

*Highlight News / January 20/2020*



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## PM wants boost for food processing



*Cambodia News | 20 January, 2020*

Prime Minister Hun Sen called for more investment in the agro-processing sector in Cambodia from Vietnamese investors and businesspeople because of its lack in Cambodia. He sees it as crucial for both Cambodians and Vietnamese businesses in the Kingdom. The premier made the call during the celebrations for the Vietnamese New Year 2020 with Vietnamese communities and Vietnamese businesspeople in Cambodia on Friday at Sokha Phnom Penh Residence Hotel. He said Cambodia exported mostly raw materials to foreign countries, especially to Vietnam. Therefore, if there is more investment in processing plants, it would help to create more jobs for people and provide added-value. Mr Hun Sen congratulated Vietnam on its remarkable economic development in recent years. He said that in 2019, although there has been tension between China and the US, the inflow of foreign direct investment to Vietnam reached \$32 billion which increased about 3 percent in the first 11 months compared with the same period in 2018. Mr Hun Sen also congratulated Vietnam on the signing of a free-trade agreement (FTA) and investment protection between the European Union and Vietnam, which is continuing the development of the economy, trade and investment between the two. "I believe that the growth of Vietnam's economy and the signing of the free-trade agreement will not only provide benefits directly to Vietnam but also provide

advantages to other neighbouring countries including Cambodia through the flow of trade, investment and tourism," Mr Hun Sen added. Bilateral trade between Cambodia and Vietnam in 2018 achieved at \$4.7billion, increased by about 24 percent compared with 2017. However, in 2019 the bilateral trade was at \$5.2billion. It was achieved over the target set by both governments to reach \$5billion by 2020. Vietnamese Ambassador to Cambodia Vu Quang Minh said the year 2019 was a prosperous one between Cambodia and Vietnam in that both nations achieved big successes on national and economic development while their roles on the international stage were promoted. He said cooperation between Cambodia and Vietnam has grown significantly in all sectors including the economy, national defence, security, culture, education and between individuals. "The remarkable development regarding the economy and trade is because they are supported and encouraged by both governments, especially with support from the Cambodian government for Vietnamese business and investment in Cambodia," Vu added. Nguyen Thanh Dung, chairman of the Vietnam Business Club in Cambodia, acknowledged the fact that doing business in Cambodia has led to Vietnamese business growth and success. He said it is because of the support of the government of Cambodia and other relevant institutions in Cambodia. "The solid economic growth in Cambodia, political stability, security, social order and peace have created a good environment for doing business in Cambodia,"

Nguyen said. He added trade and investment between Cambodia and Vietnam has increased remarkably. Bilateral trade has increased \$5.26 billion, up nearly 12 percent, compared with 2018. He said as of January this year, Vietnam has 214 projects registered in Cambodia, with a total investment capital of \$3.07 billion. Of them, 176 valid projects registered total capital of \$2.77 billion. Nguyen said Vietnam is among the top three of foreign direct investors in Cambodia. He said Vietnamese business activity is mostly involved with agriculture, banking, telecommunication and technologies and food processing. He added that the investment activities of Vietnamese enterprises in Cambodia are not only successful for Vietnamese businesses but also contributed to the development of the economy and social security of Cambodia. “Our investment will be an efficient and long-term investment in Cambodia because we are considering Cambodia as a second home, so we hope that the government of Cambodia will put their belief in us and support us,” Nguyen said. Mr Hun Sen urged the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) and relevant ministries to push the development of the special economic zone along the Cambodian and Vietnamese border, adding to the existing special economic zone in Bavet, Svay Rieng province. “I believed that for the moment, to facilitate and encourage more investment from Vietnam, we are trying to solve issues that Vietnamese investors and businesses have met in Cambodia,” he added. “Now, the Cambodian government is welcoming all

the decisions of the foreign investors, especially, Vietnamese investors who choose and aim to invest in Cambodia and set Cambodia as their first place to start their investment or expand their business,” Mr Hun Sen said.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50681330/pm-wants-boost-for-food-processing>

