

**VIETNAM BUSINESS FORUM**  
**Published by VCCI**

PHAM NGOC TUAN  
**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

PHAM THE NAM  
**DEPUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
**In Charge of VIETNAM BUSINESS FORUM**

**BOARD OF ADVISORS**

Dr. VU TIEN LOC  
*VCCI President & Chairman*  
Dr. DOAN DUY KHUONG  
*VCCI Vice President*  
PHAM NGAC  
*Former Ambassador to Five Nordic Countries*  
NGUYEN THI NGA  
*Chairwoman of Board of Directors, BRG Group*

Designer: LE NGOC  
Sub-editor: STEVEN GROFF

**HEAD OFFICE**

4th Floor, 9 Dao Duy Anh St., Hanoi  
Tel: (84-24) 35743985/35743063  
Fax: (84-24) 35743985  
Email: vbfhanoi@gmail.com; vbf@vcci.com.vn  
Website: www.vccinews.com

**SOUTHERN REP. OFFICE**

171 Vo Thi Sau St., Dist.3, HCM City  
Tel: (84-28) 39321099/39321700  
Fax: (84-28) 39321701

**NORTHERN REP. OFFICE**

4th Floor, 208 De La Thanh St.,  
Dong Da Dist., Hanoi  
Tel: (84-24) 6275 4809  
Fax: (84-24) 6275 4835

**Chief Representative**

NGO DOAN KHUYEN

**JAPAN**

2nd Floor, Hirkawacho-Koizumi Bldg.,  
1-9-5, Hirakawacho, Chiyoda - ku,  
Tokyo 102-0093  
Tel: 81-3-5215-7040  
Fax: 81-3-5215-1716

**Chief Representative**

AKI KOJIMA



Available on **Vietnam Airlines**

Licence No.58/GP-BTTTT dated February 18, 2020  
Printed by the Trade Union Printing Company  
**PRICE: VND25,000**



# CONTENTS

## INTEGRATION

**03** Welcoming Japanese Businesses to Expand Investment Cooperation in Vietnam

## VCCI

**04** Businesses Flexibly Adapt to Climate Change

**05** Women's Empowerment Principles Award Launched

## BUSINESS

**06** EVFTA - Driving Force for Supply Chain Development

**08** Trade, Origin Fraud Increase after COVID-19

**08** Origin Fraud on E-commerce Platform Increasingly Complicated

**09** FDI Attraction: Breakthrough Actions and Solutions

**10** Can Stocks Keep Momentum?

**11** Doing Business at Home, Getting Incentives at HDBank

**12** Vietnam Economy Remains Resilient

- 13 Businesses Expect 3-5% Economic Growth in 2020
- 14 Continued Business Support After Covid-19

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 15 VSS, MoH Sign Coordination Regulations on Health Insurance Policy Making and Enforcement
- 16 Encouraging Businesses to Improve Productivity and Product Quality
- 17 Vinh Phuc Intensifies Business Support

## POTENTIAL - CAN THO PROVINCE

- 18 Can Tho Tapping Resources, Speeding up Development
- 20 Can Tho Ready for New Opportunities
- 22 Great Progress in Scientific and Technological Research, Application and Development
- 23 Accelerating IT Application, E-government Development
- 24 Developing Transport Infrastructure to Attract Investment
- 25 Facilitating Business Development
- 26 Can Tho Customs Determined to Innovate and Create Favorable Conditions for Businesses
- 27 Available Capital Is Ready for the Economy
- 28 KVIP - Space for Business Startup and Technology Incubation

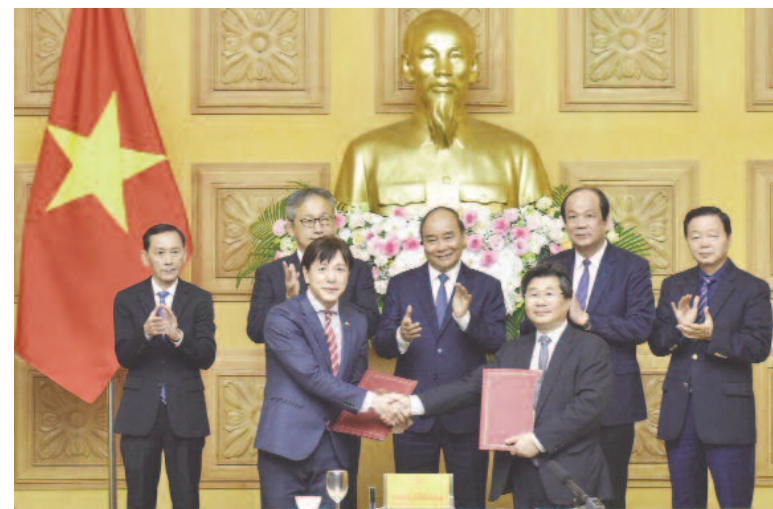
18

- 29 Ninh Kieu District: Sustainable Development of Trade and Services
- 30 Thot Not District Tapping Favorable Connectivity for Development
- 31 O Mon District Harnessing Potential and Advantages for Economic Development
- 32 Vinh Thanh District Wooing More Investors, Sustaining Development
- 34 Co Do District: Garden Economy Associated with Cooperative Economy
- 36 Cai Rang District: Efforts for Successful Socioeconomic Targets
- 37 Can Tho Obstetrics Hospital - Completely Trusted Address for Pregnant Women and Patients
- 38 S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital: Where Patients Fully Trust

## ENTERPRISE

- 40 Vietcombank Can Tho Promoting Tradition of Labor Hero Unit
- 42 Hoang Minh Nhat JSC Building Close Links with Cooperatives and Farmers
- 44 Goldland Con Khuong Creating Green Community
- 46 Pham Nghia Bringing Bronze Featherbacks Far and Wide
- 48 CiLaf & Partners Law Firm Delivering Best Legal Solutions to Clients
- 50 Sustainable Chains Needed for Businesses to Tap EVFTA
- 52 Power Generation Corporation 2 Determined to Perform "Dual Tasks" Well
- 54 PhuSa Biochem: Joint Effort to Respond to Covid-19
- 56 Dat Xanh Mien Tay Increasingly Affirms Position in Mekong Delta
- 58 Can Tho Port JSC Delivering Productive and Flexible Solutions
- 60 Can Tho Lottery Company: Efforts to Overcome Hardship and Share with the Society

## Welcoming Japanese Businesses to Expand Investment Cooperation in Vietnam



Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc at the dialogue with Japanese economic organizations and businesses in Hanoi

Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc recently hosted a meeting with Japanese economic organizations and Japanese businesses intending to expand investment in Vietnam.

HA THU

Given the negative impacts of Covid-19, Prime Minister Phuc welcomed and appreciated the Government of Japan's prompt decisions to support overseas supply chain diversification and expressed his pleasure to know that 15 out of 30 Japanese enterprises that received the first support from the Government of Japan wished to expand their investment to Vietnam. This is also a joy and an encouragement for Vietnam to confidently further improve the investment environment and create conditions for successful businesses, including Japanese.

The Government of Vietnam always appreciates the role of the Japanese business community - serious, responsible, effective investors that contribute to the budget income, pay attention to environmental protection, and take care of their workers' lives, he said.

Vietnam established a working group in charge of promoting foreign investment cooperation, led by a Deputy Prime Minister, to seize opportunities for investment cooperation, hold talks with foreign investors and handle proposals of major investors coming to Vietnam. The Prime Minister requested reopening commercial flights to some safe places, including Japan, applying a streamlined and convenient entry process, ensuring safety against the pandemic and convenience for businesses.

Vietnam has a huge demand for development investment. The Prime Minister welcomed Japanese firms to expand investment cooperation in infrastructure, energy, manufacturing, high-quality agriculture, information technology, smart cities, financial services, banking, innovation-based entrepreneurship, and become strategic

partners of equitized State-owned enterprises (SOEs) in Vietnam. The Government of Vietnam and authorities at all levels will accompany the business community, support and facilitate them to do business, bring more benefits to all parties and lift Vietnam-Japan relations to a new level.

Japanese Ambassador Yamada Takio and business representatives said that, in the past 20 years, Vietnam's economy has grown rapidly and Vietnam has confirmed its position in the international arena.

During the Covid-19 pandemic breakout, Vietnam has shown its superior risk management capabilities and achieved certain results. Global investors, including

Japanese, are paying much attention to Vietnam, a safe place for investment in the new normal after the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to a survey by Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), many Japanese companies are considering moving their production bases to Vietnam. The Japanese side will continue to support them to invest in Vietnam and support Vietnam in the new normal.

Japanese investors put forth a number of proposals like reopening flights between the two countries, improving public investment disbursement, attracting more foreign investment into Vietnam, and improving Vietnam's credit rating, creating investment incentives suitable for Japan's manufacturing companies, building energy infrastructure in PPP investment mode, proposing human resource development, and developing new industries, supporting industries and research and development.

Recognizing and responding to the concerns of Japanese businesses, the Prime Minister told central and local authorities and agencies to quickly deal with existing problems within their competence without delay. He affirmed that facilitating the investment expansion of 15 Japanese businesses in the first phase would be deployed most smoothly, and effective preparation made for the next investment phase.

Emphasizing that Vietnam has well controlled the Covid-19 pandemic, the Prime Minister stated that Vietnam will continue to maintain production and business activities, not to disrupt supply chains. Vietnam will continue to develop and upgrade infrastructure that is convenient for investors. In particular, it will prepare premises and industrial zones for them to locate factories immediately. Besides, it will maintain direct meetings to seek best solutions to deal with customs, tax, land, environment, labor and administrative procedures for investors. ■

Party General Secretary, State President Nguyen Phu Trong, and Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc sent congratulations to Mr. Suga Yoshihide on his election as the President of the Liberal Democratic Party and new Prime Minister of Japan.

Vietnam has always attached great importance to the friendly cooperative relationship with Japan and wishes to work closely with the Prime Minister and the new Government of Japan to develop the Vietnam-Japan strategic partnership to new heights, becoming increasingly comprehensive, extensive, substantial, effective, for the benefit of the two peoples and for peace, stability, cooperation and development in the region and the world.



# Businesses Flexibly Adapt to Climate Change

## Negative impact on businesses

Vietnam is among the 10 countries most vulnerable to climate change. Speaking at an workshop that published the Report “Adapting to Succeed - Assessing the Impact of Climate Change on Vietnamese Businesses” released by the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) in cooperation with the Asia Foundation and the support of the UPS Foundation affiliated to UPS, an American multinational package delivery and supply chain management company, Dr. Vu Tien Loc, President of VCCI, affirmed that disaster risks and climate change are global challenges which affect every aspect of social life, from the health of each individual to the health of the world economy.

Climate change causes increasingly adverse multifaceted impacts on business operations such as manufacturing disruptions, decreased labor productivity, declined revenue, disrupted transport channel, increased production costs, stagnated distribution network, and product and facility damage, manpower shortage, and input shortage. According to Dr. Loc, businesses in the Central Coast and the Mekong River Delta are more affected by natural disasters and climate change than the rest of the region. Agriculture, forestry and fisheries are the most affected sectors. Newly launched businesses are also affected more than the rest of the business community.

The share of companies being affected relatively/very much in business disruptions is highest (54%). The runners-up are: declined productivity as a result of adverse weather, and declining revenue (both at 51%). The shares of respondents reported transportation channel interruptions (46%) and production cost increases (44%). Next are the shares of companies reporting a relatively much/very much impact: slowed distribution network (38%), reduced product and service quality (37%), damaged facilities (34%) and manpower shortage. Even



Dr. Vu Tien Loc, President of VCCI, addresses the event

Businesses play an important role in socioeconomic development and have become important actors to cope with natural disasters and climate change.

33% of respondents are affected relatively much/very much by the lack of production input supplies.

## Adapting to succeed

According to VCCI President Vu Tien Loc, damage caused by climate change highlights the importance and urgency of environmental actions. Together with many countries around the world, Vietnam has been strictly abiding by the United Nations Framework Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement on climate change. In recent years, the Government of Vietnam has actively improved the domestic legal system on environmental protection and prioritized resources for the implementation of disaster risk response and climate change

programs.

In those efforts, businesses are an important actor to cope with natural disasters and climate change risks. Many are aware of the need to respond to natural disasters and climate change risks with various solutions, from simple to complicated. The most are reinforcement and repair of existing factories and workplaces (53%), working hours (30%), staff training to respond to natural disasters and climate change risks (28%) or rescue and relief after a disaster (28%).

Furthermore, many companies supported, responded, rescued and addressed consequences of natural disasters. Most are willing to deliver relief and remediation if natural disasters occur.

The report also explored their willingness to invest to improve their environmental compliance. Accordingly, a typical business is willing to pay up to 7.32% of operating costs for being more environmentally friendly.

VCCI President Vu Tien Loc said the business community needs to link, cooperate and raise its voice on environmental and sustainable development issues. They need to give up the thinking that it is not the time to take action on climate change. Taking action to protect the environment needs to start with the smallest activities. ■



Delegates at the launch of WEPs Award

## WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES AWARD LAUNCHED

The Women's Empowerment Principles (Weps) Award was officially launched under the framework of the Women's Economic Empowerment program in Asia (WeEmpowerAsia) in Hanoi.

The award is designed to encourage and recognize the efforts of companies that have programs and actions to create corporate culture toward gender equality and women's empowerment; to raise awareness and attract more and more companies to apply the Women's Empowerment Principles in their businesses.

WeEmpowerAsia is a joint program between the United Nations Agency on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the European Union (EU). The Vietnam Women Entrepreneurs Council is currently the national partner of UN Women in implementing this program in Vietnam.

One of WeEmpowerAsia's core activities is to mobilize companies to commit and implement the Women's Empowerment Principles, developed by UN Women and the UN Global Compact (UN Global Compact Network) and kicked off in 2010. This is a set of seven principles to support businesses in achieving gender equality in the workplace, in the market and in the community.

The First Weps Award in the Asia-Pacific region is organized by UN Women WeEmpowerAsia on the 10th anniversary of the Women's Empowerment Principles, the 25th anniversary of

the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and aims to promote the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality in the business community through the application of Weps.

There are five categories of the award including: Leadership commitment; Gender equality in the workplace; Gender equality in the market; Gender equality through community and industry participation; Gender equality through action in the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the organizers, the participants of the award are all businesses in the Asia-Pacific region, regardless of size or industry, having good programs and practices to promote gender equality; meeting one or more of the award categories and having a (current or former) CEO who signed or intends to sign a declaration in support of the Weps.

The organizers start to receive entries for the awards from August 26, 2020, at the website [www.asiapacificwepsawards.org](http://www.asiapacificwepsawards.org) to September 25, 2020.

The domestic award ceremonies will take place in seven member countries of the UN Women WeEmpowerAsia program, scheduled for November 2020. Vietnam's award ceremony is expected for mid-November 2020, in Hanoi. The regional award ceremony will take place online on December 10, 2020. ■

LA



EVFTA is the most comprehensive and ambitious trade and investment agreement that the European Union has ever signed with a developing Asian country. This trade pact has a positive impact on competitiveness enhancement and market development. However, more than the elimination of import taxes, EVFTA is also the driving force for supply chain development in the coming time.

**THU HA**



EVFTA

## Driving Force for Supply Chain Development

Vietnam and the EU are considered to be two supportive and complementary markets. EVFTA, which took effect from August 1, 2020, has created opportunities for Vietnam not only to promote trade and investment, but also to form a new supply chain.

Mr. Luong Hoang Thai, Director of Multilateral Trade Policy Department under the Ministry of Industry and Trade, said, as one of the first developing countries in the region to have an FTA with the EU, Vietnam is well-positioned to become a destination of choice for new supply chains. EU investors are capable of accessing and sharing advantages in global value chains such as technology, data, information, skills and networks. This is also an opportunity for Vietnam to develop new supply chains.

In addition, given tax preferences, EVFTA will bring many opportunities for Vietnam's import and export. According to CEL Consulting, a supply chain management training and consulting company, more imports from the EU are expected to be shipped to

Vietnam. Tax cuts and simplified administrative procedures will attract new EU companies to the Vietnamese market, thus providing more options for Vietnamese consumers on the one hand and significantly boosting capital investment on the other. This will support local infrastructure and develop employment in areas where Vietnam still needs to catch up: sustainable energy, information systems, logistics, cold supply chains, advanced manufacturing technology and recycling. These areas can be supported by the EU's fund.

Moreover, also according to CEL Consulting experts, EVFTA also stimulates enterprises to apply high technology, adopt long-term investment strategies, and link together to create a closed supply chain. In fact, tough requirements will invite companies to reinvent in supply chains, upgrade standards, identity, and transparency. Besides, they will have more specialized production capacity, more advanced logistics infrastructure, faster and more integrated processes, more sustainable agriculture, and better environmental protection - the things that EVFTA aims for. No one

can deny the benefits of such progress for Vietnam.

In addition, the emphasis on rules of origin, one of the core conditions for tariff elimination, will have a positive and profound impact on Vietnam's industrial development. Vietnam is shining with its current manufacturing sector because it can assemble products (footwear, garment and electronic products) with imported parts (apparels, batteries, wood and electronic components). Rules of origin attract companies to invest more deeply in supply chains - more domestically produced materials and components supplied to large-scale assembly plants will be developed in the future, enabling Vietnam to be more self-reliant and resilient as a result.

According to CEL Consulting, Thailand has gone beyond pure assembly and successfully

developed a domestic supply base, especially in electronics and automotive sectors - enabling it to be very competitive even when labor costs increase. This agreement will help Vietnam build a more integrated, deeper and more efficient domestic value chain and create more qualified jobs for workers at the same time.

Not only that, EVFTA places an unprecedented emphasis on sustainability. The EU will also encourage Vietnam to innovate or co-innovate to minimize environmental impacts of products and their supply chains. Reducing plastic use, not using chemicals in vegetables and fish processing, preferring air transport to sea transport, not treating animals badly and encouraging recycling and water conservation will all help Vietnam transition to a circular and sustainable economy.

According to Julien Brun, CEO of CEL Consulting, EVFTA brings many new opportunities for companies in Vietnam to provide goods and services to the EU. Given the importance of the EU market to Vietnam's export profile, new benefits of this agreement will surely increase the competitiveness of Vietnamese businesses in Europe. Apart from competition, Vietnam should see this as an opportunity to improve industrial capacity and move toward more efficient, more integrated and more sustainable supply chains. ■

## Trade Surplus Nears US\$11 Bln in Jan-Aug 2020

Vietnam's trade value was estimated at US\$337.28 billion in the first eight months of 2020, just 0.02% higher than in the same period in 2019, according to the General Department of Vietnam Customs. Of the sum, the export value was forecast at US\$174.1 billion, up 1.6%, and the import value was projected at VND163.17 billion, down 1.6%. The surplus in merchandise trade was estimated at nearly US\$11 billion in the eight-month period.

Shipment of crude oil, a key export, hit 592,000 tons for US\$200 million in August, up 121.7% in volume and 125.1% in value over July. Vietnam exported 3.35 million tons of crude for US\$1.11 billion from January to August, up 22.4% in volume but down 21.2% in value year on year.

The country shipped 2.07 million tons of ore for US\$161 million, down 2.4% in volume and up 3.3% in value from a year earlier.

In eight months, 27 exports earned over US\$1 billion for Vietnam, accounting for 89.7% of its total export value. Telephones and components brought home US\$31.5 billion, accounting for 18.1% of the total export value, down 5.5% year on year. The export value of electronic devices, computers and components slumped 24.8% to US\$27.6 billion.

By export structure, heavy industrial goods and minerals brought home US\$92.25 billion from January to August, up 4.6% year on year, accounting for 53% of total merchandise exports. By destination, the United States was the largest export market of Vietnam with US\$46.7 billion, up 19% year on year. China was the runner-up with US\$27 billion, up 13%. The European market shrank by 4% to US\$22.9 billion, followed by ASEAN with US\$15 billion (down 13.6%), South Korea with US\$12.6 billion (down 1.5%) and Japan with US\$12.5 billion (down 6.1%).

The tax revenue from imports and exports reached VND200.217 trillion as of August 31, 2020, equal to 56.4% of the full-year target and down 15.13% year on year.

**Huong Hau**





## Trade, Origin Fraud Increase after Covid-19

After the Government lifted social distancing and took measures to stimulate economic development, allowed reopening Vietnam-China land border gates and border crossings, trade fraudulence, origin faking and illegal cross-border transport of goods showed signs of increase, according to the General Department of Vietnam Customs.

LE HIEN

Commonly violated goods include refined sugar, cigarettes, beer, powdered milk, medicine, cosmetics, electronic devices, fowl products and animal horns transported by air, sea, post and land.

Drug trafficking is more complicated than previous months. In the month, the postal air service unearthed many drug trafficking cases. Along border routes in Dien Bien, Nghe An, Tay Ninh and other localities, cross-border drug trafficking into Vietnam is still rampant and traffickers used sophisticated tricks to dodge inspectors. Arrested goods were of great quantity.

From July 16, 2020 to August 15, 2020, the customs sector cooperated with relevant agencies to handle 1,122 cases of violation with a value of VND161.268 billion. The budget revenue collected was VND70.716 billion. Customs authorities prosecuted two cases and handed over 10 cases to other agencies.

