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***Information and experience equal knowledge,
please share your knowledge with us!***

1. PM approves loans for poverty reduction programme

Ha Noi, 09/10/2006: Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung has approved the agreement on loans to implement the poverty reduction programme III and attached documents.

The PM assigned the Governor of the State Bank of Viet Nam (SBV) to sign the agreement with a representative of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

He assigned the SBV to be an account holder to receive the loans and allowed the SBV to buy that amount of foreign currency to add to the national reserve.

Source: VNA

2. New Measures Helping Donor Aid Reach Poorest

MANILA, PHILIPPINES, 20 October 2006: New aid delivery and management mechanisms are improving

the effectiveness of donor assistance and better addressing the needs of impoverished families in developing countries, according to evidence discussed this week at a forum on aid effectiveness.

During this week's 2006 [Asian Regional Forum on Aid Effectiveness: Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation](#), held at ADB's Manila Headquarters, national governments, civil society and international donors reported on progress made since last year's Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which provides a framework for reforming the way development assistance is delivered and managed.

"While all of us recognize that the volumes of aid and other development assistance should increase to achieve the [Millennium Development Goals](#), we must also accept that scaling up aid effectiveness, as framed under the Paris Declaration, is essential to meet the MDGs in Asia, and elsewhere," said [ADB Vice President Khempheng Pholsena](#).

A further lesson emerging from the case studies is that aid, including disaster response, is more effective when it is based on national development strategies in which communities, local government bodies, and civil society organizations are involved in all aspects of the development aid process.

Since last year, measures adopted by parties to the Paris Declaration include clarifying the responsibilities of different governments and donors to eliminate parallel project delivery structures, strengthening country systems and establishing baselines and targets that allow recipient countries and donors to measure their collective performance on aid effectiveness.

Partner countries plan to take forward subregional dialogue to advance the implementation of the Paris Declaration, while donors need to address a series of institutional issues.

The Forum recognized the importance of evaluation in supporting policy making and aid management, and ensuring that assistance remains focused on achieving development results. A culture of evaluation needs to be developed across the region, together with substantial investments in developing evaluation capacity. Participants discussed the options of a global evaluation framework for the Paris Declaration, to help partner countries assess their progress and capture emerging lessons and good practices as we move towards the next High-Level Forum in 2008 in Ghana.

The Forum noted the importance of bringing emerging and non-traditional donors into the aid effectiveness process.

The Forum is cosponsored by ADB, the Government of Japan, United Kingdom Department for International Development and the World Bank.

Source: ADB web

3. ADB Supporting Viet Nam's Poverty Reduction Program

MANILA, PHILIPPINES, 6 October 2006 - ADB has approved a US\$15 million loan to support a multi donor program to [reduce poverty in Viet Nam](#).

In spite of adverse shocks experienced in recent years, such as the avian influenza and rising oil prices, Viet Nam's gross domestic product has grown at an average annual rate of 7.5% over the past decade, with a high of 8.1% in 2005. This makes Viet Nam one of the fastest growing economies in Asia.

Despite these successes, important structural issues and social challenges remain, and the new loan addresses these through the Poverty Reduction Support Credit framework. It supports the transition to a market economy by removing structural weaknesses and improving the business environment. It will also make development socially inclusive and environment friendly, and will modernize [governance](#) capabilities and the public administration system.

"This framework is hinged on the strong commitment of the donor community to supporting Viet Nam's reform agenda and galvanizing interest for the reform program among stakeholders," says Ayumi Konishi, Country Director for ADB's Resident Mission in Viet Nam.

The loan provides this year's ADB support to the framework, which donors are using to provide financial support to the Government's Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy for 2002-2006. This year, the framework will provide \$210 million to the Government.

Approval of the loan immediately followed the adoption of ADB's [new assistance strategy to Viet Nam](#).

"This loan is an excellent example of the operational links among Viet Nam's [Socio Economic Development Plan 2006-2010](#), and the harmonized and coordinated efforts of the development partners in support of the plan," adds Mr. Konishi. "The country is making good progress in reducing poverty supported by strong growth."

Aside from ADB, the framework is supported by concessional loans from the World Bank (US\$100 million), Japan Bank for International Cooperation, and Germany (€6 million).

Grants will also be provided by Australia (A\$10 million), Canada (Can\$4 million), Denmark (DKr61 million), European Commission (€10 million), Ireland (€3 million), Netherlands (€9 million-14 million), Spain (€3 million), and the United Kingdom (£20 million).

ADB's loan comes from its concessional [Asian Development Fund](#) and carries a 24-year term, including a grace period of 8 years. Interest is set at 1% per annum during the grace period, and 1.5% per annum thereafter.

