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Ministry calls for new tourism products to attract Chinese and Korean visitors



Cambodia News | 19 August, 2019

The Minister of Tourism on Friday urged the creation of new tourism products and the expansion of existing tourist sites in Siem Reap province to attract more tourists from China and South Korea. The proposal follows a drop of 20 percent in the number of Korean travellers to Siem Reap during the first half of the year. Tourism Minister Thong Khon on Friday pointed out that the number of visitors from South Korea to Siem Reap is declining, and called on all industry players to work together to establish new tourism products to attract more Chinese and Korean visitors to the province and make them stay longer. “We must create new tourism products. The government is studying the tourism master plan for Siem Reap province. We have identified new potential tourism products, particularly in Kulen Mountain, the Tonle Sap area, and around the temples of Angkor,” Mr Khon said. The ministry is now pushing Siem Reap authorities to decorate the streets and set up souvenir shops that cater to Chinese and Korean tourists, Mr Khon said. He also asked businesses to refrain from selling counterfeit products to tourists, blaming the practice for the current downturn in tourist visits. Chhay Sivlin, president of the Cambodia Association of Travel Agents, said the minister’s comments were on point. “We also encourage the establishment of new

tourism products in main tourism destinations like Siem Reap province. We want tourists to stay longer and the best way to achieve this is through new tourism products and destinations,” Ms Sivlin said. “Tourists can visit the ancient temples during the day, and then enjoy other tourist sites like eco-tourism establishments. At night, they can visit the night markets or other new sites,” Ms Sivlin said. During the first half of the year, Cambodia welcomed 3.3 million holidaymakers, an increase of 11 percent compared to the same period last year. Chinese tourists continue to top Cambodia’s tourism market. 1.2 million Chinese visited the Kingdom from January to June. Last year, 6.2 million foreigners visited Cambodia, a 10.7 percent year-on-year hike.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50634711/ministry-calls-for-new-tourism-products-to-attract-chinese-and-korean-visitors/>

State-backed online shopping platform launched



Cambodia News | 19 August, 2019

Tinh Tinh E-commerce, Cambodia’s first state-backed online marketplace, officially launched last week. The e-commerce platform, hailed by developers as the Kingdom’s biggest, is owned by Cambodia Post E-Solutions PLC – a venture of Cambodia Post – Chinese firm ZVS Investment, and local tech company Paxxa Mobile Solutions. According to the developers, Tinh Tinh E-commerce offers a comprehensive and integrated set of online services, acting as a logistics and intermediary

agency, among other roles. Tinh Tinh is Khmer for “buy, buy.” The platform is available in Khmer, English, and Chinese, said Ork Bora, director-general of Cambodia Post. Mr Bora said the platform was established with an initial capital of \$1.5 million. Cambodia Post, a public enterprise since 2011, holds a 10 percent stake, while ZVS owns 50 percent. The rest is owned by Paxxa Mobile Solutions. “I believe this platform will help local businesses, especially small and medium-sized ones, sell their products online to reach a global market,” he said. Meas Sopheary, chairman of Cambodia Post E-Solutions PLC, said Tinh Tinh E-commerce is Cambodia’s only certified online marketplace. She said it is the biggest online shopping platform with tens of thousands of quality products on display. “Cambodia Post E-Solutions PLC has joint the largest digital online market in Cambodia. It will also become one of the most popular online purchase apps in the world,” she said. Ms Sopheary said local merchants no longer need to worry about the cost of advertising. “Merchants are welcomed to sell their products on our platform,” she said, adding that the company will enter agreements with several banks to ensure that transactions are safe. “We are working with Cambodia Post and ZTO Express to guarantee the efficiency of our logistics system,” she added. ZTO is a leading express delivery company in China and one of the largest express delivery companies in the world. According to the Telecommunications Regulator of Cambodia (TRC), the number of internet

users in Cambodia – including both mobile internet and fixed internet – rose 31.6 percent during the first half of the year, and now stand at 15.8 million, equalling 98.5 percent of the population. TRC noted that, as of February, Facebook had 7 million users in the country. Speaking at Friday’s launch, Tram Iv Tek, the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, said the e-commerce platform will play an important role in developing the country’s digital economy. “This is an important initiative in line with global economic trends of the digital era,” he said, adding that Cambodia needs more investments in technology to diversify its economy. “The Cambodian economy used to be heavily reliant on the agricultural sector. Now the industry and service sectors are becoming our economic drivers,” the minister noted.

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50634706/state-backed-online-shopping-platform-launched/>

Indian govt supports training for local techies



Laos News | 19 August, 2019

The Indian government is supporting a course for technical staff at the Laos-India Centre of Excellence in Software Development and Training (CESDT) of the Institute of Information and Communication Technology as part of a US\$1.3 million project. The CESDT project from 2017-2019 is a cooperative effort between the Institute of Information and Communications Technology (IICT) under the Lao Ministry of Posts and Telecommunication and the

Indian Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC). The project aims to enhance human resources to develop high quality software in line with the government's digital transformation policy and contribute to socio-economic development. The institute organised a training course for information and communications technology staff at its office on Friday with the launch attended by the Director General of IICT, Mr Sayfon Boutchanthalath, and Indian tech expert Ms Akanksha Sharma. "We have trainees from various departments of the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, and companies such as Lao Telecom and Sky Telecom participating in our initial course," Mr Sayfon said. He expressed his heartfelt gratitude to C-DAC and the Indian government for their support. The Indian government supports the CESDT, and for Laos, it is the first project that lies within the Asean-India Cooperation Programme. The CESDT comprises highly advanced facilities, suitable for trainees to learn the latest skills and technology. Each course will take about 200 to 320 hours with participants to be presented with completion certificates by C-DAC. Courses including software testing, advanced web technology, Android programming, IT project management, ethical hacking and information security and Linux system administration are to be conducted under the programme. Mr Sayfon said that after all courses by the visiting experts have taken place, the institute will continue to deliver courses to contribute to ICT capacity building.

