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The first section of the Vientiane-Boten Expressway is open to traffic.

## Govt plans more expressways to improve logistics

Phomphong Laoin

The government is upgrading the country's road network and is planning to build more expressways to improve logistics and help fulfil the goal for Laos to become a land-linked country.

Deputy Minister of Public Works and Transport Mr Lan Seng-Aphone gave a summary of the work undertaken in road development over the past three years at a meeting

of the public works and transport sector.

He noted that the first stage of the planned expressway between Vientiane and Boten in Luang Namtha province, at the border with China, had been completed over a distance of 109.12km between Vientiane and Vangvieng district in Vientiane province.

The section of the expressway between Boten and Huayxai district in Bokeo province has been

surveyed and a feasibility study and detailed design plan are now being carried out.

A feasibility study on construction of the Vientiane-Pakxe Expressway is also being undertaken for sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 but the Memorandum of Understanding on section 5 has been cancelled because the concessionaire did not comply with the regulations.

A new expressway is also planned between the 3rd Lao-Thai Friendship

in Thakhaek district to the Vietnamese border in Khammuan province, for which a feasibility study is underway.

An expressway is also planned between Pakxan district to the Vietnamese border in Xaychamphon district, Borikhamxay province.

A feasibility study is also in progress for an expressway between Thangon village in Xaythany district, Vientiane, and Sanglek

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## Russia, Ukraine conclude first-round talks without clear breakthrough

MOSCOW (Xinhua) -- Russia and Ukraine concluded on Monday their first round of negotiations in Belarus with no clear breakthrough.

The talks are certainly a positive signal, observed analysts, but the negotiation process would be rather complicated.

### No Breakthrough

The long-awaited negotiations between delegations from Russia and Ukraine was held in the Gomel region in Belarus and lasted for five hours.

Headed by presidential aide Vladimir Medinsky, Moscow's delegation was formed by representatives from the defense and foreign ministries, among others.

Ukrainian Defense Minister Olexiy Reznikov and the deputy head of the ministry of foreign affairs were among the participants from the Ukrainian side.

Before the negotiations, representatives from the Russian side said a key aim would be to achieve peace.

Belarusian Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei welcomed the participants and assured safety during the

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## Nam Et-Phou Luey National Park reopens to visitors

Times Reporters

Nam Et-Phou Luey National Park in Huaphan province, which is one of the largest protected areas in Laos, has re-opened to visitors after being closed during the Covid-19 outbreak.

The national park provides numerous opportunities for immersion in the rugged landscape and deep communication with nature.

Visitors can take boat trips on the Nam Nern River to spot wildlife during a night safari and go on treks through forested areas, all of which help to support wildlife conservation as well as local communities.

Nam Et-Phou Luey National Park is closely monitored for illegal hunting as it is home to many endangered species.

Visitors can enjoy birdwatching and, if lucky, will hear the calls of the

critically endangered northern white-cheeked gibbon, although these fascinating creatures rarely show themselves in the dense forest.

It's also possible to spot wildlife from an observation tower and to trek up to the highest point in the national park, during which visitors can sleep in a jungle camp and swim in their own private waterfall.

The park arranges 2-5 day activity programmes, which are led by the residents of 26 villages close to the park, mainly in Hiem and Huameuang districts in Huaphan province and Viengkham district in Luang Prabang province.

Villagers who work in the park and take part in visitor activities receive training from park officials.

Nam Et-Phou Luey National Park spreads across 10 districts in the

three northern provinces of Huaphan, Luang Prabang and Xieng Khuang.

Huaphan province is located in the far north of Laos, about 600km from Vientiane and is renowned for its stunning waterfalls, including Sa Lery, Tadloun and Phavang, as well as Tham Hang cave and the Hiem and Nam Meuang hot springs.

The province is also home to Pha Thee mountain and has a renowned city pillar in the provincial capital.

Viengxay district recently received an Asean Clean Tourism Standard award following an assessment of compliance with Asean tourism standards.

The main objective of the Asean standards is to improve the quality of community-based tourism, as this is seen as important for developing tourism and



Visitors take a trek in the park.

--Photo Nam Et-Phou Louey National Park

increasing the number of visitors.

To receive an Asean clean tourism district standard award, a district must be able to show good

standards of cleanliness at hotels, guesthouses and restaurants.

Visitor attractions must also be clean and in good condition, and local

residents must participate in the provision of services, according to the Huaphan Information, Culture and Tourism Department.





An artist's image of the park.

--Photo Pasaxon newspaper

## Architecture faculty to create recreational study park

### Times Reporters

The Faculty of Architecture at the National University of Laos (NUOL) has begun construction of a "learning park", with the first phase of the four-year project to cost about 6 billion kip, according to the Pasaxon newspaper.

The park will be built on a four-hectare site in the grounds of the Faculty.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, the Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Mr Sinthavone Dalavong, said the site would be developed in line with five principles set by the Ministry of Education and Sports.

"We want the park to be a symbol of technical development and unity, and view it as an important part of NUOL's strategic plan for 2016-2025. The intention is to transform teaching and learning into a practical experience, giving students more opportunities to actually learn from the field," he added.

The park will facilitate the study of various subjects in the course of students' degree programmes as well as the training of teachers and students, not only at the Faculty of Architecture but also at other faculties.

A multi-ethnic cultural museum will be built on the site by bringing together houses and equipment associated with different ethnic groups in one place.

This will enable students to learn about the architecture of different ethnic groups, conventional

wisdom in designing and building, and the ways that culture is incorporated into building styles.

Trees and flowering shrubs will be planted to teach students how to design a garden in a landscaped environment, as well as how to grow and care for plants.

The park will be a place where teachers and students can organise various activities, exercise, hold markets selling items made by students, and display the work of teachers, students and the university.

The NUOL Heritage Museum will be built to exhibit items that reflect the

birth and growth of NUOL from its origins until the present time.

The site will also be a place where teachers and students can gather at restaurants and bars, and will have shops selling study materials.

The park will be a focal point of the university, located in the centre of the Dongdok Campus close to the main access road.

NUOL has authorised the Faculty of Architecture to use the site to create a place that symbolises both development and unity, as well as beautify the main campus.

## Govt, partners mull plans to transform Laos' food systems

### Times Reporters

The government in cooperation with its partners is highlighting opportunities to transform the country's food systems, including the sectors of agriculture, food, fisheries and environment.

Government officials and researchers collaborated in a national technical consultation held on March 1, which was facilitated by CGIAR, a global partnership of international organisations engaged in research for the development of food, land and water systems.

The focus of the meeting was on policy, market integration, and trade.

Topics included harnessing the use of local agricultural biodiversity, nourishing Asean megacities and peri-urban areas, youth and women entrepreneurship and technology, climate-smart agriculture and aquaculture, mechanisation and modernisation of agriculture, climate change and green recovery, strengthening cooperation through institutions, and germplasm exchange and evaluation network for crops, livestock, and fisheries for regional safety.

Speaking at the meeting, Deputy



Mr Kikeo Singnavong addresses the national technical consultation workshop.

Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Mr Kikeo Singnavong highlighted Laos' commitment to identifying opportunities for transforming the country's food systems within the Asean context.

Mr Kikeo said ensuring food system sustainability is a key development goal for Laos, while the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the agriculture sector and the food chain in the region.

The National Technical Consultation Meeting on the Asean-One CGIAR Research and Development Project will make a significant contribution to the implementation of the Asean Food Security Strategy 2021-2025 and the Asean Food Security

Framework, while helping to transform Laos' food system in the years to come.

"Food system transformation will help us not just address current challenges, but will also give us the capacity and adaptability to respond effectively to future risks, uncertainties and partnership-driven research towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals," said Jean Balié, CGIAR Regional Director for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, in a recorded message.

Also speaking at the event, Director General of the National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI), Dr Chay Bounphanousay, said the information gathered from this series of workshops would be used in regional research for the development programme proposal that CGIAR intends to share with the Asean Secretariat.

The proposal will be reviewed by Asean member states at the 14th Asean Technical Working Group on Agriculture and Research Development, while discussions will address the need to comprehensively tackle the needs of the country's food, land and water systems, Dr Chay added.

## 10 hectares of opium poppies cut down in Oudomxay

### Times Reporters

Houn district police have cleared over 10 hectares of opium poppies found growing in two villages of Oudomxay province.

Poppies were cleared from 58 sites in Sibounheuang and Namngoy villages in Houn district.

Officials cut down the plants so that villagers would be unable to harvest the latex from the poppies and plant new seeds to grow another crop, according to the Ministry of Public Security.

Police issued warnings to the owners of the poppy crops and laid down the law with regard to poppy cultivation, in an attempt to slow the drug trade in Oudomxay province.

Authorities encouraged villagers to grow other crops instead and take up animal farming to augment their income.

According to the United Nations, Laos was previously the world's third-largest illicit opium poppy producer.

However, the government's commitment to eradication efforts has helped the country to reduce opium poppy cultivation to marginal levels.

This is an enormous success considering that, as recently as 1998, Laos had one of the highest opium addiction rates.

In 2005, it became illegal to cultivate opium poppies, leaving many farmers without the means to make a living.

Many organisations



Officials cut down opium poppy plants.

--Photo Ministry of Public Security

are working with the government to ensure the sustainability and continuation of alternative

development projects in order to promote food security, manage the fragile environment, and provide

livelihood opportunities to small-scale farmers to prevent the resurgence of opium poppy cultivation.

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# Over one million UXO devices destroyed from 1996-2021

Times Reporters

More than one million unexploded ordnance (UXO) items were destroyed by clearance teams in Laos from 1996 to December 31, 2021, while over 71,000 hectares of land were cleared of munitions.

The figures were reported at a consultation meeting on the Draft Unexploded Ordnance National Strategic Plan in Laos "Safe Path Forward III" for 2021-2030, which took place in Vientiane on Monday.

According to the national UXO database, from 1996 until December 16, 2021, some 71,943 hectares of land in 18 provinces were cleared.

Of this, 55,286.3 hectares were agricultural land and 16,656.7 hectares were land targeted for development.

A total of 1,693,487 UXO items were destroyed, of which 4,288 were large bombs, 968,447 were bombies, 2,379 were landmines, and 718,367 were other types of unexploded ordnance.

Surveys and clearance are difficult because of the country's mountainous terrain, swamps and rivers, which adds time and money to the process, with only about 7,000 hectares of land cleared on average each year.

At the same time, UXO becomes eroded along streams and can be buried in deep landslides, and there can be a mismatch between the location of a device and the coordinates of US bombing data.

In addition, there is a lack of information and coordinates on the dropping of chemicals



Mr Padeumphone Sonthany chairs the UXO consultation meeting on Monday.

and other explosive devices used in ground battle.

According to the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) for the UXO/Mine Action Sector, since 1996 the focus has been on UXO clearance in the nine most heavily impacted provinces: Huaphan, Xieng Khuang, Luang Prabang, Khammuan, Savannakhet, Champassak, Saravan, Xekong and Attapeu.

UXO Lao is the main body responsible for identifying and clearing unexploded ordnance and some provinces have joint programmes with international humanitarian operators.

Over the past 10 years, the NRA conducted 18,862 Mine Risk Education activities, which involved 2,541,421 people.

A total of 285 UXO-related accidents were recorded involving 465 casualties, with 362 people being injured and 107 people dying in these accidents.

The consultation meeting was chaired by Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Welfare and Deputy Chairman of the NRA, Mr Padeumphone Sonthany,

and the SPF III Committee. The co-chairs were UNDP Resident Representative Ms Ricarda Rieger and US Ambassador to Laos Dr Peter M. Haymond.

The meeting focused on the main content of the Draft Unexploded Ordnance National Strategic Plan "The Safe Path Forward III".

There was an evaluation of the implementation of the national strategic plan "The Safe Path Forward II" over the past 10 years, which highlighted outstanding points and the challenges encountered.

There were in-depth research and comments on the draft vision "By 2030, Lao people live in a safer environment from UXO and accelerate the socio-economic development of the country".

Four strategic objectives were named: "Safer communities and reduced accidents from UXO", "High priority land is released from UXO and put to productive use", "UXO victims are well supported and integrated into society", and "Efficient delivery of the management of the UXO sector is flexible, faster, efficient and effective".

Mr Padeumphone said "This draft strategy must be adapted to the conditions found in Laos. We ask development partners to continue to improve the content and send it to the NRA."

"The NRA will coordinate with the National Strategy Drafting Committee to revise the content, with the revision to be submitted to the government meeting for consideration and approval."

# Health ministry issues caution over spread of Omicron

Phetphoxay Sengpaseuth

Health officials around Laos are strengthening Covid-19 response measures in a bid to prevent the spread of Omicron and ensure that everyone has access to adequate healthcare.

At least 108 countries have detected cases of the highly transmissible strain while more than 33 provinces in Thailand have recorded Omicron cases.

The Ministry of Health is readying government hospitals and health officials to cope with a possible widespread outbreak of the new strain of Covid-19.

Target hospitals in Vientiane and the provinces have set up emergency medical teams and are fully prepared for a worst-case scenario of a viral outbreak, a member of the National Taskforce for Covid-19 Prevention and Control said.

Local authorities are preparing provincial and district hospitals and their staff and amassing the special equipment needed to care for people suspected of having or confirmed to have the Omicron variant.

A senior official from the Department of Communicable Disease Control under the Ministry of Health, Dr Viengsavanh Khitthiphong, led a workshop on Tuesday in which she advised the media



Dr Phonepadith Sangxayarith (right) and Mr Visith Khamlusa chair the media workshop.

to alert the public to the possible spread of Omicron and advise caution.

Work to strengthen the Covid-19 response is based on the results of a multistakeholder risk assessment and involves epidemic level assessment, the capacity of health officials in relation to treatment and knowledge around the virus outbreak, and the rate of vaccination coverage.

