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The New Light of Myanmar

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Senior General Than Shwe felicitates Cuban President

Nay Pyi Taw, 1 Jan — Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Dr Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Council of State and of the Government of the Republic of Cuba, on the anniversary of the Liberation of the Republic of Cuba which falls on 1 January 2008. — *MNA*

Prime Minister General Thein Sein attends final match of 1st Inter-Ministry Volleyball (Men's) Tournament

Nay Pyi Taw, 31 Dec — The final match of the first Inter-Ministry Volleyball (Men's) Tournament 2007 was held at No 1 Volleyball Ground, here, yesterday, attended by Prime Minister General Thein Sein.

The tournament, the first of its kind, started on 26 November with the aim of keeping healthy and fresh mind of service personnel in Nay Pyi Taw and unity among them under the guidance of the Head of State.

Among the spectators were Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin, the ministers, the Attorney-General, the deputy ministers, members of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the director-general of the Government Office and departmental heads and service personnel.

The Ministry of Sports beat Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs 3-2. Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint presented championship shield and the replica of the shield to first prize winning Ministry of Sports.

Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan presented individual medals to the players of first, second and third prize winning Ministry of Sports, Ministry of PBANRDA and Ministry for Home Affairs respectively.

Next, Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint presented cash rewards to Sa Aung Zaw Zaw of Ministry of Sports, Hla Htwe and Zarni Hein of Ministry of PBANRDA.

(See page 6)

Stand tall as citizens of independent nation

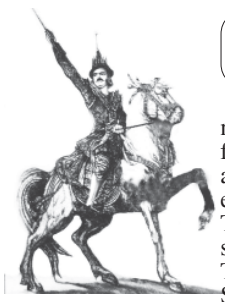
Myanmar nationals are the ones who are splendidly proud of their mother country, monarchs, sovereignty, literature, culture and traditions by lineage, and are well imbued with nationalistic fervour. In addition, as independent citizens, the national people have stood tall and well realized the value and taste of independence throughout the periods.

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
(From message sent on the occasion of the 59th Anniversary Independence Day)

Prime Minister General Thein Sein enjoys final match of Inter-Ministry Volleyball (Men's) Tournament 2007. — MNA

SPECIAL FEATURES TO HAIL 60th ANNIVERSARY INDEPENDENCE DAY

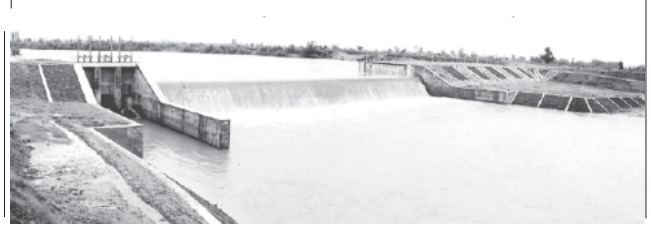
Article



Maintain justice and independence

Myanmar became a sovereign nation again after regaining independence from colonialists on 4 January 1948. Actually, Myanmar was an independent and sovereign nation with its own monarchs since Third Century BC with the establishment of such city states as Beikthano, Hanlin, Thuwunna Bommi, Tagaung, Vesali, Srikestra, etc.

Achievements of the agriculture sector



Poem

Hailing Independence Day with nationalistic fervour

* History of subjugation
Faced our nation
From colonialist wickedness
A memory so heart-rending

Cartoon

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

PERSPECTIVES

Tuesday, 1 January, 2008

Strive with renewed vigour for emergence of a new, peaceful, modern and developed nation

Today marks the end of 2007 and the beginning of 2008, in which the new year is ushered in.

On such significant occasion, the entire national people are to strive together with the government for the emergence of a new, peaceful, modern and developed nation.

At present, the government is building up a peaceful and tranquil nation. In that regard, it is placing emphasis on the emergence of such infrastructures as roads, bridges, dams and reservoirs, universities and hospitals while implementing electric power projects the length and breadth of the nation.

In the meantime, the increased production of minerals, oil and gas, jade and gems as well as agricultural produce and forest products is a driving factor for the national development.

In an effort to build a new, modern and developed nation the development of human resources is indispensable. Thanks to the nation-wide literacy campaign the literacy rate of the nation has increased remarkably.

Moreover, as part of uplift of health and fitness of the entire nation the immunization days were organized across the nation, in which vaccines or oral vaccines were given to children. As a result, the child mortality rate has decreased.

All in all, the entire national people and the government are to make continued efforts with renewed vigour for the emergence of a new, peaceful, modern and developed nation, making better use of the already-achieved development.

ပညာရေးစုံညီပွဲတော်

နိုင်ငံတစ်ဝန်းလုံးရှိအခြေခံပညာကျောင်းအားလုံး
ပါဝင်ဆင်နွှဲမို့။

၂၀၀၈ ခုနှစ်၊ ဇန်နဝါရီလ ၁ ရက်မှ ၃ ရက်

SCHOOL FAMILY DAY

1-3 January, 2008

People's Desire

* **Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views**
* **Oppose those trying to jeopardize stability of the State and progress of the nation**
* **Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State**
* **Crush all internal and external destructive elements as the common enemy**

USDA courses opened

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo delivers an address at opening of Myanmar Affairs and International Studies Course No 13, International Relations Course No 8 and Basic Journalism Course No 11.—MNA

YANGON, 31 Dec — A ceremony to open the Myanmar Affairs and International Studies Course No 13, the International Relations Course No 8 and the Basic Journalism Course No 11 of the Union Solidarity and Development Association was held at the USDA Training School in Nyaunghnapin Camp of Hmawby Township, here, this morning.

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo delivered an opening address.

In his address, he said the Association was formed with youths who will to their bits with genuine national spirit in the drive for peace and development of the nation. As USDA is able to undertake all tasks to benefit people practically at each and every region, the participation of local residents is rising. This being the case, the membership of USDA has reached over 2.4 million.

He continued to say that the task to build a new nation is internal affair that has to be carried out by the government of the Sate and the people — the real forces. USDA members are to participate in the drive for achieving success in the task.

He went on to say that it is crystal clear that the current changes head for a democratic new nation for which people long for. Not to decrease the already gained peace and development, the USDA members have to take part with positive attitude in the process to ensure greater development of the nation. On the other hand, members of the USDA are to fence riots and destructive acts that will disrupt peace and stability of the nation, and encourage constructive acts.

In conclusion, he urged the members:

- to uphold Our Three Main National Causes as national duty
- to Play a role to ensure stability and develop ment ofthe nation
- to join hands with the people in the efforts for smooth transition to a discipline-flourishing democratic nation with developments
- to make efforts for the emergence of the new State Constitution according to the fundamental principles and detailed basic principles that the National Convention has laid down
- to actively join hands with the people to realize the Seven-step Road Map
- to strive for serving the interests of local resident according to Nine Future Tasks laid down at USDA Conference-2007, and
- to ward off all destructive acts that will harm the tasks of building the new nation.

Later, the Secretary-General gave warm greetings to the trainees.

Also present on the occasion were USDA CEC members, officials from the USDA Headquarters, the Course In-Charge and supervisors and course instructors.—*MNA*

Cash donated to MWJA

YANGON, 31 Dec — A ceremony to donate cash to Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association was held in Shwegondine Hotel in Bahan township yesterday in conjunction with a ceremony to give a brief account of Film Star Hlyan Htet.

CEC members of MWJA, journalists, film stars and actor Hlyan Htet's family were present.

First, U Thet Lwin, owner of Shwegondine Hotel extended greetings and film actor U Myittar explained facts about film star Hlyan Htet, son of U Thet Lwin.

Next, U Thet Lwin and film star Hlyan Htet presented K 100,000 to Joint Secretary-1 U Than Hlaing (Tekkatho Thinkha) and CEC member U Maung Maung Myint Aye of MWJA.

Film Star Hlyan Htet, Director Kutho and Academy Khin Maung Gyi (Music) answered queries raised by the journalists.

Film Star Hlyan Htet entered the movie world in 1998. He starred in many famous films as well as TV commercials. He had also acted a series of videos. In 2000, he went to America for his academic study. He returned from America in 2004.—*MNA*

Joint-Secretary-1 U Than Hlaing and CEC Member U Maung Maung Myint Aye accept K 100,000 donated by wellwishers.

MNA

Asif Ali Zardari (L) and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, husband and son of slain opposition leader Benazir Bhutto, with party's vice chairman Makhdoom Amin Fahim (R) attend a news conference in Naudero on 30 Dec, 2007.
INTERNET

Bhutto's son appointed chairman of PPP

ISLAMABAD, 31 Dec — The assassinated Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto's son Bilawal was appointed on Sunday chairman of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Bhutto's husband Asif Ali Zardari was named co-chairman, local TV channel DAWN NEWS reported.

A central executive committee of PPP held a meeting at Bhutto's house in Naudero in the southern Sindh Province on Sunday, making a decision that Bhutto's 19-year-old son Bilawal would lead the party with the assistance of some other senior leaders of the party, said the report.

The decision came just three days after Bhutto was killed in a suicide attack near the capital Islamabad. "Bilawal is the new chairman of the party and Asif Ali Zardari will assist him as co-chairman," one of the party officials said.

Meanwhile, the party of Pakistan opposition leader Nawaz Sharif said Sunday it will reconsider its early decision to boycott the next month's elections if Benazir Bhutto's party decides to take part in.

In the latest development, the PPP has decided to take part in the 8 January parliamentary elections. However, a spokesman for the ruling party said on Sunday that the scheduled 8 January elections will likely be postponed to three or four months following the assassination of opposition leader Bhutto.

MNA/Xinhua

Bhutto death raises doubts over Pakistan election

ISLAMABAD, 30 Dec—The assassination of Benazir Bhutto has thrown into doubt whether Pakistan can hold an election in 10 days time that was meant to complete a transition to civilian rule in the nuclear-armed US ally. Opposition leader Bhutto was killed in a suicide attack on Thursday as she left an election rally in the city of Rawalpindi. The government has blamed al-Qaeda.

The United States and other Western allies have exhorted President Pervez Musharraf to press ahead with polls they hope will bring stability to a country emerging from eight years of military rule while facing mounting violence from Islamist militants allied to al-Qaeda. Prospects for a smooth poll look bleak, with the head of the country's biggest political party dead and the other main opposition party announcing an election boycott in response to her murder.

Bhutto had hoped to win the 8 January vote, though most analysts had expected a three-way split between her, former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and a party that backs President Pervez Musharraf.

