

Highlight News / September 27, 2023



- Private sector crucial to tourism growth
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- Long An makes strong recovery following COVID-19 pandemic
- Vietnam spent nearly \$1 billion on gasoline imports in 8 months



Private sector crucial to tourism growth



Cambodia News | 27 September, 2023

The role of the private sector in promoting the tourism landscape in the Kingdom was highlighted Tuesday at a meeting organised by the Ministry of Tourism at its headquarters in Phnom Penh. Addressing the meeting, Sok Soken, Minister of Tourism, called for joint efforts between the private sector and related associations in boosting the tourism sector by promoting potential destinations as well as tourism products across the international markets. Hor Sarun, Undersecretary of State of MoT, Chhay Sivlin, President of Cambodia Tourism Association (CATA), and Top Sopheak, Secretary of State and Spokesperson of MoT attended the meeting along with over 100 representatives of the private sector and tourist associations. The ministry organised the meeting aimed at deriving strategies to further develop the Kingdom's tourism industry while maintaining an edge over other countries in the region. The meeting also discussed the challenges faced by the private sector players in the tourism industry and measures to improve the tourism dynamics of the nation. During the discussion, Chhay Sivlin raised issues regarding the major obstacles that need improvement to facilitate international travellers into the Kingdom including the plan to increase the cost of passenger service, the development of infrastructure in potential tourist

destinations and concerns regarding the procedures for obtaining the border pass for entering the Kingdom as well as the inappropriate behaviour by some officers. Sivlin said the issues that happened at the border dented the image of many tourism services as the tourists are no longer interested in visiting the country. "We might have good foods, attractive tourism destinations, or remarkable hospitality services, but if travellers encounter problems at the border, they might lose interest in exploring the journey, which could be a loss in terms of rebound tourists," she added. In response, the Minister of Tourism committed to improving and seeking solutions to attract more international tourism and to promote tourism products to the international markets. He highlighted the process of establishing more direct flights connecting the countries with the largest populations in the world including India and China. He also revealed the plan to create tourism schools in Siem Reap and Sihanoukville provinces. "These projects witness the effort of the government of Cambodia in striving to attract international tourists from all sources as well as to produce human resources for sustainable development in the future." Speaking to Khmer Times, Sivlin said, "The reassuring response from the Minister has convinced many investors as the government is not only concerned about the current situations but on the future projects as well."

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501366904/private-sector-crucial-to-tourism-growth/>

Japan ready to buy more Cambodian agri products



Cambodia News | 27 September, 2023

Japanese Ambassador to Cambodia Ueno Atsushi has urged Cambodian exporters to enhance the quality of products with the required standards for exporting the items to the Japanese market. “Cambodia’s exports of agricultural products to the Japanese market are marginal, but Japan can import more,” he said at a round table discussion on Cambodia-Japan relations at Sun & Moon Hotel, Phnom Penh, yesterday. The Ambassador called for separate negotiating assistance to the agricultural sector in Cambodia under the official Japanese agency ODA, saying that it must be separated from private investment projects. Japanese private companies have made some investments in Cambodia such as for the export of pepper products to Japan or cashew products, he added. “We continue to support exports to Japan, both by the public and private sectors. At the moment, we do not have any restrictions on the import of Cambodian agricultural products to Japan,” he said. Agricultural products from Cambodia are no different from the agricultural products of ASEAN countries. But the issue is transportation or the trademark of products in Cambodia, he said. Cambodia and Japan are members of the Regional Comprehensive Partnership (RCEP) agreement, which was put into force in early 2022. Japan is one of the main trade

partners of Cambodia. Cambodia exported \$1.93 billion worth of products to Japan last year, a year-on-year increase of 10.5 percent, said the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) report. Import from Japan was valued at \$515 million, a decrease of 11.2 percent compared to the same period last year, the report read. Japan is among the potential trade partners that Cambodia has planned to start negotiations for a bilateral FTA. The ‘comprehensive strategic partnership’, established last year between both countries is expected to attract more Japanese investment and open a wider market for Cambodian products.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501366903/japan-ready-to-buy-more-cambodian-agri-products/>

Laos Promotes EVs for Clean Energy



Laos News | 27 September, 2023

The Lao Ministry of Industry and Commerce has rolled out measures to promote the use of electric vehicles (EVs) to minimize the budget for importing petroleum and protect the environment with using clean energy. They include policies to encourage the development of production, supply and use of EVs and EV batteries, and to promote the provision of post-purchase services and construction of charging stations nationwide, along with attracting investors to build factories that engage in producing and assembling four-wheeled EVs, Lao News

Agency (KPL) reported on Wednesday. Coordination with the natural resources and environment sector is also a must to set forth measures to handle expired batteries to avoid leaving negative impacts on the environment and society. Buavanh Vilavong, Director General of Department of Industry and Handicraft under Lao Ministry of Industry and Commerce, said the use of EVs in Laos is urgent to minimizing the budget for importing petroleum, adding that the import value of this product in Laos is relatively high, accounting for 20 percent of the country's total value. Meanwhile, Laos has great potential for electricity production, thus, promoting the adoption of EVs nationwide is the right direction to take advantage of internal resources as well as to ensure the trade balance. Currently, the use of EVs in Laos still faces many obstacles such as limited EV manufacturing or assembling factories. Besides, the road system in Laos has not met standards suitable for EVs, especially non-urban routes, while the number of charging stations has not yet satisfied actual demand. Laos plans to increase the number of EVs to about 1 percent of the total vehicles by 2025, including motorcycles, buses and cars, and to install at least 50 charging stations. The Lao government promotes EVs to advance clean energy use in transportation, aiming for an action plan by 2025, a strategy by 2030, and a vision by 2050. The adoption

of EVs also aims to minimize fuel imports and reduce harmful emissions, as well as fulfill the national agenda for addressing the Southeast Asian country's economic and financial difficulties.

Source: <https://nepalnews.com/s/global/laos-promotes-evs-for-clean-energy>

Corn prices in steep decline



Myanmar News | 27 September, 2023

Corn prices are in sharp fall owing to abundant fresh supply, export halt to Thailand and weak demand by China. The FOB prices are US\$270-290 per tonne of corn at present. The corn prices stand at K1,130-1,150 per viss in the domestic market, according to the Yangon Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung Commodity Centre). Myanmar delivers corn to China and Thailand through the border and also ships corn to China, India, Vietnam and the Philippines via maritime trade at present, according to the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association. Thailand nodded corn imports under zero tariff (with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August. However, Thailand imposes a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn imports to protect the rights of their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand. China has been purchasing Myanmar's corn through cross-border trade under the opium substitution program. Legitimate corn trade between Myanmar and China commenced at the end of 2022. A total of 112

Myanmar companies have been permitted for corn exports. This being so, Myanmar will export 60,000 tonnes of corn that are produced as an alternate crop replacing opium poppies in Shan State in October 2023, the association stated. Myanmar exported more than two million tonnes of corn in the 2022 corn season. The majority of them were sent to Thailand and the remaining went to China, India, the Philippines and Viet Nam. More than two million tonnes of corn are expected to be shipped to foreign trade partners in the 2023 corn season, said U Min Khaing, chair of the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association. The corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons — winter, summer and monsoon. The country produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn every year. — NN/EM

Source: <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/corn-prices-in-steep-decline/#article-title>

two years and a half of implementing the Resolution of the 11th provincial Party Congress for the 2020-2025 tenure, the province obtained positive results in 16 out of its 19 socio-economic development targets, he said. The province posted 0.95% and 8.32% growth in the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) in 2021 and 2022, respectively. Its economy expanded by 3.43% in the first six months of this year. The province currently has 121 out of 161 communes meeting new-style rural standards and many of them satisfy advanced new-style rural standards. The official held that industrial production has basically recovered, achieving an average growth rate of about 4% a year and so did commercial activities with average growth of 10% a year. The processing industry accounts for over 90% of the province's industrial proportion, he said. In 2022, Long An's Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI) moved six places from the previous year to the 10th position out of the country's 63 cities and provinces. Investment promotion is being innovated and becoming more effective. Thirteen projects valued at over 40 trillion VND (1.6 billion USD) were granted investment certificates at a promotion conference held in July this year, along with the commitment of nearly 100 trillion VND in a number of projects that are calling for investment in the locality. Currently, there are 16,100 enterprises operating in Long An province, an increase of 29.3% compared

Long An makes strong recovery following COVID-19 pandemic



Vietnam News | 27 September, 2023

Long An (VNA) – The Mekong Delta province of Long An has recovered from damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Nguyen Van Ut, Chairman of the provincial People's Committee. After

to the end of 2020. The number of foreign-invested projects in the locality reached 1,191 with combined registered capital of 10.4 billion USD, an increase of 165 projects and 4.1 billion USD compared to the end of 2020. The province's budget revenue in 2022 stood at 21.84 trillion VND, up 18% from 2020's figure. To overcome shortcomings and fulfill all targets set in the 11th provincial Party Congress's resolution, it is necessary to diversify investment sources and focus on carrying out key tasks, Ut said, adding that economic development must go together with social stability and environmental protection. According to the Long An province's approved development master plan, the province aims to become a dynamic, efficient, and sustainable economic centre in the southern region by 2030. It would serve as a gateway on the urban-industrial economic corridor of the Mekong Delta, closely connecting with Ho Chi Minh City and the southeast region, and becoming an important cooperation and trading hub with Cambodia. By 2050, Long An envisioned itself as the leading industrial province in Vietnam and one of the important economic growth poles in the Mekong Delta./.

Source: <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/long-an-makes-strong-recovery-following-covid19-pandemic/268639.vnp>

Vietnam spent nearly \$1 billion on gasoline imports in 8 months



Vietnam News | 27 September, 2023

VOV.VN - Vietnam has climbed four spots to rank 106th among 165 countries and territories in the Economic Freedom of the World Index, as released by Canada's Fraser Institute. The rankings measure the degree of which both policies and institutions of countries are supportive of economic freedom. They consider five metrics - government size, legal system and property rights, currency stability, freedom to trade internationally, and regulation. In the government size category, the country ranked 83rd, with a slight decrease in score from 6.56 to 6.53. In the legal system and property rights category, it reached 77th spot, an increase from 4.96 to 5.15. This represents the first time that the country's score has surpassed five in this category. Regarding currency stability, Vietnam secured 128th position with its score rising from 6.96 to 7.02. Vietnam made progress in international trade freedom, ranking 98th with its score rising from 6.4 to 6.52. In terms of the regulation of the credit market, labour market, and businesses, Vietnam finished 103rd with a slight score improvement from 6.08 to 6.10. Singapore topped the list, followed by Hong Kong (China), Switzerland, New Zealand, and the US. In Southeast

Asia, Malaysia fell three notches to 56th, whilst Thailand rose eight to 64th and the Philippines dropped three to 70th. Indonesia ranked 74th, marking a decline of one notch, Cambodia fell three to 78th, and Laos rose one to 107th. The annual Economic Freedom of the World Index assesses the economic freedom of individuals and their ability to make their own economic decisions by analysing the policies and institutions of 165 jurisdictions.

Source: <https://vietnamnet.vn/en/vietnam-spent-nearly-1-billion-on-gasoline-imports-in-8-months-2194858.html>
