

Files on Vietnam

- Resolutions of the Government and the National Assembly
- Periodical and overall reports of different branches
- Foreigner-related normative acts of the Government and ministries, which may be made good references for research



CONTENTS

Governmental Decree No. 55/2000/NĐ-CP of 11 October 2000 on amending three articles in Decree No. 104/1998/NĐ-CP of 31 December 1998, which sets detailed regulations and guidance for the implementation of the Law on Vietnamese Citizenship.	1
Decree No 10/2001/NĐ-CP of March 19, 2001 regarding business conditions for maritime service provision	3
Cornerstones of government's conduct of business and management in the first quarter of 2001	8
Foreign investment in Binh Duong	13
Prevention of blindness in Vietnam over the past years	14
How to Make Pork a Major Export?	15
Re-investment in Scientific and Technological Activities from Retained Earnings	16
Hindrances in Devolving Investment License Granting	16
Đà Nẵng industrial zones attract 15 more investment projects	17
How to renovate general education and universalize junior secondary education? ..	18
Đồng Nai-based industrial parks attract 327 investment projects	20
Vietnam's economy gains a high growth ..	21
VND 15,549 billion budgeted for education and training	21
Fund for Development Assistance encouraged to provide more soft loans ...	22
Newsbrief	23
Chronology of June 2001	30
Chronology of July 2001	31

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

As Vietnam proceeds with *doi moi* (renovation) and continues its open-door policy, there is an increasing need for current and relevant information about Vietnam in an easily accessible format. This new publication, *Files on Vietnam*, seeks to meet this need.

The number of foreigners who are interested in Vietnam as a promising land for doing business and as an attractive tourist destination is increasing daily. As Vietnam reaches out to befriend other nations for independent and peaceful co-existence and development, precise and accurate information will help to cement the bonds of friendship and cooperation between Vietnam and the rest of the world.

This bi-monthly series *Files on Vietnam* is meant by Thế Giới Publishers to furnish interested readers with open and up-to-date material about all aspects of this country. Each issue is in fact a collection of translations of overviews, reports, statistical data from various branches and industries, and legal documents relevant to foreign residents in Vietnam.

It is hoped that the *Files on Vietnam* will be a help to foreign policy makers, businessmen, researchers, tourists and students. Any comments or suggestions for improving the series will be highly appreciated.

Thế Giới Publishers

Governmental Decree No. 55/2000/NĐ-CP of 11 October 2000 on amending three articles in Decree No. 104/1998/NĐ-CP of 31 December 1998, which sets detailed regulations and guidance for the implementation of the Law on Vietnamese Citizenship.

THE GOVERNMENT

Pursuant to the Law on Organization of the Government dated September 30, 1992;

Pursuant to the Law on Vietnamese Citizenship dated May 20, 1998;

At the request of the Minister of Justice,

DECREES

Article 1. Amending three articles of Decree No. 104/1998/NĐ-CP promulgated on December 31, 1998, which sets detailed regulations and guidance for the implementation of the Law on Vietnamese Citizenship as follows:

1. *Article 12 is amended and supplemented as follows:*

"Article 12. The formalities required at the central echelon.

1. Within 30 days as of the date of reception of the written proposal of provincial people's committees, or diplomatic or consular agencies of Vietnam, the Ministry of Justice shall undertake to consider the application for Vietnamese citizenship; if such an application is found complete and the applicant satisfies the necessary conditions to be granted Vietnamese citizenship in accordance with Vietnam's law, the Ministry of Justice shall inform the provincial people's committees, or diplomatic, consular agencies of its findings. Subsequently, provincial people's committees, or diplomatic, consular agencies shall issue a paper certifying the applicant's completion of his/her application so that he/she can start

procedures to abandon his/her current citizenship. In special cases where a foreigner, who applies for Vietnamese citizenship, wants to retain his/her foreign citizenship, pursuant to Clause 3, Article 20 of the Law on Vietnamese Citizenship, the Minister of Justice, authorised by the Prime Minister, shall submit to the President of State for consideration and decision such an application and a signed letter which clearly points out the applicant's desire to retain his/her current citizenship.

In case the application is not complete, or some details in it need to be clarified, the Ministry of Justice shall issue a document requesting provincial people's committees or diplomatic, consular agencies, to finalise, with the help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the application or supplement it. Regarding applications that are submitted by diplomatic, consular agencies and subject to investigation by competent authorities, the Ministry of Justice shall make a written request for such investigation. In this case, the duration of settlement shall be 75 days.

2. Within 30 days as of the date of reception of the request made by the Ministry of Justice according to Clause 1 of this Article, provincial people's committees, diplomatic, consular agencies, or authorised agencies must finalise the applicant's file or clarify the matters in question and reply the Ministry of Justice in writing.

3. Within seven (07) days as of the date of reception of a certificate of a foreigner abandoning his/her foreign citizenship, the Ministry of Justice shall finalise his/her application; the Minister of Justice, authorised by the Prime Minister, shall submit the foreigner's application for Vietnamese citizenship and its written request to the President of State for consideration and decision.

In case the foreigner is permitted to have Vietnamese citizenship, his/her name will be written in the Vietnamese language in the

Decision signed by the President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam."

2. Article 16 is amended and supplemented as follows:

"Article 16. The formalities required at the central echelon.

1. Within 30 days as of the date of reception of the written request made by provincial people's committees, or diplomatic, consular agencies, the Ministry of Justice shall undertake to consider the application for resuming Vietnamese citizenship; if the Ministry of Justice finds the application complete and the applicant meets the necessary conditions to resume Vietnamese citizenship in accordance with Vietnam's law, the Minister of Justice, authorised by the Prime Minister, shall submit to the President of State for consideration and decision such an application and its signed letter which clearly points out the applicant's desire to resume Vietnamese citizenship.

In case the applicant is allowed to resume his/her Vietnamese citizenship, his/her name will be written in the Vietnamese language in the Decision signed by the President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

In case the application is found incomplete, or some details in the application need to be clarified, the Ministry of Justice shall issue a document requesting provincial people's committees or diplomatic, consular agencies, to finalise, with the help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the application or supplement it. Regarding applications that are submitted by diplomatic, consular agencies and subject to investigation by competent authorities, the Ministry of Justice shall make a written request for such investigation. In this case, the duration of settlement shall be 60 days.

2. Within 15 days as of the date of reception of the request made by the Ministry of Justice according to Clause 1 of this Article,

provincial people's committees, diplomatic, consular agencies, or authorised agencies must finalise the applicant's file or clarify the matters in question and reply the Ministry of Justice in writing."

3. Article 24 is amended and supplemented as follows:

"Article 24. The formalities required at the central echelon.

1. Within 30 days as of the date of reception of the written request of provincial people's committees, or diplomatic, consular agencies, the Ministry of Justice shall undertake to consider the application for ceasing to have Vietnamese citizenship; if the Ministry of Justice finds the application complete and the applicant meets the necessary conditions to cease to have Vietnamese citizenship in accordance with Vietnam's law, the Minister of Justice, authorised by the Prime Minister, shall submit to the President of State for consideration and decision such an application and its signed letter which clearly points out the applicant's desire to cease to have Vietnamese citizenship.

In case the application is found incomplete, or some details in the application need to be clarified, the Ministry of Justice shall issue a document requesting provincial people's committees or diplomatic, consular agencies, to finalise, with the help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the application or supplement it. Regarding applications that are submitted by diplomatic, consular agencies and subject to investigation by competent authorities, the Ministry of Justice shall make a written request for such investigation. In this case, the duration of settlement shall be 60 days.

2. Within 15 days as of the date of reception of the request made by the Ministry of Justice according to Clause 1 of this Article, provincial people's committees, diplomatic, consular agencies, or authorised agencies must finalise the applicant's file or clarify the

matters in question and reply the Ministry of Justice in writing.

Article 2.

1. This Decree shall take effect after 15 days as of the date of signing.

2. Ministers, heads of ministerial-level agencies, heads of governmental agencies, Chairmen of provincial and centrally-governed city people's committees shall be responsible for the implementation of this Decree.

**On behalf of the Government of the
Socialist Republic of Vietnam**

Prime Minister
Phan Văn Khải
(Signed)

DECREE No 10/2001/NĐ-CP OF MARCH 19, 2001 REGARDING BUSINESS CONDITIONS FOR MARITIME SERVICE PROVISION

THE GOVERNMENT

Pursuant to the September 30, 1992 Law on Organization of the Government;

Pursuant to the June 30, 1990 Maritime Code of Vietnam;

Pursuant to the April 20, 1995 Law on State Enterprises;

Pursuant to the June 12, 1999 Law on Enterprises;

Pursuant to the November 12, 1996 Law on Foreign Investment in Vietnam and the June 9, 2000 Law Amending and Supplementing a number of Articles of the Law on Foreign Investment in Vietnam;

Pursuant to the March 20, 1996 Law on Cooperation;

At the proposal of the Minister of Communications and Transport,

DECREES:

Chapter I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1. Scope of application

This Decree prescribes the business conditions for maritime service provision applicable to the following forms of maritime service:

1. Sea-ship agency service;
2. Sea-transport agency service;
3. Maritime brokerage service;
4. Sea-ship supply service;
5. Goods inspection and counting service;
6. Sea towage service;
7. Services for sea-ship repairs at ports;
8. Sea-ship cleaning service;
9. Services for cargo loading and unloading at ports.

Article 2. Enterprises licensed to provide maritime services in Vietnam

Enterprises of all economic sectors, which fully meet the conditions prescribed in this Decree, may provide assorted maritime services mentioned in Article 1 above. For enterprises with foreign investment capital, the capital contributed by the Vietnamese party must not be lower than 51%; particularly for two kinds of services: sea ship agency service and sea towage service, only enterprises with 100% domestic investment capital may provide them.

Article 3. Applicable laws and international treaties

1. Enterprises providing maritime services must abide by the provisions of this Decree, Vietnamese laws and relevant international treaties which the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has signed or acceded to.

2. Where an international treaty which the Socialist and Republic of Vietnam has signed or acceded to contains different provisions, the provisions of such an international treaty shall apply.

