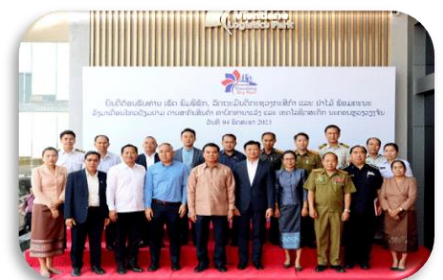


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## Chinese firm bags Kampot port construction contract



*Cambodia News | 08 May, 2023*

The China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) secured the construction contract for Kampot multi-purpose port in Kampot province, after a year of ground and infrastructure foundation preparation. CHEC signed the contract with Kampot Logistics and Port Company Limited (KLP) on May 5 during the presence of Sun Chanthol, Senior Minister, Minister of Public Works and Transport, and representatives of the firms. According to a report from the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, the construction is divided into three phases with a total investment of about \$1.5 billion. Around \$200 million will be invested in the first phase of the project. The ground-breaking ceremony for the port was held in May last year. The port will have the capacity to handle throughputs of 300,000 TEUs by 2025 and is set to increase to 600,000 TEUs by 2030. The project will include container grounds, special economic zones, free trade zones, logistics centres, customs warehouses, manufacturing and distribution plants, refineries and fuel centres, residential and tourist areas, and passenger terminals. Chanthol said the project will help construct another large and deep-sea port in Cambodia and an international modern port in the ASEAN. The minister said it will be the third largest port in the Southeast Asian country after the Sihanoukville Autonomous Port in the coastal city of Sihanoukville and the freshwater Phnom Penh

Autonomous Port in Phnom Penh. “The project will complement the existing ports such as Sihanoukville Autonomous Port and Phnom Penh Autonomous Port and help promote the successful implementation of the master plan to develop Sihanoukville into a multi-purpose special economic zone in line with the policy of industrial development of Cambodia 2015-2025,” he added. The 600-hectare Kampot Logistics and Port project began in May last year, with the Shanghai Construction Group and the China Road and Bridge Corporation also being the contractors.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501285979/chinese-firm-bags-kampot-port-construction-contract/>

## Kingdom pushes tourism at int'l travel fair in Seoul



*Cambodia News | 08 May, 2023*

The Ministry of Tourism along with the Cambodian Embassy in Korea and the Ministry of Tourism in Korea led a delegation of more than 10 private companies to take part in the 38th International Travel Fair 2023 in Seoul, May 4-7, said a press release. Cambodia is expecting to receive approximately 80,000 Korean tourists by the end of 2023, said the Ministry of Tourism. Cambodia took part in the travel fair to implement its vision strategy on the plan to rehabilitate, recover and promote Cambodia's tourism in and after the second phase of the Covid-19 crisis. The aim is to boost 'Visit Cambodia Year 2023', Cambodia as 'Sport for Peace', sports destination through the ongoing 32nd SEA GAMES, the 12th ASEAN PARA GAMES 2023

and the Asian Youth Game 2029. Along with the Ministry of Tourism, the delegation of private companies has promoted Cambodia as a warm, safe, clean and green destination for tourists with the slogan of 'Everyday is a miracle'. On May 4, the ministry organised the 'Cambodian Tourism Roadshow' with over 10 Cambodian operators and 100 Korean tour operators. Long Phirum Secretary of State of the Ministry of Tourism of Cambodia attended the opening ceremony of the Seoul International Travel Fair 2023 as well. She was accompanied by Chring Botum Rangsay, Cambodian Ambassador in Korea and Kim Hae-Yong the Secretary-General of the ASEAN-Korean Center, and Kim Myoung Chul, Cambodian Tourism Representative in Korea. Cambodia is expecting to receive about 80,000 Korean tourists by the end of 2023.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501285972/kingdom-pushes-tourism-at-intl-travel-fair-in-seoul/>

## Thanaleng Dry Port could generate US\$200 million a year for the state from container fees, developer says



*Laos News | 08 May, 2023*

Thanaleng Dry Port plans to introduce a fast-track lane to speed up the movement and transit of agricultural produce between S.E. Asia and China. Thanaleng Dry Port (TDP), Laos' first ever integrated logistics centre, has the potential to earn the state as much as US\$200 million a year from container fees once it is fully maximised, its developer has said. But