Since the start of the pandemic, Laos has taken the necessary health and social measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19, Dr Viengsavanh said.

Everyone must play a part in protecting communities against the virus, she added.

"Risk assessments are required regularly so that outbreaks or risks can be assessed early and a quick response can be made," she

said. The health ministry is mobilising doctors and nurses from government and private hospitals, as well as medical teams from the Lao army, to join the effort to tackle the virus outbreak.

The ministry advises anyone with flu-like symptoms who has travelled to a virus outbreak area or had any contact with an at-risk group to get in touch with hospital staff. Hospitals will provide free treatment for anyone who contracts the virus.

The media workshop was led by the Director of the National Centre for Laboratory and Epidemiology, Dr Phonepadith Sangxayarith, and Director of the Centre of Information and Education for Health, Mr Visith Khamlusa, and attended by senior ministry officials and media personnel.

# Rising price of imports sparking surge in inflation

Somsack Pongkhao

The cost of imported goods, especially fuel, rose sharply in January, contributing to the highest rate of inflation recorded in two years.

The year-on-year inflation rate jumped to 6.25 percent in January, the highest figure recorded since January 2020, according to the latest report from the Lao Statistics Bureau.

The cost of goods and services was largely driven by the rise in the price of imported products because businesses must pay more to buy the foreign currencies need to buy imports, including fuel.

According to the Lao Statistics Bureau, the import price index jumped by 10.49 percent year-on-year in January, triggered by the rising price of fuel, food seasoning, sugar, dairy products, household items, vehicles and spare parts.

For instance, the price of oil and gas rose by 29.53 percent year-on-year, affecting the cost of transport and the price

of goods on sale in local markets.

Last week, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce announced the fifth increase in fuel prices this year in response to spikes in the global fuel price, ramping up pressure and causing new pain for low-income earners and their efforts to improve their living standards.

Drivers in Vientiane now pay 16,930 kip per litre for premium grade petrol, 14,950 kip per litre for regular grade petrol and 12,940 kip per litre for diesel.

The surge in oil prices is due to a supply-demand mismatch, while the situation in Ukraine is also having a large bearing on the global fuel price.

Fuel accounts for Laos' biggest slice of imported products. The cost of diesel imported in January jumped to US\$52 million, while the cost of premium and regular grade petrol was US\$15 million.

The surge in fuel prices has had a huge impact on the consumer price index due

to the fact that rising fuel prices have driven up the cost of transportation.

Costs in the communications and transport category in January rose by 1.26 percent month-on-month, and 13.72 percent year-on-year, according to the Lao Statistics Bureau.

Meanwhile the price of goods produced in Laos rose by 4.36 percent year-on-year, mainly driven by food prices including meat.

Rising prices have sparked increasing debate among members of the public regarding the use of electric vehicles to help reduce fuel imports and reduce the amount of foreign currency needed to buy fuel.

The government aims to increase the number of electric vehicles on the country's streets to one percent by 2025 and to over 30 percent in 2030.

The government has decided to cut Value Added Tax from 10 to 7 percent this year, and to control the rising price of fuel, to ease the impact on the economy and the general public.

# Govt plans more... FROM PAGE 1

village in Thoulakhom district, Vientiane province.

Over the past three years, the Ministry of Public Works and Transport has focused on road development to improve connectivity with countries in the region and further afield.

As part of this, Road No. 13 North between Sikeuth and Phonhong has been upgraded, the Pakxan-Bueng Kan and Kontuen-Huaykeo bridges have been built, and other improvements are taking place around the country.

The ministry is also upgrading National Highway No. 9 from Kaysone Phomvihane city to Xeno on the Laos-Vietnam

border.

A feasibility study on the upgrade of National Road No. 8 has been completed through a grant from KOICA, while a similar study for National Highway No. 12 has been funded by a grant from NEDA.

In addition, over the past three years, the upgrade of Road No. 6 from Viengxay to Nam Soi, and Road No. 6A from Hanglong-Sopbao in Huaphan province has been funded by ADB.

The upgrade of Road No. 4B from Hongsa district in Xayaboury province to Xiengman district in Luang Prabang province was funded by NEDA, and the upgrade of Road 2.6313

between Thapangthong and Toumlane in Savannakhet province was funded by NORINCO.

Two bridges have been built along National Road No. 9 in Savannakhet province (Xenammuk Bridge and Xekoumkam Bridge) as well as two bridges across the Nam Houng in Xayaboury province.

Two more bridges are currently under construction across the Mekong River, namely the 5th Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge (from Pakxan district in Borikhamxay province to Bueng Kan in Thailand) and the Kontuen-Huaykeo Bridge in Bokeo province.

## Vientiane Times on CD-ROM

Issues of Vientiane Times from 1994 to February 2022 have been recorded on CD-ROM. Now available at Vientiane Times office.

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# Excerpts from the Lao Media

## Commercial crops help family in Hadxaifong overcome poverty

Translated by Meuangkham Noradeth

Growing commercial crops has helped a family in Xiengkhuang village in Hadxaifong district of Vientiane earn more than 200 million kip a year and overcome poverty.

Mrs Namfon Vongvichit is the head of this family that grows various crops, including yams, sweet potatoes and tomatoes, and this has helped them have a better life.

Mrs Namfon said her parents had grown crops for many years, and this made her love farming. After she graduated in law, she decided not to work in an office and instead began growing commercial crops on two hectares in 2011. She has been growing various vegetables and it is quite easy to sell them because traders come to buy directly from her farm. Mrs Namfon said she invested 30 million kip to grow yams in November. She harvested the crop in February and sold it at a price of 20,000 kip per 12 kg.

She said the sweet tomatoes were harvested in the same month as the yams and were sold for 50,000 kip per 12 kg. Mrs Namfon added the tomatoes were grown in September and harvested in December, and sold at a price of 15,000 kip to 20,000 kip.

She said her husband works as a teacher and helps her to grow crops, and she also hired some local villagers to help her. Growing crops has helped Mrs Namfon's family have a better life and overcome poverty, and she also saved some money to buy land to expand her farm.

Mrs Namfon's family is a good example for others in Xiengkhuang who want to grow commercial crops and move towards eradicating poverty.

--Pasaxon, February 28

## Xaythany police confiscate 12,000 amphetamine tablets

Police in Xaythany district of Vientiane have arrested a man and his wife on charges of dealing drugs and seized 12,000 amphetamine tablets from them.

On February 28, police arrested Mr Daolin, 24, and his wife, Mrs Chanda, 37, from Dontiew village in Xaythany. During questioning by police, they confessed that they had been dealing drugs since 2021. They usually bought drugs from Ms Khemphone, 43, from Xaysavang village in Xaythany district, and sold them to teenage drug addicts. At 11 am on February 28, Mr Daolin and his wife Mrs Chanta allegedly bought 12,000 amphetamine tablets from Ms Khemphone, and police subsequently arrested them. Later, police attempted to arrest Ms Khemphone from her house but she escaped. Police checked her car and found 14 amphetamine tablets and four small bags of crystal methamphetamine. Police officials are now trying to arrest Ms Khemphone and to trace more drug dealers from the same group.

--Lao Security News, February 28

## Keo-oudom villagers and businessmen join hands to rebuild gravel road

The residents of Phonyaeng village in Keo-oudom district of Vientiane province joined hands with businessmen to rebuild a gravel road that was damaged.

The head of Phonyaeng, Mr Souksabai Thoummalard, said the village has 159 families and a population of 638. Most of the people are engaged in agriculture and rearing animals.

He said that the gravel road in Phonyaeng had been damaged and was full of potholes. The village officials and local residents discussed the issue and agreed to donate money to rebuild the road. They also received assistance from local businessmen. Mr Souksabai said the work of rebuilding the road started on February 22, and is expected to be completed by March 5 at a cost of more than 35 million kip. This gravel road is 3.5 km long and four metres wide. Once it is rebuilt, the road will help improve basic infrastructure, facilitate the movement of traffic and make it convenient for local residents to transport their crops and goods to nearby markets, he added. Mr Souksabai said the rebuilding of the gravel road reflected the solidarity among the people and their desire to develop the community and to improve their living conditions instead of waiting for help from the authorities.

--Vientianews.com, February 27



Deputy Governor of Naxaithong district Mr Phouvong Phonglatkeo (seated, centre), representative of the international cooperation NGO IV-Japan Mrs Sachiko Tominaga (seated left), officials from the Vientiane Education and Sports Department and trainees on Monday gather at Naxaithong district Vocational Training Centre for the presentation of certificates to participants of the 3rd cycle of the Hospitality and Care Working Course, which took place from September 13, 2021, to February 28, 2022. The course is organised by IV-Japan in partnership with the Vientiane Education and Sports Department. Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and international cooperation NGO IV-Japan have provided almost US\$400,000 to finance the course over the past three years.

## PHOTO SCENES



German Ambassador to Laos Ms Annette Knobloch on Friday meets Minister of Planning and Investment Mr Khamjane Vongphosy to discuss future areas of cooperation.



Japanese Ambassador to Laos Mr Kobayashi (fourth left) meets the Governor of Vientiane province Mr Khamphanh Sithidampha (fourth right) in Viengkham district. The hydropower station at the Nam Ngum dam in Vientiane province was built with Japanese assistance in the late 1960s. The governor recommended the ambassador visit Vangvieng district and other tourist spots, and showed him various locally-made products.

--Photo Japanese Embassy to Laos



The Vientiane Traffic Police Department and traffic police office in Pakngum district, Vientiane, last week partner with Honda New Chip Xeng Co., Ltd. to give a road safety talk at the 512 Army Command in Pakngum district. The talk aimed to make military personnel aware of the traffic regulations and the dangers of careless driving. Over 200 army personnel, staff from Honda New Chip Xeng Co., Ltd., and traffic police attended the event. The aim of the ongoing road safety programme in Vientiane is to curb the rising number of accidents in the capital, many of which involve young people.



Central library staff gather at the start of a training session for first year students at the National University of Laos (NUOL). The course, which is taking place on February 23, 25 and 28 and is supported by the Asia Foundation, aims to acquaint new students with ways to obtain information independently. They have learnt how to access information digitally through resources available at the library and NUOL. In addition, students have learnt how to search for full texts and abstracts, especially those published by scientific journals, as well as books, and how to find books and documents using the Online Public Access Catalog and other methods. They have also learnt how to find specific topics and keywords using Picture Motion Browser software. The course is also teaching students how to search for items using electronically stored information in digital libraries of countries in the region and further afield through the Research4Life and Open Development Lao database. During the orientation, students are able to share their experiences with other Lao and foreign students.



## World news in brief

**Lam expresses confidence as HK welcomes third medical team**

(China Daily/Asia News Network) -- Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor reiterated on Monday her confidence that the city would stamp out its worst-ever COVID-19 outbreak with the full support of the central government. Lam made the remark in a video speech that came on the same day as the city received the third group of mainland medical experts, led by Liang Wannian, head of the National Health Commission's COVID-19 leading task force. The team is made up of five epidemic control experts.

**Malaysia drops six-day Covid-19 test procedure for Singapore VTL and others**

KUALA LUMPUR (The Straits Times/Asia News Network) -- Malaysia has dropped a requirement for inbound travellers to undergo Covid-19 RTK-Ag tests within six days of arrival under three programmes, which include the air and land vaccinated travel lane (VTL) with Singapore. Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said in a statement on Monday (Feb 28) that the new procedure - starting from Thursday - will also apply to travellers entering Malaysia via the Langkawi International Tourism Bubble (LITB) and One Stop Centre (OSC) for short-term business visitors, the Bernama news agency reported.

**UNDP, Australia to help Vietnam reduce poverty by 50 percent**

(Vietnam News/Asia News Network) -- A memorandum of understanding for a poverty reduction programme between the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), UNDP and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia (DFAT) was signed on Monday. The "UNDP-MOLISA-DFAT programme development and policy advising on multidimensional and sustainable poverty reduction 2021-2023" project has provided technical support and advice to MOLISA on developing the National Target Programme on Sustainable Poverty Reduction (NTPSPR) 2021-2025. The advice helps the NTPSPR have a more innovative and timely approach and allows the government and local people to innovate and strengthen community power.



Photo shows a view of the talks between the Ukrainian and Russian delegations held in the Gomel region in Belarus on Feb. 28, 2022. --Photo Belta news agency via Xinhua

**Russia, Ukraine conclude...** FROM PAGE 1

negotiation process.

After the consultations, Medinsky, head of the Russian delegation, said that the next round of peace talks would take place on the Belarusian-Polish border in the coming days.

Medinsky also said that each one of the delegations would now head back to their capitals to further discuss all negotiation positions to prepare for the next round of negotiations.

"We have found some issues on which we can predict there would be common positions," the official said, adding that all negotiation positions were discussed in detail during the talks.

**Heightened Tensions**

While the talks were going on, Russian President Vladimir Putin held a telephone call with French President Emmanuel Macron, reiterating that a settlement would only be possible if Russia's security concerns were taken into account.

Putin said it was important to recognise "Russia's sovereignty over Crimea," as well as the country's commitment to

solving the tasks of Ukraine's "demilitarisation" and "denasification", and the issue of Ukraine's neutral status.

As for developments of Russia's military operation, the country's armed forces have hit 1,114 Ukrainian military infrastructure objects, according to Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu informed Putin earlier on Monday that the country's nuclear deterrence forces have begun combat duty with reinforced staff.

Meanwhile, Moscow has taken more retaliatory measures in response to recent restrictions imposed by the West.

As a response to the ban of European states on Russian air carriers, a restriction has been introduced on the operation of flights by air carriers from 36 countries, according to aviation authorities.

The country's economy has also been impacted. Russia's Central Bank said Monday that "external conditions for the Russian economy have drastically changed," announcing the decision to increase the key

rate to 20 percent per annum from Feb. 28.

**Complicated Negotiation**

The world is closely following developments with regards to the peace talks.

