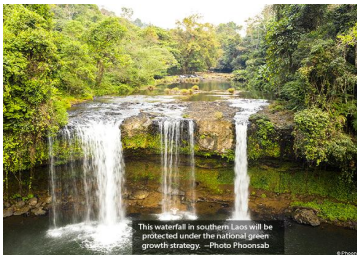


- Cambodia facing power shortage of 400 megawatts in dry season: PM
- NBC launch national strategy to fight against financial crime
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Cambodia facing power shortage of 400 megawatts in dry season: PM



Cambodia News | March, 16/2019

Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen said on Saturday that the country is facing the electricity shortage of 400 megawatts during the ongoing dry season. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the fifth River Festival in Kampong Chhnang province, Hun Sen said the Southeast Asian country has been facing drought and water shortage since February and the trend will continue until June. "A large amount of our electricity is produced by hydropower dams, but now, there is a shortage of water, so the hydropower dams can produce only a small amount of electricity," he said. "We are currently lacking the electricity of 400 megawatts, and we are seeking solutions to this issue." The prime minister asked the people for understanding when there were power cuts during this period and called on those who own generators to use them for their houses, hotels or working places in order to tackle this power shortage together. However, he said the manufacturing sector, especially rice mills, were not affected from this power shortage. According to the Ministry of Mines and Energy, electricity supply in Cambodia was 2,650 megawatts in 2018, in which 1,329 megawatts, or 50 percent of the total power supply, were produced by hydroelectric dams.

Source: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-03/16/c_137900673.htm

NBC launch national strategy to fight against financial crime



Cambodia News | March, 18/2019

The National Bank of Cambodia (NBC) launched the National Strategy for Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (ML/FT) 2019-2023 on Thursday and provided stakeholders with a document outlining the key strategies to fight ML/FT in the next five years. The national strategy for combating ML/FT – its second version since 2013 – comprises 10 key national strategies and objectives – including understanding and mitigating ML/TF risk, preventative measures and supervision and effective investigation of money laundering and predicate offence. Speaking at the launch ceremony on Thursday, NBC governor Chea Chanto said the national strategy aims to serve as a comprehensive long-term roadmap for Cambodia, which enables all relevant ministries, institutions and other stakeholders to understand well their respective roles and responsibilities in contributing to the effectiveness of combating ML/FT in the Kingdom. "The national strategy will serve as a compass to all relevant stakeholders in their respective responsibilities to build a strong system [to combat ML/FT] and enable Cambodia to participate with other countries in strengthening a [larger] system." "All relevant parties need to continue to work hard and in a more unified manner to get the country out of the [Financial Action Task Force's (FATF's)] grey list as soon as possible."

The 2019-2023 national strategy was prepared with input from over 70 participants from across 22 ministries and agencies with technical assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The strategy emphasises the importance of key agencies and units responsible for the implementation of Cambodia's anti-money laundering and countering financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) programmes. High priority should be given to the effective implementation of AML/CFT measures by all key players in the Kingdom – the achievement of AML/CFT objectives is dependent on effective cooperation and coordination between key actors within agencies and among the relevant agencies. IMF senior adviser Clive Scott said the effective implementation of the strategy will provide a beacon for the Kingdom to achieve its goals in combating ML/FT and other financial crime as well as for a speedy exit from FATF's grey list. He said donors may use the national strategy as a guide to determine what assistance they can provide. "The national strategy launched today [Thursday] is an example of Cambodia's progress in the coordination of its effort to implement AML/CFT law and policy. It should provide valuable tools to all stakeholders if they work towards improving Cambodia's AML/CFT mechanisms," he said. Global money-laundering watchdog FATF last month placed Cambodia on its "grey list" because of concerns that the Kingdom is vulnerable to the concealment of illegally acquired money.

