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Vous trouverez ci-joint un choix d'articles publiés au Laos en anglais dans le quotidien "Vientiane Times"

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Typhoon Dianmu passes over northern provinces

By Times Reporters

The remnants of Typhoon Dianmu passed over northern Laos yesterday, bringing with it strong winds and heavy rain after making landfall in north-central Vietnam on Thursday night. The tropical storm brought direct impacts to northern provinces such as Huaphan, Phongsaly and Xieng Khuang, while rain also extended over the central provinces, according to the Lao Meteorology and Hydrology Department.



Villagers in Kham district, Xieng Khuang province have seen their houses inundated.

Strong winds and heavy rain as a result of the passing of the typhoon caused landslides, flash flooding, and rising river levels, particularly in Mekong River tributaries. Many tributaries in northern areas are now at high to dangerous levels. Meanwhile people in the central provinces, especially those living along the Xebangfay and Xan river catchments, can also expect flood impacts. The flash flooding in the northern provinces has inundated people's houses, and caused losses of livestock, poultry and farmed fish stocks. Some roads linking northern districts are now difficult to travel on but passable while other routes have been completely cut off by landslides or washouts. The department had already warned members of the public on Wednesday August 17 to prepare and be ready for this tropical

storm. Authorities remain concerned that people living along the tributaries of the Mekong may suffer worse impacts as waters can rise quickly in areas outside the flood plains. Rain is expected to continue in the northern provinces until August 21, after which the weather is expected to clear. Flash flooding so far this rainy season has caused thousands of hectares of upland and wet season rice to be damaged, along with the loss of hundreds of livestock, as well as poultry and fish stocks. Many roads and irrigation systems have also suffered varying extents of damage. Most of the victims are people who live in northern and central provinces, local media has reported. However, all scheduled Lao Airlines domestic flights from Wattay International Airport in Vientiane still departed yesterday, despite the storm passing over Laos. Vietnam's domestic airlines had to cancel numerous flights arriving or departing from the country's northern and central airports yesterday due to Typhoon Dianmu. Dianmu, the third typhoon to hit Vietnam so far this year, was forecast to make landfall in the country's northern region from Hai Phong City to Ninh Binh province at around 10 a.m. local time on Friday. The strongest gales were predicted at 75-100 km per hour, according to the National Centre of Hydro-Meteorological Forecasting of Vietnam. Following such forecasts, the national flag carrier Vietnam Airlines cancelled ten flights departing and arriving at northern Hai Phong City's Cat Bi airport, and central Thanh Hoa province's Tho Xuan airport yesterday. South China's Hainan and Guangdong provinces were also hit by the same Typhoon, causing heavy rains and landslides in the region.

(Vientiane Times 20 August 2016)

PM calls for improved revenue collection

By Somsack Pongkhao

Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith has called for the financial sector to improve mechanisms for collecting revenue and addressing financial leaks while warning to penalise corrupt officials. Mr Thongloun made the call while addressing a nation-wide budgetary and treasury meeting held in Vientiane on Thursday which was attended by more than 400 officials.



PM Thongloun Sisoulith.

The PM's remarks came following a report about the revenue shortfall over the past 10 months of 2015-16 fiscal year, which could further escalate budgetary tensions and hold back national development. He reiterated the need for transparency in collecting revenue in which officials in charge must enhance their responsibilities and be trustworthy to serve the nation and people. The PM said that mechanisms or organisations not working properly would need to be addressed promptly. The government would not allow dysfunctional mechanisms or organisations and other barriers to continue to disrupt revenue collection efforts. He added that officials who violated financial regulations and laws needed to be stopped to prevent them from conducting further such malpractices. The PM encouraged corrupt officials to change their attitudes and instead dedicate their efforts to serving the interests of the nation as the government is determined to

