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S'ville to get \$294m road revamp



Cambodia News | 18 November, 2019

The government is spending \$294 million in an ambitious project to restore and expand more than 30 roads in Sihanoukville, on the country's coast. Construction work began on Saturday. Presiding over the groundbreaking ceremony on Saturday, Prime Minister Hun Sen said the massive project will improve infrastructure that has been damaged over the years with the ultimate goal of making the coastal city a more attractive investment destination. The project covers 34 roads (84 kilometres in total), three roundabouts and six bridges. Several construction companies will be involved and the whole project will take eight months to complete, Mr Hun Sen said. Once it is completed, Sihanoukville will be a modern and attractive city, he said, noting that the city is now Cambodia's second economic hub, behind Phnom Penh and ahead of Siem Reap. "By 2020, the face of Sihanoukville will have dramatically changed, including roads and buildings ... Sihanoukville will become an attractive tourism hub, commercial centre, and an engine of Cambodia's economic growth," Mr Hun Sen said. Sin Chanthy, president of the Cambodia Freight Forwarders Association, told Khmer Times that the project will ease logistics problems in the country. Specifically, it will make it easier for container trucks to travel to Sihanoukville Autonomous Port, the country's only deep-sea port. "This is a good move that will make the roads bigger and wider, easing traffic problems in the city. The

roads now are too small and container trucks always cause traffic jams. It takes hours to get to the port," Mr Chanthy said. Once work on all the roads is complete, more people from around the country will visit Sihanoukville because travelling there will be much easier and comfortable, Mr Hun Sen said at the event. During his speech, Mr Hun Sen noted that the province has experienced a surge in construction projects in recent years. In 2018, the city attracted \$1 billion in construction projects, and this year's investment in the sector will be approximately the same, he said. "There are more than 800 buildings with at least five storeys, 229 of which have been completed," he said. "We are working to transform Preah Sihanouk province into an economic corridor that will help drive our economic growth," he said. Located about 240 km southwest of Phnom Penh, Sihanoukville is booming with investment, particularly from China. An estimated 80,000 Chinese nationals live in Sihanoukville, with almost 90 percent of hotels, casinos, restaurants and massage parlor there run by Chinese, according to a report from the provincial police published in July. The report notes that the province has 71 casinos in operation, 48 of which are operated by Chinese. Citizens of China also run at least 150 hotels and guesthouses, 41 KTVs and 46 massage parlours. Investment in construction in the Kingdom reached a new high during the first nine months of the year, amounting to \$6.5 billion, an increase of 34.7 percent over the same period last

year, according to a report from the Ministry of Land Management.

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50660723/sville-to-get-294m-road-revamp/>

Phnom Penh named best regional airport in Asia Pacific by CAPA



Cambodia News | 18 November, 2019

Phnom Penh International Airport last week was named the best regional airport of the year in the Asia Pacific by the Center for Asia Pacific Aviation. The award was bestowed on Thursday during the CAPA Asia Summit, held in Singapore. The event brought together leaders of the aviation and travel sectors. CAPA is a leading provider of market intelligence for the aviation and travel industries. Its “Aviation Awards for Excellence” were established in 2002 and are composed of 10 categories. According to a statement from Cambodia Airports, the company that manages all international airports in the Kingdom, Phnom Penh earned the distinction because of its contributions to the aviation industry. “The Regional Airport of the Year accolade, awarded by an independent panel of judges, is bestowed to the regional airport that has been the biggest standout strategically,” Cambodia Airports said, adding that the award aims to recognise smaller airports (fewer than 10 million passengers a year) that rely primarily on short-haul routes. Phnom Penh International Airport, as a small airport, benefits from an ability to easily adapt and respond to the customer’s needs, said Alain Brun, CEO of

