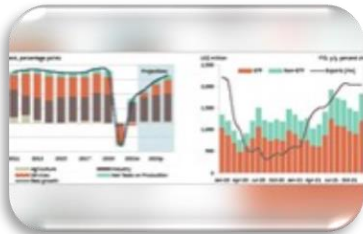


Highlight News / April 07/2022



- Cambodia growth projection at 4.5% in 2022: World Bank
- More than \$413 million earned through rice exports prior to end of Q1
- Investment, stronger agricultural exports drive economic growth
- Myanmar ships over 1.4 mln MT of rice in past mini-budget period
- WB lowers Vietnam's 2022 economic growth to 5.3%
- Vietnam to boost 5G commercialization



WB lowers Vietnam's 2022 economic growth to 5.3%



Cambodia News | 06 April, 2022

The World Bank (WB), in its East Asia and Pacific Economic Update on April 5, has lowered Vietnam's GDP growth rate for this year to 5.3% from its 5.5% projection in January. The bank said the national economy has been recovering gradually after the government adopted a strategy of living safely with COVID-19 and stepped-up vaccinations, making it easier for business and production activities to gather steam. The service sector is expected to bounce back as consumer confidence is restored and foreign tourism is set to gradually resume from the middle of the year. In addition, manufacturing exports are expected to grow at a slower pace mirroring moderating growth in major Vietnamese export markets, including the United States, the EU, and China. However, the bank stated the economy is facing serious downside risks from possible new SARS-CoV-2 virus variants, the global impact of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine armed conflict, rising commodity prices, and an economic slowdown in its major export markets. Economic recovery will also hinge on the rebound of domestic private demand, which has so far been slow. With a strong economic rebound underway since the start of the year, providing that the Government deploys a strong fiscal policy support then the impact on economic growth could be mitigated. WB experts noted that monetary policy will also need to remain

accommodative, with continued vigilance to contain financial sector risks. Additional shocks could lead to a low case scenario of GDP growing 4% this year, with growth recovering to 6% and 6.5% in 2023 and 2024, respectively. Over the medium term, the bank said the country's vision to become an upper-middle income economy is largely dependent on its ability to evolve from its current growth model to become a productivity and innovation led growth model. The Government's institutional capacity to shepherd major structural reforms is set to be a key lever in this transition, which will require additional focus on building a digitally transformed, greener, and more resilient economy.

Source: <https://vietnamnet.vn/en/wb-lowers-vietnam-s-2022-economic-growth-to-5-3-2005916.html>

Vietnam to boost 5G commercialization



Cambodia News | 06 April, 2022

Hanoi (VNS/MNA) - 5G is changing businesses worldwide, and Vietnam is catching up very quickly, being among the first countries to deploy 5G trials. The Dau tu (Investment) Newspaper organized a talk titled "Getting 5G Ready for Vietnam's Digital Transformation" on April 4. All three major carriers, including VinaPhone, MobiFone, and Viettel, have started their 5G journey by announcing the trial of the service in big cities like Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City at the end of 2020 and then consecutively expanded to other cities. The 5G network was commercially tested by three operators, Viettel, VNPT and

MobiFone, in 16 provinces and cities by the end of last year. Nguyen Hoa Cuong, vice president of the Central Institute of Economic Management (CIEM), said that about 70 countries around the world had commercialized 5G. Besides being a technological innovation on its own, 5G was the enabler for many other technologies, he added. Vietnam is aspiring to develop a digital government, digital economy and digital society, and 5G is expected to play a fundamental role by enhancing broadband connection, improving rural coverage, creating conditions to narrow the digital divide, developing Industry 4.0 and increasing the contribution of the digital media sector to Vietnam's GDP. An important component of Vietnam's socio-economic development strategy is the development of the digital economy, which is expected to contribute 7 percent of GDP by 2025 and 7.5 percent by 2030. The Ministry of Information and Communications has set a goal to officially license 5G commercialization this year and soon cover high-tech industrial parks. The information and communication industry is determined to bring Vietnam along as a leading country in 5G. The Ministry of Information and Communications is currently in the final preparation steps to officially license 5G network operators this year. However, for the successful commercialization of 5G, problems still need to be solved. To commercialize 5G faster, Vietnam needs sufficient bandwidth, ripe 5G technology, diversified 5G services, and numerous

cheap terminal equipment. Investment in 5G infrastructure is also a matter of concern. In the context of rising investment costs and declining telecommunications revenue, 5G investment is not simple. According to experts, tightening spending and investing in the common use of infrastructure and networks are key solutions for network operators to implement in Vietnam successfully. This is just one of many solutions to the problem. Reducing investment costs also lies in choosing technology, using foreign equipment or self-manufacturing, and optimizing markets and human resources costs. These will be issues that network operators need to calculate more carefully in the near future./.

