

- **Nearly 5 mln tourists visit tourism sites in Cambodia during traditional New Year**
- **PM tells Oudomxay to scrutinise developments**
- **PetroChina opens its first filling station in Myanmar**
- **Indian agribusiness granted IFC loan to expand Myanmar facilities**
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Nearly 5 mln tourists visit tourism sites in Cambodia during traditional

New Year



Cambodia News | April, 17/2019

The number of domestic and foreign tourists visiting tourist destinations in Cambodia during the Khmer New Year holiday rose 67 percent to 4.72 million, a tourism ministry report said on Wednesday. The report said that about 4.64 locals traveled within the country during the three-day holiday, up 66 percent year-on-year. Meanwhile, international arrivals increased to 83,123, showing a rise of 98 percent. Besides, another 3 million locals visited Buddhist pagodas across the nation during the traditional New Year, which started on April 14 and concluded on April 16, Cambodian Tourism Minister Thong Khon said. He said peace and political stability allowed people to travel freely and fearlessly. "Under the shade of peace in combination with people's better livelihoods, people had happily celebrated the traditional New Year with the reflection of Cambodian identity," Khon said.

Source: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-04/17/c_137984560.htm

PM tells Oudomxay to scrutinise developments



Laos News | April, 18/2019

Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith has asked Oudomxay provincial leaders to scrutinise private investment projects in detail so that economic growth in the northern province can be driven by high quality developments and programmes. The premier gave the advice on April 12 during a visit to the province in which he met with provincial governor Dr Khamphanh Pheuyavong and many other senior officials. He told all present that investments must meet the developmental needs of the province. Only fully qualified investors who have good investment backgrounds, experiences and sufficient technical expertise should be given contracts to facilitate infrastructure projects, he told the meeting. The PM advised provincial officials to create conditions that will help facilitate business operations and activity. He said a rule based system must underpin provincial operations and any issues which arise must be dealt with in a transparent and fair manner. The provincial leadership team was told to concentrate on capturing the untapped potentials of Oudomxay province and to seek creative ways to respond to challenges as they arise. He said this was especially necessary as the province draws up a new development agenda. The premier called for proper and efficient management of lands, especially along the Laos-China railway, so that they are allocated correctly and used in a way which benefits the greatest number of people possible. The PM said the province needs to make greater effort in resolving many social issues. He said illegal drug

manufacturing and trade, addiction, theft and violence are issues which need particular attention in the province.

Greater attention should be given to poverty alleviation too, the PM said. The people of Oudomxay deserve access to modern production methods and assistance with finding the best buyers for their products. PM Thongloun also praised the province for the many achievements it has made over recent years. Dr Khamphanh told the premier that Oudomxay province has enjoyed social order and security for many years. He said the province recorded growth of 7.23 percent in its GDP last year, meaning an extra US\$ 1,388 (about 12 million kip) went in to the pockets of each adult citizen. 24 billion kip revenue was collected during the first quarter of 2019 which meets expectations 100 percent. Dr Khamphanh said more works are planned to alleviate poverty in the province. He acknowledged that 37 percent of villages in the province remain categorised as poor. On April 13, the premier and his entourage visited the Laos-China railway construction site in Xay district. 126.6 km of track will run through Oudomxay. Nine stations are planned in all. Namor, Xay and Nga districts will have the first three stations up and running. 6 others will follow at a later date. The track work in Oudomxay will require construction of over 60 bridges that will total 12.7 kms in length. This is 34 percent of the total bridge work to be done in the entire country. 32 tunnels with a combined length of 84.9 km will mark the Oudomxay section of track. Almost half of all tunnels for the track will be found in Oudomxay province. 50 km of tunnels have now been completed. This is 58.7 percent of all the tunnels to be made in the province. PM Thongloun praised the progress made on the rail construction in Oudomxay province. He called on authorities to place great attention on the quality of

constructions and to make sure works are progressing as planned. The entire track is expected to be fully operational by 2021. PM Thongloun also toured organic farms, handicraft production groups and visited a wood processing plant while in the province. He and his wife, Naly Sisoulith, also attended a grand ceremony to kick off Lao New Year celebrations on April 14.

Source: http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_PM_89.php

PetroChina opens its first filling station in Myanmar

 Myanmar News | April, 17/2019

PetroChina International has launched its service station in Myanmar, marking the Chinese state-run oil major's first foray into the country's fuel station market. The filling station is a joint venture between PetroChina International's Singapore unit Singapore Petroleum Co (SPC) and Shwe Taung Energy Co, a subsidiary of Shwe Taung Group. Shwe Taung said it will upgrade all of its outlets into SPC brand. A spokesperson said the joint venture agreement is only for retail and SPC's investment accounted for 35 percent. The investment amount is not disclosed. The companies renovated a 750m² gas station into an SPC facility located at the corner of Pyay Road and Dhammazedhi Road in Sanchaung township. It was launched on March 30 and is supplied with gasoline imported from SPC's Singapore refinery.