Cambodia Airports. “This accolade is a testament to the relevance of the airport Public-Private-Partnership model, powered by Vinci Airports, under which Phnom Penh International Airport has been successfully developed over the last 25 years,” he said. He said the company’s model demands long-term vision, reliability, and continuous investments, which translates into solid passenger growth, significant infrastructure projects and operational efficiency. “Cambodia Airports is continuously investing to enhance its airport infrastructure to cope with growing traffic, and this year we expect to reach 6 million passengers,” he said. CAPA Chairman Emeritus Peter Harbison noted that Phnom Penh’s airport has experienced strong growth in recent years, with passenger volume increasing by 50 percent from 2015 to 2018. He noted that this growth has required enormous adjustment to its operations. Cargo payload capacity at the airport has almost doubled during the same period, he added. “The expansion was the result of a well-coordinated programme of business development,” Mr Harbison said. The number of foreign tourists visiting Cambodia rose by 10 percent during the first nine months of the year, according to the latest report from the Ministry of Tourism. From January to September, a total of 4.8 million foreign holidaymakers visited the Kingdom. During this period, the international airport in Phnom Penh handled 1.5 million passengers (a 12.7 percent growth), Siem Reap’s welcomed 1.2 million (10.9

percent growth), and 549,481 passed through Sihanoukville's (a 308 percent increase).

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50660722/phnom-penh-named-best-regional-airport-in-asia-pacific-by-capacity/>

Laos govt ploughs ahead with measures to cut unnecessary spending



Laos News | 18 November, 2019

VIENTIANE (Vientiane Times/ANN) - The government is confident its austerity policy will continue to lower budgetary tensions and financial difficulties in the coming year despite slow progress in implementing measures to curb wasteful spending. The Ministry of Finance will take action in coordination with several other ministries to implement the policy, to help the government minimise budgetary pressures. Speaking on behalf of the government while responding to questions from Assembly members on Wednesday, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Mr Somdy Duangdy, said his ministry would continue to use measures, decrees and agreements to push forward the effective implementation of the policy. He said Laos would, however, continue to face financial difficulties because revenue collection had not increased as anticipated, while expenditure had risen significantly over the past few years. "The ministry is now focusing on the actual implementation of the austerity policy with the aim of it becoming a model for government bodies at the central and local levels, as well as the

adoption and implementation of decrees and the Prime Minister's Order on purchasing and hiring activities," he said. Mr Somdy said his ministry would continue to work on a draft presidential decree and prime ministerial decree on the management of state-owned vehicles, to strengthen the control of vehicles used by ministries and local administrative offices. "We will also continue to carry out inspections of state-funded projects to ensure investment costs are reasonable. This will be another measure to control spending. Additionally, various decrees, measures and laws will be disseminated within the ministries concerned," the deputy prime minister said. The Ministry of Finance plans to team up with other sectors, including the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, in this work. These ministries will play a key role in tackling wasteful spending, especially when it comes to hosting grand ceremonies, cultural and festive celebrations, gala dinners and other lavish events. The Ministry of Public Works and Transport will help by designing and calculating the cost of construction of schools, hospitals, government buildings and other infrastructure. Mr Somdy also told Assembly members that as a result of the austerity policy, the government had been able to save more than 158 billion kip in the purchase of vehicles for officials. This year alone, 53 billion kip was saved. In terms of inspection work, authorities found that in 2017 a total of 18 projects had overrun their initial cost estimates, while in 2018 a total of 12

projects were found to have cost considerably more than projected. Authorities are still investigating projects being carried out this year, he added. Mr Somdy said the government was not only focusing on cutting unnecessary spending on state vehicles and office supplies but also expenditure on electricity, water and telecommunications as part of the austerity programme.

Source: <http://annx.asianews.network/content/laos-govt-ploughs-ahead-measures-cut-unnecessary-spending-108434>

Lao business operators learn about benefits of free trade agreements



Laos News | 18 November, 2019

VIENTIANE (Vientiane Times/ANN) - Lao businesses will be better able to expand their markets and compete with other countries more aggressively after being educated on the conditions and benefits of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). A seminar held in Vientiane on Thursday discussed the benefits of FTAs and engaging in e-commerce. Nearly 100 business representatives, including from small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Vientiane and officials from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and others attended. "Free Trade Agreements enable businesses to market made-in-Laos products more effectively and compete with neighbouring countries. Right now, Lao products cost more compared to those of its neighbours," Director of the Trade Promotion Department, Ministry of Industry

