SEZ management decree under scrutiny, aiming to draw more investors

Times Reporters

The government is creating new decrees to ensure the sustainable development of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in ways that yield strong benefits. Special Economic Zones are economic development areas set up to attract large-scale investors, both Lao and foreign, to spur economic growth and create job opportunities for local people.

Government officials from central and provincial agencies yesterday gathered in Vientiane to discuss a draft decree on the promotion and management of SEZs. Also up for discussion was a draft decision on the Investment Promotion Law that would ensure the directives contained in the Investment Promotion Law were effectively carried out.

These decrees are aimed at simplifying procedures for investors, making them faster, more transparent and fair, and ensuring that investors have confidence in the system and are not taken advantage of by the authorities, Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment Dr Khamlien Pholsena said.

The decrees would also help the management committees in each area to better promote and develop,


develop.

Solid growth expected for Laos this year and 2018: ADB

Times Reporters

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for Laos is forecasted to reach 6.9 percent in 2017 and 7.0 percent in 2018, a slight increase from the 6.8 percent growth recorded in 2016, according to the ADB’s flagship annual economic publication, Asian Development Outlook 2017, which was released in

CONTINUED PAGE 3

Dr Khamlien Pholsena.

CONTINUED PAGE 2
Solid growth expected...

FROM PAGE 1

Vientiane yesterday. “Despite fiscal constraints and weaker global demand for minerals in recent years, the Lao economy remains one of the ASEAN countries’ most resilient,” saidADB Country Director Mr Yasushi Negishi. According to the ADB, the services sector posted strong growth at 9.0 percent, supported by the expansion of wholesale and retail trading, hotels and restaurants, financial services and telecommunications. The industry sector also maintained growth at 8.0 percent, though mining output declined slightly. This was boosted by increases in electricity generation, notably at the Hongsa Lignite Power Plant, and the development of residential and commercial buildings. Growth in agriculture edged up from 2.0 percent in 2015 to 2.5 percent in 2016 due to improved weather in the latter part of the year. The current account deficit slightly improved from 16.8 percent of GDP in 2015 to 14.1 percent in 2016 but the latter was partly due to lower imports of construction materials and machinery for the Laos-China railway.

Correction

Vientiane Times wishes to correct a mistake in the fifth paragraph of the article titled “Massive land area awaiting UXO clearance” on page 1 of issue No. 80 published on April 5. The second sentence should read: “One third or about 87,000 square kilometres of the country’s territory is contaminated with bombs.”

Mr Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee speaks to Lao media. -Photo Somsay

Times Reporters

Asean countries should teach their citizens more about the significance of the Asean Socio-Cultural Community (ASC) as an important pillar in driving cooperation with the bloc’s other pillars in the push for prosperity. The ASC tends to be ignored by the region’s citizens even though they benefit from various forms of cooperation.

Deputy Secretary General of Asean for the Asean Socio-Cultural Community, Mr Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee, highlighted the matter when talking to the Lao press on Wednesday on the occasion of the 6th ASEAN Social Cultural Community. Mr Vongthep said he pointed to the importance of youth development and the workforce for economic integration, which he said were all about the people of Asean in various aspects.

Mr Vongthep added that Laos and other Asean member countries were placing importance on cooperation under this pillar, pointing to the adoption of several documents by Asean leaders concerning cooperation under the ASC.

Some of the documents signed by the Asean leaders are: the Asean Declaration on One Asean, One Response: Asean Responding to Disaster as in the Region and Outside the Region; the Vieta Declaration on Transition from Informal Employment to formal Employment towards Decent Work Promotion in Asean; the Vieta Declaration on Re-inforcing Cultural Heritage Co-operation; and the Asean Declaration on Strengthening Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth.

Pertaining to the adoption by Asean leaders of the Vieta Declaration on Re-inforcing Cultural Heritage Co-operation, Mr Vongthep said this would not only promote the idea of preservation of both tangible and intangible cultural heritages, but that it would highlight how Asean as a community addressed issues such as the illicit trafficking of cultural and intellectual property.

Asean was formally declared an Economic Community in December 2015 and the AEC is familiar to most people in the region, including in Laos. The current known goal is the freer transboundary flow of goods and labour, and easier border crossing within the region.

The Asean Secretariat official spoke about Laos’ achievements in the area, saying Laos wanted to make the transition from an informal economy to a formal economy. This would promote the concept of decent work for workers, who have security through social protection schemes, and their human rights will be upheld in line with the standards identified by the International Labour Organisation.

Besides that, the project will teach various occupational and life skills to disabled people so they are better equipped to run a small business.

The project will run in Viengxay district, starting now and continuing until September 30, 2018.

Ms Yashiro said ADDP had received suggestions from authorities in Huaphan province about possible activities for people with disabilities including making biscuits, gardening, making handicrafts, and caring for Sakura Park. The project will focus on women with disabilities in order to help them earn an income.

Workshops will be held on the provision of jobs for disabled people and there will be inspections of the progress of individuals running small businesses by people with disabilities. There will be meetings to encourage sponsors to step forward and get involved in providing jobs for disabled people and the project will continue to provide training for trainers on suitable occupational skills.

The project will attempt to provide disabled people with jobs and lighten the burden on their families. The number of people in Laos who had been disabled for more than five years amounted to 2.8 percent of the population in 2015, Mr Khamping said.

Huaphan is in the north of Laos and is home to many disabled people, some of whom have been maimed in accidents caused by unexploded ordnance. The ADDP has been operating in Laos for about 20 years. It is an international non-governmental organization which seeks to help disabled people find work by acquiring useful skills.

Mr Khamping Sengtannat shelshakes hands with Ms Tomiko Yashiro after signing a Memorandum of Understanding in Vientiane yesterday.

Times Reporters

Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Asean Development with Disabled Persons (ADDP) have provided more than $US260,000 ($2.3 billion kip) for the development of work opportunities for disabled people in Huaphan province.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the project was signed yesterday by a representative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Mr Khamping Sengtannat, and President of the Asean Development with Disabled Persons, Ms Tomiko Yashiro.

The project aims to improve the skills of the trainers of disabled people and teach them the basics of small and medium enterprise management.

Asian Development Bank Country Director Mr Yasushi Negishi (second right) speaks about the growth of the Lao economy in Vientiane yesterday.

ADBD’s economists also stressed that diversifying the sources of growth toward more labour-intensive manufacturing and services was key to making growth more inclusive.
President extends deepest sympathy to Russia

President of the Lao PDR, Bounnhong Vorachit on April 5 extended deepest condolences and sympathy to his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin over the Metro blast that occurred in St. Petersburg.

The message reads: “I have learned with profound sadness of the Metro blast that occurred in St. Petersburg on April 3, perpetrated by a terrorist act which caused numerous deaths and injuries to innocent people.”

“On behalf of the Lao people and on my own behalf, allow me to extend my deepest condolences and sympathy to Your Excellency and the people of the Russian Federation as well as to the bereaved families of the victims affected by this barbaric act of violence.”

“The Lao PDR strongly condemns this terror attack and stands by side in solidarity with the Russian people in all their national and common efforts in the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.”

Attacting more tourists the key to aviation growth

Luang Prabang arranges...
Ministry, WWF agree to strengthen wildlife law enforcement

Times Reporters

The Department of Forest Inspection and the World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) yesterday signed a Memorandum of Agreement initiating the implementation of a new project aimed at supporting efforts to strengthen wildlife law enforcement and cross-border cooperation.

The agreement was signed by Director General of the Department of Forest Inspection of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Mr Khampouth Phandoungouvon, and Country Director of WWF-Laos, Mr Somphone Bouasavanh.

Recently, Laos has received increased international attention with regard to the issue of illegal wildlife trading. Laos has been identified by many observers as a transit country for the illegal trade of wildlife products coming from Africa, ultimately destined for China and Vietnam, according to a press release from WWF-Laos.

Recent reports have also identified that Laos has seen an increased domestic demand for items such as ivory, rhinoceros horns, and tiger products, which are predominantly purchased by tourists coming from neighbouring Thailand, China, and Vietnam.

The new project, which began March 14, 2017, is scheduled to run until June 30, 2018. With a budget of US$85,500 (over 701 million kip), funded by WWF-Switzerland and WWF-Singapore, the project will support the Lao government in particular the Lao-Wildlife Enforcement Network (LAO-WEN), in combating wildlife trafficking.

In particular, the initiative will focus on prioritised species within Laos as identified in the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) agreement, to which Laos became a party in 2014.

The project will provide support in the capacity building of Lao government authorities with respect to law enforcement and bilateral cooperation, to address wildlife trafficking issues in Laos and the Greater Mekong Region.

WWF is one of the world’s largest and most respected independent conservation organisations, with over 5 million supporters and a global network active in over 100 countries.

WWF’s mission is to stop the degradation of the earth’s natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world’s biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

LaoVietBank donates to Vangvieng school

The LaoVietBank last week handed over supplies and construction materials to a school in Nakhuang village, Vientiane province. The items including cement to build new classrooms complete with educational equipment, the Socio-Economic News in Brief newspaper reported yesterday.

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A rise in temperatures from today until at least April 9, the Laophatthana newspaper reported. Temperatures in the northeast are forecast to rise 1-2C and will range from 19-27C, while temperatures in the northwest are forecast to rise to 1-3C and will range from 19-33C. In Vientiane and the central provinces, temperatures will range from 20-33C.

Tanmixay-Sikeuth road 15 percent complete

Construction of a 9-km road linking the traffic lights in Tanmixay village, Xaythany district, to the junction in Sikeuth village, Naxaithong district, is now 15 percent complete, the Khuamsangob newspaper reported. Construction of the road began in November last year at a cost of more than 368 billion kip and is expected to be complete next year, the newspaper reported, citing the Vientiane Public Works and Transport Department.

Young woman handed 16 year jail term for arranging killing

The Vientiane court on Monday sentenced a 23-year-old woman to 16 years in prison after she was found guilty of hiring a man to kill a relative she disliked. She was also fined 5 million kip, the Khuamsangob newspaper reported.

The woman was identified as Ms Anisa, of Nongbouathong village, Sikhottabong district. The woman’s accomplice, Mr Somphong, 27, of Phonsavard Neua village in Sikhottabong district was sentenced to 10 years in prison and fined 2 million kip. The victim was named as Mr Keo Oudom, 31, of Sibounheuang village, Chanthabouly district. Ms Anisa told police she hired Mr Somphong to arrange to have Mr Keo killed because she was angry that he had insisted she stop gambling. Police said Ms Anisa paid Mr Somphong 82 million kip (US$10,000) to carry out the deed. He in turn hired two Thai nationals to dispatch Mr Keo, who was shot and killed.

News in Brief

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021-215199
Marketing Manager of Lao Press in Foreign Languages, Mr Phoutthasack Intahouommame (second right), yesterday presents a basket of flowers to the Fleet Sales Manager of Lao Ford City, Mr Vilaysack Borliboun (right), as a gift for Pi Mai Lao.

A representative of Lao Press in Foreign Languages’ marketing team, Mrs Latdavong Yommalath (second right), yesterday presents a basket of flowers to Mrs Somchan Phengsay on behalf of the TISSOT marketing and sales team, to mark Pi Mai Lao.

