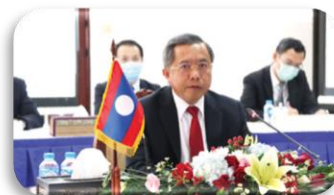


*Highlight News / September 03/2021*



- Cambodia's agricultural exports up 89.7 percent in first 8 months, netting \$3.23 billion in revenue
- BRI projects help Cambodia cushion economic fallout of COVID-19 pandemic
- Laos, Vietnam strengthen digitalisation development
- Myanmar-Bangladesh border trade decreases \$16 mln this FY
- Myanmar Agro exports grow 25 per cent as of 20 Aug
- Standard Chartered revises down Vietnam's 2021 GDP growth forecast to 4.7%
- Vietnam runs trade deficit for fourth consecutive month



## Cambodia's agricultural exports up 89.7 percent in first 8 months, netting \$3.23 billion in revenue



*Cambodia News | 02 September, 2021*

Cambodia exported 5.54 million tons of agricultural products in the first eight months of 2021, up 89.7 percent from 2.92 million tons over the same period last year, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Veng Sakhon said on Wednesday. Shipped to 66 countries and regions, the Southeast Asian nation earned gross revenue of \$3.23 billion from the exports during the January-August period this year, he wrote on social media. He added that main agricultural produce for exports included rice, rubber, cassava, mangoes, fresh bananas, pepper, cashew nuts, corn, palm oil, and tobacco, among others. "In sum, during the first eight months of 2021, non-rice exports rose by 110 percent, while milled rice exports dropped by 23 percent due to shipping container shortages and higher shipping costs," Sakhon said. Cambodia exported 343,447 tons of milled rice during the first eight months of this year, generating \$292 million in revenue, the minister said. China remains the top buyer of Cambodia's milled rice, accounting for 48 percent of the kingdom's total rice export, he said, adding that the country shipped 165,612 tons of rice to China during the period, up 4 percent year-on-year. Xinhua

Source:

<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50927787/cambodia-as-agricultural-exports-up-89-7-percent-in-first-8->

[months-netting-3-23-billion-in-revenue/](#)

## BRI projects help Cambodia cushion economic fallout of COVID-19 pandemic



*Cambodia News | 02 September, 2021*

Projects under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) have been helping buffer Cambodia's economic development against the fallout of COVID-19, officials and academics said in recent interviews. Cambodian government chief spokesman Phay Siphon said BRI projects here like the construction of the Phnom Penh-Sihanoukville expressway, the new Siem Reap international airport, the national stadium, and the Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone (SSEZ) among others, have provided tremendous benefits to Cambodia's economic development during the pandemic. Despite the impact of COVID-19, construction of mega projects like the Phnom Penh-Sihanoukville expressway and the 700-megawatt power plant in Sihanoukville has made headway steadily, promoting Cambodia's economic development, he said, adding that when completed those projects will play a very important role in helping boost Cambodia's economy in the post-pandemic era. "The SSEZ has importantly contributed to supporting the country's exports, and all hydropower plants have supplied stable electricity, which is crucial to ensure the normalcy of people's daily lives and businesses," he told Xinhua. Since its inception in 2013, the BRI is becoming the

new engine of global economic growth, Siphon said, adding that it has importantly contributed to boosting regional and global cooperation in terms of hard and soft infrastructures, economy, trades, investment opportunities, cultural exchange, and people-to-people connectivity. Cambodia's economic growth is expected to rebound by 2.5 percent in 2021 after experiencing a contraction of minus 1.9 percent last year, according to the government's latest forecast. Neak Chandarith, director of the Cambodia 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Research Center, said the BRI projects have played a stabilizing role in anchoring economic development in Cambodia during the pandemic, while there are disruptions elsewhere. He said, according to an operator's report, the SSEZ saw a rise of 44.51 percent year-on-year in the value of imports and exports reaching 1.185 billion U.S. dollars in the first seven months of 2021. Meanwhile, the construction of the Phnom Penh-Sihanoukville expressway, which is expected to be completed on schedule despite the pandemic, has created thousands of jobs for Cambodian people. "The expressway will reduce travel time and cost, and improve the logistics connectivity between Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville to the world, thus fueling faster economic growth and alleviation of poverty in the country," he said. "These BRI projects will be the significant contributors to Cambodia's economic development in the post-COVID-19 recovery, as well as to the integration of the Cambodian economy with other economies of the world," Chandarith told Xinhua. Kin Phea, director-

