



COVID-19 GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES & SUPPORT IN ASIA

A regional snapshot gathered from DFDL's COVID-19 resource hub

A black and white photograph of a hand dropping a coin into a stack of coins. The hand is positioned at the top center, and the coin is falling towards the middle of the frame. Below the falling coin are three stacks of coins of varying heights, with several loose coins scattered on the surface in the foreground. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

PART 1
BANKING & FINANCE

BANGLADESH

- Moratorium: No extension has been provided for 2021, the previous moratorium period was valid up to 31 December 2020. The current moratorium interest rate is at 2% per annum until further instructions are announced.
- The Bangladesh Bank (“**BB**”) introduced a new credit facility of USD 580 million as pre-shipment credit reliance scheme at the rate of 7% interest.
- The BB has introduced a new credit facility of USD0.58 billion for the agricultural sector at the rate of 4% interest.
- Stimulus packages offered to selected sectors: In order to limit the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the country’s economy, the government of Bangladesh has announced stimulus package featuring:
 - (a) USD 4.70 billion for affected industries (including the industries under BEZA, BEPZA and High-tech park) and service sector organizations issued in the form of working capital through commercial banks at a 9% rate of interest of which 4.5% will be borne by the respective organization and 4.5% by the government; reduce interest rates and fees based on the business operation of the debtors;
 - (b) USD 235 million for small and medium enterprises at the rate of 9% interest of which 4% interest will be borne the respective enterprises and the remaining 5% interest will be borne by the government; and
 - (c) To facilitate export trade, The BB has increased the export development fund (“**EDF**”) to USD5 billion and the rate on EDF loans to authorized dealers (“**AD**”) by BB will be 1% per annum and the ADs will charge interest to manufacturer-exporters due to the economic disruption caused by COVID-19.

CAMBODIA

The financial program to provide cash benefits to poor and vulnerable families that were hit particularly hard during the COVID-19 pandemic is extended until the end of June 2021.

The National Bank of Cambodia (“**NBC**”): (1) continues to keep the lower reserve requirement ratio of 7% until further notice; (2) permits banks and financial institutions to continue restructuring loans (“**Loan Restructuring Measure**”) until 31 December 2021; and (3) encourages banks and financial institutions to reduce or waive fees and penalties.

The Loan Restructuring Measure was introduced by the NBC in March 2020 with the validity up to 31 December 2020 and was amended in November 2020 with the validity extended to 30 June 2021.

LAO PDR

In March 2020 the Bank of Lao PDR (“**BOL**”) issued Decision (№ 238/BOL, 26 March 2020) which instructed commercial banks and financial institutions to:

- (a) Postpone the repayment of principal and interest;
- (b) Reduce interest rates and fees based on the business operation of the debtors;
- (c) Consider the provision of new loans to debtors and people who are affected by COVID-19; and
- (d) Restructure loans of affected debtors, including the suspension of principal and interest payments for one year or as agreed with customers.

These principles were further elaborated on in Instruction (№ 249/CBSD, 11 May 2020) which, in addition to the above, also provided for the provision of new loans to support liquidity and to restore production and business activity.

The above measures announced in 2020 were continued via Notification (№ 254/CBSD, 5 May 2021). Under this Notification commercial banks are instructed to continue to implement the above credit policies and are required to review and adjust their internal policies and rules to address debtors that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. After the review and adjustment, the commercial banks must notify customers through their website or other means and report to the BOL during May 2021 and thereafter on a monthly basis.

The BOL issued Decision (№ 256-BOL, 13 May 2021) which expands on the credit policies from 2020. Under this recent Decision, commercial banks and deposit and non-deposit micro-finance institutions are to offer a three-month delay on loan and interest payments during May, June and July 2021. Leasing companies and pawnshops are to offer a three-month delay for lease fee payments during May, June and July 2021. Those eligible to receive the delay in these payments are: (a) individuals who do not receive their salary/wage in full or in part as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and as a result cannot repay the loan or lease fee, this requires a certification from the work place; or (b) business customers who are impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence of irregular income will need to be provided. Additionally, during this period commercial banks and financial institutions are prohibited from taking possession of secured assets, imposing fines or collecting fees.