"The talks are certainly a positive signal," Bogdan Bezpalko, a member of the Council for Interethnic Relations under the President of the Russian Federation, said in an interview with Xinhua on Monday.

According to the expert, Russia has shown that it is ready to solve problems through diplomacy.

Alexander Gusev, director of Russia's Institute for Strategic Planning and Forecasting, considered the current negotiation process to be rather complicated.

"The situation that is currently developing in Ukraine is quite complicated, so it's simply impossible to set ambitious goals when it comes to the negotiation process," Gusev told Xinhua.

"On the other hand, the talks have shown that both sides are ready for dialogue, they have found common ground... and I am convinced that the negotiation process will continue, this is just the beginning," he said.

**South-east Asia among regions hardest hit by climate change, must prioritise adaptation: IPCC**

SINGAPORE (The Straits Times/Asia News Network) -- South-east Asia is among the regions of the world hardest hit by climate change, and is especially at risk of losing settlements and infrastructure to sea-level rise, a major new report published on Monday (Feb 28) has shown.

"With ongoing global warming, today's children in South and South-east Asia will witness increased losses in coastal settlements and infrastructure due to flooding caused by unavoidable sea-level rise, with very high losses in East Asian cities," said the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report.

The report also concluded that if global warming exceeds 1.5 deg C above pre-industrial times, the impacts of climate change could be more severe, and some will be irreversible.

"Risks for society will increase, including to infrastructure and low-lying coastal settlements," said the IPCC report.

But limiting global warming to the 1.5 deg C threshold will help the world avoid harsher climate impact, scientists say.

Sea-level rise expert Benjamin Horton from the Nanyang Technological University's Earth Observatory of Singapore said the greatest effects of sea-level rise will be felt in Asia, due to the number of people living in the continent's low-lying areas. For example, mainland China, Bangladesh, India, Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand are home to the most people on land that is projected to be below average annual coastal flood levels by 2050, Professor Horton said.

"Together, those six nations account for roughly 75 per cent of the 300 million people on land facing the same vulnerability at mid-century," he added.

The IPCC report also found that risks to coastal cities and settlements are projected to increase by "at least one order of magnitude" by 2100, if there are no significant plans to deal with the crisis.

Sea-level rise is not the only threat confronting South-east Asia.

Climate scientist Winston Chow from the Singapore Management University, one of the authors involved in the IPCC report, said Asean has already been exposed to many climate change-related impacts, such as floods, droughts, urban heat as well as biodiversity and habitat losses.

"These current impacts are projected to worsen in the future, especially when global surface temperatures exceed the 1.5 deg C threshold," said Dr Chow.

The world has already warmed by 1.1 deg C since pre-industrial times.

At this level of warming, some climate impacts are already locked in and considered close to irreversible in some natural ecosystems, such as the long-term decline of coral reefs in the South China Sea, said Dr Chow.

He added that a warmer Earth could mean that parts of Asean dependent on water from glacial melt - such as cities along the upper Mekong - will likely have reduced freshwater resources, due to the loss of ice there.

Crop yield could also be reduced if the world gets warmer, and other climate-driven events such as floods, droughts and tropical cyclones could further affect yield," said Dr Chow.

If cities and countries want to reduce such climate risks, then adaptation is essential to minimise future loss and damages, he added.

Adaptation refers to measures that countries can take to reduce the impacts of climate-driven events on societies, while loss and damage is a term used in climate change discussions that refers to climate impacts that societies are currently suffering which cannot be, or have not been, reduced by adaptation efforts.

For sea-level rise, for example, adaptation measures could include building sea walls or restoring mangroves, since these ecosystems have tangled root systems that can keep pace with sea-level rise to an extent.

**Medical expert warns against excessive use of Favipiravir for Covid infections**

(The Nation/Asia News Network) - Thailand is using some 60 million Favipiravir pills a month to treat people with symptomatic Covid-19 disease, raising concerns in a medical specialist that the virus may turn resistant to the drug.

The concern was voiced on Tuesday by Assoc Prof Dr Thawee Chotepithayasunon, a specialist of the Medical Services Department.

Thawee said about 90 per cent of people do not have symptoms or only have mild symptoms after they are infected with the Omicron strain of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, so they should not be given the Favipiravir antiviral

drug. The doctor said statistics showed that Thailand is using about 2 million pills of Favipiravir a day or 60 million pills a month, which was very high.

"Since the antiviral drug is used in very high amounts now, specialists fear drug resistance. Theoretically, it can happen," Thawee said.

He said once the Covid-19 virus becomes resistant to Favipiravir, the antiviral drug would become useless.

He said infected people should be treated based on their symptoms and people with no symptoms should not be given Favipiravir at all.

The doctor said the Public Health Ministry has issued

new treatment guidelines for hospitals to admit only infected people with high fever above 38 degrees Celsius or people with comorbidities or the elderly who may need respirators or may see their symptoms worsen later.

Thawee said 90 percent of infected people will be able to cure themselves in course of time. Doctors who are in charge of home isolations may consider giving them Far Talai Jone (Andrographis paniculata) herb.

The doctor added that it was very rare for people infected with Omicron to see their condition worsen from green to red — the most serious condition.







Lunar Crust.

# New planned vehicle may help store oxygen on moon & build ‘Lunar Villages’ - report

(Sputnik) -- While we expect that flights to Mars and the Moon will soon become a reality, access to oxygen is still a problem that plagues potential space colonists. The Moon has a sparse atmosphere, consisting mainly of hydrogen, neon and argon. So far, all hopes lie on electrolysis, a special reaction that can help extract oxygen from Moon materials. A special device, reportedly being developed by the European Space Agency in cooperation with Thales Alenia Space, Franco-Italian aerospace manufacturer specialising in the space industry, would be able to extract oxygen from Lunar rocks, according to the Mirror. The innovation may be another step towards the

creation of a real “lunar village.” “We wish to have lunar research stations which are permanent and people can go backwards and forwards from, rather than just go up there every 20 years,” said Roger Ward of Thales Alenia Space. “That’s when you start thinking about lunar villages and the need for resources such as oxygen to support that.” An unmanned spacecraft “would feed the rocks into the machine to be crushed to dust that would be pressed into tablets,” according to the newspaper. When heated, these tablets were said to be able to emit oxygen that could be stored in reservoirs for future use. The European Space Agency agreed on a £840,000

(US\$1,1 million) deal with Thales Alenia Space to develop “a blueprint for the device.” The project is expected to start in the next two years. Electrolysis has many applications, from separating water into hydrogen and oxygen to extracting oxygen from lunar rocks. Not so long ago, researchers at the University of Glasgow in the UK examined how the electrolysis method works in reduced gravity since the Moon has only one-sixth and Mars one-third of Earth’s gravity. Scientists discovered that under conditions of Lunar and Martian gravity, oxygen production can decrease by about 11 and 6 percent compared to terrestrial conditions.

# China’s UN envoy calls for direct negotiations on Ukraine crisis

(China Daily/Asia News Network) -- China’s ambassador to the United Nations on Monday called for efforts to create an enabling condition for direct negotiations over the Ukraine crisis and warned against the politicisation of humanitarian assistance to the Eastern European nation.

The situation in Ukraine is changing sharply and has evolved to a point that China does not wish to see and where it is not in the interests of any party, Zhang Jun, China’s permanent representative to the UN, told an emergency special session of the UN General Assembly, on Ukraine.

Zhang stressed that the immediate priority is for all parties concerned to exercise necessary restraint and prevent further worsening of the situation, while stepping up diplomatic efforts aiming for a political solution.

“China welcomes the start of direct dialogues and negotiations between Russia and Ukraine,” he said.

“Ukraine should serve as a bridge of communication between the East and the West, rather than an outpost for confrontation between major powers. We call for efforts to create an enabling atmosphere and conditions for



Zhang Jun, China’s permanent representative to the UN.

direct negotiations between the parties concerned, as this is the fundamental way to resolve the issue,” Zhang said.

The envoy said all actions taken by the UN and the relevant parties of the international community should “prioritise regional peace and stability and the universal security for all and should help de-escalate tensions and facilitate a diplomatic settlement”.

“China does not approve of any approach that may exacerbate tensions,” said Zhang. China supports relevant UN agencies’ continued work on humanitarian aid in Ukraine, said Zhang. “We believe that the safety of civilian life and property and their humanitarian needs should be effectively guaranteed,” he said.

As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China always earnestly fulfills its responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, the ambassador said.

“It is our consistent and unequivocal position that all countries’ sovereignty and territorial integrity should be respected, and that the purposes and principles of the UN Charter should be upheld. China will continue to play a constructive role in the pursuit and realisation of peace,” he said.

The Cold War has long ended, Zhang said. “The Cold War mentality based on bloc confrontation should be abandoned. Nothing can be gained from stirring up a new Cold War, but everyone will stand to lose,” he said.

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**Title:** Review & Improvement of 5-Year Provincial Socio-Economic Development Plan + Spatial Planning (PSEDPs + SP) of Sayaboury & Houaphan Provinces  
**Project:** LMDP3, (PN: 18.2091.9-001.00, ref:83403893)

**Scope:**  
Preparatory Work – 7 days  
1. Planning and Consultation – 2 days  
2. Meetings with National Partners, Experts & Advisers – 5 days  
Sayaboury Province SEDP+SP – 25 days  
3. Meetings with Provincial Partners, Experts & Advisers – 2 days  
4. Review of PSEDP 2021-2026 of Sayaboury Province – 3 days  
5. Sectoral Consultation Meetings – 10 days  
6. Writing & Presentation of Improved PSEDP+SP – 10 days  
Houaphan Province SEDP+SP – 25 days  
7. Meetings with Provincial Partners, Experts & Advisers – 2 days  
8. Review of PSEDP 2021-2026 of Houaphan Province – 3 days  
9. Houaphan Provincial Sectoral Consultation Meetings – 10 days  
10. Writing and Presentation of Improved SEDP+SP – 10 days  
Reporting – 2 days  
11. Report submission & Presentation to GIZ – 2 days

**Objectives:**  
1. To review and revise the current version of the 5-Year PSEDPs of Sayaboury and Houaphan provinces based on agreed quality criteria and parameters  
2. To align the PSEDPs with the priorities and directions under the NSEDP IX, particularly the 6 pillars or goals of the Lao government and priority interventions  
3. To link and harmonize the sector-based SEDP with spatial-based Land Allocation Plan of government, ensuring that land and resources are allocated properly based on development demands and targets of sectors whilst ensuring conservation, green growth, balanced and sustainable development.  
4. To present the improved revised version for consideration and approval by provincial authorities.

**Working Language:**  
The selected consultant will work with the PSEDP document in Lao Language only

**Interested qualification local consulting are invited to register to obtain more detail information of tender document by sending mail to register: LA\_Quotation@giz.de**  
**from 08:00 to 16:00 starting 01 March 2022 until dead line submission 16 March 2022. (please indicate your full address plus enclosed business license + reference contract number 83403893 when request for registration)**

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**ໂຄສະນາຄົ້ນໄຫມ  
ການບໍລິການໃຫ້ຄໍາປຶກສາ  
ເປີດກວ້າງສໍາລັບ ບໍລິສັດທີ່ປຶກສາ ພາຍໃນປະເທດ**

**ປະເທດ:** ສາທາລະນະລັດ ປະຊາທິປະໄຕ ປະຊາຊົນລາວ  
**ອົງກອນ:** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  
**ທີ່ຢູ່:** ຫ້ອງການ GIZ ນະຄອນຫຼວງວຽງຈັນ, 247/ໜ່ວຍ 19, ບ້ານທ່າພະລານໄຊ, ເມືອງສີສັດຕະນາກ, ຖະໜົນວັດນາກໃຫຍ່, ເລກທີໂປສະນີ 9233, ນະຄອນຫຼວງວຽງຈັນ, ສປປ ລາວ ໂທ: +856 (21) 353 605-112

**ຫົວຂໍ້:** ທົບທວນ ແລະ ປັບປຸງ ແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມ (PSEDPs+SP) ໄລຍະ 5 ປີ ຂອງ ແຂວງ ໄຊຍະບູລີ ແລະ ແຂວງຫົວພັນ  
**ໂຄງການ:** LMDP3, (PN: 18.2091.9-001.00, ref:83403893)

**ຂອບເຂດຂອງໜ້າວຽກ:**  
ການກະກຽມວຽກ – 7 ມື້  
1. ວາງແຜນ ແລະ ໃຫ້ຄໍາປຶກສາ - 2 ມື້  
2. ປະຊຸມຮ່ວມກັບຄູ່ຮ່ວມງານ ຂັ້ນສູນກາງ, ຜູ້ຊ່ຽວຊານ ແລະ ທີ່ປຶກສາ - 5 ມື້ ແຂວງໄຊຍະບູລີ PSEDP+SP – 25 ມື້  
3. ປະຊຸມຮ່ວມກັບຄູ່ຮ່ວມງານຂັ້ນແຂວງ, ຜູ້ຊ່ຽວຊານ ແລະ ທີ່ປຶກສາ - 2 ມື້  
4. ທົບທວນເອກະສານແຜນ 5 ປີ PSEDP ປີ 2021-2026 ຂອງແຂວງໄຊຍະບູລີ – 3 ມື້  
5. ປະຊຸມປຶກສາຫາລືຮ່ວມກັບພາກສ່ວນທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງ – 10 ມື້  
6. ຂຽນ ແລະ ນໍາສະເໜີແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມ ສະບັບປັບປຸງ (PSEDP+SP) ຂອງແຂວງ – 10 ມື້ ແຂວງຫົວພັນ SEDP+SP – 25 ມື້  
7. ປະຊຸມຮ່ວມກັບຄູ່ຮ່ວມງານຂັ້ນແຂວງ, ຜູ້ຊ່ຽວຊານ ແລະ ທີ່ປຶກສາ - 2 ມື້  
8. ທົບທວນເອກະສານແຜນ 5 ປີ PSEDP ປີ 2021-2026 ຂອງແຂວງຫົວພັນ – 3 ມື້  
9. ປະຊຸມປຶກສາຫາລືຮ່ວມກັບພາກສ່ວນທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງຂອງແຂວງຫົວພັນ - 10 ມື້  
10. ຂຽນ ແລະ ນໍາສະເໜີແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມ ສະບັບປັບປຸງ (PSEDP+SP) ຂອງແຂວງ – 10 ມື້ ການເຮັດລາຍງານ – 2 ມື້  
11. ສົ່ງບົດລາຍງານ ແລະ ບົດນໍາສະເໜີໃຫ້ GIZ – 2 ມື້

