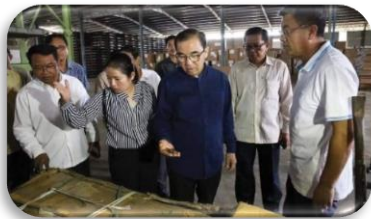




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Chinese firm to invest \$10 million in organic fertilizer plant



Cambodia News | 25 September, 2019

Chinese company Hameinivin Investment on Monday announced plans to invest in a large-scale organic fertilizer plant in Tboung Khmum province. Construction of the plant, which will cost \$10 million, will start early next year. Pan Dong Feng, Hameinivin president and chairman of the Chinese Agricultural Association in Cambodia, unveiled the investment plan on Monday during a meeting with Agricultural Minister Veng Sakhon, who was visiting the firm's farm. Mr Pan said the plant, set to occupy 15 hectares, will be operational by the end of 2020. Once Phase 1 is finished, it will be able to produce 50,000 tonnes of organic fertilizer a year. With the conclusion of Phase 2, the output will rise by 10,000 tonnes. The company has been investing in the province since 2016. It has bought 1,300 hectares where it grows tobacco, banana, and corn. "We are growing tobacco on 200 hectares and will expand the plantation in the future," he said. The company buys tobacco leaves from 2,500 farmers in Tboung Khmum's Krouch Chmar and Chhloung districts, Mr Pan said. "Farmers are benefiting from our investment and are earning \$2,000 to \$4,000 a year by selling us their tobacco," he said, noting that Hameinivin buys a kilogram of tobacco for \$1 to \$2.5. He said the company also owns a facility to dry tobacco leaves with a capacity to process 2,000 to 3,000 tonnes a year. The processed tobacco is sold locally or exported, he noted. Minister Sakhon praised the company for its investment plans

and its contribution to the livelihoods of local tobacco farmers. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Cambodia produced 7,454 tonnes of tobacco in 2018, an 18 percent decrease from 2017. Tboung Khmum and Kampong Cham provinces are the largest tobacco producers in the Kingdom.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50646140/chinese-firm-to-invest-10-million-in-organic-fertilizer-plant/>

Indonesian firm urged to invest in Cambodian railroads



Cambodia News | 25 September, 2019

Transport Minister Sun Chanthol last week asked PT Industri Kereta Api Indonesia (Inka) – a state-owned, Indonesian train manufacturing firm – to invest in Cambodian railroads. During an official visit to Indonesia from Sept 19-21, Minister Chanthol requested that Inka representatives visit the Kingdom to discuss investing in Cambodia's railway system with local authorities and Royal Railways, according to a post on the Facebook page of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport. According to the ministry, Inka agreed to send a team of officials to discuss railway development with local officials. Cambodia is working to grow its railway network and make it more efficient. The country has only two railway lines: Phnom Penh to Sihanoukville and Phnom Penh to Banteay Meanchey province's Poipet. The country's railway network is managed by the Royal Group through its subsidiary Royal Railways. In April, the Cambodian government asked China Railway Construction Corporation for help to improve the local railway system.

According to Kong Vimean, spokesman for the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, CRCC has already completed a study on revamping Cambodia's railway system. "The Chinese company has completed the study, but we have not received the report yet," he said.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50646169/indonesian-firm-urged-to-invest-in-cambodian-railroads/>

Laos' Economy Forecast To Moderate This Year



Laos News / 25 September, 2019

(KPL) Economic growth for the Lao PDR is forecast to moderate in 2019 and 2020 as expansion in the industry and services sectors softened in the first half of 2019 due to lesser international tourist arrivals and near stagnation in electricity exports and generation despite a slight recovery in the agriculture sector, a report has said. In an update of its flagship publication Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2019, the Asian Development Bank projects the Lao PDR's economy to grow by 6.2% in 2019 and 2020, slightly lower than its April forecast of 6.5% for 2019 and 2020. "The tight fiscal condition, as the Lao PDR's public debt remains high, holds back the government's spending and investment in the country," said ADB Public Management Specialist for Laos, Mr Rattanatay Luanglatbandith. "Accelerating the pace of public finance reform, further improving business environment to promote private sector investment and producing a skilled Labour force to support the labour market demand