Chapter II

MARITIME SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Article 4. Sea-ship agency service

The sea-ship agency service means the service for performing the following jobs under the ship owners' authorization:

1. Carrying out procedures for ships to enter and leave ports with competent bodies;

2. Arranging tow ships, arranging pilots for pilotage, arranging wharves and mooring places for ships to load and/or unload cargo, embark and/or disembark passengers;

3. Providing necessary information to parties related to ships, cargo and passengers, preparing documents and papers on cargo and passengers, arranging the delivery of goods to consignees;

4. Carrying out ship-related customs and border-gate procedures as well as procedures for cargo handling and/or passengers' embarkation and/or disembarkation;

5. Collecting and/or paying on behalf of ship owners freight, damages, reward money, ship release fines and other sums;

6. Arranging the supply for sea ships at ports;

7. Signing contracts for ship charter, carrying out procedures for hand-over of ships and crews;

8. Signing contracts for cargo transport or handling;

9. Carrying out procedures relating to maritime disputes;

10. Settling other matters as authorized.

Article 5. Sea-transport agency service

Sea-transport agency service means the service for performing the following tasks under the entrustment of goods owners:

1. Organizing and carrying out works in service of the process of goods transport, delivery and reception, passengers and luggage transport on the basis of sea transport contracts or multi-mode transport contracts;

2. Leasing, renting on behalf of goods owners sea-transport means, loading and unloading equipment, warehouses, wharves and yards, piers and other special-use maritime equipment;

3. Acting as container agents;

4. Settling other matters as authorized.

Article 6. Maritime brokerage service

The maritime brokerage service means the service for performing the following tasks:

1. Acting as intermediary service in signing contracts for cargo, passenger and luggage transport;

2. Acting as intermediary in signing maritime insurance contracts;

3. Acting as intermediary in signing ship lease contracts, ship purchase/sale contracts, towage contracts, crew hiring contracts;

4. Acting as intermediary in signing other contracts relating to maritime activities at the

requests of authorizers according to each specific contract.

Article 7. Sea-ship supply service

The sea-ship supply service means the service for performing the following tasks related to sea ships:

1. Supplying sea ships with food, food-stuff, fresh water, materials, equipment, fuel, lubricant, wedging, lining and/or partitioning materials;

2. Providing services for daily-life needs, health care, entertainment and recreation of passengers and crews, organizing the departure, arrival, entry, exit and/or change of crews.

Article 8. Goods inspection and counting service

The goods inspection and counting service means the service for inspecting and counting the actual quantity of goods upon the delivery and reception thereof with sea ships or other means under the entrustment of goods consignors, goods consignees or carriers.

Article 9. Sea-ship towage service

Sea-ship towage service means the service for operation of towing, tugging, pushing or supporting sea ships and other floating means on sea or water areas relating to seaports where sea ships are allowed to enter, leave and/or operate.

Article 10. Sea-ship repairing service at ports

The sea-ship repairing service at ports means the service for repairing and maintaining sea ships during their anchorage at ports.

Article 11. Sea-ship cleaning service

The sea-ship cleaning service means the service for gathering and treating garbage,

discharge oils and other wastes discharged from sea ships while anchoring or mooring at ports.

Article 12. Cargo-handling service at sea ports

The cargo-handling service at sea ports means the service for cargo loading and unloading at ports according to the technological process from loading and unloading each kind of goods.

Chapter III

CONDITIONS ON MARITIME SERVICE BUSINESS

Article 13. Conditions on sea-ship agency service business

Enterprises may provide sea-ship agency services when meeting all the following conditions:

1. The enterprises' directors have directly performed the sea-ship agency operations for at least 2 (two) years;
2. The agency staff members must fully meet the following conditions:
 - a. Having graduated from the maritime university or the foreign trade university or having performed sea-ship agency-related operations for at least 3 (three) years;
 - b. Having certificates of the professional qualifications for sea-ship agency operations, granted by the Maritime Agency and Brokerage Association;
3. The enterprises always have the credit balance of at least VND 1 (one) billion in their

deposit accounts at banks established and operating under Vietnamese laws or have purchased the occupational liability insurance for sea-ship agency activities.

Article 14. Conditions on sea-transport agency service business

Enterprises may provide sea-transport agency services when meeting all the following conditions:

1. The enterprises' directors have directly performed the sea-transport agency operations for at least 2 (two) years;
2. The agency staff members fully meet the following conditions:
 - a. Having graduated from the maritime university or the foreign trade university, or having performed the sea-transport agency service operations for at least 3 (three) years;
 - b. Having certificates of professional qualifications for sea-transport agency service operations, granted by the Forwarding Association;
3. The enterprises have purchased the occupational liability insurance for sea-transport agency activities.

Article 15. Conditions on maritime brokerage service business

Enterprises may provide maritime brokerage services when meeting all the following conditions:

1. The enterprises' directors have directly performed the maritime operations for at least 2 (two) years;
2. The maritime brokers have graduated from the maritime university or foreign trade university or have performed the maritime operations for at least 3 (three) years.

Article 16. Conditions on sea-ship supply service business

Enterprises may provide sea-ship supply services when meeting all the following conditions:

1. The enterprises' directors have directly performed the sea-ship supply operations for at least 2 (two) years;
2. The sea-ship suppliers have graduated from the maritime schools or trade schools of intermediate or higher level, or have performed the maritime operations for at least 3 (three) years;
3. The goods items supplied to sea ships must fully satisfy the law-prescribed standards.

Article 17. Conditions on goods inspection and counting service business

Enterprises may provide goods inspection and counting services when meeting all the following conditions:

1. The enterprises' directors have directly performed the goods inspection and counting operations for at least 2 (two) years;
2. The goods inspectors and counters have graduated from schools of intermediate or higher level, or have performed the maritime operations for at least 3 (three) years.

Article 18. Conditions on sea-ship towage service business

Enterprises may provide sea-ship towage services when meeting all the following conditions:

1. The enterprise' directors have directly performed the sea-ship towage for at least 2 (two) years;
2. The crewmembers working on towage ships have the professional certificates of maritime operations as prescribed by law.
3. The enterprises have their towage ships registered in Vietnam, which satisfy the

technical safety requirements as prescribed by law.

4. The enterprises have purchased insurance for the towage ship owners' civil liability and for crewmembers.

Article 19. Conditions on sea-ship repairing services at ports

Enterprises may provide services for sea-ship repair at ports when meeting all the following conditions:

1. The enterprises' directors have directly performed the sea-ship repair operations for at least 2 (two) years;

2. Having enough means, equipment and personnel that satisfy the requirements prescribed by law.

Article 20. Conditions on sea-ship cleaning service business

Enterprises may provide sea-ship cleaning services when meeting all the following conditions:

1. The enterprises' directors have directly performed the sea-ship cleaning operation for at least 2 (two) years;

2. Having enough means, equipment and personnel that satisfy the requirements prescribed by law;

3. Having plans for treatment of garbage, discharged oil, wastes and the environmental impact assessment reports approved by competent State bodies.

Article 21. Conditions on cargo-handling service business

Enterprises may provide cargo-handling services when meeting all the following conditions:

1. The enterprises' directors have directly performed the cargo loading and unloading operations for at least 2 (two) years;

2. Having loading and unloading means, equipment and instruments which satisfy the technical safety standards, and the contingent of loading and unloading workers meeting the prescribed requirements.

Chapter IV

EXAMINATION, INSPECTION, COMPLAINTS, DENUNCIATIONS AND HANDLING OF VIOLATIONS

Article 22. Examination and inspection of maritime service business activities

1. The Ministry of Communications and Transport shall have to organize the inspection and examination of maritime service business activities and handle violations according to its competence.

2. The inspection and examination contents shall cover the observance of law provisions on maritime service business and the making of committed registrations with competent State bodies.

3. The examination and inspection of enterprises in their maritime service business must comply with the provisions of law.

Article 23. Complaints and denunciations

Enterprises may lodge complaints and/or denunciations or initiate lawsuits according to law provisions against State bodies and/or individuals committing acts of violating their law-prescribed right.

Article 24. Handling of violations

Organizations and individuals that violate the provisions of this Decree shall, depending

on the nature and seriousness of their violations, be disciplined, administratively sanctioned or examined for penal liability; where damage is caused, compensation thereof must be made according to law provisions.

Chapter V

IMPLEMENTATION PROVISIONS

Article 25. Implementation provisions

1. This Decree takes effect 15 days after its signing.

The previous regulations contrary to the provisions of this Decree shall all be annulled.

2. Enterprises which have conducted the maritime service business before this Decree takes effect may continue their operations, but have to satisfy all the prescribed business conditions within 180 (one hundred and eighty) days as from the date this Decree takes effect.

3. The ministers, the heads of the ministerial-level agencies, the heads of the agencies attached to the Government and the presidents of the People's Committees of the provinces and centrally-run cities shall have to implement this Decree.

**On behalf of the Government of
the Socialist Republic of Vietnam**

Prime Minister

Phan Văn Khải

(Signed)

CORNERSTONES OF GOVERNMENT'S CONDUCT OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2001

(Documents for the Government's
Press Conference on April 3rd, 2001)

I. ACHIEVEMENTS GAINED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN ITS CONDUCT OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2001

**1. The Government has directed
the issuance of institutions and policies,
with focus on some important points**

According to the working program for the first quarter of 2001, the Government undertook the elaboration of 11 draft projects on Law and Ordinance, of which seven have so far been discussed by the Government to submit to the National Assembly and National Assembly Standing Committee. They include the Law on Customs, Amended and Supplemented Law on Land, Law on Social Insurance, Ordinance on Food Hygiene and Security, and Ordinance on Fees and Charges.

Up to 20th March 2001, the Government and the Prime Minister issued 595 documents on the direction and management, focusing on establishing mechanisms, solving urgent issues, and step by step overcoming difficulties for socio-economic development. The documents have received great approval from the public. Noteworthy is the fact that the Government has issued a program for administrative reform in 2001 aiming at building a strategy for administrative reform linked to the implementation of the socio-economic development strategy in the period 2001-2010 and

new institutions, and publicized Decisions on solutions to selling rice, paddy, and coffee.

2. The Government has early started fulfillment of the tasks set for 2001 and effectively managed the key links of economic development

By the end of December 2000, the Government assigned the set norms and budget estimation for 2001 to the ministries, branches, and localities. In early February 2001, the Government held the Nationwide Conference on mapping out measures for the realization of socio-economic development tasks. At the Conference, many solutions were proposed to overcome difficulties and promote such fields as economy, science, technology, education-training, culture, society, and administrative reform. The Government has directed ministries, branches and localities to bring into full play initiatives and creativeness, rapidly carry out the work within their competence and responsibility, and avoid inertia. The Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Ministers have directly held over 40 meetings with ministries and branches to start the fulfillment of important tasks.

