Thai princess visits Laos to enhance ties, mutual understanding

Times Reporters
Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand arrived in Vientiane yesterday for a two-day official visit to Laos, aimed at enhancing bilateral ties between the two neighbours and mutual understanding between the Lao and Thai peoples. Her visit is in response to an invitation from Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Thongloun Sisoulith, the Lao Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a press release.

The ministry said the princess’s visit will be an important boost in enhancing mutual understanding between the people of Laos and Thailand, and furthering relations and cooperation between the two countries. Shortly after landing at Wattay International Airport where Her Royal Highness was warmly welcomed by high-ranking Lao officials, the princess visited an ethnic and cultural school for orphans in Vientiane province where she attended the official opening of a computer studies building.

During her visit, Princess Sirindhorn presented study materials and sports equipment to the school. Later in the day, the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of goods production and circulation, Mr Somsavat Lengsavd, hosted a dinner for the princess at the Lao Plaza Hotel in Vientiane. In the afternoon, the princess paid a courtesy visit to President Choummaly Sayasone at the Presidential Office. The president, on behalf of the Lao people, expressed heartfelt thanks to Her Royal Highness for the valuable assistance she has extended.

NA seeks power to control public debt

Times Reporters
The National Assembly is debating whether to assume increased control over government debt in a bid to safeguard macroeconomic stability. Assembly Vice President Mr Somphath Phengkhamma on Monday proposed a number of changes to the constitution. One of these would require the government to seek approval from the legislative body if it wishes to change the proportion of government debt in relation to GDP.

The Constitution Drafting Committee has suggested that public debt be kept within a certain percentage of GDP. At present, there is no regulation governing the matter in the Lao constitution. National Assembly members are currently debating the inclusion of such a regulation in the constitution. Many expect that a change to the constitution, which outlines the role and duties of the assembly, will receive a majority vote. Once enshrined in the constitution, this law would empower the assembly to more closely monitor government expenditure.

Huaphan vehicle caravan expected to grow

Soukhriludon Southivongnroath
A vehicle caravan travelling to the northern provinces from December 11-15 this year, has doubled in size compared to the previous year, according to the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism yesterday.

The ministry arranged a press conference to officially announce the caravan to the public. The main objective of the activity was to promote tourism sites among local people and foreign visitors or foreign residents in Laos.

They said it is also part of celebrating the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and the 95th anniversary of President Kaysone Phomvihane’s birthday on December 13.

The conference reported today that so far about 65 vehicles have joined the caravan and it is believed that this number shall increase to over 100 before December 11, the scheduled date of departure from Vientiane to the northern provinces.

Deputy Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism, Mr Chaleun Warinhrasak said this year the caravan will visit many great activities relating to the celebrations, in particular in Huaphan province, which played a major historical role in the struggle for the independence of the Lao people in the past.

The caravan shall depart Vientiane before passing through Xieng Khuang province on its way to Viengsay district of Huaphan province under the theme “Return to the Birthplace- Glorification to the revolution of Laos.”

Running from December 11-15, the trip will start from That Luang Esplanade in the capital and head up through Xieng Khuang on its way to Huaphan province.

The caravan group will visit the Kaysone Phomvihane Memorial Cave, the Caves of the Government Leaders and join a photo exhibition at Xang-Lot Cave in Viengsay district.

The caravan will then move to Samneua district in the evening of December 13 to enjoy a traditional arts show by local communities in Huaphan province.

During its return to the capital on December 14, the participants of the caravan will enjoy various other activities and new experiences at the historic tourist sites in Xieng Khuang province before returning to Vientiane on December 15.

Mr Chaleun explained that there will be many great events
City authorities JICA confer on development planning

New e-library system boosts health learning process

UNFPA to employ new strategy for helping women, girls

Phetphoxay Sengsaeth

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) will use a transformative new agenda and strategy for helping women and girls in the natural crisis-prone world, it was highlighted at a recent meeting.

Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment, Dr Kikeo Chanthabouthay spoke at a press conference to announce "Shelter, Protection, Transformation: Agenda for women and girls in a crisis-prone world" on Monday in Vientiane.

Dr Kikeo said he hoped that governments of countries around the world had been solving the problem of violence against women and girls. Now, they need to solve the problems of women and adolescent girls facing extraordinary burdens with the wonders of conflicts, wars and natural disasters, UNFPA officials said.

Dr Kikeo said Laos has enjoyed a peaceful society and less major disaster events in the past decades. However the Laos government has exchanged on experience on helping women and girls in the natural crisis world with many partners internationally.

The new strategy is important to Laos for the protection of family and community, as women and adolescent girls can easily become victims of sexual violence, unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, he added.

Over the past few years, UNFPA has expressed that critical basic services are under siege when natural disasters, wars and conflicts, and girls in today's natural crisis-prone world. It was further explained that critical basic services are under siege when natural disasters, wars and conflicts, and girls in today's natural crisis-prone world.

"We hope that this E-Library system will not only help them to have active discussions but also to take concrete actions in order to support the development of Vietniane," Mr Khamthavy said.

He also asked for the continuous efforts of participants in supporting the future cooperation with JICA experts to ensure its successful implementation.

Participants agreed that it was important for them to be connected with an internet connection and not to carry very heavy books to read.

Vientiane Times

Deputy Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism, Mr Chaleun Phrasavath (second right) and the caravan committees attend a press conference in Vientiane to promote the caravan to the northern provinces.

Deputy Editor-in-Chief and Features Editor: Phoukhothe, Phon Thikeo
Tel: 021-336431, 021-336407
Email: phonkhothe23@yahoo.com

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Registered participants will receive a free shirt, hat and four stickers.

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Laos News

Sisay Vilaysack
Tel: 556-5716, 021-336045,
Fax: 336046
sisay69@gmail.com

Business Editor
Panyathil Thamvanvongsa
Tel: 021-336407,
020-7770411

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Editor-in-Chief
Thonglor Duangsavanh
Tel: 021-336042

Publication and Promotion Department by phone:
021-212-248, 020-5548492

News Editor
Sisay Vilaysack
Tel: 556-5716, 021-336045,
Fax: 336046
sisay69@gmail.com

Business Editor
Panyathil Thamvanvongsa
Tel: 021-336407,
020-7770411

Copy Sub-editor: Elizabeth Winch
Finance Manager
Somphone Vongva
Tel: 336040, 020-55647291

Marketing Manager
Phouvathack Inthakhounarme
Tel: 021-336042,
Fax: 336401
Mobile: 020-55599209
email: sale.advisor@gmail.com,
Chomphet town relocated to a larger space

The town of Chomphet district in Luang Prabang province has been relocated as the old area of Xiangem where the town, which was located close to the banks of the Mekong River, was removed because it was unpaved, making it difficult for residents to travel to the town site. The new town of Chomphet was removed to a larger space opposite the town of Luang Prabang district. The new town site, which is situated between the two villages of Phalath and Bomlung, has been developed for several years.

According to Dr Somchanh, the Governor of Chomphet district, most of the state buildings of Chomphet district have been relocated and district authorities have been working at the new town site, which is situated in the two villages of Phalath and Bomlung, for a few years already.

Currently, only the district Public Works and Transport section and district health section are working in the old town because the funds for the reconstruction of these buildings in the new town are insufficient as yet.

The new town of Chomphet district as well as a road linking the district of Chomphet in Luang Prabang province to Houangxai district of Xayabury province. The road is currently unpaved.

However Mr Chan said it is expected that the road will start to be improved with asphalt this year, starting from Houangxai district of Xayabury province and moving towards Chomphet district in Luang Prabang province.

Botanical experts on Southeast Asia meet in Vientiane

Botanical experts from Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam are meeting in Vientiane this week to discuss and report on the success of botanical research in tropical Asia.

The third such meeting was organized to stimulate research and collaboration in the study of tropical flora. In particular, various botanical research topics will be reported at the meeting, with technical exchanges between the experts, researchers and students.

A total of 121 titles included in the programme will be given by keynote speakers, including 62 oral presentations and 52 poster presentations by researchers from domestic and international institutes.

One of the attractions, there will be a botanical ink drawing master class guided by French regional herbarium practical training, and a best student posters award contest, officials confirmed.

Speaking at the meeting, Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences at the National University of Laos and a representative of Laos Botanical Research in Tropical Asia, Dr Somchanh Bouphammy said that this meeting has been eagerly awaited as a forum where recent research results can be presented, advice on plant conservation policy in tropical Asia can be given, and the sustainable use of plant resources can be promoted.

Dr Somchanh said it will provide opportunities for Lao researchers to exchange ideas and promote collaboration with foreign experts and researchers. It will also promote Lao botanical research to be upgraded and gradually brought in line with regional and international standards.

This meeting will offer its stage for four days of informative lectures and presentations, productive discussions and opportunities to address some eight fields of research including botany, ethno-pharmacology, photo-chemistry, biodiversity and botanical gardens ecology database, she added.

Dr Somchanh said “This will be a memorable symposium and we are looking forward to this meeting providing unique opportunity for sharing the latest research, strengthening the research collaboration and mostly pointing out new tools for better conservation and plant conservation policy in tropical Asia can be given, and the sustainable use of plant resources can be promoted.”

Thai princess visits... FROM PAGE 1

To Laos over the years. This has helped to improve the livelihoods of the Lao people and boost socio-economic development.

According to the Faculty of Natural Sciences, the first symposium (December 13-14, 2000) was organized by the Museum National d’ Histoire Naturelle and the Royal University of Vientiane. Dr Prathipcent, gathering some 350 participants from more than 20 countries.

There were 57 oral presentations and 60 posters, and a workshop on botanical illustration which attracted about 40 people.

The most important element of the branding process for southern Laos was not its output of a logo or a centre, but the fact that it brought tourism stakeholders together from the public and private sector, across provincial borders and across business interests.

CEO of QO Mr David Keen underlined that the brand launching event was just the start of a journey which is likely to contribute significantly to the economic success of the four southern provinces of Laos.

But he stressed the importance for local stakeholders to take ownership of the brand and to live it in their day-to-day operations.

A bight of media tools was also launched for stakeholders to communicate with their own material creatively. Part of the media package is a new website (www.southern-laos.com) filled with highlights on things to do or see, as well as an area for tourism trade professionals.

Southern Laos launches tourism destination brand

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Nonaka seeks power... FROM PAGE 1

Economists welcomed the Constitution Drafting Committee’s suggestion of giving power to the National Assembly, as the people’s representative, to oversee government debt and safeguard macroeconomic stability.

However, the NA as having the power to oversee government expenditure,” and facilitating the centre was established in 1994 to facilitate by Swisscontact over a period of 10 months, and supported by international brand expertise from the marketing agency QO, based in Bangkok.