Students in Xaythany district, Vientiane, gather with donors at a ceremony on Wednesday to donate eyeglasses for distribution by a mobile clinic to students in rural areas of Vientiane. The initiative is a joint venture between the Lao Red Cross and the Twin Pine Group. The project aims to help about 30,000 students in 141 primary and secondary schools in Xaythany, Pakngum and Sangthong districts.

Members of the Foundation for Assisting Poor People of the Lao PDR Rescue 1623’s Champassak province branch attend a training course in Vientiane to learn how to improve their teamwork.

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**Vientiane Times**

Friday April 7, 2017 | Photo news | 5
Decree imposes fines on minerals, water resources violations

HANOI (Vietnam News Agency) — Vietnam’s Government has issued a decree on punishment for administrative violations in the minerals and water resources sectors, imposing fines ranging from VND250 million (US$11,250) to VND2 billion ($89,000).

Administrative violations in the water resources sector involve violations in the inspection, planning, surveying, exploitation and use of water resources; violations in reservoirs and riverine operations; and violations in water resource protection, among others.

Four of top-five young universities in Asia

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in Hong Kong was named second-best young university. The UK is the most represented nation in the ranking with 27 universities, closely followed by Australia with 23, France, Spain, Germany and Italy also making the list. The rankings claim less than 3 per cent of places in this young top 200 list. Even the most-represented nation in the table, the UK, only takes 13.5 per cent of positions. The result is that universities from 48 countries across Europe, Australasia, Asia, North America and Latin America make the table. This means the list represents a wider range of countries than any other THE ranking, except the flagship world rankings, THE rankings editor Phil Baty said.

The US reaffirmed commitment to Asia-Pacific region and bilateral defence ties with Singapore: Ng Eng Hen

US reaffirmed commitment to Asia-Pacific region and bilateral defence ties with Singapore: Ng Eng Hen

SINGAPORE (The Straits Times) -- United States Defense Secretary James Mattis has reaffirmed the US commitment to the Asia-Pacific region and expressed a desire to deepen bilateral defence ties with Singapore, said Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen.

He also revealed in a Facebook posting on Tuesday (April 6) morning that Mr Mattis will be attending the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, an annual security dialogue that is usually held in late May and often features top brass military and defence personnel.

Dr Ng, who is making a working visit to the US, met Mr Mattis at the Pentagon on Wednesday (US time), and described their meeting as “warm and productive”.

“We discussed common security challenges including the threat of terrorism and ways to deal with them. I look forward to returning the warm hospitality when Secretary Mattis attends the Shangri-La Dialogue in June this year,” wrote Dr Ng.

According to a transcript of an interview with Channel NewsAsia in Washington DC, Dr Ng described Mr Mattis, a former Marine Corps general, as someone who has strategies and plans, and vast experience in the US military.

“He gave a reassuring calm, and in his words, he is now to become ‘Secretary of Reassurance’. So I was very happy with the outcome of that,” said Dr Ng.

“Think it bodes well from the security point, America’s commitment to the region, and not only commitment to the region, but commitment towards Asia-Pacific’s stability... There is much reassurance and confidence that Secretary Mattis is there,”

Dr Ng added that both countries remained committed to the enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement, signed in 2015, which will further collaboration in new areas such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, cyber defence, biosafety and public communications.

Singapore also remains committed to facilitating the use of Changi Naval Base and its air bases by American forces, said Dr Ng.

He said the purpose of his trip from Sunday to Wednesday (April 2 to 5) was to get a better feel of how to engage the US as there have been “several levels of uncertainty, unpredictability, new administration” under President Donald Trump since Mr Trump took office on Jan 20.

“We thought the best way to do that is to meet the individuals, the ambassadors, and we lined up a significant number of calls with old friends of Singapore who understand the politics, who understand the history of Singapore and relations with the US, and understand our region,” said Dr Ng.

He said it has been a very useful trip, calling it not only a voyage of discovery, but also one of reassurance and reaffirmation by many strong friends and supporters of Singapore in Washington, “who have given us very good guide posts and who also gave us strong assurance that you can call on them if need be”.

Asked about the upcoming Mar-a-Lago Summit meeting between US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping in the US, Dr Ng said it is a “good development” that both leaders are meeting, as it is better for both countries to be cooperating than to be in an antagonistic relationship.

He said Singapore believes it would be healthy for the US and China to agree to avoid trade wars and to help both sides grow economically.

The US reaffirmed commitment to Asia-Pacific region and bilateral defence ties with Singapore: Ng Eng Hen

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in Hong Kong was named second-best young university.

“While the US dominates the top 10 places, and China to agree to avoid trade wars and to help both sides grow economically, it’s no easy task to appear in the 2017 Young University Rankings… Institutions must demonstrate high standards of performance across teaching, research, international outlook and knowledge transfer,” Baty added.

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ASEAN sees solid growth in developing Asia this year

MANILA (Xinhua) -- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) said Thursday that developing Asia will continue to perform well this year even as recovery in the major industrial economies remained weak, predicting the region’s economy to expand by 5.7 per cent in 2017 and 2018.

“Gross domestic product for the region as a whole is expected to grow by 5.7 per cent in 2017 and 2018, a tick down from the 2016 outcome of 5.8 per cent as the controlled moderation of growth in China is balanced by expected healthy growth elsewhere,” said the report released on Thursday.

Excluding the high-income newly industrialised economies like South Korea and Singapore, the report said regional growth is expected to reach 6.3 per cent in 2017 and 6.2 per cent in 2018.

“Growth is picking up in across 18 Asian countries including Thailand. It’s no easy task to appear in the 2017 Young University Rankings… Institutions must demonstrate high standards of performance across teaching, research, international outlook and knowledge transfer,” Baty added.

ASEAN sees solid growth in developing Asia this year

The ASEAN sees solid growth in developing Asia this year.
About 6 pct of Brazilian children out of school: study

Priscila Cruz, chief executive of All of Education, said the situation worrying, saying those who cannot afford schooling are the most vulnerable social groups, such as children from poor families, children with disabilities and those who live in remote areas.

The study shows that over 1.54 million school dropouts are aged from 15 to 17.

Reasons for this alarming situation ranges from teenage pregnancy, financial difficulties, violence, to other difficulties faced by the teen’s family.

Cruz believes that the reform of high school system, which was signed into law earlier this year, may help address these concerns and reduce school dropouts, but it depends on how the new system will work out.

AUDRREA, New Zealand warn of possible attack in Turkey

SYDNEY (AP) -- Australia and New Zealand warned on Thursday that extremists may be planning an attack on the commemoration of a World War I campaign that is being held in Turkey this month.

Australian Veterans Affairs Minister Dan Tehan urged the nearly 500 Australians and New Zealanders registered to travel to Gallipoli, Turkey, to mark ANZAC Day on April 25 to exercise a high degree of caution amid the threat, but offered no specifics about the alleged threat.

ANZAC Day is an annual holiday commemorating the April 25, 1915, landings in Gallipoli. The ANZAC military operation fought by the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps during World War I.

Australian Federal Police deputy commissioner Mike Phelan declined to release details of a bomb threat or where the information originated, saying only that the government had received information that extremists may attack the services being held on the Gallipoli peninsula.

Phelan said there was no specific plot linked to the threat.

"It is just that terrorists may indeed try to carry out a terrorist attack during the commemorations," Phelan told reporters in the nation’s capital, Canberra. "That is all we have got at this stage."

Tehan said Australia and New Zealand were working closely with Turkish authorities, EU and other vulnerable social groups, children with disabilities and those who cannot afford schooling, to support those who want to attend the ANZAC Day celebrations in Australia. In 2015, police in Melbourne arrested five teenagers on suspicion of plotting an Islamic State group-inspired attack intended to coincide with the city’s ANZAC service. In 2016, police arrested a 16-year-old and charged him with planning an attack on an ANZAC ceremony in Sydney.

New Zealand Foreign Minister Murray McCully said he could not be more specific about the nature of the threat or where the information had come from. He said he’d been getting advice about the threat since last Friday and over the last day or two. McCully urged travelers to Gallipoli to regularly check the government travel website for updates. He said he had confidence in how Turkish authorities were handling security, and apologized for not being able to offer more information.

"It’s not an area in which they encourage ministers to let their imaginations wander," he said. "We very carefully have to follow the steps and script of the officials who give advice in this area."

Many New Zealanders feel a strong bond with Gallipoli at this time of year, speaking volumes about the significance it holds," he said.

A Eurogroup bailout review not sealed

ATHENS (Xinhua) -- Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras has on Wednesday called for an emergency euro zone summit in April if the Eurogroup meeting on Friday does not conclude a bailout review.

The remarks were made during joint statements here with visiting European Council President Donald Tusk.

According to a press release issued by the Greek prime minister’s office, Tsipras named creditors to delay the closure of the assessment.

According to the initial timetable agreed in 2015, the second review should have concluded in February 2016. The Greek prime minister said Athens expects an agreement during the Eurogroup meeting in Malta this Friday, otherwise it will seek initiatives at a higher level to resolve the issue.

"We must have a positive development before Easter, in any case in April, even if we need to convene a euro zone summit," he stressed.

Tusk also expressed the hope that deal could be reached on Friday.

"I hope that we will be able to reach a deal this Friday at Eurogroup. I would like to underline that all sides participating in this process are sharing the responsibility to reach this agreement," said the European Council president.

During talks with Greek President Prokopis Pavlopoulos earlier, Tusk appeared cautiously optimistic about the conclusion of the review soon.

"I really feel that we are very close to the conclusion of this phase of the programme. I believe that this grand finale will come thanks to the determination of Greek people and their sacrifices," Tusk said.

Greek PM calls for emergency summit if Eurogroup bailout review not sealed

About 6 pct of Brazilian children out of school: study

RIO DE JANEIRO (Xinhua) -- Brazil has over 2.48 million minors aged between four and 17 without access to school, according to a study published Wednesday.

The figure represents 6 percent of the total number of children and teenagers in that age bracket in Brazil, said the study, which was carried out by nongovernmental organization All for Education.

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Invitation for Bids.

Scaling Up Participatory Sustainable Forest Management Project. (SUPSM)

Contract Title: Construction of NPMO Office Building

Reference No.: WO/NC/8/2017

1. The Lao People’s Democratic Republic has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Scaling Up Participatory Sustainable Forest Management Project.

2. The Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for Construction of NPMO Office Building.

3. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding procedures as specified in the World Bank’s Guidelines: Procurement of Goods, Works and Non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers (January 2010) and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Procurement Guidelines.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the Project Office.

5. A complete set of bidding documents in English including hard copy and a CD containing technical specifications, drawings and bill of quantities may be purchased by interested eligible bidders upon submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Lao K1,000,000 or equivalent in currency of the country of origin.

6. Bids must be delivered to the address in paragraph 8 below on or before 10:00 a.m. (Local Time) on April 26, 2017. Electronically bidding will not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the bidders’ designated representatives and anyone who choose to attend at the address in paragraph 8 below at 10:00 a.m. on April 26, 2017.

7. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid-Securing Declaration.

8. The address referred to above is:

Mr. Bounpheng SENGTHONG
Deputy Director General, Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Chao Anou Road, Thatdam Block, Sisaket Village, Champasak District, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

Telephone: (+856 21) 215723
Fax: (+856 21) 215502
E-mail address: bounpheng.s@gmail.com (cc. chittanom.b@gmail.com), and inspect the bidding documents during office hours 0900 to 1600 hours (Standard Lao PDR time) at their address given above.