and Commerce, Mr Xaysomphet Norasing said. "To export products, Lao firms have to pay taxes and other fees, which drives up the price of locally manufactured goods. FTAs will help slash these prices on the international market. Tax-free and other beneficial policies will help give Lao products a competitive edge internationally," he added. The talk was organised by the Trade Promotion Department, Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI), SME Promotion Department and Barterfli Company, and co-chaired by the Director of the Trade Promotion Department, Mr Xaysomphet Norasing, a representative of Barterfli Company, Mr Damien Lam, and an official from the SME Promotion Department. Participants also discussed the challenges they faced when exporting goods. "The goal of this meeting is to familiarise entrepreneurs in Laos with FTAs, especially the benefits of FTAs for businesspeople, and the processes and rules involved, so they can export goods and increase their competitive edge," Mr Xaysomphet said. Event participants also learned about the benefits of engaging in e-commerce and how to source information on the Asean Free Trade Area (AFTA). The meeting also informed participants about the e-commerce website, www.plaosme.com. The website is the result of the Lao SME E-Commerce & Export Development Programme to support local businesses in online transactions and boost their

export capabilities. On this digital platform, buyers and sellers can meet and discuss terms directly, eliminating the role of middlemen and added costs such as shop rental. “So far, over 1,400 Lao products have been uploaded to the website for sale, and we expect that more and more products and entrepreneurs will take part in this initiative,” Mr Xaysomphet said. Plaosme was devised by the Department of Import and Export under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the LNCCI and is operated and managed by Barterfli Holdings.

Source: <http://annx.asianews.network/content/lao-business-operators-learn-about-benefits-free-trade-agreements-108433>

US promotes inclusive agriculture-led growth in Kachin State



Myanmar News | 18 November, 2019

Myitkyina - US Ambassador Scot Marciel met with more than 60 members of the Kachin State agriculture sector in Myitkyina last Thursday, to discuss how the new US Agency for International Development (USAID) Agriculture and Food-Systems Development activity can help overcome constraints that farmers and the private sector face in improving agriculture and livelihoods in the state. “The United States is committed to supporting inclusive agriculture-led economic growth in Kachin State. USAID recently expanded its agriculture activities to include Kachin State,” said Marciel. “The

Agriculture and Food-Systems Development Activity is the first USAID agriculture programme to expand into Kachin State.” The Agriculture and Food-Systems Development Activity is a five-year, US\$38 million programme expected to reach over 125,000 individuals in Kachin State, Shan State, and the central dry zone. The support aims to increase the sales of farmers and agricultural firms in the project area by US\$42 million, catalyse US\$20 million in private-sector investment, and help create 3500 new full-time jobs. The ambassador spoke with farmers, community-based organizations, faith-based organisations, local and international development organisations, representatives of the private sector, business and industry association leaders, and Kachin government officials during the visit. The information shared by the participants will inform how US investments can support the private sector to expand and improve the delivery of services. This includes providing inputs such as seeds to rural farmers, as well as purchasing high-value raw and processed goods from farmers. The approach is expected to create more inclusive livelihood opportunities for diverse communities in Kachin State. “The United States is committed to implementing development assistance programs in an open, transparent manner. Today’s consultations are part of this effort.” Marciel said at the workshop. He added, “We are here to listen and learn.”

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/us-promotes-inclusive-agriculture-led-growth-kachin-state.html>

Malaysia expects more Myanmar patients



Myanmar News | 18 November, 2019

The Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council said it expects to make 22 million ringgit (K8 billion/US\$5.3 million) from medical tourists from Myanmar this year. Nik Yazmin Nik Azman, chief commercial officer of the council, said that the country's healthcare system can provide quality health services to Myanmar citizens. "Myanmar citizens who come to Malaysia will pay the same prices as Malaysians," she said. "We want to make sure that good quality healthcare is given to everyone." Last year, Malaysian healthcare facilities earned 12.8 million ringgit from Myanmar patients. "We expect this number to keep growing," she added. Patient safety and care are strictly monitored by Malaysia's Ministry of Health under the Private Healthcare and Facilities Service Act (1998). Malaysia has a well-developed dual healthcare system in which public and private healthcare facilities work in tandem under the ministry. Malaysia has 200 private hospitals, not including dental clinics and health and wellness centres. The Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council said it has 78 best partner hospitals, 21 elite partners, and 52 ordinary members. Records

showed that the most common medical treatments that Myanmar citizens seek in Malaysia are related to heart problems, oncology, in vitro fertilisation and diabetes. In 2011, over 2000 patients came from Myanmar to Malaysia for medical treatment. By 2018, that number had grown to 16,000, the council said. The council said it is looking for a long and fruitful collaboration with Myanmar, where it wants to build medical facilities, and already works with seven hospitals, including Victoria Hospital in Yangon. Malaysia was awarded the "Best Country in the World for Healthcare" and "Top Asian Country for Retirement" by US-based International Living three times between 2015 and 2019. It has emerged as one of the top performing countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Recently, the Global Market Report 2018 ranked Malaysia as the world's top healthcare travel destination by volume.