According to Tim Gamper, Country Manager of Swisscontact in Laos, the most important element of the branding process for southern Laos was not its output of a logo or a centre, but the fact that it brought tourism stakeholders together from the public and private sector, across provincial borders and across business interests.

CEO of QO Mr David Keen underlined that the brand launching event was just the start of a journey which is likely to contribute significantly to the economic success of the four southern provinces of Laos.

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Thailand has provided more than 5 billion baht (almost 59 billion kip) to finance the construction of infrastructure and facilities at the centre.

From 1993 to 2014, Thailand has provided more than 5 billion baht (almost 59 billion kip) to finance the construction of infrastructure and facilities at the centre.

The princess will present her students with a set of tools, a diploma, and a cheque for the amount of 200,000 baht (2.5 million kip).

The event was surrounded by cultural performances from southern Laos and sought to bring together local leaders, giving a glimpse of the charming nature of the destination.

A big list of media tools was also launched for stakeholders to communicate with their own material creatively. Part of the media package is a new website (www.southern-laos.com) filled with highlights on things to do or see, as well as an area for tourism trade professionals.

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U.S. Embassy Auction
December 12, 2015

Appliances, Electronics, Air Conditioner
Computer Items (Printer, Scanner, US), Office Supply, Furniture, Vehicles (1 truck and 1 SUV), Tools and much more..........................

Pre-registration is required for bidders:
December 7, 8 and 9, 2015
From 09:00 to 11:00 hrs

Late-registration will also be accepted:
December 12, 2015
From 08:00 to 10:30 hrs

Embassy Field: Ban Watnak, Sisattanak District, Vientiane.
Tel: 020-5551-5996, 020-5552-9692
(For Vehicles 020-5552-9616)

PBM, Interplast provide free surgery in Xieng Khuang

Times Reporters

A medical team led by doctors from Interplast Australia and New Zealand arrived in Laos to provide free surgical treatment for people in Xieng Khuang province suffering from conditions such as burn scar contractures, cleft lip or cleft palate.

The programme, worth a total of US$550,000, is funded by Phu Bia Mining (PBM) and supported by the Women’s International Group (WIG).

The team of plastic and reconstructive surgeons, anaesthetists and nurses from Interplast are working at the Lao-Mongolian Friendship Hospital in Xieng Khuang from December 1-10, 2015. They will also work alongside and train staff from Mahosot Hospital in Vientiane.

During the programme, the WIG provided pre and post-operative assistance to all patients, and financial support to those who travelled to receive treatment.

In 2014, a total of 91 procedures were performed, which included 33 people undergoing reconstructive burns surgery, 13 for repair of cleft lip and palate and 27 for treatment to reduce scarring from burns.

The majority of the 91 procedures were on female patients. Specialist reconstructive or plastic surgery is life-changing treatment for the people in Xieng Khuang province benefiting from the programme.

The specialist medical treatment has transformed the lives of more than 200 people in Xieng Khuang over the last three years. To mark the 40th anniversary of Laos, the company also extended support to local communities in Xaysomboun province who wished to travel to Xieng Khuang province to receive free surgery. We expect to provide treatment to more than 90 people this year,” Mr Chanpheng said. He added that Phu Bia Mining will continue to support Interplast and work with local authorities to address health and poverty.
UNFPA to Laos representative, Dr. Hassan Mohtashami (left) hands over the report on the State of the World Population 2015 to Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment, Dr. Kikeo Chanthabouly (right). The UNFPA also highlighted its new strategy ‘Shelter from the storm: A transformative agenda for women and girls in a crisis-prone world’ on Monday in Vientiane.

Officials from the Ministry of Public Works and Transport and representatives of authorised Toyota dealers in Laos gather for a group photo last week during a one-day driving course in Vientiane titled Safe Driving Education, organised by Toyota Motor Thailand Company Limited. The company’s Executive Vice President Mr. Wichien Empmasertsook, Deputy Head of the Operations Office for the Mekong Division Mr. Kumpol Akameteepun and senior Lao officials attended the event.

A ferry takes vehicles and passengers across the Mekong River between the town of Luang Prabang and Chomphet district in Luang Prabang province.

Tourists listen attentively as a guide explains the history of some of the landmarks in Luang Prabang.
Afghanistan seeks united anti-terror approach at Heart of Asia conference

The Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister said his country attaches importance to having strong relations with all the regional countries for a view promoting mutual trust in the areas of security and economic interaction. He highlighted building measures identified in the Istanbul process document as leading to non-tariff regional engagement and cooperation of the Heart of Asia countries with Afghanistan in areas of trade and economic, energy, counter terrorism, narcotics, disaster management, regional infrastructure and education.

He said the confidence and collective approach at Heart of Asia conference to finalize agenda for the ministerial conference to be held on Wednesday.

Pakistan’s FM Advisor on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz told the opening session that Pakistan continues to play a durable peace in Afghanistan as instability there is not in the interest of Pakistan.

“Pakistan will continue to support all endeavors aiming at strengthening peace and security in Afghanistan,” Aziz said.

Sartaj Aziz stressed that Heart of Asia Conference is an effective platform for promoting regional economic cooperation and connectivity for the benefit of the region. He said Pakistan offers an opportunity to member countries in resultant oriented engagements for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, and a secure and prosperous Pakistan.

He said since the launching of Heart of Asia Conference in 2011, the forum has made good progress towards realisation of its core objective of promoting durable peace and stability in Afghanistan. He said the key achievements include political cooperation and engagement with Afghanistan and its neighbors and the regional countries with a view of promoting mutual trust in the areas of security and economic interaction.

The analyst further said that healthy and well-educated children in Indonesia lived side by side with children who suffered from malnutrition, learned little when they were in school and dropped out too early.

“Some 6 percent of children in rural Papua have no access,” said Chaves, adding that this kind of inequality dims the prospect of society for generations.

Meanwhile, the benefits of economic growth have been enjoyed largely by the growing consumer class. Between 2003 and 2010, consumption per person of the richest 10 percent of Indonesians grew at over 6 percent per year after adjusting for inflation, but it grew less than 2 percent per year for the poorest 40 percent.

Australia’s opposition leader’s popularity hits record low of 14 percent

The embattled Labor leader, Shorten told the opening session of the conference that he won’t quit because he doesn’t quit.

While Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has recently returned from a five-nation tour where he met 20 world leaders, his standing as preferred prime minister also fell. T urnb ull’s rating dropped four points to 60 percent and a 30 percent government still holds a 6 percent margin in the House of Representatives, the government said that in order to improve the fraying support for protectionism and cooperation between the two nations, the armed forces, the government still holds a “very strong relationship” with the US that it will “continue to strengthen”.

World Bank warns of Indonesia’s rising inequality

The analyst further said that healthy and well-educated children in Indonesia lived side by side with children who suffered from malnutrition, learned little when they were in school and dropped out too early.

In 2013 we changed the aid mechanism, which were previously determined by the school, to be based on unified data via Indonesia Smart Card (KIP). The impact was quite large,” he said.

Filthy Rich: A small child brushes her teeth with river water. Considerable numbers of Indonesian people continue to lack adequate access to clean water and basic sanitation. (Courtesy of the Public Works and Public Housing Ministry)
India set to agree on bullet train import from Japan in summit talks

Tokyo (Kyodo News) — India is making final arrangements to adopt Japanese bullet train technology for a high-speed railway project, with the leaders of the two countries set to unveil the agreement in a joint statement this week, a Japanese government source said Tuesday.

The statement following talks between Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday is expected to incorporate this accord, which would mark India’s first high-speed railway project, the source said. Abe’s meeting with Modi during his three-day visit to India from Friday will come at a time Japan hopes to regain lost ground after losing out to China in its bid to secure a key high-speed railway contract in Indonesia.

The proposed railway of about 500 kilometres will link Mumbai in western India and Ahmadabad, north of Mumbai, in roughly two hours, the source said. Construction of the project, which is estimated to cost 980 billion rupee (about US$14.68 billion), will begin in 2017, with the aim of starting railway operations in 2023.

Tokyo has sounded New Delhi out about a plan for Japan to provide yen loans on the premise that the railway contract will be given to a consortium of Japanese firms, the source said. The Japanese side has also been considering offering a package which includes rail cars and railway operation systems, as the Indian government has been cautious given its financial circumstances. Some have called for a competitive international tender.

Should India agree to adopt the Japanese shinkansen train technology, Japan is expected to take advantage of a policy of relaxing conditions for extending yen loans announced by Abe during an international conference in Kuala Lumpur last month, the source said. Abe said his country will ease conditions in carrying out its yen loan scheme for emerging countries in Asia, as Japan seeks to spur its economy through infrastructure exports to the fastest-growing region.

Tokyo’s move to review its yen loan scheme to make it more acceptable to potential partner countries is seen as a countermeasure to Beijing, which has tapped into the huge infrastructure development needs of Asia.

Competition between Japan and China over the Indian railway project has been tough as China also offered funds and technology transfer to India. China successfully bid for the Indonesian railway project connecting Jakarta and the West Java provincial capital of Bandung in October. The project was estimated to cost 78 trillion rupee (US$5.5 billion).

Chinese tourists in Australia outspend Brits, Americans, Canadians combined

CHINA (China Daily) — Chinese tourists in the past year reportedly spent AUS 7.7 billion (US$5.6 billion) in Australia, an increase of more than three times the rate of overall spending by visitors.

According to a report in The Australian, spending by visitors from China rose 43 percent in the 12 months to September, while the number of tourists from China increased by one quarter.

The depreciation of the Australian dollar, which has made the country more affordable than before, has been cited as the main driving force behind the significant rise of Chinese spending. What is more, the number is so huge that it even exceeds the spending by the British, Americans and Canadians combined.

With the rise and expansion of China’s middle class, outbound travel has become a trend among a good many Chinese families, who usually choose overseas holiday destinations over domestic ones when making vacation choices. Australia, with its natural and cultural landscape, has emerged as one of the most popular resort places for Chinese tourists.

“The problem of time, distance and cost mean that Australia will never be a high volume destination,” said John O’Sullivan, Tourism Research Australia managing director.

“Our Tourism2020 strategy is unashamedly focused upon yield: encouraging international visitors to stay longer, disperse further and ultimately do more and spend more while in our country.”

JOB VACANCY

Land Registration Export (Lao National)

The Land Management and Coastal Planning Program (LMCPP) is a project of the German Development Cooperation implemented through GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit). The project comprises two main areas of activity: 1) securing land rights through systematic land registration and titling, and 2) territorial development planning and poverty focused investment management. Through a multi-level approach, activities are supported at central, provincial and district levels in four provinces, including Savannakhet, Laos, Pakse, Houaphan and Mondolkiri.

