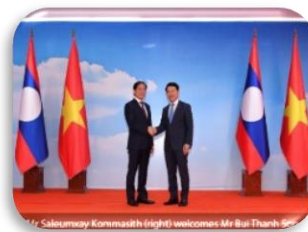




- Container traffic in Sihanoukville Autonomous Port up by more the 16 percent
- Cold storage shortage, Covid-19 hurt agriculture exports
- Lao, Vietnamese foreign ministers hold talks on bilateral ties
- Myanmar relaxes currency conversion order for traders at China, Thailand borders
- Qu^ảng Ninh continues to top PCI rankings in 2021



Container traffic in Sihanoukville Autonomous Port up by more the 16 percent



Cambodia News | 28 April, 2022

As the country and the world begin steps to recover from the economic slump and supply chain disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, Sihanoukville Autonomous Port has begun to record an increase in traffic. According to the Statistics of Goods Transit at Sihanoukville Autonomous Port, the number of containers passing through the port was 18,182 Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit (TEUs) in the first quarter of 2022, an increase of 16.32 percent compared to the same period in 2021. The port has served as a transit and transport point for goods to countries such as Japan, South Korea and Singapore. It is an important part of Cambodia's economic and social development. The Royal Government plans to further develop the port. The planned development will allow almost all large container vessels to ship directly from Sihanoukville Port to Asia Pacific, Europe and the United States without need for a transit point.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501065618/container-traffic-in-sihanoukville-autonomous-port-up-by-more-the-16-percent/>

Cold storage shortage, Covid-19 hurt agriculture exports



Cambodia News | 28 April, 2022

The shortage of cold storage for transporting fresh agricultural products and strict measures in importing countries during Covid-19 have caused disruptions in the export of Cambodia's agricultural products, said the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries. In a statement issued yesterday, the ministry said that the factors that affected the export of fresh agricultural products to foreign markets were due to the lack of cooling storage for agriculture, restrictions on the control of goods to prevent the spread of Covid-19, restrictions on sanitary and phytosanitary. Based on talks with a number of major agricultural exporters, the drop in exports was due to a number of factors, including a lack of cooling storage for fresh agricultural products that have led to a sharp rise in the price of transport compared to the period before the Covid-19 crisis. The transport cost is now more than three times higher, read the statement, citing that the imports of those products meet disruption in the China market. "Tightening the control of goods to prevent the spread of Covid-19 from foreign countries at the China-Vietnam import port, causing blockage of goods, exports, the goods imports to Vietnam have declined as exports from Vietnam to China have slowed due to the Covid-19 crisis." "Restrictions on sanitary and phytosanitary conditions caused by the discovery of Covid-19 on the packaging of bananas by the Chinese customs

authorities, some companies have temporarily suspended exports and some companies left unharvested,” the statement read. Sin Chanthy, president of the Cambodia Logistics Association, said that the normal price of shipping to China was only \$2,500, but this year it has risen to \$8,000. Shipping costs to the United States and Europe jumped from more than \$4,000 to nearly \$20,000, and some destinations increased by more than \$20,000, he said. “We run normally, shipping may decrease to some countries, but some places are also in strong demand, there is an increase. Overall, there is an increase in transportation, exports,” he said. Prime Minister Hun Sen said at the closing ceremony of the annual meeting of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, that the Kingdom’s export -garment, non-garment industrial products and agricultural products increased by 33 percent in the first quarter. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is working to increase production with high quality in accordance with the needs of the importing countries and strives to negotiate the requirements for phytosanitary for the export of those agricultural products to foreign markets.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501065109/cold-storage-shortage-covid-19-hurt-agriculture-exports/>

Lao, Vietnamese foreign ministers hold talks on bilateral ties



Laos News | 28 April, 2022

Laos and Vietnam have agreed to enhance cooperation in a wide range of areas during talks between the two countries’ foreign ministers held in Vientiane on Thursday. Vietnam’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bui Thanh Son, is paying an official visit to Laos from April 27-29 at the invitation of his Lao counterpart Saleumxay Kommasith, the Lao Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a press statement. The two ministers co-chaired the 9th ministerial political consultative meeting and discussed ways to enhance the great relations, special solidarity and comprehensive cooperation between the two neighbours. The ministers exchanged views on a wide range of areas and discussed future cooperation plans to elevate cooperation mechanisms between the two ministries, in a bid to fulfil the direction of cooperation advised by the leaders of the two countries. The ministers agreed to work together to follow up and address any difficulties hindering bilateral relations and to cooperate in a timely and effective manner. The two sides said they highly valued the friendly relations, special solidarity and comprehensive cooperation between Laos and Vietnam and the two ministries. Leaders of the two countries have maintained regular contact and exchanges of visits despite the

ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The visit to Laos is the first by Mr Bui Thanh Son as Vietnam's foreign minister. It comes as the two countries celebrate the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations and the 45th anniversary of the Laos-Vietnam Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. The ministers agreed to strengthen cooperation in the fields of politics, national defence and security, as well as foreign affairs, creating fundamental conditions for the continuation and enhancement of the special relations between the two nations. They also agreed to work jointly to promote and facilitate cooperation in trade, investment and transportation, as well as reciprocal visits. Two-way trade between Laos and Vietnam reached US\$1.3 billion in 2021, an increase of nearly 30 percent compared to the previous year. Vietnam is a leading foreign investor in Laos and has invested in 426 projects with a total value of more than US\$4.3 billion. The ministers agreed to promote cooperation in clean agriculture and commodities manufacturing, in accordance with the potential of the two countries. The meeting also resulted in consensus on the need for joint efforts to realise unfinished cooperation projects. Both sides agreed to continue to extend mutual support in bilateral and multilateral forums, especially within the United Nations and Asean, as well as Laos' preparations to assume the Asean chair in 2024. The ministers briefed each other on the progress of socio-economic development in their

respective countries, and exchanged views on regional and international issues of common interest. During his visit, minister Bui Thanh Son called on President Thongloun Sisoulith, President of the National Assembly Dr Xaysomphone Phomvihane, and Prime Minister Phankham Viphavanh. Through the minister, the Lao leaders extended their greetings to their Vietnamese counterparts.

Source: https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Lao81.php

Myanmar relaxes currency conversion order for traders at China, Thailand borders



Myanmar News | 28 April, 2022

YANGON, April 28 (Xinhua) -- The Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) has extended the time span of compulsorily converting foreign currencies into kyats for exporters trading at the borders with China and Thailand. According to a directive issued by the central bank on Tuesday, exporters trading under China-Myanmar and Thai-Myanmar border trade programs no longer need to compulsorily convert their export earnings in foreign currencies into kyats within one working day. Meanwhile, the central bank has directed the exporters to compulsorily convert their earnings in foreign currencies into kyats within one month. The central bank also instructed designated authorized dealer banks to examine the

compulsory putting of exporters' earnings into the state's bank account for export earnings. Additionally, the central bank allowed the importers to make payments in foreign currencies at designated banks without approval from the Foreign Exchange Supervisory Committee.

Source : <https://english.news.cn/20220428/c939e28c2cdf49dab0f244300c49df72/c.html>

Quảng Ninh continues to top PCI rankings in 2021



Vietnam News | 21 April, 2022

HÀ NỘI — For the fifth consecutive year, the northern province of Quảng Ninh leads in provincial competitiveness among all 63 provinces and cities, according to the provincial competitiveness index (PCI) ranking announced by the Việt Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) yesterday. With a score of 73.02, Quảng Ninh maintained its top position for the fifth straight year with excellent economic management quality and a favourable and friendly business environment. Meanwhile, Hải Phòng stood in second place for the first time, with a score of 70.61, 1.34 higher than the previous year. Đồng Tháp was in third with a score of 70.53, followed by Đà Nẵng (70.42 points) and Vĩnh Phúc (69.69 point). The remaining positions in the Top 10 PCI 2021 were Bình Dương (69.61 points); Bắc Ninh (69.45); Thừa Thiên Huế (69.24); Bà Rịa - Vũng Tàu (69.03)

and Hà Nội (68.6). These localities were highly appreciated by the business community in the indices of cutting administrative procedures, reducing the burden of complying with conditional business licensing procedures and solving difficulties for businesses. Compared to PCI 2020, two other centrally-run cities, HCM City and Cần Thơ, were not in the Top 10. Cần Thơ ranked 12th with a score of 68.06, while HCM City stood in 14th place with a score of 67.5. Five localities at the bottom of the PCI 2021 rankings were Hà Giang, Kiên Giang, Kon Tum, Hòa Bình and Cao Bằng. According to VCCI, the PCI 2021 report was carried out amid difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the enterprises still assessed that the quality of provincial economic management in Việt Nam continued to improve. The report also noted that the business environment in Việt Nam has shown positive changes. Local authorities have continued to promote proactivity and support for the private sector. Informal charges have continued to decline in many areas. However, compliance with conditional business licensing procedures has remained burdensome, said Đậu Anh Tuấn, director of the Provincial Competitiveness Index Programme, and Director General of the Legal Department, VCCI. "Efficiency of administrative procedures improved, but more reform efforts are still needed," Tuấn said. Besides that, information and dissemination of guidance to firms about international economic integration remain weak,

according to the report. With FDI enterprises, they also recorded positive improvements in Việt Nam's business environment. These enterprises said that inspection activities and informal costs have been reduced. Labour quality and infrastructure have been improved. But, to maintain attractiveness to foreign investors, local authorities need to further reform administrative procedures in tax, import and export, investment registration and social insurance. Việt Nam also needs to create more favourable conditions for foreign direct investment (FDI) enterprises in carrying out procedures for implementing investment projects, especially construction permits and environmental impact assessments. For the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic that businesses are facing, the VCCI representative said that supportive policies for the businesses in recovery and development after the pandemic need to be designed according to the needs and development capabilities of each group of businesses. Phạm Tấn Công, VCCI chairman, said that PCI 2021 is the 17th consecutive edition of the index. PCI 2021 was built based on feedback from 11,312 businesses, including 10,127 private enterprises in 63 provinces and cities and 1,185 foreign-invested enterprises operating in 22 localities. PCI measures the ease of doing business for the private sector in the areas of entry cost for new firms, land access, transparency, time costs of regulatory compliance, informal charges, proactivity of provincial leadership, policy bias, business

support services, labour training and legal institutions. PCI methodology is periodically recalibrated every four years to reflect changes in the business and regulatory environment as well as developments in the business community in Việt Nam. VNS

Source : <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/1176410/quang-ninh-continues-to-top-pci-rankings-in-2021.html>