

*Highlight News / June 24/2021*



- Cambodia, China agree to boost transport development cooperation
- Japanese exports to Cambodia surge
- Laos-China expressway to be complete in 10 years
- Sesame prices up by K20,000 in three weeks
- Vietnam records 1.35 billion USD trade deficit in first half of June
- Vietnamese firms invest US\$21.81 billion in overseas projects



## Cambodia, China agree to boost transport development cooperation



*Cambodia News | 23 June, 2021*

Cambodia and China have agreed to boost transport development cooperation. The Kingdom has sought assistance from China in human resources development of infrastructure skills. The agreement was made during a virtual meeting held yesterday between the Senior Minister and Minister of Public Works and Transport Sun Chanthol and his Chinese counterpart Li Xiaopeng. Chanthol briefed his counterpart on the progress of the \$2 billion expressway connecting Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville. The road is currently 55 percent built and is scheduled for an early completion in September 2022, ahead of the original deadline slated for 2023. The minister's Facebook page said that he asked for support and assistance from the Chinese side to provide professors and technical experts in line with a memorandum of understanding between China and Cambodia to teach engineering on infrastructure development. Chanthol also invited his counterpart to physically attend the ASEAN Transport Minister meeting Cambodia will host in November this year as well as to review progress on the Phnom Penh-Sihanoukville Expressway's construction. The expressway is being built by the China Road and Bridge Corp. Institutes and universities in China have expressed their desire to cooperate with the newly launched Samdech Techo Institute on Public Works and Transport in order to

enhance the capacity of Cambodian infrastructure engineers in Cambodia, said Li Xiaopeng. Regarding the building of a bridge crossing the Mekong River that will connect Kratie and Kampong Thom provinces, Chanthol said it will be funded by a concessional loan from China. The Chinese government has also agreed to help construct the road section from Stung Treng province to the border with Laos, classifying it as ASEAN highway number 11, Chanthol said.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50879451/cambodia-china-agree-to-boost-transport-development-cooperation/>

## Japanese exports to Cambodia surge



*Cambodia News | 23 June, 2021*

Shipments of goods from Japan to Cambodia jumped by more than one third in the first four months of the year as stimulus spending and higher demand increased calls for foreign goods. Citing the Global Trade Atlas, the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) said exports from January to April rose to \$204.046 million, 34.8 percent higher than the same period a year earlier. JETRO noted Cambodia's exports to Japan were up 1.4 percent to \$639.475 million for the same period. The Cambodia Chamber of Commerce reported slightly higher export figures last week, saying the Kingdom's shipments to Japan were up 2.4 percent in the first four months of the year to \$643 million. Exports to Japan include textiles, footwear, furniture, office equipment, leather goods, cosmetics, paper, and steel. Japanese

exports to the Kingdom include machinery, automobiles, electronics, furniture, fabrics and plastics. "The positive growth of exports to Japan is a good sign for Cambodia's trade," said Ngou Meng Tech, director-general of the Cambodia Chamber of Commerce, who noted that the Kingdom benefits from free trade agreements with China and South Korea and is hoping to begin talks to strike a similar deal with Japan. Bilateral trade rose by around 8 percent according to figures released by both groups, raising optimism of a rise in bilateral trade after last year's slump. Trade between the two countries fell 8 percent last year compared with 2019 to \$2.099 billion. Exports fell 6.7 percent, according to JETRO. Imports were down 13.8 percent.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50879441/japanese-exports-to-cambodia-surge/>

## Laos-China expressway to be complete in 10 years



*Laos News | 24 June, 2021*

The contractor estimates it will take 10 years to build the next three sections of the Laos-China expressway from Vangvieng district in Vientiane province to the Chinese border in Luang Namtha province, at a cost of US\$6 billion. Surveying of the next three sections of the Laos-China expressway, which will run between Vientiane and Boten at the Chinese border in Luang Namtha province, is now complete. The expressway will cover a total distance of 440km and comprises four sections. The first stage between Vientiane and Vangvieng district in