Source: http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Indian_186.php

Local property portal raises \$3m in second round funding



Myanmar News | 18 August, 2019

ShweProperty.com, Myanmar's online property firm, has raised US\$3 million in a Series B round of funding to boost its business operations and streamline its home purchase system. "The latest round of funding will be used to accelerate all areas of our business operations, sales and marketing, product development, and includes our advanced transaction model that streamlines the home buying process for consumers," said Kevin Goos, managing director of ShweProperty. The second round of funding was led by Singapore-registered private equity firm, Emerging Markets Investment Advisors, followed by 500 StartUps, Simon Baker (former chair of iProperty and Mitula Group), and family office of Dinh Thi Hoa (chair of Galaxy Media and Entertainment Vietnam). The due diligence process for in-depth transaction was conducted by US-based auditing company Deloitte. Existing investors for the local online real estate company include Vostok New Ventures (Nasdaq Stockholm) and a UK-based Investment fund. "ShweProperty has seen impressive growth since our initial investment, and we are very pleased with their clear market leadership in the Myanmar property market. We

always try to find market leaders throughout the world and our continued support and commitment to ShweProperty is a testament to their strong performance and outlook,” said Per Brilioth CEO of Vostok. ShweProperty is led by Myanmar born CEO, Justin Sway, managing director Kevin Goos, and founder and director Kaung Thu Win, who are also shareholders of the company. Founded in 2011, the company launched an online property portal to connect property buyers, renters, and sellers. It has more than 100,000 active listings and the portal works with all top property developers and real estate agents across the nation.

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/local-property-portal-raises-3m-second-round-funding.html>

Steep plunge in rice exports to China as import rules tighten



Vietnam News | 18 August, 2019

Vietnam Customs data show rice exports to China in the first seven months fell 65.7 percent year-on-year to 318,000 tons. Prices for Vietnam’s 5 percent broken price fell 1.47 percent to \$335-345 a ton Thursday from \$340-350 last week, Reuters reported. The plunge has happened after China began applying stricter regulations on agriculture imports. Vietnamese traders say that Chinese importers are unable to buy rice from Vietnam because of new technical barriers China has erected. The largest importer of Vietnamese

agriculture produce has been increasingly tightening import regulations because Vietnamese exports to China have a history of problems, including counterfeit certificates, declarations and orders, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development had said in a report last June. Vietnamese goods has also been violating quality standards for agricultural products set by China, it said. Vietnam’s Ministry and Industry and Trade recently said it would organize several trade promotion trips this year to boost rice exports. Rice exports to China will likely face more challenges next year as its imports are forecast to decline by 2.94 percent from this year to 3.3 million tons because of abundant domestic supply, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said in a report earlier this month. From January to July, agriculture exports to China fell by 10 percent year-on-year to \$3.35 billion, according to Vietnam Customs.

Source: <https://e.vnexpress.net/news/business/industries/steep-plunge-in-rice-exports-to-china-as-import-rules-tighten-3968743.html>

Annual car sales to reach a million in 2025



Vietnam News | 17 August, 2019

Vietnam's annual car sales could more than triple in the next five years to reach a million in 2025. The Ministry of Industry and Trade said this in a new report, adding that there is a rising demand among people to switch from motorbikes to cars as the

country's GDP per capita increases. GDP per capita rose 8.3 percent against 2017 to \$2,587 last year. Passenger car sales in the last five years have grown 30-40 percent a year. However, the car industry's localization rate remains low at 40-55 percent for trucks and buses, and 7-10 percent for passenger cars, according to the ministry. As most parts produced in the country are simple with low technology and value, the car industry lacks supply of components and has to import large volumes of car parts every year. Among 1,800 car parts manufacturers in the country, only 300 are equipped to join the supply chain of multinationals, it said. A weak-performing support industry has made Vietnam's automobile production costs 10-20 percent higher than those of imports from other ASEAN countries. This is why Vietnam is seeking to support local manufacturers. The Ministry of Industry and Trade is considering removing the special consumption tax on car parts produced in the country, which would apply for 5-10 years, covering cars with 9 seats or under. It is also considering tax incentives for electric cars to promote the production and consumption of such vehicles. Vietnam last year issued a decree to limit car imports in a bid to promote local auto manufacturing. As a result, the number of imported cars fell 20 percent, while VinFast, a unit of conglomerate Vingroup, became the country's first fully fledged automaker in October

by introducing its first two car models. Car consumption in Vietnam last year was 288,683 units, up 6 percent from 2017, of which 68 percent were passenger cars, according to the Vietnam Automobile Manufacturers Association (VAMA).

Source:<https://e.vnexpress.net/news/business/industries/annual-car-sales-to-reach-a-million-in-2025-3969001.html>