should help spur investment and boost employment and economic growth that benefits everyone," said Mr Rattanatay Luanglatbandith. In the first four months of 2019, merchandise exports have slightly increased in US dollar terms, compared with the same months in 2018 as the electricity export grew only at 2.3 %, which is much slower than 7.0% a year earlier. This indicates a slowdown in industry growth in the first half of the year and a deepened contraction in mining output. Meanwhile, growth in tourism, a proxy for the services sector, softened as international tourist arrivals slowed from 6.1% in the first half of 2018 to 5.0% in the same period this year. The Lao Kip appears to be overvalued, considering the significant premium over the official exchange rate paid on the open market for hard currency. Inflation is now forecasted to be around 2.3 % in the 2019 and 2020, slightly higher than the 2.0% projection in April this year because of continued pressure on food prices and local currency depreciation. The monetary and credit conditions remain tight in the country as both grew by 3.9% and 3.1%, respectively, in the first quarter of 2019. The current account deficit in percentage of gross domestic product is projected at 8.9% in 2019 and 8.4% in 2020 on the back of an improvement in exports. Imports, meanwhile, is seen to contract at 9.5% in 2019 and 10% in 2020, narrower than previous estimates. Despite the Lao PDR's expected improvement in the current account deficit, gross international reserves are forecast to remain below \$1 billion by December 2019, covering only a month

of imports, making the Lao PDR's external position vulnerable to external financial shocks. ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. In 2018, it made commitments of new loans and grants amounting to \$21.6 billion. Established in 1966, ADB is owned by 68 members with 49 from the region.

Source : <http://kpl.gov.la/En/Detail.aspx?id=48415>

Export earnings increases over 595 m USD this FY



Myanmar News | 25 September, 2019

Till September 13 of 2018-19 fiscal year, the export earnings reached over 15.976 billion US dollars, up over 595 million US dollars compared with the same period last year, according to the Commerce Ministry. Myanmar exports farm, animal, marine, mining, forest, industrial finished and other products. According to the figures from the Commerce Ministry, now there is a trade deficit of over 1,200 million US dollars more than one week left before the end of this fiscal year. Till September 13 of this FY, the export value amounted to 15.976 billion US dollars and the import value, over US 17.218 billion US dollars. The total external trade is expected to fetch over 31 billion US dollars during this fiscal year. The trade deficit is expected to lower to 500 million US dollars, said Union Minister for Planning and

Finance Soe Win. The current trade deficit has declined by over 1.930 billion US dollars, compared to that in the same period.

Source : <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/export-earnings-increases-over-595-m-usd-this-fy>

Myanmar and Singapore sign Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment



Myanmar News | 25 September, 2019

The 7th Joint Committee of Myanmar-Singapore Ministerial Meeting was held at Melia Yangon Hotel in Yangon on September 24. During the meeting, Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations of Myanmar, and Mr. Chan Chun Sing, Minister for Trade and Industry of Singapore signed an Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment between Myanmar and Singapore. "Singapore's investment volume to Myanmar has reached more than US\$ 22 billion," said Union Minister Thaung Tun. The agreement can noticeably support the investors between the two countries. It can not only create investment environment but also boost investment between Myanmar and Singapore. Myanmar approved 321 investment businesses of Singapore from 1988-89 to now and investment volume reached more than US\$ 22 billion, accounting for 27 %.

In the current financial year, Singapore is making most investment in Myanmar and it is also an important and strategic economic partner. The official statistics of the Ministry of Commerce indicated that the trade volume between the two countries amounted to US\$ 3.838 billion. The meeting focused on trade, investment promotion and industrial zones, technical cooperation and assistance for SMEs, urban development, finance and banking services, and legal affairs and intelligence property right services. Both ministers expressed desire to continue boosting trade and investment and cooperating in other areas in the future. The Joint Committee of Myanmar-Singapore Ministerial Meeting was founded in 1995 with the aim of accelerating technical cooperation drive between the two countries.