Most recently, the Prime Minister’s Office issued Notification (№ 532/PMO, 20 May 2021) providing guidance on policies and measures to be implemented by the BOL including:

- (a) Continuing to support the credit policies (as set out above) of commercial banks and financial institutions; and
- (b) Devise and expand the policy to strengthen financing credits to boost production to compensate for imports and promote exports.

Under the same Notification, the BOL will also expanded on its monetary policy aiming to:

- (a) Ensure national monetary stability as well as boost economic growth;
- (b) Ensure the effectiveness and timely implementation of the credits policy and other activities to strengthen financing to support SMEs, the domestic economy, and promote exports, and
- (c) Strengthen banks and financial institutions.

A further Notification (№ 108/FISD, 27 April 2021) was issued relating to the physical operation of the financial institutions requiring them to:

- (a) Provide its services through other methods where appropriate and make a secondary plan for continuation of services;
- (b) Create a mechanism to monitor and report the risk to COVID-19 infection of staff and customers;
- (c) Implement prevention and control measures at offices, branches and service units; and
- (d) Consider changing service hours or temporarily suspending services.

MYANMAR

The Myanmar government issued the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (“CERP”) on 27 April 2020 in order to mitigate risks associated with the global COVID-19 pandemic and the current economic slowdown. The CERP encompasses 7 goals, 10 strategies, 36 action plans and 76 actions to cover a broad range of extraordinary fiscal measures.

- **Moratorium on debt repayments:** Banks have been allowed to restructure and reschedule loans extended to micro, small and medium enterprises (“MSMEs”) that have regularly serviced the loans including the interest portion up to a maximum of three years.
- **Cutting interest rates:** The Central Bank of Myanmar (“CBM”) slashed the annual interest rates by an additional 1.5%. The annual interest rate of the CBM stands at 7% effective 1 May 2020.
- **Stimulus packages offered to select industries:** The Myanmar government has announced an initial stimulus package to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the country’s economy featuring: USD 70 million (MMK 100 billion) fund for cut-make-package (“CMP”) in the garment and manufacturing industry and hotel and tourism businesses, as well as Myanmar-owned MSMEs; and 1% Interest rate on one year loans provided by the fund with the rate and period to be reviewed later after the economic impact of the virus outbreak can be assessed.
- **Stimulus packages offered to other industries:**
 - (a) Other than the beneficiaries in the abovementioned sectors, the Myanmar government will guarantee 50% of loans made by a bank to a Myanmar enterprise whose turnover is less than MMK 1 billion (USD 70 million) to be used as working capital. The guarantee would be provided on the pre-condition that all the employees of the enterprise as on 1 February 2020 would be maintained and if terminated such employees would be rehired;
 - (b) To provide government guarantees to existing or new firms in selected high-growth sectors of the economy which have been impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and
 - (c) The government also intends to speed up the merger of the Myanmar Economic Bank and the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank and increase the existing commercial lending programs to the most economically affected townships.
- **Reduction in deposit rates and stabilization of lending rates:** Starting from 1 May, the minimum interest rate payable on savings, saving certificates and time deposit in banks in Myanmar will be reduced to 5%, while lending rates will not exceed 10% for collateralized loans and 14.5% for other unsecured loans.
- **Stimulus offered to Banks:** The following stimulus have been offered to banks by the CBM to allow the banks to cope with the impact of the economic slowdown:
 - (a) The reduction of the minimum reserve requirement for banks from 5% to 3.5% of customers’ deposits have been extended up to 31 March 2021 by way of Directive 10/2020 issued by the CBM;
 - (b) Between 20 April 2020 to 30 September 2020, banks were directed that while calculating liquidity ratios and treasury bonds with a term of one year or more shall be included at 90% as against the usual 50%. This stimulus has been further extended till 31 March 2021 through Directive 11/2020 issued by the CBM;
 - (c) Banks have been allowed flexibility regarding capital requirements, large exposure and non-performing loans for a period of up to 3 years;
 - (d) The Myanmar government aims at establishing an Asset Management Company as soon as possible to set aside potential non-performing loans held by banks for 5-7 years and allow the banks to contribute towards credit growth; and
 - (e) The CBM to conduct credit auctions on an immediate basis to inject more liquidity into the banking and financial sector.
- **Stimulus offered to Microfinance Institutions:**
 - (a) The Microfinance Business Supervisory Committee vide Directive 2/2020 instructed Microfinance Institutions (“MFIs”) to negotiate with borrowers and not to collect interest and principal payments according to strict timeframes, where the lending and collection of loans by MFIs was temporarily paused until 30 April 2020. The temporary pause on lending and collection of loans have subsequently been extended to 30 April 2021; and
 - (b) As per the CERF, the Financial Regulatory Department under the MoPFI must ensure that MFIs have full access to low-cost funding.
- **Increasing the COVID-19 fund and contingency fund:** The government aims to increase the budget allocated for the COVID-19 Fund and Contingency Fund by cutting the budget to other government entities to the extent possible.