The State Bank of Viet Nam is the executing agency for the program loan, which will be utilized until December 2007.

Source: ADB web

4. Over 1.5 trillion VND for central irrigation project

Ha Noi, 25/10/2006 - The Prime Minister has agreed with an estimated investment capital of more than 1.5 trillion VND (approximately 97.5 million USD) to be sourced from the Asian Development Bank's loan for a central irrigation project.

PM Nguyen Tan Dung has assigned the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) to negotiate with the ADB for the loan earmarked within the 2006 fiscal year.

The PM also assigned the people's committees of central Thanh Hoa, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien-Hue, Quang Ngai and Binh Dinh province to work with the MARD to make estimated expenses for each sub- project and the total cost for the whole project.

The feasibility study of sub-projects should be finalised before Dec. 19, 2006, the PM said.

Source: VNA

5. Viet Nam's GEF action plan discussed

HA NOI, October 5, 2006 - International and national environment experts will gather in Ha Noi over the next three days to discuss Viet Nam's national action plan for protecting the environment through the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

This "national dialogue seminar" will provide the opportunity to review the new guidelines and policies of GEF and its implementing agencies, and to discuss national strategic priorities.

Much of this time will be spent reviewing the "National Strategic Priorities of GEF Viet Nam," the Government's draft Action Plan that pays special attention to assisting national agencies in accessing GEF resources under new GEF guidelines, as well as integrating GEF priorities in national programmes and involving key stakeholders. During the next 4-year GEF period (late 2006-2010), Viet Nam has been allocated \$10.2 million for work in biodiversity and \$8.5 million for programmes in climate change - in addition, Viet Nam is also eligible for funds to address issues like, land degradation and persistent organic pollutants.

"The Government's drafting team has attempted to both make the Action Plan fully consistent with national priorities and to ensure it help further align GEF strategies of UN agencies with Government's priorities," said UN Resident Coordinator, John Hendra. "As Viet Nam rapidly develops - and as we see in our daily lives - we are all linked through our natural environment and we will need global partnerships like the GEF to ensure that

we meet the great challenges before us in the coming decade, including achieving Millennium Development Goal seven of environmental sustainability for both current and future generations here in Viet Nam."

Since 1991, this global funding mechanism, managed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank, has supported Viet Nam with 50 national and regional projects in biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and persistent organic pollutants, amounting to nearly \$50 million. It has had a major impact on Viet Nam's efforts to preserve and protect its natural heritage.

"These have been very valuable and meaningful funds for Viet Nam especially in the context that Vietnam has faced shortages of resources for environmental protection," said Dr. Pham Khoi Nguyen, Senior Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) and Chairman of the Viet Nam GEF in his opening address. "Through implementation of GEF projects, knowledge, skills and abilities of domestic agencies and national experts have been significantly enhanced and improved. Therefore, we are of the opinion that GEF assistance continues to play an important role in Viet Nam for the short and longer-term future."

GEF funding helped Viet Nam to establish its first Biodiversity Action Plan and since 1995 nine national parks have received direct support for environmental protection. GEF-funded projects have also resulted in new policies, strategies, action plans, and guidelines on protected area management; greater environmental consciousness in communities; numerous research activities and; a pilot project on biodiversity conservation in marine protected areas was established, and replicated in Nha Trang Bay and Cu Lao Cham.

Source: UNDP website

6. Nearly 57 million USD invested in irrigation projects

Ha Noi, 10/10/2006: Nearly 910 billion VND (56.87 million USD) have been spent so far this year for the construction of irrigation works nationwide, said the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD).

The ministry said it was allocated over 1.19 trillion VND (74.56 million USD) for the year 2006, including 428 billion VND (26.75 million USD) from foreign loans, to build irrigation works.

MARD asked irrigation project management boards in provinces to accelerate the construction of key projects, especially those using capitals from the Government bonds and official development assistance (ODA).

Source: VNA

7. Mountainous, ethnic minority regions call for foreign investment

Ha Noi, 09/10/2006: The government has compiled a list of more than 810 projects for mountainous and ethnic minority regions in need of official development assistance (ODA) and non-governmental organisations' (NGO) aid.

The projects, listed by the Committee of Nationalities and Mountainous Region Affairs and the Ministry of Planning and Investment, aims to eradicate hunger and bring the rate of poverty in these regions to below 10 percent by 2010.

Four major projects alone will need a combined total of over 1.1 billion USD, which are the second phase of the socio-economic development programme in disadvantaged communes of mountainous areas (programme 135), a scheme to build houses, supply water and provide job training for the poor, a project to build vocational training schools in mountainous and ethnic minority regions from now until 2010 and the third phase of a rural finance project.

