



- Extractive industry to become new economic driver – Ministry
- US companies urged to invest in Cambodia
- Course organisers assess scheme to provide rural women with job skills
- Vientiane on track to reach targeted number of tourists for 2019
- Over 1.1 M tourists visit Myanmar via border
- Over \$110 m earned from marine export in a month
- Vietnam's GDP expected to expand 7% in 2021-2025
- Vietnam's sugar industry in serious decline



Extractive industry to become new economic driver – Ministry



Cambodia News | 25 November, 2019

The government last week said the extractive industry is on course to become a main economic pillar. Cambodia's economic development is mostly driven by the construction, real estate, tourism, garments and agricultural sectors, but the government is working to diversify, with the extractive industry set to become an important source of growth, said Suy Sem, the Minister of Mines and Energy. Speaking during the 8th Extractive Industries Forum, Mr Sem said the extractive industry will play an increasingly significant role in Cambodia's economy and social development. The forum, held under the theme 'Toward Responsible Mineral Development in Cambodia', was held on Friday in Phnom Penh. He noted that the industry has been boosted by the establishment of large-scale cement plants, oil refineries, and gold mining facilities. "This industry will be the backbone of the Kingdom's economy. It will create a new source of revenue for the national budget and provide job opportunities to local communities. "It will play a significant part in strengthening and diversifying Cambodia's economic development," he said. Last week, Prime Minister Hun Sen said the extractive industry, particularly gold mining and oil extraction, will help generate more revenue for the government. The premier said Singapore-based KrisEnergy is

expected to begin oil extraction sometime next year. "The revenue from locally-extracted oil will be used to build infrastructure and improve the health and education sectors," Mr Hun Sen said. Speaking to Khmer Times after the event, Meng Saktheara, secretary of state at the Ministry of Mines and Energy, said revenue from the mining and oil sectors can be divided into two categories: tax and non-tax revenue. Non-tax revenue refers to licensing fees, land leases and royalties payable to the government through the Ministry of Mines and Energy. Tax revenue, on the other hand, is collected by the General Department of Taxation. "Non-tax revenue collected from the mining and oil sectors amounted to almost \$20 million per year from 2014 to 2018. This is a lot more than in 2013, when it was only \$2 or \$3 million," he said. "When large-scale mining and oil operations begin – including projects by KrisEnergy, Renaissance Minerals, and Mesco Gold – there will be more revenue generated for the government." Renaissance Minerals, a subsidiary of Australia-listed Emerald Resources, is expected to begin extracting gold in Cambodia's Mondulkiri province sometime in 2021, according to Mr Saktheara, who said the company will take the whole year of 2020 to finish its construction site. Un Vichea, representative of Mesco Gold, confirmed to Khmer Times last week that his company will begin extracting gold in mid-2020. "Construction of the site is almost over, but we still need to build our refinery. We hope to begin gold production in May next year," he said, noting that the company will pay 30 percent tax on income. Priscilla

Ngero, Oxfam interim country director, said the extractive industry has contributed to poverty reduction and equitable development in the country. “To achieve the goal of responsible mining development, industry players have to be transparent and responsible when it comes to the environment and social issues,” she said. She said Oxfam has a global extractive industry programme working in more than 30 countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa. “We develop tools, guidelines, and reports to promote responsible mining operations. And we support civil society partners and local communities engaged in the sector to enhance the social responsibility of the extractive industries,” she said.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50663802/extractive-industry-to-become-new-economic-driver-ministry/>

US companies urged to invest in Cambodia



Cambodia News | 25 November, 2019

Cambodia last week asked the United States to increase investments in the Kingdom, claiming that working conditions here have improved dramatically in recent years. The appeal was made by Commerce Minister Pan Sorasak in a meeting on Friday with US Ambassador Patrick Murphy. Mr Sorasak told the ambassador that the Cambodian government has made significant progress in improving working conditions in the Kingdom.