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-to-boost-5g-commercialisation/224626.vnp>

Investment, stronger agricultural exports drive economic growth



Laos News | 07 April, 2022

Laos' economy is projected to grow 3.4 percent this year and 3.7 percent in 2023, due to the country's investments to boost exports, according to the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2022 released by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Wednesday. "Growth in 2022 and 2023 will be underpinned by recovering investment and rising output in capital intensive industries, including electricity and mining; gradually recovering tourism; and agriculture's continued steady performance," the report stated. "Downside risks to the outlook are the possibility of new Covid variants and inflationary pressures

exacerbating an already high level of debt distress. A key policy challenge is staying on track for decarbonization commitments.” Sound management of the country’s finances will be the key to recovery, which remains fragile and faces headwinds including the ongoing pandemic, high inflation, and the impacts of the Russian-Ukraine conflict. “In 2021, Laos’ economy gradually recovered from its worst performance in decades, but new virus variants and rising inflation could derail the momentum,” said ADB Country Director for Laos, Sonomi Tanaka. “The government will need to remain vigilant by fully vaccinating as many people as possible and bolstering transparency in public financial management to restore market confidence and attract resilient, sustainable investments.” According to the ADB, a Covid wave in April 2021 forced the government to impose a series of lockdowns, which disrupted economic activity in domestic services, including hotels, restaurants and transportation. To spur recovery in domestic markets, including tourism, the government in January 2022 relaxed Covid control measures and speeded up vaccination. It aims to have 80 percent of the population fully vaccinated by the end of 2022, compared with 50 percent as of December 2021. Industrial and agricultural exports contributed to last year’s economic recovery. Favourable weather allowed many hydropower plants to operate at full capacity and maximise energy production for export.

Agricultural exports rose across most categories, partly to meet robust demand from China. Growth in exports will likely continue this year and next, thanks to anticipated investment inflows to support the development of wind, solar, and other low-carbon electricity for export markets. Rising oil prices and the depreciation of the kip, which led to 5.3 percent inflation in December 2021, may push the country’s average rate of inflation to 5.8 percent in 2022 and 5.0 percent in 2023. Inflation will add to the country’s debt distress, which is already at high risk. The report urges the government to boost transparency in the management of external public debt, which will help open doors for Laos to access sustainable development finance, according to the ADB. The ADO 2022 says Laos has made solid progress towards achieving its nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement, aimed to achieve net-zero emission, especially in the areas of hydropower development and the expansion of household electrification. However, Laos’ policy commitments on forestry, transportation, and renewable energy, were “not on track.” To correct that, the government has taken steps to secure international investment, though it must first make progress in addressing gaps in climate policy and institutional frameworks, as well as increasing project preparedness.

Source: https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent_Investment68.php

Myanmar ships over 1.4 mln MT of rice in past mini-budget period



Myanmar News | 06 April, 2022

MYANMAR delivered more than 1.4 million metric tons of rice and broken rice in the past mini-budget period (October 2021-March 2022), according to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF). Myanmar has exported rice to more than 27 foreign markets,

mainly to China. Meanwhile, Myanmar shipped broken rice primarily to China, followed by the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, France and three other countries. The rice and broken rice exports volume stood at over 216,375 MT in October 2021, 285,223 MT in November, 301,033.9 MT in December, and 269,215.9 MT in January 2022, 214,335 MT in February and 133,972 MT in March, respectively, MRF's data showed. The prices of low-grade white rice varieties were approximately US\$340-355 per MT, depending on the different sorts and quality. The export price of Myanmar's rice was relatively lower than the rates of Thailand and Viet Nam. Yet, the prices were higher than those of market prices of India and Pakistan, MRF's data showed. At present, the exporters will suffer losses due to the Central Bank of Myanmar's policy changes. The Foreign exchange earned by locals in Myanmar must be deposited in accounts at the authorized banks and exchanged for the local currency at the CBM's reference rate of K1,850. At present, traders carry

out maritime trade for rice export as COVID-19 restrictions hinder the trading activity through the border posts. Myanmar shipped rice and broken rice to China, regional countries and European Union countries through maritime trade. Rice worth K43,000-K50,000 per bag is highly demanded in the domestic market. The prices of high-grade rice move in the range of K34,500-K58,000 per bag, Bayintnaung Rice Wholesale Centre's price data indicated. Next, the prices of low-grade rice varieties are relatively high in the export market as well, ranging from K25,000 to K27,500 per 108-pound bag. Myanmar generated over \$800 million from rice exports in the Financial Year 2019-2020 ended 30 September, with an estimated volume of over 2.5 million tonnes. Myanmar generated US\$700.13 million in income from exports of 1.87 million tonnes of rice and broken rice in the past FY2020-2021 (October-September) amidst the border trade disruption triggered by the COVID-19 negative consequences, as per the statistics released by the Customs Department. — KK/GNLM

Source: [https://www.gnlnm.com.mm/7-april-](https://www.gnlnm.com.mm/7-april-2022/#article-title)

[2022/#article-title](#)

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