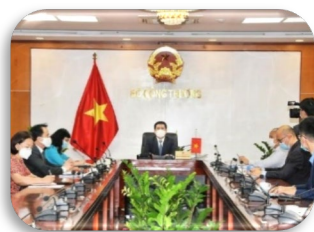
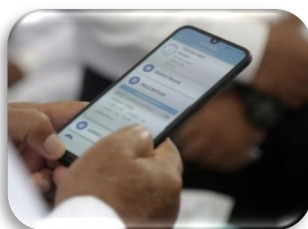


Highlight News / May 27/2021



- 4.1 million tonnes of agricultural products exported in first five months
- Customers and retailers urged to pay online to help prevent COVID-19 spread
- Funds rolled out for agriculture competitiveness project
- Over K77 bln loans to be disbursed to farmers to grow monsoon crops this year
- Myanmar iron, steel materials imports exceed \$315 mln in five months
- Vietnam, Japan to work closely for effective implementation of CPTPP
- Wood exports post 50.5-percent surge in four months



4.1 million tonnes of agricultural products exported in first five months



Cambodia News | 26 May, 2021

Cambodia exported some 4.1 million tons of agricultural products in the first five months of this year, a 1.1 million increase over the same period last year. The figures were shared this morning by Veng Sakhon, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, adding that the country exported 1.6 million tonnes of paddy rice, 1.2 million tonnes of cassava slice, 800,000 tonnes of cashew nut, and 134,000 tonnes of corn. Other exported commodities included 11,000 tonnes of bean, 197,588 tonnes of fresh banana, 21,118 tonnes of pomelo, 152,090 tonnes of fresh mango, 19,916 tonnes of palm oil, 6,800 tonnes of pepper, 56,500 tonnes of chili, and 10,500 tonnes of mango jam. Major markets for Cambodia's agricultural products include China, EU, ASEAN countries, India, Japan, Korea, Russia, Australia and many other nations. Chea Vannak – AKP

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50862233/4-1-million-tonnes-of-agricultural-products-exported-in-first-five-months/>

Customers and retailers urged to pay online to help prevent COVID-19 spread



Cambodia News | 26 May, 2021

The National Bank of Cambodia (NBC) has urged customers and retailers to make uses of e-wallets

and apps such as Bakong to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. In an announcement issued on May 24, NBC says that using digital banking could help reduce the number of COVID-19 transmission by lessening the need for person-to-person transactions. NBC is also encouraging the country's major banks and institutions to provide incentives to consumers and businesses who choose cashless transactions over those involving banknotes. "As the regulator in banking sector in Cambodia, it is vital that we work with the industry as part of our concerted national effort to battle the COVID-19 pandemic," said Ms Chea Serey, Assistant Governor and Director General of NBC. "This is why we are encouraging all Cambodians to use e-wallets and payment platforms such as Bakong because they minimise contact and risk," she added. The World Health Organisation (WHO) urges caution when handling banknotes and advises people to wash their hands thoroughly after handling money – especially when touching or eating food, read the statement. "While we realise that many Cambodians prefer to conduct their transactions in person and often in cash, we would like retailers and customers to become more used to a cashless life and for the payment platforms to do their best to educate and attract people to their apps," Serey said. In 2020 the NBC launched Cambodia's only integrated payment system that allows customers to do everything – e-wallets, mobile payments, online banking and financial applications – all in one place. According to NBC, more than 59 percent of Cambodians currently

conduct their payment transactions online. “Digital payment platforms are one of the country’s most effective tools for ensuring that all segments of society have access to banks and banking,” Serey stressed. “Now, the safety of our population in the face of COVID-19 gives the NBC and other financial institutions another incentive to promote a cashless society.” Chea Vannak – AKP

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50862261/customers-and-retailers-urged-to-pay-online-to-help-prevent-covid-19-spread/>

