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CP is ready to raise the standard of food products in Cambodia



Cambodia News | 09 February, 2021

Bilateral trade between Cambodia and Thailand for 2020 reached only half of the \$15 billion target set by the two governments in 2015. Those targets had set a goal of tripling two-way trade. Two-way trade between the two nations was valued at \$7.236 billion last year, a decrease of 23 percent, according to Thailand's Ministry of Commerce. Cambodia's 2020 exports to Thailand totaled \$1.148 billion, a huge drop of 49.5 percent from 2019 figures. Cambodia imported \$6.089 billion in goods from Thailand, a drop of 14.8 percent from 2019. The 2020 numbers represent a decline in bilateral trade after years of growth. Panyarak Poolthup, Thailand's ambassador to Cambodia said the virus tightened border crossings, making it difficult for an easy flow of goods between the two countries. He added that Thai investors and business people remain bullish on the potential for investment in Cambodia, with investment opportunities still being sought out. Thai companies operating in Cambodia are continuing their normal production chains, he said, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Cambodian embassy to Thailand recently announced it would establish a representative office for the Cambodia Business Council in Bangkok. It will serve as a one-stop shop for business and trade between Cambodia and Thailand. The Cambodian ambassador to Thailand said that once operational

the business council trade office will help promote Cambodian products by providing information and training programmes to entrepreneurs and facilitate bilateral trade and investment between the two countries.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50811862/cp-is-ready-to-raise-the-standard-of-food-products-in-cambodia/>

Kingdom is bolstering its logistics in anticipation of string of FTAs



Cambodia News | 09 February, 2021

With five free trade agreements (FTAs) on the docket this year, Cambodia is bolstering its logistics network in anticipation of the deals. To that end, last month the Prime Minister approved the immediate upgrade of the Stung Bot, Bavet and Poipet checkpoints. Sopheavatey Sorn, director of logistics at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, said the Bavet International Checkpoint with Vietnam will expand from four lanes to six lanes within the next six months, while the Poipet International Checkpoint will expand from four lanes from two. "We are aware that trucks have to wait days to cross the border despite the short distance, particularly at the Bavet International Checkpoint," said Sorn. She added that the Phnom Penh to Sihanoukville Expressway is currently 35 percent complete and scheduled to be finished by August 2022, nearly one year ahead of schedule. "This is a very strategic route in improving the logistics of the nation because it connects with the Sihanoukville special economic zone and will allow

for greater access to Phnom Penh and Bavet," she said. A working group has also been established to explore a new route from Phnom Penh to Bavet, while logistics complexes in Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville have been studied, according to Sorn. The Phnom Penh Logistics Complex has progressed furthest with an agreement set for signing in the next two weeks. A suitable location for the Sihanoukville complex is currently under review with a Singaporean firm studying how to best connect the logistics complex with the upcoming expressway and Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone. Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville Autonomous Ports are also set to be upgraded. Sihanoukville Autonomous Port – Cambodia's only deep seaport – currently has a depth of 20.5 metres and can accommodate 2,000 Twenty-foot Equivalent Units (TEU). TEU is the standard measurement for shipping capacity in the industry. Construction on the new Sihanoukville cargo terminal is set to be complete by 2025. Upon completion, the port will be able to receive 5,000 TEU and will have a depth of 40.5 metres. While the bilateral FTA with China is the only agreement actually signed (just awaiting full ratification), that and other agreements including the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the anticipated FTA with South Korea, along with a host of other trade discussions all speak to the need to boost Cambodia's logistics capabilities now. The World Bank's Logistics Performance Index gave Cambodia a score of 2.8 in 2018, a ranking well below other East Asia and Pacific regions. A

Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) data collection survey found Cambodia suffers from high logistics costs when compared with Thailand and Vietnam. "From an infrastructure perspective, Cambodia's average score is slightly less than the mean of each scale, and as such, its infrastructure is considered to be slightly below par and will require further improvements to meet the needs of current and future demand," the JICA report said.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50811861/kingdom-is-bolstering-its-logistics-in-anticipation-of-string-of-ftas/>