Typically, on August 17, 2020, the Northern Drug Trafficking Prevention and Control Team (Team 5) under the Drug Trafficking Prevention and Investigation Bureau, the General Department of Customs cooperated with the police force of Nam Tu Liem district in Hanoi; and Drug Control and Prevention Team under the Hanoi Customs Department arrested two people in Dien Bien province illegally carrying narcotics. Exhibits seized included 15 heroin cakes weighing 4,836.27 grams.

On August 3, 2020, Tan Thanh Customs Office under the Lang Son Customs Department cooperated with Binh Nghi Border Guard to detect one derelict shipment containing 22,000 non-labelled facemasks made in China.

On August 4, 2020, customs authorities in Quang Tri province arrested one case of illegally transporting 4,000 packages of cigarettes branded Esse Special Gold, originated from South Korea, 1,000 packages of 555-branded cigarettes made by foreign manufacturers. The value of exhibits is about VND115 million.

On August 5 and 7, 2020, at Dong Phuoc import-export checkpoint, authorities coordinated Xa Mat Border Customs Office under the Tay Ninh Customs Department to detect two cases involving pirated intellectual property rights. Violated goods included 1,180 blue-tooth headsets under fake Apple brand, 95 metal bracelets made from metal and plastic in the shape of letter H (Hermes) and 560 cases of phone cases printed with unauthorized LOUIS VUITTON logo. ■

## Origin Fraud on E-commerce Platform Increasingly Complicated

Up to 85% of the Vietnamese population are using the Internet, ranking 13th out of 20 countries for most internet users in the world, according to a survey by Nielsen Vietnam Company and Miniwatts Marketing Group in 2019. Given an annual growth of about 30%, e-commerce revenue in Vietnam is forecast to reach US\$15 billion in 2020. As e-commerce is a fertile soil, it will be used to sell counterfeits, knockoffs, goods of unknown origin, or even prohibited goods.

E-commerce development has brought many benefits to all stakeholders, promoted economic growth, enabled consumers to buy goods conveniently at cheaper prices, helped companies diversify distribution channels, access more markets and reduce costs. Nevertheless, the ease of trading online has also posed challenges to authorities.

Mr. Tran Huu Linh, General Director of Market Management

Bureau under the Ministry of Industry and Trade, said, in e-commerce, buyers and sellers do not meet each other and there is no need for a physical marketplace or store. Notably, online business locations lie inside dwellings and apartment buildings, making it hard for authorities to inspect and settle. Even when the warehouse is checked and verified, it is difficult to know who the warehouse owner is.

In addition, specific evidence is needed to handle e-commerce cases. Currently, 99% of online transactions are not recorded into invoices or equivalent documents. Furthermore, online business via social networks like Facebook is not effectively controlled, especially when social networks do not have legal representatives in Vietnam. Counterfeits, knockoffs, goods of unknown origin, and intellectual property-pirated goods are publicly displayed on websites, e-commerce platforms and social networks to an alarming level. This spoils social and consumer confidence.

Recently, authorities intensified inspections into trafficking rings carrying counterfeit goods, prohibited goods, origin-unknown goods, and IP-violated goods for buying and selling on the e-commerce platform or social networks. Many violators were discovered and handled. For example, in Lao Cai and Hanoi, violators used Facebook to sell counterfeit goods and goods of unknown origin. Market watchdogs in Ho Chi Minh City seized more than 7,600 products at the Ansan Cosmetics System with signs of trading smuggled goods, counterfeit goods, goods of unknown origin.

According to the General Department of Customs, to completely handle frauds on e-commerce, it is necessary to determine the right nature and individual presence in the online environment and engage many units such as information management, network security, anti-smuggling and customs clearance inspection. Besides, it is necessary to increase the responsibility of e-commerce platform owners to sellers on it and provide more complete information. ■

## FDI ATTRACTION

## Breakthrough Actions and Solutions



After a slowdown in early 2020, FDI inflows to Vietnam have increased sharply in recent months. According to experts, this is a sign of a new investment wave in Vietnam - an attractive destination for foreign investors.

HA THU

Mr. Do Nhat Hoang, Director of the Foreign Investment Agency - FIA (Ministry of Planning and Investment - MPI), said, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a strong impact on global investment capital flows. Foreign investment flows in the world declined deeply and outflows were even seen somewhere. In Vietnam, according to a report by the Ministry of Planning and Investment, as of August 20, 2020, the total registered FDI fund reached US\$19.54 billion, equal to 86.3% of the amount it got in the same period in 2019. Compared to countries in the region, the appeal of Vietnam's investment environment comes from internal economic factors and external effects. In particular, the successful control of the Covid-19 pandemic along with its efforts to improve the investment environment and administrative procedures has enhanced Vietnam's reputation as an attractive and safe investment destination.

However, attracting FDI in the new normal requires breakthrough actions and methods, Mr. Hoang said. What needs to be prepared includes a clean land fund, electricity supply, high-quality human resources, supporting industries and administrative procedures. Special

offers are applied to large-scale projects that use advanced technology, make more added values, and facilitate Vietnamese firms to join value chains or achieve high localization. Enterprises need to take advantage of opportunities from integration; strengthen connectivity and must raise qualifications and cooperation with domestic business links.

Concurring with this point of view, Dr. Nguyen Dinh Cung, former Chairman of the Central Institute for Economic Management (CIEM), said FDI attraction in the coming period must be driven by policy packages tailored for each type of investors rather than a universal policy for all investors. In this regard, the Ministry of Planning and Investment is also working with ministries, agencies and localities to develop a support package for each type of project instead of a general incentive as before, Mr. Hoang said.

In addition, according to experts, investment attraction policies must ensure that domestic private businesses are supported to cooperate with and supply for FDI firms. Otherwise, investment attraction incentives will be available only to foreign businesses.

Regarding the future approach, Vietnam will focus on attracting investment for projects using high technology, manufacturing

(continued on P.26)



# Can Stocks Keep Momentum?



The Vietnamese stock market strongly advanced and became one of the best performers in the world in August when the VN-Index added 10.4%. According to Viet Dragon Securities Corporation (VDSC), August momentum and expected fresh foreign cash flows may help the gauge surpass the 900-point threshold achieved in June and possibly reach 920 points in September 2020.

LAN ANH

## All economic indicators decline

Industrial growth and retail sales data show that the impact of the second pandemic wave was mixed among sectors. While growth was still seen in a few industries such as pharmaceuticals, rubber, plastic, furniture and electrical equipment, and some showed positive progress such as machinery, transportation equipment and apparel, others witnessed slowing growth such as food, metal, paper, textile and chemicals. In addition, social distancing has helped minimize Covid-19 impacts on retail sales. However, tourism and hotel sectors will continue to see grave difficulty as people prefer not to go outside or on holiday.

According to VDSC, Vietnam's GDP growth was forecast to increase by 2.5% in the third quarter of 2020 due to a slight increase in production and consumption. Economic recovery will be better in the fourth quarter thanks to selective easing of virus containment measures (such as resuming international flights), better public investment, improved consumer confidence and business sentiment, together with the hopes for a Covid vaccine in 2021.

Although the Government managed to control the pandemic, many companies still had to cut jobs and shut down business locations due to the pandemic. According to the General Statistics Office, about 34,300 companies suspended their business operations in the first eight months of the year, up 70.8% over the same period. As more companies shut down and more people lost their jobs, policymakers are considering a second support package to ease negative pandemic impacts on the economy.

According to the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), only about 28.5% of the first aid package was disbursed by the end of July 2020 (VND17.5 trillion). The low rate of disbursement of the first support package raised questions about the accessibility of affected entities and what measures could be used for the second package. Currently, MOLISA has proposed extending measures used in the first package, including expanding beneficiaries and revising zero-rate loan terms for salary payment by borrowers. In addition, the second support package is aimed to support new affected people (unemployed workers living in difficult circumstances) and focus on promoting small businesses by providing concessional loans. This support package is estimated at VND18.6 trillion (US\$798 million, or 0.31% of GDP), much lower than the first package.

In particular, the budget deficit increased

due to excess public investment spending. According to the General Statistics Office, the Government recorded a budget deficit of VND106 trillion (1.8% of GDP) in the first eight months of 2020, in contrast to a surplus of VND97,200 billion in the same period of 2019. As of August 15, 2020, the total budget revenue was VND812.2 trillion, completing 53.7% of the 2020 plan and declining 12.9% over the same period of 2019. Meanwhile, total budget expenditure was estimated at VND918.2 trillion, fulfilling 52.9% of the budget plan but rising 10.0% over the same period of 2019. Notably, development investment spending significantly increased, by 44.4%, over the same period last year and reached 44.3% of the full-year plan, thanks to more rapid deployment of public investment projects in recent months.

While budget funds and GDP growth in 2020 are affected by the Covid-19 crisis, an increase in public investment spending and a bailout fiscal package in the form of tax deferrals, exemptions and reductions could lead to a higher budget deficit. In June 2020, the Ministry of Finance estimated the budget deficit at 5.0-5.1% of GDP. However, based on recent state budget movements and lower GDP growth forecast, the budget deficit in 2020 may be higher than the estimate, at around 5.5-6.0% of GDP.

## Rougher September uptrend

According to VDSC, in addition to short-term uptrends in early September, the Vietnamese stock market may perform better when foreign investors are more active following a huge spending from them in early September. While foreign investors kept selling out for many months, a huge amount of funding successfully raised for Vietnam's markets will be a big boost.

Specifically, before a Taiwan fund raised US\$160 million to invest in the Vietnamese market, Dragon Capital also pooled a huge amount of money for VFMVSF Fund of Vietfund Management Company. VFMVSF was estimated to have received about VND1.5 trillion from foreign investors since the end of June. This fund disbursed more than VND1.1 trillion in August alone. Its investment portfolio is mostly high-liquid large-cap stocks. However, the uptrend in September could be bumpier.

Besides, the rally is unlikely to be sustained when outstanding margin debt balance also looked up strongly. This will make stock investors more susceptible to negative news, which may come from strong volatility in world stock markets. Most recently, after a series of consecutive days of decline, the VIX Index, a

Proactively applying optimal financial solutions for individuals and micro-enterprises, HDBank launched a preferential credit package where a customer may borrow up to VND2 billion carrying an interest rate of just 8.6% per annum.

LE PHUONG



# Doing Business at Home, Getting Incentives at HDBank

On September 11, 2020, to extend its preferential loan programs for individual customers and micro-enterprises, HDBank launched the credit package called "Doing business at home, getting incentives at HDBank" where customers can borrow up to 60 months if they have business locations/estate. At the same time, HDBank reduced the fee for premature capital withdrawal and loan repayment.

Accordingly, customers will be assisted to borrow loans at HDBank in the fastest and most flexible manner. In particular, loan applications are streamlined and simplified for existing customers, agents,

distributors and retailers selling HDBank associated products, experienced customers and borrowers doing business at home.

Previously, HDBank also had preferential credit programs for tenants like "Rent a house without worry, be confident in

business, borrow now despite Covid", "Green Card for Vietnamese families" for individual customers and households installing rooftop solar panels.

Accompanying customers, sharing difficulties, providing timely support for small and medium-sized enterprises, individual customers and households to do stable business to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic, since the beginning this year, HDBank has deployed many soft credit packages to support customers. The bank has lent VND24 trillion to SME customers, VND10 trillion to micro enterprises, business households, and individual customers. HDBank has also exempted or reduced transaction fees for customers to cope with the Covid-19 pandemic.

In addition, HDBank has launched many modern technology application services, increased convenience and experience for customers making transactions on mobile banking and Internet banking. HDBank has increasingly digitized processes, products and services toward a digital, paperless bank: Online transactions such as loans can be approved via HDBank mobile application, opening savings online brings in higher interest rates than at the counter; using online savings products and digital banking services on MISA accounting software and online customer information authentication (eKYC) on the application helps customers to make transaction immediately, safely and securely. ■

gauge of stock volatility of the U.S. market, rebounded to over 30 points, raising a warning level in the U.S. market. In the past, the U.S. market unexpectedly rallied strongly to create a new record peak, it tended to correct deeply after that. Looking on recent developments, VN-Index movements will not be too positive.

According to the VDSC report, given uncertain economic prospects and falling deposit interest rates, the stock market is becoming more attractive than other investment channels such as gold or real estate, because it does not require a lot of funds to make a deal while liquidity is high. For that reason, not only domestic investors but foreign investors also boosted their investment in stocks although macroeconomic data are not really optimistic. The number of new accounts in August increased by 4.8% over the previous month (to 28,300 accounts), the highest since 2019 (15,000-20,000 accounts per month). In addition, a high outstanding margin loan balance since the end of July showed the

current investor excitement with the market (margin loan at the end of the month rose by 40% against June).

Foreign cash flowed into professional funds signified a positive signal to stock indices. Although some of this cash can be disbursed into mid-cap stocks, large-cap stocks are still preferred due to their good fundamentals and transparency. That could push the VN-Index higher in September. When considering P/E ratio in VN30 (blue-chip), VN70 (mid-cap) and VNSML (small-cap) stock baskets, only the VN30 stock P/E is lower than in the past. Meanwhile, although VN70 and VNSML stocks look cheaper than the VN30, they are no longer more attractive when their historical P/E data are taken into consideration. Therefore, VDSC believed that cash flow-following investment strategy of professional funds is still an appropriate option in 2020. Likely rising stocks for the time being may be MWG, VRE, PNJ, KDH, HPG, REE, FPT, VPB and MBB. ■



# Vietnam Economy Remains Resilient

According to Mr. Andrew Jeffries, Country Director of ADB in Vietnam, declining domestic consumption and weakening global demand due to Covid-19 have affected the Vietnamese economy more than expected. However, economic growth will remain resilient in 2020, largely due to the Government's success in controlling the spread of Covid-19. Economic growth will be supported by Vietnam's macroeconomic stability, increased public spending, and ongoing reforms aimed at improving the business environment.

ADB's analysis shows that the global recession and weakening domestic conditions, especially worsening unemployment and a significant decline in consumption, have hurt the economy more than expected. The economic outlook has been also threatened by an increase in new Covid-19 cases since the end of July 2020. Hence, the growth forecast for 2020 is revised downward from 4.8% in the ADO Report 2020 and 4.1% in the additional ADO report in June to 1.8% in this updated ADO report.

Notably, in 2021, investment will be boosted by improving public investment disbursement, supply chains shifted from China to Vietnam, the Chinese economy's recovery and the EU- Vietnam Free Trade Agreement. The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) has announced a list of 15 Japanese enterprises that plan to transfer their production activities from China to Vietnam.

From the supply side, the agricultural sector will face difficulty in 2020 due to extreme weather and will continue to suffer due to weak external and domestic demand. The manufacturing sector will be held back this year due to weak exports, limited travel and reduced domestic demand due to loss of income and jobs, although it will rise again in 2021. Mobile phones and components, along with electronics, are still the top export items of Vietnam,

Vietnam's economy is expected to grow by 1.8% in 2020 amid the coronavirus pandemic and bounce back to 6.3% in 2021, according to a new report by Asian Development Bank (ADB).

LAN ANH

accounting for 18% and 16% of total export turnover respectively. In the first eight months of 2020, exports of phones and components decreased by 5% year-on-year. Falling incomes and limited mobility will also hamper the recovery of domestic and international tourism.

Inflation can be pushed up by rising commodity prices and increased liquidity by accelerating public investment. However, inflation will remain low in 2020, lower than the State Bank of Vietnam's target of 4.0%, due to persistent low growth and spending.

Lending will remain weak even though the central bank has taken supportive measures. As a result, bank credit is forecast to increase only 10%

this year, much lower than the central bank's target of 14.0% year-on-year growth.

A matter of concern is that the unemployment rate is likely to rise. A joint study by the International Labor Organization and the ADB predicts that 548,000 young Vietnamese workers will lose their jobs if the pandemic continues and this number will be 370,000 even after the pandemic has been controlled.

The current account surplus is expected to fall to the equivalent of 1.0% of GDP in 2020 and recover slightly, to 1.5% by 2021. Although exports will decline in the last months of the year, imports are expected to decline even more, keeping the balance of trade in surplus. However, this surplus is not an indicator of economic health, as it arises from both declining production and demand. Meanwhile, the pressure that makes the current account most likely to decrease is coming from remittances, which are forecast to drop by 18.0% in 2020.

Facing the above reality, ADB forecasts that Vietnam's economy in the near future will face many difficulties, in the context of the global economic recession and the domestic slowdown being worse than expected. However, Vietnam is showing stronger resilience than most similar economies, and the medium and long-term outlook remains positive.■

# Businesses Expect 3-5% Economic Growth in 2020



This information is found in PROFIT500 Rankings - listing the 500 most profitable companies in Vietnam in 2020.

## Effort to keep customers

Many Vietnamese businesses, even giants in the market, have been "infested" by the Covid-19 pandemic. According to the survey by Vietnam Report Joint Stock Company, up to 60% of companies said that their revenue in the first six months of 2020 decreased from a year earlier, with nearly 15% experiencing a sharp decline. Similarly, the profitability was not very satisfactory when 54% said that their pre-tax profit slipped from the same period in 2019, with 31% suffering a sharp slump, even a serious loss.

Being aware of difficulties caused by the pandemic impact and world economic - political instability, many companies revised their 2020 business plans to match reality. This is clearly expressed when 77.1% of respondents said that they completed over 50% of their 2020 revenue plan, with 36.1% fulfilling over 80% of the full-year plan. Regarding profit result in 2020, as of August 2020, 68.9% of companies joining the survey said that they had completed over 50% of the yearly plan, with 31.1% fulfilling over 80%.

To cope with the Covid-19 pandemic, 86.7% of respondents joining the survey by Vietnam Report said that they tried to maintain loyal customers; 66.7% enhanced strong risk management and financial management; 65.0% took measures to cut costs; 53.3% looked for markets for new products and services; and 50.1% changed their sales plans and marketing plans.

When the market shrank and it was hard for them to reach new customers, most companies had to opt for a safer and more feasible approach. Instead of looking for potential customers or expanding the market, 86.7% of businesses sought to retain their existing loyal customer base, this was considered a right and wise decision that helped them overcome the current tough time.

On the other hand, unpredictable events can occur at any time. Taking coronavirus as an example, it was unimaginable for it to spread at breakneck speed and produce very dangerous strains, as it has. Therefore, up to 66.7% of companies responded that they decided to promote risk management and financial management. Objectively speaking, not only large corporations or certain

Despite being affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, some industries continue to see more businesses than others, e.g. construction, building materials, real estate (23.9%), finance (11.6%), food and drink (10.9%) and electricity (6.3%).

ANH MAI

industries such as banks need a risk management system, but it is a matter for every business regardless of their size. An effective risk management process helps achieve set goals and have response options if needed.

In addition, 65% of respondents said that they had cut costs by reducing personnel costs, administrative costs, production costs, and marketing costs. Cost is not a new matter but it is called when they seriously suffer very heavy impacts caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Cautious with business prospects

When asked about barriers and challenges likely to affect profitability in the last months of the year, most companies shared the same concern about the risk of Covid-19 outbreak: Pandemic return (98.3%) and unstable economic growth (71.2%). Vietnam is controlling the Covid-19 pandemic well. However, concerns about further outbreaks still exist. Until the vaccine is successfully found and widely produced, the pandemic is not completely extinguished. Vietnam cannot relax and be subjective.

Because of this, businesses become more cautious in assessing their business prospects in 2020. Accordingly, 54.1% of respondents expressed optimism about the prospect of increasing revenue and 49.1% are optimistic about profitability in 2020. This number is very modest relative to revenue and profit prospects in the report surveyed by Vietnam Report in September 2019, where 82% expected revenue growth and 79% thought that their net would grow over 2018. Thus, it can be seen that businesses are basing on the current economic context of Vietnam to make growth forecasts in 2020.

On growth prospects in the next 1-2 years, pharmaceutical/health sectors ranked first with 61.7% of responses (compared to their No. 6 place in the 2019 survey). The runner-up was the information technology/telecom industry with 50.1% of responses (ranked first in the 2019 survey), followed by the finance/banking sector with 39.8% of responses, two grades higher than in 2019.

Surveyed companies also focused on digital transformation: corporate governance digitization (65.0%), digital distribution, marketing and sale channels (58.3%) and spending for technology innovation and technology application (56.7%). In addition, surveyed businesses also stated they had strengthened cooperation with partners to bring applied technology into customer service, marketing and sales channels, as well as support services like record verification, electronic signature and facial recognition.

Given policy support from the government and efforts of the business community, 25.1% of respondents anticipated an economic growth of below 3% in 2020 and 61.7% thought that the growth would be 3-5%. Following the adoption and enforcement of the EU - Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA) and the EU - Vietnam Investment Protection Agreement (EVIPA), good pandemic control and stable business investment environment, Vietnam is forecast to be a place for strong FDI inflows in the near future. Vietnamese businesses should take advantage of the opportunity to catch the FDI waves.■







## Continued Business Support after Covid-19

While businesses are struggling with difficulties caused by business shutdowns, production reductions and inventory increases, the first support measures such as corporate income tax incentives are considered ineffective and unhelpful. They are waiting for the second support package with more new solutions.

