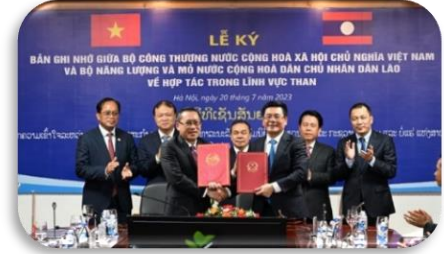


Highlight News / July 24/2023



- Cambodia's exports to Thailand up 6.5% in H1
- Cambodia's export to RCEP nations rises by 24% YoY in H1 2023
- Govt mulls pay rise for low-income civil servants, private employees
- Black gram, pigeon pea prices plunge tracking weak foreign demand
- German newspapers praise Vietnam's development potential, investment opportunities
- Viet Nam plans to import 20 tons of coal from Laos annually



Cambodia's exports to Thailand up 6.5% in H1



Cambodia News | 22 July, 2023

Cambodia's exports to Thailand reached more than \$527 million in the six months from January to June 2023, an increase of 6.5 percent compared to the same period in 2022, amounting to more than \$495 million. Cambodia imports more than \$1.4 billion from Thailand. This is according to the General Department of Customs and Excise of Cambodia. For June 2023, Cambodia's exports to Thailand fell 15.5 percent to more than \$47 million, compared to more than \$57 million in 2022. Thailand has the fourth largest trade volume with Cambodia after China, the United States and Vietnam. In the first half of 2023, the trade volume between the two countries reached nearly \$2 billion, down 14 percent compared to the same period in 2022. In late 2022, the Thai Prime Minister said in a meeting with the Cambodian ambassador that Cambodia and Thailand planned to reach a trade volume of \$15 billion by 2025, while Thailand told Cambodia that the two countries needed more cooperation in a number of areas. Cambodia's main exports to Thailand include garments, agricultural products, gems and raw materials, while imports include fish, meat, beverages, organic fertilizers, cosmetics, home decor, electronics, cars, spare parts, office equipment and construction. Kampuchea Thmey

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501328681>

[/cambodias-exports-to-thailand-up-6-5-in-h1/](#)

Cambodia's export to RCEP nations rises by 24% YoY in H1 2023



Cambodia News | 22 July, 2023

Cambodia's exports to other Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership nations were worth \$4.07 billion in 2023 first half—up by 24 per cent year on year. Its top three export destinations under RCEP during the period were Vietnam, China and Japan. It shipped products worth nearly \$1.43 billion to Vietnam, \$713 million to China and \$545 million to Japan. Cambodia's exports to other Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) member countries were worth \$4.07 billion in the first half (H1) this year—up by 24 per cent from \$3.28 billion over the same period last year, according to the ministry of commerce. The country's top three export destinations under the RCEP during H1 2023 were Vietnam, China and Japan, the ministry said in a report. It shipped products worth nearly \$1.43 billion to Vietnam—up by 22 per cent; \$713 million to China—up by 17 per cent; and \$545 million to Japan—up by 1 per cent, the report said. RCEP comprises 15 Asia-Pacific countries—ten member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and their five trading partners: China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. "The growth clearly shows that the RCEP countries are a potential market for made-in-Cambodia products," ministry spokesman Penn Sovicheat was quoted as saying. Fibre2Fashion News Desk (DS)

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501328587/cambodias-export-to-rcep-nations-rises-by-24-yoy-in-h1-2023/>

Govt mulls pay rise for low-income civil servants, private employees



Laos News | 23 July, 2023

The government is studying the possibility of providing a supporting allowance for low-wage civil servants and increasing the minimum wage for private sector employees, to enable them to cope with spiralling living costs, Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone has said. The Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Finance have been entrusted to carry out the study to determine if the state budget could afford to provide a supporting allowance for low-salary civil servants. “Not all civil servants would be provided with this support. We will focus only on civil servants on low incomes,” the PM told the National Assembly (NA)’s 5th Ordinary Session on July 3. This selective focus comes as Laos is suffering from severe budgetary constraints. In a move to push for a minimum wage increase for private employees, the government has instructed the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to work with the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry on the matter. Premier Sonexay was responding to questions raised by NA members as they called for a wage increase. They said the current monthly minimum wage of 1,300,000 kip agreed on several years ago was far from sufficient to cover household spending on basic needs amid skyrocketing living costs. Over