Focusing on two key matters: *development investment* and *market expansion*, the Government has intensified its instruction of the implementation of some of big policies, creating a momentum for the development of production force and more closely linking production with market.

Regarding development investment

The Government has continued its direction on the realization of policies on investment, accelerating the pace of building key projects, making better use of State budget allocations and credit, and making public the revenue and spending of the State budget (particularly expenditure on investment) at various echelons.

The Government has pointed out that apart from the increase in investment amount, attention should be paid to how to boost investment efficiency, with an investment structure set up in the direction toward promoting the comparative advantages of all localities, branches and the whole nation to raise the economy's effectiveness and competitiveness. It has enlarged the authority of the ministries, branches, and localities in making decisions on investment. The Government has continued to perfect the devolution mechanism among central agencies and local authorities with regard to investment capital coming from the State budget and the capital of national target programs.

In order to accelerate the investment tempo, the Government has ordered ministries, branches, and localities to hand in the planned norms, and rapidly review and amend some regulations on construction investment procedures, process of project consideration and approval, and site clearance. Over the last months, foreign direct investment has shown signs of recovery. For the first time, an international conference has been held outside the country to make known 104 projects calling for investment capital. The conference is the manifestation of Vietnam's integration into the international economy.

Regarding the Government's assistance for enterprises to overcome difficulties

In the first three months, about 4,000 enterprises registered their operation, bringing the total number of enterprises operating within the framework of the Law on Enterprises up to over 18,000. In order to make the Law more effective, the Government has supervised the review of the one-year implementation of the Law to draw experience and to timely correct the errors that obstruct the Law enforcement. Continuing with the establishment of a uniform mechanism to implement the Law on Enterprises, the Government has issued Decree No 8/2001/CP-

ND promulgating security conditions for some conditional trades, the reorganization of the inspection of enterprises, to rapidly build and issue regulations on stable import and export for the period 2001-2005, further expansion of the rights of all economic units at home and abroad to import-export, to decrease the number of prohibited items and those subject to permission, to strongly shift to the management mechanism using international economic methods instead of administrative methods to create favorable conditions for enterprises to actively run their business and expand market. In order to generate capital for enterprises, apart from its investment aids from the Fund for Development Assistance intended for projects on the production and processing of export goods and projects on agricultural production, the Government has given encouragement and initial assistance so that the funds for investment credit can be closely linked with local professional associations, meeting the demand for development investment of small- and medium-sized enterprises. The Government has also directed the banking branch to guarantee capital and renovate the credit samples and procedures so that effective investment projects can apply for loans.

Market expansion

Facing the urgent situation in selling rice and coffee, the Government has instructed how to speed up trade promotion and search for more markets; it has bought one million ton of rice and 150,000 tons of coffee for temporary reserve, introduced some urgent policies such as debt rescheduling, reducing the import tax rate, canceling price differences on fertilizers, reducing and abolishing the tax on using agricultural land for planting rice and coffee. The Government has also introduced the mechanism of deferred-payment sales to foreign countries. The solutions mentioned above well support enterprises and peasants in stabilizing and developing production.

Moreover, the Government has directed the ministries, branches, enterprises, associations, and diplomatic and trading representative agencies abroad to accelerate the pace of searching for international markets.

3. The Government has enacted policies on improvement of people's living standard and the development of culture, education and society, and instructed the implementation of these policies.

With wholesome and practical activities, the Government and authorities at various echelons have enabled people all over the country to celebrate the New Year Holiday (the Year of the Snake) in a joyful atmosphere. Particularly, it has paid great attention to the care for social policy-beneficiaries. Also, the Government has supplemented the budget of some ministries and localities to help them overcome the grave consequences of floods, earthquakes and hunger.

The educational branch is being gradually reorganized with regard to the curricula and organizational system. The Government has decided to reorganize Hanoi National University and Hồ Chí Minh National University, issue Regulations on the organization and activities of National University. In terms of culture and society, the Government has directed the summing up of the national target programs in the period 1996-2000. On that basis, it will reorganize and build the national target programs for the period 2001-2010, approve the population, healthcare, and national nutrition strategies for the period 2001-2010, and the National Action Program for Vietnamese Children in 2001-2010, issue the Directive on the implementation of "The Year of Society Volunteering for Children Encountering Special Difficulties," issue the Decree on vocational training and guidance for the implementation of the Labor Code and the Law on Education. Besides, the Government

has directed the pushing up of labor export and social-evil prevention and fighting.

As the first quarter is the season of traditional festivals, the Government has directed the culture branch and all localities to strengthen the supervision and management of ritual ceremonies and persistently fight against the commercialization of festivals and illegal construction of temples and pagodas.

II. WEAKNESSES OF THE GOVERNMENT'S MANAGEMENT AND CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

The Government's efforts in its direction and management have brought about many encouraging achievements. However, there are some weaknesses that need to be strictly dealt with to draw experience and further promote the role and efficiency of the State administrative machinery.

1. **Administrative discipline in the direction, and management and performance of proposed tasks has not been strictly followed;** there is lack of strong measures for effectively directing the realization of the set forth policies. Though many of those policies are sound and urgent, in fact, their implementation at some ministries, branches, and authority levels is still slow and irresolute while red tape and negative practices are still widespread.
2. **The direction and implementation of the measures to overcome difficulties and create favorable conditions for enterprises and economic sectors to develop their production in some branches and localities are not regular and resolute.** Since the beginning of the year, only six State-owned enterprises have been equitized while some ministries and branches are still tardy in setting up a list of prohibited goods or have presented too many "conditions" on the items that require import-export permission. Apart from that, obstacles in the financial and credit mechanism are not removed in time.

3. **The decentralization in direction and management is slow and perplexing** while government activities are put on the shoulders of the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Ministers; many problems of social security and order over the past time have not been solved timely. Some cases of complaint left unsolved for a long time have become serious and flared up into hotbeds; social evils, traffic accidents, traffic jams in big cities are still pressing questions. Therefore, effective solutions and long-term, comprehensive strategies are required to deal with them.

III. SOME CORNERSTONES IN PROMOTING EFFICIENCY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S DIRECTION AND MANAGEMENT IN THE SECOND QUARTER

The tasks for the remaining months of 2001 are very important. Below are some concrete proposals on the Government's direction and management in the time to come.

1. *More attention should be paid to the direction of the administrative reform with a special view to building institutions, first and foremost in the economy,* to create a legal framework for production and trade activities, to develop production forces, and to intensify State management. The administrative reform should focus on removing difficulties encountered by enterprises and intensifying dialogue between ministries, branches and enterprises and people. The Strategy for administrative reform in 2001-2010 should be perfected to resolutely direct ministries and branches to fulfil the tasks of the reform. Organizational rearrangement, decentralization, and competence assignment in localities should be rapidly realized so that the Government can have more time for devising policies and solving urgent issues of the country. The supervision of the realization of normative acts should be intensified, and entanglements should be removed so that documents on the

Government's direction and management can take their effect.

2. *To focus the direction and management on solving urgent socio-economic issues of the country* with special attention to be paid to demand stimulation in investment and consumption. •

To push up the equitization of State-owned enterprises according to categories of enterprises—those that need support from the State, those that can be further invested, and those that need restructuring. Besides, the transfer of the right to management, the mechanism of contractual business, selling, and lease of small- and medium-sized enterprises should be actively carried out. Policies are needed to transform State-owned enterprises into one-member limited liability companies. Moreover, attention should be paid to removing entanglements in business registration to develop the people-run sector as well as in the general mechanism to develop enterprises. To early rectify the work of inspection and supervision with regard to enterprises.

To continuously implement the measures of stimulating the demand for construction investment in line with the intensification of the management mechanism to raise investment effectiveness. To strictly follow the Regulations on Bidding and to seriously supervise the process of project performance. Apart from that, the Ordinance on Bidding should be quickly completed to submit to the National Assembly Standing Committee for approval. To early send teams of supervisors to localities to investigate and push up the realization of investment plans to materialize the guidelines approved by the Government at its meeting in January 2001.

To rapidly introduce the mechanism of regulating import and export in the period 2001-2005. More policies are needed to actively support export: disseminating necessary information timely and investing

directly in export-assisting links such as trading centers and warehouses in foreign countries. To resolutely remove unreasonable protective barriers that are not suitable with our roadmap of integration. At the same time, to effectively check smuggling and commercial fraud and strictly deal with smuggling.

Positive changes have taken place in the attraction of foreign direct investment (FDI) over the first quarter of 2001. In the second quarter, attention should be paid to the realization of the Government's guidelines on measures of attracting more FDI in 2001-2005 (a resolution on this issue will be promulgated) with regard to resolutely realizing new solutions and guidelines to create favorable conditions for foreign investment, guarantee our competitiveness in relation with other countries in the region, and build confidence in investors.

3. *To push up the implementation of Program 135 and Program of Hunger Eradication and Poverty Reduction.*

The Government has added 447 communes of 192 districts in 33 provinces and centrally-governed cities to the list of communes in distress, enabling them to benefit from Program 135 (the program on the socio-economic development of the communes in distress, in mountain areas of ethnic minority groups, in the border regions and in remote and far-flung areas). The Government has strongly decentralized the realization of target programs, Program 135, and programs on hunger eradication and poverty reduction of localities. Particularly, ministries and branches have intensified their activities of supervision and investigation with regard to the realization of the programs to make sure that money is transferred to the right beneficiaries.

4. *To focus the direction on solving people's complaints, particularly outstanding cases.* A fundamental and long-term measure is to build a transparent and strong apparatus, properly realize the policies of the Party and

State in all localities, well follow the regulations on grassroots democracy, perfect the institutions, policies and laws to create a basis for solving people's complaints, and raise the position and competence of the administrative court.

Generally, the direction and management of the Government in the first quarter have gained achievements. Closely following the general guidelines, timely solving urgent issues, and reaching the main targets of national socio-economic development, the direction and management have displayed the great efforts and high responsibility of the Government, ministries, branches, and localities.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN BÌNH DƯƠNG

Ngữ An

(*Quốc Tế* Newspaper, 9 May 2001)

Bình Dương Province now possesses 385 licensed foreign-invested projects with the total capital of US\$ 2.345 billion. In the first months of the year 2001, 19 new projects with the total registered investment capital of US\$ 28.8 million have been licensed.