HUONG LY

### Outcome is not as good as expected

According to the General Statistics Office, from January to August 2020, 34,300 companies suspended their operations nationwide, 70.8% more than a year ago; 24,200 companies stopped operations and waited for bankruptcy procedures; and 10,400 companies completed bankruptcy procedures. However, according to economists, the damage may be much larger. Current statistical results do not fully reflect Covid-19 impacts on the economy and particularly businesses.

According to a recent survey on Covid-19 outbreak impact on businesses conducted by the Advisory Council on Administrative Procedures Reform, the biggest difficulties faced by businesses are having no customers, sales orders and product sales contracts, while still having to pay salary, social insurance and other expenses. Up to 76% of respondents said that their current income and expenditure is not balanced, with 54% having enough cash to cover less than 50% of the costs. Many had to cut labor.

Remarking on the first support package of the Government, Dr. Nguyen Tri Hieu, finance and banking expert, said that the package of VND300 trillion launched by the State Bank of Vietnam was not effective. The VND62 trillion package for jobless workers was only about 30% disbursed, with many complaining about very difficult procedures to get the aid.

Regarding business support, according to Dr. Hieu, the package of tax exemption, tax reduction, and tax payment postponement is only effective if companies make a profit. If they suffer a loss or go to bankruptcy, that package is meaningless. Until now, many companies cannot access the zero-rate package of VND18 trillion. It is necessary to increase the size of the support package to enable them to resume business operations right after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Many businesses complained about the reasons for their failed access to support policies. For example, to get the aid, they had to lay off 50% of employees or lose 50% of properties as a result of the pandemic impact. This requirement is very difficult to be fulfilled in practice as it requires companies to show proof certified by competent authorities which require companies to deal with a lot of administrative procedures as well. In some other cases, undesirable adverse effects may occur. For example, they may

deliberately sack 50% of their employees to get the support or they may ask for proof of having this requirement in return for a kickback. Still, if their layoffs or property damage are below 50%, they do not qualify for the aid.

### Expectation for second support package

According to experts, the second support package should focus on monetary policies and reduce fiscal policies. Dr. Pham The Anh from National Economics University, said, the Government should help jobless workers and troubled businesses get cost support, rather than tax cuts like now.

Some monetary policy measures for business support considered practical and effective in the coming time are expanding the form of unsecured loans to support businesses, preferential interest rates, and interest rate cuts, allowing tourism and logistics industries to apply electricity prices like the manufacturing industry, he said.

Dr. Nguyen Tri Hieu also said that the second support package for the economy is necessary and preference should be given to small and medium-sized enterprises. In fact, despite being considered the main growth engine of the economy, SMEs are rarely given policy priority and their resistance is weak and vulnerable.

In particular, it is necessary to reduce cumbersome and unreasonable regulations and procedures seen in the first support package, prevent business recession, promote public investment, effectively attract FDI inflows and support domestic businesses to make good use of opportunities. More specific proposals included asking the Government to submit to the National Assembly a 30% reduction of corporate income tax for all businesses in 2020, and reduce by at least 50% social, health and voluntary insurance and exempting union dues.

Notably, the Government is recommended to reduce corporate income tax by 30% for all businesses in 2020 instead of only applying to companies with total revenue of VND200 billion or less in 2020 as specified in Resolution 116/2020/QH14 on corporate income tax reduction in 2020. According to the current assessment, preferential corporate income tax only benefits 2% of companies affected by the pandemic.■

## VSS, MoH Sign Coordination Regulations on Health Insurance Policy Making and Enforcement



importantly helping protect people's health. That coordination clearly demonstrates the development of legal policies on insured medical examination and treatment; build and issue guiding documents, and create unity to minimize difficulties in implementing health insurance policies in the locality. One of outstanding coordination activities between the two sectors is information technology application to reform medical examination and treatment procedures and payment of insured medical examination and treatment.

The Coordination Regulations

include three chapters and 11 articles stipulating principles and contents of coordination in health insurance policy and law construction and implementation between MoH and VSS. Accordingly, the coordination principle is based on the fulfilment of and compliance with Party guidelines and State laws and on functions, duties and powers of each party. Ensuring that coordinated activities are performed in a timely, consistent and united manner, both parties regularly provide and exchange information on construction and execution of health insurance policies, laws and plans to deal with emerging difficulties in executing health insurance laws.

Regarding the coordination content, the Ministry of Health and Social Insurance of Vietnam shall coordinate to develop policies and laws on health insurance, including: Developing legal documents; developing an overall strategy and planning for the development of health insurance; formulating and submitting to the Government solutions to ensure the balance of the health insurance fund; evaluating the implementation of legal documents on health insurance. Besides, MoH and VSS will coordinate to direct and guide the implementation of health insurance regulations; disseminate and inform policies and laws on health insurance; jointly inspect, examine and handle violations and settle complaints and denunciations about health insurance; work together to conduct scientific research and international cooperation in health insurance; and coordinate to implement the approved Government Project on promoting online public social insurance services at Level 4 and public services on the basis of data sharing between VSS and other concerned agencies.

VSS and MoH leaders believe that the Coordination Regulations will be a solid foundation for their more effective coordination, importantly helping execute health insurance laws in Vietnam, complete the goal of universal health insurance and ensure effectiveness of people's healthcare in the coming time.■

The Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Vietnam Social Security (VSS) recently held a ceremony to sign the Coordination Regulations on making and enforcing policies and legal regulations on health insurance in Hanoi.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Acting Minister of Health Nguyen Thanh Long emphasized that, under the leadership of the Party and the State, the enforcement of health insurance policies and laws in the country has achieved a lot of important results. Currently, nearly 90% of Vietnamese people hold health insurance policies and this rate will reach 95% soon. The Health Insurance Fund is an important funding vehicle for operations of the health sector and helped health facilities to provide better services.

"The Ministry of Health and the Vietnam Social Security are on the same boat. Each is on one side of the boat. They must row together for the boat to move forward. Therefore, the promulgation and signing of the Coordination Regulations is essential to better implement health insurance regulations; overcome existing shortcomings and limitations, stay consistent with actual socioeconomic development, science and technology, expand and enhance the quality of health services covered by the Health Insurance Fund," he said.

Sharing the same viewpoint with Acting Minister Long on the need for a new coordination regulation with a new vision in place of the coordination regulation signed in 2008, VSS General Director emphasized that, in the past years, especially the last five years, the coordination between the two sides has achieved new progress,





## Encouraging Businesses to Improve Productivity and Product Quality

**A**ccording to the decision, the Prime Minister assigned the Ministry of Science and Technology of Vietnam to assume the prime responsibility for implementing the program; to guide relevant ministries, agencies and localities to develop plans and implement the tasks of the program. In which, the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) is responsible for leading and coordinating with the Ministry of Science and Technology, relevant ministries, agencies and localities to mobilize and introduce enterprises to participate in the program; coordinate with ministries, agencies and localities to organize propaganda and raise awareness about productivity and quality for enterprises. VCCI is to take part in the consideration and selection of collectives and individuals with achievements in productivity and quality enhancement.

The overall objective of the program is to support enterprises to improve productivity and product quality (productivity and quality) on the basis of applying solutions to standards, technical regulations, management systems, contributing to increasing the proportion of the total factor productivity (TFP) to economic growth, improving the productivity, quality, efficiency and competitiveness of the economy.

Accordingly, in the period of 2021-2025, the harmonization rate of the national standard system with international standards and regional standards will reach about 65%; granting training and standard certification for about 600 experts in productivity at ministries, agencies, localities and enterprises.

The number of enterprises receiving annual support for solutions to improve productivity and quality increases by 10-15%. The number of ISO 9001 quality management system certificates and the number of ISO 14001 environmental management system certificates granted to businesses increase at least 10% compared to the 2011-2020 period. At least 100 enterprises are instructed to synchronously apply solutions to improve productivity and quality, becoming models for sharing and replicating nationwide.

**Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc has just approved the national program to support enterprises to improve productivity and product quality in the period 2021 - 2030.**

**QUYNH CHI**

In the period of 2026-2030, the harmonization rate of the national standards system with international standards and regional standards will be around 70-75%; granting training and standards certifications for about 1,000 experts in productivity and quality, of which about 200 experts are certified with regional and international qualifications.

In order to achieve the above objectives, the program sets out tasks and solutions to improve mechanisms and policies to promote productivity and quality improvement activities; research and propose mechanisms,

policies and solutions on science, technology and innovation to improve the productivity of the country, industries, localities and enterprises in the process of economic restructuring. The program also aims at developing a productivity improvement master plan based on science, technology and innovation.

At the same time, it aims at strengthening information and communication on productivity and quality; promoting the dissemination and guidance on the application of management systems, productivity and quality improvement tools, especially supportive tools for smart production and smart services in enterprises. The program also aims at honoring and rewarding collectives and individuals with high achievements in productivity and quality activities, encouraging and supporting enterprises to participate in National Quality Awards programs.

In addition, the program will support enterprises to apply standards, technical regulations, management systems, basic quality and productivity improvement tools, promoting the application of specific management systems and productivity improvement tools. It will support businesses to apply a system of traceability of products and goods, and application of good agricultural practices (GAP) for organic agricultural production.

In particular, the program will attach importance to training human resources for productivity and quality improvement, developing and promulgating criteria and standards for productivity specialists, and expanding productivity and quality training in universities, colleges and vocational schools. ■

## Vinh Phuc Intensifies Business Support

Providing all favorable conditions for enterprises to stabilize and develop operations after the Covid-19 pandemic is one of top goals of Vinh Phuc province to foster economic growth, increase budget revenue and revive the economy amid adverse effects of the pandemic. To achieve its goals, Vinh Phuc has issued many guiding documents, policies and timely solutions, requiring authorities and each locality to be responsible for actions which are gauged by actual performance.

**H. LANG**

**I**n the first six months of 2020, the Vinh Phuc Provincial People's Committee launched many effective business support policies for companies troubled by the Covid-19 pandemic. By the end of June 30, 2020, the province rescheduled debt payment terms, exempted and reduced interest fees. The SBV Vinh Phuc said that interest rates of new loans are 0.5-2% lower than old lending rates for 11,450 customers who borrowed VND14,433 billion, including 635 corporate borrowers with VND6,382 billion. Local lenders exempted and reduced interest rates and rescheduled repayment terms for 1,257 customers who borrowed VND3,556 billion, including 239 corporate borrowers with VND1,892 billion. In addition, this policy extended repayment terms for 521 customers with outstanding debt of VND1,186 billion, including 69 corporate customers with VND791 billion.

On tax support according to Decree 41/2020/ND-CP dated April 8, 2020 and Resolution 84/NQ-CP dated May 29, 2020 of the Government, by the end of June 2020, the Vinh Phuc

Taxation Department extended payment terms of land rents worth VND736,628 billion for 712 companies. The province settled entry procedures for 793 foreign experts, managers and technicians working for 147 companies in the locality.

In addition to carrying out central support policies, Vinh Phuc province actively directed specialized agencies to base on actual situations and settle complaints and recommendations of businesses. The Department of Planning and Investment has been assigned to study mechanisms and policies for socioeconomic development, investment promotion and business development by the Provincial People's Committee. The Department has always supported enterprises to deal with their emerging problems in business operations and inform them via many effective communication channels such as contact hotlines connected to provincial leaders.

Vinh Phuc is an industrial province and its economic performance depends significantly on corporate performance. Therefore, right from March 2020, when the whole country was still fighting against the Covid-19 pandemic, Vinh Phuc defined that the local economy would confront enormous difficulties in the future. Then, the province proactively promulgated Plan 51 to solve difficulties, support businesses and promote growth. It has synchronously applied consistent policies and solutions to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), sped up investment promotion and helped companies with ongoing projects in the province.

Many administrative procedures have been streamlined. The rate of public investment capital disbursement, land compensation and site clearance has been boosted significantly. The supply source of production inputs has been promptly and fully arranged. The investment capital for investment and production expansion is reasonably allocated.

These results have promptly facilitated people and businesses to restore manufacturing and business operations, importantly contributed to macroeconomic stability, and supported local economic growth. ■







With the fierce and consistent participation, Can Tho City has taken many solutions and activities to remove difficulties for businesses and investors, thus tapping all resources for accelerated development in 2020 and the following years. Mr. Le Quang Manh, Chairman of Can Tho City People's Committee, gave an exclusive interview to Vietnam Business Forum on this topic. Ngo Khuyen reports.

# CAN THO

## Tapping Resources, Speeding up Development

**Could you please tell us about the implementation of the Politburo's Resolution 45-NQ/TU on Can Tho City construction and development? How has Can Tho tried to speed up its development in the coming years?**

After 15 years (2004-2019) of implementing Resolution 45-NQ/TW of the 9th Politburo, Can Tho successfully unlocked its potential and advantages. Economic indicators picked up, with the gross regional domestic product (GRDP) rising by 7.27% a year, higher than the national average. In 2019, the economic size was 5 times that of 2004. GRDP per capita reached VND88.3 million, 7.1 times higher. The investment fund mobilized was more than VND52 trillion, 7.07 times that of 2005. The economic structure has been shifted toward a desired pattern where the share of service and industry goes up to play a central role and a driving force for Mekong Delta development. The city has also completed the new rural development program.

However, achieved results are not commensurate with local potential and advantages. The driving role of Can Tho City in the region has not spread far and wide. The economic structuring is slow. Socioeconomic infrastructure, especially transport infrastructure, is still limited. In order for Can Tho to develop and become a center and driving force for the Mekong Delta, the city has proposed a number of solutions to the Government of Vietnam: Promulgating a new decree on specific mechanisms

for investment, finance, budget and decentralization for Can Tho after the Politburo summarizes Resolution 45-NQ/TW and issues a resolution on Can Tho City construction and development to 2030, with a vision to 2045; focusing investment on transport infrastructure connecting to the Mekong Delta. In the medium-term public investment plan in 2021-2025, Can Tho city has proposed the Government to support the city to invest in some key projects serving the development of Can Tho City and the Mekong Delta; allow Can Tho City to adjust its industrial park development plan in line with local development needs to create a new driving force to ensure a breakthrough, rapid and sustainable development of the city; approve O Mon Thermal Power Plant II Project in O Mon district.

**Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, in the first six months of 2020, Can Tho City witnessed many low economic growth indicators. What tasks and solutions will the city focus on in the last months of 2020 to successfully realize its next target plan?**

The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, drought and saltwater intrusion in the Mekong Delta have made it difficult for Can Tho City to achieve its goals, targets and tasks set for 2020. In the first six months of 2020, the city did not experience negative growth but the GRDP growth was low, rising just 1.43% as compared to the initial target of 7.82%. After the social

distancing was eased, economic sectors started to revive. With a drastic direction from the central government through its support packages for businesses and people, and the active direction of all-tier authorities, its business development has improved. In June 2020, newly established companies increased significantly. The number of newly registered companies rose by 94% over April and 44% over May. The number of suspended enterprises meanwhile declined 49% and 23% versus April and May, respectively.

To realize its plans, the city will focus on the following key solutions in the last six months of 2020:

- Controlling the pandemic, strictly checking quarantined/isolated cases to prevent public contagion; providing timely information, strictly punishing deliberate information falsification that messes up public opinions.
- Thoroughly grasping and carrying out the Politburo's Conclusion 77-KL/TW dated June 5, 2020, the Government's Resolutions 01, 02 and 84/NQ-CP, Resolutions of the City Party Committee and City People's Council, the Prime Minister's Directive 11/CT-TTg dated March 4, 2020, and Directive 19/CT-TTg dated April 24, 2020; the Prime Minister's Conclusion on the meeting with businesses.
- Proposing the Government, the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the General Department of Customs to boost exchanges and settle problems in goods clearance for convenient export of goods and import of inputs for production.
- Launching solutions to boost social demand.
- Effectively implementing the Government's social security policies, ensuring right policy beneficiaries; reviewing and cutting recurrent expenditures, generating more funding for social security policies, stimulating local consumer demand.
- Strengthening national defense, security, foreign affairs, international integration.
- Promoting disbursement of public investment capital.
- Carrying out support policies for enterprises affected by the Covid-19 pandemic; removing difficulties, fostering production, business and economic recovery solutions in the coming time.
- Reforming administrative procedures, creating favorable conditions for people and businesses.

**Can Tho's PCI in 2019 was 68.38 points (highest ever), demonstrating its efforts to improve business environment and competitiveness in recent years. So, how will Can Tho City further improve the investment and business environment?**

Improving the investment and business environment and creating favorable conditions for investors and businesses is one of key tasks of the municipal government. Right from the beginning of the year, the city issued Action Plan 22/KH-UBND dated February 11, 2020 to carry out the Government's



National Assembly Chairwoman Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan attends the groundbreaking ceremony to upgrade a historic monument in Can Tho in 2019



Resolution 02/NQ-CP and raise its Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI) in 2020 and 2021. The city government has assigned 23 key tasks and 33 specific jobs to relevant agencies and district authorities.

After the social distancing was eased, the City People's Committee held a business meeting to learn about hardships, proposals and recommendations of local businesses to have best solutions. The city government has directed and requested leaders of departments and agencies, chairpersons of District People's Committees to urgently review and settle petitions and proposals of enterprises within their jurisdiction.

From now to the end of 2020, the city will focus on directing departments, agencies and districts to implement Action Plan 22/KH-UBND dated February 11, 2020 to implement Resolution 02/NQ-CP of the Government; carry out consistent solutions to maintain and boost PCI scores, further improve the investment climate. The city will focus on reviewing and upgrading the quality of setting administrative procedures, particularly appropriate licenses for organizations and individuals in order to reduce the time that enterprises need to have all necessary licenses to start up their operations.

**Thank you very much!**





## CAN THO READY FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES

To seize the opportunity of Vietnam's increasing integration, along with the global investment shift, Can Tho is innovating investment promotion approaches and upgrading infrastructure to attract resources for faster development. Vietnam Business Forum has an interview with Mr. **Nguyen Thuc Hien**, Director of the Department of Planning and Investment of Can Tho City, about this topic. **Ngo Khuyen** reports.

**What are the promotion and investment attraction results of Can Tho city in recent years? What will it be like in the coming years?**

In recent years, Can Tho city has identified that promoting investment attraction for socio-economic development is a key task. The city has been promoting FDI attraction by reviewing regional planning, sector planning for management; proposing projects calling for investment; welcoming foreign investors; organizing domestic investment promotion conferences; and organizing delegations abroad to call for investment such as to Korea, Japan, Singapore.

Such efforts have brought positive results. From 2017 up to now, the city has attracted 37 domestic capital projects (outside industrial parks) with a total registered investment capital of VND38,667.5 billion. 63 projects are being implemented, with a total registered investment capital over VND48 trillion. To date, the city has 83 foreign investment projects with a total registered capital of over US\$752 million. In particular, at the Investment Promotion Conference in 2018, the city called for direct investment into 54 projects, and investment in the form of

public-private partnerships (PPP) into 10 projects. Up to now, the city has granted investment policies to 14 out of 64 projects.

It has strived to build Can Tho city into a modern, green, clean, beautiful city, worthy of being the gateway to the lower Mekong region; a center of industry, trade – service - tourism, education - training and science - technology, healthcare and culture. It will serve as an important hub for regional and international transportation; a key area holding a strategic defense and security position of the Mekong River Delta region and the whole country.

In the coming years, the city will prioritize and focus on attracting investment in some areas such as projects in the local potential list: hi-tech agricultural development (especially rice-related products); ICT industry, biological industry; industrial park infrastructure development; tourism; high technologies, and environment friendly technologies. The city is preparing feasible projects to attract an investment wave from leading technology corporations in production chains, high-tech partners from Japan, Korea, the United States and Europe.

### What bottlenecks will Can Tho city focus on removing?

To attract resources to accelerate development in the coming years, Can Tho city will focus on removing bottlenecks such as: Incomplete infrastructure; not sufficient clear land fund; incomplete information on investment projects, and unattractive investment incentive policies.

**With many opportunities opening up from free trade agreements between Vietnam and EU and ASEAN countries, and the global investment shift, how has Can Tho prepared for a new wave of investment?**

With an expected inflow of international investments, Can Tho city has prepared all necessary factors to attract investors to the city. Specifically:

1. Promoting investment and improving infrastructure, including investment in infrastructure of industrial parks, and inviting enterprises to invest in industrial development projects, including processing industry, supporting industries, high-tech industries. Preparing clean land in industrial parks for investors. Stepping up the planning and construction of resettlement areas, serving the ground clearance work for project implementation.

Promoting investment in the development of technical infrastructure to support project implementation, coordinating with related units in improving the quality of human resources to meet the requirements of investors.

2. Making the list of projects calling for investment with detailed information; collaborating with the Investment – Trade Promotion Center and the Exhibition Fair of Can Tho City to build and update information on the local investment environment in many foreign languages: English, Korean, Japanese.

3. Advising the appropriate and effective allocation of public investment capital, avoiding spreading and meeting the completion of key projects as a lever to promote socio-economic development.

4. Continuing to study and propose the central government to consider and approve specific preferential policies for localities to develop professions with strengths and growth orientations in the coming time.

