

*Highlight News / May 14/2020*



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- Govt buys about 6,300 tons of rice in reserve from 40 companies
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## Export Competitiveness key to Cambodia's rice industry



*Cambodia News | 13 May, 2020*

The Ministry of Commerce and development partner – CAVAC (Cambodia Agriculture Value Chain Programme) – have reviewed a study on rice export cost, aiming to enhance the competitiveness of Cambodia's rice export. The discussion was held under the chairmanship of Sok Sopheak, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Commerce with representatives from CAVAC and Cambodia Rice Federation. The project of Cambodian rice production and export cost study was proposed by the Ministry of Commerce with technical and financial support from CAVAC. It is aimed at identifying and eliminating challenges as well as explore the possibility of strengthening the current competitiveness of Cambodian rice sector. The study particularly focused on the competitiveness of Cambodia's rice sector by analysing the value chain of the sector, from cultivation, drying and milling to exporting, including shipping and document processing, to target countries (import) in the EU and other countries. The report will be released to the private sector and other relevant ministries and institutions to map out Cambodia's rice development plans and policies so as to reach out to more foreign markets. As of April this year, Cambodia exported 300,252 tonnes of rice to foreign markets, up 48 percent compared to the same period last year. Last year, approximately 7.9 million tons of wet season

paddy rice were harvested in 2019 while the milled rice export was reported at 620,106 tons, registering a year-on-year decrease of about 1 percent. Cambodia's milled rice were shipped to 59 countries by 89 rice-exporting companies last year. Chea Vannak/AKP

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50722719/export-competitiveness-key-to-cambodias-rice-industry/>

## \$880m Siem Reap International Airport to be ready in 3 years



*Cambodia News | 13 May, 2020*

The new \$880 million Siem Reap International Airport project that begun construction in March will take three years to complete, according to the 'building company Angkor International Airport Investment. The new airport – set to be the largest in Cambodia – will be located 51km South-East of downtown Siem Reap and 40km from Angkor Archaeological Park and will cover an area of around 700 hectares. In a meeting this week with Mao Havannall, State Secretariat of Civil Aviation and Lu Wei, the director of Angkor International Airport Investment (AIAI). it was announced that the construction of the new airport began on March 15 this year and will take 36 months to complete. "Our company is working closely with the Cambodia Civil Aviation's technical team, focusing on installing the airport's technical facility and design," Lu Wei said. Mao Havannall also expressed strong support for the project and urged the company to finish construction by the scheduled

date, while praising the good relationship between both Cambodia and China as a result of the investment. Angkor International Airport Investment (Cambodia) Co Ltd operates under the Chinese state-run Yunnan Investment Holdings Ltd (YIHL) after the company signed a 55-year concession with the Cambodian government for the new airport in 2017. In addition, the Chinese-based construction company Shanxi Mechanisation Construction Group won the bid last year to build two sections of the new airport for \$42.16 million. The company will be responsible for the construction of the flight area and the auxiliary facilities that include the terminal, foundations, earthworks, slopes, the runway and drainage engineering. Once the first phase of the new airport is completed, the airport is expected to receive 7 million passengers annually, greatly facilitating aviation and the tourism development of Siem Reap province and boost the economy of Cambodia for which tourism is a pillar industry, the construction firm said. The airport will be the company's first overseas airport project and is considered part of the Belt and Road Initiative for the group to expand into overseas markets. Sin Chansereyvutha, a spokesman at the State Secretariat of Civil Aviation told Khmer Times this week said the project has actually already started because the earthworks have been 30 percent completed. "Unfortunately the COVID-19 pandemic has been affecting the work because the Chinese technical experts could not fly to Cambodia. However this is not a risky investment because we

have studied the details and we believe in the great potential of the project," he said. The main reason for building the new airport and not just expanding the old one is because of the current limitations of the existing Angkor International Airport in Siem Reap. The airport, which is operated by Cambodia Airports and only located 5 kilometres from the famous ancient temple complex and world tourism site Angkor Wat only has one runway. Expanding the airport has conservation groups concerned more additional run- ways will result in increased vibrations caused by the take-off and landings of aircraft and may damage the foundation of Angkor Wat, according to officials.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50722558/880m-siem-reap-international-airport-to-be-ready-in-3-years/>

## Laos attracts investment of US\$36 billion since opening up to the world



*Laos News | 14 May, 2020*

The government has approved more than 6,000 investment projects with combined funding of US\$36 billion since the introduction of the market-oriented economy in the 1980s. The Ministry of Planning and Investment, which is in charge of public and private investment administration, unveiled the latest figures recently, which showed that from 1989 to 2019 the total number of investment projects was 6,144, with an overall investment value of US\$36.8 billion. The government began to encourage private investment in the mid-1980s after introducing its opening-up

policy, which allowed the private sector to play a greater role in driving economic growth and national development. According to the statistics posted on the ministry's website, of the total number of investment projects, 2,621 projects were funded by Lao entities with a value of US\$13 billion, while the rest were funded by foreign countries. According to the statistics, China is the top foreign investor with a total of 862 projects with a combined investment value of US\$10 billion. Thailand and Vietnam were named the second and third largest foreign investors with investment values of US\$4.7 billion and US\$3.9 billion respectively. Among the other top 10 foreign investors from 1989 to 2019 were South Korea, France, the United States, Japan, Malaysia and Australia. The most popular investment sector among both Lao and foreign companies from 1989 to 2019 was electricity generation, which attracted investment of about US\$14 billion and was the largest investment sector. The second sector attracting a significant amount of Lao and foreign funding during this period was mining, with total investment of US\$7.5 billion. Other sectors attracting high levels of investment were services, agriculture, industry, and handicrafts. It is the government's policy to further promote private investment in the coming years. One of the steps taken by the government to encourage more investment is to improve the business climate and make it easier for businesses to invest and operate in Laos. To make it easier for companies to start a business, the government has issued a list of controlled

