



Bounden duty

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

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

(From message sent on the occasion of the 61st Anniversary Independence Day)

On behalf of Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San host reception and dinner to mark 61st Anniversary Independence Day

NAY PYI TAW, 4 Jan— On behalf of Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing, Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San hosted reception and dinner to mark the 61st Anniversary Independence Day at the City Hall here this evening.

At 6.30 pm, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San arrived at the City Hall where reception and dinner to mark the 61st Anniversary Independence Day was to be hosted. Accompanied by member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence, Prime Minister General Thein Sein, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife cordially greeted diplomats led by Dean of the Diplomatic Corps Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Mr Guan Mu and their spouses.

Also present at the reception and dinner were member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence and wife Daw Khin Lay Thet, Prime Minister General Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win, Secretary-1 of the SPDC Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo and wife Daw Khin Saw Hnin, members of the SPDC and their wives, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy), the Commander-in-Chief (Air) and senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence and their wives, the Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, the ministers and their wives, the Chief Justice, the Attor-

ney-General, the Auditor-General, the Chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee Nay Pyi Taw Mayor, the deputy ministers and their wives, the directors-general of the State Peace and Development Council Office, the Government Office, the President Office, the Pyithu Hluttaw Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, diplomats led by Dean of the Diplomatic Corps Ambassador of the People's Republic of

China Mr Guan Mu and their spouses, resident representatives of UN agencies and their wives, members of the Central Committee for Observance of the 61st Anniversary Independence Day, chairmen of the sub-committees and invited guests.

Before and during the dinner, those present were entertained with songs presented by vocalists to the accompaniment of the Myanma Athan modern music band.—MNA



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San greet diplomats and their spouses at the reception and dinner to mark the 61st Anniversary Independence Day.

MNA

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 5 January, 2009

Safeguard the nation, keep watchful eye on dangers of neo-colonialists

The Union of Myanmar regained its independence and sovereignty after the national brethren had launched anti-imperialists struggles sacrificing lives, blood and sweat. Our independence has now turned 61st anniversary. Bold struggles and brilliant efforts of the national people with high sensibility to any forms of attempts to harm national prestige and integrity who cherish and value sovereignty were put on record throughout the period of independence struggles.

In his message on the occasion of the 61st Anniversary Independence Day, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe pointed out that the entire people are duty-bound to safeguard the motherland through the might of national unity for ensuring non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty, while keeping a watchful eye on attempts of neo-colonialists to harm the sovereignty of the country.

The national goal of the State is the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed democratic nation with flourishing discipline. The government has been carrying out the tasks for community peace and the rule of law, constructing more and more economic infrastructures and development of human resources.

Moreover, it has laid down the 24-special region development project and rural development project for ensuring equitable development of all parts of the nation and is implementing them.

At the same time, all the national people are to keep a watchful eye on dangers of neo-colonialists who want to encroach upon other countries and to ward off the attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, to put pressure on other countries to serve as their minions, to resort all possible ways of forcing a government to serve as a puppet one and to undermine peace and stability of the targeted country with national awareness.

Thus, it is the paramount duty of all the entire people of the Union to discharge in unity the duties bestowed by history for perpetuity of the independent nation our ancestors built and regained sacrificing lives and its sovereignty with national outlook and awareness.

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

Yangonites salute State Flag on 61st Anniversary Independence Day

YANGON, 4 Jan—The 61st Anniversary Independence Day State Flag Hoisting and Flag

members of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association, social association members,

Culture (Yangon).

At 7 a.m, the Guard of Honour of Yangon Command took the designated position after marching from the Pyithu Hluttaw compound to the People's Square.

Guard of Honour. Meanwhile, the band played the National Anthem.

After paying tribute to the fallen leaders and soldiers, the Guard of Honour recited four oaths.



Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen

Win Myint read out the message sent by

Senior General Than Shwe.

MNA



Saluting Ceremony of Yangon Division was held at the People's Square on Pyay Road, here, this morning.

First, the flag hoisting platoon of Yangon Command hoisted the State Flag at 4.20 a.m.

Present on the flag saluting ceremony were departmental personnel of districts and townships in Yangon Division,

teachers, students and the people totalling over 2,300.

It was also attended by senior military officers of Yangon Command Headquarters, servicemen of regiments and units, division, district and township level authorities, departmental officials, rectors, principals, representatives of social organizations and national races of University of

Chairman of the Yangon Division Leading Committee for Organizing the 61st Anniversary Independence Day Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Win Myint took the salute of the Guard of Honour. Next, the people saluted the State Flag together with the

The commander read the message sent by Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Than Shwe on the 61st Anniversary Independence Day Ceremony.

After saluting the commander, the Guard of Honour together with the people left the People's Square.—MNA



The 8th respect-paying ceremony of old students of University of Culture in progress at the Universities' Dhammayon in Kamayut Township on 4 January.

NLM

Mingaladon No. 2 BEHS' old students pay respects to teachers

YANGON, 4 Jan —The 8th ceremony to pay respects to teachers of Mingaladon Township No. 2 Basic Education High School (Aung San Thuriya Hla Thaung) for 1972-2008 academic year was held at the school here today. Head of the administrative board of the school Maj Ye Myint

Aung made a speech, and old students paid respects and presented gifts to teachers.

Next, Chairman of the respect paying ceremony Maj Soe Myint Aung explained points about the purpose of the ceremony and an old student spoke words of thanks.—MNA



An Afghan National policeman walks past a truck carrying construction equipment which was destroyed by insurgents in the Kunar Valley in eastern Afghanistan on 3 Jan, 2009. — INTERNET

US soldiers shoot, wound woman in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 4 Jan — American soldiers shot and wounded a woman — identified by an Iraqi television station as one of its producers — after she failed to heed warnings to stop near a Baghdad checkpoint recently targeted by suicide and car bombs, Iraqi and US military officials said on Saturday.

The US military said in a statement that the woman was “acting erratic” and didn’t respond to warnings from Iraqi and American

troops near the checkpoint in the central neighborhood of Jadiriyah on Thursday.

“Concerned by the danger she might present to the security forces and civilians, given her repeated failure to respond to warnings, soldiers fired two rounds, wounding the woman,” the US military said. It did not provide further details of her behavior.

The Biladi TV station, which is owned by former Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari, identified the

woman as 25-year-old producer Hadeel Emad.

Station spokesman Muhsin Kadhum told The Associated Press that Emad had just left the station and was crossing the street to get a taxi when she was shot. “She has hearing problems, and she didn’t hear the warnings,” Kadhum said. “She was wearing a long coat and carried nothing in her hands.” Emad was in critical condition in a Baghdad hospital, Kadhum said.—*Internet*

Pakistan arrests senior Taliban figure

PESHAWAR, 4 Jan— Pakistan has arrested a former Taliban spokesman who was released by Afghanistan in 2007 in exchange for a kidnapped Italian journalist, intelligence officials said on Saturday — a high-profile catch at a time when many in the West are concerned tension with India could distract Pakistan from fighting militants on the Afghan border.

Taliban leader Mullah Omar sent his former spokesman, Ustad Mohammed Yasir, to Pakistan last year to mediate between two Taliban groups in the Mohmand tribal area on the Afghan border, an intelligence official said.

Many Taliban and al-Qaeda militants fled to Pakistan in 2001 after the US-led invasion of Afghanistan to oust the Taliban regime. The US has pushed Pakistan to crack down on the militants, who have regrouped in the country’s northwest and have been launching attacks against Western forces across the border in Afghanistan.

The Pakistani military has launched several operations along the Afghan border, including one earlier this week to secure the main supply route for US and NATO troops in Afghanistan. But many in the West have questioned Islamabad’s willingness to target the Taliban because Pakistan backed the hardline regime before its ouster. Pakistan’s recent decision to redeploy troops away from the Afghan border toward India following tension over the deadly Mumbai attacks has heightened concerns that the fight against militants could languish. India has blamed Pakistani militants for the November attacks in India’s commercial capital that killed more than 160 people.

Internet



A view of a house destroyed by security forces during a crackdown as security forces launched an offensive against militants in the Khyber tribal agency on the outskirts of Peshawar on 2 Jan, 2009.—INTERNET

6.2 quake shakes northeast Afghanistan, Pakistan

KABUL, 4 Jan—Officials say a strong earthquake has hit northeastern Afghanistan, a quake that rattled the capital Kabul for about a minute.

The US Geological Survey says Sunday’s quake had a preliminary magnitude of 6.2 and was located in the northeastern province of Badakhshan in the Hindu Kush mountains. The area is often hit by earthquakes but is sparsely populated.

A Badakhshan police official, Fazel Ahmad Naderi, says the quake was strong but noted that his cell phone still worked, meaning that towers had not been toppled. The quake hit about 12:50 am local time and Naderi says he won’t know about damage until daylight. The quake rattled buildings in Kabul, about 160 miles southwest of the epicenter.—*Internet*

Poland may send more troops to Afghanistan

WARSAW, 4 Jan—Poland may send 400-600 additional troops to Afghanistan, raising its total number to 2,000-2,200, Defence Minister Bogdan Klich was quoted as saying on Saturday.

