Commission for Drafting the State Constitution holds meeting

Chief Justice U Aung Toe delivers an address at meeting No 4/2008 of the Commission for Drafting the State Constitution. — MNA

China donates water pumps

Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and Chinese Embassy held a ceremony to hand over twenty sets of water pumps at Water Resources Utilization Department of the ministry here yesterday.

Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo delivered an address and Economic and Commercial Counsellor Mr Tang Hai of Chinese Embassy to Myanmar explained the purposes of the donation. Econmic and Commercial Counsellor Mr Tang Hai of Chinese Embassy to Myanmar and Director-General U Hla Myint of the Water Resources Utilization Department signed the agreement and exchanged the documents.

Out of 20, 11 pumps will be installed at Myitkyo Hydropower project in Myanaung Township in Ayeyawady Division, seven at Kyeeya Hydropower project in Pakokku Township and two at Mnywa Hydropower project in Yesagyo Township in Magway.

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Increasing investment in health for longevity of people

Health is a state of physical, mental, and social well-being. Good health enables people to enjoy life and have the opportunity to achieve their goals. Society as a whole reaps the benefits from people’s good health. For that reason, many governments and organizations strive to improve the health of their peoples. The government strives to promote better health of the people throughout the country such as the opening of new specialist hospitals, general hospitals and teaching ones and providing better health care services including modern diagnosis equipment and hospital equipment.

Universities of medicine and health universities have been opened for progress of medical science and turning out qualified human resources.

The 200-acre National Herbal Park of international level was opened near Nay Pyi Taw-Taungnyo Road recently with the aim of producing potent medicines to be used in curing six major common diseases in the country.

In the herbal park the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, the Ministry of Forestry and the Ministry of Health grow altogether 24,831 medicinal plants of 719 species for production of vaccines for cholera, dysentery, hypertension, diabetes, malaria and tuberculosis.

Research works are being conducted for production of new medicines and finding out new therapies with the use of medicinal plants for progress of Myanmar traditional medicine. Concerted efforts are being made for production of potent medicines and finding out effective therapies for the diseases that cannot be cured by western medicines.

No doubt, the health standard of the national people will improve gradually as the government increases its health investment in the fight against diseases for longevity of the people and for their well-being.

Deputy Minister inspects hospitals in Bago Division (West)

YANGON, 9 Jan — Deputy Minister for Health Dr Paing Soe held a meeting with the head of the Health Department of Bago Division (West), medical superintendent and specialists, doctors, nurses and hospital staff at the Pyay General Hospital yesterday. He then inspected the patient ward, X-ray room and Pathology and the newly-built intensive care ward and equipment.

The Deputy Minister also met the trainees of Nursing and Mid-Wifery training school at the hospital and inspected the training school.

He next looked into the Traditional Medicine Hospital in Pyay, Thayawady District hospital, Gyobingok hospital, Shwe Taung Township Hospital and Taikkyi Township Hospital.

Mayor inspects upgrading of Hlawga road construction

YANGON, 9 Jan — Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, accompanied by Secretary U Aung Than Win and officials, inspected upgrading of 5600-foot long and 24-foot wide Hlawga road section that is from Pyidaungsu junction to Maungmagan junction in Dagon Myothit (South) Township, here, this morning.

The mayor looked into progress in upgrading the road section and constructions tasks. He gave instructions on speedy measures for timely completion of the road construction to meet the set standards and minimizing waste and loss and attended to the requirements of the road construction.

MCBA holds annual meeting

YANGON, 6 Jan — Myanmar Customs Brokers Association conducted the 11th Annual Meeting of the association at UMFCCI Office Tower in Lanmadaw Township on 30 December.

At the meeting, the annual report of the association and budget of the executive committee of the association for the 2006-2007 were approved and 15 new executive committee members for the next two-year term of the association were named.

The meeting ended with concluding remarks by Chairman U Myo Thant.

Director-General U San Thaung delivers an address at 11th annual meeting of Myanmar Customs Brokers Association. — UMFCCI
Sharif asks party members to step up campaign

Lahore (Pakistan), 9 Jan — Pakistani former prime minister Nawaz Sharif on Monday called on members of his PML-N party to step up campaigning for the upcoming general elections scheduled for 18 February.

Sharif made the calling here after a high level meeting of Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N), which is expected to chalk out the party’s strategy for the national and provincial assembly elections.

Addressing a Press conference, Sharif said his party would deploy youth supporters at the polling stations to prevent the rigging of the elections.

President Pervez Musharraf, who resigned the post of Army chief in late November and took oath as a civilian president, has pledged free and fair elections. The elections were initially scheduled for 8 January but delayed for 40 days due to violence in the aftermath of Benazir Bhutto’s assassination on 27 December.

Sharif blamed what he described as “brink of crisis” in Pakistan on the political and economic policies and called for the establishment of a national unity government to replace the caretaker government.

Clinton vows to continue US presidential battle

Washington, 9 Jan — Her front-runner status gone, Democrat Hillary Clinton said on Monday she will continue to battle for her party’s nomination for the November US presidential election even if she loses the crucial New Hampshire primary. A Reuters/C-SPAN/Zogby poll released on Monday showed Clinton, a New York senator and former first lady, trailing Barack Obama by 10 points in New Hampshire, which holds its primary on Tuesday.

Obama, a senator from Illinois bidding to make history as the first Black US president, has been capitalizing on his surprise win last week in the Iowa caucuses.

Clinton, who for months was the front-runner among Democratic candidates, came in third in the Iowa vote behind Obama and former North Carolina Senator John Edwards.

ASEAN’s new Secretary-General assumes

Jakarta, 8 Jan — Thailand’s former foreign minister Dr Surin Pitsuwa assumed the post of Secretary-General of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) here Monday, succeeding Ong Keng Yong, whose term ended on 31 December 2007. Surin Pitsuwa’s five-year tenure will be from 1 January, 2008 to 31 December, 2012. His appointment was formally endorsed by the ASEAN leaders at the 13th ASEAN summit in Singapore in November 2007. Dr Surin received his MA and Ph D in Political Science and Middle Eastern Studies from Harvard University. Upon his return from the United States, he spent almost ten years teaching at the Faculty of Political Science at Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand. In 1986, Dr Surin ran for a Parliament seat in his home town, Nakorn Sri Thammarat. He has been returned to Parliament eight times since 1986. Dr Surin was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand from 1997-2001. He served as Chair of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting and the ASEAN Regional Forum from 1999-2000.

Laos to host Mekong summit in March

HANOI, 9 Jan — Laos is making preparations for the Third Summit of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) slated for 28-31 March in Vientiane capital, Lao newspaper Vientiane Times reported Monday.

Leaders from GMS members— Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar and China—as well as representatives from the Asian Development Bank will meet at the summit to promote economic, social, cultural, tourism and environmental cooperation within the region.

Iran has no plan to normalize ties with US

Teheran, 8 Jan — Iran has no immediate plan to normalize relations with the United States, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Mohammad-Ali Hosseini told reporters during his weekly briefing on Sunday. “Due to continuation of hostile US policies against Iran, Teheran has no programme for normalization of ties with Washington and that is not in our agenda,” Hosseini said. He apparently intimated to clarify remarks by Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei who said on Thursday that he was willing to restore diplomatic relations with the United States but doing so now would endanger Iran’s security.

Khamenei was quoted by state media as telling a student group meeting in the central Iranian province of Yazd that now it is not the appropriate time to resume diplomatic ties with the United States since it cannot “benefit” Iranian people.
California struggling to restore power

LOS ANGELES, 8 Jan—Utility crews across California worked overnight to restore electrical service to customers left without power due to a storm lashing the region, officials said Sunday.