Since the start of the process of decentralization, the Bình Dương People's Committee has issued 117 investment licenses with the total registered capital of US\$ 210.9 million to the projects outside its industrial parks (IPs). The IPs' Management Board has issued 144 investment licenses with the total registered capital of US\$ 561.3 million to projects in the IPs of the province. Of the 385 projects, 165 ones are in IPs with the total capital of US\$ 933.1 million. Also, licenses of 30 projects with the total capital of US\$ 116.7 million have been revoked; 12 new projects with the total capital of US\$ 13.2 million are being filed to

submit to the Provincial People's Committee and the Ministry of Planning and Investment for licenses.

In 2000, foreign direct investment (FDI) in Bình Dương accounted for 40% of the province's total social investment capital source. The FDI in this province mainly focuses on industrial branches (accounting for 97% of the total projects and 88% of the total investment capital). There is one investment project on IPs' infrastructure development, seven projects on services and tourism, and eight projects on agriculture.

Up to date, 230 foreign-invested projects have come into operation. These projects with the realized capital of US\$ 938 million and with the legal capital of US\$ 572 million account for 40% of the registered investment capital and 52% of the prescribed capital respectively. In 2000, the total revenue of foreign-invested enterprises reached US\$ 481 million, of which US\$ 179 million came from export. Their total value of imported goods mounted to US\$ 110 million. They spent US\$ 34 million on purchasing goods for capital construction and US\$ 76 million on goods for their business and production. In 2000, they contributed about US\$ 10 million to the State budget.

Bình Dương has imported many new technologies for automobile assembly and production, digital switch operator manufacture, optical cable production, and automatic electronic appliance assembly lines. Foreign-invested enterprises offer many new products, which reach both the Vietnamese and international standards. These enterprises attract 29,000 direct laborers and over 15,000 indirect laborers engaged in capital construction, material production and other services.

As for foreign investment, Bình Dương has set orientations for 2001 as follows: to invest in the produce of foreign-invested enterprises for export; and to encourage investment

in export-oriented processing and high-tech industries; mechanic, electronic industries, and those which can make the best use of local materials and labor force. Accordingly, the province's economic structure will shift in the direction towards industrial-service; here industry plays an important role in stepping up the economic growth. Binh Duong will offer preferences for clean industries, high-tech industries and supplementary industries in renting land in its IPs. Binh Duong will also develop its traditional crafts such as carving, lacquer painting and pottery making.

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS IN VIETNAM OVER THE PAST YEARS

Việt Anh

(Sức khoẻ & Đời sống Newspaper, Issue No 40, 3
April 2001)

It is estimated that in Vietnam today there are at least 463,552 who are blind in both eyes and 889,276 blind in one eye. Cataract causes 306,342 people blind in both eyes and 396,937 people blind in one eye. It ranks top among the causes of blindness among people who are over 50 years old and who are blind in both eyes (60.09%); next come other diseases on the areas behind the eyeball (retina, optic nerves, etc.) 14.38%, glaucoma 5.4% and trachoma 4.79%.

Thanks to the instruction of the Ministry of Health, the effective cooperation of the Peoples' Committees, Services of Health in provinces and cities, assistance from international organizations and its own efforts, the ophthalmological branch has gained many

encouraging achievements. The Central Ophthalmological Institute has helped provinces open 47 training courses for 213 cataract surgeons in 30 provinces and cities nationwide. Its facilities and quality of check-up and treatment have been increasingly improved. So far, almost all ophthalmological departments and ophthalmological stations in provinces nationwide are equipped with microscopes for surgery, microscopes for check-up and other instruments for micro-dissection. A number of institutions have been equipped with argon and Diot lasers, yag lasers, etc. A number of centres can now apply new techniques in operating on cornea and laser in treating myopia, glaucoma and other eye diseases.

In the past three years, the branch has focused on curing people who get blind from cataract and has operated on 1/3 of the total patients and 32,519 trichiasis-suffering patients. The rate of children suffering the diseases caused by Vitamin A shortage has been considerably reduced. The programme "For the Vision of Children" which started in 1998 in the Central Ophthalmological Institute has been expanded to 18 provinces across the country. All surgeries on sight-impaired children have proved successful with no complications and side-effects reported so far.

Thanks to these efforts, over the past 3 years, many units in the ophthalmological branch has been conferred by the State with honorary awards: the Central Institute was awarded with the Independence Order, Nam Định Ophthalmological Centre won the title "Labour Hero" and many individuals have won the title "Emulation Soldiers of the Branch."

These achievements will serve as stimulants for the branch to strive for the target of "giving all people the right to vision by the year 2020."

HOW TO MAKE PORK A MAJOR EXPORT?

Xuân Quân
(Quốc Tế Weekly,
22-28 February 2001)

Vietnam will have many potentialities in exporting pork if it can expand the market for the product. The country exported an average of 14.3 thousand tons of pork and earned US\$ 22.8 million annually during the 1990-1995 period. The scale and diversity of pork export remains limited, accounting for only 15 of the country's export volume. However, pork is likely to become an important export item of Vietnam in the near future.

The Ministry of Trade (MoT) set forth in its project on pork export for the 2001-2010 period the target of exporting 60,000-70,000 tons of pork every year by 2005. In order to attain this target, it is necessary to find new markets for the product and to expand the traditional ones, according to the MoT.

The traditional markets for Vietnamese pork are small. Vietnam used to export to Russia mainly chunks of frozen pork, which accounted for 95% of the total pork export between 1990 and 1995. In the same period, Vietnam exported to Hongkong frozen piglets and porkers which accounted for 5% of the total pork export.

However, both markets are now presenting fiercer competition for Vietnamese enterprises engaging in pork export. The Russian market, the largest one for Vietnamese pork for many years in the past, has recently experienced the drastic reduction in the price of imported pork due to the depreciation of the ruble and the massive US and EU

"pork" aid which amounts to 150,000 tons/year.

Hongkong and Thailand are exporting pork at very low prices. China enjoys many advantages in selling pork to these two markets, which is putting more pressure on Vietnamese exporters.

Russia imports mainly chunks of frozen pork while Hongkong only imports piglets and porkers, which causes trouble for many Vietnamese enterprises if they fail to supply the right product to the right market.

According to the MoT, Vietnamese enterprises can certainly expand the markets in regional countries for their pork, such as Singapore, Malaysia, or Japan. Singapore and Malaysia are more dependent on pork imports. Relevant agencies of the two countries have licensed the import of Vietnamese pork. Therefore, it is very easy for this Vietnam-made product to penetrate into these markets.

Singapore is a demanding market in terms of quality and hygiene of imported pork. At present, only the Binh Duong-based Taiwanese Agricultural and Forestry Co., Ltd. is preparing to export pork to Singapore. The company can be seen as a pioneer in the export to this market.

Vietnamese enterprises should also pay attention to other markets such as Japan and South Korea. Japan is the world's biggest pork importer with an annual volume of 900,000 tons. The close distances between Vietnam and the two markets help Vietnamese enterprises easily compete with the traditional pork exporters to Japan and South Korea. Yet, Vietnamese enterprises have to improve the quality and hygiene standards of their products in order to penetrate into these markets.

Both trade experts and representatives of enterprises believe that we should make more investments in material zones if we want to reach the target of exporting 60,000-70,000

tons of pork by 2005. Leading enterprises in the export should focus on planning and developing material-supplying zones and ensure the exportability of products of these zones. The State is expected to devise policies on helping them with strains, feed, and store construction, and those on price subsidy for pork export. Veterinary agreements with major importers should also be signed soon so as to boost the export.

RE-INVESTMENT IN SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES FROM RETAINED EARNINGS

Khôi Nguyên
(*Sài Gòn Giải Phóng Newspaper*,
25 February 2001)

The Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment and the Ministry of Finance has jointly issued Circular 12/2001/TTLT on guiding the management of retained earnings from scientific and technological tasks.

According to the Circular, such retained earnings include proceeds from the sale of unused materials, fixed property and tools of scientific and technological projects. The retention rate is calculated as follows: 60-70% on projects in direct service of the agricultural sector, rural, mountainous and disadvantaged areas; 80-100% on industrial and technological projects and projects to transfer research results from abroad; and 80-100% on projects which do not belong to the two above groups. Reduction of or exemption from retention will be considered for projects that have to be stopped due to natural calamities and market upheavals, or those

that cannot sell their products. The retention money will be contributed to the State budget and then re-invested in scientific and technological activities.

HINDRANCES IN DEVOLVING INVESTMENT LICENSE GRANTING

T. Tâm
(*Sài Gòn Giải Phóng Newspaper*,
25 February 2001)

One month after being authorised by Hồ Chí Minh City's People's Committee to handle some procedures concerning State administrative management over State-owned enterprises and 100%-foreign-invested enterprises and to grant licenses for projects that have an investment capital of under US\$ 5 million, the City's Department of Planning and Investment has licensed only one foreign-invested project by Vietnam Quadrille Ltd. The company, with a legal capital of US\$ 200,000, is to invest in a sewing and embroidery workshop in District 12.

This devolution is aimed at helping the Department join forces with the City's People's Committee to make the procedures of license granting more convenient, expeditious and simpler. The Department can only license non-productive projects that have been approved by the Committee in writing and projects that have the same content with at least three projects already licensed by the Committee. Therefore, despite the devolution, most of the projects registered for investment since the beginning of the year fall under the competence of the Committee.

On 21st February, the Department submitted to the Committee a list of five BOT projects calling for investment in 2001. They include: (1) the 4,800 metres-long road

connecting Tân Sơn Nhất, Bình Lợi, Bình Triệu crossroads, Tân Bình, Gò Vấp, Bình Thạnh and Thủ Đức districts, (2) the bridge on Bình Tiên road in Districts 6 and 8, (3) Nguyễn Xí road connecting Nguyễn Xí-Định Bộ Lĩnh crossroads, Đỗ bridge, 26-3 road and provincial highway No 16, (4) the parking lot for trucks in Ga crossroads in District 12 on an area of 2.26 ha, and (5) the parking lot for trucks in District 7 on an area of 7 ha.

ĐÀ NẴNG INDUSTRIAL ZONES ATTRACT 15 MORE INVESTMENT PROJECTS

Thái Như
(Đầu Tư Review, 24 March 2001)

At the seminar on realization and promotion of foreign investment in the Central Part of Vietnam held in early March this year, foreign investment managers in Đà Nẵng released some information confirming the safety of the industrial zones (IZs) in the province. Initial information about the attraction of capital in the three IZs in Đà Nẵng in the 1st quarter of 2001 shows optimistic signs: about 15 projects, of which many are domestic, are undergoing procedures for renting land.