For the Land Registration component of the program, GIZ LMCPP is seeking a qualified Land Exporter in the field of land registration/land management in Haumphane province.

Job title: Assistant Land Exporter

Main tasks and responsibilities:

- Advise the partner agencies (mainly provincial and district offices of Natural Resources and Environment) in cadastral survey, land adjudication and registration (including technical and administrative tasks);
- Conduct quality control and monitoring of the registration processes (GPS parcel surveying, adjudication and digital data management);
- Support the development and improvement of workbooks and quality assessments for land registration in cooperation with the line agencies and other GIZ project stakeholders.
- Train and coach partner staff in the use of survey equipment, GIS software and related programs used for registration and cadastral mapping;
- Support streamlining of processes at district and provincial level with national directives.
- Closely coordinate and cooperate with relevant partner departments and organizations and related (other) projects;
- Prepare reports and documentation on to other tasks as assigned by the GIZ supervisor.

Experience and qualifications:

- University/GIZ’s degree in the area related to the function;
- At least 3 years’ professional experience in a comparable position, preferably with an educational background in the field of land management, surveying or related;
- Proficient computer skills (MS Office, data management), knowledge of GIS and use of GPS devices;
- Good working knowledge of ICT technologies (related software, prises, fax, email, the internet);
- Strong management and organizational skills;
- Willingness to work in rural areas and under demanding conditions, including frequent travels to the field;
- Ability to work as a team of national/international experts;
- Personal flexibility and high motivation;
- Very good command of the English language;
- Very good communication skills.

GIZ is an equal opportunity employer. Women and persons with disabilities are especially encouraged to apply.

Interested candidates are asked to send their application with a comprehensive CV including at least 3 reliable referees and cover letter explaining their motivation as well as how and when they experience meets the requirements by 16:00 Hr on 18th of December 2015 to the HR Division of GIZ Office Vientiane, P.O. Box 1033, Vientiane Capital. or email: jobs.lmcpp@giz.de

All applications will be treated confidentially and only short-listed candidates will be notified.
LOS ANGELES (Xinhua) -- Investigators believed that the suspect couple who killed 14 people and injured 21 others in a deadly shooting in San Bernardino of Southern California had been radicalised "for some time," the FBI said on Monday.

"We have learned both subjects were radicalised and have been for some time," David Bowdich, assistant director in charge of the FBI's Los Angeles Field Office, told a press conference.

"Did the female radicalise the male in this case? The answer is we still do not know," Bowdich said. "As the investigation has progressed, we have learned and believe that both subjects were radicalised and have been for quite some time."

The latest revelation in the FBI-led probe came five days after Syed Rizwan Farook, 28, and his wife, 29, shot out at a Christmas party of San Bernardino County Health Department, where Farook had worked for five years.

Farook, a US born citizen, and his wife Tashfeen Malik from Pakistan, were killed in a face-off with police hours after their attack on Wednesday morning in a conference room at the Inland Regional Centre social services agency in San Bernardino, about 100 km east of Los Angeles. The FBI said on Friday that authorities were investigating the mass shooting as an "act of terrorism."

"The investigation so far has developed indications of radicalisation by the killers and of potential inspiration by foreign terrorist organisations," FBI Director James Comey said on Friday.

The authorities, however, have no indication that the couple were part of an organised group, he added. On Sunday night, US President Barack Obama said the two shooters were "self-radicalised," as no evidence had been found of links between the couple and any terrorist groups.

Bowdich said on Monday that the FBI investigators, who interviewed more than 400 people and gathered more than 300 pieces of evidence to figure out how and when the couple were radicalised, had in target practice in the broader Los Angeles area and one of the target practices was done within days of shooting, he said.

Besides two hand guns, two assault rifles, and more than 6,000 rounds of ammunition, police and investigators also found 12 pipe bombs and tools to make pipe bombs in their car and at their home after the couple were shot dead during the street shootout with police.

Both of them had participated in target practice in the broader Los Angeles area and one of the target practices was done within days of shooting, he said.

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Russian role seen in Ankara-Baghdad tension over Turkish reinforcements to Mosul

ISTANBUL (Xinhua) -- The wrangling between Turkey and Russia over a downed Russian warplane by Iraqi forces has spilled over into Iraq, as Baghdad asked Turkey to withdraw its troops sent into Mosul over perceived pressure from Moscow.

The Iraqi central government on Sunday gave Turkish troops 48 hours to leave, calling the reinforcements to a military camp in the town of Bashirqa near Mosul in northern Iraq a violation of Iraq’s sovereignty.

As a matter of fact, the camp has been used by Turkish troops to train Kurdish and local Arab forces to fight against the Islamic State (IS) militant group since 2014.

Turkish analysts who spoke to Xinhua described Ankara’s latest deployment to the region, in which a training battalion equipped with armoured vehicles was dispatched, as a step within the framework of an agreement signed with Iraq’s Kurdish autonomous region.

The analysts even advised the central government in Baghdad to add the Norwegian special forces to its Kurdish regional one, which would cover part of the counter-terrorism efforts.
HCM CITY (VNS, ANN) -- Reducing the use of scarce natural resources through measurement of energy efficiency is critically needed to meet the energy demand of a growing economy like Vietnam, Vu Van Khiem, director general of the Ministry of Science and Technology’s National Office of the Southern Region, has said.

Speaking at a three-day training conference on sustainable energy technology last week in HCM City, Khiem said that Vietnam was facing an energy shortage within the next few decades.

Economic growth and rapid industrial expansion based on low-energy costs have consumed significant amounts of energy and other resources, increasing exhaustion of natural resources.

In the future, Vietnam will shift from an exporter to an importer of energy and the level of dependence on imported energy would increase, he added.

State agencies in Vietnam such as the Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Industry and Trade and other agencies have worked with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) on labelling energy and building energy efficiency standards for appliances and replacing the use of fossil fuels.

As a result, there have been positive results in management and energy savings, he said. In recent decades, with the present rate of consumption of traditional energy resources, energy reserves are expected to be depleted rapidly, Khiem said.

According to forecasts, by 2035 the level of global energy consumption will increase by 53 percent. Enterprises around the world are constantly conducting research to seek new and renewable energy sources, he said.

The traditional burning of fossil fuels has caused adverse environmental impact such as the greenhouse effect, rising radioactivity and global warming, he added.

Also speaking at the conference, Cho Chang-hee, principal researcher of the Korea Electrotechnology Research Institute, said that in Korea, island microgrids were being used to meet demand.

Microgrids that have helped meet increased demand for green energy globally are especially suitable for remote villages, he said. They have helped improve electricity penetration ratio and reduced petroleum use.

“Fewer CO2 emissions are the result,” he said. “It also decreases transmission losses.”

A microgrid is a system of multiple power sources of different sizes and technologies connected to the central grid. The system can disconnect and function autonomously as physical and economic conditions dictate.

More than 1,400 microgrid projects have been deployed in more than 100 countries, Cho said.

The conference was organised by the National Research Council of Science & Technology, ASEM SMeS Eco-Innovation Center, Korea Institute of Energy Research, Korea Electrotechnology Research Institute, and Korea Institute of Industrial Technology.

VN eyes renewable energy

Buses wait passengers at the Southern Bus Terminal in Vientiane.

Wind turbines at the Tay Phong Wind Power Plant in Binh Thuan province.

Business

Bank deposits “haircut”, Grexit off the table, Greece implements all commitments: PM

ATHENS (Xinhua) -- Greece has pushed the risk of a “haircut” on bank deposits and Grexit off the table by implementing all its commitments under the latest bailout agreement with international creditors. Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said on Monday night.

A few hours after his Left-led coalition government passed on Sunday the latest crunch test in the parliament during the vote on the 2016 state budget, the prime minister granted an interview to state broadcaster ERT.

He hailed as a significant milestone in efforts to overcome the six-year debt crisis and restore growth the recapitalisation of Greek banks this December, the third in three years.

“There is no more fear of deposit cuts and Grexit,” he underlined, dismissing reports in some international media suggesting that Greece was a “rudderless ship” heading towards the rocks.

A German daily cited this week an alleged report of the German embassy in Athens containing the particular description. The report was dismissed from officials in both countries.

Tsipras attributed it to the “never ending efforts of some conservative circles to attack the government.”

Amidst renewed concerns over the stability of his ruling coalition after the recent expulsion of two lawmakers who voted against party line on prior actions for the disbursement of more loans to Athens, he assured that he feels “very safe” with the reduced parliamentary majority of 153 MPs in the 300-member strong chamber.

He does not intend to seek the formation of a unity government, but would most welcome wider consensus on major issues, such as the upcoming pension system reform and the refugee crisis.

Exchange rates as of December 8, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreign Currencies</th>
<th>Buying</th>
<th>Selling</th>
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<td>US Dollar 50-100</td>
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<td>Thai Baht</td>
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<td>Euro 50-500</td>
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</table>
**New Zealand govt’s deficit better than expected**

Wellington (Xinhua) -- The New Zealand government deficit for the first quarter of this year, under the pressure of uncertainty due to October came in below forecast, putting the full-year accounts on the road to a second successive surplus, according to financial statements from the Treasury on Tuesday. Overall the fiscal results had improved on the previous year with the operating deficit of NZ$478 million (US$317.48 million) well under the NZ$1 billion (US$664.2 million) at the same time last year, and net debt relatively constant. Core tax revenue was up by 5.8 percent while core expenses grew by 2.5 percent over the same period. The operating deficit was NZ$267 million (US$453.6 million) under the Treasury forecast in May, due to tax and other revenue coming in above the forecast.

**Korea ponders options before Fed tightening**

BEIJING (AP) -- Global stocks fell after a collection of central bankers, weighing the immediate impact lower input prices have on profits, he said China's central bank has ruled out the possibility that in oil prices is a 'good thing' in that it reflects increasing supply rather than lower demand, but this is not yet reflected in share prices.

The government is prepared to intervene to support flagging industries, but it is only a last resort. We must also continue to develop and support high-quality, safe, smart vehicles. The government is committed to offering a full range of vehicles to meet the needs of consumers. The government will continue to support the development of electric vehicles and will introduce policies to encourage their use.

Global stocks are likely to slide after oil prices weaken. But Chinese stocks, which are heavily weighted with energy companies, are expected to be more resilient. The government has pledged to support the economy and has introduced measures to boost demand. These include tax cuts to reduce costs for companies and people, as well as investment in infrastructure projects.

**Korea ponders options before Fed tightening**

The South Korean economy has been struggling due to slower global growth and lower oil prices. In an interview with The Korea Herald, Bank of Korea Governor Lee Ju-yeol said the central bank is closely monitoring the global economy and how to best cope with the uncertainty.

