

Highlight News / May 13/2020



- Loans in Kingdom soaring
- Digitalisation said to be good for real estate transactions amid pandemic
- The Laos-China Railway will meet its target
- Govt to help workers who left jobs in Thailand
- Myanmar central bank reinstates banking hours after complaints emerge
- Vietnam enjoys trade surplus of 3.04 bln USD in first four months
- Vietnam's shrimp exports forecast to reach 3.8 billion USD in 2020



Loans in Kingdom soaring



Cambodia News | 12 May, 2020

Credit Bureau Cambodia (CBC) has reported that the total outstanding loans in the first quarter of the year reached about \$28.4 billion, up to 26 percent compared with the same period last year. The figures were released by CBC's Chief Executive Officer Oeur Sothearoath. "This includes a 30 percent increase in new disbursements. There was a modest growth of 3.3percent in credit enquiries this quarter as compared with the previous year," he added. He said that late repayments (30 days past their due date) as a share of total outstanding balances saw an increase by 0.07 percent to 1.61 percent in the same period. "The loan portfolio mixture remains largely the same with business loans accounting for the largest share of disbursements followed by personal loans and mortgages. Total outstanding mortgage loans amounted to \$4.23 billion which represents a 31percent growth compared with Q1 2019," Sothearoath said. PRASAC's Executive Vice-President and Chief Marketing Officer Say Sony told Khmer Times that as of the end of March PRASAC had \$3.28 billion in total assets and a loan portfolio of \$2.72 billion with 421,374 borrowers. "Our loan portfolio has grown about 8 percent from \$2.501 billion in December to \$2.725 billion on March 31, while our deposits grew about 2.25 percent from \$1.778 billion to \$1.828 billion," Say added. "Our non-performing loans (NPLs) slightly increased from

0.36 percent to 0.48 percent because of the COVID-19 situation." The National Bank of Cambodia (NBC) has says commercial banking and finances have strong capital and liquidity although the Novel Coronavirus outbreak is hitting the country's economy. NBC's Director-General Chea Serey told Khmer Times in early April that that at present commercial banks and microfinance industries (MFIs) are in a good position after the NBC imposed strict rules on being prudent during the good times. However, she added that the economic situation globally is not looking good and she is not sure when it will get better. "In this kind of situation we need to be prudent and make sure that whatever measures apply are sustainable for a longer term," Chea added. Tongngy Kaing, head of communications at the Cambodia Microfinance Association, told Khmer Times that MFIs in Cambodia are already supporting Cambodians who are affected by Covid-19, as recommended by the National Bank of Cambodia, by providing them with loan restructures. By May 3, CMA members had provided 95,000 clients with loan restructuring. "CMA would like to take this opportunity to encourage Cambodians to only use formal financial services because legal MFIs have clear mechanisms to protect clients. In contrast, private lenders and loan sharks lack mechanism to protect their clients and charge very high interest rates that could push Cambodians to over-indebtedness," he said. "By providing formal financial services, microfinance institutions have been empowering Cambodians with freedom and

choices to do what is/are best for them,” Tongngy added.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50722002/loans-in-kingdom-soaring/>

Digitalisation said to be good for real estate transactions amid pandemic



Cambodia News | 12 May, 2020

Industry insiders say digitalisation has played an important role in real estate business transactions as it struggles under the Coronavirus pandemic. Speaking during a webinar series hosted by realestate.com.kh, Chandy Mann, country head of Juwai IQI Cambodia, said Coronavirus will provide lessons in new ways of doing business, especially in the in real estate market. He said the local market has not yet adapted to ways of closing deals on a digital platform. “I think the way of doing business will see a significant change in the real estate business because we will see transactions done online rather than with traditional measures,” he said. Edward Liu, general manager of Yi Fung Real Estate Service, said business operations at his company use digital platforms, especially when it comes to doing presentation for customers. Regarding the local market situation in terms of performance of sales, Chandy said there were still few deals closed in the Cambodia market, especially in the condominium segment. Investors closing deals were from Singapore and Malaysia. He added there is still demand for landed housing (boreys) but the condo segment is tough for domestic customers. Both