According to Đà Nẵng's experts, the city's three IZs, namely Đà Nẵng, Hòa Khánh and Liên Chiểu, as planned, are located in a sandy and hilly area. The infrastructural systems in the area such as the seaport, airport, and roads are mainly located outside these IZs and totally "immune" from floods. "The comparative advantages of Đà Nẵng have not been widely known. Thus, mentioning the Central Part, many people keep holding that Đà Nẵng is prone to natural disasters, especially floods, which fuel the worries of investors," voiced a representative

of Đà Nẵng IZs and PZs Management Board at the seminar.

For a long time, harsh climatic conditions, such as successive floods and storms, have constituted a disadvantage for the Central Part in attracting foreign investment. To make the matter worse, the region's infrastructure is poor. Its markets remain small and scattered due to the specific geographical and topographical conditions typified by numerous passes and slopes and the Trường Sơn range obstructing to the West. Many delegates to the seminar confirmed that the understanding of these disadvantages is merely based on the traditional view of developing the "North-South" economy. When the conditions for development of North-South and East-West economies allow, the Central Part, especially Đà Nẵng, will become an important key economic region, which can serve as a gateway to Indochina and as the junction of the trans-Asia route.

The concerned agencies in Đà Nẵng should give top priority to mitigating the threats posed by storms and floods, and second priority to improvement and completion of the infrastructure and reform of administrative procedures in order to develop local IZs.

The Đà Nẵng People's Committee reserves a reasonable budget for the construction and upgrading of infrastructure and site clearance expenditure to help reduce the land rental in these IZs to the lowest possible level. At present, the land rental in Hòa Khánh IZ and Liên Chiểu IZ applicable to domestic enterprises is VND 960-4,200 per sq.m per year and the rental applicable to foreign investors is US\$ 0.3-0.6 per sq.m per year. The Đà Nẵng IZs and PZs Management Board is coordinating with the concerned agencies in building a "one seal, one door" mechanism in the procedures concerning investment projects, which will exempt investors totally from tax.

HOW TO RENOVATE GENERAL EDUCATION AND UNIVERSALIZE JUNIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION?

(Sài Gòn Giải Phóng Newspaper,
3rd January 2001)

Chairperson of the National Assembly Nông Đức Mạnh has recently signed two important resolutions on education—one on the universalization of junior secondary education and the other on the renovation of general education. Hereinafter is the summary of the two resolutions.

In the period 2001-2010, the target for universalizing junior secondary education is to ensure that most primary-school graduates can have opportunities to finish junior secondary school before the age of 18. On that basis, the requirement for raising people's intellectual standard, training human forces, and nurturing talents can be met to serve the cause of national industrialization and modernization.

Norms on universalization of junior secondary education:

1. In communes, wards, and towns:

- To maintain and consolidate the results as well as complete the target for universalizing primary education.

- The annual rate of primary-school graduates entering junior secondary schools should be at least 95%. In poor communes, the figure should be at least 75%.

- The rate of junior secondary-school graduates at the age of 15-18 must be at least 80%. In poor communes, the figure should be at least 70%.

2. In districts, provincial towns, and cities

To ensure that 90% of communes, wards, townships reach the target for universalizing junior secondary education.

3. In centrally-governed cities and provinces

To ensure that 100% of districts, towns, and provincially-governed cities reach the target for universalizing junior secondary education.

Responsibilities of citizens, families, organizations and the State for the universalization of junior secondary education.

1. All citizens listed in the category subject to educational universalization shall have the right and responsibility to finish junior secondary school at the age of 18.
2. The family is responsible for creating favorable conditions for its members in the stipulated age to finish their junior secondary education.
3. The State shall issue proper policies to guarantee that teachers, classrooms, schools, textbooks, equipment and financial sources are adequate for the universalization. The State shall collect tuition fees from junior secondary-school pupils and reduce, even exempt, poor pupils and beneficiaries of special policies from the fees and shall supply textbooks and learning devices to pupils encountering special difficulties.
4. The State encourages organizations and individuals to contribute labor and material to the universalization of junior secondary education.
5. The Vietnam Committee of Fatherland Front and its member agencies are responsible for urging all people to realize and supervise the plan of universalization.

Target for renovating general educational program

To build a new content for the program, a new teaching method and new textbooks, aiming at raising the quality of education for the young generation so as to meet the requirement of promoting human resources to serve the cause of national industrialization and modernization. The program must be suitable with the actual conditions and tradition of Vietnam and can catch up with the general educational level of developed countries in the region and in the world. The renovation of general educational program must thoroughly grasp all targets and requirements of educational content and methods at all levels stipulated in the Law on Education; do away with the weaknesses of the existing program and the current textbooks. Besides, it must intensify the practicality of textbooks as well as the skills for practice and ability of self-study of pupils; must pay great attention to social sciences and humanities and must supplement the textbooks' content with scientific achievements and modern technologies that suit pupils' ability of receiving knowledge.

To guarantee the consistency, inheritance and development of the educational program; to promote the relation between general education, vocational training, and university education; to structure properly the branches of training in the national educational system so as to create balance in the structure of human resources; to guarantee the consistency of standard knowledge and skills; to map out projects that suit various circumstances and conditions of all localities to apply the new educational program and textbooks.

The renovation of the content of the educational program, textbooks, teaching and learning methods must be realized at the same time with the upgrading and renovation of teaching equipment, assessment organization,

examination, school standardization, teacher training and fostering, and educational management.

The pace of the renovation of general education

The construction of the educational program, the compilation of textbooks, the experimental realization of the program and summing up to draw helpful experience must be carried out in a thoughtful and expeditious manner to reach the above-mentioned targets. The new program and textbooks will be applied to classes 1 and 6 in the school-year 2002-2003, and class 10 in 2004-2005. By the school-year 2006-2007, all the last classes of every grade must follow the new program and textbooks.

The Ministry of Education and Training is responsible for mobilizing knowledgeable and experienced scientists, pedagogues, educational managers, and teachers in the compilation, experiment, and examination of the new program and textbooks and instructing all localities to introduce them into use. Besides, the Ministry will build a project on teaching and studying foreign languages and informatics at secondary schools, renovate the training program in teachers training schools and departments, and organize training courses for teachers to catch up with the new program and textbooks. Moreover, it shall direct all localities to construct and develop technical secondary schools so that their pupils can be equipped with both general knowledge and vocational skills.

The Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the Government Organization and Personnel Department and relevant ministries and branches should coordinate with the Ministry of Education and Training to guarantee all financial conditions, material facilities, staff and policies for teachers to effectively renovate the general educational program.

The People's Committee of all provinces and centrally-governed cities are responsible for directing the renovation of the general educational program, building a teaching staff in adequate quantity, with a reasonable structure and training standards as stipulated by the Law on Education, and upgrading and constructing schools, classrooms, and facilities in the direction toward standardization.

The Committee of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member bodies shall supervise the implementation of the renovation of general education.

ĐỒNG NAI-BASED INDUSTRIAL PARKS ATTRACT 327 INVESTMENT PROJECTS

Nguyễn Ngọc
(Đấu Tư Newspaper, 26 May 2001)

Recently, the Management Board of Industrial Parks in Đồng Nai province has made a breakthrough in granting investment licenses: within 24 hours as of the reception of applications, three investment projects subject to special priority were licensed. Đồng Nai is the first southern province to have industrial parks (Biên Hoà IP). Up to now, the province has devised planning projects for 17 IPs (total area: 8,119 ha) among which ten IPs (2,718 ha) have been approved by the Government. Some IPs such as Amata, Loteco, Biên Hoà II, Gò Dầu, and Nhơn Trạch I have completed the building of their infrastructure: electricity and water supply, transportation network and communications. In the ten IPs in operation, 327 projects have been licensed with a total registered capital of US\$ 4,537 million.

Among them, 229 are foreign-invested projects with a registered capital of US\$ 4,196.84 million; 261 projects with a registered capital of US\$ 3,672.52 have come into operation. In 2000 alone, Đồng Nai attracted 27 new projects worth US\$ 93.4 million.

In the first four months of 2001, the industrial parks experienced some positive changes. Twelve projects with a total investment capital of US\$ 19.7 million have been licensed. Particularly, the Formosa Corporation (Taiwan) has entered into a land-rent contract on 300 ha in Nhơn Trạch III industrial Park for its investment projects worth US\$ 420 million.

According to Mr. Đặng Kim Nguyên, Vice Chairman of the province's People's Committee and Head of the Management Board of Industrial Parks, State management of the enterprises operating in industrial parks has been further renovated to streamline administrative procedures for solving the enterprises' problems expeditiously. "The development of IPs not only contributes to the State budget but also serves as a motive force for promoting the infrastructure development of urban and residential areas, facilitates the shift of the agricultural-industrial structure, and urbanizes residential areas," Mr. Nguyên said. According to the most recent statistics, the IPs in Đồng Nai province have created jobs for 104,397 labourers in and out of the province and brought them an average income of VND 700,000-800,000 per month.

Mr. Nguyên also revealed that the success of the industrial parks in Đồng Nai province should be attributed to the perfect coordination of many bodies and to the macro policies of the State, which have encouraged enterprises to invest in IPs. Moreover, the local authority has provided timely a number of sound instructions in this field.

VIETNAM'S ECONOMY GAINS A HIGH GROWTH

Huyền Anh
(Hà Nội Mới cuối tuần Newspaper,
12 May 2001)

Many economic experts hope Vietnamese policy-makers will promote further the renovation to facilitate the development of the non-State sector. However, they believe that in 2001 the Vietnamese economy will strongly develop. According to *Far Eastern Economic Review's* estimation, Vietnam's GDP growth rate in this year will be 6.4% (the Government's expected figure is 7.8-8%). The Chief economist of UNDP in Hanoi, Mr. Robert Glofsheski said, "In Vietnam, there are now more incentives for development and higher consumption demand." The estimated budget debt of 45% is likely to be within the State's control.

Export is expected to go up by 13.1% in 2001, especially in regard of garments, footwear, and marine products.

Many analysts hope that the price of agricultural products will go up, offering farmers great benefits. An official of a foreign bank said, "The price increase of some agricultural products such as rice and coffee can compensate for the lower export of crude oil."

