

Highlight News / March 23, 2021



- Cambodia boosting inclusive businesses
- Pandemic gives life to digital menus
- New leader seeks to create development environment
- Land transport authority offices reopen, to allow extension of vehicle licenses
- Fisheries envisaged to become a vital economic sector
- Price management faces new conditions amid pandemic



ADVISORY INSTITUTE FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT BY TCC (AITI)



Cambodia boosting inclusive businesses



Cambodia News | 22 March, 2021

Cambodia is taking the lead in ASEAN regional adoption of the model for inclusive businesses by launching the Inclusive Business Landscape Study Report. The study was announced at the inaugural Inclusive Business Champions Meeting for Cambodia, which was held virtually under the direction of Cham Prasidh, Senior Minister, Minister of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation. Inclusive businesses are sustainable business entities that productively integrate low-income populations into their value chain, said the minister. They contribute vitally to providing deals for income generation and promoting poor and low-income populations sustainably, he said. “This is why it is necessary to encourage inclusive business companies to join the government to attain our vision for the nation reaching high-income country status by 2030,” Prasidh said. Inclusive business models seek to create value for low-income communities by integrating them into a company’s value chain on the demand side as clients and consumers, or on the supply side as producers, entrepreneurs or employees, in a sustainable way. The inclusive business report is important to Cambodia, said Meng Nimol, deputy director-general of Cambodia Chamber of Commerce. “The official launch of the study report will have an impact on the development of human resources and the exchange of

experiences on the landscape of inclusive businesses in Cambodia and ASEAN,” said Nimol. ASEAN members endorsed the guidelines for promotion of inclusive businesses in September 2020. The guidelines provide a greater understanding of these dynamics for ASEAN members and the region collectively to move on to consider integrating inclusive business in their national and regional policies, said Bountheung Douangsavanh, chair of the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. Cambodia is the first country to adopt inclusive business in the region. It will organise the fifth ASEAN Inclusive Business Summit and third ASEAN Inclusive Business Awards in 2022.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50828275/cambodia-boosting-inclusive-businesses/>

Pandemic gives life to digital menus



Cambodia News | 22 March, 2021

The pandemic has created a seismic shift in the restaurant industry, first with the rise of online ordering and now through ordering via Quick Response (QR) code menus. Nham24’s ship is poised to rise with the tides on the strength of using both. With thousands of partnered restaurants and an ever-growing customer base, the company is the Kingdom’s most popular food delivery app. Nham24 launched its QR-based digital menu feature earlier this month. Since its introduction, about 300 restaurants per week on average have signed up for the feature nationwide. Chan Borima, the company’s

chief executive officer and founder, told Khmer Times that his firm began developing the feature in November before testing it with select eateries last month. Using Nham24's Digital Menu, allows diners to view menus on their smartphones, select menu items and show it to waiting staff to place their order. It does not require users to have the Nham24 app on their phone. The feature is available in three languages – Khmer, Chinese and English – with customers able to point to the item they want after scanning QR codes on tables. Borima said his company was inspired to introduce the feature since “menus are one of the least hygienic items in restaurants because they pass through so many hands”. He added that the feature will allow restaurants to turn more tables and save costs associated with printing, updating and maintaining menus. “The human-interaction element of dining is never going to go away, but I think restaurants will use touch-free QR code menus and contactless payments to prevent the spread of Coronavirus [and take advantage of the associated time and cost savings],” Borima said. A representative from Hyatt Regency Phnom Penh told Khmer times that the firm is building a similar system that will be introduced in the upcoming months. It will allow guests at the hotel to scan a QR code which directs them to a static e-menu. “Hyatt's global team is developing the mobile ordering system so guests can actually order when they scan the QR code or access the menu through a dedicated link” the representative said. Alongside established players, new companies are capitalising

