



- Minister reiterates no more power shortage during the dry season
- Trade across Cambodia-Vietnam border remains stable amid COVID-19 outbreak
- Taskforce demands effective execution of PM's order as virus cases rise
- Laos updates int'l community amidst virus pandemic
- Govt announces priority sectors for emergency loans in Myanmar
- Petrol prices see sharp fall of up to VND4,252 per litre
- US attracts most Vietnamese investment in three months



## Minister reiterates no more power shortage during the dry season



*Cambodia News | 30 March, 2020*

The Ministry of Mines and Energy has reiterated there will be no more power shortages during the dry season this year. Mines and Energy Minister Suy Sem insisted people and businesses will no longer face any electricity shortages between November and April. There were power cuts last year and potential investors are insisting on the government making sure the power supply in the country is reliable. During last year's dry season, the country faced an electricity shortage of 400 megawatts, because a water shortage limited the amount of electricity produced by hydropower dams. The government also claimed that the rise of investment in the construction sector didn't help. Suy also claimed all villages nationwide will be able to access different sources of electricity this year. Power supply rose by 28 percent in 2019 to 3,382 megaWatts (mW), with the main operating power source for the Kingdom being seven hydropower dams that generated a total of 1,328 mW of energy, accounting for 33.5 percent of the nation's total power supply. Last week, a combined 400 mW supply of power plants proposed to run on heavy fuel oil in Kandal province's Lvea Em district will not generate power as planned in the first part of this year because construction has been suspended by COVID-19.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50707162/minister-reiterates-no-more-power-shortage-during-the-dry-season/>

## Trade across Cambodia-Vietnam border remains stable amid COVID-19 outbreak



*Cambodia News | 30 March, 2020*

Trade activities across the Vietnam- Cambodia border have been maintained despite the halt of entry and exit of citizens and tourists as a measure to curb the spread of the acute respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19). Talking to Vietnam News Agency reporters, Truong Cong Nhan of the customs division at Khanh Binh Border Gate under An Giang provincial Customs Office, said that the transportation of commodities through the Khanh Binh – Chrey Thom border gate pair still continues as normal, with about 40 trucks a day, equivalent to the amount before the entry-exit suspension order became effective on March 18. On recent days, medical quarantine measures have been strictly applied to trucks entering Vietnam to receive goods exported to Cambodia. At the Khanh Binh border gate, 82km south of Cambodia's Phnom Penh capital, the three forces, including medical quarantine, border guards and customs, have worked closely to guide drivers of Cambodian vehicles to strictly follow the quarantine procedure, including disinfecting the vehicle, checking the drivers' protective gear (self-equipped) and measuring the drivers' body temperature. The

drivers then wait in the quarantine room while the goods are loaded. At present, quarantine measures for drivers and vehicles are mainly conducted by the Vietnamese side. Exports to Cambodia are mostly aquatic products, frozen food, vegetables and fruits.

VNA

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50707441/trade-across-cambodia-vietnam-border-remains-stable-amid-covid-19-outbreak/>

## Taskforce demands effective execution of PM's order as virus cases rise



*Laos News | 31 March, 2020*

The national committee in charge of Covid-19 Prevention and Control on Monday urged relevant authorities and people nationwide to effectively implement the prime minister's order as the number of virus cases rose to nine. "The government has enhanced measures to deal with [Covid-19] PM order No. 06/PM dated March 9, 2020," Standing Member of the National Taskforce Committee for Covid-19 Prevention and Control, Associate Prof. Dr Phouthone Muongpak told a press conference on Monday. "[The committee] would like to relevant authorities to closely monitor the implementation of the PM order to ensure its effectiveness," he said. Associate Prof. Dr Phouthone who is also Deputy Minister of Health, announced the committee's call after giving an update on the Covid-19 situation in