to fulfil this revenue potential, procedures must be streamlined at the dry port, which facilitates cross-border rail freight transport, to speed up the movement of freight, especially farm products. "Rail transport is a new service that currently has many duplicated inspection procedures," Chanthone Sitthixay, Chairman of the Vientiane Logistics Park Co., Ltd. – the developer of the dry port - told Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Dr Phet Phomphiphak on Thursday. He also informed the minister, who visited the multimodal transport hub in Vientiane that day, that his ministry plays a key role in facilitating the transit of farm produce. "To achieve the US\$200 million figure, we need to address [streamline] immigration, customs and agriculture-related procedures," Mr Chanthone said. He added that his company is currently working with immigration and customs authorities to introduce a fast-track green lane to speed up the movement of agricultural produce, which constitutes a significant amount of the goods traded between Asean and China. In addition, the dry port operator is working with the Chinese side to build a Chinese-certified sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) centre at the dry port-associated Vientiane Logistics Park to certify goods traded between China and its partners. Construction of the centre is expected to begin in July, and will take about five months to complete. Once the SPS centre is operational, products labelled with SPS customs seals there can directly enter the Chinese market without having to undergo SPS checks at the Chinese border, Mr Chanthone said. These facilities

and services are essential to handle the growing trade and freight transport in the region. In 2022, China and Asean recorded two-way trade amounting to US\$970 billion. Of this, trade in agricultural produce accounted for up to 25 percent of the total. The value of all exports from Thailand to China reached about US\$70 billion, of which more than half was agricultural produce. However, only 2 percent of all agricultural produce was shipped to China by rail. Most was transported by sea and land, despite the fact that rail transport is a highly cost-effective option, Mr Chanthone said. He cited the complicated inspection procedures and the newness of the rail freight service as the main reasons for lack of use of the railway. But given the cost-effective option offered by rail transport, coupled with the improvement of bureaucratic procedures, the dry port operator is optimistic that there will be a steep rise in the amount of freight passing through the dry port. It is estimated that at least one million containers could pass through the dry port annually in the years to come if all of the above-mentioned services and facilities are put in place. The government charges a fee of US\$200 for each container that passes through the dry port. "The government can earn US\$200 million from these fees alone," Mr Chanthone reiterated. Dr Phet praised the Lao investor's determined efforts to develop the dry port, which has greatly improved Laos' logistics and transport links to regional and global markets. In response to Mr Chanthone's proposal, the minister said "There are many aspects of the existing

logistics system and associated transport that we have to work together to study." He agreed on the need to expedite services to maximise revenue potential. Thanks to the operation of the dry port and railways, export and import service providers are benefitting from reduced transport costs. Panya Paputsaro, President of Thailand's Kaocharoen Train Transport Co., Ltd., told Vientiane Times that shipment by rail enables his company to cut transport costs by 30 percent. Travel time is also shortened by about half compared to land transport, thus delivering fresher seasonal Thai fruit to Chinese consumers. Opening for service in December 2021, the dry port, which houses extensions of the Laos-Thailand and Laos-China railways, handled 41,000 containers last year, which generated about 30 billion kip for the state budget. It is expected that the container volume could double this year. The Vientiane Logistics Park Co., Ltd. is also developing a world-class logistics complex comprising seven zones, including an export processing zone where investors can set up facilities such as cold-chain storage warehouses to keep farm products fresh. The US\$727 million dry port and logistics complex is part of the packaged Lao Logistics Link project, which also includes the Vung Ang seaport in Vietnam's Ha Tinh province and a planned railway linking the seaport to the dry port in Vientiane and a logistics park in Khammuan province through which the planned railway will run. Once it is fully realised, the Lao Logistics Link will be a big boost to the

government's efforts to transform landlocked Laos into a land-link country.

Source : [https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent86\\_Thanaleng\\_y23.php](https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent86_Thanaleng_y23.php)

## Three international breweries pay Myanmar junta U.S. \$155 million in taxes per year



*Myanmar News | 08 May, 2023*

Democracy advocates in Myanmar are calling on three international beermakers to pull out of the country, alleging that taxes they pay to the military junta support crimes against humanity. The covert activist group Justice for Myanmar last month released a report that implicated Heineken, Carlsberg, and Thai Beverage, all of which have operated in Myanmar after the Feb. 1, 2021 coup. Their tax payments have collectively amounted to U.S.\$155 million. "Paying taxes to people who commit war crimes is directly participating in those crimes and therefore the large foreign companies have to decide if they will continue to participate in the crimes of the military council or stop paying taxes," Justice for Myanmar spokesperson Yadanar Maung told RFA's Burmese Service. A young woman from Yangon, who requested anonymity for safety reasons, told RFA that any beer brand that supports the junta must be boycotted. "Before the coup, I only drank Myanmar Beer brand. But after the coup, Myanmar Beer had to be completely boycotted, so I

switched to other brands," she said. "Now, if Heineken, which is the most popular drink in the market, has been added to the boycott list, we have to choose from other options." Every company that cooperates with the junta should pull out from Myanmar as soon as possible as they must be held responsible and accountable, Me Htet Nay of the Nyan Lynn Thit Analytica political research and rights group told RFA. "I understand that companies with big investments have to pay a lot of money in taxes, so they have more responsibility for the oppression of the people. ... It is best in their interests that they leave," said Me Htet Nay. He said that the junta's sources of income should be cut off as it spends most of the tax money on the military budget that oppresses the people. Japanese-owned Kirin Company, which had been working with Myanmar beer, sold its shares and left Myanmar in 2022, a year after the military coup.

