

## Highlight News / November 20, 2023



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## Global headwinds keep Cambodia's GFT exports down nearly 17 percent



*Cambodia News | 17 November 2023*

Cambodia's main exports of garments, footwear and travel goods (GFT) continued to decline amidst global challenges and in the January to October period, the exports recorded a slide of 16.90 percent, compared to the same period last year, triggering chances of further job losses in the sector. According to the latest trade data of the General Department of Customs and Excise (GDCE), Cambodia exported \$8.96 billion worth of GFT goods during the first ten months of the year, a sharp decline from the \$10.78 billion the country exported during the same period in 2022. GFT goods, the biggest export earner for the country, helped Cambodia earn \$12.63 billion last year, an increase of 15 percent compared to 2021. But this year, the earnings from the GFT sector declined essentially due to the worsening international economic situation and the subsequent drop in demand, especially from the US and the European Union (EU). The GFT goods exports for October 2023 alone showed a decline of 5.69 percent year on year, going down compared to the previous month's 4.16 percent decline. In fact, the GFT goods exports declined every month during the year so far except in June when they gained one percent growth relative to June 2022. The exports in August 2023 declined by 11.12 percent and in July

by 28.15 percent compared to the respective months last year. The decline in exports for May 2023 was 17.03 percent compared to May 2022. For April, they showed a decline of 30.42 percent, for March by 14.60 percent, in February by 24.54 percent and by 28 percent in January, compared to the respective months last year. The decline in GFT goods exports continued even as almost all other sectors registered growth in exports, the GDCE data showed. Overall, Cambodia's exports ended up with a marginal rise of 0.2 percent in the January to October period this year, compared to the same period last year. Within the GFT sector, knitted apparel articles brought in \$4.54 billion till October this year, a decline of 17.6 percent, compared to \$5.51 billion earned for the same period in 2022. Non-knitted apparel articles earned \$1.92 billion, compared to \$2.23 billion for the same period last year, again a decline of 13.7 percent year-on-year. Travel goods netted \$1.40 billion until October this year, compared to \$1.58 billion for the same period last year, registering a decline of 11.8 percent year-on-year. Footwear exports earned \$1.08 billion for the first 10 months this year, also showing a decline of 24.6 percent compared to the same period in the previous year when they earned \$1.44 billion. According to experts, apart from the prolonged Russia-Ukraine war and subsequent inflationary pressures, the non-renewal of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) by the US and the reduction in Everything But Arms (EBA) benefits by the European Union (EU) have also hit the

Cambodian GFT exports hard. As per the GFT Sector Brief released by the European Chamber of Commerce in Cambodia (EuroCham) in 2022, of the 64 EBA-affected tariff lines for Cambodia, five relate to travel goods, 13 to footwear products and 46 to garment products. As a result of this, Cambodia's GFT exports to the EU declined from \$4.2 billion in 2019 to \$3.4 billion in 2020, a decline of 20 percent, and reduced further to \$2.7 in 2021 (another 20 percent decline), the Brief said. Ky Sereyvath, Senior Economist and Director General of the Institute of China Studies at the Royal Academy of Cambodia attributed the Kingdom's GFT sector struggles to the global economic slowdown. But in his opinion, GSP and EBA issues did not affect Cambodia's GFT exports much. In a recent conversation with Khmer Times, Sereyvath noted that Cambodia's GFT exports had still been going up from 2019 to 2022 even after the GSP non-renewal and EBA cut-down.