Following the CERP, the Myanmar Government is planning to come up with the Myanmar Economic Recovery and Reform Plan (“MERRP”). The MERRP is proposed to be a medium to long-term response to the economic damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. A draft of the MERRP has been issued, however, it is yet to be finalized.

THE PHILIPPINES

- In a Notice dated 30 March 2021, the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) clarified that no mandatory grace period was granted for the payment of loans and/or interest falling due within the Enhanced Community Quarantine (“ECQ”) period from 29 March to 04 April 2021. Nonetheless, the SEC strongly encourages financing companies, lending companies and micro-finance NGOs to continue implementing debt relief measures in view of the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the borrowing public.

- Moratorium on debt repayments:** The Thai Bankers' Association had announced a 1 year moratorium for COVID-19 impacted borrowers as part of a relief package. Additionally, on 22 April 2020, BOT announced a six month moratorium for COVID-19 impacted SMEs, which expired on 22 October 2020 and no further moratorium measures in regard to SMEs has been announced. Despite there being no further moratorium measure applicable to SMEs, the BOT issued the debt restructuring guidelines for debt restructuring within 31 December 2020. If the debt restructuring for the debtor is not feasible within 31 December 2020, the bank may apply the moratorium on debt repayment until 30 Jun 2021. For impacted borrowers with multi-creditors, including SMEs, whose debts are not considered non-performing loans since 1 January 2019. However, the guidelines are on an opt-in basis and such debt restructuring is based on the agreement between creditors and each particular debtor.

- Assistance from State-owned Financial Institutions:** State-owned financial institutions are agreeing to government requests for debt relief for struggling business operators.

- Facility for mutual fund liquidity:** Bank of Thailand (“BOT”) has set up a special facility which will ease liquidity for mutual funds through commercial banks that purchase investment units of high-quality money market funds or daily fixed income funds impacted by the decreased market liquidity. These mutual funds will be able to use the underlying units as collateral for liquidity. The facility will remain open until the market conditions return to normal. BOT’s preliminary estimate of eligible mutual funds is approximately THB 1 trillion.

- Bank of Thailand lays out guidelines for minimum assistance:** BOT orders banks to suspend dividend payments. The BOT Governor, Veerathai Santiprabhob, said that COVID-19 had caused widespread impacts on businesses and the general public. The BOT has ordered commercial banks to draw up management plans for the next three years. The BOT has ordered Thailand’s commercial banks to freeze interim dividend payments to shareholders and also suspended stock buybacks to preserve capital in an economy devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

THAILAND

- Soft loan facility for businesses:** The BOT has provided soft loan of THB 250 billion at 0.01% interest rate per annum to financial institutions with 2-year withdrawal period and a maximum 5-year term loan. Financial institutions will then lend to (i) the existing borrowers with existing credit line not exceeding THB 500 million as of 28 February 2021 and whose loan statuses are NPL as of 31 December 2019; or (ii) the new borrowers with no existing credit line with financial institutions as of 28 February 2021.

The interest rate shall not exceed an average of 5% per annum for 5 years, and at 2% in the first 2 years. This measure is effective from 10 April 2021.