Klich told the Dziennik daily the government would review the Afghan mission’s effectiveness in January and depending on the result may opt for increasing the number of troops. “After the review the government will decide whether to continue our presence with the current strength, or as experts say, whether to raise it by 400-600 soldiers,” Klich said.

In October, Poland took command of security in the Afghan province of Ghazni, a volatile area two hour’s drive southwest of Kabul, freeing up US forces.

Internet

Relatives carry Sheik Mohammed Abdullah Salih back home from a hospital on 3 Jan, 2009 after he was wounded in a suicide bombing at his home the day before in Youssifiyah, Iraq. Sheikh was wounded as he received people for a luncheon when an explosives-strapped man blew himself up Friday.—INTERNET



Govt trying for release of kidnapped Indian in Afghanistan

NEW DELHI, 4 Jan— The Centre has been doing its best for the safe release of an Indian worker who was abducted by militants at Herath Province in Afghanistan two months ago, the government said on Saturday.

“Details will not be revealed as it is a kidnap case. The Embassy is at the job. They are trying through the Government,” overseas Indian affairs minister Vyalar Ravi said commenting on the abduction of Simon Paramanandam, who hails from Kalakurichi Village of Villupuram district in Tamil Nadu.

Paramanandam, who was working with an Italian food store supplying food to its soldiers in Afghanistan, was kidnapped by a militant group on 13 October last year.—*Internet*

Foreign Heads of State/Governments send felicitations to Myanmar Prime Minister

NAY PYI TAW, 4 Jan —*The following are messages of felicitations from the foreign heads of State/Governments sent to General Thein Sein, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, on the occasion of the 61st Anniversary Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.*

From Dr H. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia

You Excellency,

On the momentous occasion of the Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar, I am pleased and honoured to convey to you my warmest congratulations.

Over the years, Indonesia and Myanmar have always worked closely together with all spheres of common interest. It is my fervent hope that the warm friendship between our tow countries as well as our cooperation within the framework of ASEAN and other multilateral forums will continue to grow and benefit our peoples.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest esteem.

From Mr Abhisit Vejjajiva, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand

Excellency,

I have the honour to extend, on behalf of the Royal Thai Government and the Thai people, my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for the wealth and welfare of the Union of Myanmar and her people on the occasion of the Independence Day.

For over six decades, the happily existing relations and constructive cooperation encompassing broad area of development cooperation between our two countries are noted with satisfaction. Our two countries are not only bound by religious and cultural linkages but we have also exchanged goodwill and support on broad issues of mutual interests. As we have entered a new chapter of our cordial ties, I, therefore, look forward to working closely with Your Excellency both bilaterally and within regional and sub-regional frameworks towards a promotion of our warm relations. As ASEAN Chair, Thailand trusts in our concerted efforts towards

the reinforcement of ASEAN for the well-being of our peoples and region.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Excellency,

On behalf of the Government and people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and on my own behalf, I have great pleasure in extending to Your Excellency our sincere greetings and warm felicitations on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

Pakistan and Myanmar enjoy cordial and cooperative relations. I am confident that friendly ties between our two countries would be further strengthened in the years to come.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr Kim Yong Il, Premier of the Cabinet, Democratic People's Republic of Korea

I extend warm congratulations and greetings to you and your friendly government and people on 61st anniversary of independence of the Union of Myanmar.

Convinced that friendly and cooperative relations between our two countries, which are developing favourably in recent years, will further expand and develop across several fields in future, I take this opportunity to sincerely wish you greater successes in the work for stability and prosperity of the country.

From Ratnasiri Wickramanayaka, MP, Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Your Excellency,

I have great pleasure in congratulating Your Excellency on this auspicious occasion of the

Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

For many centuries Sri Lanka and Myanmar has enjoyed the friendliest and the warmest relations based on our common legacy of Buddhism. I firmly believe that the bonds of friendship and cooperation that so happily exist between our two countries will be further strengthened and consolidated in the years to come.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey

Excellency,

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Turkey and on my own behalf, I would like to express my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of the Union of Myanmar.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey my best wishes for the happiness and prosperity of the people of Myanmar.

From Mr Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore

Dear Prime Minister General Thein Sein,

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Singapore, I congratulate Your Excellency and the Government of the Union of Myanmar on Myanmar's 61st Independence Day.

Singapore and Myanmar enjoy warm and longstanding relations. Our two countries have worked well together both bilaterally and within ASEAN, particularly in the post-Cyclone Nargis relief and recovery efforts. I hope that our close cooperation will continue, especially in the implementation of the ASEAN Charter which has now come into force, and in building an ASEAN Economic Community by 2015.

MNA



Independence Day commemorative marathon, novice marathon and mini-marathon start in front of Nay Pyi Taw Myoma Market..—MNA

Nay Pyi Taw inter-ministry sport activities held in commemoration of Independence Day

NAY PYI TAW, 4 Jan —Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint watched the 61st Anniversary Independence Day commemorative Nay Pyi Taw inter-ministry open

marathon, novice marathon and mini-marathon held in front of Nay Pyi Taw Myoma Market this morning.

Next, he watched the inter-ministry final matches of Sepak Takraw and tug-of-war. After the competitions, Director-

General U Thaung Htaik of Sports and Physical Education Department presented prizes to the winners. Later, the minister awarded the first, second, third and consolation prize winners in men's open marathon and women's open marathon.—MNA

Strong earthquake recorded

YANGON, 4 Jan—A strong earthquake measuring 7.6 Richter Scale with its epicentre outside Myanmar about (2700) miles East Southeast of Kaba Aye seismological observatory was recorded at (02) hrs (13) min (54) sec MST on 4 January 2009, according to the Meteorology and Hydrology Department.—MNA

Slight earthquake outside Myanmar

YANGON, 4 Jan—A slight earthquake of intensity (5.9) Richter Scale with its eipcentre outside Myanmar (near Afghanistan) about (2000) miles Northwest of Kaba Aye seismological observatory was recorded at (02) hr (53) min (22) sec MST, said the Meteorology and Hydrology Department.—MNA

MFPTMA CEC member leaves for Indonesia

YANGON, 4 Jan— CEC member of Myanmar Forest Products and Timber Merchants Association U Zaw Win left here by air this morning to study teak pedigree development work, research work on teak cultivation and teak plantations in the Republic of Indonesia from 4 to 11 January 2009.

He was seen off at Yangon International Airport by officials concerned.

MNA



U Zaw Win seen at the airport before departure for Indonesia.
NLM

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to Senior General Than Shwe

NAY PYI TAW, 4 Jan—*The following are messages of felicitations from foreign Heads of States sent to Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council, on the occasion of the 61st Anniversary of Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.*

From Mr Lech Kaczynski, President of the Republic of Poland
Your Excellency,

On the occasion of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar on behalf of the people of the Republic of Poland and my own, I wish to extend to Your Excellency our sincere congratulations for all the citizens of Myanmar.

I hope that the upcoming period will be a time of comprehensive development for your country and the harmonious cooperation of all political and social forces for the creation of a democratic state will lead to the fulfillment of the aspirations and expectations of the citizens of Myanmar.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr Lee Myaung-Bak, President of the Republic of Korea
Excellency,

I would like to extend to you and the people of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Korea, my warmest felicitations and good wishes on the occasion of Your Independence Day.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my satisfaction on the steady development of our bilateral relations and my conviction that our friendly and cooperative relations, based on mutual benefit, will endure in the coming years.

Please accept, You Excellency, my best wishes for your continued good health and happiness, and success in all your noble endeavours.

From Mr Raul Castro Ruz, President of the Councils of State and of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba
Excellency,

On the occasion of celebrating the 61st Anniversary of Independence of the Union of Myanmar, I take pleasure in conveying to you and to your Government and people cordial congratulations, on behalf of the Cuban people and government, and in renewing our resolve to continue strengthening the bonds of the friendship between both nations.

Upon expressing my best wishes for the prosperity of your people and for your personal happiness, I renew to you the assurances of my highest consideration.

From President Mr Asif Ali Zardari of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Excellency,

It gives me great pleasure to extend to Your

Excellency our warmest felicitations and best wishes on the happy occasion of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

Pakistan and Myanmar enjoy close friendly relations. I am confident that the mutually beneficial ties between our two countries will be further strengthened in the years ahead.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From the Custodians of the Two Holy Mosques Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

I am grateful to send cordial and best regards to Your Excellency on the occasion of the 61st Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar. On behalf of the People and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and my own behalf, I would like to send my best wishes and my heartiest congratulations on the auspicious occasion of your 61st Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

Wishing Your Excellency, long lasting life, happiness and to the people of Myanmar, development and prosperity.