Source : <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/export-earnings-increases-over-595-m-usd-this-fy>

ADB forecasts Vietnam's economy to grow at 6.8 per cent in 2019



Vietnam News | 25 September, 2019

Vietnam's economy is forecast to maintain healthy growth in 2019 and 2020 at 6.8 per cent and 6.7 per cent, respectively, after growing robustly at 7.1 per cent last year, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in an update of its flagship annual economic

publication launched on September 25. In the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2019 Update, ADB noted that while Vietnam's gross domestic product growth moderated in the first half of 2019, it will remain resilient this year and next year despite a weaker external environment. Inflation forecasts are revised down to 3.0 per cent from 3.5 per cent for 2019 and 3.5 per cent from 3.8 per cent for 2020. GDP growth moderated from 7.0 per cent in the first half of 2018 to 6.8 per cent in the corresponding period of this year. On the demand side, as external demand weakened, volume growth in exports of goods and services slowed by more than half, from 15.7 per cent in the first 6 months of 2018 to 7.1 per cent a year later. The adverse effect of the export slowdown on GDP growth was well cushioned, however, by continued strength in domestic demand. Growth moderated across the board in agriculture, industry, and services, but to varying degrees. Prolonged drought and a fresh outbreak of African swine fever dragged growth in agriculture down from 3.8 per cent in the first half of 2018 to 2.4 per cent a year later. Within agriculture, growth in farm production dropped sharply from 3.1 per cent to 1.3 per cent, and forestry output growth eased from 5.5 per cent to 4.2 per cent, while fisheries sustained strong 6.4 per cent expansion. "Despite a slowdown in export growth due to the escalation of the trade conflict between the US and the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the consequent downturn in global trade, the economy remains healthy thanks to continued strength in domestic

demand and sustained inflows of foreign direct investment,” said ADB Country Director for Vietnam Eric Sidgwick. “Prospects for domestic consumption continues to be positive, supported by rising incomes, buoyant employment, and moderate inflation”, Mr. Eric Sidgwick noted. The recent signing of a free trade agreement with the European Union promises to further open market access for trade and investment, as does the regional Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. A recent amendment to the Public Investment Law should improve public investment by accelerating processes, simplifying procedures, and enabling faster disbursement of public investment. While retaining the growth outlook for Vietnam for this year and the next, the report highlighted significant risks to the forecast. Further escalation of the US–PRC trade tensions and continuing global economic slowdown could shrink global trade, which will adversely impact the country’s trade performance and economic growth.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/economy/adb-forecasts-vietnams-economy-to-grow-at-68-percent-in-2019-403674.vov>

Vietnam’s digital economy likely to hit 30 billion USD in 2025



Vietnam News | 25 September, 2019

Hanoi (VNA) - Vietnam's digital economy was valued at 9 billion in 2018 and is expected to reach 30 billion by 2025, according to Open Gov Asia. In an article published on September 24, Open Gov Asia said

Vietnam’s digital economy is growing rapidly, making important contributions to the country’s economy. Over the past years, Vietnam has witnessed an increase in online shopping, the article said, adding that the boom of e-commerce and the emergence of new business models on the Internet have changed consumption habits of Vietnamese people. It stressed that e-commerce is the fastest developed field in Vietnam, growing at about 30 percent a year, with revenue in 2018 valuing at about 8 billion USD and predicted to reach at least 10 billion USD by 2020. According to the article, telecommunications enterprises in Vietnam have also grown with a turnover of about 6.1 billion USD, creating more than 851,000 jobs. Meanwhile, the online advertising industry is growing rapidly, with forecast revenue of more than 1 billion USD by 2020, three times higher than the figure in 2016. However, the article also pointed out challenges facing Vietnam in the context of the explosion of a digital economy, especially cyber security, and competitive pressure in the integration process. To reach sustainable growth, Vietnam needs comprehensive measures and joint efforts from both State and private sectors, including creating favourable legal corridors and normative documents that are appropriate for a digital economy, upgrading digital infrastructure and equipping modern digital technology solutions, giving tax incentives for

investment activities, developing digital infrastructure and information security.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnams-digital-economy-likely-to-hit-30-billion-usd-in-2025/161055.vnp>