- Debt Restructuring through Asset Warehousing with Buy-Back options:** The BOT has provided loans of THB 100 billion to financial institutions with interest rate at 0.01% of the value of asset transfers. Under this measure, the financial institutions and the borrower (granting collaterals prior to 28 February 2021 and whose loan status is not NPL as of 31 December 2019) agree to transfer collaterals to the financial institutions for purpose of debt restructuring. This measure is effective from 10 April 2021. Nevertheless, the borrower shall have the following rights:

- the first rights to repurchase collaterals back within 5 years, where the repurchase price should not be higher than the transfer price plus carrying cost (1% per annum of the transfer price); and
- the first rights to rent the collateral asset, where the rents received by the financial institutions will be deducted from the repurchase price.

- Bond issuance program for 2021:** The BOT plans to adjust the bond issuance program due to the coronavirus outbreak. The BOT will not issue new 6-month bills and 3-year bonds. Furthermore, the BOT will not issue the current BIBOR-linked floating-rate bond and start issuing a new floating-rate bond that is indexed to Thai Overnight Repurchase Rate (“THOR”) instead.

THAILAND

- **Additional THB 3.04 Billion for the Rao Chana ('We Win') Stimulus Program:** Thai Government approved an additional THB 3.04 billion in funding for its Rao Chana ('We Win') stimulus program and extended its duration by one more month until 30 June 2021. The increased program budget of THB 3.04 Billion will expand eligibility to the handouts to cover an additional 2.4 million people, comprising of the elderly, citizens without access to smartphones, those confined to medical facilities (e.g. bedridden patients) or vulnerable people otherwise in need of special assistance.
- **Phase 2 of COVID-19 relief measures announced:** Debt relief measures announced on Friday include interest rate cuts of 2-4% for credit cards and personal loans. The maximum interest rate for credit cards will fall to 16% per year from 18%, while the rates for personal loans will be reduced to 24-25% from 28%, effective from 1 August 2020, the BOT said.
The new rates for revolving loans and installment loans will be 25%. Auto title. loans will carry a maximum rate of 24%. The central bank also mentioned that the credit lines could be raised for credit cards and personal loans for certain good debtors from 1 August 2020 to 31 December 2021.

VIETNAM

- **Restructuring debt service & cutting of interest rates:** The State Bank of Vietnam issued Circular No. 01/2020/TT-NHNN dated 13 March 2020 ("**Circular 01**") on instructing credit institutions and branches of foreign banks to restructure loan repayment schedules, waive and reduce interest rates and maintain debt classifications to support customers who are affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, including:
 - (a) Debt repayment restructuring: Circular 01 stipulates that debts subject to rescheduling are the outstanding amounts of principal and/or interest that fully satisfy the following conditions: (i) arising from lending activities, financial leasing; (ii) the obligation to repay the principal and/or interest arising between 23 January 2020 and the following day after three months from the date the Prime Minister announces the end of the COVID-19 epidemic; (iii) customers who are unable to pay the debts and/or interest in due time because of decreases in revenues and incomes caused by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The debt mentioned above shall be rescheduled subject to the following conditions: (i) the unpaid debt is undue or up to 10 days overdue according to loan/finance lease agreements; (ii) the debt is overdue (except for the cases mentioned in condition (i)) during the period from 23 January 2020 to the 16th day from the effective date of Circular 01, which is 13 March 2020. The credit institutions and the branches of foreign banks shall be responsible for providing specific guidance on the criteria to determine the outstanding debts of customers affected by the COVID-19 epidemic; and must follow rules as: (i) the debt violate regulations of law shall not be rescheduled, (ii) the debt shall not be deferred for more than 12 months from the initial repayment deadline according to the loan/finance lease agreements.
 - (b) The waiver and reduction of interest and fees: the credit institutions and the foreign banks branches will decide on waiving and reducing their interest and fees according to their internal regulations for the outstanding loans arising from credit extension operations (except for activities of buying and investing in corporate bonds), with the obligation to repay the principal and/or interest being due between 23 January 2020 and the following day after three months from the date the Prime Minister of Vietnam announces the end of the COVID-19 epidemic, and customers who are unable to pay their debts and/or interest in due time because of declines in revenue and income caused by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - (c) On maintaining debt classifications: the credit institutions and the foreign bank branches are entitled to maintain classified debt groups in accordance with the provisions of the State Bank of Vietnam at the closest time to 23 January 2020 with regard to the debt balances subject to loan repayment rescheduling, interest & fee waiver and reduction. Also, they are requested to conduct debt classifications, set up risk provisions in line with the restructured terms in accordance with the legal provisions on debt classification, setting up and using risk provisions in order to address risks in the operations of the credit institutions and the foreign bank branches; however the adjustment principles shall not be applied to debt groups with higher risk levels.