Chandy and Liu agreed that a better economic situation in China will see a positive impact on the Cambodian economy, especially the real estate market. Chandy said: “This is as good sign for Cambodian real estate, especially in the condo segment. According to Juwai, Chinese investors are now looking again at investing in property outside their own country. So, we expect to see those investors to come to Cambodia.” The International Monetary Fund said that rebounds in economic activity in China and major markets in 2021 will improve Cambodia’s growth outlook next year. According to a report from real estate company CBRE, during Q1 2020, the market will continue to see a downward correction in sale prices in the mid-range and high-end condominium segments. The mid-range sale price weakened by 1.4 percent and the high-end sector adjusted downwards by just 0.5 percent. Meanwhile, the affordable segment witnessed an uplift of 0.3 percent, leading average sale prices in this segment to \$1,549 per square metre. Throughout Q1, rental values stood relatively stable at approximately \$14.2 per square meter for high-end places and \$11.8 per square metre for the mid-range supply, a quarter-on-quarter downward adjustment of 0.4 percent and 0.6 percent respectively, in part because of the substantial completions witnessed in Q1.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50722122/digitalisation-said-to-be-good-for-real-estate-transactions-amid-pandemic/>

The Laos-China Railway will meet its target



Laos News | 13 May, 2020

Construction of the Lao-China railway has been under construction since late 2016, so far progress has been made in the coming years, with the impact of the outbreak of pandemic 19, but more action has been taken to ensure its success. At present, in order to ensure the overall construction work of the Lao-China Railway is fully operational, we have focused our efforts on implementing preventive, quality and safety measures. Safe and timely. He added that under the circumstances to prevent and control the spread of disease Clovis - 19 green position in the Department of Management to implement procedures to prevent and control the spread of disease Clovis - 19 strictly, to build and to prevent the spread of disease Clovis - 19 achieve its goals, the company put "quarantine strict, avoid infectious diseases, both With the progress of the project. " The Lao-China Railways upgrades have been upgraded from 2 km 3 days to 1 km. On May 7, Tianjin drove a 21-car freight train, each carrying about 70 tons of heavy-duty steel rails. It may be said that now the construction of the Lao-China Railway has begun to enhance its agility. The Lao-China Railway Company Limited said that following the outbreak of cocaine - 19 participating agencies had implemented disease prevention and control measures, improved construction plans, allocated scientific resources and actively promoted

construction. The construction of bridges, tunnels, and roads has now reached its final stage; Balloons, electrical installations and the establishment of various stations have begun to take place. At that point, the railroading has reached a critical stage The railway uses all of China's standards and technical standards, with a design speed of up to 160 km / h, an electric rail that transports goods and freight passengers together.

Source : <https://laoedaily.com.la/2020/05/13/78008/>

Govt to help workers who left jobs in Thailand



Laos News | 13 May, 2020

Workers who have returned to Laos after leaving jobs in Thailand as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak will receive help from the government in finding new employment. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare has asked the Departments of Labour and Social Welfare in each province and Vientiane to compile information from village authorities about the number of people who have returned after the Covid-19 outbreak meant they had to leave Thailand. Director of the Vientiane Department of Labour and Social Welfare, Mrs Lamphoy Si Akkhachanh, on Tuesday informed the media about this process and the course of action proposed by the ministry. The ministry has instructed Labour and Social Welfare Departments around the country to work with local authorities in providing detailed information about the number of people who need assistance. It is hoped that returning workers can find jobs with Lao

businesses and receive appropriate training before taking up new employment. Labour officials are compiling figures on the number of workers returning to Laos from Thailand between March 24 and May 30. Mrs Lamphoy said the current number was estimated at 79,208, of whom at least 2,000 are living in Vientiane. This figure was provided by the National Taskforce Committee for Covid-19 Prevention and Control. The information collected will detail the number of people who are now unemployed. The figure is expected to be high because many businesses have closed temporarily while the threat posed by Covid-19 persists. The figures will be submitted to the government so that solutions can be considered and people provided with new jobs where possible. Mrs Lamphoy called on everyone involved to make sure that all workers were registered and received the help they needed. Labour and Social Welfare Departments throughout the country are also gathering information on the jobs available in each province and in Vientiane. Departments will provide supporting programmes for people wanting to work on a freelance basis or be self-employed, as well as those who hope to find more work in other countries when the situation improves.