**ຈຸດປະສົງ:**  
1. ເພື່ອທົບທວນ ແລະ ແກ້ໄຂແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມ (PSEDPs + SP) ໄລຍະ 5 ປີ ຂອງ ແຂວງໄຊຍະບູລີ ແລະ ແຂວງຫົວພັນ ສະບັບປະຈຸບັນ ບົນພື້ນຖານເງື່ອນໄຂ ມາດຕະການ ແລະ ຂໍ້ຕົກລົງທີ່ໄດ້ກໍານົດໄວ້.  
2. ເພື່ອປັບປຸງທິດທາງ ການພັດທະນາ ໃນແຜນ PSEDPs + SP ໃຫ້ສອດຄ່ອງກັບບຸລິມະສິດ, ທິດທາງ ແລະ ຫມາກຜົນໄດ້ຮັບ ພາຍໃຕ້ແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມແຫ່ງຊາດ ຄັ້ງທີ 9 (NSEDP IX), ໂດຍສະເພາະ 6 ເປົ້າໝາຍແຫ່ງຊາດ ທີ່ເປັນບຸລິມະສິດຂອງລັດຖະບານ.  
3. ເພື່ອເຊື່ອມໂຍງ ແລະ ເຊື່ອມສານ ແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມ (SEDP) ເຂົ້າກັບແຜນການຈັດສັນທີ່ດິນ (PLAP) ຂອງລັດຖະບານ, ເພື່ອໃຫ້ພົ້ນໃຈວ່າ ຊັບພະຍາກອນ ທຳມະຊາດ ທາງດ້ານທີ່ດິນ ໄດ້ຮັບການຈັດສັນຕາມຄວາມຕ້ອງການໃນການພັດທະນາ ແລະ ເປົ້າໝາຍຂອງພາກສ່ວນຕ່າງໆ; ພ້ອມດຽວກັນນັ້ນ ກໍເພື່ອເປັນການຮັບປະກັນການອະນຸລັກ, ການເຕີບໂຕສີຂຽວ, ຄວາມສົມດຸນ ແລະ ການພັດທະນາແບບຍືນຍົງ.  
4. ເພື່ອນໍາສະເໜີ ແຜນສະບັບປັບປຸງ ຕໍ່ອົງການປຶກຄອງແຂວງ ເພື່ອຮັບຮອງ ແລະ ປະກາດນໍາໃຊ້ຕໍ່ໄປ

**ພາສາທີ່ນໍາໃຊ້:**  
ທີ່ປຶກສາບຸກຄົນ ທີ່ຖືກຄັດເລືອກ ຈະໄດ້ເຮັດວຽກກັບເອກະສານ ແຜນພັດທະນາເສດຖະກິດ-ສັງຄົມ ໄລຍະ 5 ປີຂອງແຂວງ (PSEDPs + SP) ທີ່ເປັນ ພາສາລາວທັງໝົດ.

**ຂໍເອີນບັນດາ ບໍລິສັດທີ່ປຶກສາ ທີ່ມີຄຸນສົມບັດທີ່ກ່າວມາຂ້າງເທິງ ທີ່ມີຄວາມສົນໃຈ ຮ່ວມລົງທະບຽນເພື່ອຮັບຮູ້ມູນລາຍອາດເພີ່ມຕື່ມຂອງເອກະສານປະມຸນ ໂດຍການສົ່ງອີເມວເພື່ອລົງທະບຽນທີ່: LA\_Quotation@giz.de ຕົ້ນແຕ່ເວລາ 08:00 ຫາ 16:00 ເລີ່ມວັນທີ 01 ມີນາ 2021 ຈົນເຖົ້າວັນທີສິ້ງເອກະສານປະມຸນ 16 ມີນາ 2021. (ກະລຸນາໃສ່ທີ່ຢູ່ຢ່າງລະອຽດພ້ອມທັງແນບ ເອກະສານທະບຽນວິສາຫະກິດ + ອ້າງອີງສັນຍາເລກທີ 83403893 ເມື່ອຂໍລົງທະບຽນ)**



## Ekhphathana Microfinance Institution gets Asean Business award



### Advertorial Desk

Ekhphathana Microfinance Institution (EMI) has won an Asean Business Awards Laos 2021, namely the Special Award for Sustainable Social Enterprise Excellence.

The award was handed over recently by Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI)

Ekhphathana Microfinance Institution was recognised for its excellence and outstanding business,

and high-quality financial services to low- and medium-income households.”

EMI's mission is also to offer a wide range of financial education services to low- and medium-income households to strengthen family livelihoods and business sustainability.

**EMI's operations are guided by four society-led goals:**

**Goal 1:** EMI offers excellent financial services enabling clients to sustainably grow their household and

**Goal 4:** EMI seeks long-term sustainability through financial viability while creating client value.

Our performance: Since 2006 EMI has issued more than 120,000 loans to low- and middle-income clients worth more than US\$80 million.

Savings evolution: EMI believes that savings can help clients accumulate assets which can be used for business and household purposes while also earning interest on savings. EMI also promotes savings for younger age groups through the Smart Kids savings programme, which allows children to put away a portion of their pocket money. To date, more than 49,000 children have taken part in the programme

Financial education for adults: EMI provides financial education for its clients on various topics relating to financial management such as spending wisely, savings for investment, choosing



loans wisely etc. Advice can also be found online at EMI's website.

Social media and financial education: EMI launched the “Financial Education with Fun”, facebook fan page in 2019. The main objectives are to educate people about financial skills and management.

EMI has a staff of 125, of whom 72 percent are female. The key management staff joined EMI more than 10 years. On average, employees stay with EMI for 6.6 years. Functional and

management skills have been developed over time. EMI has invested in its human resources continuously through short-term training and further education.

EMI's core value: In 2017, EMI started a core value called “EMI DNA”, which aims to increase staff satisfaction and happiness to ensure that we can provide the best services and maintain clients' satisfaction and loyalty. The project was implemented by consultants from the I-Team Consulting Company of Thailand.

Five DNA were identified through several focus group discussions with staff at all levels. EMI DNA consist of 1. Teamwork, 2. Adaptability, 3. Accountability, 4. Ethics and 5. Customer Centric.

In 2020, the “EMI From Good to Great Institution” was formed to translate knowledge into practice. Several implemented programmes encourage staff to do great things such as provide great services to clients and co-workers, be a great team member, etc.



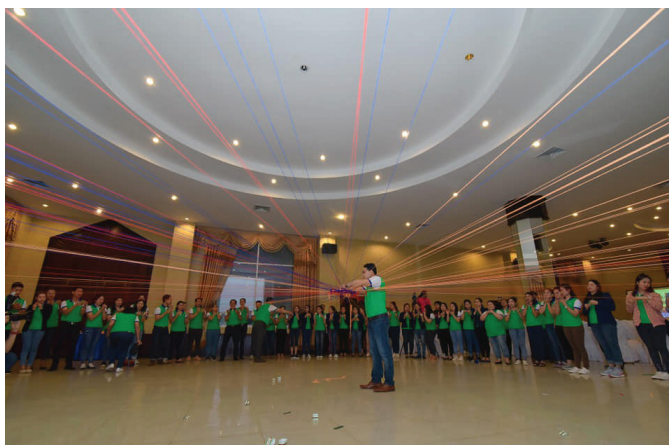
which provides a unique and standout service for clients under the slogan “Laos' leading provider of responsible, sustainable financial services and education”.








The institution's CEO Mr Somphone Sisenglath said “EMI's vision is to be a leading microfinance institution in the Lao PDR offering efficient, modern

business assets and achieve their family goals.

**Goal 2:** EMI offers excellent financial education services enabling clients to manage their money wisely in meeting their household budget needs and growing their businesses.

**Goal 3:** EMI is an equal opportunity employer that invests in the continuous education of its employees.



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 <b>Thai Baht</b>	<b>THB</b>	353,81	356,46
 <b>Euro</b>	<b>EUR</b>	12.501	12.596
 <b>Renminbi Yuan</b>	<b>CNY</b>	1.762	1.798
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“ເສີມສ້າງສະພາບແວດລ້ອມການດຳເນີນທຸລະກິດທີ່ເອື້ອອຳນວຍ ແລະ ມີທັດສະນະແຂ່ງຂັນສູງ ນຳໂດຍພາກທຸລະກິດທີ່ເຂັ້ມແຂງທີ່ປະກອບສ່ວນຢ່າງຫຼວງຫຼາຍ ຕໍ່ການຂະຫຍາຍຕົວຂອງເສດຖະກິດຂອງ ສປປ ລາວ ແບບຍືນຍົງ”

*“Building up a conducive and competitive business environment with a strong business sector that contribute substantially to the sustainable economic growth of the Lao PDR”*



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LNCCI App





# Turkish economy expands 11 percent year-on-year in 2021

(AA) -- Türkiye's economy expanded 11 percent year-on-year in 2021 in line with market expectations, according to official data revealed on Monday.

"Gross domestic product at current prices increased by 42.8 percent and reached 7.2 trillion Turkish liras (US\$802.7 billion) in 2021 compared with the previous year," the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) said in its latest report.

The gross domestic product per capita was 85,672 Turkish liras (US\$9,539) at current prices last year.

Service activities made the biggest contribution to the country's economy with a 21.1 percent rise, followed by 20.3 percent in other service activities and 20.2 percent in the information and communication activities.

Financial and insurance activities, agriculture sector and construction sector decreased 9 percent, 2.2 percent and 0.9 percent,

respectively.

A panel of 21 economists polled by Anadolu Agency on Wednesday expected that Türkiye's GDP would rise 11.1 percent in 2021.

In the fourth quarter of 2021, the Turkish economy grew 9.1 percent from the same period of the previous year, TurkStat said.

Gross domestic product at current prices increased 51.8 percent to reach 2.3 trillion Turkish liras (US\$198 billion) in the last quarter of the year.

Economists' forecast for the fourth quarter was a 8.7 percent annual growth rate on average, with the lowest at 6.3 percent and the highest at 10.2 percent.

It revealed that the economy boosted 1.5 percent quarter-on-quarter in October-December 2021.

Commenting on the annual figures, Treasury and Finance Minister Nureddin Nebati said Türkiye became the fastest growing economy

among the countries of G20, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and EU for which data is available.

Türkiye is committed to maintain the balanced and stable growth trend in the upcoming period, thanks to 'Türkiye Economy Model,' Nebati said.

"Through focusing on investment, production and exports, we will achieve our target of value-added growth that provides high employment," Nebati wrote on Twitter.

Türkiye saw a 7.5 percent growth in the third quarter after expanding 21.9 percent in the second quarter and 7.3 percent in the first quarter of 2021.

According to the country's medium-term economic program, announced last September, the government aimed a 9 percent growth for the year.

In 2020, the Turkish economy grew 1.8 percent.

## Exports up 20.6 percent in Feb. on robust chip, auto shipments

(The Korea Herald/ANN) -- South Korea's exports jumped 20.6 percent in February from a year earlier as overseas shipments of chips, autos and other key products increased amid a global economic recovery, data showed Tuesday.

Customs-cleared outbound shipments stood at US\$53.91 billion last month, up from US\$44.71 billion a year earlier, according to the preliminary data compiled by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy.

It is the highest figure for February since the ministry began compiling related data in 1956. It also marked the first time that the country's exports volume surpassed the US\$50 billion mark in February. The previous record was set in February 2012, when the corresponding figure came to US\$46.3 billion.

Imports jumped 25.1 percent to US\$53.07 billion, also the highest for any February due mainly to soaring global energy prices.

Dubai crude, South Korea's benchmark, soared to US\$94.10 per barrel in February on average, up more than 50 percent from US\$60.89 a year earlier. South Korea depends on imports for most of its energy needs.

Despite the spike in imports, the country was still able to post a trade surplus of US\$840 million in February, a turnaround from the previous two months of a trade deficit.

"The country had faced



This file photo, taken Feb. 11, 2022, shows a port in South Korea's southeastern city of Busan.

unfavorable conditions both at home and abroad last month, such as the spread of the Covid-19 omicron variant, high raw materials prices and tensions surrounding Ukraine. But the solid growth in exports offset rising imports, which led to an improvement in the trade balance," the ministry said in a release.

February marked the 16th consecutive month that the country's exports have marked an on-year expansion. Exports also posted a double digit growth for the 12th month in a row last month.

Shipments of the country's major export items increased in February, with sales of high-value memory chips rising 24 percent to US\$10.38 billion and autos moving up 9.1 percent to US\$3.84 billion.

Sales of petrochemicals surged 24.7 percent on-year to US\$4.79 billion and those

of petroleum products spike 66.2 percent to US\$3.97 billion. The steel industry also enjoyed 40.1 percent growth in outbound shipments to US\$3.31 billion last month.

The bio-health sector's sales also rose 24.7 percent amid the continued pandemic across the world, the data showed.

By nation, exports to China went up 16 percent on-year to US\$13 billion last month, and shipments to the United States also expanded 20.9 percent to US\$7.74 billion over the cited period, according to the data.

