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Gov't call for urgent action on food security



Cambodia News | 13 April, 2020

Agriculture Minister Veng Sakhon has ordered all agriculture departments to take immediate measures to ensure the food security of the country in response to the outbreak of COVID-19. Veng Sakhon told the General Directorate of Agriculture to record the stock of paddy and rice in rice mills, communities and in each household to get a clear picture of the food situation and identify the potential areas to grow vegetables. Veng also demanded that the General Directorate of Animal Health and Production make an estimate on the amount of local demand for meat supply in 2020. The purpose is to provide a foundation for raising livestock levels to ensure adequate supplies of meat during the pandemic. "It is to involve all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, to ensure food security. The Capital and Provincial Agriculture Departments must also take serious action to prevent the illegal smuggling of animals and meat," Veng added. In addition, Veng also instructed the Fisheries Administration to estimate the demand and supply of aquatic products to ensure that they fulfill domestic demand, the market price is stable and to make sure there is enough stock for people. Late last month, The Ministry of Agriculture reassured the public that there is no need to panic over potential food shortages. Veng declared that Cambodia has abundant supplies of staples such as rice, meat,

vegetables and fish to meet national demand. "In terms of food security in Cambodia, there should be no concern. We have enough rice in stock, pig farming can produce up to 80 percent of meat supplies and both the fishing industry and vegetable production industry are supplying stock normally so, all in all, our agriculture sector is working well," Veng said. Cambodia's annual demand for meat from pigs is around 2.9 million tonnes a year. Livestock supplies increased by 37 percent in 2019 compared with 2018, and meat supplies have increased from 209,000 tonnes in 2015 up to 239,000 tonnes in 2019. In terms of rice stock, official figures show that in 2019, the total yield was 10.88 million tonnes, with a surplus of 5.76 million tonnes once both domestic and international needs were met. Total crop production, including bananas, cassava and sugar cane, totalled 16 million in 2019 and just under half of that volume was exported. Both natural and farmed fish supplies also increased in 2019. Some 908,000 tonnes were available for consumption in 2019, representing a 21 percent rise on 2018.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50712467/govt-call-for-urgent-action-on-food-security/>

Mango prices 'must stay same'



Cambodia News | 13 April, 2020

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries has issued measures to prevent the drop in price of mangoes, which has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the ministry. The Ministry said that while the Cambodian government is

fighting against the spread of Coronavirus, the disease does not only affect public health but it hurts the economy, both directly and indirectly, especially because it has caused a drop in the prices of some agricultural products, including mangoes. To prevent a further drop in mango prices, the ministry has announced measures, including urging all provincial agriculture departments to cooperate with departments involved in the agro-industry to work closely with farmers to register their businesses with related ministries or departments that would make it easy for production management control. The ministry also urged provincial authorities prepare to provide farmers with technical training and connect them to the market by contract farming. "All levels of authority need to cooperate with the private sector and development partners to process final products and all provincial agriculture departments need to study mango production costs and send reports to the Ministry of Agriculture to take appropriate measures," the announcement read. Mao Sothea, sales manager of Kirirom Food Product (KFP) Co Ltd, one of the local mango processing companies, said that before COVID-19, most mangoes were exported to Thailand and Vietnam and only about 35 percent were sold in local markets. "The current price of mangoes has dramatically declined, and we cannot predict the situation because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. It will be a serious matter for the mango industry and farmers may abandon the crop next year," she said, adding that it will then affect the processing chain. Mao said her company

could process about 50 tonnes of mangoes a day at a price of 350 riels a kilogramme. In 2019, the company paid 700 to 800 riel a kilogramme, Moa said. The price of mangoes strongly decreased during this period because some processing factories have been temporarily closed, causing an oversupply during the harvest season and fewer buyers. According to the ministry, the price of mangoes currently is 320 riels a kilogramme, down from 800 riels in 2019. The Ministry said that currently about 20 to 30 tonnes of mangoes are bought every day by companies. There are more than 100,000 hectares of land planted with mango trees in Cambodia, mostly in Kampong Speu, Kampot, Battambang, and Banteay Meanchey provinces.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50712431/mango-prices-must-stay-same/>

The Lao government has just ordered the temporary nationwide ban on the sale and distribution of all alcoholic beverages in Laos.



Laos News | 13 April, 2020

A notice has just been released by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) instructing all provincial governors and the mayor of Vientiane Capital to strictly prohibit the sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages during the course of the Pi Mai Holiday. The new regulation is to take effect starting 13 April (starting at 6 am), which coincides with the first day of the lunar New Year Holiday. The notice period will

end at 6 am, on 20 April. Distributors, supermarkets, convenience stores, wet markets, individuals, and other online commercial enterprises are prohibited from engaging in the sale and distribution of liquor, beer, and other alcoholic beverages. Violators will be punished within the provisions of the law.