MNA/Xinhua

Ten-year-old sea lion Jonao uses a brush to write the word rat in Chinese characters in preparation for the new year at Hakkeijima Sea Paradise in Yokohama, suburban Tokyo.
INTERNET

Bin Laden says US seeks to exploit Iraqi oil

DUBAI, 30 Dec— Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden accused Washington of plotting to take control of Iraq's oil and urged Iraqis to reject efforts to rebuild a US-backed national unity government there.

The militant leader also vowed in an audio recording posted on the Internet on Saturday to expand its jihad to liberate all Palestinian land and said his group will never recognize Israel.

"America seeks, alongside its agents in the region, to create an allied government... that would accept in advance the presence of major US bases in Iraq and give the Americans all they wish of Iraq's oil," he said. The Saudi-born militant said the envisaged Iraqi Government was also meant to help Washington "fully dominate" the region with help from allies such as Saudi Arabia.

MNA/Reuters

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Israel says finds explosive chemicals in EU aid bags

JERUSALEM, 31 Dec— Israel said on Saturday it had recently seized a truck carrying chemicals used to make explosives hidden in bags marked as European Union aid for the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip.

The Army said 6.5 tons of potassium nitrate were in bags marked as sugar from the European Union for Palestinians in the coastal enclave.

"We are looking into this report," said an EU official in Israel. "If it is found to be accurate, this is an illegal act that should be condemned." The cargo in a Palestinian truck was travelling in the occupied West Bank and seized several weeks ago at an Israeli checkpoint, the Army said.

MNA/Reuters

Freight train kills four villagers in C China

YICHANG, 31 Dec—Four villagers were killed by a freight train while walking along a rail track in central China's Hubei Province on Saturday, said local police.

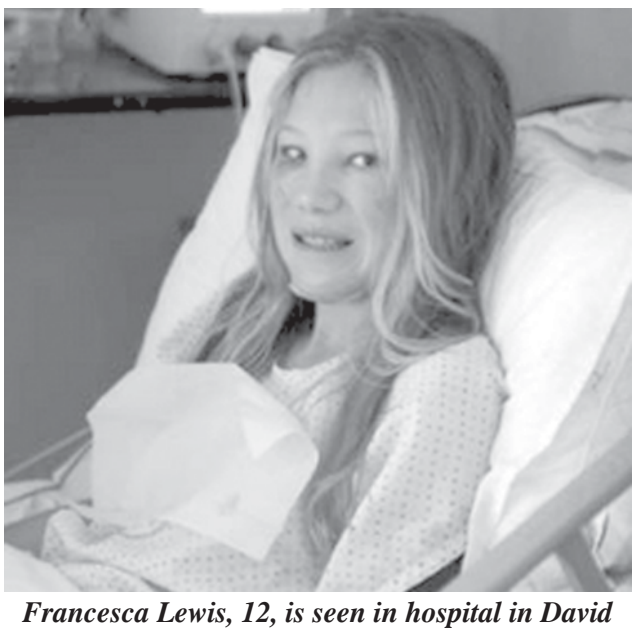
The accident occurred around 7:00 am on Saturday near Taoziling Railway Station in Yidu City. The four victims were all residents in Guanping Village, not far from the station, according to the police.

Heavy fog was blamed for the deadly accident. "The visibility was reduced to about 10 metres," said a witness.

The cause for the accident is under investigation.

The city railway authorities warned the locals to abide by traffic rules and not to walk on rail tracks.

MNA/Xinhua



Francesca Lewis, 12, is seen in hospital in David City in the Chiriqui Province 270 miles (435 km) west of Panama City, on 28 Dec, 2007. Rescue crews in Panama found Lewis, an American girl on Tuesday who survived a plane crash that killed the other three people on board, including wealthy California investor Michael Klein, authorities said.—INTERNET

Pope calls Bhutto death "brutal terrorist attack"

VATICAN CITY, 29 Dec — Pope Benedict called on Friday for calm in Pakistan after the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, which he called a "brutal terrorist attack".

In a telegram of condolences, the spiritual leader of the world's 1.1 billion Roman Catholics expressed "sentiments of deep sympathy and spiritual closeness to the members of (Bhutto's) family and to the entire Pakistan nation".

"He prays that further violence will be avoided and that every effort will be made to build a climate of respect and trust, which are so necessary if good order is to be maintained in a society and if the country's political institutions are to operate effectively," read the message, signed on behalf of the Pope by Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

Bhutto, a former Pakistani prime minister and leader of a major opposition party, was buried on Friday after her assassination on Thursday by a suicide attacker at a rally ahead of a 8 January election.

MNA/Reuters

A visitor admires paintings at a computer graphics exhibition in Beijing, on 29 Dec, 2007. An exhibition of excellent computer graphics (CG) works was held in Beijing on Saturday. The exhibition covers architectural animation, movie special effect, digital characters, original animation and etc.—INTERNET

British boy dies after pet Rottweiler attack

LONDON, 31 Dec— A one-year-old boy has died in hospital after being attacked by a Rottweiler in the yard of his grandparents' home, West Yorkshire Police said.

The dog, a family pet, snatched the boy from the arms of a 7-year-old girl who was carrying him at the Wakefield home on Friday afternoon.

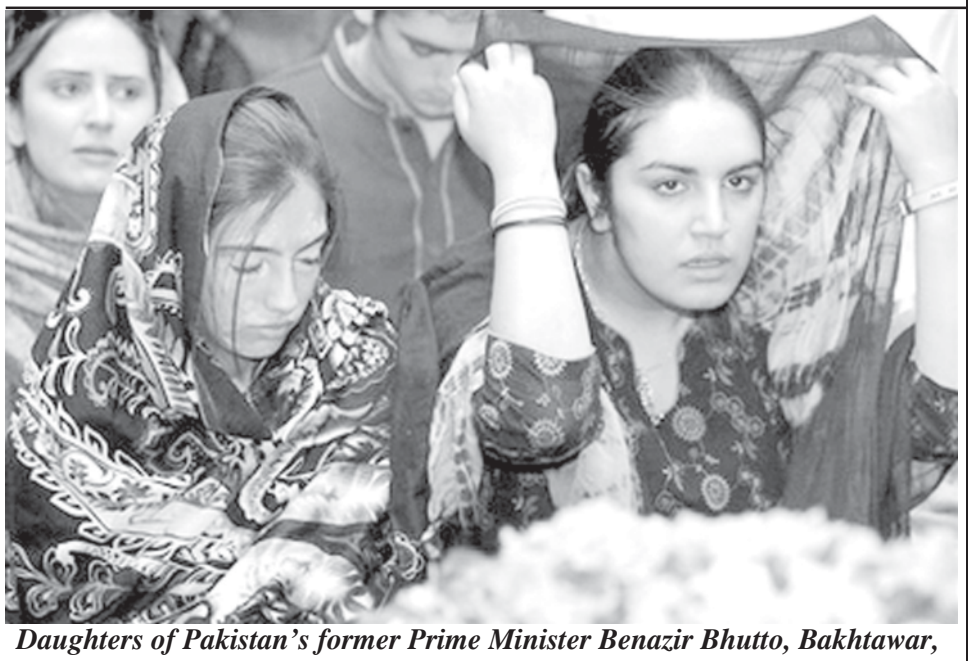
The girl had gone to the kitchen door to stroke the animal, which was kept in the yard outside.

When the door was opened the dog, without warning, grabbed the boy and carried him into the yard.

The boy suffered serious injuries and was taken to Pinderfields General Infirmary but died later in the evening.

Armed police officers destroyed the dog, a two-and-a-half year-old female dog, at the scene.

MNA/Reuters



Daughters of Pakistan's former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, Bakhtawar, right, and Asifa visit their mother's grave in Garhi Khuda Bakhsh near Larkana, Pakistan on 29 Dec, 2007.—INTERNET

US, Iraqi forces kill five gunmen in N Iraq

MOSUL (Iraq), 31 Dec — US Army and Iraqi police forces raided on a village in Iraqi northern province of Nineveh on Saturday morning, killing five gunmen, a provincial police source said.

"According to intelligence reports, the troops backed by helicopters conducted a joint operation against insurgents in the village of Sheikh Ibrahim near the town of Tal Afar, some 70 kilometres west of Mosul," Brigadier Ibrahim al-Jubouri, chief police of the town told *Xinhua.*

The operation resulted in the killing of five gunmen and the arrestment of seven others, along with seizure of four weapons caches, Jubouri said.

In separate incident, a car bomb went off in the Qadsiyah neighbourhood in eastern the provincial capital city of Mosul, wounding seven people, a local police source said.

The blast damaged four nearby houses and several civilian cars, the source added.

Mosul, some 400 kilometres north of Baghdad, has been the hotbed of insurgency and sectarian violence since the US-led invasion broke out in 2003.

MNA/Xinhua

Three PPP winning candidates get red cards

BANGKOK, 31 Dec — Thailand's Election Commission (EC) on Sunday issued three red cards disqualifying three People Power Party (PPP) winners from the northeastern province of Buriram from the 23 December general election.

EC secretary general Sutthipol Thaweechaikan said the three winners — Pornchai Srisuthiyothin, Rungroj Thongsri and Prakit Poldej — were also banned from political activities for one year and were subject to criminal charges.

Sutthipol said the EC found the three candidates guilty of buying votes and transporting voters to polling stations in Buriram's Constituency one.

A new election will be held in Buriram's Constituency one on 13 Jan, Sutthipol said.

So far six winning candidates of the PPP have been disqualified, reducing its House seats to 227.