tackle the misappropriation. Referring to a lesson learnt from China, Mr Thongloun said the Chinese government tried not to leave any opportunity for any officials to be corrupt given that corruption not only resulted in the state losing huge amounts of revenue but also losing capable officials. He said it was critical to collect revenue through electronic systems while closing gaps that emerged in the financial sector while being transparent to serve the nation. In April this year the National Assembly approved the government's proposal to reduce the 2015-16 fiscal year budget. This meant the plan for revenue collection for this fiscal year was adjusted down from 26.159 trillion kip to 23.7 trillion kip and budget expenditure from 31.946 trillion kip to 31.118 trillion kip. According to the Ministry of Finance, the revenue collection over the past 10 months of the fiscal year attained only 74.52 percent of the annual plan. The government projected that the revenue collection might not accomplish the target again this fiscal year which will end on September 30. However, Mr Thongloun urged financial officials to concentrate on collecting the revenue above the target set for the next quarter (October-December, 2016) in order to offset the shortfall in this fiscal year. The PM said over the past one or two months, revenue collection in several provinces had increased significantly after the government reinforced its inspection on financial sources and closed loopholes which resulted in previous financial leaks. Laos is a least developed country in Asia which requires a huge financial capital to boost socio-economic development, but since 2013, the country encountered the revenue shortfall, forcing the government to stall many development projects to avoid a fiscal crisis.

(Vientiane Times 20 August 2016)

Polio prevention sees good results

By Phetphoxay Sengpaseuth

Laos has achieved good results in its vaccination campaign for polio prevention in all targeted provinces this year but there are still challenges and lessons which can be learned to improve coverage in the next round. Director of the National Centre for Laboratory and Epidemiology, Dr Phengta Vongphrachanh spoke

with *Vientiane Times* about the issue last week, after a workshop analysing the success of an advocacy event on the polio outbreak response. Dr Phengta said the government has a target that at least 90 percent of all children under the age of 15 are vaccinated according to the plan. There are an estimated 2.4 million children under the age of 15 in the target provinces throughout the country. At present, the concerned sectors have achieved success and met 95 percent of the plan. All children in the target provinces of the country have access to vaccines to further boost their immunity against polio under the government's policy to provide effective health services. Dr Phengta said although they cannot say this disease has disappeared from Laos the government has achieved good success. It is currently advising the Ministry of Health in cooperation with local administrations to continue to advocate against polio and further boost immunity against the deadly disease in chil-

dren under the age of 15 nationwide. "I think that the staff have been working very hard over the past months to contain the outbreak with support from the WHO, UNICEF and the USCDC," he noted. The provincial authorities joined with district commissions of mother and child units and immunisation teams in the field to provide information about the need to have children vaccinated and support the field activities, Dr Phengta added. As part of the project, provincial authorities are distributing information to local people on the dangers of polio. Communication strategies will be two-tiered. At the national and provincial level, mass media (television, radio and newspapers) will share information on the current polio outbreak and upcoming vaccination campaign. At the community level, village heads, mass organisations, Mother and Child Health Committees, village elders and religious leaders will participate in briefing sessions on polio, to help mobilise support before and during the campaign, he added. According to the Ministry of Health, Laos was declared polio free in 2000, joining all the other countries that had successfully wiped out polio. But in October of this year, a series of laboratory tests confirmed that polio was back. Already, two children have died in Borikhamxay province from the virus.

(*Vientiane Times* 22 August 2016)

Obama to visit Laos to advance ties, attend meetings

By Times Reporters

US President Barack Obama will travel to Laos early next month to advance Laos-US cooperation and attend the US-Asean Summit and the East Asia Summit, the US Embassy to Laos has confirmed in a statement. Mr Obama will also travel to China during his eight-day trip to the two Asian countries from September 2-9. During his historical trip to Laos, which will be the first visit to the country by a US President, Mr Obama will have bilateral meetings with Lao President Bounnhang Vorachit and other key officials to advance US-Lao cooperation on economic, development, and people-to-people ties. President Obama also will participate in the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Summit, where he will hold a town hall meeting, among other areas, the US embassy said. During the Asean Summit, President Obama will discuss ways to strengthen economic cooperation with the countries of Southeast Asia, which collectively represent America's fourth largest trading partner and further enhance collaboration on regional and global challenges. At the East Asia Summit, President Obama will coordinate with the region's leaders on efforts to advance a rules-based international order. In the meetings in Laos, Mr Obama also plans to highlight efforts to improve global opportu-

nities for American businesses and the role that the Trans-Pacific Partnership could play in cementing US economic leadership in the Asia-Pacific region, the Wall Street Journal reported, citing White House press secretary Josh Earnest. It is expected that more than 5,000 leaders, official delegates, and business leaders, of whom 200 are foreign media personnel, will attend and cover the 28th and 29th Asean Summits to be held back-to-back and its related meetings in Vientiane early next month. President Obama is among other leaders to attend the meetings. Foreign media has also reported that Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and President of Republic of Korea Park Geun-hye have confirmed their attendance to the summits in Laos. In China, President Obama will participate in his final G-20 Leaders' Summit, where he will emphasise the need to continue building on the progress made since 2009 in advancing strong, sustainable, and balanced global economic growth, Mr Earnest said in a statement. President Obama will underscore the importance of G-20 cooperation in promoting a level playing field and broad-based economic opportunities. This is President Obama's 11th trip to Asia since taking office in 2009.

