Senior General Than Shwe sends Independence Day message

All national brethren urged to firmly uphold five objectives of 60th Anniversary Independence Day 2008

Realize objectives with Union Spirit and patriotism while making firm resolve to build a new, peaceful, modern and developed discipline flourishing democratic nation

(Nay Pyi Taw, 4 Jan—The following is a translation of the message sent by Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary Independence Day.

On this auspicious 60th Anniversary Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar, I with love and respect would like to greet all the national people residing in the nation.

It has been 60 years since Union-born national races have regained independence and sovereignty of the Union of Myanmar from the colonialists after sacrificing lots of blood, sweat and lives.

Throughout history, national brethren including Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Banar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan had the fine tradition of living in amity, unity, mutual compassion and understanding and through thick and thin based on Union Spirit. And with that fine tradition and noble spirit, the national brethren were vigorously and daringly safeguarding the State for the perpetuation of the nation and sovereignty. Hence, the nation stood tall in the world with dignity as a sovereign and independent state under the rule of her monarchs throughout the past successive eras.

In the late 19th Century, Myanmar monarchy met its end and the nation lost independence and sovereignty due to colonialist aggression. Naturally, Myanmars are gifted with the spirit to make sacrifices for the nation and race, the spirit to cherish and value own nation, race, sovereignty, literature and traditions and culture and the spirit to never tolerate any acts that will harm national dignity. Hence, they fought back the intruders sacrificing lots of blood, sweat and lives and regained independence and sovereignty.

(See page 8)

Senior General Than Shwe accepts credentials of Nepalese Ambassador

(Nay Pyi Taw, 3 Jan—Ms Guma Laxmi Sharma (Bishowkarama), newly accredited Ambassador of Nepal to the Union of Myanmar, presented her credentials to Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, at Bayintnaung Yeiktha, here, at 10 am today.

Also present on the occasion were Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Deputy Ministers for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Thu and U Maung Myint and Director-General U Kyaw Kyaw of the Protocol Department.

MNA

Senior General Than Shwe accepts credentials of Nepalese Ambassador Ms Guma Laxmi Sharma (Bishowkarama).

MNA

WITH INDEPENDENCE DAY SUPPLEMENT

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Safeguard independence and sovereignty of the nation

The 60th Anniversary Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar falls on the 4th of January 2008 (today).

Myanmar has stood as an independent and sovereign nation with own monarchs since time immemorial.

In the late 19th Century, Myanmar lost sovereignty, following the three aggressive wars waged by the colonialists. Feeling very bitter about alien subjugation, the entire people bravely fought back the colonialists with nationalistic fervour and unity. So, the nation regained independence.

The entire national people have to bear in mind the history of independence struggles that cost a lot of lives, blood and sweat of forefathers.

Now, the seven-step Road Map is well under way for building a peaceful and modern nation with flourishing discipline. And the drafting of the State constitution is in progress.

Today’s young generations should be constantly aware of the colonialists’ exploitation in the economic, education, social and cultural sectors in the colonial days.

The entire people are therefore duty-bound to work together for emergence of a new modern and developed nation, while valuing and safeguarding the independence, for which successive generations of ancestors had to sacrifice their lives.

Perspectives

Friday, 4 January, 2008

No wish to continue to cooperate with NLD

46 members resign from Thakayta Township NLD

Yangon, 3 Jan — A ceremony to present resignation letters of 46 members from Thakayta Township National League for Democracy was held at the Dhammyan in the junction of No 2 Khine Shwe Wah Street and Thalawati Street, 10/South-13 Ward in Thakayta Township yesterday.

Ward NLD Secretary Daw Khin Than Htay said that they disagreed with NLD party and they did not want to cooperate with NLD any longer. That was why they resigned from NLD of their own volition and presented letters of resignation to Chairman U Mya Kyang of Thakayta Township Multi-party Democracy General Election Sub-commission.

The 46 members are Daw Khin Than Htay, Daw Than Than Aye, Daw Pyone Yi, Daw Zin Mar Tun, U Ye Lwin Oo, U Kyaw Zin, Ma Htay Htay Mar, U Tun Tun Oo, U Myo Thu, Daw Win Yin, Ma Khin Mar Htay, Daw Myint, Ma Mu Mu Kyaw, Daw San Myint, U Min Min, U Min Lwin, Daw Mya Thit Nwe, Daw Than Than Htay, U Nyunt Win, U Tun Oo, Daw Than Win, Daw Nwe Nwe San, U Hla Kyaying, Daw Hla Hla Hwiwe, Daw Hla Oo Min Htay, U Tin Aung, U Nyi Naing, Ma Moe Thida, Ma Zin Zin, U Baw Baw, Ma Khin Moe Moe, Ma Thin Thin Maw, U Kyaw Nyunt, Daw Aye Than, Ma Su, Daw Pyone Kyi, U Min Aung, Daw San, Daw Aye Cho, Daw Nu Nu Khine, Daw Mar Oo, Daw Tun Oo, Daw Tun Tun Oo, Daw Tin Tin Nwe, Daw Tun Tun Win, U Min Min Tun, U Aung Kyaw Thet and Ma Zin Nwe Oo.

Resignation letters were sent to NLD (Headquarters) on Shwegondine Road in Bahan Township and local authorities concerned. — MNA

Members of Healthy Shop (Paris) honoured

Yangon, 3 Jan — Healthy Shop (Paris) honoured its members today at a ceremony to mark the anniversary of the cosmetic company’s penetration of Myanmar market.

At the ceremony held at Sedona Hotel here, Chairman of Healthy Shop (Paris) U Kyaw Min extended greetings and presented membership certificates to new members.

Managing Director U Myo Thwin of Healthy Shop (Paris) presented certificates of honour to outstanding directors of the Healthy Shop (Paris).

Managing Director U Myo Thwin spoke words of thanks and picked up lucky draws for guests at the ceremony. — MNA
**INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

**US chopper kills suspected insurgent in Iskandriyah**

Baghdad, 2 Jan—A US helicopter bombed areas near the town of Iskandriyah south of Baghdad after two US patrols attacked by roadside bombs, killing a suspected insurgent and wounding another, local police said on Tuesday.

Two roadside bombs detonated on Monday night near US patrols outside the village of Lagash near the town of Iskandriyah, 50 kilometres south of Baghdad, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

A US helicopter flew over the area and bombed several positions around the sites of the two attacks, killing a man and wounding another, the source said. The US troops transported the two suspected insurgents to the police station in the town of Iskandriyah, he added. Separately, a joint US and Iraqi security force searched several areas north of the city of Hillah, some 100 kilometres south of Baghdad, detaining 46 suspected insurgents, including a Saudi national, the source said.

**Saudi Crown Prince hopes to boost ties with China**

Riyadh, 3 Jan—Saudi Crown Prince Sultan Bin Abdul-Aziz said on Tuesday that he wishes to strengthen ties with China to push for a deeper and faster development of the strategic and friendly bilateral cooperation.

Sultan, also Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Aviation and Inspector General, made the remarks during his meeting with the new Chinese Ambassador Yang Honglin. Calling China a “sincere friend”, Sultan said his country places great importance on its friendly cooperation with China.

Saudi Arabia and China are both peace-loving countries and have a long history of cooperation, he said. The Crown Prince envisions a broad perspective in bilateral cooperation, citing similar political positions and the mutually complementary economies of the two countries.