During the first wave of the storm Friday night and early Saturday, more than one million households in California lost power. In Los Angeles, about 50,000 households were affected by the power outage, said Kim Hughes, spokesman, of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. But all those outages were fixed as of 7 am on Sunday, Hughes said. “There are only a few minor individual jobs being completed, but all circuit and neighbourhood outages from the first two have been restored,” Hughes said. —INTERNET

Chinese Defence Minister meets with Singaporean guest

BEIJING, 8 Jan—Chinese Defence Minister Cao Gangchuan met here Monday with Chiang Chie Foo, permanent secretary of the Singaporean Defence Ministry, and both sides discussed cooperation in the defence field.

Cao said China is satisfied with the good momentum of bilateral relations and will make joint efforts with Singapore to drive forward relations between the countries and Armed forces.

Chiang Chie Foo, who is here attending the first China-Singapore defence policy dialogue held Monday, said he hoped both countries could expand exchanges and cooperation in the defence area.

Chiang spoke highly of current bilateral state and military relations, saying Singapore seeks to deepen the friendly cooperation between the two defence ministries.

Chiang reiterated the Singaporean Government’s one-China stance. —MNA/Xinhua

Malaysia keen to reduce dependence on foreign labourers

KUALA LUMPUR, 8 Jan—The Malaysian Government is considering ways to reduce the number of foreign labourers, especially in the construction and industrial sectors, local Press reported on Monday. The government was concerned over the number of foreign workers which stands at about two million in industrial sectors, local Press reported on Monday.

The government was concerned over the number of foreign workers which stands at about two million in the country and wanted to reduce it, The Star quoted Malaysian Human Resources Minister Fong Chan Onn as saying.

One approach is to push for a pre-fabrication building to reduce manual labourers at worksites, Fong said.

—MNA/Xinhua

British Army accused of glamorizing war in its adverts

LONDON, 8 Jan—The British Army is targeting children as young as seven with a glamorous portrayal of warfare, a report said on Monday.

The Army, strapped for new recruits partly as a result of the negative publicity about conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, is going into schools promoting the “action man” side of a military career rather than the realities, said the report funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.

Britain is the only European Union country which allows children as young as 16 to be recruited, it noted.

“Marketing to children below recruitment age commonly glamorizes warfare,” the report said. “Minors are especially vulnerable to joining the Armed Forces without due consideration of the risks.”

The report, “Informed Choice? Armed Forces and Recruitment Practice in the UK”, calls for a more balanced depiction of Army life to be given and for the minimum age of recruitment to be raised to 17. The Ministry of Defence said it does not target under-16s but goes into schools to promote its work in an increasingly competitive job market.

“Armed Forces careers must compete against other potential employers in a competitive environment and it is right that they have the opportunity to recruit people when they are legally able to leave school,” a spokesman said. “The single-service schools teams visit about 1,000 schools a year between them — only at the invitation of the school — with the aim of raising the general awareness of their Armed Forces in society, not to recruit.”

—MNA/Reuters

Ecuador, Venezuela to explore gas in Guayaquil Gulf

QUITO, 8 Jan—Energy ministers from Ecuador and Venezuela Monday signed a statement of intent to begin gas exploration in the Gulf of Guayaquil.

Ecuadorean Energy Minister Galo Chiriboga said that state company Petroleos de Venezuela would assume exploration costs of 150 million US dollars. If exploration finds nothing, “there is no risk for Ecuador, but if the exploration comes up positive, the exploitation process will be negotiated”, he said.

The Navy Oceanography Institute will probably do the seismic studies, he added. —MNA/Xinhua

Flood water in Monon, Indiana on 8 Jan, 2008. Heavy rain and melting snow pushed Indiana rivers and streams over their banks Tuesday, with floodwaters killing at least three people, including two children in an SUV that plunged into several feet of water. —INTERNET
Vietnam eyes bigger realized foreign capital in 2008

HANOI, 8 Jan—Vietnam has targeted 5.5-6 billion US dollars in realized foreign direct investment (FDI) this year, up from 4.6 billion dollars last year, local newspaper Vietnam Investment Review reported Monday.

Foreign-invested enterprises in Vietnam are forecast to make total revenues of 38.8 billion in 2008, up 16.5 per cent against 2007. They are also predicted to gain export turnovers of 24.3 billion dollars this year, up 21.5 per cent over last year.

To attain the six-billion dollar target, Vietnam will remove obstacles preventing foreign investors from putting their promise into reality, including weakness in infrastructure network, shortage of skilled workers, incomplete investment legal framework, and absence of overseas investment promotion offices.

Phan Huu Thang, head of the Foreign Investment Agency under Vietnam’s Ministry of Planning and Investment said the country’s attraction of registered FDI capital in 2008 would as bright as 2007 on the back of the nation’s continued political stability and sustained economic growth.

Vietnam lured a record FDI of 20.3 billion dollars in 2007, bringing the total registered capital to 83 billion dollars with 8.590 operational FDI projects by the end of the year.

Jia Qinglin (L), chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, views Chinese paintings in an exhibition in Beijing, capital of China, on 8 Jan, 2008.—Xinhua

Lao Airlines launches route to Chinese city

HANOI, 8 Jan—Lao Airlines opened a new route between the World Heritage town of Luang Prabang and Kunming, capital city of China’s Yunnan Province to meet the need of growing tourism in the region, Lao newspaper Vietniane Times reported Monday.

“The opening of this new route (on 5 January) will mean we can better meet the demand and change in the tourism industry, as more tourists become interested in travelling to the region,” said the deputy director of the airline Leuy Boumbandit.

In 2007, Luang Prabang Province, home to the World Heritage site, welcomed 320,000 visitors, including 195,175 foreigners, and generated tourism revenues of about 80 million US dollars, said deputy head of the Provincial Tourism Administration, Khamlah Somphavilay.

The province is expected to receive 500,000 visitors in 2010, 650,000 visitors in 2015 and 800,000 visitors in 2020, and gain tourism revenues of more than 200 million dollars in 2020, he said.

Now, Lao Airlines operates four flights a week between Vientiane capital and Kunming. The carrier, currently having three aircraft, plans to purchase a new MA60 plane in the near future.

Lao Airlines transported 251,000 passengers in 2005, over 275,000 in 2006, and 330,000 passengers in 2007, the newspaper said.—MNA/Xinhua

China’s Customs revenue in 2007 hits record high

BEIJING, 8 Jan—China’s Customs revenue reached a record 758.46 billion yuan in 2007, up 24.3 per cent year-on-year, the General Administration of Customs (GAC) said on Monday.

The Customs revenue increased partly because of the increase of imports, which were up 20.5 per cent to 865.5 billion US dollars during the first 11 months of last year.

The Customs revenue from telecommunication equipment, integrated circuits, television receivers and printing machines rose considerably due to the increase in imports of these products, the administration said.

More imports of high-end cars and SUVs, and rising prices of imported staple goods such as copper, nickel and other metals also contributed to the revenue rise, it explained.

MNA/Xinhua

ECONOMIC NEWS

Iran cuts natural gas supply to Turkey

ANKARA, 8 Jan—Iran began to cut short natural gas supply to Turkey as of early Monday, but local officials said there was no serious problem for now, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported.

Officials of Turkish Petroleum Pipeline Corp (Botas) said that they have taken necessary measures to make sustain the gas supply to industry and residents. However, Energy & Natural Resources Minister Hilmi Gulen said on Sunday that Iran had reduced daily gas supply as of last week due to cold weather, noting that Ukraine also dropped the amount of natural gas it pumped to Turkey.

“We will solve the problem by all means. We will hold talks with Iranian officials and draw gas from our storage depots,” Gulen was quoted as saying.

MNA/Xinhua

Japan’s domestic new vehicle sales slide to 35-year low

TOKYO, 8 Jan—Japan’s domestic sales of new vehicles slid for the fourth year in a row to 3,433,829 units in 2007, marking a year on year decrease of 7.6 per cent and reaching a new record low since 1972, the Japan Automobile Dealers Association said Monday.