the country, highlighting that the number of cases continues to climb. The government has imposed key measures to restrict free movement. From April 1, all people, except for officials assigned to fight against Covid-19 as well as other essential jobs nationwide, have been ordered to stay at home until April 19. The measure aims to curb the number of infections in the country as the government believes social distancing will prevent people from spreading the virus to others. According to the media release, the committee confirmed another Covid-19 case on Tuesday, lifting the number of cases in Laos from only two last week to nine. The situation provided a strong signal for the government, relevant authorities and people nationwide to join hands against Covid-19. The additional case was discovered following the testing of 64 suspected samples. Of this number, only one test returned positive. Over the past several days, the committee tested 364 suspected cases. The latest case involved a 22-year-old woman from Phonphanao village, Xaysettha district, Vientiane. At present, she is being treated at Mittaphab Hospital in the capital. The patient was described as having mild Covid-19 symptoms, such as fever, cough, runny nose. She was still able to help herself while being treated in the hospital. Of the nine infected people, six are being cared for at Mittaphab Hospital while the other three are being treated in Luang Prabang Hospital. On top of providing treatment to

patients, Associate Prof Dr Phouthone said the government was paying attention to screening people travelling into the country. About 3,122 entered Laos on March 29. Of this number, 2,141 entered Laos by land across the Mekong border. Some four of these incoming people were found with fever. The number of Covid-19 cases globally saw an increase of 3,627 on March 29. The total accumulated cases were 662,643 with 30,845 deaths reported and 141,945 have recovered from the illness.

Source:[http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten\\_Taskforce.php](http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Taskforce.php)

## Laos updates int'l community amidst virus pandemic



*Laos News | 30 March, 2020*

The government has briefed foreign embassies and diplomatic representatives, and international organisations in Laos to address problems they may face during the country's lockdown to combat the Covid-19 pandemic. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Saleumxay Kommasith presided over the briefing held yesterday in Vientiane to deliver the new order of the Prime Minister on measures to stop the disease outbreak. "We'll try our best to communicate to the whole international community living and working in the Lao PDR on any measures that the government will further take in response to Covid-19. Please be informed we will do it through our Foreign

Ministry's website if the government takes further additional measures," Mr Saleumxay said. Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith on Sunday (March 29) announced measures to enhance comprehensive preparedness to prevent and control the pandemic. The new PM's order covered stricter measures regarding international crossings, and travelling within Laos, and even within provinces of the country, which came into effect from yesterday. International flights have also been suspended. Diplomats raised some issues at the briefing concerning international visitors who are stuck in Laos due to the suspension of flights and accommodation services. Regarding this, Mr Saleumxay said his ministry would quickly coordinate with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport and Lao Airlines as soon as it got all information on the number of travellers. He noted the importance of connecting flights to final destinations that had been booked through transit hubs such as Bangkok, Thailand, as an example. The minister also suggested the diplomatic community coordinate with each other to help their citizens, such as those from European countries, who wanted to connect via Bangkok to their final destination. He said this would be more convenient for Lao authorities to coordinate arrangements at short notice for flights from Vientiane to Bangkok. Shuttle flights will be allowed for countries to pick up their citizens from Laos. For

hotels and guesthouses, Mr Saleumxay said they could close if operators felt they were at risk, but those still open had to adhere to the strict measures. Tourists with expired visas would not be fined for overstaying, according to Mr Saleumxay. He said his ministry was pleased that many people wanted to extend their visas and authorities would coordinate the facilitation. For those foreigners stuck in other provinces and willing to go to Vientiane, the minister said they should get authorisation from local authorities such as the provincial Department of Health to ensure they are not infected with the virus. Those infected must be in quarantine and treated in the provinces. From tomorrow until April 19, civil servants and government employees have been ordered to work from home instead. Mr Saleumxay said there was strong encouragement for anybody to stay at home, but the country could not be locked down completely. Even though passenger transport had been suspended, freight shipments were still allowed, but in limited number. Medical emergencies were also allowed between Laos and Thailand with coordination between the two sides. At the briefing, the minister, representing the government, thanked the United Nations and international community for their continued support of Laos in the fight against Covid-19.