9. The successful bidder will be required to sign a contract with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry within 20 days of receipt of the award notice.

10. The responsive and responsible bidder will be awarded a contract for the construction of the NPMO Office Building.

11. The financial institution will make available a portion of the funds for the implementation of the project.

12. The World Bank Group, acting through the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, is the lender for the project.

13. The project’s objective is to contribute to the development of the forestry sector in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic.

14. The bidding process will be conducted according to the World Bank’s Guidelines: Procurement of Goods, Works and Non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers (January 2010).

15. Whether this project will be implemented through a competitive bidding or other procurement methods, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry will ensure that bidders from all eligible countries can be awarded the contract.

16. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry will provide the necessary information to the banks and participants to participate in the project.

17. The tenderers may be assisted in preparing their bids.

World
New education projects to boost human resource development, feed growing skilled labour demand

Recently, the Australian Government, European Union (EU) and ChildFund Australia agreed to support Basic Education Quality and Access (BEQUAL) Projects in Huaphan Province.

Dr Mithong Souvanvixay from the Ministry of Education and Sports, and Ms Keoamphone Souvannaphoum from ChildFund Laos signed on 28th March 2017 a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the implementation of the BEQUAL NGO Consortium Project in Houaphan Province.

Basic Education Quality and Access in the Lao PDR (BEQUAL) is a ten-year program led by the Government of Lao PDR and Australia, with additional support from the European Union, to support educationally disadvantaged children to complete quality basic education.

As part of the overall BEQUAL program, the BEQUAL NGO Consortium (comprising of Plan International, Save the Children, World Vision and ChildFund Laos) is responsible for implementing activities that support increased access to and participation in primary school. The BEQUAL NGO Consortium project aims to ensure that all children, particularly non-Lao speakers, girls and children with disabilities, in 171 disadvantaged schools, enroll in and complete a quality primary education, supported by their parents and communities.

Under the MoU signed recently, ChildFund Laos will start to deliver activities in Huameuang and Xamneua Districts, Houaphan Province. The project is supported by the Australian Government, the European Union and and ChildFund Australia with a budget of US$ 1,312,505 and will run until the end of the project in September 2018. A total of 57 primary schools have been selected to promote education access and participation in the 2 districts. The project will be carried out in close partnership with schools, the District Education and Sports Bureau in each district and the Provincial Education and Sport Service in Houaphan to plan, implement and monitor the different activities.

The main objectives of this project are to address the quality of teaching of early reading and Lao language acquisition in schools, and to enable community engagement in supportive learning environments. As part of the BEQUAL NGO Consortium, ChildFund Laos will implement specific activities to improve Lao language acquisition and children’s reading habits such as training for teachers of Grade 1 to better support non-Lao speaking students upon school entry, provision of reading books to schools, and reading promotion activities with schools and communities. Increased enrolment and participation in school by all children will be promoted through training for Village Education Development Committees and teachers on inclusive education, and activities for students to increase their awareness of key issues affecting participation. Sanitation and hygiene improvements at primary schools will be addressed through the installation of hand-washing facilities, plus training for teachers and school-level hygiene promotion activities. This project will enable an improvement in quality of the education delivered as well as gradually reduce the education gap between urban and rural areas.

“ChildFund attaches great importance to collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Sports. Synergies with the BEQUAL NGO Consortium also substantially expand the prospects of our increased information sharing and effective engagement for countrywide inclusive and quality education”, Ms Keoamphone said.

For more information on the ChildFund BNC Project or activities please contact Oulath Saengouthay, oulaths@childfund.org.la, 021-412966, 020 54424204
**IMF paints positive picture for global economic growth**

**Somsack Pongkhao**

Economic activity is projected to pick up its pace in 2017 and 2018, especially in emerging markets and developing economies, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s recent World Economic Outlook Update.

The report also predicts improved economic growth among Lao major trading partners, Asean and China. The economic growth of the Asean 5 (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam) is projected to expand from 4.8 percent in 2016 to 4.9 percent in 2017 and 5.2 percent in 2018.

The economic improvement in Asean and China could also create greater momentum for stronger economic growth in Laos this year and next, helping to drive regional integration. Among advanced economies, activity rebounded strongly in the United States after a weak first half of 2016, and the economy is approaching full employment, according to the IMF.

The outlook for advanced economies has improved for 2017–18, reflecting somewhat stronger activity in the second half of 2016 as well as a projected fiscal stimulus in the United States.

Growth prospects have slightly worsened for emerging markets and developing economies, where financial conditions have typically tightened. Near-term growth prospects were revised up for China due to expected policy stimulus but were then revised down for a number of other large economies — most notably India and Brazil.

The growth rate in China was a bit stronger than expected, supported by continued policy stimulus but activity was weaker than expected in some Latin American countries currently in recession.

Oil prices have increased in recent weeks, reflecting an agreement among major producers to trim supply. With strong infrastructure and real estate investment in China as well as expectations of fiscal easing in the United States, prices for base metals have also strengthened.

Growth projections for 2017 have also been revised upward for Germany, Japan, Spain, and the United Kingdom, mostly on account of a stronger-than-expected performance during the latter part of 2016. Last year, the Lao economy grew at a rate of 6.9 percent while Lao economists say the country's economy will continue to grow at about 7 percent this year as many new mega-projects that have been delayed in past years have now commenced.

The IMF said that emerging markets and developing economies also face diverse cyclical positions and structural challenges. The IMF recommended that enhancing financial resilience can reduce the vulnerability to a tightening of global financial conditions, sharp currency movements, and the risk of capital flow reversals.

Economies with large and rising nonfinancial debt, un-hedged foreign liabilities, or heavy reliance on short-term borrowing to fund longer-term investments must adopt stronger risk management practices and contain balance sheet mismatches.

In low-income countries that have seen their fiscal buffers decrease over the last few years, the priority is to restore those buffers while continuing to spend efficiently on critical capital needs and social outlays, strengthen debt management, improve domestic revenue mobilisation, and implement structural reforms.

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**ADB sees solid growth in developing Asia this year**

MANILA (China Daily, ANN) -- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) said on Thursday that developing Asia will continue to perform well this year even as recovery in the major industrial economies remained weak, predicting the region's economy to expand by 5.7 percent in 2017 and 5.2 percent in 2018.

Asian Development Outlook 2017: the ADB's annual economic publication, said continued expansion helps developing Asia deliver more than 60 percent of global growth. “Gross domestic product for the region as a whole is expected to grow by 5.7 percent in 2017 and 2018, a tick down from the 2016 outcome of 5.8 percent as the controlled moderation of growth in China is balanced by expected healthy growth elsewhere,” said the report released on Thursday.

Excluding the high-income newly industrialised economies like South Korea and Singapore, the report said regional growth is expected to reach 6.3 percent in 2017 and 6.2 percent in 2018.

“Growth is picking up in 30 of the 45 economies in developing Asia, supported by solid regional growth and rebounding global commodity prices,” the report said.

Indeed ADB chief economist Yasuyuki Sawada said the region “faces risks from uncertain policy direction in the advanced economies, including the pace of interest rate normalisation in the United States.”

“While short-term risks seem manageable, regional policy makers should remain vigilant to respond to possible spillover through capital flows and exchange rate movements,” Sawada said.

China’s economy will continue "to rebalance, depending more on consumption to drive growth." 

"A further shift of economic activity from industry to services shows rebalancing progressing as planned. Growth in China now relies more on internal demand and less on exports," the report said, adding that China's economy will experience "moderate deceleration" growing 6.5 percent in 2017 and further to 6.2 percent in 2018.

After slowing down in the first half of 2016, the report said the United States, the euro area and Japan are forecast to grow collectively by 1.9 percent in both 2017 and 2018.

The report predicted Japan’s economy to continue to recover "but may lose some steam unless export growth maintains its new momentum."
Prudential opens new branch in Luang Prabang

Prudential Life Assurance (Lao) Company Limited (Prudential Laos) recently launched a new sales unit branch at the ACLEDA Bank branch in Luang Prabang province, aiming to offer products that better suit customers’ needs.

The opening of the new branch is in line with Prudential’s credo of “Always Listening, Always Understanding”, which is available throughout the country at ACLEDA Bank Lao Ltd.

The event was attended by representatives from the company and provincial authorities along with other invited guests.

Prudential opened its representative office in Vientiane in March 2015 and has since received a licence from the Ministry of Finance to begin business operations.

P r u d e n t i a l h a s e s t a b l i s h e d a strategic and exclusive “bancassurance” partnership in Laos with ACLEDA Bank Lao, a reputable commercial bank with more than 40 branches across the country.

Prudential Laos is now distributing its products to customers of ACLEDA Bank Lao through the branch network, starting in Vientiane before expanding nationwide in the near future.

Prudential Corporation Asia, part of the UK-based Prudential plc, has started its life insurance business in Laos.

Operating here as Prudential Life Assurance (Lao) Company Limited (“Prudential Laos”), Prudential offers life insurance products that meet the protection and savings needs of the Lao people.

Prudential has been operating in Asia since 1923 and owns a pan-regional distribution platform that serves over the diverse financial needs of Asian families in 13 markets.

Prudential Corporation Asia is a business unit of Prudential plc (United Kingdom), comprising its life insurance operations in Asia, and its asset management business, Eastern Investments. It is headquartered in Hong Kong.

Prudential is a leading life insurer in 13 markets in Asia, covering Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

Prudential has a robust multi-channel distribution platform providing a comprehensive range of savings, investment and protection products to meet the diverse needs of the Asian people.

Boost for airlines, REITs as more tourists head for Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR (The Star) – Total tourist arrivals to Malaysia this year could jump by over 4 percent on-year after airline bookings from China to Malaysia surged 72 percent on-year from March 16 to Aug 31, 2017.

This was after China discouraged its citizens from visiting South Korea, Maybank Investment Bank Research said on Thursday.

“If we assume that Chinese tourist arrivals for the whole of 2017 grow by a narrower 50 percent on-year, we estimate that this will lift total tourist arrivals by 4 percent on-year.

“This figure could be conservative as it has not accounted for recent promotional efforts by the government.

“The development reinforces our positive view on the tourism industry,” the research house said in a note.

It said the direct beneficiaries to the positive growth in tourist arrivals will be AirAsia’s MAHB, Sunway REIT, Sunway REIT, IGB REIT and IGB REIT.

The China National Tourism Administration recently discouraged Chinese tourists to South Korea in retaliation for the latter deploying the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence missile system.

Business intelligence group ForwardKeys reported that China to Malaysia airline bookings from March 16, 2017 to August 31, 2017 surged 72 percent, and ranked Malaysia as the prime Asian beneficiary from the move by CNTA.

The research house said beneficiaries from higher tourist arrivals were the aviation (airlines, airport), hospitality (hotels, theme parks, casino) and consumer (retail, F&B) sectors.