The industry body attributed the loss to continued surges of fuel price in the international market and Japan’s falling birthrate.

MNA/Xinhua

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MNA/Xinhua
Bangladesh to set up seven rental power plants in 2009

DHAKA, 8 Jan—Bangladesh will set up seven rental power plants in 2009 with a total electricity generation capacity of 260 megawatts to mitigate the electricity crisis across the country. The council committee on the government purchase Sunday approved the setting up of the seven rental power plants by private entrepreneurs, local newspaper The Financial Express reported Monday.

“These power plants must start producing electricity within 120 days of signing of the agreements,” Finance and Planning Adviser AB Mirza Azizul Islam told reporters after the meeting.

The finance adviser, who chaired the meeting, hoped that electricity generation from these plants would be added to the national grid before the next summer.

“Power purchase agreements with the concerned entrepreneurs would be signed by 15 January next,” Power Division Secretary M Fouzul Kabir Khan said.

Of the seven rental power plants, five are gas fired and two are liquid fuel-based. MNA/Xinhua

Foreign firms to build Vietnam’s second oil refinery

Hanoi, 8 Jan—Companies from Thailand, China, Australia, Malaysia and the United Kingdom will develop a multi-billion US-dollar crude oil refining and petrochemical complex with annual capacity of 7-8.4 million tons of crude oil in Vietnam’s central Thanh Hoa Province, according to local newspaper Vietnam Investment Review on Monday.

Following a memorandum of agreement signed by the provincial authorities and Thailand-based Saha Regal Best in late 2007, the Thai firm and its partners — China’s Kunming No 1 Construction and Engineering, Australia’s Leighton Holdings, Honeywell Limited and Global Union, Malaysia’s Trangsan Group, and the UK’s Jardin Lloyd Thompson — want to develop the Nhi Son complex which will produce liquefied gas, unleaded petrol, kerosene, jet fuel, diesel and asphalt.

MNA/Xinhua

Nepal to set up SAARC food bank

KATHMANDU, 8 Jan—The Nepali Parliament has endorsed the intergovernmental agreement to establish the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) food bank, local media reported on Monday.

According to nepalnews.com website report, Minister for Industry, Commerce and Supplies Shyam Sundar Gupta had presented a proposal for Parliament’s approval to the agreement, which was passed recently by the Cabinet.

The agreement to establish SAARC food bank as adopted by the SAARC during its 14th Summit held in New Delhi in April last year. The food bank will net as regional food security reserve for the SAARC member countries during normal time food shortages and emergencies, and provide regional support to national food security efforts, foster inter-country partnerships and regional integration, and solve regional food shortages through collective action.

Nepal will contribute to the 241.580 tons of food reserve with 4,000 tons of food grains. MNA/Xinhua

Uganda announces oil refinery plans

KAMPALA, 8 Jan—President Yoweri Museveni has announced plans to construct an oil refinery, a first step toward lessening Uganda’s reliance on foreign fuel.

“We intend to construct a mini-refinery, in Hoima, using the petroleum products there,” Museveni said on state-owned television, late on Sunday.

“This refinery will commence its operations in mid-2009, with the production of Heavy Fuel Oil, paraffin and diesel.”

Last year, Uganda discovered oil deposits at Hoima, 250 kilometres (150 miles) north western Uganda near Lake Albert.

Museveni has come under strong criticism as the country has no fuel reserves.

The political crisis in neighbouring Kenya highlighted Uganda’s exposure to fuel disruptions as election-related violence choked off supplies of fuel and petroleum products from Kenya’s Indian Ocean port to landlocked countries such as Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda and south Sudan. — MNA/Reuters

First ozone observatory in Tibet starts operation

LHASA, 8 Jan — The first ozone measurement observatory in Tibet Autonomous Region has become operational on the world’s highest plateau, according to local meteorological administration.

With an investment of 1.52 million yuan (208,000 US dollars), installment on the observatory began last December at an elevation of 3,648.9 metres in Lhasa, the regional capital. It is equipped the cutting-edge Brewer Ozone Spectrophotometer which alone costs 1.40 million yuan (192,000 US dollars).

“The observatory will provide precise information on the total ozone amount and the Ultraviolet-B (UVB) radiation.” He said the observatory will also reflect the changes in the ozone layer over the plateau.”

MNA/Xinhua

An engraved Zune Media Player is displayed during the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Nevada on 8 Jan, 2008. Customers can select from a choice of colours, 4 lines of text, and up to 27 original illustrations from 18 international artists with no extra charge when they order from the zuneoriginals.net website, a representative said. — Internet

Artist Bob Smith poses with his proposed Trafalgar Square fourth Plinth short listed model ‘Faites L’Art, pas La Guerre (Make Art, Not War)” on display at the National Gallery in London, on 8 Jan, 2008.— Internet

Polar bear cub Knut walks in an enclosure in Berlin zoo on 9 April, 2007. Knut, born on 5 Dec, 2006, had to be hand fed by a zoo employee after its mother Tosca refused the baby. —Xinhua

MNA/Xinhua

First ozone observatory in Tibet
Turkish forces seize 640 kilos of ammonium nitrate

ANKARA, 9 Jan— Turkish security forces found 640 kilos of ammonium nitrate hidden by members of the outlawed Kurdish Workers’ Party (PKK) in a shelter in eastern Turkey, Turkish military said on Tuesday.

According to a statement issued by the Turkish General Staff, the security forces “found 640 kilos of ammonium nitrate, hidden in a shelter in Baskale town of Van province,” the General Staff said. The Turkish military has massed up to 100,000 troops near the mountainous Iraqi border and has recently launched several cross-border attacks to battle separatist PKK rebels, who use northern Iraq as a launch pad for attacks against Turkey.

Live mice found on US flight to China

BEIJING, 9 Jan— As many as eight dead and live mice were found on a United Airlines’ (UA) flight from Washington to Beijing, the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) said here Monday.

The UA reported to the Beijing Capital International Airport on Sunday afternoon after its arrival that they found live mice on the flight UA897. All the entries to the plane were shut down for further examination.

An emergency team was immediately dispatched to the aircraft. The team put rat poison and mice traps at every possible corners on the aircraft, including the cockpit.

Eight mice, dead and live, were found at last, which were hidden in pillows. Live mice had been sent to labs for virus test. Experts said that mice could spread more than 35 fatal viruses, including plague spot and ship fever. In addition, they might bite circuits of the plane, and cause deadly accidents.

They also commented that it was very rare to find so many mice on one aircraft.

Floods hit southern Africa, over one mln at risk

LUSAKA, 9 Jan— Zambia said 1.5 million people would be displaced by floods and aid agencies warned the lives of tens of thousands were in danger on Monday as rising waters inundated southern Africa.

Zambia put half of its territory on alert, while floods in Mozambique, fed by heavy rains from there and Zimbabwe, killed six people and cut major transport links to neighbouring countries, relief officials said.

The early heavy rains have swollen rivers to alarming levels across the region, catching authorities off guard and forcing governments and aid agencies to step up efforts to avert crisis.

Two sailors drown, four missing in French shipwreck

RENNES (France), 9 Jan— Two sailors have drowned and four are missing after a fishing boat sank on Monday off the northern Brittany coast, maritime officials said.

A seventh person was picked up with hypothermia and taken to hospital. The “Petite Julie” trawler sent a distress signal when it was sinking at around 0350 GMT off the north coast of Finistere. Five helicopters and five ships were searching for the missing sailors on Monday morning in strong waves and high winds.

Dutch troops, Taleban combat leave seven dead

BRUSSELS, 9 Jan — Two Afghans were killed and five others injured in combat between Dutch troops and the Taleban in the southern Afghan Province of Uruzgan on Friday, Dutch paper De Volkskrant reported Monday.

Amid the victims were one child and three other children were wounded, the newspaper quoted the Dutch Defence Ministry as saying.