According to the Ministry of Planning and Investment's report, from 1993-2005, almost 8.16 billion USD in ODA has been poured into transport, power, agriculture and social infrastructure projects in these regions, accounting for 31 percent of the total ODA flow into the country. However, the amount is far from meeting these regions' demand.

Chairman of the National Assembly's Council for Ethnic Minorities Trang A Pao said the rate of poor households in the region had been reduced to 20 percent in 2005 after seven years of implementing programme 135. The regions also got a facelift with new essential infrastructural facilities.

By the end of 2005, 97 percent of disadvantaged communes were accessible by cars, 64 percent of households in remote areas were connected to the national power grid, 90 percent of ethnic children went to school and 96 percent of the population in mountainous and ethnic minority regions had access to health care services.

Source: VNA

8. ADB Announces \$3 Billion for 2007-2009 in Support of Viet Nam's Vision for the Future

MANILA, PHILIPPINES, 6 October 2006 - ADB has endorsed its new assistance strategy to [Viet Nam](#) for the period 2007-2010, including a plan to provide US\$3 billion in 2007-2009.

The new strategy of ADB closely follows the Government's [Socio Economic Development Plan \(SEDP\) 2006-2010](#) approved this year that envisages the total investment needs during this five-year period to be \$140 billion-\$150 billion.

"We would like to support the Government's new economic development plan," says Ayumi Konishi, Country Director for ADB's Resident Mission in Viet Nam. "We very much appreciate that the plan was developed through an open, consultative process. Viet Nam has been successful in [reducing poverty](#) through strong growth and we are happy to support the Government's own strategy."

ADB's new assistance strategy focuses on business-led, pro-poor economic growth that is supported by social equity, balanced development, and environmental sustainability. The plan also stresses the need to support the improvement of [governance](#) and control [corruption](#). In addition, the strategy points out the need to make contributions to [regional cooperation](#), whenever possible.

In order to support business-led, pro-poor growth, the plan also calls on ADB to help improve infrastructure, develop a business-enabling environment, offer financial intermediation, and support secondary education.

Projects amounting to \$3 billion are expected during 2007-2009, supplemented by assistance to regional projects and [private sector](#) operations. Assistance under ADB's concessional loan facility, the [Asian Development Fund](#), is expected to increase from the current \$220 million a year to about \$300 million a year.

"A key feature of this new strategy is that we will try to be most flexible in responding to the changing needs of Viet Nam through the combination of many different approaches," Mr. Konishi added.

As of the end of 2005, ADB operations in Viet Nam have included 55 public sector loans totaling \$3.5 billion, 178 technical assistance grants totaling \$120 million, and 7 private sector projects amounting to \$337 million.

Viet Nam was among ADB's founding members in 1966 and cooperation has progressed steadily since operations resumed in 1993 after pausing for about 23 years.

Source: ADB web

9. Dak Lak: VND 1.400 billions of government bond invested in irrigation

Hanoi, 11/10/2006 -- 10:04: Early 2007, Dak Lak will be invested with VND 1400 billions allocated from government bond for the construction of such hydraulic works as Ea Bong dam, Ya Mo canal system, (the part in Dak Lak province) and Krong Pak Thuong reservoir.

In the past, VND 1700 billions of government bond was invested in the construction of two irrigational works: Upstream Ea Sup and downstream Kron Buk.

In addition, the province People's Committee submitted to the Government and MARD a proposal of a VND 250 billion investment from government

bond for the construction of small and medium scale irrigation structures in the poor areas and the ethnic minority areas to help the residents thereof to improve their production and reduce the poverty.

The mentioned above proposal was already approved by the competent authority and will be implemented in the early of next year. After the completion of these irrigation structures, they will irrigate more than 50,000 ha of rice and subsidiary crops in the province.

Source: VNA

10. Mid-term Workshop: Integrated Rural Development Project for Central provinces - TA 4440-VIE

Hanoi, 20th Oct. 2006: The Mid-term Workshop of Integrated Rural Development Project for Central Provinces TA 4440-VIE was held by MARD. The workshop was chaired by H.E Vice Minister Nguyen Ngoc Thuat, Director General of ICD MARD Dr. Le Van Minh, Mr. Ayumi Konishi - Country Director of ADB in Vietnam and Mr. Didier Baillet - representative of AFD in Vietnam.

The workshop objective is to assess the project implementation process and develop the follow-up works in order to push up the preparation for the implementation of the loan project in 2007.

Participating in the workshop are leaders and experts of MARD's affiliated departments, Central Project Management office (CPO), Agricultural Project Management Board, Government office, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Construction; chairmen, vice chairmen and directors of Province People's Committee, provincial Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development, Departments of Transportation and province project management boards of 13 provinces involved in the project. In addition, there were representatives from other international organizations such as UNDP, JICA, Embassy of the Netherlands, and GHD International Consultant Company.