**Pakistan issues Bhutto killing photos, offers reward**

Islamabad, 3 Jan—Pakistan authorities published on Wednesday photographs of a severed human head and two men standing in a crowd moments before Benazir Bhutto was killed and offered a reward for their identification.

Opposition leader and former prime minister Bhutto was killed in a gun and suicide-bomb attack as she left a rally in the city of Rawalpindi last Thursday.

One of the pictures, published in a notice in Pakistan’s biggest Urdu-language newspaper, shows two men standing in the crowd outside the Bhutto rally moments before she came out and was killed. The picture, already published by a television station, shows a clean-shaven young man wearing sun glasses, a white shirt and dark waist coat.

Behind him stands a man with a white shawl over his head, who a television station said was believed to be the bomber.

Later pictures and video footage have shown the young man firing a pistol at Bhutto as she left the rally standing up through the sunroof of her land cruiser to wave to supporters. A second photograph published in the notice on Wednesday shows a severed human head, apparently that of the suicide bomber.

**Cyprus, Malta embrace euro**

Brussels, 2 Jan—Cyprus and Malta are embracing the euro on Monday as the two island countries count down to the new year.

Six years after the euro coins and banknotes came into circulation on 1 January, 2002, Cyprus and Malta will become the latest European Union (EU) countries to join the euro zone, the single currency club within the EU.

The adoption by Cyprus and Malta of the euro marks the second enlargement of the euro zone, bringing the total number of the eurozone members from currently 13 to 15.

Slovenia adopted the single currency on 1 January, 2007 in the first enlargement, making itself the 13th member.

To welcome this historic moment, a large poster of new euro coins to be issued in Cyprus and Malta has been on display at the side wall of the European Commission headquarters building since half a month ago.

**Jin Yu, a nail beautician, embellishes a painting formed by fake nail tablets in Nanjing, capital of east China’s Jiangsu Province, on 2 Jan, 2007.—Xinhua**

**A 3 kilometre long, 33 metre wide bridge in Rui’an City, in eastern China’s Zhejiang Province, is completed on 2 Jan, 2008, after the two sections of the bridge met in the middle. The Rui’an Bridge, a two-way road with six lanes, has a weight capacity of 3,000 tons.—Xinhua**

**American wounded in attack on US embassy car in Sudan**

Dubaï, 2 Jan—An American was wounded in the chest in a shooting at a vehicle that belongs to the US embassy in Sudan, Al Arabiya television reported on Tuesday.

The driver, probably a Sudanese, was killed in the shooting at the sports utility vehicle in a main street in the capital Khartoum in the early hours of the morning, it said.—MNA/Reuters

**INTERNET**

Zhejiang Province, is completed on 2 Jan, 2008, after the two sections of the bridge met in the middle. The Rui’an Bridge, a two-way road with six lanes, has a weight capacity of 3,000 tons.—Xinhua

**INTERNET**

Seafood producers to look at alternative ways to increase supply.—INTERNET
Shanghai port continues to rank first in the world

SHANGHAI, 2 Jan — The throughput of TEUs (twenty-foot container equivalent units) at Shanghai port increased by 20.4 per cent to reach 26.15 million, the bureau said.

The cargo throughput of Shanghai port reached 443 million tons in 2005, surpassing the Port of Singapore to become the largest in terms of cargo throughput.

The Shanghai port now has 42 TEU piers and routes to more than 300 ports worldwide.

The municipal government authorities have been striving to build the Shanghai port into an international shipping centre. — MNA/Xinhua

Georgia to secede from ex-Soviet group

MOSCOW, 2 Jan — Georgia has planned to eventually secede from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), a loose grouping of ex-Soviet republics, but not in a hurry, ITAR-TASS news agency reported on Monday, citing a senior Cabinet member.

"Georgia will eventually secede from the CIS, but this decision will be made at the most advantageous moment so that it does not harm Georgia," State Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Georgy Barazidze was quoted as saying.

CIS, formed after the Soviet collapse in 1991, groups 12 of the former 15 republics of the Soviet Union with Moscow in a dominating position. — MNA/Xinhua

Pub smoking ban belatedly reaches Germany, France

BERLIN/PARIS, 2 Jan — For years, anyone needing a nicotine fix in a German pub or French cafe did not even have to light up — the air was already so full of smoke that they only had to open their mouth and inhale.

But that all changes on Tuesday when strict new bans take effect in two of Western Europe’s final bastions for smokers, Germany and France. There was long and fierce resistance to the prohibitions on tobacco that other countries imposed.

"When I have a beer I want to smoke, and if I can’t smoke here anymore, I won’t come anymore," said Hans Dorsmann, 60, a Berlin salesman summing up a gloom-filled view that has made countless small pub operators fear for their businesses. — MNA/Reuters

Israelian Embassy evacuated in Canberra

CANBERRA, 3 Jan — The Israeli Embassy in Australia’s capital Canberra was evacuated on Wednesday after the discovery of a suspicious package, a spokesman told Reuters.

"The embassy was evacuated this morning after we discovered white powder in an envelope sent through the mail," Dor Shapira said. A police spokesman said the heavily-guarded embassy had been evacuated as a precaution. — MNA/Reuters

Two US sailors found dead in hotel room in Ghana

DARK, 2 Jan — Two US Navy sailors were found dead on Tuesday in their hotel room while on shore leave in the West African country of Ghana, the US Navy said in a statement.

The cause of death was unknown and was being investigated by Ghanaian authorities in cooperation with US Navy officials, the statement said.

Both sailors were stationed aboard the Fort McHenry, a dock landing ship conducting a port visit to Ghana as part of a US naval partnership programme in West Africa. — MNA/Reuters

Three die in New Year crash in London

LONDON, 2 Jan — Three people have died and two others have been seriously injured after their car collided with a bus in south east London, Scotland Yard said.

All five were travelling in a Peugeot 106 which hit the single-decker bus near the junction of Little Heath and Cemetery Lane in Charlton at around 6:30 am.

The three victims — two females and one male — were pronounced dead at the scene.

The others, a male and a female, were cut free by fire officers and taken to hospital. There were not believed to be any injuries among those travelling on the bus.

The families of the victims were being informed, police said. — MNA/Reuters

Strong quakes jolt Papua New Guinea

WASHINGTON, 2 Jan — Two strong quakes, a magnitude 6.2 quickly followed by a magnitude 6.1 aftershock, struck Papua New Guinea on Tuesday, on the eastern shore of the main island of New Guinea, the US Geological Survey reported.

The first quake, initially reported as a magnitude 6.7 but later verified at 6.2, was centred 55 miles (88.5 kilometres) north of the town of Lae. It was only 29.8 miles (50 kilometres) deep.

The aftershock, deeper at 38.5 miles (62 kilometres), struck at 1913 GMT, very nearby, 46 miles (74 kilometres) north of the town of Lae. It was a magnitude 6.2 quickly followed by a magnitude 6.1 aftershock, struck Papua New Guinea on Tuesday, on the eastern shore of the main island of New Guinea, the US Geological Survey reported.

