



- Ministry and Eurocham to collaborate on exports to EU
- Agricultural rice map updated to boost production
- Micro-businesses dominate Laos' enterprises: survey
- Mandalay real estate market clinging on to rentals
- Internet cut spells trouble for online businesses in Myanmar
- Tet flight passenger numbers plunge by 64.8%
- Outlook positive for Vietnam's retail market



## Ministry and Eurocham to collaborate on exports to EU



*Cambodia News | 17 February 2021*

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and the European Chamber of Commerce (EuroCham) in Cambodia have promised to collaborate on the development of the Kingdom's agriculture with a view to expanding exports to the EU market. During the meeting between MAFF's Minister Veng Sakhon and EuroCham's Chairman Tassilo Brinzer yesterday, both parties highlighted their ongoing cooperation over the past years and EuroCham congratulated MAFF for its support measures for the agricultural sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sakhon discussed points raised by EuroCham relating to the wider agribusiness sector, such as agro-industry special economic zones, international support programmes for agricultural improvement, levelling the business playing field in the sector, the Cambodia Inter-census Agriculture Survey 2019 and opportunities and challenges of Cambodia's free trade agreements. The minister informed the EuroCham chairman about the progress of the agricultural sector in the context of the global spread of COVID-19. Cambodia has ensured its food security and has been promoting agricultural exports to international markets, especially China, the Republic of Korea and the European Union. He said that among those export products are milled rice, pepper, dried potato chips, processed cashew nuts, bananas, mango

and mango syrup. Sakhon noted that apart from milled rice, the volume of other agricultural exports to the EU seemed to be low. Therefore, the Minister asked the new EuroCham chairman to consider helping the Kingdom bring more Cambodian agricultural products to the European market. At the same time, the minister asked EuroCham to provide more cooperation on appropriate agricultural technical support to increase productivity, competitiveness, inclusiveness and climate change resiliency and especially in the area of infrastructure for the processing of animal and fish feed. He also asked EuroCham to support investment in business and agricultural processing, harvesting, distribution and the increasing of added value through reducing the export of raw materials in favour of domestic processing. "The Ministry is looking forward to continued collaboration with EuroCham in Cambodia in working together to create a positive investment atmosphere in the agriculture sector and make business in agriculture in Cambodia even better," Sakhon added. EuroCham Chairman Brinzer said the main purpose of the meeting was to strengthen and expand the collaboration between EuroCham and MAFF and to make sure that both parties can jointly develop the agriculture sector in Cambodia. He is optimistic that although Cambodia has been faced with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government of Cambodia, especially MAFF, has been putting a tremendous effort towards the development and sustaining of this sector. However, he also cited that the agriculture sector has already

grown remarkably, ensuring the Kingdom's food security and pushing exports while others sectors have suffered crises. "The European Union remains a key partner of Cambodia, especially MAFF, in boosting growth through contract farming and the introduction of new technology which aligns with market needs, expanding the processing of agriculture products and human resources training to ensure competitiveness in the context of climate change and inclusion," said Brinzer.

Source: : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50814995/ministry-and-eurocham-to-collaborate-on-exports-to-eu/>

## Agricultural rice map updated to boost production



*Cambodia News | 17 February 2021*

The Ministry of Agriculture is updating the national rice map to boost the Kingdom's quality and quantity of rice production by providing detailed data about geographic areas. Agriculture Minister Veng Sakhon said recently on his Facebook page that it is necessary to update both the classification and the eco-agricultural map of the rice-growing areas in Cambodia as a basis for building an orientation plan on the implementation of policies and development for rice production. He said outcomes based on the map include basic rice diversification, development of micro-irrigation systems, crop insurance as well as diversification of crops best suited to a particular soil, climate and other factors considered for each zone. Using the map together with a clear understanding of economic and population growth, and the momentum of development in all sectors of Cambodia's rice map,