**Can Tho's market entry index in 2019 was 6.51 points - the lowest ever. What is the cause of this and what solutions have you been advising and implementing to improve it in the coming time?**

According to PCI results in 2019, Can Tho's "market entry" index decreased slightly at 0.56 points. The "market entry" index in the PCI is based on 10 component indices, including the indices related to business registration procedures and completion of other procedures to officially operate. Currently, the administrative procedures related to business registration have been greatly shortened, even the establishment of a business is easy, and the business registration mechanism has changed from "pre-check" to "post-check". According to data from the National Business Registration Portal in 2019, Can Tho had an average time of 2.18 days to process a new registration application, faster than requirement of the Enterprise Law (03 working day); The rate of dossiers handled on time was 99.55%, above the national average of 98.36%. Can Tho city has also well implemented the application of online



business registration with the rate of business registration dossiers done by this method reaching 49.8%.

However, in addition to the business registration procedure, depending on the business sectors and industries of enterprises, they must carry out relevant procedures to enter the market, such as procedures related to construction including: appraisal of design, fire prevention and controlling conditions, environmental emission treatment, conditions related to import and export of machinery and equipment, and a series of permits of all kinds and other types of conditions for business sectors having requirements.

Can Tho city has also implemented many solutions to improve the investment environment, and improve "market entry" in order to attract investment and create a favorable investment and business environment for enterprises. In order to improve the score of the "market entry" index, we have also advised the City People's Committee to direct sectors and districts to continue implementing a number of solutions such as: Continuing to implement Plan 22/KH-UBND dated February 11th, 2020, and Resolution 02/NQ-CP of the Government; enhancing competitiveness at provincial and city levels; local authorities need to review and improve the quality of handling and shortening the time to grant qualified licenses to organizations and individuals; enhancing professional training, communication skills, and behavioral skills for staff in charge of guiding and receiving records, thus improving the components of the "market entry" index.

**Thank you very much!**





# Great Progress in Scientific and Technological Research, Application and Development

## Rising role of science and technology

In the 2016-2019 period, Can Tho invested in building material foundations and equipment to enhance potential for scientific and technological development; promoting scientific and technological application in local enterprises; conducting demand-based scientific research and application; developing scientific and technological market and services; and strengthening domestic and international connectivity and cooperation. At the same time, the city mobilized and fostered human resources to build Can Tho City into a key science and technology center for the Mekong Delta.

State investment in science and technology has been on the rise. Total investment in 2017, 2018 and 2019 was VND246.35 billion. The city issued many central and local mechanisms and policies to support enterprises to renovate technology, improve productivity and product quality, protect and develop intellectual property, and boost scientific and technological advances.

The Can Tho support plan for innovative startup ecosystem development to 2025 provided a favorable environment for formation and development of rapidly growing businesses leveraged by intellectual property, new technology and business models. The City People's Committee issued the "Development support program for science and technology businesses and public science and technology organizations to implement autonomous and self-responsible mechanisms in Can Tho City in 2018-2020" to encourage capable science and technology businesses to transform into science and technology corporations.

## Startup support and international integration

Scientific and technological activities in Can Tho City have undergone extensive changes in many fields, like establishing and protecting intellectual property rights, developing scientific and technological market and services; establishing cooperation with domestic and foreign units; supporting enterprises in technological innovation;



Mr. Ngo Anh Tin, Director of Can Tho Department of Science and Technology

After four years of executing Resolution 02-NQ/TU of the Can Tho City Party Committee dated August 1, 2016, on scientific and technological development and application, Can Tho City's science and technology sector has obtained much progress and many important achievements. This is the premise of the sector to make breakthroughs and meet requirements on socioeconomic development and international integration.

NGOC TUNG

developing an innovative startup ecosystem. Particularly, the scientific and technological market and services are the city's outstanding strengths with many achievements and research results applied in practice.

The science and technology sector has joined international technology fairs, exhibitions and exchanges to introduce local scientific and technological achievements and products and formulated cooperation with domestic and foreign units. It has also successfully hosted many national and international events to develop the scientific and technological market.

From October 2018, the technology supply-demand matching point in the Mekong Delta region was put into operation in Can Tho City. This is one of effective solutions to develop various types of scientific and technological market intermediaries, accelerate scientific and technological application technology transfer and innovation for domestic and international organizations and individuals to enhance their capacity, quality and effect of scientific and technological research and development. This place displays about 100 technological products and 20 processes. In 2019, it consulted about 70 customers (enterprises and business households) on technologies: odor treatment, dryer, water treatment, drinking water, intellectual property registration and trademark registration.

Can Tho has developed scientific and technological services, featured by strong capabilities of experimenting, testing and calibrating hi-tech equipment by the Center for Standards, Metrology and Quality. Its laboratories are accredited with the quality management system according to the ISO/IEC 17025 international standard and appointed by six ministries to be in charge of State management of product quality. The

center also provides support services for enterprises to test goods quality in eight areas: agricultural and aquatic products, food, fertilizer - chemicals, oil and gas, environment, construction, electricity - electronics, and mechanical engineering - consumer goods.

Since mid-2017, the center has been one of pioneers in the country to calibrate medical equipment according to

# Accelerating IT Application, E-government Development



Given the Covid-19 pandemic breakout, building e-government plays an important role in changing working manners to ensure the smooth and effective service and operation of the administrative apparatus. Can Tho City has identified e-government building as a key task.

The Department of Information and Communications advised the City People's Committee to issue Decision 644/QĐ-UBND dated March 16, 2017, on E-Government Architecture of Can Tho City, laying the foundation for the city to deploy IT applications to ensure synchronization, interconnection and data sharing. With the goal of applying information technology together with administrative reform, building and developing the e-government of Can Tho City based on the Vietnam e-Government Platform and based on open data toward digital economy and digital society to enhance the operational efficiency of the administrative apparatus and service quality of people and businesses, ensure information safety and network security, the Department of Information and Communications consulted the Can Tho People's Committee on the 5-year e-government plan for the 2016-2020 period (Plan 131 dated November 28, 2016) and annual information technology application plans for government agencies; advised the Can Tho People's Committee to issue Plan 73/KH-UBND dated April 19, 2019, on implementation of the Government's Resolution 17/NQ-CP dated March 7, 2019, on e-government development tasks and solutions in the 2019-2020 period.

The document management and administration system is applied at all 495 government agencies from city to commune levels. The system is interconnected with the National Document System to ensure the sending and receiving of four-level interlinked electronic documents (from central to commune levels). Over 92% of outgoing/incoming documents are transferred electronically. 95% of

incoming/outgoing documents are transferred electronically and in writing between government agencies.

The Online Public Service Portal System and the Electronic Single-window Mechanism are deployed synchronously for all state administrative agencies from city to commune levels according to Decree 61/2018/NQ-CP on deployment of single-window mechanism in administrative procedure service under the guidance of the Ministry of Information and Communications. The systems are added and interconnected with the post office system, online payment and social networking sites for looking up result status, and collecting opinions online of citizens, organizations and businesses about administrative procedures at government agencies. At the same time, the City Public Service Portal has connected to the National Public Service Portal and enabled single sign-on, file synchronization and server security as required by the Office of the Government.

The e-mail system ensures stable and effective operation to meet information exchange needs of government agencies and public employees. As of May 2020, 13,322 mailboxes have been activated in the city. All public employees use the email system.

The Videoconferencing System, launched since 2018, is working stably and effectively (from city to district and commune levels) with more than 303 online meetings as of May 2020, enabling leaders at all levels to direct and administer their work in a quick, efficient and cost-saving manner.

Digital signatures are granted to 100% of authorized organizations and leaders. A total number of 1,776 digital signatures have been issued for sending and receiving electronic documents and online payment transactions at the treasury.■

compulsory regulations of the Ministry of Health. Previously, businesses in the Mekong Delta had to bring their products to certification units in Ho Chi Minh City. Since it was invested with high-tech equipment, this service has helped local firms save a lot of time and travel expenses.

Mr. Ngo Anh Tin, Director of Can Tho Department of Science and Technology, said, the department will advise the city to further develop an innovative startup ecosystem and the scientific and technological market for the city and the

Mekong Delta in the coming time. It will give priority to investment, transfer and application of new technologies to manufacturing and business activities of enterprises. The center will gradually enhance corporate competitiveness with such programs and projects like the "support program for technological innovation", "support program for intellectual property development", "project for product productivity and quality improvement for businesses", "support project for innovative startup ecosystem development".■





# Developing Transport Infrastructure to Attract Investment

In order to remove bottlenecks in transport infrastructure, the Can Tho City Department of Transport has proposed synchronous solutions to mobilize and efficiently use resources; thereby promoting investment attraction, contributing to speeding up the city's socio-economic development in the coming years. Mr. **Le Tien Dung**, Director of Can Tho City Department of Transport, shared with Vietnam Business Forum about this issue. **Song Uyen** reports.



## What do you think about the development of transport infrastructure in the city in recent years?

In recent years, the local transport infrastructure has seen strong development. It is easily accessible, with improvement in the road system connecting Can Tho with Mekong Delta provinces and Ho Chi Minh City; from the city center to Can Tho airport, the cluster of seaports, industrial parks, urban areas and centers of 85/85 communes, towns and wards. The inland waterways have six national routes and a network of rivers and canals, with 10 inland ports, 781 inland waterway terminals and 91 cross-river passenger terminals. Up to now, Can Tho International Airport operates 14 routes, including 10 domestic routes and four international routes. Can Tho seaport is the national general port. The project for large tonnage ships into the Hau River opened technical channels in 2017, contributing to improving sea transport capacity, making Can Tho city a gathering point of import and export goods of the Mekong Delta.

However, the transport infrastructure still has some bottlenecks. Expressways through the area are not all available; major roads have not been upgraded. Inland waterways are only fully exploited. Can Tho seaport cluster does not operate effectively because the warehouse and logistics system has not been invested synchronously.

**In the coming years, how will Can Tho prioritize transport infrastructure?**

The Department of Transport will advise the City Party Committee, People's Council, City People's Committee to continue to prioritize investment in modernizing transport infrastructure, focusing on the construction of expressway projects through the area (Chau Doc-Can Tho-Soc Trang; Can Tho-Ca Mau); Ho Chi Minh City - Can Tho high-speed railway; promoting the opening of more routes to Can Tho International Airport, building Cai Cui Port to reach a complete scale as planned, and completing phase 2 of the Channel Project for large tonnage ships entering the Hau River to attract passengers and goods from provinces in the Mekong Delta to Can Tho International Airport and Can Tho Seaport, and from there to other regions in the country and internationally.

The city will also focus on building key projects in the public investment portfolio of transport for the period 2021-2025 to meet the requirements of inter-regional development and connectivity; investing in modern transport systems and terminals, shelters to develop public passenger bus transport connecting the whole city and neighboring provinces, developing smart transportation systems, applying information technology and information sharing to reduce costs, save time and resources in order to well serve the management and supervision of transport activities and ensure traffic safety.

**Thank you very much!**

“

*Over the past years, the Can Tho City Department of Transport has always paid attention to promoting administrative reform and achieved remarkable results. From 2017 up to now, the Department has implemented online public services at level 3, 4 for administrative procedures, thereby saving people's time and travel costs.*

”

Can Tho is one of the five centrally-run cities of Vietnam, with a natural area of 1,439.2 square kilometers and a population of 1,272 million. Can Tho is located in the center of the Mekong Delta and also a center of economics, finance, education, science, technology and healthcare. In the near future, it is expected to become a modern industrial city, serving as a driving force for the Mekong Delta's development.

# Facilitating Business Development

**C**an Tho City Export Processing and Industrial Parks Authority is an important part of this development.

Currently, Can Tho city has six concentrated industrial parks attracting 250 valid projects with a total registered capital of US\$1,766 billion. Disbursed capital is US\$1,075 billion (accounting for 60.9%); including 223 DDI projects (US\$1,349 billion), 27 FDI projects (US\$395.86 million) and one ODA project (US\$21.13 million). By June 2020, the industrial parks employed 36,969 workers (34,407 official workers and 2,562 seasonal workers in 13,435 FDI projects), an increase of 3,022 people over the same period in 2019.

In the first six months of 2020, total revenue of enterprises reached US\$908.93 million, up 5% over the same period in 2019; of which, the industrial production value reached US\$680.10 million, up 8% over 2019; commercial services value reached US\$227.82 million, down 4% year on year and exports value reached US\$312.83 million, up 4% compared to 2019. Particularly for FDI enterprises, total revenue reached US\$222.85 million, up 21% compared to 2019; in which, the value of industrial production reached US\$222.85 million, up 21% and exports value reached US\$129.33 million, up 39% over the same period in 2019.

In the first six months of 2020, the world's economy in general and Vietnam's economy in particular suffered heavily due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Enterprises in the industrial parks are no exception. Some businesses have difficulties in production and business with revenue decreased by about 30%. It is because there are no new orders; foreign customers suspend or cancel signed contracts; businesses have not yet recovered debts from export markets; export markets are narrowed, domestic markets are also facing difficulties due to

social distancing and there is great pressure on social insurance, taxes, and workers' compensation.

Through survey, enterprises in the Can Tho Export Processing and Industrial Zones Authority (CEPIZA) recommended: (1) Reducing interest rates on bank loans; supporting loans from banks for social policies at 0% interest rates to pay employers who have to lay off; (2) Delaying payment of land rental and infrastructure use fees; (3) Delaying payment of taxes and social insurance; (4) Reducing the price of electricity, water.

The CEPIZA proposed to departments, specialized branches and the City People's Committee to promote solutions to restore production and business such as: Supporting access to soft loan packages; rescheduling of old loans; issuing tax exemption and reduction in the current period; reducing electricity and water prices; promoting the domestic market, e-commerce, transportation and delivery services with reasonable transportation costs; supporting the application of science and technology in production and business to improve labor productivity, products quality and lower product costs.

The CEPIZA also constantly promotes administrative procedure reform. The administrative procedure reforms are publicly listed on the CEPIZA's website. At the same time, it regularly reviews and simplifies the procedures under their jurisdiction. The CEPIZA has also updated and uploaded the software for single-widow procedures, so 100% of records and documents are resolved on or before the deadline for individuals and organizations according to the current regulations.

Mr. Lu Thanh Dong, Director of Can Tho City Export Processing and Industrial Zones Authority, said, CEPIZA is always ready to welcome businesses to come to work, providing them with detailed and specific instructions to meet the highest possible efficiency. ■





## CAN THO CUSTOMS

## Determined to Innovate and Create Favorable Conditions for Businesses

Up to now, Can Tho Customs has implemented electronic customs procedures for 100% of import and export goods declarations. Some core administrative procedures such as customs clearance, collection of import and export taxes have been provided with online public services at level 3 and 4, allowing the reception and processing of documents, payment of taxes, fees and charges and returning results entirely over the internet. The rate of import-export enterprises paying taxes electronically via banks is over 99%.

It has conducted exchanges through the National Single Window with 11 ministries, sectors and Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI). It also exchanges origin certification information with eight ASEAN countries (Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, Laos, Myanmar, and Cambodia). It has deployed the automated cargo management system through connecting and exchanging information with enterprises operating in ports, airports, warehouses, and locations

Can Tho Customs Department's management area includes Can Tho City and four provinces of Hau Giang, Soc Trang, Vinh Long and Tra Vinh. Over the years, the Department has focused on renovating the operation process, from manual management to modern customs management, on the basis of applying the method of "Risk Management", creating a breakthrough in administrative reform; and strongly applying IT to its professional work.

subject to customs supervision.

Customs inspection and supervision have shifted from pre-check to post-check on the basis of risk management. It applies the priority regime in customs procedures, customs inspection and supervision for exported and imported goods of five enterprises, two of which are in Can Tho city.

The fight against smuggling, trade fraud and State budget revenue loss has brought many positive changes. As a member of Steering Committee 389 of Can Tho City, the Department has coordinated with relevant authorities in the area to manage and strengthen the fight against smuggling, trade fraud, and counterfeiting and illegally transporting goods across the border.

Thanks to the above efforts, the State budget collection of Can Tho Customs Department has met and exceeded all the targets. Particularly in 2019, the unit contributed over VND2,790 billion to the State budget, reaching over 123% of the plan assigned by the Ministry of Finance. In 2020, the Department is assigned by the Ministry of Finance to collect State budget revenue of VND2,351 billion. ■

(from P.9)

equipment, materials and input components for international assembly and transportation. Drawing foreign investment will be selective, with priority given to quality, effect, technology and environmental protection. Priority is given to projects using advanced technology, new technology, high technology, clean technology, modern governance and generating high added value and ripple effects.

In order to prepare a clean land fund for large investors, the Ministry of Planning and Investment asked localities to review the land fund in industrial zones and economic zones. In case projects are behind schedule, land must be reclaimed from their investors.

Recently, at the working meeting with Japanese economic organizations and businesses intending to

expand investment in Vietnam, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc also affirmed that the Vietnamese market is large enough for ambitious business investment plans consistent with restructuring and shifting strategies of global and regional supply chains of international investors. Vietnam will further develop and upgrade more convenient infrastructure such as airports, ports, logistics services and highways, as well as preventing power outages and water loss for investors. In particular, it will prepare premises and industrial zones for them to locate their factories immediately.

Needless to say, the opportunity is great, but, to catch up with the investment wave as expected, it is necessary to have coordination and participation of central and local authorities. By doing this, Vietnam can take advantage of golden opportunities and participate in global value chains. ■

## Available Capital Is Ready for the Economy



Mr. Pham Van Nhieu, Deputy Director of the SBV Can Tho

As an economic, financial and service center in the Mekong Delta, Can Tho is home to most commercial banks. The diversified banking industry network has created favorable conditions for capital mobilization from the people and timely supply of capital needs for production, business and consumption activities.

## Strongly developed network and services

Mr. Pham Van Nhieu, Deputy Director of the State Bank in Can Tho City, said: The city banking system currently has 46 credit institutions and seven people's credit funds, with 253 transaction points covering five districts and four towns. In addition, the Social Policy Bank has transaction points in communes to support policy beneficiaries to borrow capital. Along with the

extensive network, services are also growing with 380 ATMs of 41 bank branches; 2,275 POS (including 2,246 POS links) of 31 financial service providers and 1,323,805 issued cards in operation.

Funds mobilized as of June 30, 2020, amounted to VND84,228 billion, up 3.61% compared to the end of 2019, of which, short-term mobilized capital accounted for 67.46%, capital mobilized over 12 months accounted for 32.54%. Total outstanding loans as of June 30, 2020 were VND94,928 billion, up 3.94% compared to the end of 2019, in which short-term loans accounted for 52.18%, up 2.61%; medium and long term loans accounted for 47.82% of total outstanding loans, up 5.44% compared to December 2019. According to the Governor's direction, credit institutions in the area are concentrating capital on priority areas, solving difficulties for businesses.

## Actively supporting businesses

In early 2020, following the instructions of the Government and the State Bank, the system of local credit institutions actively implemented credit programs to support people and businesses affected by the Covid-19 pandemic with lending rates falling sharply by 0.5 - 2.5%. Even commercial banks also reduced lending interest rates by 3-4%/year.

The new lending rate for production and business activities create favorable conditions for customers to borrow money, but do not loosen or lower credit conditions to ensure credit quality. In addition, the entire banking system has also been active in exempting and reducing fees for some payment services to support people and businesses affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Credit institutions in the province have restructured repayment terms, considered interest exemption or reduction according to current regulations such as reducing interest rates by 0.5 - 3% compared to the normal interest rate level, depending on the extent of customer losses, or launching new credit programs with many incentives for customers in areas that were greatly damaged by the Covid-19 pandemic. By the end of June 2020, accumulated new loan sales from January 23, 2020, reached VND16,305 billion for more than 4,491 borrowers affected by Covid-19; rescheduled loan balance was VND2,074 billion for more than 1,155 affected customers.

The State Bank Can Tho and local credit institutions have coordinated with Can Tho City People's Committee to meet and hold dialogue with businesses to discuss and resolve problems, and to remove difficulties in borrowing capital to help businesses cope with the impact of the pandemic on production and business. ■





## SPACE FOR BUSINESS STARTUP AND TECHNOLOGY INCUBATION

Korea - Vietnam Incubator Park (KVIP) based in Can Tho City is the result of a comprehensive cooperation program between the Government of Vietnam and the Government of South Korea. Located in Tra Noc Industrial Park 2, KVIP mainly supports innovation research and development, and incubates processing technology for new agricultural and seafood products.

Tenants are entitled to incentives specified in the Prime Minister's Decision 1193/QĐ-TTg dated July 30, 2015, on piloting specific mechanisms and policies for KVIP development, largely incentives for corporate income tax, import tax and land rent. Inaugurated on November 14, 2015, KVIP has, to date, selected nine companies for incubation and making new products. In addition, KVPI has supported more than 1,020 local students to use its equipment for graduation projects and scientific topics. Currently, the incubator continues to invite organizations and individuals to study and incubate technologies to create many new products of high added value. At the same time, it is ready to support students to study, conduct scientific research and start up a business.

The incubator encourages companies to innovate technology, supports them to transfer technology, select and adapt to advanced technologies in Vietnam and abroad; strengthens scientific and technological cooperation with domestic and foreign organizations and

individuals; and strengthens Vietnam - South Korea bilateral cooperation in a number of strategic industries, such as agricultural and aquatic product processing and mechanical engineering, to soon form and develop a science and technology market and make Can Tho a science and technology center of the region.

