

Highlight News / May 21/2020



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- Expressway to be built connecting Yangon-Mandalay Expressway and Thilawa SEZ
- Vietnam gears up to export fresh lychee to Japan later this year
- Construction plan for Tan Son Nhat Airport's third terminal approved



## Expressway construction 20 percent complete; compensation work 88% complete



*Cambodia News | 20 May, 2020*

Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT) today updated the progress of construction work of the expressway project, linking Phnom Penh capital to Preah Sihanouk coastal province. According to a message posted on the MPWT's Facebook page on May 19, the Phnom Penh-Preah Sihanouk expressway was 20.65 percent complete while the compensation for local people affected by the project was 88.84 percent complete as of April 2020. With an estimated cost of some US\$2 billion, the construction of the 190-kilometre-long expressway started in March 2019 and is rescheduled to complete earlier, i.e. in late 2022. Connecting the capital city of Phnom Penh and the deep-sea port province of Preah Sihanouk in southwestern Cambodia, this Chinese-invested expressway is expected to become the artery of Cambodia's economy. The 190-km expressway, invested by China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC), will have two lanes for each direction and vehicles can travel with a speed of 100 km per hour. The construction of the project began in March 2019 and has so far created 3,500 jobs. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen has said that this thoroughfare will become an important strategic road, and will contribute to boosting Cambodia's economic growth

by increasing logistics efficiency in the country, and reducing cost of goods transportation and travel period.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50724925/expressway-construction-20-percent-complete-compensation-work-88-complete/>

## Laid-off workers hope to be paid next week



*Cambodia News | 20 May, 2020*

The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training has said wage support for unemployed workers, whose jobs in temporarily suspended factories, is expected to begin transferring the money to them next week. The Ministry is in a partnership with Wing Specialized Bank to transfer \$40 of their wages to each laid-off worker every month. To mitigate the economic shock of the pandemic, the government has announced an up to \$2 billion reserve budget to help the Kingdom's economic pillars, including agriculture and banking, and also help the unemployed in the garment and tourism sectors. On top of the government's \$40 it is requesting factory owners to pay \$30 a month. The \$40 incentive per month will also be provided to those affected in the tourism sector. "So far, the process of the wage transfer is going well, and we are awaiting the Ministry of Economic and Finance to transfer the money. It depends on the process, so we hope [to begin] next week," said Sour. He did not respond when asked how many suspended workers have so far been put on the shortlist for the wage transfer, but last week local media quoted him as

saying that 15,000 names have already been drawn up and the government is ready to transfer the money to them. He added that there had been some challenges when it came to processing the cash because some workers gave incorrect phone numbers. Wing needs the right numbers to transfer the money. Payments will only be provided to workers with businesses formally registered with the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, the Ministry of Tourism or the Ministry of Commerce, according to a government announcement. For garment workers, only those whose factories they work for who submitted suspension of employment contracts to the Labour Ministry will be paid. Ath Thon, the president of the Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers' Democratic Union, said yesterday that he was previously informed that the wage was due between May 5 and 10. He added that work on the matter should be speeded up as soon as possible because those whose jobs are temporarily suspended are facing a critical financial situation. The latest updated official figure from the Garment Manufacturers Association (GMAC) in Cambodia showed that 180 factories have suspended their operations with 60 more in the pipeline affecting more than 150,000 workers now out of work without a clear indication when they can return. An estimated 2 million Cambodian family members who depend on them will also be affected. Sour said that for the second quarter of the year, garment and footwear exports will expect to see a 50 to 60 percent decline

from last year. "Cambodia has yet to receive any orders from buyers for both May and June, as well as for the foreseeable future. We can conclude that exports of garments and footwear will be hit hard in the second quarter this year," he said.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50724620/laid-off-workers-hope-to-be-paid-next-week/>

## Banks urged to extend loan repayment deadlines



Laos News | 21 May, 2020

The Bank of the Lao PDR is asking commercial banks and financial institutions to ease the burden on business owners and workers suffering the effects of the Covid-19 outbreak by extending the deadline for loan repayments. Speaking at a media conference on May 17, Deputy Governor of the Bank of the Lao PDR, Mr Phouthaxay Sivilay, said commercial banks and financial institutions under the administration of the central bank would be required to offer relief to their debtors. "Leasing businesses and pawn shops are required to consider suspending or extending the deadline before which they would take possession of or sell assets deposited by customers as security against the money they borrowed, for at least two rounds of payments," he said. "They should also appropriately reduce or waive the administrative fees and fines they charge customers who are suffering economic hardship during the Covid-19 pandemic." Mr Phouthaxay made the call on behalf of the Bank of

the Lao PDR, which is supporting the government's mission to minimise the impact of the pandemic on business owners and workers, especially those who have taken out a bank loan and are obliged to repay the money while they are jobless or have a greatly reduced income. Banks and other financial bodies that comply with the demands and policies of the central bank will receive incentives, including permission to lower their currency reserve requirement from 5 percent to 4 percent for Lao kip and from 10 percent to 8 percent for foreign currencies. Under this initiative, commercial banks that implement the central bank's policy to help businesses during the Covid-19 crisis would be able to offer more loans. Other incentives to be offered by the Bank of the Lao PDR to commercial banks and financial institutions that support and cooperate with authorities are a reduction in the central bank loan interest rate from 4 to 3 percent a year for loan periods of less than seven days. The participating banks will also be offered a reduction in the central bank loan interest rate from 5 percent to 4 percent a year for loan periods of 7 to 14 days and from 10 percent to 9 percent for loan periods of 14 days to one year. Following the introduction of the central bank's Covid-19 relief policy, Mr Phouthaxay said several banks and financial institutions had supported the scheme and that 202 customers who had taken out loans worth a total of 566 billion kip had been allowed to extend the repayment deadline. In addition, administration fees worth a total of 92