(Vientiane Times 22 August 2016)

Over 300 business people, academia to attend ABIS 2016

By Times Reporter

More than 300 business people, academia, and speakers from institutes in and out of Asean are expected to attend the Asean Business and Investment Summit 2016 (ABIS 2016) next month. The number was reported by the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI) yesterday. According to LNCCI, ABIS 2016 will coincide with the 28th Asean Summit with the summit providing a platform for the business community to engage with Asean leaders, business leaders, entrepreneurs and key decision makers. ABIS 2016 is also where the Asean private sector can identify, discuss and develop answers to pressing issues that impact the region's investment attractiveness and business potential. It hopes to bring into focus the opportunities, requirements and questions faced by the private sector, and explore the myriad of possibilities brought forth by the onset of the recently created Asean Economic Community (AEC). ABIS 2016 is a platform for business leaders to meet global and regional leaders from different investment, business and academic backgrounds. The summit hopes to allow participants to also explore new ideas, challenge perspectives, outline opportunities, and network. The theme of ABIS 2016 is **Operationalising AEC-Turning Vision into Reality**. It relates to issues such as

Complementing Regional and Global Free Trade Agreements, Fast Tracking Business Development and Integration in Energy, Infrastructure and Environment, Global Megatrend and Regional Integration, AEC Sustainable Economic Development, the Future of Technology, Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Engine for Growth and the role of youth and women in business, as well as Trade and Transport Facilitation. Mr Oudet Souvannavong, President of LNCCI and the Chairman of Asean Business Advisory Council (Asean BAC) 2016, had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with ST Bank Deputy Director Mr Ekalard Rattanachan for the amount of US\$50,000 as a gold sponsor to the summit. Mr Oudet also signed a MoU with Mr Akio Furuse of the Nikkei Asia Review to make Japan as a Strategic Media Partner for the summit while also signing a Silver Sponsorship Agreement with Mr Kalin Sarasin, Director Government Liaison and Public Affairs, Siam Cement Group (SCG) for the amount of US\$25,000. The signings were made in Bangkok, Thailand, in the presence of Vice President of LNCCI and Asean-Bac Laos, Mr Thanongsinh Kalagna as well as the Vice President of the Thai Chamber of Commerce and Asean-Bac Thailand, Mr Phairush Burapachaisri. The ABIS 2016 summit will be held from September 5-7 in Vientiane.

(Vientiane Times 24 August 2016)

Government discusses draft national land policy

By Times Reporters

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has held discussions to research and improve the draft national land policy as well as the plan for agricultural land use in Laos. The policy was revealed at a workshop on the draft national land policy held in Vientiane on Tuesday. The event was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Dr Sonexay-Siphandone, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Mr Sommad Pholsena, district governors and other involved sectors. The purpose of the meeting was to present research and discuss improvements to the draft national land policy, the plan for agricultural land use, plan for land management and other items involved with land use nationwide. During the event, the participants will also discuss and share comments on the draft national land policy to contribute to the draft and solve the remaining issues of land management nationwide. They will also discuss the rights for land use, land management, set target land uses and plan future

land uses. Dr Sonexay-Siphandone said the land belongs to the nation, and it's a priceless natural resource as well as the place of living of the population. After the discussions, he noted, the committee will improve the draft to present to the government's meeting on August 26 and also present it to the meeting of the National Assembly in October this year. In 1992, the government of the Lao PDR set out and improved other regulations about land management, especially the decree on Land No. 99/PM, dated July 12, 1992 as well as the first Land Law in 1997 as well as the improved Land Law in 2003. From 1994-2003, the government has had a policy on land allocation and provided land to people in 5,400 villages nationwide as well as issued 300,000 certificates for temporary land use. In the period from 2009-2015 land allocation was completed in over 4,600 villages and 55 districts around the country.