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The aftershock, deeper at 38.5 miles (62 kilometres), struck at 1913 GMT, very nearby, 46 miles (74 kilometres) north of Lae. The quakes struck on land, near the eastern coast. No reports of damage or casualties were immediately available. — MNA/Reuters

Snow-covered 3,766-metre-high (4,129-yard-high) Mount Fuji is seen clearly behind the landmark Tokyo Tower, left, beyond a distance of about 100 kilometres (60 miles) northeast from Tokyo’s Shinjuku waterfront area on 3 Jan, 2007. —INTERNET
Iran, Vietnam ink MoU on commercial cooperation

TEHERAN, 2 Jan—Iran and Vietnam on Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the trade and economic sectors, the official IRNA news agency reported.

Iranian Commerce Minister Masoud Mir-Kazemi and visiting Vietnamese Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Cao Duc Phat inked the MoU on the second day of the Fifth Iran-Vietnam Economic and Commercial Cooperation Commission Meeting in Teheran.

The MoU underlines the need for expanding cooperation in the field of customs, support for joint investments, preferential tariffs as well as engineering and technical services, IRNA said.

By signing the MoU, the two nations can prepare grounds for making use of their capabilities to develop mutual relations for long-term trade and economic cooperation, the report said.

SAR chief says Macao’s eco-prosperity to benefit all

MACAO, 2 Jan—Macao’s Government will make efforts to ensure that the whole community will benefit from the booming economy by enhancing public services and curbing inflation, said Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) Chief Executive Ho Hau Wah in his New Year speech on Monday.

Extending his New Year greetings to the Macao people, Ho promised that, in the coming years, the government will work on translating Macao’s economic prosperity into various high-quality public services, and adopting resilient and comprehensive policies to curb inflation that affects people’s daily lives.

He said Macao’s economy, centring on the tourism and leisure industries, has taken shape as it was designed and brought prosperity to the SAR in the past year.

New car sales in France up 3.2% in 2007

PARIS, 3 Jan—Sales of new cars in France hit 2,064,633 units in 2007, an increase of 3.2 percent compared with 2006, according to a statement from the Committee of French Car Makers (CCFA).

In the statement published on Wednesday, the CCFA said car registration “jumped” by 21.2 percent to 182,638 units in December 2007.

According to the committee, after the uncertainty during the first half of the year, the situation reversed in July and the increase became more marked in the last month of 2007. —INTERNET

Israel economy booms at 5.3% GDP in 2007

JERUSALEM, 2 Jan—The Israeli economy grew by 5.3 per cent in 2007, up from 5.2 per cent in 2006, the Central Bureau of Statistics said on Monday.

2007 is the fifth consecutive year of rapid growth, and the fourth in which the economy grew in excess of 5 per cent, it said. Growth during the year was mainly supported by a stronger private sector and higher exports. Consumer spending in the private sector grew 7.2 per cent over 2007, from 4.5 per cent a year earlier, while exports rose 8.6 per cent compared with 5.9 per cent in 2006, the bureau said. Investments in fixed assets rose by 13.6 per cent following a rise of 10.1 per cent in 2006.

Israel’s growth rate in 2007 was double that of members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and nearly three times the rate in the United States. Per capita gross domestic product was at 92,700 shekels (22,600 US dollars), a 3.5 per-cent rise over 2006, the highest rise of all Western countries.—MNA/Xinhua

Vietnam to build first 6-star hotel

HANOI, 2 Jan—Vietnam will build its first six-star hotel in Nha Trang city of central Khanh Hoa Province next year, as part of a scheme to boost tourism in the country, local newspaper Vietnam News reported Wednesday.

The French-designed Vinpearl Hotel will include 150 rooms, covering 25 hectares on Hon Tre island in the coastal city. Vinpearl Tourism and Trading Joint Stock Company, the major tourism and infrastructure company in Vietnam, will carry out the project, but the project’s investment capital and groundbreaking date have not yet been released.

Vietnam is regarded as one of the most attractive destinations for foreign visitors, the construction of high-standard hotels and restaurants will contribute to creating positive images of Vietnam’s tourism for foreign visitors, said Nguyen Trong Hien, chairman of the company’s management board, noting that the company is also planning other projects in Nha Trang in order to promote its trademark to international visitors.

A Chinese girl shows irregular-shaped poker cards featuring Fuwa, the mascots of Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, at a franchiser in Wuhan in central China’s Hubei Province, on 2 Jan, 2008.—INTERNET

A young fisherman in US captured a weird fish on Wednesday, whose white belly looks like a big balloon. Its body is stuffed with hairy flesh thorns, fins are translucent in the colour of cod-liver oil pill and gray back is specked with white dots.—INTERNET

ECONOMIC NEWS

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MNA/Xinhua

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By signing the MoU, the two nations can prepare grounds for making use of their capabilities to develop mutual relations for long-term trade and economic cooperation, the report said.
Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to Senior General Than Shwes

NAY PYI TAW, 4 Jan—The following are messages of felicitations from foreign Heads of State sent to Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council, on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

From Norodom Sihamoni, King of Cambodia
Mr Chairman,
The auspicious celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar gives me the opportunity to extend to Your Excellency, on behalf of the Cambodian people and on my own behalf, my warmest congratulations and best wishes for Your personal well-being, as well as for a happy future of the Union of Myanmar.

The multiform cooperation between our two countries is not just beneficial for the development of our bilateral relations as well as that of ASEAN. Cambodia and Myanmar are Countries whose friendship is based on mutual respect and support for each other. Cambodia has always supported the aspirations of the people of Myanmar for independence, peace and development. I am confident that the bonds of friendship and cooperation between our two Nations will continue to flourish.

Please accept, Mr Chairman, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr Chhoummaly Sayasone, President of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic
Your Excellency,
On the auspicious occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the people of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and on my own behalf, I have a pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and through Your Excellency to the entire brotherly people of the Union of Myanmar. I am gratified to note that the friendly relations and good cooperation between our two countries have been continuously developed in bilaterally as well as within the framework of ASEAN. I am confident that the friendly ties and good cooperation will be further enhanced and strengthened in the years to come for the interest of the peoples of our two nations as well as for peace, stability and cooperation for the development in the region and the world.

May I take this opportunity to wish Your Excellency good health and well-being and continued progress and prosperity for the people of the Union of Myanmar.

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

From King Akihito of Japan
On the occasion of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar, I have great pleasure in sending Your Excellency my heartfelt congratulations and sincere good wishes for Your happiness and for the prosperity of the people of Your country.

From Mr Yasuaki Nogawa, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan
Your Excellency,
On the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Independence of the Union of Myanmar, I have the great pleasure to convey to Your Excellency on behalf of the Korean People, my heartfelt congratulations.

The past years have witnessed significant growth in mutual understanding and friendship between our two countries. I am confident that our friendly relations will be further advanced to the mutual benefit of our two peoples.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my best wishes for Your continued good health, happiness and the prosperity of Your great country.

From H.E. Mr. Luis Donaldo Cesar Castillo Ruiz, First Vice-President of the Council of State and of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba
Your Excellency,
The commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Independence gives me the welcome opportunity of extending to you and to the people and government of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the Cuban people and government, most cordial congratulations and to renew our resolve to continue enhancing the relations of friendship and cooperation between our countries.

Upon expressing sincere wishes for the prosperity of that friendly nation and for your personal happiness, I renew to you the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr Abdullah Gul, President 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 wish for your personal health and happiness and for the continued progress and prosperity of the people of Myanmar.

