

Highlight News / March 13/2020



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12 more Chinese ships carrying garment raw materials to arrive in Cambodia this week



Cambodia News | 12 March, 2020

The Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia (GMAC) said on Wednesday that 12 more Chinese ships transporting raw materials for garment industry will arrive in Cambodia this week. In a statement, GMAC said the first shipment of raw materials for the garment sector arrived at the Sihanoukville Autonomous Port in southwest Cambodia's Preah Sihanouk province Monday night. "We expect that 12 ships with more raw materials will arrive at the Sihanoukville Autonomous Port subsequently until Sunday," it said. The statement added that the "Green Lane" measure taken by the Ministry of Economy and Finance through the General Department of Customs and Excise has immediately helped facilitate clearance formalities and procedures from the port, and the raw materials have been transported to factories in various areas including Phnom Penh. Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen said on Tuesday that more than 60 percent of the raw materials for production in the garment and footwear industry in Cambodia are imported from China. "The vessels will deliver raw materials to Cambodia from this March to May until the situation (of COVID-19) has eased," he said. The prime minister expressed his sincere thanks to the Chinese government, Chinese investors and companies for supplying those raw materials to

factories in Cambodia timely. The garment and footwear industry is Cambodia's biggest export sector, employing about 750,000 people in approximately 1,100 factories and branches, according the Labor Ministry. The sector earned gross revenue of 9.32 billion U.S. dollars last year, up 11 percent compared to the year before. Xinhua Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50700937/12-more-chinese-ships-carrying-garment-raw-materials-to-arrive-in-cambodia-this-week>

Upcoming confab signifies Cambodia's growing reputation as key logistics hub



Cambodia News | 12 March, 2020

Cambodia's capital city will host a large gathering of local and international freight-forwarders next month, signifying the Kingdom's growing reputation as an important logistics hub in Southeast Asia. According to Indian research company Mordor Intelligence, the freight and logistics market in the country is expected to reach a market value of \$2.25 billion by 2023. A study released by Agility, one of the leading logistics companies in the world, showed that Cambodia's ranking in the global index of emerging logistics markets has markedly improved from last year. Cambodia has also seen a dramatic growth in its number of freight-forwarding companies. In the last five years, according to figures provided by Cambodia Freight Forwarders Association, close to 500 registered logistics companies have started operating in Sihanoukville, Phnom Penh and other

parts of Cambodia. These include local firms and branches of prominent international players such as Maersk, Nippon Express, OOCL and Ben Line Agencies. The organisers are expecting between 100 to 500 participants from Cambodia and other countries to participate in the 3rd Logistics Leads Network Conference, which will be held at the Dyvith Hotel in Phnom Penh from April 18 to 20. While the bulk of the attendees are expected to come from the local logistics and freight-forwarding sector, representatives of more than a few regional and international freight forwarding companies in Vietnam, Thailand, China, Japan, South Korea, United States, Europe and other countries are also expected. Canadian firm Logistics Leads Network is the event's main organiser, supported by sponsors including Kargo League Logistics of India and Thai Airways. Logistics Leads Network said it will provide an opportunity for local freight-forwarding companies to establish partnerships with their foreign counterparts and further boost the thriving sector. To encourage more participants, the company's website is claiming the event "will be the best investment that you can make during 2020".

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50700678/upcoming-confab-signifies-cambodias-growing-reputation-as-key-logistics-hub>

Avoid hiring foreign workers from outbreak areas: labour ministry



Laos News / 13 March, 2020

Employers in Laos should avoid hiring new foreign nationals from areas or cities where the coronavirus has been reported, authorities have advised. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare on Wednesday issued an announcement asking employers to follow the new rules imposed to regulate workers, in order to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Before entering Laos, overseas workers must have their temperature checked at ports of entry and undergo any other checks imposed by the authorities. The ministry also told Labour and Social Welfare Departments in provinces and Vientiane to work with the relevant authorities before granting permission to hire foreign labourers. The departments were also told to work in collaboration with the relevant bodies and exercise caution when sending Lao workers abroad as well as receiving them from foreign countries. Regulating Lao and foreign workers in this regard should strictly follow guidance issued by the National Taskforce Committee for Covid-19 Prevention and Control, the ministry said. The ministry told employers to provide essential equipment to both local and international employees to protect them against the virus. The items in question include soap, handrub and masks, and must be provided free of charge. Employers are required to monitor their staff closely on a daily basis,

and those found with flu-like symptoms such as fever, coughing, sore throat, sneezing and breathing difficulties must be sent to a hospital for observation. For further information contact the Labour Management Department at Telephone No: 021 213007 or Fax: 021 213247. Authorities have previously warned Lao nationals not to travel to cities or areas where virus outbreaks have occurred. The Task Force Committee told State departments to consider suspending or postponing overseas work trips by their civil servants to outbreak countries. Lao authorities also told foreign airlines to check the temperature of their pilots, flight attendants and passengers before flying to Laos in a bid to prevent the spread of the coronavirus here. As of yesterday, there were no confirmed cases of the virus in Laos.