Lao and foreign business operators gather at the opening ceremony of the sales unit branch in Luang Prabang province.
Trading Summary

LSX's index was up 12.17 points or 1.13 percent to 1,089.88 points with 3,800 shares traded, worth around 18 million kip from the increase of EDL-Gen and BCEL, which rose 50 kip and 300 kip respectively. EDL-Gen edged up 50 kip to close at 5,450 kip with small trading volume of 300 shares only, while BCEL added 300 kip to close at 5,200 kip with 3,100 shares. In the meantime, PTL and SVN were stable at 2,000 kip, 3,000 kip with 300 shares, 100 shares traded respectively. LWPC stayed unchanged at 9,100 kip with no trading.

Indonesia, Australia discuss transportation cooperation enhancement

JAKARTA (The Jakarta Post, ANN) -- Indonesia and Australia are discussing ways to enhance their cooperation in the transportation sector in a meeting in Nusa Dua, Bali, from April 5 to 7.

Representatives of the two countries will discuss issues such as priorities in the transportation sector, infrastructure investment, security and safety and regional maritime pollution preparedness and response.

The two countries will explore a cooperation arrangement in the transportation sector, according to a press release issued prior to the start of the meeting on Thursday.

“One of the important issues that will be discussed is the finalisation of the new MoU in the transportation sector which aims to accommodate the interests of the two countries,” the statement says.

The result of the meeting in Nusa Dua is considered important for when the agreement between Indonesia and Australia under the scheme of the Indonesia Transportation Safety Assistance Package ends.

The new funding scheme for cooperation projects between two countries will be implemented through consultation between the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the National Development Planning Board (Bappenas) and the Indonesian Coordinating Economic Ministry. The discussions will be jointly led by Indonesian Transportation Ministry secretary-general Sugihardjo and Australian deputy secretary of infrastructure and regional development, Shane Carmody.
To: State and private organisations and people across the country  
Title: Ceasing operations of one leasing company and three pawnshops

Pursuant to Prime Ministerial Decree on leasing No 11/PM, dated 18 February, 1999  
Pursuant to Prime Ministerial Decree on pawnshop No 248/govt, dated 26 July, 2016.

The Office of the Bank of the Lao PDR would like to inform you about the revocation of business operation licenses of one leasing company and three pawnshops, which are detailed as follows:

1. Phiewvongsaen Leasing Company was granted a business operation license from the Bank of the Lao PDR No 30/BoL, dated 29 October, 2013. The company's office is located in Savang village, Chanthabouly district, Vientiane.

2. Vientiane Motor Market Pawnshop was granted a business operation license from the Bank of the Lao PDR No 509, dated 9 October, 2003. The shop is located in Sibounheuangthong village, Sikhottabong district, Vientiane.

3. Bouathip Pawnshop was granted a business operation license from the Bank of the Lao PDR No 210, dated 13 July, 2006. The company is located in Saimoungkhoun village, Naxaithong district, Vientiane.

4. CK Pawnshop., Ltd. was granted a business operation license from the Bank of the Lao PDR No 420, dated 29 August, 2003. The shop is located in Chormmanitai village, Xaysetha district, Vientiane.

Therefore, the Bank of the Lao PDR issues this announcement to inform you about this fact.
CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

JOB VACANCY for National Consultant on Antimicrobial Resistant

Contract duration: 9 months (with possible extension)

Vacancy No. 2017/002

Deadline for Applications: 12 April 2017

Duty station: Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

Key performance indicators:

- Expected Outputs:
  - Development and dissemination of the FAO-Repertoire of Lao PDR, the technical supervision of the Chief Veterinary Office Animal Health Unit FAO-ALIANT, in close coordination with the Lao PDR CEPD-TA Team Leader, and operational supervision of the budget holder in FAO’s Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, the national consultant will perform the following tasks:
  - Work closely with the AMR/TOG of Lao PDR as well as other national authorities, FAO technical staff, and other agencies responsible for the control of AMR in Lao PDR.
  - Work closely with the CEPD-TA Team to also address the overall Vietnamese health and development needs of Lao PDR.
  - Assist and oversee activities related to Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and antimicrobial (AM) monitoring, surveillance, and research studies.
  - Assist in the development and conduct of training modules on AMR and AMR monitoring and building.
- Liases and coordinates with the VGSD’s Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and other relevant authorities on the formulation and implementation of the National Action Plan.
- Support engagement, coordination and communication with central and provincial officials, the WHO, the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), and other stakeholders.
- Provide technical inputs on stakeholders’ awareness and appropriate use of antimicrobials and the health risks of AMR.
- Supports programming, coordination and communication with central and provincial officials, the WHO, the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and other stakeholders.
- Monitor progress against the work plan by tracking activities and targets with periodic reviews and assessments.
- Prepare inputs for FAO and donor reports.
- Participate in and provide inputs to the FAO project planning activities.
- Submit an Exit Mission Report.
- Perform any other related duties as requested.

Candidates should meet the following requirements:

- Minimum Requirements
  - Graduate of veterinary medicine, animal husbandry or any related course in livestock production.
  - Experience in managing projects and development of training.
  - Experience in sound research.
  - Competencies
    - A professional qualification in the subjects mentioned above would be an advantage.
    - Ability to work as a team.
    - Building effective working relationships with national and international colleagues.
    - Proficiency in written and spoken English is required.

Technical/Functional Skills:

- Minimum of 5 years’ experience in the planning and implementation of development projects.
- Relevant work experience in the planning and implementation of development projects.
- Ability to deal with the political, technical, and people management challenges and work effectively with all levels of staff at all levels and with all groups involved in the project.
- Ability to effectively coordinate a large multi-stakeholder project with results-based management approach.
- Ability to manage and support the project management system.
- Strong communication and networking skills in the English language both written and presentation skills.

Selection criteria

Applicants will be contacted directly if selected for an interview.

Additional information

Applicants, specify your work experience in microorganisms related to health impact and food safety.

FAO seeks gender, geographical and linguistic diversity in its international and national consultants to ensure that FAO missions in all regions are supported.

At all candidates should adhere to FAO values of Integrity to FAO, Respect for All, and Integrity and Transparency.

How to apply

All applications will be made through FAO’s eRecruitment system. Click on the link below to access the eRecruitment portal. You can search and apply for this Call for Expression of Interest.

In order for your application to be properly evaluated, please ensure that all sections of your application are completed. Incomplete applications will not be evaluated.

If you need help or have questions, please contact [recruitunit@fao.org](mailto:recruitunit@fao.org).

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Agency/Project Name: National GPRF Programme: Governance for Inclusive Development Programme

Location: Based in Vientiane Capital, Ministry of Home Affairs

Duration: 9 months (with possibility of extension)

Deadline for submission: 12 April 2017

The Governance for Inclusive Development Programme (GIDP) has been formulated under the framework of the National Governance and Public Administration Reform Programme (NGARP) of the Government of Lao PDR. The GIDP, led by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), seeks to promote good governance and improve public administration’s ability to deliver better service delivery and increase citizens’ systemic engagement, especially at the local levels where basic services are coordinated, planned, financed and reported. GIDP has a particular focus on an actions of marginalized people and groups. GIDP will also enhance partnerships at the national level through the Governance Sector Working Group, to promote multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on good governance and related policies.

The GIDP now seeks qualified candidates to fill in the following positions:

Position: Inclusive Local Service and Development Coordinator (Lao National)

Objective of the assignment

The inclusive local service delivery and development coordinator will be primarily responsible for providing overall technical support to GIDP and expect the deliverables of Output 1: “Targeted local consultations and feed the implementation of multi-sector work plans based on community priorities.” S/he will provide technical assistance in the implementation of the project’s objectives, particularly in the areas of planning, implementation and evaluation. The GIDP’s output 2: “Identified local consultations and facilitate the implementation of multi-sector work plans based on community priorities.” S/he will provide technical assistance in the implementation of the project’s objectives, particularly in the areas of planning, implementation and evaluation.

Position: Programme Coordinator / Assistant to Programme Manager (Lao National)

Objective of the assignment

S/he will support the Programme Coordinator to ensure the smooth implementation of the project’s objectives, particularly in the areas of planning, implementation and evaluation.

Position: Finance Support Coordinator (Lao National)

Objective of the assignment

S/he will support the Finance Manager to ensure the smooth implementation of the project’s objectives, particularly in the areas of planning, implementation and evaluation.

Position: Accountant (Lao National)

Objective of the assignment

S/he will support the Finance Manager to ensure the smooth implementation of the project’s objectives, particularly in the areas of planning, implementation and evaluation.

For full job profile go to the [www.moha.gov.la](http://www.moha.gov.la)

For full job profile go to the [www.mois.gov.la](http://www.mois.gov.la)

For full job profile go to the [www.mois.gov.la](http://www.mois.gov.la)

For full job profile go to the [www.mois.gov.la](http://www.mois.gov.la)

For full job profile go to the [www.mois.gov.la](http://www.mois.gov.la)

Note: Please note that only short-listed candidates will be notified. Qualified female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply. Closing Date: 7 April 2017.

Full details are available in the Terms of Reference on: [www.moha.gov.la](http://www.moha.gov.la) - [Projects -> NGARP -> Job Opportunities]. Candidates should submit a cover letter and CV to FAO Programme Manager, Ministry of Home Affairs, Vientiane, Lao PDR. Fax: 020 22026574, or: Email to ngarp.moha@gmail.com, and care of online portal.

Project Code: 603
On the occasion of Lao New year 2017 is coming soon, Sky City Apartment has a Promotion for customers for best discount 30% as special priority on the occasion of lao new year from the date 01 April 2017 to 30 April 2017, please note that the promotion room are limited available.

Sky City Apartment
Tel: +856 21 850 999, 021 850 275
Mobile: +856 20 28249695
Email: infoskycityhotel@gmail.com, Poulisa.vp@gmail.com
Add: Kaisone Road, Sibounhueng Village
Chanthabuly District, Vientiane Capital City Lao PDR
Vientiane Times
Friday April 7, 2017 | 15

Lao People’s Democratic Republic
Ministry of Industry and Commerce
Second Trade Development Facility
Project ID No: P130512

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
National Trade Facilitation Specialist

1. Background to the assignment
The Second Trade Development Facility (TDF-2) is a multi-donor program financed by Australia, the European Union, Germany, Ireland and the World Bank focusing on improving trade and private sector development in Lao PDR. The development objective of the TDF-2, which is implemented by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, is to support the implementation of government’s trade and integration priorities outlined in the 2012 Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) Roadmap, and in particular to contribute to improved competitiveness and diversification, focusing outside the natural resource sectors. TDF-2 has three main components:
(a) trade facilitation, trade policy and regulations;
(b) diversification and competitiveness; and,
(c) mainstreaming aid for trade.
The appraised value of the project is US$ 14.0 million, with implementation to take place over a period of four years, starting in April 2013. Technical responsibility for implementation of the Trade Development Facility lies with the National Implementation Unit (NIU), based within the Planning and Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

2. Objective of the assignment
The objective of the assignment for the National Trade Facilitation Analyst is to support the National Trade Facilitation Secretariat of the TDF-2 of the Lao PDR Ministry of Industry and Commerce. The main responsibilities of the consultants include:
• Managing the implementation of the different activities related to the Lao PDR National Trade Facilitation Strategy (NTFS) and Action Plan;
• Helping in coordination between DIMEX, other relevant government agencies/ministries, and relevant donor and development agencies in the design and implementation of the TDF-2 NTFS Action Plan;
• Dissemination of work on NTFS Action Plan to interested parties, including the private sector.