SPC managing director Xia Hongwei said there is an increasing demand for quality products and services in Myanmar. “We are seeing considerable growth opportunities in the oil and gas retail market.” This is the first international name to enter Myanmar since the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) liberalised the retail energy sector in 2017. MIC Notification 15, issued in April 2017, stipulates that foreign investors only need approval from the Ministry of Electricity and Energy (MOEE) to distribute and sell fuel. Since the government opened up the industry to the private sector in 2010, Myanmar has seen a sharp increase in the number of service stations. The number of privately-owned stations has now reached 2,445, according to data from MOEE updated on March 25. Stations are unevenly distributed - Mandalay Region has 622, while Yangon Region - with a much bigger population, has 178. There are only four in Chin State. As of 2016, the MOEE had privatised 261 out of its 273 fuel stations. Max Energy and Shell inked an agreement in July 2017 to operate Shell-branded petrol stations. But this is yet to happen. Meanwhile, Singapore-based Puma Energy plans to set up 50 service station franchises within a decade. Pietro Borsano, a lecturer at Shinawatra University in Mandalay, commented that the SPC venture will speed up the modernisation of filling stations across the country. “Myanmar’s retail energy business is very undeveloped. A lot of gas stations across the country are old and decrepit. Bringing in the SPC brand will heat up competition and force other players to start providing integrated solutions.” Yunnan refinery PetroChina, the listed arm of state-owned China National Petroleum Co (CNPC), started operating a 260,000 barrels per day Yunnan oil refinery in October 2016. The plant processes crude oil imported from the Middle East, via the

Sino-Myanmar pipeline, which is part of the twin oil and gas pipelines - financed by PetroChina - linking Kyaukphyu in Rakhine and Yunnan. In addition, PetroChina began operating a joint venture fuel storage in Yangon last September, CNPC said. The state-run company added it started selling refined fuel to Myanmar last April via China’s southwest land corridor. By October, CNPC refined fuel exports to Myanmar by land exceeded 10,000 tonnes. Overall, PetroChina supplies more than one million tonnes of refined fuel to Myanmar every year. There are plans to open SPC stations in Sagaing, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw regions “in the near future”, CNPC said. For Mr Borsano, the upgraded filling stations outside Yangon and their accompanying convenience stores and new facilities will benefit from robust market demand, supported by a growing availability of affordable cars and in-country tourism.

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/petrochina-opens-its-first-filling-station-myanmar.html>

Indian agribusiness granted IFC loan to expand Myanmar facilities

 Myanmar News | April, 18/2019

The Yangon subsidiary of an Indian agri--logistics group has secured a US\$3 million loan from the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the investment arm of the World Bank. Delhi-based Sohan Lal Commodity Management (SLCM) will use the capital to expand its warehousing and logistics services in Myanmar. The terms of the loan were however not disclosed.

The company handles cotton, black pepper, rice, wheat, pulses, maize, sugar and spices in Myanmar, for both imports/exports and domestic consumption, according to SCLM assistant manager Diksha Arora. The Myanmar unit has managed 3.24 million square feet of commodity storage space in 127 industrial zones and handled 10.14 million tonnes of commodities. Agriculture is the backbone of Myanmar's economy, while more than half of the national population live in rural areas. But the infrastructure and technology necessary for farmers and traders is severely underdeveloped. Many local warehouses are completely lacking in operational equipment and technology, such as CCTVs, dock levellers or a stable power supply. Farmers in Myanmar are often forced to store harvested products to sell at a later time. The poor warehouse conditions mean the storage leads to substantial losses, which the IFC estimated to be at around 20 percent. The biggest hurdle is for the agri-logistics industry to understand the business model, Ms Arora added. Another obstacle is the limited understanding by Myanmar financial institutions on how to evaluate and manage agri collateral. "Agriculture like e-commerce has gone through an immense change in the past few years. Infrastructure used to be a challenge in the past. Now, cutting-edge technology makes it possible to manage and handle agri commodities despite location, infrastructure, weather pattern or crop." In particular, SCLM has reduced post-harvest losses to 0.5pc in Myanmar, said CEO Sandeep Sabharwal. The IFC loan will further help farmers store higher volumes and reduce post-harvest

losses caused by infestation, excess humidity and inadequate storage. Myanmar's agriculture provides employment to 53pc of the labour force, IFC manager for Myanmar Vikram Kumar highlighted, and is key to alleviating the country's poverty. "A World Bank research has shown that progress in the agricultural sector was directly responsible for at least 46pc of the reduction in poverty between 2005 and 2015." Since 2013, the Washington-based lender has invested over \$1.3 billion in the country. Last month it announced a \$20 million loan to the Myanmar subsidiary of German retail group Metro AG.

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/indian-agribusiness-granted-ifc-loan-expand-myanmar-facilities.html>

EU remains top market of Vietnamese shrimp

 Vietnam News | April, 17/2019

The European Union (EU) was the largest market of Vietnamese shrimp in the first two months of 2019, according to the Vietnam Association of Seafood Entrepreneurs (VASEP). During January-February, export value of Vietnamese shrimp fell year-on-year by 15.2 percent to 373.6 million USD. Accounting for 20.5 percent of total export turnover, the EU secured its position as biggest buyer of Vietnamese shrimp. Within the EU, the UK, the Netherlands and Germany were the top purchasers. White-leg shrimp continued to occupy a key position in this market, making up 82 percent of total

shrimp shipments. Spending 67.7 million USD on Vietnamese shrimp in the period, Japan was the second largest buyer. Experts have said that shipments to the East Asian country have shown audacious signs from the outset of the year, with the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) taking effect from January, and completion of tax reduction progress under the Vietnam-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (VJEPA). Local firms may bolster exports to the market as Japan has applied a zero percent tariff on Vietnamese seafood. Meanwhile, China ranked third by spending 62.3 million USD on Vietnamese shrimp. Currently, Vietnam is the sixth largest shrimp supplier for China with 5.7 percent of the market share. VASEP eyes more than 4 billion USD in shrimp exports this year thanks to free trade agreements. It said the shrimp sector would make a breakthrough in exporting to 28 EU countries – enjoying low import tariffs once the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement takes effect – for an estimated export value of 1 billion USD.-VNA

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/eu-remains-top-market-of-vietnamese-shrimp/151147.vnp>