Laos pushing the tourism button; Savannakhet joins forces with other southern provinces for package tours



Laos News | 10 February, 2021

VIENTIANE, Feb 9 (Vientiane Times/ANN): Savannakhet authorities will partner with other southern provinces and tour companies to arrange package tours as part of the Lao Thiao Laos (Lao Visit Laos) tourism campaign. The tours will take visitors to well-known places in each province and show them the way of life of local ethnic groups. Deputy Head of Savannakhet's Information, Culture and Tourism Department, Dr Phoxay Sithixonh, told Vientiane Times about the scheme on Monday. In preparation for this, provincial authorities and tour operators recently visited places of interest including Tad Sakhoi waterfall, Tham Hod Hiew cave, Tad Sadee waterfall and Vat Seponkao temple. They assessed the facilities provided and the need to

improve access roads and install signposts, Dr Phoxay said. Next month provincial authorities and tour operators will arrange for a convoy of vehicles to take visitors to these sites. Vat Seponkao temple is revered by local residents, while Tad Sakhoi waterfall, Tham Hod Hiew cave and Tad Sadee waterfall are undeveloped and surrounded by lush vegetation. Visitors can enjoy the glories of nature and fresh air and can be accommodated in homestays. This will allow them to learn about local lifestyles and sample the local food, organically grown vegetables, and coffee produced by villagers. Savannakhet provincial authorities are in the process of obtaining concessions to develop several sites, Dr Phoxay said. Savannakhet province has numerous places of interest such as Dong Ling (monkey forest), Tad Phalong and Salen waterfalls, as well as treks through protected areas and the chance to see some rare wildlife. There are also the Xayyaphoum and Taleo temples as well as the Hotay Pidok manuscript repository, a stone house and stone artefacts, and several villages are home to members of the Phouthai ethnic group. Annual events include the rocket and boat racing festivals and Boun Pha That Phonh stupa festival. Savannakhet province, about 480km from Vientiane, is full of fascinating sights and stunning landscapes. The province has 74 officially-designated nature-based sites, 32 places of cultural interest, and six historical sites, of which 112 are open to visitors, 24 are being registered and 60 are under development. There are

49 hotels, 161 guesthouses and resorts, 215 restaurants, and seven entertainment venues, the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism reported in 2019. More than 144,000 visitors from Laos and other countries came to Savannakhet last year, a drop of 82 percent compared to 2019, according to the province's Information, Culture and Tourism Department. - Vientiane Times/ANN

Source : <https://www.thestar.com.my/aseanplus/aseanplus-news/2021/02/09/laos-pushing-the-tourism-button-savannakhet-joins-forces-with-other-southern-provinces-for-package-tours>

Growing number of Myanmar SMEs forced to fold amid political crisis



Myanmar News | 09 February, 2021

Sales of various goods, from food to luxury products, have seen a drastic drop following the Tatmadaw's declaration of a one-year state of emergency, said U Soe Min, a businessperson from Pinyinana, Nay Pyi Taw. "People are only buying essentials because everyone is anxious about the current situation at this time," he said. Another distributor of eggs and poultry products in Nay Pyi Taw also said the sale of eggs has dropped by about 70 percent now. "Before, we would sell around 140 cartons of eggs (4200 eggs) on a daily basis. Now, sales have fallen to only 40 cartons (1200 eggs) per day," said U Yin Oo. Moreover, poultry sales and that of other types of meat have also been hit hard by the unstable

