

Highlight News / August 17, 2021



- Drafting of National Roadmap for Cambodia's Sustainable Food Systems accelerated
- Cambodia and Japan in talks to promote agro-tourism and recovery of tourism sector post-pandemic
- Govt reveals debt payment plan
- Myanmar-Bangladesh border trade decreases \$16 mln this FY
- Vietnam Remains a Top Three Instant Noodles Consumers
- Vietnam aims digital economy to represent 20 pct of GDP



ADVISORY INSTITUTE FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT BY TCC (AITI)

Drafting of National Roadmap for Cambodia's Sustainable Food Systems accelerated



Cambodia News | 14 August, 2021

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) is accelerating the drafting of National Roadmap for Cambodia's sustainable food systems for 2030 roadmap to further promote the sector toward sustainable development. A meeting to examine the final draft of the National Roadmap took place recently via videoconference under the chairmanship of Veng Sakhon, Minister of MAFF and Vice President of the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD), with the participation of representatives of 13 relevant ministries and institutions as well as those of development partners such as FAO, ADB, WB, WHO, GIZ, and UNICEF. The roadmap focuses on ensuring a sustainable, well-nutritious food system and providing equitable livelihood opportunities, especially for the youths with innovation, poor farmers, vulnerable people through the increase of productivity, agricultural diversification toward green growth, and increase of smallholder farmers' and vulnerable people's income. Pheng Somany – AKP

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50915722/drafting-of-national-roadmap-for-cambodias-sustainable-food-systems-accelerated/>

Cambodia and Japan in talks to promote agro-tourism and recovery of tourism sector post-pandemic



Cambodia News | 13 August, 2021

Cambodia and Japan discussed the promotion of the agro-tourism subsector and the development and restoration of the tourism sector after the end of the Covid-19 pandemic. In a video discussion on August 12 chaired by the Director General of Tourism Development and International Cooperation, Thong Rathsak, with the Second Secretary in charge of Agriculture from the Japanese Embassy, Okada Naoya, and the founder of Yamato Green, Nabeshima Katsuhito, discussed the preparation for agrotourism projects in order to facilitate the recovery of the tourism industry in Cambodia after the end of the pandemic. The recovery is to be promoted by development of new agro-tourism products, the Green Belt, as well as promote value added in tourism. The Ministry of Tourism signed a memorandum of understanding with Yamato Green in September 2020 with the aim of promoting the development of the Green Belt Project. The project focuses on the development of agro-tourism, eco-tourism, and community tourism in the Kingdom. Through this cooperation the Ministry of Tourism has been preparing a pilot project on agro-tourism and modern techniques of cultivation in Baray District, Kampong Thom. The project's goal is to study and gradually evolve the agro-tourism sector through the cultivation of vegetables and fruits

in compliance to modern food safety standards. It also aims to inspire and facilitate the livelihood of the locals.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50915060/cambodia-and-japan-in-talks-to-promote-agro-tourism-and-recovery-of-tourism-sector-post-pandemic/>

Govt reveals debt payment plan



Laos News | 16 August, 2021

Revenue earned from potential mining operations, revamped state enterprises and from other as yet untapped sources will be used to pay debts amounting to almost US\$14 billion, the government has told the National Assembly (NA). Foreign debt has accumulated to about US\$13 billion and domestic debt now stands at US\$900 million. Money has been borrowed to balance the budget, Minister of Finance Bounchom Ubounephone told an extraordinary session of the NA's ninth legislature recently. It is planned that debts will be repaid over the next five years from 2021-2025 and then from 2026-2030, with several income streams identified to generate the necessary funds. The government will strive to boost revenue from new sources and explore untapped potential sources of revenue, especially in the mining and energy sector. With these new income streams, the government expects to generate at least an additional 10,000 billion kip (about US\$1 billion) over the next five years, the minister said. Currently, 82 projects have been

approved for the excavation and processing of mineral ores. The revenue generated from fees relating to natural resource exploitation and concessions amounts to 400 billion kip (about US\$40 million) a year. The profit tax paid by Lane Xang Minerals Limited and Phu Bia Mining Limited alone accounts for 170 billion kip, according to the minister. "There is a lot of potential in the mining sector," he said. Debt repayment is one of the measures planned to fulfil a national agenda that spells out the action needed to address financial and economic difficulties. The national agenda was adopted by the NA's extraordinary session, which has set a timeframe for its implementation of two and a half years, or by the end of 2023. Mr Bounchom said the government is reforming state enterprises in an attempt to make them profitable so they can pay the debts they owe. He explained that the government had borrowed money from foreign sources to issue as loans to state enterprises, but these enterprises had not been able to pay the money they owed to the Ministry of Finance. "Therefore, we have drawn up a plan to reform state enterprises so they will be able to pay off their debts at the rate of about US\$300 million a year," he told the NA session. According to the plan, reforms will cover many aspects, such as the management structure of enterprises, with more outsourced professionals to be employed as executive officers

instead of only state officials as before. The reforms will also seek to ensure that executives operate transparently and those whose performance is poor and results in the business making a loss will be fired. Professional experts will look into the matter and give recommendations as to which enterprises should be 100 percent government-owned, which ones could be turned into a joint public-private venture, and which ones should be sold off. Mr Bounchom told lawmakers that if all the planned debt-payment measures are fully realised, the government might not have to borrow more money or possibly only a small sum of about US\$200-300 million to pay off its debts.