the government can respond to the overall need to increase rice production and ensure the multiplication, safety and security of rice in accordance with export market orientation, he added. Cambodia Rice Federation president Song Saran congratulated this initiative. "We welcome the initiative to have the rice map, as we have been requesting it for two years," he said. "It will give our rice sector a clear orientation. This map will be a guide to develop our rice sector in the right way in the future," he told Khmer Times. "Cambodia has different geographic areas and types of soils, but when we have this map, we can help our farmers to make the right decisions for their specific land about seed, water use and proper amounts and types of fertiliser," he said. "It can also help us to prepare our rice markets well, too." According to the ministry, Cambodia is currently using a remote sensing-based monitoring company known as 'RIICE' to collect and analyse detailed information to assist the government with policy-making and to help insurance evaluate risks. RIICE uses applications such as MAPscape, ArcGIS, QGIS, Rice-YES and Oryza Crop Model. Rice is one of the major food crops, which provide food security for the Cambodian people. Last year, Cambodia grew a total of 3,404,131 hectares of rice with a total of 10,935,618 tonnes of output. Cambodia exported a total of 690,829 tonnes of milled rice to international markets earning nearly \$540 million and 2,893,750 tonnes of paddy rice, worth almost \$725 million, to neighbouring countries.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50814769/agricultural-rice-map-updated-to-boost-production/>

## Micro-businesses dominate Laos' enterprises: survey



*Laos News / 18 February 2021*

Laos, as a least developed country, is still largely dominated by microbusinesses, which account for 94.2 percent of all enterprises in the country, the results of the latest survey revealed on Tuesday show. A total of 133,997 enterprises recorded their operations in 2019, an increase of 9,124 compared to 2013, according to the third economic census conducted by the Lao Statistics Bureau in 2019-2020. The total figure comprised 126,168 microbusinesses, 6,600 small enterprises (4.9 percent), 954 medium enterprises (0.7 percent), and 276 large enterprises (0.2 percent), according to the survey. Larger numbers of all types of enterprise are to be found in the central region and cities. But there are fewer numbers of all types of business in the south and in rural areas where there is no road access. Most large enterprises are found in the major provinces of Luang Prabang, Khammuan, Savannakhet and Champassak, and the capital Vientiane. The survey indicates that microbusinesses represent the smallest percentage in terms of access to finance from banks, even though they constitute the largest number of all types of enterprise. Medium-sized enterprises were shown to have the most bank loans with 29.7 percent reporting a loan. This was followed by large and small enterprises accounting for 27 and 24.6 percent respectively. Access to loans by microbusiness

represented just 8.7 percent of the total. Wholesale and retail businesses make up the largest percentage of businesses registered in Laos, followed by car and motorbike repair shops with a combined figure of 61.2 percent. Processing plants account for 14.7 percent, while hospitality businesses constitute 10.6 percent. According to the survey, these enterprises employ 490,373 workers, of whom females comprise 50.1 percent. Some 90.6 percent of all enterprises employ just 1-5 workers each. The total registered capital of all enterprises was recorded at 649,000 billion kip. In 2018, these enterprises generated a combined income of 107,584 billion kip. Head of the Lao Statistics Bureau, Mrs Phonesaly Souksavath, said she was confident that the survey would be useful and a good reference for policymakers, researchers, students and others during the course of their work. The first economic census was conducted in 2006, the second in 2013, and the latest in 2019-2020.

## Mandalay real estate market clinging on to rentals



*Myanmar News / 17 February 2021*

Mandalay's real estate market is currently running on rentals, said players in the industry. Real estate agents said that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and recent political turmoil have severely hampered the market. It would take some time for the market to recover and (the sector) will have to depend on rentals during this time, they said. Buyers have almost completely disappeared from the market,

they added. “People don’t want to spend large sums of money right now, owing to cash flow problems and the current political turmoil. The market has almost completely ceased,” said U Kyaw Naing who is involved in the real estate business. “Foreign investments are also uncertain. There is also no long-term rent for (properties),” he said. U Kyan Naing added that those who were holding onto their assets in the hopes of doing business following the aftermath of COVID-19 have also started liquidating their assets. “Only rentals priced around K100,000 a month and houses in suburbs are in demand but rental of properties like shops and car showrooms have dropped drastically,” he said. – Translated