The BOK is tasked with ensuring price stability and promoting economic activity. The governor said that the central bank is considering a range of policy options to support the economy. The BOK is widely expected to keep interest rates unchanged at the next meeting on December 16th. This is in tandem with the US Federal Reserve's decision to raise rates.

**Iron ore demand to fall further next year**

Iron ore demand is expected to fall further in China next year as the country continues to phase out steel output. Demand for iron ore will fall by 4.2 percent in 2016 from a year ago. The steel output, released by the Chinese government, is expected to be at a high this year, said Li Xianchung, director of the institute. Iron ore, which may fall by 0.4 percent this year, will decline by 4.2 percent in 2016 to around 0.7 billion tonnes, according to the institute's estimates, total steel output this year will be about 9.7 billion tonnes, while iron ore production is estimated at about 1.2 billion tonnes.

“Slower GDP growth, industrial upgrading of the conventional resources-driven economy and eroded export capacities have crimped demand for steel and as a result for iron ore. Slower off take by downstream industries, such as real estate, construction, machinery, energy and automobile industries, has also contributed to the sluggishness,” said Li Xianchung, director of the institute.

Unsold inventories of commercial apartments continue to be at a high this year, the report said, adding that supply will continue to outstrip demand next year.

The total consumption of iron and steel for construction purposes this year is expected to be about 360 million tonnes, according to the institute.”

**A worker at a steel plant in Dalian, Liaoning province, checks weights alloy strips.**

**S.Korea (The Korea Herald, ANA) -- The US Federal Reserve Reserve widely expected to make a major shift in its monetary policy stance this month as the world's largest economy's historic era of near-zero interest rates, rates that started to be its task in late 2008, is finally coming to an end. The Fed starts raising interest rates is in the lap of the Bank of Korea. The task for the BOK is to navigable the murky waters of monetary tightening, ensuring that the Fed can get even more if and when the Fed starts raising interest rates on December 16th. A 6.2 percent decline in the benchmark US$37.7 billion in Japan's Nikkei 225 lost 0.9 percent to 19,492.60. Australia's benchmark S&P/ASX 200 Index fell 1.9 percent to 3,470.07. **
CONSULTANTS WANTED

The National Implementation Unit (NIU) of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR, is pleased to announce the Request for Express of Interest in the Recruitment of Eligible Consultants for the implementation of specific services for the three components of the Small and Medium Enterprises Access to Finance Project (SMEAFP). The project is aimed at enhancing the access to finance by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) through the Small and Medium Enterprises Access to Finance Project (SMEAFP). The project will be implemented for a period of 3 years, starting from January 2016.

**Eligibility Criteria:**
- At least 5 years of relevant experience in SMEs management.
- Strong knowledge of the business environment and familiarity with the business needs of the target SMEs.
- Excellent communication and reporting skills in English.

**Proposal Structure:**
- A project summary not exceeding 10 pages.
- A detailed work plan

**Project Description:**
The project will focus on three main components:
1. **A Credit Line Facility**
2. **A Risk Sharing Facility**
3. **Technical Assistance**

**Submission:**
Expressions of interest must be delivered only by email to niu-vientiane@moic.gov.la on or before December 18, 2015, 16:00 o’clock.

**Contact:**
Phouvieng Phongs, NIU Director. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for the interview.

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**LAO PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**
**MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE**

**Small and Medium Enterprises Access to Finance Project**
Credit No. 5471-LA, Grant No. H958-LA

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESS OF INTEREST**

**National Environment & Social Safeguards Specialist**

The Government of Lao PDR is receiving support from the World Bank Group for improving access to finance by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) through the Small and Medium Enterprises Access to Finance Project (SMEAFP). The objective of the project is to provide long-term funding sources for banks to provide long-term credit to small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This will be achieved by increasing the supply of long-term finance provided by commercial banks and by strengthening the capability of the Department of SME Promotion to formulate and implement public policies that promote access to finance for SMEs. The project includes three components: 1) A Line of Credit Facility; 2) A Risk Sharing Facility; and 3) Technical Assistance.

As part of the Component 3 above, the DOSMEP is looking for a dynamic and experienced Full Time National Consultant to fill the position of National Environment & Social Safeguards Specialist. The Consultant will be engaged on a part time basis equivalent to 4 months in each of the three years (a total of 12 months). This duration may be modified and agreed to in writing by both parties during the life of the contract.

In order to qualify for the position, the candidates shall meet the following experience and competence requirements:
- University degree in law, preferably with specialization in environment and social aspects.
- At least 5 years of relevant experience in environment and social management.
- Excellent IT, communication and reporting skills in English.

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with World Bank’s “Selection and Employment of Consultants”, Individual Consultant (IC) selection method, January 2011.

The NIU now invites interested consultants to provide information indicating that you are qualified to perform the services (curriculum vitae with expressions of interest and references). Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below. Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below on or before December 15, 2015, 16:00 o’clock (submissions via email are also acceptable).

To: Mr. Keophouthonehithong, Procurement Officer, Ministry of Industry and Commerce.
National Implementation Unit (NIU), Ban Phonxay, Xaysettha District, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, Tel: +856 (21) 41 39 16 – 45 39 82; Fax: +856 (21) 41 39 16; E-mail: keophouthonehithong@moic.gov.la; Attn: Mr. Phouvieng Phongs, NIU Director. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for the interview.

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**LAO PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**
**MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE**

**Small and Medium Enterprises Access to Finance Project**
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ជាច្រើនបំផុត
Ministry of Public Health - Center of Malariology, Parasitology and Entomology (CMPE)

Supported by Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Expression of Interest

Background:

Date: 23 November 2015

Ministry of Health (MOH) of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic has received grants since 2003 from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and currently is under the round of New Funding Model (NFM) to implement the activities under the National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP). The Center of Malariology, Parasitology and Entomology (CMPE) is currently seeking for the qualified candidates to provide technical assistance to the mentioned above programmes.

Responsibilities:

1. Procurement and Logistics Specialist: 1 Position, based in Center of Malariology, Parasitology and Entomology (CMPE), Vientiane Capital.
    
    Responsibilities:
    
    • Technical expertise in designing/fine tuning training curriculum with the logistic management and PR logistic Unit.
    • Prepare report on trainings outcomes together with the logistic staff at CMPE and evaluate training needs assessment to improve future trainings.
    • Support Project Coordinator and CMPE management team to respond OSDV, PDDR and management letter from the Global fund related to PSM issues.
    • Perform other duties are requested by the Head of Unit, Project Coordinator and Manager.

2. Procurement and Logistics Assistant: 1 Position, based in Center of Malariology, Parasitology and Entomology (CMPE), Vientiane Capital.
    
    Responsibilities:
    
    • Initiate and follow up all administrative processes for implementation of activities as instructed by TWGs.
    • Maintain filing system for all documents and records, official correspondence, email etc. with the head of unit and to CMPE technical/management staff.
    • Keep regular and updated minutes of all TWG meeting and ensure distribution to stakeholders.
    • Ensure timely receipt of all reports related to TWGs activities, both technical and financial reports.
    • Liaison and coordination with external stakeholders, as advised by TWGs coordinator to ensure regular communication and feedback.
    • Assist the TWGs coordinator to prepare relevant presentations and technical documents as instructed.
    • Work closely with CMPE relevant staff related to the implementation of TWGs activities i.e., (Meeting, workshop, training).

Qualifications required:

• Bachelor Degree of Art or Business Administration or related field.
• At least one year experience in secretarial/administrative work.
• Good written and spoken English.
• Computer literacy in Word and Excel or similar package.
• A self-managed and self-motivated person who needs minimal supervision.
• Willingness to learn new things and updating own capacity.
• A capacity to be flexible under stressful conditions.
• Previous experience of working with INGO or international organizations or knowledge of international standard patterns.

Interested Candidates should submit their Expression of Interest and Curriculum Vitae, for this position, to:

Mr. Yosa Nyalor
Project Coordinator
Telephone: 020 7280 7281
Email: yosa166@gmail.com

Ms. Thithida
Local Procurement Assistant
Telephone: 020 7474 7477
Email: thithida166@gmail.com

Closing Date: 09 December 2015 (16:30 local time)

Only Shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interview.

Mr. Vienghong Sengsavath
Project Coordinator
Telephone: 020 7246 0186
Email: vienghong@gmail.com

Ms. Noy Niyalor
Procurement and Logistics Specialist
Telephone: 020 7246 0186
Email: noy166@gmail.com

Hon Khaithong Nea
Chanthabuly District, Vientiane Capital

Office Number: 021 214010
Fax: 021 218131

Interested and qualified candidates are required to submit a completed application form (Deadline for all applications: 18 December 2015).

The British Embassy Vientiane is part of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s (FCO) world-wide network of 230 Posts, representing British political, military, economic, visa and consular interests overseas.

The role of Policy and projects Officer is to provide top-class policy, communications, economic and security advice to the Ambassador, Deputy Head of Mission (DHM) and Foreign Office in London. This is an exciting job at the frontline of the Embassy’s work, and would suit an experienced analyst with top-notch research and advisory skills.

The successful candidate will promote trade and investment between the UK and Laos, support British interests and businesses. If you are interested, please apply with a CV, and your expression of interest. If you are selected you will be invited for an interview.

The successful candidate will be offered a one-year fixed-term contract, subject to a 2-month probationary period. There is the possibility of upgrading to a permanent contract.

The British Government is an equal opportunities employer and this position is open to both Lao and foreign nationals. The successful candidate will work full-time, 40 hours per week. Normal working will be 0830-1630 Monday-Friday.

Employees will be entitled to 20 days of leave per year, as well as up to a combined annual total of 14 Lao National and British public holidays. They will also benefit from a private medical package. Travel to the UK or to British Embassies in the region may be required and occasional work during evenings and weekends which will be compensated with time off in lieu. Training opportunities will be provided, as necessary, for the successful applicant.

To apply

Please send your cover letter detailing why you’re interested in the position, CV and the completed application form, which can be downloaded from our website at https://www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/brtish-embassy-vientiane/about/recruitment by 18 December 2015, to laos.recruitment@fcopo.gov.uk . Please clearly indicate your name and position title in the subject of your email. Please note that incomplete applications will not be taken into consideration.

No accommodation or relocation expenses are payable in connection with this position. You must have or be able to obtain work authorisation for Laos in order to apply. Applicants must have or be able to obtain Laos work authorisation.

Staff recruited locally by the British Embassy is subject to terms and conditions of service according to local Laos employment law. Employees will be subject to successful clearance of pre-employment checks. Only short-listed applications will be called for personal interviews.