KVIP will connect and incubate product development ideas initiated by companies. Equipped with high-tech equipment and machinery, a team of leading experts will work together to help businesses incubate technological innovations at KVIP with the opportunity to research and make new products of high quality and increase competitiveness in the market. After successfully researching products, they will be supported to transfer science and technology to make new products at their own production facilities.

Supporting businesses and connecting businesses with scientists and authorities, KVIP will further strive to find new solutions and new technological processes to help them access preference policies and government solution packages for their overall development. ■

**Korea - Vietnam Incubator Park in Can Tho City**  
Road 8, Tra Noc Industrial Park 2, Phuoc Thoi Ward, O Mon District, Can Tho City  
- Tel: 02923 761120  
- Email: [vuonumcongnghe\\_vnhq@cantho.gov.vn](mailto:vuonumcongnghe_vnhq@cantho.gov.vn)  
- Website: [www.kvip.com.vn](http://www.kvip.com.vn)



### NINH KIEU DISTRICT

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE AND SERVICES

Over the past years, as a central district, Ninh Kieu has strongly promoted the development of its commercial and service sector in the direction of modernity and high value. Thereby, it has become a central urban area of Can Tho city and made an important contribution to the development of the city.

### Sustainable development

In 2015-2020, Ninh Kieu district maintained a high growth rate. The economic structure has shifted in the right direction toward commerce, tourism and finance. The proportion of industrial and agricultural production has decreased over the years. Business investment environment has been improving, attracting investment in all economic sectors, forming many large commercial centers, developing many new types of business and services with high quality and well serving the consumption and transactions needs of people and visitors.

The district has invested in economic - technical infrastructure to build a modern city. Education - training and healthcare have been focused on. The quality of medical services has been increasingly improved. National defense and security have been maintained.

### Attracting investment sustainably

In the period 2020-2025, Ninh Kieu district is set to improve the quality of growth and the competitiveness of the economy; synchronously invest in socio-economic infrastructure; combine economic

development with cultural development, environmental protection and social security and environmental protection. In particular, the field of trade - services associated with tourism development will be a spearhead for the district to develop. To achieve the goal, Ninh Kieu district will focus on mobilizing diversified investment resources to build and develop synchronous and modern infrastructure; building Ninh Kieu district into the central urban area of Can Tho city according to Resolution 05-NQ/TU of Can Tho City Party Committee. The district will develop the economy quickly and sustainably, with priority given to the development of trade and service with great potential and high added value. In addition, the district will attract domestic and foreign resources to invest in developing a variety of trade and services.

Mr. Huynh Trung Tru, Chairman of Ninh Kieu District People's Committee, said the district will continue to focus on improving an open and fair investment and business environment; effectively implementing incentive mechanisms, supporting businesses and investors to boost production and business. The district will enhance cooperation; promote the search for new markets, focus on trade development associated with green and sustainable tourism; and support businesses.

"To create investment attraction, the district authorities will actively coordinate and create favorable conditions for investors. At the same time, Ninh Kieu district leaders will regularly hold dialogues to deal with all difficulties and problems of businesses," Chairman Huynh Trung Tru confirmed. ■



## THOT NOT DISTRICT

## Tapping Favorable Connectivity for Development



Thot Not is the northwestern gateway district of Can Tho City, with a total area of 12,202.40 ha. The district is adjacent to three provinces of An Giang, Dong Thap and Kien Giang, with favorable waterway and roadway connections. These are great advantages for the district to promote investment attraction into industry, handicraft, service and commerce.

**T**he favorable geographical location has created conditions for the district to attract investment into processing industries and a number of supporting industries such as milling, manufacturing, logistics services, specialized rice markets, thus creating conditions for the development of various services, such as advertising, packaging, vocational training, finance - banking, waste treatment, waterway transportation, yards, and freight transportation.

Currently, Thot Not district is on the way to building a new urban appearance and many key projects are implemented in the area. Typically, the construction of Thot Not Industrial Park with the planned area of 600 ha is divided into two phases. At present, the first phase has attracted 13 enterprises with a total investment of nearly VND2,443.5 billion, creating over 8,880 regular jobs.

Thot Not New Port has been put into operation since the end of 2015 and has the capacity to accommodate 2,000-ton cargo ships, and 1,000-ton barges. The main throughputs are rice, aquatic products, animal feed of Can Tho city and neighboring provinces such as An Giang, Kien Giang, Dong Thap. At the same time, it provides logistics services for the waterway connecting the Mekong Delta with Ho Chi Minh City and deep-water ports such as Cai Mep - Thi Vai as well as the Cambodia route. Currently, the investor is applying for further investment in expanding the port in the area of more than five hectares.

In the orientation to 2025, the district will focus on implementing and completing key works and projects; building synchronous transport infrastructure for socio-economic development - one of three breakthrough stages set by the 12th District Party Committee's Congress term 2020-2025. ■

## O MON DISTRICT

## Harnessing Potential and Advantages for Economic Development



Mr. Le Viet Si, Chairman of O Mon District's People Committee

The Party and the government of O Mon district have focused on directing relevant bodies to utilize local potential and advantages for economic development for high-quality industry, trade, service and agriculture; and effectively mobilized investment resources for synchronous socioeconomic infrastructure, especially transport infrastructure. At the same time, it has strengthened urban, land and environment planning management and carried out local development projects for a more modern and more developed O Mon district.

**Good economic prospects**

In the 2015-2020 term, O Mon district has defined its overall goals of fostering economic development, increasing production value, improving the living quality of people, maintaining sociopolitical stability, protecting national defense and security, and creating a solid foundation to become a basically prosperous district. Over the past five years, the district has utilized local advantages and focused on overcoming difficulties to achieve its economic objectives.

The local economic quality has been gradually improved. Economic growth and production value have stayed high, averaging 10.44% a year in the 5-year term. The economic structure shifted in the right direction, with a decreasing share of agriculture and fisheries and a rising share of industry - construction and trade - services (Agriculture - fisheries accounted for 4.12%; industry - construction, 65.86%; and trade - service, 30.02%).

Trade - service has developed quite well, with outstanding fields of commerce, finance - banking, information technology, telecommunications, health and education. Total retail revenue of goods and services exceeded 0.36% of the plan, 1.92 times that of 2015.

The district has high-quality agriculture which applies scientific and technological expertise to production. The growth has averaged 0.98% a year since 2015. Many production cooperation models have been established and scaled up.

The district has mobilized all available resources for investment and development and achieved good results. Total social investment fund was estimated at VND57,685 billion (165% of the plan), an increase of 1.9 times over

the 2010-2015 period.

Urbanization, construction, land, and environmental protection management has been strengthened. The quality of education, training and health care for the people has been raised. The social security policy has been well implemented. National defense, political security and social safety and order have been firmly maintained and strengthened. The district has achieved important results in Party building and political system building, and prevented and repelled the deterioration of political ideology, morality and lifestyle of public employees and Party members.

To promote its achieved results, in the period 2020-2025, O Mon district has set out the following specific tasks:

The gross output (GO) growth will reach an average of 9.75% or more a year in the period 2020 - 2025, striving to increase GO by 110.12% by 2025 (agriculture - fisheries by 96.52%, industry - construction by 109.48%, and trade - service by 113.81%).

The GO value will reach VND194,675 billion in the 2020-2025 period (agriculture - fisheries will account for VND6,721 billion; industry - construction, VND143,433 billion; and trade and services, VND44,521 billion).

By 2025, the agriculture - fishery sector will account for 3.64% of the GDP, the industry - construction sector will make up 65.91%, and the trade - service sector contributes 30.45%.

The State budget revenue is estimated to grow by 12% a year (excluding land use fees). The expenditure for basic construction will fulfil 95% of the spending plan. Total investment capital for social development is from 38% of GO and over (VND90 trillion).

(continued on P.51)



## VINH THANH DISTRICT

# Wooing More Investors, Sustaining Development



Delegates at the 12th Vinh Thanh Party Congress (2020 - 2025 term)

To boost socioeconomic development and proactively integrate into the world economy, Vinh Thanh district has worked hard to improve the business environment, increase investment funding and support business development. In particular, the district determined that completing infrastructure is one of important solutions to create a driving force for sustainable development.

## Holding steady growth momentum

In the last term, 2015-2020, the Party, the government and people of Vinh Thanh district strived to achieve and exceed all 14 key targets specified in the Resolution of the 11th District Party Congress. The economy has grown well. The total gross output was estimated at more than VND32,925.33 billion, fulfilling 112.42% of the plan. The economic structure has shifted positively. The average value of agricultural production was more than VND117 million per hectare a year, 56.5% higher than the goal set in the Resolution. Trade and service progressed, exceeding the plan by 25.42%. Industry and handicraft surpassed the plan by 20.9%. Budget revenue was 22.17% higher than the plan.

The district has mobilized all available resources to carry out many important works and projects to serve socioeconomic development

requirements. Rural traffic networks have been upgraded to make sure that motorized vehicles can reach all communes and villages to spur economic growth and raise people's incomes and livelihoods. The district has mobilized VND1,948 billion for new rural development, ensuring all nine communes and wards meet new countryside requirements two years before the deadline.

These results are a solid foundation for the district to develop faster and more sustainably in the new period. In the 2020-2025 term, it will strive to achieve the gross output value of VND46,490 billion, annual budget revenue growth of 12% or more, and all nine communes and wards fulfilling advanced new countryside criteria and two recognized as model new countryside communes. It will also develop Thanh An and Vinh Thanh towns into fourth-grade urban areas and reduce the poverty rate to less than 0.5%.

## Investment attraction, business support

Vinh Thanh is an agricultural district where land resources and labor resources are abundant and the infrastructure system for socioeconomic development has been synchronously invested for construction. The district has built and upgraded many important traffic routes, using central and local budget, including National Highway 80, 24-km passing Cai San River traffic route and Road WB5. In addition, Lo Te - Rach Soi traffic route is expected to be completed and put into operation in early 2021.

These lifeblood traffic routes meet transport demands, connect the region and neighboring provinces such as An Giang, Kien Giang and Dong Thap, and open up the opportunity to engage all economic sectors to invest in local development. In the new period, Vinh Thanh is determined to focus on building and developing the district towards an advanced, civilized and modern new countryside; attract investment funds and quickly develop industry, handicraft, trade and service.

To perform these tasks, the district has introduced following solutions: Focusing on agricultural restructuring, actively adopting suitable crops and animals, organic production to increase the value that the market needs; expanding the scale and raising the economic value of industry - handicraft; mobilizing all investment sources to build synchronous socioeconomic infrastructure; and engaging the public to build rural traffic routes with government support to meet development and traveling requirements.

According to Chairman of Vinh Thanh People's Committee Vo Van Phuong, the district will first of all call for investment fund for infrastructure construction in industrial and handicraft areas and provide land, transport, grid and water infrastructure for the city to build Lo Te - Rach Soi Industrial Park (900 ha) in Vinh Trinh commune; and develop new urban areas and other key projects.

Meanwhile, Vinh Thanh district will encourage industries for agricultural development, such as food processing, agricultural materials, seafood processing and animal feeds. The district will pay greater attention to developing handicraft industries and traditional trades such as mechanical repair, mechanical manufacturing, welding, processing and construction. At the same time, the district will focus on modernizing trade and service, diversifying products and services, facilitating businesses to invest in building supermarkets and convenience stores, and adopt new business methods to better meet social needs.



According to Mr. Phuong, for many years, the locality has actively invited local and external investors, but results are still modest. Most investors are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Therefore, in the coming time, the district will direct the effective implementation of tasks and solutions to create a favorable business environment to satisfy investors and businesses.

Vinh Thanh district will formulate a broad feedback channel for investors and businesses to raise their opinions; pledge to support and strengthen dialogues with investors, promptly and completely solve difficulties, and create best conditions for them to expand business operations.

"With the principle that the growth of the business is the success of Vinh Thanh, the district government will closely direct site clearance, create a clean land fund for projects; and create a stable and safe investment environment. In particular, district leaders will closely monitor the settlement of administrative procedures for organizations and individuals, ensure compliance with regulations on the time of receiving and processing administrative procedures," said Mr. Phuong. ■





## CO DO DISTRICT

## Garden Economy Associated with Cooperative Economy

Co Do district has recently obtained many achievements in agricultural development, promoted the role of the collective economy and garden improvement, and replaced seasonal fruit gardens by orchard models. In the coming years, Co Do district will continue to focus on implementing the "Project on developing a collective economy and a garden economy in the district for the period 2020 - 2025, with a vision to 2030", thereby boosting agricultural development and the district's economy.

### Garden economic development

Recently, Co Do's garden economy has developed quite effectively; by the end of 2019, the total area of orchards was 3,823 hectares (the area in Thoi Hung commune was 3,359 hectares), including 2,191 hectares of mangos, 420 hectares of custard-apples, 248 hectares of bananas, 116 hectares of coconuts, and 321 hectares of longans, creating profit 3-5 times higher than rice cultivation. However, limitations for the garden economy include small scale; no factory for preliminary processing, preservation, or full processing; and lack of linkage between farmers and businesses means products are mainly sold to traders resulting in dependent and unstable prices.

The requirements for the development of the garden economy in the area in the current period must be in the direction of safety, combining with various economic types (especially ecotourism). It is necessary to form a value chain from production to processing and consumption; attract investment from enterprises; apply new scientific and technological

achievements to cultivation; thereby improving the scientific and technical levels, producing clean products towards building brands according to market standards.

On that basis, in 2020 - 2025, the district will accelerate the improvement of inefficient gardens to develop high-value fruit trees; build gardens toward food safety and hygiene with traceability and development in a chain of links; form areas specializing in fruit trees. In 2025 - 2030, the district will focus on consolidating and improving the quality of fruit-growing areas associated with ecotourism development in Thoi Hung commune and durian planting area, citrus trees associated with ecotourism in Trung Thanh commune.

To accomplish the above objectives, the district is promoting propaganda and mobilization of cadres, party members, union members, and people to create strong improvement in awareness for economic development of gardens in the current period; strengthening leadership and direction of the Party Committee and authorities and promoting exemplary and pioneering role of cadres, Party

members in the development and implementation of projects and plans for the development of concentrated production areas; the district also encourages replacing inefficient orchards with specialty fruit trees; mobilizes people to plant fruit trees according to planning to improve the efficiency of agricultural production. Along with that is the promotion of technical training, transfer of scientific and technical advances of planting fruit trees and encouraging people to apply organic production and develop models according to safety standards.

The district also coordinates with the City's departments and sectors to support the construction and registration of trademarks and logos for products; in addition, Co Do district will strengthen coordination among unions to set up loan support programs for farmers to increase production scale and improve income for horticultural farmers.

Mr. Nguyen Truong Tho, Acting Chairman of the District People's Committee, said: With the engagement of the entire political system in the area, especially the active initiative of farmers, it was believed that the Co Do's garden economy development would bring good results, thereby increasing people's income and contributing to promoting local socio-economic development.

### Promoting cooperative economy

By the end of 2019, Co Do district had 20 agricultural cooperatives operating in the fields of cultivation and fisheries, and having consumption links, with a charter capital of VND0.45 million - VND7 billion; three non-agricultural cooperatives (construction, transport and trade, service) with a charter capital from VND500 million to VND9 billion and 312 cooperative groups operating in the fields of cultivation, animal husbandry, fisheries and irrigation services. However, the collective economic development still has many limitations. Most of the cooperatives do not have their own headquarters, have poor facilities, simple machines and equipment, lack capital and still rely on the support of the State.

From that situation, the district has set the direction in the coming years including: developing the collective economy with building and improving the quality of new rural communes; promoting solidarity for farmers to overcome barriers to boost cooperation in production and development integration. Agricultural cooperatives must ensure production activities according to market needs, value chains, good application of scientific and technological achievements, provide clean products to the market, thereby increasing income for cooperative members and people. Non-agricultural cooperatives must

meet market requirements and promote the development of industry, handicraft, trade and services.

The district has also set specific targets for agricultural cooperatives: In 2020 - 2025, completing 15 cooperatives with 50% of them having revenue of over VND1.5 billion /cooperative/year, with linked consumption of products, registered trademarks, bar codes, geographical indications and traceability; in 2025 - 2030, it will develop 10 more cooperatives, bringing the total number to 45 cooperatives. For non-agricultural cooperatives, in the 2020 - 2025 period, there will be four more cooperatives with revenue of over VND2.5 billion/ cooperative/year; 100% of cooperatives will be assessed annually, of which over 80% will operate efficiently; in 2025 - 2030, it will develop six more cooperatives, bringing the total number to 14 cooperatives.

To accomplish the above objectives, the district will focus on propagating the policies and guidelines of the Central Government and Can Tho City on the development of the collective economy; Cooperative Law 2012, Decree 98/2018/ND-CP dated July 5, 2018, on policies to encourage the development of cooperation, linkage of production and consumption of agricultural products. Besides, the district will pay attention to training human resources to meet the management and administration. The district will also regularly survey and assess activities of cooperatives, cooperative groups and linkage models; thereby timely supporting the consolidation of the apparatus, guiding the operation and management skills, taking advantage of capital sources and project programs for cooperatives and cooperative groups.

Mr. Nguyen Truong Tho added: Co Do district would effectively apply preferential policies and incentives to create conditions for cooperatives to develop in accordance with the reality, combining the consolidation and development of cooperatives under the new rural development program with the need to develop the collective economy to become one of the key economic components of the district. ■



*In 2019, the production value per hectare cultivated in Co Do district reached VND174 million, an increase of VND38.33 million compared to 2015, while the average income reached VND53.5 million/person/year, up VND22 million compared to 2015. The above results are attributed to the district's focus on improving the quality of economic restructuring, promoting the efficiency of high-quality agricultural production models.*







## CAI RANG DISTRICT

# Efforts for Successful Socioeconomic Targets



In the 2015-2020 term, Cai Rang district has achieved 17 out of 18 of development targets as set in the Resolution of the 11th Party Congress. To learn about the district's goals in the next term, Vietnam Business Forum has an exclusive interview with Mr. **Le Thanh Tam**, Secretary of the Party Committee and Chairman of the People's Committee of Cai Rang District. **Duy Binh** reports.

**Could you please introduce some economic indicators for 2020 - 2025 term?**

The 12th Party Congress of Cai Rang district defined targets for the 2020 - 2025 term, specifically "Improving leadership of the Party Committee; building a strong political system; promoting the strength of great national unity; stepping up administrative reform, mobilizing all resources to modernize Cai Rang district and achieve rapid and sustainable economic development and better social security and people's life."

To achieve the above targets, the Cai Rang Party Committee has focused on mobilizing all available resources to build the district into a civilized and modern place; restructuring the economy by developing trade, services, tourism and urban agriculture; investing in rapid and synchronous infrastructure development, especially road traffic routes, seaports and waterway systems, to meet development and connectivity requirements. The district has built a contingent of qualified, reliable public employees to fulfil their political and professional tasks; effectively carried out the Resolution of the Central Party Committee (13th term) on strengthening the Party building and rectification in line with the Politburo's Directive 05-CT/TW on following the ideology, morality and manner of President Ho Chi Minh; and effectively achieved breakthroughs in improving the quality of human resources and sustainable urban development to complete all 19 targets defined in the Resolution of the District Party Congress.

**How will the district support investors and businesses in the coming time?**

In the past time, to help people and businesses scale up production and business activities, in addition to investing and upgrading road and waterway transportation systems to facilitate the trade of goods and business cooperation expansion with domestic and international companies, the Cai Rang People's Committee has constantly focused on improving the investment and business environment and launching business startup programs to build a favorable ecosystem for startups, and to inspire entrepreneurship among the people; provided policy support, business development instruments, investment funds, startup incubators, consulting activities, business maintenance and development. Investors involved in new urban area construction projects will be helped to clear ground for construction, land compensation, project implementation and project operation by the Cai Rang District People's Committee and relevant units. In addition, every week the district organizes regular meetings and dialogues with local enterprises to learn about their difficulties and problems to apply the best solutions.

In the coming time, the Party Committee, the government and the people of Cai Rang district will continue to create the most favorable conditions for enterprises, but investors must really devote themselves to their own business investment and to the common development of Cai Rang district.

**Thank you very much!**

## CAN THO OBSTETRICS HOSPITAL

# Completely Trusted Address for Pregnant Women and Patients

Can Tho Obstetrics Hospital was established in 2014 from the separation from Can Tho General Hospital. This is a first-grade hospital with 250 beds (planned to be doubled to 500 beds). It has 21 departments and the Center for Antenatal and Neonatal Screening - Diagnosis.



## Efforts for development and positioning

Before Can Tho Obstetrics Hospital was founded, every year thousands of people in Can Tho City and neighboring provinces in the Mekong Delta region had to go to Ho Chi Minh City for examination and treatment of complicated diseases of pregnant women or access to advanced techniques such as infertility and prenatal diagnosis. And, they had to spend a lot of money, time and health for this.

To solve this problem, Can Tho General Hospital proactively brought together obstetricians from some local hospitals to acquire advanced technology such as laparoscopic surgery, laparoscopic hysterectomy, and intrauterine insemination and established the Department of Infertility in 2010. This was the 13th unit in the country and the first in the Mekong Delta to apply in-vitro fertilization (IVF) technique with a quite high success rate.