From King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, King of Saudi Arabia
I am grateful to send cordial and best regards to Your Excellency on the occasion of the 60th 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 heartfelt congratulations on the auspicious occasion of your 60th 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 Abdulalziz Al Saud, Crown Prince, Deputy Premier, Minister of Defense and Aviation and Inspector General, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
I am pleased to send the congratulatory message on the occasion of the 60th 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 60th 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 Mr Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa
Your Excellency,
On the auspicious occasion of the celebration of the Union of Myanmar’s Independence Day on 4 January 2008, the Government and people of the Republic of South Africa join me in conveying to Your Excellency, (See page 7)
Foreign Heads of State send felicitations...

(From page 6)

the Government and people of the Union of Myanmar our
warmest greetings and sincere congratulations.
May I take this opportunity to express the wish for
Your Excellency’s good health and also reaffirm our desire
to further enhance and consolidate the excellent bonds of
friendship that exist between our countries.
Please accept Your Excellency, my best wishes
for your personal good health and prosperity for the
Government and people of the Union of Myanmar.

From Mr Hu Jintao, President of the People’s Republic of
China
Excellency,
Upon this auspicious occasion of the 60th
Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of
Myanmar, I would like to, on behalf of the Chinese people
and in my own name, extend to Your Excellency and
through you to the people of Myanmar the warmest
congratulations and best wishes.
China and Myanmar are linked by common
mountains and rivers while the two peoples enjoy profound
Pauk-Phai friendship. Continuous consolidation and
development of good-neighbourly and friendly relations
of cooperation serve the fundamental interest of two peoples
and are conducive to peace, stability and development of
Asia.
I am willing to make joint efforts with Your
Excellency to further promote the relations between China
and Myanmar.
May the Union of Myanmar enjoy prosperity and
her people well-beings, and wish Your Excellency good
health and every success.

From Mr Kim Yong Nam, President, Presidential,
Supreme People’s Assembly, Democratic People’s
Republic of Korea
I extend warm congratulations to you and through
you, to people of the Union on 60th Independence Day of
the Union of Myanmar.
Convinced that friendly relations between our
two countries will further expand and strengthen as required
by a new century, I take this opportunity to sincerely wish
you good health and happiness as well as greater successes
in your work for country’s stability and prosperity.

From Mr S R Nathan, President of Singapore
Excellency,
On behalf of the people of the Republic of
Singapore, I wish to convey our warmest wishes to Your
Excellency and the people of the Union of Myanmar on the
auspicious 60th anniversary of the Independence of
Myanmar.
I wish to assure Your Excellency that my
Government will support the Government of Myanmar in
all its endeavours to secure for the Myanmar people the
goals of unity, peace, democracy and national development.
Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest
consideration. — MNA

Laotian Vice-President sends felicitations to
Vice-Senior General Maung Aye

NAY PVI TAW, 4 Jan—The following is the
message sent by Mr Bounnhang Vorachith, Vice-President
of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, to Vice-Senior
General Maung Aye, Vice-Chairman of the State Peace
and Development Council, on the occasion of the 60th
Anniversary Independence Day of the Union of
Myanmar.

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

From Mr Bounnhang Vorachith, Vice-President
of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic
Vice-Senior General Maung Aye,
On the auspicious occasion of the 60th
Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of
Myanmar, I have a pleasure to extend my warmest
congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency.
I have a full hope that the traditional relations of
friendship and good neighbourly cooperation between
our two countries and the peoples of our two nations Laos
and Myanmar will be further strengthened and developed.
May I take this opportunity to wish Your
Excellency good health, well-being and success in your
noble task.

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

Foreign Heads of Government send felicitations to
Prime Minister General Thein Sein

NAY PVI TAW, 4 Jan—The following are
messages of felicitations from foreign Heads of
Government sent to General Thein Sein, Prime Minister
of the Union of Myanmar, on the occasion of the 60th
Anniversary Independence Day of the Union of
Myanmar.

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

From Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun
Sein, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia
Excellency,
On behalf of the Royal Government and people of
Cambodia, I have the great pleasure to extend my
heartfelt congratulations to Your Excellency on the happy
occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Independence
Day of the Union of Myanmar, and best wishes of
happiness and prosperity to the people of Myanmar.
I note with satisfaction that the relations of close
friendship and good cooperation between our two
countries have been strengthened and developed day by
day for the mutual interests of our two peoples as well as
for a stronger ASEAN family.
Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances
of my highest consideration.

From Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun
Sein, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia
Excellency,
On behalf of the Royal Government and people of
Cambodia, I have the great pleasure to extend my
heartfelt congratulations to Your Excellency on the happy
occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Independence
Day of the Union of Myanmar, and best wishes of
happiness and prosperity to the people of Myanmar.
I note with satisfaction that the relations of close
friendship and good cooperation between our two
countries have been strengthened and developed day by
day for the mutual interests of our two peoples as well as
for a stronger ASEAN family.
Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances
of my highest consideration.

From General Surayud Chulanont (Retd), Prime
Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand
Excellency,
On behalf of the Royal Thai Government and the
Thai people, I have the honour to extend to Your Excellency
our sincere congratulations and warmest wishes for the
prosperity of the Union of Myanmar and her people on the
occasion of the Independence Day.
As we commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the
establishment of our diplomatic relations, I wish to
reaffirm to Your Excellency that Thailand will continue
its constructive cooperation with the Union of Myanmar
in both bilateral and multilateral fora. I also firmly
believe that our close consultation and collaboration
particularly in ASEAN and ACMECS frameworks
will lay a solid foundation for our sustainable
development in the years ahead.
Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of
my highest consideration.

From Mr Yasuo Fukuda, Prime Minister of Japan
Excellency,
On the 60th anniversary of the Independence
Day of the Union of Myanmar, I wish to extend to Your
Excellency my warm congratulations and sincere wishes
for the development of your country.
Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my
highest consideration. (See page 9)
Nowadays, the entire people have unanimously adopted the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed discipline-flourishing democratic state as the national goal and are striving to realize it. The government has been giving priority to ensuring stability of the State and the rule of law, building economic infrastructures and developing human resources which are essential for building a new nation. It has been working overtime to ensure equitable progress in all parts of the nation. It has laid down 24 special development zones project, border areas development project and rural development project and is implementing them for harmonious development of the entire nation. The government has been making all-out efforts in every aspect to lay a durable foundation for the new nation.

The government has already proclaimed the seven-step Road Map to build a new, peaceful, modern and developed discipline-flourishing democratic nation. The government has been realizing the Road Map phase by phase and it successfully concluded the National Convention on 3 September 2007, which is the most important step. The National Convention successfully and unanimously adopted fundamental principles and detailed basic principles to write a constitution. The Commission for Drafting the State Constitution has been formed and assigned duties to it. The commission is now implementing its task of drafting the constitution in accord with the fundamental principles and detailed basic principles adopted by the National Convention.