“Minister of Commerce Pan Sorasak asked the US to boost investments here, particularly in agriculture, gem processing, light manufacturing, and electronics,” a post on the Ministry of Commerce’s Facebook page said. During Friday’s meeting, Mr Murphy pointed out that the US Embassy will soon organise a forum focused on the agriculture sector. The aim of the event, he said, is to help small and medium-sized businesses. “To support the development of SMEs in Cambodia, the US embassy will soon organise a forum on agro-industry in February next year,” Mr Murphy said. The US diplomat told Mr Sorasak that General Electric has expressed its intention to invest in Cambodia’s energy sector. US Embassy Spokeswoman Emily V. Zeeberg said the embassy is encouraging US businesses to seek investment opportunities in Cambodia. “The United States values our economic relationship with Cambodia and our Embassy has worked to attract more US companies to the Kingdom as well as connect Cambodian companies to US businesses,” Ms Zeeberg said. “We plan to follow-up this event by inviting some of the United States’ top companies to Cambodia in February to explore trade and investment opportunities in Cambodia’s agriculture sector,” she added. A diverse group of Cambodian businesses participating in the Indo-Pacific Business Forum, the region’s premier trade and investment event held in Bangkok in early November, had the opportunity to build connections to key policymakers and nearly

1,000 business executives from the US and over 20 other Indo-Pacific nations, she pointed out.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50663745/us-companies-urged-to-invest-in-cambodia/>

Course organisers assess scheme to provide rural women with job skills



Laos News | 25 November, 2019

Course organisers assess scheme to provide rural women with job skills. The Lao Women's Union and the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Gender Equality and Family have joined forces to provide vocational training for Lao women, to improve their job prospects. A meeting to discuss the management of the project took place on Friday at the Lao Women's Training Centre in Vientiane, chaired by the Vice President of the Lao Women's Union, Mrs Sirikit Bouppha and a representative of Korea's Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Mr Shang Heang Choi. Also present were members of the Lao Women's Union from Luang Prabang, Borikhamxay, Khammuan and Xekong provinces, as well as officials from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of Education and Sports, and other bodies. Speaking at the meeting, Mrs Sirikit said the training project was supported by Korea's Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, and carried out by the Dorundorun Asia Women Bridge. "This meeting will report on the progress of the project and the challenges we face in the future, as well as discuss issues relating to women's skill development and ways to build their capacity," she added. Mrs Sirikit

called on everyone present to share information and ideas in order to resolve problems and make realistic plans for the future. Deputy Director of the Lao Women's Training Centre, Mr Chanbandith Khounphom, said the vocational training project began in 2016 with the aim of providing women with the skills needed to get a job. The courses target marginalised women in rural areas who struggle to find work and earn a living. Most recently, 57 marginalised women from around the country learnt skills in the fields of cooking, tailoring and beauty treatment as part of the project coordinated by the Lao Women's Union and Korea's Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. The Lao Women's Union was established in 1955 to unify the country's women in support of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party. Over 40 years later, it has a membership of about 600,000 women nationwide. In 1991 the Union was recognised under the Constitution as being responsible for responding to women's development needs, promoting the status and role of women, and encouraging unity amongst women of different ethnic groups and social strata.

Source: http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Course_256.php

Vientiane on track to reach targeted number of tourists for 2019



Laos News | 25 November, 2019

Vientiane officials are confident that the targeted number of 2 million visitors set for Visit Laos-China Year 2019 will be reached. Director of the Vientiane