In 2012, with training support and technology transfer from National Obstetrics Hospital, the University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Ho Chi Minh City and Tu Du Hospital, Can Tho General Hospital set up a prenatal diagnostic unit to provide counseling, designation and testing for prenatal and neonatal diagnostic tests. In 2013, the General Office of Population and Family Planning surveyed and selected this unit for upgrading to the Center for Antenatal and Neonatal Screening - Diagnosis to serve patients in the Mekong Delta.

Those important milestones laid the foundation for establishment of Can Tho Obstetrics Hospital on September 9, 2014. In October 2019, the Can Tho City People's Committee recognized it as a first-grade hospital, the largest obstetrics and gynecology hospital in the Mekong Delta.

To date, the hospital has always taken the lead in successfully applying endoscopic techniques to diagnosis and treatment of gynecological diseases, especially laparoscopic surgery for ovarian, uterine tumors and pelvic inflammatory diseases; expanding newborn screening techniques such as congenital heart disease and congenital hearing impairment; and deploying high technology in in-vitro fertilization and maternal care services.

In 2019, it applied the technique of screening congenital metabolic disorders for 50 patients (only Hanoi and Hue are able to perform this technique). In the field of neonatology, currently the hospital has adopted feeding techniques, mechanical ventilation, high-frequency ventilation, umbilical vein catheterization. It can raise a baby weighing over 550 grams and having a gestational age of about 27 weeks (32-week or older fetus has a survival rate of over 90%). Thereby, it helps protect infertility treatment outcomes.

In addition, the hospital has performed all common serious diseases during pregnancy such as placenta accreta, pre-eclampsia, placenta previa, cesarean scar pregnancy, mid-pregnancy heart disease and mid-pregnancy liver disease. It can perform examination, emergency, treatment and care for endogenous newborns to reduce the workload for Can Tho Pediatrics Hospital.

The hospital organized in-depth training on antenatal and neonatal screening - diagnosis as well as direction and supervision processes for health workers in 12 Mekong Delta provinces. It also built a network to receive test samples with dried blood drops on blotting paper from neighboring provinces and then transfer them to Antenatal and Neonatal Screening - Diagnosis Center. Screening results are provided through software to produce timely diagnosis, and ensure effective disease management and prevention.

At the same time, the hospital has stepped up health socialization policy to gain financial autonomy. Hospital quality management was focused and upgraded from Level 3 in 2015 to Level 5 in 2019. In 2018, through an independent survey by the Ministry of Health, the hospital was one of five leading units in the country with the highest satisfaction index.

Given those results, in 2019, the hospital was recognized by the Ministry of Health as "Excellent hospital for breastfeeding practice", and was awarded the Emulation Flag by the Prime Minister and the Certificate of Merit from the Vietnam Women's Union.

*(continued on P.53)*





## S.I.S CAN THO INTERNATIONAL HOSPITAL

# WHERE PATIENTS FULLY TRUST

The S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital (Stroke International Services Hospital) has examined and treated more than 50,000 patients (nearly half related to stroke and cardiovascular diseases) just since beginning operation on February 20, 2019. The S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital treats not only stroke patients but also patients carrying other diseases like musculoskeletal surgery, congenital heart, cancer and arrhythmias. Hence, people in the Mekong River Delta are increasingly confident in the hospital.

### Not only savior for stroke patients

Dr. Tran Chi Cuong, Director of S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital, said, the health sector has strongly developed machine technology, treatment techniques and protocols to give people with better medical care, and handle many diseases once considered 'incurable' like stroke in recent years. In the past, stroke was called apoplexy that resulted in lifetime consequences or even death. Current medicine clearly explains that stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is interrupted or reduced, preventing brain tissue from getting oxygen and nutrients. Brain cells begin to die in minutes without oxygen and nutrients. Then, doctors can treat it by placing tiny catheters in the lumen of the blood vessel to find the place where the vessel is blocked or clotted.

Also according to experts, stroke sufferers need prompt emergency services, otherwise they are highly likely to suffer immobility or even death because of dead brain cells. With a population of 17 million, the Mekong Delta has more than 10,000 strokes a year and patients are often referred to medical facilities in Ho Chi Minh City. Due to geographic distance and

traffic difficulty, more than 90% of stroke patients are brought to medical facilities in a "6-hour golden time" for the most effective treatment.

From the above difficulties and scientific and technological advances, S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital is a top-tier intensive stroke treatment facility in Can Tho City, the capital of the Mekong Delta, thus opening up new opportunities for local people. Costing VND500 billion, construction of the 200-bed hospital commenced on July 20, 2017, and it was put into full operation only 18 months later, starting from January 2019. With S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital, there is no longer a need for ambulance trips to transport stroke patients from the Mekong Delta to Ho Chi Minh City, and thus thousands of lives will be saved each year and serious stroke consequences avoided "because two million nerve cells are lost each minute," said Dr. Cuong. Established from urgent social need, S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital has become a savior for millions of Mekong Delta people. In fact, after 18 months of operation, it has successfully treated more than 20,000 stroke patients, even hopeless cases.

Mekong Delta people have urgent needs for not only

stroke treatment but also other diseases due to inadequate medical facilities. Seeing this, the leadership of S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital proposed and got licensed for deploying many at specialist medical services that remained undeveloped in the Mekong Delta such as high-tech musculoskeletal surgery, congenital heart intervention, early cancer diagnosis, cardiac arrhythmia treatment with high-frequency electrosurgery. With serious and methodical investment conducted by top-notch specialist doctors, S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital not only saves stroke patients, but also treats other diseases as trusted by its patients.

### Good personnel with good equipment

Up to now, it can be affirmed that S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital is one of the well-equipped medical facilities in the Mekong Delta, having even some equipment and machinery unseen elsewhere in the country. With 13,000 square meters of floor on 10 floors, the hospital is furnished with equipment such as sophisticated ultrasound apparatus for congenital heart diagnosis, 128-slice CT scanner, two MRI 3 Tesla scanners, two DSA scanners, the first to be installed in Asia, MRI Lumina 3Tesla screeners of tumors and stroke, world-class modern hybrid operating theaters equipped with versatile C-Arm microscopes, Monitor central systems for 24 hour patient tracking, digital switchboard stroke emergency call center, ambulance equipped with full heart-shock defibrillators and ambulance used as a mobile emergency room. Recently, on August 12, 2020, the hospital installed the latest two-surface DSA Icono Artis angiography system with a lot of outstanding features, the first hospital in Vietnam and Asia to use this system to achieve breakthroughs in stroke and cardiovascular interventions and optimize all DSA and CT functions, ready to be connected with future vascular intervention robots. This will be a training center for domestic and foreign vascular interventions.

Not only completing investment in infrastructure, medical machinery, and equipment, S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital is staffed by core experts, leading physicians who serve as senior advisors and appointed

*Each case of stroke treatment costs a lot of money, a truly difficult choice for poor patients. Thus, along with professional activities, S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital has funded many poor stroke patients. Nevertheless, due to limited medical resources, the hospital called for the establishment of the Charity Fund for the Poor Stroke Patients in the Mekong Delta to provide better support and got the approval of the Ministry of Home Affairs as in Decision 487/QD-BNV dated July 6, 2020. This is not only the joy of the founders of the Fund, but also a meaningful savior to poor stroke patients in Mekong Delta.*

doctors. In addition to sophisticated expertise and modern machinery, the hospital offers many special features: Leading hospital to build an animal test laboratory where doctors can practice a technique before it is applied to save people or using boats to provide water-based emergency aid for patients in the Mekong Delta.

Besides its core function of patient treatment, the hospital also trains specialized health workers and provides research and education services, especially in stroke diagnosis and treatment, thanks to its international cooperation with top hospitals and universities in the world like Erlanger Stroke Hospital (USA), Tennessee College of Medicine, Medicine Faculty - University of Toronto, Canada, Mahidol University Thailand, European Stroke Organization, and World Federation of Interventional and Therapeutic Neuroradiology (WFITN). For that reason, S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital is expected to be the center of

intensive practice training for domestic and foreign hospitals, organizer of international and regional conferences and seminars.

The name of S.I.S Can Tho International Hospital is becoming increasingly known to many more domestic and foreign patients seeking effective examination and treatment. Vietnamese patients do not need to go abroad for high-cost health check-ups. Dr. Cuong revealed that stroke treatment or cardiovascular treatment requires a long hospitalization. Currently, the hospital, although it is a 10-storey facility, is still crowded and with an increasing number of patients. Therefore, in the coming time, we do not know how to manage to provide the best services. So, we hope that the Can Tho government will consider our proposal for more space for expansion of specialties and inpatient treatment areas.

He also expressed concerned that every year, the country has more than 50,000 stroke patients but current health facilities fail to meet public demands. Currently, along with technical transfer cooperation with other medical facilities, we are planning to invest in SIS-model hospitals in Ho Chi Minh City, Binh Thuan, Da Nang, Hanoi and other localities and looking forward to receiving the attention and cooperation and conditions of investors and local authorities. ■





## VIETCOMBANK CAN THO PROMOTING TRADITION OF LABOR HERO UNIT

Over the past 30 years of development, Vietcombank Can Tho has always been an exemplary bank in thoroughly grasping and implementing the Party's guidelines, the State policies and laws, and contributing an important role in the national innovation and development and local socio-economic development.

**M**ore than 30 years ago, on October 1, 1989, Vietcombank marked its presence by establishing the 11th branch in the system in Can Tho city. Over the past 30 years of development, Vietcombank Can Tho Branch has always been an exemplary bank in thoroughly grasping and implementing the Party's guidelines, the State policies and laws, and contributing an important role in the national innovation and development and local socio-economic development. In the Vietcombank system, Can Tho Branch is always one of the outstanding branches with the most effective business operations in

the Southwest region.

The period 2015-2020 has seen many unfavorable factors in the economy. The banking industry has focused on directing the restructuring of the system, along with the fierce competition among credit institutions. Also during this period, the Vietcombank system has made many changes in operation strategy, perfected mechanisms and policies, and especially implemented a comprehensive transformation of business activities under the system restructuring project to 2020.

As a heroic unit, Vietcombank Can Tho has managed to overcome difficulties. The achievements are attributed to the efforts of the Branch's Board of Directors in management and

administration. The Branch's Board of Directors has firmly directed the comprehensive promotion of all aspects of operations, fostered retail development and individual credit growth; and enhanced the operational efficiency of transaction offices. Such efforts have been productive with great improvement in scale, structure and business efficiency, as well as governance. In the past five years, Vietcombank Can Tho has made impressive growth: capital mobilization has increased by 2.1 times, and credit by 2.5 times; of which retail credit has increased by 5.1 times; profit by 2.6 times; NPL ratio/total outstanding loans has decreased to 0.02%. The average profit per capita that contributed to the general profit of the branch in 2015 was at VND0.3 billion/person/year; by December 31, 2019, it reached VND1.52 billion/person/year, an increase of five times from 2015. The business activities shifted toward increasing the retail proportion, with retail accounting for over 70% of activities; income from services accounted for 25% or more of total income. Since the end of 2017, Vietcombank Can Tho has taken the lead in the market share in Can Tho city in terms of three targets of capital mobilization, credit and profitability, and has maintained this position until now.

In addition to well performing its business tasks, over the past years, Vietcombank Can Tho has paid special attention to social security, always actively participating in charity programs launched by the local government, such as: contributing to the poor children fund, supporting people suffering from natural disasters such as floods, building compassion houses, awarding scholarships to poor and studious students, and funding school construction. In the period 2015-2020, Vietcombank Can Tho directly acted as a focal point for the head office to sponsor social security for Can Tho City and Hau Giang province with the amount of more than VND62 billion.

With its achievements, Vietcombank Can Tho has received many noble titles from the Party and the State such as First Class, Second Class, and Third Class Labor Orders, and the noble Labor Hero title awarded by the State President. In particular, in the period 2015-2020, Can Tho Branch was awarded twice by the Governor of the State Bank with Emulation Flag and Merit; In 2018, it was awarded the Emulation Flag by the Prime Minister and Third Class Labor Order by the State President. In the Vietcombank system, Can Tho Branch was recognized for five consecutive years as a branch having successfully completed its tasks; operating with internal solidarity and unity, having good discipline, compliance with processes and regulations, and receiving no negative feedback or complaints from customers.

Effective business solutions and some experiences in emulation and commendation have been implemented at Can Tho Branch in recent time:

Firstly: Always following the direction of the banking industry, strictly complying with the provisions of law, and Vietcombank's procedures and regulations, applying appropriately within the economic situation of the region and locality, and in accordance with business practice at the branch. The Branch's Board of Directors has been careful in each activity, firm in direction and administration, and flexible in solving problems.

Secondly: Strongly shifting to retail activities, increasing revenue from non-credit activities, maintaining wholesale market share, thereby contributing to increasing profits.



Implementing effective retail operation by adopting many solutions such as: Identifying key customers and industries; building marketing policies, customer care for total sale of services; promoting the maximum exploitation of public administrative services to attract customers, increasing mobilized capital; strengthening brand promotion in public places; creating an open transaction place, and using considerate and professional service style; paying special attention to improving the operational efficiency of transaction offices; attaching importance to investing in modern facilities and training a team of professional leaders and sales for transaction offices.

Thirdly: Planning always ensures feasibility, timeliness and strict supervision; assigning specific responsibilities to each member of the Board of Directors and each head of groups of staff; Sticking to the daily and weekly progress of implementing the plan to take appropriate adjustment measures. Timely removing difficulties is necessary to have the job done quickly and effectively.

Fourthly: In terms of solutions for human resource management, the Branch has exploited the maximum potential of local human resources, arranged the right staff for the job, combined regular training, and updated new knowledge to meet the requirements of daily work.

Fifthly: It is necessary to strengthen the leadership of the Party Committee and Board of Directors in emulation and commendation work. The close and regular leadership and direction of the Party committees and authorities are decisive factors for effective and efficient emulation and commendation work. It is also important to well maintain emulation movements associated with rich and attractive commendation forms and timely reward to have strong effect on each individual and collective; look for ways to arouse the spirit of solidarity; the head of the branch must spread enthusiasm to all employees.

And finally: The coordination and solidarity between the Party Committee, Trade Union, Youth Union in performing professional tasks and in taking care of material life, improving income for employees, is key in creating a professional, equal and fair working environment, with appropriate treatment and commendation for employees' contributions.

Inheriting and promoting the proud tradition of the heroic unit and the core values of the people of Vietcombank, all employees of Can Tho Branch continue their efforts and strive to successfully complete their tasks in the new period. The recent achievements will be a solid foundation for Vietcombank Can Tho to conquer new heights. ■





Mr. Hoang Minh Nhut, Director of Hoang Minh Nhat JSC

## HOANG MINH NHAT JSC

# Building Close Links with Cooperatives and Farmers

Hoang Minh Nhat Joint Stock Company processes and sells rice in Can Tho City and neighboring provinces. In the past years, the company has adopted the company - cooperative - farmer business model to ensure the guaranteed purchase of agricultural products from cooperatives and farmers. This model has initially produced positive results and promoted business development.

Director Hoang Minh Nhut said, “I have worked in the food business for decades. At first, I ran a small business, purchased only 3,000 - 4,000 tons of paddy for processing each year on average and sold it to shops and agents. Doing this business, I realized a paradox: The Mekong Delta is the largest rice granary of the country but it has not built its own rice brand. Farmers just cultivate the paddy with traditional practices rather than adopting new methods based on the market demand. Moreover, agricultural production is often prone to natural disasters and pandemics, and product prices usually fall when the harvest is good, resulting in low income for farmers. Seeing this, I decided to establish Hoang Minh Nhat Joint Stock Company in 2006.”

With its nearly 15 years of experience in export rice production and processing, modern machinery and technology and an experienced workforce, Hoang Minh Nhat Joint Stock Company has now become a big rice supplier for Vietnam and for many countries in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

Staffed by young, dynamic, enthusiastic and highly qualified employees and directed by an experienced management team, Hoang Minh Nhat always provides high-quality products and services in domestic and international markets. With its right development directions, the company’s growth has been quite impressive in recent years. Starting with a relatively small production capacity in 2006, its scale doubled in 2008 and trebled in 2012. The sales increased from nearly VND100 billion in the first year to VND700-900 billion a year from 2012. Of all its products, the company directly exports 25-40% and sells 10% to domestic agents and 50-65% to exporters.

“In order to have a stable input supply, ensure product quality, meet domestic customer demand, and fulfil strict requirements imposed by importing markets, the company must establish close partnerships with cooperatives and farmers for these purposes and increase interest for all stakeholders,” he said. ■

QC



# GOLDLAND CON KHUONG

## CREATING PROSPERITY - UPLIFTING LIFE

Goldland Con Khuong, an urban area project invested by An Khuong Real Estate Company Limited, has now entered the sprint finish of its construction progress. A gradual formation of a modern, green city promises to create a classy, distinctive and attractive life in Can Tho City.

NGOC TUNG

### Highlighted new urban area

In recent years, the traffic infrastructure in Can Tho City has been constantly invested and developed, helping connect it seamlessly with localities in the region, Ho Chi Minh City and the whole country. As an economic - education - health center of the Mekong Delta, Can Tho has a lot of opportunities to attract investment and develop industrial, service, tourism and other sectors in the coming time, and draw a lot of experts, engineers and workers to work and live, resulting in high housing demand.

Grasping this trend, An Khuong Company launched Goldland Con Khuong Project under Decision 3591/QD-UBND dated December 1, 2015 of the Can Tho People's Committee. The project, covering 23.037 ha of land and costing over VND402 billion for



The leaders and engineers of An Khuong Company regularly inspect and urge on the progress of project implementation

construction, includes townhouse land (561 lots), villa land (43 lots), and social housing land (348 adjacent houses, equivalent to 20% of the residential land of the project). In addition, 2,164 square meters of land is used for multi-functional commercial and residential facilities.

As mentioned above, Can Tho, the capital of the Mekong Delta region, is changing robustly into a civilized and modern metropolis. Like Phu My Hung

Urban Area (in Ho Chi Minh City), Goldland Con Khuong, situated in Cai Khe Ward, Ninh Kieu District, is also planned to become the center of the city. Can Tho, with modern urban areas, meets development requirements in the new period.

Besides, the city set development requirements for Goldland Con Khuong with its own values. That is to keep regional styles in architectural construction, featured by low-rise houses, green space, airy and fresh climate, carry a modern "body" but still showing traditional virtues of southwestern people.

This requires investors to have devotion and vision and adherence to the city's leadership.

Goldland Con Khuong with a desire to create prosperity and uplift the value of life, has shaped a sizable modern urban area with very well-made design and synchronous infrastructure investment. Specifically, the investor arranged 87,607 square meters to build traffic infrastructure to ensure smooth connectivity and 10,485 square meters for educational works.

In addition, Goldland Con Khuong demonstrates the value of public service with essential amenities, such as an 18-story trade center, shophouses, amusement park, modern entertainment facilities, high-class resort and many other utility services. The highlight of the project is the 14,142-square meter park designed to create a green landscape, fresh air and a friendly living environment.

When the project was designed, the investor was sensitive to including the culture and humanity of the southwest as the hub. The living space is friendly to the environment and brings nature close to habitants. The houses are surrounded by green trees and grass to generate fresh and cool air. It is not only a place for families to live, but also a place to relax and enjoy life after tiring working hours.

Besides, according to the old concept, "the best place to live is near the market, the second best is near to the river." To build a house, a place near a river is preferred, because fertile soil is good for agriculture, a favorable waterway is good for trade development and the crowds will speed urbanization. According to feng-shui, the land near the river is the land of vitality and prosperity.

These elements are present in Goldland Con Khuong as it lies next to the Hau River, on the arterial trade route of the Mekong Delta, on fertile land where the green and coolness is seen and felt all year round. In addition, this place is also connected to Nguyen Van Cu Street, one of major and vibrant streets of Can Tho City. Interestingly, just across the Con Khuong Bridge, the bustling atmosphere gives way to tranquility and romance of Goldland Con Khuong "oasis".

### Attractive investment opportunity

Goldland Con Khuong has become a "magnet" to investors. To achieve its business development needs and bring profit to investors, the project developer has focused on developing shophouses and business streets to obtain best investment value.

"A row of townhouses, an 18-story shopping center, modern parks and entertainment facilities will release a new wind into the Can Tho real estate market, becoming a new center of entertainment and shopping for local residents and tourists," a representative of An Khuong Company affirmed.

With the motto "Prestige - Quality", right after taking on the project, An Khuong Company carefully selected contractors to meet construction requirements. Up to now, the project has already completed 82.56% of ground clearance; and levelled 320,000 cubic meters of sand (51.6% of designed volume).



Furthermore, the company has built over 50% of traffic infrastructure, drainage system and pavements and other facilities. The total disbursed budget is over VND202 billion.

From now to the end of the year, the company will accelerate investment for infrastructure construction, particularly social infrastructure (education, commercial centers and high-end apartments). It will complete utilities, services and trade facilities such as water parks, shophouses, villas, townhouses and serviced trade centers, and is expected to be put into operation in 2021 - 2022, fulfilling its commitment to the Can Tho City People's Committee.

