

Highlight News / February 17/2021



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Sihanoukville Port reports profits down in 2020



Cambodia News | 16 February, 2021

Preah Sihanoukville Autonomous Port's (PSAP) profits for 2020 fell by 54 percent to \$10.37 million, according to its 2020 financial statement. The statement, issued Thursday last week, was reviewed by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). Basic earnings per share for the Cambodian Securities-listed (CSX) company fell from 7 cents to 2 cents in 2020, according to the report. However, PAS shares traded well in 2020, with its share price rising 35 percent over 2019. The stock price ended the year at \$1.50 per share. The authorities' shares trade under the symbol PAS on the CSX index. PSAP's share price reached an all-time high of \$1.58 on Jan 4, before gradually settling back to \$1.50 at the end of the CSX's trading session on Friday. The company's market cap currently sits at \$130.19 million. A representative from the company told Khmer Times that PSAP saw a modest increase of .04 percent in throughput last year, but the company experienced a decline in profit because of loan payment obligations. "COVID-19 had a substantial impact on our business, resulting in a loss. Some companies went bankrupt due to the pandemic. We are obligated to repay our loans and both interest and exchange rates played a factor [in the decrease in profits]. Although our throughput increased in 2020, it was a modest gain and there were too many negative factors [to overcome in avoiding a drop in

profits]," the representative said. The report showed that the carrying value for the company's outstanding loans increased by 3.14 percent to \$9.58 million. Its main lenders are the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which charge between 1.26 and 3.7 percent interest per annum. A significant portion of PSAP's revenue is derived from foreign customers, with three major clients during the period accounting for 35 percent of its revenue, according to the report. Average employee salaries and directors' remuneration dropped 73.36 percent and 98.05 percent respectively, the report said. PSAP is the only commercial deep seaport in Cambodia. It is currently undertaking several expansion projects, including a new cargo terminal which will allow it to double its capacity. It also operates the Sihanoukville Port Special Economic Zone, a 68-hectare project which currently has some 45 hectares available for lease. The report said that the company had an outstanding capital expenditure commitment of \$226.3 million for the purchase of construction services, property and equipment. The review added that the firm's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks, including ones associated with foreign exchange, interest rates, credit and liquidity because of the nature of the industry. Lang Hy, a partner at PwC, said he was unable to provide an opinion on the financial statement because the firm was not aware of all significant matters that might be

identified in an audit given the scope of reviews are substantially less than an audit.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50814565/sihanoukville-port-reports-profits-down-in-2020/>

\$217 million collected through tax in January: PM



Cambodia News | 16 February, 2021

The General Department of Taxation (GDT) of Ministry of Economy and Finance earned 879 billion riels (approximately \$217 million) from tax income in January this year. The data was shared in a monthly review meeting held on Feb 15 under the direction of Kong Vibol, the director-general of GDT. The January tax income collected exceeded expectations and amounted to 116 percent of the planned income for the month. The amount also represented about 9 percent of the tax income planned for the whole of 2021. Compared with January last year, tax income declined 8 percent to about \$19 million. Vibol said in the meeting that the highly effective performance of officials in collecting tax and management system reform combined to result in greater efficiency in gathering tax revenue. However, the country's economy was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, total collected tax income was \$2.889 billion – 101 percent of what was planned. Prime Minister Hun Sen said earlier in February that the country's fiscal revenues reached \$400 million in January this year, a figure below the revenue recorded in January last year. That figure included income from customs totalling \$201 million.

Last year, Cambodia's economy contracted 3.1 percent, but it was not only Cambodia that experienced negative economic growth, Mr Hun Sen said. "We expect that in 2021 Cambodia's economy will achieve the 4 percent growth projected by experts, but we have to work together, jointly, to fight the COVID-19 pandemic," he said.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50814324/217-million-collected-through-tax-in-january-pm/>