3. Key qualification requirements
• Minimum Bachelor degree in law, economics, business, public policy, political science, international relations, or related discipline.
• Minimum two years working experience in an international/multinational organization or in the government/public sector on an international project or in trade facilitation related area.
• Knowledge of work with/in government organizations, in particular in connection with the public sector is an asset.
• Knowledge of customs policy and non-customs procedures (e.g. SPS, transport, etc) is an asset.
• Fluency in Lao and English are mandatory (spoken and written). Strong interpersonal skills to facilitate dialogue with various government agencies, engage with senior and technical staff, and the private sector.
• Ability to work in a team and have good communication skills.
• Willing to work alongside and assist national counterparts in a practical and proactive way.
• Sound policy development and research skills are an asset.

This assignment is designed for a full-time engagement over a period of 2 years with annual contract extensions subject to satisfactory performance. There is an initial probation period of three (3) months. The majority of inputs will be delivered in Vientiane, Lao PDR, working alongside government officials. The expected commencement of services is expected as soon as possible. The full text of the ToR can be accessed at the NIU’s website: www.t4dlaos.org

The NIU now invites interested eligible consultants to provide information indicating that you are qualified to perform the services (curriculum vitae with expression of interest and references). Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below.
Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by 21st April 2017, 16:00 o’clock.

Attn: Mr. Phouvieng Phongsu, NIU Director, CC: Mr. Keophouthone Inthivong, Procurement Officer. Ministry of Industry and Commerce, National Implementation Unit (NIU), Ban Phoxay, Xaysettha District, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR. Tel: +856 (21) 41 39 16 – 45 39 82; Fax: +856 (21) 41 39 16 E-mail: keophouthone.in@laosaft.org Note: Only Short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Lao Tobacco Limited
have an exciting and rewarding career opportunity for
two

WHOLESALES EXECUTIVE.

Have you got the influencing, people skills and ready to explore the challenging through selling?
We are looking for someone with at least 2 years sales experience. Ideally you will have experience working in the FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) industry.
The successful candidate will be ensuring the optimal sales volume and influencing shopper decisions via generating customer and shopper needs-based services to create value.

This position will be field based with at least 90% of your time away from home in the field.

This position is required a basic English, but must be fluent in Lao (both written and spoken)

For the successful candidate Lao Tobacco Limited offers an excellent salary and rewards package.

Interested applicants please send your CV and a covering letter by 12th April 2017. For more information please contact:

Human Resources Department
Tel: (+856 21) 352 780
Km8 Thadaeux Road, PO Box: 181
Vientiane Capital
Fax: (+856 21) 313 144
E-mail: recruitment@lao.tobacco.com

Lao Tobacco Limited

have an exciting and rewarding career opportunity for
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MECHANICAL ENGINEER.

14 – MONTH PROGRAM WITH POTENTIAL

A Successful candidate will be trained functional roles & responsibility. You will start first at the junior level of Mechanical function, then go through all needed assignments that develop you to become a well performing Senior Mechanical Engineer of the company in the future.

Within a 14 months program, the incumbent will be able to exposure to the knowledge and skills of mechanical with multiple jobs to learn in the business.

Working with team and gain experience from task in our business for growth.

This position is required a basic English, but must be fluent in Lao (both written and spoken).

For the successful candidate Lao Tobacco Limited offers an excellent salary and rewards package.

Interested applicants please send your CV and a covering letter by 12th April 2017. For more information please contact:

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Km8 Thadaeux Road, PO Box: 181
Vientiane Capital
Fax: (+856 21) 313 144
E-mail: recruitment@lao.tobacco.com
Study in China !!!

Make a difference with a Chinese Scholarship
Applications are open now

The Chinese government provides the graduating high-school students in the northern areas (Provinces of Luang Prabang, Oudomxay, Bokeo, Luang Namtha, Phongsaly, and Haiphong) of Lao PDR with opportunities of scholarship for degree study in China starting from September 2017. The scholarship includes all the necessary support and funding to complete your study.

Through this experience,

--- You will gain knowledge of Mandarin language and new skills, It will not only make you more employable in the future, but also will empower you to make a difference in your community.

--- You will be immersed into the Chinese culture, and it makes you be more aware of cultural differences and similarities during your study in China.

--- You will make more friends in China, and make contribution to China-Lao people-to-people friendship.

--- You will make an important contribution to the economic and social development of your country on your return home.

Your are welcome to apply for the scholarship!

--- The recipients of "The Chinese Consul General Scholarship from the Northern Agriculture and Forestry College of Lao PDR pose for a group photo at the consulate office building entrance."

Application Documents

1. A brief application letter of your basic information, including name, gender, birth date, graduating school, province, etc.
2. Notarized highest diploma (Documents in language other than Chinese or English must be attached with notarized Chinese or English translation.)
3. Chinese Proficiency Test Certificate (HSK Certificate, if any)
4. Foreigner Physical Examination Form completed in English or Chinese
5. No criminal record certificate
6. A photo copy of passport
7. Letter of recommendation in Chinese or English (if any)
8. A Study Plan or Research Proposal in Chinese or English with a minimum of 200 words.
9. The deadline date for the application is 15 April, 2017.

Contact information:
Tel: 00856-71-232437
Email: consulate_lp@mfa.gov.la
Add: PhouKhan Village, Luang Prabang District, Luang Prabang Province, Lao PDR
Mitsubishi Electric

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Mr. SLIM
Project Officer - Laos

- Located in Vientiane, Laos
- World-renowned international development NGO
- Contribute to a growing team to help end avoidable blindness

Join one of Australia’s most respected and largest growing international development organisations – The Fred Hollows Foundation. Working across more than 26 countries, our vision is for a world where no one is needlessly blind. We have an ambitious 5 year strategic plan that aims to take The Foundation even closer to realising our vision of ending avoidable blindness.

We are seeking a highly motivated Project Officer to join The Foundation’s work in Laos. You will work closely with our implementing partners, guiding them in effective planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting of their activities. Your energy for our goal of ending avoidable blindness, along with your coordination and organisational skills will match our needs to keep delivering on our current projects and contribute to the development of new ones.

Essential criteria include:
- Bachelor’s Degree in International Studies/Development/Health
- Proven ability to influence and work with partners/stakeholders
- Minimum of 3 years’ experience working with international development or community-based organisations on project management including project design, budget development and monitoring
- Strong written and verbal English ability

How to apply & who to contact
For a detailed job description and for information on how to apply please visit our website http://www.hollows.org.au/current-vacancies

Alternatively, if you would like further information please contact our Recruitment Specialist Lynnette Chen or Nicole Cunningham via email at employment@hollows.org

Closing Date for Applications: 14th April 2017

Please note: Due to high levels of applications, only successful candidates will be contacted.

The Fred Hollows Foundation is committed to protecting the rights of children in all areas where we work. Applicants are advised that The Foundation reserves the right to conduct police checks and other screening procedures to ensure we maintain and promote a child safe environment.

Country Manager - Laos

- Located in Vientiane, Laos
- Key role within a world-renowned international development NGO
- Lead a growing team to help end avoidable blindness

Join one of Australia’s most respected and largest growing international development organisations – The Fred Hollows Foundation. Working across more than 26 countries, our vision is for a world where no one is needlessly blind. We have an ambitious 5 year strategic plan that aims to take The Foundation even closer to realising our vision of ending avoidable blindness.

We are seeking a highly skilled and motivated leader to continue The Foundation’s work in Laos. You will work closely with our implementing partners and stakeholders in Government to not only ensure that important eye health activities are carried out in communities but that our strategic objectives of strengthening the health system in Laos is achieved. With support from a growing team and the benefit of our experience in Laos, our Country Program has the capacity to go to the next level and deliver greater benefits in the areas we work.

Essential criteria includes:
- Master’s Degree in Public Health, International Development or related field
- Extensive experience (minimum of 5 years) managing complex programmes in public health or development, ideally with some exposure to eye health programming and new business development
- Demonstrated capacity for high level representation and strategic advocacy: able to engage and influence senior levels of government, multi-lateral agencies and other partners
- Experience managing a team and working in a global environment
- Project management and project design experience
- Strong written and verbal English ability

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Alternatively, if you would like further information please contact our Recruitment Specialist Lynnette Chen or Nicole Cunningham via email at employment@hollows.org

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All outdoor furniture 20% OFF

HELP FRED’S WORK LIVE ON

Finance Officer - Laos

- Located in Vientiane, Laos
- Help end avoidable blindness
- Key Finance role for the team

Join one of Australia’s most respected and largest growing international development organisations – The Fred Hollows Foundation. Working across more than 26 countries, our vision is for a world where no one is needlessly blind. We have an ambitious 5 year strategic plan that aims to take The Foundation even closer to realising our vision of ending avoidable blindness.

We are seeking a Finance Officer to join our team in Laos. You will work closely with our Program Team to coordinate the financial requirements of our projects. With your attention to detail, advanced computer skills and knowledge of accounting software you will contribute to the efficient running of our office in Vientiane.

Essential criteria includes:
- Bachelor in Accounting, Finance or other relevant tertiary study.
- Minimum of 3 years professional work experience, ideally in an NGO environment with exposure to the financial management of programs and projects.
- Knowledge of modern accounting methods, including electronic book keeping.
- Good Accounting and Microsoft Office skills, particularly Excel and Word
- Strong written and verbal English ability

How to apply & who to contact
For a detailed job description and for information on how to apply please visit our website http://www.hollows.org.au/current-vacancies

Alternatively, if you would like further information please contact our Recruitment Specialist Lynnette Chen or Nicole Cunningham via email at employment@hollows.org

Closing Date for Applications: 14th April 2017

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HELP FRED’S WORK LIVE ON
For many years, we heard that bread was Western food and not very popular among Lao people. But today one entrepreneur who is now making bread is delighted with the steady income he earns.

Even though his bread is popular among customers in Vientiane and the northern provinces, SBS bread factory owner Mr Somboun Silisouk continues to improve the quality of his products in a bid to expand his customer base.

He always makes new designs and fillings for his bread, hoping to give customers different eating opportunities every year.

Today, the factory produces 40 types of filling, including coconut, screwpine fruit of the genus Pandanus (bayteui), cream, taro, sesame and vanilla. It costs 700 to 3,000 kip to make a loaf at the bakery, depending on size.

But before his bread found favour with customers, Mr Somboun lost money for several years. In 2000, he and his wife Ms Saengdao Silisouk started making bread for sale. They started building a brick oven with the aim of making traditional bread using their own two hands.

Ms Saengdao made bread whenever she had time, while her husband earned money by making items from scrap wood. But he saw that making bread had better earning potential than the furniture he was producing. But with no experience in baking and lacking marketing skills, for a long time their bread was not customers' first choice.

They learnt that the quality must be improved, with customer feedback informing their production methods.

Mr Somboun decided to give up woodwork and began helping his wife to find ways to improve the quality of their bread so that it satisfied their customers. They realised that the raw materials must be the main problem and were causing their bread to be inferior.

So they went in search of quality ingredients, especially wheat flour. They went to China, Thailand and Vietnam to study baking methods. They also learned how to determine the quality of the wheat flour produced in these countries.

They decided to buy bread-making machines from Thailand. And at the same time they learnt the right way to bread from the owner of the machine manufacturer and a producer of wheat flour.