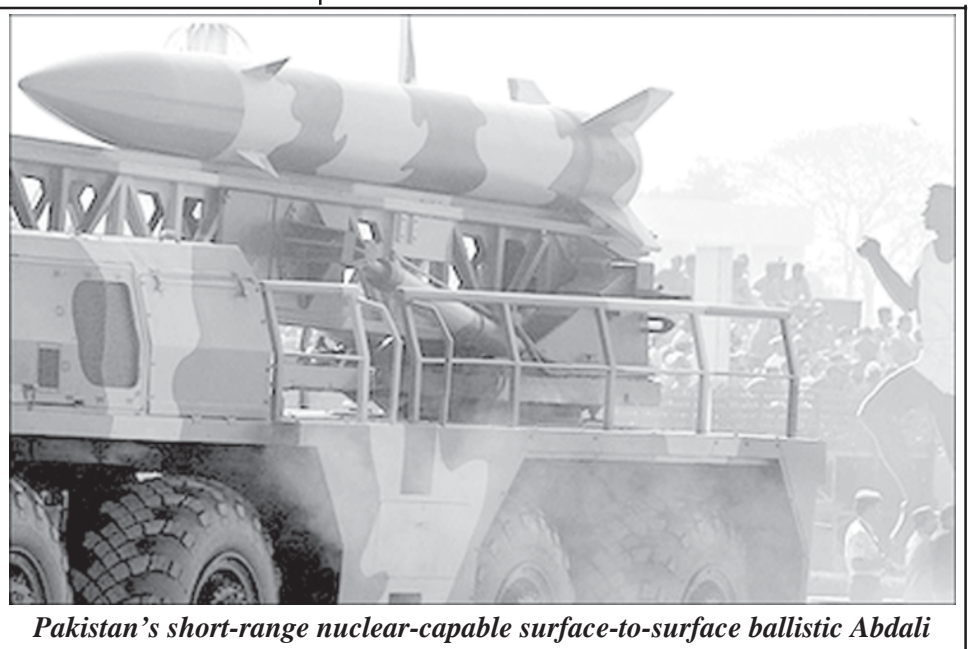
Foreseeing the issuance of more yellow and red cards to election winners, Sutthipol said the EC should complete its investigation of all electoral fraud cases as of 3 January. —*MNA/Xinhua*

No casualties in loud bang in Moscow shopping centre

Moscow, 29 Dec — Thousands of holiday shoppers were evacuated from a shopping centre next to the Kremlin on Thursday after a loud bang resounded, but police said there were no reports of injuries and suggested it was caused by fireworks.

A *Reuters* witness saw thousands of people streaming out of the underground shopping centre into nearby Manezh square and police setting up a cordon of metal barriers while urging onlookers to leave the area. A police spokesman told *Reuters* the noise was likely the result of a loud fire-cracker.

MNA/Reuters



Pakistan's short-range nuclear-capable surface-to-surface ballistic Abdali missile at the National Day parade in Islamabad. —INTERNET

ECONOMIC NEWS

China opposes US on anti-subsidy probe into tyres

BEIJING, 30 Dec—The Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOC) said on Saturday that it was strongly unsatisfied with and firmly opposed to a recent United States preliminary ruling on the anti-subsidy probe into tyres for non-road use imported from China.

The US Department of Commerce ruled on 10 Dec that the Chinese Government offered several subsidies to the tyre producers involved in the investigation and said it would take temporary anti-subsidy measures.

The probe infringes US tradition of not adopting anti-subsidy measures against non-market economies, which has been practiced since 1984, the MOC said in a statement. The frequent requests for anti-subsidy probes into Chinese exports made by US industries are unconducive to the normal development of the bilateral trade relations, the statement said.

The US Department of Commerce made false calculation of the subsidies after refusing to take into account the credible data provided by the Chinese side, accord-0ing to the statement. The unjust ruling not only violates the US basic laws and multilateral rules, but shows US discrimination against Chinese companies and its bias on Chinese mode of economic development, it said.

This will give a rise to trade protectionism in the US and damage the interests of Chinese industry, which is unacceptable to the Chinese Government and industry circle, the statement noted. China will reserve the right to take further action to protect the interests of its domestic companies, the MOC added.—*MNA/Xinhua*

The Tata logo shines on the boot of a car in Mumbai. India's giant Tata Group plans to launch the world's cheapest car early in January while also looking set to drive off with two of the poshest marques — Ford's iconic Jaguar and Land Rover brands.—INTERNET

Transit fees for ships using Egypt's Suez Canal will increase in 2008 by an average of 7.1 percent.—INTERNET

Suez Canal to raise fees in 2008

ISMAILIYA, 30 Dec—Transit fees for ships using Egypt's Suez Canal will increase in 2008 by an average of 7.1 percent, the canal authority said on Sunday.

Fees will rise by 5.7 percent for container ships, by 7.3 percent for oil tankers and by 10.5 percent for natural gas ships, authority chief Ahmed Ali Fadel told reporters in the canal city of Ismailiya.

Passenger ships' fees will increase by 5.2 percent, naval vessels will see a 10 percent increase and all other types of ships will increase by 5 percent, Fadel added.

The authority, which has run the canal since its nationalization in 1956, last raised transit fees in April 2007.

The Suez Canal, which opened in 1869, is Egypt's third largest source of revenue, after tourism and remittances from expatriate workers.

Fadel said he expected canal revenues to reach 4.6 billion dollars in 2007, the highest ever.

Internet

UK drug giants probed over bribes to Saddam regime

LONDON, 30 Dec—British pharmaceutical companies Glaxo Smith Kline (GSK) and Astra Zeneca have been linked to an investigation into bribes allegedly paid to former regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

Both firms have been told to hand documents to the Serious Fraud Office, which is probing possible breaches of the oil-for-food sanctions against Iraq, Sky news reported on Sunday.

British pharmaceutical companies GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and AstraZeneca have been linked to an investigation into bribes allegedly paid to former regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.—INTERNET

The investigation was reportedly triggered by a United Nations report that listed more than 2,200 companies worldwide that may have been linked to bribery to Iraq.

Both GSK and Astra Zeneca have denied any wrongdoing.

A spokesman for Glaxo SmithKline said, "GSK does not believe that its employees or its agents in Iraq knowingly engaged in wrongdoing regarding the oil-for-food programme."

An Astra Zeneca spokeswoman said, "Astra Zeneca has received a request from the Serious Fraud Office for documents as part of its review of the oil-for-food programme in Iraq.

The company will be providing the documentation." —*Internet*

China to slap export taxes on grains

BEIJING,30 Dec—China is to levy export taxes on wheat, corn, rice, soybean and other processed products next year, the official *Xinhua* news agency said on Sunday.

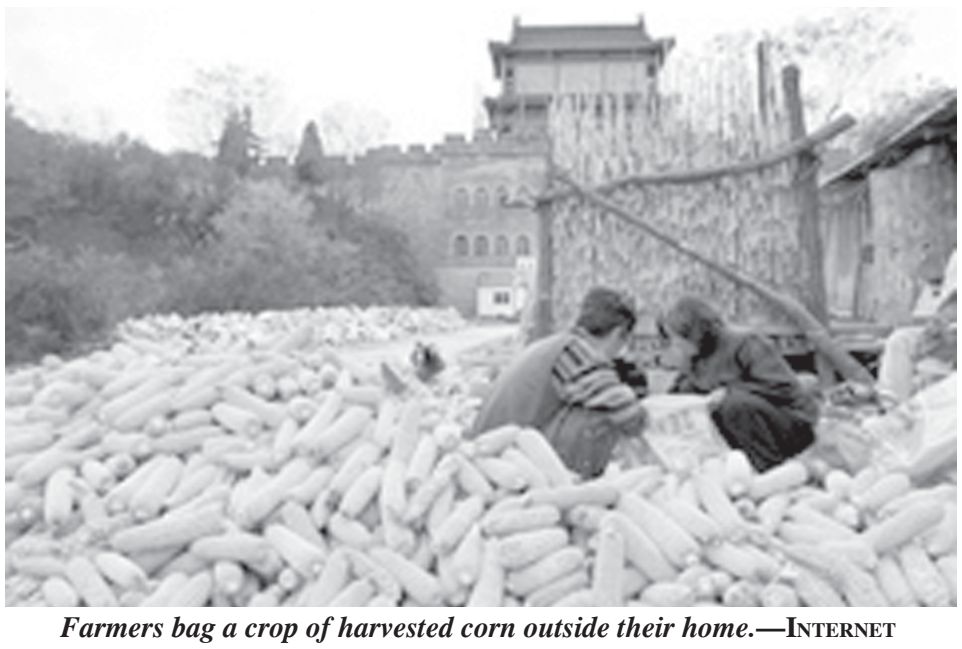
The ministry of finance said the rates would range from five to 25 percent, the agency said in a brief dispatch.

It had already said earlier in December that it would eliminate export tax rebates on 84 categories of grain and grain products in an apparent effort to fight high inflation and ensure domestic food supplies.

The government has said repeatedly in recent months it is working to ensure a stable food supply to the nation's growing population of about 1.3 billion, the world's largest.

Exacerbating the problem is that China's arable land is steadily being lost to expanding cities and environmental degradation.

Internet



Farmers bag a crop of harvested corn outside their home.—INTERNET

Minister Maj-Gen Saw Lwin awards Ministry of Home Affairs Team through an official.

MNA

Foreign Minister sends felicitations to Cuba

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan — U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Felipe Perez Roque, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, on the anniversary of the Liberation of the Republic of Cuba which falls on 1 January 2008. — *MNA*

Prime Minister General Thein Sein…

(from page 1)

Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and for Immigration and Population Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe presented cash rewards to Aye Min Tun of Ministry of Industry-1 and Kyaw Lwin Moe of Ministry of Home Affairs.

Afterwards, Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin presented cash rewards to Best Player Award winner Sa Aung Zaw Zaw and cash rewards to prize winning teams.

MNA

Minister Brig-Gen Ohn Myint presents award to Zarni Hein of Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Team.—MNA

Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan awards an athlete of Ministry of Sports Team.—MNA

Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint presents championship shield to officials of Ministry of Sports Team.—MNA

Literary awards of Tun Foundation announced

YANGON, 31 Dec— Tun Foundation announced the award winning books for 2006 today.

Tun Foundation's scrutinizing committee for selecting award winning books scrutinized the award winning books of two categories — book and manuscript. The committee designated eight subjects for one category with book, manuscript and English Language.

A total of 13 award winning works — seven books, seven manuscripts and two books in English —are selected by the committee. Those who won awards for the book category are Khin Khin Htoo in the history genre, Moe Moe Taraw San in the biography genre, Junior Win in the children literature genre, Win Maung (Tamma Waddy) in the culture genre, Dr Soe Lwin in the health genre, Dr Toe Hla (member of Myanma Historical Commission) in the ancient treaties genre and Maung Wun Tha in the reference book genre.

Those who won awards for the manuscript category are Maung Nwe Than in the history genre, Hla Toe (Psychology) in the biography genre, Minbu Aung Kyaing in the culture genre and Mya Mya Cho in the ancient treaties genre.

Selected Writings of Daw Kyan (Bilingual) written by Daw Kyan and Collection of Hpyat-sar, Legal Cases and Court Decision of Myanmar Kon-Baung Period (AD 1752-1885) written by U Tun Yi in English are also selected as the award winning books for 2006.

The winners are urged to contact Tun Foundation, Ph 01-291881 and to give their two passport-size photos and biographies to the committee.