billion kip charged on the loan interest rate have been waived for 33 bank customers. In rolling out the central bank's new policy, commercial banks are in the process of offering 419 customers assistance schemes worth a total of 3,760 billion kip. They are also considering assistance for another 675 customers that would amount to 1,267 billion kip. In addition to the introduction of this policy in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Bank of the Lao PDR has allocated 200 billion kip for low interest loans to SMEs each year. The central bank is also working with the relevant sectors to speed up the distribution of US\$300 million in loans for SMEs provided by the Chinese government. Mr Phouthaxay said business owners and workers who are suffering financial hardship due to the Covid-19 outbreak should submit a request for the extension of their loan repayment deadline to their creditors.

Source : [http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent\\_Banks96.php](http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Banks96.php)

## Vientiane Center focuses on marketing assistance to stores



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Source : <https://laoedaily.com.la/2020/05/21/78442/>

## Expressway to be built connecting Yangon-Mandalay Expressway and Thilawa SEZ



*Myanmar News | 20 May, 2020*

A 57.8-kilometer expressway connecting Yangon-Mandalay Expressway and Thilawa Special Economic Zone will be built and the project includes a 1.4-kilometer bridge across Bago River and approach roads, according to the Ministry of Construction. Yangon City Development Committee in cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is implementing a project for a comprehensive urban transport plan of the greater Yangon (YURTA) to reduce traffic congestion and road accidents caused by increasing traffic and commodity flow. The eastern part of Yangon Outer Ring Road (YORR) is a priority of the above mentioned project. The expressway connects Yangon-Mandalay Expressway and Thilawa SEZ by passing through Yangon River and Dala on No.(7) Highway. The project is due to be completed by 2025. The project was proposed by the Ministry of Construction. JICA has planned to provide technology and an official development assistance (ODA) loan for the project. Yangon sky train and YORR projects are part of the master plan of YUTRA. Actually, the Yangon transport network is of three parts in the YUTRA master plan. YORR orientation

towards national economic development. It is also related to the GMS East-West Economic Corridor.

Source : <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/expressway-to-be-built-connecting-yangon-mandalay-expressway-and-thilawa-sez>

## Vietnam gears up to export fresh lychee to Japan later this year



*Vietnam News | 20 May, 2020*

VOV.VN - The Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade has requested that Japanese authorities move to seek solutions to facilitate the export of fresh lychee to the Far East country during this year's harvest season, said Minister Tran Tuan Anh during a recent meeting held alongside Japanese Ambassador to Vietnam Yamada Takio. During the function, Minister Tran Tuan Anh expressed a desire for relevant Japanese agencies to be flexible when taking measures to recognise the nation's lychee fumigation facilities and to facilitate the export of the first batch of fresh lychee to Japan later on this year. The move comes following the Far East nation being unable to send their experts to the country in order to inspect and recognise the disinfection treatment system of fresh lychees that were set to be exported as a result of the impact of the recent novel coronavirus pandemic. Minister Tuan Anh also extended his thanks to Japanese Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu along with Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Kajiyama Hiroshi for their close



co-ordination with Vietnam in stepping up cooperation among ASEAN, Japan and India, in addition to devising flexible initiatives so as to speed up the negotiation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). The two nations will be working closely through consultations and dialogues alongside key partners to seek suitable solutions aimed at removing all existing hurdles. In addition, as the ASEAN Chair in 2020, Vietnam will also be consulting and working alongside other ASEAN member states in an effort to reach a consensus within the bloc, while persuading all relevant parties to come up with flexible measures in a bid to finalise the negotiations and conclude the signing of the RCEP later this year. Minister Tuan Anh therefore requested that Ambassador Takio work closely with relevant Japanese agencies to remove challenges whilst completing all necessary procedures to facilitate the export of the first batch of fresh lychees to Japan during this year's harvest season.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/economy/vietnam-gears-up-to-export-fresh-lychee-to-japan-later-this-year-413914.vov>

Terminal 3 at Ho Chi Minh City's Tan Son Nhat International Airport. The terminal has a designed capacity of 20 million passengers a year, which is expected to help ease the overload at Terminal T1. Total investment for the project is estimated at 10.99 trillion VND (470.6 million USD) that will be fully funded by the Airports Corporation of Vietnam. The project is scheduled to take 37 months. Tan Son Nhat International Airport is the busiest airport in Vietnam, with Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 for domestic and international flights, respectively. The two terminals handled over 40 million passengers last year, 1.6 times higher than their designed capacity of 28 million passengers per year./.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/construction-plan-for-tan-son-nhat-airports-third-terminal-approved/173605.vnp>

## Construction plan for Tan Son Nhat

### Airport's third terminal approved



*Vietnam News | 20 May, 2019*

Hanoi (VNA) – Deputy Prime Minister Trinh Dinh Dung has given the green light to the construction of