on the emerging QR code menu market. Dharma Gohil, the owner of Masala Dosa Street Kitchen on Street 3, has already embraced the QR revolution. His restaurant removed physical menus more than a year ago. Gohil's restaurant served as a testing ground for Sevafast – an online platform that allows registered restaurants to accept and manage orders. The company provides software service to restaurants wanting to maintain their branding, reduce overheads and revise menus. Using Sevafast, customers scan individual QR codes associated with the table they are sitting at and then have their orders sent simultaneously to the cashier and kitchen staff. Its conception was born out of necessity as the pandemic slowed down traffic to restaurants, forcing eateries to cut down on overheads. Sevafast stands apart from other firms in that it allows eateries to use their own branding on items. It also allows their clients to accept pick-ups, deliveries, reservations and room service. Sevafast also does not require customers to download an app – something that Gohil believes would hold back adoption of the technology. Instead, scanning a QR code takes users directly to an on-screen interactive menu. “We have spent one year testing and perfecting the service. QR ordering is not really new: It's just new to Cambodia and the pandemic has made a lot of customers familiar with the technology” Gohil said. He noted that when Masala Dosa Street Kitchen first introduced QR code check-in posters at its storefront, customers were hesitant to use it. “There is no question that the QR code is more than

a trend and it's here to stay. The real question is how interactive it will become and to what extent business owners will strive to maximise the technology to its fullest potential," he said. Already, Gohil is working on introducing near-field technology (NFC), which will allow users to simply tap their device so that customers can place orders via their smartphones. "Our developers are also working closely with ABA Bank so that each individual restaurant can have its own account and receive payments directly to its bank accounts instead of going through an intermediary," he said.

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50828300/pandemic-gives-life-to-digital-menus/>

New leader seeks to create development environment



Laos News | 23 March, 2021

The new President of the Lao PDR, Mr Thongloun Sisoulith, has vowed to create an environment that will enable Laos to enjoy stability and nationwide security as well as sustained socio-economic development in the coming years. Mr Thongloun who also serves as the Secretary General of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, made the pledge after the inaugural session of the 9th Legislature of the National Assembly on Monday elected him as head of state, replacing President Bounnhang Vorachit who retired from the position of Party chief during the Party Congress in January. "I will work alongside other Party and state leaders to do whatever we can

to create conditions that secure national stability, security and sustained socio-economic development," he said after assuming the position of state president during the National Assembly meeting. Party and state authorities will continue their mission to improve livelihoods and cement the foundations of the people's democratic regime, he added. President Thongloun also promised that the state administration would continue to strengthen and deepen change in line with the opening-up policy initiated in 1986. The new administration will also pursue a foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation for sustained development in the region as well as the world, he said. As part of efforts to maintain good governance, President Thongloun said that, as the country's top leader, he would respect and implement the constitution and laws as well as be loyal to the nation and its citizens. During his speech to accept the presidency, he thanked and congratulated his predecessor, Mr Bounnhang Vorachit, who served as an important national leader as well as a leadership strategist. He praised Mr Bounnhang as being a strong and brave leader who had dedicated his physical and intellectual strength to the national struggle for independence as well as national protection and development. During the NA session yesterday, President Thongloun recommended that the National Assembly elect Mr

Phankham Viphavanh as the new prime minister, to fill the vacancy left by his departure.

After assuming the post of the head of government, Mr Phankham said his government would continue to maintain political stability and security as well as address undesirable trends taking place in Laos. As the prime minister, Mr Phankham will build the government's leadership and capacity to maintain a strong macroeconomy including public finance reform in order to bring quality economic growth and sustainability. The new prime minister also promised to improve state administration in order to serve people more efficiently and quickly and ensure that public administration was in line with the law. Mr Phankham said his focus would be on building the foundations for Laos to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, reduce poverty and narrow the development gap between urban and rural areas. In relation to foreign affairs, he said the government would pursue a foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship as well as promote wider and deeper cooperation with strategic and friendly nations.

Source: https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_New_57.php

Land transport authority offices reopen, to allow extension of vehicle licenses



Myanmar News | 22 March, 2021

Land transport authority offices in Myanmar reopened on March 22. For now, they are only providing one service that is to extend the license of motor vehicles. The state-ran newspaper announced on March 16 that land transport authority offices will reopen to allow extension of vehicle licenses after allowing only the registration of new vehicles in December 2020, after closing due to COVID-19.