The Integrated Rural Development Project for Central Provinces was formed based on the merge of MARD project titled "Infrastructure project to improve the livelihood of Central provinces" and MPI project named "Improvement of the livelihood in Central coastal provinces" upon the Official Letter No. 1441/TTg-QHQT dated 14th Sep. 2006 by the Prime Minister. The project is conducted in 13 Central poor provinces including Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Kon Tum, Ninh Thuan, and Binh Thuan.

The Meeting received a lot of opinions given by the participants from different ministries and 13 provinces under the project, international experts. The initiative of merging two mentioned above projects

was highly appreciated. This would facilitate the approval of project in 2007 and address the urgency of rural infrastructure in 13 Central provinces. The project period is in 6 years (from 2008 to 2013) and based on the decentralization model.

According to the project plan, the Consultant will organize the end-term workshop in Dec. of 2006. ADB will dispatch the Investment Appraisal Mission in Jan. 2007 and the Loan Agreement is expected to be signed in July of 2007.

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11. More synergy needed to manage Viet Nam's protected areas

Ha Noi October 5, 2006 - Viet Nam needs to take a "leap forward" in its policy and institutional arrangements if it wants to maintain the fragile environmental health of its protected areas, according to a new policy brief released today by the Forest Protection Department (FPD) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD).

Viet Nam currently has over 128 protected forests, 68 wetlands of national importance and 15 protected marine areas. In a country as rich in natural diversity as Viet Nam, it is not uncommon for these areas to be adjacent to each other, their ecosystems inextricably linked. Yet unlike the natural environment, the responsibility for the management of these ecosystems is not integrated.

Viet Nam's protected areas consist of three main categories: wetland, terrestrial and coastal, with each of them falling under different ministerial jurisdictions: terrestrial protected areas are managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD); wetland protected areas are under the management of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE); and marine and coastal protected areas are the responsibility of the Ministry of Fisheries (MOFI).

"The more separate levels and regulations required to manage protected areas, the more difficult it will be to take an integrated approach to protect our natural heritage," said Ms. Nguyen Ngoc Ly, Head of the UN Development Programme's Sustainable Development programme. "We need to take a landscape approach to managing protected areas, ensuring that wetlands, forest and coasts that share the same space are managed and regulated efficiently."

This policy brief was the recommendation of the fifth and the last study jointly carried out by the Forest Protection Department and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) under the framework of

the “Creating Protected Areas for Resource Conservation” or PARC project co-financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UNDP.

“It is important for Viet Nam to integrate biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development,” said Mr. Bernard O’Callaghan, Acting Country Representative of IUCN Viet Nam. “This brief presents a vision for policy for protected area management in the country while not forgetting the important role of the local people, whose livelihoods depend on natural resources.”

The project’s objectives are to improve the operation capacity to effectively and sustainably manage three protected areas in Ba Be, Na Hang, and York Don, and to reduce external threats to biodiversity, through integrating conservation and development objectives and activities at the local level.

Source: UNDP website

12. Video Conference on the Movement “One village, one product”

Hanoi, Oct 25th 2006: The Asia Productivity Office (APO) cooperated with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to hold a live TV conference on the Movement “One village, one product”. There were 4 countries participating in this TV workshop including Japan, Laos, Cambodia, and Mongolia. The Vietnam’s site was set in the office of World Bank at 63 Ly Thai To, Hanoi.

The participants had an opportunity to hear H.E Mr Morohiko Hiramatsu - the former Chairman of Oita prefecture, who was the first person to promote the Movement “One village, One product”, sharing his experience in the movement implementation and its success in resurrecting his Oita home town from 12am. to 14.30 pm. In addition, the attendants had a chance to exchange with the responsible persons in Japan site. After the Movement’s proved success in the rural development, “One village, one product” has been developed in many other countries of Asia, Africa, and America Latin. Many heads of state and national leaders of such countries as Thailand, Indonesia, Philippine, Laos, Cambodia, China, Korea, Tuynidi, Malawi, etc. visited Oita prefecture to study the Movement and develop it in their countries. H.E Mr. Morihiko Hiramatsu has been awarded the national noble rewards by these countries for the contribution of this Movement to their rural development.

