

## Highlight News / May 18, 2022



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**Advisory Institute for Trade and Investment by TCC (AiTi)**

## Oil and gas imports reach \$1.15B in four months



*Cambodia News | 16 May, 2023*

Cambodia's imports of oil and gas reached \$1.15 billion in the first four months of this year, a decrease of just 0.6 percent from the same period in 2022, according to a report from the General Department of Customs and Excise. Cambodia currently imports all of its oil and gas, as its offshore oil and gas reserves have not yet been tapped yet. Since the Russia-Ukraine crisis began in February 2022, oil prices in Cambodia have skyrocketed, causing a ripple effect on the prices of other goods and services. Despite the surge in demand, Cambodia has enough oil inventory to meet local consumption, Ministry of Commerce spokesman Penn Sovicheat said earlier. Cambodia has enough oil inventory to last for 15 to 20 days without any imports, Sovicheat told Khmer Times. The report only mentioned the import value, not the import volume. Cambodia's demand for petroleum products is expected to increase from 2.8 million tons in 2020 to 4.8 million tons in 2030, Mines and Energy Minister Suy Sem said. The minister called for further investment in the sector to meet this growing demand. According to an ADB report, Cambodia's economy is expected to grow at 5.5 percent in 2023 and 6 percent in 2024, driven by a stronger rebound in tourism and faster growth in the services sector. The growth outlook, however, is subject to downside risks, including

weaker growth in the US and Europe, high private debt, disappointing tourist arrivals from China and foreign direct investment, soaring energy prices, and extreme weather.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501290819/oil-and-gas-imports-reach-1-15b-in-four-months/>

## GDT allows taxpayers to adjust annual tax online



*Cambodia News | 16 May, 2023*

The General Department of Taxation (GDT) of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) has issued an instruction on procedures to enable taxpayers who are owners of registered businesses to make online adjustments of their online filing on annual tax on income (ToI E-Filing), a statement issued by the internal tax authority said. The GDT statement released yesterday pointed out that those taxpayers would be able to adjust their respective ToI E-Filing by following two-step procedures. First, registered business owners have to use their respective existing system user account or create a new one to log into the e-Tax system and then search their companies and years for adjustments. Second, taxpayers have to select the information or data that they need to adjust—headquarters or branches—and then save them, according to the statement, adding that they would be required to create and print a form to pay additional taxes through E-Payment System or commercial banks within seven days if the adjustment result shows this requirement. "It is to make it easier for taxpayers on confusion,

unintentional mistake or filed data update bases, the procedures of request for adjustments have been prepared,” the statement pointed out. However, GDT indicated that taxpayers are required to fill in a form to request for making adjustments and it would respond with an approval or rejection through the system. The statement further stated that adjustments would not affect the amount of tax if the adjustments make no change in the amount of tax if GDT approves the request for adjustments and taxpayers would be allowed to make another request for adjustment if GDT rejects their current request with specifying reasons behind its rejections of requests. Khun Darith, Managing Partner of audit, accounting and tax solutions at accountancy and auditing firm K Professional Accountants (KPA), told Khmer Times yesterday that taxpayers who are the owners of registered firms have been allowed to make their respective adjustments on annual tax on income for the last three years like 2022, 2021 and 2020. He further said that the new procedures would help GDT to fulfill its digital modernisation for taxation, which enables taxpayers to comply with the fiscal policies made by the government more efficiently and effectively, while taxpayers normally make mistakes in filing their taxes. “I congratulate ... for these procedures as it that would be good for taxpayers,” said Darith. “All companies had been able to request for making manual adjustments on their annual tax on income with the general department of taxation, but now they would not need to go there anymore to request for making such

adjustments, but it has right to allow or not ... If the adjustments show that they should have paid less than the amount they already paid, they would get reference credit to the next payment,” said Darith. Full online filing of monthly and annual income tax returns and payments has been set for all types of taxpayers to implement from January 2023 onward after GDT had ended the E-Documents Submission System from January 10, 2023. GDT has also initiated a new system called E-Administration that would enable taxpayers to submit all types of administrative documents and pay some types of taxes that still cannot be sent to GDT through the E-Filing, ToI E-Filing and Tax Prefiling systems.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501290817/gdt-allows-taxpayers-to-adjust-annual-tax-online/>