(Vientiane Times 24 August 2016)

Mekong water levels remain at safe heights

By Times Reporters

Mekong water levels in central and southern provinces are still lower than warning levels despite heavy rain that struck the region this month.



The Meteorology and Hydrology Department expects the Mekong level in Vientiane to decrease today after seeing a decrease overnight yesterday.

The water level of the Mekong in Vientiane yesterday was about 10.30 m which decreased from 11 m on Monday and was expected to be down to 9.34m today, while warning levels are 11.50 m and 12.50 m according to the Meteorology and Hydrology Department. Pakxan district, Borikhamxay province was at 12.67 m yesterday and is expected to decrease to 12.32 m today, while warning levels there are between 13.50 m and 14.50 m. However, the water level of the Mekong is expected to increase from Khammuan to Champassak provinces as water runs into the river from central provinces. The water level of the Mekong in Thakhaek district, Khammuan province yesterday was 11.25 m and was expected to

increase to 11.35 m today, while warning levels are 13 m and 14 m. Savannakhet province's water level was about 9.31 m yesterday and could rise to 9.44 m today while the warning levels here are from 12 m and 13 m. Champassak province was about 8.59 m yesterday and was expected to increase to 8.64 m today, where warning levels are between 11 m and 12 m. Most of people affected by recent flooding are located in the Northern provinces, especially Luang Prabang because of the high levels witnessed in the Nam Khan, one of Mekong River's primary branches. The department has advised people living along rivers and in lowlands to be careful at all times and that those whose condition allowed they suggest stay in temporary safe areas while the water levels are still high. The department is currently monitoring weather conditions constantly and is also working with the meteorology and hydrology sectors of other countries. When the Mekong's level increases to high or when other extreme weather conditions are forecasted, the department will immediately send out warnings through various domestic and foreign meteorology and hydrology sectors or via social media like Facebook, websites, radio, newspapers and television.

(Vientiane Times 24 August 2016)

Top leader to open Asean summits next month

By Times Reporters

The President of the Lao PDR Mr Bounnhang Vorachit will be honoured to open Asean summits early next month, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced. The official opening ceremony of the 28th and 29th Asean Summits and related Summits will take place on September 6 at the National Convention Centre. During the 3-day summits, Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith as the chair of Lao Asean Chairmanship this year, will host and chair at least 11 summits in Vientiane. These include the 19th Asean-China Summit to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of Asean-China Dialogue Relations, 19th Asean-Japan Summit, 18th Asean-Republic of Korea Summit, 19th Asean Plus Three Summit, First Asean-Australia Summit, 8th Asean-UN Summit, 14th Asean-India Summit, 4th Asean-United States of America Summit, and 11th East Asia Summit. In addition, the 8th Mekong-Japan Summit will also be held on the sidelines of the summits. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Asean Department Director General Mr Phongsavanh Sisoulath said recently that the 28th and 29th Asean summits would have a total number of 42 outcome documents. Officials in charge are finalising all significant documents which will be signed and adopted by Asean leaders during the event. These documents include declarations regarding Asean's response to natural disasters, transitioning from informal employment to formal employment towards decent work promotion in Asean, along with the Initiative for Asean Integration work plan and master plan on Asean Connectivity 2025. They also address

cultural heritage, trade facilitation, promoting sustainable development and infrastructure development in the region. The 28th Asean Summit will discuss Asean Community building efforts especially the implementation of the Asean Community Vision 2025 and the way forward, while the 29th Asean Summit will focus discussion on Asean's external relations and future direction as well as exchange views on regional and international issues of common interest and concern. The Asean+1 Summits will review cooperation, discuss future direction and exchange views on regional and international issues. The 19th Asean Plus Three (China-Japan-Republic of Korea) Summit and the 11th East Asia Summit, a forum of Leaders from 18 countries (10 Asean Member States, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russia, Australia, New Zealand and United States) will review and discuss the future direction of cooperation with Asean as well as exchange views on regional and international issues. Prior to the 28th and 29th Asean Summits and related Summits, there will be meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to Asean, Asean Senior Officials' Preparatory Meeting, 14th Asean Political-Security Community Council Meeting, and 18th Asean Coordinating Council Meeting on September 3-5. All preparation activities for the summits are now active with various sub-committees working to fulfil their responsibilities assigned by the government. Asean, established in 1967, groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

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