

*Highlight News / February 02/2024*



- Cambodia eyes establishing Special Economic Zone by countries, Says PM
- Agricultural modernisation govt's top priority, says PM
- Bokeo links tourism to investment
- Lao Airlines Introduces New Regional Routes
- Yangon Port: 53 container vessels slated to arrive in Feb
- 147 construction permits granted in YCDC area in H1 Jan
- Vietnamese holidaymakers prioritise domestic tourism during Tet holiday: report
- Vietnam strives to increase competitiveness for agricultural exports to US



## Cambodia eyes establishing Special Economic Zone by countries, Says PM



*Cambodia News | 1 February, 2024*

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said that Cambodia is considering creating a special economic zone by countries, speaking on January 31, 2024 at the official launch of the “Special Programme to Promote Investment in Preah Sihanouk Province 2024” in Preah Sihanouk province. He continued, “Our vision for the future special economic zone is one that can seamlessly accommodate a diverse range of industries. To achieve this, we are actively formulating policies and implementing pilot projects within the economic zone, with a particular focus on attracting investments in green technology, sustainable industries, and the digital sector.” On the occasion, Prime Minister Hun Manet added that Cambodia currently boasts economic zones tailored for all industries and nations. This additional arrangement is intended to complement our existing framework, not to replace or compete with it. Fresh News

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501432763/cambodia-eyes-establishing-special-economic-zone-by-countries-says-pm/>

## Agricultural modernisation gov't's top priority, says PM



*Cambodia News | 1 February, 2024*

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) continues to give high priority to the development

and modernisation of the agricultural sector to enhance competitiveness in the domestic, regional and international markets, said Prime Minister Hun Manet. Presiding over the closing ceremony of the 2023 Annual Meeting of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries on Tuesday, Mr Hun Manet said, “A large number of Singaporean companies and the group of investors from the United States and Japan are evincing interest in our country’s agriculture sector.” RGC has increased investment in supporting infrastructure such as irrigation systems, rural transport systems, logistics, electricity and process facilities, promoting economic development linked with diamond cooperation, building fish and rice corridors and strengthening the use of technology, innovation, and digital transformation, the Premier added. He went on to add, “The government also focus on creating human capital and provides fiscal incentives to improve quality efficiency, productivity and security aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of the agricultural products in the domestic, regional and international markets.” During the ceremony, Mr Hun Manet emphasised that RGC prioritise the development and modernisation of the agricultural sector through the launch of the Pentagonal Strategy – Phase One, focusing on six priority policy projects which have been implemented since last year to address the challenge in the future. “The National Agriculture Development Policy 2022-2030 aims to turn the agriculture industry into a modern, competitive, sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture while

the National Cashew Policy 2022-2027 will transform our country into a cashew emperor in the future,” he explained. Speaking to Khmer Times, Uon Silot, President of Cashew nut Association of Cambodia (CAC) said, “Contributing to achieving the dream of becoming a cashew emperor, our association has set out several long-term plans such as organised training sessions for farmers to improve production yield and convert them from normal farmers to become agri-business farmers. Conduct more research to develop new cashew varieties that are resistant to climate change, build up a community warehouse so that raw cashew nuts to supply the whole year’s demand of local consumers, increase processing plants to gain more value-added from cashew nuts, and transform Kampong Thom province into a cashew nut industrial zone for both production and processing goods, he added. He continued that to successfully implement the projects, CAC has appointed four representatives to help boost the market and attract more investors from different countries, such as China, Japan, Singapore, and India. According to the Premier’s post on social media, RGC continues to implement three major principles, the first is to exempt taxes on agricultural land, family farmland and imports of agricultural equipment. The second principle is on VAT exemption on basic food items for people’s daily lives until the end of 2028 and the last is to extend two more years of tax incentives until the end of 2025 for domestic manufacturing enterprises on 14 types of agricultural products such as rice, milk rice, corn,

bean, pepper, cassava, cashew nuts, rubber, mango, banana, aquaculture, animal husbandry, longan from Pailin province, local palm oil products which is a raw material for making animal food. Hor Sereyvath, Chairman of Innovation & Development Investors Association (IDI) told Khmer Times, “Rice, pepper, rubber, cassava and cashew are the flagship products that can be found both in eastern and western provinces of Tonle Sap River regions. These products and other agriculture crops require advanced processing facilities to meet the buyer standards and consumer demands if the producers intend to process and export to the Japanese, European and United States markets.

