

Highlight News / March 21, 2022



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ADVISORY INSTITUTE FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT BY TCC (AITI)



Cambodia sees gains begin flowing from RCEP agreement



Cambodia News | 20 March, 2022

Cambodian Commerce Minister Pan Sorasak said on Monday that the trade deal is a key driver for economic recovery in the participating countries both during and after the pandemic. The minister was speaking at a workshop titled “RCEP: Implications, Challenges, and Future Growth of East Asia and ASEAN” that was held by the Cambodian Ministry of Commerce and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia. Pan Sorasak said Cambodia is expected to gain from the trade agreement through a 7.3 percent increase in exports, a 23.4 percent rise in investment, and 2 percent growth in GDP. Cambodia is the ASEAN chair this year. With participating countries seeing gains from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, experts believe the free-trade pact is fulfilling its promise to drive economic growth across the region. “The implementation of the RCEP should serve as a key engine of trade and investment in ASEAN in 2022 and beyond,” said Sithanoxay Suvannaphakdy, lead researcher of the ASEAN Studies Centre at Singapore’s ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute. Sithanoxay told China Daily that the trade pact, which came into force on Jan 1, will eliminate as much as 90 percent of tariffs on goods traded between its signatories over the next 20 years. China, one of the top three export markets of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, will this year

eliminate about 70 percent of its tariffs on products from ASEAN, he said. He added that ASEAN countries will eliminate about 75 percent of their tariffs on products imported from China. The RCEP comprises the 10 members of ASEAN along with China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. According to studies cited in a book launched at the event, the RCEP can boost ASEAN’s real GDP by as much as \$160 billion in 2035 and increase the value of exports and imports by more than \$500 billion. A study by the World Bank in February said the East Asia and Pacific region can reap significant benefits through further liberalization, with Cambodia, Vietnam and other lower-middle-income countries gaining the most from the RCEP. “The region will also see an additional ‘kick’ in productivity as greater openness brings additional skills, technology, and capital,” the research said. Some countries have already begun to experience the benefits of the RCEP. In Thailand, the value of exports by companies certified under the RCEP rose by more than 200 percent in February from the month before, news website The Nation said. Thailand’s exports reached 1.16 billion baht (\$35 million) in the first two months of 2022, the report said, citing Pitak Udomwichaiwat, the director-general of Thailand’s Department of Foreign Trade. China was the second-biggest importer of Thai goods under the RCEP at 453.95 million baht, after Japan’s 540.36 million baht. As ASEAN’s biggest trading partner, China has repeatedly emphasized that the two sides need to further enhance their

cooperation to promote regional free trade. “China has been very consistent in terms of trade liberalization and this kind of multilateral trading system,” said Chheang Vannarith, president of the Asian Vision Institute think tank in Cambodia. He said this is good for the whole region because China is the largest market in the RCEP with an increasing consumption power. “I think it will be a win-win scenario,” Chheang Vannarith said, noting that greater economic interdependence between China and ASEAN will contribute not only to regional prosperity but also stability and security. China Daily

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501044513/cambodia-sees-gains-begin-flowing-from-rcep-agreement/>

China highlights ties with Cambodia



Cambodia News / 20 March, 2022

President Xi Jinping underlined on Friday the importance of keeping up the momentum of cooperation within BRICS and formulating a more comprehensive, closer, pragmatic, inclusive and high-quality partnership. Xi spoke over the phone with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen on Friday. Bilateral ties have become even stronger despite various tests, he noted. Xi said the two nations should promote the high-quality building of the Belt and Road and accelerate the construction of major projects including highways, airports and special economic zones, and expand cooperation on finance and the digital economy. China will increase its imports of high-quality agricultural produce from

Cambodia, conduct more bilateral cooperation to improve people's well-being, including rural roads and education, and help with rural development and poverty alleviation in the nation, he said. Figures from the Ministry of Commerce showed that the bilateral trade between Cambodia and China reached \$11.144 billion last year, a year-on-year increase of 37.28 percent from 2020. The total import from China was valued at \$9.633 billion, a 37 percent year-on-year increase. Cambodia exports to China increased by 39 percent to \$1.510 billion last year, a positive move to the Kingdom's trade as Cambodia and China put into effect their newly-endorsed bilateral free trade agreement. China firmly supports the central position of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in the regional cooperation framework and supports Cambodia's role as the ASEAN rotating chair this year, the president said. Hun Sen said the quick growth of bilateral trade and the progress of Belt and Road projects showed that the two nations are true ironclad brothers. The two leaders also exchanged views on the situation in Ukraine, and they both highlighted the need to uphold a balanced and fair position and make proactive efforts for peace and dialogue. China Daily/Khmer Times

Source:<https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501044520/china-highlights-ties-with-cambodia/>

