

ISG Secretariat: Room 209-210 Building A9 - 2 Ngoc Ha, Hanoi  
Tel: (84-4) 733 6610 - Fax: (84-4) 733 6624  
[Mailto:isginfo@fpt.vn](mailto:isginfo@fpt.vn) - Website: <http://www.isgmard.org.vn>

Issue No. 45 - April 2007

**In this issue:**

1. World Bank supports poverty reduction programs for Vietnamese ethnic minorities and remote highland communities
2. Difficult ethnic minority can borrow preferential loans
3. Boosting Agriculture Science and Technology in Viet Nam
4. Conference on unifying agriculture and market information system
5. 2.7 million USD for tea, fruit tree cultivation
6. Tea plantation planned in Central Highlands
7. Binh Dinh: Cargill animal food factory starts operation
8. Launching government bonds worth VND 22,000 billions for transportation and irrigation
9. Dak Lak province develops concentrated cashew plantations
10. Viet Nam's three crops graded in world top ten
11. More efforts to prevent rice diseases and pests
12. US found out a new vaccine to prevent virus H5N1
13. The 5th Annual Mekong Flood Forum (Ho Chi Minh City, 17-18 May 07)
14. Coffee exports rise 11 percent over last year
15. Dong Thap promotes farm produce export to Japan
16. KOTRA to set up business assistance centre in Viet Nam
17. Plans to set up fruit, vegetable and flower export centres
18. other news relating to WTO, trade and investment
19. Viet Nam attends world conference on trade promotion
20. List of legal documents issued in March 2007

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

**1. World Bank supports poverty reduction programs for Vietnamese ethnic minorities and remote highland communities**

**Hanoi, March 22, 2007:** Vietnam's ethnic minorities and communities in its remote, mountainous areas will be the focus of a US\$50 million interest-free credit that the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved yesterday.

The new Development Policy Credit - one of three expected over the next five years - will support the Government's efforts to reduce poverty among its ethnic minorities and communities in mountainous areas. Known as "Program 135 Phase 2" (P135-2), the Government program aims to support socio-economic

development in around 1,644 of the country's poorest communes and 2,500 poorest villages.

Resources for the credit come from the World Bank's concessional lending arm, the International Development Association, or IDA, which provides credits and grants to the world's poorest countries.

The credit supports policy and institutional improvements in the design and implementation of the Government's P135-2, in areas such as (i) poverty targeting, (ii) empowering communities to play a more active role in selecting and overseeing the construction of basic rural infrastructure; (iii) enhancing transparency and accountability in program implementation by strengthening the government's own systems for public procurement, financial management, and auditing, and increasing

public oversight in these areas; and (iv) better process monitoring and impact evaluation.

The operation is co-financed by Australia, Finland, Ireland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and provides an effective vehicle for donor coordination. IDA and these co-financiers will provide less than a third of the total cost of P135-2 through budget support to the Government. The policy and institutional improvements, however, apply to the entire program.

For more information about the project, please visit:

<http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/main?pagePK=64283627&piPK=73230&theSitePK=40941&menuPK=228424&Projectid=P104097>

Source: WB

## 2. Difficult ethnic minority can borrow preferential loans

**Hanoi, 07/03/2007:** Difficult ethnic minority households can borrow loans with interest rate of 0% to develop production, stabilize their life, and reduce poverty.

According to Decision dated 5<sup>th</sup> March by the Government on providing loans for special difficult ethnic minority households, the Social Policy Bank is assigned to conduct those loans or entrust local partly social-political organizations to offer loans and withdraw debts.

Beneficiary of this decision are ethnic minority households with average income below VND 60,000/person/month, total asset value not exceeding VND 3 millions (not including value of land using right, value of mountainous farms, houses supported by the State or other organizations), and with production orientation but in shortage of or without capital.

Those mentioned above households can borrow money one time or many times with accumulated total number not exceeding VND 5 millions/household. They do not have to use their asset as a guarantee and are exempted from administrative charge in borrowing loans./.

