

Highlight News / June 11/2021



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Cambodia's trade outlook brightens on positive US and China export news



Cambodia News | 10 June, 2021

The Kingdom's trade prospects have brightened with news that China has pledged to increase agricultural imports coming on the heels of a report showing a significant growth in exports to the US measured January to April. The Chinese government pledged to expand its imports of agricultural products from Cambodia, especially rice and mangoes during a meeting between Cambodian Deputy Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, state councillor and minister of foreign affairs for China. The two engaged in a face-to-face discussion while at the ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' meeting held in Chongqing this week. "Wang Yi reiterated China's continued support for Cambodia's national development and protection of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. China has also promised to import more agricultural products from Cambodia, especially rice and mangoes," read a statement released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cambodia. At the meeting, Cambodia identified other potential agricultural products for export to China including Pailin longan, durian, dragon fruits and bird saliva (the binding agent in bird's nests used in a popular Chinese soup). The current approved products for export to China are fresh mangoes and bananas.

"The ministry is working to identify the potential products and then provide support because technical assistance will need to be given to lift the production up from planting to processing for export," said Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Veng Sakhon. Cambodia also plans to negotiate with the Chinese side on setting new quotas for milled rice for export to China. According to the Ministry of Commerce, which will lead the talks with the Chinese side, the new quota of milled rice will be set at 500,000 tonnes, a 100,000 tonne increase from the current 400,000 tonne quota. From January to May this year, the Ministry of Agriculture reported that Cambodia exported 3 million tonnes of non-rice agricultural products worth \$1.799 billion, a 67 percent rise from last year. At the meeting, the two sides also agreed to increase bilateral cooperation by ratifying their free trade agreement. This news comes shortly after bilateral trade figures for the first four months of 2021 between Cambodia and the United States were reported to have reached \$2.652 billion, a 24.3 percent increase compared with the same period last year. US Census Bureau data showed that Cambodia exported \$2.519 billion of goods to the US during the period, a 24.4 percent increase from a year ago. Cambodian imports of US goods for Jan-April 2021 increased by 25.5 percent over the same period in 2020. Lim Heng, vice-president of Cambodia Chamber of Commerce, said the increase in exports to the US reflects a rise in demand in the US market for Cambodian products. "It is a good sign to see the growth of exports to the

US increase because it [indicates] that local manufacturers in the country are operating,” Heng said. Bilateral trade between the Kingdom and the US amounted to \$6.9 billion in 2020, an increase of 17.89 percent from 2019. The export value of Cambodian goods was \$6.5 billion in 2020, a rise of 22.79 percent from the \$5.3 billion recorded in 2019. Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50871510/cambodias-trade-outlook-brightens-on-positive-us-and-china-export-news/>

Ministry of Commerce to launch E-Commerce marketplace



Cambodia News | 10 June, 2021

Ministry of Commerce will launch CambodiaTrade, an e-commerce marketplace aiming to serve small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to sell their products online to potential clients in the domestic and overseas markets. The ministry calls on those who wish to sell their products in the e-commerce marketplace to make the pre-registration. To be eligible to use the marketplace at CambodiaTrade.com, the SME must be a company or enterprise formally registered with the Ministry of Commerce or its affiliates and has a valid patent tax and VAT certificates, according to the ministry's announcement on June 9. SMEs offering products that are made in Cambodia are also eligible, the same source added. The marketplace is developed with financial support from the Enhanced Integrated Framework under the Go4eCAM project with the

main objective of realising the benefit of e-commerce for the SMEs. Chea Vannak – AKP

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50871464/ministry-of-commerce-to-launch-e-commerce-marketplace/>

Additional funding to help Laos reach 50 percent vaccination target



Laos News | 11 June, 2021

An additional US\$15 million was made available on June 9 to help Laos stop the spread of Covid-19, following an agreement between the World Bank and the government, according to World Bank. This additional funding is split between an International Development Association credit of US\$10 million and a US\$5 million grant from the Health Emergency Response and Preparedness Multi-Donor Trust Fund. Following the approval of an initial US\$18 million Covid-19 response project in April 2020, the Lao government requested additional resources this year to expand the deployment of vaccines. The new funds bring the total value of the project to US\$33 million and will be used to further finance the rollout of vaccines already pledged by the worldwide COVAX initiative and other donors. The funds will also be used to help procure enough additional vaccines to allow Laos to vaccinate 50 percent of its population. According to Minister of Health Dr Bounfeng Phommalaisith, the new agreement “will anchor the government’s National Deployment and Vaccination Plan, which seeks to accelerate the

vaccination of the population, following the success of the first phases of the vaccination drive.” “In addition, it will build on the successes of the initial response project, which has strengthened emergency response systems and provided vital medical equipment, supplies, and isolation and treatment facilities under the guidance of the Covid-19 National Taskforce.” Around US\$9 million of the total project financing will be allocated to vaccine procurement. Nearly US\$5.5 million, including the trust fund allocation, will help ensure the safe, effective, and equitable delivery of vaccines to target groups, as defined in the National Plan. Deployment activities will include training of health staff on vaccine delivery and security, delivery through fixed mobile and sites in remote and rural areas, and management and monitoring of the rollout. “This additional financing comes at a crucial time, when Laos is working hard to contain a new wave of Covid-19 infections,” said World Bank Country Director for Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, Mariam Sherman. “A swift and broad vaccination campaign is vital to the country’s economic recovery from the slowdown caused by the pandemic, and this initiative builds on the strong response we have already seen from the Lao authorities.” The Covid-19 response project is part of a wider health response to the pandemic, supported by various development partners under the guidance of the Ministry of Health, and complements the World Bank’s existing health initiatives, the Health Governance and Nutrition Development Project and the Health and Nutrition

