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Proactive Information-Sharing for Stronger SEZ Management

With Thailand's Ministry of Commerce and support from the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Special Fund, MI implemented an e-training course on "Measures for the Management and Promotion of Special Economic Zones (SEZ)." The training, which ran from August 10 to 21, 2020, helped strengthen capacities of 25 participants in SEZ management. [Read more.](#)



Innovative Green Freight and Logistics Training Highlights Sustainable Development

MI rolled out the "Advanced Training of Trainers on Green Freight and Logistics Certification" training from August 24 to September 11, 2020. Supported by the Mekong-Republic of Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF), 19 participants completed the online training to better promote efficient and environment-friendly freight and logistics practices in the Mekong region. [Read more.](#)



MI and Partners Strategize Tourism Recovery

Under MKCF, project partners of the "Sustainable and Smart Tourism Development in the Mekong Region" project convened to discuss proactive measures to support tourism recovery and deepen collaboration between the Republic of Korea and Mekong region countries. [Read more.](#)



Bridging the Gender Gap for Inclusive Growth Recovery

MI, in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam, as well as the Korea International Development Agency have rolled out the "Market Access Through E-Commerce Promotion for Women-Led SMEs" project to help increase income and employment opportunities of women-led enterprises in the Greater Mekong Subregion. [Read more.](#)

Diversification and Digitization Keys to SME Resilience

Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, MI's Director of Trade and Investment Facilitation, was one of four speakers who presented ways forward in strengthening the resilience of SMEs against a COVID-19 landscape at a webinar on "Supporting SME Internationalization in the New Normal" last September 15, 2020. Organized by the Asian Development Bank, Mr. Dutta highlighted the need to help SMEs access new markets in the region and tap on digitization practices as safeguards against risk of loss and to protect return of investments.

[Read more.](#)



Cambodia Food SMEs Discuss Impacts of COVID-19

MI together with Cambodia's Consumer Protection, Competition, and Fraud Repression Directorate-General and the Cambodian Food Manufacturers Association hosted a food safety forum last September 22, 2020. Under the theme "Challenges and Coping Strategies for Food Enterprises in the Time of COVID-19," the blended onsite and online forum was organized to help smallholder producers and food enterprises take proactive steps in increasing food production outputs, adapting better business e-strategies, and strengthening health protocols to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. [Read more.](#)



ROK-MI Renew Partnership

MI and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea formalized their partnership at the virtual memorandum of understanding signing last September 28, 2020. This will see MI extend its role and position as MKCF's fund manager and implementing agency from 2020 to 2025. [Read more.](#)

MI and Partners Kick off R&D on Connective Energy Systems

MI, China Southern Power Grid Co., Ltd., Yunnan Grid Co., Ltd., and other partners kicked off the "Key Technologies Research and Demonstration Application of Smart City Energy Network Cooperative Management and Operation Optimization Over One Belt One Road Countries" project last September 29, 2020. Set to run from 2020 to 2023, the project will deliver joint research, development, and demonstration activities to help integrate energy consumption and maximize energy potentials in the Belt and Road countries. [Read more.](#)



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

OCTOBER

19 - 23

Regional Training Program on Managing Food Safety Along the Food Supply Chain



TOGETHER

TO GET THERE

Mr. Suriyan Vichitlekarn was appointed as MI's seventh Executive Director on September 1, 2020. In his first 44 days in office, Khun Suriyan has been finalizing the Strategic Plan, overseeing operations, completing long rounds of meetings with dignitaries, and promoting MI services to prospective international partners, while still finding quality time to get to know each of the 45-member MI staff.

In this interview, read about the man who has been an inspiring force to the MI family.

Can you tell us something about yourself?

I am an ordinary man with simple tastes, who loves playing the guitar, traveling, and running. I am also an advocate of agriculture as the primary benchmark of real progress in any society and country. This is why my career has been dedicated to helping advance agricultural development and improve farmers' livelihoods in Southeast Asia, including the Mekong region.

And like our MI colleagues, I am a lifelong champion of regional cooperation for the core principle it espouses—that we are stronger in delivering purposeful work together, rather than apart.



What do you think makes MI unique and different from other organizations in the region?

Institutionally, MI stands out for its country membership and ownership. To represent and be represented by the governments of Cambodia, P.R. China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam is a privilege not granted to many.

Moreover, our work is special because we get to operationalize cooperation in the everyday lives of many. Be it in facilitating trainings that allow participants to find solutions to common challenges; conducting studies that result to policies which protect people's welfare, or convening high-level discussions with prime movers to help small- and medium-sized enterprise survive, our work—when combined—transforms lives.

What are your priorities for MI?

OUR priority is to ensure that MI remains **relevant** to the countries we service so we can continue to produce **impactful** change. For this to happen, we must invest in our **efficiency** by strengthening internal systems and processes and being **effective** in taking more measured and results-based approaches to deliver **sustainable** development in the region.

Where do you see MI three years from now?

I see MI continuing to bridge regional cooperation and integration through higher levels of technical services. Building on the gains of the last decades, MI will be coalescing its expertise to produce holistic development well beyond the boundary of single impact projects.

I also foresee MI expanding its network to more dynamic and multi-level linkages of people who—while representing government, the private sector, international organizations, businesses, and many other types of groups—will be proudly described as an MI alumna or partner.

What is your message to the MI family?

That I stand equal to each of you in value and work. It is my sincere hope that we work in synergy so we, as MI, can be a catalyst for positive change.