Source: VNA

## 3. Boosting Agriculture Science and Technology in Viet Nam

**Hanoi, 14 March 2007:** ADB and the Government of Viet Nam signed an agreement today for a US\$30 million loan to contribute the sustainable growth of Viet Nam's agriculture sector by helping to improve and modernize agriculture science and technology in the country.

Le Duc Thuy, Governor, State Bank of Viet Nam signed the agreement on behalf of the Government of Viet Nam. Signing on behalf of the

Asian Development Bank was Ayumi Konishi, ADB's Country Director for Viet Nam. Other senior officials witnessed the signing.

Over the past decade, Viet Nam's agriculture sector has grown rapidly. From a net importer of rice in the late 1980s, the country has become one of the largest rice exporters in the world and now exports large quantities of commercial crops.

The Government plans to further improve the quality of the country's produce, diversify into higher value products and markets, increase productivity and value addition, and improve technology development.

"Access to new technologies by farmers and agro-based enterprises is essential as Viet Nam's agriculture is shifting its focus from increased production volumes to increased production values in the era of globalization" says Ayumi Konishi, ADB's Country Director for Viet Nam.

The project will address critical issues in three key areas - agricultural research, extension, and rural-based training. It aims to promote more client-oriented activities with improved mechanisms for disseminating technology that reflects demand, develop better physical and human resources, and improve linkages among the three covered areas.

To boost agricultural research and capacity training, it will fund research proposals that respond to the sector's practical needs, support further training and graduate studies for staff of agricultural research institutes, and upgrade research and laboratory equipment in selected institutes.

It will also improve farmers' access to agricultural extension services, or information or education, in mainly upland or remote areas in five provinces - Dak Nong, Nghe An, Ninh Thuan, Quang Nam, and Thanh Hoa.

Training, such as on business skills, advanced agricultural science and technology, and integrated pest management, will be provided based on needs. The project will also support on-farm demonstration trials through contractual arrangements with regional or national research institutes to strengthen the links between research and extension.

Last, teachers will be trained in 10 rural-based technical and vocational training schools where school equipment and facilities will be upgraded under the project.

The project complements the Agriculture Sector Development Program, which was approved in 2002 with a \$90 million loan from ADB.

ADB's new loan, from its concessional Asian Development Fund, carries a 32-year term, including a grace period of 8 years. Interest is charged at 1% per annum during the grace period and 1.5% subsequently.

The Government will contribute \$10 million equivalent toward the project's total estimated cost of \$40 million. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural

Development is the executing agency for the project, which is due for completion around December 2011.

ADB, based in Manila, is dedicated to reducing poverty in the Asia and Pacific region through pro-poor sustainable economic growth, social development, and good governance. Established in 1966, it is owned by 67 members - 48 from the region. In 2006, it approved loans and grants for projects totaling \$8.5 billion, and technical assistance amounting to almost \$242 million.

Source: ADB

#### 4. Conference on unifying agriculture and market information system

**HCMC, 9/3/2007:** Management Board of Project “Strengthening agriculture and market information system” coordinated with MARD’s HCMC-base Representative Office to organize a conference on unifying agriculture and market information system at the representative office no. 2 of MARD at 135 Pasteur street, district 3, Ho Chi Minh city.

The conference was participated by representatives of Central Agriculture Project Management Board, departments, and 11 South provinces involving in the project. The conference is aimed to unify structures, operation process of the agriculture extension and market system in 20 provinces and 100 districts under the project.

The participants exchanged, discussed and agreed to the lists of good systems, sites for information collection, process of information communication from central to locality (provinces, districts). The project management board also introduced software of agriculture extension and market information system management. Equipment was also transferred to 11 provinces by the project management board.

Source: ICARD

#### 5- 2.7 million USD for tea, fruit tree cultivation

**Yen Bai, 08/03/2007:** A total of 2.7 million USD will be invested in the cultivation of tea and fruit trees in 2007 under a project using loans from the Asia Development Bank (ADB).