Source:[http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten\\_Laos64.php](http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Laos64.php)

## Govt announces priority sectors for emergency loans in Myanmar



*Myanmar News | 30 March, 2020*

The committee set up by the government to handle the economic impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has issued a statement on which sectors of the economy would be prioritised for emergency low-interest rate loans that are part of a stimulus package. The statement issued by the task force says that cut-make-pack enterprises in the garment industry, hotels and tourism businesses, and small and medium enterprises would be given preference for the loans. In the announcement, the task force said that these sectors are priorities in the country's economy and also the ones most immediately affected by the global economic slowdown brought on by the pandemic. Loans with interest rates of 1 percent for businesses in the categories will be disbursed from a K100 billion fund set up by the government. The sum is further divided into a K50 billion revolving fund and K50 billion social welfare fund. Yesterday, the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry (MOPFI), which is part of the task force, announced that the loans will be provided at an interest of 1 percent for a one year period. MOPFI announced that the interest and loan period will be reviewed as required depending on the impact for the country's economy. Among the conditions set by the government for businesses that want to apply for the loans is that they must be able to prove that they

have actually been impacted by the pandemic, must be an operating enterprise that will temporarily halt operations for three months from the date of this announcement, but can start operations as soon as they receive the loans. The loan applicants must also show that they have been generating revenue over the past two years and have the ability to pay back the loan. The government noted that failure to pay back the loans shall be met with legal proceedings in accordance with the existing laws. Applications have to be submitted between March 30 to April 9. The Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) today announced that it will cooperate with the government to respond to the impact on the country's economy and that it helps the sectors most impacted to apply for the loans. The government also officially announced that the 2 percent advance tax on export items will be lifted until the end of 2019-20 fiscal year.

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/govt-announces-priority-sectors-emergency-loans-myanmar.html>

## Petrol prices see sharp fall of up to VND4,252 per litre



*Vietnam News | 30 March, 2020*

NDO/VNA – The retail prices of petrol plummeted from 3pm of March 29, making it the sixth consecutive reduction since the beginning of this year. Following the latest adjustment by the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Ministry of Finance, the price of biofuel E5 RON92 fell by VND4,100 to

VND11,956 (US\$0.69) per litre at the highest, and that of RON95-III was also down by VND4,252 to VND12,560 per litre. Meanwhile, the prices of diesel 0.05S and kerosene were VND11,259 per litre and VND9,141 per litre, down VND1,776 and VND2,705 per litre, respectively. Mazut 180CST 3.5S is sold at no more than VND9,453 per kilogramme, down VND1,048 per kilogramme. The two ministries review fuel prices every 15 days to adjust domestic prices in accordance with fluctuations in the global market.

Source: <https://en.nhandan.com.vn/business/item/8529702-petrol-prices-see-sharp-fall-of-up-to-vnd4-252-per-litre.html>

## US attracts most Vietnamese investment in three months



*Vietnam News | 30 March, 2019*

Hanoi (VNA) – Vietnam invested 49.3 million USD abroad in the first three months of 2020, with the US being the biggest recipient. During the period, the country secured investment certificates for 27 projects worth 22.9 million USD, while six others were permitted to add 26.4 million USD. Accommodation and food services attracted 14.7 million USD, accounting for 29.9 percent of the total investment by Vietnamese firms. They were followed by scientific and technological activities (12 million USD, 24.4 percent) and processing – manufacturing (9 million USD, 18.3 percent). The US was the top recipient of Vietnamese capital in the first quarter with 20.1 million USD, or 40.8 percent of the total. Singapore ranked second with 12.8 million USD,



accounting for 26 percent, and Cambodia stood third with 9.5 million USD, making up 19.3 percent. Meanwhile, Vietnam granted investment licenses to 758 new projects worth 5.5 billion USD between January and March, up nearly 45 percent year on year, according to the Foreign Investment Agency under the Ministry of Planning and Investment. More than 230 existing projects registered to adjust their capital with an additional 1.07 billion USD in the January-March period, equivalent to 82 percent of the same period last year. Meanwhile, the value of capital contributions and shares purchased by foreign investors in the country reached almost 2 billion USD, equivalent to 34.4 percent of the same time in 2019./.

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/us-attracts-most-vietnamese-investment-in-three-months/170914.vnp>

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