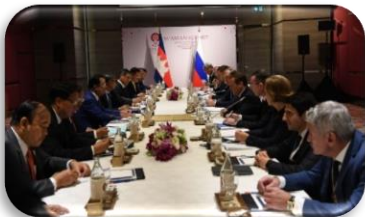


Highlight News | November 7/2019



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Nation set to ink agreement with Russia-led economic bloc



Cambodia News | 06 November, 2019

Thousands of Cambodian products could soon be shipped duty-free to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) market, a huge free-trade bloc, after the Kingdom made moves to sign an agreement with the union. The potential free-trade agreement (FTA) was disclosed during a discussion between Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen and his counterpart Dmitry Medvedev, the Russian Prime Minister. The talk was held on the sidelines of the Asean Business and Investment Summit in Thailand's Bangkok on Sunday. Mr Hun Sen said Russia has taken big efforts to support the negotiations. "We would also like to thank Russia's principle support for efforts in helping to negotiate the free trade agreement between Cambodia and the union," he was quoted as saying in a Facebook post. The prime minister said Cambodia is now asking Russia to formally support Cambodia's official request to the Eurasian Economic Commission to sign the deal. "This is a very import move and we expected that the free trade agreement between Cambodia and the EAEU will be signed in the near future once the negotiation is completed," Mr Medvedev was quoted as saying on Mr Hun Sen's Facebook post. Russian News Agency TASS reported that five Asean nations – Brunei, Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand, and the Philippines – have expressed interest in signing free trade agreements with EAEU. Mr Medvedev said the union is open to cooperate with those nations. "I would like to point out

that the union is open to cooperation with all interested partners and welcomes the interest those five Asean countries have shown," he said. He noted that the EAEU has experience in creating a common market and so far free trade agreements had been signed with Vietnam, Singapore, and China, while talks for creating one with India are underway. EAEU is an international organisation for regional economic cooperation composed of five member states: Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Together, these countries are home to 183 million people and represent a combined gross domestic product of about \$5 trillion. Speaking to Khmer Times on Tuesday, Cambodia Chamber of Commerce Vice-President Lim Heng said EAEU will offer great opportunities in terms of trade expansion for Cambodian products. He said about 4,000 to 5,000 types of Cambodian goods will be allowed duty-free in the EAEU if the FTA is signed. Most would be agricultural and textile products. "This is a good opportunity for the Cambodian economy. We would be able to attract more foreign investors to our country as well as export new products to the Union," he said. "The Cambodia Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Commerce have been working to make the agreement a reality. If it happens soon, it will be great for Cambodia," he said. Cambodia is hoping to follow the example of Vietnam, which signed an FTA with the EAEU in 2016. That has resulted in bilateral trade with Russia growing from essentially zero to \$10 billion per annum in the past two years, while Russian investments into Vietnam totalled about \$1 billion, according to research by Dezan Shira & Associates. "There are

advantages for Russian and EAEU investors in Cambodia and Vietnam as both are Asean members and as such have FTAs with both China and India,” it said.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50657467/nation-set-to-ink-agreement-with-russia-led-economic-bloc/>

German companies consider investing in local solar sector



Cambodia News | 06 November, 2019

A host of companies from Germany showed interest in Cambodia's clean energy sector during a conference on solar power held yesterday in Phnom Penh. With the government having recently unveiled its goal of having 20 percent of locally-produced energy come from solar farms, the sector is attracting an increasing number of foreign players. During yesterday's conference on industrial and commercial solar energy, held at Raffles Hotel in Phnom Penh, several German companies introduced their products and services to the government, NGOs, and factory owners. The event was organised by the Delegation of Germany Industry and Commerce in Myanmar (AHK) and supported by the GIZ Project Development Program, the Global Business Network, the German Business Group Cambodia, and the European Chamber of Commerce (Eurocham). The conference aimed to promote renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies, showcase sustainable energy solutions, and contribute to climate protection, the organisers said. German firms Enebar, Dhybrid, 21st Century Clean Energy and 4i Capital, among others, were represented at the

