

## Two power plants open in Ngapudaw

TWO new power plants were opened yesterday in Ngapudaw Township, Ayeyawady Region, with Electric Power Deputy Minister U Aung Than Oo unveiling the archways to mark the official opening of the two plants.

The Ngayokkaung Taung and Ngapyema 66/33/11KV 10MVA power plants both held test runs for the distribution of electricity to nearby villages in the township on 12 October last year.

Over 20 miles of cables are being installed in Haigyikyun Township to bring electric power to the households by February.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Officials visit a newly opened power plant in Ngapudaw. PHOTO: MNA

## As Kyauk Phyu SEZ gets underway hotels owners ask, 'Where is everybody?'

ANTICIPATION of the commencing of the Kyauk Phyu Special Economic Zone in Rakhine State was that it would bring increased tourism to the area, for which hotel expansion was prepared accordingly. However, the number of foreigners visiting the region is yet to live up to expectation, say hotel owners.

"We've had hardly any foreign or national guests. Once the Oil and Shwe Gas Project was confirmed some foreigners came to the town, but they've rented out their own property," said U Tin Aung Soe, owner of the May Pone Moe Hotel.

There are seven hotels in the town of Kyauk Phyu, which

boast a combined total number of 160 rooms, although hotel owners were only able to fill approximately 15% of these rooms with guests during this month of January.

It is known that some of the foreigners and nationals who have set up base in Kyauk Phyu because of their companies involvement with the Chinese Shwe Gas Project, are living in rented housing within the town of Kyauk Phyu, rather than staying at the one of the town's hotels.

"This kind of living arrangement [of foreigners living in rented housing] is not in line with article 32(a) of the Hotel and Tourism Law. The relevant bodies need to make sure to regulate this matter," continued U Tin Aung Soe.

Hotel owners will continue their expansion of hotels in Kyauk Phyu with the expectation

of the arrival of foreign guests with the onset of foreign investment projects in the region.

"Construction for a twenty room hotel is still under way. We're expanding our operations specifically because of the SEZ project," said U Tin Aung Soe.

It is also known from hotel owners that preparations are also being made for construction of hotels close to the Min Pyin beach where the Kyauk Phyu SEZ is to be built.

The building of the Kyauk Phyu SEZ was approved in union parliament on 29 December, 2015 with 424 votes in favour of the project against just 23 votes who opposed, while the first actual phases of construction of the zone will commence at the end of this year, according to the Kyauk Phyu SEZ administration committee.—*Myitmakha News Agency*



A scale model of Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone. PHOTO: SEZ

## SCG holds \$305 million in Myanmar assets

SIAM CEMENT (SCG) announces its operating results for 2015, showing a 35 per cent growth in earnings year on year. The company reported sales of K14.839 trillion (US\$12.835 billion), marking a 10 per cent decrease year on year as a result of lower oil prices. However, profits for the period reached K1.532 trillion (\$1.325 billion), representing an increase of 35 per cent year on year, which has been attributed to healthy earnings in the chemicals business, despite a lower performance in the cement and building materials businesses. The company's export revenues accounted for 29 per cent of SCG's total revenue from sales—an 11 per cent decreased year on year to

K4.287 trillion (\$3.708 billion).

On a quarterly basis, SCG's Q4/2015 revenue from sales decreased 10 per cent year on year and a five per cent quarter on quarter to K3.799 trillion (\$2.947 billion) as a result of lower chemical prices, which are linked to oil prices. However, profits for the period registered an increase of 29 per cent year on year at K412 billion (\$319 million) thanks to higher chemicals earnings, while also showing a growth of 27 per cent quarter on quarter, since the previous quarter (Q3/15) was held back by a total of K131 billion (\$101 million) in non-recurring items ranging from inventory adjustments and FX loss.—*Kyaw The-ein (MNA)*

## Fish Farming : Driving Rural Development and Incomes

MYANMAR'S fish farming industry is in rapid growth, despite perceptions that it's been sluggish, and has the potential to drive rural development and incomes, according to a recent report launched this week. The research discussed the fish farming industry's role in creating job opportunities, supporting improved nutrition, health and well-being, as well as examined the inhibitors to maximize the industry's growth. The Centre for Economic and Social Development, Michigan State University and the International Food Policy Research Institute led the research.

It is estimated that the output of fish farms in the Delta, which accounts for 90% of the country's

fish farms, has grown 250% over the last ten years. The land area of fish farms in this region is also believed to have doubled.

Fish plays a significant role in food and nutrition security in Myanmar. It is a major source of micronutrients, particularly important for child development. Household budgets in Myanmar allot 14% of food expenditure on fish, a close rate to the food expenditure on rice (19%).

Fish farming, compared to rice farming, also provides rural employment, requiring more manpower in the harvest and transport of fish to markets. The study also suggests it is potentially more profitable than other alternative forms of agriculture.

## Over 100 Myanmar workers laid off in Chiang Rai without pay

APPROXIMATELY 120 Myanmar migrant workers have been made redundant from a construction company in the northern Thai town of Chiang Rai after they protested to the workers and social security department about not receiving their salaries.

The workers staged the protest on January 27 as the aforementioned construction company owed roughly 3.4 million Thai Baht in salaries.

"The company gave us the sack. They didn't pay us our salaries. We are protesting in order to get the money that we are owed," said Myanmar migrant worker Ko Htun Htun.

The company cut off the water and electricity supply to the accommodation of the workers after they protested, and so they are currently searching for new employment and a place to live.

"[We're protesting about] the salary owed to us for December 16, 2015 to January 15, 2016. We requested our Migrant Workers Federation to provide assistance in the manner of the law," commented a Myanmar migrant worker involved in the protests.

The Myanmar migrant workers in question were working on the three project construction sites of the aforementioned company, while workers are demanding 15 days salary, on top of a week's advance salary and compensation after being fired.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

The study was conducted at seven townships, which accounts for 75% of fish farm land areas in Myanmar, and San Pya market, Yangon's largest wholesale fish market.—*MiTV*