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Cambodia joins Vietnamese programme for agri cooperation



Cambodia News | 2 December, 2019

Cambodia has sent representatives to attend a Vietnamese programme that seeks to strengthen the relationship between them and the agricultural sectors of Vietnam and Laos, Vietnamese media reported. The programme, which also includes a green agricultural fair, kicked off Saturday and concludes today in the Vietnamese city of Da Lat in the Central Highlands. The Cambodian delegation to the Friendship Meeting Programme includes Agriculture Ministry officials, agricultural experts and farmers. Cambodian companies that deal in agricultural products were also represented at the event, as well as firms from Vietnam and Laos. There were 225 booths featuring agriculture products from the three countries. According to a report in Nhan Dan Online, the participants during the three-day programme shared their experiences on agricultural development, farming and rural affairs. "This programme aims to strengthen solidarity and friendship between the peoples of the three countries while promoting mutual support among farmers in doing businesses and consuming agricultural products," Dinh Khac Dinh, vice chairman of Vietnam Farmers' Association (VFA), was quoted as saying in Nhan Dan Online. His statement was backed up by Meas Pyseth, deputy secretary of state of Cambodia's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. "The Cambodian

delegation wishes to exchange experience with farmers from Vietnam and Laos," he said. It was reported that several cooperation agreements to facilitate the application of technology in the sector were signed. There is still a lack of advanced agricultural technology in the three countries, but this limitation could be addressed soon with more focus on agricultural development. A separate report in Saigon Online emphasised that the gathering was also a good opportunity to find ways to cooperate further as production and consumption of agricultural products in the three neighbouring countries increases. "This will also assist businesses in promoting their products or accessing domestic markets," the report noted. The participants, according to Nhan Dhan Online, later visited high-tech agricultural models in Da Lat that are being developed to catch up with the best and the most advanced in the world. The cool climate and fertile soil of Da Lat have made it the breadbasket of Vietnam since ancient times. Da Lat and the region around it produce a staggering amount of coffee, tea, vegetables, and other agricultural products.

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50665907/cambodia-joins-vietnamese-programme-for-agriculture-cooperation/>

Tourism caravan reaches final destination



Cambodia News | 2 December, 2019

A caravan of 33 vehicles organised to promote tourism sites in China, Laos and Cambodia reached

its final destination on Saturday. The convoy departed Kunming, in China's Yunnan province, on Nov 16, crossing Laos before arriving in Cambodia on Nov 25. The convoy crossed into Cambodia through the border gate at Stung Treng province. It then travelled to Phnom Penh, Kandal and Kampong Thom before reaching its final destination, Siem Reap. From Kunming to Siem Reap, the convoy travelled about 6,000 kilometres. The official name of the caravan is the "Lancang-Mekong Culture and Tourism Exchange and Historical Cities Caravan Tour from China, Laos and Cambodia". The convoy's goal was to promote tourism sites visited along the way as well as cultural and tourism exchanges within the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Framework. The convoy was organised as part of the '2019 China-Cambodia Culture and Tourism Year.' Speaking at a ceremony to mark the end of the caravan in Siem Reap on Saturday, Hor Sarun, undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Tourism, said the convoy helped promote Cambodia's tourism potential. "The caravan provided an opportunity to have cultural exchanges and promote tourism by visiting important sites along the Mekong-Lancang river, which is an important historical area," Mr Sarun said. Shi Ling, deputy director-general of Yunnan's Department of Culture and Tourism, asked Cambodians to consider travelling to Yunnan province during their next vacation.

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50665906/tourism-caravan-reaches-final-destination/>

Laos, Australia extend partnership in human resource development



Laos News | 3 December, 2019

The government is closely cooperating with Australia on human resource development and implementation of the development strategy in this field. The topic was discussed at the third annual National Human Resource Development (HRD) Dialogue in Vientiane recently. Attended by about 60 participants from government ministries and development partners, the event allowed stakeholders to provide feedback on key Lao government initiatives to improve the Lao labour force and identify areas for future collaboration, according to a press release issued by the Australian embassy. This year, the Dialogue focussed on the implementation progress of the National Human Resource Development Strategy and its linkage to the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan, especially in the three main priority sectors: agriculture, education and health. Another key highlight is the development of the Monitoring and Evaluation Learning Framework of the national HRD strategy, with an emphasis on the purpose of this framework, the list of proposed indicators and the next steps required. The Dialogue also provided an update on the implementation progress from previous Dialogue initiatives, including the progress made on the Labour Market Information System and the Study of Skills Demand in the Private Sectors in Laos.