The British Embassy is an equal opportunities employer and does not discriminate on grounds of ethnic origin, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, gender or sexual orientation.
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1. At Rimping Supermarket, we have variety of renowned products for over 20,000 merchandises from all around the world consist of fresh food, fresh vegetable, fruit, meat, dried food, cheese, wine, kitchenware, and bakery as well as local products from Laos and Thailand.

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5. Apart from selected notable products from around the world, Rimping Supermarket also supports local businesses by starting a project called "Local Talent" which helps developing the manufacturing process and distribution of local products to remarkably standout into the global markets and open up an opportunity for community.

6. Beside the community related, we concern about the environment by doing a campaign of reduce the use of plastic bags; instead encourage people to consume the cloth bags which it can be used for lifetime, on the contrary the plastic bags have a very long decomposition time and easily tears. Besides our plastic bags are made from natural materials, which decompose quickly for less than a year. These can be started from your fingertips.

7. We provide multi-language staffs to service our customers with pleasure.

8. Not only full range of products, environment, community and staffs to serve our customers, but this is also a heaven on earth of one-stop-shopping service right at your front door so you don’t have to waste your time going anywhere else but here. Rimping Supermarket is located in Vientiane Capital. We gladly help you save your travel time for purchasing everything you want. No more of stocking goods as we proudly say that we open daily from dusk till dawn.

9. Worry-free of the parking lot area as we have comfortable parking spaces for more than 200 cars in the mall.

10. Bottom line is that Rimping Supermarket reach "Where shopping is a pleasure"
INVITATION FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The Xe-PianXe-Namnoy Power Company Limited (PNPC) is the owner and developer of the 410 MW Xe-PianXe-Namnoy Hydroelectric Power Project located in the Provinces of Champasack and Attapeu, Lao PDR which is currently under construction.

The PNPC is currently seeking for a Canteen Operator for the Main Construction Camp located in the Bolaven Plateau, Paksong District, Champasack Province. Any interested and qualified business entities can submit their expressions of interest with the following requirements:

1. Letter of Interest
2. Copy of Business License
3. Copy of Financial Statement/Bank Statement
4. Staff Plan (List of Canteen Personnel with attached education-training certificates and certificates of experiences)
5. Operations Plan for a LAK40,000/meal/person at three times/day, 7 days/week
6. List of equipment and materials to operate the canteen
7. A minimum experience of three years in operating and managing a restaurant
8. Restriction: Any entity with relatives working at the PNPC are not entitled to submit expressions of interest.

Interested entities should personally submit their documents to the PNPC at 6th Floor Capital Tower, 23 Singha Road, Nongbone Village, Xaysettha District, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR or at the Pakse Office, Houay Gnaangkam Village, Pakse District, Champasack Province, Lao PDR. The closing date for submission is on 11 December 2015. For further inquiries, interested entities may contact mindh@pnpclaos.com or khemaksonep@pnpclaos.com or call (021) 45 5045 at the PNPC Vientiane Office and (031) 21 5048 at the Pakse Office.
THAILAND (The Nation) -- One of Thailand’s most popular tourist destinations, Phuket is known for its sparkling clear waters, white sand, accommodation to suit most pockets and, of course, its seafood.

Now it has another attraction, one that will have gourmets salivating - an organic sweet corn farm that allows you to taste the goodys on site.

Spread over 45 rai of land in the island’s Muang district, Vanich Farm is run by Apirag Ganlom, chief executive of the Vanich Group.

“Sweet corn had never been grown on Phuket until I introduced it in 2010. The idea for developing the farm came to me during a visit to Nakorn Ratashima. I love corn and thought that my fellow islanders would also enjoy nibbling on freshly picked corn grown organically,” he says.

Aprig has taken his dream of farming corn in the city much further and today Vanich Farm is also a learning centre and an agricultural lifestyle tourism destination.

A shopping area is located around the entrance with a small selection of shops offering more than 1,000 items. There’s an ice-cream parlour with cones and cups selling corn ices and a fresh market selling corn milk, corn silk tea, popcorn and corn on the cob. A souvenir shop has premium OTOP products from the island as well as from other southern provinces.

There are corners with cool props for photos but they all fade into the background as visitors spot the sheep, miniature cows and rabbits.

“I’ve never focused on making a profit. My aim is to produce food that is tasty and safe while creating a sustainable environment.

“Even when I was young, Phuket was a beautiful place. It was full of greenery. Hotels and other buildings have mushroomed over the last 30 to 40 years and that greenery has been severely eroded. I am trying to bring nature back to downtown Phuket so our younger generation can learn about nature and, I hope, preserve it.

“It’s heartbreaking to see so many vegetables and fruits in the markets that are not safe to eat. That’s why I focus on chemical-free farming. I am lucky to have the help of corn guru Surapol Chowchong and organic farming expert Uthai Gansom,” he says.

Visitors are welcome to walk through the four large fields of corn and sun hemp or climb into an electric-powered cart to the traditional Thai house that borders the rice paddies to take photos of the albino buffaloes and kids dressed in old-style attire.

“The sunn hemp has beautiful yellow flowers but our main reason for growing it here is to use them as green manure to improve and protect the soil,” agronomist Surapol explains.

“Kids these days have no idea where their food comes from. They don’t know that it takes time to grow rice and vegetables and just know they come from plastic bags and is sometimes ready to eat straight out the packet. They can’t tell the difference between krapao (Holy Basil), horapa (Thai Sweet Basil) and maengkhal (Lemon Basil). This learning centre allows them to see the plants, touch them and smell their different aromas before they are cooked and put on the dining tables,” adds Uthai, a farmer from Nakorn Ratchiratana who looks after the organic rice paddies and garden in the farm.

The main building is an airy, two-storey construction covered with brown cedar shingles that’s designed to mimic the shape of a large corn husk. From here, you can admire the farm in all its glory, enjoy cold milk, tuck into fine dishes or sip the farm’s signature drink, a cocktail in which the main ingredient is the South Korean favourite soju. It’s mixed with domestic organic fruits and vegetables from the farm including corn, mulberry, pandan leaf and pineapple.

A free-form split-level tree house stands along side. Ten metres tall, it is designed by architects from Studio Miti and is covered with a giant net made from pine lumber. It will soon be used as an exclusive dining venue for parties of four who will be served a meal from the famous Thai restaurant Nara that will open in the main building.

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2. Computer literacy.
3. Fluent in both verbal and written English.
4. Ability to make a documentation in English
5. Experience in Accounting and bookkeeping.
6. Deposit Marketing of bank at least 3-5 years.
7. Experience in Marketing plan and Rebranding.

**Interested candidates should send Cover Letter, CV, Proof of qualifications to BOYOUNG LAO BANK Human Resources Department**

Unit 34 Nongphap Rd. Phonwaj, Xayathai Dist, Vientian Capital

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**LAO PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**

MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

Small and Medium Enterprises Access to Finance Project

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESS OF INTEREST National Finance Officer**

The Government of Lao PDR has received financing from the World Bank (WB)’s International Development Association (IDA) to support the Government’s Small and Medium Enterprise Access to Finance Project, in the amount of 25 million USD. The Project’s overall objective is to provide long-term funding source for banks to provide long-term credit to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with particular focus on SMEDs (Small and Medium Enterprises Development) for financing the growth of previously underserved businesses. The project will be implemented through the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOCI), which is designated as the Department of SME Promotion (DSMOP) to formulate and implement public policies that promote access to finance for SMEs.

The Department of SME Promotion (DSMOP) at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOCI) is the Executing Agency for the project. Other partners involved in project implementation include selected commercial banks (FPBs) and National Implementation Unit (NIU). DSMOP is responsible for formulation of SME development strategy and policy to promote SME development and to coordinate and manage the project implementation. Detailed information on the project is available on DSMOP website in their relevant documents: Project Appraisal Document (PAD) and Project Implementation Manual (PIM). The project includes the following components:

**Component 1: A Line of Credit Facility**

1) A Line of Credit Facility
2) A Risk Sharing Facility
3) Technical Assistance

**Component 2: Risk Sharing Facility**

This component is being cancelled.

**Component 3: Technical Assistance**

1) Provision of technical assistance to DSMOP and other relevant agencies to strengthen their capacity in terms of policies, strategies and other activities related to the promotion of SMEs, and to implement, monitor and evaluate the Project.
2) Provision of technical assistance to Participating Financial Institutions and other relevant financial institutions to improve the SME banking strategies, products and services, including their compliance with environmental social due diligence and safeguard requirements.
3) Provision of technical assistance to SMEs to build their capacity in business development, administration and financial management.

As part of the Component 3 above, DSMOP is seeking a dynamic and experienced full-time national consultant to fill the position of National Finance Officer (NFO) to assist the DSMOP in managing the SME Access to Finance Project funds and to provide support to the NIU finance team.

The Consultant shall perform the Services during the life of the project until June 30, 2019 with yearly performance assessment or any other period as may be subsequently agreed by the parties in writing. The National Finance Officer will work under the day-to-day supervision of the NIU/Finance of the DSMOP. The National Finance Officer must be able to continuously manage and supervise the staff of the NIU/Finance of the DSMOP at the NIU Office, Ministry of Industry and Commerce. The full terms of the ToR can be accessed at the NIU’s website: http://niums.org/index.php/work-in-triban-vacancies.

**COMPETENCIES:**

To qualify for this position, the candidates shall meet the following experience and competence requirements:

- Bachelor Degree in accounting, finance or related subject.
- Certification in Public Accounting (CPA) is an advantage.
- Minimum 2 years of working experience in bookkeeping procedures, finance management and accounting.
- Minimum 2 years of experience in finance or accounting with WB or other similar donor funded projects.
- Knowledge of accounting software package, such as QuickBooks.
- Familiarity with National Treasury MOF payment procedures.
- Familiarity with MS Office applications and writing in both English and Lao languages.
- Excellent communication, negotiation and writing skills in both English and Lao language.
- Awareness of basic information and terminology to advanced knowledge of Microsoft Office Package (Excel, Word, PowerPoint) and internet.

The National Finance Officer will be selected in accordance with the World Bank’s Guidelines. Selection and Employment of National Finance Officers, Individual National Finance Officers (IC) selection method, January 2011.

The NIU now invites interested eligible National Finance Officers to provide information indicating that you are qualified to perform the services. You will be given time with expressions of interest and reference. Interested National Finance Officers may obtain further information at the above address. Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below or no later than December 18, 2015, 16:00 o'clock (submissions via email are also acceptable).

To: Mr. KeophouthoneInthivong, Procurement Officer, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, National Implementation Unit (NIU), 34 Nongpan Rd. Phonaway, Xayathai Dist, Vientian Capital, Lao PDR, Tel: +856 (21) 41 39 16 - 41 39 12, Fax; +856 (21) 41 39 10 39 E-mail: keophouthone@niums.org. Amt Mr. PhoumphiPhoune, NIU Director. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for the interview.
An emotional return home

Ms Sorn is one of the human trafficking victims.