On this glorious Independence Day, I with love and respect urge all the national brethren born in the Union to firmly uphold the following five objectives of the 60th Anniversary Independence Day 2008 and vigorously realize them with Union Spirit and patriotism while making a firm resolve to build a new, peaceful, modern and developed discipline flourishing democratic nation:

1. All the national people to constantly join hands for safeguarding the perpetuation of independence and sovereignty of the State;
2. All the national people to collectively strive for non-disintegration of the Union and non-disintegration of national solidarity;
3. To ensure emergence of an enduring constitution in line with the fundamental principles and detailed basic principles adopted by the National Convention that has been completed successfully;
4. All the national people to harmoniously make all-out efforts for building of a modern, developed discipline-flourishing democratic nation;
5. All the national people to cooperate in realizing the State’s seven-step Road Map with Union Spirit, patriotic spirit and the spirit of sacrifice.—MNA

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo delivers an address at School Family Day for 2007-2008 Academic Year. — MNA

Secretary-1 Li-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo presented prizes to 17 outstanding students for the 2007-2008 academic year and posed for a documentary photo together with them. Then, Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin presented certificates of honour to the students who won gold medals in international and South-East Asian sports events and posed for a documentary photo together with them. — MNA
Foreign Heads of Government send...

(from page 7)

From Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed, Chief Adviser to the Non-Party Caretaker Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh

Excellency,

On behalf of the people of Bangladesh and on my own behalf, I have great pleasure in conveying to Your Excellency and through you to the friendly people of the Union of Myanmar, our warmest greetings and heartfelt felicitations on the joyous occasion of the Independence Day of Myanmar.

On this happy occasion, I express my firm conviction that the existing friendly relations between Bangladesh and Myanmar would continue to grow in large magnitude for the best benefit of our two peoples. I avail of this opportunity to express my earnest wishes to Your Excellency for your good health, happiness and long life and for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Myanmar.

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

From Mr Mohammadmian Soomro, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Excellency,

It gives me great pleasure to extend to Your Excellency, on behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan and on my own behalf our sincere greetings and warm felicitations on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar, falling on January 04, 2008.

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

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

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

Your Excellency,

I have great pleasure to congratulate Your Excellency on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

It’s with honour that I refer to Your Excellency’s visit to Sri Lanka in August this year which contributed for furtherance of the longstanding bilateral relations and goodwill between the two countries. I take this opportunity to express once again the sincere appreciation of the Government and the people of Sri Lanka for the continued generosity of the Government and the people of the Union of Myanmar of gifting of two elephants during this visit. I firmly believe that the bonds of friendship cooperation that so happily exist between our two countries will be further strengthened for the well-being of our two peoples in the future.

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 Wen Jiabao, Premier of the People’s Republic of China

Excellency,

Upon this auspicious occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar, I would like to, on behalf of the Government of the People’s Republic of China and in my own name, extend to Your Excellency and through you to the Government of the Union of Myanmar our warmest congratulations and best wishes.

The Chinese Government treasures the Paik-Paw friendship between China and Myanmar, and is willing to make joint efforts with the Myanmar side for the consolidation of the traditional friendship, the enhancement of mutual beneficial cooperation, and the continuous promotion of the relations between China and Myanmar.

May the Union of Myanmar enjoy prosperity and her people well-beings, and wish Your Excellency good health and smooth work.

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

I extend warm congratulations and greetings to you, your government and people on 60th Independence Year of the Union of Myanmar.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere wish to you for your good health and happiness and same kind of wish to your people for continued progress and prosperity.

From Madame Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, President of the Philippines

Excellency,

On behalf of the government and people of the Republic of the Philippines, I wish to extend best wishes and warm felicitations to the government and people of the Union of Myanmar on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

The friendly relations between our two Governments and our peoples continue to strengthen and thrive as we aim to nurture excellent ties as neighbouring countries and brothers in ASEAN.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration. — MNA

Secretary-1

awards...

(from page 8)

Minister for Education Dr Chan Nyein awarded prizes to 17 Basic Education High Schools for performance in the tasks of greening the schools and their environs for the 2007-08 academic year and had a photo taken along with them.

Then the first session of the prize presentation ceremony concluded with a song by students of BEHS No 2, Nay Pyi Taw.

The second session of the ceremony started at 9 am with a song by BEHS No 3 Nay Pyi Taw.

Minister for Hotels and Tourism Maj-Gen Soe Naing presented prizes to 16 outstanding ninth graders for 2007-08 academic year from states and divisions. Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint presents prize to an outstanding student. — MNA
Notifications on conferring titles and medals of commendation issued

Union of Myanmar
State Peace and Development Council
Notification No 1/2008
11th Waining of Nadaw, 1369 ME
(4 January 2008)

The State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar has conferred religious titles on the following Most Venerable Sayadaws, Gandhathura Pariyatti Lecturer Sayadaws, Vipsasanadhikara Patipatti Kammathana Instructor Sayadaws, Mobile Dhamma Preachers, national foreign missionary figures and outstanding donors of the Four Essentials to the Buddha Sasana.

Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Title

1. Bhaddanta Naginda, Myoma Monastery, Ward 4, Hpa-an, Kayin State
2. Bhaddanta Phadama, Maha Dhammakaya Monastery, Monywa, Mandalay Division
3. Bhaddanta Sein, Myoma Monastery, Mawlamyine, Mon State
4. Bhaddanta Sasa, Bhamini Tawya Monastery, Yeiktha, Mayangon Township, Yangon Division
5. Bhaddanta Vimala, Thindalmahe Monastery, Mandalay, Mandalay Division
6. Bhaddanta Weidhi, Sagaing, Sagaing Division

Agga Maha Pandita Title

1. Bhaddanta Indaca, MyouU Monastery, Kyain Kyauk, Kayin State
2. Bhaddanta Phadama, Maha Dhammakaya Monastery, Monywa, Mandalay Division
3. Bhaddanta Sasa, Bhamini Tawya Monastery, Yeiktha, Mayangon Township, Yangon Division

Agga Maha Pandita Titles on six laity; Agga Maha Thiri Sayadaws; Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Titles on two laity, Thudhamma Manijotadhara Titles on three laity; Thiri Thudhamma Theingi Titles on five laity; Thith Thudhamma Manijotadhara Titles on three laity; Thitha Thudhamma Theingi Titles on two laity, Thudhamma Manijotadhara Titles on 24 laity and Thudhamma Theingi Titles on 31 laity.

Under the Notification No 2/2008, medals for excellent performance in medical field (Third Class) to seven persons; medals for excellent performance in administrative field (First Class) to 53 persons; medals for excellent performance in administrative field (Second Class) to 44 persons; medals for excellent performance in administrative field (Third Class) to 153 persons; medals for excellent performance in social field (First Class) to 102 persons; medals for excellent performance in social field (Second Class) to 87 persons; medals for excellent performance in social field (Third Class) to 166 persons; medals for Ye Thitha to four persons, medals for Ye Thira to four persons, medals for Ye Tali to two persons and medals for Ye Kyawswa to four persons.

Under the Notification No 3/2008, Military Good Service Thingaha Medals were presented to 1337 persons.

Under the Notification No 4/2008, Military Good Service Medals were presented to 2947 persons.

Under the Notification No 5/2008, Good Public Service Medals were presented to 5250 persons.

Under the Notification No 6/2008, Good Myanmar Police Force Medals were presented to 24 persons.

Under the Notification No 7/2008, MFP Service Medals were presented to 173 persons.

Under the Notification No 8/2008, Public Service Medals were presented to one retired personnel and 14,801 personnel and Law and Order Restoration Medals to one retired personnel and 25,122 personnel.

MNA

Notification No 1/2008
11th Waining of Nadaw, 1369 ME
(4 January 2008)
Union of Myanmar
State Peace and Development Council Notification No 2/2008
11th Waning of Nadaw 1369 ME
(4 January, 2008)

The State Peace and Development Council has conferred titles of commendation on the following persons.

