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Key commerce laws to be passed this year



Cambodia News | 10 July, 2019

A raft of new laws to boost the local economy is in the pipeline and will be passed before the end of the year, according to a senior public official. Mao Thora, secretary of state at the Ministry of Commerce, told Khmer Times on Tuesday that the E-commerce and Consumer Protection laws have already been sent to the Council of Ministers, who will review the drafts on Friday before passing them on to the National Assembly and then the Senate. As a last step, King Norodom Sihamoni will sign the documents. “The work on the bills is done, and Prime Minister Hun Sen will chair the meeting on Friday this week to discuss the drafts,” he said. Competition Law is at an earlier stage, with the ministries having recently finished discussing it, Mr Thora said. He said it aims to help consumers purchase goods and services at fair prices, as well as increasing the quality and variety of the offer available to them. Finally, he pointed out that the Contract Law, which deals with franchises, is now being reviewed by the ministries. “These four laws will come into effect before the year ends,” he stressed. When asked which law is most critical to help improve commerce in the country, Mr Thora said they are all equally important.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50622358/key-commerce-laws-to-be-passed-this-year/>

E-visa Launched Allowing Foreigners Apply For Lao Visas Online



Laos News | 09 July, 2019

(KPL) Lao e-visa, a system that allows foreigners to apply for visas to the Lao PDR online, was launched on Jul 9 at the Wattay International Airport, Vientiane Capital. The move is to create favourable conditions for cooperation and people to people exchange between Laos and other friendly countries and boost the inflow of foreign visitors in the country. The launch ceremony took place in the presence of Deputy Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone, Minister of Foreign Affairs Saleumxay Kommasith, diplomatic corps and representatives of international organizations based in Vientiane. Laos has signed unilateral and bilateral visa exemption agreements with 46 countries around the world. At the initial stage of the project, the e-visa service will be available at two international ports: Wattay International Airport and Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge 1 using the official website: <https://laoevisa.gov.la>, according to Minister Saleumxay.

Source: <http://kpl.gov.la/En/Detail.aspx?id=46982>

Competition heats up on Yangon- Shanghai route



Myanmar News | 10 July, 2019

Chinese budget carrier Spring Airlines on Monday commenced scheduled operations at Terminal 1 of the Yangon International Airport (YIA). Spring Airlines will operate direct flights between Yangon and Shanghai using an Airbus A320 aircraft, which

has the capacity to carry 186 passengers. The carrier offers flights from YIA four times a week. The move comes just a month after China Eastern Airlines launched a direct Shanghai-Yangon full service flight using Airbus 320 aircraft. This route offers flights from YIA three times a week. It was China Eastern Airlines' ninth route connecting China and Myanmar, making it the airline with the most flights between the two countries, and it expects to transport around 360,000 passengers on those flights in 2019, the airline said. With the addition of Spring Airlines, there are now 32 international airlines operating at YIA, connecting Myanmar to 33 destinations across Asia, Yangon Aerodrome Company Limited, which operates YIA, said in a statement. At least ten are Chinese airlines, the Myanmar Times understands. To date, 15 cities in China, including Shanghai, are connected with Yangon. More than 3.5 million tourists visited Myanmar in 2018, 40 percent of whom came from China. Some 650,000 Chinese visitors arrived in the first four months of 2019, an increase of 30pc from the same period last year, according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. The number of Chinese tourists has increased since Myanmar started giving visa exemptions. On June 21, the ministry formed groups comprising regional tourism officials in Yangon, Mandalay and Bagan to monitor Chinese tourists. "We need to check how tourism companies are managing these big groups to make sure that both the country and the businesses are making

money," the Hotels and Tourism Ministry said in a statement.

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/us-soybean-planting-experiment-scheduled.html>

Viet Nam's forestry sector targets

US\$11 billion in export



Vietnam News | July, 10/2019

HA NOI — Việ Nam's export of timber and wood products is expected to reach US\$11 billion this year, said Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Nguyễn Xuân Cường. Cường said export value reached \$5.23 billion in the first half of this year, up 20 per cent compared with the same period in 2018. "The increase of exports of timber and wood products have contributed to creating jobs and reduced the pressure of the growth for husbandry and planting areas," Cường said. Speaking at a conference in Hà Nội last week, he said 2019 had proved challenging because of the US-China trade tensions and changes in the world economy, which had had an impact on agriculture, something he said the ministry saw coming. "From a country which had maintained only 20 per cent of the forest coverage in the past, Việ Nam now has recovered nearly 43 per cent," he said. The minister also pointed out that in addition to the advantage of around 4,500 wood processing enterprises, Việ Nam had a lot of potential for cultivating herbs and other materials for medicine, which is a multi-billion dollar industry. "The forestry sector needs to determine key areas for its sustainable development

in the future.”According to the Institute of Medicinal Materials, Việt Nam has 5,117 herbal plants and fungus, along with 408 species of animals and minerals used as materials for nearly 1,300 traditional remedies. Domestic demand for herbal medicinal materials is about 60,000-80,000 tonnes per year, mostly for producing foods, medicines and cosmetics. Cường said with a series of free trade agreements approved, the legal issue of raw materials and timber sources was inevitable in the integration trend of the forestry sector. Plus as the summer comes, people must be aware of the dangers of forest fires. “The weather has been hot and sunny over the past month, meaning a high risk of forest fires in the central region. The sector needs to focus on forest fire prevention and control in the last months of the year,” Cường said. He said the sector must build an appropriate policy framework for sustainable forest fire prevention and develop forest protection projects for each region. According to the General Department of Forestry, the growth rate of forestry production value in the second quarter of this year increased by 4.53 per cent, 0.08 per cent higher than the same period in 2018. In the first half of the year, the country discovered 5,691 cases of violation to the provisions of the Forestry Law, reducing 16 per cent year-on-year. The broken forest area was 287 ha, down 11 per cent. At the meeting, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Hà Công Tuấn required the department to complete the draft decree on a timber

legality assurance system to implement the Voluntary Partnership Agreement on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance, and Trade (VPA/FLEGT) between EU and Việt Nam, which officially came into effect on June 1 this year. “This is a decree for a new issue, so it must be built with high quality and responsibility but not increase administrative procedures,” Tuấn said. With the high demand in implementing the VPA/FLEGT Agreement as well as the impact of the US-China trade war on the industry, Tuấn asked the department to assign specific people to be responsible for the agreement’s implementation. Deputy Head of the General Department of Forestry Phạm Văn Điển said the department would pay much attention to applying high-tech for the forest management and protection. “To reach the target of \$11 billion in export value this year, the department will co-ordinate with relevant sectors to fight against trade frauds of some export enterprises as well as control the import of timber from other countries which are in high risks of illegal timber sources,” Điển said. — VNS

Source: <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/522438/viet-nams-forestry-sector-targets-us11-billion-in-export.html#X8r27jclD8QT0wDH.97>