Exports bound for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) surged 45.6 percent to 1.3 billion in February. Russia accounted for around 73 percent of South Korea's total exports to the CIS region, but tensions between Russia and Ukraine only had limited impacts on trade, the ministry said.



Domestic goods widely attract foreign buyers.

## LNCCI eyes branding promotion for domestic products in foreign markets

Times Reporters

Laos hopes to beef up the promotion of its domestic products to attract foreign buyers in order to generate more revenues and contribute to socio-economic development in line with the LNCCI's five-year strategic plan for 2021-25.

The Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI) plans to provide technical advice and access to funding for businesses so that they can upgrade the quality of their products and develop widely recognised brands for domestic and foreign buyers.

In Laos, a few domestic products are internationally recognised and exported to foreign countries, including coffee, tea and beverages, but the income from these goods is limited when compared to similar items from neighbouring countries.

In his opening remarks at the recent "Made in Laos" fair, LNCCI President Oudet

Souvannavong said the export of Lao products has generated substantial income for the country over the past few years.

"However, Lao products face the challenge of competition from imported goods and other difficulties while entering international markets, because they are unable to meet international standards while the price remains high," he said.

In this context, LNCCI continues to provide technical advice and other suggestions to producers to ensure their production standards are aligned with the demand of buyers, he said.

Mr Oudet said the hosting of various fairs and expos, including the "Made in Laos" fair, the "Lao Thiew Laos" (Lao visit Laos) campaign and other important events, are aimed at promoting local products.

"This year's Made in Laos fair had a lot of domestic products on sale. Entrepreneurs from 17

provinces were able to join several seminars on digital marketing so that they can access e-commerce or online markets amid the Covid-19 pandemic," he noted.

Prime Minister Phankham Viphavanh and other high ranking-government officials attended the opening ceremony of the "Made in Laos" fair that was held during February 19-28.

The presence of the premier at the event provided inspiration and encouragement to entrepreneurs who are keen to improve their production capabilities under the promotional guidelines and policies of the government.

One of the most important promotional plans framed by LNCCI is a move to prioritise an increase in the quantity, quality and standards of product to meet the requirements of domestic and international buyers as this will gradually reduce the import of foreign products.

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Lao People's Democratic Republic  
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Ministry of Public Works and Transport  
Department of Housing and Urban Planning  
Tel: (856-21) 253 116  
Fax: (856-21) 253 114

**INVITATION FOR BIDS**  
**IFB No.: PKS-ICB/RB-CW04/Lot 1**

Date: 08/02/2022  
Grant No. ADB Grant 0606-LAO(SF)  
Name of Project: Fourth Greater Mekong Subregion Corridor Towns Development Project  
Name of Contract: RB-CW04/Lot 1: Paksan Riverbank Protection

Deadline for Submission of Bids: 25/03/2022, 14:00 hours, local time

1. The Lao Democratic People's Republic has received financing from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) toward the cost of the Fourth Greater Mekong Subregion Corridor Towns Development Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payment under the contract for Package RB-CW04/Lot 1: Paksan Riverbank Protection.

2. The Ministry of Public Works and Transport (the Employer) through the Department of Housing and Urban Planning now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the works contract of RB-CW04/Lot 1: Paksan Riverbank Protection, in Paksan town, Bolikhamxay Province. Contract duration is 730 days and the Defect liability period is 365 days.

3. International competitive bidding will be conducted in accordance with ADB's Single stage: Two envelope bidding procedure and is open to all eligible Bidders from eligible countries as described in the Bidding Document.

4. Only eligible Bidders with the following key qualifications should participate in this bidding:

- **Contract of Similar Size and Nature:** Participation in at least two contracts, as main contractor (including as JV partner) or subcontractor, that have been successfully or substantially completed within the last five (5) years and that are similar to the proposed works, with construction of drainage facilities, where the value of the Bidder's participation for each contract exceeds **USD3,570,000**.
- **Construction Experience in key activities:** Key experience in (i) Construction of reinforced concrete embankment structure for protection against water corrosion purpose at minimum length of 1,000m and (ii) Installation of geotextile or higher quality similar material at minimum 6,000m<sup>2</sup> and (iii) Soil excavation and backfill.

**Financial Capacity**

- The Bidder shall demonstrate that its financial resources meet or exceed the total requirement for the subject contract of **USD558,000**
- The audited balance sheets or other financial statements acceptable to the Employer, for the last three (3) years (2018, 2019 and 2020) shall be submitted and must demonstrate the current soundness of the Bidder's financial position. As a minimum, the Bidder's net worth for the last year calculated as the difference between total assets and total liabilities should be positive
- Minimum average annual construction turnover of **USD4,470,000** calculated as total certified payments received for contracts in progress or completed, within the last three (3) years.

5. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Project and inspect the bidding documents during office hours, 9:00 to 16:00 at the address given below,

a. For Vientiane Capital Office, please contact Ms. Malychanh Sananikhom, Director of Project Coordination Unit (PCU), Department of Housing and Urban Planning, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR. Tel: (856-21) 253116 Fax: (856-21) 253114, E-mail address: [malychanh@gmail.com](mailto:malychanh@gmail.com)

b. For Bolikhamxay Province Office, please contact Ms. Youpha Phokhasombath – Director of Project Implementation Unit (PIU), Department of Public Works and Transport of Bolikhamxay Province.

• Address: Department of Public Works and Transport of Bolikhamxay Province Project Implementation Unit, Hongxay Village, Paksan Town, Paksan District, Bolikhamxay Province.

• Tel: +(856) 54 212091.

• Email: [Youpha.p@gmail.com](mailto:Youpha.p@gmail.com)

6. A complete set of bidding documents in English shall be purchased by interested bidders upon written application and payment of a non-refundable fee of USD200 or 2,290,000 Lao Kip in cash or Demand Draft or Pay order beginning on 09/02/2022. The bidding document (i) may be claimed personally at the Employer's addresses above, or (ii) may be delivered by courier and can be arranged upon request by bidders for additional fee of USD50 (fifty US Dollars). The Employer will assume no liability for loss or late delivery.

7. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before **14:00 hours** on 25/03/2022. Electronic bid submission will not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. Technical Bids will subsequently be opened in public in the presence of the bidders' designated representatives at the address below. All technical bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security as described in the Bidding Document.

8. The address for receiving bids is: The Meeting room of the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), Department of Public Works and Transport of Bolikhamxay Province, Lao PDR.  
Tel: +(856) 54 212091

**Ms. Malychanh Sananikhom**  
Director of Project Coordination Unit (PCU)  
Department of Housing and Urban Planning, Ministry of Public Works and Transport,  
Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR.  
Tel: (856-21) 253116, Fax: (856-21) 253114  
Email: [malychanh@gmail.com](mailto:malychanh@gmail.com)



Vietsovetro's oil rig in Bạch Hổ (White Tiger) field. The Russia-Ukraine tension causes energy prices to rise, leading to rising costs, resulting in inflation in countries around the world.

# Russia-Ukraine tensions only impact Vietnam's stock market in the short-term

HA NOI (The Vietnam News Agency) -- Escalating geopolitical tensions between Russia and Ukraine would have a short-term impact on the Vietnamese stock market, but the market still has positive growth prospects in the long term thanks to stable macro factors.

VN-Index closed last week, the 9th week of 2022, with three gaining sessions, two decreasing sessions, losing 5.95 points, or 0.4 percent, closing at 1,498.89 points.

Particularly on February 24, when the tension between Russia and Ukraine reached its peak, along with many other global stock indices, the VN-Index lost more than 17 points, with many stocks plummeting.

Bui Hoang Minh, senior analyst for individual clients at Ho Chi Minh City Securities Corporation (HSC), said that geopolitical tensions often had a short-term impact on the stock market.

Regarding the impacts, the Russia-Ukraine tension caused energy prices to rise, leading to rising costs, resulting in inflation in countries around the world. However, rising energy prices is a predictable problem, Minh said.

According to Minh, if oil prices continued to stay at US\$80-90 per barrel, energy and fertiliser stock groups will benefit and put pressure on the monetary tightening policy decision.

"Geopolitical tensions will be a major issue in the first and second quarters, but when making investment decisions, investors need to look at a market with long-term economic prospects in the next 2-3 years, with benefiting industries such as real estate, industrial zones,

oil exports and retail," Minh said.

According to Nguyen Hoai Thu, Managing Director of VinaCapital's Securities and Bond Investment Division, the most obvious risk caused by the recent Ukraine issue is inflationary.

"On the supply side, sanctions and supply chain disruptions can lead to shortages of many basic commodities, which directly increases input prices for businesses. On the demand side, inflation can slow down consumption and investment disbursement in the economy, including public investment, due to high prices and unpredictable fluctuations," Thu said.

"Directly affected companies may include businesses that depend on the prices of basic goods as input materials, but are unable to increase selling prices to offset the increased costs of raw materials and transportation," she said.

"Airlines could take a double hit as the cost of oil rises and routes are disrupted," she said.

"The investment portfolio of open-ended funds managed by VinaCapital struggle to avoid short-term negative effects, mainly because the stock market is often volatile and sensitive to news.

However, the above risks do not have much impact on the prospects of the businesses in which VinaCapital is investing. Plus, we do not have stocks of airlines in the list," a representative of VinaCapital said.

VinaCapital currently focuses most of its portfolio on businesses that are able to protect profit margins against the risk of rising raw material prices and transportation costs. At the same time, it focuses on companies

that have a sustainable competitive advantage and benefit from Việt Nam's long-term growth story, mainly in key industries such as banking, industrial parks, domestic services and infrastructure including transportation, maritime, and energy.

VinaCapital's fund managers will continue to monitor developments and may make necessary adjustments if tensions continue to escalate severely.

"We recommend that investors calm down and think carefully about their plans to withdraw money from the market. When the market falls deeply, it will be an opportunity for VinaCapital to buy good stocks at a cheaper price for funds, because we still believe in the positive prospect of Vietnam's economy in the long term," said the VinaCapital representative.

"In the next week, we expect that cash flow will return to the group of large-cap stocks which had quite deep declines last week. With such developments, short-term investors can disburse a small proportion into the pillar stocks leading the market. Meanwhile, mid- and long-term investors should still wait for the time when the market price level is more stable before considering disbursing," said Vietcombank Securities Company Limited (VCBS).

"The Russia-Ukraine tension does not have direct effects on the Vietnamese stock market, because of the disconnectivity between Vietnamese economy and those two countries. Only psychology of investors is affected," said Do Bao Ngoc, Deputy General Director of Vietnam Construction Securities Company.



## Feature

## Sports doctors, the unsung heroes of Vietnam's success

HANOI (Vietnam News/ANN) – PHNOM PENH — Doctor Duong Tien Can had a high temperature and cough, and a test proved his suspicions - he was a Covid-19 patient. But Can could not rest for he still had work to do, taking care of the U23 football players who won the AFF Championship title on Saturday in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Can was one of two doctors assigned to follow the U23 team. He worked on a range of issues, such as dealing with injured players and helping with recovery after gruelling games. His goal is to get players back in action as quickly and as safely as possible.

But on this working trip, apart from his normal duties, Can had to deal with a big problem; the Covid-19 pandemic, which affected many players.

"We discussed the matter before we left for Cambodia, but I could not imagine that it would spread so fast among our team," said Can, whose second son was born a few days ago in Hanoi.

The doctors' day started at 6am when they sanitised the hotel area where the Vietnam team stays. They had to clean the elevator and the stairs that led players from their rooms to the restaurant.

They kept reminding players to keep a safe distance and suggested foods that are good for their physique.

They also took charge of doing quick tests for players, once every three days.

But they could not stop Covid-19 from attacking the team. The first players tested positive on February 17, just a few days after the team landed in Phnom Penh.

The doctors' workload increased. They had to continue their normal duties while carrying out a care programme for the sick members.

"It was a really big worry because more cases would come out soon. Our duty was doubled. We had to take care of players on the field, giving them energy drinks, preparing ice packs and giving treatment to players' injuries. Then, we prepared medicine and traditional herbs and food for the patients. We were overloaded with work," said Can, who himself tested positive 10 days later.

Can however could not rest - almost 30 patients needed him.



Doctor Duong Tien Can (first row, second from right) poses for photos with athletes at the 2019 SEA Games in the Philippines.

He was not allowed to work on the field but he took care of players at the hotel and supported his colleague by phone when necessary.

"It was the most memorable trip. Luckily, we received help and encouragement from the Vietnam Football Federation, Vietnam Anti-Doping Agency, and the team's coaching board. We were tired but knew that it was a national task so we had to do our best," said Can, who did not tell his wife about the situation.

"Players' strong determination and their iron mindset to play for Vietnam moved me. They got injuries, they were exhausted but they did not give up. We, the doctors, also fought hard," he said.

He added that being a sports doctor is a glorious profession, because he often stands in the background, witnessing first-hand the great moments of victory. Doctors are not an important part of the tournament but not many people have the chance to see the national flag flying high and sing the national anthem together with winning athletes.

F0 caring for F0

Last month, doctor Tran Thi Trinh of the women's football team was also in the same situation.

She followed the team to Spain for a training camp and then to India for the Asian Cup, which saw Vietnam overcome a Covid storm to earn a spot at the 2023 World Cup.

"My most memorable moment was when 14 players

tested negative and were allowed to fly from Spain to India. We all cried with happiness," Trinh said.

"Covid-19 attacked our team. Seven players and two doctors tested positive after the last friendly match in Spain. We were shocked to hear the news. However, we did not think about ourselves, but players.

"We worried because they had high temperatures and coughed a lot. It would strongly affect their lungs and may cause respiratory failure. Luckily, as sportswomen they had a good physique and quickly recovered," said Trinh.

In India, Trinh and her colleague also worked as chefs to cook Vietnamese food to make sure of the nutrition regime for players.

"Players recovered but they were still weak, and so could be easily injured on the field. The diets of the players also did not have beef and pork, so they lacked good nutritional food. We had to cook for them," Trinh said.