## Aclede Bank IPO workshops prove popular



*Cambodia News | 20 January, 2020*

Aclede Bank’s public seminar to promote awareness about its plans to become the first commercial bank within the Kingdom to list its shares on the Cambodian Securities Exchange (CSX) attracted more than 600 people. Speaking to Khmer Times after the final session, Aclede Bank president and group managing director Dr In Channy said: “We want our future investors to do all of the necessary preparations to be ready for when we go IPO [initial public offering]. The seminar is not to try and convince them [the public] but to advise them about the risk, challenges, benefit and information to allow them to make the analysis themselves.” In went on to address some of the preconceptions surrounding the move, which has been dubbed the People’s IPO, explaining that the criteria to become an investor is not as complicated as many may think. “Firstly, a public investor has to have a savings or fixed account with the bank. Secondly, they must have investment identification from the securities authority and, thirdly, the public investors should also open

investment identification accounts from 10 companies licensed by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Cambodia (SECC). Finally they have to open trading accounts to prove their nationality and address,” he said. Ny Sryneat, a participant who took part in one of four workshops at the seminar after reading the announcement on social media, said the session had helped her to understand the stock market. “When I heard that Acleda Bank is going to issue the IPO, I wanted to learn and understand more about it,” she said. “It’s a way that we [the public] can invest and make profit on top of our monthly salary. I hope to benefit from it.” Since its beginnings as a nongovernmental organisation 27 years ago, Acleda’s initial capital investment of \$600,000 has grown to assets of around \$900 million. The bank currently has six corporate shareholders and hopes the IPO issuance will encourage local and individual investors. Hong Sok Hour, chief executive officer of the CSX, expects that Acleda could now float on the stock market as soon as April. “It can take up to six months for companies to receive approval in principle from CSX, depending on their readiness and preparation to list,” he said. “However, I hope that Acleda take less time than that because they have already prepared [ahead].”

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50681329/acleda-bank-ipo-workshops-prove-popular>

## Ministry to adjust cost of pork amid escalating market price



*Laos News | 20 January, 2020*

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce will set a new official price for pork sold throughout the country after vendors have been unable to sell the popular meat at the set government price of 36,000 kip per kg. A butcher in Vientiane’s Khuadin market, Ms Mack, said “I sell Grade A pork for 43,000 to 45,000 kip per kg because the price charged by middlemen has increased. This means I cannot sell pork at the price designated by government.” The authorities are monitoring the price of pork after it rose above the government’s set price, affecting the large number of people who rely on this meat as a daily staple. “Since hearing complaints from both consumers and vendors about the price, our department and Vientiane authorities are discussing setting a new price to bring it in line with market mechanisms,” said an official from the Domestic Trade Department, Ministry of Industry and Commerce. “The new price of pork will not be too high for consumers. We expect to announce the price to the general public and related sectors this week,” he added. “Of course, after the new price is announced, vendors who sell pork above this price will be fined or otherwise penalised in line with the law.” “Over the past few months lots of pig died from a viral infection. This caused a shortage of pigs which is one reason for the sharp increase in the market price of pork,” he said. The price of pork has

also risen in Thailand, Vietnam and China. Some traders may try to sell pigs to these markets so they get a better price. Another reason for the high market price of pork is that the value of the kip is weak, which is driving up the price of most consumer goods, observers say. In addition, the cost of fuel is rising in line with global market trends.

Source: <http://annx.asianews.network/content/ministry-adjust-cost-pork-amid-escalating-market-price-112283>