businesses in which enterprises must seek permission to engage. Types of business that are not included in the controlled business list can be carried out without restriction. To improve the situation for new business operators, the Ministry of Planning and Investment has set up a one-stop service to make it easier for businesspeople to obtain investment permission as well as the necessary business-related documents. One of the sectors in which Laos has huge, untapped potential is agriculture thanks to the abundance of fertile land. This is made even more attractive by the surging demand for agricultural produce in neighbouring China. This will help boost investment in Laos in the future.

Source : [http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent\\_Laos.php](http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Laos.php)

## Govt buys about 6,300 tons of rice in reserve from 40 companies



*Myanmar News | 13 May, 2020*

Government started purchasing, inspecting, accepting and storing State rice reserves on April 30, and about 6,300 tons of rice bought from 40 export companies have been stored in five warehouses. The Ministry of Commerce, in cooperation with Myanmar Inspection and Testing Services Ltd and Myanmar Rice Federation, took charge of those tasks. The Department of Trade has announced that in declaring export of rice, licensed exporters must sell 10 percent of their amount

declared to the government for State rice reserves. The aim is to ensure local food security, price stability, farmers' income improvement and increased exportation during the Covid-19 outbreak. Companies need to sell and send 10 percent of the amount of rice and broken rice stated in their export declarations to the designated State-owned warehouses before their export or within one week after export. If the companies fail to do so, they will have their export/import registrations revoked and face legal action.

Source : <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/govt-buys-about-6300-tons-of-rice-in-reserve-from-40-companies>

## Jade export earnings reach \$420m in seven months



*Myanmar News | 13 May, 2020*

Myanmar has earned US\$420 million from export of jade over the past seven months in the current fiscal year exceeding over US\$160 million compared to the same period of last fiscal year, said Khin Maung Lwin, spokesperson and assistant permanent secretary of the Ministry of Commerce. US\$420 million was earned from export of jade from October 1 last year to April 24 this year in the current 2019-2020 FY. "This year we have earned US\$420 million from jade exports. US\$162 million more was earned compared to last year, he said. The earnings came from jade expos. More jade could be exported when

more expos were held. When there were few jade emporiums, the export declined. "It depends on jade emporiums. The more jade expos there are, the more exports of jade," the spokesperson commented. At Mid-year Gems Emporium 2019, 15 percent special commodity tax was levied on uncut jade pieces, and 10 percent tax on ruby, sapphire and other precious stones except diamond and emerald, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

Source : <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/jade-export-earnings-reach-420m-in-seven-months>

## April auto sales down nearly 40% vs March



*Vietnam News | 13 May, 2020*

Automobile sales totalled just over 11,700 units in April, down 39% against March, the Vietnam Automobile Manufacturers' Association (VAMA) reported on May 12. Of the sold vehicles, more than 7,700 were passenger cars, down 40%, while over 3,600 were commercial vehicles and 313 were special-purpose vehicles, down 36% and 16%, respectively. Sales of domestically-assembled vehicles reached 7,400 units, down 38%, while sales of imported vehicles were down 40% to 4,361. During the first four months of the year, VAMA members sold a total of 64,100 units, down 36% year-on-year. Sales of domestically-assembled and imported vehicles slumped 33% and 40%, respectively. However, the

figures were not complete, as many makers did not disclose their sales. Data from VAMA and TC Motor - the representative of Hyundai Thanh Cong and not a member of VAMA - show that the best-selling car brand remained Toyota, with 2,803 units, followed by TC Motor with 2,206, Mazda with 1,329, Kia with 1,118, Mitsubishi with 876, Honda with 834, and Ford with 702. The domestic auto market is expected to begin to recover in May if COVID-19 is brought under control, albeit at a modest rate.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/economy/april-auto-sales-down-nearly-40-vs-march-413642.vov>

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## Over 4,000 Hanoi businesses suspend operations due to COVID-19



*Vietnam News | 13 May, 2019*

VOV.VN - The first quarter of the year has seen a total of 4,240 enterprises register to halt operations due to the negative impact of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic, representing a sharp increase of 36% in comparison to the same period last year. In line with the figures, the number of unemployed workers who have subsequently applied for unemployment insurance now totals over 13,200. Throughout the reviewed period, the majority of Hanoi's growth targets fell short in comparison to last year's corresponding period. Despite the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) increasing by 3.72%, the rise is lower when compared to the same period from previous years, resulting in many

businesses scaling back production or looking to suspend operations. As a way of removing hurdles for businesses while simultaneously boosting production and business activities, the capital has deployed a range of drastic solutions aimed at mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic. This has been done alongside striving to accelerate reforms relating to administrative procedures, improving product quality, and diversifying business support services.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/economy/over-4000-hanoi-businesses-suspend-operations-due-to-covid19-413664.vov>

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