Vientiane province has already been built and is in use. Section 2 will run between Vangvieng and Luang Prabang province, section 3 will link Luang Prabang and Oudomxay provinces, and section 4 will extend between Oudomxay and the Chinese border. Deputy Director of the Laos-China Joint Expressway Development Co., Ltd., Mr Tao Jun, said surveys of sections 2, 3 and 4 have been completed. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed on funding for construction and an assessment of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the import of construction equipment has been carried out. It will take 10 years to build the next three sections, according to China Radio International. A project official told Vientiane Times on Wednesday that section 2 will cost about US\$3.2 billion, section 3 will cost US\$2.89 billion, and section 4 will cost US\$1.6 billion to build. The government has approved the route for section 2 of the expressway, which runs between Vangvieng and Luang Prabang province. Construction of the Vientiane-Vangvieng section began at the end of 2018 and was set for completion in 2021 but was finished ahead of schedule in December 2020. The Chinese investor will operate the expressway under a 50-year concession agreement, with the total cost expected to be US\$1.2 billion. The Lao government has a 5 percent stake in the project. The Vientiane-Vangvieng link is the first section of the expressway, with the investing company from Yunnan province intending to build three more sections that will eventually link Vientiane to Boten on the Laos-China border. The project

agreement was signed in 2017 during Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit to Laos. The expressway is a cooperation project under China's One Belt, One Road Initiative and is symbolic of the friendship between Laos and China. The government is working to improve the transport of goods and people, promote the production of goods, and boost commerce, investment, tourism and services. Motorists will benefit through the much shorter travel times that will be possible when the expressway is complete.

Source : [https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten\\_Laos121.php](https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Laos121.php)

## Sesame prices up by K20,000 in three weeks



*Myanmar News | 23 June, 2021*

Sesame is cultivated in the country throughout the year. Magway Region, which has gained a reputation as the oil pot of Myanmar, is the main producer of sesame seeds. The seeds are also grown in Mandalay and Sagaing regions. Chinese buyers eye newly harvested black sesame seeds (Samone variety) due to high quality, and the high demand raised the price to K160,000 per 45-viss bag, which shows a significant increase of K20,000 per bag in three weeks, according to Mandalay wholesale market. In early June, the black sesame seeds (Samone variety) fetched only K130,000-143,000 per bag, whereas it sharply rose to K160,000 per bag on 21 June. The acidic rainfall can damage yield and crops. At present, the growers are supplying acid-free sesame seeds owing to

the favourable weather before the harvest time. They are highly demanded by China. Good weather led to a high yield as well. Chinese traders are buying them as much as possible for now, said a trader from Mandalay stated. Normally, Myanmar exports about 80 per cent of sesame production to foreign markets. China is the main buyer of Myanmar sesame, which is also shipped to markets in Japan, South Korea, China (Taipei), the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, and Poland among the EU countries. The EU markets prefer organic-farming sesame seeds from Myanmar, said an official from the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization. Japan prefers Myanmar black sesame seeds, cultivated under good agricultural practices (GAP), and purchases them after a quality assessment. This year, Japan has not purchased Myanmar's sesame yet. Sesame is cultivated in the country throughout the year. Magway Region, which has gained a reputation as the oil pot of Myanmar, is the main producer of sesame seeds. The seeds are also grown in Mandalay and Sagaing regions. Of the cooking oil crops grown in Myanmar, the acreage under sesame seed is the highest, accounting for 51.3 per cent of the overall oil crop plantation. Myanmar's sesame seeds export has earned US\$284.47 million in H1 (October-March) of the current financial year 2020-2021, according to data released by Myanmar Customs Department. The volume of sesame exports was registered at over 96,000 metric tonnes, worth \$130 million, in the 2015-2016FY; \$100,000 tonnes, worth \$145 million, in the 2016-2017FY; 120,000 tonnes, worth

