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Contractor competition kicks off



Cambodia News | 28 November, 2019

The National Contractor Competition kicked off yesterday aiming to build the skills of Cambodian construction professionals. Organised by SCG Cambodia, a subsidiary of the Siam Cement Group, the two-day event is a collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training. The competition is part of SCG's Contractor Academy Programme. Forty contractors, selected from among over 200 contractors who took part in the provincial rounds of the competition, are participating in the contest, competing in categories like cement plastering, roofing, and smartboard and smartwood installation. Speaking at the opening ceremony, Lao Him, undersecretary of state at the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, said developing technical and vocational education in the country requires the support of the private sector. "The competition will improve the skills of Cambodian workers and help them achieve international standards" Mr Him said. "The competition is also in line with government's policy on skill training, job creation, as well as increasing productivity and income." Wirot Phanitphotchamarn, SCG general manager for sales and marketing, said the skills learned during the contest will give participants access to new career opportunities and higher incomes. "Through this programme, SCG wishes to improve the craftsmanship of Cambodian contractors as well as the quality of construction in Cambodia. Homeowners and project developers will have access to services of higher

quality, which will improve the quality of life for many Cambodians," he said.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50664639/contractor-competition-kicks-off/>

Mango exports to South Korea given greenlight



Cambodia News | 28 November, 2019

After long negotiations on export requirements, the first shipment of local mangoes will reach South Korea before the end of the year, according to a high-ranking Korean official. Kim Hyeon-soo, the newly-appointed Agriculture Minister of South Korea, said the first consignment of Cambodian mangoes will reach Korean shores next month, noting that the Korean government approved imports of the product on Oct 29. Mr Kim revealed the information during a meeting on Monday with his Cambodian counterpart, Minister Veng Sakhon. The meeting between the ministers was held on the sidelines of the Asean summit in the Korean city of Busan. During the summit, Cambodia and Korea also signed an agreement on agricultural cooperation. "Cambodia can officially begin shipping mangoes to the Korean market in December," he was quoted as saying in a government statement. Cambodia's General Directorate of Agriculture and South Korea's Animal and Plant Quarantine Agency began negotiations on exporting the product in 2009, signing a protocol in 2015. Minister Veng Sakhon, described the move as the result of stronger cooperation between the countries in the agriculture sector and requested Korea's assistance to modernise Cambodia's agriculture. A fruit treatment facility based in Kampong Speu province and

owned by Korean conglomerate Hyundai Agro said it was granted permission to export the fruit in late October. Its first consignment was expected to reach Korea this month, but the shipment has been delayed and will not enter a Korean port until January, Chang-Hoon Lee, managing director of Hyundai Agro, told Khmer Times this week. "The shipment was delayed because due to unfavorable weather conditions – mostly heavy rains – could not produce good quality mangoes," he said, explaining that Korea is a premium market and only accepts the best mangoes. "So we will wait until January when we will have a sizeable volume of good quality mangoes," he said. Hyundai Agro's three-hectare fruit processing facility opened in December last year. The Korean firm teamed up with local mango producer Mao Legacy to plant mangoes on 2,400 hectares in Kampong Speu province. Korean consumers have big expectations for Cambodian mangoes and Hyundai Agro will be supplying large and well-known supermarket chains, Mr Lee pointed out. The Cambodian mangoes that will be exported belong to the variety Keo Romeat. Mr Lee said his company started trial exports to Hong Kong in November last year, sending one to three containers every week. "Unfortunately, our buyer suspended orders following the demonstrations in Hong Kong," he said, noting that the company is now sending trial shipments to Singapore and also considering the Russian market. In Chayvan, president of the Kampong Speu Mango Association, applauded the work of the government to expand the market for mango exporters. "Our mangoes are shipped to Vietnam and Thailand and now we can also export to Korea. This is great news for our farmers. Soon our mangoes will also reach China," he said.