There were no reported casualties among Dutch troops, the paper said. A Dutch armoured vehicle was hit by a bomb on Friday morning near Khorna, 10 kilometres north of Tarin Kowt, where Dutch troops are stationed. — MNA/Xinhua

Bus crash kills eight in Utah

LOS ANGELES, 9 Jan — Eight passengers were killed on Monday when a chartered bus ran off a wet road and rolled over in southeastern Utah, authorities said.

The accident also injured 20 others in Mexican Hat, a remote area in southeastern Utah, said Trooper Cameron Roden of the Utah Highway Pated. — MNA/Xinhua

Helicopter crashes in Germany, killing one

BERLIN, 9 Jan — A helicopter crashed near southwestern German city of Heidelberg on Monday, leading to one death and one injury.

The helicopter was checking a cross-country gas pipeline from the air before the crash, according to German news agency DPA.

A pipeline monitor, 46, was killed during the crash, and the pilot, 51, was injured. The investigation is still underway. — MNA/Xinhua

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MNA/Xinhua

Tourists pose for photos in front of a giant Snow Wild Park in Shenyang, capital of northeast China’s Liaoning province, on 7 Jan, 2008—INTERNET

A tiger is pictured inside a car of a busted illegal wildlife trafficking gang, in central Hanoi, on 7 January. The wild cats had been anaesthetised by the animal smugglers but woke during a police raid. —INTERNET

Painting stolen from museum recovered in Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO, 9 Jan— Brazilian police said Tuesday they had recovered two paintings stolen from the Sao Paulo Museum of Art in December, including one piece by Spanish master Pablo Picasso.

The works are “Portrait of Suzanne Bloch”, painted by Picasso in his so-called Blue Period in 1904; and “O’Lavrador de Cafe”, (“The Coffee Farmer”), painted by the Brazilian master Candido Portinari in 1939.

The oil-on-canvas paintings are two of the most important pieces in the museum’s collection, and their total market value was estimated at around 100 million US dollars. A gang of burglars stole the paintings from where they were being displayed during the early morning of 20 December. Two suspects have been arrested, police said.

MNA/Xinhua

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MNA/Xinhua
Minister meets GM of Qatar Airline

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Jan — General Manager Commercial, Mr Ali M-Al Rais, Qatar Airline, Qatar, and party called on Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Minister for Transport at the Ministry here on 7 January. They discussed flight services between Doha and Yangon.

MNA

Prize presenting ceremony of Grand Royal Special Reserve Golf Championship 2008

YANGON, 9 Jan — Under the arrangements of the Myanmar Golf Federation and sponsorship of International Beverages Trading Co Ltd, Grand Royal Special Reserve Golf Championship 2008 Qualify Round continued its second day 18-hole event along with prize presenting ceremony at Phankhmyae Golf Club in Magway this evening.

After the event, Chairman of Magway Division Peace and Development Council Col Phone Maw Shwe presented first prize to Soe Lwin Oo who fired 138 nett total strokes, second prize to Aung Kyi, 140 strokes and third prize to Tin Lin Ko, 140 strokes. Brig-Gen Htay Aung of Magway Station awarded first to fifth consolation prize winners and Magway Division PDC member 1 Police Col Thein Kyi to sixth to tenth consolation prize winners.

Executive of MGF U Ko Ko Lay presented prize to Than Oo who stood first at Putting Challenge, and General-Secretary of MGF U Aung Kyi, Longest Drive prize to Aung Myint, and nearest to the pin prize to Dr Than Htuk Shen.

Production Manager of International Beverages Trading Co Ltd U Zaw Htak presented prizes to Kaung Naing, Myint Han, Soe Lwin Oo, Zaw Myo Han and Tin Lin Ko who are qualified for final round due to be held from 14 to 16 March, 2008 at City Golf in Yangon.

International Beverages Trading Co Ltd was main sponsor. Co-sponsors were Dusit Inya Lake Hotel, Srixon and Alpine (Purified Drinking Water) and Han Event Management organized the event.

MNA

60th Anniversary Independence Day marked in Myitkyina, Lashio, Pathein, Sittway, Toungoo

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Jan — Chairman Senior General Than Shwe. The commander inspected the 60th Anniversary Independence Day Flag hoisting and saluting ceremony (2008) at the office of Kachin State Peace and Development Council in Myitkyina at 4.20 am on 4 January. The attendees saluted the State Flag.

Next, the ceremony to mark the 60th Anniversary Independence Day took place at the sports grounds of the division in Pathein at 4.20 am on 4 January. Those present saluted the State Flag. Chairman of Ayeyawady Division PDC Commander of South-West Command Brig-Gen Kyaw Swe read out the message to mark the 60th Anniversary Independence Day (2008) sent by SPDC Chairman Senior General Than Shwe.

The commander and officials viewed the sports events held to mark the 60th Anniversary Independence Day. On behalf of the Chairman of SPDC, the commander presented awards to those of Shan State (North) who won medals conferred by the State. Likewise, Ayeyawady Division held the 60th Anniversary Independence Day (2008) commemorative ceremony at the sports grounds of the division in Pathein at 4.20 am on 4 January.

Bago Division celebrated the 60th Anniversary Independence Day (2008) commemorative ceremony at the sports grounds in Toungoo at 7 am on 4 January. The attendees saluted the State Flag. Chairman of Bago Division PDC Commander of Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko read out the message to mark the 60th Anniversary Independence Day (2008) sent by SPDC Chairman Senior General Than Shwe.

Likewise, Ayeyawady Division PDC Commander of North-East Command Brig-Gen Aung Htut read out the message to mark the 60th Anniversary Independence Day (2008) sent by SPDC Chairman Senior General Than Shwe. The commander inspected the 60th Anniversary Independence Day Flag hoisting and saluting ceremony (2008) at the office of Shan State (North) who won medals conferred by the State.

MNA

Seinle Shwepyi Journal in circulation

YANGON, 9 Jan — No 3 Volume V of Seinle Shwepyi Journal comes out today.

The weekly journal has covered news on efforts for sufficiency of drinking water, booming dried fish market in the upper Myanmar, booming sales figures of chemical fertilizer in Ayeyawady delta region and UNFPA’s project for prevention of mother-to-child HIV infection. Moreover, the journal has covered international news including economic news, articles and crime news in this issue.

The journal is available at Sarpay Beikman Bookshop on Merchant Street, the bookshop of Printing and Publishing Enterprise and Pan Shwepyi Bookshop on Tharabyu Road. Those wishing to send manuscripts may contact Seinle Shwepyi Journal Publishing House at Building No 228, Printing and Publishing Enterprise, on Tharabyu Road, Botahtaung Township, Ph 01-382070. — MNA
**USDA CEC member attends Kayin New Year Day**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 9 Jan—** CEC member of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung together with Chairman of Kayin State Peace and Development Council Brig-Gen Zaw Min donated provisions and K 1 million for Maha Bawdi Thitsa Pagoda to the Sayadaw of Kayin State central missionary monastery on 7 January.

They paid homage to Thitsa Thawta Mandine Pagoda to the Sayadaw and members of the Sangha and met with local people at Ahlet monastery in Mokkadi village.

The minister also accepted 2,600 membership applications of four villages.

The CEC member and the chairman visited physic nut plants growing ceremony in Mokkadi village and inspected giving free medical treatment at the village dispensary.

Next, they viewed the entertainment to mark Kayin Nwe Year Day at Mokkadi village BEHS (branch) and met with teachers and students.

The CEC member and the chairman also visited Hsin Shweli sugarcane plantation and onion plantation of farmer U Saw Toe Hlaing. — MNA

**Sale agents wanted**

**Yangon, 9 Jan—** Ministry of Industry 1 is producing 891 items of consumer and household goods. Among them, 498 items which are sold at Win Thuzar with the aim of extending its distribution sector.