Source : <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/501432466/agricultural-modernisation-govts-top-priority-says-pm/>

## Bokeo links tourism to investment



*Laos News | 1 February, 2024*

The government has instructed all its departments and local authorities to use all means at their disposal within the scope of their responsibility to Bokeo authorities plan to develop the province’s tourism industry through stronger links with culture, nature and investment in other Mekong countries. While attending a tourism meeting on January 27 in the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone, the Governor of Bokeo province, Mr Bounkhong Nammavong, said the province will create various sightseeing activities that link with tourism initiatives in other provinces and countries. The province will also seek to boost trade and investment in the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone as well as

build facilities that strengthen links with China, Thailand and Vietnam.

Source : [https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freenews/freecontent\\_23\\_Bokeo\\_y24.php](https://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freenews/freecontent_23_Bokeo_y24.php)

## Lao Airlines Introduces New Regional Routes



*Laos News | 1 February, 2024*

To enhance accessibility to Laos, Lao Airlines unveiled new international routes between Savannakhet and Bangkok, Vientiane and Phnom Penh, and Vientiane and Danang. Commencing 15 March, Savannakhet-Bangkok flights will operate Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The new link between Laos and Thailand will be shortly followed by a new Vientiane-Phnom Penh route, starting 19 March with three flights a week on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Flights will also transition between Laos and Vietnam, with the Vientiane-Danang route beginning flights from 4 April, operating two flights a week.

Source : <https://laotiantimes.com/2024/01/31/lao-airlines-introduces-new-regional-routes/>

## Yangon Port: 53 container vessels slated to arrive in Feb



*Myanmar News | 1 February, 2024*

A total of 53 container vessels are scheduled to call at the Yangon Port in February 2024, the Myanmar Port Authority announced. In February, six container vessels each run by Maersk Line, Cosco Shipping Line and Samudera Shipping Line, five each by CMA CGM Line and SITC Shipping Line, four by MSC

Line, three each by BLPL Shipping Line, Evergreen Line, ONE Line, RCL Line and Ti2 Container Line, two each by IAL Shipping Line and PIL Line and one each by BAY Line and Land and Sea are slated to enter the Yangon Port. In January, 49 vessels docked at the Yangon Port. Yangon Port handled 629 container vessels in 2023. Thanks to the draft extension, the international ocean liners can access the inner port for now, according to the Myanmar Port Authority's statement on 22 June 2022. After the new navigation channel (Kings Bank Channel) accessing the inner Yangon River had been found, the draft extension work was accelerated. After that, the port can now handle larger ships. The container vessel (185.99 m LOA, 35.25 m Beam, 29,232 GRT and 2,698 TEU) Hong Kong-based SITC Shipping Line docked at Asia World Port Terminal for the first time on 22 June, which is the largest ship that AWPT Port handled. From May 2021, the arrival of ships at terminals in Yangon has increased again. Three new container vessels by Maersk Line Myanmar (SeaLand Maersk) started to run to fulfil the seaborne trade requirements in 2021. Earlier, the larger ships had draft problems preventing sailing on the Yangon River. With the draft extending up to 10 metres, more giant ocean liners can enter the Thilawa Port.

Source : <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/yangon-port-53-container-vessels-slated-to-arrive-in-feb/#article-title>

## 147 construction permits granted in YCDC area in H1 Jan



*Myanmar News | 1 February, 2024*

A total of 57 building permits were issued within the boundaries of the Yangon City Development Committee in the second week of January. In addition, regarding Building Complete Certificate (BCC) applications, 147 construction permits were issued within two weeks. The building completion certificate (BCC) has been approved for 41 buildings, and the list of 25 buildings that have applied for building permits from four to 17 rooms has been sent to the Yangon Electricity Supply Corporation (YESC). Endorsements have been sent to related departments, such as one letter to the Fire Services Department, 34 letters to the Engineering Department (Water and Sanitation), and 12 to the Urban Land Planning Department to allow building construction. When applying for building construction permits, it is necessary to include the Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) to be communicated with the Electricity Corporation by the landowners and licensed contractors for obtaining electricity. This week, licensed contractors will be invited to a meeting to get the BCC and install electricity meters for the buildings. Yangon Electricity Supply Corporation takes the responsibility of installing the electricity meters.

