

Highlight News / September 15/2021



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Cambodian customs department nets \$1.52 billion in eight months



Cambodia News | 14 September, 2021

The General Department of Customs and Excise earned \$1.5 billion as revenue in the first eight months this year, representing 64.2 percent of yearly plan. The figures were shared by Kun Nhim, Director General of Customs and Excise in a recent virtual conference on vehicle import duty. Imports of cars, machinery, motorcycles and other vehicles are sources of goods that have contributed to the growth of customs collection, especially the taxes on the import of cars under the label of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and National Police licence plates, he said. The General Department of Customs and Excise of Cambodia has played an important role in collecting the export-import taxes from international trade for national income, he underlined. In 2020, the GDCE collected \$2.420 billion as revenue, a 24.8 percent decrease compared to that of 2019. Chea Vannak – AKP

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50934455>

[/cambodian-customs-department-nets-1-52-billion-in-eight-months/](https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50934455/cambodian-customs-department-nets-1-52-billion-in-eight-months/)

Hunt down more overseas trade, demands Prime Minister Hun Sen



Cambodia News | 14 September, 2021

Cambodian businesses must urgently seek more external trade particularly in the agricultural sector, after a call by Prime Minister Hun Sen that it is essential for the security and future of the economy.

This comes as six documents were signed on Sunday between the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi and his Cambodian counterpart Prak Sokhonn, also deputy PM, at Phnom Penh's Peace Palace which was witnessed by Mr Hun Sen. These documents included: Handover Certificate of Humanitarian Demining Materials to the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority, the Cooperation Agreement on Hospitals Counterpart Support between the National Health Commission of China and the Ministry of Health of Cambodia and the Handover Certificate of Anti-pandemic Supplies between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia. The Chinese minister also gave grant aid of \$270 million but its purpose is unclear. Wang Yi reaffirmed China's support for the agricultural sector, saying: "China will import more agricultural produce from Cambodia for the benefit of the Cambodian farmers." Mr Hun Sen raised the idea on the direct export of Cambodian agricultural produce such as Pailin longan to the Chinese market, which has an annual production volume of 200,000 tonnes. China is the second-largest economy in the world behind the United States and so it benefits Cambodia greatly to have it as close allies, although many economists argue that it is dangerous to rely on just one market alone because any breakdown in relations could affect exporters in the country. American Chamber of Commerce president Anthony Galliano told Khmer Times yesterday: "Although there has been much attention and prominence paid

to the bilateral Cambodia- China Free Trade Agreement, China although one of the fastest growing economies and markets in the world, is just one market and has its limitations. “The nation that is the largest importer of bananas, and second in mangoes, in the world is the United States, which imports \$2.8 billion per year... 18 percent of the total imported.” He continued: “Belgium, Russia, Japan and Germany are ahead of China for importation of bananas with them being sixth. “The bilateral trade relationship between Cambodia and the US surged to 33 percent and \$3.8 billion in the first half of 2021, despite the severe impact of the pandemic on the global economy and international trade and, although the US has historically been one of the world’s largest and dominant food producers, as a country it is second only to China as the largest single country agricultural produce importer. This is a huge market opportunity for Cambodia.” Galliano is showcasing an agricultural webinar titled “Agricultural Trade and Investment in the Kingdom of Cambodia” at 10am on Sept 21. Along with the upcoming free trade agreement coming into force with China, there is a free trade agreement with all ASEAN members and Australia and New Zealand that has been in place since January 2010 and ensures tariff-free movement of 90 percent of goods traded between the signatories. There is also an agreement with South Korea that was due to be signed in the middle of the year but because of Covid- 19 it has been put on hold. Yesterday, Cambodia also made a request to China specifically

to buy more of its agricultural products. The request was made by Hor Namhong, deputy prime minister, in a meeting with China’s Wang Yi, who is also co-chair of the China- Cambodia Intergovernmental Coordination Committee in Phnom Penh. Cambodia has listed longan, durian, pepper, and palm sugar as potential agricultural products for exports to China, Namhong said. In the seventh Asean-China ministerial meeting on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Cooperation held yesterday, Cambodia Agriculture Minister Veng Sakhon appealed to China’s Wang Lingjun, deputy minister of General Administration of Customs China, to accelerate the valuation in each process of the matter. “Improving the phytosanitary nature of our agricultural products will bring Cambodian products to a standard that can be exported to international markets in the future,” Lim Heng, deputy president of Cambodia Chamber of Commerce, said yesterday.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50934578/hunt-down-more-overseas-trade-demands-prime-minister-hun-sen/>