Source: https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Govt_158.php

Myanmar-Bangladesh border trade decreases \$16 mln this FY



Myanmar News | 16 August, 2021

The bilateral border trade stood at over US\$35 million as of 30 July in the current 2020-21 financial year which saw a slight decrease of \$16 million, from the corresponding period of last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce's trade report. The Myanmar-Bangladesh total border trade during the period included Myanmar's export of \$16.98 million and its imports of \$18.4 million. At corresponding time last FY, the Myanmar-Bangladesh trade through border gates was touched at \$51 million, with exports worth \$26.5 million and imports amounting to

\$24.89 million. When compared with last FY, this FY saw a decrease in value of exports by \$9.5 million and the bilateral imports dropped by nearly \$6.47 million. Myanmar exports goods to Bangladesh through both maritime and land routes. Bilateral border trade is mainly conducted through the Sittway and Maungtau points of entry. The products traded between the two countries include bamboo, ginger, peanuts, saltwater prawns and fish, dried plums, garlic, rice, mung beans, blankets, candy, plum jams, footwear, frozen foods, chemicals, leather, jute products, tobacco, plastic, wood, knitwear and beverages, according to the Ministry.—ACM/GNLM

Source: <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/myanmar-bangladesh-border-trade-decreases-16-mln-this-fy/#article-title>

Vietnam Remains a Top Three Instant Noodles Consumers



Vietnam News | 15 August, 2021

You won't believe how many packs of instant noodles Vietnamese people consume, even more so during the global pandemic. Vietnamese people consumed about 7.03 billion packs of instant noodles last year, behind China/Hong Kong and Indonesia, VNA cited the World Instant Noodles Association (WINA). The latest survey by Nielsen Vietnam show that the consumption rate of domestic instant noodles has increased by 67%. Vietnam is home to about 50 local and foreign instant noodles producers. China is currently the world's highest consumer of instant noodles, but the growth rate in

consumption is not as high as that of Vietnam. According to data from the WINA, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has caused a sharp increase in the demand for instant noodles around the world. The consumption demand of this product surged by 14.79% year-on-year in 2020. Statistics of the WINA show the Asian market was the biggest consumer of this product, accounting for 56.45% of the total global instant noodle consumption last year, especially in Northeast Asian countries such as China, the Republic of Korea, and Japan. With the five main markets, namely Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia, the Southeast Asian region accounted for 25.24% of the total demand. According to a market research report of Facts and Factors, revenue from this item is expected to increase to USD 73.55 billion in 2026 from USD 45.67 billion in 2020. The annual average figure can reach 6% in the 2021-2026. Regarding export potential, a number of Vietnamese companies recorded a 300-% surge in the noodle export output. Instant noodles made in Vietnam have been sold in more than 40 countries worldwide. Most brands of instant ramen noodles are precooked and dehydrated so that they can be packaged up and sent all over the world. To dehydrate the noodles, most manufacturers will fry them or use many other techniques to ensure that they are preserved and ready for consumer use. This is why instant ramen noodles can cook in a matter of minutes in boiling water, as they were already cooked to start with, they

just needed hydration, and for the dehydration process to be reversed. It is during the cooking process then that you can add your flavoring sachet, or add in some cooked veggies, pork, beef or chicken and customize your ramen noodles to your tastes. Instant noodles are high in carbohydrates and sodium so this high level of consumption is bad news when it comes to Vietnam's public health. Other experts suggest that people should only eat one or two packs of instant noodles per week. Many Vietnamese people are well aware of the harmful effects of instant noodles, but it's common in Vietnam for people to snack on a pack of instant noodles between breakfast, lunch and dinner. The noodles are popular among college students, who often live far from home and lack the facilities to cook themselves a proper meal. The constant use of instant noodles for cooking is one of the main reasons behind the serious malnutrition in Southeast Asia, said UNICEF in 2019. Accordingly, instant food products like noodles and cookies could help fill stomachs but lack the essential nutrients for children's growth.

Source: <https://vietnamtimes.org.vn/vietnam-remains-a-top-three-instant-noodles-consumers-34865.html>

Vietnam aims digital economy to represent 20 pct of GDP



Vietnam News | 15 August, 2021

Vietnam is in a hurry to catch up with the world in terms of digital economy in general and e-commerce

in particular, according to Bloomberg. It wants its digital economy to account for 20 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) by 2025, the government website has reported, citing a draft decision by the prime minister. The National Party Congress, which meets every five years, has set a target for the digital sector to make up 30 percent of GDP by 2030. It is an ambitious reach, as the country's digital economy currently accounts for just 8.2 percent of GDP. Euromonitor International has estimated that e-commerce represented a mere 3 percent of Vietnam's retail market last year, the smallest slice among Southeast Asia's major economies. The country wants 80 percent of the population to have online payment accounts by 2025, according to the government's post. That is also when they want half of e-commerce transactions, a lot of which are still conducted in cash, to go cashless. Its young and tech savvy population, with more than half of the 98 million citizens owning smartphones, is attracting foreign tech investors, including Warburg Pincus LLC, Goodwater Capital LLC and Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. Between 2016 and the first half of 2020, investors funneled \$1.9 billion into Vietnam's online sector, according to a study by Alphabet Inc.'s Google, Temasek Holdings Pte and Bain & Co. The country's digital economy is forecast to grow to \$52 billion by 2025 from 2020, expanding nearly 30 percent per year, according to the same study.

Source: <https://e.vnexpress.net/news/business/economy/vietnam-aims-digital-economy-to-represent-20-pct-of-gdp-4340822.html>
