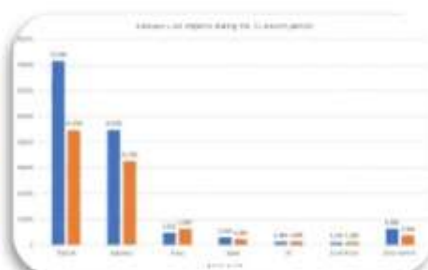


Highlight News / December 15, 2020



- UK ambassador confirms GSP status for Cambodia
- Cambodia-South Korea bilateral trade reaches \$798 million in first 11 months
- 1st expressway in Laos inaugurated
- Myanmar rice trading to go digital in 2021
- Vietnam car imports down 11% in November
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## UK ambassador confirms GSP status for Cambodia



*Cambodia News | 19 December, 2020*

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the UK) have confirmed its Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) for Cambodia, underlined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in a press release issued this morning. The confirmation was made at a meeting between Prak Sokhonn, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and Mrs. Tina Redshaw, the UK Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia. During the meeting, the UK ambassador informed that starting from Jan. 1, 2021, the UK will implement independent trade policy. The UK Ministers have decided not to replicate the EU partial withdrawal of trade preferences under the Programme Everything But Arms (EBA) for Cambodia taking into account the economic impact of COVID-19 on some of the most vulnerable members of the society, among others, garment workers. The Ambassador said that the UK is exploring ways to establish regular dialogue with Cambodia's authorities on issues related to human rights and other freedoms. With this regard, Mr Sokhonn expressed his high appreciation for the decision by the United Kingdom considering it as encouraging for the Cambodian government and a very good news for our workers who already suffer much from the COVID-19 disastrous impact. He stressed that Cambodia is firmly committed to

forge mutually beneficial relations with the UK in bilateral and multilateral areas. Heng Panha – AKP

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50795156/uk-ambassador-confirms-gsp-status-for-cambodia/>

## Cambodia-South Korea bilateral trade reaches \$798 million in first 11 months



*Cambodia News | 19 December, 2020*

The two-way trade between Cambodia and South Korea was valued at \$798 million in the first eleven months of this year, a year-on-year decrease of 15 percent. Figures from Korea International Trade Association (KITA) showed that from January to November 2020, Cambodia exported \$291 million worth of products to South Korea, down 4.9 percent compared to the same period last year. Meanwhile, Cambodia imported \$507 million worth of goods from South Korea, a 20 percent decrease. Cambodia's main products exported to South Korea are clothes, footwear, travel goods, beverages, components for electronic equipment, rubber, pharmaceuticals and agricultural products, while its main imports from the country are vehicles, electronics, kitchen appliances, beverages, pharmaceuticals and plastic products. Last year, the bilateral trade between both countries rose by 6 percent to more than \$1 billion, of which the Kingdom exported \$336 million worth of goods. The bilateral trade volume of the two countries is expected to increase high once the ongoing talks on free trade agreement (FTA) complete and the pact

comes into effect. Cambodia and South Korea have just wrapped up the fourth round of their FTA negotiations. Pan Sorasak, Minister of Commerce, said in November that the result of the negotiations showed positive progress and only points related to customs remained which will be discussed in the next talks. Chea Vannak – AKP

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50795184/cambodia-south-korea-bilateral-trade-reaches-798-million-in-first-11-months/>

## 1st expressway in Laos inaugurated



*Laos News | 20 December, 2020*

VIENTIANE, Dec. 20 (Xinhua) -- The Vientiane-Vangvieng section of the China-Laos expressway, the first highway in Laos jointly constructed by the Lao government and China's Yunnan Construction and Investment Holding Group (YCIH), was inaugurated on Sunday. The opening ceremony was held simultaneously in Vientiane, the capital of Laos, and Kunming of southwest China's Yunnan Province, via video conferencing. Bounnhang Vorachith, general secretary of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee and President of Laos, and Sonexay Siphandone, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning and Investment, in Vientiane, joined Ruan Chengfa, secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Yunnan Provincial Committee and the province's Acting Governor Wang Yubo, in Kunming, together with representatives from China and Laos, to attend the ceremony. The China-Laos expressway starts in Vientiane and ends at the Laos-

China border town of Boten, with an approximate length of 440 km. The project adopts Chinese technical standards for construction and operation and is planned to be implemented in four phases. Construction of the first phase, namely the Vientiane-Vangvieng section, kicked off on Dec. 30, 2018 by YCIH in cooperation with the Lao government. The Vientiane-Vangvieng section, opening to traffic on Sunday, is about 110 km long, designed as a two-way four-lane expressway with a design speed of 80 km to 100 km per hour. The Vientiane-Vangvieng section, 95 percent invested by YCIH and 5 percent by the Lao government, is to be operated under the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) model for 50 years. There are 36 bridges, 402 culverts, seven interchanges, 11 separated interchanges, one tunnel, eight toll gates, three service areas, and two parking areas along the road. Construction of the Vientiane-Vangvieng section has overcome multiple difficulties, especially those caused by the COVID-19 epidemics. The journey from the capital Vientiane to the tourist town of Vangvieng will be shortened from the 3.5 hours to one hour. After its completion, the China-Laos expressway will become the backbone of central and northern Laos' transportation, promote the economic and social development in Laos, and will help accelerate the construction of a rapid transportation network covering the entire Indochina Peninsula, the YCIH said in a statement. The Chinese company hopes that it will be beneficial to the development of cross-border self-driving travel, cross-border logistics,

cross-border commerce and cultural exchanges, as well as promote the building of the China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor, regional economic integration and regional community with a shared future, and the Belt and Road Initiative implementation. Enditem