The Board for Management of Agricultural Projects and the Central Board for Tea and Fruit Tree Development Project announced the sum for this year at a conference in the northern Yen Bai province on Mar. 8 to review their works in 2006 and launch the 2007 plan.

In 2006, the project was carried out in 13 provinces with a budget of 11.47 million USD.

The project helped 26,600 farming households grow tea in the northern mountainous provinces of Thai Nguyen, Phu Tho, Yen Bai, Tuyen Quang and Ha Giang, and the Central Highlands province of Lam Dong. It also helped develop fruit trees in the

northern provinces of Bac Giang and Hoa Binh, the central provinces of Thanh Hoa, Binh Dinh and Khanh Hoa, and the southern provinces of Tien Giang and Ben Tre, with some 37,500 households receiving loans.

Source: VNA

#### 6. Tea plantation planned in Central Highlands

**Lam Dong, 13/03/2007:** The People's Committee of the Central Highlands province of Lam Dong has mobilised 218 billion VND (13.6 million USD) of the Government budget and other sources and will use it to create 28,000ha of tea fields.

Farmers can earn 150-180 million VND (9,339-11,207 USD) annually per ha of tea trees, according to officials from the People's Committee.

Source: VNA

#### 7. Binh Dinh: Cargill animal food factory starts operation

**Binh Dinh, 15/03/2007:** An animal food processing factory of the Cargill group (the US ) was put into operation in Long My industrial zone, Qui Nhon city, Binh Dinh province, on Mar. 14, becoming the first of its kind in the province.

The 5.6 ha factory, built with a total investment of 6 million USD, with modern equipment, is capable of processing 60,000 tonnes of assorted animal food a year. Its products will be distributed to central provinces from Thua Thien-Hue to Phu Yen.

Cargill Viet Nam Company has so far built five factories across the country, which have a combined capacity of more than 700,000 tonnes of animal feed per annum.

Source: VNA

#### 8. Launching government bonds worth VND 22,000 billions for transportation and irrigation

**Ha Noi, March/2007:** Ministry of Finance has decided to issue Government bonds worth VND 22,000 billions for the 5<sup>th</sup> time to mobilize investment in the country’s important transportation and irrigation structures.

This time’s government bonds are issued and paid in Vietnamese dong, in terms of certificate or recording. They are issued from 15<sup>th</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2007 with 5-year period, 7-year period, 10-year period, and 15-year period.

The issuance is through bidding, guarantee, and social insurance not through the State Treasury’s system./.

Source: VNA

#### 9. Dak Lak province develops concentrated cashew plantations

**Dak Lak, 07/03/2007:** Central Highlands Dak Lak province is striving to raise its cashew acreage from the current 45,000 ha to 50,000 ha in 2010 with the hope of feeding enough 10 plants capable of processing between 60,000-70,000 tonnes of raw cashew nuts per year.

Thanks to shifting low-yield coffee and rice plants to developing concentrated cashew plantations, the life of ethnic groups in the province, especially those in Ea Sup, Ea Kar and Krong Ana districts, has changed for the better.

However, four cashew nut processing plants in Dak Lak province still have to import raw materials from neighbouring provinces as this year's cashew output of Dak Lak reached only 8,000 tonnes due to old low-yield strains while the new cultivation acreage has not yet yielded.

**Source:** VNA

### 10. Viet Nam's three crops graded in world top ten

**Ha Noi, 20/03/2007:** Viet Nam's three crops, namely coffee, rubber and rice, have been ranked in the world's top ten in terms of export turnover.

Last year, the country exported around 800,000 tonnes of coffee beans, earning more than 1 billion USD, next to Brazil, and 4.7 million tonnes of rice worth 1.3 billion USD, next to Thailand.

Meanwhile, rubber exports fetched 1.5 billion USD, helping Viet Nam rank fifth after Thailand, Indonesia, India and Malaysia in terms of revenues.