## Laos, Australia vow to cement ties



Laos News | 16 May, 2023

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Saleumxay Kommasith and Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Penny Wong have agreed to work together to enhance relations and broaden cooperation between Laos and Australia. Ms Wong is on a two-day official visit to Laos at the invitation of Mr Saleumxay in order to enhance the longstanding relations and broaden cooperation between the two nations, the Lao Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a press release. The two ministers discussed future cooperation in a wide range of areas. “Both sides re-

affirmed their intention to elevate the relations and cooperation between Laos and Australia into a Comprehensive Partnership in the soonest future,” the Lao ministry said. The ministers said they highly valued the growing ties and cooperation between the two nations since Laos and Australia established diplomatic relations on January 15, 1952. The two governments have maintained regular reciprocal visits by high-level delegations as well as people-to-people exchanges. The ministers also exchanged views on regional and global issues of common interest. They agreed to continue cooperation and extend mutual support through regional and global arenas, including Mekong cooperation frameworks, Asean, and the United Nations. These include cooperation from 2021-2024 when Laos acts as the official coordinator between Asean and Australia, and Lao preparations to chair Asean next year, as Asean and Australia prepare to mark the 50th anniversary of their dialogue partnership. Australia, Laos’ third largest provider of Official Development Assistance, has provided assistance to Laos in a wide range of areas including education, human resource development, infrastructure development, clearance of unexploded ordnance, and affairs within the framework of Asean – the regional bloc of which Laos is a member. Minister Saleumxay, on behalf of the government and people of Laos, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the government and

people of Australia for the valuable assistance extended to Laos. Australia’s assistance, he said, has contributed significantly to Laos’ socio-economic development and poverty alleviation, bolstering efforts to ensure Laos graduates from Least Developed Country status. The Lao minister also thanked Australia for the cooperation and assistance extended to Laos within the Asean framework, including Laos’ preparations to chair Asean next year. For her part, Minister Wong thanked Laos for acting as the coordinating country between Laos and Australia and pledged support for Laos’ chairmanship of Asean in 2024. The Australian minister expressed heartfelt gratitude to the government and people of Laos for the support extended to Australia in the regional and global arenas. She vowed continuous support, cooperation and assistance for Laos in order to fulfil cooperation agreements between Laos and Australia. After their talks, Minister Wong and Lao Minister of Energy and Mines Phoxay Sayasone signed the Laos-Australia Sustainable Energy Partnership, which was witnessed by Mr Saleumxay. Minister Wong also called on Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone and met the Head of the External Relations Committee of the Lao People’s Revolutionary Party, Thongsavanh Phomvihane.

Source: [https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent92\\_Laos\\_Australia\\_y23.php](https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContent92_Laos_Australia_y23.php)

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## UN expert says Myanmar military imported US\$1 billion in weapons from China, Russia and others since coup



*Myanmar News | 18 May, 2023*

Myanmar's military has imported at least US\$1 billion in arms and other material since it staged a coup in February 2021, a UN expert said on Wednesday in a new report that calls out Russia and China for aiding the junta's deadly campaign to crush its opposition. Since the military seized power and jailed democratic leaders, some opponents of military rule have taken up arms, in places joining ethnic minority insurgents, and the military has responded with air strikes and heavy weapons, including in civilian areas. Russian-made Mi-35 helicopter, MiG-29 fighter jets and Yak-130 light aircraft, and Chinese K-8 jets, have been most frequently used to conduct air strikes that have hit schools, medical facilities, homes and other civilian sites, said the report by Tom Andrews, the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar. In a single attack on a village gathering organised by the military's opponents in Sagaing region on April 11, two bombs dropped from a Yak-130 killed at least 160 people, reportedly including nearly 40 children, the report said. Myanmar's military says it is targeting

insurgents and after the Sagaing attack said any civilians killed were probably supporters of opponents it calls "terrorists." "The good news is we now know who is supplying these arms and the jurisdictions in which they operate," Andrews said in a statement, calling for UN members to "step up and stop the flow of arms" with a complete ban on the arms transfers to Myanmar's military, enforcement of existing bans and coordinated sanctions. The UN expert used trade data to detail transfers of arms and other goods, including raw materials for Myanmar's domestic arms production, to the military since the coup worth US\$406 million from Russia and US\$267 million from China, including from state-owned entities in both countries. State-owned entities in India also made a smaller volume of transfers, and companies in Singapore, India and Thailand were also involved in transfers to the military. Some US\$227 million of material came from Rosoboronexport, Moscow's state-owned arms exporter, which has transferred SU-30 fighter jets, supplies for MiG-29 jets and rocket launch systems to Myanmar, the report said. Other Russian companies provided a range of tools, equipment and spare parts for Russian-supplied weapons systems, it said. "Weaponry provided by Russian suppliers has been used to commit probable war crimes and crimes against humanity in Myanmar," the report said. The UN missions of the five countries mentioned in the report as sources of arms and material did not immediately



respond to requests for comment. At a news conference in New York, Andrews said Chinese officials had earlier criticised his reporting, saying he was vilifying legitimate trade in arms and operating outside his mandate by conducting analysis. Russian officials had expressed a similar response, Andrews said.