Source : <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/beer-05082023095704.html>

## Vietnam boosts rare earths output by tenfold – data



*Vietnam News | 08 May, 2023*

Vietnam's mined output of rare earths soared tenfold last year, U.S. data showed, as global firms have flocked to the Southeast Asian country with the world's second largest estimated deposits to reduce reliance on China for the key industrial metals. Past

attempts to build up Vietnam's rare earth industry have stuttered due to falling prices and regulatory hurdles, but growing sales of electric vehicles (EVs) and firms' efforts to diversify their suppliers has revived interest in Vietnam. Australian Strategic Materials Ltd (ASM) ASM.AX said on Monday that it would buy 100 tonnes of rare earth oxides this year from Vietnam Rare Earth Co and is looking for a longer-term supply agreement. ASM said a longer-term agreement with the Vietnamese firm, which is ultimately owned by China's government, would provide it with a multi-source feedstock option and additional supply security for its processing plant in South Korea. Rare earths are a group of elements that have applications in electronics manufacturing and batteries, making them important for the global transition towards cleaner sources of energy and in defence. Vietnam's rare earth mine production jumped to 4,300 tonnes last year from 400 tonnes in 2021, according to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), a government agency. Its output is a tiny fraction of the amount top producers mined last year. China, the world's biggest producer, mined 210,000 tonnes in 2022, the United States 43,000 tonnes and Australia 18,000 tonnes. But Vietnam's estimated reserves of 22 million tonnes are half of China's and larger than any other country, according to USGS. Its output growth last year, which turned it into the world's sixth biggest producer up from 10th in 2021, may signal a turning point in the exploitation of its resources. It was also the only major Southeast Asian producer to boost output last year, with its

larger regional competitors Myanmar and Thailand reporting lower production, USGS data showed. The main beneficiary of the increased production in Vietnam appears to be China, the world's largest auto and EV market and also a major global manufacturing hub for electronic goods such as smartphones. China's customs data show a doubling of imports from Vietnam of rare earth elements (REEs) and other concentrates that usually contain strategic metals to nearly 12,000 tonnes last year. What quantity of the imports were processed rare earths and unprocessed ores was unclear. Vietnam also imports rare earths for processing and re-exporting. Vietnam's "REE-processing infrastructure is rather advanced, and does process not only domestic REE-resources," Per Kalvig, a researcher at Denmark's Center for Minerals and Materials (MiMa), said. He said Vietnam was one of the world's biggest importers of raw rare earths compounds in 2021. Vietnam's industry ministry and Vietnam Rare Earth did not reply to requests for comment. By Francesco Guarascio and Khanh Vu Reuters

Source : <https://www.thaipbsworld.com/vietnam-boosts-rare-earths-output-by-tenfold-data/>

## Vietnam's regulators downplay impact of electricity price hike



*Vietnam News | 08 May, 2023*

HANOI, May 8 (Xinhua) -- Vietnam lifted the retail electricity price for the first time since 2019, raising concerns over inflation. However, the Ministry of

Finance said the hike would likely have a small impact on the country's consumer price index (CPI) in the short run, Vietnam News reported on Monday. As the state-owned utility, Electricity Vietnam (EVN) raised the average retail electricity price by 3 percent, energy-consuming industries would be the hardest hit as higher electricity prices mean higher production costs, said the ministry, adding that steel, cement and paper companies may see their costs inching up 0.18 percent, 0.45 percent and 0.4 percent, respectively. The electricity price hike would account for about 0.105 percent of the increase in the CPI while the increase of 5 percent would make Vietnam's CPI advance 0.175 percent, Mirae Asset securities forecast. In the short term, a small price hike will not likely have a large impact on major industries as it is common practice for electricity producers to sign long-term contracts with EVN, with some up to 25 years, the securities company said. Given the fact that EVN made losses of 36.29 trillion dong (1.5 billion dollars) last year due to a year-on-year increase of 9.27 percent in electricity production costs, the 3-percent price hike should be seen as moderate, said Nguyen Tien Thoa, president of the Vietnam Valuation Association. A 3-percent price hike in electricity might result in as much as a 1.099 percent rise in CPI in the short term and a 1.28 percent rise in the long term, he said. Vietnam's CPI in the first four months

this year rose 3.84 percent from a year before due to higher school fees and housing costs as well as more expensive food prices, according to the General Statistics Office. The statistics authorities also said core inflation, excluding more volatile food, energy, and other public services prices, jumped 4.9 percent in the period from a year ago. Vietnam is trying to keep its CPI close to the target of 4.5 percent for the year.

Source : <https://english.news.cn/asiapacific/20230508/a510476ed2264890955a70542d8b3027/c.html>

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