general of the International Relations Institute at the Royal Academy of Cambodia, said the BRI projects are excellent opportunities for Cambodia and it is a right development train for Cambodia to board. He said the development of infrastructure such as roads, rails, airports, seaports, hydropower plants, and special economic or industrial zones under BRI are very important in reducing logistics cost in the kingdom, enhancing economic competitiveness, and diversifying sources of growth. "BRI also strengthens the economic performance of Cambodia. During and post-COVID-19, BRI projects will play more important role in Cambodia's economic development," Phea said. He suggested that China continue to help infrastructure development in Cambodia so as to improve its logistics and cost competitiveness for the next stage of development. He added that human capital development and technology transfer are equally important areas of cooperation for Cambodia to realize its inclusive development goals. Proposed in 2013, the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (BRI) aims to build trade and infrastructure networks connecting Asia with Europe and Africa on and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes. Chheang Vannarith, president of the Phnom Penh-based Asian Vision Institute, said BRI has provided huge opportunities for Cambodia to develop its infrastructure as well as deepen its national and regional connectivity, which in turn help Cambodia further integrate into regional logistics and supply chains. "As China has paid more

attention to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards, the quality of BRI projects will improve,” he told Xinhua. He added that the local Cambodian government needs to develop and enforce rules and regulations concerning ESG practices.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50927813/bri-projects-help-cambodia-cushion-economic-fallout-of-covid-19-pandemic/>

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## Laos, Vietnam strengthen digitalisation development



*Laos News | 03 September, 2021*

Laos and Vietnam have agreed to strengthen their cooperation in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and foster further development in digitalisation. An agreement was signed on Wednesday during an online meeting between Minister of Technology and Communications Prof. Dr Boviengkham Vongdara and Vietnam’s Minister of Information and Communications, Mr Nguyen Manh Hung. The two sides will work together in the fields of postal services, telecommunications, Internet, frequency allocation, satellite orbits, digital government, information security, digital transformation, and innovative digital technologies. Training of personnel will also take place to build capacity in digital development. In the past, the two ministries have shared in a number of projects such as ICT training to help upgrade both bachelor and master’s

degrees. They have also provided training for teachers and ICT staff on topics such as frequency management, Internet code management, and internet security. The two ministries also called for further cooperation between the private sectors of Laos and Vietnam. Officials recommended setting up a technology entrepreneurial society for start-up businesses with the potential to partner in the areas agreed to in the Memorandum of Understanding based on the principles of mutual assistance, special solidarity and comprehensive cooperation. The agreement was signed as preparations are underway to celebrate the Year of Solidarity in 2022, the 60th anniversary of Laos-Vietnam diplomatic relations and the 45th anniversary of the signing of the Laos-Vietnam Friendship and Cooperation Treaty. The E-Government Centre of the Ministry of Technology and Communications, together with Vietnam’s Star Telecom (UNITEL) recently entered into an agreement to expedite the government’s use of digital technology. Their partnership will drive development in this field and enable the modernisation of services through improved e-government. This will further the process of digital transformation and the development of a modern state administration on a par with others in the region.

Source : [https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten\\_Laos172.php](https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Laos172.php)

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



*Myanmar News | 02 September, 2021*

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 bilateral border trade between Myanmar and Bangladesh totalled US\$35.41 million as of 20 August in the financial year 2020-21, a decrease by \$16 mln compared to the same period last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce. Between 1 October and 20 August, this FY, Myanmar- Bangladesh trade through border checkpoints was touched at \$35.41 million, with exports worth \$16.98 million and imports amounting to \$18.43 million. When compared with last FY, this FY saw a decrease in the 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. — Zwe/GNLM

Source: <https://www.gnlim.com.mm/myanmar-bangladesh-border-trade-decreases-16-mln-this-fy-2/>

## Myanmar Agro exports grow 25 per cent as of 20 Aug



*Myanmar News | 02 September, 2021*

The agricultural exports rocketed to US\$4.3 billion between 1 October and 20 August of the current financial year 2020-2021, despite the downward trend in other export groups resulted from the tightened coronavirus containment measures in the border and increase in the container shipping cost. Myanmar's agricultural exports over the past ten months of the current financial year soared 25 per cent amid the closure of the major border post Muse triggered by the coronavirus impacts, indicated the Ministry of Commerce statistics. The agricultural exports rocketed to US\$4.3 billion between 1 October and 20 August of the current financial year 2020-2021, despite the downward trend in other export groups resulted from the tightened coronavirus containment measures in the border and increase in the container shipping cost. The figures reflect an increase of \$877 million this FY. The agro exports topped \$3.46 billion in the corresponding period of the 2019-2020FY, according to the trade figures released by the Ministry of Commerce. The agricultural exports surged even though the main trade partner China shut down all the borders in the wake of the COVID-19 surge in Myanmar. The coronavirus pandemic impacted the foreign demand for other export groups: agricultural products, fishery, livestock, mineral, forest products, finished industrial goods and other goods. In the exports