**Source:** VNA

### 11. Viet Nam's three crops graded in world top ten

**Ha Noi, 20/03/2007:** Viet Nam's three crops, namely coffee, rubber and rice, have been ranked in the world's top ten in terms of export turnover.

Last year, the country exported around 800,000 tonnes of coffee beans, earning more than 1 billion USD, next to Brazil, and 4.7 million tonnes of rice worth 1.3 billion USD, next to Thailand.

Meanwhile, rubber exports fetched 1.5 billion USD, helping Viet Nam rank fifth after Thailand, Indonesia, India and Malaysia in terms of revenues.

**Source:** VNA

### 12. More efforts to prevent rice diseases and pests

**Ha Noi, 12/03/2007:** Thanks to synchronous measures taken by southern provinces to prevent rice diseases and pests, more than 1 million ha of ripe winter-spring rice has been protected and is under harvest at high yields, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

However, about 500,000 ha of growing winter-spring rice in southern Viet Nam is still threatened by Ray Nau (brown hoppers), "vang lun"

(rice grassy stunt disease), and "lun xoan la" (rice ragged stunt disease).

The ministry has launched a one-month campaign to combat brown hoppers and rice diseases, aiming to prevent any outbreak of plant diseases, ensuring that the output of the winter-spring rice crop is not affected.

The ministry said that among the technical measures used in preventing brown hoppers and rice diseases was the measure to define the best time for planting. This should be considered the top priority and has been highly appreciated by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

The government has also supported farmers by covering all funding for purchase for the purchasing of chemicals for plant protection.

The Agriculture and Rural Development Ministry called on several localities to prolong the interval between winter-spring and spring-summer crops in an effort to prevent rice diseases.

According to experts, farmers should prolong the between-crop periods and plant rice with other crops in order to prevent diseases from affecting rice crops. Crop restructuring is also a good measure to prevent brown hoppers and rice diseases, they said.

**Source:** VNA

### 13. US found out a new vaccine to prevent virus H5N1

**Hanoi, 5/03/07:** The daily Hong Kong's South-China Morning Post Newspaper dated 5<sup>th</sup> March has released that American researchers has found out a new easily - produced vaccine against virus H5N1 to prevent avian influenza of H5N1 type and inhibit this fatal disease.

Dr. David of Aaron Diamond Aid Research Center was quoted as saying that the new vaccine could be produced simply and quickly and easily preserved.

Testing of this vaccine on mouse showed that they generated antibody types that could prevent this dangerous disease.

**Source:** VNA

### 14. The 5th Annual Mekong Flood Forum (Ho Chi Minh City, 17-18 May 07)

**Hanoi, 29 Mar 2007:** The MRC's Regional Flood Management and Mitigation Centre (RFMMC) will conduct the 5th Annual Mekong Flood Forum from 17-18 May 2007 at the Rex Hotel, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam.

The theme for this year's forum is: "Improving Inputs towards Mediumterm Flood Forecasting and Early Warning in the Mekong Basin". This reflects the MRC's Strategic Plan 2006-2010 which states that a key challenge of the RFMMC is to improve data collection and information exchange

among the riparian countries and the MRC, as well as with other users or donors.

Source: [user@sea-user.org](mailto:user@sea-user.org)

### 15. Coffee exports rise 11 percent over last year

**Dac Lac, 06/03/2007:** Enterprises in the Central Highlands province of Dac Lac earned 70 million USD from exporting coffee in the first two months of this year, an 11 percent increase over last year, according to its People's Committee.

About 65,000 tonnes of coffee were shipped internationally, accounting for one-sixth of total exports from the country.

Source: VNA

### 16. Dong Thap promotes farm produce export to Japan

**Tokyo, 15/03/2007:** The Mekong Delta province of Dong Thap is eyeing the potential market in Japan, where there is demand for agricultural products.

Chairman of the provincial People's Committee Truong Ngoc Han said during a recent market survey tour to Japan that his province has various products that can sell in the Japanese market, even in large quantity, like food and fruits.