Source : http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Avoid_52.php

Skilled workers eligible for jobs in Japan



Laos News / 13 March, 2020

A limited number of skilled workers will be able to work in other Asean countries and Japan, in small and medium enterprises, agriculture, and other fields, with jobs to be arranged through employment agencies. The Vientiane Employment Service announced the scheme earlier this month, adding that Lao nationals would be able to strengthen their skills by working in other countries. Director of the Vientiane Employment Service, Mr Bounxou

Chanchom, explained the importance of skilled workers being allocated jobs overseas. This year it is estimated that about 20,000 people will be selected to go to Thailand and Japan after passing skills tests which will be administrated by the employment service. Applicants must be in good health and able to travel. Following interviews conducted by the employment service, applicants will know the test results the same day. About 90 percent of applicants will come from Champassak, Savannakhet, Saravan and Khammuan provinces, Mr Bounxou said. In addition, a large number of Lao people are being employed in Thailand. However, Japan looks set to become a new destination for Lao workers as the country is looking to employ more foreign nationals, he added. A senior official from the Department of Labour Skill Development at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare said on Wednesday the ministry was continuing to provide skill development training courses. These are aimed at equipping people, especially those from poor backgrounds, with essential skills so they can more easily find jobs in Laos and other countries. She said the demand for skilled labour in Laos and internationally continues to grow. Lao workers are currently employed in many countries, including Thailand, South Korea, and Japan. An anonymous official from the Employment Service Centre under the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare said that last year the centre arranged

for Lao workers to go to Japan to improve their skills through the Japanese Technical Intern Training Programme. Under this programme, Japan accepts young people and middle-aged workers from various countries including Laos. It fosters talented individuals who can contribute to the development of industries in their countries through the transfer of Japanese industrial and vocational skills, techniques, and knowledge. According to the ministry, in the past few years at least 50,000 Lao nationals, including 27,176 women, have obtained employment in other countries. Most found work in Thailand, while just over 50 got jobs in Japan.

Source : http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Skilled_52.php

India-Myanmar trade hit by border closures



Myanmar News | 12 March, 2020

Trade across the India-Myanmar border slows due to the closure of border gates in Mizoram and Manipur, India, ordered by government of India as a precaution against the spread of the coronavirus outbreak sweeping the world. Chin State and Sagaing Region in Myanmar share borders with Manipur and Mizoram in India. Myanmar traders say the state governments of Mizoram and Manipur ordered three border gates closed on March 9. According to U Kapno, chair of the Chin State Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry,

India's gates along the Chin border were closed on March 10 but reopened again the next day. However, cross-border trade in Tamu, which lies along the Sagaing-Mizoram border has been stopped since March 10, U Khin Maung Tint, secretary of the Tamu Border Trade Association, told Myanmar Times. "As a preventative measure, India initiated the closure of the border. It wasn't done through bilateral negotiation. It was closed solely by India," U Khin Maung Tint said, adding that Myanmar is going to be affected as exports via the Tamu border gate has come to a stop. Much of Myanmar-Indiacross-border trade is conducted via Htantalan and Reed camps in Chin state, and Tamu in Sagaing Region. "All the businesses that rely on border trade are going to come to a stop. Travellers will also face difficulties returning to their own countries. Myanmar farmers will also be affected if exports of agricultural goods stop," said U Khin Maung Tint. "We could have time to prepare if they had sent us a warning. We have been informed verbally that the closure will be for one week, but this is unofficial. Who knows how long it will be based on how the virus situation changes?" he added. According to the Ministry of Commerce, the total trade volume from Tamu border trading post in FY 2018-19 was US\$96.667 million, with exports valued at US\$95.38 million and imports of US\$1.28 million. Total trade volume via the Reed border trade post in the same period was US\$104.58

million, with exports valued at US\$82.11 million and imports US\$22.46 million. Trade volume via the Tamu border gate in three months of FY 2019-20 to December totalled US\$19.34 million, with exports valued at US\$19.32 million and imports US\$29,000. In the same period, the total trade volume via the Reed border trading post stood at US\$14.73 million, with exports valued at US\$13.42 million and imports US\$1.311 million.

Source : <https://www.mmmtimes.com/news/india-myanmar-trade-hit-border-closures.html>

Fisheries exports not as badly hit as agriculture by virus



Myanmar News | 12 March, 2020

Although exports of marine products to China have declined slightly so far this year due to the COVID-19 outbreak sweeping the world, some 4,000 tonnes of goods were still sent overseas over the last week, a senior fisheries official says. “As the number of coronavirus cases started rising in China in January, exports of Myanmar’s fisheries products declined slightly in early February. Unlike with agricultural products, sales of fisheries products have not been as severely impacted,” said U Myint Than, head of the Fisheries Department, on Tuesday. Some 4000 tonnes of marine products worth more than US\$3.12 million (K4.3 billion) were exported to China via Muse border trade route from March 1 to 8. The exports were mainly pike, flounder, white pomfret, yellow

pike conger, carp, puffer fish, prawns, and squid. Exports through Chin Shwe Haw border trade point declined in February, but fishery products particularly eel and pike conger or sea eel totalling 28.23 tonnes worth US\$72,075, were exported between March 1 and 8. “Border exports of fisheries products proceeded as usual in February, as the Chin Shwe Haw border gate was only closed briefly as a precaution against the virus outbreak but re-opened in March. However, the trade through the gate is mostly for eels,” said Myanmar Fisheries Federation Vice Chair Daw Toe Nandar Tin. Up to February 28 of the current fiscal year, Myanmar fishery products worth US\$415.3 million were exported compared with US\$361.5 million in same period last year, mainly to China, according to trade figures from the Ministry of Commerce.