sector, the agriculture industry performed the best, accounting for 34 per cent of overall exports. The chief items of export in the agricultural sector are rice and broken rice, pulses and beans and maize. Fruits and vegetables, sesame, dried tea leaves, sugar, and other agro products are also shipped to other countries. Myanmar agro products are primarily exported to China, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka. Sometimes, the export market remains uncertain due to unsteady global demand. The country requires specific export plans for each agro product, as they are currently exported to external markets based upon supply and demand. The G-to-G pact also ensures a strong market for the farmers. Contract farming systems, involvement of regional and state agriculture departments, exporters, traders, and some grower groups, are required in order to meet production targets, the Agriculture Department stated. The Commerce Ministry is working to help farmers deal with challenges such as high input costs, procurement of pedigree seeds, high cultivation costs, and erratic weather conditions. — KK/GNLM

Source: <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/myanmar-agro-exports-grow-25-per-cent-as-of-20-aug/>

## Standard Chartered revises down Vietnam's 2021 GDP growth forecast to 4.7%



*Vietnam News | 02 September, 2021*

HCMC – Standard Chartered has revised down its forecast for Vietnam's gross domestic product (GDP) growth this year from 6.5% to 4.7%. The country's GDP in 2022 was predicted to expand 7%, lower than the 7.3% projected earlier, the local media reported. Due to low economic indicators, the serious developments of the Covid-19 pandemic and slow Covid-19 vaccination, Standard Chartered has revised down its forecast for the country's economic growth three times this year, from 7.8% to 6.7%, then 6.5% and now 4.7%. According to the bank, if the pandemic is not brought under control this month, the country's economic growth will be dragged even lower. The global economy, which may recover in the last quarter of the year, and the improved global trade may support Vietnam's import-export activities. Standard Chartered forecast the pandemic would send investment in Vietnam down until the end of the year and negatively affect the tourism sector. Tim Leelahaphan, economist for Thailand and Vietnam at Standard Chartered, said Vietnam had been facing the brunt of the pandemic. However, Standard Chartered still maintains its positive outlook on the country's economic growth. According to the General Statistics Office, Vietnam's index of industrial production, one of the key pillars of economic growth, in August dropped 4.2% month-

on-month and 7.4% year-on-year, the steepest decline since early this year, except for February with the eight-day Tet holiday.

Source : <https://english.thesaigontimes.vn/standard-chartered-revises-down-vietnams-2021-gdp-growth-forecast-to-4-7/>

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## Vietnam runs trade deficit for fourth consecutive month



*Vietnam News | 02 September, 2021*

HCMC – Vietnam ran a trade deficit of US\$1.3 billion in August, the fourth consecutive month, taking the January-August total to US\$3.7 billion, according to a Ministry of Industry and Trade report. The report on industrial production and trade released on September 1 showed that the fourth wave of Covid-19 infections had forced many cities and provinces, especially in southern Vietnam, to practice stringent social distancing and impose harsh travel restrictions, negatively affecting import-export operations, the local media reported. However, the Ministry of Industry and Trade remains optimistic about the trade balance in the remaining months of the year. According to the ministry, the country is traditionally inclined to step up imports in the first months of year to prepare export production, so exports will rise in the second half of year. In the eight-month period, domestic enterprises incurred a trade deficit of US\$20.36 billion, while foreign-invested firms generated a trade surplus of

US\$16.65 billion. In August, the country exported products worth US\$26.2 billion and spent US\$27.5 billion on imports, down 6% and 5.5%, respectively, month-on-month. The country's key export earners last month were phones; machines, equipment, tools and parts; and electronic products and accessories. In January-August, the respective turnover from exports and imports reached US\$212.55 billion and US\$216.26 billion. The United States was the largest importer of Vietnamese products in the period with revenue of US\$62 billion, up 32.3% year-on-year. China came in second with US\$32.7 billion, followed by the European Union with US\$26 billion. Meanwhile, China remained the largest supplier of products to Vietnam with US\$72.5 billion, followed by South Korea with US\$34.6 billion and ASEAN with US\$28 billion.

Source: <https://english.thesaigontimes.vn/vietnam-runs-trade-deficit-for-fourth-consecutive-month/>