Laos, Saudi Arabia strengthen bilateral cooperation



Laos News / 21 March, 2022

Laos and Saudi Arabia plan to extend cooperation in the fields of trade, investment, mining, energy, agriculture, education, and tourism. These issues were discussed when the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, His Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, paid an official visit to Laos on Friday. His Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud and his delegation visited Laos in response to an invitation from Lao Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Saleumxay Kommasith. The visit was arranged to strengthen and expand the existing good relations and cooperation between the two countries for the mutual benefit of both peoples. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during the meeting the two sides exchanged views on bilateral cooperation and plans for further cooperation in the fields of trade, investment, mining, energy, agriculture, labour, education, culture and tourism. The two foreign ministers briefed each other on their respective socio-economic development situations and discussed regional and international issues of common interest. The Lao side proposed that Saudi Arabia consider providing assistance in human resource development, including training in English and Arabic for Lao diplomatic staff. Laos also asked Saudi Arabia to consider investing in

agriculture and importing agricultural produce from Laos. This would enable Laos to move closer to achieving its sustainable development goals and graduate from Least Developed Country status. The Saudi foreign minister expressed his pleasure at being able to facilitate the two sides to discuss and work more closely to make the proposals a reality. Mr Saleumxay congratulated Saudi Arabia on its success in hosting the 42nd Gulf Summit in 2021 and thanked the Saudi government for its past support and assistance to Laos, as well as expressing his hope for continued mutual support in the future.

Source: https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContenten_LaosSaudi_55_22.php

Value of trade via Muse border trade zone on the decline



Myanmar News / 20 March, 2022

The value of trade via the Muse border trade zone was on the decline as of 4 March in the mini-budget financial period, according to the official statistics of the Ministry of Commerce. The value of trade via Muse in this mini-budget year amounted to US\$579.48 million, whereas in the same period of last FY the figure was \$3.09 billion, a slump of over \$1.92 billion. Between 1 October 2021 and 4 March 2022, Myanmar's exports to China through the Muse land border were valued at \$555.52 million, while imports are worth \$23.9 million. The trade showed a slump in both exports and imports against the year-

ago period. China shut down all the checkpoints linking to the Muse border amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The checkpoints next to the Muse border are Nantaw, Sinphyu, Mang Wein (Kyalgaung), Kyinsankyawt-Wang Ding and Panseng-Wang Ding. Of the checkpoints, Kyinsankyawt has resumed trading activity from 26 November on a trial run. Myanmar daily delivers rubber, various beans and pulses, dried plum, watermelon, muskmelon and other food commodities to China through Kyinsankyawt with the use of a Chinese short-haul trucking service. Exports to China through Muse are made up largely of agricultural produce like rice, beans and fruits, while Myanmar imports medicines, electronics and construction materials via the overland route. —ACM

Source: <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/value-of-trade-via-muse-border-trade-zone-on-the-decline/#article-title>

Vietnam's rice exports signal a favourable year in 2022



Vietnam News | 19 March, 2022

Hanoi (VNS/VNA) - Vietnamese rice exports have been increasing significantly in the first months of 2022, signalling a favourable year for the country's produce. Data from the General Department of Customs showed the country exported 974,556 tonnes of rice worth nearly 469.26 million USD in the first two months of the year, up 48.6 percent and 30.6 percent against the same period last year, respectively. Vietnam's largest rice export market

during the period was the Philippines, with the exports to the country rising by 110 percent in volume and 82 percent in value. It was followed by China with 81,880 tonnes. Experts forecast both rice output and consumption in the global market will increase this year. They even said that in the next one or two weeks, rice export market will be busier. Besides, export prices are also expected to rise again when importers step up their purchases. Instead of volume, Vietnamese rice exporters have been focusing more on quality to better access the European market to capitalise on the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA). According to the Department, though the country's rice export volume to the EU last year inched up only 0.8 percent against the previous year to 53,910 tonnes, the produce's export value surged 21.6 percent to 38.07 million USD. The Ministry of Industry and Trade's Import-Export Department attributed the high value to the success of Vietnamese rice exporters in taking advantage of the EVFTA. The export price of Vietnamese rice gained the strongest increase of 20.3 percent to 781 USD per tonne on average among the top 10 rice suppliers for the EU in the first nine months of 2021. The price hike was thanks to an increase in exports of Vietnamese high-quality and specialty rice varieties such as fragrant rice, ST24 and ST25. Experts said Vietnam's rice exports this year will continue to better exploit the advantages from the EVFTA to boost shipments to the European market. The EU currently accounts for

only a small share of Vietnam's total rice exports with 1 percent in volume and 1.3 percent in turnover./.

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnams-rice-exports-signal-a-favourable-year-in-2022/223755.vnp>