event. The conference is part of the German Energy Solution Initiative – Energy Solutions Made in Germany, a programme supported by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. Participants at the conference discussed the Kingdom's renewable energy policy and mostly focused on the opportunities and challenges to develop the sector. Martin Klose, delegate of AHK Myanmar, said the conference will open the door for Germany to increase investment in Cambodia. “We have been tasked with promoting German trade and investment in Cambodia, so we are holding a lot of events in Germany to raise awareness about Cambodia and put the Kingdom in the map of German investors,” Mr Klose said. AHK Myanmar represents German trade and investment in Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar. Victor Jona, director-general of energy at the Ministry of Mines and Energy, told reporters that the government welcomes all investors looking to develop projects in the solar sector. “We support these initiatives because clean energy like solar power does not harm the environment. The government is working to promote these types of investment,” Mr Jona said after the conference. Mr Jona touted Cambodia's potential in solar, pointing out that the Kingdom has a very high number of peak sunlight hours. According to Mr Jona, with only two solar farms in operation, Cambodia generates 90 megawatts from solar. However, by 2022, seven new solar facilities will be running, bringing that figure up to 410 MW.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50657473/german-companies-consider-investing-in-local-solar-sector/>

Laos promotes environmentally-friendly hydro projects



Laos News | 06 November, 2019

The government is encouraging the building of environmentally-friendly hydropower plants to ensure green growth and sustainable poverty reduction, according to a senior government official. “The government is highly encouraged to promote environmentally-friendly and sustainable hydropower projects,” Deputy Minister of Natural Resource and Environment, Ms Bounkham Vorachit, said on November 5. “Therefore, all development projects need to be comprehensively studied to assess and avoid impacts on the environment and local communities,” she added. Ms Bounkham reiterated the government’s policy on hydropower development at the 8th Regional Stakeholder Forum of the Mekong River Commission (MRC), which is taking place at the Lao Plaza Hotel in Vientiane until today. At this forum, which is attended by representatives of the Mekong countries, academia, civil society and the media, Ms Bounkham said the government’s decision to promote hydropower development was based on the country’s potential with respect to water resources. “I believe that no nation desires to live in poverty for a long period of time and that each country has varying potential for social and economic development,” she said. Laos is a small country with abundant resources so its

policy is to encourage investment in the development of hydropower, as the growth of this sector will make a significant contribution to poverty reduction, she added. Ms Bounkham said that another reason for Laos wanting to promote hydropower was that it was a clean industry and a renewable source of energy. Laos has always attached importance to the principles of sustainable development and green growth through the implementation of its obligations under the relevant international agreements, she said. She added that to comply with the 1995 Mekong Agreement, the Lao government submitted a proposal for the Luang Prabang hydropower project to the MRC and its member countries to seek additional consultation and inputs from member countries and stakeholders. “We hope that today’s meeting will give stakeholders more understanding, not only about the development of Mekong mainstream hydropower projects, but also enable contribution to discussions and inputs on our next basin development strategy for 2021-2030 as well as the MRC strategy plan,” Ms Bounkham said. She also stressed the need for cooperation and support from stakeholders to ensure sustainable development of the Mekong. “I realise that the challenges of sustainable development cannot be addressed without significant support and cooperation from our stakeholders, including Member Countries, Dialogue

Partners, Development Partners, civil society organisations, research institutes, private sector, and the media,” Ms Bounkham said.