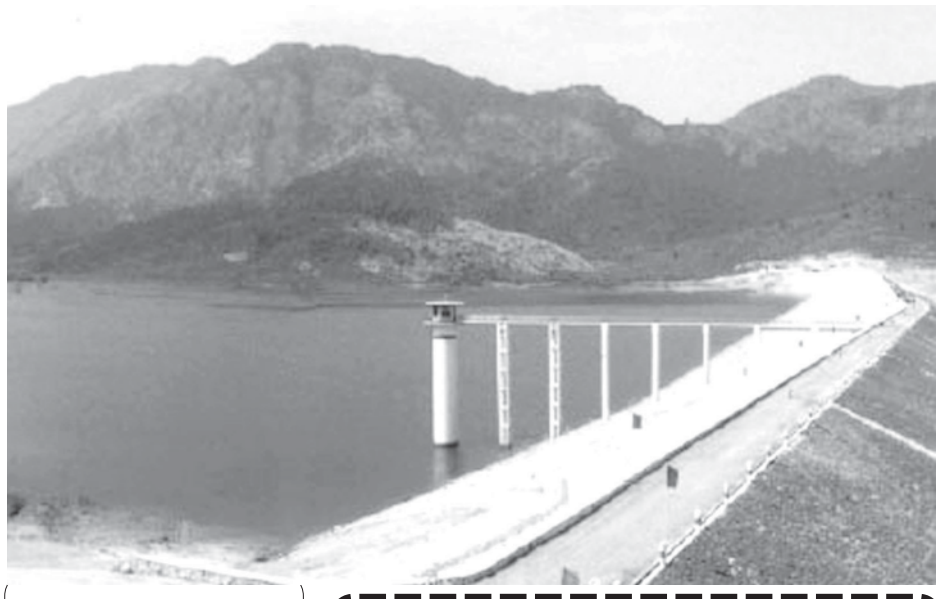
Those wishing to participate in the competitions for 2007 may send manuscripts and books to the committee.

Tun Foundation established Tun Foundation literary awards last year as part of efforts for the development of Myanmar literature.— *MNA*

Minister Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe awards an athlete of Ministry of Home Affairs Team.— MNA

State No.	Region No.	Dam	Location	Benefited acres	Opening Date
194.	35.	Tamar Dam	Seikpyu Township, Pakokku District, Magway Division	150	31-1-07
195.	36.	Phoni Dam	Seikpyu Township, Pakokku District, Magway Division	75	31-1-07
196.	37.	Madae Dam	Kanma Township, Thayet District, Magway Division	4000	25-2-07
197.	5.	Pyaingchaung Dam	Kyauktaw Township, Thandwe District, Rakhine State	5000	31-3-07
198.	10.	Kataik Dam	Paung Township, Thaton District, Mon State	10000	30-4-07
199.	43.	Baingda Dam	DaikU Township, Bago Division (East)	46700	19-5-07
200.	9.	Ma Mya Dam	Myanaung Township, Pathein District, Ayeyawady Division	10000	7-6-07
201.	49.	Male Nattaung Dam	Singu Township, PyinOoLwin District, Mandalay Division	10000	22-7-07
202.	38.	Gwegyo Dam	Yesagyo Township, Pakokku District, Magway Division	400	19-8-07
203.	50.	Shanmange Supporting Dam	Meiktila Township, Meiktila District, Mandalay Division	200	29-9-07
204.	51.	Sitha Supporting Dam	PyinOoLwin Township, PyinOoLwin District, Mandalay Division	water supply	25-10-07
205.	23.	North Yama Supporting Dam	Pale Township, Monywa District, Sagaing Division	water supply	28-11-07

Hailing the 60th Anniversary Independence Day



Kataik Dam was opened in Paung Township, Thaton District, Mon State, on 30 April 2007 to irrigate 10,000 acres of farmland.

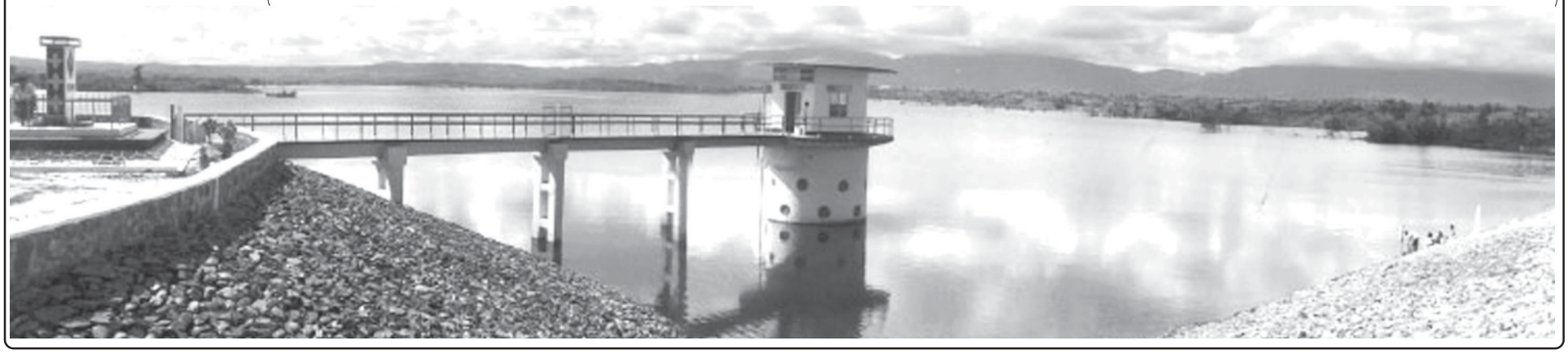
Achievements of the agriculture sector throughout the nation in 2007

Baingda Dam was opened in DaikU Township of Nyaunglebin District, Bago Division, to benefit 46,700 acres of farmland.

A distance view of Ma Mya Dam opened in Myanaung Township of Pathein District, Ayeyawady Division.

Shanmange Dam was opened in Meiktila Township, Meiktila District, Mandalay Division to supply water to 19,504 acres of farmland.

North Yama Supporting Dam was opened in Pale Township of Monywa District, Sagaing Division to irrigate 22,000 acres of land.

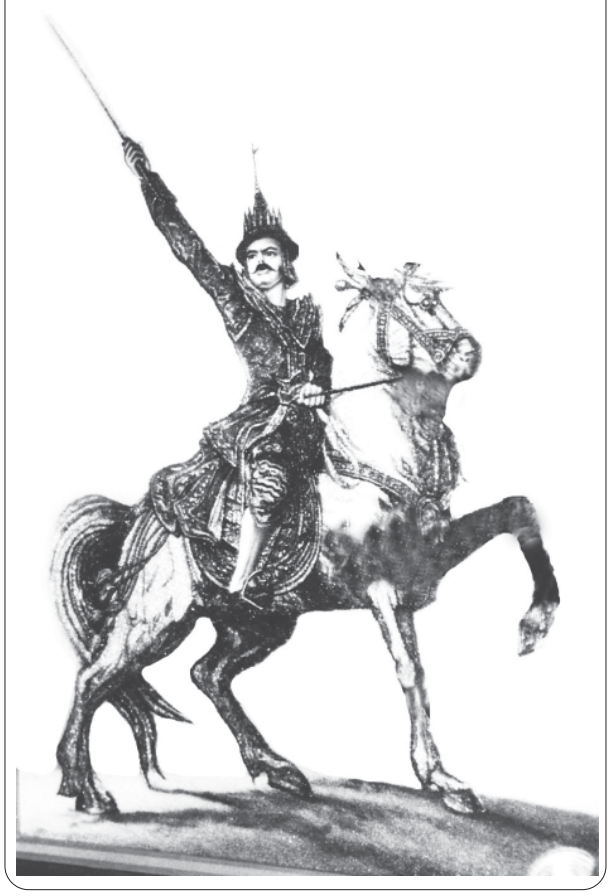


HAILING THE 60th ANNIVERSARY INDEPENDENCE DAY

Maintain justice and independence

Kyaw Min Aye

Cherish the Independence, safeguard it at the risk of lives



Myanmar became a sovereign nation again after regaining independence from colonialists on 4 January 1948.

Actually, Myanmar was an independent and sovereign nation with its own monarchs since third Century BC with the establishment of such city states as Beikthano, Hanlin, Thuwunna Bommi, Tagaung, Vesali, Srikestra, etc.

History has it that Myanmar was able to stand tall among the world nations as the first Myanmar under the leadership of King Anawratha (1044-1077) in Bagan Period, as the second Myanmar under the leadership of King Bayintnaung (1551-1581) in Toungoo Period and as the third Myanmar under the leadership of King Alaungphayar (1752-1761) in Konbaung Period.

In the course of history all the national brethren were able to solve and surmount any crisis and difficulty occurred in the nation at the risk of their lives through unity and cooperation, sharing joy and sorrow. They were able to do so in the face of dangers at home and abroad.

Although Myanmar is situated between the two most populous nations namely India and China that enjoy high civilizations, it has been able to preserve and safeguard its own tradition, customs and national character in successive eras.

In the 19th Century the colonialists occupied the Indian region, then waged three aggressive wars on Myanmar and occupied it. Another intention of colonialists who occupied Myanmar was to enter China through Myanmar from the rear of the former.

At that time, European colonialist traders were eager to occupy Myanmar so that they could use it as their market. History shows that British colonialists had the intention to enter China through Myanmar making better use of Ayeyawady River and then land route, for they had to take time if they passed Malacca Straits and South China Sea.

It can be found that during the WW II the US and its allied forces constructed Ledo Highway linking India, Myanmar and China in a desperate manner. The 1,726 km long road originated from Ledo of Assam State of India and ended in Kunming of Yunnan Province of the People's Republic of China passing through Myitkyina of Kachin State of Myanmar. It was a main transport and communication route for the US and its allied troops during the war.

It can be assessed that the geographical condition of Myanmar made her to be politically strategic. Myanmar is situated in the Asian Continent and is contiguous with inner regions of the continent in the north-west and north. In the east of the nation, there lie South-east Asia and East Asia. In the west and south, lie the Bay of Bengal, Mottama Gulf and the Andman Sea.

In the north, there are China with a population of about 1,300 million, India with a population of about 1,100 million and Bangladesh with a population of over 140 million. In the east, lies Laos and in the south-east, lies Thailand with a population of over 65 million.

The boundary of the nation is about 5,200 miles long, of them over 3,800 miles are shared with the neighbouring countries—1,357 miles with PRC, 857 miles with India, 152 miles with Bangladesh, 128 miles with Laos and 1,314 miles with Thailand.