“Missed you my beloved daughter, said my mother as I ran into her arms, tears streaming down my face,” Sorn (not her real name) shares.

“Every day, I had to sell cucumbers, pineapples and vegetables for my traffickers. I worked in Thailand for 3 years without work permits and pay. I worked from 7am to midnight every day for 3 years. No days off and no free time. At 11pm every night, I would be given my only meal of the day,” she says. “Returning home brought a warm feeling within me and gratefulness to be able to see my mother and family again,” Sorn says.

“My father hadn’t allowed me to leave. I asked both my parents’ permission when I was 16, but they refused. When my father went to tend to the cows, I left with my friends for the border and crossed with the hope of working to help my family’s condition. We were poor, with barely enough rice to eat and a home that was falling apart; I wanted to help. The broker I met told me I would receive a good salary that would help my family become better. However in the end, I was found with a broken dream, no way to help my family and in trouble,” Sorn says.

“My cousin and I were asked to deliver vegetables to a nearby building when we decided to escape. We approached the police for help and they sent us to KorKed Centre for a year, a place for human trafficking survivors to learn valuable skills, before going back to Laos,” Sorn shares. Now 21-years-old, she is completing grade 4 of primary school in the province of Saravan.

Sorn is also one of the participants who joined the trafficking prevention programmes.

“This event was a great success for human trafficking survivors. Such an event builds awareness, teaches them how to protect themselves and helps them identify their strengths and weaknesses. The lessons they have learned from this event will help them succeed in society and hopefully allow them to learn and improve,” said Mr Thongphone Oudanith, deputy office of the Savannakhet Provincial Labour and Social Welfare Department. “I was very happy and grateful to join the human trafficking survivors’ events in the province of Savannakhet. It was the first time I got to join activities like this and meet other people from different places that were facing the same problem. It made me feel good. I will use the lessons learned from these activities in my daily life and share with my friends,” Sorn says with hope.

“I have learned about the dangers of human trafficking, from the dangers of working without the right documentation to recognising signs of abuse from employers who refuse to pay employees,” she says. Sorn recently finished taking sewing classes at Village Focus International, an NGO that works with vulnerable communities to give them valuable skills and knowledge to be independent. World Vision provided Sorn with all the sewing materials necessary to set up a small business in her home.

“I would like to thank my sponsor who helped and supported me. I will try my best to make a better life for myself and make my dreams come true,” she added.


World Vision actively works with its partners to protect children throughout the country. According to a recent Lao Social Indicator Survey (2012), 76 percent of children have experienced violent discipline and hundreds of children continue to be victims of exploitative labour and human trafficking.

World Vision Laos is working towards systemic change, which requires both changes in community behaviours and institutional strengthening.

—Source World Vision Laos
What are your thoughts on the amendments to the constitution?

The National Assembly opened its ongoing annual session on Monday, with the meeting scheduled to end on December 25. Lawmakers are debating amendments to the constitution and Vientiane Times asked various NA members for their opinion on the need for these changes.

Mr. Khunmeng Kommonad, President of the Xepong Lao Front for National Construction and NA member for Xepong province: It's great that we're getting together again at the National Assembly to discuss the problems we have in Laos and how we can resolve them. This time, we're debating changes to the constitution. This is the third time we've held these talks. We're having in-depth discussions because these issues are very important for our country as the constitution is the basis of our laws. As Laos changes and develops, so the constitution must be amended. This is especially important with the coming of the AEC and globalisation. When the constitution is amended, some laws must be changed so that certain situations and the regulations governing them can be compatible. NA members are sharing their ideas, especially on important parts of the constitution as it will govern our development process.

Mr. Vannkhon Inthachack, President of the Savannakhet Lao Front for National Construction and NA member for Savannakhet province: The constitution is the basis of our legal system and governs all our activities. It needs to be amended because Laos is developing and the people need a stronger constitution that reflects the changing circumstances. The constitution is at the heart of everything we do so NA members are sharing their ideas on amendments and additions to laws that have been in existence for over 40 years. Many things have to be changed so that we can integrate with the AEC and the rest of the world, and make it easier for us to mitigate and everyone has voiced their opinion. We need to ensure that from everyone involved so that we can set the right path and foster development. Changes to the constitution are important because they are the foundation of government and will underlie the development process. Any country will move forward and enjoy prosperity if it has a solid constitution as it will steer the nation in the right direction.

Mr. Bounnthes Thaijongkou, Head of the Nongnokkhan International Border Checkpoint and NA member for Savannakhet province: We've been talking about these changes for a long time now and everyone is very concerned about them. It's important that we amend the constitution as it should be as useful as possible and agreed to by almost everyone. We want to rewrite some of the laws that need updating because many things are changing, especially as we prepare to join the AEC. To promote the new constitution, we should make sure the general public understands it and complies with it. In the past people have been fairly law abiding but not completely as some people didn't fully understand the laws.

Mr. Simoun Ounlasy, Vice President of the Laos Trade Union and NA member for Savannakhet province: It is very important to amend the constitution because there have been a lot of changes, both in society and in terms of economics. The constitution has not been changed a lot. Some articles have been added but not many things have changed. We amended some of the articles to make improvements and have made changes to about 20 percent. This has been done because we want everything to last and run smoothly and ensure that we are in a strong position to compete with other countries.

All Interested Candidates

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<td>Vientiane Times bank account at the PO Box 114, Vientiane, Laos</td>
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<td>Fax: 856-21-488002</td>
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<td>Telephone: 856-21-487000</td>
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<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:VientianeHRO@state.gov">VientianeHRO@state.gov</a></td>
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PAYMENT IN ADVANCE
Fees are due prior to the start of the program and are non-refundable. Please note that fees must be made payable in US dollars.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER: 15-10

OPEN TO: All Interested Candidates

POSITION: Budget Analyst (Thaw) (with 80% Finances/20% Management)

APPLICATION DUE: November 10, 2015

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

BASIC FUNCTION OF POSITION

The incumbent serves as the Embassy Budget Analyst. He/She provides the full range of budget oversight, controls and execution for assigned budget areas. He/She makes obligations, and assures that all budget and program requirements are met. Oversees and certifies the allocation, accounting for and obligations of funds. Provides budget projections and makes recommendations on budget levels. Interprets and analyzes budget data. Works closely with the Financial Specialist and to the Financial Management Officer. He/She serves as the primary link to the senior Budget Analyst.

EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

All applicants must add the specific education and experience they have related to the above.

1. Bachelor’s degree in a related field (B.S./B.A.) with a minimum of 6 months experience in the relevant field of work.
2. Completion of a master’s degree in a related field (M.S./M.A.) is preferred.
3. A combination of both; i.e. Sections 1-24 of the UAE along with a listing of the applicant’s work experience attached as a separate sheet; plus
4. Recent employment with the US government.

At least 2 years of post-secondary education training beyond high school.

CONTRACT:

Full-time; 40 hours/week

WORK HOURS:

November 30, 2015

SALARY:

Actual salary will be based on the qualifications of the applicant.

NOTE: This position is not eligible for consideration for the Foreign Service Retirement and Survivors Act (FSRSA).

EEO COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The U.S. Department of State also strives to achieve equal employment opportunity in all personnel operations through continuing diversity enhancement programs. The U.S. Mission in Vientiane provides non-discriminatory and fair and equitable employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation. The Department of State also strives to achieve equal employment opportunity in all personal operations through continuing diversity enhancement programs. The EEO complaint procedure is not available to individuals who believe they have denied equal opportunity based upon marital status or political affiliation. Individuals with such complaints should avail themselves of the appropriate grievance procedures, remedies for prohibited personnel practices, and/or courts for relief.

CLOSE DATE FOR THIS POSITION: December 23, 2015

The U.S. Mission in Vientiane provides non-discriminatory and fair and equitable employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.
The Lao PDR celebrates 40 years in grand style

Editorial Desk

The Lao PDR can be justifiably proud of the widespread and meaningful celebrations marking 40 years of the Lao PDR and the national movements on the road to development.

A magnificent fireworks display brings the celebrations to a close.

Released to take place amid reverence and solemnity on December 2 in the nation’s capital of Vientiane. Tens of thousands of people attended, including Lao citizens, friends and people of Lao origin now living overseas.

The programme of activities staged for the giant celebration included a grand fireworks display, an art event featuring 4,000 people and a firework display.

Speaking at the parade, which took place at the That Luang esplanade, Secretary General of the Lao People’s Revolutionary Party and President of the Lao PDR Chounamouy Sayasone said: “Today, we together with our Lao compatriots of all ethnicities marked the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Lao PDR. We have looked back at the 40 years that have passed since December 1975. It is with great pride that we remember how the Congress of People’s Representatives, which represented the aspirations of the entire Lao population, agreed to proclaim the establishment of the Lao PDR, finally erasing the feudal and colonial regimes that had occupied Laos for so many years.”

“The proclamation of the Lao PDR was the fruit of the democratic national revolution that took place for many years under the great and capable leadership of the Party. It was a victory for the solidarity of the masses and the unity of our army and people, which enhanced the tradition of ardent patriotism, as well as the valiant and brave struggle of our nation.”

“During 40 years of protection and development by the new regime under the leadership of the Party, our country has headed firmly towards its targeted destination. This makes us proud, as in no era before has our beloved country been so peaceful, developed or progressive, or enjoyed the status it has now during this time.”

The magnificent ceremony was put on to mark this noteworthy occasion, which took place in an atmosphere of joy as people all across the country marked the achievements of national development and protection.

Every sector and every community throughout the country actively took part in the celebrations, either by attending parades, watching or participating in a show, or helping out with security.

The celebrations enabled the people of Laos and the world to appreciate the scale and fruitfulness of development under the leadership of the Lao People’s Revolutionary Party over the past four decades. Economic infrastructure has constantly improved and poverty has been addressed step by step. The government spent a large sum of money on the celebrations to ensure they were praiseworthy and successful.

The sectors involved worked hard on the preparations, including rehearsals, decorations and security, in order to achieve an outstanding result. We should offer them our thanks for carrying out this huge task.

The night before the parade, students, officials and other participants were encouraged to gather and sleep in schools, government offices and ministries to ensure they were ready to transport people to the site of the parade the early next morning.

This was yet another demonstration of the solidarity and unity of the Lao people in serving their country. It was a great opportunity for a large number of people to take part in these activities and it was a day for everyone involved to remember.