Services Access Project. The Ministry of Health’s Centre of Information and Education for Health reported on June 10 that 698,503 people had received a first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine and 355,853 people had received a second dose.

Source : https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Additional112.php

Domestic rice prices up by K2,000 per bag



Myanmar News | 10 June, 2021

At present, rice worth K32,000-35,000 per bag is highly demanded in the market. The rice prices in domestic markets have increased by K2,000 per bag, said U Than Oo, secretary of Bayinthaung Rice Wholesale Centre. At present, rice worth K32,000-35,000 per bag is highly demanded in the market. “The prices of high-quality rice move in the range of K27,000-35,000 per bag. The figures show an increase of K2,000 per bag,” U Than Oo continued. It is expected that the rice fetches at a lower rate before Thingyan Festival (Myanmar New Year Festival in April). Shortly after that, the price usually goes up, he added. “During the early monsoon, the rice stocks are commonly found in the hands of millers instead of farmers. Consequently, the price hike occurs amid low supply. The rice prices usually hit a peak in Thadingyut and Tazaungdaing festivals (Oct-Nov). When the newly harvested rice enters the market, the price declines,” U Than Oo elaborated. The price is unlikely to fall this month, Bayinthaung

Rice Wholesale Centre reported. “The price possibly remains high for now. The farmers also set the rice crops higher. The demand in the retail market is not that good. The export is not strong as well. As a result, the sharp price hike is not expected amid the low demand,” U Than Oo stated. About 80,000 rice and broken rice bags were earlier traded per day at the Bayinthaung Rice Wholesale Centre. In contrast, the trade volume plummeted to about 30,000 bags at present.—NN/GNL

Source: <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/domestic-rice-prices-up-by-k2000-per-bag/#article-title>

ICAEW: Vietnam's GDP likely to expand 7.6% in 2021



Vietnam News | 10 June, 2021

VOV.VN - Despite the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic, the nation's GDP is set to grow 7.6% this year, the highest rate in the whole region, according to the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) in its latest Southeast Asia Economic Outlook report. The report outlines that despite facing the fourth wave of the pandemic, the country's growth outlook remains optimistic moving forward. Indeed, the national economy is forecast to return to the level of growth previously achieved before the recurrence of COVID-19, meaning that Vietnamese GDP is forecast to surge by 7.6% this year, the highest throughout the entire region. Most notably, Vietnam represents one of the few economies globally to have enjoyed growth in 2020

due to its success in combating the spread of the pandemic. This success has helped the national economy to benefit from an increase in global business activities along with greater foreign investment, thereby boosting the local manufacturing industry and exports.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/en/economy/icaew-vietnams-gdp-likely-to-expand-76-in-2021-864890.vov>

Auto sales down 15 pct.

in May: VAMA



Vietnam News | 10 June, 2021

Hanoi (VNA) - The Vietnam Automobile Manufacturers' Association (VAMA) has reported that its members posted a 15 percent month-on-month decline in automobile sales in May to 15,585 units, due to the impact of COVID-19 and a shortage of semi-conductor chips for the industry. Its members sold 17,581 passenger cars in May, 7,482 commercial vehicles, and 522 special-use vehicles, falls of 14 percent, 16 percent, and 33 percent, respectively, against April. Sales of domestically-assembled vehicles were down 20 percent month-on-month to 13,825 units, while those of completely-built-up (CBU) vehicles fell 7 percent to 11,760. In the January-May period, VAMA members sold 126,894 vehicles, up 53 percent against the same period last year, with a 51 percent rise seen in the sales of passenger cars, 56 percent in commercial vehicles, and 59 percent in special-use vehicles. These figures

do not fully reflect the situation in Vietnam's automobile market, however, as they do not include sales of brands such as Audi, Jaguar, Land Rover, Mercedes-Benz, Subaru, Volkswagen, and Volvo. A representative from TC Motor said the company sold 6,053 vehicles in May and 28,477 in the first five months of the year. It led all brands in May sales, followed by Toyota with 5,139, Kia 3,336, Mazda 2,426, Ford 1,666, and Honda 1,423. Toyota Vios was the best-seller during the month, with sales of 1,789, followed by the Hyundai Accent with 1,620. Industry analysts said that along with COVID-19, a shortage of semi-conductor chips in both the global and domestic market will continue to slow down production at automobile manufacturers over the remainder of 2021 and even into 2022./.

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/auto-sales-down-15-pct-in-may-vama/202847.vnp>