Being strategically located close to the big nations, the most important national interest for Myanmar is to ensure the perpetual existence of independence and sovereignty. Likewise, each and every nation is to be well aware of giving top priority to the national interest.

The lifeblood of a nation is sovereignty. Legislative power, executive power and judicial power which are the sovereignty must be in the hands of the people of the particular nation. If the three branches of power fall into the hands of a certain foreign nation directly or indirectly the nation concerned is meant to be initiated into slavery indirectly under neo-colonialism.

A glance at the time of Myanmar's regaining independence will reveal that shortly after the end of the WW II (1945) the cold war broke out as a result of rivalry of isms between the East Bloc and the West Bloc. At that time, Myanamr practised the independent and active foreign policy in order that it would be able to stay away from any international crisis but to stand by the truth.

During the cold war period there was no world war. However, the Korea war that broke out in 1950-1951 brought the world community to the brink of war. During that period, the CIA provided the remnant Chinese nationalists with arms and enabled them to take stronghold in Myanmar with the aim of attacking the Chinese Communist Party that established the PRC. The Myanma Tatmadaw had to ward off the incursion of the Chinese nationalists and lodged a complaint with the United Nations in that

(See page 9)

HAILING THE 60th ANNIVERSARY INDEPENDENCE DAY

Maintain justice and independence

Kyaw Min Aye

(from page 8)

regard. The Tatmadaw had to drive the Chinese nationalists out of the nation up to 1961. Consequently, Myanmar still has to face internal insurgency and dangers of narcotic drugs as evil legacy of the nationalist Chinese.

Under these circumstances, Myanmar, China and India signed the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence in June 1954. The Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence are;

1. Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty
2. Non-aggression
3. Non-interference in one another's internal affairs
4. Equality and mutual benefit
5. Peaceful co-existence

At that time, the South East Asian Treaty Organization-SEATO signed by the US, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines emerged. Myanmar is sticking to the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence. The five principles are the fundamental principles of 118 non-aligned countries today. The Non-Aligned Movement was born out of Afro-Asian conference that was held in Bandung of Indonesia in 1955. Myanmar was a founder of the NAM.

The localized wars that broke out in South-East Asia region spread to Vietnam in the early 1960s. During that period, the nation saw a series of activities in which certain groups tried to secede from the Union and join the SEATO.

However, Myanmar had been able to solve its internal problems with internal forces. Myanmar without accepting any external interference had also been able to address any matters caused by the instigation of external elements in accord with the wishes of the people. This reflects the perpetuation of sovereignty of the nation.

Myanmar paid serious attention to perpetuation of sovereignty since 1971, shifting from the practice of independent and non-aligned foreign policy to the practice of independent and active foreign policy. The Tatmadaw government which assumed the State responsibilities on 18 September 1988 continued practising the independent and active foreign policy and has been dealing with neighbouring countries, countries of the region and the international community with a sense of good neighbourliness and friendship.

Myanmar became a member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in July 1997. In December 1997, it became a member of Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). This has enabled Myanmar to become politically and economically strategic between South-East Asian region and South Asian region.

Further strengthening friendly ties between the PRC and India will contribute much to economic development and the process of transition to democracy in Myanmar. As regards the policy of India towards Myanmar, the Indian Minister of External Affairs said that having close geography, culture, tradition and national character in common, Myanmar and India were able to pave the way for cooperation in various sectors.

Similarly, the PRC gave a helping hand to Myanmar for the economic development and the process of transition to democracy taking a stand not interfering in the Myanmar's internal affairs.

In the meantime, the PRC and India are further strengthening cooperation in various sectors in the interest of 2,400 million peoples of theirs as well as those of Asia and the world, thereby surely bringing peace, stability and development to Myanmar.

The re-emergence of the Ledo Highway linking India, Myanmar and PRC built during the WW II for military purpose has contributed to development of economic and social sectors of the three countries that unanimously signed the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence.

In 2007, a ceremony to open the 176 km long road section linking Yunnan Province of PRC and Myitkyina of Kachin State of Myanmar was held at Kanpaikti bordering PRC and Myanmar. The Chinese government disbursed RMB 1.23 billion on loan to Myanmar and two-thirds of the loan will be used in construction of the road section in Myanmar. Likewise, the road section linking India and Myanmar is now reconstructed.

All in all, as Myanmar is imbued with a sense of good neighbourliness and friendship based on justice, amity and peaceful co-existence, neighbouring countries always hold her sovereignty and independence in high regard.

Translation: TS

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POEM:

Hailing Independence Day with nationalistic fervour

* History of subjugation
Faced our nation
From colonialist wickedness
A memory so heart-rending

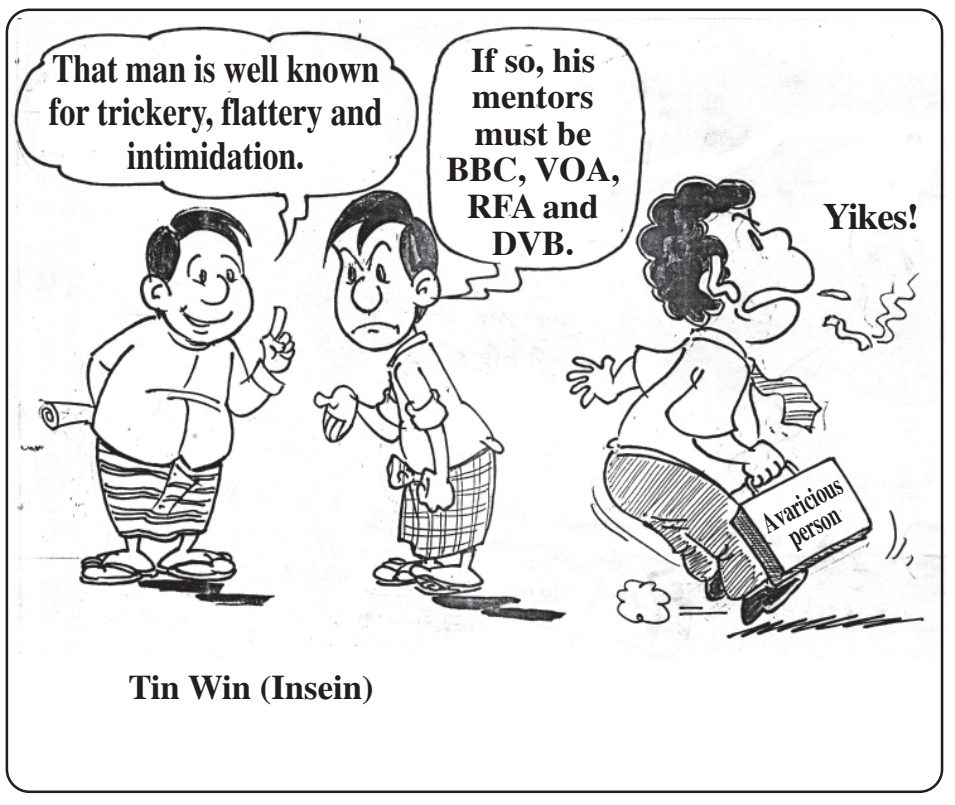
* Bowing down before heroes many times
For they the people's force without fear
Launched the war
With valour and patriotism
Freeing nation from subjugation

* Awakened with patriotism good sons
Sacrificed lots of blood, sweat
Unyielding with nationalistic fervour
To regain nation's life our territory
So daring and sacrificing for independence

* Independent nation with own system
Seven-step Road Map she adopted
For peace and progress
And modernization also
Safeguarding our ancestral territory

* With rising internal strength
Using only own system
All in amity and unity
Family of Union
Encroachments on our strong nation
With aggressive and tricky means
We will never tolerate
Interferences, disturbances, dissensions
We will ward off even risking lives
Our patriotism and strength
We hail Independence.

Yenatha Maung Kyaw Nyunt (Trs)
(Hailing the 60th Anniversary Independence Day)



Tin Win (Insein)

Beautiful words from poems

PyinOoLwin Khin Hnin May

On the morning of 4 January 1948 Myanmar regained her independence. Myanmar stands tall as an independent and sovereign nation among the nations of the world. The people have made efforts for development of the country for sixty years. The country have had ups and downs in the past and the people enjoyed nice things and suffered evil ones. The poets composed poems about the lessons for the good future. The literary world full of various kinds of works of art is like a garden with all kinds of flowers in different hues and designs.

As a book lover, I copied some poems in my notebook I would like to express some excerpts in hailing the 60th Anniversary Independence Day that falls on 4 January 2008. Some readers may have read them. I have chosen some poems that I love very much.

First, I will describe a poem entitled "When you die" written by Saya Zawgyi (1907-1990) that we often recite. One of the points is that he wrote the poem at the age of 28. It says: it is true that humans will get old, or sick and then die. However, you should leave your native land developed. You should leave your language and literature improved. The pagoda you pay respects to should be left bright.

Many poets composed such kinds of verses from different points of view. I will present a poem entitled "Cetena" (goodwill) written by poetess Nu Thazin. The poem said: Lakes and wells are dug not for me only. Crops are cultivated not for me only. They are for all. Muddy roads are paved with gravels not only for me to walk on. It is necessary for all to maintain them for years. Despite being tired, harmonious efforts should be made without a pause. I let you spend all hard-earned money as necessary.

The entire people made efforts for national development with harmony. The national races were united in times of emergencies. Therefore, the nation has developed to some extent. Not everyone has participated in the tasks with enthusiasm. To tell you the truth, there may be black sheep. There are bad things that should not be mixed with the rice meant for good purpose. In the turning point of history there are destructive elements in the making of the nation. The poets pointed out the facts. The poem "Useless man" by Manoketha Kyaw Win said: One did not take part in building a house.Village people in unity tried to build a small bridge. However, he criticized that the bridge was narrow to walk.

Poet Aung Lu Thit described liars in his poem "Liar". In the poem, the character said he would like to sacrifice his life for the country and the people. He never gets tired of saying such thing. He announces his qualities boastfully. He, however, always keeps away from participating in community welfare service.

The people feel sad and tired of the useless men and liars. Other countries developed considerably in 30 years. But progress has not been made in our country because of the destructionists. So, a poet wrote a poem "Should be shameful" in the 2006 October issue of Naing-Ngan Gonyi Magazine. "Ignorance is worse than poverty. Poverty is not a fault. The life is not beautiful if there is ignorance. One should judge oneself what kind of person one is. He should think about what is shameful."