Source: <https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/land-transport-authority-offices-reopen-to-allow-extension-of-vehicle-licenses>

Fisheries envisaged to become a vital economic sector



Vietnam News | 22 March, 2021

Hanoi (VNA) – Fisheries will be branched out into an important economic sector of the nation by 2030 under a fisheries development strategy to 2030 with vision until 2045, which has been recently approved by the Prime Minister. Accordingly, the sector must sharpen focus on developing large commodity production in combination with industrialization and modernisation, expanding the application of high technologies into production, restructuring production to improve productivity, and building prestigious trademarks as well as competitive edge. The strategy sets targets of an average 3-4

percent growth in fisheries production value each year, with total output topping 9.8 million tonnes including 7 million tonnes from aquaculture, and an export revenue of 14-16 billion USD by 2030. Furthermore, the sector aims to generate jobs for more than 3.5 million workers, with income per capita equal to the national level. Meanwhile, fishing villages in coastal areas will be built into civilised communities that have rich spiritual life in connection with the building of new-style rural areas. Under the strategy, the sector is envisioned to become a deep processing centre and enter the world's top three producers and exporters of aquatic products. In the coming time, sea reserves will be established or expanded in tandem with eco-tourism development and new style rural area building. Meanwhile, breeding sites and migration route of aquatic creatures will be strictly managed and protected. Fishing quota will be allocated in order to reduce then put an end to activities that destroy aquatic resources, while priority will be given to the farming of aquatic products with high economic values. The State will accelerate the delegation of management to community-based organizations in coastal and inland water areas./.

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/fisheries-envisaged-to-become-a-vital-economic-sector/197891.vnp>

Price management faces new conditions amid pandemic



Vietnam News | 22 March, 2021

HÀ NỘI — The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted economies and commodity markets globally, including Việt Nam, and domestic prices will continue to fluctuate and be more closely linked to the fluctuations of raw material and fuel prices on the world market. At the 10th meeting session, the 14th National Assembly set a target of an average consumer price index (CPI) growth rate of about 4 per cent. Economists forecast that there were many factors to make the consumer price index (CPI) increase this year. Notably, the prices of many types of raw materials and fuels on the world market are expected to hike again when the COVID-19 pandemic in the world is gradually controlled, COVID-19 vaccines are distributed on a large scale and production, trade and international exchanges recover. Dr Nguyễn Ngọc Tuấn from the Academy of Finance predicted that the price of many essential goods would fluctuate this year, so the CPI would be higher than last year, but the average for the whole year would be below 4 per cent, the target set by the National Assembly. Nguyễn Anh Tuấn, director of the Price Management Department, Ministry of Finance, said there would be some factors that adversely affect the price situation this year such as fuel and petroleum product prices had changed continuously. Essential goods, including pork, could also be impacted if the disease was not controlled

well, he said. However, in the opposite direction, amid many factors related to the pandemic and the aggregate demand of the economy unlikely to recover to levels seen pre-pandemic, the market prices of essential goods are not expected to have large fluctuations in general. Therefore, Tuấn said it was necessary to forecast both difficulties and advantages to prepare appropriate measures. Authorities plan to strengthen management and inspection of the observance of the law on prices and of compliance with the laws on taxes and fees and to strictly manage the listing of prices and selling at listed prices of items with high demand during holidays. In addition, authorities will closely monitor developments and implement solutions to balance supply and demand to stabilise the market and prices. At the same time, there should be specific operation solutions for commodities such as petroleum. Specifically, the Ministry of Industry and Trade must work with the Ministry of Finance to control the price of petroleum, taking into account market factors and working with the petrol price stabilisation fund, he said. For electricity products, it would be necessary to carefully evaluate the cost factor affecting the price to consider the impact on electricity prices, Tuấn noted. — VNS

Source: <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/908496/price-management-faces-new-conditions-amid-pandemic.html>