One of the successful models learnt from the Oita Movement “One Village, One product” is Thailand’s “One Tambon, One Product”. After 5-year implementation, hundreds of artisan tambons have been restored and developed in this country. Many traditional handicraft products have been known and used by foreign customers. Domestic market (in combination with tourism) and oversea market are

more and more expanded. Turnover of this movement’s products is continuously increased, specifically Bath 46.362 billion and Bath 55.447 billion in 2004 and 2005 respectively, a big gap compared to the planned targets of Bath 40 billion and Bath 46 billion for these two years respectively. So far, even though there’re some political changes, the Thailand leaders still affirmed the continuation and development of this model in the Workshop “Supporting APEC Medium and Small Scale Enterprises - Development of Local Handicraft Industry”.

The Workshop is a good opportunity for those people having concerns of rural development in Vietnam as well as in other developing countries to gain experience and the success of the Movement “One Village, One Product” in Oita prefecture to apply it in their localities.

Source: Nguyen Manh Dung, Department of Agro-forestry processing and Salt industry, MARD

13. News of the Special Project Administration Mission for the Second Red River Basin Sector Project

Between 20 September and 3 October 2006, a special project administration mission (the Mission) comprising representatives of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Agence Française de Développement (AfD), and the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE) has been undertaken to improve implementation of the captioned projects by (i) assessing readiness of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MoNRE) to implement Phase 3 of TA 3892 - Part A; (ii) updating implementation of approved subprojects and preparation of accepted subprojects under Loan 1855/ JFPR 9046 - Part B; (iii) reviewing implementation of the project action plan and overall project implementation progress; and (iv) formulating relevant measures for co-financing subprojects and accelerating project implementation.

The Mission held discussions with representatives of MARD and MoNRE – the project executing agencies (EAs), the Cau River Sub-Basin Organization (CSBO), MARD’s Department of Water Resources (DWR) and Department of Dike Management, Flood and Storm Control (DDM) – the implementing agencies (IAs) for Part A of the Project, MARD’s Central Project Office (CPO) and its Project Management Office (PMO) – IA for Part B, and MoNRE’s Department of Water Resources Management (DWRM) – IA for the third component under Part A. The Mission visited 13 project provinces and had discussed with the representatives of Sub-regional Project Offices (SPOs), Provincial People’s Committees (PPCs), Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARDs), Provincial Implementation Units (PIUs), local

consultants and other project stakeholders. The Mission's visits to project provinces were arranged and facilitated by staff of MARD and the DARDs. The results of the Mission were discussed at the wrap-up meeting held on 3 October 2006 and are described in the Aide Mémoire.

Source: MARD

14. Viet Nam, France seek to improve ODA management capacity

Ha Noi, 05/10/2006: - A seminar on managing and supervising the use of official development assistance (ODA) funds opened in Ho Chi Minh City on Oct. 5.

The two-day seminar is being attended by National Assembly deputies, officials from the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning and Investment, and representatives from southern provinces and the French Embassy in Viet Nam.

As part of the seminar, four round-table talks are being held for the participants to discuss the framework for managing ODA funds in Viet Nam, share experiences in ODA management, exchange views on how to improve ODA management and forecast the level of ODA funds, according to ADETEF Vietnam (Assistance for the development of exchanges in economic and financial technologies), a French organisation which was a co-organiser of the seminar.

Source:VNA

15. WB offers Vietnam a grant of USD 35 mil. for bird-flu prevention.

Hanoi, 4-10-06: "World Bank will finance the project of emergency plan for Vietnam to prevent bird flu." Said by Dr. Nguyen Huy Nga, Director General of Standby Health Department.

The project fund is USD 35 million, of which USD 15 mil. is allocated for the Ministry of Health and the remaining of USD 20 million is allocated for the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development".

It's released that the Central Institute of Epidemic Prevention already collected 400 samples of medical waste in 12 sites of the experimented area in September. The result showed that there's no samples of H5N-positive, mostly H1-positive. There were 7 cases suffering from serious pneumonia but H5N1-negative.

Source: Labor newspaper 274/2006

16. Strengthening the capacity of food safety management system and controlling the APEC's agro-products quality

Hanoi, 9th - 10th Oct. 2006: A workshop on APEC Food Safety was held by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The forum is one activity of the Project "Strengthening the capacity of food safety

management system and controlling APEC's agro-products quality". This is the project in preparing for Vietnam to become the host of APEC Summit in 2006. The project was proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD).

This is a forum for APEC members to exchange on the policies and food safety status in the regional countries, coming to the standardization of the region's food safety standards. The workshop was participated by more than 70 representatives from APEC members including Australia, China, Philippine, Taiwan, Thailand, the United States, and Vietnam.

MARD presides, with the cooperation with other APEC members, the implementation of the project. The project, on the one hand, helps Vietnam improve its knowledge and food safety management capacity. On the other hand, hosting the APEC project heightens the country's cooperation position in the region.