Source: [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-12/20/c\\_139604815\\_2.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-12/20/c_139604815_2.htm)

## Myanmar rice trading to go digital in 2021



*Myanmar News | 21 December, 2020*

Myanmar's first online market to trade rice and seeds and function as an information hub will be available in beginning of 2021, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF). "We are working to create a digital platform for the trading of seeds as well as crops like paddy and rice. This will be the first in Myanmar and we are aiming for it to be available in the last week of December or first week of January. Applications will be simple and easy for farmers," said U Ye Min Aung, chair of the MRF. The MRF will establish a mobile application called the MRF Rice Portal, which will be made available to farmers, seed production farmers and companies, rice mill owners and local and foreign rice traders. "Currently, seeds and rice are traded via social networks but it is not effective. With a centralised digital platform, traders and other stakeholders in the industry will be able to get all the available information via the MRF Rice Portal. There will also be messaging services via SMS. We believe this will be more effective in boosting trade," he said.

Meanwhile, to further develop the paddy seed production industry in Myanmar, the MRF is cooperating with Germany's Welthungerhilfe (WHH) for the first time to produce higher quality seeds expected to improve crop harvests and enable farmers to fetch better prices in the foreign rice market. There are currently just five farms producing seeds in Myanmar. Efforts are now being made to grow the seed production market in Myanmar and develop a more robust seed trade locally as well, he said. - Translated

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/myanmar-rice-trading-go-digital-2021.html>

## Vietnam car imports down 11% in November



*Vietnam News | 19 December, 2020*

The Hanoitimes - 90% of imported cars in Vietnam in November came from Thailand, Indonesia and China. In November, Vietnam imported 12,237 cars worth US\$273 million, down 10.4% month-on-month in volume and 3.6% in value, according to the General Department of Vietnam Customs (GDVC). According to the GDVC, 90% of imported cars in Vietnam in November came from Thailand, Indonesia and China, with the corresponding numbers of 5,927, 3,823 and 1,204, respectively. Overall, 92,261 cars were imported to Vietnam during the 11-month period, down 30.5% year-on-year. Upon breaking down, the country imported 68,104 passenger cars, or cars with less than nine seats, accounting for 73.8% of total cars

imported, and 18,091 trucks, down 34.3%. Customs statistics also showed that car accessories and parts worth US\$427 million were imported into Vietnam in November, up 8.2% month-on-month. Suppliers of those products were mainly from South Korea with US\$113 million, up 1% month-on-month; Thailand with US\$86 million, up 2%; Japan with US\$80 million, up 11.24%; China with US\$75 million, up 30%. Overall, accessories and parts imported to Vietnam during the 11-month period reached US\$3.5 billion, down 8.3% year-on-year. Data from the Vietnam Automobile Manufacturers' Association (VAMA) revealed the number of cars sold in Vietnam increased by 9% month-on-month and 22% year-on-year to 36,359 units in November. In the first 11 months of 2020, car sales in Vietnam dropped 14% year-on-year to 246,768 units across all segments. Sales of domestically assembled cars reached 158,306 units during the period, down 7% compared to the same period of last year, while imported completely-built-units (CBUs) totaled 90,462 units (-24%).

Source: <http://hanoitimes.vn/vietnam-car-imports-down-11-in-november-315439.html>

## Covid-19 takes a heavy toll on Vietnam aviation industry



*Vietnam News | 20 December, 2020*

The Hanoitimes - The aviation industry has experienced a sharp decrease in passenger volume this year. The impacts of Covid-19 and unfavorable weather conditions have sunk air passenger volume

this year, according to the latest report from the Civil Aviation Administration of Vietnam (CAAV) on December 18. According to the CAAV, Vietnamese airlines carried out around 340,000 flights in 2020, a decrease of more than 31.9% compared to 2019. The volume of air passengers this year is estimated to reach only 66 million, 43.5% less than past year. In terms of freight tons, the total load reached only 1.3 million tons, 14.7% less. Due to the pandemic and unfavorable weather, the work of ensuring aviation security faces a number of risks, the CAAV reported. Since the fleet has been on the ground for a long time, ensuring sufficient spare parts for the maintenance of a large number of aircraft has been a challenge, affecting aircraft operations and the regular training of pilots. In 2021, the pandemic situation is forecast to be serious, so domestic aircraft carriers and related businesses must regularly update the operating standards and procedures issued by the International Civil Aviation Organization; enhancing aviation security surveillance; improving the quality of flight crew testing and licensing, according to the CAAV. The national flag carrier Vietnam Airlines and two budget carriers of Vietjet Air and Bamboo Airlines have requested for government support and refinancing loans. They estimated that in such a situation, the industry will only be able to fully recover by 2023 at the earliest. The National Assembly has recently approved a support package for Vietnam Airlines. Vietnam Airlines previously requested refinancing loans worth VND12 trillion (US\$518.57

million) from the government, including a loan of at least VND4 trillion (\$172.85 million) with preferential interest rates. The airline also suggested that it could sell stake worth VND8 trillion (\$345.7 million) to existing shareholders. In this case, State-owned State Capital Investment Corporation, the largest shareholder of Vietnam Airlines owing 86 per cent of stake, could be the agency to buy this amount of shares.

Source: <http://hanoitimes.vn/covid-19-takes-a-heavy-toll-on-vietnam-aviation-industry-in-2020-315448.html>

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