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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish **"Letter to the Editor"** that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Tomato growers receive good price for latest harvest

THE month of December saw an increase in prices of tomatoes produced in Aunglan Township, Thetyet District, Magway Region, growers say.

"We continue to receive a handsome price for the marketable kitchen crop this harvest season which is higher than that of last year. Based on the size, quality, freshness and species, the prices of tomato are between Ks500 and Ks700 per viss (a viss is equivalent to 3.6 pounds) in the domestic market," said U San Lynn, one of local tomato producers.

Tomatoes, a popular kitchen crop, is widely used as the main ingredient for many traditional dishes in the country. In Aunglan Township, tomatoes have mostly been grown in villages along Moekaung Creek and Bwokegyi Creek in the cold season. The fresh tomatoes are usually sent to the wholesale markets in nearby towns.

Woman selling tomatoes on the street market. **PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE**

"Despite an increase in prices of tomatoes at the present time, growers worry that they may experience a decline in the prices of tomato again that they experienced in previous years. At the time, we received only Ks50 per viss and lost production costs," said U San Lynn.

Normally, an acre of tomato plantation costs approximately Ks500,000, he added.

The crop is famous for its health benefits. According to an international study, tomatoes provide antioxidant protection against cancer, strengthen the heart and prevent constipation.—Shwe Khine ■

Rural electrification project implemented in Sittway District

ELECTRICITY authorities announced that a rural electrification project has been implemented in villages ten miles from Ponnagyun Township, Sittway District, Rakhine State.

Under the government's rural electrification plan, installation of power facilities have been carried out in target villages with the use of the Union government's budget so as to offer 24 hours electricity services to the villagers in the coming year.

As part of the project, a 20 MVA/66/11 KVA transformer is also being installed at the 230 KV main power station in the town. Electrical engineers and staff from the Township Electricity Department are putting continuous efforts to finalise the installation of the new transformer no later than this month.

The country's power consumption is increasing year by year especially in industrial cities while the vast majority of rural areas are living without electricity.

The country generates power mainly from hydropower projects and from heat.

According to the ministry's official figures, the Ministry of Electricity and Energy produced over 10 billion units of power in 2012-2013 FY. It increased to over 12 billion units in 2013-2014 FY, 14 billion units in 2014-2015 FY and over 15 billion units in 2015-2016 FY. In 2016-17 FY, the power production reached more than 17 billion units.—Khine Khant ■

Fish paste industry relies mainly on local market

THE fish paste, dried fish and sauce industry is mainly relying on the local market, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

Even though businessmen want to penetrate the international market, there is a lack of technical expertise and investment money in the fish paste, dried fish and sauce sector.

Although fish paste, dried fish and fish sauce produced locally is exported to Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea and Singapore, the vast majority of these products are bought and consumed by locals.

Myanmar exports only 20 per cent of fish paste, dried fish and sauce from local production.

"Other countries demand only raw materials of Myanmar's aquatic products.

Also, we don't get a high price. The fish paste and dried fish are likely to be less durable because we have made them without using chemicals.

Therefore, we cannot penetrate the international market," said U Tun Sein, the secretary of Myanmar Fish Paste, Dried Fish and Fish Sauce Association.

To be able to export these products, the Myanmar Fish Paste, Dried Fish and Fish Sauce Association has invited foreign investors to invest in the Myanmar aquatic sector, it is learnt.— GNLM ■

Elderly killed in hit-and-run crash in Yangon

A fatal road accident happened on Saturday early morning in Dagon Myothit Seikkan Township in Yangon that left an elderly woman dead, according to the township police.

Investigators say that the 75-year-old Daw Tin Tin Ohn residing on Zawtika Street in Ward-87 who was hit by a Hyundai car while she passed the Ponnami Street to dispose the kitchen rubbishes at around 6 a.m. on 23 December.

She died at the scene. Police are still trying to identify the driver.

A police officer said that investigations are being made in an effort to arrest the unknown driver who immediately fled from the scene.

The driver will face legal charges under the existing Penal Code for his careless driving.—Ko Gyi Soe (Seikkan) ■

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu inspects the paving of Dai Kyi-Yat Thar Road yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Rakhine Chief Minister inspects development of the state Rakhine

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, together with state ministers, met township administrative officials at the hall of the Ann administrative office yesterday morning.