Among others, 498 items which are sold at Win Thuzar and honoured the out performers. Journalists Association of Myanmar (JAMA) yesterday.

**Talks on industrial sector development on 11 Jan**

**Yangon, 9 Jan—** To honour the 14th annual general meeting of Myanmar Industrialists Association which will be held on 12 January, 2008, the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry will hold talks on development of industrial sector at Mingalar Hall of UMFCCI Office Tower at 1 pm on 11 January.

Executive of MWJA (Central) U Myo Thant (Maung Hsu Shin) also spoke and Daw Nan Ei Ei Zar spoke words of thanks.

**Tharaphu (Crow) donates cash to MWJA, honours sales agents**

**Yangon, 9 Jan—** Tharaphu (Crow) Magazine donated cash to Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association and honoured the outstanding sales agents at its 10th anniversary celebration at Sedona Hotel here yesterday.

At the celebration, Publisher of the magazine Daw Nan Ei Ei Zar donated K 100,000 to MWJA and honoured its best sales agents.

Executive of MWJA (Central) U Myo Thant (Maung Hsu Shin) also spoke and Daw Nan Ei Ei Zar spoke words of thanks.

**Good deed**

Good is the doing of that deed, having done which one does not repent and the result of which one experiences with delight and with a happy mind.

**Dhammapada 68**

**U Than Kyaw, Member of the Commission for Drafting the State Constitution.**

**Dr Daw Khin Mar Yi, Member of the Commission for Drafting the State Constitution.**

**Tekkatho Myat Thu, Member of the Commission for Drafting the State Constitution.**

**U Tin Aye, Member of the Commission for Drafting the State Constitution.**

**Thaungyi-Daikpyet new gravel road opened in Kyonpyaw**

**Yangon, 9 Jan—** To hail the 60th Anniversary Independence Day 2008, the 3.180-foot Thaungyi-Daikpyet gravel road section 6 was put into service in Kyonpyaw Township on 3 January.

The road was undertaken by Kyonpyaw Township Development Committee during 2007-2008 fiscal year.

Executive officer U Thant Zin Thein of Township Development Committee explained matters on new gravel road. A local resident spoke words of thanks.

Executive Officer U Thant Zin Thein presented the commemorative pennants to Chairmen of Township Peace and Development Council, Kyee-ai village tract PDC and Organizer of Kyee-ai village Union Solidarity and Development Association U Tun Lwin.

Chairman of Township PDC, executive officer and organizer of Village USDA cut the ribbon to open the new road which can benefit rural people from 26 villages of 13 village tracts. — MNA

**Daw Nan Ei Ei Zar speaks at the 10th anniversary celebration of Tharaphu (Crow) Magazine.** — MNA
Shwe Naing Ngan Journal comes out

YANGON, 9 Jan—Shwe Naing Ngan Journal volume VI no 16 is in circulation today.

It features articles written by Magyun Soe Myint, Soe Htay, Dr Khin Maung Nyo, Htet Naung and Maung Maung Myint Thein. Moreover, it carries economic news, international news and local news.

The journal can be bought at Sarpar Beikman bookshop, Printing and Publishing Enterprise bookshop, and Pan Shwe Pyi bookshop. Those wishing to send manuscripts may contact Shwe Naing Ngan Journal Printing and Publishing House No 228 Thein Phyu Street, Botataung Township Yangon, Ph: 01-382070.—MNA

YANGON, 9 Jan — Ministry of Industry-1 will organize special sales festivals at the township playgrounds in Katha, Sagaing Division from 8 to 17 January, at the compound of Hthinosein Pagoda in Mrauk U, Rakhine State from 11 to 17 January, at the Hlme playgrounds in Hlme Township, Yangon Division from 12 to 21 January, at the compound of Shwethalyaung Pagoda in Mogang, Kachin State from 16 to 22 January and at the Independence stone pillar ground in Maubin, Ayeyawady Division from 10 to 19 January. The special sales festivals will be held at the designated places from 8 am to 8 pm daily on a grand scale. — MNA

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Obama recalls being broke seven years ago

NEW LONDON (New Hampshire), 9 Jan — US Senator Barack Obama is running for the White House, but it was not so long ago that he was so broke his debit card was declined.

At an unscheduled campaign stop at Vessels & Jewels store in New London, Obama bought a necklace for each of his two young daughters and a key chain, spending 37 US dollars on his debit card.

Waiting for his receipt, the man who is hoping to be elected as America’s first Black president turned to an aide and said, “Have I told you the story of the 2000 convention?”

“After I had lost my congressional race I had been running on broke and I got talked into going to Los Angeles. I got to the airport and I tried to use my card but it was declined,” Obama said.

“That was only seven years ago,” he said. “It’s not that far from being normal, that’s my point.”

MNA/Reuters

YANGON, 9 Jan — The Government of Japan, under its Grassroots Grant Assistance (GGA) Scheme, granted US $8.250 for provision of medical equipment for the State General Hospital in Myitkyina, Kachin State.

Mr Tetsuro AMANO, Minister-counsellor/Deputy Chief of Mission, the Embassy of Japan in the Union of Myanmar, and Dr U Win Ko Ko, Medical Superintendent of the State General Hospital Myitkyina a recipient organization, signed the grant contract today.

In recognition of the hospital’s attempt for providing earlier detection of breast cancer for the population of Kachin State, the Government of Japan decided to fund a mammogram with processor and an ultrasound with a probe.

It is expected that this assistance will lower the mortality rate from breast cancer and benefit women in the area. — H

Vietnam’s rubber export to rise slightly in 2008

HANOI, 9 Jan — Vietnam is estimated to export 780,000 tons of rubber worth nearly 1.5 billion US dollars this year, posting respective increases of four per cent and 2.3 per cent, local newspaper Vietnam Investment Review reported Monday.

Vietnam, currently having 495,000 hectares of rubber plantations, plans to increase the acreage to 700,000 hectares by 2010.

The country has also grown hundreds of thousands of hectares in Laos and Cambodia.

Vietnam exports some 80 per cent of its rubber output to 40 countries and regions, including Chinese Mainland, South Korea, Russia, China’s Taiwan, the United States, Japan and Germany.

According to the Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade, the world’s demand for rubber will this year continue to rise with China leading the way with an 8-per cent increase, followed by the United States with 4.1 per cent, and the European Union with 2.2 per cent, the newspaper said.

MNA/Anhau

District News in Brief

Thanlwin road opens to mark 60th Anniversary Independence Day

HINTHADA, 4 Jan — Thanlwin road (Old Hospital Street No 1) was opened to mark the 60th Anniversary Independence Day on 2 January.

Chairman of Hinthada Township Peace and Development Council U Aung Kyaw Naing, Township Development Affairs Committee Executive Officer U Khin Maung Myint and townselder U Tin Saw formally opened the road.

The Township DAC contributed K 1,700,000 to the road construction and the public, K 1,200,000.

District DPRD

Coord meeting to build Flowers’ City held

PYIN ODLWIN, 22 Dec — The coordination meeting to build Flowers’ City in Pyin Oo Lwin Township, Mandalay Division was held at the meeting hall of Pyin Oo Lwin District Peace and Development Council on 3 December.

At the coordination meeting, District Secretary U Aung Thu Tun urged departmental officials to participate in the construction tasks and compilation of proposals for implementation of projects in 2008-2009. Departmental officials were engaged in the discussions.

Deputy Director-General U Oo Nyunt of Development Affairs Department and party go on an inspection tour of Mindat in Chin State on 19 December, 2007. They looked into flow of water in Bawkhwe lake and regular water supply tasks.