Accept your Excellency my compliments and considerations.

From His Royal Highness Sultan Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince, Deputy Premier, Minister of Defence & Aviation and Inspector General of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

I am pleased to send the congratulatory message on the occasion of the 61st Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar. On behalf of the People and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and my own behalf, I wish to convey to your Excellency my best regards and congratulations on the occasion of your 61st Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

Wishing your Excellency, long lasting life, happiness and to the people of Myanmar, development and prosperity.

Accept your Excellency my compliments and considerations.

From President Mr. Kim Yong Nam, Presidium of Supreme People's Assembly of Democratic People's Republic of Korea

I warmly congratulate you and your friendly people on 61st Anniversary of Independence of the Union of Myanmar.

Convinced that friendly and cooperative relations between our two countries, which are recently developing on good terms, will expand and develop on a full scale across several fields of politics, economy and culture in future, I take this opportunity to sincerely

wish you good health and happiness as well as greater success in your noble work for stability and prosperity of the country.

From President Mahinda Rajapaksa of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Your Excellency,

I have great pleasure in conveying to Your Excellency, the Government and the people of the Union of Myanmar, warm congratulations and best wishes of the people and the Government of Sri Lanka and those of my own, on this auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

For centuries, relations between Sri Lanka and Myanmar continued to be fostered and bonded by our common heritage of Buddhism. On the eve of celebrating the 60th Anniversary of Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between our two countries, I am confident that the close relations that exist between Sri Lanka and Myanmar will be further consolidated for the mutual benefit of our two peoples in the years to come.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my sincere wishes for your personal health and happiness and for the continued progress and prosperity of the people of the Union of Myanmar.

From President Mr Abdullah Gül of the Republic of Turkey
Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Turkish people and my own behalf, I would like to express my congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of the Union of Myanmar and reiterate my best wishes for the well-being and prosperity of the people of Myanmar.

From President Mr. S.R. Nathan of the Republic of Singapore
Excellency,

On behalf of the people of the Republic of Singapore, I convey my warmest wishes to Your Excellency and the people of the Union of Myanmar on the 61st Anniversary of the Independence of Myanmar.

The past year has been a difficult one for the people of Myanmar, with Cyclone Nargis causing unprecedented destruction and loss of life. Our hearts go out to those who had suffered during this unexpected tragedy. Myanmar's willingness to work with ASEAN countries, including Singapore, and the international community, in the post-disaster relief and recovery operations has helped the cyclone survivors return gradually to their normal livelihoods. I look forward to our two countries continuing to work together for the benefit of our peoples and the ASEAN community.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.—MNA

New tarred road opened in Pakokku Township

YANGON, 4 Jan—Hailing the 61st Anniversary Independence Day, the opening of new Yokeson Kyaung tarred road was held at the archway of the new road in Ward-2 of Pakokku Township on 1

January. Chairman of Pakokku District Peace and Development Council U Tin Maung Soe opened the new road and Executive Officer U Thet Paing of Pakokku Township Development

Affairs Committee and Pakokku District Police Force Police Lt-Col Tun Sein cut the ribbon to open the new road.

The newly-opened tarred road is 625 feet long and 12 feet wide.

MNA

National races in border areas provided with technical training

YANGON, 4 Jan—The opening of Course No. (5) for national races in border areas was held at Technical Training School of Education and Training Department under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas

and National Races and Development Affairs in Laukkai yesterday.

Brig-Gen Win Maung of Local Station made opening address and Deputy Director-General U Win Aung gave accounts of the school.

Next, Brig-Gen Win Maung and those present viewed learning of trainees at the school.

It was also attended by departmental heads, officials, townselders, course instructors and 60 trainees.—MNA



Independence Day State Flag Hoisting and Saluting ceremony...

(from page 16)
ministries, USDA regional coordinators, members of the subcommittee and work committee, members of Nay Pyi Taw Development Affairs Committee, rectors, district and township USDA members, representatives of social organizations and national race representatives took position.

The Stage Flag Hoisting ceremony was held at 4.20 am. The State Flag Saluting ceremony started at 7 am and the Guard of Honour (Army, Navy and Air Force) marched and took position at the square.

Chairman of the Central Committee for Organizing the 61st Anniversary Independence Day Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo took position on the dais. The Secretary-1 took the salute of the Guard of Honour. While the Secretary-

1 and the attendees saluted the State Flag, the Guard of Honour played the National Anthem. Next, they saluted the fallen heroes and recited the four oaths.

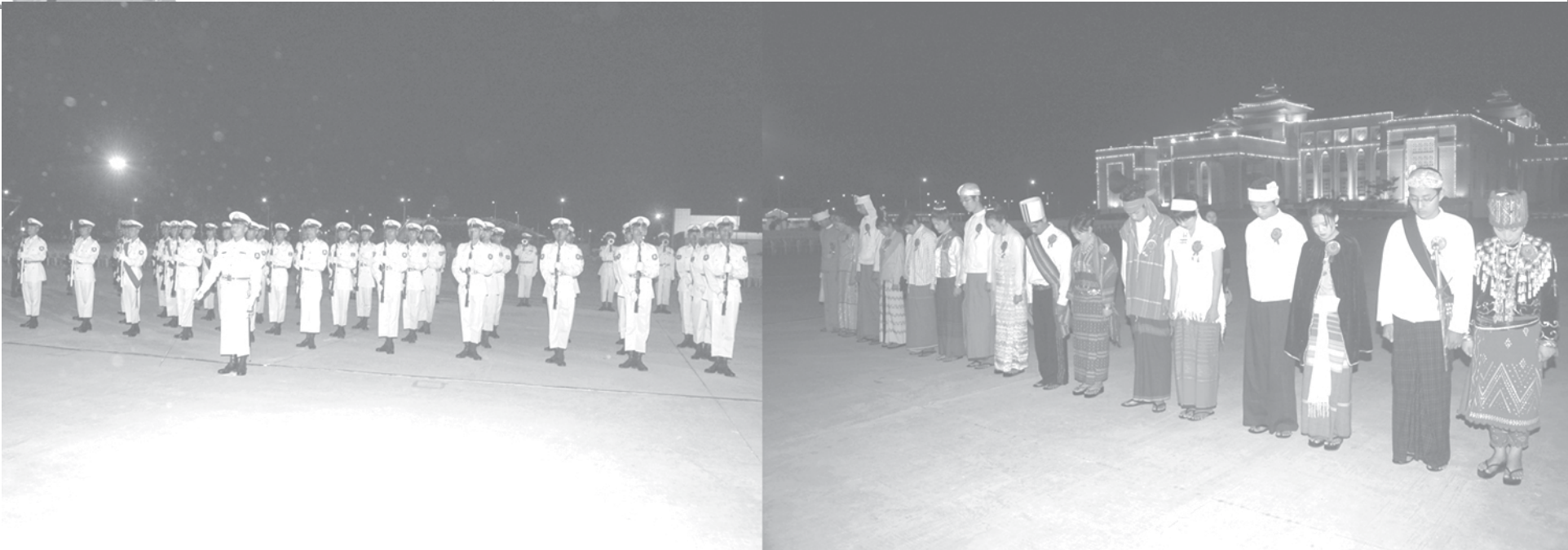
Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo read out the Independence Day Message of Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council. Afterwards, the Secretary-1 took the salute of the Guard of Honour and left the square.

As a gesture of marking the 61st Anniversary Independence Day, the ministries in Nay Pyi Taw, Nay Pyi Taw City Hall, Thabyegon roundabout, Kyapan roundabout, Razathingaha roundabout, Nay Pyi Taw Myoma Market, Thabyegon Market, houses and staff quarters were illuminated tonight.

MNA

The 61st Anniversary Independence Day State Flag Hoisting ceremony in progress at the square in front of Nay Pyi Taw City Hall.

MNA



Dignitaries at the 61st Anniversary Independence Day State Flag Hoisting ceremony. — MNA

MMA to meet with sale agents

YANGON, 4 Jan—The Committee for Organizing the 55th Myanmar Medical Conference will hold the meeting with agents of pharmaceuticals and pharmaceutical equipment at the Myanmar Medical Association Hall at No. 249 on Theinbyu Road in Mingala Taungnyunt Township on 8 January afternoon.

All the sale agents have been invited to attend the meeting. — MNA

FSD sports events mark Independence Day

YANGON, 4 Jan— Final match of Director-General's Cup Football Tournament of the Fire Services Department and sports events to mark the 61st Anniversary Independence Day took place at the head office of the Fire Services Department here today.

Present on the occasion were Director-General U Myint Tun of the department and wife, officials and their wives and employees.

After the competitions, the director-general gave first prize to Mithasu football team, and officials awarded winners of other events.—MNA

MOFA holds friendly golf tournament

NAY PYI TAW, 4 Jan — A friendly golf tournament of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and foreign diplomats was held at Nay Pyi Taw golf course here this morning, to mark the 61st Anniversary of the Independence Day.