Information, Culture and Tourism Department, Ms Vilayvone Chanthalaty, told Vientiane Times that city authorities in cooperation with individual companies had made a great effort to attract more tourists by creating and improving visitor attractions. As part of these efforts, repairs were carried out at the Hor Phakeo museum and That Luang stupa. More than 1.5 million visitors came to Vientiane in the first 10 months of this year, Ms Vilayvone said. Vientiane is known for its rich culture and history, with the That Luang Grand Stupa being a standout feature of the city as an enduring symbol of Laos and an icon of Buddhism. Hor Phakeo, Vat Simeuang and Vat Sisaket temples are steeped in history as well as being architecturally fascinating. Also in the town centre is the Patuxay monument which rises majestically into the sky, challenging the energetic to climb to the top for a panoramic view. It also has a small park attached, where the weary can take a restful break. Vientiane is the most visited destination in Laos and a hub for travel around the country and onward to other countries. It is easy to access, whether arriving at the international airport by air or overland by road or rail via the Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge. Visitors should be sure to try Laos' signature dishes - tam mak houn (spicy green papaya salad), larp (beef mixed with vegetable, herbs and chilli), ping kai (barbecued chicken) and keng nor mai (bamboo soup). The city has 24 officially designated

places of cultural interest and 15 historical sites, while a trip to the outskirts will provide a contrasting rural environment complete with rivers and lakes. As of 2018, Vientiane had 230 hotels, 253 guesthouses and resorts, 108 restaurants and 38 entertainment venues, according to the Tourism Development Department, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism. More than 2.2 million tourists visited Laos in the first six months of this year, an increase of about 5 percent compared to the same period last year.

Source: http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Vientiane_on_256.php

Over 1.1 M tourists visit Myanmar via border



Myanmar News | 23 November, 2019

More than 1.1 million tourists visited Myanmar via Techilek border gate from January to November 21 in this year, according to figures from Ministry of Hotel and Tourism. The tourists are from Thailand, China, Japan, South Korea and third party countries. The number of tourist arrival from airports, ports and border gates from January to September in this year is increased to over 600,000 in compared with the same period in last year arrival, according to Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population. In 2018, tourist arrival from January to December was 3.5 million and 3.4 million in 2017. Most of the tourists used border gates to visit Myanmar, according to the Ministry of Hotel and Tourism.

Source: <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/over-11-m-tourists-visit-myanmar-via-border>

Over \$110 m earned from marine export in a month



Myanmar News | 23 November, 2019

Myanmar has earned over US\$110 million from exporting marine products in over a month of this fiscal year exceeding over US\$18 million compared to the same period of last fiscal year, according to official figures from the Ministry of Commerce. From October 1 to November 8 in the current 2019-2020 FY, marine export value amounted to US\$114.582 million while last year's amount was US\$95.949 million. So, this year's amount exceeded US\$18.578. Currently, the amount of marine products including fish and prawn Myanmar is exporting is far less than that of its neighbouring countries. Therefore, the country needs to improve farming system rather than catching naturally. In cooperation with experts from Indonesia, Taiwan and China, Myanmar will build fish farms, fish feed factory and cold storage factories using modern technology with the aim of achieving a target of earning up to US\$3 billion. In so doing, the Ministry of Planning and Finance has plans to provide SME loans for helping acquire farmlands for breeding fish and prawns.

Source: <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/over-110-m-earned-from-marine-export-in-a-month>

Vietnam's GDP expected to expand 7% in 2021-2025



Vietnam News | 23 November, 2019

Trade fraud and large-scale smuggling in the last two years have led to closure of than one-third of sugar mills in Vietnam, and many sugarcane fields have been left uncultivated. According to the Vietnam Sugarcane and Sugar Association (VSSA), Vietnam has 40 sugar production and trading companies. In the 2017-2018 crop, there were 37 sugar mills operating and the total sugar output was 1.47 million tons. Meanwhile, in 2018-2019, only 1.17 million tons of sugar were produced. The total sugarcane growing area has decreased by 30-60 percent compared with the years before. The lack of input materials forces sugar mills to operate at moderate level. While the production cost is VND7 million for every 1,000 square meter, the revenue is just VND3-4 million. As a result, farmers have incurred big losses. In many areas, farmers have given up sugarcane cultivation because the more they farm, the higher losses they incur. Many of them have shifted to other crops or to aquaculture. A report shows that 17 out of 30 sugar mills have incurred losses. Meanwhile, under ATIGA (ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement), from January 1, 2020, Vietnam will remove the quotas for sugar import from ASEAN and cut the tariff to five percent. In the context of the sugar industry bearing pressure from trade fraud and increased smuggling, the implementation of ATIGA will increase pressure.