On the day itself, crowds turned out to watch the wonderful parades at the That Luang esplanade and in the evening there was an amazing show at the National Sports Complex. At night, people gathered to enjoy stunning fireworks displays at the That Luang esplanade and the sports complex, which aptly reflected the success of the whole celebrations.

The celebrations were conducted in a peaceful and orderly manner throughout the country and the magnificent firework displays were a fitting end to this long-anticipated event.

Following the celebrations in Vientiane all of the provinces also organised heartwarming events to mark the occasion, including Borikhamxay, Champassak, Savannakhet and Luang Prabang. The celebrations that took place in Luang Prabang province coincided with events staged by the authorities to mark the 20th anniversary of Luang Prabang as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

What the Lao papers say

Translated by Times Reporters

Groups of youths are continuing to ride motorbikes recklessly and disturbing society so police are disseminating traffic regulations to students at many schools around the country.

Recently, police organised to spread the information in Nongbong and Xaysettha Secondary Schools will continue their efforts at many lower and higher secondary schools around the capital.

Deputy Head of Vientiane Traffic Police Department, Major Sangkhom Phonhong said that police were not only distributing traffic regulations to students but also urging them to not to join groups of youths who involve themselves in antisocial behaviour.

Police also encouraged students to help protect the peace and order of society. Police said they would use strict measures to punish anyone who did not respect the law.

Police are also increasing efforts to solve traffic problems and prevent crime in society.

--Vientiane Mai Daily, December 3

Everyone should take responsibility to clean up rubbish

Many people are still not taking responsibility for their actions and throwing rubbish around everywhere. This has to stop if we want to make the city clean and tidy.

A reader called in about one littering incident near Talat Sao Shopping Mall. Although the amount of rubbish was not that much the concerned officials need to solve this problem as the mall is a key tourist area in Vientiane.

This problem is the result of people not putting garbage in the bin or that the cleaning-up actually properly clean up the area. Either way it has clean to attract tourists.

Cleaning-up will mean the city is tidy with fresh air and a good environment and many people will want to come and visit, in the opinion of a Pasaxon Van-Atthi reader.

Everyone must contribute to cleanliness and not litter to solve this problem.

--Pasaxon Van-Atthi Weekly, November 6

Modified motorbikes causing social disturbance

Many youths in Vientiane province are still using modified motorbikes to cause social disorder so all concerned officials are working hard to solve this.

To tackle the problem traffic police of Phonhong district, Vientiane province have organised random checks on modified motorbikes.

Phonhong district traffic police reported they recently mitigated checks along many roads around the community and at schools and have seized 18 modified motorbikes and re-educated the motorists.

Traffic police urged owners not to modify the motorbikes because it breaks the law and increases the risk of road accidents.

Modified motorbikes also disturb other people, especially bikers with loud exhausts involved in illegal street racing.

--Khuamsangob Daily, December 1

Opinion

40 years in grand style

About 40 years ago, nobody held the RMB as a store of value. It was a special currency, the special drawing rights. During Mao Zedong’s (RMB), is now an elite international currency and is the biggest recipient of FDI among emerging markets through trade and incoming private foreign direct investment (FDI), owned by China. FDI brings in not only capital but also skills and technology as well as networks of international markets. Severe international market competition forced companies in China to increase efficiency, reduce costs, move to higher value-added products and upgrade the quality of production. Because of these trends, the PRC now exports its own telecommunications sets, computers, aircraft, high-speed locomotives and nuclear generating plants.

Indonesia, on the other hand, remains a producer and exporter of unprocessed raw materials and a borrower from China.

Unlike in Singapore, SOEs in Indonesia still demand capital injections from the government. Because of limited job opportunities at home, Indonesia exports its uneducated and low-skilled labour surplus all over the world. Other options for the unemployed are to work in the non-formal sector, such as peddlers and okok (motorcycle taxi) drivers with very low productivity.

The objective of America’s TPP trade agreement is to achieve “free and open trade and investment” in the Asia Pacific. Such an objective mimics the ambitions outlined in the Bogor Goals crafted in an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit 20 years ago. The TPP now has 12 member countries but is largely a free trade agreement between two big countries, the US and Japan. Trade between these two economic giants accounts for about 60 percent of the TPP’s economic benefits.

Benefits of Trans-Pacific Partnership and issues to look out for

Anwar Nasution

JAKARTA (The Jakarta Post) -- Indonesia should join the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) as a way to promote regional economic growth. Such reform would include restructuring state-owned enterprises (SOEs), improving the investment climate, improving economic efficiency and productivity to create jobs for the nation’s surplus labor and promoting exports. The speedy implementation of these targets by the East Asian countries have become more developed and prosperous, mainly due to their greater penetration into international markets through trade and incoming private investment.

The People’s Republic of China (PRC), which started deregulating its economy in 1978, 12 years later than Indonesia, has grown much faster than Indonesia. Its currency, the renminbi (RMB), is now an elite international currency and a member of the International Monetary Fund’s special drawing rights. During Mao Zedong’s years, nobody held the RMB as a store of value.

By contrast, our rural moves like a yo-yo and it is very much affected by short-term capital flows. Using Mao Zedong’s terminology, Deng Xiaoping adopted “capitalist roaders” by inviting foreign direct investment (FDI), owned by foreign capitalists, to create job opportunities for China’s labour surplus, to modernise the economy and to promote the export of agricultural and manufacturing products. Starting as a poor country with assembly plants to produce cheap and low quality industrial goods and products, China’s gross domestic product (GDP) is now bigger than the GDP of Japan and its export value is the second biggest in the world after Germany. The country is the biggest recipient of FDI among emerging economies and is now a major military power in the Asia Pacific.

FDR brings in not only capital but also skills and technology as well as networks of international markets. Severe international market competition forced companies in China to increase efficiency, reduce costs, move to higher value-added products and upgrade the quality of production. Because of these trends, the PRC now exports its own telecommunications sets, computers, aircraft, high-speed locomotives and nuclear generating plants.

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Flash to appear in ‘Batman v Superman’

LOS ANGELES (The Statesman) -- The Flash, a popular superhero character, may appear in ‘Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice’, Michael Wilkinson, who designed the costumes for some characters in the film, has revealed.

During a presentation at CCXP - Comic Con Experience 2015, the costume designer was asked about how he made a modern and different costume for The Flash, reports aceshowbiz.com.

“Well, I’m not really at liberty to talk about The Flash right now, but it’s something that you’ll be seeing in the future in our films,” Wilkinson said.

He later revealed that fans would see him in ‘Batman v Superman’.

“You do get a glimpse of him, of course, in ‘Batman v Superman’. But I’m really looking forward to taking the amazing, iconic costume for The Flash and interpreting it in a fresh way where Ezra Miller is playing The Flash,” he added.

‘Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice’ also stars Gal Gadot as Wonder Woman, Jesse Eisenberg as Lex Luthor, Amy Adams as Lois Lane and Jason Momoa as Aquaman. The movie is scheduled to release on March 25 next year.

Vangvieng to take the scene for a new music experience

The first ever Vangvieng Music Festival 2015 will take place over a fun-filled two days from December 18-19 in the parking lot of Lom cave in Vangvieng district.

Music fans from far and wide will be able to enjoy listening to leading Lao rock artists and rock bands from neighbouring countries as well as performing at the festival. The Lao artists will be led by Sack Cells, Black Eyes, Boxer, Metallic, Leprosy, and Taty Akard while the Thai rock bands will be led by Instant and Skykck Ranger.

Meanwhile the Lao DJs shall be led by DJ Taiy, Energy King Z and Vientiane Electro. They shall be joined by famous DJ from Germany DJ Nicone, DJ Xam Zhanghwe from France, DJ Yodi, DJ Ruby, DJ Hicolo and DJ PBLAA from Thailand.

This first Vangvieng Music Festival is expected to help promote the domestic tourism atmosphere, especially Vangvieng, a well-known place in the world. Lao Pride Records and Smart Event Organizer are seeking to create new musical experiences in the country as well as to open chances for Lao artists to showcase their skills on offer at the different stages.

People who are interested to join this big music festival event can now book the tickets, which are currently on sale to members of the public. The tickets will have the following prices ranging from 70,000kip to 250,000 kip and can be purchased by contacting 030 9414245 or 030 9414246 for booking.

The 70,000 kip tickets are valid for one person only. They can be used for watching the live music during the two days of performing. The 250,000 kip tickets are valid for two people with free camping provided for the audience. Mr. Anoua expected that crowds of both local and foreign people will come to join the first Vangvieng Music Festival in Laos, which should offer a great experience for all.

He urged city folk to head north to join the festival and take in all the scenery and relaxed ambience of the Vangvieng countryside.

For more information, fans can visit the Vangvieng Music Festival Facebook page.

Namfon adds glamour to Minister Cup 2015

Local pop princess Namfon added to the atmosphere of the football action at The Minister Cup last week performing alongside other local artists for fans.

Namfon Inthavong’s performance at Lane xang Stadium in Nonghay village, Haduxaung district was hot on the heels of her appearance in the Asean Celebrity Explore Quest Malaysia 2015, where she represented Laos while joining other regional personalities in various activities during her weeklong trip around Malaysia.

Meanwhile, Namfon expressed her happiness being able to interact with other Lao stars such as Neung Super One and Kimneu Tonglel Gay to perform at the recent football event. The pre-match entertainment bill also featured dances teams including Project – X, X-Junior, Beautiful and Handsome who showcased their best moves for fans.

In other news, Namfon also performed at the 40th wedding anniversary celebrations of Lao Brewery Company Managing Director Mr Kissana Vongsay and his wife. Namfon said it was great to sing at such a warm and loving event for the well known couple.

Namfon has also been performing at various corporate events including golf days and recently took up a role as presenter for Adidas sportwear.

Artists & Leisure

The role of MRC is to promote and coordinate sustainable management and development of water and related resources for the countries’ mutual benefit and the people’s well-being.

MRC Secretariat is now recruiting a highly qualified Lao candidate for the position of Mekong River Commission

Consultant Type: Individual Consultant, General Support position
Division/Section: Finance and Administration Section
Work location: Mekong River Commission in Vientiane, Lao PDR
Contract type/ Duration: 6 months Service Contract

Key Responsibilities:
• Plan and direct all maintenance work on the MRC premises, ensuring that buildings and equipment are kept in good condition and that staff enjoy good uninterrupted working conditions;
• Prepare maintenance schedules for the MRC premises, equipment and appliances, and perform routine maintenance to ensure smooth functioning of all equipment. This includes, but is not limited to, power supply, communications, utilities, health and safety issues etc. Liaises with authorities regarding problems encountered with utilities;
• Maintain a system to control MRC archive and storage by checking/updating the equipment/documents on a regular basis;
• Prepare and update the inventory list of the MRCs and prepare inventory reports on quarterly basis. Ensure the effective maintenance and control of the MRC fixed assets on a regular basis. Reconcile the fixed assets with Solomon Financial Management System in cooperation with Finance department;
• Coordinate with Unit/Division/Sections and the Property Survey Committee to identify any fixed assets items to be sold out and/or donated and update the inventory record accordingly;
• Coordinate with work on the auditor on the audit of Fixed Assets;
• Keep the maintenance equipment inventory listing;
• Oversee proper setting up of the conference room and meeting rooms for official functions and take and monitor bookings for the rooms;
• Supervise and coordinate daily activities of all cleaners, gardeners, helpers, and security staff plus any staff working to provide regular services to do maintenance work. Oversee regular cleaning of within MRC grounds and proper disposal of cut grass, tree branches, trunks and related materials;
• Manage the provision of adequate office space, cleaning and security services;
• Arrange for official transportation for the MRC staff, consultant and visitors;
• Supervise all office drivers and ensure proper records are maintained on monthly basis;
• Supervise all guards and ensure proper records are maintained on daily basis;
• Prepare request for maintenance and keep maintenance record of each vehicle for reference;
• Perform other duties related to post as required by the supervisor.

Qualifications/Requirements:
• University degree, diploma or vocational school in related fields;
• At least five years experience in the area of maintenance and at least one year in supervisory level, preferably in an international organization;
• Experience in dealing with authorities / government agencies;
• Wide experience of maintenance, i.e. electrical equipment, furniture, office building, is required;
• Very good knowledge of written and spoken English is required;
• Knowledge of more than one riparian language is an advantage.

The Terms of Reference and other information can be obtained from the MRC website http://www.mrcmekong.org/working-with-mrc/mrc-vacancies/

Application procedures:
• All candidates are eligible to apply. The application should include (i) a cover letter outlining clearly how the candidate meets the requirements of the position, (ii) a detailed CV, and (iii) MRC Personal History Form. The position title is written on top left of a page.

The application should be sent to:
Mekong River Commission
Office of the Secretary in Vientiane (OSV)
P.O. Box 6101, 184 Fa Ngoum Road
Vientiane 01000, Laos
Email: mrc@mrcmekong.org

Closing date for applications: 14 December 2015
RentsBuy Co., Ltd is a leading professional real estate company offering; house, land, apartment, office, warehouse, business for rent /for sale and property valuation throughout Lao PDR.

Dongpainar Rd., Ban Phontan, Saysetta District, Sisattanak, Vientiane
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The Australian Embassy has several vacancies, representing exciting career and learning opportunities. We are seeking experienced and highly motivated individuals to work independently and as part of a small team, contributing to the Embassy’s work across the Lao PDR.

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- Fluency in both English and Lao languages, and strong written and oral communication skills in both languages.
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- An interest in, and understanding of, Australian society and culture.
- Work experience in a relevant environment, such as government, NGO or the private sector.

The Embassy is looking to fill two important positions: a Logistics Officer (Corporate) and a Logistics Manager (Corporate). The Australian Embassy is an equal opportunity employer - all applicants will be considered on their merit.

To apply for the position at the Australian Embassy, applicants must prepare a written response that directly addresses the selection criteria for the position. The Embassy will consider only applicants who meet the selection criteria.

Applications must be submitted by 5.00pm Friday 18 December 2015. Applications that do not address the selection criteria will NOT be considered.
Vangvieng Boat Racing Festival

The 5th Barcamp Vientiane is on this month. Barcamp is an international network of user-generated conferences which allow people to join and participate freely. Everyone can talk about any topics they think are interesting, knowledgeable or fun.

Fang Mae Khong International Dance Festival 2015

Vangvieng Music Festival

Vientiane Times welcomes notices from members of the public for announcement on this page. Any events or functions open to the general public are suitable for publishing.

Contact: editor@vientianetimes.la
Sepp Blatter at risk again from FIFA kickbacks scandal

GENEVA (AP) — Sepp Blatter is at risk again from the World Cup bribe scandal that tainted much of his FIFA presidency.

Switzerland's justice ministry informed on Monday that American authorities formally asked for files in the ISL kickbacks case to aid their spying investigation of alleged racketeering by international soccer leaders.

The ISL marketing agency was found to have been routinely bribed top sports officials, including Blatter's predecessor, in exchange for stripping rivals of World Cup rights before collapsing into criminal bankruptcy in 2001.

British broadcaster the BBC aired a programme Monday alleging it had seen a letter obtained by the FBI that was written by Havelange and said Blatter had “full knowledge” of kickback payments in the 1990s. Blatter was Havelange's general secretary for 17 years until becoming president in 1998.

Blatter would not comment on the BBC's claims, but spokesman Klaus Stoehleker told The Associated Press on Monday.

FIFA said it is cooperating to provide “all relevant information” to American and Swiss investigators, and would not comment on specific allegations.

The ISL case sent FIFA into financial crisis, then dogged the career of its chief, Blatter, through a criminal trial of six agency executives in 2008. A legal fight followed as FIFA tried to keep sealed the identity of officials named in a settlement deal to repay bribes.

Two years ago, FIFA finally declared the case closed after its ethics committee reviewed the rules of April 2013.

The ethics judgment confirmed three longtime executive committee members were bribe-takers: Havelange, who was FIFA president from 1974-1998, resigning just days before his new term; his former son-in-law Ricardo Teixeira of Brazil, who had resigned a year earlier; and Nicolas Leoz of Paraguay, who resigned as president of the South American confederation CONMEBOL.

Criticising Havelange and Teixeira for “morally and ethically reproachable” conduct, the ethics ruling of April 2013 also noted that commercial bribery was not illegal in Switzerland in the 1990s.

And Blatter’s behaviour over the years did not amount to “any criminal or ethical misconduct,” according to the ethics panel’s summary.

A source close to Eckert wrote.

Blatter had been merely “clumsy,” Eckert said, when in March 1997 he sent back a payment of 1.5 million Swiss francs (then US$1.1 million) which arrived at FIFA for Havelange from ISL.

Being cleared of misconduct was a relief to the FIFA president, FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke told the 48th days after the ruling was published. The name ISL that was “tattooed on his forehead” for more than a decade was washed away from Blatter by the ethics panel’s summary.

Valcke said in May 2013 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Watson wins World Challenge by 3 shots

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP) — A few years after Bethany Watson made her PGA Tour, he started waking up early to play practice rounds with Tiger Woods. Now he doesn’t ask a lot of questions of the world’s No. 1 player who already had 14 majors under his belt.

“I learn by watching and listening,” Watson said. “So I just tried to watch him and be able to learn from the best player of our generation.”

On Sunday, he did.

Watson didn’t make a bogey all weekend until the final hole, when he jokingly asked NBC field reporter Notah Begay how many shots he needed to win. He played it safe and made bogey, and all that cost him was the tournament record. Watson finished at 23-under 263, one shot from Jordan Spieth, who took the 15th US Open title in 2010, won one silver and five bronze medals.

Watson wasn’t even 26 when he was asked questions of the world’s No. 1 player who already had 14 majors under his belt.

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Everton rescues 1-1 draw against Crystal Palace in EPL

LIVERPOOL, England (AP) -- Romelu Lukaku scored his 50th goal for Everton in his 100th appearance to give the team a 1-1 draw against Crystal Palace on Monday in the Premier League.

Everton missed the woodwork once before Gerard Deulofeu found him with a low cross in the 19th minute and the Belgian striker had a simple tap-in from close range for the first goal of the game.

Lukaku nearly leveled immediately but thumped a shot against the crossbar, having struck the post with a low effort in the first half.

Palace is sixth on 23 points, with Everton a point back in ninth place.

Mr Sitthixay said next year the Lao National University (NUOL) while the Lao Athletics Federation will provide the field and track events at NUOL’s Dongkloop campus.

The Lao Amateur Athletics Federation will hold the upcoming 1st Lao National University Games in Vientiane in March next year.

The Lao National University Games will be hosted by the National University of Laos (NUOL) while the Lao Athletics Federation will provide the sporting equipment for the track and field events at NUOL’s Dongkloop campus.

Secretary of the Lao Amateur Athletics Federation, Mr Sitthisak Sakpaseth said the NUOL will check and improve the stadium again before hosting the track and field events.

He said national athletes will be able to attend the 1st games if they are currently studying at a university. However national athletes will be unable to compete in the games if they have already graduated from university.

The first National University Games will include football, badminton, table tennis, sepak takraw, petanque, tchoukball, volleyball, and beach volleyball.

During competition at the 1st games, the Lao Amateur Athletics Federation will select the best athletes to represent the NUOL to compete in the Asian University Games in Singapore in June 2016.

The federation has over 10 athletes who can compete at the national level. They previously competed at the 10th National Games in Oudomxay province in 2014 and also the 2014 Asian University Games in Indonesia.

Laos came away empty-handed in the athletics events at the 25th SEA Games in 2009. At the 15th Asian Games in Doha in 2010, Laos won one silver and five bronze medals.

Everton’s Romelu Lukaku (left) and Middlesbrough’s Daniel Ayala battle for the ball during the quarterfinal English League Cup game at the Riverside Stadium, Middlesbrough, England on Tuesday.

---Photo AP
More than 30 Lao coaches from various Vientiane clubs will be able to better instruct young footballers following a coaching seminar being delivered by the Japan Football Association from December 8-9.

Many Lao coaches are getting B and C level licenses from the Asian Football Confederation. The coaches are studying to develop their practical and theoretical knowledge under Japan Football Association representative Mr Shigeo Yamazaki.

The coaching seminar is supported by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

This event is the first of its kind following the strategic alliance agreement with JICA, Japan Football Federation and the J-League.

Mr Shigeo said the Japan Football Association had been able to develop its footballers to a skilful level, and at the same time, is able to exchange ideas with Lao coaches.

"During the seminar, we are able to show training methods and also the playing system of Japanese football teams and we would like to see Lao coaches be able to train local footballers to be as skilful as Japanese footballers," Mr Shigeo said.

Mr Pasith said the Lao Football Federation was happy to have the cooperation of the Japan Football Association and the local coaches were keen to take away important lessons from the coaching seminar.

The opening ceremony of the seminar was attended by Lao Football Federation’s Vice President Mr Pasith Souphab and a senior official from JICA Mr Kimura Hironori.

Mr Pasith said the Lao Football Federation was happy to have the cooperation of the Japan Football Association and the local coaches were keen to take away important lessons from the coaching seminar.

The seminar is also helping to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Laos-Japan diplomatic relations and 50th anniversary of JICA volunteers coming to Laos. Currently, JICA sends more than 800 Japanese volunteers to assist in many development areas such as sport, education, agriculture, society and other organisations in Laos.

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