Number of basic economic units rises to 133,997, census reveals



Laos News | 17 February, 2021

The number of basic economic units in Laos reached 133,997 in 2019, an increase of 9,124 from the 124,873 units recorded in 2013, the economic census III conducted by the Lao Statistics Bureau for 2019-2020 has revealed. Vientiane has the largest number of units at 22.3 percent, followed by Champassak province with 11.8 percent and Savannakhet province with 11.4 percent. A meeting to report the findings of the census took place on Tuesday, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Mr Somdy Duangdy, who is a member of the National Steering Committee for the economic census III. The first economic census took place in 2006, the second in 2013, and the most recent one in 2019-2020. The census records the number of businesses and shops across the country. Head of the Lao Statistics Bureau, Mrs Phonesaly Souksavath, said the teams carrying out the 2019-2020 census encountered challenges due to the

rainy season, as there were floods in some areas which made travel difficult. Lack of cooperation was another problem encountered by census officials, especially during the business registration period, and many business units were difficult to access. The Lao Statistics Bureau does not have a database of basic economic units that can be inspected in line with the registration system of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and the Ministry of Finance's Taxation Department. Establishing a statistical database from the process of collecting administrative reports at the village level and creating a unified inventory code that enables inspection and integration with the registration system are procedures that need to be urgently implemented to ensure a systematic statistics system. Another challenge is the lack of ability and in-depth understanding on the part of enumerators concerning the concepts, definitions and methods of recording data. Most of the enumerators are from the district level. The cooperation of local authorities is another important factor in coordinating and providing basic information to enumerators. Villages do not keep records of business units, including shops, making it difficult for these to be located and tracked.

Source : https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Number_33.php

Exports operating as usual as imports stutter at Muse



Myanmar News | 16 February, 2021

Myanmar's exports of agriculture and other perishable goods to China are operating as usual despite the civil disobedience movement hampering the country's imports. Agents in charge of processing imports at the Muse border trade posts are currently participating in the movement, resulting in delays of daily transactions and stranded incoming trucks at the trading zone. The country's exports of vegetables, fruits and perishable goods to China, however, are operating as usual, said Daw Ye Ye Khaing, the in-charge of the 105 mile Muse wholesale centre. "Many people are participating in the demonstrations. These include agents from the border trade posts. Agents from the import section are involved in the civil disobedience movement and this has led to delays in import activities. More than 100 trucks of imported products were prohibited from entering into the trading zone," she said. "However, we can still transport crop exports to China as some of the staff from the export section are not taking part in the movement," she added. Myanmar's exports of watermelons, cucumbers, mangoes, fish, crabs and eels are still transported into China as usual. – Translated

Source : <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/exports-operating-usual-imports-stutter-muse.html>

Economy to expand 5.8 pct if Covid-19 outbreak contained



Vietnam News | 16 February, 2021

Vietnam's economy could grow by 5.8 percent this year in the absence of further community

transmissions in the country, a think tank said. The Vietnam Institute for Economic and Policy Research (VEPR) made its forecast based on the scenario that the Covid-19 outbreak in the country is brought under control in the remaining months and the domestic economy gradually resumes normality. This growth rate would be lower than the government's 6.5 percent target. However, the Institute estimated the country's GDP growth at only 1.8 percent should the new Covid-19 outbreak increase in severity and disrupt domestic economic activities. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the Vietnamese economy grew by 2.91 percent. Vietnam has recorded as many as 679 locally transmitted Covid-19 cases since community transmissions reemerged in the nation on Jan. 28 after 55 consecutive clean days.

Source : <https://e.vnexpress.net/news/business/economy/economy-to-expand-5-8-pct-if-covid-19-outbreak-contained-4235863.html>

Vietnam spends over US\$212 million importing cars in January



Vietnam News | 16 February, 2021

The number of cars imported to Vietnam in January 2021 surged by nearly 85% over the same period in 2020, according to the General Department of Customs. In January, Vietnam imported 8,343 completely built-up (CBU) automobiles of all kinds with a total turnover of 212.5 million USD, according to Thanh Nien Newspaper. The two most imported automobiles included ones having 9 seats or less

with 5,203 units, worth 101.6 million USD, and trucks (including pickup trucks) with 2,230 units, worth 60, 6 million USD. The volume of imported CBU cars increased by nearly 85%, while the value increased by more than 76% against the same period last year. Most cars were imported from Thailand and Indonesia, with 4,341 units (84.5 million USD) and 1,437 units (19.2 million USD) respectively. In 2020, the country imported more than 100,000 CBU cars of all kinds, with a total turnover of 2.35 billion USD, declining 24.5% in volume and 25.6% in turnover compared to 2019. Thailand was Vietnam's largest import market with 52,647 units. It was followed by Indonesia, China, Japan, the United States, and South Korea.

Source : <https://vietnamtimes.org.vn/vietnam-spends-over-us-212-million-importing-cars-in-january-28233.html>