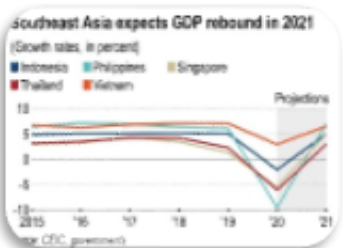


Highlight News / February 25/2021



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Promoting business in farming



Cambodia News | 24 February, 2021

Khmer Enterprise (KE), a unit under the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Cambodia Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture (CPSA), have entered a partnership to promote entrepreneurship in the agriculture sector in Cambodia. Both parties agreed to promote innovation, technology adaptation, production solutions, business skills development, academia-industry links and entrepreneurship in the agriculture sector as well as to exchange information and data related to the sector with a purpose to build supporting mechanisms. KE and the CPSA also launched the Enterprise Agriculture Cooperative Incubation Programme, a three-year project aimed at creating a more sustainable and productive agriculture industry. It looks to address two key main problems affecting the agriculture sector in Cambodia: low productivity and fewer young people engaging in the sector. It has two components, an incubation during which youths are trained for four months on agri-technical subjects, entrepreneurship and business skills, and an apprenticeship in which they are placed in one-year programmes with agricultural cooperatives in various provinces. Dr Chhieng Vanmunin, CEO of KE, said the agriculture sector grew 0.5 percent in 2020 during the pandemic while other sectors such as manufacturing and services experienced some setbacks. He added that in this context, it is expected that the increase of innovation

and business skills at community level could boost the agriculture sector to bring it to its full potential.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50817350/promoting-business-in-farming/>

Mango farmers asked to register to boost standards



Cambodia News | 24 February, 2021

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) has once again called on mango growers and farmers to register their mango cultivation with the General Directorate of Agriculture. By doing this, it is easier for MAFF's technical officials to share information and technical training services in order to boost the production, quality and the standard of the fruit. It also enable them to form mango business clusters and work with local and international companies to sign up for contract farming and collect mangoes for processing and export. According to MAFF, the price of agricultural products, including mangoes, has fluctuated according to their harvest season and supply and demand in the market. The ministry added that January mango prices were higher but they dropped in February because it is mango harvesting season in Cambodia and the region and the market is flooded with product. Additionally, the pandemic has pushed prices down. "Currently, the price of mangoes in China has fallen to around \$1.10 to \$1.20 per kilogramme," said MAFF. As a result, MAFF has put much effort into seeking more markets for Cambodian mango products, including South

Korea and Japan. Oum Savoeun, president of the Keo Romeat Mango Association in Kampong Speu province, said that his association has 45 mango grower members. Among them, 20 families are requesting recognition from MAFF because these farms meet essential safety requirements and two families are able to export to the Chinese market. "So far, we have 45 families as members in the Keo Romeat Mango Association, covering a total of more than 4,000 hectares, with 2,000 hectares in harvest areas," said Savoeun. However, he noted the price of mangoes has now dropped to around 200 to 300 riels per kilogramme. He added mango prices have been dropping since 2017. Savoeun explained that local demand for mangoes has been slowing down while the supply of mangoes in the market has been rising as more people are growing the fruit. He added local demand for mangoes consumes 10 percent of local production. Savoeun said that in previous years foreign markets have absorbed Cambodia surplus production, but now there are some issues with imports and exports because of COVID-19. Cambodia exports mangoes mostly to Vietnam, Thailand and China. "Mangoes cannot keep long compared with paddy, cashew nuts or coffee. If we don't harvest them five to seven days after ripening, they will be ruined," he said. Cambodia has a total of 131,890 hectares of mango plantations with 93,099 hectares of that figure in harvest. The average yield is 18.78 tonnes per hectare. The 2020 yield was 1.75 million tonnes, with 950,000 tonnes of that directed to export, according

to MAFF. The ministry also said that Cambodia has signed a protocol for the exporting of fresh mangoes to South Korea and that official exports were conducted in January of 2020.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50817427/mango-farmers-asked-to-register-to-boost-standards/>

GIZ, Environment Ministry agreement to increase sustainable consumption



Laos News / 24 February, 2021

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) signed with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to provide EUR 600,000 on technical support for sustainable consumption and protection outreach in Laos under the Next Five Project. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on February 24 was signed by the Director General of the Department of Planning and Finance of MONRE, Mr Phouvong Luangxaysana, and the National Director of GIZ Laos, Dr Wolfgang Hannig. Representatives of Ngoi district and the company join villagers at the commencement ceremony of the drinking water demonstration project. The signing was witnessed by Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Dr Saynakhone Inthavong and other delegates from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the German Embassy, the Delegation of the European Union in the Lao PDR, and the GIZ Laos.

The project “Sustainable Consumption and Production Outreach in Asia: The Next Five” (SCP) is a regional project funded by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and the Nuclear Safety commission of Germany in cooperation with the Pollution Control Department of Thailand. The objective is to support the governments of Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Bhutan in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through sustainable production and services and environmentally friendly consumption. The total budget for the five countries is EUR 5 million with project duration of three years. The Lao PDR will receive technical support up to amount of EUR 600.000. Project expectation outputs on Legal frameworks, communication systems and appropriate incentive mechanisms are established to address climate-relevant products and services. Strategies for a more sustainable public procurement, environmental labels promotion and the mutual recognition of environmental labels improvement. It is expected that this project will contribute to implement relevant legislation and regulations of the Lao PDR, in particular the Law on Public Procurement (No. 030 / NA), issued on 2 November 2, 2017), which states in Article 4, paragraph 3, that the government promotes environmentally friendly public procurement.