## Thailand provides 1.38 billion baht to Laos for construction of new bridge



*Laos News | 20 January, 2020*

The Lao government believes that the planned fifth Friendship Bridge across the Mekong River, linking Bung Kan province in Thailand and Pakxan district in Borikhamxay province, will greatly facilitate regional transport and trade. Because of its significance for regional economic development, the Lao side of the bridge has received funding support from Thailand through the Neighbouring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency (NEDA), amounting to over 1.38 billion baht (over 414 billion kip). An agreement on financing for the bridge was signed in Vientiane on Friday by Deputy Minister of Finance Mr Bounchom Ubopaseuth and NEDA President Mr Perames Vudthitornetiraks. Deputy Minister of Public Works and Transport Dr Viengsavath Siphandone and other senior ministry officials witnessed the signing of the agreement. The 1,350-metre long bridge will be built 10km north of Pakxan – the capital of Borikhamxay province - and

about 2.5km from Road No.13 South. It is believed the bridge will be a vital transport link, boosting trade and investment between Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. From Thailand's Bung Kan province, vehicles will travel about 150km to Nge An province in Vietnam along Lao national highway No. 8 in Borikhamxay province. In Nge An, the road then links to Hanoi, Danang and other areas of Vietnam. An initial study of the planned fifth Mekong Friendship Bridge indicates that it will transform Borikhamxay province into a transport and export-import hub. The first Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge connects Vientiane to Thailand's Nong Khai province and the second connects Savannakhet province to Mukdahan province in Thailand. The third bridge links Khammuan province with Nakhon Phanom province in Thailand, and the fourth links Bokeo province in the north of Laos with Chiang Rai province in Thailand.

Source: <http://annx.asianews.network/content/thailand-provides-138-billion-baht-laos-construction-new-bridge-112282>

## Hong Kong company invests US\$172 M to build a power station in Kyaukphyu



*Myanmar News | 18 January, 2020*

CNTIC VPower KY3 Limited from Hong Kong is planning to build a US\$172 million gas-fired and thermal energy power station in Kyaukphyu to generate and sell electricity, according to

Directorate of Investment and Companies Administration (DICA). It can generate 658.8 million kilowatts hour. The electricity generated from the power station will be provided locally. About 20 per cent of the electricity generated from the power station will be distributed in Rakhine State and the rest will be supplied to national grid. Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) allowed four proposed foreign investments and 17 confirmed investments worth US\$310.451 million and they can provide job opportunities for 10,102 locals. The MIC approved US\$1546.94 million of foreign investments and Ks716.451 billion including US\$128.4 million of local investments from October 1 to January 10 in 2019-20 FY, said Thant Sin Lwin, Secretary of the MIC and Director General of the DICA. He said respective ministries are scrutinizing to grant investments in mining sector in 2020. "The investment in mining sector is big and Ministry of Electricity and Energy is promoting electricity sector. I think the investment will come after that. Investments will be flowed into housing and construction sectors normally," he said. According to the DCA, more than US\$2.904 billion are invested in mining sector till at the end of November, 2019.

Source:<https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/hong-kong-company-invests-us172-m-to-build-a-power-station-in-kyaukphyu>

## CSOs demand suspension of contract signing for Kyaukphyu deep seaport project



*Myanmar News | 18 January, 2020*

Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone Watch Group, a coalition of 18 CSOs, issued a statement on January 16, calling for the suspension of plans to sign the agreement on the implementation of Kyaukphyu Deep Seaport Project in Kyaukpyu Township in Rakhine State. In the statement, ongoing armed conflicts in Rakhine State have displaced more than 100,000 people. The government is unable to solve many land disputes in the oil and gas pipeline project which started in 2010. It is found that the government is turning a blind eye to the rights of locals. The Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) included in the Kofi Annan Commission's report, should be made. There is no sufficient information sharing with locals on the special economic zone project and the deep seaport project in Kyaukphyu. There is no coordination on the substitution plan for job losses. The statement covers five points. In addition, necessary preparations should be made to legally recognize freehold lands owned by locals and to create job substitutes and sufficient job opportunities when the agreement is signed. They also call on the government to re-scrutinize the sale of mangrove forests and lands and to re-implement the local ownership tradition.