Source : <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/147-construction-permits-granted-in-ycdc-area-in-h1-jan/#article-title>

## Vietnamese holidaymakers prioritise domestic tourism during Tet holiday: report

Domestic tourism remains a priority of Vietnamese holidaymakers during the Lunar New Year with 57.7% of respondents said they will spend the holiday at local tourist destinations, according to a report released by The Outbox Company on January 31. More than half of the respondents selected tours that span from one to three nights, and over 40% opted others from four to seven nights. The report also revealed that the group of tourists aged 35-44 years old are most actively preparing for their Tet trips. Some 22.9% said they prefer food tourism, while only 13.7% selected maritime tourism for the holiday. The Tet holiday will last seven days from February 8 to 14, 2024, per an official document approved by Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh. The Lunar New Year festival or Tet is the largest Vietnamese traditional celebration and has been since ancient times. Last year, Vietnam received 12.6 million foreign arrivals, 3.5 times higher than 2022, exceeding the target set at the beginning of the year by 57%. The number of domestic tourists hit 108 million, 5.85 higher than the target. The sector's revenue was estimated at 27 billion USD, surpassing the goal by over 3% and equivalent to 90% of the figure recorded in 2019./.VNA

Source : <https://vietnamnet.vn/en/vietnamese-holidaymakers-prioritise-domestic-tourism-during-tet-holiday-report-2245880.html>



## Vietnam strives to increase competitiveness for agricultural exports to US



*Vietnam News | 1 February, 2024*

Hanoi (VNA) – There is great potential for Vietnam to increase its agricultural, forestry, and aquatic exports to the US, particularly when the quality and competitiveness of its products are improved. In 2023, the US was the second largest market for Vietnam's agro-forestry-fishery products, accounting for 20.7% of its total export turnover. According to the Foreign Trade Agency under the Ministry of Industry and Trade, statistics from the US International Trade Commission showed that in the first 10 months of 2023, the US imported 1.43 million tonnes of rubber. However, Vietnam exported just 20,370 tonnes worth 28.99 million USD to the US, ranking 13th among rubber suppliers to this market, and making up only 1.42% of the US's total rubber imports. In the US market, Vietnamese rubber has to compete with that from many markets including Indonesia and Thailand whose market share in the US reached 25.13% and 14.28% respectively. Meanwhile, in 2023, up to 88.7% of total cashew nuts imported into the US were from Vietnam. Among fisheries exporters to the US in the 10 months of last year, Vietnam was the one with the strongest increase in volume and the second highest rise in value. Notably, the US's imports of shrimp, tra fish, and tuna from Vietnam saw positive growth. According to the Vietnam Association of Seafood

Exporters and Producers (VASEP), Vietnam is currently the 6th largest aquatic product supplier to the US, after Canada, Chile, India, Indonesia, and Ecuador. Regarding the consumption trend of tra fish in 2024, the US will not only focus on frozen fillet fish – a key product of Vietnam but also gradually increase consumption of processed tra fish and high value-added products such as swim bladder and tra fish paste. This requires the Vietnamese seafood industry to diversify its products and focus on deep processing to increase competitiveness in this major market. Regarding other products, Trade Counsellor of Vietnam in the US Do Ngoc Hung said that in 2022, the total export turnover of cinnamon from Vietnam to the US reached about 50 million USD, accounting for 35% of the US's total cinnamon import turnover. Vietnam's cardamom shipments to the US fetched about 5 million USD, making up 13%. Cinnamon and cardamom are not only popular spices but are also widely used in the food, pharmaceutical, and cosmetic industries. They have also been added to beverages such as tea, coffee, and other nutritional supplements. Hung said that US consumers are increasingly interested in immune-boosting products, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, so the demand for cinnamon and cardamom essential oils continues to rise. These are significant values in sustainable development and have the potential to promote Vietnamese cinnamon and cardamom exports in the US market, Hung stressed. He suggested localities have plans to ensure high-quality raw material areas with the application of

organic farming standards to enhance Vietnamese products' competitiveness against similar products from other countries like Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and India. Processing businesses should promote the application of scientific and technological advances and actively participate in international trade fairs to widely promote Vietnamese cinnamon and cardamom products in the market, he said./.

Source : <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/vietnam-strives-to-increase-competitiveness-for-agricultural-exports-to-us/278092.vnp>

---