Trinh said it was a tough trip but she will never forget it.

Our job is hard but the players work 10 times harder. They practised regardless of the weather, rain or shine. Looking at them, I find my job is nothing and I love them more. I think I am lucky to have the chance to contribute my humble labour to the success of the team," said Trinh.

"On February 27, National Doctor's Day, I wish all the best for my colleagues, especially those

who are sports doctors and physicians. I hope they will stand strong in the pandemic and contribute more to national sports. Happy National Doctor's Day!" said Trinh, whose next task is to accompany the Vietnam Team at the 31st SEA Games this May in Hanoi.



Doctor Duong Tien Can (right) takes care of a player during the AFF U23 Championship. --Photo of VFFA



Doctor Tran Thi Trinh cooks Vietnamese food for the women's football players while they compete at the Indian Asian Cup 2022.



Lao People's Democratic Republic  
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Ministry of Home Affairs  
Cabinet Office

No. 22.../CO  
Vientiane Capital, February 2022

### REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CRVS IT Officer (Procurement No: C1-C-020)

The Government of Lao PDR received a IDA loan from the World Bank (WB) to implement a project entitled Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Project (CRVS) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services to establish a functional electronic civil management information system and improve the coverage of civil registration of vital events, particularly births and deaths in Lao PDR.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) seeks a full-time CRVS IT Officer to support the CRVS Project team on delivering the eCRVS System at the Provincial Offices of Home Affairs (POHA) and District Offices of Home Affairs (DOHA).

#### The national consultant should possess the following qualifications:

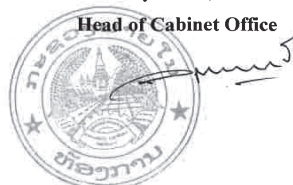
- A Bachelor degree or above in Computer Science, Software Engineering, Information Technology or any related or equivalent fields;
- Knowledge of delivering the enterprise system at the Corporate or State Organizations in either tailor-made software or commercial off-the-shelf software;
- Knowledge of the software development and administration of the relational database and/or NoSQL database with at least 3 year of work experience;
- Experience in technical coaching, IT training and issue management system;
- Experience in SDLC using Agile Methodologies or any equivalent methodologies;
- At least 3 year of work experience in some common middleware technologies such as Web Services, Restful API or any equivalent technologies;
- At least 3 year of work experience in some common programming languages such as JAVA, Angular, JavaScript, HTML/CSS, Bootstrap, ActiveMQ or any equivalent languages;
- At least 3 year of work experience in some database tools such as PostgreSQL, MariaDB or any equivalent tools;
- At least 3 year of work experience in some BI tools such as JasperReport, ELK Stack, Matomo or any equivalent tools;
- Experience in Keycloak, OAuth 2.0, OpenID Connect standards and Kong API gateway or any equivalence.
- Knowledge of data center-based solution and/or cloud-based solution (middle level) is a plus;
- Experience in CRVS would be an added advantage;
- Fluency in English and Lao language: both spoken and written; document translation skills in English-Lao or vice versa;

The successful consultants will be selected in accordance with the competitive method of individual consultant set out in of the Procurement Regulations, dated July 2016, revised November 2017 and August 2018.

In order to apply for the position, interested applicants should provide information indicating that she/he is qualified to perform the services (description of experienced similar assignments on Expression of Interest) and detailed CV to the address: [vkommaly@gmail.com](mailto:vkommaly@gmail.com), Cc: [vanthanong55617181@gmail.com](mailto:vanthanong55617181@gmail.com), Tel: 030 5518524; Mobile: 020 5561 7181 during office hours from 08:00 to 16:00 hours, from Monday to Friday (Lao PDR time) by postal mail or e-mail by 11 Mar 2022. Only Short-listed candidates will be contacted, we are looking forward to seeing your response soon.

Sincerely Yours,

Head of Cabinet Office



ນ. ວິໄລທອນ ສຸນທອນ ໄຊມິງຄຸນ



# Beyond counting sheep

KHOO BEE KHIM CNA (Borneo Bulletin/ANN) – It's time to sleep but there you are in bed, with eyes wide open and a brain filled with a myriad thoughts. You might have had a particularly busy day earlier on and your head is still buzzing. Perhaps you had a disagreement with someone at home and the unsettled feeling is keeping you up.

Or you could have spent the whole day (and night) Netflixing on the couch – and now, you're as mentally edgy as the zombies in your latest K-drama fix. Sometimes, your brain might, on a whim, pull out an embarrassing memory from way back in school.

**Whatever your thoughts are, there's one commonality: We tend to ruminate just when it's time for bed. But why is that?**

According to experts, your brain is constantly collecting new information all day long. The lull period before you drift off to sleep is when your brain has the opportunity to process the information, said a clinical psychologist in Manhattan Beach, California, Professor Michael Breus on the Everyday Health website. "And all of that information, including your worries, comes flying through the door."

The result is, unsurprisingly, sleep deprivation. "We clock, on average, 6.8 hours of sleep each night in 2021 compared with the seven hours found in 2020," said a clinical psychologist with Annabelle Psychology Lynn Ng, citing a study done in Singapore. "And only 21 per cent of the respondents felt well rested in the day."

If you find yourself staring at your bedroom ceiling instead of sleeping, try these tips from the experts on some common scenarios you might encounter from time to time.

**You've had a hectic day and your mind is still buzzing by bedtime**

Prep yourself mentally before bed, advised a counsellor in private practice at A Space Between Martin Williams. For starters, switch off all your devices, including the TV, an hour before bedtime, he said. "If possible, go for a short, gentle walk for about 20 to 30 minutes, followed by a shower to relax yourself."

And don't rush through the shower, said, an associate psychologist with Annabelle Psychology Chua Wan Zhen. This is a good opportunity to practise mindfulness and take some self-care.

"Note how the soap smells and the sensations you feel as you lather your body.



After your shower, make a cup of warm chamomile tea and/or play some soothing music as you wind down for bedtime," she said.

If this fails, pick up a creative hobby, read a book or do some gentle physical stretching, suggested Williams. They are great ways to "activate different parts of the brain, which will help slow down the work-active buzzing part".

For those who are familiar with meditation (try guided visualisation videos on YouTube), this is the time to put it to good use, suggested Yvonne Yeow, a coach and counsellor, who also has a private practice at A Space Between. "You can fix your heightened attention onto the guided visualisation exercises, which will gradually calm and relax your mind, and help you drift off to sleep."

**You had caffeine a little too late in the day and now, you can't fall asleep**

How long does it usually take our bodies to break down caffeine? "It takes at least five hours for the effects of caffeine to wear off by half, and it could take 10 hours for it to be eliminated," said a clinical dietitian and founder of Aptima Nutrition & Sports Consultants Jaclyn Reutens.

And each time you drink a standard cup of espresso-based coffee (latte, cappuccino, macchiato and espresso itself), you're introducing about 60mg to 65mg of caffeine into your body, she said.

Here's a look at how each type of coffee and tea, based on a standard drink, stack up in terms of caffeine content, according to Reutens and the BBC Good Food website.

Brewed/filtered/black coffee: 70mg to 140mg

Instant coffee: 30mg to 90mg

Espresso/latte/cappuccino/macchiato: 60mg to 65mg

Decaf: 0mg to 7mg

Black tea: 47mg

Green tea: 33mg

Matcha green tea: 35mg per half teaspoon

Herbal tea (chamomile, ginger, peppermint, rooibos and fruit teas that aren't derived from the tea plant): 0mg

As for drinking more water to flush caffeine out of your system, it doesn't really work.

"Limited research has been done on that," said Reutens.

"However, staying hydrated can reduce the caffeine-induced jitters caused by dehydration and help to keep the blood flowing smoothly. More water also helps the urinary tract to increase urine output, but it won't hasten caffeine elimination."

Your best bet to neutralise the stimulating effects of a late-afternoon cuppa? "You'll just have to wait it out," said Reutens. Or try these methods: Get moving by briskwalking or jogging; stop caffeine intake six to eight hours before bedtime; or eat high-fibre foods to help slow down the release of caffeine in the bloodstream.

**You're expecting a big day tomorrow**

Get up from bed and move out of the bedroom, advised Ng. Write down your thoughts on a piece of paper and read them aloud. You'll notice how unhelpful these thoughts are and how they might have made you worry for nothing, she said.

"Put the paper aside and redirect your thoughts to your breath to release your feelings of anxiety," she continued. "Consider doing some simple stretching to release tension from your body."

If you are still thinking about the next day, repeat the process of taking deep breaths and/or stretching until you feel relaxed, she said.

Williams' strategy, on



the other hand, is to be well prepared for the event. "When we've done proper planning, we can relax more, knowing we've done the best we can. If you can do a practice run-through with someone at home (if you are preparing for an interview, get someone to ask you some likely questions), that will help build confidence and reduce the anxiety."

**You have some cash flow problems**

Find a time in the day to organise the bills to pay in a systematic manner (that is, how much money is needed, when is payment due, etc), suggested Chua. "List down the possible steps you can take, people you can speak to, services you can apply for."

Williams added: "If possible, talk to a trusted friend or family member as they might be able to see opportunities for managing this short-term issue that you may not have considered."

If you find yourself worrying about it again while you are in bed, reflect upon the possible steps you've already listed down and that you have a plan to tackle these problems, said Chua. "This process will help you to mentally transition from worrying to a more problem-solving approach."

**You had a fight with your spouse or family member**

You're lying in bed and fuming over what your loved one said to you at dinner. "Wherever possible, try to make up with your spouse or family member before bed," said Ng, "as going to sleep feeling angry will worsen your sleep quality."

But if you're still boiling

mad, what can you do? Make some warm, calming drinks (chamomile tea and milk are good options), invite the other party to join you, sit down and have a chat, suggested Ng.

Advised Yeow on how to mend the fence: "You can meet each other halfway or agree to disagree. If similar issues keep recurring, you may want to seek couple or family counselling. Working with a neutral third party can help to bring resolution to difficult matters".

Williams recommended using the chat to reach an agreement about what you have been fighting about. "Even if you don't (reach an agreement), reinforce your love for the other party and acknowledge that your relationship is more important than the issue at hand."

If you can't bring yourself to have a calm discussion with the affected party, take some time to cool down first, said Yeow. "But it is important not to sweep the matter under the carpet. The issues should be brought up and discussed, so that some resolution is reached."

**Something unpleasant or embarrassing happened and you keep ruminating over the incident**

Just stop thinking about it? Easier said than done. "It is difficult to turn off emotions like regret and embarrassment, if you handled a matter poorly," said Yeow.

But instead of playing the scenario on loop in your head, take yourself out of the bedroom to practise

some compassionate self-reflection, recommended Chua. "Talk to someone or write down how you might have handled it differently. Notice how you are feeling after sharing or writing down your thoughts."

Chua suggested listing one or more steps that you might have otherwise taken to better handle the incident. "Show yourself some compassion and encouragement. Tell yourself: I have done well today. It is not helpful for me to think about it now. I have already noted down some areas for improvement and will try again."

Use it as a learning point to improve yourself, added Yeow. "You can visualise how you would better handle things in future when a similar situation arises."

And sometimes, the situation might not have been as significant as you thought. "If possible, talk it through with someone you trust to get a different perspective on it," said Williams.

"The issue may actually be very minor and they can help you see that. If it was a significant incident, they may be able to help you plan an appropriate response or formulate a good apology, if necessary."

You've just finished bingeing on your favourite series and now, you can't sleep

Save yourself the trouble of tossing and turning in bed, and "accept that you won't be falling asleep immediately", said Williams.

Instead, do something more productive and get back in bed after 30 to 60 minutes of the activity. You could read a book, perform some breathing exercises or meditate in bed. "Your body will recognise that it is time to sleep and you will soon become tired," he said.

It may be difficult to switch off the TV or laptop when you're in the middle of a gripping episode of your favourite K-drama, but you should try to avoid screen time 90 minutes before bedtime, said Ng. "If you have to use your laptop for work or study at night, consider using night mode on your device."



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Opinion

Streetwise

# What do you think about the way train tickets are sold?

*After it was learnt that touts were buying up train tickets to sell on at inflated prices, in addition to the inconvenience of people having to travel 10 kilometres out of the city centre to buy tickets at the station, the rail operator has opened a ticket office at the Vientiane Center. But passengers must pay an additional 20,000 kip per ticket as a service charge. Vientiane Times asked members of the public for their thoughts on the sale of tickets.*

Lamphone Pasanthong

**Mr Brian Vorarath, an employee in Naxaithong district, Vientiane:** I'm glad that the rail operator has



opened the ticket office at the shopping mall as this will make things easier, and

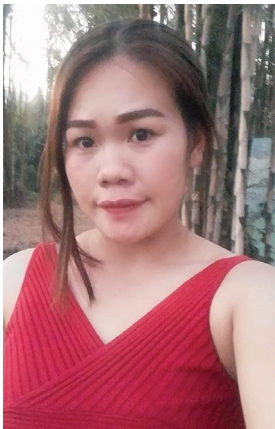


tickets can be purchased up to three days before the date of travel. In the past

people had to start queuing up at 4am and might wait until noon only to be told

all the tickets were sold. This is a huge annoyance as well as wasting a lot of time. But I don't agree with the 20,000 kip service charge. If the rail company is going to charge this much extra, it's not much different to buying a ticket from touts at the train station. I'd like to know why they can't use the same system as airlines and sell tickets at several agencies where they all cost the same price.

**Ms Phoutsady, an employee in Luang Prabang province:** To improve the ticket sales system and protect



passengers from cheating, I think the rail company should have an online booking system so that we can buy tickets that have our name on them. This would prevent unscrupulous individuals from hoarding tickets. It would also reduce crowding at



ticket counters, which is important if we want to keep Covid in check.

