

Highlight News / April 09/2020



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Half a million workers already affected by cancelled orders



Cambodia News | 08 April, 2020

The Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia (GMAC) has stated approximately 60 percent of its factories have been severely affected by cancelled orders of ready-made garment exports, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ken Loo, secretary-general of GMAC told Khmer Times that the majority of buyers of Cambodian garments and textiles have already cancelled their orders. However, the association could not put a specific monetary value on what the cancellations will cost. “A large majority of buyers have cancelled orders with our factories, however, we have not been able to determine a specific dollar value, as of yet. We do know that the bulk of these cancelled orders have come from both the US and EU markets, which represent 28 percent and 46 percent of our export market respectively,” Ken said. “If we do a calculation on these two figures we reach 74 percent, out of the approximate 750,000 workforce in the garment sector – this equates to around 500,000 workers that have been impacted by these cancellations,” Ken added. In 2019, Cambodian garments, footwear and travel goods exports were valued at \$9.35 billion, representing a year-on-year increase of 11 percent, according to a report from the Ministry of Industry and Handicraft. Speaking about the issue, Prime Minister Hun Sen

said that around 100 factories had already applied for temporary suspension assistance for their workforce. This included a request to the Government to subsidise \$40 of their garment workers’ minimum wage of \$190 per month. While factory owners were originally requested to pay 40 percent of their workers minimum wage, this has now been reduced to \$30. “The Government had previously requested factory owners to pay 40 percent of their workers minimum wage (\$76). However, due to issues with owners unable to pay this amount we have now asked them to pay \$30. This will mean suspended workers can continue to earn \$70 per month over the next 6 months,” Mr Hun Sen said. “We also no longer require workers to participate in any training sessions as all educational institutions have been ordered closed,” Mr Hun Sen added. In response, Ken Loo welcomed the move, saying, “Right now. we all have to join together, we cannot blame or ask for full responsibility from employers. Everyone from the government, employers, buyers and workers need to tighten their belts.” Ken added that there are 1,069 garment factories registered with the Ministry of Industry and Handicraft and he believes there will be more factories that apply for suspension over the coming months.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50710646/half-a-million-workers-already-affected-by-cancelled-orders/>

Cambodia must boost agricultural output, says Prime Minister Hun Sen



Cambodia News | 08 April, 2020

The prime minister has urged all stake holders involved in the agricultural sector in the country to boost and promote the vital agricultural sector as it will provide food for the country's people as well as enable exports. Mr Hun Sen, speaking at a press conference at the Peace Palace yesterday instructed the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries and other stakeholders to further greater attention to farming, livestock, fisheries and other products to boost its growth and help contribute towards the national economy while other traditional economic pillars are in the doldrums because of the current Coronavirus pandemic. He said that the virus has affected other sectors including services, tourism, industry and construction but this is an opportunity for the agriculture sector to look into various measures to boost output and food production and make Cambodia self-sufficient instead of relying in food imports. According to the Prime Minister, services, tourism, and industrial sectors used to achieve high growth for many years while the agriculture sector has seen only a slight growth, but this year all stakeholders have to do their best to promote the agriculture. Mr Hun Sen also ordered the state companies to balance priority food stocks

to ensure food security in the country, including rice and salt.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/710823/>

[cambodia-must-boost-agricultural-output-says-prime-minister-hun-sen/](#)

Vientiane Economic Officials Patrol Wet Markets, Enforces Price Controls



Laos News | 08 April, 2020

Government officials from Vientiane Capital were on the scene at wet markets to force compliance with the government's instructions, part of which prohibited the opportunistic raising of prices of essential goods during the COVID-19 crisis. With regard to pork, the government has fixed the retail price at 40,000 kip/kg for type 1 (filet and ribs) and 38,000 kip/kg for type 2 (bacon and fatty pieces). "After surveying eight large wet markets (Hai Kham, Non Khor, Nongchan, Phonsavang, Phonthong Chomany, HuayHong, Sikhai, Lao-Aussie, Huakua) in the capital city, we found that three were in violation of the government's orders: Nongchan, Lao-Aussie, and Huakua markets," says Deputy Director of Vientiane's Department of Industry and Commerce Nantha Sanouvong. In one instance, officers from the Vientiane Department of Industry and Commerce, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce's Domestic Trade Department, and Saysettha District in conjunction with the economic

police patrolled Hua Kua's wet market in the capital to see if vendors were complying with the government's instruction, according to local newspaper Vientiane Mai. Two market vendors of pork were fined because they were caught selling at prices higher than the rates set by the government. According to the law, vendors that sell above government-set prices are fined anywhere from 1 to 3 million kip. The public is urged to notify authorities of any violation of the government prices by calling 1510.

Source : <https://laotiantimes.com/2020/04/08/vientiane-economic-officials-patrol-wet-markets-enforces-price-controls/>

Chinese medical experts in Luang Prabang, Champassak for Covid-19 fight



Laos News | 09 April, 2020

Chinese medical experts arrived in Luang Prabang and Champassak cities to fight the Covid-19 outbreak after completing related tasks in the capital Vientiane. Chinese medical experts gathering at the airport before traveling to Luang Prabang and Champassak --Photo CRI-FM93 The 12 Chinese medical experts in two teams will take up the fight with Covid-19 outbreak in Luang Prabang and Champassak provinces. The Chinese doctors traveled to the two provinces on Tuesday. The main work of Chinese medical experts includes inspection and evaluation in risk areas of both cities. They will offer training courses on appropriate care of patients

to Lao doctors and nurses in provincial hospitals in the fight against the Covid-19 outbreak. Members of the Chinese anti-epidemic medical expert team also visited the China-Laos railway construction site on the outskirts of the capital. The members went to the railway track welding yard of China Railway No.2 Engineering Group (CREC-2) on the outskirts of Vientiane on Sunday to advise personnel at China-Laos railway construction sites on COVID-19 prevention and control. The team communicated with the site engineers and held a seminar on COVID-19 prevention and control, Xinhua reported on Tuesday.