Source : http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Govt90.php

Myanmar central bank reinstates banking hours after complaints emerge



Myanmar News | 12 May, 2020

The Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) has reinstated banking hours to 9.30am-3pm starting May 12, after businesses and the public urged it to reconsider the current hours in the country. The CBM on April 28 instructed local banks to open from 10am to 2pm for the duration of COVID-19 to prevent the spread of the virus among bank employees and for banking operations to continue smoothly. But since the opening hours have been compressed, the banks have instead been getting more crowded as clients rush to conduct their banking affairs within a shorter timeframe. “Customers are facing difficulties and the banks are getting more crowded. Actually, the CBM should have expanded the banks’ operating hours instead of reducing them,” said U Maung Maung Lay, vice president of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI). He added that the chamber had been receiving a rising number of complaints by businesses about the current banking hours. Gold traders were among the businesses affected by the shorter opening hours. “We can’t be effective in our business with the banks crowded with customers. It is too time consuming,” said U Zaw Aung, owner of Tate Sein gold shop. He added that reduced banking hours had caused a decline in gold sales. U Zaw Aung and many other businesses called for the hours to go back to normal. U Pe Myint, managing

director of CB Bank, said the hours were shortened temporarily for the safety of bank employees. The bank has separated its employees into two groups. The groups alternate their working hours at the bank to ensure safe social distancing, U Pe Myint said.

Source : <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/myanmar-central-bank-reinstates-banking-hours-after-complaints-emerge.html>

Vietnam enjoys trade surplus of 3.04 bln USD in first four months



Vietnam News | 12 May, 2020

Hanoi (VNA) – Vietnam recorded a trade surplus of 3.04 billion USD in the first four months of 2020 despite the negative impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT). During the Jan-April period, the country's export turnover totalled 82.94 billion USD, up 4.7 percent year-on-year. Commodities with strong growth in export value in the reviewed period included machinery, equipment, tools and spare parts (29.6 percent); computers, electronic products and components (28.6 percent); wood and wooden products (10.1 percent), footwear (1.3 percent), and telephones and components (1.1 percent). The US remained the largest market for Vietnamese exports in the reviewed period, with a 20.3-billion-USD turnover, surging 13.4 percent. It was followed by China and Japan with respective turnovers of 13.1 billion USD and 6.7 billion USD, up 26.7 percent and 10.1 percent. Meanwhile, imports reached 79.89

billion USD in the period, up 2.1 percent against the same period last year. The ministry said after reaching positive growth in the first quarter, Vietnam's trade activities in April began to be strongly affected by the pandemic. Export turnover in April reached only 19.7 billion USD, down 18.4 percent from the previous month and 3.5 percent year-on-year. However it predicted that Vietnam's export value will increase again in the second half of this year if the epidemic is controlled in the second quarter. The ministry will continue to give priority to promoting trade connections between Vietnamese enterprises and foreign partners, and the introduction of made-in-Vietnam goods to domestic and international consumers. /.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-enjoys-trade-surplus-of-304-bln-usd-in-first-four-months/173161.vnp>

Vietnam's shrimp exports forecast to reach 3.8 billion USD in 2020



Vietnam News | 12 May, 2019

Hanoi (VNA) – Shrimp exports are expected to hit 3.8 billion USD, instead of the previous forecast of 3.5 billion USD, thanks to positive signs amid the COVID-19 outbreak, according to the Vietnam Association Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP). Despite the pandemic, Vietnam's total shrimp export value in the first three months rose by 1.8 percent year-on-year to 628.6 million USD. Some key export markets reported significant growth,

especially Japan and the US. Japan jumped to first place in the five largest export markets, accounting for 21 percent of Vietnam's total shrimp export value after the export value to this market in February surged sharply by 63 percent year-on-year. In this period, the country earned 132 million USD from shrimp exports to Japan, 8.4 percent higher than the same period of last year. Meanwhile, the US became the second largest export market for Vietnamese shrimp in the first quarter because of higher demand for essential food, including shrimp, during the pandemic, the association reported. In the first three months Vietnam's shrimp export value to the US market reached 115.5 million USD, a year-on-year surge of 18.2 percent. Truong Dinh Hoe, VASEP Secretary General, said that the Vietnamese Government's effective controlling of the disease is opening up opportunities for shrimp exports. According to the association, although it is still unclear when the pandemic ends, there is high demand for shrimp on the domestic and global markets because it is one essential food. Therefore, Vietnam needs to ensure shrimp supply for the home and abroad markets now and in the future. Shrimp output in many key producers in the world such as India and Ecuador is estimated to reduce due to disease of shrimp and bad weather while the shrimp demand on the global market is forecast to increase sharply after the pandemic./

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnams-shrimp-exports-forecast-to-reach-38-billion-usd-in-2020/173163.vnp>