\$147 million, in the 2017-2018FY; 33,900 tonnes valued \$43.8 million in the 2018 mini-budget period, 125,800 tonnes, worth \$212.5 million in the 2018-2019FY and over 150,000 tonnes of sesame, worth \$240 million in the previous 2019-2020FY, the trade data of Central Statistical Organization indicated. —KK/GNLM

Source : <https://www.gnlnm.com.mm/sesame-prices-up-by-k20000-in-three-weeks/>

## Vietnam records 1.35 billion USD trade deficit in first half of June



*Vietnam News | 23 June, 2021*

Hanoi (VNS/VNA) - Vietnam reported a trade deficit of 1.35 billion USD in the first half of June as exports reached only 12.3 billion USD – down nearly 2 billion USD compared to the latter half of May, the General Department of Customs has announced. Among items posting the strongest turnover decline included computers, electronics and parts with 1.06 billion USD, down 800 million USD; machinery and equipment with 1.1 billion USD, down 260 million USD; and telephones and components with 1.96 billion USD, down 50 million USD. Since the beginning of this year to mid-June, the nation's trade value surpassed 288.6 billion USD. Of the sum, over 143.3 billion USD came from exports, up 30 percent year-on-year while the remainder of 145.3 billion USD was from imports, up 36 percent. That resulted in a trade deficit of 1.96 billion USD, the department said. According to trade experts, the above-

mentioned trade deficit was not a worrisome figure as enterprises ramped up their imports of input materials to meet their production demands. Tran Thanh Hai, Deputy Director of the Import-Export Department under the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT), said at the MoIT's regular press meeting for the second quarter last week that the import of production materials currently accounted for a high proportion, especially in garment and footwear sectors, thus pushing up the import value, affecting the trade balance. The COVID-19 resurgence in late April had certain impacts on many production industries which had started to recover such as electronics and mobile phones. However, exporting enterprises which already had orders still had to import raw materials and accessories for production. Thus, an import increase should be considered a good sign rather than a cause for concern, Hai said. According to the MoIT, exports are set to increase by about 21.7 percent by year-end compared to the year's respective targets of 4-5 percent. To this end, the ministry would continue to give priority to promoting trade connections between Vietnamese enterprises and foreign partners, and the introduction of made-in-Vietnam goods to domestic and international consumers. Particularly, it would continue working to promote overseas shipments, diversify both export and import markets, optimise opportunities generated by free trade agreements,

and remove barriers to enter new markets. Last year, the country's trade surplus hit a record high of 9.9 billion USD, the highest level seen in the past four years./.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-records-135-billion-usd-trade-deficit-in-first-half-of-june/203486.vnp>

## Vietnamese firms invest US\$21.81 billion in overseas projects



*Vietnam News | 23 June, 2021*

VOV.VN - Vietnamese investors poured a total of US\$21.81 billion into 1,420 valid projects abroad during the opening five months of the year, according to the Ministry of Planning and Investment. Their numerous investment projects largely focus on mining and agro-forestry-fisheries sectors, with Laos, Cambodia, and Russia emerging as the top destinations for Vietnamese capital, making up the lion's share with 23.7%, 13.1%, and 12.9%, respectively. Total newly and additional investment capital abroad during the reviewed period reached US\$546.7 million, a three-fold increase in comparison to the same period from last year. Of the total, there were 21 projects which received investment certificates with a total registered capital of US\$143.5 million, equivalent to 88.7% of the figure recorded during the same period last year. Furthermore, local financiers adjusted investment capital for nine projects, with combined additional investment capital reaching US\$403.2 million, representing an annual rise of 21.4 times. A

major part of the capital outflow, approximately US\$271 million, was poured into the science and technology sector, followed by the wholesale and retail sector, the agro-forestry-fisheries sector and support services. A total of 15 countries received investment from Vietnam during the first five months. The United States took the lead with US\$302.8 million, trailed by Cambodia with US\$89.1 million, Canada with US\$32.08 million, and France with over US\$32 million.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/en/economy/vietnamese-firms-invest-us2181-billion-in-overseas-projects-868290.vov>