According to the experts of Deutsch Bank, the US\$ 1.5 billion South-Côn Sơn Gas Project approved at the end of 2000 will surely attract the flow of FDI into Vietnam. So it is possible to get an FDI capital of US\$ 1-1.5 billion and even more. The new Law on Enterprises that reduces much administrative red-tape for private enterprises plays an important role in promoting the establishment of new enterprises and job creation. The Vietnamese Government has set itself a target of creating 1.4 million jobs in 2001.

VND 15,549 BILLION BUD- GETED FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

(Sài Gòn Giải Phóng Newspaper,
31 January 2001)

In Hồ Chí Minh City: 5,826 drop-outs attend school again.

* According to the Ministry of Education and Training, the Government plans to budget VND 15,549 billion in 2001 for education and training in which VND 2,300 billion will be earmarked for capital construction, and VND 600 billion for target programs including VND 415 billion for nursery and general education, VND 75 billion for higher education, VND 20 billion for vocational secondary schools and VND 90 billion for vocational training. VND 12,649 billion will be the biggest regular spending in which VND 11,086 billion will be provided for localities and the rest will be budgeted for central ministries and branches.

The Ministry of Education and Training revealed that in 2001, the education branch will carry out the planning for a network of universities, colleges and vocational schools, upgrade two national universities and local universities, boost the investments in key teachers training schools. At the same time, the branch will also set up a project to establish a University for the Northeast region, upgrade the information technology facilities of all universities and some secondary schools and their computer system. The branch will use the State budget allocations for implementing the programs on sending scientists and technicians abroad for training.

* On 17 February, the Hồ Chí Minh City Young Pioneers' Brigade Council held a conference to review its activities and local youths' movements in 2000.

To raise the awareness of the City's children of education, self-perfection and determination to overcome all difficulties, the Brigade has launched many movements for example, "Let's Overcome Difficulties and Help Our Friends Do So," "For a Clean, Beautiful and Civilized City," "Return to the Origins" and "Joy and Healthiness." As a result, 6,029 children have received scholarships worth more than VND 986 million and over 5,826 drop-outs have started to attend school again. Several thousands of the City's young pioneers took part in activities such as Green Sundays, Cleaning Streets and Environmental Protection. The City's Young Pioneers' Brigade has planted 3,400 trees. Its branches at district level have admitted more than 1,068 new members.

* In order to realize the youth's project "Raising People's Educational Standards in Nhuận Đức Commune, Củ Chi District," the Communist Youth Union of the City's Post-Office branch has coordinated with its partner from Củ Chi District to encourage teachers to open compassionate classes and keep them running well, to present scholarships, rewards, notebooks, clothes and other gifts at the Tết holiday to poor pupils who are in danger of giving up their study or cannot afford schooling. The total fund for this work is valued at over VND 36 million. The campaign has contributed to reduce the rate of children giving up their study to 0.53% from 7%. Around half of 27 poor pupils sponsored regularly by the campaign are usually rated from "good" to "excellent."

FUND FOR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE ENCOURAGED TO PROVIDE MORE SOFT LOANS

Manh Hùng
(Sài Gòn Giải Phóng Newspaper,
17 February 2001)

"The Fund for Development Assistance should further promote its role as a "midwife" in the provision of soft loans for prioritized investment projects," Prime Minister Phan Văn Khải said at the Follow-up Conference of the Fund held recently in Hanoi.

According to the PM, the Fund has been set up as a tool to materialize the Government's ideas of encouraging the development of a number of industries and trades. The Fund has gained considerable achievements since it came into operation one year ago. Yet, it has failed to fulfil some assigned tasks.

The PM said some of the Government's recent economic programs such as those on sugar-cane, mechanical engineering or deep-sea fishing, which received loans from the Fund, had reaped quite a few good results. However, there are some problems in the implementation of these programs, for example, the low efficiency of production establishments, high product prices and poor performance in the collection of debts and loan interests. Take the case of the sugar-cane program for example. Last year, the program showed a low rate of capital recouping and loan interest collection (43%). However, thanks to the program, we have achieved the target of producing one million ton of sugar by 2000 and saved US\$ 150 million which were supposedly spent on importing 0.5 million ton

of sugar. Up to now, the program has attracted 300,000 direct employees, created jobs for 600,000 agricultural workers and stabilised the livelihood of over 1.4 million people. Besides, the economic efficiency of farmland in Tây Ninh, Quảng Ngãi and Thanh Hoá provinces, where sugar-cane is planted in replacement of rice, has been brought up 2-3 times higher than the previous figure.

Similarly, the program on assisting the mechanical engineering industry has reaped initial successes. It has borrowed VND 700 billion from the above-mentioned Fund, of which VND 190 billion has been earmarked for projects on producing bicycles and electric fans and VND 434 billion for ship-building projects.

In the current context, the PM demanded the Fund increase its investments in 2001 in such new fields as cotton, tobacco growing and export-oriented industries. According to the PM, every year Vietnam has to spend a large amount of foreign currencies on importing 70,000 tons of cotton to meet the demand of domestic production. Meanwhile, the potential of developing cotton crops in Southern provinces remains untapped and the demand for foreign currencies to be spent on importing machinery and equipment is high. It's time now to restore the once famous tobacco-growing areas in Lạng Sơn, Bắc Giang, Sóc Sơn, Cao Bằng and Đồng Nai provinces so as to lessen our dependence on imported tobacco.

The credit the Fund needs for financing projects in 2001 is estimated at VND 23,800 billion, nearly double that of 2000. It will channel VND 23,100 billion of the total amount into soft loans for investors, VND 300 billion into investment credit guaranty and VND 400 billion into post-investment interest support. This is a very heavy task, according to the Management Board of the Fund. Therefore, right from the beginning of the year, the Fund started to give allowances to prioritized projects while awaiting a concrete plan from the Government. To date, 14 projects have

received the allowances worth VND 240 billion. The Fund has also publicized the first stage of the year's lending plan so that concerned ministries, branches and localities can ensure sufficient capital for their projects.

NEWSBRIEF:

PETROL AND OIL MOSTLY IMPORTED FROM SINGAPORE

According to the Ministry of Trade, since the beginning of this year, Vietnam has imported about 1.6 million tons of oil and petrol of all kinds while the expected total quantity in 2001 is 9.7 million tons. This product is mostly imported from Singapore. In 2000, the quantity of imported oil and petrol from Singapore was 6.27 million tons, accounting for 73% of the total imported quantity of the whole year.

TEA EXPORT SLOWLY GROWS

In the first two months of this year, Vietnam exported about 4,000 tons of tea of all sorts. To gain the total quantity of 45,000 tons recorded in 2000, Vietnam must export at least 3,750 tons monthly. In 2000, the country's turnover of tea export reached US\$ 53.4 million.

40,000 TONS OF RUBBER EXPORTED

According to statistics, since the beginning of this year, the quantity of exported rubber is over 40,000 tons only, much lower than the expected target of the whole year (300,000 tons). In the two first months alone, nearly 37,000 tons were exported for US\$ 20 million, reducing 23.5% in quantity and 30% in value.

FRUITS EXPORT TO GAIN US\$ 350 MILLION BY 2010

According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, by 2010, Vietnam's

turnover of fruit export will reach US\$ 350 million.

At present, the consumption demand for Vietnamese fruit is estimated at 7.6 million tons (6 million tons at home and 1.6 million tons abroad). The agricultural branch is designing a plan to broaden the area of fruit trees from 450,000 hectares to 750,000 hectares so as to reach the per capita consumption of 60-70 kg per year.

(*Đầu Tư* Newspaper,
20 March 2001)

84 ENTERPRISES INVEST IN TÂN BÌNH INDUSTRIAL PARK

Though built just two years ago, Tân Bình Industrial Park has attracted a good number of domestic and foreign investors thanks to its good infrastructure and services. Up to now, 84 enterprises, both domestic and foreign, have invested in Tân Bình IP, with the total investment capital of over VND 601 billion and US\$ 15.3 million. About 20 enterprises from Australia, France, Canada, England, Russia, Czech Republic, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand have invested in garments, textiles, motorcycle components, jewels, aluminum moulds, packaging, construction materials, emery-paper, inox tubs, etc. Sixty four domestic enterprises have invested in textiles, garments, fine pottery and ceramics, plastic packaging, medical equipment, aromatics, rubber, electric equipment, processing of agricultural products, marine products, foodstuff, pharmaceutical products, footwear, heat-resistant equipment. These enterprises have rented 68.19% of the industrial building land; 22 factories have provided its products for domestic consumption and export. Other 13 factories are being built or equipped.

1,000 JOBS OFFERED TO TEENAGERS

The Communist Youth Union of the Service of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs (Hồ Chí Minh City) plans to carry out four "youths' projects" during the 2001-2005 period: providing jobs for 1,000 teenagers at the Service's schools and relief organizations; conducting a scientific research to forecast the labour supply-demand in HCMC; checking social evils in a ward of Bình Thạnh District and a commune of Nhà Bè District; nurturing 50 talented pupils at the Service's educational and vocational training units.

(*Sài Gòn Giải Phóng* Newspaper,
24 February 2001)

US\$ 120 MILLION TO BE INVESTED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT PROCESSING

(*Đầu Tư* Newspaper, 20 March 2001)

Metro Cash & Carry International Holding B.V., an affiliate of the German Metro A.G Group, has submitted to the Government its project on building in Vietnam eight centers for processing agricultural, marine, food and non-food products.

The project comprises two stages. In the first stage, two centers will be built in Hồ Chí Minh City and one in Hanoi. In the second stage, the other centers will be built in Hải Phòng, Đà Nẵng, Cần Thơ and Đà Lạt. The project has a total investment capital of US\$ 120 million and a legal capital of US\$ 36 million and will recruit 2,500 employees.

US\$ 6 BILLION EXPECTED FROM MECHANICAL ENGINEERING PRODUCT EXPORT

(*Đầu Tư* Newspaper, 20 March 2001)

According to the Ministry of Trade (MoT), Vietnam's export turnover from

mechanical products may reach US\$ 6 billion in the next ten years.

An MoT official was quoted as saying that Vietnam will be able to save from US\$ 600 million to US\$ 1,200 million to be spent on the annual import of the products if the above target is attained. Also according to the official, the US\$ 2 billion worth of mechanical product import in the 1996-2000 period shows that the country's industry has not yet occupied a deserving share in the market.