Source : <http://annx.asianews.network/content/laos-promotes-environmentally-friendly-hydro-projects-107690>

Vientiane looks to boost use of Lao-made products, enhance consumer protection



Laos News / 06 November, 2019

VIENTIANE (Vientiane Times/ANN) - Authorities in Vientiane intend to promote the use of Lao-made goods and encourage the cultivation of organically farmed agricultural produce in the capital to create jobs and generate income. These issues were discussed at a meeting held on Saturday at the Vientiane Industry and Commerce Department and the meeting was presided over by the Vice Mayor of Vientiane, Dr Athsaphangthong Siphandone. Participants exchanged views on achieving a balance between the demand and supply of domestically-made goods and minimising the unnecessary import of foreign products. The meeting was attended by representatives of the capital's trade and investment promotion and agro-business units, members of Vientiane's management boards, and organic vegetable growers. A pig breeder and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the CS Group, Mr Khanthong Sipaserth, told the

meeting that his large farm produces a large amount of pork and piglets every month but is still unable to meet market demand. “I believe consumers are confused about food safety because of the recent outbreak of African swine flu that caused some panic. Domestic trade promotion authorities should partner with the food and drug sector to provide the right information about Lao-made products,” he said. He suggested that the most successful way to promote local products was to increase the use of Lao-made goods by the government, minimise the import of foreign goods and substitute them with home-grown products. Head of the Board of Management at Nongchanh market in Sisattanak district, Mr Bounnoy Vongsay, said the market was a large venue for the sale of fresh produce and allowed organic vegetable growers to sell their goods. “On behalf of the market's management team, I'd like to openly declare that we are willing to support the organic and clean vegetable growers of Vientiane. We would also like to support growers with special offers, such as not paying any rent for two months,” he said. He said the market's management team would arrange a special zone for organic farmers as part of efforts to promote the consumption of locally grown produce. Other markets in Vientiane such as the Lao-Aussie Fresh Market in Sikhottabong district and Haykham Market in Xaysettha district have agreed to support the

promotion of local agricultural produce. In his concluding remarks at the meeting, the Vice Mayor of Vientiane, Dr Athsaphangthong Siphandone, said the city's authorities will continue to promote domestic products and improve the protection of consumers. "Vientiane authorities will cooperate with the Vientiane Chamber of Commerce and Industry to learn about the demand and supply of domestic products and find proper ways to provide trade and investment information in Vientiane," he said. He added that this meeting between representatives of Vientiane's markets and agricultural producers was just the beginning of closer coordination that will continue to form different working groups to roll out policies to promote domestic goods and protect consumers. Director of the Vientiane Industry and Commerce Department, Mr Berlin Phetchantharath, and domestic trade officials from various districts in Vientiane also attended the meeting.

Source : <http://annx.asianews.network/content/vientiane-looks-boost-use-lao-made-products-enhance-consumer-protection-107692>

New road project in Chin set to start next year



Myanmar News | 06 November, 2019

Work on a new road project in Chin State funded by a World Bank loan will begin next October, a state official has announced. The new road will connect the townships of Kalay, Falam and

Hakha. The starting point of the road will be in Kalay, which straddles the Chin State and Sagaing Region border. "The road marks the first project with international backing in Chin State, and is very much welcomed even though the start of the project will only be in October next year," said Chin State Minister of Transport and Communications U Shwe Chit Oo. The Kalay-Falam-Hakha road is crucial in connecting Chin State with other regions and states in the country and once completed will boost development in the state, U Shwe Chit Oo added. The project will be carried out with a US\$65million loan from the World Bank and is part of \$200 million in funding provided to Myanmar after the flooding in 2015, said Mr Josiah Bowles an international safeguards specialist and advisory team member for the World Bank. The loan was granted for infrastructure development in Rakhine State, Ayeyawaddy Region, and Chin State. Currently, officials are conducting the environmental impact assessment for the road project, after which more in-depth planning for the road can begin, Bowles said. International consultancy Cardno Myanmar Co has been selected by the World Bank and the Ministry of Construction, to ensure the environmental and social impacts from the road project are minimised. Cardno

Myanmar is now carrying out assessment work and according to its latest information, the number of people expected to be affected by the project is 600. The project is an important one for Chin State so care is being taken to ensure that it is properly built and sustainable, said Ms Flora Bawi Nei Mawi, an official with an NGO in Chin. Initial results for environmental and social impact studies for the project conducted by Chin State civil society organisations were released in Hlaing Township, yesterday. An agreement called the Chin Action Plan approved by the state government will serve as a guideline to ensure people affected by the project will be fairly compensated and that the project will be carried out as fairly, transparently, and with as little environmental impact as possible, Bowles said.