TOWNSHIP DAC

Health Deputy Minister inspects hospitals

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Jan—Secretary of National Health Committee Deputy Minister for Health Dr Myo Oo, accompanied by officials concerned, arrived at Gyobingauk People’s Hospital in Bago Division (West) on 1 January. At the meeting hall of the hospital, he met with doctors, nurses, health staff, members of township health committee, members of social organizations and spoke on the occasion. Afterwards, he looked into operation theatre, drug store, patient wards, labour room, delivery department and X-ray room.

He also inspected Minhla Hospital, Letpadan Hospital and Thatwady General Hospital.—MNA

Japanese Government provides Medical Equipment for State General Hospital in Myitkyina, Kachin State

YANGON, 9 Jan — The Government of Japan, under its Grassroots Grant Assistance (GGA) Scheme, granted US $8.250 for provision of medical equipment for the State General Hospital in Myitkyina, Kachin State.

Mr Tetsuro AMANO, Minister-counsellor/Deputy Chief of Mission, the Embassy of Japan in the Union of Myanmar, and Dr U Win Ko Ko, Medical Superintendent of the State General Hospital Myitkyina a recipient organization, signed the grant contract today.

In recognition of the hospital’s attempt for providing earlier detection of breast cancer for the population of Kachin State, the Government of Japan decided to fund a mammogram with processor and an ultrasound with a probe.

It is expected that this assistance will lower the mortality rate from breast cancer and benefit women in the area.
Sarkozy ready to wed Bruni, gives no date

PARIS, 9 Jan—French President Nicolas Sarkozy on Tuesday dropped a heavy hint he was preparing to marry Italian singer and former model Carla Bruni, but he avoided announcing a wedding date.

Sarkozy, 52, was asked at a news conference about his romance with Bruni after the Journal du Dimanche (JDD) newspaper reported on Sunday that the couple could wed on February 9, only two months after they met at a party in November. —MNA/Reuters

Four die in north China laundry fire

HORHET, 9 Jan—Four people were confirmed dead in a laundry fire early on Monday in north China’s Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the local fire brigade said.

Fire engulfed the laundry on the first floor of an apartment building on Heping Road in Donghe District of Baotou at around 1 a.m. It was put out at 2:50 a.m., a fire brigade spokesman said.—MNA/Xinhua

“Missing” canoeist couple facing extra charges

LONDON, January 9—A man who “returned from the dead” after apparently being lost at sea in a canoeing accident five years ago will face extra charges, as will his wife. Cleveland Police confirmed Tuesday.

John Darwin, 57, and his wife Anne, 55, will face additional charges of obtaining money by deception when they appear before Hartlepool Magistrates’ Court on Wednesday, a spokesman said. The pair already face charges of deception by dishonestly claiming his life insurance money. Anne Darwin, who was arrested following her return from Panama where she had recently moved, is charged with dishonestly obtaining 25,000 pounds by money transfer and dishonestly obtaining 137,000 pounds by money transfer.—MNA/Reuters

Images of the Day

The swimming pool in the most expensive new property ever sold in Britain is seen in this undated handout photograph received in London on 8 Jan, 2008.—INTERNET

The Hope Diamond is seen in this undated handout photo provided by Smithsonian Institution in Washington.—INTERNET

A view taken of the ‘Salone del Maggior Consiglio’, at the ‘Palazzo Ducale’, on 10 July, 2001 in Genoa, Italy. The original structure of the building dates back to the end of 1200, but a large part of the actual structure was built at the end of 1500. Most of the frescoes in this room were painted after a fire heavily damaged the original decoration in 1777.—INTERNET

Trabant cars produced by the former East Germany, drive past Cambodia’s main capital of Phnom Penh, on 9 Jan, 2008. Three Americans and a Briton, after traveling through 21 countries, have arrived in Cambodia by means of the two unlikely vehicles. —INTERNET
**ADVERTISEMENTS**

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

**MV BANG SAO TONG VOY NO (107)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANG SAO TONG VOY NO (107) are hereby notified that the vessel has arrived on 10.1.2008 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT**

**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY**

**AGENT FOR: M/S WONG SAMUT OCEAN SHIPPING CO, LTD**

Phone No: 256916/256919/256921

**TRADE MARK CAUTION**

**MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC INDUSTRIAL CO., LTD., a corporation incorporated and existing under the laws of Japan of 1006 Onoda, Kadora, Kadora-Shi, Osaka 571-8501, Japan, is the Owner of the following Trade Marks**

**National**

Reg. No. 5011/1996
Reg. No. 228/2003

in respect of “Class 7: Machines and machine tools; motors and engines (except for land vehicles); machine coupling and transmission components (except for land vehicles); agricultural implements; incubators for eggs, but not including ’carbon or graphite or carbonaceous or graphic products’ and/or ‘oil or grease seals and parts thereof, bearings and pads thereof, and similar thereto’.”

Fraudulent imitation or unauthorized use of the said Trade Mark will be dealt with according to law.

Win Mu Tin
M.A., H.G.P., D.B.L.
For MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC INDUSTRIAL CO., LTD.
P.O. Box 60, Yangon
Dated: 10 January 2008

**JOB VACANCY**

(Local Service Only/Salary in Kyat)

In order to up-grade working efficiency, we are looking for challengeable persons for her/his future.

1. Store Manager M/F (age 25-30 yrs) 1 Post
2. Admin Staff F (age 20-30 yrs) 2 Post
3. Account F (age 20-30 yrs) 1 Post
4. Business Staff M/F (age 20-30 yrs) 2 Post
5. Import & Export M/F (age 20-30 yrs) 2 Post
6. Store Staff M/F (age 20-30 yrs) 2 Post
7. Pattern Person M/F (age 20-30 yrs) 1 Post
8. Sewing Supervisor F (age 25-40 yrs) 1 Post
9. Finishing Supervisor M/F (age 25-40 yrs) 1 Post

A. English must be fluent in both speaking and writing for all posts.
B. Needs Computer Skill. Good personality performance. Interested persons, please forward your C.V. in English with relevant documents, copy of labour registration card and a recent photo to following address within (10) days.

**MYU & SUE GMT MFG CO, LTD.**

No. (64/65), Pyinlu Mintharygi St, Indl’1 Zone (4), Hainghthayar Township.

Phone: 786514, 707025

**ANNOUNCING A MARRIAGE**

Parents of both families agreed the marriage of

Ma Than Than Swe

daughter of (U Aung Than) & Daw Than Kyi

Hlaing Mucieung village, Dadye township,

Ayeawadi Division

Mg Tun Hlaing @ David Tun

son of U Than Chaung & Daw Ohn May

No.755, Anawmar 9th street, ward 13, South

Ookalapa township, Yangon on Thursday, 28th

of December 2007 at the presence of the

magistrate.

Mg Tun Hlaing @ David Tun, Ma Than Than Swe

and the parents of both families.

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

**MV KARANA SEMBILAN VOY NO (EAL 10)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KARANA SEMBILAN VOY NO (EAL 10) are hereby notified that the vessel has arrived on 10.1.2008 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT**

**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY**

**AGENT FOR: EASTERN CAR LINER LTD**

Phone No: 256924/256914

**Don’t Smoke**

**Internet**

**Up to 1,000 dead in Kenya violence**

Nairobi, 8 Jan—African Union mediation to end Kenya’s post-election turmoil, in which up to 1,000 people may have died, could start on Wednesday, opposition leader Raila Odinga said on Monday.

Odinga told Reuters AU chairman John Kufuor, the President of Ghana, who would arrive on Tuesday night, “He will be ready to begin the talks on Wednesday,” he said. Asked about the death toll in a week of violence since the disputed re-election of President Mwai Kibaki, which the government puts at 486, he said it was “closer to a thousand”.

Odinga said in an interview with Reuters that he had spoken to Kufuor by telephone after talks earlier on Monday with US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Jendayi Frazer.

He said Kufuor “confirmed to me that he has now received an invitation from (President Mwai) Kibaki to come and chair mediation talks”.