They both underwent training in Bangkok and also at home, learning from expert Thai bakers. Slowly but surely, they progressed along the road to bread making. As the quality of their bread improved, the products they turned out in the SBS bread factory in Vientiane grew in popularity, starting in 2008.

Today, the SBS factory employs more than 10 permanent workers, who earn a monthly salary. It also employs 10 temporary workers who are students and earn a daily wage. They work at the factory when they are not in school.

Mr Somboun says the factory's products are always in line with customer demand. This means that all the bread sold in markets is always new and fresh. He and his wife continue to come up with new designs and fillings for the bread so that their customers don't get bored with the same old flavour.
Globalization a trend that must be sustained

As China’s central bank governor Zhou Xiaochuan said during the 2017 Boao Forum for Asia, globalization is a reality for all countries, and is not a matter of choice. Policymakers across the world should keep in mind that although we are not in a perfect global village, globalization has benefited numerous people; and what we should do is cooperate with each other to improve the global trade system.

In the past decades, globalization has benefited both the developed and developing countries. In the developing countries, people’s incomes have been raised and many have been lifted out of poverty. In the developed world, companies have taken advantage of the globalization tide to reach beyond their home countries to invest and profit in almost all corners of the globe.

However, the sluggish global recovery after the financial crisis has resulted in growing angst among those most affected and a growing backlash against globalization in some countries, most notably in the developed economies. Regrettably, policymakers in these countries have chosen to point accusing fingers at developing countries such as China and offer the short-term prescriptions for their woes.

Instead of accelerating their economic restructuring to better allocate resources and rebalance their domestic wealth distribution, they are threatening to close their doors and resort to anti-free trade measures. What they are doing can only jeopardize global trade and hold back the already bumpy global economic recovery.

The Chinese leaders have been strongly championing globalization in recent months, and in a congratulatory letter to the opening ceremony of the annual forum, President Xi Jinping called on the attendees to jointly push forward a more dynamic, inclusive and sustainable globalization process.

This is not just in China’s interest, but in the interest of the entire world. The world’s major trade players should refrain from any beggar-thy-neighbor practices, cast away their differences, and better communicate with one another to enhance mutual confidence and realign the world economy on the track of shared growth.

Yunnan is a land of abundance

Zhang Tong

Just like messengers of spring, edible leaves and flowers such as toon leaves, cardoon leaves and gorse flowers can be spotted at local markets and on dining tables. These edible leaves and flowers are traditional “mountain treasures” on the dinner tables of Yunnan. They come in 600-some varieties. Through intensive pollution-free cultivation on farms, and the rational development and utilization of wild resources, they have promoted forestry efficiency and are bringing in new incomes for farmers. The photo shows farmers selling cardoon leaves.

Boao Forum for Asia

The Bank of China (BOC) held the “BOC Global SMEs Cross-border Matchmaking Services” roadshow in the Lao capital of Vientiane a few ago. According to the Lao Ministry of Industry and Commerce, SMEs accounted for 99 percent of Lao enterprises, which are in urgent need of financial promotion. The institutions and customer resource centres at BOC all over the world can help Lao SMEs expand outside of the country.

Chen Keqin, vice president of the BOC Vientiane branch, hopes that cross-border matchmaking services can bring new ideas and opportunities to Lao and Chinese enterprises operating and developing in Laos. He also hopes to promote Laos’s import and export trade and investment and economic development.

In recent years, BOC has been helping Chinese SMEs invest in other countries and enter into large-scale businesses. These efforts have helped corporations achieve a series of business cooperations and the introduction of investments and technology.

Hu Xiaorong

Since last year, the Yunnan provincial party committee and Yunnan government have been attaching great importance to environmental protection of the whole province.

Yunnan has further implemented its air pollution control and water pollution control, strengthened control, last year Yunnan implemented the Yunnan Provincial Water Pollution Prevention Work Plan. Each prefecture and county strengthened control, last year Yunnan implemented the Yunnan Provincial Water Pollution Prevention Work Plan. Each prefecture and county strengthened control, this year, relevant departments strengthened supervision of key projects for the nine lakes’ prevention and control, with 5.338 billion yuan invested.

For soil pollution control, last year Yunnan implemented five pilot projects for soil pollution treatment and restoration. Major heavy metal pollutant emissions decreased significantly. Environmentally friendly, energy-saving and economic quality in the areas of heavy metal pollution control is generally stable and improving.

Hu Xiaorong

ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION

Yunnan breeds first Asian elephant

Dai Zhenhua

Recently, a female elephant named ‘Future’, living at the China Asian elephant breeding base at the Wild Elephant Valley in Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, smoothly gave birth to a healthy male calf. The birth marked a breakthrough in Asian elephant breeding technology. In 2015, in order to explore and master the Asian elephant breeding methods, the Asian Elephant Breeding and Rescue Centre decided to use human intervention to make the male elephant, ‘Parent’, and the female elephant, ‘Future’, fall in love. The Centre provided the two elephants with a comfortable mating place. Eventually, ‘Future’ became pregnant and smoothly delivered a 106-centimetre-long male calf after 22 months of meticulous care. At present, the calf’s vital signs are normal.

Over the past ten years, the female elephants living at the Asian Elephant Breeding and Rescue Centre have given birth to three calves by natural mating. This is the first time in which the Centre has successfully bred a calf through human intervention. The success has filled a gap in China’s Asian elephant breeding technology, which will provide technical support and practical experience for the breeding of Asian elephants in the future.

Yunnan continues improving environmental quality

AMAZING YUNNAN

Lao students sample Yuixi delicacies

A group of 39 Lao students participated in the 2017 China Yuxi Rice Noodle Cultural Festival recently. They sampled all sorts of Yuixi delicacies, including rice noodles with soybean paste, and fried pork with pickled vegetables. In 2009, Yuxi City of Yunnan Province and Pakse of Champasak Province became “sister cities.” In July 2016, the two parties officially signed a secondary professional talent cooperation agreement.

Photo by Yu Hong

For more information, please visit our website. For more information, please visit our website.
What’s your opinion of the work done by the security forces?

Security Forces Day was observed on April 5, with this year being the 56th anniversary of the founding of the protective body (April 5, 1961-April 5, 2017). Organisations nationwide held activities to mark this important occasion and Vientiane Times asked some local residents for their thoughts on the work of the security forces.

Visith Teppalath
Mr Chantha Xayasarn, an employee in Sisattanak district, Vientiane: It is good to hold activities to mark this day because it means we are doing something to honour our security forces. As we all know, security officers, especially the police, are a very important force and protect people from danger and disorder, including theft, terrorism, traffic problems, drug abuse and the like. They also help people to solve many problems. They work hard for the people all the time and are responsible in carrying out their duties. The police do a better job than in the past. They should continue to work in the public interest and try to be a bit more productive than they are at present.

Mr Phouny Bounnachan, an employee in Xaysettha district, Vientiane: The police are responsible for law and order, and ensuring peace and solidarity. They have achieved great results in their vision and work in previous years. Of course, the country and people need them and want them to continue to work in our interest. If we didn’t have a police force, there could be many problems and our lives would not be so good. So on this important occasion each year all organisations and individuals should acknowledge the security forces and give flowers and other gifts to the police to thank them and spur them on to greater achievements. The public should be aware of this important occasion and do what we can to honour our police force. We should praise them and hope that they become an even greater force for good in the future.

Ms Silchay Thavisone, an employee in Xaysettha district: The police are at the forefront of efforts to ensure that society remains peaceful and that we live in safety. They encourage people to follow the rules and laws, keep the peace, and work with the public to solve problems. They also protect people and work hard for them when something untoward happens. They love their country and the people, and the people love them in return. The police force needs to continue to work slowly and never arrive on time when there’s an incident of some kind and that they can’t catch the thieves after a robbery, and so forth. Many people say that if they could act a bit more quickly the thieves would be arrested and the situation resolved more efficiently. They should also use more modern equipment like the police in other countries do. Having more and better equipment would enable them to better monitor criminals and also help to reduce the like. They should also use more modern equipment like the police in other countries do. Having more and better equipment would enable them to better monitor criminals and also help to reduce the like.

Police contribute to the celebrations on special occasions.

Mr Phouny Bounnachan, an employee in Xaysettha district, Vientiane: It is growing well, both in terms of numbers and quality. The police are very important force and security forces. As we all know, security officers, especially the police, are a very important force and protect people from danger and disorder, including theft, terrorism, traffic problems, drug abuse and the like. They also help people to solve many problems. They work hard for the people all the time and are responsible in carrying out their duties. The police do a better job than in the past. They should continue to work in the public interest and try to be a bit more productive than they are at present.

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The next generation of corporate banking

Ernest Saudjana

JAKARTA (The Jakarta Post, ANN) — The corporate banking sector is in the throes of profound disruption — and it’s happening whether or not banks are fully ready. Banking leaders face an urgent need to radically optimize performance and commit to a continuous digital transformation.

In other words, there is an impending need for the incumbent banks to embrace deep, systemic digitization to stay relevant, open up new paths to sustained economic profit generation, and overhaul all key levers. Now is the time for corporate banks to evolve, to reinvent themselves, and to innovate for both survival and growth.

According to the Corporate Banking Performance Benchmarking survey, by Boston Consulting Group (BCG), leading corporate banking divisions excel in four ways — they’re dramatically less credit-centric; deliver higher risk-adjusted lending margins; excel in managing operating costs; and have highly capable sales forces. However, the players are facing increasing competition, declining interest margins and revenues, surging regulatory costs, spiking loan losses, and rising capital requirements.

These, amid an environment where digitally enabled business models are redefining the movement of data and money, are challenging banks’ traditional advantages and the economics of corporate banking. BCG’s benchmark data also confirms the hazards of clinging to traditional credit-centric revenue models and static, inflexible operating practices.

BCG doesn’t know precisely what corporate banking will look like in 20 years, but it’s getting clear indications of where the industry is heading. These indications come from every region of the world and all kinds of players, including aggressive incumbents, fintechs and fast-growing Asian startups. The result is many ways leapfrogging brand-name Western corporate banks.

Though there are many possible scenarios, we envision three main ones that have strong potential to emerge, whether individually or collectively.

1. Industry 4.0: The rise of Industry 4.0 shows how technology changes both the business ecosystems and the financial services used. Industry 4.0 will connect buildings, vehicles, sensors, and machines.

2. These connections make it possible to gather and analyze data, predict failure, and adapt to changes, enabling faster, flexible and efficient processes that can generate significant increases in productivity.

3. Ecosystem Banking: It’s no accident that digital leaders in many industries are also platform leaders; think Amazon, for example. In the future, many parts of the economy will be regionally or industry-specific value chain platforms, operated by many suppliers and distributors.

A building of the Development Bank of Singapore (DBS).

In other words, there is a diffused network of powerful ecosystem that allows corporate banking divisions to support a diffused network of companies in a particular industry-specific value chain platform. Advances in digital technologies and the growing readiness and ability of companies of all sizes to participate in such an ecosystem, however, will soon usher in a significant increase in demand as firms learn about the ability of such platforms to improve the operational performance of each ecosystem participant.

Banking with the Internet of Things: A more ambitious future could be built on the Internet of Things. For instance, the bank will increasingly be seen as a trusted provider and fraud risk manager, generating new service opportunities and revenue streams.