Source : <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/new-road-project-chin-set-start-next-year.html>

CMP businesses import raw materials worth over \$160m in one month



Myanmar News | 06 November, 2019

CMP businesses have imported raw materials worth over US\$160 million over a month this fiscal year that started in October 1, exceeding over US\$12 million compared to the same

period of last fiscal year, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce. From October 1 to 25 in the current 2019-2020 fiscal year, CMP raw materials worth US\$160.748 million while the amount of last year was US\$148.588 million. So, this year's amount exceeded US\$12.160 million. CMP system is mainly used in garment industry in Myanmar. The system is also seen in shoe-making and bag-making. However, Myanmar earns only 10 percent as CMP system is based on wages. Officials from Myanmar Garment Federation said that although the country earns just about US\$300 million annually from CMP businesses, the adoption of FOB system can increase the earnings of US\$3 billion.

Source : <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/cmp-businesses-import-raw-materials-worth-over-160m-in-one-month>

Ten-month industrial production index rises 9.5 percent



Vietnam News | 06 November, 2019

The index of industrial production (IIP) for the first 10 months of this year increased by 9.5 percent from the same period last year, led by the manufacturing-processing sector. According to the General Statistics Office (GSO), the manufacturing-processing sector recorded a growth of 10.8 percent. Some industries with especially high growth rates included metal production up 34.3 percent, coke and refined oil up 31.8 percent, and rubber and

plastic products up 14.3 percent. Meanwhile, the production of medicine, pharmaceutical chemistry and medicine materials reduced by 3.4 percent; and that of motorbike was down 6.3 percent. Several key industrial products enjoyed good growth, such as crude iron and steel (42.8 percent), oil and petrol (33.2 percent), television (16 percent) and mobile phone (13 percent). In October alone, the IIP picked up 2.7 percent from the previous month and 9.2 percent from one year ago. The manufacturing-processing sector also posted a 10.8 percent expansion, electricity generation and distribution went up 8.1 percent, while mining showed a drop of 0.2 percent. As of October 1 this year, the number of workers employed by the industrial sector increased by 1.3 percent from one month ago, and was up 2 percent from the same period last year. The workforce of the State-owned sector shrank by 1.9 percent, but that of the non-State and foreign-invested sectors were up 0.6 percent and 3.4 percent, respectively.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/economy/tenmonth-industrial-production-index-rises-95-percent-405754.vov>

FDI inflow to Dong Nai province breaks target



Vietnam News | 06 November, 2019

The southern province of Dong Nai secured 1.46 billion USD for 190 FDI projects during January-

October, surpassing its annual target by 46 percent. According to the provincial Department of Planning and Investment, local authorities had licensed 93 new projects with total registered capital of 800 million USD, while allowing capital adjustments worth nearly 670 million USD for 97 existing projects. Most of the projects are involved in the supporting industry and use advanced technology that is environmentally friendly with skilled workers, it said. Notable projects include the 33 million USD Watakuyu Vietnam Company Limited from a Japanese investor at the Amata industrial park in Bien Hoa city, the 40 million USD SEA project from a Korean investor at the Nhon Trach 6 industrial park in Nhon Trach district, and the 72 million USD Otsuka Techno Vietnam Company Limited from a Japanese investor at the Nhon Trach industrial park, also in Nhon Trach district. The department said the province is now home to 1,447 valid FDI projects worth 29.8 billion USD. Businesses from 45 countries and territories have invested in the province, with the Republic of Korea, Taiwan (China) and Japan leading the way.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/economy/fdi-inflow-to-dong-nai-province-breaks-target-405777.vov>