Source : <https://www.mmmtimes.com/news/fisheries-exports-not-badly-hit-agriculture-virus.html>

Automobile sales up 11% in February



Vietnam News | 12 March, 2020

The Vietnam Automobile Manufacturers’ Association (VAMA) reported on March 11 that its members sold 17,616 vehicles in February, a month-on-month increase of 11%. Sales of commercial and special-purpose ones surged 74% and 49% respectively, to 4,812 and 333 units. Meanwhile, 12,471 passenger cars were sold in the month, down 3%. Sales of

domestically-assembled vehicles reached 11,697 units, up 22% while imported ones decreased by 4% to 5,919 units. Notably, TC Motor, which is not a member of VAMA, said it sold 4,332 vehicles in February, lifting the total sales of automobiles in Vietnam in the month to 21,948. Toyota took the lead in February with 4,682 units. It was followed by TC Motor - 4,332, Kia - 1,833, Mazda - 1,663, and Ford - 1,259. General Director of Ford Vietnam Pham Van Dung said the automobile market is expected to see a growth of between 10-20% in 2020 thanks to abundant supply and various promotion programmes.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/economy/automobile-sales-up-11-in-february-411220.vov>

Vietnam sees cassava export reduction in two months



Vietnam News | 12 March, 2019

Hanoi (VNS/VNA) – Vietnam witnessed a slight reduction in cassava exports during the first two months of this year due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. In the first two months of 2020, cassava exports reached 383,000 tonnes, earning 127 million USD, down 0.06 percent in volume and 0.16 percent in value over the same period last year. Of which, exports in February totalled 171,000 tonnes, earning 54 million USD. The average export price of cassava was estimated at 332 USD per tonne in the first two months, a year on

year reduction of 10 percent. In terms of product structure, fresh cassava chip exports were estimated at 130,000 tonnes, earning \$27 million, up 39.6 percent in volume and 72.2 percent in value over the same period last year. Cassava starch exports were estimated at 253,000 tonnes in volume and 101 million USD in value. The export volume fell by 19.5 percent year on year but the export value rose by 25.6 percent. China continued to be the largest market for Vietnamese cassava, accounting for 93 percent of total cassava exports in the first two months. However, the cassava exports to China decreased by 21.1 percent in volume and 25.1 percent in value over the same period of last year. Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, China has extended the closure of border markets and continued to suspend the trading activities of border residents. That has had a great impact on the cassava exports from Vietnam to China, the ministry said. Next months, the cassava exports to China will continue to be quiet because China's cassava demand is not expected to increase during the epidemic. Nguyen Quoc Toan, director of MARD's Agricultural Product Processing and Market Development Department, predicted this year cassava exports from Vietnam to China will face fierce competition from other countries such as Thailand, Cambodia and Laos. In addition, China has strengthened strict control on labelling, packaging and border trade, Toan said. Meanwhile, China this year will continue to reduce the value-added tax on imported cassava starch from 13 percent to 10 percent to encourage imports

via contracts to China. However, Toan said Vietnam would have opportunities to boost cassava export to China because Chinese enterprises have little cassava inventory and the US alcohol supply for this market has reduced due to the high import duty of 45 percent. On the other hand, China would increase demand for ethanol to 10 million tonnes this year, so it increases imports of cassava chips. According to Nguyen Van Lang, Chairman of the Vietnam Cassava Association, the output of raw cassava in the 2019-20 crop is expected to decrease by 50 percent compared to the previous crop due to the disease of cassava trees. That has led to lack of raw cassava material and also lower quality of this material, Lang said. The cassava production industry needs to control varieties of cassava to reduce the disease and improve quality. In addition, the association has proposed to the ministry and localities to manage cassava development planning, supplying enough cassava for the domestic market. According to the association, Vietnam now has 120 cassava starch processing factories with a total capacity of over 15.5 million tonnes, while the total annual output of 8.8 million tonnes of fresh cassava. The shortage of material has led many cassava processing enterprises to face difficulties in processing and business. In 2019, the cassava exports reached 2.5 million tonnes in volume and 973 million USD in value. The exports rose by 3.2 percent in volume and 1.6 percent in value compared to 2018. The cassava exports to mainland China accounted for 89.2 percent of Vietnam's total

overseas cassava shipments. It was followed by the Republic of Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia and the Philippines./.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-sees-cassava-export-reduction-in-two-months/169980.vnp>