Source: <https://www.phnompenhpost.com/business/nbc-launch-national-strategy-fight-against-financial-crime>

Tourism holds the key to green growth

Laos News | March, 18/2019

Protection of the country's national parks and cultural traditions will be strengthened with the government's commitment to the National Green Growth Strategy. The 2030 strategy, which was unveiled earlier this month, provides a pathway for the mainstreaming of environmentally-friendly policies into the programmes of all government departments and sectors. Among these, tourism has been listed as a key sector to drive the green and sustainable development of the country in the coming years. Development in the tourism sector necessarily means protecting and conserving the natural, historical and cultural sights that draw visitors here in the first place. Endorsed by Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith on January 31, the strategy makes reference to Laos' abundant waterfalls, forests, caves and temples as well as the country's fine traditions and harmonious way of life. But alongside conservation measures the government must improve infrastructure and services around key tourist attractions. This includes better roads and transport options, and higher standards in hotel and restaurant services. Tourism-related businesses will also be encouraged to efficiently consume energy and to use environmentally-friendly products whenever

possible. The efforts of tourism businesses will make a significant contribution to the protection of natural resources and the environment, the strategy says.

Other key measures to ensure sustainable green growth include the government committing to the equitable distribution of profit and incomes in the tourism industry. This will ensure local communities get just rewards from the benefits that development of the sector brings. Strategy makers believe that nature and culture based tourism development will help to protect the country's natural resources and say it will also generate increased revenue due to the increasing number of people who will come to see the nation's treasures. According to a report from the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Laos has huge potential for tourism development. The country has 2,237 officially designated tourist sites, of which 575 have been defined as cultural sites while the rest are either of natural or historical significance. Although Laos has a huge number of fascinating places to visit, only 366 sites have any visitor facilities. Many opportunities exist for local and foreign entrepreneurs wanting to invest in an area with such potential for growth. In 2018, Laos welcomed more than 4 million tourists. This year being Visit Laos-China Year, it is expected there will be an upturn in the number of Chinese taking holidays in Laos

Source:http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Tourism_holds_65.php

Myanmar permits 7 more local, foreign investments



Myanmar News | March, 16/2019

Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) has recently permitted seven investments from both home and abroad, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) Saturday. The permitted investments included three local investments and four others from China, Singapore and Japan. The investments entered into the manufacturing, oil and gas, hotel services and education sectors. The investment projects covered 71.78 million U.S. dollars and 2.854 billion kyats (1.89 million U.S. dollars). About 1,161 job opportunities are expected to be offered from the projects, the DICA said

Source: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-03/16/c_137899866.htm

Efforts to draw Chin investments yield positive results



Myanmar News | March, 17/2019

Myanmar is intensifying efforts to draw investors to Chin State, which is the poorest region in the country. At a Yangon fair held over the weekend to promote business and investment opportunities in Chin, the state's chief minister Salai Lian Luai said promising sectors included hotels and tourism, agriculture, mining, textiles, infrastructure as well as hydropower and wind power. Chin State remains among the least

developed regions in Myanmar. To-date, there are only a handful of local hotel businesses operating and no foreign investments in the state. “The state government invites local and foreign investors to study the investment opportunities in the state. We will help them,” Salai Lian Luai said. Held to help potential investors understand both existing and untapped areas of investment in the region, the Chin State Investment and Product Fair was co-organised by the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, Chin State government, and Chin State Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The event was supported by UK-funded Dana Facility and law firm VDB Loi Company. “Chin State has significant growth potential, coming from a modest baseline. We would like to help small and medium enterprises and farmers find financing and responsible business partners and also help to promote foreign direct investment reform to facilitate investment in the state, Jean Loi, managing partner of VDB Loi, said. Foreign investors have indeed started to take interest in Chin’s potential for growth. On March 16, the Chin State government signed an MOU with a Norwegian power company for a US\$50 million, 30-megawatt hydropower project. The state also inked separate agreements with local investors for a hotel, crop plantation and urban housing project worth a total of \$4 million, U Soe Htet, Chin State Minister of Municipal, Electricity, and Industry, told the Myanmar Times. During the fair, vice president U Myint Swe referred to the national

project bank, under which the Union government has prioritised a slew of infrastructure projects across the country, including in Chin State, which lacks basic transport infrastructure such as roads as well as reliable access to electricity. To spur investments and demand for tourism, the government has committed to opening Surbung Airport in Falam township, Chin State, the first major airport in the state, by September 2020, U Ye Htut Aung, Deputy Director General of the Department of Civil Aviation, told The Myanmar Times last month. Construction of the K30 billion-airport, which began in 2016-17, had originally been scheduled for completion in 2021-22 but will now be brought forward. The number of tourists visiting Chin State, which is home to Myanmar’s heart-shape Rih Lake and Nat Ma Taung National Park, is expected to rise once the airport is complete. The regional government is also making plans to open smaller airports in Tiddim, Tonzang, Falam and Hakha townships. The Union and state governments will work together to ensure development in Chin State. “The main barrier to investment for Chin State is the lack of infrastructure. However, these challenges can be converted to potentially lucrative opportunities,” said U Thaug Tun, chair of the MIC.

