

Highlight News / February 09/2022



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Cross-border trade with Cambodia jumps 16.63 percent to 144.9 billion baht in 2021



Cambodia News | 8 February, 2022

Cross-border trade in 2021 between Thailand and Cambodia expanded by 16.63 percent to 144.9 billion baht last year, an amazing achievement despite the borders being closed significantly last year. Overall, Thailand's cross border trade grew 30 per cent compared to the previous year, the Commerce Ministry reported last week, while setting a target of 5-7 per cent growth for 2022. "The total trade of 1.71 trillion baht in 2021 represented a rise of 30.03 per cent, with exports rising 34.6 per cent to 1.03 trillion baht and imports up by 23.7 per cent to 684 billion baht," said Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanawisit. "The cross-border trade in 2021 has overwhelmingly exceeded the ministry's target of 6 per cent expansion by five times," he pointed out. "This year we estimate the trade volume will continue to grow within the range of 5 to 7 per cent year on year. Exports are expected to amount to 1.08 trillion to 1.1 trillion baht," Jurin said. He said the factors that would contribute to an expansion in cross-border trade in 2022 include the continued recovery of global and regional economies from the impact of Covid-19, the weakening baht that would increase product price competitiveness, and the use of the newly opened China-Laos railway that would greatly help in transportation of farm products from Thailand to Vientiane and Chongqing – two of the biggest

markets for agricultural products. When divided by countries, the values of cross border trade with foreign neighbors are as follow: Laos recorded 417.73 billion baht trade volume in 2021, increasing 39.31 per cent year on year Malaysia recorded 346.6 billion baht, increasing 42.6 per cent Cambodia recorded 144.9 billion baht, increasing 16.63 per cent Myanmar recorded 122.08 billion baht, increasing 109.24 per cent China recorded 194.82 billion baht, increasing 59.71 per cent Singapore recorded 53.85 billion baht, increasing 51.49 per cent Vietnam recorded 46.3 billion baht, increasing 5.03 per cent "To further facilitate cross-border trade, the ministry will continue to work with government agencies and the private sector, both domestic and overseas, to locate potential buyers in new markets," Jurin said. "Furthermore, this year we expect to reopen more border checkpoints that had been shut to prevent Covid-19 from spreading." Of the 97 checkpoints that Thailand shares with Malaysia, Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia, only 48 are now open for cross-border trade. Jurin said he planned to reopen at least 12 more this year; four checkpoints are in Nong Khai, two in Chiang Rai, while Loei, Nakhon Phanom, Mukdahan, Ubon Ratchathani, Trat and Sa Kaeo have one checkpoint each. "The ministry will continue to closely monitor the two risk factors that could hinder the expansion of cross-border trading: one is the situation now that the more transmissible Omicron is a major variant found in Thailand and neighbouring countries, and the other is the economic/political situation in

Myanmar, especially the import control policy that aims to reduce the country's deficit balance," Jurin added. The Nation/Ministry of Commerce, Thailand.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501020980/cross-border-trade-with-cambodia-jumps-16-63-percent-to-144-9-billion-baht-in-2021/>

Almost 90 percent of Cambodian received COVID jobs



Cambodia News | 8 February, 2022

New statistics from the Ministry of Health showed that 89.78 percent of Cambodia's 16 million population have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, still one the highest in the world. Among those, the government has achieved 102.08 percent of its 10 million target in adult population. It almost fully reach full target of vaccinating nearly two million minor between the age of 12 and 17 while the government has already succeeded in the 6-12 and 3-5 age groups, achieving 106,05 percent and 106.88 percent respectively. On the New York Times' Tracking List of Coronavirus Vaccinations Around the World, Cambodia stands at number 9 and in Southeast Asian is behind only Brunei, whose population is less than 1 million.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501021130/almost-90-percent-of-cambodian-received-covid-jobs/>

NTP launches free fuel delivery service



Laos News | 9 February, 2022

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce has authorised NTP Public Company to launch a free-of-