Poet Yawai Shin Phone pointed out those with "one-sided view" in the 1961 September issue of Nawadei Magazine. There seemed to be a few one-sided pessimists after passing the age of forty years. Those are making trouble for the people. Those who make trouble get into trouble themselves.

They are foolish to make trouble for the people. The poem "One-sided view" by Yawai Shin Phone said: He learns nothing. He does nothing if he knows something. His deeds are not correct and he does not practise his knowledge. Such a man does not think that efforts of the people are good as he is one-eyed man.

The poems of National Literary Award winner poet Myelat Maung Myint Thu are smooth in rhymes. I appreciate his goodwill. I never forget one of his poems in the 1975 March issue of Ngwetari Magazine. The poem "With unity" said: Friend, you are before me as I trust you. You do not continue to walk because you don't trust me behind you. When I ask you to go behind me, you are jealous. Friend, You and I are the citizens. Let's take part in building of roads in unity.

There are still destructive elements who undermine the development of the nation and those who do not want dignity and progress of the nation. They should change their attitude. I copied one poem of Saya Maung Thin Wai in the 1994 September issue of Panwaithi Magazine. In the "Let's look at the mirror", he said: One looks at the mirror to make oneself beautiful. It is her daily duty. She also changes different clothes. But the mirror does not describe interior motives of Lobha, Dosa and Moha and selfishness. The mirror does not show whether her heart is beautiful or not. She should change.

Humans are of various kinds. Some are simple and some strange. There are good and able citizens and foolish ones. But foolish ones are few. We have to march on together with them. Poet Shwedar Maung Lay Yi wrote about it in 1997 May issue of Myawady Magazine. I liked the poem"Tomorrow in the world" over ten years ago: I grow plants and prepare soil for bearing fruit. He does not grow plants but consumes sweet fruit. I ..... know to grow but do not intend to eat. He .... does not know to grow but wants to eat. He and I have different hobbies and attitudes. There remains a long way to go in the rest of the journey.

I present some of the poems I like very much. In conclusion, I will share an expression of Amarapura Maha Gandayon Sayadaw Ashin Janakabhivamsa. Only when there is justice and discipline, will there be progress. "Dhamma is like the eyes, Vinaya is like the feet. If there are eyes, one can go to where he wishes. If there is strong feet, one can go where he wishes.

I thank the librarian and staff of the library of PyinOoLwin Township Information and Public Relations Department for giving me the opportunity to read books free of charge.

Translation: NY

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

Visitors hit a giant bell to mark the new year as a Buddhist monk (bottom R) looks on, at Zojoji temple in Tokyo on 1 Jan, 2008. Buddhist temples throughout Japan tolled bells 108 times, symbolizing a desire to leave behind earthly desires and prepare for the new year.—INTERNET

A man waves a Beijing Olympic Games flag in front of a crowd during a New Year's event in Beijing on 31Dec, 2007.—INTERNET

A perfomer walks past a painting during a New Year's eve carnival in Johannesburg on 31Dec, 2007. – INTERNET

A street vendor sells masks as they take part in the festivities on New Year's Eve in Bangalore, India, on 31 Dec, 2007.—INTERNET

A woman hits a drum during an event to celebrate New Year on Jeju Island, south of Seoul, on 1 Jan, 2008.
INTERNET

Fireworks explode over the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House during a pyrotechnic show to celebrate the New Year on 1Jan, 2008.
INTERNET

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Win Mu Tin
M.A., H.G.P., D.B.L.,
for **Daido Kogyo Co., Ltd.**
P. O. Box 60, Yangon
Dated: 1 January 2008

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for **Renesas Technology Inc.**
P. O. Box 60, Yangon
Dated: 1 January 2008

Cyclone forces shut-in of Australia oil fields

SYDNEY, 30 Dec—Tropical Cyclone Melanie, a category two storm with winds of up to 130 kilometres per hour (80 miles per hour), sped closer to Australia's remote northwest coast on Saturday, prompting Chevron to shut down production at its oil fields.

The storm was estimated to be 375 kilometres (230 miles) north of Port Hedland, a key terminal for the shipment of iron ore, and 430 kilometres northeast of oil producing region Karratha, the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) said. It was moving south at about 11 kilometres per hour. Chevron spokesman Scott Walker said the evacuation of non-essential personnel was well-advanced and operations on Barrow and Thevenard Islands were being shut.

The fields have a combined production of about 8,000 barrels per day (bpd).

Woodside Petroleum Ltd , Australia's second-largest oil producer, said the company was keeping a close watch on the weather, though its offshore oil and gas operations had so far been unaffected by bad weather.

Santos, operator of the 4,000-5,000 bpd Mutineer-Exeter field, could not be immediately reached for comment. —*MNA/Reuters*

Iran welcomes Iraq view on validity of border deal

TEHERAN, 31 Dec—Iran on Saturday welcomed comments by Iraq that it had not repudiated a 32-year-old border treaty over which the countries waged a decade of war. Iraqi President Jalal Talabani's office said on Thursday the Algiers Treaty was "valid and not void", after telling journalists on Monday it had been "voided by the current government".

The treaty was signed in 1975 by Saddam Hussein, Iraq's then vice president, and Iran's former Shah and defined the border between the two neighbours. Talabani's earlier remarks threatened to reopen a border dispute that caused the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. But Talabani's latest comments were welcomed by Iran's Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki.

"We support Talabani's recent stance that the 1975 treaty between Iran and Iraq is valid," Mottaki was quoted as saying by the students news agency *ISNA*. "This view can be a strong basis for Iran and Iraq's relations." — *MNA/Reuters*

Heavy rain sparks new landslide fears in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 30 Dec—Torrential downpours overnight sparked fears of further landslides on Saturday in Indonesia's Java island, where rescuers were still struggling to recover bodies of recent landslide victims, officials said.

Nearly 100 people were killed or missing after landslides buried houses under thick mud across the Central Java Province this week, while thousands were forced to move out of homes submerged by floods triggered by days of heavy rain.

"Heavy rain like this could trigger fresh landslides in the same spots. The first ones have scarred the hillsides, making them more prone to landslides," head of the provincial rescue team Eko Prayitno told *Reuters*.

Authorities have urged people in Tawangmangu, an area in central Java worst hit by landslides, to leave their homes, while rescue workers continue to search for missing bodies buried under the thick blanket of mud despite.

MNA/Reuters

Bhutto supporters shot dead; lorries, shops burned

KARACHI, 30 Dec—Masked gunmen killed a supporter of Benazir Bhutto early on Saturday, while security forces shot dead two other party activists as a mob tried to force its way into an oilfield, police said.

The killings take the death toll since Bhutto's assassination on Thursday to 40, including four policemen, and came as protesters torched shops, lorries, welfare centres and ambulances overnight as violence entered a third day. A 27-year-old man wearing a tunic made from a Pakistan People's Party (PPP) flag had just shouted "Bhutto is great" when he was gunned down while returning from the mausoleum where Bhutto was buried on Friday, police said.

"Two gunmen were waiting in a vehicle, their faces covered, and they opened fire," said Shaukat Ali Shah, deputy inspector general of police in the city of Hyderabad in Sindh.

Separately, up to 400 PPP activists carrying banners portraits of Bhutto and wielding bricks, tried to burst into an oilfield facility near Hyderabad before dawn, when security forces acted on orders to shoot violent protesters on sight.

"The mob was warned," Shah said. "Two people were killed."

Almost all of the deaths since Bhutto's killing occurred in the southern province of Sindh, the PPP's power base, where the Election Commission said several of its offices were set on fire and electoral rolls and ballot boxes destroyed.

Downtown neighbourhoods of Karachi, the volatile capital of Sindh, and a city of 14 million people, were virtually deserted, as armed police and paramilitary forces patrolled streets.

MNA/Reuters

Colombian hostage release to be delayed

BOGODA, 30 Dec—A Venezuelan mission to pick up three hostages held by Colombian rebels would not be able to proceed until the guerillas provide the exact position of the release, officials said on Saturday.

Envoys from France, Brazil, Ecuador, Bolivia, Cuba and Argentina, as well as Colombia's high commissioner for peace, Luis Carlos Restrepo, have arrived at the central Colombian city of Villavicencio a day early waiting for the final hour of their mission.

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez told a state TV by phone late Saturday that he hoped the handover would happen Sunday or Monday.

"They are still waiting for the details to complete the operation. We hope it will be tomorrow or the day after," he said.

Colombia authorized on Wednesday a plan proposed by Chavez to send helicopters to pick up the hostages from some location in the Colombian jungle.

In 9 December statement the rebel Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) offered to hand over Venezuela former Colombian vice-presidential candidate Clara Rojas, her son Emmanuel born in captivity, and former legislator Consuelo Gonzalez.

MNA/Xinhua

Hamas urges Egypt to open Gaza border to pilgrims

GAZA, 30 Dec—Hamas Islamists called on Egypt on Saturday to open its shuttered border crossing with the Gaza Strip to let more than 2,000 Palestinians return to their Gaza homes from the annual haj pilgrimage in Mecca.

Hamas, which controls Gaza, is demanding that Egypt reopen the Rafah crossing to allow the pilgrims to pass directly into the coastal territory rather than force them to pass through Israeli border posts first.

Hamas fears Israel will arrest militants among the pilgrims. Hamas officials estimated that 2,200 Gaza pilgrims were stranded on ships at an Egyptian port on the Red Sea.

Israel believes some of the militants may be carrying money for Hamas and other groups. "We are aware of the Israeli and American pressures on Egypt, and we urge Egypt to reject these pressures and to allow the pilgrims a safe return through Rafah," Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri told a news conference. Hamas said a 62-year-old woman who fell ill died aboard one of the ships, which have been stranded for a second day.

Abu Zuhri said the Gaza pilgrims have rejected Egyptian demands that they agree to return through Israeli-controlled crossings

MNA/Reuters

Croatia to enforce fishing zone from 1 January

ZAGREB, 30 Dec—Croatia is set to enforce a protected fishing zone in the Adriatic as planned from 1 January, 2008, despite objections from the European Union, but it is unclear how and if it will affect Croatia's EU accession talks.

Croatia, which hopes to become an EU member around 2010, wants to declare the zone, known as ZERP, to preserve fish stocks and limit pollution. The zone, approved by the Croatian Parliament, is opposed by its EU neighbours Italy and Slovenia, which takes over the EU's rotating presidency on 1 January.