Source: <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/csos-demand-suspension-of-contract-signing-for-kyaukphyu-deep-seaport-project>

## Tra Vinh farmers harvest mud crab for Tet, earn high profit



*Vietnam News | 19 January, 2020*

Tra Vinh (VNS/VNA) - Farmers in the Mekong Delta province of Tra Vinh are entering the mud crab harvest for Tet (Lunar New Year) and earning a high profit of 30 - 35 million VND (1,300 - 1,500 USD) per hectare as demand is high for the coming holiday, which falls on January 25. In the province, farmers harvest three mud crab crops a year, including one for Tet, as it takes about four months from breeding until harvest. Farmers in the province, which is one of the delta's largest mud crab producers, breed mud crabs mostly in the coastal areas of Cau Ngang, Duyen Hai and Chau Thanh districts and Duyen Hai town. Nguyen Van Hue, who breeds mud crabs in Chau Thanh's Long Hoa commune, said most mud crab farmers earned high profits last year because of high prices. Mud crabs are purchased by traders at prices between 150,000-320,000 VND (6.5-14 USD) a kilo depending on their gender and size. The province's mud crabs are sold locally and other localities, including HCM City, and are exported. With stable selling prices, breeding mud crabs provides farmers sustainable incomes compared to black tiger shrimp and white-legged shrimp under

semi-intensive farming models, according to authorities. Huynh Quoc Vu, Chairman of Long Hoa commune's People's Committee, said many farmers in the commune had switched from breeding three shrimp crops a year to one shrimp crop and two mud crabs a year, or switched completely to breeding two to three mud crab crops a year. The switch had offered high and sustainable incomes for farmers, he said. Many farmers also stagger the breeding of mud crabs so they can have harvest year round to avoid an over-supply during the main harvest seasons. Each year farmers in the province also calculate the time when they begin a new mud crab crop for T<sup>é</sup>t so they can harvest before the holiday to fetch high prices. The province's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has encouraged farmers in coastal areas to breed mud crabs, including rotation of mud crab and shrimp in the same ponds, to reduce the risk of losses. Farmers have also been encouraged to breed mud crabs under advanced extensive farming models in mangrove forests, a method that adapts to climate change and is sustainable. The province has more than 9,000ha of mangrove forests in coastal areas. Of the figure, the province has allocated 5,460ha for individual households and organisations to protect and exploit, including breeding aquatic species in mangrove forests. Mud crabs are easy to breed, are resistant to disease, and do not require high breeding costs

as they eat mostly trash fish. With a coastline of 65 kilometres, the province has potential to develop aquaculture, including mud crab cultivation. The province has 13,000ha of mud crab with an annual output of more than 1,400 tonnes. Of the 13,000ha, 35 per cent are intensive farming with a yield of 0.8 – 1.2 tonnes per hectare a year./.

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/tra-vinh-farmers-harvest-mud-crab-for-tet-earn-high-profit/167541.vnp>

## Prices of fruits, vegetables and pork tend to reduce



*Vietnam News | 19 January, 2020*

Deputy Director of Ho Chi Minh City's Department of Industry and Trade Ms. Nguyen Huynh Trang last night led a working delegation to inspect and work with management boards and shopkeepers of Thu Duc and Hoc Mon wholesale markets. Reporting at the working session, Vice Director of Thu Duc Agricultural Wholesale Market Management and Trading Company Mr. Nguyen Nhu said that shopkeepers signed contracts with manufacturers and business households to accumulate goods for Tet holiday. From the 24th to 28th day in the last month of the lunar calendar, the amount of goods pouring to the markets has gradually increased thanks to plentiful supply and stable prices. Particularly, the average amount of goods reached around 4,600 tons on the 24th day and is expected to gradually increase to 6,500 tons per day on the days before Tet. The prices of essential commodities

such as mango, green grapefruit, grapefruits, long-shaped watermelon, papaya, etc have been fairly stable. Regarding vegetable products, Director of Thu Duc Agricultural Wholesale Market Company Mr. Nguyen Van Huay said that prices of some vegetable products will see a downward trend on the days before Tet while fresh flower prices are expected to remain stable. At the night of the 23rd day in the last lunar month, the number of pigs imported to the markets was 5,500 ones, corresponding to 360 tons per night. The pig price was VND 83,000 per kilogram while pork prices reduced to between VND 95,000 and VND 100,000 per kilogram.

Source: <https://sggpnews.org.vn/business/prices-of-fruits-vegetables-and-pork-tend-to-reduce-85310.html>