According to a representative of An Khuong Company, promoting what it has achieved with Goldland Con Khuong New Urban Area, in the coming period, An Khuong Company will choose to invest in feasible projects, not only in Can Tho City but also in other potential localities in order to bring valuable products to customers. In this way, it can boost the name of An Khuong in the Can Tho real estate market in particular and in the Mekong Delta region in general. ■



Green space - the distinctive value of the Goldland Con Khuong urban area





Mr. Pham Trong Nghia, General Director of Pham Nghia Food JSC

During five years of developing products processed from bronze featherbacks, Pham Nghia Food Joint Stock Company (PHAM NGHIA FOOD) has always focused on building a chain of farming, processing, distribution and export to optimize the value of this specialty fish. Along with the principle of upholding the nutritional value, product quality and the health of consumers, PHAM NGHIA FOOD brand has step by step captured the trust of customers near and far.

## Pham Nghia Food JSC Bringing Bronze Featherbacks Far and Wide

### Raising the value of bronze featherbacks

A bronze featherback is a freshwater fish whose meat is supple, tough and very fragrant, and can be processed into many different dishes. In addition to the special taste, the fish also has high nutritional value and is good for health, so many people love it.

Realizing the great values from the bronze featherback and wishing more consumers to enjoy the dishes from this specialty fish, in 2015, Mr. Pham Trong Nghia (currently General Director of PHAM NGHIA FOOD) decided to start a business in the field of processing bronze featherbacks.

In the early days of his career, he had to go down to Soc Trang province to learn the process of raising bronze featherbacks. At the same time, he had to persuade local people to cooperate in fish farming and product consumption.

Mr. Nghia knew that only fostering that cooperation can ensure the scale of raw material areas to provide a stable supply for the processing. More importantly, fish materials will have a clear origin, ensuring the quality in accordance with the production standards of the company.

"At that time, I only had more than 10 employees, 50 square meters for my office and production area, so the processing output was only 50 to 60 kilograms per day. On the other hand, the products were also quite simple, only grilled fishes and whole fishes marinated with spices, so they did not meet all the needs of the market," recalled Mr. Nghia.

Facing that fact, he and his colleagues reassessed the processing process and market requirements to set the development direction. The key thing was to promote product research and development, creating

diverse, rich and novel products. In particular, it is necessary to show customers a clean processing process with safe products.

Therefore, PHAM NGHIA FOOD decided to invest intensively in three key areas: "farming area - factory and production process - customers".

After five years of efforts, up to now, the company has built a VietGAP-standard farming area in Ke Sach district (Soc Trang province) and a farming area of more than 10 hectares in Thoi Lai district (Can Tho city), meeting Global GAP standards. At the same time, it has continued to link production with local people, with the same process as the company's farming area; ensure commitment to purchasing and creating stable income for farmers.

For the processing process, raw fish is checked for quality before being caught and transported to the factory. Here, fish is produced according to the process meeting HACCP standards to ensure food quality, hygiene and safety. In particular, 2020 marks a big step forward for PHAM NGHIA FOOD, when the company applies the production line powered by the modern Japanese technology. Thanks to that, it has created more products from bronze featherbacks, rich in types, diversified in segments, with some high-end products with high added value.

From simple products made from bronze featherbacks initially, through hundreds of research projects and experiments, combining with other ingredients as well as grasping the needs of customers, PHAM NGHIA FOOD has released a lot of quality products. These include: Deli/Hapi Grilled Bronze Featherback, Hapi Kim Sa Deboned Bronze Featherback, Hapi



Bronze Featherback – Octopus Ball, Hapi Bronze Featherback – Shrimp Ball, Pham Nghia Pati Hotpot Ball.

### Gradually reaching international markets

Products from bronze featherbacks of PHAM NGHIA FOOD are now available in most major supermarkets such as: BigC (GO), LOTTE Mart, Co.opmart, MM Mega Market, Vinmart, AeonMall, Emart, and many other retail systems, distribution agents, affirming the brand and meeting the needs of customers.

Some rustic but attractive dishes are made from bronze featherback such as: deboned bronze featherback served with mango and raw vegetables; bitter melon hotpot with bronze featherback balls are always specialty dishes, chosen by tourists to enjoy when visiting Can Tho city. Therefore, PHAM NGHIA FOOD has focused on branding, well packaging, preserving products from bronze featherbacks, which are special gifts to visitors far and wide.

Besides, Mr. Pham Trong Nghia shared: "Currently, PHAM NGHIA FOOD is promoting cooperation with exporters to bring bronze featherback products to the international markets. Driven by the business philosophy of LSD: Lead, Speed, Differentiation, we believe that we will bring quality products to customers".

From the outstanding efforts and successes over time, PHAM NGHIA FOOD was honored with many prestigious awards such as: "Outstanding Agricultural Product Award 2017", "High Quality Vietnamese Goods - Standard integration in 2019" and many other certifications.

In addition, the products are also part of the "Safe Food Supply Chain Products".

The past five years is not a long way, but it is enough to mark the process of discovery, efforts and brand development of PHAM NGHIA FOOD. In the coming time, the company will continue to stay steadfast to the symbol of "Safe and Quality Food", contributing to enrich Vietnamese family's meals. ■



PHAM NGHIA FOOD JOINT STOCK COMPANY  
79T Nguyen Van Quy, Phu Khanh Area, Phu Thu Ward, Cai Rang District, Can Tho City  
Phone: 0292 3668 979; Website: [www.phamnghia.vn](http://www.phamnghia.vn)





With the “All for Success” mission, Cilaf & Partners is always a reliable address for businesses and investors. Cilaf & Partners helps clients to avoid legal risks and ensure legal safety when investing and doing business in Vietnam, especially in Can Tho City- the center of the Mekong Delta region.



Mr. Vo Hoang Tam, Managing Lawyer of Cilaf & Partners

## CILAF & PARTNERS LAW FIRM

### DELIVERING BEST LEGAL SOLUTIONS TO CLIENTS

**A**t Cilaf & Partners, experienced lawyers provide clients with legal advice on commerce, investment, business, contract, intellectual property, real estate, and dispute settlement among businesses, particularly listed businesses and those involved in pharmaceuticals, health, food, agriculture, education.

Currently, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused adverse impacts on the economy and businesses. A lot of investment and business activities are stalled and are at risk of closure, which will seriously affect the legal market, especially corporate clients. With its mission and service quality - a top priority of the firm, Cilaf & Partners is always trusted and chosen by clients for delivering legal services, especially in dealing with cases arising from the Covid-19 pandemic impacts to overcome current difficulties and build a solid future.

Mr. Vo Hoang Tam, Managing Lawyer of Cilaf & Partners, said, “With our professional personnel, Cilaf & Partners provides legal solutions in a dedicated - professional, understanding - sharing, comprehensive - rapid and optimal - safe manner. We understand that clients have increasing demands for higher service quality than what we provide, both quality and progress. Therefore, even staffed by highly qualified lawyers, we always have to improve our professional knowledge and skills to meet clients' rising requirements. In addition, we send lawyers and specialists to forums, training courses and legal support missions to help clients be vigilant on potential and existing legal risks in doing business in Vietnam.”

To make Vietnam a favored destination for foreign investors, the Government needs to promote Industrial Revolution 4.0, deploy electronic public administrative services, reform administrative procedures, and minimize

unnecessary paper documents. In Can Tho city in particular and Mekong Delta provinces in general, an online public service portal was also launched for businesses and investors to carry out legal procedures. Moreover, the professional and friendly receipt of investment documents and delivery of instructions on investment procedures are also positive points to attract foreign investment in the Mekong Delta, especially in Can Tho city.

In the near future, the investment wave will roll strongly in Vietnam when the CPTTP and EVFTA agreements come into effect, and there are many favorable conditions in the Investment Law 2020 and the Enterprise Law 2020, which are scheduled to take effect on January 1, 2021. Clean energy, agribusiness, food production and pharmaceuticals will be potentially invested by European investors in Vietnam. Before this opportunity, Cilaf & Partners will research, assess and analyze advantages and disadvantages of new agreements and laws for its clients through legal newsletters at its website [cilaf.vn](http://cilaf.vn). At the same time, Cilaf &

Partners will organize seminars for clients to grasp their requests and give them legal advice promptly. ■





# Sustainable Chains Needed for Businesses to Tap EVFTA



The signing and enforcement of the EVFTA not only brings opportunities for export growth but also helps Vietnam's agricultural sector accelerate restructuring, with focus placed on competitiveness enhancement through product quality, traceability and packaging, helping Vietnam's agricultural, forest and aquatic products integrate deeply into global supply chains. Vietnam Business Forum has an exclusive interview with Mr. **Pham Thai Binh**, General Director of Trung An High-Tech Agriculture Joint Stock Company, on this issue. **Duy Binh** reports.

**EVFTA already came into effect. As a reputable rice exporter, how do you assess new opportunities for Vietnamese agricultural companies?**

EVFTA will really be a golden opportunity, creating a strong boost for export of agricultural, forest and aquatic products, especially strong and competitive products such as seafood, vegetables, rice, cashew, coffee, pepper and woodwork.

Agricultural imports currently account for about 8.4% of the EU's total imports. Therefore, Vietnam still has room to expand agricultural, forest and aquatic exports to this huge consumer market.

EVFTA has the highest level of commitment that an FTA partner gives to Vietnam (99% of import tariff lines will be eliminated in 7-10 years), especially for some strong agricultural exports of Vietnam like rice, seafood, coffee and vegetables.

Needless to say, EVFTA helps Vietnamese businesses easily take part in a "level playing field" where businesses must assert themselves, must be aware that they not only build brands for themselves but also build a national brand.

**It is said that the cooperation chain among businesses, farmers and cooperatives in Vietnam is currently unsustainable. What do you think about this issue?**

Vietnam's economy is increasingly integrated into the world economy. However, in the agricultural sector, many Vietnamese agricultural products do not have a strong brand in the

market. Therefore, building and developing the agricultural product value chain to meet market needs is an urgent requirement in the current context of deep integration.

Recently, many places have set up synchronous value chains in production, processing and consumption of agricultural, forest and aquatic products, engaged by enterprises, cooperatives, and farmers. With the introduction of support and incentive policies by the Government and central agencies for businesses and cooperatives to form production and consumption chains, Vietnam has established development chains at three levels: National key product, provincial key product and local product. To focus resources on developing value chains for key agricultural products in the country, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam has issued a list of those products at national level to shape investment priorities in the agricultural and rural development according to Decree 57/2018/ND-CP with 13 key products, including rice, coffee, rubber, cashew, pepper, tea, vegetables, fruits, cassava, pork, meat and eggs, pangasius, shrimp and woodwork.

Accordingly, closed value chains of national key products from production to consumption have been gradually completed. Especially, the rice value chain has been implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development for the past 10 years. Many localities, businesses, cooperatives and farmers have joined the value chain. However, due to the lack of specific policy

“

*In order to export all the quotas that the EU has granted and increase the quotas for the following years, the only way that the Vietnamese rice industry can go is producing and cultivating rice in a sustainable manner and strictly adhering to market requirements. To be more specific, it must apply large-field cultivation and boost cooperation with farmers.*

”

solutions for capital resources, the value chain based on contractual production and consumption is still very weak.

**For your part, how have you prepared to seize EVFTA opportunities?**

Trung An Company already brought its products to Europe before the EVFTA came into effect. We have prepared to export our products to demanding markets such as Europe, America, Australia and Singapore since 2011.

To meet quality requirements in the European market, we have focused on applying large-scale farming methods directed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. We have advocated direct cooperation with farmers for mutual benefits. At present, Trung An is proud to be one of companies selected by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development as a model for developing large-scale fields in the Mekong Delta for scale-up to other regions.

We are currently running 30,000 ha of rice fields that meet export requirements.

More specifically, Trung An uses 6,000 ha in Kien Giang province (800 ha owned by the Company) to grow rice that meets Global G.A.P standards and grow organic rice to meet fastidious customer demands for quality (free from pesticide residue). Up to now, 615 ha has been granted GlobalG.A.P certification and 100 ha has been certified by Organic Certification of the U.S. and Europe. Depending on actual market demand, the Global G.A.P. and Organic acreages will be expanded on the remaining area. Notably, unlike other farmers' fields, its 800 ha of land used to be in a primitive Melaleuca forest and cultivated rice with Organic and Global G.A.P standards from 2015. Therefore, the remaining 700 ha can meet organic farming standards at any time rather than spending time on improving the soil for three years like other traditional fields.

With such preparations, at the beginning of July 2020, Trung An successfully exported three containers of Trung An-branded rice (TRUNG AN RICE) to France. "This is the first time a Vietnamese-branded rice product is directly sold to European consumers".

Thank you very much!

(from P.31)

**Speeding up administrative reform and business support**

In recent years, administrative procedure reform is always a matter of concern and focus of the Party and the government of O Mon district to build a clean, strong, modern, effective and efficient system of government agencies, enhance democracy of administrative agencies, create a fair, convenient, transparent business environment, and practically support enterprises of all economic sectors.

Clearly defining the role and importance of administrative reform in local administration and development in all fields, O Mon district has actively directed concerned agencies and localities to boost administrative reform in the past time. In the coming time, the district will continue to actively carry out many consistent solutions to improve the business investment environment by promoting administrative procedure reforms for greater publicity and transparency; effectively applying the single-window mechanism and reducing service fees.

At the same time, the district will further inspect and review legal documents and regulations, create a simple and open legal corridor, widely apply information technology in local agencies and enterprises to enhance operational efficiency in many fields, like finance - banking, telecommunications, information and administration.

As the success of investors is also the success of O Mon, the district will be a reliable place for domestic and foreign investors to do business. The government of O Mon district is committed to supporting investors when they invest in the locality.

Given potential advantages and open investment policy, O Mon district is confident to grow strongly and become a favored destination for investors in the coming years.■





POWER GENERATION CORPORATION 2

## Determined to Perform “Dual Tasks” Well

Given the reemergence of the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, Power Generation Corporation 2 (EVNGENCO 2) is resolute to perform well its dual tasks: Preventing and controlling the Covid-19 pandemic and ensuring the electricity supply for socioeconomic development and people’s livelihoods, especially providing safe and stable electricity for local production, hospitals, quarantine facilities and medical facilities for infected and suspected Covid-19 patients.

### Ensuring safe, uninterrupted and stable power supply

In 2020, EVNGENCO 2 will strive to allocate 18,347 million KWH of electricity for the country’s socioeconomic development. With this output target, EVNGENCO 2 has launched solutions and thoroughly directed its member companies to ensure safe, continuous and stable power supply, especially for economic activity amid the complicated Covid-19 pandemic development. EVNGENCO 2 has proposed specific solutions as follows:

Strengthening technical management of generators to ensure continuous safe and reliable operation according to the direction of the National Load Dispatch Center, ensure availability of

generators (e.g. thermal power units); carefully preparing fuel, materials, equipment, and human resources to meet requirements of the National Load Dispatch Center; carrying out projects to improve the reliability and operational effect of coal-fired thermal power plants, implementing a pilot coal burning program, developing an ash and slag treatment project and ensuring the environment for coal-fired thermal units; strengthening management and strict supervision to ensure progress and quality of repairing units; keeping track of hydrological situations to use water efficiently, following market developments to have the most optimal bidding strategy and working out response plans to ensure water supply for irrigation, agriculture and downstream livelihoods; actively preventing and quickly overcoming consequences of natural disasters, ensuring safety in the rainy season; and researching, developing and applying Technology 4.0 to production and business to improve operational efficiency and increase labor productivity,

with focus placed on equipment maintenance and operational optimization.

### Developing clean energy projects

To scale up and supplement development sources and create a foundation for continuous development, EVNGENCO 2 always pays close attention to investing in clean energy projects, mainly wind power projects and solar power projects.

It realizes renewable energy potential by investing in construction of solar power plants to complete power production targets, complete green development strategy and response to climate change in Vietnam.

This clean energy source enables the company to help the Prime



Mr. Truong Hoang Vu, General Director of EVNGENCO 2, delivers a speech at the conference on review of work in 2019 and deployment of tasks for 2020

Minister’s commitments on climate change to the United Nations, increase the share of renewable energy in the Vietnamese electricity system according to the Prime Minister’s Decision 2068/QĐ-TTg dated November 25, 2015, on the Vietnam renewable energy development strategy to 2030, with a vision to 2050, and the Prime Minister’s Decision 428/QĐ-TTg dated March 18, 2016, on the adjusted National Electricity Development Plan in 2011-2020, with a vision to 2030.

EVNGENCO 2 clearly defines clean energy development as a policy of the Party and Government. Hence, over the past years, it has actively searched for investment opportunities in this category. Up to now, the firm has launched investment in clean energy projects as follows:

Typical projects include Huong Phung Wind Farm 1, Cong Hai Wind Farm 1 (Phase 2), Rooftop Solar Power Farm at An Khe KaNak Hydropower Company (Quy Nhon City - Binh Dinh province), Quang Tri Hydropower Company, Song Bung Hydropower Company (Da Nang City) and Can Tho Thermal Power Company.

Besides, to modify current projects, EVNGENCO 2 has asked for projects to study biomass fuel burning solutions instead of HFO oil for S4 turbines of Can Tho Thermal Power Plant; launched procedures for planning Quang Tri Solar Power project; deployed additional planning procedures for floating solar power projects on lakes and reservoirs of hydropower plants like An Khe, KaNak and Quang Tri. Moreover, EVNGENCO 2 has taken additional planning procedures for floating solar power projects on lake beds of hydropower plants managed by other companies like Thac Mo and Ba Ha hydropower reservoirs.

Mr. Truong Hoang Vu, General Director of Power Generation Corporation 2, said, “In the coming time, all employees of EVNGENCO 2 will strive for effective business and ensure financial health; endeavor to achieve stable and reliable operation norms and improve production efficiency to reach five-year targets (2016-2020). EVNGENCO 2 will complete equitization of the parent company under the direction of the Government, the State Capital Management Committee; thoroughly apply Industry 4.0 achievements to increase labor productivity, enhance governance capacity, prepare best conditions to take over investment projects from Vietnam Electricity (EVN) like O Mon 5, Pha Lai 3 and Tan Phuoc thermal power plants. EVNGENCO 2 always strives to become a sustainable, environment-friendly and socially responsible company.” ■

(from P.37)

## Further improving quality and scale

Senior Specialist Physician Nguyen Huu Du, Director of Can Tho Obstetrics Hospital, said, in the 2020 - 2025 period, the hospital will continue to effectively carry out the On-demand Examination and Treatment Project, Loan Socialization for Development of Services Project, self-contained services and reproductive health care needs. It will establish some more departments such as Gynecological Cancer, Endoscopic Surgery, and Pathology.

To achieve the above objectives, the hospital will continue to improve facilities to have 500-700 beds, further train employees, especially through international cooperation. Recently, it cooperated with MEET (U.S.) to send two doctors to short-term intensive training in obstetrics, gynecology and fertility at the University of Washington.

Besides, to develop techniques for in-vitro fertilization and to establish a fertility support center, in 2020, the hospital held an intensive seminar on IVF techniques and introduced 10 years of application, with 770 babies born with this technique.

In addition, after being upgraded, the center can treat all cases of neonatal diseases and preterm pregnancy; speed up prenatal screening diagnosis; and build operating rooms that meet standards of the Ministry of Health and soon international standards.

“We will continue to standardize principles and conducts of medical staff, enable patients to access services and increase patient satisfaction and confidence. We will affirm our hospital’s brand reputation and increasingly elevated position to be a completely trusted address for pregnant women and patients in the Mekong Delta region,” said Director Nguyen Huu Du. ■



PHUSA BIOCHEM

# Joint Effort to Respond to Covid-19

The business community, including PhuSa Biochem Co., Ltd, has joined forces with the whole country to contain the Covid-19 epidemic since its outbreak in early 2020.

## Working together to deal with Covid-19

On January 20, 2020, Mr. Hoang Quoc Cuong, Director of the Pasteur Institute of Ho Chi Minh City, contacted and requested PhuSa Biochem Company for emergency supply of WHO's E-Sarcobe to conduct diagnostic tests on the first two suspected novel coronavirus infection cases in Vietnam, hospitalized at Cho Ray Hospital, because Vietnam did not receive this product from WHO at that time. With this kit of biological products, Cho Ray Hospital promptly detected the first two infections.

At about 7:30 p.m. on January 22, 2020 (28th day of the 12th lunar month), Mr. Ngo Anh Tin, Director of the Can Tho Department of Science and Technology, announced that he had received a phone call from Dr. Hoang Quoc Cuong to ask for a company capable of quickly manufacturing coronavirus test kits, referred to the WHO kit. This was a special science and technology research from the department, used for an emergency time and deployed in just three months. After having carefully considered, Mr. Tin decided to recommend inviting the Pasteur Institute of Ho Chi Minh City and PhuSa Biochem to join the research. With its long history and knowledge of technology, PhuSa Biochem is a leader of molecular biotechnology in Vietnam with a lot of recognized achievements. Since then, PhuSa Biochem has cooperated with the Science and Technology Center under the Can Tho Department of Science and Technology to launch the project in February 2020. Closely supervised by experts, in June 2020, the research project was rated excellent by a specialist council and effectively served for the supply of biomolecules for quick detection of novel coronavirus (nCoV).

