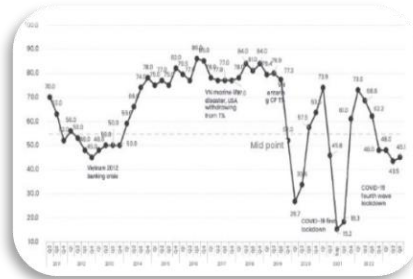


Highlight News / October 12, 2023



- Cambodia's international trade reaches \$35 billion in nine months
- Gasoline prices down 250 riel per litre
- Repairs underway to Road No. 13 South in Khammuan
- Octane 92 price rebounds to over K2,000 per litre
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Cambodia's international trade reaches

\$35 billion in nine months



Cambodia News | 11 October, 2023

Cambodia's international trade totalled more than \$35.16 billion in the first nine months of this year, inching down 3.5 percent from the same period last year, the General Department of Customs and Excise's report showed on Tuesday. From January to September, the Kingdom exported \$16.94 billion worth of goods to foreign markets, a year-on-year decrease of 0.8 percent, while its imports dropped by 5.9 percent to \$18.21 billion, the source pointed out. Cambodia's biggest markets are the U.S., China, Vietnam, Japan, China, Germany, Canada, and the UK. The Kingdom's main products exported include garments, machinery and electrical equipment, footwear products, leather goods, grain, furniture, rubber, fruits, vegetables, pearls, toys, and textiles. The garment, footwear and travel goods industry is the largest foreign exchange earner for Cambodia. The sector consists of roughly 1,133 factories and branches, employing approximately 840,000 workers, mostly female. In 2022, Cambodia exported a total of \$22.4 billion worth of goods, up 16.4 percent from a year earlier, and imported \$29.9 billion, up 4.3 percent, the official report showed. AKP-CheaVannak

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501374641/cambodias-international-trade-reaches-35-billion-in-nine-months/>

Gasoline prices down 250 riel per litre



Cambodia News | 11 October, 2023

The Ministry of Commerce announced that the price of gasoline this week has dropped by 250 riel, equivalent to 4,300 riel per litre, while diesel is 4,650 riel, down 200 riel. This price is valid from today to October 21, 2023. Ministry of Commerce spokesman Pen Sovicheat once told local news that the fuel Cambodia uses is currently imported from Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Cambodian retailers that import fuel include Tela Sokimex, Papa Savimex, Lim Long, and others. Foreign companies that import fuel to Cambodia include Total, Caltex, and PTT. The Ministry of Commerce issues retail prices every 10 days to keep up with the trend of changes in global fuel prices. Kampuchea Thmey

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501374895/gasoline-prices-down-250-riel-per-litre/>

Repairs underway to Road No. 13 South in Khammuan



Laos News | 11 October, 2023

A Chinese company is helping to repair a 10-kilometre section of Road No. 13 South in Khammuan province. On October 6, an official from the province's Department of Public Works and Transport, Mr Saisack Sisoulath, on behalf of the committee responsible for the improvement and repair of Road No. 13 South in Khammuan, reported

on the details of the upgrade, which is taking place between the traffic lights at Km 4 and Nabuap village. Mr Saisack warned that the works would create a considerable amount of mud and dust and that travel on the road would be difficult. The province's Department of Public Works and Transport asked the Lao Kaiyuan Company for assistance in repairing the road and the company acceded to the request, saying it would be pleased to improve the surface so the road was safe for everyone to use, while the company would be able to more easily transport goods. The total cost of the repairs will be about 100 million kip, funded by Lao Kaiyuan, which will use its own machinery and manpower. The upgrade will involve repairs to the pavement, which are expected to be complete before the start of the rainy season next year. Last year the company also carried out repairs to the road, at a cost of 400 million kip, and will do so again in the future for the benefit of people living in nearby villages, which are also close to the company's facilities. Motorists are advised to drive carefully when using this road and to follow the signs erected at points where repairs are being carried out, to ensure that no accidents occur.

Source: https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freenews/freecontent_198_Repairs_y23.php

Octane 92 price rebounds to over K2,000 per litre



Myanmar News | 11 October, 2023

Octane 92 price bounced back to K2,015 per litre in the domestic market on 10 October after a five-day fall. The Octane 92 price was below K2,000 per litre from 5 October. The prices gained to K2,015 per litre of Octane 92, K2,115 for Octane 95, K2,310 for diesel and K2,350 for premium diesel on 10 October. The price index set by Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS), the pricing basis for many refined products in southeast Asia, influences the domestic fuel prices, according to the Supervisory Committee on Oil Import, Storage and Distribution of Fuel Oil. Last August 2022, the oil prices hit the highest of K2,605 per litre for Octane 92, K2,670 for Octane 95, K3,330 for premium diesel and K3,245 for diesel. The committee is therefore steering the fuel oil storage and distribution sector effectively so as not to have a shortage of oil in the domestic market and to ensure price stability for energy consumers. The Petroleum Products Regulatory Department, under the guidance of the committee, is issuing the daily reference rate for oil to offer a reasonable price to energy consumers. The reference rate in the Yangon Region is set on the MOPS's price assessment, shipping cost, premium insurance, tax, other general costs and health profit per cent. The rates for regions and states other than