In welcoming this year's participants, Australian Ambassador to the Lao PDR Mr Jean-Bernard Carrasco said the Australian government is proud to be a long-term partner with the government of Laos in this critical sector, and to support this important event as it aims to bring government, non-government and private sector stakeholders together to discuss the challenges and opportunities in national HRD policy and implementation. "This Dialogue provides an invaluable opportunity to bring relevant stakeholders together, and try and take stock of how these different layers of direction, policy and strategy are fitting together for effective management of human resource development in Laos," Mr Carrasco said. Minister of Education and Sports Mrs Sengdeuane Lachanthaboun said "As Laos approaches the mid-point of the National HRD Strategy; and the government gets close to finalising an improved Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Strategy with Australia's assistance, the meeting is timed at a significant junction for human resource development policy in Laos." "The Monitoring and Evaluation Learning Framework will provide valuable information for the Lao government and relevant stakeholders in terms of strategic and long-term planning. It will be a source of information for studying the challenges and gaps in the strategy implementation and to identify solutions. It will also bring together and enhance coordination and cooperation between all stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation process. Australia and the Lao government annually undertake a National

Human Resource Development Dialogue, involving the government of Laos' National Human Resources Development Commission and a range of multilateral and bilateral donors. The Annual Dialogue is an opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities in national HRD policy and implementation. Australia is contributing to human resource development by providing scholarships to Lao students and officials to study in Lao and Australian universities. According to the embassy, the Australian government has been providing scholarships through the Laos Australia National Scholarships programme, with 50 scholarships a year to the National University of Laos and 20 scholarships to Souphanouvong University. Australia also provided 30 scholarships through the Australia Awards scholarship scheme for study in Australia.

Source: http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContenten_Laos_Australia_261.php

French research institute, Nam Theun 2 partner in environmental studies



Laos News | 3 December, 2019

The French Research Institute for Development (IRD) and Nam Theun 2 Power Company (NTPC) have agreed to cooperate on research in environmental protection, especially water quality and greenhouse gas emissions. CEO of NTPC, Mr Olivier Didry and IRD representative, Mr Eric Deharo signed an agreement last week which was witnessed by NTPC

Senior Government Affairs Coordinator, Mr Olay Phommavong along with invited guests. Under the agreement, the two parties will take part in monitoring and research activities, training, and consultancy in fields such as water quality and nutrients, carbon and nitrogen cycles, as well as greenhouse gas dynamics and emissions. The project will also include training and capacity building activities for technical staff, sourcing co-funding, creation of international joint research laboratories and more. IRD and NTPC have been collaborating in the fields of environmental and aquatic sciences within the Nam Theun 2 Aquatic and Environment Lab in Gnommalath district, Khammuan province. The agreement was put together as part of Nam Theun 2's intention to promote scientific monitoring of aquatic ecosystems by providing reputed know-how in this field and the mission of IRD relating to skills transfer in developing countries to enhance long-term scientific excellence through training and research. As part of the agreement, special attention will be given to scientific and technical training and scientific collaboration between the two parties at the national and regional level.

Source: http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_French_261.php

Seed imports banned as fungal disease hits Thai rubber trees



Myanmar News | 2 December, 2019

Following the outbreak of the Pestalotiopsis sub species fungal infection of Thai rubber trees, rubber seeds, seedlings, and saplings will not be allowed through local airports and border gates, the Crop Protecting Unit of the Department of Agriculture said. The Pestalotiopsis fungal disease has spread in some rubber plantations in Thailand, so precautionary measures have to be taken to protect Myanmar's rubber trees. Additionally, imports of rubber seeds, seedlings, and saplings from other countries will also be halted, said U Win Zaw, head of the Myeik District Agriculture Department. The ban, which affects not only Thanintharyi Region, but the whole country, remains in effect indefinitely. "The current announcement will be effective until the next one is issued. All people need to abide by it," said U Win Zaw. The outbreak of the fungus does not affect the rubber market and imports of raw rubber and rubber latex are still allowed without restriction as before, he said. A rubber tree that has been invaded by the pestalotiopsis fungus will lose its leaves, produce less latex of poorer quality, and eventually. "The rubber market has been poor for a long time and there are only a few growers these days. Sellers are not interested in it so the ban has little impact," said a Myeik resident and rubber plantation owner U

Myo Zaw Min. He said rubber price is low in Myeik and some plantation owners have stopped extraction of latex because they can't even cover production costs. According to some rubber growers, the fungus has also spread in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Sri Lanka although this has not been confirmed.