**Ms Phissamai Kaiyasith, a resident of Sikhottabong district, Vientiane:** I'm



pleased that the rail company has provided the ticket office but I don't think it's fair that passengers have to pay a service charge in addition to the basic ticket price. All costs should be included in the cost of the ticket. It would be better if the authorities improved the way tickets are sold so that the whole process is fair and quick. This would make passengers satisfied and enjoy train travel even more.

**Ms Lita, a resident of Hadxaifong district, Vientiane:** I think it's good that the rail company has opened the ticket agency but I'm not sure that it will solve the problem entirely because people won't be happy about paying an additional 20,000 kip. That's not so different



from buying tickets at the station. Many people want to take a ride on a train and it's now the top choice of transport, replacing bus travel in many northern areas. But the way that tickets are sold is inefficient. I'd like the people responsible to come up with a better way of selling tickets, so that the process is both fair and convenient.

**Mr Bounmy, a government official in Sisattanak district, Vientiane:** I'm very happy that tickets can now be purchased in the middle of Vientiane instead of people having to drive all the way out to the station, which was a costly and time-wasting exercise. I thought the new ticket office would save me money but in fact it doesn't help all that much and I feel it's not so different from buying a ticket from a tout at the station. If the rail operator is going to slap on a service charge to run this service, I think it would be better to set up an online system, and also to run more trains.

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# Asia-Pacific countries poised to transform agrifood systems through innovation and digital technologies – FAO ready to support members in the region

The current nutrition situation in Asia and the Pacific is difficult in many areas across the region. About 40 percent of its inhabitants cannot afford a healthy diet, and in some areas the fight against hunger has seen reversals rather than advances. Progress toward meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of defeating both poverty (SDG 1) and hunger (SDG 2) has been thrown off track amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which has devastated both lives and livelihoods.

Luckily, the picture is not all bleak and there are signs of optimism and dynamism. Advances in the region's agrifood systems are changing the ways in which food is sustainably produced, marketed and consumed. This transformation reflects a greater awareness by Asia-Pacific producers and a growing demand from consumers for healthier, more nutritious foods.

Crop and livestock farmers, fishers, pastoralists, other producers and retailers – large and small – are successfully turning to innovative ideas and digital technologies. These improvements in production and sustainable resource management keeps more money in their pockets, while also helping to reverse environmental degradation.

All this is helping to create a paradigm shift that is taking shape in other parts of the world too. In Asia and the Pacific, there is a clear and growing movement toward innovation and digitalization along the entire agrifood value chain.

Retail grocery and food shopping is an important example. This is not only a phenomenon of well-developed economies, with four out of five sales of online food and grocery purchases taking place in the Asia-Pacific region.

This is just one aspect



QU Dongyu, Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

of the agrifood systems overhaul that is reshaping countries rapidly across Asia and the Pacific, from West Asia, all across South Asia, Southeast Asia and East Asia to the Pacific island countries.

In the Pacific's Small Island Developing States (SIDS), grassroots entrepreneurs are increasingly stepping forward. Their innovative smart phone apps help producers and consumers to make informed, nutritious choices. The private and development sectors are also leveraging increasingly available data to make the supply chain of agricultural commodities to markets more efficient and timely, and to map areas vulnerable to extreme weather events. Several of these innovations were showcased at the 'SIDS Solutions Forum', the first of an event to be held biennially, co-convened in August 2021 by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the Government of Fiji.

There are still some challenges in accessing data on demand and without interruption, as we saw when Tonga's undersea communications cable was severed during the eruption of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha apai volcano. But these

setbacks will bring forth the new ideas needed to overcome them!

At FAO, we are working with our Members across Asia and the Pacific region to transform agrifood systems to be MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable - to the benefit of all. Through the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, we are assisting policy makers in their plans to further leverage data, technology and innovation to meet the SDGs targets by 2030.

We are proactively identifying and supporting digital villages across the region as part of FAO's 1,000 Digital Villages Initiative. We are continuing to nurture and promote country-led SIDS solutions and Hand-in-Hand partnerships, which includes advising on climate event mitigation and adaptation, and helping to overcome the damage caused to lives and livelihoods by the pandemic and the climate crisis.

These are among the

topics that will be discussed at the 36th Session of the FAO Asia and the Pacific Regional Conference in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 8 to 11 March. FAO Members from the region – 46 in total – will come together to build on the transformational agenda and actions under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, along with the recommendations of the UN Food Systems Summit 2021.

FAO is leading in hosting the recently established Coordination Hub for the follow up of the Summit, which will support countries in further developing and implementing national pathways towards agrifood systems transformation in line with national priorities.

Working with our Members in Asia and the Pacific, we will create even stronger partnerships with academic and research institutions, civil society organisations, cooperatives, parliamentarians and the private sector, with the inclusion of women and youth, as part of our commitment to the global efforts to build back better.

FAO is supporting the region to think big and act concretely. We are providing a constructive hand, but we need many more hands to reach our collective goals. For a better world with a better future for our children, we need better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life for all – leaving no one behind.

For this, we need strong political will and efficient, effective and coherent multilateral actions.

*The article is written by QU Dongyu, Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)*



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Attapeu, March 01<sup>st</sup>, 2022

## INVITATION FOR BID

To: Civil Engineering and Construction Companies operating in Lao PDR

We, Xekaman 1 Power Co., Ltd, are operating Xekaman 1 Hydropower Plant and Xekaman Xanxay Hydropower Plant with capacity of 322MW in Xanxay District, Attapeu Province, Lao PDR.

You are kindly invited to participate in our tender for permanent slope stabilization of 115kv Switchyard - Xekaman Xanxay Hydropower Plant as following:

- Name of Project:** Xekaman 1 Hydropower Project.
- Procuring Entity – Employer:** Xekaman 1 Power Company Limited.
- Name of Tender:** Tender no. III.3.14: Permanent Slope Stabilization of 115kv Switchyard - Xekaman Xanxay Hydropower Plant.
- Source of fund:** Revenue from electrical power sale.
- Method of contractor selection:** National competitive bidding.
- Form of contract:** Lump sum
- Contract performance duration:** 06 months.
- Issuance of bidding documents:** From 09:00 a.m, March 02<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 to 09:00 a.m. April 01<sup>st</sup>, 2022.
- Bidding Document fee:** Free
- Location of issuance:** Xekaman 1 Power Co., Ltd in Xanxay District, Attapeu Province, Lao PDR. Please contact Ms. Nguyen Thi Van Trang (Phone: +84.977059817 or Mr. Do Ngoc Van (Phone: +84.345804167) for more detail.
- Deadline of submission of bids:** 09:00 a.m. April 01<sup>st</sup>, 2022.
- Opening of Bid:** 09:30 a.m. April 01<sup>st</sup>, 2022

For Procuring Entity  
Xekaman 1 Power Co., Ltd  
Pham Hoang Viet  
Chief Executive Officer

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## Entertainment

# 'Squid Game' bags three trophies at SAG Awards

SOUTH KOREA (The Korea Herald/ ANN) -- Netflix megahit drama series "Squid Game" won three awards at the 28th Screen Actors Guild Awards, held in Santa Monica, California, Sunday night.

The series was nominated in four categories.

Two actors -- Jung Ho-yeon and Lee Jung-jae -- won awards for their roles. This marked the second consecutive year of Korean actors winning at least one SAG award. Last year, veteran actor Yoon Yuh-jung won for her role as a feisty grandmother in the film "Minari."

Jung, who played Sae-byeok, a North Korean defector who participates in the bloody survival game to win 45.6 billion won (\$38.9 million) in the Netflix series, won the award for outstanding performance by a female actor in a drama series. The series marked her debut as an actor. She is better known in Korea as a model.

At the awards ceremony, Jung began her acceptance speech in Korean, expressing gratitude toward other actors at the event, adding that she

was honored to be there with people she looks up to. Then she started speaking in English with tears in her eyes.

"Thank you make me dream and open the door for me. And I love you 'Squid Game' crew," Jung said in her acceptance speech.

Jung was nominated in the category alongside Jennifer Aniston for "The Morning Show," Elisabeth Moss of "The Handmaid's Tale," Sarah Snook of "Succession" and Reese Witherspoon of "The Morning Show."

Top star Lee, who played Gi-hun, a down-on-his-luck middle-aged man who also takes part in the deadly "Squid Game," was named the winner for outstanding performance by a male actor in a drama series.

"Oh my, thank you so much. This is truly huge," Lee said during his acceptance speech in Korean. "Thank you SAG Awards. And thank you to the global audience for all of your love for 'Squid Game.'"

Lee was nominated along with Brian Cox of "Succession," Billy Crudup of "The Morning

Show," Kieran Culkin of "Succession" and Jeremy Strong of "Succession."

The outstanding action performance by a stunt ensemble in a comedy or drama series prize also went to "Squid Game" on Monday. Other works that were nominated in the category were "Cobra Kai," "The Falcon and the Winter Soldier," "Loki" and "Mare of Easttown."

The Korean drama series was also listed for outstanding performance by an ensemble in a drama series, but "Succession" took home that prize.

Director Hwang Dong-hyuk's "Squid Game" is a story about hundreds of cash-strapped players who risk their lives to compete in children's games where the final winner gets 45.6 billion won.

Following its release in September, it quickly became the most-watched Netflix show of all time, reaching the No. 1 spot on the show charts of 94 countries.

The "Squid Game" team also won multiple awards at other US awards events.



Mr Phonpaserd Sengmanivong (second right) seen with the students who were the top ten in the contest.

## Top ten artists in the Toyota Dream Car Art Contest 2022 announced

Sisouphan Amphonephong

The top ten artists of the Toyota Dream Car Art Contest 2022 were announced last week after the competition attracted entries from students across Laos.

The contest held at Pakson Shopping Mall attracted students from different schools, and they showcased their creativity and ideas in their art works.

This contest invites children from all corners of the globe to share ideas about the future of mobility by drawing their dream cars.

An art teacher and fashion designer, Mr Phonpaserd Sengmanivong, told Vientiane Times on Monday he was happy that several of his students had entered the top ten in the contest.

He said the organisers of the contest, which had three main categories, encouraged students from all over the nation to send in their art works.

The organisers selected the top ten artists from each category to join the contest last week.

Mr Phonpaserd congratulated four students from Jouse-Hoffet

International School and Wattanakorn International School and one student from Phiawat secondary school who were among the top ten finalists.

The top five finalists of the Toyota Dream Car Art Contest will be announced in the next two weeks.

Mr Phonpaserd also appreciated that Mr Kanthaka Sithirathphanleudeth of Jouse-Hoffet International School was declared the winner of a dream city drawing competition recently organised by the European Union in Laos.

## Job Vacant

Vientiane Capital, 28 February 2022

Dear Sir, Madam,

1. The Ministry of Justice, the People Supreme Court, the Office of the Supreme People's Prosecutor and the Lao Bar Association (hereinafter called "Clients") have received financing (hereinafter called "the funds") from the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) toward the cost of the project, entitled "Training of Judicial Services, Institutions and Capacity Building Project" (JuSTICE Project)". The Clients intend to apply a portion of the funds for the recruitment of an Administration and Finance Manager of the project.
2. The Project Management Unit, piloted by representatives of the concerned authorities under the coordination and leadership of Ministry of Justice (MoJ), on behalf of all the clients, now invites candidates (individual consultants) for the position "Administration and Finance Manager". More details on the services and criteria of selection are provided in the Terms of Reference (TOR) that could be requested for free at the below address.
3. For the people who are interested in the vacant position, all the candidacy documents consisting of a letter of interest, a curriculum vitae (CV), at least two recommendation letters, a financial Proposal and the signed Statement of Integrity, and must be submitted by person to the Project Management Unit (PMU) no later than 4:00PM on the 31 of March 2022 at the following address.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Khamphone SIPASEUTH

Chief of Cabinet AND JuSTICE Project Director

Ministry of Justice

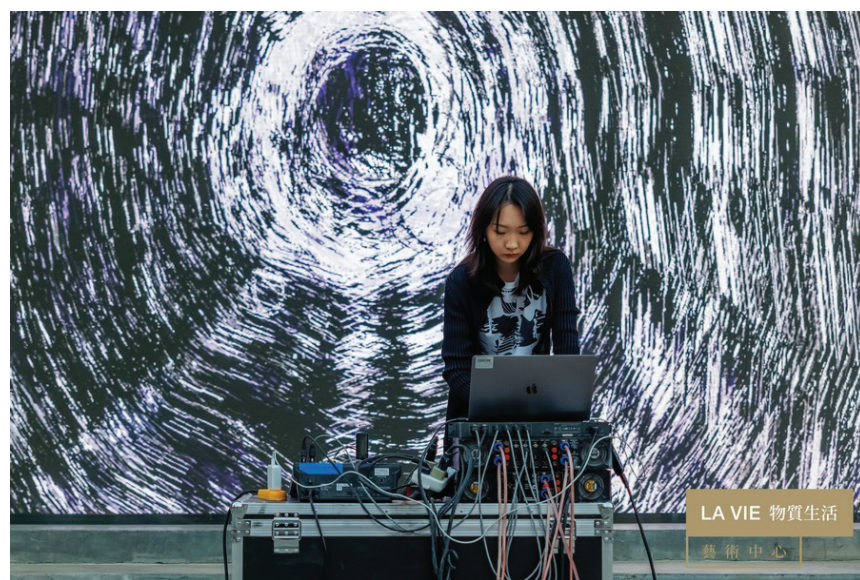
Project Management Unit

B.O. Box: 08, Ban Don Nok Khoum, Sisattanak District, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

Phone number: 020 5511 8399

Email: vvlbounmany@hotmail.com

## Group exhibition by female artists opens in Shenzhen



Exhibition Metaphor and Gaze features 17 female artists and includes works of installation, video, performance art, painting and fabric art.