Yangon are evaluated after adding the transportation cost and the retail reference rates daily covered on the state-run newspapers and are posted on the media and official website and Facebook page of the department daily starting from 4 May. The committee is inspecting the fuel stations whether they are overcharging or not. The authorities are taking action against those retailers of fuel stations under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law 2017 if they are found overcharging rather than the set reference rate. As per the statement, 90 per cent of fuel oil in Myanmar is imported, while the remaining 10 per cent is produced locally. The domestic fuel price is highly correlated with international prices. The State is steering the market to mitigate the loss between the importers, sellers and energy consumers. Consequently, the government is trying to distribute the oil at a reasonable price compared to those of regional countries. Some countries levied higher tax rates and hiked oil prices compared to that of Myanmar. However, Malaysia's oil sector receives government subsidies and the prices are about 60 per cent cheaper than that of Myanmar. Every country lays down different patterns of policy to fix the oil prices. Myanmar also levies only a lower tax rate on fuel oil and strives for energy consumers to buy the oil at a cheaper rate. — NN/EM

Source: <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/octane-92-price-rebounds-to-over-k2000-per-litre/#article-title>

Bright outlook for Vietnam's economy – EuroCham report



Vietnam News | 11 October, 2023

HCMC – The European Chamber of Commerce Vietnam (EuroCham) has released its Business Confidence Index (BCI) for the third quarter of 2023, offering a positive perspective on Vietnam's business environment after a challenging year. In Q3, the BCI rose to 45.1 from 43.5 in the previous quarter. Although this signifies a small uptick and hints at emerging positive economic momentum, it marks the fourth consecutive quarter of staying below the 50-point threshold, according to analysts. Business sentiment appears to be shifting. Between the second and third quarters, pessimism regarding the current business situation decreased by three percentage points, while positive and neutral perspectives increased by six and four percentage points, respectively. The Q3 survey also found a change in expectations for the final quarter of the year. Compared to responses in Q2, there was an 11-percentage-point increase in businesses anticipating economic stability and growth in the coming months. Meanwhile, businesses projecting a negative trend fell by five percentage points. Despite these optimistic sentiments, businesses remain cautious. Expectations concerning

increased revenue or orders remained stable compared to the previous quarter, with only 22% of companies planning to expand their teams in Q4. Vietnam's appeal for global investment remains robust, with 63% of the surveyed businesses ranking Vietnam among the top 10 destinations for foreign investment. Over half of the surveyed companies plan to increase their direct investment in Vietnam by the end of the year. However, 59% of respondents cited administrative difficulties as their primary challenge in Vietnam. These difficulties include uncertainties in rules and regulations, obstacles in obtaining permits, and strict visa and work permit requirements for foreign workers. To enhance Vietnam's attractiveness for foreign investment, 58% of respondents stressed the need to reduce red tape, 48% called for an improved regulatory environment, one-third wanted better transport infrastructure, and 22% urged the easing of visa and work permit requirements for foreign experts. The BCI, conducted by Decision Lab, has provided periodic insights into Vietnam's economy since 2011.

Source: <https://english.thesaigontimes.vn/bright-outlook-for-vietnams-economy-eurocham-report/>

Vietnam's economic growth projected at 4.7 per cent in 2023



Vietnam News | 11 October, 2023

The Vietnamese economy is forecast to grow by 4.7 per cent in 2023, before rebounding to 6 per cent in 2024, according to the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO). After the sharp slowdown in the first quarter of this year, Vietnam's economic growth has now picked up, with signs of increasing new orders and improving business confidence. However, the outlook for Vietnam's economic growth in the near term remains fragile as the global economy is forecast to experience only moderate growth. Inflationary pressure remains under control, thanks mainly to adequate domestic food production, temporary cuts of oil-related taxes, and administered prices. Consumer price inflation is expected to increase slightly to 3.3 per cent in 2023 and 3.4 per cent in 2024. On the external front, the contraction of exports will be offset by import compression and rising income from tourism. Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows remain strong amidst the reconfiguration of the global supply chain. Trade surpluses and resilient FDI inflows will be the key factors behind the overall balance of payments surplus. AMRO's lead economist Sumio Ishikawa said, "The elevated headwinds from

weakening global demand and the downturn in the local housing market call for the recalibration of the macroeconomic policy mix to support the economy and safeguard financial stability." Accordingly, the government has implemented several measures to support growth, including the temporary reduction and deferral of land rent and some taxes, a 150 basis point cut to the operating interest rate, and credit support measures. In light of the financial distress in the residential property market, Ishikawa feels an appropriate policy mix should be employed to support growth while maintaining stability. "With output still below its potential and some available fiscal space, policies should offer targeted support to micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and vulnerable households that are adversely affected by the country's weak economic conditions. Expediting state capital investment would also boost growth," Ishikawa stated. "Over the medium term, fiscal policy should focus on improving tax administration, broadening the tax base, enhancing spending efficiency, and strengthening social protection." The accommodative monetary policy has eased the financial burden on vulnerable borrowers, and to some extent, bolstered business and consumer confidence. He argues that the monetary policy stance should be normalised once the economic recovery is on track. Modernising the monetary

policy framework, including transitioning to a more market-based stance, would allow monetary policy to support the economy more effectively. According to the AMRO, concerted efforts should be made to promote green, inclusive, and sustainable growth. Increasing MSMEs' access to financing through the expansion of credit guarantee funds could also be considered. More resources should be directed to increase the availability and quality of education and vocational training. Finally, amidst the intensifying climate risks, more attention should be paid to mitigation and adaptation.

Source: <https://vir.com.vn/vietnams-economic-growth-projected-at-47-per-cent-in-2023-105916.html>