This Circular is implemented together with the emergency assistance package of approximately VND 250 trillion. Note that at this point, an amendment to Circular 01 is being discussed to better suit and support both individuals and enterprises due to the ever-changing COVID-19 situation.

PART 2 EMPLOYMENT & LABOUR



BANGLADESH



- The Bangladeshi government has declared lockdown from 5 April 2021 and it is extended up to 5 May. However, factories and industries are allowed to operate with the condition to maintain health and safety guidelines. Further, the employers are required to provide transportation for the employees since public transports are restricted during the lockdown.
- The Bangladeshi government has cancelled all the upcoming programs on the occasion of 'Labour Day' on 1 May 2021.
- The Bangladeshi government has formed a new committee to upgrade Labour Rules 2015.
- New health guidelines have been introduced by the Bangladeshi government to better ensure the safety of factory workers given the widespread COVID-19 pandemic. Also, committees have been formed in every district of the country to monitor all industries and factories to ensure compliance with the new guidelines.
- Factory owners are required to have their own medical teams to control the spread of COVID-19 and monitor the health and well-being of their workers.
- TK 50 Billions incentive package for export-oriented industries for the payment of salaries and allowances to their employees.
- Ready-made garments ("RMG") factory owners have been requested not to terminate workers on the grounds of redundancy.
- A new policy has been approved by the Bangladeshi government in respect of implementing activities to ensure the social welfare of workers who lost their employment in the RMG sector, leather and footwear industries due to COVID-19.
- The Bangladeshi government has re-formed and re-constituted the complaint committee regarding workplace sexual harassment of females.
- The minimum wage has been declared for employees working in plastic, re-rolling mills sectors, leather and footwear industries, rice mills and the private road transport sector.

CAMBODIA



- The Royal Government of Cambodia ("RGC") will continue to implement measures that provide aid to suspended employees and workers in garment, textile, footwear, travel products and bags sectors that are registered with the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training ("MLVT")/Department of Labour and Vocational Training, the Ministry of Commerce, the General Department of Taxation Cambodia and, where applicable, the Ministry of Tourism. Those suspended workers, subject to their current status being certified with appropriate documentation, will continue to be eligible to receive government subsidies of USD 40 per month until the end of June 2021. An additional USD 30 per month contributed by the factories and enterprises will be available to garment, textile, footwear, travel products and bags sectors workers (amounting to a total of USD 70 per month for such workers).
- Hotel, guest house, restaurant and tourism workers will be eligible to receive USD 40 per month until the end of June 2021.
- In addition to the Government subsidies, enterprises and businesses in the tourism sector may provide financial contributions to their employees on a voluntary basis or subject to their financial capacity.
- While the RGC issued Sub-Decree in March 2021 to provide details on National Social Security Fund ("NSSF") pension scheme, the delay in the implementation of the NSSF pension scheme by all employers will continue for another six months until July 2021.
- The exemption of the obligation of employers in garment, textile, footwear, travel goods, bags, and tourism sectors to make monthly contributions to the NSSF for occupational risk and healthcare schemes during the business suspension will continue to be extended.
- The program to provide cash benefits to poor and vulnerable families that were hit particularly hard during the COVID-19 pandemic is extended until the end of June 2021.
- For employers in all businesses (save for factories and manufacturing sectors), it is expected that the deferment of seniority payments accrued prior to 2019 and current seniority payments (for 2020 and 2021) will continue until 2022, unless there is any regulation issued by the competent authority that provides otherwise. On 21 January 2021, the MLVT issued Notification 003 which provided that, for factories and manufacturing sectors, seniority payments that accrued prior to 2019 and current seniority payments applicable in 2020 and 2021 are to be implemented in 2021. Under this Notification, employers in the factories and manufacturing sectors are required to disburse seniority payments starting from 2021 onwards.