He said Kampong Speu can produce 500,000 to 700,000 tonnes of the fruit a year. The price per kilogram ranges from \$0.50 to \$0.86 depending on quality.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50664792/mango-exports-to-south-korea-given-greenlight/>

Nam Che 1 hydropower plant officially opened



Laos News | 28 November, 2019

The Nam Che 1 hydropower project in Xaysomboun province was pronounced officially open at a grand ceremony held in Vientiane on Wednesday, after construction of the plant began in 2017. The ceremony was chaired by the Minister of Energy and Mines, Dr Khammany Inthirath. In his address, Dr Khammany said the hydro plant was another step for electricity development in Laos and was an environmentally-friendly and sustainable project. "The plant is also very important for the economic development of Xaysomboun province, especially Thathom district," he added. The developer - Nam Che 1 Hydropower Company Limited - is a joint venture between the B.Grimm Power (Lao) Co., Ltd., a subsidiary of the B.Grimm Power Public Co., Ltd., which is a leading energy company with investments in Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos and extensive experience in the construction, operation and maintenance of power plants, and Daosavanh Co., Ltd. Daosavanh is a leading engineering company in Laos with long-time

experience in the construction of public utilities, hydropower plants and irrigation projects. The Nam Che 1 is a small hydro plant designed as a run-of-river scheme using water from the Nam Che river. It is located in Namlong village, Thathom district, Xaysomboun province. The Nam Che flows from the north to the Nam Ngiep and Mekong rivers. The plant consists of a weir and power intake structure. The weir is located upstream of the Nam Che river where water will be conveyed through the water intake. The power intake on the dam's right bank will divert flow from the reservoir to the powerhouse through the underground waterway. There are two Francis turbines of the horizontal type with an auxiliary and each unit can produce 8.4MW. With a total installed capacity of 16.8MW, the power output flows through a 115kV transmission line to the Tha Vieng substation over a distance of about 15 km. Global Hydro from Austria provided the turbines and auxiliary, including a generator. The Nam Che 1 Hydropower Company Limited has a 25-year power purchase agreement with Electricite du Laos (EDL) with a contracted capacity of 15MW, providing electrical power for Laos. The Commercial Operation Date was June 1, 2019. The Nam Che 1 Hydropower Company Limited is partnering with the Thathom Women's Union to train women in new garment designs and the use of natural dyes. The company is also arranging for grass to be grown in Namlong and Samkothong

villages to help improve the quality of life, and is funding the construction of a primary school in Samkothong village.

Source : <http://annx.asianews.network/content/nam-che-1-hydropower-plant-officially-opened-109186>

Xayaboury earthquake damage estimated at around US\$221,000



Laos News / 28 November, 2019

VIENTIANE (Vientiane Times/ANN) - Damage to property in Hongsa and Xaysathan districts of Xayaboury province has been estimated at over US\$2,21,000 after at least 300 families were affected by an earthquake last week. Director of the province's Labour and Social Welfare Department, Mr Nouphone Xaypanyachith, said two earthquakes measuring 6.4 and 5.9 on the Richter scale struck the districts of Hongsa and Xaysathan on November 21, injuring eight people. A total of 134 families in 17 villages in Hongsa district were affected, while 71 houses, 11 schools, 12 temples, four hospital centres, and two offices suffered varying degrees of damage. Seven other houses were damaged beyond repair and 24 families suffered damage to their belongings. The total property damage in Hongsa has been estimated at 1.1 billion kip. Meanwhile, 169 families in 18 villages of Xaysathan district were affected and three people were injured. Sixteen houses were damaged beyond

repair, 29 houses sustained moderate damage, and 124 houses were slightly affected. Eight offices and over one kilometre of road also sustained structural damage. Damage to property in Xaysathan district has been estimated at 976 million kip. Mr Noupone said provincial authorities and army personnel were helping people to carry out repairs but construction materials were needed for this work, especially zinc, roofing tiles, cement, bricks and nails. The epicentre of the quakes was recorded in Laos at a depth of 5 kilometres and about 19km southeast of Nam Chang village in Chalerm Prakiat district in Thailand's Nan province. According to the Meteorology and Hydrology Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, there were 18 earthquakes in total, with two being particularly strong. The first took place at 4:03am and registered 5.9 on the Richter scale in central Hongsa district, about 38km from the provincial capital, close to the Thai border. This was followed by another at 6:50am with a magnitude of 6.4. The second quake was felt in every district of the province but most strongly in central Hongsa district and Xaysathan.