Source: ICD, MARD

17. EU's ODA for Vietnam: to be increased by 10% per year

"This increase is to implement the assistant commitments of European Union (EU) after Vietnam became a member of The World Trade Organization (WTO). We expect to increase to Euro 40-45 millions for the single projects and the co-sponsored projects in Vietnam. We believe that our financial assistance will help Vietnam to conduct necessary reforms for the country's economy on the way of integration." said Mr. Cornaro.

The EU's grant aid for Vietnam is from Euro 35mil. - 40mil./year. The committed aid will be focused on commercial technical assistance for Vietnam in the coming time.

Mr Cornaro added that EU will further strengthen the cooperation in trade, especially in the copyright protection in order to help Vietnam to meet the requirements of the Intellectual Property Right as well as the cooperation in establishing the fast notification stations of quarantine for the exported goods of Vietnam.

EU is the biggest grant-aid donor for Vietnam, and is supporting Vietnam in many fields and sectors.

Source: VN-Media updated at 22h15" , on 15/10/2006.

18. FDI inflow in Viet Nam increases sharply

Ha Noi, 25/10/2006: Viet Nam attracted a total of 6.48 billion USD in foreign direct investment (FDI) in the first 10 months of the year, a year-on-year increase of 41.4 percent, the highest growth rate so far this year, the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) has reported.

The total capital achieved 99.7 percent of the country's yearly target, the report said.

In 10 months as many as 705 foreign-invested projects with a combined capital of 4.7 billion USD were licensed. The figures saw a year-on-year increase of 7 percent in terms of numbers and 60.1 percent in capital.

The period also saw an additional investment of 1.7 billion USD in operating FDI projects nationwide.

In October, 125 projects valued at 929 million USD were granted licences. An additional investment of 405 million USD in 88 operating FDI projects were also made.

The MPI said Viet Nam has been highly appreciated by foreign investors and attracts a lot of attention from them. Major partners including the European Union, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan and the US, have been playing major roles in investing into Viet Nam and continued to increase their investment.

The MPI added that the recent visit to Japan by the Vietnamese Prime Minister has had a great effect and is believed to have kick-started Japanese investment into Viet Nam.

According to the MPI, more opportunities to attract FDI into the country will be accelerated, focusing on Japan, Taiwan and the US. Holding workshops before the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting will be one of the methods to promote investment.

Source: VNA

19. Khanh Hoa invests in wet rice cultivation

Khanh Hoa, 25/10/2006: The central province of Khanh Hoa has invested more than 52 billion VND (3.3 million USD) in a wet rice cultivation development programme in the two mountainous districts of Khanh Son and Khanh Vinh.

The programme has provided technical assistance to ethnic residents engaged in wet rice cultivation in the two districts. More than 500 million VND (31,000 USD) have been allotted to local residents to help them invest in land for wet rice cultivation. The districts are now home to 285 ha of wet rice fields.

The programme has also led to the construction of 23 irrigation works to provide water for 900 ha of rice and crops.

Source: VNA

20. Agro-forestry products earn 5.3 billion USD from exports

Ha Noi, 05/10/2006: Viet Nam earned nearly 542 million USD from exporting agro-forestry products in September, bringing the country's total agro-forestry export revenue in the past nine months to 5.3 billion

USD, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development reported.

The export value of agricultural products reached 3.77 billion USD, a rise of 19.8 percent over the same period last year, while forestry products raised 1.54 billion USD in export revenue, up 23.8 percent.

Export of a number of staples increased in both quantity and turnover. Of these, coffee saw increases of 7 percent and 56 percent respectively; and rubber, 45 percent and 121 percent. In the fourth quarter of 2006, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will instruct its affiliates to help promote Vietnamese farm produce trademarks.

Source: VNA

21. Kon Tum: over 14.2 billion VND for agricultural promotion

Kon Tum, 18/10/2006: The Central Highlands province of Kon Tum has mapped out a key agricultural promotion programme between now and 2010 with a total investment of over 14.2 billion VND (887,500 USD).

The programme will hold training courses for agricultural promotion workers and build models to demonstrate advance farming techniques, with focus on growing rice, maize and sugarcane.

Agricultural promotion documents will be translated into Ba Na, Gie Trieng and Se Dang languages to serve ethnic minority people.

The programme will spend 300-400 million VND each year on transferring preserving technology with the aim of helping local farmers minimise post-harvest losses.

Another 700 million VND will be used to buy fish and shrimp fries for farmers to raise in ponds and water rice fields.-Enditem

Source: VNA

22. FDI inflow into Viet Nam to increase, UNCTAD reports

Ha Noi, 17/10/2006: Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow to Viet Nam trends to increase, but investment in infrastructure and workforce still needed, according to the World Investment Report (WIR) 2006 announced by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Themed "FDI from Developing and Transition Economies: Implications for Development", the report shows that FDI in Viet Nam exceeded 2 billion USD in 2005 compared to 1.6 billion in 2004. Viet Nam has become an attractive location for new companies looking to invest.