Among the participants were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Deputy Minister U Maung Myint, foreign diplomats led by

Dean of Diplomatic Corps of Myanmar Ambassador of People's Republic of China Mr Guan Mu, UN Resident Coordinator Mr Bishow Parajuli and officials concerned of the ministry.

Before the tournament, documentary photos were taken, and then Minister U Nyan Win and Deputy Minister U Maung Myint awarded the participants.—MNA

Foreign diplomats pose for a documentary photo before the Independence Day commemorative friendly golf tourney.

MNA



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San greet diplomats and their spouses at the dinner to mark the 61st Anniversary Independence Day. (News on page 1)—MNA



School Family Day observed at Thuwunna BEHS

YANGON, 4 Jan — Thuwunna Basic Education High School of Thingangyun Township held the School Family Day for 2008-09 academic year

at Yuzana hall of the school yesterday.

It was attended by Patron of the School Board of Trustees Honorary Patron of Myanmar Karate-

do Federation Col Aung Din (Retd), Headmaster U Aung Kyaw Mya and teachers, Chairman of SBT U Chit Myo, Vice-Chairperson Daw Hla Hla Myint, Secretary U Kyaw Kyaw, Treasurer U Okkar Aye (Alinkar Wutyi Literary House) and members, Vice-Chairperson of the Parent-Teacher Association Daw Ni Ni Shein, Daw Mya Mya Win, Secretary Daw Phyu Phyu Wai, Joint Secretary Daw Nyo Mie Hlaing and executives, well-wishers, parents and guests.

Officials presented prizes to outstanding teachers and students.

NLM



An official awards the first prize winner Maung Ye Wint Zaw in mathematical skills.

NLM

Independence Day commemorative festivities held

NAY PYI TAW, 4 Jan — The 61st Anniversary Independence Day was celebrated in conformity with the four objectives of Independence Day here and the townships of states and

divisions this morning. Commemorative festivities and sports activities were held on a grand scale in basic education schools, staff housing quarters, wards and

village-tracts of the townships in Nay Pyi Taw District. Departmental heads and officials attended the activities and awarded the winners.

MNA



Independence Day commemorative sport activities in progress at schools, wards and villages in the townships of Nay Pyi Taw District.

MNA



Nay Pyi Taw illuminated in the evening of 61st Anniversary Independence Day. (News on page 16)—MNA

HONOURING THE 61ST ANNIVERSARY INDEPENDENCE DAY:

Independence Day deserves respect of entire people

Padaung Than Kywe

Ward off colonialist tricks with patriotism



Myanmar managed to set itself free from the occupation of the colonialists and became a sovereign nation on 4 January 1948. So, Myanmar's independence is in its 61st anniversary on 4 January 2009.

Myanmar had been an independent country with own monarchs with city states such as Vissano, Hanlin, Thuwunnabumi, Tagaung, Vesali and Srikestra since BC 3rd Century.

King Anawrahta unified many separate regions into the First Myanmar Empire; King Bayintnaung, the Second Myanmar Empire with Toungoo as the royal seat; and King Alaungmintragyi U Aung Zeya, the Third Myanmar Empire.

In the course of the Myanmar history, the people of such diverse national races as Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan had lived in amity and in cohesion with Union Spirit. They shared joys and sorrows, mutual understanding and attachment in their motherland Myanmar. They safeguarded the country at risk to life for ensuring perpetuity of the nation and sovereignty, and preserving fine traditions and demonstrating good volition.

Myanmar stood tall as a sovereign country with own monarchs in the world for successive

The goal of building a modern developed nation can be achieved only through national unity, patriotism, self-sacrifices, thrift, hard work, discipline and respect to law, not through disunity, anarchic riots and disputes.

periods.

From the geological point of view, Myanmar has a strategic location. It is situated on the mainland of Asia, with a long gateway to the sea. It is adjacent to inlands of Asia in its northeastern and northern parts. It shares borders with China and India with large populations and is close to southeast Asian and eastern Asian countries. It is blessed with fertile soil and favourable climate pattern. More than half the area of the nation is covered by forests. It has a good yield of crops and is rich in gems, teak, oil and natural resources. Its abundant natural resources and strategic location attracted the covetous eyes of the colonialists.

In the 19th century, British colonialists annexed India to the empire and colonized Myanmar through the three aggressive wars. The British's aggressive invasion made Myanmar lose its monarch, sovereignty and independence. Myanmar people are by nature imbued firmly with nationalistic fervour prepared to make sacrifices in the interests of the nation and the people, to value and love the motherland, the people, sovereignty, own literature,

culture, traditions and customs, and to remain sensitive to assault to national prestige and integrity. National brethren fought against the intruders at the risk of life, thus regaining independence and sovereignty.

Sovereignty is the lifeblood of a nation. If the three sovereign powers namely legislative, executive and judicial powers are in the hands of aliens or foreign countries directly or indirectly, such a nation falls under alien subjugation implicitly under neo-colonialism.

Certain nations are now kept under the control of alien troops that have invaded their territories by force. So, they are not in a position to build security and reconstruct themselves. They are in a real fix with sham independence and puppet governments. They are at the mercy of the invaders, who launch air strikes and fire weapons indiscriminately thus claiming casualties of many innocent people every day.

Today, certain military powers are driving a wedge among the people with the intention of
(See page 9)

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HONOURING THE 61ST ANNIVERSARY INDEPENDENCE DAY:

Independence Day deserves respect of entire people

Padaung Than Kywe

(from page 8)

breaking up their targeted countries. They never hesitate to use force if their attempts to split a targeted country are abortive. They are used to irresponsibly mentioning the Third World War. They show disregard for International Law and sovereignty of any other country with the belief that "Might is right".

In such circumstances, a nation can defend itself from alien intrusion only if it is militarily strong enough. Only with nationalistic spirit, patriotic fervour and national unity, can a nation

achieve the lofty goal. It is working hard day in, day out for equitable development of all parts of the Union. As part of the drive, it has the 24-Special Region Development Project, the Border Areas Development Project and the Rural Development Project on the go. So, the nation has seen rapid development in all sectors, as evidenced by a large number of development facilities across the land.

The goal of building a modern developed nation can be achieved only through national unity, patriotism, self-sacrifices, thrift, hard work, discipline and respect to law, not through disunity,

In such circumstances, a nation can defend itself from alien intrusion only if it is militarily strong enough. Only with nationalistic spirit, patriotic fervour and national unity, can a nation build its strength. Unity is the engine of building a developed nation capable of keeping abreast of other global family members. With that concept in view, the government tried its utmost to put an end to internal insurgency, which made the nation lag being other countries in development for about 40 years, and built peace and unity.

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Now, the people are pursuing in concert the national goal of transforming the nation into a peaceful, modern and developed discipline-flourishing democratic one. In the process, the government gives priority to ensuring the rule of law, strengthening economic infrastructures and human resource development that are essential to

anarchic riots and disputes.

So, the government is now implementing the State's seven-step Road Map it has laid down to meet the ultimate goal. It is, therefore, compulsory for the entire people to work hard in harmony for successful completion of building a new modern developed nation in accordance with the State Constitution approved through the support of the great majority of the voters, while participating with Union Spirit and patriotic spirit in the drive for accomplishment of the State's seven-step Road Map.

Translation: MS

Four objectives of the 61st Anniversary Independence Day

- * All the national people to constantly join hands for ensuring the perpetuity of independence and sovereignty of the State;
- * All the national people to collectively strive for non-disintegration of the Union and non-disintegration of national solidarity;
- * All the national people to harmoniously make all-out efforts for building up a modern, developed discipline-flourishing democratic nation in accord with the new State Constitution that has been approved by the votes of the great majority of national people;
- * All the national people to cooperate in realizing the State's seven-step Road Map with Union Spirit and patriotic spirit

POEM

Our territory
our soul

- * Always in mind
Independence Day
- * Originates Myanmar from Tagaung
Flourished under own monarchs
Throughout Pinya, Inwa, Konboun
eras
With power and splendor
Religion firmly propagating
Possessing own performing arts
Language, literature
And impressive lifestyle
Rich in resources
Prospering golden land
Where happiness and unity prevailed
- * Throughout history
Living in all states, divisions
With unity national races
Like close relatives
Renowned in world as
Ever harmonious Myanmar
- * Nowadays prevailing
Peace, stability in whole country
For perpetuity of golden land
Let's ward off
All destructive enemies

Ko Ko Thet (Dawei) (Trs)
Honouring the 61st Anniversary
Independence Day

ACHIEVEMENT IN COMMUNICATIONS SECTOR IN 2008



Communication Station built in Falam of Chin State to ensure development of communications sector for all regions of the country including border areas.



Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications Centre constructed in Ahlon of Monywa Township for enhancement of communications sector.

