

Highlight News / January 25, 2021



- EU and Khmer Enterprise fund partnership for clean energy innovation in the agri-fishery sector
- MoU between LyLy and Agriculture Market
- Lao Airlines' earnings nosedive by 70 percent in 2020
- Laos tightens border watch after virus imports from Thailand
- Ngapali hotels open to poor response
- E-commerce growth of Vietnam achieves 18 percent in 2020
- Demand for imported luxury seafood rises



ADVISORY INSTITUTE FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT BY TCC (AITI)

EU and Khmer Enterprise fund partnership for clean energy innovation in the agri-fishery sector



Cambodia News | 25 January, 2021

Khmer Enterprise, a unit under the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) and EnergyLab, Cambodia's only energy start-up incubator, have inked a partnership agreement to support clean energy start-ups in the agriculture, fishery, and aquaculture sectors in Cambodia with funds from the European Union. The partnership aims to support clean energy entrepreneurs in developing competitive products adapted to the energy needs of agri-fishery enterprises in the Tonle Sap region. EnergyLab will select between five and ten clean energy start-ups each year to participate in its highly successful one-year incubation program. That programme guides start-ups with intensive training, mentoring and one-to-one coaching. Khmer Enterprise will provide funds through a 'seed investment grant' to the selected start-ups for the prototyping of new products and their related sales, marketing, and growth strategies. Chhieng Vanmunin, Chief Executive Officer of Khmer Enterprise (KE), said that this partnership aligns perfectly with their mandate to support the entrepreneurship ecosystem and agro-industry which is one of Khmer Enterprise's prioritised sectors. Khmer Enterprise wants to create, invest in and support successful business in this sector. Through this program, these start-ups can get the

support they need to take their business concepts to reality and be set for growth and investment. Khmer Enterprise wants to be there to help mobilise other investors for long-term success," said Vanmunin. This partnership is part of the EU-funded programme "Switch to Solar", which is being implemented by People in Need (PIN) along with EnergyLab as well as Sevea, a specialised consulting company. The collaboration with Khmer Enterprise allows us to enhance our incubation program and accelerate start-ups progress towards success," said Antoine Denizart, EnergyLab's SWITCH to Solar Project Director. "The opportunities to create value with clean energy solutions for the agriculture or aquaculture sector is vast, but these projects are complex, and the availability of good business solutions is limited in Cambodia," he added. "We are pleased to be collaborating with Khmer Enterprise because their support will help entrepreneurs seize these market opportunities while de-risking their innovation process," Denizart. The second round of the Clean Energy and Agri-Fishery Incubation Program will start accepting applicants in August 2021. Innovations using clean energy in the value chain can help rural companies expand their business, strengthen competitiveness and pave the way for a green recovery after COVID 19, said EU Ambassador to Cambodia, Ms. Carmen Moreno. She added: "Our support will allow Cambodian entrepreneurs to develop new green technologies and business solutions for the agricultural, aquaculture, and fishery industries," she added.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50806857/eu-and-khmer-enterprise-fund-partnership-for-clean-energy-innovation-in-the-agri-fishery-sector/>

MoU between LyLy and Agriculture Market



Cambodia News | 25 January, 2021

Lyly Food Industry Co Ltd and Food and Agriculture Market have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to supply and purchase agribusiness products in Siem Reap. Speaking at the signing ceremony, Commerce Minister Pan Sorasak said the Ministry is promoting the supply of domestically grown agribusiness products to the local market to increase the income of farmers. Local production has been in high demand, but supplies have been uncertain in either quantity or quality. This has resulted in prices for local farmers being inconsistent. “The Ministry of Commerce, which is leading the implementation of the Accelerating Inclusive Markets for Smallholders (AIMS) project, has begun working to improve production and market connectivity,” he added. The commerce minister noted that the MoU signing ceremony between the Food and Agriculture Market and Lyly Food Industry Co Ltd on the supply and purchase of vegetable products in Siem Reap is another achievement coming from the projects’ efforts to connect producers, collectors and processors. Sorasak noted that both signatories must maintain quantity and quality and cooperate in ensuring a smooth and sustainable process in supplying and