TÂN TẠO INDUSTRIAL ZONE ATTRACTS LOTS OF INVESTMENT PROJECTS

(*Đầu Tư* Newspaper, 20 March 2001)

The Tân Tạo Industrial Zone (IZ) in Hồ Chí Minh City is seen as having a complete infrastructure and the highest attractiveness to investment in comparison with many IZs in the city. To date, 90% of its land has been rent to 112 investors, of whom 80 are Vietnamese and 32 foreigners. The investors have put in their projects VND 1,550 billion and nearly US\$ 85 million. Forty-eight factories in the IZ have started their operation. They produce a large diversity of products which meet domestic and export demands. Over 60 other factories are under way, either at the stage of equipment installation or designing. As estimated, Tân Tạo Industrial Zone Development Company has invested VND 300 billion in building the infrastructure for this IZ.

LIST OF PROJECTS CALLING FOR FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN 2001-2005 PERIOD PREPARED

(*Đầu Tư* Newspaper, 17 February 2001)

A new list of projects calling for foreign investment will be made public at the Seminar "Towards Success" held by the Ministry of

Planning and Investment (MPI) on 15 March 2001 in Singapore. At present, MPI is collecting opinions from all ministries and branches on this list, which has fewer projects than the previous ones.

The list is set up by reconsidering and adding projects of the previous list.

It is said that the List of Projects Calling for Foreign Direct Investment was first issued by the Minister of Planning and Investment in March 1999 with about 170 projects. However, up to now, many projects have been licensed or their planning/investment schemes have been changed. So, MPI has reduced the number to 90 projects.

LÊ MINH XUÂN INDUSTRIAL PARK RENTS OUT ITS LAND DURING STAGE I

(*Đầu Tư* Newspaper, 20 March 2001)

By early March 2001, the entire 45-hectare land of the Lê Minh Xuân Industrial Park (Hồ Chí Minh City) was rented by 89 investors, including 21 foreigners.

The IP Management Board has built four workshops with the total area of 1,260 m² on 55 ha of stage II. Up to now, according to the registration, 50% of this area has been rented. To gain such a success, the Management Board has taken many measures to encourage investment, such as reduction of service prices, construction of handicraft and small-industrial zones for small enterprises, establishment of health insurance services, provision of accommodation for employees, construction of a sewage-treating system, etc.

ORION HANEL PROMOTES ITS EXPORT

(*Đầu Tư* Newspaper, 20 March 2001)

To increase its export in 2001, the Orion Hanel Picture Tube Joint-Venture has required

the State to take some measures, such as allowing enterprises to take charge of their import and export, exempting imported materials from VAT and simplifying the procedures of taxation.

In 2000, Hanel gained the total revenue of US\$ 109 million, exporting 78% of its produce to foreign markets. In Hanoi, this is a successful industrial enterprise which gained an import-export turnover of US\$ 130 million over the year.

OVER 100 PROJECTS CALLING FOR FOREIGN INVESTMENT

(Đầu Tư Newspaper, 20 March 2001)

In preparation for the Seminar "Towards Success" in Singapore, the Ministry of Planning and Investment has made a list of 104 projects, branches and fields in need of foreign investment capital.

Compared with the old list, the new is added with many projects on health care, education, engineering and high technology, tourism, and entertainment parks.

However, this is not the formal list of the period 2001-2005. And it is being supplemented and perfected, according to some experts.

SHOULD THERE BE A NEW MECHANISM FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND ENTERPRISES?

(Đầu Tư Newspaper, 20 March 2001)

The Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) reveals that, despite the acknowledged role of associations of enterprises including VCCI, the support for their members against unfavourable market fluctuations remains ineffective. This hinders the development of the Government-enterprise cooperation.

Mr. Đoàn Duy Thành, Chairman of VCCI, noted that, to ensure effective cooperation between the Government and enterprises, VCCI has requested the Government help all enterprises and associations to get easy access to information about the Government's activities.

BELATEX SUGGESTS TO TRANSFER ITS ENTIRE SHARES

(Đầu Tư Newspaper, 20 March 2001)

Recently, Belatex Rubber, an enterprise with 100% capital coming from Belarussia has asked for permission from the Government to transfer its entire assets valued at US\$ 2,678,000 to Long Sơn Company (Bà Rịa-Vũng Tàu). Belatex was originally Vibelatex Company, a joint-venture (registered capital: US\$ 37.8 million) between Thống Nhất Rubber Company and Bạch Nga (Belarus) Tire and Tube Factory.

Established in 1992, the targets of the joint venture are to plant 8,000 ha of rubber trees and build a factory producing gloves for surgery. After four years, both partners faced with numerous difficulties. Thống Nhất Company left the joint venture, which was then converted into a 100%-foreign invested enterprise in 1998. However, due to some newly-emerging hindrances, the investor in Belatex Rubber has decided to transfer his property to Long Sơn Company.

US\$ 300 MILLION FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

(Đầu Tư Newspaper, 20 March 2001)

According to the Vietnam Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (VBARD), in 2001, the Bank will receive 8-10 projects (total capital: US\$ 300 million) funded by international organizations. The biggest projects (World Bank - WB and Asian Development

Bank - ADB) need US\$ 150 million to develop rural infrastructure and US\$ 80 million for rural enterprise finance. ADB decides to fund the Bank US\$ two million to build a training center in Hanoi. The other projects are designed for fruit trees and tea development (US\$ 40.2 million), on hunger eradication and poverty reduction (US\$ 5-10 million).

Last year, VBARD received and managed 50 foreign projects of the total value of US\$ 1.208 billion. Besides, VBARD carried out a project on technical aid funded by ADB with the total of US\$ 1.4 million of which US\$ 900,000 was the non-refund capital. This was an important project of VBARD to realize its restructuring strategy.

NO LIMITATION ON TAKING GOLDEN JEWELRY OUT OF VIETNAM

The State Bank is considering the issuance of a decision on allowing Vietnamese citizens and people residing in Vietnam to take golden jewelry in an unlimited quantity when they leave Vietnam.

The decision shall take the place of Decision 46/QĐ of the State Bank in 1988 on the management toward gold. The State Bank explains that such a decision will push up the on-spot export of golden jewelry.

A FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FOR THE TÂY NGUYÊN HIGHLANDS

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has just publicised a draft project called "The Highlands Forestry Development towards the year 2010."

In a bid to reach the target of growing 3.5 million ha of forest by the year 2010, an increase of 500,000 ha as against the present area, some major solutions have been mentioned in the draft. These solutions include detailed planning for the three forest categories, stepping up the implemen-

tation of the policies on allotment of land and forest to populations, and promoting investment in forest protection, afforestation and reafforestation. Besides, the solutions aim to stabilize the livelihood of local residents by linking programs on agricultural and forestry development and on the State-owned forestry farm reform with those on the promotion of application of scientific and technological advances.

The competent agencies are completing the project through concrete steps concerning capital requirement and human resources. The project will be submitted to the Government in the third quarter of this year.

HINDRANCES TO DEVELOPMENT

Vinh Sơn

Up to now, there have been as many as 1,400 craft villages, of which 200 are traditional craft ones. The villages attract around 11 million non-agricultural laborers, of whom 1.2 million are regular ones. In the 2001 - 2005 period, the target of craft villages is to increase the export turnover of handicrafts to US\$ 900 million or US\$ one billion, tripling that of the year 2000. However, shortage of funds, poor infrastructure, unstable export markets, poor material supply sources and the pressure from financial policies are great hindrances to the development of the craft villages.

IN 2001 VND 53 BILLION NEEDED FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING

*(Sài Gòn Giải Phóng Newspaper,
31 January 2001)*

According to the report of the Service of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs, in 2000, the vocational schools in Hồ Chí Minh City enrolled about 15,000 students, a 135%-increase against that of 1999) and trained them as technical workers. Among these schools,

the centrally-governed ones attracted more students than the City-governed ones. At present, the City's vocational schools have not yet selected enough students, only reaching 65.98% of the plan. Besides, private or people-founded vocational schools, centers and establishments have recruited 173,000 students and provided short-term courses for them (reaching 123% of the plan).

Over the past year, the City has invested over VND 4.4 billion in the construction of material facilities for five vocational establishments. The Municipal People's Committee has allowed 15 other vocational establishments to get loans worth VND 75 billion. However, the investment is not proportional to the requirement of the vocational training reform.

In order to realize the targets of training 10,000 students as technical workers in regular courses and 140,000 in short-term courses in 2001, the Municipal Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs Service has required the Central authority and the City to provide further VND 53 billion for infrastructure construction and teaching facilities. The money will be spent on organizing intensive training courses for teachers and managers so that they can improve their professional standards.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT FUNDS

*(Đầu Tư Review,
10 March and 24 March 2001 Issues)*

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Trade, after more than four years of trial operation, five local Development Investment Funds in Hồ Chí Minh City, Bình Định, Bình Dương, Đồng Nai and Hải Phòng have lent nearly VND 2,800 billion in total to 322 projects.

The Development Investment Fund of Hồ Chí Minh City ranks top among these funds. It has lent VND 1,851 billion to 150 projects. The Đồng Nai Fund, since its establishment in

February 2000, has invested over VND 116 billion in 32 projects.

VINAPPRO EARNS US\$ 2.6 MILLION FROM EXPORT

Since the beginning of 2001, engineering-manufacturing company (Vinapro) has earned an export turnover of US\$ 2.6 million, nearly reaching the target of US\$ 3.3 million set for the whole year. So far, the Company's products have been exported to 18 countries, among which Indonesia and Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore and the Middle East are its most regular customers. The Company also markets its products in African countries, Latin America, Syria and the US.

FOREIGN-INVESTED SECTOR IMPORTS US\$ 158.4 MILLION WORTH OF EQUIPMENT

To implement its licensed projects, since the beginning of the year, the foreign-invested sector has imported over US\$ 158.4 million worth of equipment and machinery. This is an important part of the foreign investments that have been realized in the past 3 months.

According to the statistics from the Customs, in 2000, the foreign-invested sector imported over US\$ 852 million worth of equipment and machinery.

US\$ 14 MILLION INVESTED IN WASTE TREATMENT IN HANOI

According to an official source, in 2001, Hanoi will start the construction of a US\$ 14-million factory which processes waste into microbial fertilizers in Thanh Oai commune, Thanh Trì district. The factory's annual capacity is expected to be over 100,000 tonnes. It will apply a technology treating fermented airtight waste into compost, a component of microbial fertilizers.