No.	Name	Location	Inauguration Day
1.	Digital Auto-exchange	Shwenyaung, Shan State (South)	1-1-2008
2.	Digital Auto-exchange	Ingapu, Ayeyawady Division	14-1-2008
3.	Digital Auto-exchange	Namsang, Shan State (North)	11-2-2008
4.	Digital Auto-exchange	Wetlet, Sagaing Division	16-2-2008
5.	Digital Auto-exchange	Nawngkhio, Shan State (North)	29-2-2008
6.	Digital Auto-exchange	Namma, Kachin State	2-3-2008
7.	Digital Auto-exchange	Nay Pyi Taw Pyisanaung model village	16-3-2008
8.	Digital Auto-exchange	Chaungson, Mon State	17-3-2008
9.	Digital Auto-exchange	Kyaikkhami, Mon State	17-3-2008
10.	Digital Auto-exchange	Mogok, Mandalay Division	21-3-2008
11.	Digital Auto-exchange	Kyatpyin, Mandalay Division	21-3-2008
12.	Digital Auto-exchange	Namphaka, Shan State (North)	21-3-2008
13.	Digital Auto-exchange	Zalun, Ayeyawady Division	21-3-2008
14.	Digital Auto-exchange	Myitkyina, Kachin State	27-3-2008
15.	Digital Auto-exchange	Kume, Mandalay Division	25-4-2008
16.	Digital Auto-exchange	Yekyi, Ayeyawady Division	30-4-2008
17.	Digital Auto-exchange	Kyonpyaw, Ayeyawady Division	30-4-2008
18.	Digital Auto-exchange	Bogale, Ayeyawady Division	30-4-2008
19.	Digital Auto-exchange	Singu, Mandalay Division	8-5-2008
20.	Digital Auto-exchange	Letpanhla, Mandalay Division	8-5-2008
21.	Digital Auto-exchange	Thabeikkyin, Mandalay Division	8-5-2008
22.	Digital Auto-exchange	Monywa (Ahlon), Sagaing Division	1-6-2008
23.	Digital Auto-exchange	Yenangyoung Industrial Zone Magway Division	26-7-2008
24.	Digital Auto-exchange	Myawady, Kayin State	1-8-2008
25.	Digital Auto-exchange	Kanbalu, Sagaing Division	1-8-2008
26.	Digital Auto-exchange	Kalay Industrial Zone Sagaing Division	1-8-2008
27.	Digital Auto-exchange	Natmauk, Magway Division	24-8-2008
28.	Digital Auto-exchange	Bagan Myothit, Mandalay Division	30-8-2008
29.	Digital Auto-exchange	Momauk, Kachin State	11-10-2008
30.	Digital Auto-exchange	Mansi, Kachin State	12-10-2008
31.	Digital Auto-exchange	Htigyaing, Sagaing Division	7-11-2008
32.	Digital Auto-exchange	Ngathaingchaung, Ayeyawady Division	11-11-2008
33.	Digital Auto-exchange	Athoke, Ayeyawady Division	30-11-2008

HONOURING THE 61ST ANNIVERSARY INDEPENDENCE DAY:

Main Building of Yatanarpon Teleport seen in Yatanarpon Myothit of PyinOoLwin Township.



Australia aviation regulator probes military link to emergencies

SYDNEY, 4 Jan — Australia's air safety regulator will examine whether interference from military radio signals prompted a second aircraft emergency over the country's northwest.

A Singapore-bound Qantas jet carrying 277 passengers was forced to turn back to the west-coast city of Perth early on

27 December 2008, after the aircraft's auto pilot disconnected.

The plane was about 260 nautical miles (416 kilometres) north-west of Perth when the malfunction occurred, disrupting the supply of key information to flight control computers.

The Air Transport Safety Bureau announced

late Friday that it would combine the investigation into the incident with a probe into a similar emergency in October.

"As it appears to be a similar event to a previous event involving an A 330 aircraft on 7 Oct 2008 it will be included as part of the earlier investigation," the bureau said.

Internet

French warship thwarts Somali pirate attack

PARIS, 4 Jan — A French warship has thwarted an attack by Somali pirates on a cargo ship in the dangerous Gulf of Aden on a day when several cargo ships were attacked, the French president's office said.

The warship was patrolling the area on Thursday as part of a multinational operation to protect commercial vessels passing through one of the world's most important sea routes.

The crew of the French "PM L'Her" dispatch boat intercepted two speedboats carrying eight Somali pirates as they were preparing to board a Panamanian cargo ship, said a statement that President Nicolas Sarkozy's office released late Thursday. The French Navy will hand over the men to Somali authorities.

The French crew seized weapons and munitions from the speedboats, the statement said.

Also on Thursday, Somali pirates seized an Egyptian cargo ship and its 28 crew members, but a Malaysian military helicopter saved an Indian tanker from being hijacked.

More than a dozen warships are now patrolling the vast waterway between the shores of Yemen and Somalia. Countries as diverse as Britain, India, Iran, the United States, China, France and Germany have naval forces in the waters.

According to the International Maritime Bureau, pirates attacked 111 times in the Gulf of Aden in 2008, successfully hijacking 42 ships.—*Internet*



Visitors acquaint themselves with Chinese artworks during the Chinese Culture and Travel exhibition in Singapore, on 2 Jan, 2009. — XINHUA

Chile identifies 133 endangered species

SANTIAGO, 4 Jan—Chile has identified 58 fauna and 75 flora species on the verge of extinction, the National Commission of Environment (Conama) said Friday.

"In this process (of the identification), there are two standouts—the southern right whale and humpback whale, classified as endangered and vulnerable respectively, as well as a high percentage of species from Juan Fernandez Archipelago," Chilean Environment Minister Anlia Uriarte said.

Only about 100 southern right whales are currently living in the South Pacific, said Uriarte, who also heads the ministerial commission.

The humpback whale is classified as "vulnerable" as it has begun a slow but progressive process of recovering, she added.

Meanwhile, Alvaro Sapag, executive director of Conama, said the identification process "allows us to have precise and relevant information on the species that live in our territory".—*MNA/Xinhua*

Manned flight to Mars one step closer?

An experiment based on a manned flight to Mars is planned to be launched in March 2009. Ten candidates have been selected for participation in the 105-day-long experiment.

Among the ten selected candidates are six Russians, and four representatives of the European Union.

Candidates were selected according to questioning and complex medical examination in the Central Clinical Hospital of the Russian Academy of Sciences and in the European Astronaut Centre in Cologne, Germany.

The final crew will include four volunteers from Russia and two from the European Space Agency. Those volunteers who will not be part of the crew will help carry out the experiment.



The primary goals of experiment are the physiological and psychological adaptation of the crewmen to the conditions of closed and isolated space and studying the interaction of the crew with the personnel of the experiment's control centre under hanging conditions of communication.

Crocodile discovered in London bath

A crocodile has been discovered living in a bath in London.



Pest control officer Steve North made a call to a Peckham flat after being told that there was a problem in the bathroom.

When he entered, he found the creature lying in the tub. "What I didn't expect was to be eyeballed by a two-foot-long crocodile, happily lounging in the bath," he said.

The official called a team of animal control experts to take away the reptile, which the flat's occupant claimed he was looking after for a friend.

Police use tobacco spit to nab burglary suspect

A trail of tobacco spit has led investigators to a suspect in at least five burglaries across eastern Oklahoma, police said.

Randy Lee Shoopman Jr, 33, was charged with 11 counts of second-degree burglary after a sample of his DNA matched that taken from expectorant left behind at the scene of several burglaries in Oklahoma, said officer Brad

Robertson, a spokesman for the Tahlequah police department.

Shoopman was taken into custody in Merced, Calif, on an unrelated stolen property charge, Robertson said.

Investigators also said Shoopman may be involved in break-ins at businesses across eastern Oklahoma and in Missouri.

Stilwell police detective Chad Smith said he was investigating the burglary of an insurance company in September when he noticed a tobacco stain on papers in the ransacked office.

Utah store has bone to pick with shoplifting dog

A thief remains at large after pulling off a daring heist — in the pet food aisle.

Surveillance video at a supermarket in this Salt Lake City suburb caught a dog shoplifting, KSL-TV reported on Wednesday.

The video showed the dog walking in the front door of Smith's Food & Drug in Murray, and heading straight to Aisle 16, the pet food aisle, where it grabbed a bone worth \$2.79.

The thief wasn't even perturbed by a face-to-face confrontation with store manager Roger Adamson.

"I looked at him. I said 'Drop it!'" Adamson said. "He looked at me, and I looked at him, and he ran for the door and away he went, right out the front door."



Song Evans of University Place, Wash, walks with a red umbrella under a dusky gray sky along the Puget Sound near Titlow Beach in Tacoma, Wash, on 18 Dec, 2008 as snow blanketed the area.