charge fuel delivery service so that members of the public can receive the best service and cut travel costs, amid record high fuel prices. A ceremony to mark the company's 5th anniversary and the launch of the fuel delivery service took place on Monday and was attended by Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce Mrs Chansouk Sengphachan. CEO of NTP Public Company, Mr Chindasak Nhotmanhkhong, said the fuel delivery service would start on February 9 and could be accessed through the "NTP Petrols" app and downloaded on Google Play and the App Store for registration. "This service will help people save time and money on travel. With the Covid-19 outbreak continuing, we wanted to provide an easy way to enable people to get fuel anywhere by launching the fuel delivery service to make it more convenient for the public," he added. The company's Deputy Director General, Mr Luem Yongvongsitthi, said NTP was founded five years ago in 2017. It is a registered enterprise and has a licence to run the business correctly and in accordance with accepted standards. NTP Public Company has built three fuel warehouses. One is in Dong Luang village in Naxaithong district, Vientiane, and has a storage capacity of 5 million litres. The second is in Nateuy village, Luang Namtha district and province, and also has a capacity of 5 million litres. The third storage facility is in Phonxay village, Kaysone Phomvihane city, Savannakhet province, and has a capacity of 1 million litres. The company also plans to build a warehouse in Savannakhet province to store 3.5 million litres of fuel. In Pakxe

city, Champassak province, the company has installed an oil bottling plant that can handle more than 1 million litres, with the aim of providing fuel to infrastructure and other projects such as the Laos-China Railway and the 5th Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge. Over the past five years, NTP has distributed fuel to 300 million customers, including 200 million litres of diesel, 2.5 million litres of gasoline, and 90.6 million litres of motor oil, using more than 60 vehicles to deliver fuel to customers. The success of the venture has been due to the attention, guidance and support of all government departments and related sectors, while at the same time the company itself has invested wisdom, hard work, wealth and resources.

Source : https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_NTP_27_22.php

Laos allows private firms to study building power line to Vietnam



Laos News | 8 February, 2022

The Lao Government has given the green light for two private companies to carry out a feasibility study on the construction of a 220kV transmission line which would carry electricity from five dams in northern Laos to Vietnam. If the study is approved, the line will transmit electricity from Nam Ou dams No.3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 through Luang Prabang and Phongsaly provinces to Vietnam. The signing ceremony for the work took place last weekend by representatives from the Lao Government and CTC Development Group Sole Co., Ltd. and Vu Thu

Construction JSC of Vietnam, the Vientiane Times reported. The feasibility study will take 18 months and if the results are positive, construction on the line will begin right after that. This move comes in the context that Laos wants to increase electricity export to meet Vietnam's growing energy demand. Laos currently exports more than 6,423MW of electricity, mainly to neighbouring countries, including Vietnam.

Source : <https://english.vov.vn/en/economy/laos-allows-private-firms-to-study-building-power-line-to-vietnam-post922950.vov>

Myanmar maritime trade tops US\$7.64 bln as of 28 January



Myanmar News | 8 February, 2022

The value of Myanmar's maritime trade between 1 October and 28 January 2022 of the current mini-budget period of 2021-2022 jumped to US\$7.64 billion, according to the Ministry of Commerce. The figure reflected an increase of \$485 million as against last financial year. Sea trade rose from \$7.159 billion during the year-ago period, according to the Ministry of Commerce. While maritime exports were valued at \$3.513 billion, imports registered \$4.13 billion. Compared to the same period in the 2020-2021FY, imports fell by \$103.37 million, while exports registered an increase of \$588.49 million. Meanwhile, the value of trade through the border this FY was estimated at \$2.107 billion, which dropped drastically from \$4 billion registered last FY. Myanmar's sea trade generated \$19.8 billion out of an overall trade value of \$29.5 billion in the previous

FY2020-2021, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics indicated. Myanmar exports agricultural products, fishery products, minerals, livestock, forest products, finished industrial goods, and other products, while it imports capital goods, consumer goods, and raw industrial materials. The country currently has nine ports involved in sea trade. Yangon Port is the main gateway for Myanmar's maritime trade and includes the Yangon inner terminals and the outer Thilawa Port. Yangon inner terminals and the outer Thilawa Port received a higher number of larger ships of above 30,000 DWT (Deadweight tonnage) after the draft limit is extended up to 10 metres with the new navigation channel accessing to inner Yangon River. — KK/GNLM

Source : <https://www.gnlnm.com.mm/myanmar-maritime-trade-tops-us7-64-blm-as-of-28-january/>

Vietnam's aviation expected to strongly rebound this year



Vietnam News | 8 February, 2021

NDO/VNA – The recent recovery signs of domestic and international air routes stir hope of the sector for a strong rebound this year following a bad year in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Civil Aviation Authority of Vietnam (CAAV), domestic airlines operated 126,280 flights in 2021, down 41.7 percent year-on-year, and nearly 60 percent from the pre-pandemic number. International regular flights had been completely frozen since the first wave of the pandemic, except flights bringing