Source : <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/mandalay-real-estate-market-clinging-rentals.html>

## Internet cut spells trouble for online businesses in Myanmar



Myanmar News / 17 February 2021

Myanmar’s online businesses are struggling due to the military government’s night-time curfew and internet outage from 1am to 9am. Online shops said sales have declined by half in recent days following disruptions in connectivity and slow internet speed. “Online shops function by selling and buying on the internet. If the connection between sellers and buyers is lost then we cannot sell anything,” said Ma Thiri, an online entrepreneur. Other players in the industry said recent political events have turned

businesses away from the digital platform. “Companies had prioritised the digitalisation of their businesses because of the COVID-19 pandemic but they have stopped doing so because of the current political situation. The internet gets cut (without warning) so there is nothing we can do about it,” said a digital service provider. Online food delivery service Food Panda said the unstable internet connection has resulted in a drop in sales. Most of the online food businesses and online shops are losing business because of the disruption in connectivity, they said. – Translated

Source <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/internet-cut-spells-trouble-online-businesses-myanmar.html>

## Tet flight passenger numbers plunge by

64.8%



Vietnam News / 17 February 2021

The number of flight passengers decreased by 64.8% during the seven-day Tet Holiday compared to the previous Tet Holiday. A report from the National Traffic Safety Committee shows that travel demand had dropped significantly. During the Tet Holiday, Vietnamese airlines transported 408,000 passengers and 2,000 tonnes of cargo, a decrease of 64.8% and 54.4% respectively compared to the previous season. 9,500 landing and take-offs were recorded at the local airports, a decrease of 43.4%. The total number of passengers and cargo transported by train also dropped. From February 9 to 13, the sector served 12,792 passengers and 6,035 tonnes of freight, accounting for only 33.56% of the total passengers and 65.56% of the cargo of the previous Tet. Due to less traffic, congestion hotspots also decreased and there was no severe congestion in Hanoi, Hai Phong, Danang, Can Tho and HCM City during Tet.

There were some local congestion before and after Tet on the main roads leading into Hanoi and HCM City. Waterways also saw smooth traffic. Port operations such as cargo loading and unloading were carried out quickly to avoid congestion.

Source : <http://dtinews.vn/en/news/018/72532/tet-flight-passenger-numbers-plunge-by-64-8-.html>

## Outlook positive for Vietnam's retail market



*Vietnam News | 17 February 2021*

Hanoi (VNA) - Despite a raft of difficulties facing Vietnam's retail market, economists and insiders are still optimistic about the outlook for the sector in the time ahead, according to the Vietnam Report JSC. In a recent survey, Vietnam Report found that nearly 42 percent of Vietnamese retail companies have been seriously impacted by COVID-19, while half said the impact has not been too serious and 8 percent experienced only minor effects. Many people have had to cut their spending after becoming jobless or having their wages reduced due to the pandemic. Retail companies, meanwhile, have had to face a shortage of capital and disrupted supply chains. However, Vu Dang Vinh, General Director of Vietnam Report, said economists and insiders remain optimistic about the sector's outlook. In following COVID-19 prevention and control regulations, many consumers have opted for online shopping, convenience stores, shopping centres, and supermarkets, rather than traditional markets. Vinh pointed to the increased popularity of multi-channel marketing, both online and in-person, while adding that thanks to quick changes, many retail businesses, including giants like Lotte Mart, have posted online sales growth of 100 to 200 percent, especially in Hanoi and HCM City. Mergers and acquisitions (M&As) are also expected to boom in Vietnam's retail market in the time ahead, he said, explaining that more than 60 percent of

local retailers are of small and medium-size and have significant demand for capital, so are ready to enter into partnerships. Analysts also said the mini-supermarket model has proven superior amid the pandemic, as it can limit large gatherings. Retailers have therefore poured more investment into this model while introducing more changes to better meet customer demand./.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/outlook-positive-for-vietnams-retail-market/196355.vnp>