NETWORK SET UP BETWEEN PROJECT MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

The Ministry of Planning and Investment is making headway in networking the computer systems of project management agencies under its charge and those of Services of Planning and Investment in provinces (Project Management Offices) in order to monitor information about foreign investment.

The formation of a web-site-based database will help Services, investment management agencies and enterprises search for information and keep abreast of the situation of foreign-invested enterprises nationwide. The database will also help the Ministry to get information about each enterprise and field of activity in order to promulgate relevant and closer-to-life policies on this sector.

ASSISTANCE FOR PROMOTION OF RESOURCES

(*Đầu Tư* Newspaper, 20 March 2001)

According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), over the past 5 years, the Fund has provided US\$ 60 million in support of the four projects on hunger alleviation-poverty reduction and promotion of resources in Tuyên Quang, Hà Giang, Quảng Bình and Hà Tĩnh provinces.

The above projects started at different times but adopted the same approach, namely planning from the lower echelon, mobilizing the participation of the population, defining the right of ownership and creating close collaborative relationships between authorities of various echelons and branches." According to Luciano Lavizzari, Director of the Research Appraisal Office of IFAD President's Office, in the time to come, besides the projects that are under way, IFDA plans to continue assisting a number of projects to create a non-

farm income for the people in the Mekong River Delta to get out of hunger and poverty.

HUNGER ALLEVIATION – POVERTY REDUCTION PROJECT IN CENTRAL VIETNAM

Following the instruction of the Government, the Ministry of Planning and Investment is coordinating with experts from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and concerned branches and authorities of various echelons to complete the pre-feasibility study of the project to reduce poverty in the Central Part of Vietnam. The project will be submitted to the Government in the second quarter of 2001. Under the initial plan, the project costs nearly US\$ 70 million, 70% of which is expected to come from ADB, 20% from the Government counterpart capital and contributions from the beneficiaries of the project; the remaining will come from other sources.

With a view to reducing poverty, the project will focus on food security, improvement of nutrition, income generation through sidelines, etc. It is likely that the project will be carried out in Quảng Bình, Quảng Trị, Thừa Thiên-Huế and Kon Tum provinces.

VND 70 BILLION FOR IMMUNIZATION PROGRAMME

The Ministry of Health plans to spend VND 70 billion on expanding the immunization programme to localities, especially mountain, remote and far-flung provinces with a view to providing a full variety of necessary vaccines to the localities and preventive healthcare centres.

The targets set for 2001 are: to prevent the recurrence of polio; to eradicate tetanus infection among children in 100% districts, to reduce the rate of tetanus infection to under 0.25 per 100,000 inhabitants; to provide

regular immunization to over 90% of children under six years of age, to prevent the six contagious diseases and to immunize 80% expectant mothers against tetanus.

CHRONOLOGY OF JUNE 2001

May 22nd - June 29th: the 9th session of the 10th Legislature of the National Assembly (NA) of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam takes place. The NA approves five laws, namely the Law on Amendments and Supplements to a Number of Articles of the Law on Land, the Law on Road Traffic, the Law on Fire Prevention and Control, the Law on Customs and the Law on Cultural Heritage. At this session, the NA accepts the proposal of Party Secretary General Nông Đức Mạnh to relinquish his position as NA Chairman to focus his energy and time on serving the Party, and appoints Nguyễn Văn An, member of the Politburo of the Party Central Committee as new NA Chairman.

May 28th-June 1st: Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania Jakaya Kikwete pays an official visit to Vietnam. He is received by PM Phan Văn Khải, has talks with Foreign Minister (FM) Nguyễn Dy Niên and works with officials from the Ministries of Trade, Agriculture and Rural Development and Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The delegation visits the capital city of Hanoi and Hồ Chí Minh City.

June 3rd-10th: a delegation of the Indian Trade Union Congress led by its Chairman Chithrangian pays a visit to Vietnam. The delegation is received by Chairman of the Vietnam Confederation of Labour Cù Thị Hậu, visits a number of production establishments and inquires about the organization and operation of Vietnam's industrial and educational trade unions.

June 4th-8th: PM Phan Văn Khải pays a visit to Japan. He attends the 7th Meeting on

the Future of Asia, which takes place in that country on June 7th and 8th. He has talks with Japanese PM Junichiro Koizumi and receives statesmen, government officials and representatives of economic-financial conglomerates and Japanese friendship organizations.

June 4th-9th: a delegation of the Federation of Korean Trade Unions led by Chairman Ly Nam Sun pays a visit to Vietnam and is received by Chairman of the Vietnam Confederation of Labour Cù Thị Hậu and visits ORION-HANEL Electronics Joint Venture and the Trade Union of the Vietnam Post Office.

June 5th-6th: FM Nguyễn Dy Niên pays an official visit to the Republic of the Russian Federation. He exchanges views with Russian FM Igor Ivanov and meets with the Chairman of the Russian Federation State Council and the Chairman of the State Duma.

June 6th-7th: Minister of Trade Vũ Khoan leads a Vietnamese delegation to attend the Meeting of Trade Ministers of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum held in Shanghai (China). He has meetings with delegations from China, Russia, the US, Thailand, Republic of Korea and Canada to discuss the ways to promote bilateral trade and economic relationship between Vietnam and these countries.

June 10th-11th: Minister of Trade Vũ Khoan pays a working visit to China. He meets with alternate member of the Politburo and member of the Cabinet Wu Yi, Minister of Foreign Affairs Tang Jia Xuan, Minister of Foreign Trade and International Economic Cooperation Shi Guang Sheng, Deputy Head of the Central Committee for Foreign Affairs of the Communist Party of China Wang Jia Rui and meets with Chinese business circle.

June 10th-15th: Iraqi FM M. Mehdi Saleh pays a visit to Vietnam. He attends the Conference of the Inter-Governmental Cooperation Committee between the two govern-

ments. He is received by PM Phan Văn Khải and Vice-President of State Nguyễn Thị Bình.

CHRONOLOGY OF JULY 2001

July 1st-5th: General Secretary of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Anders Johnson pays a visit to Vietnam. He is received by Chairman of the National Assembly Nguyễn Văn An and has talks with Chairman of the NA Committee for Foreign Affairs Đỗ Văn Tài and Head of NA's Office Vũ Mão.

July 2nd-6th: General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece A. Papariga leads a delegation of senior Party leaders to visit Vietnam and is received by Party General Secretary Nông Đức Mạnh. She has talks with Politburo member, head of the delegation of the Communist Party of Vietnam Trần Đình Hoan and has a working session with heads of mass organizations in Vietnam. The delegation visits Hồ Chí Minh City and Quảng Ninh province.

July 2nd-11th: Vice President of the World Bank (WB) Jamil Kassum pays a visit to Vietnam. He has a working session with Governor of the State Bank of Vietnam (SBV) Lê Đức Thúy. The two sides sign three credit agreements under which the WB shall lend SBV US\$ 526 million.

July 9th-12th: Party General Secretary Nông Đức Mạnh pays an official friendship visit to the People's Democratic Republic of Laos. He has talks with President of State Khamtay Siphandon, meets with other leaders of the Party, State, Government and National Assembly of Laos and visits Vientiane and the province of Champasac.

July 11th-14th: Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Congress of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea Kim Yong Nam pays an official visit to Vietnam. He has talks with President of State Trần Đức Lương, meets with NA Chairman Nguyễn Văn An, is received by Party General

Secretary Nông Đức Mạnh and visits Hanoi and Hải Phòng. A joint communiqué is released by the two sides on this occasion.

July 17th-21st: Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Laos Bounnyan Vorachit pays an official friendship visit to Vietnam. He is received by Party General Secretary Nông Đức Mạnh and President of State Trần Đức Lương, has talks with PM Phan Văn Khải, visits Đà Nẵng and Hồ Chí Minh City. A number of documents on the cooperation between Vietnam and Laos are signed and a joint communiqué is released on this occasion.

July 17th-20th: Deputy PM Nguyễn Mạnh Cẩm pays a working visit to the Republic of the Russian Federation. He has a working session with Deputy PM Khristenko, the two co-chairmen of the Inter-governmental Commission for Economic-Commercial-Scientific Cooperation, is received by PM M. Kasyanov and visits a number of economic and technical establishments in Russia.

July 19th-21st: the 5th meeting of the ASEAN Standing Committee (Tenure 34) and the Meeting of ASEAN senior officials (ASC) are held in Hanoi to review the activities of ASEAN in the past year and to complete the documents, contents, agendas in preparation for the 34th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, the 8th Meeting of the ministers of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Meeting between ASEAN foreign ministers and their dialogue partners (PMC).

July 23rd-24th: the 34th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) takes place in Hanoi. It approves the Hanoi Declaration on the narrowing of the development gap in order to strengthen the tie among ASEAN countries, and a joint communiqué. PM Phan Văn Khải delivers an important speech at the opening ceremony of the Meeting. On this occasion, he also receives foreign ministers and heads of ASEAN delegations.

July 24th: a meeting between ASEAN foreign ministers and their counterparts from China, Japan and Korea (ASEAN+3) under the chairmanship of Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyễn Dy Niên takes place in Hanoi.

July 25th: the 8th Meeting of ministers of the ASEAN Regional Forum takes place in Hanoi with the participation of foreign ministers and representatives of member countries: ASEAN countries, Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, People's Democratic Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Russian Federation and the United States, under the chairmanship of Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyễn Dy Niên.

July 26th-27th: the Meeting between ASEAN foreign ministers and their dialogue partners (PMC) under the chairmanship of the Vietnamese Foreign Minister takes place in Hanoi. The meeting includes general meetings

between ASEAN foreign ministers and their counterparts and heads of delegation from 10 partner countries (PMC ASEAN+10) which include China, Russia, India, Japan, the US, EU, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, and between ASEAN foreign ministers and each partner country (PMC ASEAN+1). General Director of UNDP is invited to the meeting as an honorary guest of the Vietnamese Government.

July 28th: the 2nd Meeting of ministers of the countries located along the Ganges and the Mekong Rivers takes place in Hanoi with the participation of ministers from six countries namely Cambodia, India, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. The meeting approves the Hanoi Plan of Action on the cooperation in the Ganges and the Mekong Rivers and agreements on the cooperation in the fields of tourism, culture, development of human resources and communications.

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Author: Nguyễn Vinh Phúc
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