At the meeting, township administrative officers reported on development during the 2017-2018 fiscal year, including rural development, electrification, bridges, education, health care, farming and irrigation.

Then Chief Minister and party met the officials of the B.E.H.S (1), (2) and (3), and parents of the students and discussed matters related to improving the educational standards in the region.

In the afternoon, they inspected the paving of Dai Kyi-Yat Thar Road and the San Htwe bridge project, which will connect Ann-Pa De Kyaw-Ma Ei Road, it was learnt.—Ann Township (IPRD) ■

Over 97,000 baskets of paddy farmed by displaced people of Maungtaw sold

As of 21 December, a total of 97,337 baskets of paddy farmed by Maungtaw region displaced people were harvested and sold, according to the Maungtaw District General Administration Department.

The paddy were reaped with the combine harvesters of Agricultural Mechanization Department and bagged by the Department of Agriculture. So far, the Maungtaw Merchants Association and the Rakhine Paddy Trading Company have mainly bought the grain. More merchants are now being invited.

The Maungtaw region borders the Bay of Bengal and has good climate for rice paddies. It is one of the major rice producing regions of Rakhine State. Traders are now transporting the paddy grains of Maungtaw region by motor vehicles through the land routes of Maungtaw-A Ngu Maw and Maungtaw-Buthidaung and by vessels to the warehouses in Sittway.—Myint Maung/ Zayar ■

Rice paddy field worker sorting, collecting and drying out rice in Maungtaw, Rakhine State. **PHOTO: NAY WIN TUN**

Human Rights Commission meets communities in Maungtaw

A Myanmar human rights delegation met with Muslim villagers gathered at a beach in Maungtaw preparing to leave for Bangladesh, offering assistance to them for living in peace.

At the meeting, members of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission asked if their rights were violated in Myanmar and their obstacles and reasons why they decided to leave for the neighboring country. The delegation members pledged to provide assistance to them if they want to live in peace in Myanmar.

Following the meeting, the members of the commission visited Kainggyi Village, where Mro ethnic people who fled from their villagers are being sheltered. The new village of Kaingyi is under construction for Mro ethnic villagers, with 50 new houses constructed by Yangon Region Government, 64 houses by Bago Region Government and a school by Taninthayi Region Government.

Commission members also visited the Muslim village of Pantawpyin (Middle) village and inquired of their situation including the rule of law, education, health and livelihood of local villagers.

At the beginning of the trip yesterday, the delegation led by U Yu Lwin Aung and Dr. Myint Kyi, members of the commission, camps in Maungtaw where Hindu people are sheltering. — Myint Maung, Zeya ■

Over 500 in Maungtaw to be formally trained as teachers

Photo: Nay Win Tun

AN opening ceremony for a programme to train 500 teachers who are currently teaching kindergarten and first-grade classes was held in the B.E.H.S (2) Maungtaw school in Rakhine yesterday.

Township education officer U Khin Aung said that 500 teachers in Rakhine State will undergo training in the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years.

The programme's aim is to implement effective education and reinforce the teachers who had been teaching without formal training due to various reasons.

U Khin Aung.

Training for a total of 553 teachers, including 280 kindergarten teachers and 273 Grade 1 teachers, will be conducted for 10 days starting today. Many teachers in Maungtaw transferred to other places following the 2016 terrorist attacks in Maungtaw, and were replaced with new teachers earning daily wages. "We draw up effective lesson plans for the KG classes in order for them to be familiar with their surroundings. And we teach them many new lessons like playing with toys, reciting poems and so on", said Daw Mya The Phyu, a teacher from Butheedaung Township.

Daw Mya The Phyu.

U Aung Ko Lin.

Teacher U Aung Ko Lin was posted in Wet Kyein, Maungtaw. Out of 183 schools, 105 schools have reopened since the terrorist attacks. There are 80,000 students in Maungtaw and in Butheedaung alone who need effective teachers. Township Education Officer U Khin Aung explained that education is a driving force to shape the development of the region, and it can help the stability of the state where the number of the intelligentsia increases.

"We are going to implement systematic goals of education as much as we can", he said. — Myint Maung/Zaya ■