"This most recent increase reflects investors' confidence in Viet Nam's economic future," UN Development Programme Deputy Resident

Representative Subinay Nandy said at a press conference announcing the report in Ha Noi on Oct. 17.

"Better infrastructure and telecommunications facilities, more highly skilled workers and stronger national technology policies will make Viet Nam more attractive, and will enable Vietnamese firms to make better use of FDI," he added.

Jonathan Pincus, UNDP Senior Country Economist, said that Viet Nam's access to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) would make it more attractive for foreign investors and become a large recipient of FDI.

According to the economist, after joining the WTO, inward FDI would increase and Viet Nam needs to fully tap into this opportunity.

The report also shows that total inward FDI has continued to increase and contributes important development opportunities for many emerging economies.

Source: VNA

23. New Website Launched to Support Regional Cooperation and Integration Initiatives in Asia and Pacific Region

MANILA, PHILIPPINES, 2 October 2006: - ADB today launched the Asia Regional Integration Center (ARIC) website, a knowledge and information portal which facilitates the tracking of progress in the region's accelerating economic cooperation and integration.

The new ARIC website supports the Asia and Pacific region's efforts to promote [regional cooperation](#) and integration. ARIC is structured on four basic strategic pillars of ADB's recently approved regional cooperation and integration (RCI) strategy: (i) cross-border infrastructure and associated software; (ii) trade and investment; (iii) money and finance; and (iv) regional public goods (such as prevention of communicable diseases and environmental degradation).

"ADB is proud to be a trusted partner in this endeavor to build a more integrated, poverty-free, prosperous and peaceful Asia and Pacific," ADB President Haruhiko Kuroda said. "The ARIC website is a valuable tool for monitoring progress and understanding ongoing and planned regional initiatives."

ARIC provides an array of resources on RCI: (+) RCI programs and initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region, (+) a set of integration indicators to monitor progress in RCI, (+) a comprehensive database to track free trade agreements (FTAs) involving countries in the region, (+) links to economic news, opinions and editorials, studies and research, and (+) ADB working papers on regional economic integration.

ARIC's vast trove of information makes it a vital source for a wide variety of users, from major government and international agencies to the corporate sector, civil society groups, think-tanks, academic researchers and policy analysts, journalists, and economic commentators.

Source: ADB web

24. Country plans for 39.5 billion USD from exports in 2006

HCM City, 11/10/2006: This year's export turnover would reach 39.5 billion USD, a 22 percent increase over last year, Permanent Deputy Trade Minister Phan The Rue said.

Deputy Minister Rue made the remark at a conference to discuss measures to boost exports in the last three months of this year in Ho Chi Minh City on Oct. 11.

He affirmed that exports will continue increasing sharply in the remaining months of this year.

Pham The Dung, Head of the Export-Import Department of the Trade Ministry, reported that the export turnover in the first nine months of this year was estimated at 29.4 billion USD, representing a 24.2 percent year-on-year increase or meeting 77.8 percent of this year's plan. High increases were recorded in almost all export staples, he noted.

Since early this year, the country has recorded relatively high growth rates in exports. The highest growth rate of 52 percent was recorded in exports to Oceania, while exports to Europe grew by 33.7 percent; America, 33 percent; and Asia, 15.3 percent. However, exports to Africa reduced by 6.4 percent.

Asia is now the largest market of Vietnamese export products, which was followed by the American, European, Oceania and African markets.

It is expected that six export products will earn more than 1 billion USD each by the end of this year, including crude oil (estimatedly 8.5 billion USD), textiles and garments (5.8 billion USD), aquatic products (3.3 billion USD), electronics and PC components (1.8 billion USD), wooden products (1.8 billion USD), and rice (1.35 billion USD). Rubber exports may earn 1.2 billion USD. Coffee may join the club of 1 billion USD earners' club, with export value estimated at 960 million USD by year's end.

The Deputy Trade Minister asked localities and businesses to keep abreast the supply of export products, especially advantageous ones; while closely following the world market in order to win most favoured export contracts.

He said that in the global economic integration process, trade associations should strictly obey regulations, bring into play their role in controlling exports, promoting cooperation, providing information and coordinating with ministries, services, localities and businesses to ensure

high effectiveness of export activities and overcome trade barriers.

Source: VNA

25. A decrease in the world food output in 2006.

The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has just released a report forecasting that the world food output will properly reach 2,013 millions tons, a decrease of 8 millions tons compared to the quantity reported in the July report of this year and of 1,6 % compared to that of 2005.