political situation in the country. “Business is very tough for the time being. Some don’t even see a single customer for the whole day,” said store owner Ko Myo Lin Aung. U Soe Moe, a tea shop owner, however, said his business has not changed because of the ongoing political instability. People are still coming to have their daily cups of tea, he said. Currently in Myanmar, markets have yet to open fully due to COVID-19, while some remain closed. With the current political situation, people are worried that the economy will get worse and many have started becoming more frugal with their spending. The drop in spending has also hit local startups and SMEs hard. “The SME sector is done for. We don’t know what to do anymore. In addition to the damage from the pandemic, the current situation has made recovery even harder. We have lost hope now,” said U Min Thu, secretary at the MSME Association (Yangon). MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) experienced many problems during the pandemic and some were forced to fold. To promote the sector again, products were introduced online in December. “Being cut off from the internet for two days, online transactions completely stopped. Even though things are back online, transactions have not recommenced,” he said. MSMEs make up 90pc of the country’s economy and with more going belly up, there might

be huge unemployment problems in the future, he said. – Translated

Source : <https://www.mmmtimes.com/news/growing-number-myanmar-smes-forced-fold-amid-political-crisis.html>

VN increases pork imports to cool off domestic prices



Vietnam News | 09 February, 2021

HÀ NỘI — Việt Nam imported more than 141,000 tonnes of pork worth US\$334.4 million in 2020, representing a rise of 382 per cent and 500 per cent over the previous year, respectively, customs statistics showed. The increase in imports was to make up for the shortage in pork supply caused by African swine fever which pushed up domestic prices in the first months of 2020. The pork was mainly imported from Brazil, Russia, Poland, the US and Canada. Brazil was the largest exporter of pork to Việt Nam last year, accounting for 24.5 per cent of the import volume. The average pork import price was US\$2.2 per kilo. According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Việt Nam approved 25 countries to export livestock and poultry meat to Việt Nam, including more than 800 enterprises from 19 countries allowed to export pork to Việt Nam. Việt Nam imported more than 43,300 pigs for breeding, mainly from Thailand, Canada, the US, Denmark and Taiwan. Live hog prices tended to

increase in many provinces across the country from early January due to increases in consumption demand ahead of Tết (Lunar New Year) to around VNĐ80,000 – 84,000 (US\$4) per kilo, around VNĐ5,000 higher than the end of December. However, in recent days, pork prices decreased by around VNĐ1,000-5,000 per kilo. Nguyễn Văn Trọng, Deputy Director of the ministry's Department of Livestock Production, said pork prices dropped in recent days because processing companies reduced their purchases as they had enough goods for consumption during Tết. The enhanced prevention against smuggling of pork to China together with the increase in supply also helped lower pork prices. Now Việt Nam had 27.3 million pigs, an increase of 21 per cent over a year ago and equivalent to 88.7 per cent of the time before the disease occurred. The Ministry of Industry and Trade said that early preparations were made to ensure enough supply of pork for Tết with many enterprises launching price stabilisation programmes. — VNS

Source : <http://hanoitimes.vn/vietnam-spends-us235-billion-to-import-cars-in-2020-316043.html>

Vietnam targets 60 – 62 bln USD from agro-forestry-fisheries export by 2030

export by 2030 under a project recently approved by the Prime Minister. The project looks to fully and sustainably join the global supply chain of agro-forestry-fisheries, improve the quality and value of their export to meet regulations of importers, and develop their trademarks in international markets. Of the figure, 25 billion USD will be from major farm produce, 16-17 billion USD from forestry products, 15 billion USD from aquatic products, 3-4 billion USD from animal husbandry products, and nearly 2 billion USD from others. Agro-forestry-fisheries export is expected to grow by some 6-8 percent annually. About 40 percent of export will be national brands, 70 percent have their origins traced, and around 60 percent of exports are processed and deeply processed ones. To such end, the project targets fine-tuning mechanisms and policies to ensure food safety and develop support industry, assisting firms in protecting intellectual property right in export markets, popularising trademarks on domestic and foreign media./.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-targets-60-62-bln-usd-from-agroforestryfisheries-export-by-2030/196140.vnp>



Vietnam News | 09 February, 2021

Hanoi (VNA) – Vietnam has set a goal of earning around 60-62 billion USD from agro-forestry-fisheries