

Highlight News / June 1, 2021



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ADVISORY INSTITUTE FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT BY TCC (AITI)

Kingdom's healthcare sector prime for digitalisation and investment



Cambodia News | 31 May, 2021

Healthcare in Cambodia is primed to benefit from the rush towards digitalisation and a potential spike in investment, according to Dr Vireak Chea, the chairman of EuroCham's health committee. He made the comments at a EuroCham webinar about business sentiment and opportunities in a post-Covid recovery Cambodia. Chea noted that the onset of Covid-19 has made it even harder for patients to access adequate healthcare and there remains a need to be able to remotely connect patients to health services and providers. Lockdown, in particular, prevented patients from being able to visit health centres physically, something that should not keep people from receiving the care they need, he said. Chea is the chief executive officer of Community Pharmacy, a retail pharmacy inside Makro which offers remote delivery services for orders. He's also the founder of PillTech, which he describes as "a digital healthcare marketplace allowing pharmacy owners to purchase approved medicines from a single platform for their retail stores". Chea noted that Covid-19 created restrictions of movement at a time when people needed to have their health checked and have access to medicine. He said, "This creates difficulties for people in general when they get sick. They need their medicine. They need their health checkups. I believe there's a need for development

of a digital solution to allow remote consultation, diagnostics and delivery of medicine." Chea believes that there are opportunities for potential investors in the healthcare industry in Cambodia as well, with the lack of pharmaceutical manufacturers constituting one of the biggest needs. He added that the recent trend of healthcare reimbursement through insurance has a high likelihood of attracting some of these bigger pharmaceutical companies. Positive notes that could attract potential investors, he added, include a rapidly growing industry, an even playing field, simple company registration, cheaper labour and high English-speaking skills in the workforce. He said if a company could figure out the "pain points" in the industry in Cambodia and succeed, they could easily apply their business model elsewhere in the ASEAN region, where many countries face the same issues. "If you look at a strategic move, Cambodia is in the middle of ASEAN where it's easy to ship to any other country. If you want to build a factory, this is a good location," he told Khmer Times. He added that the Council for the Development of Cambodia also provides perks such as duty-free imports on production equipment and raw materials. Chea believes relying more on technology in healthcare will create across-the-board upgrades in the industry. "Digitalisation in the healthcare industry will definitely boom in Cambodia. I foresee pharmacy owners adopting technology to aid their daily operation, whether it's point of sales, inventory management, expiration date alerts or just to keep track of their sales in general." Chea has

already launched a beta version of TOVPET, an app that connects patients to doctors remotely. Patients can search for doctors according to their symptoms and have medication prescribed electronically. He said regulations will have to guide these practices – and he'd be open to working with the government to create them. Eurocham's Business Opportunities guide, released in conjunction with the webinar, identified a rising demand in Cambodia for improved healthcare. "The growing middle class is increasingly willing to pay privately for more reliable, sophisticated forms of medical care, creating a wealth of opportunities in this sector," it said. "Opportunities lie not only in importing pharmaceuticals, but also providing training and expertise in medical technology, laboratory technology and biomedical engineering. Other opportunities include the supply of medical equipment and the provision of health insurance."

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50865080/kingdoms-healthcare-sector-prime-for-digitalisation-and-investment/>

Ministry of Agriculture plans to increase durian plantations



Cambodia News | 31 May, 2021

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries has plans to boost durian production by expanding plantation land, strengthening the standard plant and forming a durian farmer association with the aim of increasing capacity of production for supplies in the domestic markets and exports. Agriculture

Minister Veng Sakhon said on Saturday that having seen durian plantations have a potential market, the ministry has worked to compile policies to help boost the fruit's production. "Durian planting in Cambodia has potential because of the many durian lovers locally supporting and recognising the quality and food safety of durians planted in Cambodia," Sakhon said. The price of locally planted durians is higher than imported ones, according to Sakhon, citing that farmers earn revenue from durian plantations of \$10,000 to \$20,000 per hectare per year. Under the policies, the ministry is planning and setting objectives on expanding durian plantation and other fruits that have potential in the local market and abroad, conducting research at durian and other fruit centres to provide varieties to farmers and to teach producers technical plantation skills. The ministry plans to create durian and other fruit associations to boost production that follows required standards in the market, to encourage the private sector to invest in the fruit-processing sector to boost production chains and supply to domestic and international markets, as well as to create a Federation of Cambodian Agro-Industry to support, encourage and boost agricultural sector development, agro-industry and agri-business in Cambodia. Although the crop provides a high income, it requires a significant amount of investment and needs proper technical knowledge about planting skills. "If farmers expand durian plantations or form a cooperative, durians will add much income to the economy," he said. A fruit

vendor in Phnom Penh Thmey area, Sous Kunthy, underlined that the price of locally planted durian is higher than durian imports. Domestic durian is priced between 28,000 riels (\$7.50) and 30,000 riels per kilogramme (kg) while imported product costs less than 20,000 riels per kg. “The price of locally planted durian is high because of quality. It has a unique sweet taste and it is difficult to plant,” he said. Durian is an acquired taste. Some compare its foul-smelling flesh to the aroma of mouldy socks and rotten eggs, but for fans it is the “king of fruits”. Cambodia currently has 5,289 hectares of durian plantations with a yield per year of 36,656 tonnes. Durian is planted in the provinces of Kampot, Kampong Cham, Koh Kong and Battambang.