INDONESIA



- Labor-intensive industries affected by COVID-19 may adjust the workers' wages and its payment method as agreed by both employers and workers in writings. "Affected by the COVID-19" means those that have their business activities limited due to government policies which cause a part or the entirety of their manpower not being able to perform the work, hence affecting the company's ability in wages payment. The agreement shall be applicable until 31 December 2021, at the latest. Such labor-intensive industries shall have the following criteria:
 - (a) Having at least 200 workers;
 - (b) The cost of the manpower constitutes at least 15% of the total production costs of the company;
 - (c) Engage in the following industries (food, beverage, tobacco, textile and garment, leather and leather goods, footwear, children's toy and furniture).
- The adjusted wages shall not be used as the basis of social security contributions and benefits, termination compensations and other worker's rights calculations.
- The company leaders are required to integrate the prevention and have control to prevent the occurrence of COVID-19 cases in the workplace following the Company's Occupational Safety and Health (K3) program.
- Religious Holiday Allowance shall be paid to the employees at the latest 7 days prior to such religious holiday celebration. Additionally, the allowance may be paid before the day of such employees' religious holiday celebration by entering into a written agreement with the respective employees. The calculation of such allowances will be applicable by the laws and regulations. The inability to pay Religious Holiday Allowance on time shall be supported with proof showing the company's internal financial report.
- Temporary suspension of new applications for foreign workers, excluding those who work on National Strategic Projects ("***Proyek Strategis Nasional or PSN***") and Strategic/National Vital Objects under the consideration or special written permission from the relevant institutions. The application can be still be processed for foreign workers that are currently in Indonesia.

MYANMAR



- Three month deferment of payment from March 2021 for monthly social security contributions for both employers and employees.
- Extension of healthcare benefits for unemployed social security benefits members from six months to one year as from the date of unemployment.
- Extension of medicine and travel benefits from six months to one year as from the date of unemployment.
- Implementation of labor-intensive community infrastructure projects for those employees who have been laid off, or returning migrants.
- Financial support to pregnant employees during the lockdown period and up to 28 weeks (payment of up to 60% of salary).
- Financial support (of up to 40% of the employee's salary) to employees insured with the Social Security Board and deprived from work as a result of closure of their company due to COVID-19.
- An insured employee who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 is entitled to 14 days of medical leave, medical treatment and cash benefits in accordance with the Social Security Law.

THAILAND



Compensation of employees insured under the Social Security Fund and who are unemployed as a result of the pandemic in accordance with Section 78 of the Social Security Act B.E. 2533 (1990).

These employees are entitled to the following:

- Employees whose employment contract was terminated between 1 March 2020 and 28 February 2022 are entitled to 70% of their wages (to be calculated in accordance with a specific formula) per day, capped at 200 days in total; and
- Employees who have resigned or whose fixed-term employment contract has expired are entitled to 45% of their wages (to be calculated in accordance with a specific formula) per day, capped at 90 days in total.



- In June 2020, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (“**MLSW**”) issued **Notification No 1559/MLSW** which confirms that any change to an employee’s remuneration package or leave entitlements are by nature amendments to that employee’s employment terms and will require the consent of the employee. Additionally, if the employer has been impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak, Notice 1559 provides that the MLSW only allows an employer to adjust the employment terms of employees (whether individually or collectively) after it has consulted and negotiated with the employee/s through compromise in terms of the procedure set out in the Decree on Labor Conflict Resolution. If the parties fail to reach a compromise, the parties should follow the collective bargaining procedures and if this fails, either party has the right to approach the Labour Conflict Resolution Committee for resolution. Notice 1559 dates back to 1 June 2020, however, we are not aware of it being repealed or replaced by the MLSW.
- Recently, the MLSW issued a Notification (No 1532/MLSW, 5 May 2021) which advised:
 - (a) Labor units to implement and maintain a range of hygiene and social distancing-related measures, including the rotation of workers;
 - (b) Workers who are contributing members of the National Social Security Fund (“**NSSF**”) who have been ordered to stop working or who work for labor units ordered to shut down by the authorities can receive an unemployment allowance. To be eligible, a worker must have contributed to the NSSF for at least six months during the period April 2020 to April 2021. The period of unemployment allowances will be based on the period that the Government announces COVID-19 containment measures;
 - (c) If a labor unit is experiencing financial difficulties, that labor unit may delay their NSSF contributions but must notify the Social Security Office in writing. Labor units that have temporarily ceased business operations may suspend their NSSF contributions for that period;
 - (d) Labor units affected by the recent COVID-19 outbreak must continue to comply with Lao PDR law and cannot terminate employment contracts without MLSW’s authorization; and
 - (e) Provincial and Vientiane Labor and Social Welfare Divisions will inspect labor units for compliance with COVID-19 prevention and containment measures. If a labor unit fails to comply, the authorities can suspend that labor unit’s business operations.