Excellence in Science (Third Class)
1. Daw Khin Myat Lwin, Lecturer, Technical and Vocational Education Department, Ministry of Information and Technology
2. Dr Thazin Han, Assistant Lecturer, Technical and Vocational Education Department, Ministry of Science and Technology
3. Dr Khin Mar Soe, Lecturer, University of Computer Studies (Yangon), Ministry of Science and Technology
4. Dr Tin Myat Htwe, Lecturer, University of Computer Studies (Yangon), Ministry of Science and Technology
5. Dr Soe Soe Khine, Assistant Lecturer, University of Computer Studies (Yangon), Ministry of Science and Technology
6. Dr Wae Nwe Khine, Assistant Lecturer, University of Computer Studies (Yangon), Ministry of Science and Technology
7. Dr Thandar Phyu, Assistant Lecturer, University of Computer Studies (Yangon), Ministry of Science and Technology
8. Dr Myat Thuzar Tun, Assistant Lecturer, University of Computer Studies (Yangon), Ministry of Science and Technology
9. Dr Myat Thuzar Tun, Assistant Lecturer, University of Computer Studies (Yangon), Ministry of Science and Technology
10. U Soe Myint (Soe Lwin Myint), Deputy Chief Editor, Naing-Ngan Gonyi Magazine, Ministry of Information and Technology

Excellence in Medical Field
(Second Class)
1. Dr Than Tun Soe, Director (Advisor), Medical Research Department (Lower Myanamr), Ministry of Health
2. Dr Khin Kyone Kyi, Deputy Director-General, Medical Research Department (Lower Myanamr), Ministry of Health

Excellence in Medical Field
(Third Class)
1. Dr Cho Cho Su Mon, Deputy Director, Research, Medical Research Department (Lower Myanamr), Ministry of Health
2. Dr Win Aung, Deputy Director (Research), Medical Research Department (Lower Myanamr), Ministry of Health
3. Dr Zaw Myint, Deputy Director (Research), Medical Research Department (Lower Myanamr), Ministry of Health
4. Dr Win Maw Tun, Deputy Director (Research), Medical Research Department (Lower Myanamr), Ministry of Health
5. Dr Daw Khin Khin Aye, Research Officer, Medical Research Department (Lower Myanamr), Ministry of Health

Excellent Performance in Industrial Field
(First Class)
1. Dr Thein Kywe, Director, Dry Zones Greening Department (Mandalay), Ministry of Forestry

Excellent Performance in Industrial Field
(Second Class)
1. Air/1837 Lt-Col Min Aung, Commandant (Air Mechanical Depot), Ground Training Base, Ministry of Defence
2. Navy/3554 Lt-Cdr Aung Thu Soe, Officer-in-Charge, Head of Department, Naval Dockyard Command, Ministry of Defence
3. Navy/3559 Lt-Cdr Htain Lin Aung, Officer, Head of Department, Naval Dockyard Command, Ministry of Defence
4. Navy/3638 Lt-Cdr Than Oo, Head of Branch, Naval Dockyard Command, Ministry of Defence
5. U Clement Sadara, Associate Professor, Mandalay Technological University, Ministry of Science and Technology
6. Dr Phyu Phyu Win, Deputy Director, Metallurgy Research and Development, Technical Development and Cooperation Department, Ministry of Science and Technology

Excellent Performance in Agricultural Field
(Second Class)
1. U Kyaw Win, Deputy General Manager, Yangon Agricultural Service, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation
2. U Aung Thu Soe, Deputy General Manager, Yangon Agricultural Service, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation
3. U Aung Maung, Deputy General Manager, Yangon Agricultural Service, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation

Excellent Performance in Agricultural Field
(Third Class)
1. Daw Nyo Nyo, Professor, University of Agriculture (Yezin), Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation
2. Dr Thein Bahadur, Associate Professor, University of Agriculture (Yezin), Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation

(To be continued)
21,233 arrested for drug trafficking in Costa Rica in '07

SAN JOSE, 2 Jan—A total of 21,233 people were arrested for involvement in drug trafficking in 2007, a report by the drug control authorities in the country said Tuesday.

An average of 63 people were arrested daily from 1 January to 5 December in 2007 for violating the Narcotics Law, said the report.

However, 95 per cent of the arrestees were seized with very small amounts of drugs and it was hard to determine if they were for personal use or for sale.

Only 374 people, 280 Costa Ricans and 94 foreigners, were found guilty of distributing and selling drugs.

The police received 176 phone calls with information on the activities of drug dealers, said a chief of the Police Drug Control agency, who withheld his name for security reasons.

“I believe the best intelligence work is done by the common citizen,” he said. — MNA/Xinhua

Kung fu actor Jet Li tops 2007 star income list

BEIJING, 3 Jan—Chinese kung fu actor Jet Li made the most money in 2007 among China’s entertainment elite, totalling some 465 million yuan, or around 62 million US dollars, as listed by Shanghai-based Oriental Morning Post on Wednesday.

It was the third year that the newspaper made a through calculation of stars’ annual income based on their media coverage. The 44-year-old actor starred in three films in 2007, “The Warlords”, “The Forbidden Kingdom” and “The Mummy 3.” His salary from “The Warlords” alone was 100 million yuan. A sharp rise as he got only one yuan for his debut film “The Shaolin Temple” 27 years ago!

Following him was another action star, Jackie Chan with the total pool of about 428 million yuan.

Hong Kong pop king Jackie Cheung ranked first among the singers, thanks to his 2007 world tour “The Warlords” show, which presented altogether 75 concerts.

Malaysia-born Chinese ethnic actress Michelle Yeoh was the richest female star of the past year, raking in an annual income of 80 million yuan. She was at seventh spot.

Taiwan girl group SHE were the only female singers on the list. They earned about 62.5 million yuan from their concerts, shows and TV commercials.

Police dogs start patrolling Beijing subway stations

BEIJING, 3 Jan—Police dogs began regular patrols in Beijing’s crowded subway stations on New Year’s Day, sniffing for incendiary substances carried by passengers. The police dogs have been trained to be comfortable with the crowded environments and slippery surfaces of subway stations, said Wang Ning, deputy head of the detection detachment of the Beijing Traffic Police Division of the Beijing Public Security Administration.

He said eight dogs are on patrol at five downtown subway stations, including those that serve the central landmark, Tian’anmen Square.

“More dogs will join the patrols later. We only use small species, such as Labrador retrievers and spaniels, for their communications and people skills,” said Wang. The administration has stepped up attempts to detect any incendiary devices or explosives that might be carried in public places.

Fircrackers and oil-based paints are the flammable products most often seized by the police on public transport. Fireworks are considered a must by many Chinese for festival celebrations, especially for the coming Spring Festival, or Lunar New Year, which will fall on 6 February.

The security patrol ahead of the festival will be good practice for the police dogs ahead of the Beijing Olympic Games later this year, said Wang. — MNA/Xinhua

Bolivia seizes 431 tons of drugs in 2007

LIMA, 2 Jan—The Bolivian anti-drug task forces seized some 431 tons of drugs in 10,400 operations throughout 2007, arresting 4,178 suspects, according to news from La Paz.

The drugs included 17 tons of cocaine and 413 tons of marijuana, said an announcement released Tuesday by the Bolivian Government.