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50865112/ministry-of-agriculture-plans-to-increase-durian-plantations/>

PM: Create conditions, opportunities for children’s development



Laos News | 1 June, 2021

Prime Minister Phankham Viphavanh has called for all sectors of society to join hands to create conditions and opportunities conducive for the development of children, striving to achieve a bright future for them. Delivering a message on Monday to mark World Children’s Day on June 1, the premier underlined the need to create such conditions so that Lao children could fulfil their development and growth potential and become quality human

resources for the country. To do this, he urged everyone to work together to address the challenges hindering children’s progress. “We are facing many challenges,” he said. The main challenges highlighted by the prime minister include malnutrition, low enrollment in preschools and compulsory education, misuse of social media by children, and drug abuse. In addition, the continuing practice of superstitious beliefs in some rural communities hampers the development of rural children. “Party and state bodies, the Lao Front for National Development, and mass organisations at all levels as well as the multiethnic people need to work hand in hand to address and overcome these issues,” he said. PM Phankham said the Party (Lao People’s Revolutionary Party) and the government have always attached great importance to the promotion and protection of children. Attention has also been paid to preventing and resolving violence against children. On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and 60th anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly’s Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the prime minister said Laos had actively followed the convention. In addition, Lao authorities have set out a roadmap for the development of children until 2030. “In addition, all Party and state organisations have committed to adhere to the Convention on the Rights of the Child,” PM

Phankham said. He added that every available resource would be used to develop Lao multiethnic children until 2030 in accordance with the roadmap, while striving to attain the Sustainable Development Goals. The prime minister expressed heartfelt gratitude to all sectors for their active support and contributions which had enabled progress to be made in the advancement of children and mothers in past years. Because of the Covid-19 outbreak, PM Phankham said it was unfortunate that authorities in charge were unable to organise a large gathering to mark this year's World Children's Day. He called for all sectors, people and students to take great care to modify their way of life in line with new normal practices, while strictly observing Covid-19 prevention and control measures.

Source: https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContenten_PM104.php

Prices of traditional clay pots stable in Ngathayauk

 Myanmar News | 31 May, 2021

The demand for traditional clay pots are moderate and the price is mostly stable in Ngathayauk, NyaungU District, U Nay Lin, a clay pot maker said. The prices of clay pots range between K2,000-K7,000 depending on design, size and quality. Taunggon Village in Ngathayauk has been relying on earthen pot making businesses for generations. The villagers execute that business on a commercial

scale and send the pots to other regions and states. The villagers prepare the clay pots ready for its toddy sap collecting season. The traders from the nearest villages come to such village to buy those clay pots to collect the toddy sap before the season starts. The Taunggon village yearly produces more than 250,000 clay pots for collecting toddy saps. The clay pots for drinking water are demanded the whole year. Other pots for flower vase (Buddhist offering) and earthen pots for cooking, earthen toys and money saving pots are also sold. The clay pots from Ngathayauk is famous for its quality, U Nay Lin explained. Most of the potters in the village are women. The clay pot brokers from Pakokku, Kyaukpadaung, Taungtha, Myingyan and NyaungU townships come the village to buy the pots. — KPD/GNLM

Source: <https://www.gnln.com.mm/prices-of-traditional-clay-pots-stable-in-ngathayauk/#article-title>

New COVID-19 outbreak puts brakes on trade, transport

 Vietnam News | 31 May, 2021

Hanoi (VNA) – The current COVID-19 resurgence has put the brakes on trade, transport and tourism, with all the sectors experiencing declines in May, according to the General Statistics Office (GSO). The turns of passengers transported across the country was estimated at 287.8 million this month, a 14.9-percent decrease from April, the GSO reported. The figure exceeded 1.59 billion in the first five months of

2021, up 4.2 percent year-on-year. In May, transport of goods, meanwhile, increased by 2.8 percent to 139 million tonnes. This brought the total volume of freight transport from January to May to 739 million tonnes, up 10.5 percent year-on-year. Total retail sales of goods and services valued 393.6 trillion VND (17.1 billion USD), down 3.1 percent from the previous month and 1 percent from a year earlier. The five-month sum hit over 2.08 trillion VND, up 7.6 percent year-on-year. International visitor arrivals in Vietnam totalled 13,400 this month, down 30.8 percent month-on-month and 40.6 percent year-on-year. The five-month figure plunged 97.8 percent compared to the same period last year as international travel restriction continued to be in place./.

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/new-covid19-outbreak-puts-brakes-on-trade-transport/202302.vnp>

HCM City attracts over 1.34 billion

USD worth of FDI in first five months



Vietnam News | 31 May, 2021

HCM City (VNA) - The inflow of foreign direct investment (FDI) into Ho Chi Minh City surpassed 1.34 billion USD in the first five months of this year, down 16.52 percent year-on-year, according to the municipal Statistics Office. Of the total, 378.8 million USD went to 187 new projects, primarily in the field of commerce (236.3 million USD) and real estate (125.8 million USD). Meanwhile, 416 million USD was added to 42 existing projects. Foreign investors channelled 267.4 million USD of capital into seven

processing and manufacturing projects, 85.5 million USD into 11 science and technology projects, and 32.9 million USD into 15 commercial projects. Countries posting high additional investment included Japan (270 million USD), Singapore (72.4 million USD), and the UK (27 million USD). Capital contributions and share purchases in 726 transactions accounted for 542.7 million USD. In terms of domestic capital attraction, the city licenced the establishment of 14,543 companies with registered capital of 245.6 trillion VND (10.66 billion USD), up 5.8 percent and 36.6 percent year-on-year./.

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/hcm-city-attracts-over-134-billion-usd-worth-of-fdi-in-first-five-months/202334.vnp>