Dong Thap province currently accounts for about 50-70 percent of Viet Nam's total rice exports to Japan over the last few years.

The province will continue to boost this momentum by carrying out a high-quality paddy cultivation project in an area of some 120,000 hectares, he revealed.

Han said surveys on some markets in Tokyo and its suburbs made him believe that a number of the province's specialty fruits such as Lai Vung mandarin, sweet mango and pumpkin as well as aquatic products like prawn and Basa catfish are able to enter the Japanese market.

Dong Thap province has designated an area of 10,000 hectares to raise prawns for export to Japan, he said.

The official, however, acknowledged that the most pressing issue for Vietnamese agricultural and aquatic products to enter the Japanese market is to meet the host country's food hygiene standards.

To this effect, he said his province has coordinated with the ASEAN-Japan Centre and Viet Nam's trade mission in Tokyo to invite Japanese businesses to conduct market surveys in Dong Thap.

Source: VNA

### 17. Kotra to set up business assistance centre in Viet Nam

**Ha Noi, 16/03/2007:** The Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (Kotra) said it will establish a

centre assisting businesses from the Republic of Korea (RoK) to operate in Viet Nam.

Kotra Ha Noi General Director Young Woong Kim said the establishment of the centre, which will begin operation in May, is a response to demands from the community of RoK investors.

The RoK's investment in Viet Nam has steadily increased over recent years, reaching 2.8 billion USD in 2006, accounting for 34.2 percent of the total foreign investment in Viet Nam, the general director said.

Viet Nam's business environment in Viet Nam is appropriate and convenient for businesses from the RoK, Kim said, citing this as the major reason behind the above-mentioned marked growth.

The Government and provincial authorities of Viet Nam have always created favourable conditions for foreign businesses, including those from the RoK, he further said.

He added that similarities in culture between the two countries have facilitated business by RoK traders and investors, many of whom have recently shifted their investment from China to Viet Nam.

Amid the increase in investment from the RoK, the establishment of such a centre, which will provide information regarding the Vietnamese investment environment for RoK businesses, is necessary in helping facilitate RoK businesses' operation, the general director stressed.

Source: VNA

### 18. Plans to set up fruit, vegetable and flower export centres

**Ha Noi, 23/03/2007:** Three centres designed to facilitate the transaction and export of fruit, vegetable and flower will be established in the northern mountainous province of Lao Cai, the Central Highlands province of Da Lat and HCM City, announced the Ministry of Trade on March 22.

The centres are part of a national programme focussing on these particular export and are scheduled to start operation next year, said the ministry.

Viet Nam's fruit and vegetable export revenues are forecast to reach 300 million USD this year, a year-on-year rise of 15 percent.

Source: VNA

### 19. Viet Nam attends world conference on trade promotion

**Buenos Aires, 17/03/2007:** A delegation from the Trade Ministry's Department of Trade Promotion, led by its vice head Nguyen Bao, has attended the sixth World Conference of Trade Promotion Organisations in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The two-day conference discussed the trade globalisation trends and the role of trade promotion organisations and commercial agencies abroad.

Bao said Viet Nam was interested in the discussed issues as they brought experiences and ideas to the country that will host the Asian Trade Promotion Forum in next year.

On the occasion, the Vietnamese delegation held working sessions with a number of Latin American business people.

Bao also stated that Viet Nam will send a number of delegates to Latin American countries in the second half of this year, including delegations to explore prospects in coffee, footwear and seafood in Brazil, Mexico as well as throughout South America.

**Source:** VNA

## 20. Vegetables, flowers exports to hit 1 billion USD in 2015

**Ha Noi, 15/03/2007:** The country plans to earn 1 billion USD from vegetable, flower and fruit export by 2015, according to the Trade Ministry.

The target was announced at a workshop on production and exports of fresh vegetables, flowers and fruits held in Ha Noi on Mar. 15 by the ministry.

Trade Deputy Minister Tran Duc Minh said that his ministry and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development have joined efforts to boost production and exports of these products for many years. However, export turnover was still small, estimated at about 280 million USD in 2006.

The country's products were exported mainly in canned and dried goods, a very small volume was raw or frozen. Viet Nam's traditional markets were China, Taiwan, Japan and Singapore.

According to the senior official, the key point of the national programme on the exports of vegetables, flowers and fruits was choosing an effective model for production and exports as well as solving major outstanding problems to reach export targets.

The Trade Ministry plans to coordinate with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to hold bilateral talks with the US, the EU, Japan and Singapore to sign agreements on animal and plant quarantine and recognise quality of vegetables, flowers, fruits and other foods to facilitate the export of those products.

**Source:** VNA

## 21. Record FDI flow forecast for Viet Nam in 2007

**Ha Noi, 20/03/2007:** Viet Nam is likely to achieve a new record in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2007, said representatives from several major international financial groups at the second Viet Nam Investment Forum, which opened in Ha Noi on Mar. 19.

"Attracting between 15-17 billion USD in FDI each year is within the country's reach," said General Director of the Vina Capital Fund, Don Lam. He revealed the company's plan to invest 400 million USD in building a complex of shopping centres and apartments for lease in Viet Nam.

Director General of the Dragon Capital Fund, Dominic Scriven, shared Lam's view, adding that a series of big investment projects will be implemented in Viet Nam in the near future, including a five billion USD project of the HonHai Precision Industry Ltd. Company of Taiwan.

General Director of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC), Michael Geoghegan, noted propitious conditions making Viet Nam an appealing destination to foreign investors, citing the country's young population and an abundant labour force with improved skills. Additionally, he said, Vietnamese people are quick to take to hi-tech services like the Internet and mobile phones.

Viet Nam's accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) would bring in new opportunities for the country's economy, particularly in the volume of FDI, added Geoghegan.

Participants at the forum agreed that how Viet Nam could maintain this capital flow is a challenge facing the country as many difficulties still remain in implementing approved projects, such as low capital disbursement, cumbersome procedures and a lack of synchronicity in enforcing laws.

The Vina Capital director said how Viet Nam opens its door and implements its commitments will affect their decision to invest in Viet Nam.

Dragon Capital's chief Scriven also agreed that the flow of direct or indirect foreign investment depends on domestic factors, and whether a country could maintain the investment capital flow depends on the way it treats customers and partners. However, he said he is optimistic that the capital flow pouring into Viet Nam will continue increasing.

According to the latest economic freedom ratings published by the Fraser Institute and members of the Economic Freedom Network, Viet Nam is ranked 138 out of the 157 rated economies while China, 119 and Thailand, 50.

Therefore, investors pointed to the need for Viet Nam to promote capital management capacity, reform investment licensing process, and create a more open and transparent investment and business environment.

**Source:** VNA

## 22. Viet Nam's FDI inflow exceeds 2.5 billion USD

**Ha Noi, 22/03/2007:** Viet Nam has in the first quarter of this year attracted more than 2.5 billion USD in foreign direct investment (FDI), a year-on-year

increase of 22 percent, reported the Ministry of Planning and Investment.

According to the Foreign Investment Department, in March alone, the country licensed 71 FDI projects with a combined registered capital of 455 million USD and permitted 47 operational projects which added 432 million USD to their investment capital.

Up to 49 percent of the total capital of the first three months was poured into the service industry, 48 percent into industrial projects, and the remainder into the agro-forestry-fisheries sector.

The Republic of Korea emerged as the biggest investor in Viet Nam in the reviewed period with a total registered capital of 486 million USD, followed by Singapore with 476 million USD.

According to the department, the largest projects involve the construction of a 276 million USD resort in central Thua Thien-Hue province, a 220 million USD paper mill in southern Binh Duong province, a 165 million USD seaport in southern Ba Ria-Vung Tau province and a 100 million USD reservoir in northern Thai Nguyen province.

Source: VNA

### 23. Vietnamese, Lao provinces cooperate in agriculture

**Quang Ngai, 07/03/2007:** Viet Nam's central Quang Ngai province and Laos' Champasak province have reached an agreement to cooperate in afforestation and plant and animal husbandry, local officials said.

Under the agreement, Quang Ngai province will assist its neighbouring partner in training technicians and providing it with plant varieties and animal breeds.

It will also transfer technology to the Laotian locality to help develop short-term industrial plants, breed cows and fish, and build tapioca and sugar mills alongside sending voluntary teachers to the locality.

Champasak province will provide 15,000 ha of land for Quang Ngai province to plant trees for industrial production materials, such as eucalyptus, sugarcane, cassava and peas.

Source: VNA

### 24. Tien Giang applies EU standards in pineapple cultivation

**Tien Giang, 19/03/2007:** The Mekong delta province of Tien Giang has started a 3.6 billion VND programme on developing pineapple cultivation in Tan Phuoc district.

The four-year programme will be deployed on 50 ha in Tan Phuoc under the European Union's Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) standards.

To increase pineapples' quality and output, the programme will provide advanced technology to farmers in the field.

Tan Phuoc district now has more than 10,000 ha of pineapple, 9,000 ha of which are currently yielding fruits but the productivity and output are not high.

Source: VNA

### 25. Vietnamese trade week to be held in RoK

**Ha Noi, 16/03/2007:** The Trade Ministry has announced that it will organise a Week of Vietnamese Trade in Seoul, the Republic of Korea (RoK), from May 27 to June 2 to promote the country's exports to that market.

Thirty-five domestic businesses are expected to take part in the trade promotion endeavour, including seminars on Viet Nam's export potential and investment market, as well as a fair of imported goods of the host country, which will take place during the event.

Of those, 25 businesses which are to display their products at the fair will be provided with expenditures for booth leases and trade promotion activities, said the ministry.

Viet Nam's exhibits will include wood furniture, handicraft items, seafood, cashew nuts, footwear, garments, textiles, plastics and construction materials.

Source: VNA

### 26. Viet Nam's WTO admission benefits RoK businesses

**Ha Noi, 16/03/2007:** After Viet Nam joined the World Trade Organisation (WTO), businesses from the Republic of Korea (RoK) have been able to facilitate operations in Viet Nam, said Young Woong Kim, General Director of the Korea Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) in Ha Noi.

Kim told a Viet Nam News Agency correspondent that after Viet Nam joined the WTO, the country's export markets have expanded markedly. Vietnamese goods are exported to almost all countries in the world with new tariffs benefiting exporters. RoK businesses in Viet Nam have also benefited from the tariff adjustment, he said. They can now directly export their products to major markets, including the US and the European Union, Kim said. He added that as a result, the output of these businesses, particularly in garments, has increased considerably.

According to Kim, the country's WTO admission will not bring about great changes for Viet Nam in the near future, but in two or three years time, particularly after Viet Nam untightens control of the service market.

He stressed that the number of businesses from foreign countries, including the RoK, coming to Viet Nam will also increase sharply. Demands for labour and infrastructure facilities will also rise correlatively.

He said that the Vietnamese government should soon map out preparatory steps in order to effectively receive this major investment flow.

Source: VNA

## 27. Workshop for promoting investment in Vietnam held in Hong Kong

**Hanoi, 14 March 2007:** About 400 enterprises in various fields at the special administrative area of Hong Kong (China) gathered at the Workshop “Vietnam: A new dynamic one in South East Asia” held on 13<sup>th</sup> March in Hong Kong.

At the workshop, Minister of Trade Truong Dinh Tuyen introduced Vietnam’s achievements during the “Doi moi” process, as well as stressed its investment advantages such as stable politics, plentiful labor force, low labour cost, more and more improved economic policies and increasingly simplified administrative procedures.

Besides, Minister also reaffirmed the application of equal treatment regulation for all foreign investors as for domestic investors.

He said that Hong Kong’s enterprises had a lot of advantages to invest in Vietnam, mainly in the fields of textile, dying, production of household electronic equipments, processing, construction of tourism parks, hotels, ports, and stock-exchange.

Trading relation between the two countries has been increased continuously and reached USD 2 billions in 2006. As of 2006, Hong Kong had 375 projects in Vietnam with total registered capital of USD 5.2 bil.

Minister of Truong Dinh Tuyen answered questions raised by Hong Kong enterprises relating to Vietnam’s investment items and policy to attract investment.

The workshop was held on the occasion of Tuyen’s visit to the special administrative area of Hong Kong from 11<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> March. 2007./.

Source: VNA

## 28. Preparations Underway for Major Water Summit

**Tokyo, Japan** - Senior government officials of countries across the Asia Pacific region, along with key delegates from concerned organizations and development agencies, are gathering to deliberate on the details of the first Asia Pacific Water Forum Summit.

The proposed summit, to be held in Oita Prefecture, Japan, in December 2007, will focus on measures that will ensure the effective delivery of adequate and safe water supply to critical areas in the

region. The summit’s priority areas will be water financing, water-related disaster management and water for development and ecosystems.

According to the joint agency report, Asia Water Watch 2015, commissioned by ADB in 2006, about 669 million people in the Asia Pacific region are still without access to safe drinking water and 2 billion people lack access to improved sanitation facilities.

ADB is a key supporter of the Asia Pacific Water Forum and has been designated the lead organization for water financing and increasing public awareness and understanding of key water trends, issues and solutions for the summit.

“ADB has responded to international calls for increased water financing with our [Water Financing Program 2006-2010](#), which aims to more than double our water investments over the next five-year period,” said ADB Vice President for Operations Liqun Jin.

The program aims to improve water services for 200 million people in both urban and rural areas and help introduce integrated water resources management in 25 river basins across the region.

Mr. Jin told participants at the steering committee meeting that is making preparations for the summit that ADB will commission a flagship report, Asian Water Development Outlook, for discussion during the summit.

The Asia Pacific Water Forum was established in September last year. It is a non-profit, non-partisan network that identifies and adopts solutions to water issues in the region. Its goal is to contribute to sustainable water management to achieve the targets of the millennium development goals, which were drawn up in 2000 by the UN Millennium Summit to reduce poverty and improve lives.

“We are confident that the summit will exert great impact on water development in the Asia Pacific region, as an integral component of development programs to achieve the millennium development goals in the developing countries,” said Mr. Jin.

Source: ADB web

## 29. List of legal documents issued in March 2007 relating to ARD development

### By the Prime Minister

1. Decision 298/QĐ-TTg dated 12 March 2007 approving the Plan on rearrangement and renovation of state-owned enterprises under MARD in period 2007 - 2008

### By MARD Minister

2. Decision 18/2007/QĐ-BNN dated 01 March 2007 on issuance of the functions, tasks, authorities and organizational structure of the Forestry Project Management Board.

3. Decision 20/2007/QĐ-BNN dated 15 March 2007 on approving the national strategy of post-harvest of rice, corns, soybeans and groundnuts to the year 2020.
4. Circular 21/2007/TT-BNN dated 27 March 2007 providing guidelines on implementation of some contents under Decision 193/2006/QĐ-TTg dated 24 August 2006 by the Prime Minister on approval of inhabitants arrangement program in the natural disaster specially difficult, island, bordering, freely emigrant, critical and very critical protection regions and stringent protection areas of the special use forest, in 2006-2010 period and orientation to 2015./.  
([http://www.vietnamforestry.org.vn/LegalDocument\\_en.html](http://www.vietnamforestry.org.vn/LegalDocument_en.html))

**By Ministries**

1. Inter-ministerial circular No 19/2007/TTLT/BNN&PTNT-BTP-BCA-VKSNDTC-TANDTC providing guidelines on application of some articles under the Penal Code concerning crimes relating to forest management, forest protection and forestry products management.

**Source:** ISG