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/malaysia-expects-more-myanmar-patients.html>

E-commerce delivery battle in

Vietnam becomes more costly



Vietnam News | 18 November, 2019

Online buyers in Vietnam are increasingly impatient, driving the war on delivery speed. Shopee on November 4 unexpectedly announced a preferential service package. All clients who buy any product on Shopee and choose Grab as deliveryman for the order will get free shipping as per Shopee's policy

and enjoy Grab's preferential package with value of up to VND200,000. The program is applied to sellers and buyers in some districts in HCM City or Hanoi. The delivery is implemented within one hour. This is not the first time Grab has joined hands with marketplaces to lure customers. In October 2018, Sendo also joined hands with GrabExpress to provide express delivery service package in HCM City, promising to deliver goods within three hours. After that, in early February the technology firm cooperated with the omni-channel sales and management platform, Sapo, to officially launch integration with GrabExpress, the delivery service. Nguyen Ngoc Trang from Grab Vietnam said Grab strives for a super-app platform, providing the most important services in everyday life, including transportation, food delivery, goods delivery, cashless payments and more. Grab last May also joined hands with VinID to deliver goods via Scan & Go app. Unlike the previous cooperation deals, this time Grab and Shopee are 'playing big' as they operate in the two largest e-commerce markets in Hanoi and HCM City and commit to the fastest delivery time. The latest move by Grab once again shows its ambition of targeting B2B, together with individual clients. A report from Google and Temasek in 2018 showed that Vietnam's e-commerce had compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 35 percent in 2015-2018 and had value of \$2.8 billion (only the value of the B2C channel is counted). It is expected that the total e-commerce market in Vietnam may have value of \$10 billion by

2020, according to the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT). The market is expected to continue witnessing a boom in 2018-2025 with the CAGR of 27 percent thanks to the popularity of internet and smartphones, and to the new generation of consumers which can adapt quickly to new technologies. The representative of Google Southeast Asia said at E-commerce Day 2019 that more and more Vietnamese shop online. According to Temasek, 3.2 million Vietnamese have begun online shopping. Google said Vietnamese consumers are curious, set high requirements on sales and are increasingly impatient

Source: <https://english.vov.vn/economy/ecommerce-delivery-battle-in-vietnam-becomes-more-costly-406314.vov>

Pork supply to meet demand on domestic market next months



Vietnam News | 18 November, 2019

HÀ NỘI — Although pork is plentiful right now, the demand is expected to rise at the end of the year, then rocket by as much as 25 per cent when the Tết (Lunar New Year) holiday is coming near. To meet the increase, Nguyễn Xuân Dương, acting director of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)'s Department of Livestock Production, said there must be close cooperation between the agriculture and trade and industry sectors. He said the average price of pork is still stable, around VNĐ65,000-66,000 per kilo in the north and about

VNĐ60,000-61,000 in the south. But there has been a price increase recently to VNĐ75,000 per kilo but this is due to mistakes in circulation and miscommunication, not lack of supply, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). **DƯ**ng also said the domestic market has not ran out of pork because many localities such as **B**ắc Giang and **H**ưng **Y**ên provinces still have large supply of pigs. Together with dealing with the African swine flu, the domestic agriculture sector has instructed to raise poultry, cattle and seafood so the total food supply does not fall short. According to the MARD's Department of Animal Health, the African swine fever virus has so far spread to more than 7,700 communes of nearly 650 districts in all 63 provinces and cities of **V**iệt Nam. More than five million pigs have been culled in a bid to stop the outbreak spreading. **K**iều **Đ**ình **T**hép, sales director of CP Vietnam Livestock Joint Stock Company, said pork supply has increased by about 10 per cent against last year with an average selling price at VNĐ65,000 per kilo. The company will keep its pork price stable until the end of the year. To increase the supply, CP Vietnam has improved productivity and re-breeding herds with biosecurity measure, **T**hép said. **N**guyễn **V**ăn Long, deputy director of the Department of Animal Health, said pig producers should use biosecurity and control measures to gain success in increasing number of pigs. — VNS

Source: <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/538566/pork-supply-to-meet-demand-on-domestic-market-next-months.html#0wkhBBOzr7y0VjeY.97>