Source : http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Chinese_8Arp.php

Protests at garment factories in Myanmar called off



Myanmar News | 08 April, 2020

Protests at all factories under the Federation of Garment Workers Myanmar (FGWM) and where disputes have erupted between employers and workers, have been closed, said Ma Moe Sandar Myint, acting head of the FGWM. "Protests were staged at six factories which are under our federation but these have since dispersed. We made temporary closures to comply with and cooperate with the government's instruction, said Ma Moe Sandar Myint. "If their demands are not met even when normal conditions prevail, workers will resume their protests by reopening the camps," said Ma Moe

Sandar Myint. Of these six factories, disputes have been settled at the K World and Charis Garment factories. The Amber Stone factory has not paid their workers for the month of March. As Myan Mood is owned by a Korean, it will inform Korea Embassy to settle their demands. Protesting workers from Xiang Yi and Myanmar Uniview factories will keep making demands via their township negotiation office. “Workers have difficulties also. Some workers are not able to pay for hostel fees as they haven’t got their wages,” she said. Cash is running out. “We only can help them as much as we can by teaching them how to take care of themselves in this situation,” said Ko Nandar Sit Aung, who helps on workers’ affairs.

Source : <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/protests-garment-factories-myanmar-called.html>

Exports of fisheries products

slow to a crawl



Myanmar News | 08 April, 2020

Exports of Myanmar’s fisheries products to other countries have nearly stopped since the COVID-19 pandemic started and factories processing frozen fisheries products are now facing difficulties keeping their operations running, industry officials say. “Currently, buyers have almost stopped placing orders. Moreover, demand has declined in many countries. Also, the signing of new export agreements has stopped while the existing agreements have been suspended,” said U Tun Aye,

chair of the Myanmar Marine Product Producers and Exporters Association. Exports of fisheries products to the EU have totally halted and there is only a little demand for lower-priced products from China, U Tun Aye said. Myanmar’s fisheries products from the sea are mainly exported to Europe and Asian countries while freshwater products are exported to Arab countries. Currently, owners of processing factories with many workers are worried that they will no longer be able to pay for their workers’ wages if the situation continues, he said. U Tun Aye said some countries such as the US and Singapore have prepared financial-aid packages that includes money for workers affected by the economic slowdown caused by the pandemic and suggested Myanmar should consider a similar move. Between October 2019 and February 2020 of the current fiscal year, Myanmar exported nearly 340,000 tonnes of marine products worth more than US\$412 million (K572 billion).

Source : <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/exports-fisheries-products-slow-crawl.html>

HCM City: Tourism sector endures losses of over 426 mln USD in Q1



Vietnam News | 08 April, 2020

Hanoi (VNA) – The HCM City Department of Tourism has estimated that the city’s tourism industry suffered losses worth close to 10 trillion VND (426.2 million USD) in the first quarter of this year due to

impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The department's data shows that the country's southern metropolis welcomed just 1.3 million visitors during the first three months of the year, down 42.26 percent from a year earlier. In March alone, tourist arrivals nosedived 84.23 percent year-on-year to about 117,000. The department plans to further strengthen preventive measures against the widely-spreading disease to ensure safety for travellers in the second quarter. It is working with the municipal Department of Science and Technology to explore how to develop community-based tourism in urban cultural spaces in the near future. It also expects to launch a series of tourism stimulus programmes after the pandemic is over to help the industry recover. Last year, HCM City was the most popular locality in Vietnam among foreign tourists during the first quarter. The city welcomed a record high 2.25 million foreign tourists from January to March, up 10 percent year-on-year. The city attracted half the total number of foreign arrivals to Vietnam during the period, according to the municipal Department of Tourism. Japan, the Republic of Korea, China and the US were the four biggest groups of foreigners visiting HCM City, helping it earn tourism revenue of 39.8 trillion VND during the period./.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/hcm-city-tourism-sector-endures-losses-of-over-426-million-usd-in-q1/171376.vnp>

Q1 sees nearly 35,000 businesses withdraw from market



Vietnam News | 08 April, 2019

VOV.VN - Approximately 35,000 enterprises based in Vietnam have made the step of withdrawing from the market in the first quarter of the year, a 2% increase on-year, according to the latest report released by the Ministry of Planning and Investment. Some of the worst-hit sectors include real estate, arts, entertainment, tourism, accommodation services, transport, and warehouse storage, with a number of firms from these sectors encountering difficulties and suspending their operations. Furthermore, the number of newly-established businesses throughout the reviewed period also endured a downturn. Overall, the country saw 29,700 new firms established during the first quarter of the year with a total registered capital of over VND 350,000 billion, representing a rise in the number of enterprises but a fall in registered capital compared to last year's same period.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/economy/q1-sees-nearly-35000-businesses-withdraw-from-market-412291.vov>