NEWS ALBUM

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5.January.2009

Plants, flowers speed surgical recovery

MANHATTAN, 4 Jan — US researchers have confirmed the beneficial effects of plants and flowers for patients recovering from abdominal surgery. Researchers Seong-Hyun Park and Richard H Mattson of Kansas State University say there is strong evidence that contact with plants is directly beneficial to a hospital patient's health.

The researchers studied 90 patients recovering from appendectomy. Patients were randomly assigned to hospital rooms with or without plants during their post-operative recovery periods and data were collected on the length of hospitalization, administration of drugs for post-operative pain control, vital signs, ratings of pain intensity, distress, fatigue, anxiety and room satisfaction.

The study, published in the journal HortTechnology, found patients with plants in their rooms had significantly fewer intakes of pain medication; more positive physiological responses — lower blood pressure and heart rate; less pain, anxiety and fatigue; and higher satisfaction with their recovery rooms compared to the control group.

The study suggests that potted plants offer the most benefit, as opposed to cut flowers, because of their longevity. Nursing staff reported that as patients recovered, they began to show interaction with the plants, including watering, pruning, and moving them for a better view or light. Indoor plants make air healthier and provide an optimum indoor environment by increasing humidity and reducing the quantity of mold spores and airborne germs, the researchers added. —Internet



Man discovers neighbour is his long lost sister

MANCHESTER, 4 Jan — A brother and sister in England spent 40 years trying to find each other then discovered they lived only 300 yards apart. Ken Whitty, 64, walked past 62-year-old Yvonne's house countless times and even saw her in the garden, but did not recognize her.

They were reunited only after Whitty wrote to his local paper appealing for help in his search. Soon after his letter was published, he got a phone call saying: "Hello, this is Yvonne." The pair spent their early years in Ordsall, Greater Manchester.

They were still kids when their parents died and were cared for by a family friend.

They lost touch after leaving home and starting their own families. Later, they tried to trace each other then Whitty, wrote to the paper last month.

When Yvonne called, it turned out she was living 300 yards from him in Reddish, Greater Manchester. Ken, who moved to Reddish in 2002, said: "I couldn't believe it. I shot round to see her." Yvonne said: "It's so nice to see Ken again. It's overwhelming."

Internet

Woman, 40, thought too young for alcohol

WINCHESTER, 4 Jan — A 40-year-old British mother-of-two says she was forced go home and get her passport after being told she was too young to buy alcohol at a store. Karen Hamilton of Hampshire county said during a recent beer run at a Tesco retail store, she was told she could not buy alcohol without proper documentation of her age, the Daily Mail reported Saturday.

Hamilton, who was not carrying any identification with a photograph at the time, said she became annoyed at the clerk's unwillingness to accept her

age claims. "The woman at the check-out must have been about my age but she insisted on asking for ID — I thought she was joking," she said.

"It became very irritating because I couldn't convince her otherwise — other women in the queue even tried to argue for my case by saying they thought I looked over 18." The Mail said Tesco has since apologized for the incident and suggested Hamilton should feel complimented for being seen as younger than 18, the legal alcohol purchasing age in Britain.

Internet



Bullet holes are seen on the windshield of a car at the scene of a shooting at a parking lot Tijuana, Mexico, on 3 Jan , 2009. According to local police reports two men were injured in the incident. —INTERNET

Recently wed, couple die in plane crash

STAFFORD, 4 Jan — Two of the victims of a small-plane crash in England were a recently married couple being treated to a joy ride by a friend who also died. Nick and Emma O'Brien were the parents of two sons, one 10 and the other only 18 months old, The Daily Mail reported. The couple married in August after years together.

The pilot, Alan Matthews, worked with O'Brien and agreed to take the couple on a flight. Service on the London to Manchester rail line, one of the busiest routes in the country, was shut down after the Piper Cherokee crashed into power lines Friday in Staffordshire. The disruption continued Saturday. —Internet

Bavarian beaver at home in Britain

EXETER, 4 Jan — A Bavarian beaver is making itself at home in England's Devon county after escaping from an area farm, its owner says.

Conservationist Derek Gow said the escaped 88-pound beaver apparently does not know it has moved across several international borders and is preparing for a typical German winter, The Times of London reported Saturday. "It's laying up a store of feed because it doesn't know it isn't in Germany," Gow said of the animal, which was one of three that escaped four weeks ago from his farm.

The other two have been recaptured.

Internet

Drug traffickers hanged in prison

TEHERAN, 4 Jan — Iran has hanged two men in prison in the south-eastern city of Zahedan after they were convicted of drug trafficking, the state broadcaster reported.

The report said the unnamed men were found guilty of smuggling 300kg of drugs. The hangings are the first to be reported in 2009. Iran executed at least 246 people last year. Capital offences in the Islamic republic include murder, rape, armed robbery, drug trafficking and adultery.

Internet

Six newly-married couples wearing theatrical costumes of shaanxi opera pose for pictures at the Yisu Center for the Performing Arts in Xi'an, capital of northwest China's Shaanxi Province, on 2 Jan, 2009. — XINHUA



Russia's President Dmitry Medvedev (R) and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin visit a ski resort outside Russia's Black Sea city of Sochi on 3 Jan, 2009. —XINHUA

UN Security Council fails to reach agreement on Gaza

UNITED NATIONS, 4 Jan—The UN Security Council failed to reach any formal agreement after discussions on Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip, the president of the council said on Saturday.

“There was no formal agreement among the members of the Security Council,” said Jean-Maurice Ripert, France’s UN ambassador and the current council president.

Ripert spoke to reporters after the 15-member council held a closed-door emergency meeting after Israeli troops entered Gaza. However, Ripert said he noted “strong convergences” among council members to have a state-

ment adopted by the council to call for “an immediate, permanent and fully respected cease-fire in Gaza and southern Israel.”

During the closed-door consultations, some council members voiced concern at the escalation of violence and the humanitarian situation in Gaza. They called for efforts to ensure free access to the area so that humanitarian supplies could be shipped to people in need.

“There are also strong convergences among the council members to call on all parties to resume peace talks,” Ripert said.

Xinhua

Gaza ground incursion aims to stop hostile aggression of Hamas

JERUSALEM, 4 Jan—The aim of ongoing Gaza ground incursion is to stop the hostile aggression of the enemy, Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak said Saturday evening.

“We don’t want war, but we won’t abandon citizens victimized by Hamas,” Barak was quoted by local daily Ha’aretz as saying shortly after the ground incursion began.

“We will provide Israeli citizens with peace and quiet,” he stressed.

“I know well the dangers and the price of military operation,” said the defence minister, noting that “I don’t want to fool anyone, Gaza operation won’t be short and easy.”—*Xinhua*

Darling Harbour near Sydney. Lucrative Australian exports such as iron ore, copper and coal face a tough year as slowing global growth and sluggish demand are set to force resource prices down from once-extravagant highs, analysts have said.—INTERNET



All items from Xinhua News Agency

Korean Air to provide service to over 30 Chinese cities by 2010

BEIJING, 4 Jan—Korean Air plans to provide service to over 30 Chinese cities by 2010, especially cities in less-developed western regions of China, said J H Chae, regional manager of Korean Air Beijing Office.

He said that 2009 marked the 15th year of

Korean Air’s inauguration of service in China. To achieve sustainable growth in China is an important development target of the carrier’s global strategy. The aviation negotiation between China and the Republic of Korea will kick off in January 2009. Korean Air expects China

to open more cities in the west. Korean Air owns 126 aircraft, among the top 20 biggest airlines in the world. China has become the most important overseas market for the carrier.—*Xinhua*

Four people die, buildings damaged in Indonesia’s earthquakes

JAKARTA, 4 Jan—Four people were dead and two hotels collapsed when the earthquakes hit eastern Indonesia’s West Papua Province on Sunday morning, said Satrio Nurhat, an official from the Indonesian National Disaster Management Centre.

Nurhat said that some local residential buildings and two banks were also damaged in the quakes, adding casualties and material damage were still increasing. A 7.2-magnitude earthquake jolted eastern Indonesia’s West Papua Province at 4:43 am local time on Sunday (1943 GMT Saturday), followed by aftershocks measuring 5.1, 6.1, 5.1 and 7.6 degrees on the Richter scale, respectively.

The strongest 7.6-magnitude aftershock struck at 7:33 am local time (2233 GMT on Saturday), with its epicenter at 0.88 degrees southern latitude, 133.38 degrees eastern longitude, and a depth of 10 km below the sea level.—*Xinhua*

Tourists look at the unfinished Marina Bay Sands casino resort near the central business district in Singapore on 2 Jan, 2009. Singapore on Friday revised downward its 2009 economic forecast and said gross domestic product was expected to shrink 1-2 percent this year.—INTERNET

Cambodian minister says foreign tourist arrivals in 2008 less than expected

PHNOM PENH, 4 Jan— Cambodia received less foreign tourists in 2008 than expected due to the global financial crisis and the instability in neighboring Thailand, national media said on Sunday.