MNA/Reuters

Putin content with achievements of Russia in 2007

MOSCOW, 30 Dec—The outgoing year is successful and weighty, Russian President Vladimir Putin said at the New Year reception in the Kremlin on Friday. "We have achieved many objectives in politics, economy, social and demographic programmes," Putin was quoted by the *ITAR TASS* news agency as saying. "These results serve Russia and its citizens. In return, people supported us at the recent Parliament elections." Putin thanked everyone who contributed to the fulfillment of strategic plans and who worked together with him for the past eight years "on the achievement of common goals and carried out the policy of Russia's economic might, authority and influence in the world". Russia is steadily promoting its national interests worldwide, the prestige of education is growing, and the native language and literature are developing, he said.

MNA/Xinhua

Authorities investigate the scene on 23, Dec, 2007, where strong winds are being blamed after a small plane that landed safely at the Kenosha Regional Airport flipped over minutes later.—INTERNET

More companies established in Belgium this year

BRUSSELS, 30 Dec— Nearly 70,000 new companies were established in Belgium this year, almost 10 per cent more than last year, according to Unizo, a Flemish organization of self-employed and small and medium-sized enterprises on Friday. This is the best figure for Belgium in years, but it is still quite low compared to the other euro zone countries, the organization said.

The increase in the number of start-ups is highest in the Brussels region (15 per cent), followed by French-speaking southern region of Wallonia (10 per cent) and Dutch-speaking northern region of Flanders (8 per cent), the statistics showed.

Unizo, which provides information for start-ups, said the threshold for starting a business in Belgium is still too high.

Major obstacles include the social statute, securing sufficient start-up capital and bank guarantees and the uncertainty of starting one's own business, it said.

The organization said the government should help entrepreneurs by granting start-up bonuses, lowering tax burdens for companies and providing a better social statute.

The organization also suggested that the authorities provide a better safety net for entrepreneurs who go bankrupt.—*MNA/Xinhua*

Nonja, the Sumatran Orangutan at Miami Metrozoo, believed to be the oldest living Sumatran Orangutan in the world, is seen in this file photo taken recently.—XINHUA

Heavy snow strands air passengers, shuts highways in China

CHANGCHUN, 30 Dec— Heavy snow has stranded nearly 1,000 airline passengers and closed five highways in northeast China's Jilin Province.

The province is expected to get more snow by Saturday night, and the public is advised to pay special attention to road safety and reschedule travel, Liu Zheng, a senior engineer with the provincial observatory, said on Saturday.

The snow, which began at noon on Friday, forced Longjia International Airport in Changchun, the provincial capital, to close later in the day. Those closures delayed 18 flights and forced 14 others to be cancelled. Airport authorities said that as a result, about 1,000 passengers had to stay at hotels or the airport.

The airport reopened at around 8 am on Saturday, but by 1 pm more than 200 delayed passengers were still waiting to leave, according to the airport.

The five highways, which were closed on Friday evening, reopened to traffic on Saturday morning, but the provincial highway administration said they might have to be closed again.

MNA/Xinhua

Pregnant women told to boost vitamin D intake

LONDON, 30 Dec— The government is advising pregnant and breastfeeding women to increase their intake of vitamin D during the darker winter months to reduce the risk of seizures and the bone disease rickets in their children. The Department of Health said doctors were reporting increasing numbers of cases of vitamin D deficiency in children. It said that children from Asian, Afro-Caribbean and Middle Eastern backgrounds could be at greater risk.

Dark skinned people do not absorb as much sunlight — a source of the vitamin — through the skin, and may also cover up most exposed parts of their body for cultural reasons, it said.

"We are seeing significant numbers of children with vitamin D deficiency," said Colin Michie, a paediatrician at Ealing Hospital in London.

"If a pregnant or breastfeeding woman is lacking in vitamin D, the baby will also have low vitamin D and calcium levels which can lead babies to develop seizures in the first months of life."

In the summer, 15 minutes exposure to sunshine on the arms, head and shoulders will create sufficient quantities of the vitamin in the body, the Department of Health said. But in winter months when sunshine is limited, the vitamin must be obtained from food sources such as oily fish like salmon, tuna and sardines, eggs, fortified cereals and bread.

The health department said pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under four could benefit from taking a daily 10 milligrammes supplement of vitamin D during winter. It advised those who thought they might be at risk of vitamin D deficiency to consult their family doctor.

MNA/Reuters

B'desh emerges as world's 5th largest remittance recipient

DHAKA, 31 Dec— Bangladesh has emerged as one of the top 10 remittances receiving countries in the world in terms of volume after migrants and expatriates sent 5.48 billion US dollars in 2006, according to Global Remittances Guide.

Of the 10 nations, the South Asian country secured the fifth position, local newspaper *The Financial Express* reported on Sunday. India, which received 25.70 billion US dollars, topped the list followed by Mexico (24.7 billion US dollars) and China (22. 4 billion US dollars) in 2006.

MNA/Xinhua

Spanish alpinist Juan Carlos Lozano (R) is assisted by French police as he exits a helicopter after the three Spanish climbers were rescued from the Taillon peak near Gavarnie in the French Pyrenees, on 30 Dec, 2007.—INTERNET

SPORTS

Russian tennis players Maria Sharapova (R) and Anna Chakvetadze pose before the start of an exhibition match in Singapore on 30 Dec. Former world number one Sharapova defeated Chakvetadze 6-0, 7-6 (12/10).—INTERNET

PSV Eindhoven beat NAC Breda 2-0 to go top

AMSTERDAM, 31 Dec — PSV Eindhoven beat NAC Breda 2-0 to go top of the Dutch league on Sunday after Feyenoord were held 1-1 at Heerenveen.

PSV now have 36 points from 17 matches and lead Feyenoord on goal difference. Ajax Amsterdam, who drew 2-2 at VVV Venlo, remained third with 33 points.

Danny Koevermans opened the scoring on the stroke of halftime for the home side and PSV's Danish international Kenneth Perez made it 2-0 in injury time.

Andwele Slory beat goalkeeper Rob van Dijk at the near post to put Feyenoord ahead after 16 minutes at Heerenveen but Gerald Sibon equalized two minutes from time by curling a free kick around the wall

Stein Huysegems and Blaise N'Kufo scored first half goals to hand Twente Enschede a 2-0 win over Graafschap Doetinchem.

Sekou Cisse and Boldizsar Bodor gave Roda JC Kerkrade a 2-0 lead at Excelsior Rotterdam before Johan Voskamp grabbed a consolation goal in the 86th minute.

Groningen, 3-1 winners at Sparta Rotterdam on Saturday, are fourth with 33 points after 18 matches. Twente and Roda are on 32 while Heerenveen are seventh with 30 points.

MNA/Reuters

Man City, Liverpool draw as Derby look doomed

LONDON, 31 Dec — Manchester City and Liverpool cancelled each other out in a 0-0 draw at the City of Manchester Stadium on Sunday, a result that left the top positions in the Premier League unchanged.

Earlier, Blackburn Rovers won 2-1 at bottom club Derby County who look doomed to relegation after being promoted at the start of the season.

Liverpool had far more scoring chances against City but the closest they came to a goal was in the 86th minute when a header by Dirk Kuyt was cleared off the City goalline.

Arsenal, who won 4-1 at Everton, lead the standings with 47 points, followed by Manchester United (45) following United's 2-1 shock loss at West Ham United.

Chelsea, who beat Newcastle United 2-1 on Saturday, are third with 41 points followed by Liverpool on 37 and Manchester City on 36. Liverpool have a game in hand over the other four teams in the top five who have all played 20.

Playing in front of a record crowd of 47,321 at the City of Manchester Stadium, Liverpool were the more adventurous side and Fernando Torres was a constant threat to the home defence, going close twice immediately after halftime.

City, who had won their opening nine home league matches before drawing 2-2 with Blackburn on Wednesday, seemed content to soak up the pressure with skipper Richard Dunne outstanding at the back. Blackburn condemned Derby to a sixth successive home league defeat and stretched their run without a win to 14 matches.

MNA/Reuters

Manchester City's Darius Vassell, right, watches a header beat Liverpool's goalkeeper Jose Reina, centre, but bounce narrowly wide during their English Premier League soccer match at The City of Manchester Stadium, Manchester, England, on 30 Dec, 2007.—INTERNET

Ajax held to 2-2 draw at VVV Venlo

AMSTERDAM, 31 Dec — A Sandro Calabro header two minutes from time gave lowly VVV-Venlo a 2-2 home draw with 10-man Ajax Amsterdam in the Dutch league on Sunday.

The visitors took the lead in the 37th minute when Gabri set up Luis Suarez but Venlo equalized in the 57th with a brilliant 45 metre lob from Rachid Ofrany after Ajax keeper Maarten Stekelenburg had cleared.

Klaas Jan Huntelaar put Ajax back in front with 13 minutes remaining before George Ogararu was sent off for a second booking and Calabro headed in the equalizer.

Feyenoord, away at Heerenveen later on Sunday, are top with 35 points after 16 matches, two above PSV Eindhoven, who host NAC Breda. Ajax are third with 33 points after 17 matches.

MNA/Reuters

AEK reclaim top spot with win over PAOK Salonika

ATHENS, 31 Dec — AEK Athens head into the New Year at the top of the Greek Super League after a 2-0 win over PAOK Salonika on Sunday.

Ismael Blanco put them ahead after 33 minutes and Julio Cesar added a second in the 89th minute to give them a two-point cushion at the top of the table.

After 14 rounds, AEK have 33 points while second-placed Olympiakos Piraeus, who beat Xanthi 2-1 on Saturday, have 31.

Panathinaikos remain in third spot with 30 points after they beat Aris Salonika 1-0 in a tough encounter in Thessaloniki.

The only goal of the game came two minutes before half-time when Sebastien Romero crossed from the right and Dimitris Salpigidis slipped the ball into the net.

Asteras Tripolis stay fourth but dropped two points when they were held to a goalless draw at Levadiakos.

Panionios also had a setback when they were beaten 3-1 at home by OFI Crete, with Yiannis Taralidis scoring twice. —*MNA/Reuters*

Motherwell soccer team fans look at tributes left outside Fir Park stadium in Scotland, following the death of Phil O'Donnell. —INTERNET

Barcelona's player Gianluca Zambrotta controls a tennis ball during a training session at Miniestadi Stadium in Barcelona,on 30 Dec, 2007. – INTERNET

Tributes pour in for late O'Donnell in Scotland

GLASGOW, 31 Dec — Motherwell manager Mark McGhee paid an emotional tribute on Sunday to captain Phil O'Donnell who died after collapsing during Saturday's Scottish Premier League game with Dundee United.