Along with the department-level research project, PhuSa Biochem also asked Mr. Truong Hoang Phuoc, Deputy Director of the Can Tho Department of Science and Technology, and Dr. Nguyen Huu Thanh from An Giang University, for support to propose a ministry-level research project to the Ministry of Science and Technology to deploy a Covid-19 pandemic screening system using the company's existing technology platforms such as PCR, SPOTCHECK and bio-diagnostic assay. With the research project, the Ministry of Science and Technology assigned the task of producing the SPOTCHECK PCR rapid detection system to detect the SARS-CoV-2 strain (including 20 test devices with 20,000 test kits). On September 15, PhuSa Biochem together with the ministry presented four SPOTCHECK PCR systems and 1,200 test kits to the Ministry of Health for Covid prevention. The company's SPOTCHECK PCR systems and kits marked an important milestone of Vietnam's science and technology - completely creating technology, equipment and biological



Mr. Ngo Quoc Nam, Director of PhuSa Biochem

products from domestic supplies. PhuSa Biochem's SARS-CoV2 test systems feature an 80% localization rate, likely to be 95% in the coming time. Thus, the company can control the product cost and run mass production lines by itself. Working well in the climatic conditions in Vietnam, PhuSa Biochem's test kits are designed to withstand ambient temperatures. No refrigeration system is necessitated for maneuvering, storage and transportation. The lightweight apparatus is designed to be used in fieldwork and powered by a 12V adapter. Most importantly, given mass epidemic screening, real-time PCR machines will be in shortage. PhuSa Biochem's SPOTCHECK PCR systems will make use of existing PCR machines in Vietnam for the screening program. Combined with a SPOTCHECK machine and four 96-well PCR cyclers, 480 samples can be processed every 3 hours and 1,920 samples in every 12 hours. The cost for this combination is around VND200 million. Meanwhile, four real-time PCR cyclers with the same capacity cost VND7.2 billion.

## Mastering science and technology

At present, the application of molecular biology in diagnostics has been highly developed in the world, but Vietnam still has to depend on imported equipment and biological products. Desiring to address this reliance and follow the government policy on Technology 4.0 Program, PhuSa Biochem has spent ongoing efforts in three years from 2017 to 2020 to develop a PCR cycler and SPOTCHECK system for scientific research application and molecular diagnosis. In addition to this system, PhuSa Biochem has also successfully produced biological products such as primers, probes and EZ-Mix made from domestic supplies. PhuSa Biochem owns five U.S. patents relating to primers, which have been exported to many world-leading primer producers like Sigma -Aldrich (US), Eurogentec (Europe), BGI (China), T4 Oligo (Mexico) and Biontech (Germany).

According to Mr. Nam, the Oligo market in the world is

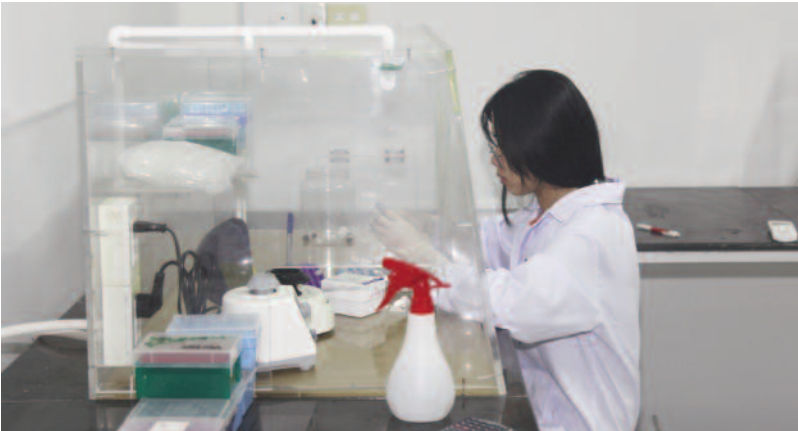
worth some US\$2 billion, engaged by about 50 major companies and many smaller producers. With 12 years of working experience in Vietnam and know-how taken from its American predecessor, PhuSa Biochem has striven to be in the World Top 50 Oligo suppliers in the near future. In recent years, the company has focused on expanding the domestic market but still faced certain obstacles, mainly due to customers' preference to foreign brands. The price of PhuSa Biochem's products is two-thirds that of U.S. competitors because they are made in Vietnam with lower production and shipping costs.

In addition to bio-products, since 2018, PhuSa Biochem has successfully produced PCR cyclers and electrophoresis machines with Vietnamese technology, featured with good quality and reasonable price and highly appreciated by scientists. These products are exported to some countries, particularly Mexico.

After 12 years of operation, PhuSa Biochem has affirmed its solid development and standing on the market as a science and technology firm, and successfully realized the policy on "Vietnamese technology for Vietnamese biology", and the principle "Know-how, core technology and product quality make customer confidence".

*Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology regularly uses PHUSA products, especially oligos, and is satisfied with the quality, price, delivery and responsibility of the company. On quality, most PHUSA oligos successfully work for PCR the first time. On price, they are relatively cheap (IDT is usually 1-1.5 times more expensive). The company's delivery is fast. Usually after three days from the date of receipt of the order, the products are delivered (compared to 1-3 weeks if ordered from IDT in Vietnam or before 12:00 in the next day if ordered from Sigma after 19:00 the day before). If any technical problem occurred, the company quickly handled it for customers with a very high responsibility and valuable support. Its PCR cyclers and 7-pin electrophoresis imager systems are suitable and affordable for small-scale research and service facilities which do not require advanced technology. However, high-frequency facilities will not easily accept the products due to some features as I reviewed in detail last time.*

**Dr. Nguyen Hai Ha - Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology (VAST)**



*PhuSa Biochem's products have very competitive prices. The delivery is quick. The website for placing purchase orders is simple, convenient and easy to manage the orders. Customer care and after-sale services are perfect. The company really supports and meets what our research team needs.*

**Ass. Prof. of Biotechnology Tran Van Hieu - University of Natural Sciences, Vietnam National University of Ho Chi Minh City**

## Entrepreneur Ngo Quoc Nam: Bringing Know-how to Enrich Hometown

Entrepreneur Ngo Quoc Nam, Director of PhuSa Biochem, was born in 1957 in Vietnam. In 1974, he went to study in France, and graduated with a master's degree in organic synthesis and molecular biology from the Conservatoire national des arts et métiers (CNAM). After more than 20 years of studying and working in France, he was invited to work in the United States by Affymetrix Company (the first biochip maker in the world). After five years working with Affymetrix, he founded CTGen Company that provided products for the biotechnology industry for more than 10 years. He had thought that he would have a good life and a good working environment in the United States, but he gradually decided to redirect his life after his return to his hometown in 2005.

In 2008, he returned to Vietnam to "make something for his homeland" with his five patents of chemical technology and molecular biology being his most valuable assets. He established PhuSa Biochem, whose name implied that it would become a new technology incubator and foster innovations in scientific research and application for young scientists in Vietnam. He invested US\$1 million for PhuSa Biochem, making it offshore producer for CTGen to manufacture synthetic substrates for oligonucleotides in the solid phase synthesis and supplier for Oligo synthetic companies in the world such as Sigma (U.S.) and Eurogentec (EU).

When he started the business in Vietnam, apart from basic construction, he directly trained each specialist group in the narrow array of genetic engineering and also taught other skills in professional activity.

Currently, PhuSa Biochem is headquartered in Ninh Kieu District (Can Tho City), which is considered the "brain" of training, research, know-how transfer and business management. The company also has facilities at the Application Center subordinated to the Can Tho Department of Science and Technology to manufacture ISO13485-standard kits and machines.



## DXMT Corporation Increasingly Affirms Position in Mekong Delta



After more than two years of operation and development, Dat Xanh Mien Tay Corporation (DXMT) has become a major real estate brand in Can Tho City in particular and the Mekong Delta in general. The company thus contributes significantly to local socioeconomic development, especially in real estate.

Vietnam Business Forum has an interview with Mr. **Duong Quoc Thuy**, CEO of DXMT Corporation, on this content and his thoughts on market opportunities in this difficult context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### Early brand affirmation

#### What factors make DXMT successful?

DXMT was established on February 1, 2018 as a member company of Dat Xanh Group (DXG) - one of leading real estate investors and distributors in Vietnam. After more than two years of efforts, DXMT has achieved certain successes in developing the workforce to more than 600 employees in three member companies and transaction offices in Can Tho, An Giang, Tien Giang, HCM City and Dong Nai.

In particular, DXMT has affirmed its brand reputation and strengthened customer and investor trust in Can Tho City and in the Mekong Delta.

To achieve these successes, first of all, we always base on DXG's core values: "Aspiration - Integrity - Professionalism - Humanity". Rising up with the desire to conquer new lands of enterprising young people, we are determined to promote the strength of our employees to deliver true value to customers.

In addition, DXMT focuses on developing a corporate culture of distinctive identity built on humanity - a key appeal to attract talents and apply the best remuneration regimes in the Mekong Delta. DXMT builds a professional, modern and cohesive working environment, becomes a peaceful place to live and offers ample opportunities for young people to assert themselves.

Together with business development, social security is always the most important task for us. Therefore, within its capacity, DXMT always stands by local authorities to launch voluntary activities and improve community responsibility. In the past time, we have taken part in many community development programs like presenting gifts to poor students with good study records, building charity houses, supporting Can

Tho City to deal with drought, salinity and the Covid-19 pandemic, joining hands with the poor to take action for a green environment.

**Could you tell us about your investment and development strategy from now to 2025? Which business philosophy will you adopt to promote your brand?**

With our well-established prestige and increasingly professional service quality, we have become a strategic partner of large real estate corporations and developed many residential and urban projects in Can Tho City and the Mekong Delta.

We outlined our strategic plans and goals with important milestones: Becoming one of five best real estate developers in the Southwest region by 2022 and the best real estate developer in the Southwest region by 2025.

We will focus on developing a variety of quality housing real estate products for different consumer demands in the Mekong Delta with a diversified business ecosystem consisting of Investment - Construction - Distribution and bring optimal investment and settlement solutions for customers.

Since inception, we have always adhered to the business principle "We build trust from building your house"; placing service quality and brand reputation on top; constantly modernizing human resources training and development processes; renovating business strategies, diversifying real estate product structures to meet increasing customer demands. This will also be a "guideline" for us to sustain in development in the coming time.

### Bright opportunities for the real estate market

**As the Vice Chairman of Can Tho City Real Estate Association, what do you think about the recovery of the real estate market of Can Tho and Mekong Delta amid the Covid-19 pandemic?**

The Covid-19 pandemic has spread on a large scale and heavily affected all industries, including the real estate sector, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and startups.

The severity of the post-Covid-19 economy forces businesses to quickly adapt to new situations, retain good employees and strengthen strong financial potential to maintain business operations.

Of course, to ensure growth or just maintain operations, they largely depend on the market.

Compared to Hanoi City and Ho Chi Minh City, the absorption of the Can Tho real estate market is relatively stable. For example, in the first six months of 2020, real estate deals in the two largest cities equaled to 14% in the same period of 2019 but this figure was over 30% in the Mekong Delta. Entering the third quarter, the market looked up as transactions increased, reaching 70-80%. This showed that the property demand of Can Tho citizens was very high, especially in projects near commercial areas, schools,



administrative centers and industrial parks.

Can Tho City, the capital of the Mekong Delta, attracts a large number of people in other provinces to live and work. Boosted by accelerated urbanization rate, it is certain that Can Tho real estate will still grow well in the coming time.

Moreover, real estate prices in the downtowns of Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi are currently very expensive while the supply is becoming scarcer. This has stimulated people to move to satellite residences, including the Southwest.

**So, for you, what are the opportunities for the real estate market in the Mekong Delta?**

According to industry insiders and experts, the current real estate market of Can Tho has many opportunities to accelerate. First of all, infrastructure has been constantly developed. For example, Trung Luong - My Thuan Expressway will technically open for vehicles by the end of this year. My Thuan - Can Tho Expressway is expected to be completed in 2023. When the entire expressway is completed, the real estate market of Can Tho and Mekong Delta will surely grow rapidly.

Furthermore, the Prime Minister recently agreed to invest over VND47 trillion to build Can Tho - Ca Mau Expressway in 2021-2025. The expressway meets long-awaited expectations of Mekong Delta people, not only creating a boost in infrastructure development for neighboring provinces but also strongly attracting investment flows, particularly for the tourism segment. Since then, socioeconomic development in general and real estate development in particular in the Mekong Delta have been strengthened.

The government has invested in 11 highways in the Mekong Delta to link Ho Chi Minh City, the Southeast of Vietnam and Cambodia. Additionally, the Mekong Delta is endowed with good climate, terrain and soil to become the largest granary and the largest fruit basket of the country. Can Tho, An Giang, Kien Giang and Dong Thap, especially the urban strip of Can Tho - Rach Gia - Phu Quoc, have focused on developing tourism services and trade connection.

From this perspective, the Mekong Delta has great potential for development, especially opportunities for industrial real estate, tourism real estate and residential real estate, especially affordable apartments and condominiums sold for VND1-2 billion each is falling short and also very attractive to customers. If they catch up with this trend and capture market demand, real estate companies will certainly develop very well.

**Thank you very much!**



CAN THO PORT JSC

Delivering Productive and Flexible Solutions



“In recent years, Can Tho Port Joint Stock Company has stepped up the introduction of many solutions like consolidating the staff, reshuffling workflows, seeking new customers, and improving service quality to expand effective business operations and elevate the role of Can Tho Port in the development of the Mekong Delta,” said Mr. **Nguyen Van Phuong**, General Director of Can Tho Port Joint Stock Company. **Duc Binh** reports.

**Would you introduce notable business results in 2019? What solutions have you taken to reduce the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic?**

In 2019, we obtained outstanding achievements. The cargo throughput reached 2,011,706 tons, up 18.77% over 2018. Revenue climbed 26.32% to VND125 billion and the net profit set a multi-year high of VND3.9 billion. We have linked with many domestic and foreign shipping lines to develop logistics service chains, notably a straw container chain from Soc Trang Port to the central region with a monthly shipment of 100 TEUs. We also invested in expanding a general warehouse of 3,000 square meters to bring our total warehouse area to 35,000 square meters, the highest in the region.

In 2020, due to the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, trading activity shrank and transportation plummeted

**role for Mekong Delta development?**

We have adopted many solutions to increase the value to our shareholders. Specifically, the port leadership regularly gives its opinions to central and local agencies on appropriate policies for infrastructure development, especially sea and inland waterway infrastructure and service charge policies at seaports. We have also cooperated with shipping lines and forwarders to develop services through subordinated ports, especially container cargo handling; and increased investment funds for post-port infrastructure and equipment installation to upgrade loading and unloading capacity to better serve customers.

Moreover, we have stepped up restructuring the operating model; applied technologies to port operations and management; focused on environmental protection at ports; and improved working conditions.

sharply. Cargo throughput decreased by 15.56% from the same period in 2019 (to 926,800 tons) but our revenue was still as high as VND57,315 billion. This outcome came from our solutions to increase customer support by reducing stevedoring service prices, providing chain services, and value added services at warehouses to reduce costs; coordinating with shipping lines to develop import and export logistics service chains through the port. Especially in June 2020, we inaugurated a 40-ton 28m-range crane capable of serving container ships of 600-1,000 TEUs at Cai Cui Terminal. This was an important premise for us to develop shipping lines/container barge routes to the Mekong Delta.

**What are specific solutions you have taken to promote your**

**Digitization is affecting all industries globally including the logistics industry. At Can Tho Port, how has digitization been applied?**

Digitization and digitized management are fundamental and urgent requirements of each country, industry and locality. Industry, agriculture, finance and especially logistics are taking the lead in digitalization application, big data management, internet of things (IoT), automation, artificial intelligence, and robotic application to operating processes.

In the past three years, Can Tho Port has applied the port management and operation software. Port operations are essentially digitized, from input (production orders) to outputs (e-invoices). The software application has accelerated the confirmation of port services and receipt of service invoices via email. Customers do not need to go to the port to check in or receive invoices for services. All information related to port operations is recorded, updated on the port management and operation software and is connected with competent authorities like customs and taxation.

In the coming time, Can Tho Port will continue to operate container cargo management software to meet information exchange requirements between shipping lines and international logistics firms with the port to develop container depots, strengthen the foundation for attracting more ship lines and logistics service chain for imports and exports through the port.

**How have you prepared to capture opportunities as Vietnam integrates more deeply with the EU and ASEAN?**

Logistics is the first industry to

benefit from international integration because goods are easily circulated. Developing logistics chains will be easier. As an integrated seaport in the Mekong Delta region, Can Tho Port has applied solutions for strong integration. Specifically, we have invested in cranes, established container depots, and attracted shipping lines to open container transport routes. We also signed an MOU with Phnom Penh Autonomous Port to develop a route for container barges on the Mekong River from Phnom Penh to Cai Cui Port for transshipment to ocean shipping mode.

We are calling on international logistics companies to cooperate in the investment and operation of large-scale modern warehouse and yard infrastructure systems to lay the groundwork for major logistics businesses to invest more in a 241.4-ha regional logistics center in Can Tho City right behind Cai Cui Port. Can Tho Port is one of founding members of the Vietnam Ports Association (VPA), regularly coordinates with VPA members to organize exchange events with members of the ASEAN Ports Association (APA).

**How do you assess the support of Can Tho City?**

To provide favorable conditions for companies to invest in business development, Can Tho City should further support them by asking the central authorities for upgrading navigational channels into seaports in the region; proposing mechanisms and policies to attract international logistics firms to invest in regional logistics centers in Can Tho City; and creating more favorable conditions for companies to import and export goods through seaports in the region.

**Thank you very much!**

“As the largest seaport in the Mekong Delta, Can Tho Port currently operates two seaports, Cai Cui Port and Hoang Dieu Port, with a total berth length of 667 meters capable of serving 20,000-DWT ships and a total surface area of more than 28 ha. In addition, Can Tho Port is operating Soc Trang river port with a 200-meter berth and an area of 2 ha.”





## CAN THO LOTTERY COMPANY

# Efforts to Overcome Hardship and Share with the Society



More than 10 years after being transformed into a one-member limited company, Can Tho Lottery Co., Ltd has achieved many breakthroughs, strengthened the organizational apparatus and corporate governance, and gradually become one of the largest and most prestigious lottery companies in the country.

NGOC TUNG

### Comprehensive innovation

Currently, Can Tho Lottery Company has a total of 101 agents active in 19 out of 21 southern provinces and cities, which directly distribute tickets to customers. In the past years, the company has replaced the manual lottery wheel with the advanced electronic lottery wheel imported from the United States to fit the lottery equipment modernization policy of the Ministry of Finance and Can Tho City People's Committee, aiming to ensure the highest transparency and objectivity, and secure absolute confidence of customers and authorities.

Can Tho Lottery Co., Ltd has also made lottery tickets more attractive in design and appearance to meet buyers' tastes; applied new printing techniques to prevent fraudulence of winning tickets and unsold lottery tickets; automated professional activities, constantly modernized working processes in order to meet customer and agent needs in the fastest manner.

Hence, its business performance has improved over the years, with steady revenue growth. Particularly in 2019, the company achieved total revenue of VND3,550.611 billion, up 7.71% over 2018; paid VND1,300.31 billion to the State budget, up 6.57% over 2018; and earned a net profit of VND353.812 billion, 10.44% higher than 2018.

### Sharing responsibility with the community

Mr. Tran Minh Tam, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Can Tho Lottery Co., Ltd, said, the Covid-19 pandemic forced the company to suspend lottery business from April 1 to 22, 2020 (four ticket rounds). As a result, its business targets (revenue, profit and tax payment) are significantly reduced.

Specifically, the company reported sales of VND2,280 billion in the first six months of 2020, fulfilling 43.02% of the full-year plan and equaling 94.21% of

the value in the same period of 2019. The revenue was estimated at VND2,154 billion, 45.84% of the plan in 2020. The average sale of each lottery round was VND97.9 billion. 94.49% of lottery tickets were sold. Its six-month profit before tax was estimated at VND216 billion, 46.84% of the yearly plan and down 15.21% year on year.

"In the coming time, the economy is forecast to face a lot of difficulties, and the Covid-19 pandemic will be complicated. Therefore, in the last six months of the year, Can Tho Lottery Co., Ltd will strive to achieve the following targets: Sales of over VND4,400 billion, profit of over VND420 billion and tax of VND1,320 billion paid to the State budget. To achieve this plan, the company's leaders will work out specific action plans and strictly comply with regulations of the Ministry of Finance to achieve the best business results," he said.

In addition to carrying out business goals, every year, Can Tho Lottery is very active in social security, spending a handsome amount of money on this. For example, the company builds charity houses for policy-benefited families and poor households; finances building schools and presents scholarships to poor and studious students; supports medical equipment for poor patients; visits and presents gifts to orphans and elderly people living alone in the city. The company's employees also usually raise money to support the poor and the Golden Heart Fund, delivers relief to victims of natural disasters, and nurtures children infected with Agent Orange/dioxin.

In particular, to stabilize people's lives after the Covid-19 pandemic, Can Tho Lottery Co., Ltd has planned to fund VND10 billion for social security, of which over VND7 billion has been spent on building charitable houses, education and healthcare, and for lottery sellers (VND500,000 each). ■