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/efforts-draw-chin-investments-yield-positive-results.html>

Agricultural sector posts trade surplus of \$1b in two months

 Vite Nam News | March, 18/2019

HÀ NỘI — The agricultural sector gained a trade surplus of US\$1 billion in the first two months of this year despite a year-on-year decrease of 1.6 per cent in export value. According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), the sector earned \$5.5 billion from the export of farm produce and forestry and aquatic products. Meanwhile, \$4.5 billion worth of agro-forestry-fishery products were imported in the reviewed period, up 3 per cent from the same period last year. In the two months, the reduction in total export revenue was partly due to a fall of 10.1 per cent in export value of farm produce to \$2.71 billion while that of animal husbandry hit \$77 million, down 7 per cent. Nguyễn Trung Kiên, head of the Department of Market Research and Commodities under the Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development, said bright spots of the agriculture sector were still seafood and forest products with year-on-year export growth at 4.4 per cent to \$1.1 billion and 12.8 per cent to \$1.5 billion, respectively, in the first two months of this year. During the first two months, rice exports were estimated at 837,000 tonnes in volume and \$364 million in value. Those figures rose 1.1 per cent in volume but dropped 10.4 per cent in value year on year. Of which, in February, the volume of exported rice was estimated at 399,000 tonnes, earning \$169 million. Nguyễn Quốc Tuấn, Acting Director of the

ministry's Department of Agro Processing and Market Development, said in the first quarter of this year, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will send a working group to the Philippines to take part in trade promotion activities to boost rice exports. Other products' exports with increases in volume but reductions in value during the first two months included rubber up 22.4 per cent in volume to 228,000 tonnes but down 6.8 per cent in value to \$293 million and pepper up 4.3 per cent in volume to 31,000 tonnes but down 20.4 per cent in value to \$92 million. Meanwhile, coffee exports decreased in both volume and value, at 7.5 per cent and 10.8 per cent year on year to 326,000 tonnes and \$610 million, respectively.

Seafood exports

The export of aquatic products earned the country \$1.1 billion in the first two months, up 4.4 per cent year on year. According to the MARD's Department of Farm Product Processing and Market Development, the top four export markets of Việt Nam's seafood products in the period were Japan, the US, China and South Korea, accounting for 53 per cent of the total export value. Strong growth was recorded in shipments to Mexico (32.4 per cent), Canada (27.8 per cent), the US (24.9 per cent) and Japan (17.7 per cent). The department forecast that Vietnamese tra fish exporters will face strong competition from Myanmar in the Chinese market, as Myanmar will soon complete a tra fis farming complex. However, there is good news for shrimp exporters as they will benefit from favourable tariffs under the Comprehensive and Progressive

Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) effective on January 14 this year in Việ̂t Nam. The department envisioned two-digit growth for shrimp shipments to Japan in 2019 while advising the exporters to renew their approach to the Japanese market, enhance promotion of products and continue to improve product quality. Fruit, veg exports

The export turnover of fruits and vegetables fell 9.9 per cent year-on-year to \$584 million in the first two months, according to the department. The reduction was attributed to fluctuations of the fruit and vegetable market in February due to the prolonged Lunar New Year (Tế̂t holiday). China was the largest export market for Vietnamese fruits and vegetables in January with 72.6 per cent of the total exports. Strong growth was also seen in South Korea (68.2 per cent), the Netherlands (60.2 per cent), Australia (54.8 per cent) and the United Arab Emirates (36.8 per cent). In February, the US allowed the imports of fresh mangoes from Việ̂t Nam. This is the sixth fruit exported to the market, after dragon fruit, longan, rambutan, lychee and star apple.

Last year, the US was one of the markets with the most impressive growth of 37 per cent compared to 2017. It is forecast that Việ̂t Nam's fruit exports to the US will continue seeing high growth thanks to the export of mangoes. — VNS

Source: <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/507196/agricultural-sector-posts-trade-surplus-of-1b-in-two-months.html#Uwo7gjXCaa0CTsm6.97>