--Photo provided to China Daily

CHINA (China Daily/ ANN) -- An exhibition entitled Metaphor and Gaze opened in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, on Sunday. The group exhibition, running until March 21, features 17 female artists and includes works of installation, video, performance art, painting and fabric art.

"As a female curator, I have always wanted to

provide more opportunities for women artists to showcase their work and creativity," exhibition curator Zhu Yujie said. "Only by exhibiting works by female artists and writing about them can female artists be known by more people and be written in art history."

The exhibition also features a reading room

section entitled "Writing Her Power -- Women's Situation and Writing", displaying books from 19 publishing houses on themes like female power, self-identity and relationships.

Artist Wen Qiwen was invited to create works of paper art for the reading room that explore the relationship between human and society.



Classified



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What's on

Video portrait contest

As



**SEMAINE DE LA LANGUE FRANÇAISE ET DE LA  
FRANCOPHONIE AU LAOS**  
Du 12 au 20 mars 2022, célébrons la langue française dans toute sa diversité !

**CONCOURS DE VIDÉO PORTRAITS**  
Pour les élèves et les étudiants



part of La Francophonie week, the French Institute is running a video competition on the theme of French-speaking personalities from around the world. The objective is to make the most interesting video presentation possible so that it can be shared in colleges, high schools and universities. The competition is aimed at secondary school students in bilingual classes, and students of ENS and universities in Laos. Candidates must create a video, alone or in groups of 2 to 3 people maximum. The maximum length of the video should not exceed 2 minutes.

**When:** The contest is open until March 7.

**Where:** Send the video in MP4 format and the participation form to: [cooperation.education@gmail.com](mailto:cooperation.education@gmail.com)

Download the participation form at: <https://bit.ly/3JlnGJ6> and more information: <https://bit.ly/3rMXrWj>



Hor Phakeo Museum

This ancient temple was first built in 1565 during the reign of King Saysethathirath to house the Emerald Buddha and was the king's personal place of worship.

**When:** Open daily 8am-12noon; 1pm-4pm

**Where:** Setthathirath Road, Chanthabouly district, Vientiane

**Photo contest**

The Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment invites entries to a contest with the themes “the Montreal Protocol - keep the world cool” and “the storage of food and vaccines”. Entries can be in the form of a photo, painting or graphic. The winner will receive a tablet and smart watch.

**When:** Applications accepted until March 2022


**Where:** Apply at [www.ozone2climate.org](http://www.ozone2climate.org)

**Asean China young leaders scholarship**

The Asean China Young Leaders Scholarship programme is accepting applications for master's degree and doctorate programmes, and one-semester (4-5 months) research scholar courses.

**When:** Applications accepted until March 31

**Where:** Apply online and get more information at [EYSD@asean.org](mailto:EYSD@asean.org)



**USAID Laos Counter Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) project**

**POSITION DESCRIPTION**

**TITLE:** Short-Term consultant on supporting development of Minimum Standard of Care for Victim of Trafficking and Vulnerable Groups

**TIPY OF CONTRACT** Individual contract (**National only**)

**REPORTS TO:** Protection and Services Specialist, USAID Laos Counter Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) Project

**DATES:** March to June 2022

**DURATIONS:** 3 - 4 months

- Background and purpose:**

The USAID Lao CTIP Project focuses on reducing vulnerability to human trafficking among vulnerable and disadvantaged people and victims of human trafficking through three areas, namely partnerships, prevention, and protection. In the area of protection, the Laos CTIP project aims to improve victim protection and assistance in the shelter and support LWU's shelter developing National Minimum Standard of Care Guideline. The National Minimum Standard of Care (MSC) guidelines will be used for operation of the shelters across the nation. The MSC guidelines will standardize the assistance for victims and at-risk populations.
- Scope of work:**

Under the supervision of Protection and Services Specialist (PSS) and Chief of Party (COP) of the Laos CTIP, the consultation will work closely with Counselling and Protection of Women and Children shelter, Lao Women's Union.

  - Review the Vietnamese Standard of Care and other guidelines including related documents on TIP from Lao and International documents/guidelines.
  - Draft the Lao National Minimum Standard of Care.
  - Submit the Lao National Minimum Standard of Care to Counselling and Protection of Women and Children, LWU and Winrock International for comments/inputs and revise until the draft will be finalized.
- Deliverables:**
  - Draft the outlines and the list of main resources after reviewing the relevant documents including Vietnamese MSC and national referral guidelines.
  - Draft the national MSC and share with GOL, Laos CTIP, and donor USAID for their review and comments. The consultant should consider including the following information in the MSC besides other information that the s/he suggests.
    - Propose practical outline based on government structure outline.
    - Review, follow structure of Vietnamese National MSC and other possible outline from TIP's related National Guidelines, including contains based on Laos context in discussion with LWU and Laos CTIP for approval.
    - And other suggest the consultant may have the LWU, Laos CTIP to review and provide comments/inputs.
  - Revise the guidelines incorporating the comments from the stakeholders, present the final draft national MSC to GOL, and finalize.
- Timeframe and activities**

This assignment is for 16 days over the duration of about 4 months. Tasks will include desk review; consultations with Laos CTIP and GOL, particularly LWU's shelter which will take a lead on the development of MSC; drafting of the MSC and its presentation at the consultation meeting, revision of the draft document based on the comments from the stakeholders.

	Activity	No of days	Timelines
1	Desk review of existing legislation on TIP and related TIP guidelines and propose the outlines of national MSC structure and relevant documents	2 days	Mid-March,
2	Draft the national MSC guidelines (First draft)	4 days	1 week (Late March to early April)
3	Laos CTIP reviews the first draft (HO/CO) and the consultant revise according to the comment.	2 days	1-2 weeks (mid-April)
4	Internal consultation meeting with LWU's shelter	1 day	Early May
5	Revise the draft based on the comments made at the consultation meeting	1 day	Early May
6	Share the second draft with Laos CTIP for their comments	2 days	1 week (May-June)
7	Second consultation meeting with LWU's shelter	1 day	June
8	Revise the draft based on the comments from the meeting	1 day	June
9	Present the second draft at the stakeholder meeting	1 day	June
10	Revise the final draft based on the stakeholder meeting and Laos CTIP reviews	1 day	July
11	Submit the final draft to the National Secretariat for approval		1-2 months expected (but not possible to predict how long it will take for the approval)
	Total working days	About 16 days	

- Qualification**
  - Bachelor's degree or above preferably related to international development, community development, social protection, social science, or other relevant fields.
  - At least 3-5 years work experience related to the following areas including human trafficking, gender-based violence, labor migration, social protection, child protection, or other relevant social issues.
  - Have experience working with GOL and development partners on TIP, migration, labor and relevant social protection areas.
  - Experience in developing national guidelines or policies in the aforementioned areas is highly desirable.
  - Strong communication skill in Lao and English.
  - Ability to work under pressure and timeline.
  - Ability to write clearly, accurately, and concisely.
- Term of payment – the payment schedule will be as follow:**
  - The first installment of 20% payment will be paid when the first draft was finalized incorporating the reviewed comments by Laos CTIP and LWU and revised.
  - The second installment of 30% will be paid when the second draft is revised after the consultation meeting with Laos CTIP, GOL and development partners was held.
  - The third installment of 50% will be paid when the final draft MSC document was submitted to the National Steering Committee for approval. Prior to this final action, the consultant will present the guidelines at the stakeholders meeting, incorporate the comments from Laos CTIP, GOL, and the National Secretariat of Anti-trafficking and revise the document, and finalize the guidelines.

To apply for this position, please send your resume and cover letter to email: [LaosCTIPJobs@winrock.org](mailto:LaosCTIPJobs@winrock.org), before end of business hours of March 07, 2022.



SPORT

# U-23 footballers to play in Lao League 2022

Times Reporters

Members of the national U-23 squad will be able to rejoin their clubs for training in preparing for the Lao Premier League 2022, which starts on March 12, after they test negative for Covid-19.

Some of the U-23 squad and staff of the Lao Football Federation (LFF) are currently in a quarantine centre in Champassak province after returning from the AFF Under-23 Championship in Cambodia last week, where they tested positive for the virus.

League matches will be played at the national football stadium.

Young Elephants FC, Army, Vientiane, Ezra, Master Seven, Luang Prabang and Champassak province clubs will take part in the league.

Last year the Pepsi Lao Premier League was postponed from April because of the Covid-19 outbreak but will now take place this month.

However, the League One series will not take place this year. Toyota FC were



A Lao U-23 player tries to wrest the ball from a Malaysian player at the AFF Under-23 Championship in Cambodia last week. --Photo Lao Football Federation

champions several years ago and the club was able to help develop young footballers so they reached the dizzy heights of playing for the national team.

The League 2021 comprised five clubs,

including Chanthaboury (Lao Toyota FC), Young Elephants, Ezra, Vientiane and the Army FC. In the first leg, Young Elephants topped the tables with two wins.

The League 2022 will be an opportunity to improve

the skills of U-23 footballers.

The Lao Football Federation will also use the tournament to choose the best players to represent Laos at the 31st South-East Asia (SEA) Games to be held in Hanoi, Vietnam, in May.

## Heritage Flame for Beijing Paralympic Winter Games lit at Stoke Mandeville

LONDON (Xinhua) -- The Heritage Flame for the Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games was lit at Stoke Mandeville, U.K. on Monday.

As the birthplace of the Paralympic movement, Stoke Mandeville, a small village about 80km northwest of London, welcomed hundreds of guests to attend the Heritage Flame Lighting Ceremony.

British Paralympians Angie Malone and Aileen Neilson brought the Beijing 2022 Paralympic torches on their wheelchairs with Malone lighting the cauldron to spark the rainy night.

"I feel so honored and so proud," said Malone who was visiting Stoke Mandeville for the second time. "It's an absolute privilege to be here in Stoke Mandeville. The last time I was here was 40 years ago when I was 16 years old and the wheelchair sport here opened my eyes."

Malone injured her spine at 16 and was introduced to a variety of sports during rehabilitation. She tried wheelchair curling when she was 36 and took part in four Paralympic Winter Games

since then.

"We had amazing memories, we had fantastic time at every Paralympic Games," said Malone.

After the 2008 Paralympics, Beijing will once again become the center stage of the Paralympic movement with the Winter Games set to be held from March 4 to 13.

"Your flame signals the arrival of historical games. Beijing is the first ever city to host both the summer and winter editions of the Paralympic Games," said Andrew Parsons, president of the International Paralympic Committee.

"I was fortunate to be in Beijing for the 2008 Games, and China set new standards for how Games could be delivered and create support structures to allow Paralympians to reach their full potentials," Parsons added.

A flame gathering ceremony will be held on March 2 at the Temple of Heaven in Beijing, where sparks collected from eight places across the three competition zones will be joined by the flame ignited in Stoke Mandeville.



### Vacancy Announcement

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Lao PDR

is looking for

Dynamic and Motivated Professional to fill in a position of

### Programme Assistant

for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) unit

as per details below:

Position details	How to apply
<b>Programme Assistant - SRH</b>	Find out the details of the position and apply today at this link:
<b>Job Opening ID:</b> 41170	<a href="https://bit.ly/3H2IALP">https://bit.ly/3H2IALP</a>
<b>Contract Type:</b> Fixed Term Appointment	
<b>Level:</b> GS 5	
<b>Nationality:</b> Lao National only	
<b>Duration:</b> One year (renewable*)	
<b>Duty Station:</b> Vientiane, Lao PDR	

**Closing date: 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022 (5 pm Vientiane time)**

Attractive compensation package and benefits

If there is problem accessing to the links, please email to [laos.office@unfpa.org](mailto:laos.office@unfpa.org)

UNFPA provides a work environment that reflects the values of gender equality, teamwork, Embracing diversity in all its forms, integrity and a healthy balance of work and life. We are committed to maintaining our balanced gender distribution and therefore encourage women to apply. UNFPA promotes equal opportunities for all including persons with disabilities. UNFPA does not charge any application, processing, training, interviewing, testing or other fee in connection with the application or recruitment process.



Lao People's Democratic Republic  
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Ministry of Industry and Commerce  
Department of Planning and Cooperation  
National Implementation Unit (NIU)  
Lao PDR Competitiveness and Trade Project  
Contract No: RFQ/012/LCTP

Date: 22 February 2022

### Request for Quotation Inspection and Sampling Equipment, Lab Consumables, Test Kits for Department of Agriculture

To: Eligible Suppliers

- The Government of Lao PDR has received financing from the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), Australia, Ireland and USAID for the cost of Lao PDR Competitiveness and Trade Project in the amount of 15.72 Million USD and intends to apply part of the proceeds of these funds towards payments under the **Contract for Supply of Inspection and Sampling Equipment, Lab Consumables and Test Kits for Department of Agriculture** under this Request for Quotation.
- The NIU now invites eligible Company to submit the sealed Quotation for the **Inspection and Sampling Equipment, Lab Consumables and Test Kits** as specified in section 5 Schedule of Items and Prices. The delivery period is: **Sixty (60) Calendar days** after the date of signature, including assembly, installation and setup service.
- Bidding will be conducted through Request for Quotation procedure specified in the Law on Public Procurement Law No 30/NA, dated 2 Nov 2017 and the Instruction of Implementation of Law on Public Procurement, No. 0477/MOF, dated 13 Feb 2019.
- A complete set of the Bid Documents is available on <http://www.t4dlaos.org/procurement-notices/> for free for the interested bidders to register and upload the application (Request letter with official stamp) online beginning **22 February 2022**. The Bid Documents will be sent via email after the online registration is completed.
- The Quotation shall be delivered before 14:00'clock, 09 March 2022 to **National Implementation Unit (NIU), 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Department of Planning and Cooperation, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Phonxay Road, Saysettha District, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR. Tel: 021 413916**, and all Quotations will be opened at 14:05'clock, 09 March 2022 in the presence of the Tender Committee and the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend.