

VIETNAM

BUSINESS REVIEW

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Coffee suffers from crop failure, prices fall



VOV - According to the Vietnam Coffee and Cocoa Association (Vicofa), Vietnam's coffee industry now suffers heavily from a 3-decade serious drought.

The lack of water for irrigation is threatening 165,000 hectares of coffee growing area, or 30% of total area in the Central Highlands. Vicofa's chair Luong Van Tu predicted that Vietnam's coffee exports may decrease by 25% this year.

However, though news about the crop failure in Vietnam is known, the prices in the world market have not increased.

Therefore, Vietnamese farmers and exporters are facing big difficulties.

A report by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) showed that in the first four months of the year, Vietnam exported 681,000 tons, worth US\$1.16 billion, an increase of 44.6% in export volume and 18.2% in value.

Also according to the ministry, the average export price in the first three months of the year decreased by 18.3% compared with the same period of 2015, at US\$1,697 per ton.

However, the export price depends on the prices fixed in the contracts signed before.

Meanwhile, businesses are still waiting for clearer signs about Vietnam's coffee output; therefore, the coffee price still has not gone up.

Experts said the 2014-2015 crop price was low because of heavy fluctuations in the gold and crude oil markets and the repeated changes of the US dollar value against the other currencies.

These prompted speculators to adjust their investments and focus on business fields which can bring optimal profits. As they sold coffee in large quantities, the price dropped sharply.

In general, Vietnamese exporters sell coffee at prices lower by US\$50-US\$100 per ton. Analysts estimated that Vietnam loses US\$150 million a year in coffee export because of this.

Le Tien Hung, general director of Simexco Dak Lak, said the drought would raise more difficulties for Vietnam's coffee exports.

Vietnamese farmers hoped that the crop failure would lead to the price increase; therefore, they stockpiled coffee, planning to sell when the prices goes up. However, the plan has failed.

Robusta coffee in London is now traded at US\$1,554 per ton, remaining unchanged.

The consumption in the domestic market accounts for 10% of the total coffee output in Vietnam, an increase of 5% compared to 10 years ago.

Pham Thi Kim Dung from IPSARD, an institute on agriculture development policies, noted that in the domestic market, coffee roasters provide coffee on short-term orders and under contracts with spot deliveries.

The increase in the domestic market, and output decrease, which leads lower supply for exports, will push the export prices up.

Vietnam can improve flower exports

VNS - With vast areas suitable for growing flowers, Viet Nam has the potential to become one of the world's largest flower exporters, according to experts.

Prof Dr Nguyen Quoc Vong of RMIT University said the area for flower growth in Viet Nam is equal to that

ECONOMY

of Spain, the EU's fifth largest flower producer.



Farmers harvest flowers in Central Highland Da Lat City. With vast areas suitable for growing flowers, Viet Nam has the potential to become one of the world's largest flower exporters.

Flowers can be grown in every part of the country, and areas like Moc Chau and Da Lat, with an average temperature of 20°C, are ideal for growing them for export, he said.

Tran Xuan Dinh, deputy head of the Crop Production Department, said flowers would play a key role in restructuring agriculture.

Last year ornamental flowers were grown on more than 23,000ha and yielded an income of VND300 million (US\$13,452) per hectare, 10 times higher than from rice.

High-end flower cultivation models in some places yielded between VND800 million to VND2.5 billion, he said.

According to the department, in the past 10 years the area under flowers has increased 2.3-fold and output, 7.2-fold. The value of the output was VND6.5 trillion.

But exports remain modest at just \$50 million a year, way below the country's potential, Dinh said.

A majority of farming households have been slow to revamp their farming techniques and flower plantations mostly remain small-sized, resulting in low value addition. Since farmers and companies are not closely connected, there is no value chain to enhance flower quality and output to boost exports, experts said.

Dalat Hasfarm is the country's largest flower producer and exporter. To penetrate the global flower market, the company has invested in modern glasshouses to grow flowers.

Thailand is the world's largest orchid exporter, earning \$200 million a year.

Viet Nam imports a large number of seedlings and cut orchids from Thailand.

The agricultural sector has enacted policies to develop technology-based flower farming, but these have not proved effective.

Dong Thap story

Sa Dec in the Cuu Long (Mekong) Delta province of Dong Thap, a town that has long been famous for its flowers, aspires to become one of the delta's leading tourist cities

and a major flower exporter, according to provincial authorities.

It is planned that all rice growing areas will switch to flowers by 2020, meaning there will be more than 1,000ha under flowers.

To achieve the targets, the province government has chosen a Dutch partner.

The Netherlands will build a research zone in the Hi-Tech Agricultural Application Centre in Sa Dec, offer training to local agricultural staff and farmers, transfer technologies for making nets and glasshouses, preliminary processing, packaging and help find outlets for flowers.

The centre is expected to supply Sa Dec flower village 300,000 seedlings this year and 1.5-2 million every year by 2020 to grow flowers for exports.

The province has signed an agreement with a French company specialising in urban planning to redesign Sa Dec on the lines of the delta's leading tourist cities but with its status as a major flower exporter and the region's characteristics in mind.

BANKS & FINANCE

Banks face off with Gov't on cash dividends

VNS - On May 30 the media carried the Ministry of Finance's request to the central bank governor, Le Minh Hung, to instruct major State-owned lenders BIDV and Vietinbank to pay the 2015 dividends in cash. The banks announced combined profits of more than VND7 trillion (\$313m) for last year but said they would not pay dividends in cash. A year ago both had committed to pay a cash dividend of around 10%. While BIDV said it would issue bonus shares worth 8.5% in lieu of dividends, Vietinbank, which reported profits of VND3.66 trillion, decided not to pay any dividends at all.

The ministry said the decisions would influence the budget since Gov't is the largest shareholder in 2 banks, owning 64.5% of Vietinbank and more than 95% of BIDV.

It pointed out that Article 23 of Decree 57/2012 stipulates that lenders in whom Gov't owns more than a 50% stake have to consult

the central bank and ministry on dividend decisions.

While the ministry is upset with the two banks' decisions to retain profits to increase their capital, the central bank said it is necessary for them to retain their profits to increase their capital.

The question of who has the final say on dividend payments does not have a clear-cut answer. Viet Nam does not have an entity that is entrusted with managing Gov't's investments, and so this generally works on co-operation between the parties involved.

BIDV and Vietinbank seem to hold most of the aces because the Enterprise Law vests the decision-making authority in case of equitised firms like BIDV and Vietinbank in their shareholders.

Both sets of shareholders have endorsed the banks' decision to issue bonus shares and not cash dividends, with Gov't, the majority shareholder, agreeing during vote.

Now if it digs its heels in on the cash dividends issue, the banks will have to organise extraordinary shareholders meetings.

Analysts warn that while paying dividends in cash would benefit the State Budget in the short term, if the banks do not increase their capital, they would face risks in long term.

Vietinbank is reportedly insistent on retaining its profits to increase capital. Analysts said Gov't would possibly have no other option but to sell off some of its shares in the bank.

But Gov't is not exactly keen to pare its investments in major banks. The imbroglio involving the central bank, finance ministry and two banks reveals one thing: that management of the State's investments in companies is in disarray and Gov't and relevant agencies need to improve the system and have consistent policies to safeguard the benefits of both the companies and Gov't.

Gov't is the biggest shareholder in the banking sector as it completely owns four lenders and has dominant stakes in three others commercial banks namely Vietinbank (64.5%), Vietcombank (77%) and BIDV (95%).

Property sector's heavy reliance on banks continues

On May 27 the State Bank of Viet Nam's image in the eyes of property developers got a boost after it announced long-awaited amendments to Circular 36/TT-NHNN regulating prudential ratios for banks.

In a new circular, the central bank has raised the risk weightage for

BANKS & FINANCE

real estate and securities loans from the 150% (the lowest level) in Circular No 36 to only 200%. It is lower than the 250% it proposed earlier, which had made property investors jittery since it would have meant banks would cut back on lending to them.

The increase will take effect next year.

The new circular also specifies a roadmap for cutting from 60% to 40% the maximum ratio of short-term funds that can be used for medium- and long-term loans.

The rate will remain at 60% until December 31 this year, fall to 50% next year and then to 40% in 2018.

Since the draft Circular 36 was issued four months ago, the central bank has received complaints from many firms in the property sector, many of them saying that tightening bank lending would impede the recovery of the real estate market from its extended slump.

Many analysts approved of the central bank's decision, saying it would ease pressure on developers' finances, reducing the impact on the real estate market recovery.

Both decisions are indeed good for the real estate market, particularly for projects that are now under development.

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This is because the market still relies heavily on bank loans and, since property projects are often developed over a long period, developers need long- and medium-term funds.

Banks will also be obvious beneficiaries.

They are now allowed to continue using 60% of short-term deposits for medium- and long-term loans, meaning they will have enough liquidity to pursue their credit activities in the property sector.

Some analysts said the new circular gives banks breathing time until early 2017 to improve their liquidity position.

But they warned that banks should be cautious while lending for property projects to avoid all risks, and said the central bank should inspect all property projects financed by banks to ensure transparency and that everything is above board.

What the new circular also brings home is that the real estate market still relies heavily on bank funding and will need a long time to be able to stand on its own feet.

Analysts said developers should take the initiative to raise funds from real estate investment funds, especially those traded abroad.

REITs would not only provide them with funds for their projects but also advanced management experience besides helping them improve transparency and diversifying their products.

Local banks welcome AEC, TPP opportunities

VNS - Vietnamese banks have more opportunities to establish and expand their presence in international markets, Gary Hwa, Ernst & Young's (EYs) regional managing partner for financial services for Asia Pacific, said.

Hwa told the press meeting titled, 'ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and Trans-Pacific Partnership: Which way for Vietnamese banks' held in Hanoi last week that with increased capital flow into the country, the solvency of the Vietnamese banking sector had been set to help banks utilise more abundant capital with lower costs.

"A wider spectrum of products are being offered by local banks to cater to more sophisticated needs of the global client. This helps boost the competitiveness of Vietnamese banks," he said.

However, the AEC and TPP would also put up bigger challenges for local banks.

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BANKS & FINANCE



Banking transactions are conducted at Vietcombank. Local banks will have more opportunities to establish and expand their presence in international markets with the onset of AEC & TPP

He said most of the Vietnamese banks were faced with funding difficulties. They should be technologically strong to have access to the development of other countries in the region.

He suggested merger and acquisitions as one of the solutions for banks in the digitalisation process as several local banks had encountered the problems of bad debts and modest scales.

He noted that small banks could implement digitalisation successfully thanks to cheap solutions from start-ups.

The wave of fintech in recent years has made investments in technology and has not been too expensive, he said.

He also suggested that Viet Nam's government should consider

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unlimited room for foreign investors. The penetration of foreign banks would also open opportunities for Vietnamese banks to approach modern, cutting edge technology, dedicated expertise and state-of-the-art banking practices.

"The issue is how to open the banking market to foreign investors while balancing the benefits. Viet Nam could step-by-step lose their room," he said, and added that the government should complete the capital market.

The role of the capital market in Viet Nam has seen limitations. The funding for the economy has still depended on bank loans. If there is no foreign investment, local banks could find it hard to resolve several targets.

Sharing these ideas, Nguyen Thuy Duong, EY Viet Nam Finance & Banking Service deputy director said there would be a risk of brain drain when the highly skilled, English proficient world force of Viet Nam could move to other more developed countries such as Singapore and Malaysia.

"Presence of more foreign banks will make competition among banks in Viet Nam more severe, especially when foreign banks possess more advantages of cutting edge technology, abundant capital base and other competitive edges compared to domestic banks," Duong said.

She said Vietnamese banks had to meet the requirement on capital, management capacity among others. This would create pressure on domestic banks to enhance their capacities in order to achieve standards to meet with qualified ASEAN bank status.

She suggested that banks should be active in enhancing risk management, seeking new capital resources and providing training to staff.

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INVESTMENT

Hanoi calls for investment into PPP projects

VGP - Hanoi is calling for investment in 52 transport infrastructure projects under PPP form in 2016-2020.

This is the first time Hanoi publicly has called for private sector participation in the construction of transport and infrastructure facilities under PPP form.

Earlier, major projects of this kind have been carried out with State budget and Official Development Assistance (ODA) and the Build-operate-transfer (BOT) modal.

The 52 projects will cost about VND338,725 billion, including 35 in infrastructure with four elevated urban railways lines listed as key projects in the set period which need a total investment of VND150,000 billion (US\$7.1 billion).

Urban railway line No.6 (from Hanoi's centre to Noi Bai international airport) is estimated to require VND 14,282 billion. It is expected to promote the urban development and socio-economic development of the Northern part of the Red River Region.

The urban railway line No. 3 (from Hanoi station to Hoang Mai district)

looks to reduce traffic congestion. It will need VND28,175 billion.

The others are urban railway line No.4 phase 1 (Lien Ha-Vinh Tuy) whose total investment nears VND40,885 billion and urban railway line No. 5 which will cost approximately VND65,572 billion.

In addition to infrastructure, Hanoi has also called for investment into healthcare, clean water, industry, trade, services, parking places, parks, hospitals and social housing projects.

Quang Ngai pins hopes on ExxonMobil's power project

VIR - The central province of Quang Ngai is looking forward to the development of a multi-billion dollar gas-to-power complex, developed by the US energy giant ExxonMobil Corp.

Quang Ngai People's Committee last week sent official documents to related ministries to commit its support as well as viable locations for the gas-to-power complex, which will have a capacity of 1,500 MW and cover a total area of 200 hectares in the first phase of the project.

"Quang Ngai is committed to maximum site clearance and

resettlement, the application of the most preferential land rental rates, as well as the development of infrastructure to meet the plant and ancillary works," stated the document.

The three locations Quang Ngai provincial authorities have suggested to the investors for construction are some 85 kilometres from offshore gas blocks, which would be convenient for them during the implementation of the project.

Quang Ngai People's Committee Chairman Tran Ngoc Cang affirmed that the authorities are willing to create the most favourable conditions for the project.

The exact amount of investment capital has not been released, but initial information suggested that the gas-to-power complex could carry a price tag of \$20b. However, state-run PetroVietnam referred to a figure of \$10b.

ExxonMobil & PetroVietnam signed a memorandum of understanding for the project in 2013. The project is believed to have high feasibility thanks to the good reputation of the investor and the readiness of the local authorities.

ENTERPRISES

Big C to be renamed in 2017



VNN - "Although we have the right to use the brand name Big C within 10 years after the acquisition, we have decided to rename it next year," said the CEO of Thailand's Central Group.

In a statement released on June 13, Mr. Tos Chirathivat, CEO of the Central Group, said in Southeast Asia, the Group will focus on Vietnam after the successful acquisition of shares in the supermarket chain Big C Vietnam.

The deal was conducted in April, at a price of \$1.1 billion.

"The acquisition of Big C gives us not only the Big C supermarket chain consists of 33 branches, but also all 10 convenience stores and 30 shopping centers owned by subsidiaries of Big C. Our current challenge is how to focus on the retail sector in Vietnam," Tos said.

In addition, he said the Central Group had planned to rename Big C in Vietnam, but this adjustment will be carried out next year.

After buying a majority stake in Big C Vietnam, the Central Group

recorded total revenue of \$1.13 billion in this market. The group predicts that revenue will grow over 10% annually.

Central Group Vietnam currently operates two Robins commercial and fashion centers in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, two Marks & Spencer stores, 27 Supersports stores, 21 Nguyen Kim Electronic Supermarket and 13 Lan Chi supermarkets in Vietnam.

VN's state-owned pharma to sell 18% stake in IPO

TNN - Vietnam Pharmaceutical Corporation, which is wholly owned by the Ministry of Health, is set to sell 42.5 million shares in its initial public offering this June 22, the government website reported on Monday.

Since the shares will be sold at a starting price of VND10,000 (44 US cents) each, the sale, equivalent to a stake of 18 percent, is expected to help the company raise at least VND420.5 billion (\$18.6 million).

After the IPO, Vinapharm, as the company is better known, will sell another stake of around 17 percent to strategic partners, according to news website Saigon Times Online. It is not immediately clear who the prospective partners are.

A major trader in drugs, supplements and healthcare equipment with stakes in 22 pharmaceutical companies, Vinapharm reported revenue of VND204.1 billion (\$9 million) in 2015, up 46.14 percent.

Mapletree buys Kumho Asiana Plaza in HCMC for \$215m

TNN - Singapore-based Mapletree Investments Thursday said it has acquired Kumho Asiana Plaza Saigon Company in HCMC from Kumho Industrial and Asiana Airlines. Mapletree said in a statement that the deal is its largest acquisition involving a completed, income-producing property in Vietnam.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency said that the South Korean carrier has sold its 50% stake in the building to Mapletree at \$107.5m.

Kumho Asiana Plaza, located on Le Duan and Hai Ba Trung streets in HCMC, houses offices, serviced apartments and a hotel managed by InterContinental Hotels Group.

Hiew Yoon Khong, CEO of Mapletree, said in a statement that Kumho Asiana Plaza is a "rare asset given its attributes such as size, its multiple components with strong occupancies, and location in the heart of HCMC's central business district.

MARKET & PRICES

Fear of inflation has returned as petrol price rises

VNN - The petrol price increase was the major cause behind the higher consumer price index (CPI) in April, the highest increase in the last five years in the same period.

Many investors hope the crude oil price in the world market will climb to \$50 per barrel and then hit the \$55 and \$60 per barrel threshold, so that shares of oil & gas firms could regain high price levels of two or three years ago.

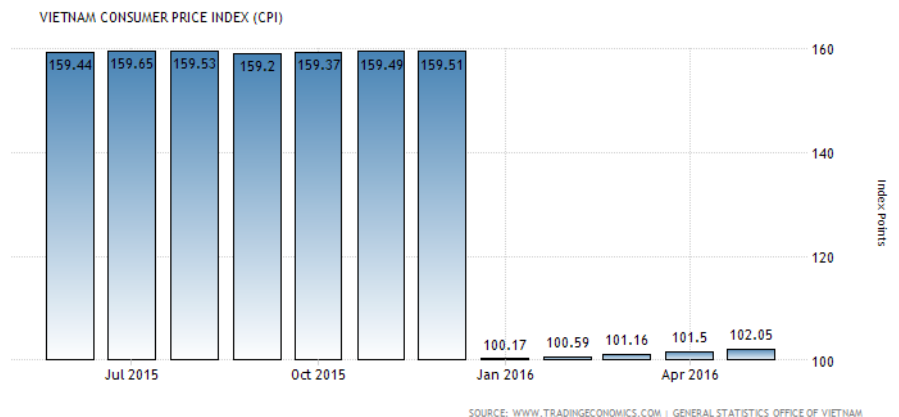
But, other investors do not think so. They know that the crude oil price will lead to an unpleasant outcome for the stock market.

The stock market will have negative reactions if two things occur: the exchange rate is adjusted and inflation becomes high.

The oil price recovery has led to a continuous increase in petrol price in Vietnam. In April, the petrol price increase was the major leverage which pushed the CPI up, while in May, price increases were seen occurring with all kinds of goods and services. All kinds of goods and services bear influences, direct or indirect, from the petrol price performance.

The report of the General Statistics Office (GSO) showed that in the first five months of the year, the CPI

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increased by 1.88% over the end of last year, or 3 times higher than the CPI increase of 2015.

In 2015, the CPI increased modestly by 0.63% compared to the year before, or 0.05% a month. In order to curb the inflation at no more than 5% this year, Vietnam needs to have the CPI increase no higher than 0.44% a month in the last seven months of the year.

Meanwhile, it is impossible for Vietnam to control the prices of materials in the world market. Essential goods and services, including electricity, water, road toll, healthcare and education fee, all are about to rise.

If the inflation rate stays high, easing the lending interest rates is an impossible mission. Meanwhile, economic development heavily depends on interest rates.

May car sales top last year's by 45%

VNS - The Vietnamese bought over 26,000 cars in May, a 45% increase compared with the same period last year, a report from the Việt Nam Automobile Manufacturers' Association noted.

Of this figure, taking the lead in sales were passenger cars, with 14,039 units, and commercial cars, with 10,312 units, rising 2.2% and 6.7%, respectively. Nearly 1,680 special purpose cars were sold, a reduction of 27%.

The report showed that 19,117 domestically assembled cars and 6,911 imported cars were sold.

Local car-maker Truong Hai Automobile JSC (Thaco) took the lead in the month after it sold 9,960 units, occupying 44.2% of the market share.

Toyota Motor Vietnam ranked second, with 4,277 cars sold, or 19% of the market share.

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LEGAL UPDATES

New law to fuel SMEs boom



Agricultural products being processed at Nam Huy Dong Thap Company in southern Dong Thap Province. A law on extending support to SMEs company is being drafted

VNS - Viet Nam is drafting a law on extending support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

It is part of Gov't's determined efforts to promote the development of the business community and double the number of firms to one million by 2020.

The planning and investment ministry will submit the draft law to Gov't next month and to the second meeting of the 14th National Assembly (NA) for discussion.

This will be the first time support for SMEs is legalised in order to provide a comprehensive approach. SME's account for 97% of businesses in Viet Nam, contribute more than 40% to the gross domestic product (GDP) and generate 52% of jobs.

Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment Dang Huy Dong said

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Vietnamese SMEs were facing several difficulties in loan, land and technology access and market expansion, partly explaining the private sector's modest competitiveness and vulnerability to policy and social vagaries, Dong said.

Dong said support policies for SMEs are currently provided by various legal documents, with a majority of them being support for businesses in general, placing SMEs at a disadvantage compared to large firms.

The ministry's statistics reveal that as of the end of 2015, the outstanding loans of SMEs accounted for just 23% of the total outstanding loans, although they make up 97% of the business community.

Đông said legalising support for SMEs was not a subsidy, adding that all forms of support will be compliant with international commitments.

At a three-day consultation conference held by the ministry in HCM City that ended last Saturday, Deputy Head of HCM City's NA Deputy Delegation Tran Du Lich said the draft should turn a spotlight on the strategic significance of SME development in the country's industrialisation process, adding that SME development support

would promote social progress and equity.

Experts at the conference said the draft should define the roles of local authorities in giving assistance to businesses, as seen in other countries. Business associations also agreed to set up a national SME development council. Vice Chairman and General Secretary of the Vietnam Association of Small and Medium Enterprises Tô Hoài Nam suggested that Gov't lay out the details of the council's functions, missions and organisational structure.

Experts also said support for business households that played an important role in the economy should also be considered.

While state-owned enterprises (SOEs) were undergoing a thorny restructuring process, Viet Nam has recognised the private sector, mainly comprising SMEs, as an important driver of the nation's economic development.

Deputy Prime Minister Vuong Dinh Hue said at the first-ever Viet Nam private economic forum that Gov't would improve the business climate to enhance national competitiveness and ensure a level playing ground for businesses.

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HIGHLIGHTS

Vietnam top productivity growth in ASEAN

VNS - Vietnamese workers have substantially improved their productivity levels in the last 15 years, according to ICAEW's latest 'Economic Insight: South East Asia' event launched in Hanoi last Friday. According to the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales report, 'pure productivity' grew 2.3 per cent and sectoral shifts accounted for 1.7 per cent of productivity growth.