Source : <http://annx.asianews.network/content/xayaboury-earthquake-damage-estimated-around-us221000-109184>

Mandalay attracts over half a million tourists



Myanmar News | 28 November, 2019

More than 500,000 foreign tourists visited Mandalay Region in the first 10 months of the year, topping last year's annual figures, a senior official of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism in Upper Myanmar said. U San Yu, deputy director of the directorate, said over 490,000 foreign tourists visited Mandalay in 2018, and his office expects that figure to top 600,000 this year. "A successful tourism industry requires everyone's cooperation," he said. "To attract more tourists, we need to provide better transportation and ease the visa process." "Since the remaining months are the peak travel season, tourist numbers may rise more than expected," he said. Among the region's top foreign visitors are the Chinese, who accounted for nearly 400,000, followed by Spanish, German, French, Italian, American and Indian tourists. Visa rules were relaxed for Chinese, South Korean, and Japanese tourists last year to ease their access to the country. U San Yu said there are plans to relax visa rules for Westerners as well. Europeans became more interested in visiting Myanmar after the Bagan Archaeological Zone in Mandalay Region was

named a World Heritage Site earlier this year, said U Myo Yi, head of the Union of Myanmar Travel Association (Mandalay). “In previous years, tours pre-ordered by Europeans were cancelled, but that’s not happening this year,” he said. Although the number of tourists is rising, it’s also important to consider the quality of tourists being attracted, U San Yu said. He said Mandalay wants to attract the kind of tourists who obey the rules and do not damage the environment.

Source : <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/mandalay-attracts-over-half-million-tourists.html>

Govt seeks to adopt treaty on ending child labour



Myanmar News | 28 November, 2019

The government will seek the approval of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Assembly of the Union) to adopt an international treaty that will compel the country to stop the use of child labour. U Thein Swe, minister of Labour, Immigration and Population, told the assembly on Tuesday about the salient points of the Minimum Age Convention (138) of the International Labour Organization (ILO), which includes the abolition of child labour. “The convention has 18 articles and aims to effectively abolish child labour, support economic development, and provide job opportunities consistent with the fullest

physical and mental development of young people,” he told the joint parliament. The treaty has been in effect since 1976. “Convention 138 is one of eight fundamental conventions of the ILO,” he added. Myanmar had previously adopted the ILO’s Forced Labour Convention (29), Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (87) and Convention on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (182). Under Convention 138, the minimum age for work is 15 years old, but undeveloped countries like Myanmar, which have yet to reach full economic and educational development, can lower the minimum age to 14.

Source : <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/govt-seeks-adopt-treaty-ending-child-labour.html>

Vietnamese firms invest 460 million USD abroad in 11 months



Vietnam News | 28 November, 2019

Vietnamese firms poured 460 million USD into 177 projects abroad in the first 11 months, reported the Foreign Investment Agency under the Ministry of Planning and Investment. Of the total, 148 new projects attracted 354 million USD worth of Vietnamese investment while the remainder came from 29 which raised their capital by nearly 105 million USD. Most of the overseas investment focused on wholesale and retail at 118 million USD, 26 percent of the total. Agro-forestry-fishery and

science and technology were the runners-up with 66 million USD and 60 million USD, respectively. Vietnamese firms invested in 31 countries and territories in the period. Australia lured the lion's share of investments with 141.3 million USD, over a third of the total. The US came next with 93.4 million USD, or 21 percent. Other destinations for Vietnamese investments included Spain, Cambodia, Singapore and Canada.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/economy/vietnamese-firms-invest-460-million-usd-abroad-in-11-months-406805.vov>

Event promoting Vietnamese goods held in Australia



Vietnam News | 28 November, 2019

Melbourne (VNA) – An event promoting Vietnamese products in Australia took place in Melbourne, Victoria state for the first time on November 26-27. The event, arranged by Ho Chi Minh City authorities, featured 50 pavilions run by 34 businesses, including 24 Vietnamese firms. Addressing the opening ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister Trinh Dinh Dung underlined that the strong development of the Vietnam-Australia strategic partnership has offered new economic cooperation opportunities for businesses from the two nations. He called on firms to grasp the chances to bolster investment and trade in a bid to double two-way investment. Vice Chairman of the HCM City People's Committee Tran

Vinh Tuyen said the event is designed to help firms from the city bolster cooperation and connections with their Australian counterparts. Through the event, HCM City is ready to welcome products from Melbourne and Victoria, with the aim of making the two sides become significant trade partners, he added. Australia is currently Vietnam's eight leading trade partner, while HCM City has attracted many investors from the country. To date, Australian firms have channelled 197.3 million USD into 197 projects in Vietnam's southern economic hub, mostly in industry and services. In 2018, two-way trade between HCM City and Australia hit nearly 979 million USD, of which exports to Australia reaching 578.5 million USD. The city's main exports included computers, electronics and components, garment-textile, footwear and machinery. Import-export activities between Vietnam and Australia have also increased after the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand free trade agreement took effect.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/event-promoting-vietnamese-goods-held-in-australia/164485.vnp>