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/seed-imports-banned-fungal-disease-hits-thai-rubber-trees.html>

GrabFood offers food delivery services in Yangon



Myanmar News | 2 December, 2019

Grab, the transport network company, will offer food delivery services to Yangonites in nine townships, according to the Country Head of Grab Myanmar, Cindy Toh. The company announced that the new service will be called GrabFood at a press conference held on November 26. "Grabfood will deliver food to customers with bicycles couriers in the downtown areas of Yangon. We have linked with many of the famous restaurants in Yangon as our partners. Consumers will have to wait around 45minutes during the peak periods 30 minutes during normal periods," said Ko Myat Kaung Min, head of GrabFood Myanmar. The customers can use the GrabFood service via the Grab application. It will become a daily, multi-use application, said Cindy

Toh, country head of Grab Myanmar. More than 20 restaurants from 9 townships will provide delivery service options to customers, with orders ranging from at least K300 to K60,000. "We live in Thaketa and, as our area is not within the GrabFood coverage of the nine Townships, we can't order anything. I hope the service will expand their coverage, but at the moment we can only order if we are in the downtown area," said a Thaketa resident at the GrabFood press conference. The GrabFood service will cover Kamaryut, Dagon, Bahan, Yankin, San Chaung, Latha, Pabedan and Kyauktada townships. Food will be delivered by bicycle with a door-to-door service. Although Yangon doesn't automatically permit bicycle-riding on its roads, the company's couriers have already been granted permission by the Yangon Regional Government to ride for the company. Customers can order food with the GrabFood app, and track the order's progression, from meal preparation to delivery via a map on the app, said GrabFood staff. Daily services will include delivery for local restaurants and international brands such as KOI, Lotteria, Gong Cha, Mr.Wok and Rangoon Teahouse. GrabFood's brand ambassador is Sai Sai Kham Leng.

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/grabfood-offers-food-delivery-services-yangon.html>

Industrial production index expansion slows in November



Vietnam News | 2 December, 2019

HÀ NỘI — The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) in November saw its lowest rise since the beginning of 2019 at 5.4 per cent, mostly due to slowdowns in the mining and processing-manufacturing sectors, according to the General Statistics Office (GSO). The IIP decreased by an estimated 1.6 per cent compared to the previous month. The mining sector fell 5.3 per cent in November due to a 46.4 per cent reduction in production of coke and refined oil. Meanwhile, production of the processing-manufacturing sector rose 6.5 per cent thanks to a 2.1 per cent rise in electronic products, computers and optical products. Electricity production and distribution enjoyed an increase of 7.5 per cent, while the water supply, waste and wastewater treatment sector expanded 6.3 per cent. The GSO attributed the low growth of the IIP in November to Nghi Son Oil Refinery's halting of operations for maintenance and low production of Samsung Bắc Ninh and Thái Nguyên. Meanwhile, the IIP for the first 11 months of 2019 expanded 9.3 per cent year-on-year, lower than the 10 per cent growth in the same period of 2018, with processing-manufacturing sector growing 10.6 per cent. According to the office, industrial products that enjoyed high growth in the 11-month period included crude steel and iron (37.5 per cent), petrol (23.9 per cent), steel bars (20.5 per cent), televisions (14.6 per cent), mobile phones

(12.3 per cent), natural fabric (11.7 per cent), chemical paint (11.2 per cent), processed aquatic products (10.3 per cent), and electricity generation (9.5 per cent). As of November 1, the total number of workers employed by industrial firms increased 1.5 per cent from a month before and 2.7 per cent compared to the same time last year. — VNS

Source: <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/569229/industrial-production-index-expansion-slows-in-november.html#RQfwHtktpHXZJLeE.97>

Agricultural exports to China face barriers



Vietnam News | 1 December, 2019

VOV.VN - The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, alongside the Quang Ninh province People's Committee, co-hosted a conference in Mong Cai on December 1 with the aim of boosting agro-forestry and aquatic exports to the Chinese market. Quang Ninh province has been considered to be the “gateway” for both import and export activities between Vietnam and China for several years, which has significantly contributed to increasing the total bilateral trade turnover to nearly US\$100 billion since the beginning of the year. A string of measures have recently been implemented by the province in a bid to promote cross-border trade activities such as improving transport infrastructure and updating border gate systems. Despite these changes, China has made steps to strengthen its own quality management system,

setting forth stricter requirements regarding imported goods. These include new rules on traceable origins, packaging, and labeling of products, which have served to affect the agricultural export activities of several businesses. A representative from the Chinese Embassy in Vietnam noted that this fresh application of international standards is appropriate and in line with the signed agreements between the two sides, adding that a number of local industries have failed to meet the requirements set by the country's northern neighbour. When producers follow these standards, it will help bolster the export of agro-forestry-aquatic products to both Chinese and international markets in the future, he said. Participants also discussed issues relating to the Chinese market and the regulations that it imposes on agricultural products, which has provided domestic firms with plenty of useful information about export activities. Tran Van Cong, Deputy Director of the Agro Processing and Market Development Authority, called for greater efforts by Vietnamese enterprises to make greater changes in production activities as a means of gaining certificates to meet the requirements set by the Chinese market. Representatives from businesses of both nations also signed a contract valued at over VND15,000 billion during the event.

Source: <https://english.vov.vn/economy/agricultural-exports-to-china-face-barriers-406985.vov>