US supports Laos’ Covid vaccination programme



Laos News | 15 September, 2021

The US government is supporting the Ministry of Health with the distribution of Covid vaccines to achieve the goals of the vaccination programme and help ensure that all eligible people are immunised. Minister of Health Dr Bounfeng Phoummalaysith on Tuesday attended the launch of the United States

Agency for International Development (USAID) Covid-19 Vaccine Rollout Support to the Ministry of Health through UNICEF and the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Laos. This support indicates the continuing commitment of the US government to the Lao government during these difficult and challenging times. Dr Bounfeng said the support of the US would help the government to overcome the challenges encountered in bringing the Covid outbreak under control, by assisting with the distribution of vaccine and targeting those most in need of immunisation. The programme will ensure that vaccination is carried out in a timely manner in line with the policies and plans of various parties, including the government's development partners and international organisations. The US Ambassador to Laos, Dr Peter Haymond, said the US and Lao governments are fighting the Covid-19 outbreak together. The US government through USAID has provided an additional US\$2 million in aid to support the government's vaccination programme. The US government has added to government contributions to the Johnson & Johnson and Pfizer vaccines to help stop the spread of Covid-19, in partnership with UNICEF and WHO. The United States is also continuing to support education and public health systems to reduce the economic impacts of the pandemic. This year, the United States and Laos are celebrating the 5th anniversary of their partnership model and it is hoped that cooperation with the US government will be expanded next year.

Source : https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_USsupports_180.php

Dala begins COVID-19 jabs for factory workers



Myanmar News | 14 September, 2021

Intending to prevent the spreading of COVID-19, Dala township began the first dose of COVID-19 vaccination for factory workers on 13 September 2021 at Township Public Hospital. Township Public Health Department staff provided the first jabs of COVID-19 vaccines to 352 workers from restaurants, grocery stores, ports, saving and loans enterprises, fuel oil stations, fisheries depots, rice mills, wages workers from electricity offices, trishaw stands and shipyard at 9 am to 3 pm. The officials from the Township General Administration Department and members of the Township Red Cross Society are also cooperating with the vaccination programme. The vaccines were administered in line with the COVID-19 guidelines set by the Ministry of Health, and health awareness talks were given to the vaccinated people. Dala Township has given the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to 5319 people including 880 people over 65 years of age, 39 government and private health workers, 386 volunteers from charity organizations, six people from home for the aged, 176 vulnerable monks and nuns, 488 civil staffs, 815 civil staffs' family members, 44 private bankers, 249 private factories workers, 25 hotel industries workers, 13 prisoners, 601 transportation staff and 1,603 supermarket staff.

Authorities are also carrying out to provide the second dose of COVID-19 vaccines to those who have had the first dose of the vaccine, according to the Township Committee on Control and Emergency Response to COVID-19. — Naing Lin Kyaw (IPRD)/GNLM

Source : <https://www.gnln.com.mm/dala-begins-covid-19-jabs-for-factory-workers/>

Domestic Flights to Be Planned for Resumption Without Restrictions to Fully Vaccinated Passengers



Vietnam News | 14 September, 2021

The Civil Aviation Authority of Vietnam (CAAV) has proposed the resumption of all domestic flights, where fully vaccinated passengers and those who have recovered from COVID-19 can travel without restrictions. The CAAV said on September 13 that it has reported to the Ministry of Transport on a plan to restore domestic air transport. Domestic flights will be operated according to three phases. In the first phase, each airline will operate each route with a frequency of less than 50% compared to the first week of April (before the fourth outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic). In the second phase, the frequency would be increased to not exceed 70 percent, while the final phase would see flight frequency return to the level as seen in the first week of April (but not exceeding it). After that, airlines can operate flights according to demand when all provinces and cities lift social distancing orders under Directive 16. The CAAV has also proposed