This was a “major, major breakthrough” and “a very significant move”, he said. — MNA/Reuters

**Singapore derivatives trading market hit record in ’07**

SINGAPORE, 9 Jan—Singapore Exchange Limited (SGX) announced Monday that its Futures and Options market saw another record year in 2007. Its derivatives volume exceeded 44 million contracts, surpassing its previous annual record volume in 2006 by 21 per cent.

SGX said in a statement that the strong increase in overall volumes was fuelled by soaring growth in some of its key contracts including the Nikkei 225, MSCI Taiwan and the MSCI Singapore Index Futures contracts, which also hit new record highs this year.

In particular, SGX saw its MSCI Singapore Index Futures (SiMSCI) volume grow by more than 80 per cent year-on-year.

**Plastic bags set to be banned in China**

BEIJING, 9 Jan—China launched a crackdown on plastic bags yesterday, banning production of ultra-thin bags and permitting supermarkets and shops from handing out free carriers from 1 June.

China uses too many bags and fails to dispose of them properly, wasting valuable oil and littering the country, China’s cabinet, the State Council, said in a notice posted on the central government Website (www.gov.cn).

“Our country consumes huge amounts of plastic bags every year. While providing convenience to consumers, they have also caused serious pollution, and waste of energy and resources, because of excessive use and inadequate recycling,” it said.

Worries about pollution are growing among citizens, as years of breakneck growth take their toll on the country’s air and water, but the new ban may not be universally welcomed.

Late last year the southern boom town of Shenzhen sparked a public controversy by unveiling draft regulations to ban free plastic bags in its shops.

Shopkeepers were worried that customers might be turned away. According to the new rules, from June shops, supermarkets and sales outlets would be forbidden to offer free plastic bags and all carriers must be clearly marked with their prices.

“We should encourage people to return to carrying cloth bags, using baskets for their vegetables,” the notice said. In addition the manufacture, sale and use of bags under 0.025mm thick is banned from the same date, with fines and confiscation of goods and profits for firms that flout the rules.

The cabinet also said financial institutions should consider adjusting taxes to discourage the production and sale of plastic bags and encourage the recycling industry.
Bangladesh rice import records hefty growth

DHAKA, 8 Jan—Nearly 950,000 tons of rice were imported during July-December period of 2007 compared to that of 173,000 tons imported during the corresponding period of the previous year, local newspaper The Financial Express reported Monday.

Rice import, thus, recorded a 434.35-per-cent growth in terms of quantity over that of the corresponding period of the previous year, according to Bangladesh Bank statistics.

The average cost of a ton of rice imported during July-December period of 2007 was 316 US dollars while it was 208 US dollars during the corresponding period of 2006. The import of rice witnessed a rise by 728.16 per-cent, in term of value, to 296.98 million US dollars during the period compared with 35.86 million US dollars of the same period of the previous year.

Bangladesh is facing acute food deficit following the production loss caused by twice monsoon flooding and devastating cyclone “Sidr” last year that battered the country’s southern coastal region.

Cuban scientists discover new drugs for fighting heart diseases, parasites

HAVANA, 8 Jan— Cuban researchers have discovered substances that can reverse the side effects of drugs used to fight heart diseases and parasites, the country’s Juventud Rebelde newspaper reported Tuesday.

The chemicals were derived from tiadiazines, based on their potential anti-parasite properties and the diversification of heterocyclic systems with pharmaceutical properties, the newspaper quoted Hortensia Rodriguez, head of Havana University’s Organic Synthesis Laboratory, as saying.

After studying new agents which could be more effective against dangerous parasites, the researchers then sought compounds with novel molecular structures, using methods with a minimal environmental impact, the newspaper said. Heart diseases and acute parasitic infections are among the world’s most serious diseases.

Malaysia to woo more big-spending visitors

KUALA LUMPUR, 8 Jan— Malaysian tourism authorities are pulling out all the stops as they set out to woo more big-spending visitors, local media reported on Monday.

The target is to attract 21.5 million tourists this year, especially well-heeled and long-haul visitors from the Arab and East Asian countries.

The ambitious plan is expected to rake in 50 billion ringgit (14.7 billion US dollars) in tourism revenue.

The move was spurred by the success of the Visit Malaysia Year 2007 campaign, which the Tourism Ministry estimated had brought in 20.7 million tourists and total tourist receipts of 45.7 billion ringgit (13.4 billion US dollars).

It is also in line with remarks by Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak last month, urging the Tourism Ministry to focus on ultra-rich tourists.

Such “quality tourists” would bring in more revenue as they would usually spend twice more than the average tourist, deputy Tourism Minister Donald Lim Siang Chai said after opening a Chinese calligraphy and painting exhibition here on Sunday.

Generally, tourists usually stay 6.7 nights and spend 2,300 ringgit (676 US dollars) per visit, but quality tourists stay an average of eight nights and spend between 4,000 ringgit (1,176 US dollars) and 5,000 ringgit (1,471 US dollars), he said.

A little sunshine in your life could make it longer

BEIJING, 8 Jan— A little more sunshine might help you live longer, according to a study published Monday that suggests for some people health benefits from the sun outweigh the risk of skin cancer.

Sunlight prompts the body to produce vitamin D, but fear of skin cancer is keeping many people in the dark, depriving them of an important protection from a range of diseases, researchers said. The skin cancer risk is there but the health benefits from some sun exposure is far larger than the risk,” said Johan Moan, a researcher at the Institute for Cancer Research in Oslo, who led the study. “What we find is modest sun exposure gives enormous vitamin D benefits.”

A number of studies have found protective effects from higher vitamin D intake for some cancers and ailments such as rickets, osteoporosis and diabetes, Moan said. Certain foods contain vitamin D but the body’s main source is the sun.

The researchers calculate that given the same amount of time spent outside, people living just below the equator in Australia produced 3.4 times more vitamin D than people in Britain and 4.8 times more than Scandinavians.

This means even though rates of internal cancers such as colon cancer, lung cancer, breast cancer and prostate cancer rise from north to south, people in the sunnier latitudes were less likely to die from the diseases, the researchers said.

Members of the Indian Press cover the unveiling of Bajaj Auto’s Life four-wheel passenger vehicle in New Delhi. India’s second-biggest motorbike maker Bajaj Auto said on 8 Jan, 2008 it aims to bring out a cheap, highly fuel-efficient small car within four years in a tie-up probably with French carmaker Renault.

This photo, published on 7 Jan, 2008, shows a cluster of the rare plant Plantago eros var. fengdouensis.
**SPORTS**

**Barca say they have permission to retain Eto’o**

MADRID, 9 Jan — Barcelona have written permission from Cameroon to delay striker Samuel Eto’o joining the country’s African Nations Cup preparations until Saturday, the Primera Liga club’s coach Frank Rijkaard said on Tuesday.

“We have written permission from the Cameroon Federation,” Rijkaard told a news conference.

“The important thing for Samuel is to play and the Federation and their coach have seen that that is best for them and for us.”

Barcelona have included Eto’o in their squad to face Sevilla in the first leg of their King’s Cup last-16 tie on Wednesday and expect to field him at home to Real Murcia in the Primera Liga on Saturday before he hooks up with Cameroon.

“I want to keep moving Singapore forward, I have a lot of support so I’m happy to stay,” he told reporters.

“Now I just want to get involved in training as soon as possible.”

Belluschi, who has two caps, is unlikely to feature in the derby against Panathinaikos at the weekend but should play a part in Olympiakos plans against Chelsea in the last 16 of the Champions League next month.

“It is a dream for every Argentine footballer to play in Europe,” he said. “I feel lucky and happy to be here and hope that I can reproduce the form I had in Argentina.”

**Avramovic to coach Singapore until 2011**

BANGKOK, 9 Jan — Singapore coach Radojko Avramovic has signed a three-year extension to his contract, which will keep him in the city-state until 2011.