Source : https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_GIZ39.php

Bilateral trade resumes after Thailand reopened its border gate



Myanmar News | 24 February, 2021

Trade at Hsinkhun special temporary border gate on the border between Myanmar and Thailand resumed on February 23 after the Thai side had reopened, according to local sources. Mawtaung border gate in Thaninthayi Township, Taninthayi Region, Hsinkhun border gate in Thailand were closed oftentimes due to the Covid-19 outbreak. Thailand decided to reopen its border gate on February 22 but trade could be resumed on February 23 due to the political situation in Myanmar. “In our area we were joining the general strike yesterday so there were no trade activities. But today (February 23) trade can be resumed. Dry goods from Myanmar go there. Thai authorities have strict rules and disciplines. Only one person from a car is allowed to get off. Workers are planning to stage a protest as they didn’t have to go to work. There are few activities because trade could have resumed today. Previously, there were 30 or 40 trucks a day. Today, we see just about 10,” said local merchant U Lwan Ko Ko Lay. In bilateral trade, Myanmar opens Mawtaung border gate. But Thailand opens Hsinkhu border gate as a temporary one, which closes very often due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Source : <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/bilateral-trade-resumes-after-thailand-reopened-its-border-gate>

Nikkei Aisa: Vietnam will be Southeast Asian growth leader in 2021



Vietnam News | 24 February, 2021

VOV.VN - As a leading financial newspaper run by Japanese media giants Nikkei Inc., Nikkei Asia have stated that, "Southeast Asia's growth leader in 2021 may well be Vietnam", during a recent article detailing ASEAN's GDP forecasts for the year ahead. According to Nikkei, the country recorded economic growth of 2.9% last year due to its success in containing the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), in addition to the robust exports of electronics and other consumer products, with the nation reportedly targeting a growth rate of 6.5% this year. The Japanese media also quote a report produced by Gareth Leather, senior Asia economist at Capital Economics, who notes that Vietnamese exports should continue to be supported by tariffs imposed by the United States on Chinese goods. "To avoid US tariffs, importers have shifted demand from China to alternative suppliers. With US-China relations likely to remain strained over the years ahead, this trend is likely to continue," Leather noted. Nikkei also stress that before the pandemic, Southeast Asia achieved collective annual growth of approximately 5% over the course of many years, therefore making it one of the world's best-performing regions in economic terms. According to media reports, the region has

become an attractive investment destination, with a relatively young population that drives demand and provides plenty of manufacturing labour. Although these factors can be viewed as advantages that can boost economic growth, the region's top priority in the short term is to stamp out COVID-19.

Source : <https://vov.vn/en/economy/nikkei-aisa-vietnam-will-be-southeast-asian-growth-leader-in-2021-839093.vov>

RCEP offers opportunity to expand Vietnamese agricultural exports



Vietnam News | 24 February, 2021

HCM CITY — The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the world's largest trade pact, offers Vietnamese agricultural exporters an excellent opportunity to increase their participation in global value chains, experts said. Lê Duy Minh, chairman of the Việt Nam Farms and Agricultural Enterprises Association, said the RCEP provides the country's farm produce with access to a larger market and opportunity to improve their competitiveness. The trade deal brings together the 10 ASEAN member countries, Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea, which account for 29 per cent of the world's GDP and have a population of 2.2 billion. The trade pact promises to help increase Việt Nam's exports since many of the other members have huge demand for its farm produce and processed foods. Thanks to the harmonisation of rules of origin between the

members, Việt Nam's exports could meet all the requirements to benefit from preferential tariffs in countries like Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand, Minh said. These countries also have relatively similar import standards and consumer tastes, not to mention the lower transportation and logistics costs they offer thanks to their proximity. It also opens new opportunities for trade with China in new categories such as communications, financial services, logistics, and e-commerce. Nguyễn Phúc Nguyễn, general secretary of the Việt Nam Fruit and Vegetable Association, said the trade deal would further increase the country's agricultural exports to China, already a major market. The RCEP removes tariffs on at least 64 per cent of tariff lines. In 15-20 years Việt Nam will abolish 89.6 per cent of tariff lines while its partner countries will remove 92 per cent of its tariffs. Other ASEAN members will remove 85.9 per cent of all tariffs for Việt Nam. Nguyễn Đình Tùng, the general director of Vina T&T Company, said the RCEP was enabling talks on opening up export markets to more of the country's agricultural products. Commitments and trade facilitation measures under the deal are also expected to promote the growth of new supply chains, thus boosting international standard agricultural production in ASEAN. However, experts also pointed to a host of challenges such as satisfying rules of origin and quality standards and competition from foreign rivals in both the domestic and foreign markets. Tùng said businesses should view free

trade deals, including the RCEP, as a chance to improve their product quality, bolster supply chain management and promote competitiveness. — VNS

Source : <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/886346/rcep-offers-opportunity-to-expand-vietnamese-agricultural-exports.html>