Funds rolled out for agriculture competitiveness project



Laos News | 27 May, 2021

The International Development Association, the World Bank and the government are providing US\$29,300,000 to fund the Lao Agriculture Competitiveness Project, which is taking place from 2018 to 2024. The World Bank is providing a loan of US\$25 million, the Lao government is contributing US\$500,000, and farmers’ production groups are contributing US\$3,800,000. The project is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and Agricultural and Forestry Offices in Xayaboury, Vientiane, Borikhamxay and Khammuan provinces, and in Vientiane. The objective of the project is to increase the competitiveness of selected agricultural value chains, from production through to post-harvest. The project has identified the three most productive crops, namely rice, vegetables, and maize, and aims to enhance

agricultural production through the adoption of new technologies, machinery, and reduction of labour and production costs. The Lao Agriculture Competitiveness Project consists of three components: improved agriculture efficiency and sustainability, enhanced agricultural competitiveness, and project management. Funding for the project in Vientiane is set at US\$4,496,000 of which US\$3,626,000 comes from the World Bank and contributions from the government and farmers production groups are US\$100,000 and US\$768,000 respectively. The project area includes the districts of Hadxaifong, Pakngum and Xaythany districts and involves 51 villages and 79 farmer production groups, with an estimated 7,246 beneficiaries. The project area covers more than 11,000 hectares of farmland and involves eight agricultural businesses as partners. As of this month, Vientiane had set up 76 farmer production groups 23 in Hadxaifong district, 26 in Xaythany district, and 27 in Pakngum district. Eighteen of the groups are Seed Multiplication Groups, 27 are Rice Production Groups for commercial use, and the other 31 are Vegetable Production Groups. The project will release matching grants to improve irrigation and develop the skills and capacity of technical staff and farmers. One of the matching grants will support farmers to invest in crucial equipment to enhance production, both in production and or post-harvest activities. Another matching grant of US\$16,000 is planned for farmer production groups on the condition that they provide a 20 percent contribution

of US\$4,000. This grant is to be invested in certified seeds, crucial equipment to empower production activity, production inputs like land preparation, certified seed, storage, labelling, transportation, water supply and electricity installation. The project has hired an outsource consultant as a service provider to support farmer production groups in developing an investment plan. Vientiane has a total targeted plan of 76 matching grants for release to 76 farmer production groups. Each matching grant will be released upon approval of the respective investment plans. In 2020, 12 investment plans by Seed Multiplication Groups were approved by the World Bank. In the first approval of 12 investment plans, 11 matching grants were released for 11 seed multiplication groups. Ten tractors and one combine harvester were purchased and handed over to these groups.

Source : https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Funds101.php

Over K77 bln loans to be disbursed to farmers to grow monsoon crops this year



Myanmar News | 26 May, 2021

K150,000 per acre for paddy and K100,000 per acre for other monsoon crops such as peanut, green gram, sesame, bamboo, chickpea, black bean, soya-bean, corn and other crops will be granted as monsoon agricultural loans. Mandalay Region Agricultural Development Bank will initially disburse

over K77 billion of agricultural loans to farmers from 23 townships in the Mandalay region in order for them to grow monsoon crops starting from 26 May, according to Mandalay Region Agricultural Development Bank (MRADB). The Mandalay Bank Branch has targeted to provide K77.109 billion loans for the cultivation of monsoon crops. The agrarian loans will be disbursed to farmers in 23 townships of the Mandalay region to cultivate monsoon paddy and other crops. "Our ADB bank is issuing the loans for the benefit of the farmers. The bank will provide the monsoon loans for 2021 to the farmers who have already paid off the principal and interest for the 2020 monsoon loan. Those who have not paid back in full will have difficulty getting 2021 loans. The bank has already collected 18.32 per cent of the loan disbursed last year. The farmers who have not paid off their last year's debts will not be qualified for a new loan this year. The bank will collect a five per cent interest rate annually. They are providing the loans with a low-interest rate," said Daw Yin Nwe, manager of the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank in the Mandalay region. K150,000 per acre for paddy and K100,000 per acre for other monsoon crops such as peanut, green gram, sesame, bamboo, chickpea, black bean, soya-bean, corn and other crops will be granted as monsoon agricultural loans. The 23 townships that will be provided with agriculture loans for 2021 monsoon

crops are Amarapura, Patheingyi, PyinOoLwin, Madaya, Singu, Thabeikkyin, Kyaukse, Singaing, TadaU, Myittha, Meiktila, Wundwin, Mahlaing, Thazi, Myingyan, Taungtha, Natogyi, Ngazun, Yamethin, Pyawbwe, NyaungU and Kyaukpadaung townships.