Last year, the forces destroyed 3,925 drug factories and 6,296 drug pools, confiscating some 1,551 tons of coca leaves used to produce drugs, the announcement said. — MNA/Xinhua
Lack of deep sleep may increase risk of type 2 diabetes

WASHINGTON, 2 Jan — Suppression of deep sleep in healthy young adults significantly decreases their ability to regulate blood-sugar levels and increases the risk of type 2 diabetes, researchers at the University of Chicago Medical Centre reported on Monday in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science.

Deep sleep, also called “slow-wave sleep”, is thought to be the most restorative sleep stage. This study found that after only three nights of selective deep sleep suppression, young healthy subjects became less sensitive to insulin.

Although they needed more insulin to dispose of the same amount of glucose, their insulin secretion did not increase to compensate for the reduced sensitivity, resulting in reduced tolerance to glucose and increased risk for type 2 diabetes. The decrease in insulin sensitivity was comparable to that caused by gaining 20 to 30 pounds, said the researchers.—Internet

Morning gargle may be used for cancer tests

BEIJING, 3 Jan — Morning gargle could be used sometime as one way for people to find whether they have head and neck cancer, US researchers said as quoted by media reports Thursday.

Scientists at the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Centre in Baltimore used to use mouth rinses that capture genetic signatures linked to cancer as a screening tool for heavy smokers and alcohol drinkers — those at high risk for head and neck cancers.

Patients were asked to brush the inside of their mouths, then rinse and gargle with a salt solution. The scientists filtered out cells in the rinsed saliva that might contain one or more of 21 bits of chemically altered genes associated with head and neck cancers.

“The challenge is to predict which hypermethylated genes are most specific to cancer,” lead investigator Dr Joseph Califano of Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions said in a statement.

SanDisk unveils USB flash drive with web backup

BEIJING, 3 Jan — SanDisk Corp Wednesday introduced a USB flash drive with automatic online backup, the first of its kind linking up with the Internet to offer new features.

The Cruzer Titanium Plus is SanDisk’s first USB drive with backup capabilities. The 4Gbyte device will be featured at the International Consumer Electronics Show 7-10 Jan in Las Vegas, Nev.

When consumers store documents, photos and music onto SanDisk’s new Cruzer Titanium Plus USB flash drive, it will back up that digital information to a Web service offered by a startup company called BelnSync, which stores data onto Amazon.com Inc’s computers.

“The Cruzer Plus comes with a six-month subscription to the BelnSync backup service at no additional charge. After opening a personal, password-protected account, any files copied to the drive from a computer are automatically backed up online.

If the computer is offline, then the files will be backed up the next time the drive is plugged into an Internet-connected machine. —Internet
**SPORTS**

**Ramos determined to keep Berbatov at Tottenham**

**London, 3 Jan — Tottenham Hotspur coach Juande Ramos has dismissed suggestions that striker Dimitar Berbatov would be sold in the January transfer window.**

"Obviously Berbatov's agent is looking to do his business and has been making comments," Ramos was quoted as saying on the BBC website (www.bbc.co.uk) on Wednesday. "But we are happy because we have the player on a contract and we plan to keep him."

The Bulgarian's agent had said earlier in the week that Berbatov would be prepared to leave Tottenham if a big enough club made an offer.

The 26-year-old forward has been linked with a move to Premier League clubs including Manchester United and Arsenal since signing for Spurs in July 2006. Chelsea coach Avram Grant could also be targeting the player after saying he admired Berbatov's skills.

But Tottenham assistant coach Gus Poyet said no offer had been received for Berbatov. "There is nothing on the table and there is nothing happening. It is not a problem for us. He is here and it is no drama," Poyet said. "We want to improve and we want to go to a better level — he has to stay." Berbatov, who scored four goals in Tottenham's 6-4 Premier League win over Reading on Saturday, joined the north London club from Bayer Leverkusen in a 10.9-million-pound (21.86-million-US-dollar) deal.

**Bayern coach Hitzfeld to step down in June**

**Berlin, 3 Jan — Bayern Munich coach Ottmar Hitzfeld is to leave the Bundesliga club at the end of the season when his contract expires, he told local media on Wednesday.**

"I already told the club three weeks ago of my decision to finish in the summer," Hitzfeld told German sports news agency SID. "I will try again over the next half year to be successful and win as many titles as possible." Hitzfeld added that his options included coaching the Swiss national side or going back to work as a television analyst.

He said he had yet to begin negotiations with the Swiss soccer federation and that a meeting was planned for the next few months.

Hitzfeld began his second stint as Bayern coach on February 1 last year, taking over from Felix Magath, and his contract runs through to the end of June this year.

**Liverpool’s Fernando Torres shoots to score during their English Premier League soccer match against Wigan Athletic in Liverpool, northern England, on 2 Jan, 2008. —INTERNET**

**Dundee United beat dejected Hearts 4-1**

**Glasgow, 3 Jan — Barry Robson scored a hat-trick to help Dundee United to a 4-1 Scottish Premier League win over Hearts, who finished the game with eight players on Wednesday. United took the lead after 23 minutes when Robson moved on to a short free kick from Lee Wilkie and crashed a rising shot from 20 metres into the net. Hearts equalized when Christophe Berra steered home a back post shot eight minutes from the interval.

Robson made it 2-1 with a 70th minute penalty after Lithuanian Marius Zaliukas was sent off for the foul.

Two of the three main title contenders, leaders Arsenal and chasing Chelsea, will suffer and the end of the season, which runs from 20 January to 10 February, cannot come quick enough for their respective managers.

Arsenal's defensive rock Kolo Toure and full-back Emmanuel Eboue played their final league game on Tuesday before joining Ivory Coast while Alexandre Song is in the Cameroon squad.

Chelsea, already nursing a long injury list, will have to do without Ivorian duo Salomon Kalou and Didier Drogba and Nigerian midfielder John Obi Mikel, while the loss of midfielder Michael Essien to Ghana will hit them hardest.

Avram Grant is likely to make some moves in the January transfer window with Bolton Wanderers striker Nicolas Anelka reported to be a target for the London club. "We are following players, but we don't want to bring in players... just for two months, we are looking for more than that," Grant said on Chelsea's website (www.chelseafc.com). "The media will link us to 2000 players."

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger said he is confident of coping with the loss of his African contingent, although he is probably relieved that striker Emmanuel Adebayor's Togo failed to qualify.

**Sprinter Gatlin handed four-year ban**

**Salvo (North Carolina), 3 Jan — Olympic 100 metres champion Justin Gatlin has been banned for four years pending a possible appeal for a 2006 positive test for testosterone, a source close to the case told Reuters on Tuesday.**

The decision by a three-member US arbitration panel, which has not been announced publicly, could end the career of the 25-year-old Gatlin if he does not successfully appeal to the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) or the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

The Washington Post reported on its website (www.washingtonpost.com) that two out of the three American Arbitration Association arbitrators had said they could not give less than a four-year ban because of a previous positive test.

A third dissented, the Post reported. Gatlin could not be reached for comment. His lawyer, John Collins, declined to comment.

Gatlin failed a drugs test in 2001 for a prescribed medication for Attention Deficit Disorder. He was reinstated by the International Association of Athletics Federations the following year.

The American won the 2004 Athens Olympic 100 metres title and completed a 100-200 double at the Helsinki world championships in 2005.