ASEAN workers, overall, have had an impressive track record, with productivity growing 3 per cent per year between 2000 and 2015. This surpasses the per year growth rate of Latin America by 2 per cent and Africa by 1.44 per cent. Sectoral shifts (workers moving from agriculture to manufacturing and services), urbanisation and an increase of workers in the 'prime age' (25-54), have been the main drivers of productivity growth throughout the region, with the exception of Singapore.

Priyanka Kishore, ICAEW economic advisor and Oxford Economics lead economist, said, "Viet Nam's productivity grew at an impressive 4 per cent per year in the last 15 years and should accelerate to 5



Vietnamese workers have substantially improved their productivity levels in the last 15 years, according to ICAEW's latest 'Economic Insight: South East Asia' event launched in Hanoi last Friday

per cent in the next five years, outpacing its neighbours."

"This will be powered by sectoral shifts, urbanisation and a growing number of workers in the prime working age. Pure productivity growth, however, ranks below its ASEAN-6 neighbours except Singapore. This highlights an opportunity for Viet Nam to invest in productivity measures to improve output per worker," she said.

High household savings are also likely to have contributed to productivity improvement as sectoral shifts would not be possible without a stable supply of finance to invest in both physical and human capital. Though foreign

direct investments (FDI) have an important role in growing ASEAN economies, the bulk of financing for business investment – particularly among the job-rich small- and medium-sized enterprises – comes from domestic savings and lending. This partly explains why ASEAN's productivity has risen faster than other 'middle income' regions.

Mark Billington, regional director, ICAEW South East Asia, said: "Training, development and skill upgrading must play an essential role if Viet Nam wants to maintain its growth path and improve the productivity and output of its workforce. As its economy continues to diversify, it will need a

HIGHLIGHTS

highly skilled workforce; one which has moved closer to a global standard of technical knowledge, business skills and innovation."

Associate Professor Trần Đình Thiên, director of the Việt Nam Institute of Economics told participants that Viet Nam needed to continue shifting economy mechanisms to higher labour productivity sectors so as to maintain labour productivity and improve labour skills.

He said, that according to ICAEW's report rising domestic demand and booming FDI are driving economic growth of 6.5 per cent despite the challenging regional and global environment. Therefore, Viet Nam needed to continue diversification of export industries from oil and coffee to textile, electronics and other manufactures that have also helped shield the economy from low commodity prices.

Mobile Commerce Day kicks off June 18 in HCMC

The Vietnam E-Commerce Association (VECOM) has announced they expect a strong turnout to participate in this year's annual Mobile Commerce Day workshop on June 18 in HCMC.

So far, 150 companies have registered to take part in the

festivities including giants Google, Nielsen, Bagasus, Sendo, Gameloft, Teamobi, Topica, FPT Telecom, Uber, The Gioi Di Dong and Haravan to name only a few.

Similar events will take place on June 25 in Hanoi and July 2 in Danang says VECOM and anyone in the nation that has interest in mobile and e-commerce should plan on attending.

As a result of the economic transformation of Vietnam and the opening of its markets, retailers are increasingly turning to low-cost channels to drive new traffic to their websites.

Beyond traffic, they also focused on community building and social networking sites to drive their content (user-generated), improve their customer service (by listening to the voice of the customer and gathering feedback), and to drive customer loyalty.

In addition to the emergence of social networking initiatives, says

VECOM, the nation is experiencing an explosion in mobile marketing. And most retailers are still trying to sort out exactly how they plan to approach their mobile strategy.

Do they need a full mobile site? Just an iPhone App? What makes the most sense for their business?

VECOM says these full day workshops will dive into the current state, best practices and emerging strategies of both social and mobile marketing and are certain to be highly beneficial.

Conference attendees will hear how their peers have established a presence in these emerging channels, what they are doing to optimize their presence, and how they plan to monetize it as well.

Everyone is welcome and currently VECOM says it expects the total attendance for all three workshops to hit 10,000. For complete information on tickets, times and agenda please visit <http://mobicomday.vn/en/>.



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