home overseas Vietnamese or those carrying foreign experts. The General Statistics Office (GSO) under the Ministry of Planning and Investment said Vietnam welcomed only 111,100 international arrivals by air last year, a drop of 96.4 percent from the previous year. Pham Viet Dung, Chairman of the Vietnam Aviation Business Association (VABA), said Vietnamese airlines experienced decreases of 80-90 percent in revenues. The national flag carrier Vietnam Airlines reported an accumulative loss of 21.2 trillion VND (934.7 million USD) as of the end of the third quarter last year. However, a representative from Vietnam Airlines, said the carrier's market share and revenue from cargo transport still took the lead in Southeast Asia, reaching some 8 trillion VND in the year, up 60 percent from 2020. The carrier will continue to focus on cargo transport, aiming to establish a cargo carrier in the time ahead, the representative said. Meanwhile, new-generation airline Vietjet reported a rise of 36.4 percent in revenue despite successive pandemic impacts, becoming a silver lining of the whole sector. During the Tet (Lunar New Year) festival, passengers going through Tan Son Nhat International Airport in Ho Chi Minh City increased sharply, surpassing 100,000 on February 6 - the sixth day of the Lunar New Year. On February 3, Noi Bai International Airport in Hanoi also served 34,000 passengers. In December 2021 when international flights were resumed, the number of international visitors to Vietnam expanded by 14.2 percent from the previous month. Experts said the Vietnamese aviation sector has surmounted the

deepest point of the crisis. Domestic transport would recover to some 70-75 percent of pre-pandemic levels, while international transport would reach 25 percent. The figures are expected to rise higher in the last quarter of this year. Vietnam Airlines General Director Le Hong Ha suggested further upgrading infrastructure and speeding up the implementation of major projects like Long Thanh Airport to ensure sustainable recovery and development of the sector.

Source : <https://en.nhandan.vn/business/item/11143502-vietnam%E2%80%99s-aviation-expected-to-strongly-rebound-this-year.html>

Viet Nam working to become innovation magnet in Southeast Asia



Vietnam News | 8 February, 2022

HA NOI — The COVID-19 pandemic, which has touched every aspect of society, has failed to cool down the startup and innovation spirit but, on the contrary, created major influence, contributing to economic development and recovery, according to insiders. Viet Nam's booming startup and innovation environment is attributable to efforts by the Government and relevant ministries, sectors and communication agencies, especially the Vietnam National Innovation Centre (NIC) under the Ministry of Planning and Investment, they said. In an interview with the Vietnam News Agency (VNA), Nguyen Thi Ngoc Dung, a representative from NIC, said domestic enterprises were aware of innovation, particularly following the pandemic fight. The centre

has brought together more than 1,000 Vietnamese experts who are working at well-known universities and research institutes globally, and connected nearly 100 venture capital funds across the world with startups in the local innovation ecosystem. Dung took Genetica, a US-based medtech startup that mainly provides its services in Southeast Asia, as an example. The firm announced in October 2021 that it would develop the largest gene sequencing centre in the region, located at NIC, with an annual capacity of 500,000 genomes. Genetica's founders graduated from leading US universities, said Dung, who has worked to persuade the firm to set up its Southeast Asian headquarters in Viet Nam. Cao Anh Tuan, Genetica Co-founder and CEO, said his firm initially picked Singapore to open the centre in, but later selected Viet Nam instead after his first meeting in the US with Minister of Planning and Investment Nguyen Chí Dung who assured him that the Vietnamese Government would create the best possible conditions for scientists returning home from the US. The Genetica centre at the NIC building is designed to the standard of US-based labs, the most rigorous for genetic testing in the world. Accordingly, Viet Nam will be one of very few Southeast Asian countries running CAP (College of American Pathologists) and CLIA (Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments) standard genetic testing laboratories. More importantly,

Genetica's gene sequencing results are accepted worldwide, allowing users to decode once and apply for a lifetime. Last year, Viet Nam ranked 44th on the global innovation index. The country's startup ecosystem also claimed the 59th position out of 100 countries. Viet Nam has been ranked third by international organisations in the group of the three most dynamic innovative startup ecosystems in Southeast Asia, only after Indonesia and Singapore. Dung suggested changes in the mindset of policymaking and the adaptation of new business models and new technologies as innovation and startup is intended to create breakthroughs that can influence the society. Tuan also emphasised three factors to the development, innovation and creation of startups, namely human resources, connectivity with mentors and partnerships with support networks (peer coaching). Despite such encouraging results, Viet Nam's innovation environment still needs to be consolidated, according to experts. Cooperation between stakeholders will continue to create opportunities for domestic businesses to connect, utilise and boost financial strength, improve knowledge and human resources, and create products, services and useful development platforms for the community. — VNS

Source : <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/1142897/viet-nam-working-to-become-innovation-magnet-in-southeast-asia.html>