"Obviously we are going to miss a guy who was a fine man, a guy who was a fantastic example to all of his colleagues," McGhee told reporters outside Fir Park.

"He was a man amongst boys, in every sense of the word, in his attitude and professionalism, in his integrity and in his sincerity."

O'Donnell, who was 35, collapsed and was taken off the pitch on a stretcher near the end of the home game which third-placed Motherwell won 5-3.

He was taken to hospital by ambulance but despite efforts by medical staff, who believe he suffered a seizure, to revive him O'Donnell did not regain consciousness.

He leaves a wife and four children.

"He was a great, great player to have worked with and I am honoured to have been his manager and to have worked with him," McGhee added.

The League have postponed three games as a mark of respect including Gretna's clash with St Mirren on Wednesday. Gretna are ground sharing with Motherwell in their first season in the top flight.

League chairman Lex Gold confirmed the postponements on the SPL Web site (www.scotprem.com), saying: "All of us at the Scottish Premier League are devastated at this awful, untimely death.

MNA/Reuters

Four killed in Navy aircraft crash in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 31 Dec— Four military officers were killed and three others were missing on Sunday after a Navy aircraft plunged into the sea off Sabang in the Aceh Province.

The airplane got an engine trouble when it flew from Sabang to Medan amid an unfriendly weather condition, Metro TV quoted a military official as saying.

The airplane was forced to return to Sabang, but failed to reach the departure airport. Instead, it made an emergency landing into the sea, some 200 metres off the Sabang shore. The emergency landing was not successful.

The names of the victims will be announced later of the day and the Navy is still searching for the three missing officers, said the report.

MNA/Xinhua

Thai ship capsizes in Brunei Bay

KUALA LUMPUR, 31 Dec — Eleven sailors are feared drowned after the timber-laden ship they were sailing on sank in Brunei Bay near Malaysia's Labuan Island last Wednesday, local media reported on Monday.

The Thailand-registered *MV Emerald* left Kota Kinabalu Port, Malaysian eastern Sabah state, on 24 Dec and was heading for Bangkok when rough waves and strong winds caused the ship to sink.

The Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency was notified of the incident when two Thai crew members were rescued by Brunei maritime authorities 30 nautical miles from Brunei on 28 December.

The two rescued sailors are currently in Brunei. Search and rescue operations were ongoing for the remaining seven Myanmars and four Thais in waters close to Labuan and in Brunei Bay within a 30 to 50 nautical mile radius, Malaysian First Admiral Ahmad Puzi Abdul Kahar said on Sunday.

"We were notified by Brunei maritime authorities and are working with the Brunei Maritime Control Centre to look for the missing sailors," the *New Straits Times* quoted him as saying.—*MNA/Xinhua*

Performers play local Minju Opera to celebrate the forthcoming New Year's Day in Fuzhou, capital city of southeast China's Fujian Province, on 30 Dec, 2007. —XINHUA

TV Myanmar

Tuesday, 1 January
View on today

7:00 am
1. ကျေးဇူးရှင်မင်းကွန်း ဆရာတော်ဘုရားကြီး၊ နိုင်ငံတော်သံဃမဟာနာယက အဖွဲ့အကျိုးတော်ဆောင်ချုပ်၊ အဘိဓဇမဟာရဋ္ဌဂုရု၊ အဘိဓဇ အဂ္ဂမဟာသဒ္ဓမ္မ ဇောတိက၊ တိပိဋကဓရ၊ ဓမ္မဘဏ္ဍာဂါရိက၊ ဆရာတော်ဘဒ္ဒန္တ ဝိစိတ္တသာရာ ဘိဝံသ၏ပရိတ်တရားတော်

7:25 am
2. To be healthy exercise

7:30 am
3. Morning news

7:40 am
4. Nice and sweet song

7:55 am
5. ကဗျာပန်းဥယျာဉ်

8:05 am
6. အဆိုပြိုင်ပွဲ

8:15 am
7. Song of yesteryears

8:25 am
8. မိုးယွန်းကြီးရေထိန်းတံခါး

8:30 am
9. International news

8:45 am
10. Let's Go

4:00 pm
1. Martial song

4:15 pm
2. Song to uphold National Spirit

4:30 pm
3. နှစ်(၆၀)ပြည့်လွတ်လပ်ရေးနေ့ ဂုဏ်ပြုအစီအစဉ်

4:45 pm
4. Sing and enjoy

5:30 pm
5. သုတစုံလင်ရွှေဥာဏ်ရှင်

6:00 pm
6. Evening news

6:30 pm
7. Weather report

6:35 pm
8. ကြယ်ပွင့်များရဲ့ရင်ခုန်သံ

6:50 pm
9. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ "မြူနိုးဝေဝေချစ်သက်တည်" (အပိုင်း-၁၁)

7:45 pm
10. အချုပ်အခြာအာဏာ ဓွန့်ရှည်ကြာခိုင်မာစေမှုဒို့ရေ့ရှု "ပညာတိုးတက်တို့ကျေးလက်"

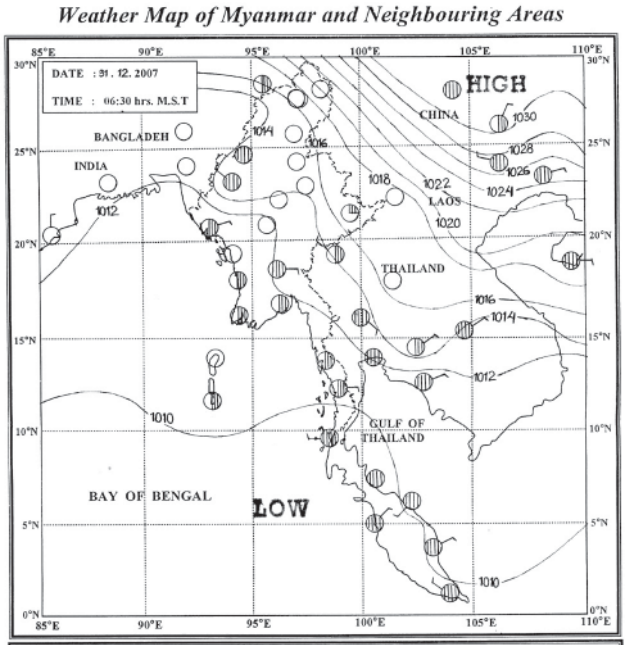
8:00 pm
11. News
12. International news
13. Weather report
14. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ "အချစ်စေတမန်" (အပိုင်း-၁၃)
15. မင်းကွန်းဆရာတော်ဘုရားကြီးဦးဝိစိတ္တသာရာဘိဝံသ၏အရပ်ဆယ်မျက်နှာမေတ္တာဘာဝနာပွားများခြင်းတရားတော်
16. The next day's programme

Radio Myanmar

Tuesday, 1 January
Tune in today

8:30 am Brief news
8:35 am Music -The reflex
8:40 am Perspectives
8:45 am Music -Running back to you
8:50 am National news/ Slogan
9:00 am Music -Let's get loud
9:05 am International news
9:10 am Music -You are best thing
1:30 pm News/ Slogan
1:40 pm Lunch time music -Not that different -Violet
9:00pm English Speaking course
9:10 pm Article -Independence for Sovereignty
9:20 pm Weekly soorts reel
9:35 pm Listening pleasure -Say you say me -Venus
9:45 pm News/Slogan
10:00 pm PEL

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas



WEATHER

Monday, 31 December, 2007

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin State, upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. Night temperatures were (8ºC) below December average temperatures in Chin State, (5ºC) below December average temperatures in Magway Division, (4ºC) above December average temperatures in Taninthayi Division and about December average temperatures in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Haka (-4ºC), Loilin (-1ºC), Pinlaung (1ºC) and Mogok (3ºC).

Maximum temperature on 30-12-2007 was 92ºF. Minimum temperature on 31-12-2007 was 62ºF. Relative humidity at 09:30 hours MST on 31-12-2007 was 78%. Total sunshine hours on 30-12-2007 was (8.0) hours approx.

Rainfall on 31-12-2007 was (nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2007 was (136.57) inches at Mingaladon, (141.38) inches at Kaba-Aye and (144.29) inches at Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (6) mph from East at (12:30) hours MST on 30-12-2007.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 1-1-2008: Weather will be partly cloudy in Kachin State, Upper Sagaing, and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas.

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperature in the Northern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 1-1-2008: Fair weather.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 1-1-2008: Fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 1-1-2008: Fair weather.

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People's Desire

☆ We favour stability.

☆ We favour peace.

☆ We oppose unrest and violence.

Maj-Gen Tha Aye visits UCS (Mawlamyine), Sittoung No 1 Paper Mill

Maj-Gen Tha Aye of Ministry of Defence inspects University of Computer Studies (Mawlamyine) project. — MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 31 Dec—Maj-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 and officials, visited the University of Computer Studies (Mawlamyine) in Thaton Township on 27 December.

After hearing reports by Principal Dr Daw Nay Chi Lè Lè Thein of UCS (Mawlamyine) on academic matters, and site engineer U Zaw Win of Collective Triangle Co on work progress, Maj-Gen Tha Aye gave instructions and presented cash assistance for uniforms to the faculty members.

Maj-Gen Tha Aye gave a speech and inspected UCS (Mawlamyine) under construction and visited Sittoung No 1 Paper Mill of Myanmar Paper and Chemical Industries under Ministry of Industry-1 in Kyaikto Township. He called for establishment of factory-owned plantations for constant supply of raw materials, and nurturing of Eucalyptus plantations.

Next, Maj-Gen Tha Aye inspected the site for stockpiling bamboo raw materials, chopsticks production, production process of crepe paper and exercise books.

He met servicemen and their families of local station and presented gifts to them.

MNA

Four political objectives

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

Four economic objectives

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

Four social objectives

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

CNG to be sold as required according to runs

Sale of fuel will remain as usual

YANGON, 31 Dec—With a view to ensuring the systematic sales of CNG to buses and trucks in Yangon Division, CNG will be sold with CNG purchasing books beginning 1 January 2008. And it will be sold as required according to runs of buses.

Moreover, the sale of fuel to petrol and diesel-used vehicles will remain as usual.—*MNA*

☆ RFA, VOA and BBC airing skyful of lies

☆ RFA, VOA and BBC saboteurs, watch your step!

☆ The public be warned of killers in the air waves — RFA, VOA and BBC