ordering vegetable products. He also noted they should share information with each other and coordinate with stakeholders to address potential challenges to that process. Both parties must also seek the further expansion of other agribusiness products in support of local farmers’ production and the promotion of food quality and safety. “Good cooperation in the supply and purchase of agribusiness vegetable products will build trust and make the market prices more stable and able to grow to another level,” Sorasak added. The AIMS project in Siem Reap has been implemented in eight districts with 150 groups of farmers connected as production groups to the region’s markets and supermarkets and has establishment a weekend vegetable market with the support of the provincial administration and the cooperation of the Chamber of Commerce, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and related partners. To expand the market for potential producers, the AIMS project team has been in discussions with Lyly Food Industries, which seeks a supply for processing into its agri-business products. The project has connected Lyly with agricultural and food markets to supply vegetables on a regular basis including pumpkins and wax melon. Lyly needs about two tonnes a day of vegetables at a price that meets the needs of both farmers and the company can accept. Soybeans and corn will be the next products tested.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50806848/mou-between-lyly-and-agriculture-market/>

Lao Airlines' earnings nosedive by 70 percent in 2020



Laos News | 26 January, 2021

Lao Airlines' earnings plummeted by 70 percent last year compared to 2019 as result of a sharp drop in passenger numbers due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The figure was reported at a recent meeting of the airline's sales representatives and related parties. The meeting was held for Lao Airlines' staff and ticket agents to discuss ways to improve the services offered by the airline in order to attract more customers. Speaking at the meeting, the Lao Airlines President, Mr Khamla Phommavanh, said "The pandemic has had a devastating impact, not only on Lao Airlines, but on airlines the world over." "Last year we carried almost 380,000 passengers on 6,645 flights, both within Laos and internationally, which was just 30 percent of the number we carried in 2019," he added. "The amount earned by our sales representatives also fell massively, from US\$31 million in 2019 to US\$13 million last year. The pandemic has not only affected aviation but other businesses related to tourism, such as travel agents, hotels, and restaurants." According to Lao Airlines, the pandemic is the biggest shock to hit the aviation industry since World War 2. Globally, revenue passenger kilometres are estimated to have dropped by up to 66 percent. To survive this challenging situation, Lao Airlines is targeting

domestic passengers and is advertising a raft of special offers to encourage more people to travel to destinations within Laos. "The airline has been hit hard by the pandemic because we have had to suspend all international routes," the Director of the Commercial Department, Mr Noudeng Chanthaphasouk, said. "Since Lao Airlines is quite small we have managed to survive by flying only domestic routes but we also face other challenges. Our operating costs are increasing because of the rising price of jet fuel while the weakening value of the kip has put added pressure on our business," he added. Lao Airlines' only international route at present is the Vientiane to Kunming sector, with flights to and from China taking place twice a week. The Covid-19 prevention measures on this route have not changed and passengers have to stay for two weeks in a quarantine centre. The temperature of both passengers and crew members is checked before they enter the aircraft, passengers have to pick up drinking water by themselves at the plane's entrance and maintain social distance.

Source:https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Lao17.php

Laos tightens border watch after virus imports from Thailand



Laos News | 25 January, 2021

Laos has tightened controls against illegal entry after two coronavirus imports from Thailand underscored fears that the virus outbreak in Thailand could spill over the border. Lao authorities have stepped up measures to prevent illegal crossing in the wake of the continued rise of new cases in Thailand, the Vientiane Times reported on Monday. The official Lao English-language news outlet did not name the sources but the move followed the finding of two new virus cases in about two months, and they were related to Thailand. The first patient was a Lao woman who returned to Champassak province in Laos through the Chong Mek-Vang Tao checkpoint, and the second case a Chinese man who illegally crossed the Mekong Border to Bokeo province from Chiang Rai, the report said. No dates of their crossing were provided. Their second tests on the samples sent to the National Taskforce Committee on Covid-19 Prevention and Control in Vientiane on Thursday confirmed their infections. The Chong Mek checkpoint is in Sirindhorn district of Ubon Ratchathani. Chiang Rai's Chiang Khong district is opposite Bokeo of Laos. The new cases brought the tally of confirmed infections in Laos to 43, still the lowest figure in Southeast Asia. No deaths have been reported there. The Vientiane government was

concerned that Lao workers fleeing the outbreak in Thailand that could cause another outbreak in Laos, according to the Vientiane Times. Thailand has 13,687 confirmed patients, the sixth highest in the region. Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and his Lao counterpart Thongloun Sisoulith have pledged closer cooperation in various issues, including the virus pandemic. Gen Prayut called the Lao leader on the phone on Friday after the Lao People's Revolutionary Party elected him the new party leader on Jan 15. The two countries share a 1,845 kilometres-long border, mostly demarcated by the Mekong River.