**Iran appoints Portugal’s Jorge as national coach**

**Tehran, 3 Jan — Iran appointed Portugal’s Artur Jorge as their coach on Wednesday ahead of 2010 World Cup qualifiers starting in February, Iran's official IRNA news agency said.**

"Iran have been without a coach since the departure of Amir Ghalenooi after they were knocked out of the Asian Cup quarterfinals by South Korea in July last year. Jorge, 61, has previously been in charge of the Swiss and Portuguese teams and quit as Cameroon coach after their quarterfinal exit at the 2006 African Nations Cup.

Earning his credentials by taking FC Porto to victory in the 1987 European Cup, Jorge has also worked in France, Switzerland, Spain, the Netherlands, Russia and Saudi Arabia."
Russians flood into China to mark New Year

BEIJING, 3 Jan — While Chinese were counting down the hours to the start of 2008, many Russian tourists crossed the border to join them.

Manzhouli, a city in the northeastern area of Inner Mongolia and China’s largest land point of entry on the China-Russia border, embraced more than 5,000 Russian tourists on New Year’s Eve, who came to listen to the bells ringing for the New Year.

In the city’s biggest Western food restaurants, more than 90 per cent of the seats had been booked by Russians. The Russians showed up in Chinese eateries, too.

“Almost every Russian knows Chinese food, like hot pot and Beijing roasted duck,” said a 34-year-old tourist from Chitinskaya, Russia.

Heilongjiang is expecting about 5,000 Russian tourists from across the Suiifen River during the New Year’s holiday, according to sources with the Heilongjiang Tourism Bureau.

“The New Year’s rush started several days before the holiday with an increasing number of tourist coaches passing by,” said Ma Gaocheng with the Dongning Border Inspection Station. “Most tourists are traveling with their families, who wish to go shopping in border cities.”

If Inner Mongolia and Heilongjiang attracted Russians with proximity, the southernmost province of Hainan won others over with its sunshine and tropical seacoast.

Last week saw nearly 10,000 Russian tourists flowing into Sanya city, 30 per cent up from same period last year, said an official with the Sanya Tourism Bureau.

The official noted that most of the tourists were from Moscow, St Petersburg and some Far Eastern cities.

“Our tourism market is far from saturated and we are expecting more Russian tourists,” he added.

China puts quota on grain powder exports

BEIJING, 3 Jan — China started a temporary quota policy on the export of wheat, corn and rice powder on Tuesday, in order to guarantee adequate domestic supply.

The adjustment aims to curb grain exports boosted by climbing international prices, and stabilize domestic food prices, said an announcement on the Ministry of Commerce website. The details of the quota are unspecified, but it will be implemented through a permit policy.

The period of the policy will be decided by the demand and supply situation of related domestic markets, the announcement said. The step added to a string of government measures to rein in food price inflation driven by shortages of items such as pork, edible oil and grain.

China’s Ministry of Finance announced on Sunday that it would levy export taxes on wheat, corn, rice, soybeans and various processed grains in 2008, just a week after China scrapped tax rebates for grain exports.

The export tax rates will range from 5-25 per cent and affect 57 types of grain and grain products.

Several factors have driven up global grain prices this year: rising demand, adverse weather in key growing nations and increased use of grains for fuel.

Wheat prices hit a record high in Chicago on strong global demand and shrunken output after bad weather hit the world’s major producers such as Australia and Canada.

MNA/Xinhua

WEATHER

Thursday, 3 January, 2008

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been generally fair in the whole country. Night temperatures were (3°C) below January average temperatures in Chin and Kayin States, (3°C) to (4°C) above January average temperatures in Rakhine State, Bago and Taninthayi Divisions and about January average temperatures in the remaining States and Divisions. The significant night temperatures were Hakha and Loliin (0°C) each, Namsam and Heho (4°C) each.

Maximum temperature on 2-1-2008 was 89°F. Minimum temperature on 3-1-2008 was 59°F. Relative humidity at 09:30 hours MST on 3-1-2008 was 73%. Total sunshine hours on 2-1-2008 was (8.2) hours approx.

Rainfall on 3-1-2008 was nil at Mingladon, Kabay and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2007 was (10) mph from East at (15:30) hours MST on 2-1-2008.

Bay inference: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 4-1-2008: Weather will be partly cloudy in Rakhine State, Upper Sagaing, and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas.

State of the sea: Strong easterly wind moderate to rough seas are likely at times Deltaic. Gulf of mottama off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong wind may reach (35) mph. Seas will be slight in Myanmar waters.

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

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 4-1-2008: Fair weather.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 4-1-2008: Generally fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 4-1-2008: Fair weather.
Nay Pyi Taw, 3 Jan—Dato Mazlan bin Muhammad, newly accredited Ambassador of Malaysia to the Union of Myanmar, presented his credentials to Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar at Bayintnaung Yeiktha, here, at 10.30 am today.

Present on the occasion were Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Deputy Ministers for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Thu and U Maung Myint and Director-General U Kyaw Kyaw of the Protocol Department. —MNA

Secretary-1 awards outstanding students at ceremony to mark School Family Day

Nay Pyi Taw, 3 Jan — Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo attended the awarding ceremony of School Family Day for 2007-2008 academic year held at No 1 Basic Education High School, here this morning, made a speech on the occasion and presented prizes to outstanding students.

Also present on the occasion were Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin, ministers, deputy ministers, members of MEC, senior military officers, directors-general of SPDC Office and Government Office, heads of department, members of social organizations, education officers of Nay Pyi Taw Pyinnama, Nay Pyi Taw Lewe and Nay Pyi Taw Tatkon, schoolheads, teachers and students. At the ceremony, eighth standard student Ma U Shwe Zin of Nya Pyi Taw Pyinmana No 1 BEHS and seventh standard student Ma Tin Htet Htet Lwin acted as MCs.

The students from No 1 BEHS opened the School Family Day ceremony by presenting the song titled “National Anthem” and “Myanma School”. The Secretary-1 made a speech on the occasion, saying that in the drive for beefing up education standards, the 3rd January is designated as School Family Day. It has been held since 1998-1999 and this is the tenth time. Over 260,000 teachers from over 40,500 basic education schools in cooperation with over 310,000 education staff as well as over 8 million students are holding the School Family Day ceremonies at the same time across the nation. The people, families and wellwishers are also participating in the ceremonies. The ceremonies include students’ skills demonstrations, competitions, festivities and prize-presentation. The nation-wide School Family Day celebrations are indeed a tangible improvement of national education. There have been signs of progress in Myanmar education arena in such celebrations of School Family Day. All-round outstanding students have been brought up in the educational sector. Universities, colleges and basic education schools have also developed. And these are the success of the national education promotion programme. This success is due to correct policies of the government and pragmatic work programme as well as the harmonious efforts of students and their parents, members of social organizations and school boards of trustees and public wellwishers. The Government has laid down and is implementing national education promotion plans with the concept that it is nurturing the younger generation to become outstanding and qualified human resources in the interests of the State and the people.

The students are being trained and nurtured to develop both physically and mentally in various areas such as knowledge, profession, health and morale and morality. This is why all the young people including the outstanding students who are awarded today are to continue to try to become intellectuals and intelligentsia in the best interests of the State and the people while upholding the concept that they are a valuable asset for the future of the nation.

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