Source: <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501393555/global-headwinds-keep-cambodias-gft-exports-down-nearly-17-percent/>

## Cambodia reports 4.11 mln air passengers in first 10 months: minister



Cambodia News | 19 November 2023

Cambodia registered 4.11 million air travellers during the first 10 months of 2023, a year-on-year increase of 144 percent, Mao Havannall,

minister in charge of the State Secretariat of Civil Aviation, said on Thursday. Some 32 international and domestic airlines had operated a total of 41,596 flights to the kingdom's three international airports during the January-October period this year, up 93 percent year on year, he said. Havannall said Cambodia currently has direct flights with eight ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) member countries, as well as China, South Korea, and Qatar, among others. "Overall, we can assume that the aviation industry in Cambodia has recovered more than 55 percent compared to the pre-COVID-19 pandemic era in 2019," he said in a speech during the inauguration of the Chinese-invested Siem Reap Angkor International Airport (SAI). The minister expressed his hope that the SAI, Cambodia's biggest airport so far, will help attract new international airlines and travellers, especially from China, to Siem Reap province, the home of the Angkor Archaeological Park. "The SAI will give a boost to the kingdom's economic growth, promote aviation, tourism and investment, and contribute further to poverty reduction," he said. "We are confident that this new airport will become a bridge connecting Cambodia to a wider world," he added.

Xinhua

Source: [https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501393834/cambodia-reports-4-11-mln-air-passengers-in-first-](https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501393834/cambodia-reports-4-11-mln-air-passengers-in-first-10-months-minister/)

[10-months-minister/](https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501393834/cambodia-reports-4-11-mln-air-passengers-in-first-10-months-minister/)

## First China-Laos-Thailand express freight train departs from Chengdu.



*Laos News | 19 November 2023*

The first China-Laos-Thailand express freight train departed from the Chengdu International Railway Port in Chengdu, capital of southwest China's Sichuan Province, on November 17, with cargo bound for customers in Thailand. The launch of the express freight train service, which cuts delivery time for goods from Chengdu to Thailand to under five days, marks a significant milestone in improving connectivity and boosting common development between the three countries.

Source: <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2023-11-19/First-China-Laos-Thailand-express-freight-train-departs-from-Chengdu-1oQZOYRv8cw/index.html>

## Laos officially launched the ASEAN chair's logo and theme of 2024.



*Laos News | 19 November 2023*

ao Ministry of Foreign Affairs has officially launched its Asean chair's logo, website, and theme for 2024, according to Lao National Radio. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Saleamxay Kommasith

chaired the ceremony with all concerned ministries and agencies in preparation for the incoming Asean chair, which will commence on January 1, 2024. The 44th and 45th Asean-related summits would be held back to back in October. The theme, "Asean: Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience," reflects the Asean chair's desire to promote and deepen the bloc's cooperation in all areas of connectivity. More specifically, during the Lao chair, top priorities would be placed on enhancing infrastructure connectivity, narrowing the development gap, and promoting greater economic integration and people-to-people exchanges. As far as external relations are concerned, Vientiane will further strengthen the bloc's dialogue partners while maintaining ASEAN's relevance and centrality in the evolving regional architectures, according to Lao National Radio. The logo is confined in a circular shape represents the globe and symbolizes ASEAN's relations and cooperation with external partners worldwide. It has four colors—blue, red, yellow, and white—of the ASEAN's flag and emblem.

Source: <https://www.thaipbsworld.com/laos-officially-launched-the-asean-chairs-logo-and-theme-of-2024/>

## FOB prices of black gram, pigeon pea, green gram post slight decline



*Myanmar News | 18 November 2023*

The FOB prices of black gram, green gram and pigeon pea fell again on 16-18 November 2023. The prices were down by \$30 per tonne of black gram, \$100 for pigeon peas, \$40 for green gram from central Myanmar regions and \$50 for green gram (Shwewah variety). The FOB prices stood at \$1,090-1,110 per tonne of black gram, \$1,350-1,370 for pigeon pea, \$740-760 for green gram from central Myanmar regions and \$930-960 for green gram (Shwewah variety) between 2 and 4 November and declined to \$1,060-1,080 for black gram, \$1,250-1,270 for pigeon pea, \$700-720 for green gram from central Myanmar regions and \$880-910 for green gram (Shwewah variety) on 16-18 November. The prices were registered at K2.9 million per tonne of black gram (Fair Average Quality/RC), K3.14 million per tonne of black gram (Special Quality/RC), K3.25 million per tonne of pigeon pea, K2,500-2,835 per viss of green gram from central Myanmar regions and K3,465 per viss of for green gram (Shwewah variety) on 18 November. The black gram price fluctuated around K2.9 million per tonne in Yangon's market. The pigeon pea prices dramatically plunged

to K3.25 million per tonne on 18 November from K3.75 million per tonne on 3 November.