In the near term, banks can gain significant headway if they focus on three areas that our research indicates are critical.

1. Digitally enable RMs, to support RM-specific analytics and increase share of wallet and generate leads.

2. Digitally enable cross-selling and upselling, dramatically accelerates cross-selling and improve profitability.

3. Digitally enable RMs, to support RM-specific analytics and increase share of wallet and generate leads.

These connections make it possible to gather and analyze data, predict failure, and adapt to changes, enabling faster, flexible and efficient processes that can generate significant increases in productivity.

In the future, many parts of the economy will be regionally or industry-specific value chain platforms, operated by many suppliers and distributors.

A building of the Development Bank of Singapore (DBS).

To boost corporate banking value and generate the profits needed to support far-reaching digital transformation, including next-generation corporate bank models, such as industry-specific ecosystems.

The trouble, of course, is that such evolution takes significant investment and, right now, banks are straining to keep up with current demands.

Although all corporate banks have taken at least tentative steps on the path to digitization, launching a long-term strategic transformation can be daunting, therefore, rather than focusing on specific projects or products, it is important to identify a transformation-path comprising of five key elements.

Determine the bank’s digital aspirations and strategy; review client journeys and redesign the most important ones; consider which potentially game-changing disruptive technologies to invest in, and at what level; develop a comprehensive plan to fund the journey; and commit to a rigorously executed change-management program.

Corporate banking divisions have emerged from the financial crisis only to be hit by a massive digital disruption. To stay viable, they need to understand the client journeys that matter most, invest in bank-wide client-centric innovation, adopt agile ways of working, and create more effective and collaborative cultures.

The example of early movers shows that the next-generation bank is around the corner. The only question is, which banks will be among them.

Ernest Saudjana, Partner and managing director of The Boston Consulting Group for the Jakarta office.
Fashion event held in support of autism association

Sisouphan Amphongphonh

Models from First Modelinglao joined together on stage for a fashion show last week, to raise money to support the Association for Autism.

First Modelinglao Agency Manager Mr Viengsamone Chittaratth said the models were asked to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day as well as to raise money in support of the association, which helps supports children with autism.

He said the agency was proud to be a part of such an event and that they had also provided product booths with souvenirs and T-shirts marking the occasion to sell in support of the association.

Singing and dancing performances by children from the Association for Autism were also featured on the night as well as dancing by the QA Dancers and singing by some of the models present.

Mr Viengsamone said he was not yet able to reveal how much money was raised as the committee had not yet finished counting the proceeds.

A model from the First Modelinglao team, Mr Alam Boudavong, said the fashion show was a lot of fun and that it felt great to be able to able to contribute to such an event.

Vice President of the Lao Journalists’ Association Mr Somsanouk Mixay and Director of the Association for Autism Ms Phokham Douangdalahb opened the show and welcomed the public and officials in attendance, asking them to enjoy the fashions on display and the entertainment activities and to help celebrate World Autism Awareness Day.

Ms Phokham thanked the sponsors for their support as well as teachers from the Association for Autism in Vientiane and the dancer from the QA team who helped to train the children that performed during the evening.

The pair also presented congratulations certificates to each sponsor, thanking them for their financial support to the Association and to the night’s fashion event.

Entertainers to celebrate Lao New Year with festivals

Sisouphan Amphongphonh

Artists from various fields and entertainment companies will join forces to celebrate Pi Mai Lao by performing at a number of water festivals around Laos.

The artists will perform on the main stage of the “Beerlao stage zone” both in Vientiane and various provinces to ring in the New Year.

Soft Drink Manager of the Lao Brewery Company Ms Saengmany Xayakone said they have created the Beerlao Music Zone to celebrate the New Year where the company will provide food, a stage and other entertainment.

Lao and foreign artists as well as DJs will entertain festival goers under the theme “Wet and Wild” while Beerlao will advertise this year’s safety message, “Drink but Don’t Drive. Enjoy Responsibly.”

The music zone will feature a main stage where leading local and foreign artists as well as DJs will perform. The stage will be open from April 14 to 16 at Chao Anouvong Park in Vientiane, in the area of Derathat’s in Luang Prabang, at the Savannakhet ITECC in Savannakhet province, and in Salakham near the Chitpasong Bus Terminal in Champassak province.

Events will start at 11:30am each day and the winners of this year’s Pepsi Singing Contest Mr Kob Kiengkai said he and his friends will also join the show with scheduled singing performances on the music stage in Luang Prabang. He said he would perform a variety of styles as well as his own tracks.

Boy band Xtreme, Tot Vilouna and Ms Soulphakh - a newcomer to the music scene - will also join the event in Luang Prabang for three days.

Mr Kob said he hoped the people of Luang Prabang would come out and have fun with the songs and music that he and other artists will be providing.

Plan to revitalise traditional crafts

Ms Saengmany Xayakone.

A new plan aimed at further promoting traditional Chinese crafts, especially those listed as part of the country’s intangible cultural heritage, has been issued by the State Council, China’s Cabinet.

The Plan on Revitalising China’s Traditional Crafts, released on March 24, aims to transform China into the protection of Chinese culture and heritage.

It calls for better management of the industry and increased market competitiveness, with substantial improvements to be made by 2020.

According to the document, traditional crafts are set to play a more significant role in creating jobs, with the incomes of practitioners to be increased and industrial structures to be diversified. The country is also set to establish a national catalog of traditional crafts and increase the number of intangible cultural heritage inheritors.

Migrant workers are being encouraged to return to their hometowns to develop traditional crafts and grow their local cultural industry, with favourable policies being put in place to help them.

More efforts will be made to improve the design, production and quality of traditional products, as higher-quality materials and a modern management system are introduced.

The document also encouraged enterprises and practitioners of traditional crafts to protect their secrets, apply for trademarks and increase the number of inheritors.

In the meantime, further efforts should be made to enhance the promotion and sales of traditional products, the document said, recommending displays and roadshows at popular tourism sites.

The document also called for universities, enterprises and institutions to host seminars and training sessions for inheritors and practitioners of famous traditional crafts.

In addition, the country will support eligible universities to set up majors and courses in traditional crafts and cultivate professional talent. The country will continue to promote intangible cultural heritage education in universities, and in middle and primary schools, in an effort to enhance awareness.
PLYWOOD AND VENEER MANUFACTURING UNIT FOR SALE

Plywood and Veneer manufacturing unit with 120000 Sq. feet factory building, with all machinery in fully working condition and licenses is available for immediate sale at Namdeau Village, Pakkading District, Bolikamxay Province, Lao PDR.

Inspection of plant can be done on all working days between 8.00 am to 5.00 pm.

Interested parties please contact: Email: finiplaylas@gmail.com / maindharrajeesh@gmail.com Phone: +8562055341730 (Lao PDR) / +919704558090 (India & Whatsapp)

Good Neighbors International (GNI) is an international humanitarian and development NGO in general consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN-ECOSOC). GNI has made great strides in its mission by providing people around the world with a better quality of life.

Good Neighbors Laos (GNL) is implementing the project in Meun district of Vientiane province for improving learning condition of children in the area.

The project is now looking for eligible party for constructing 2 primary school buildings - Nagnao and Phonsivilay in Meun district Vientiane Province. Each building has standard 5 class rooms (7m x 8m) + 1 teacher room (7m x 6m), and 1 toilet building.

The project is here with inviting interested parties to submit application and related document and get school drawing design at GNL office as the detail below.

The deadline for application is April 28th 2017.

Contact Number: Sisangvone, Xaysettha District, Vientiane Capital E-mail: gnlaos@gmail.com Tel: (856-21) 41 214 946
We have many types of cars for rent new model and old, sedan & 4 wheel such as: TOYOTA, KIA, HYUNDAI, MITSUBISHI small and middle sedan for city.

AGL Assurances Alliance Group.

Short term 1-7 days & long 1-12 Months.

Office at Donnokkoum Village, SiSattanak District, Vientiane.

Contact: 020 55 51 25 02 and 020 588 94 62

Email: vpscarrental@yahoo.com, mwvp@yahoo.com

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**What’s On**

### Xayaboury rocket festival

Everyone is invited to an annual rocket festival in Xayaboury province. Thousands of rockets made by local people will be launched to honour Nang Samphiew and worship her stupa. Nang Samphiew is recognised as the mother of the district. There will also be other activities starting from April 22 such as donations, almsgiving, a street fair, and entertainment.

**Where:** Nangsamphiew Stupa in That village, Thongmiyak district, Xayaboury province.

When: The festivities will start on April 22 and the rockets will be launched on April 23.

### Football Competition

The Lao Football Federation is calling for young people aged 10-23 to try out for the U15 and U23 football teams preparing for the Asia Championship tournament matches in Thailand and Korea.

**When:** Tryouts April 20-30 from 4pm to 6 pm.

**Where:** Apply at the Lao Football Federation, Heuy Hong Village, Chartabouly District, Vientiane.

For more information call: 020 9970 7053, 020 5444 3133 and 020 5491 8322

### C-Thru Water Festival

Meet leading international DJs and MCs at the C-Thru Water Festival. Featuring exciting music and fun activities to celebrate Lao New Year. Entrance is free.

**When:** April 14-16 from noon to midnight.

**Where:** Vientiane Centre.

### Lao Central Bank

The central bank requests the public to inform the bank if they encounter any suspicious activity or incident concerning illegal fundraising by calling the following numbers: 021 265713-715 or 021 265607.

### Lao New Year concert

A Lao-Thai concert will take place over Lao New Year, presented by Nakhair Media. On stage will be Lao performer Ms, Dokya and singer Thailand’s Ms Lamay, Mr Thrunva and Phoe Choy, Zea band. There will be free Wi-Fi and more than 2,000 free gifts.

**When:** April 14-16.

**Concert from 10am to 8pm**

**Where:** Don Chan beach, Vientiane.

### Lao Supermodel 2017

Organisers of the Lao Supermodel contest are calling on young men and women, as well as children, to enter their latest contest. Conditions:

- Males must be aged 18-28, be at least 1.75m tall
- Females must be aged 18-28, be at least 1.65m tall
- Children must be aged 6-10.

**When:** Applications are open until May 6.

**Where:** Apply at LT Company in Phonxay village, Xaysettha district, Vientiane

For more information: 020 2247 9479, or 020 9146 2699 www.facebook.com/lao super model

### Miss Xekong 2017

Organisers of the Miss Xekong contest are calling on young ladies in Xekong province to enter its annual competition. Some conditions do apply: Contestants must be a woman by birth, aged 18-25 and be at least 1.55m tall.

**When:** Applications open until April 4. Selection round announced on April 10.

**Where:** Apply at the Information, Culture and Tourism Department of Xekong, Nonmixay village, Lamam district, Xekong province.

For more information call: 038 211 024, 020 2864 4861

### Volleyball competition

A beach volleyball competition will take place over Lao New Year, while many other forms of entertainment and cultural shows will also be on offer over the holiday.

**When:** April 13-16.

**Where:** Donchan Island, Mekong riverbank, Vientiane.

### SEA Write Award

The Lao Writers’ Association is calling for short stories for entry in the SEA Write Award competition. The aim is to promote Lao literature and foster interest among Lao writers.

**Where:** Send your short story to the SEA Write Award Secretary or Vannasin Magazine on the second floor of the Tourism Building on Lane Xang Avenue.