The 58-year-old Serb, who has coached the Lions since 2003, will lead the team through qualifiers for the 2010 World Cup and the 2011 Asian Cup.

“I want to keep moving Singapore forward, I have a lot of support so I’m happy to stay,” he told Reuters on Tuesday.

“I had looked at other options but we’ve worked hard these last four years and I’m really happy with the way it’s been going.”

The former Oman and Kuwait national team coach, who steered Singapore to victory in last year’s ASEAN (Southeast Asian) Championships, said his focus would now be on the players of the future.

**Real’s Heineze out for up to five weeks with injury**

MADRID, 9 Jan — Real Madrid defender Gabriel Heinze will be out of action for up to five weeks with a torn muscle in his left leg, the Primera Liga leaders said on Tuesday.

The Argentina international picked up the injury during the 2-0 home win over Real Zaragoza in the Primera Liga on Sunday and had to be substituted after 16 minutes. Heinze has suffered a string of muscle problems since joining from Manchester United for 12 million euros in August, and has only made six starts in the league.

**Cara, Huber reach Medibank Int’l quarterfinals**

HARARE, 9 Jan — Cara Black and Liezel Huber of Zimbabwe flushed out their disappointing semifinal exit from last week’s Mondial Australian Women’s Hardcourt Tennis Tournament to reach the quarterfinals of the Medibank International in Sydney, Australia.

The world’s top women’s doubles team returned to the top of their game to eke out a ruthless 6-1, 6-2 defeat of Australians Nicole Pratt and Bryanne Stewart in the first round of the 600,000-US-dollar Tier II tournament on Monday. Black and Huber are the top seeds at this hardcourt tournament while their opponents were unseeded. Black and Huber were just fired-up in a match which took them less than an hour, according to Tuesday’s The Herald.

**Avramovic leads Argentina midfileder Belluschi signs for Olympiakos**

ATHENS, 9 Jan — Greek champions Olympiakos Piraeus have signed Argentina international midfielder Fernando Belluschi on a four-and-a-half year contract, the club said on Tuesday.

No details of the fee to be paid to his previous club River Plate have been made public but reports in the Greek media said it could reach 6.5 million euros.

“I am very happy. I was really anxious for the negotiations to be completed,” Belluschi, 24, told reporters.

“Now I just want to get involved in training as soon as possible.”

Belluschi, who has two caps, is unlikely to feature in the derby against Panathinaikos at the weekend but should play a part in Olympiakos plans against Chelsea in the last 16 of the Champions League next month.

“IT is a dream for every Argentine footballer to play in Europe,” he said. “I feel lucky and happy to be here and hope that I can reproduce the form I had in Argentina.”

Greek media have reported Olympiakos are negotiating with another Argen- tine, Sergio Almiron who joined Juventus for nine million euros in June but has only played three times.

**Marseille chairman says Cisse will not leave**

Marseille, 9 Jan — French international Djibril Cisse is not for sale in the January transfer window, Olympique Marseille chairman Pape Diouf said on Tuesday.

“Djibril Cisse will not leave. He will stay with Olympique Marseille until the end of the season,” Diouf told a Press conference.

“Djibril has been approached, it’s true. I have myself been approached by Manchester City and my answer was a point-blank no,” he added.

“We talked about it and he accepted my position. He understood I would not let him go and didn’t make an issue of it.”

Marseille have included Cisse in their line-up against Swiss side Young Boys in their King’s Cup last-16 tie on Tuesday. The 23-year-old, who has scored 11 goals in 16 appearances this season, claimed he would stay in France until 2011.

**Milwaukee Bucks forward Yi Jianlian from China shoots under pressure from Philadelphia 76ers guard Willie Green (33) during the second quarter of their NBA basketball game in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on 8 Jan, 2008.**

**Monterrey forward Humberto Suazo (R) fights for a header with San Luis defender Oscar Mascorro during the second half of their Interliga Mexican soccer club tournament in Carson, California, on 8 Jan, 2008.**

**Barcelona have included Eto’o in their January transfer window, Olympique Marseille and my answer was a point-
Bangladesh to build 2,000 cyclone shelters in 2008

DHAKA, 9 Jan—Bangladesh, still struggling to overcome the devastating effects of cyclone Sidr late last year, will build 2,000 new storm shelters in 2008.

“Some 2,000 new cyclone shelters will be built in 15 low-lying coastal districts, which had been trampled by the 15 November cyclone,” Food and Disaster Management Secretary Mohammad Ayub Miah told Reuters.

US arrests eight in online sports betting operation

NEW YORK, 8 Jan—US authorities arrested eight people on Monday in connection with a Costa Rica-based online sports gambling operation they said made millions of dollars in profits annually.

Twelve men face charges including conspiracy and illegal gambling in an indictment unsealed on Monday in Manhattan federal court for their role in operating a gambling website and call center that serviced US-based sports bookies.

US prosecution of foreign online gambling companies has drawn criticism from such companies in Europe, who have accused the Justice Department of violating World Trade Organization rules by singling out foreign companies in such cases.

In the latest case, US prosecutors said that starting in 2005 Carmen Cicalese headed the operation out of Costa Rica, charging several hundred US bookies weekly fees of 15 US dollars to 30 US dollars for each gambler they registered.

GM Chairman and CEO Rick Wagoner is pictured here with the Cadillac Provoq Fuel Cell Concept prior to its world introduction during his keynote speech at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, on 8 January.—INTERNET

WEATHER

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Taninthayi Division and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. Night temperatures were (4°C) below January average temperatures in Chin State, (5°C) below January average temperatures in upper Sagaing Division and about January average temperatures in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Haka (1°C), Lohtim (3°C), Mogok and PyinOoLwin (3°C) each.

Maximum temperature on 8-1-2008 was 92°F. Minimum temperature on 9-1-2008 was 61°F. Relative humidity at 09:30 hours MST on 9-1-2008 was 70%. Total sunshine hours on 8-1-2008 was (8.2) hours approx.

Rainfall on 9-1-2008 was nil at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2008 was nil at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (4) mph from West at (17:30) hours MST on 8-1-2008.

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 10-1-2008: Weather will be partly cloudy in Taninthayi Division and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. State of the sea: Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters.

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

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 10-1-2008: Fair weather.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 10-1-2008: Fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 10-1-2008: Fair weather.
People’s Desire

★ We favour stability.
★ We favour peace.
★ We oppose unrest and violence.

Electric Power No 2
Minister inspects tower construction plan

YANGON, 9 Jan — Minister for Electric Power No 2 Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint accompanied by officials inspected the progress of the construction of 230 KV towers between Toungoo main sub power station to Thakayta main sub power station and construction of bore pile on 8 January. Deputy Chief-Engineer U Tint Lwin of Construction Project Special Group No 1 under the Public Works of Ministry of Construction and Project Director U Thein Hlaing of Electric Power Supply Enterprise under the Myanma Electric Power Enterprise reported on progress of work. The minister fulfilled the requirements and inspected the site. — MNA

INSIDE

Research works are being conducted for production of new medicines and finding out new therapies with the use of medicinal plants for progress of Myanma traditional medicine. Concerted efforts are being made for production of potent medicines and finding out effective therapies for the diseases that cannot be cured by western medicines. — PAGE 2 PERSPECTIVES

Minister looks into Royal Kaytumadi Hotel Construction Project

Hotels and Tourism Minister Maj-Gen Soe Naing inspects Royal Kaytumadi Hotel Construction Project in Toungoo. — H&T

INSIDE

Research works are being conducted for production of new medicines and finding out new therapies with the use of medicinal plants for progress of Myanma traditional medicine. Concerted efforts are being made for production of potent medicines and finding out effective therapies for the diseases that cannot be cured by western medicines.

Skyful liars attempting to destroy nation
★ BBC lying
★ VOA deceiving
★ RFA setting up hostilities
★ Beware! Don’t be bought by those ill-wishers