Source:<https://laotiantimes.com/2020/04/13/government-imposes-temporary-ban-on-sale-of-alcoholic-beverages-during-pi-mai/>

Phongsavanh Foundation assists 103 Hospital to fight Covid-19



Laos News | 13 April, 2020

The Phongsavanh Foundation has donated medical supplies and consumer products worth about 66.56 million kip to 103 Hospital to help in the fight against Covid-19. The goods were handed over by the Lao Front for National Development's Vice President, Mrs Khamchan Phomsaengsavanh, and delegations to 103 Hospital's representatives, during a ceremony held on Friday. The medical supplies and consumer products included 3,000 medical gloves, 300 bottles of hand sanitiser cleaning gel, 5,000 face masks, 10 electric hot water pots, 200 instant noodle packs, 200 water packs, 16 cereal packs, 16 coffee packs and 36 milk packs. A 103 Hospital's representative thanked the Phongsavanh Foundation for its assistance and for providing the valuable supplies to the hospital as a contribution to the efforts to prevent and control Covid-19. The Phongsavanh Foundation,

which is concerned about the health of the people amid the Covid-19 pandemic health, handed over the goods to the hospital so that they can be used to provide medical services. It was also a contribution to the State and Party's health-related works to provide better health services. The Phongsavanh Group has made effective contributions to Laos' socio-economic development, poverty eradication programmes, human resource development and quality of life improvement, and has contributed significantly to various aspects of societal well-being.

Source:http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Phongsavanh78.php

Myanmar reports another surge of COVID-19, cases up to 53



Myanmar News | 13 April, 2020

The health ministry reported on April 13 another surge in COVID-19 cases in the country, with 12 new confirmed patients, bring to 53 the total number of people infected with the dreaded disease. All the new 12 cases were people undergoing quarantine and those admitted at various hospitals for showing symptoms of the virus, such as fever, cough and sore throat, among others, the health ministry said. The National Health Laboratory tested 174 more persons suspected of being infected with the virus but all the results were negative. This is the highest single-day surge in the number of newly detected COVID-19 patients since the first two cases were

reported on March 23. Of the 53 total COVID-19 patients, four have died and two made full recoveries, the health ministry said.

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/myanmar-reports-another-surge-covid-19-cases-52.html>

Motorcycle sales decrease in first quarter



Vietnam News | 13 April, 2020

Hanoi (VNA) – The five members of the Vietnam Association of Motorcycle Manufacturers (VAMM) sold 731,077 vehicles in the first quarter of 2020, down 3.03 percent year on year. That means the VAMM members, namely Honda, Piaggio, Suzuki, SYM and Yamaha, delivered nearly 244,000 units to customers every month, data of the association show. These producers are currently supplying about 100 models to the market, from domestically assembled to imported vehicles, with prices ranging from 18 million VND to 1.2 billion VND (771 – 51,400 USD) per unit. However, insiders said the actual motorcycle sales in the country are much higher than the released figure since apart from the VAMM members, there are more brands in the Vietnamese motorcycle market such as Kymco, Ducati, Kawasaki, BMW, KTM, Benelli and Harley Davidson. Meanwhile, VinFast, Pega and Yadea are also manufacturing, assembling and distributing electric scooters in the market, but they are not members of the VAMM and haven't revealed their sales. Experts already forecast the fall in motorcycle sales triggered by market saturation, and the

downward trend began several years ago. The sales declined 2.5 percent year on year in 2018, 4 percent in 2019 and 3.03 percent in Q1 of this year. Besides, the improved living standards and decreasing car prices have encouraged many people to choose automobiles instead of motorcycles./.

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/motorcycle-sales-decrease-in-first-quarter/171624.vnp>

Fruit, vegetable exports reach 836 million USD in Q1



Vietnam News | 13 April, 2019

Hanoi (VNA) – Vietnam exported 836 million USD worth of fruits and vegetables in the first quarter of 2020, a year-on-year decline of 10.9 percent, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The decrease was seen in main products such as dragon fruit, banana, longan, watermelon, durian and shiitake. China continued to take the lead in importing Vietnam's fruit and vegetable with over 300 million USD, down 29.4 percent compared to the same period last year. The sharp decline was attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, other markets recorded slight year-on-year growth in January-March such as Indonesia with 2.1 million USD compared to only 164,800 USD in the same period in 2019, Thailand 35.2 million USD as against 7.6 million USD one year ago, Laos 9.6 million USD compared to 2.6 million USD last year, Russia 8.2 million USD against 2.4 million USD in the same period last year, and Cambodia 885,300 USD from 340,000 USD from one

year ago. Last year, fruit and vegetable exports lagged behind expectations, reaching only 3.8 billion USD, a year-on-year drop of one percent. According to the Ministry of Industry and Trade, 2019 was a tough year for the sector. China, the country's largest importer, tightened requirements for imports from Vietnam via strict quarantine measures and origin traceability. However, growth was seen in shipments to several markets such as ASEAN (26.6 percent), the US (10.7 percent) and the European Union (32.2 percent).

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/fruit-vegetable-exports-reach-836-million-usd-in-q1/171613.vnp>