passengers meet several criteria including being fully vaccinated and having a negative test result for SARS-CoV-2 taken within 72 hours prior to travel, according to Nhandan. The first phase is expected to last two weeks after the CAAV's proposal is approved. In this phase, passengers need to have a certificate of completion of concentrated isolation or a certificate of being fully vaccinated or a certificate of recovery from COVID-19. In the second phase, besides the conditions applied in the first phase, passengers who have a certificate of living in a locality not undergoing social distancing under Directive 16 can also take domestic flights. Meanwhile, the third phase will not limit the number of eligible passengers. For air routes that had only one flight a day even pre-pandemic, they can resume operations as normal. Passengers on domestic flights must test negative for the coronavirus within 72 hours before flying. Certain requirements would also be applied in three phases. In the first phase, to be trialed for two weeks, allowed passengers would include those on official missions, those fighting the pandemic, those carrying approved papers by local authorities for travel, those with certificates to prove they have completed their quarantine periods, and those with documents to prove they have either been fully vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 for up to 12 months prior to the flight. The second phase would also last two weeks and add more categories like people who have confirmed their stay in areas not under social distancing orders as dictated by

Directive 16 for up to 12 months before the flight. The third phase would see no restrictions regarding the types of passengers allowed to fly. However, the CAAV would ban any passenger found forging papers to board a plane. To execute the proposal, the CAAV has allowed airlines to devise flight schedules, selling tickets and other measures, while preparing to adapt to any changes should the pandemic evolve. Airports must also cooperate with local Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to monitor coronavirus control measures, the CAAV added. The proposal has been sent to the Ministry of Transport, and once approved, would be applied immediately, reported the vnexpress. Amid rampant Covid-19 outbreaks, Vietnam has still not allowed international flights to resume, except in certain cases. Flights that carry goods and coronavirus forces are still functional, with the Hanoi-Ho Chi Minh City route allowed two back-and-forth flights a day.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-automobile-sales-slip-to-record-low-due-to-covid19/207891.vnp>

Seafood exports drop sharply during social distancing



Vietnam News | 14 September, 2021

HCMC – Stringent social distancing measures in 19 southern cities and provinces over the past two months have severely affected the seafood manufacturing and processing industry, resulting in a sharp decline in seafood exports, according to the Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and

Producers (VASEP). Data from VASEP showed that Vietnam's seafood exports to major markets such as the United States and Europe in August plunged 16-50% compared with the same period last year. Specifically, seafood exports to the Netherlands and Germany saw the steepest decline, at nearly 50% and 42%, respectively. Meanwhile, seafood exports to Japan and China dropped 36%. The country's total seafood exports reached US\$588 million last month, falling nearly 28% year-on-year. Exports of most key seafood products were affected. Particularly, exports of shrimp, catfish, tuna, and squid and octopus fell 36%, 31%, 25% and 23%, respectively, compared with the same period last year. Le Van Quang, chairman of the board of directors of Minh Phu Corporation, said seafood companies in the southern cities and provinces were required to apply the stay-at-work mode during the social distancing period, leading to higher production costs and lower productivity. According to Quang, Minh Phu Corporation is able to provide accommodation at the factory for only 25% of its employees. Seafood companies in the South account for 90-95% of the country's total seafood exports. Some companies said they would go bankrupt if they are not able to resume operations by September 15. Even if social distancing measures are relaxed after September 15 and they can resume operations soon, it will be hard for them to fulfill orders for the year-end peak

season. According to Vo Quan Huy, one of the biggest challenges that seafood companies are facing during the social distancing period is the shortage of workers. Besides, difficulties in the transport of products, materials and equipment have caused disruptions in the industry. To help businesses, especially seafood producers and exporters ride out difficulties, the Government has issued Resolution No. 105, asking the relevant agencies to promptly support them. In the resolution, the Government asked the Ministry of Health to accelerate Covid-19 vaccination for workers in the manufacturing and processing industry. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Transport must simplify procedures to ensure the smooth transport of goods between localities. Moreover, the State Bank of Vietnam should launch more financial incentives for businesses affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and expand beneficiaries of supporting policies.

Source : <https://english.thesaigontimes.vn/seafood-exports-drop-sharply-during-social-distancing/>