— Min Htet Aung (Mdy Sub-Printing House)/GNLM

Source : <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/over-k77-bl-loans-to-be-disbursed-to-farmers-to-grow-monsoon-crops-this-year/>

Myanmar iron, steel materials imports exceed \$315 mln in five months



Myanmar News | 26 May, 2021

The value of Myanmar's iron and steel imports for the construction sector is estimated at US\$315.6 million in five months (Oct-Feb) of the current financial year, according to Myanmar Customs Department. The figures stood over US\$1.19 billion in the past financial year 2019-2020, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Commerce. At present, Myanmar's steel demand is estimated about 2.5 million tons per year, and 92 per cent are imported. According to MSA, the market is likely to grow up to 5.4 million tonnes per year in 2030. If Myanmar can fulfil the requirements of local steel consumption and focus on import substitution, the steel industry will strategically contribute to the nation's interests. Steel consumption includes in calculating economy growth index, Myanmar Steel Association (MSA)

stated. Therefore, 11 executive members of MSA established MSA Public Company Limited. They are making efforts to set up iron and steel industrial zone in order to reduce the outflow of US dollar, effectuate the development of the steel industry and assist in the country's infrastructure building. Studies for implementing iron and steel industrial zone projects are underway in Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Rakhine and Mon states. The government needs to support the steel sector by granting tax relief and land rights, controlling illegal import, making anti-dumping law come into an effort and formulating steel policy. The steel industry is pivotal in industrial infrastructure building. According to the MSA, this project needs to be implemented for future prospects of the country's economy. China is the leading supplier of Myanmar's steel market. Iron and steel are also imported from India and the Republic of Korea. – HH/GNLM

Source : <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/myanmar-iron-steel-materials-imports-exceed-315-mln-in-five-months/>

Vietnam, Japan to work closely for effective implementation of CPTPP



Vietnam News | 26 May, 2021

Hanoi (VNA) - Vietnam and Japan have agreed to boost their close cooperation with a view to effectively implementing the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership

(CPTPP).The consensus was reached during phone talks between Minister of Industry and Trade Nguyen Hong Dien and Japanese economic revitalisation minister Yasutoshi Nishimura on May 26.Dien suggested Nishimura encourage and create favourable conditions for Japanese investors who want to invest in Vietnam.He said the move will help Vietnam become an important link in the supply chain of Japanese enterprises, particularly in the fields of automobile manufacturing, electronics, medical equipment, garment and textiles, and sectors that bring benefits to bilateral economic-trade ties.Nishimura, for his part, proposed that Vietnam support Japan's initiatives, and continue to work with Japan to implement the trade pact.As several countries, including the UK, have expressed an interest in joining the agreement, the Japanese minister hoped Vietnam would endorse the organisation of the fourth CPTPP Commission meeting in early June, which will consider negotiating with the UK after it made a formal request to join on February 1.The CPTPP covers 13 percent of global GDP and groups together Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam.China, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan (China), and Thailand have also expressed an interest in joining./.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-japan-to-work-closely-for-effective-implementation-of-cptpp/202091.vnp>

Wood exports post 50.5-percent surge in four months



Vietnam News | 26 May, 2021

Hanoi (VNA) - The export turnover of wood and wood products hit 4.99 billion USD in the first four months of 2021, a surge of 50.5 percent year-on-year, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development.In April alone, the export value of wood and wood products reached 1.2 billion USD, the ministry said.The US, China, Japan and the Republic of Korea were the biggest importers of Vietnam's wood in the period, accounting for 87.1 percent of the total export value.In the last four months, the value of exports increased in almost all markets except for Taiwan (down 0.1 percent) and the UK (down 0.7 percent).In the reviewed period, Vietnam spent 978.8 million USD on importing wood, up 33.6 percent compared to the same period last year, the ministry added.Export turnover of wood and wood products is the sixth largest among Vietnamese export commodities. Wood and wood products are also the items with the largest trade surplus, contributing to improving the trade balance. Vietnam currently has about 12,000 enterprises operating in wood production and processing, with about 500,000 employees and 320 trillion VND (nearly 14 billion USD) of production-business capital over 120 trillion VND in value of fixed assets, and nearly 360 trillion VND in net revenue./.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/wood-exports-post-505percent-surge-in-four-months/202061.vnp>