The total number of foreign tourist arrivals in the kingdom in 2008 stood at 2.15 million or so, a 6 percent rise over 2007, but much less than the expected 15 percent to 20 percent, Chinese-lan-

guage newspaper the Commercial News quoted Tourism Minister Thon Khong as saying.

Around 33 percent of them came to Cambodia through Thailand and 29 percent through another neighboring country Vietnam, the minister said.

In 2008, top 5 providers of foreign tourists for Cambodia were South Korea, Vietnam, Japan, the United States and China, he added.—*Xinhua*



Two security men killed in landmine explosion in SW Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 4 Jan—Two paramilitary soldiers were killed and four others injured in a landmine explosion in southwestern Pakistan on Saturday, private TV channel DAWN NEWS reported.

The soldiers were patrolling a gas field in the town of Dera Bugti in Balochistan Province when a landmine was detonated by their vehicle, said the report.

As a result, two soldiers were killed and four others injured.

A spokesman for a militant group called Baloch Republican Army, Sarbaz Khan, later claimed responsibility of the attack.

Xinhua

SPORTS

Iniesta makes scoring return as Barca march on

MADRID, 4 Jan—Spanish international midfielder Andres Iniesta marked his comeback from injury with a crucial goal as leaders Barcelona defeated Real Mallorca 3-1 on Saturday to continue where they left off before Christmas. A first



Barcelona's midfielder Andres Iniesta celebrates his goal during their Liga football match against Mallorca at the New Camp Stadium in Barcelona.—INTERNET

victory in 2009 takes Barca 11 points clear of Valencia who moved up to second with a 3-1 triumph over Atletico Madrid.

Spain's Euro 2008 heroes David Villa and David Silva, who grabbed a brace, were the goalscorers for Valencia rendering Diego Forlan's penalty irrelevant. It was Atletico's first defeat in 16 games in all competitions and champions Real Madrid, a point behind in fifth, can go above their city rivals with a home win against Villarreal on Sunday. Real are 15 points behind Barca and desperately need maximum points at the Santiago Bernabeu.—Internet

Forest wins 3-0 at Man City in FA Cup

LONDON, 4 Jan—Nottingham Forest won 3-0 at high-spending Manchester City for the biggest upset in the third round of the FA Cup on Saturday. In another surprise, Southend played to a 1-1 draw at Chelsea, scoring the tying goal during injury time.

Stoke tumbled 2-0 at League One Hartlepool, which got second-half goals from Michael Nelson and David Foley. League One Peterborough drew 1-1 at West Bromwich Albion, which is last in the Premier League, and defending champion Portsmouth also faces a replay after being held to a scoreless tie at home by Championship club Bristol City.

There were only three matchups of Premier League teams. Sunderland edged Bolton 2-1 and Hull and Newcastle will need a replay after a 0-0 draw. On Friday, Tottenham downed Wigan 3-1. Arsenal defeated Plymouth 3-1 helped by two goals from Robin van Persie. Everton won 1-0 at Macclesfield and West Ham outplayed Barnsley 3-0. Middlesbrough beat Barrow 2-1 and Fulham won 2-1 at Sheffield Wednesday.

Internet

Answers to yesterday's Crosswords Puzzle

1	M	A	2	S	T	3	E	R			4	P	E	5	A	C	6	E	
	O			Q			L		7	D		O			B			N	
8	R	O		U	T	E			9	R	E	S	O	U	N	D			
	O			A			M			E		T			S			I	
10	S	A	L	T	E	R	S						11	L	E	A	N		
	E			I			N		12	S	A	13	P					G	
			14	E	D	I	T					15	E	D	16	G	Y		
17	H							18	S	P	19	A		E		A		20	G
21	O	I	22	L	Y				23	C	A	R	A	M	E	L			
	B			O			24	J		U				G		B		O	
25	B	O	Y	C	O	T	T			26	Y	E	L	L	S				
	L			A			I			E		N		E				S	
27	E	L	L	E	N					28	S	T	O	R	E	Y			

Wenger backs Ferguson in fixture row

LONDON, 4 Jan—Arsene Wenger has backed Sir Alex Ferguson's claim that the Premier League fixture list is unfair and should be changed. Ferguson has been highly critical this week of the scheduling that has led to his Manchester United side playing a majority of weekend Premier League games away from home following a midweek Champions League clash.



Arsenal's Emmanuel Ebouie (R) is seen in action against Plymouth Argyle's Jamie Mackie during their FA Cup football match at the Emirates Stadium in London.—INTERNET

Wenger took the unusual step of agreeing with his longstanding rival after his Arsenal team's 3-1 FA Cup third round victory over Plymouth Argyle at the Emirates Stadium here Saturday. The Gunners boss believes Ferguson has a case — and pointed to the imbalance of home fixtures across the four Champions League teams to reinforce his claim.

"I saw Ferguson made the case about fixtures," Arsenal manager Wenger said. "And we checked because we are always curious. And he has a case, and in this case so do we." If you take the international fixtures plus the Champions League, everybody has played ten games, six Champions League games and four internationals." And after those 10 games, we played eight away games and two at home. Manchester United played nine away games, Chelsea played six games at home and four away. And Liverpool played eight times at home and two away.—Internet

Djokovic enjoying pressure as tennis Grand Slam champion

BRISBANE, 4 Jan—Serbia's Novak Djokovic said he was enjoying the expectations that come with being a Grand Slam champion and would use the pressure to his advantage over the next month.

The world No 3 broke through for his first Grand Slam win at last year's Australian Open when he beat Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in the final.

He is top seed for this week's inaugural Brisbane International and told reporters he was enjoying being back in Australia. "It's always nice to come back to the country where you did well the previous year," he said. "I take the best memories of my career out of Melbourne last year and I really look forward to going back there.

Internet



Australian Open champion Novak Djokovic of Serbia is seen here during a training session at the Brisbane International tennis tournament, on 4 January.—INTERNET

Saint Etienne keep Perrin on course for French Cup treble

PARIS, 4 Jan—Saint Etienne ended their three-year losing French Cup record on Saturday with a 1-0 win over Bordeaux to reach the last 32 and keep coach Alain Perrin on course for an unprecedented Cup treble.



Bordeaux's Franck Jurietti (R) challenges Saint-Etienne's Daisuke Matsuki during their French cup football match at the Chaban-delmás stadium in Bordeaux, southwestern France.—INTERNET

Bafetimbi Gomis grabbed the only goal of the game in the 76th minute on a treacherous and slippery surface at Bordeaux's Jacques-Chaban-Delmas stadium. Bordeaux, coached by former Manchester United defender Laurent Blanc, were missing a host of their South American stars who had been given permission to stay on their Christmas vacation. That would have delighted Perrin who coached Sochaux to the 2007 French Cup title and repeated the success with Lyon last season.—Internet

Southend shock won't prompt Scolari spending-spree

LONDON, 4 Jan—Chelsea manager Luiz Felipe Scolari said he did not need to buy a new striker in the January transfer window after seeing his side begin their FA Cup campaign with a shock 1-1 draw at home to Southend. The Blues, second in the Premier League, looked to be cruising into the fourth round of the FA Cup at Stamford Bridge here on Saturday until birthday boy Peter Clarke headed the Shrimpers level in injury-time.



Chelsea's Didier Drogba (L) clashes with Southend United's Alan McCormack during their FA Cup third round match at Stamford Bridge football stadium.—INTERNET

Chelsea, who had lost ground to Premier League leaders Liverpool in recent weeks after draws with West Ham, Everton and Fulham, took a first-half lead through Saloman Kalou's header. But they then squandered chance after chance against a team 55 league places below them to leave Scolari in no doubt where his problems lie.—Internet

Illness forces Kirilenko out of Brisbane tennis tournament

BRISBANE, 4 Jan—Seventh-seeded Russian Maria Kirilenko has withdrawn from the Brisbane International tennis tournament due to a virus, according to the organisers. Kirilenko, the world No 29, was due to play Australian Samantha Stosur in the opening match of the tournament but pulled out shortly before she was due on court.

The draw has been altered to see the next highest-ranked player not to be seeded, Japanese veteran Ai Sugiyama (No.31), take Kirilenko's position in the draw. Sugiyama was expected to play Stosur either later Sunday or Monday. The extra place in the women's draw is set to go to a lucky loser from qualifying.



Seventh-seeded Russian Maria Kirilenko

Internet

Singapore issues commemorative coins for lunar ox year

SINGAPORE, 4 Jan—Singapore Saturday launched commemorative coins featuring the image of ox to celebrate the upcoming Chinese new year.

The Singapore Mint Saturday introduced the latest coin series on its website, saying that the design is inspired by the Chinese characters “Heavenly Stem and Earthly Branches”, which are inscribed as motifs on the coins. A peony, a traditional Chinese

symbol of blessings, is emblazoned on the oxen’s body, brings well wishes of hope and happiness in the New Year.