“Trade fraud and smuggled sugar from Thailand have caused big losses to the sugar industry for a long time. One third of sugar mills in Vietnam have shut down and many sugarcane fields have been left idle because of losses,” said Truong Van Ba from the 389 National Steering Committee. In late October, the committee, coordinating the anti-smuggling and trade fraud effort, organized a conference in HCM City to discuss solutions to fight against smuggling and help sugar companies solve difficulties. VnExpress on November 2 reported that thousands of hectares of sugarcane in Hau Giang province were drying out, but they still could not sell. In the 2019-2020 crop, Hau Giang farmers grew 8,200 hectares of sugarcane. Ly Thi Hien, 68, in Phung Hiep district, who has 2,000 square meters of sugarcane field, said she had to bargain sugarcane away at the low price of VND400,000 per ton to petty merchants and incurred a big loss of VND6 million. The smuggling of sugar through the southwest border line is getting worse. Ba said sugar is brought to Vietnam mostly from Thailand and Cambodia. At the conference, sugar mills said they don't fear competition in ATIGA, but they need the state's support to prevent smuggling and counterfeit goods, so that they can compete with foreign goods in the home market.

Source: <https://english.vov.vn/economy/vietnams-gdp-expected-to-expand-7-in-20212025-406577.vov>

Vietnam's sugar industry in serious decline



Vietnam News | 24 November, 2019

Trade fraud and large-scale smuggling in the last two years have led to closure of than one-third of sugar mills in Vietnam, and many sugarcane fields have been left uncultivated. According to the Vietnam Sugarcane and Sugar Association (VSSA), Vietnam has 40 sugar production and trading companies. In the 2017-2018 crop, there were 37 sugar mills operating and the total sugar output was 1.47 million tons. Meanwhile, in 2018-2019, only 1.17 million tons of sugar were produced. The total sugarcane growing area has decreased by 30-60 percent compared with the years before. The lack of input materials forces sugar mills to operate at moderate level. While the production cost is VND7 million for every 1,000 square meter, the revenue is just VND3-4 million. As a result, farmers have incurred big losses. In many areas, farmers have given up sugarcane cultivation because the more they farm, the higher losses they incur. Many of them have shifted to other crops or to aquaculture. A report shows that 17 out of 30 sugar mills have incurred losses. Meanwhile, under ATIGA (ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement), from January 1, 2020, Vietnam will remove the quotas for sugar import from ASEAN and cut the tariff to five percent. In the context of the sugar industry bearing pressure from

trade fraud and increased smuggling, the implementation of ATIGA will increase pressure. “Trade fraud and smuggled sugar from Thailand have caused big losses to the sugar industry for a long time. One third of sugar mills in Vietnam have shut down and many sugarcane fields have been left idle because of losses,” said Truong Van Ba from the 389 National Steering Committee. In late October, the committee, coordinating the anti-smuggling and trade fraud effort, organized a conference in HCM City to discuss solutions to fight against smuggling and help sugar companies solve difficulties. VnExpress on November 2 reported that thousands of hectares of sugarcane in Hau Giang province were drying out, but they still could not sell. In the 2019-2020 crop, Hau Giang farmers grew 8,200 hectares of sugarcane. Ly Thi Hien, 68, in Phung Hiep district, who has 2,000 square meters of sugarcane field, said she had to bargain sugarcane away at the low price of VND400,000 per ton to petty merchants and incurred a big loss of VND6 million. The smuggling of sugar through the southwest border line is getting worse. Ba said sugar is brought to Vietnam mostly from Thailand and Cambodia. At the conference, sugar mills said they don’t fear competition in ATIGA, but they need the state’s support to prevent smuggling and counterfeit goods, so that they can compete with foreign goods in the home market.

Source: <https://english.vov.vn/economy/vietnams-sugar-industry-in-serious-decline-406612.vov>