Source: <https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/3220940/un-expert-says-myanmar-military-imported-us1-billion-weapons-china-russia-and-others-coup>

## Việt Nam expected to emerge as a prominent logistics player in Asia



*Vietnam News | 17 May, 2023*

HÀ NỘI — Việt Nam's logistics industry is gaining recognition in the global market, with growing expectations that it will emerge as a “rising star” in Asia. This is due in large part to the country's efforts to develop its supply chain industry and benefits from ‘China plus’ sourcing strategies of major multinational manufacturers. The industry has witnessed an annual growth of 14-16 per cent which has solidified its position as one of the fastest-growing and most stable sectors in the country with a total value of US\$40 billion to \$42 billion a year. According to Agility Emerging Markets Logistics Index 2023, Việt Nam moved into the top 10 of the Index among 50 global

markets, advancing one position compared to the previous year. Agility's ranking is based on four criteria including domestic opportunities, international opportunities, business fundamentals and digital readiness. This recognition can be attributed to several factors, including the country's strategic location, favourable investment policies and the Government's ongoing efforts to improve infrastructure and streamline regulations. Among these criteria, Việt Nam is leading Southeast Asia and ranks 4th globally in terms of global opportunities with a score of 6.03 out of 10. The country has benefited greatly from the “China plus” policy as major global manufacturers are seeking to diversify their supply chains to reduce reliance on the Chinese market. According to Agility, Apple has been at the forefront of moving production to Việt Nam. In 2020, it began planning to expand assembly operations in Việt Nam, requesting its major supplier Foxconn to expand its assembly operations in the country. Sony, Samsung and LG have also expanded production in Việt Nam, building airfreight infrastructure in Hà NỘI to support their assembly of mobile phones. Việt Nam's furniture industry is also a key beneficiary of this trend with its share of global exports rising from 11 per cent in 2019 to 17 per cent in 2022 while at the same time, China's share has fallen from 61 per cent to 53 per cent. Việt Nam's competitiveness has also been boosted by the growth of both domestic and export e-commerce, transforming it into a major hub for global product transshipment.

According to Trần Thanh Hải, Deputy Director of the Import-Export Department under the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the country's import-export value reached a record high of \$732 billion in 2022, up 9.5 per cent on-year, was partly attributable to the improved quality and quantity of logistics services offered by businesses. Moreover, the Vietnam Maritime Administration has recently embraced the trend of green technology in the shipping industry to reduce fuel consumption, lower carbon emissions, and mitigate the effects of climate change. However, the logistics industry in Việt Nam has not developed adequately due to the lack of connections between logistics service providers and manufacturers, traders and import-export businesses. Experts in Việt Nam's logistics sector stress the critical need for greater collaboration with enterprises. Nguyễn Xuân Hùng, Deputy General Director of Ratraco, wants to expand the network of shipping, warehousing and equipment suppliers to enhance the domestic and international rail transportation systems for refrigerated containers. "This not only diversifies the product range and offers inland cold transport solutions, but also provides a solution to shippers' concerns about supplying and delivering chilled products to the Chinese market," he said. Despite Việt Nam being in an advantageous position to capitalise on China's challenges, the Vietnamese Government still has a considerable amount of work to do in order to establish a strong industrial ecosystem that can attract

top-notch manufacturers and foster the growth of local suppliers that add value. — VNS

Source: <https://vietnamnews.vn/economy/1536733/viet-nam-expected-to-emerge-as-a-prominent-logistics-player-in-asia.html>

## Vietnam to develop rooftop solar for onsite consumption as part of approved energy transition plan



*Vietnam News | 17 May, 2023*

The Vietnamese government has approved a plan to develop renewable energy sources for electricity production, including building rooftop solar for residential and commercial premises. The plan aims to ensure national energy security and provide sufficient electricity demand in the Southeast Asian country, therefore meeting the goal of socio-economic development, with an average GDP growth of about 7% per year expected in the period from 2021-2030. According to the plan, 50% of office buildings and residential houses will use self-produced rooftop solar power for on-site consumption by 2030. However, the generated electricity will not be sold to the national electricity system. Other parts of the plan include developing new power sources and grids. The government estimated that a total of US\$134.7 billion will be

required to fund the plan. Vietnam accelerated its renewable energy transition in recent years, as PV Tech reported that the G7 initiative Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) had agreed to support Vietnam's green energy transition and mobilise an initial US\$15.5 billion of public and private finance over the upcoming years. This mechanism could potentially help the country resolve issues it has had with solar power in recent years after a boom between 2018-2020 that was abruptly stopped, in part due to its grid capacity issues. Moreover, Vietnam was one of the beneficiaries of the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet's plan to accelerate the clean energy transition and access. Priority programmes included supporting battery energy storage systems (BESS) in Vietnam.

Source: <https://www.pv-tech.org/vietnam-to-develop-rooftop-solar-for-onsite-consumption-as-part-of-approved-energy-transition-plan/>

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