The Singapore Mint said the design adds an oriental flair and celebrates the endearing virtues of the ox, which are leadership, honour and compassion.

The coin series are being displayed at Suntec City Mall as part of the annual Lunar New Year Retail Fair, which will end on 11 January.—*Internet*

Grape seed extract kills leukemia cells

LEXINGTON, 4 Jan—An extract from grape seeds forces laboratory leukemia cells to commit cell suicide, University of Kentucky researchers said. The study, published in Clinical Cancer Research, found that within 24 hours, 76 percent of leukemia cells had died after being exposed to the extract. While grape seed extract has shown activity in a number of laboratory cancer cell lines—including skin, breast, colon, lung, stomach and prostate cancers—no one had tested the extract in hematological cancers, said lead author Xianglin Shi. The researchers found that the extract activates JNK, a protein that regulates the apoptotic—cell death—pathway. “What everyone seeks is an agent that has an effect on cancer cells but leaves normal cells alone, and this shows that grape seed extract fits into this category,” Shi said in a statement. The research is not far enough along to suggest that people should eat grapes, grape seeds or grape skin in excess to stave off cancer, Shi said. “This is very promising research, but it is too early to say this is chemoprotective,” Shi said in a statement.—*Internet*

Israelis in shock are evacuated from the scene of a rocket attack in the coastal southern city of Ashdod. Israeli ground forces fought fierce battles with Hamas in Gaza on Sunday.—*Internet*



Nano device ‘times drug release’

LONDON, 4 Jan—US researchers say they have harnessed the power of gold nanoparticles to devise a better way of delivering

drugs to treat diseases such as cancer. The fledgling system could release a number of drugs in a specific part of the body at desired intervals, the MIT team wrote in the journal ACS Nano.

The device makes use of the fact that different particles melt when exposed to different levels of infrared light.

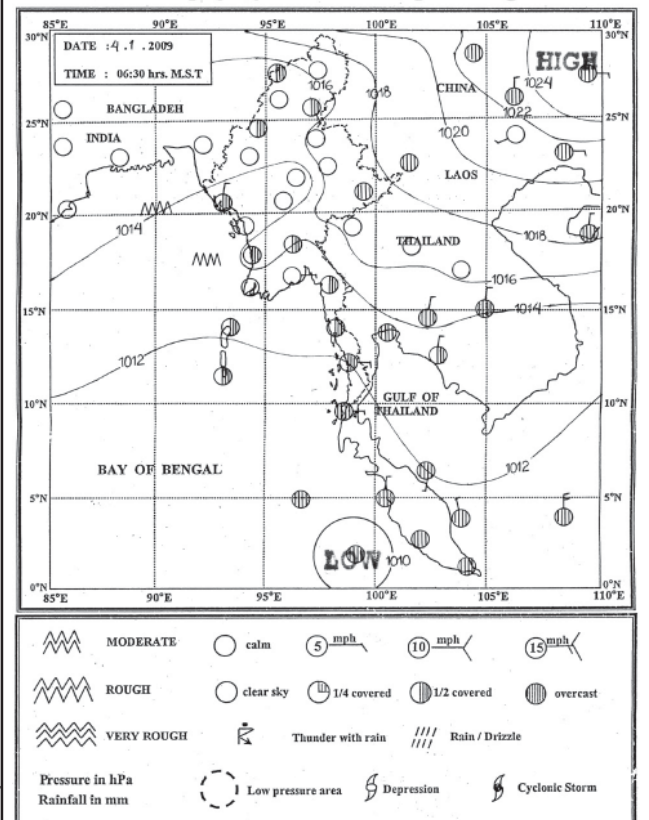
Different drugs on the particles could thus be released in a controlled way. One of the advantages of being able to

deliver drugs directly to a specific site within the body is that you can use relatively toxic drugs without fear of causing widespread damage to other, healthy tissue.

A number of trials are using nanoparticles, sometimes as small as one nanometre—or a billionth of a metre—to take drugs directly to the site of a tumour and avoid many of the side-effects associated with traditional chemotherapy.

—*Internet*

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas



WEATHER

Sunday, 4 January, 2009

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hr MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin State, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) below January average temperatures in upper Sagaing and Yangon Divisions, (6°C) below January average temperatures in Chin State, (3°C) to (4°C) above January average temperatures in Shan and Kayah States, Bago and Taninthayi Divisions and about January average temperatures in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Hakha (-3°C) and Heho (4°C).

Maximum temperature on 3-1-2009 was 91°F. Minimum temperature on 4-1-2009 was 63°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 4-1-2009 was 61%. Total sunshine hours on 3-1-2009 was (9.7) hrs approx.

Rainfall on 4-1-2009 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2009 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (4) mph from North at (21:30) hours MST on 3-1-2009.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 5th January 2009: Weather will be partly cloudy in Kachin and Shan States, upper Sagaing, Yangon 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: Generally fair weather in the whole country.

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 5-1-2009: Generally fair weather.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 5-1-2009: Generally fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 5-1-2009: Generally fair weather.



Monday, 5 January
View on today

7:00 am

1. မင်းကွန်းဆရာတော်ဘုရားကြီး၏ ဝရိတ်တရားတော်

7:25 am

2. To be healthy exercise

7:30 am

3. Morning news

7:40 am

4. Nice and sweet song

7:50 am

5. အတီးဖိုင်ပွဲ

8:00 am

6. Song to uphold national spirit

8:10 am

7. “စည်ကမ်းလိုက်နာဆေးကင်းကွာ” (ကျော်ရဲအောင်၊ ချစ်သူ၊ ဇော်ဝင်းမောင်၊ မော့စို၊ လင်းစာနည်ဇော်၊ ပွင့်) [ဒါရိုက်တာ-ခင်ဇော်မြင့်စိုး (ဝ/သ-ရန်ကုန်)]

8:20 am

8. Cute little dancers

8:30 am

9. International news

8:45 am

10. Musical programme

4:00 pm

1. Martial song

4:20 pm

2. Dance variety

4:30 pm

3. Musical programme (The radio Myanmar modern music troupe)

4:40 pm

4. အေးသင်တက္ကသိုလ်ပညာရေး ရုပ်မြင်သံကြားသင်ခန်းစာ ဒုတိယနှစ် (အရှေ့တိုင်းပညာ အထူးပြု) (အရှေ့တိုင်းပညာ)

4:55 pm

5. Songs to uphold national spirit

5:05 pm

6. မြန်မာစာမြန်မာစကား (အပိုင်း-၂)

5:20 pm

7. မွေးမြူစိုက်ပျိုးစီးပွားတိုး (အပိုင်း-၁)

5:30 pm

8. Musical programme

5:40 pm

9. “တစ်လောကလုံးလင်းပါစေ”

(ပြေတီဦး၊ မိုးပြည့်ပြည့်မောင်၊ မေသဉ္ဇာဦး၊ ဝါဝါအောင်၊ ဧကမ္မာပွင့်) (ဒါရိုက်တာ-စင်ရော်မောင်မောင်)

6:00 pm

10. Evening news

6:30 pm

11. Weather report

6:35 pm

12. ဆိုကြမယ်၊ ပျော်ကြမယ်

7:10 pm

13. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ

“စူပါမင်းနှင့်မာနရှင်” (အပိုင်း-၂၁) (ဇာတ်သိမ်း)

8:00 pm

14. News

15. International news

16. Weather report

17. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ

“မြင့်မြတ်နုလုံးသားပိုင်ရှင်” (အပိုင်း-၁၅)

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

Independence Day State Flag Hoisting and Saluting ceremony take place in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 4 Jan — The 61st Anniversary Independence Day State Flag Hoisting and Saluting ceremony took place at the square in front of Nay Pyi Taw City Hall this morning with more than 4000 people attending it.

First, departmental staff of the State Peace and Development Council Office, Prime Minister's Office, Supreme Court, Attorney-General's Office, Civil Service Selection and Training Board Office and ministries, members of Union Solidarity and Development Association of Nay Pyi Taw District and the townships of Nay Pyi Taw District,

members of Red Cross Society and fire brigade and local people took position at the square at 6 a.m.

Maj-Gen Min Aung Hlaing, Lt-Gen Tha Aye and senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, Chairman of the Subcommittee for holding the ceremony Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin, the USDA secretary-general, joint secretary-general, secretariat members and CEC members, ministers, deputy ministers, senior military officers, departmental heads, heads of office of the

(See page 6)

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo reads the message sent by Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe on 61st Anniversary Independence Day for 2009.—MNA



Nay Pyi Taw illuminated in the evening of 61st Anniversary Independence Day.

MNA

SPECIAL FEATURES TO HONOUR 61st ANNIVERSARY INDEPENDENCE DAY



Article

Independence Day deserves respect of entire people

Poem

Our territory our soul

* Always in mind Independence Day