According to FAO, the prospect of this year's harvesting is not quite optimistic, as since July the hot and dry climate has caused the negative impacts on the wheat crops in Brazil, Argentina and Australia. In many Asian countries, the long lasting droughts and floods also influenced seriously to the crops. Millions of people in Indian, Pakistan, Nepal,... needed the emergency food relief because of the unheard-of floods caused by the long-lasting heavy rain in July.

According to the report of the World Food Program (WFP), the world food relief has increased by 10%, reaching 8,2 millions tons in 2005.

The executive director of WFP, James Morrios said that: The food relief has remarkably contributed to relieve the victims of the natural disasters such as the Tsunami in Asia in the end of 2005, earthquakes in some countries and conflicts in some African nations and the war in Middle East.

However, Mr J.Morris said that the food relief was not enough to meet the minimum demand of millions of people in the world who're under the need of assistance . The world community has to enhance the food aid in order to deal with an annual increase of 4 millions people suffering from hunger . The world food reserve ensured 33% of the global food consumption in 1999. This rate now is down to 20%.

Source: VNECONOMY update on: 23/10/2006

26. 4m tonnes of rice exported in nine months

HCM CITY, 11-10-2006: Viet Nam exported 4.1 million tonnes of rice in the first nine months of the year and will strive to ship another one million tonnes to hit the year's planned target, said Deputy Minister of Trade Phan The Rue yesterday.

The deputy minister made the statement as he chaired a meeting in HCM City to review the year's rice exports and work out a strategy to reach the year-end goal.

Rue asked food companies to keep a close eye on the global rice export situation, particularly in the main markets including Iran, Iraq, Cuba, the Philippines and Indonesia.

He also suggested that enterprises make contracts available to the Viet Nam Food Association in advance.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development should work with the Ministry of Trade to ensure food security and prepare for resource bidding, he said.

Truong Thanh Phong, chairman of the association, proposed that more attention should be given to the new varieties of the rice, soil conditions and post-harvest technology.

Phong noted that new markets for Vietnamese rice export would likely emerge in Iran and Iraq early next year. He said that reaching the full export potential to these emerging markets would require careful preparation.

The country is also now bracing for a rice bidding with the Philippines at the beginning of this December.

Source: VNS

27. Rubber exports double in revenues

HCM City, 25/10/2006: he Viet Nam Rubber Corporation has so far this year earned over 334 million USD from exports of 170,000 tonnes of rubber latex, representing an increase of 194 million USD year on year.

China remains Viet Nam's traditional market with a consumption of half of its exports, while demands for rubber imports from other markets such as the US, France, Germany, Japan and the Republic of Korea are also increasing, said the corporation, the national leader in this industry.

A steep decrease in rubber supply from Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia has done much in escalating prices of raw rubber to over 2,100 USD per tonne.

The corporation said it has invested millions of US dollars in upgrading its production chains and technology in rubber latex processing and applying international standard measures in examining the rubber latex production to improve its products' quality.

Source: VNA

28. List of legal documents issued in October

By the Government

1. Decree 121/2006/ND-CP dated 23th Oct. 2006 by the Government adjusting and supplementing some articles of Decree No. 116/2003/ND-CP dated 10th Oct. 2003 of the Government on the Recruitment, Employment and Management of cadres and civil servants in public service delivery agencies.
2. Decree 119/2006/ND-CP dated 16th Oct. 2006 by the Government regulating the organization and performance of forest protection.
3. Decree 118/2006/ND-CP dated 10th Oct. 2006 by the Government on addressing the physical responsibility of officers.

(02 Decrees on common officers and 01 decree on professions)

By the Prime Minister (n/a)

By MARD

1. Decision 89/2006/QD-BNN dated 2nd Oct. 2006 on the issuance of Regulations on Plant Pesticide Management .
2. Decision 90/2006/QD-BNN dated 2nd Oct. 2006 regulating the function, task, power, and organization structure of the Inspectorate under the Department of Plant Protection.
3. Decision 92/2006/QD-BNN dated 16th Oct. 2006 regulating the function, task, power, and

organization structure of the Inspectorate under the Department of Dyke management and Flood Control.

4. Decision 93/2006/QD-BNN dated 16 Oct. 2006 regulating the function, task, power, and organization structure of the Inspectorate under the Department of Animal Health.

5. Decision 94/2006/QD-BNN dated 23 Oct. 2006 on the issuance of the list of fertilizers subjected to be applying sector standards.

6. Decision 95/2006/QD-BNN by the Minister dated 24th Oct. 2006 oblying the Decision 58/2003/QD-BNN dated 5th May, 2003.

Source: ISG