the first six months of 2023, the cost of goods and services soared by 38.06 percent, affecting household incomes and people’s standard of living, Minister of Planning and Investment Mr Khamjane Vongphosy told the NA session, which ended on July 18. Although inflation has declined from a record high of 41.3 percent in February to 28.8 percent in June, it remains high. “The cost of goods and services is continuing to rise,” Mr Khamjane told lawmakers. Affected by the low value of the kip and high inflation, more people are leaving Laos to seek job opportunities in other countries, mainly Thailand. Concern is growing that if these issues are left unaddressed, it will worsen the Lao labour market, which is already suffering from a worker shortage. NA members called for the monthly minimum wage to be increased from 1,300,000 kip to 2 million kip, not only to help workers cope with hardship, but also to encourage them to fill jobs in Laos. It was reported previously that businesses have argued against a pay rise, saying it would increase their costs and reduce their competitiveness. In the face of current challenges, the government is well aware of the need to increase the minimum wage but has yet to make a decision regarding the precise amount and the timeframe for its rollout. “The minimum wage of 1,300,000 kip is not enough in view of the current cost of living. It will be upgraded to keep pace with living costs,” PM Sonexay told NA members. As the government rolls out a number of measures in a bid to overcome the current challenges, the prime minister told lawmakers he is optimistic that once the

situation has been addressed and is under control, fewer people will seek job opportunities in other countries.

Source : https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeConten_Govt140.php

Black gram, pigeon pea prices plunge tracking weak foreign demand



Myanmar News | 22 July, 2023

YANGON, July 15 (Xinhua) -- Myanmar welcomed 69,373 international arrivals in May this year, up from 14,115 visitors registered in the same period last year, according to the figures released by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism on Saturday. During the period, foreign arrivals to Myanmar by air accounted for 33.34 percent of the total, followed by road with 66.6 percent and sea routes with 0.05 percent, the ministry's data showed. In 2022, a total of 233,487 international tourists visited Myanmar, the figures showed.

Source : <https://www.gnfm.com.mm/black-gram-pigeon-pea-prices-plunge-tracking-weak-foreign-demand/#article-title>

German newspapers praise Vietnam's development potential, investment opportunities



Vietnam News | 22 July, 2023

The German newspaper Focus has published an article about the development of Asia, in which it highly evaluated Vietnam's potential. The article cited Horst Geicke, an investor and Chairman of the Deutsches Haus (German House) in Ho Chi Minh

City, as saying that Vietnam is considered a new investment destination for a wide range of foreign investors in general and German enterprises in particular. In Asia, in addition to Singapore, only Vietnam has signed a free trade agreement with the European Union (EVFTA). German businesses targeting the Southeast Asian markets includes the automobile spare parts suppliers Brose and ZF, equipment manufacturer Kärcher, building materials provider Knauff, and consumer goods company Henkel. The article said Vietnam posted nearly 27.72 billion USD in total foreign direct investment and 22.4 billion USD in disbursed amount last year. These figures significantly contributed to Vietnam's impressive GDP growth of over 8% in 2022 and an average of 5.9% over the past 13 years. It also mentioned the visit of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to the country last November and emphasised that German leaders highly value the relationship with Vietnam and wish to further enhance this connection. Earlier, German magazine PT-Magazin also published an article on investing in Vietnam, stating that in an effort to diversify supply chains, medium-sized enterprises still see the nation as an interesting choice. According to the article, Vietnam is one of the developing countries with a policy of free market access, thus attracting many foreign investors. Many have chosen well-known locations, such as Ho Chi Minh City and its neighbouring provinces in the south, Bac Ninh and Hai Phong in the north, and Da Nang in the central

region. Currently, less-developed destinations like Quy Nhon are also gaining attention.

Source : <https://en.nhandan.vn/german-newspapers-praise-vietnams-development-potential-investment-opportunities-post127720.html>

Viet Nam plans to import 20 tons of coal from Laos annually



Vietnam News | 22 July, 2023

Under the MoU, both nations will further strengthen cooperation and investment activities in coal mining, processing and exporting and enhance experience sharing and capacity building in coal mining and processing. Besides, the MoU will make it easier for coal trade activities between the two sides' enterprises. The signing of the agreement not only consolidates solidarity and special friendship between the two Parties, States and peoples, but also contributes to ensuring national energy security and fostering energy transition process in Viet Nam in line with international commitments. Furthermore, the MoU also paves the way for Laos to uphold its potential and advantages to promote socio-economic development and guarantee national defense and security. At the signing event, the two ministers vowed to increase the efficiency of the inter-Governmental Committee and soon establish new bilateral cooperation frameworks to bolster economic and trade ties. Economic ties between the two nations have witnessed positive achievements across all sectors of trade, industry and energy. Viet Nam-Laos trade value hit US\$1.7 billion in 2022, up

24 percent against the same period last year. In the first half of this year, the bilateral trade reached US\$833 million, a year-on-year increase of 1 percent. Last year, Viet Nam spent US\$78.2 million to import 1.8 million tons of ores and minerals from Laos./.

Source : <https://en.baochinhphu.vn/viet-nam-plans-to-import-20-tons-of-coal-from-laos-annually-111230722092801128.htm>