**When:** Submit until June 30.

For more information call: 021 219871

### Dok Champa in bloom

Champa Moungkhoun Garden invites everyone to see the more than 5,000 frangipani trees and 200 species on display from around the world, which are now in full bloom. Entrance free for children under 10.

**When:** Until June 1. Open from 8 am to 8 pm.

**Where:** Champa Moungkhoun Garden is near the National Stadium at Km16 in Nakhae village, Xaythany district.

For more information call: 020 5675 4125, 020 5562 0109, 030 935 5603

### Master’s degree scholarships

The Ministry of Health and Thammasat University of Thailand are offering Master’s degree scholarships for graduates with a bachelor degree in medicine. The offer is open to everyone interested in applying.

**When:** Applications open until April 12.

**Where:** Apply at Ministry of Health, Department of Planning and Cooperation (Opposite Don Chan Palace hotel) Thaikhoi Village, Sisattanak District, Vientiane.

For more information Tel: 021 252 753, 021 242 849; Fax: 021 223 146, 021 240 032; or E-mail: poc.hspd@gmail.com

### Modelling contest for children

The Lao Furniture Association invites children to take part in a modelling contest, with kindergarten and primary school children encouraged to compete in a Pi Mai Lao dress contest and show off their charms.

**When:** April 1-9

**Where:** Lao-ITECC

### Vietnamese scholarships

The government of Vietnam is offering scholarships for the study of doctorate and Master’s degrees.

**When:** Applications open until May 13

**Where:** Apply at Ministry of Education and Sports, Department of Student Affairs (Chao Anouvong Stadium area), Vientiane.

For more information Tel: 021 255 034; or www.dsa.moe.gov.la

### Young Designer Contest 2017

Aspiring creators of fashion are invited to enter Lao Young Designer 2017 with the theme: “Festival of Lights”. The winner will have a chance to study at the ESMOD International Fashion Institute in Paris, France.

**When:** Fashion Design Contest 2017 c/o Lao Fashion Week, Sosociety Corporation, 6901 Namphou Square, Seththathirth Road, Vientiane.

**When:** Closing date is April 30

For more information contact: 021 254 808, 021 213 776 or email: info@laofashionweek.com

### Nationwide Water Festival events

People throughout the country are gearing up to celebrate Pi Mai Lao, one of the most important dates in the Lao calendar. As well as being a time of celebration and endless fun, the occasion is synonymous with holidays, the reinforcing of Lao identity and family bonds, and a time to reflect on the year ahead.

**Vientiane:** Activities: There will be traditional dances, a wax castle procession, and religious activities. There will also be concerts and other entertainment at Don Chan beach. There will be no Nang Sangkhian parade this year.

**Champassak:** Activities: Nang Sangkhian beauty contest, traditional dance shows, wax castle procession, and a fair selling ‘One district, One product’ goods. There will also be a concert and a singing contest. Vat Phou, a World Heritage Site, will have traditional activities, as well as a market fair selling local products.

**Luang Prabang:** Activities: Street fair, traditional performances, popular Lao singers, and a beauty contest to choose Nang Sangkhian. There is also a grand parade featuring the Prabang, one of Laos’ most revered Buddha images, which gave Luang Prabang its name in 1512 (‘Luang’ meaning great or royal). The statue is carried from the former Royal Palace to Wat Mai, followed by hundreds of monks in their bright orange robes.

**Savannakhet:** Activities: Champhehe, Kaysone Phomvihane and Xayphouthong districts will hold traditional and religious activities. Temple monks will take down Buddha images from their customary shelves so the public can pour water over them. A Nang Sangkhian beauty pageant parade will take place in Kaysone Phomvihane district. There will be a special market fair at the That Inhang stupa and a free concert at Savann ITEECC.

**Gold decoration ceremony at That Luang**

Everyone is invited to a ceremony to place gold on the top of 30 spires (paramy) surrounding the That Luang stupa, which will feature an almsgiving and traditional rituals to pay homage to the stupa.

Participants should dress in white.

**When:** April 7, gold decoration ceremony.

**Where:** That Luang esplanade

### Summer Pool Party

A fun Summer Pool Party hosted by Inpeng heralds Lao New Year with songs and music from Lao and foreign performers as well as DJs.

**Where:** Inpeng Water Park swimming pool on Thadeua Road.

**When:** Saturday April 8, from 1pm.

For more information contact: 020 940 0083

### Fashion Design Contest 2017

Fashion Design Contest 2017 c/o Lao Fashion Week, Sosociety Corporation, 6901 Namphou Square, Seththathirth Road, Vientiane.

For more information: 021 255 034; or www.dsa.moe.gov.la
Johnson injures back falling down stairs on eve of Masters

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) -- Masters favorite Dustin Johnson took a serious fall on a staircase Wednesday and injured his lower back, and his manager said it was uncertain whether the world's No. 1 golfer would be able to play the tournament.

It was a stunning development on an otherwise quiet day at Augusta National, where the course was shut down at 1:30 p.m. because of storms.

Football teams from Lao Brewery Co., Ltd and the media pose at Victory sports field in Vientiane on Wednesday before their friendly match to welcome the upcoming Lao New Year. In a high scoring affair Lao Brewery Co., Ltd drew with the media 6-6.

Johnson takes a serious fall on a staircase Wednesday and was uncertain whether he would be able to play the Masters.

Thompson sprains thumb, ending NBA playing streak

CLEVELAND (AP) -- Tristan Thompson's "Iron Man" streak is over. The Cavaliers' run of bad luck isn't.

Thompson sprained his right thumb Tuesday in a 117-113 victory over Houston and is ruled out of Wednesday's game against the Los Angeles Clippers.

Thompson continued to play after getting his thumb taped and finished with 13 points and nine rebounds.

"I tried to keep up the pressure and tried to dominate the game as well as I could, " Johnson said. "I think I worked my way through the match. It was a close match, you know. I didn't know whether I just tried to believe in my game, and if I was down, I told myself I was going to get more chances."

Williams could only ponder what might have been.

"I tried my best to think I could be this great match but I'll never play in her place. Honestly," Williams said. "I basically won the match but still lost.

Elsewhere, Russian Daria Kasatkina ousted Puerto Rican Olympic champion Monica Puig from the tournament. She'll meet Frenchwoman Kristina Mladenovic in the quarterfinals.

Clay Court Championship

The No. 1 seed, world No. 54, Daria Gavrilova of Australia defeated American Alison Riske 6-3, 6-1; Kiki Bertens of the Netherlands defeated Kateryna Bondarenko of Ukraine 6-2, 7-5; Mirjana Lucic-Baroni of Croatia defeated Mona Barthel of Germany, 6-3, 6-2; Japan's Naomi Osaka defeated Zhang Shuai of China 6-4, 6-4; Anastasia Rodionova of Australia defeated Sara Errani of Italy 6-2, 3-6, 6-4; Camelia Begu of Romania, defeated Kristina Kucova of Slovakia 4-6, 6-2, 7-6 (6); Lucie Safarova of the Czech Republic defeated Bethanie Mattek-Sands of the United States 6-3, 6-3.

Laura Siegemund, of Germany, hits a return to Venus Williams, of the United States, at the Volvo Car Open tennis tournament in Charleston S.C., on Wednesday. --Photo AP
Govt supporting Xieng Khuang stadium construction

Sangkhomsay Bubphanouvong

The government plans to contribute 215 billion kip towards construction of province’s main football stadium which will host the 11th National Games next year from November 7-20.

The 11,000 seat stadium set on 35 hectares with parking for 6,000 cars is 51 percent complete and will stage the opening and closing ceremonies of the 11th National Games.

Construction began in October 2015 and is expected to be complete in 2018 well ahead of the games.

The Daophuan Design-Construction Company is building the stadium and responsible for all aspects of the project including the electrical system, plumbing, parking lot, plus track and field facilities.

“We have faced some challenges with wet weather and installing the electricity and water supplies for the building, however, we are still looking to have the stadium complete four months before the opening ceremony,” Daophuan Design-Construction Company spokesman Mr Khammany Intavong said.

Meanwhile, other construction of the indoor stadium and sport fields is 50 percent complete, according to officials with the new indoor venue to be utilised for the muaylaow, boxing and basketball events.

A ten-pin bowling facility with eight lanes was completed last year while a nine whole golf course is 91 percent finished.

The shooting range for the games is being improved with additional facilities and 18 existing sport fields are undergoing upgrades.

The province’s accommodation is also being enhanced and by November will comprise 18 hotels for 810 officials, 69 guesthouses for 1,768 spectators and 17 schools for 8,580 competitors and trainers.

An additional four more sports have been added since Oudomxay province hosted the 2014 National Games bringing the total to 28 with hockey and rugby to be demonstration events in Xieng Khuang province.

At the 10th National Games in Oudomxay province, Xieng Khuang finished in 10th place with nine gold, 17 silver and 22 bronze medals and will be hoping to improve their ranking on home soil in 2018.

Chelsea back on track for Premier League title

(AP) -- Chelsea re-established its position as hot favorite to win the Premier League trophy on Wednesday, virtually eliminating Manchester City from the title race and leaving Tottenham as the only realistic challenger to the long-time leader.

On a night when the title race could have been thrown open, Chelsea pulled off one of its most significant results of the season by beating City 2-1 at Stamford Bridge to cement its seven-point lead with eight games remaining.

Tottenham is the only team inside 12 points of Chelsea — but only remained in sight of the leaders after a late comeback in a 3-1 win at Swansea.

Down 1-0 going into the 88th minute, Spurs turned things around to keep alive their faint hopes of a first Premier League title.

Chelsea goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois let City back into the game, sending a clearance straight to David Silva. The Spain playmaker ran through and his shot somehow evaded the two-mm-wide upright to sink to his knees too early.

Chelsea goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois let City back into the game, sending a clearance straight to David Silva. The Spain playmaker ran through and his shot somehow evaded the two-mm-wide upright to sink to his knees too early.

Chelsea completed the double this season over City, which is fourth — four points above both Arsenal and Manchester United having played a game more.

Tottenham has won its last five games to stay in title contention — just about.

Former Spurs player Wayne Routledge put Swansea ahead in the 11th minute and the Welsh team held on until the 88th, when Dele Alli tapped in an equalizer. Son Heung-min and Christian Eriksen added further goals in stoppage time at Liberty Stadium.

Tottenham moved five points ahead of third-place Liverpool and has a game in hand. Swansea dropped into the relegation zone in place of Hull.

Arsenal’s challenge for a Champions League qualification place is back on after just a second win in seven leagues games.

Sabaidee Pi Mai - Buffet Dinner
April 14-16, 18:30 - 22:00 hrs.

Celebrate Pi Mai Laot with a wide selection of local and international dishes in a festive Buffet includes Seafood, Smoked Salmon, Australian Sirloin Steak, Sushi & Sashimi, Traditional Lao Food such as Larb, Charcoal Grilled Pork Neck, Green Papaya Salad, Steamed Mekong Fish, Mango Sticky Rice and much more....

Kip 300,000++ for adult & Kip 200,000++ for child (6-10 years)

This includes: A glass of welcome drink on arrival, free flow house wine & draught beer.

Special offer: For a group of more than 10 persons receive a complimentary bottle of French wine.

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