Source: https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Govt_16.php

Ngapali hotels open to poor response



Myanmar News | 25 January, 2021

There have been lackluster responses to the reopening of hotels at Ngapali, said the deputy manager of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, Ngapali branch. Approximately 10 percent of hotels and resorts at the popular beach destination were allowed to resume operations but the number of visitors have been disappointing. "We are trying to run the business in line with COVID-19 guidelines from the health and sports ministry," said U Myint Soe. "Those arriving in Ngapali via flights do not need to undergo quarantine, but quarantine is mandatory when travelling in cars. Some hotels and

resorts are operating but only receive a two-digit number of visitors," added the deputy manager. Five establishments - the Amazing Ngapali Resort Hotel, AZ Family Resort Hotel, Royal Linthar Lodge, Kyaw Myanmar Lodge and Htein Linn Thar Guest House - out of 60 hotels at Ngapali beach were allowed to reopen in accordance with COVID-19 rules and regulations in early January. The Amazing Ngapali Resort was however forced to suspend their services shortly after a guest tested positive for the virus upon his return to Yangon on January 7. The resort reopened again on January 22. Ten more hotels have applied to the relevant authorities for permission to reopen, said the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism. - Translated

Source: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/ngapali-hotels-open-poor-response.html>

E-commerce growth of Vietnam achieves 18 percent in 2020



Vietnam News | 25 January, 2021

According to information from the E-commerce and Digital Economy Agency under the Ministry of Industry and Trade, last year, the Covid-19 pandemic caused difficulties to the global economy and disruption to production and business activities. However, it helped the e-commerce growth of Vietnam to reach 18 percent, with a scale of US\$11.8 billion. Thanks to that, Vietnam is the only country in Southeast Asia posting double-digit e-commerce growth. Large corporations in the world, such as Google, Temasek, and Bain&Company, forecast that

with a growth rate of 29 percent in the period 2020-2025, the scale of Vietnam's digital economy will possibly exceed \$52 billion and hold the third place in the ASEAN by 2025.

Source: <https://sggpnews.org.vn/business/ecommerce-growth-of-vietnam-achieves-18-percent-in-2020-90400.html>

Demand for imported luxury seafood rises



Vietnam News | 25 January, 2021

HCM CITY – Việt Nam's imports of high-value seafood such as king crabs and lobsters are rising due to their falling prices, and are expected to rise even further during Tết, experts have said. Robert Greenan, deputy consul general at the US consulate in HCM City, said last year exports of Alaskan seafood rose 125 per cent to US\$19 million. Việt Nam became the US's sixth largest buyer of agricultural products and foodstuffs with imports worth \$4 billion. According to the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute in Việt Nam, demand for seafood is rising in the country, and several processing factories are moving from China to Việt Nam due to tariffs. Alaskan seafood is mostly bought by restaurants and hotels and processors. The institute aims to expand the distribution network so that more customers can buy Alaskan seafood for cooking at home. During Tết, there is especially high demand for Alaskan king crab since it is relatively easy to cook and suitable for special occasions, according to seafood provider The Alaska Guys Việt Nam. Cod fillet is also popular

due to its aroma and boneless meat, making it suitable for making porridge for children and seniors. Canada is also a large supplier of luxury seafood to Việt Nam with zero tariffs under the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. In 2020 Việt Nam imported over \$78.5 million worth of seafood from Canada, 10 per cent more than in 2019. Trần Văn Trường, director of Royal Seafood Co. Ltd, said free trade agreements had reduced the prices of these products, enabling his firm to open more stores in 2020. Demand for seafood during Tết was expected to be three times higher than normal, and so his company was increasing imports. Online businesses are also profiting from the falling prices of luxury seafood, and are offering free shipping or pre-processing the seafood to provide more convenience to customers. – VNS

Source: <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/860872/demand-for-imported-luxury-seafood-rises.html>