Source: <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/fob-prices-of-black-gram-pigeon-pea-green-gram-post-slight-decline/#article-title>

## HCMC tops logistics competitiveness index



*Vietnam News | 18 November 2023*

HCMC – HCMC has secured the top spot in logistics competitiveness across Vietnam, according to the Logistics Competitiveness Index (LCI) report. The report, conducted by the Vietnam Logistics Business Association (VLA), the Vietnam Logistics Research and Development Institute (VLI), and Dream Incubator (DI), evaluated 26 provinces and cities. Criteria included gross regional domestic product (GRDP), cargo volume, and the number of logistics businesses. HCMC scored highest, with a rating ranging from 43.3 to 74.3 out of 100, underling the city's exceptional performance in technology integration, infrastructure development, service quality, and legal frameworks pertaining to logistics. It was followed by Haiphong City and Binh Duong Province, securing the second and third positions in the ranking, respectively. The LCI serves as a benchmarking tool created to assess and give an overview of the country's growth rate, quality, infrastructure, and provincial and municipal policies

in the logistics sector, thereby cutting logistics costs, promoting production and export, and attracting foreign investment. The LCI report is designed to highlight and explain the differences between provinces and cities in their performance on trade and import-export logistics and, as a result, help domestic and international businesses determine where to expand their businesses.

Source: <https://english.thesaigontimes.vn/hcmc-tops-logistics-competitiveness-index/>

## Opportunity for Vietnam's coconut exports to US, China



*Vietnam News | 19 November, 2023*

Bui Duong Thuat, Director of the Mekong Fruit Export Co., Ltd. in Chau Thanh district, the southern province of Ben Tre, said that the US market is the second-biggest coconut importer in the world, just after China as it imports approximately 2,000 containers of fresh coconut yearly. Meanwhile, Vietnamese companies export between 110 and 120 containers of fresh coconuts to the US a year. Therefore, there remains room for Vietnamese coconut in the market. Moreover, the General Administration of Customs of China is inspecting cultivation areas to endorse a protocol authorising the official import of Vietnamese fresh coconut to the market of over 1 billion people, Thuat said, hoping that Vietnam's fresh coconut will be exported to

China soon. To seize the opportunity, he said his company planned to cooperate with coconut farmers in Ben Tre province to develop a 100-ha organic material area. Vo Van Hai, the Chairman of the Luong Hoa commune Farmers' Association in Ben Tre province's Giong Trom district, said that the commune is one of the most productive coconut-growing areas in Vietnam. Currently, there are more than 716 ha of coconut farming in the commune, with 300 ha grown to get coconut water. On average, a tree yields between 140 and 150 coconuts per year, and coconut farmers can earn up to 100 million VND (4,200 USD) per hectare per year. Ben Tre is known as Vietnam's coconut capital with a coconut growing area accounting for about 40% of the country's total and 46% of the total in the Mekong Delta region. Huynh Quang Duc, Deputy Director of the provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, said that Ben Tre has over 78,000 ha under coconut farming and produces over 800 million coconuts a year. Regarding coconuts grown to get coconut water, the province cultivates nearly 16,000 ha with a yearly output of about 390 million coconuts. About half of the coconuts meet export requirements. Ben Tre has five enterprises that export fresh coconuts to markets, including Japan, Singapore, Taiwan (China), Australia, and Canada. About 20 companies have registered to get packaging facility codes and planting area codes that enable them to export

coconut to the Chinese market. Besides, geographical indications have been granted to the province's coconut products. Therefore, the effective exploitation of the geographical indications adds an advantage for Ben Tre coconut to expand its markets.

Source: <https://en.nhandan.vn/opportunity-for-vietnams-coconut-exports-to-us-china-post131272.html>

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