Around the same time, the NSSF issued Notification (No 1589/NSSF, 4 May 2021) which allows labor units to file social security contribution forms electronically by scanning a copy or taking a photo of the form and sending it to NSSF’s WhatsApp account.

- Most recently the Prime Minister’s Office issued Notification (No 532/PMO, 20 May 2021) providing guidance on policies and measures to be implemented by the MLSW, namely:
 - (a) A labor allowance policy for workers registered in the social security system that have been impacted by the recent COVID-19 outbreak, while simultaneously suspending and delaying social security contributions from any labor units that have suspended their business operations and are not paying salaries to employees;
 - (b) Called for a collection of information on workers not covered by social security system who have been impacted by the recent COVID-19 outbreak and the provision of support to such workers on a case-by-case basis. Determination of policies on the appropriate contributions and benefit payments for employers and employees during the work suspension period and the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - (c) Accelerate its information collection of unemployed workers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic to allow for the arrangement of skills training, especially for foreign investment projects that need a large number of workers; and
 - (d) Coordinate with provincial and Vientiane Capital taskforces to address the burden of workers (and freelance workers) staying in rented houses during the lockdown period.
- The Notification also provides that the Ministry of Energy and Mines must devise a policy to assist the community by reducing fees for water, electricity, internet, garbage collection, and other utilities, and delay payments for water bills for May, June, and July 2021.3 months, if contributions have been made for 12 months to 36 months.

THE PHILIPPINES



- Alternative work arrangements (including reduction of working hours/workdays, job rotation, forced leave, work-from-home, transfer or reassignment, partial closure of business) may be adopted.
- Employees who are on a work from home or telecommuting arrangement shall be provided with the adequate support to perform the assigned job.
- Adjustment of wage and wage-related benefits as governed by collective bargaining agreement or existing laws, rules and regulations.
- Workers in the tourism sector who became temporarily or permanently unemployed are entitled to avail of the government's Cash-for-Work Program ("**CWP**") and the financial assistance equivalent to PhP 5,000. For this purpose, the government set aside the following: PhP 3 Billion which will be distributed to the displaced tourism workers from a Department of Tourism ("**DOT**") accredited or Local Government Unit ("**LGU**")-licensed tourism enterprise.
- PhP 100 Million for displaced tour guides belonging to a tour guide organization. Displaced Tourism Workers not belonging to an organization may avail of financial assistance or CWP under the other programs of the government.
- All commercial and industrial establishments, projects, sites, and all other places where work is being undertaken are required to provide adequate ventilation as a preventive measure against the spread of the COVID-19 virus.
- All establishments and employers in the private sector shall adopt and implement the appropriate vaccination policy in the workplace as part of their occupational safety and health program, consistent with the guidelines issued by the Department of Health and Inter-Agency Task Force in accordance with existing laws, rules, and regulations. No cost of vaccination in the workplace shall be charged against or passed on, directly or indirectly, to the employees.
- Employees who refuse or fail to be vaccinated shall not be discriminated against in terms of tenure, promotion, training, pay and other benefits, or terminated from employment. A "No vaccine, no work" policy is prohibited.

VIETNAM



- Financial support to employees who do not receive wages from their employer for at least one month and employees ineligible for unemployment benefits if employees satisfy the certain conditions by law, such as employees must be participating in social insurance and only have income of VND 1 million to 1.3 million (approx. USD 43 to USD 56) or none at all.
- Granting of loans without collateral to employers who are facing financial difficulties and having employees that are participating in mandatory social insurance but subject to temporarily postpone performance of labor contract or unpaid leave for at least 1 month consecutively from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020.
- Extension of deadlines for mandatory social security contributions comprising retirement and death funds and trade union fees until the end of December 2020 and 31 December 2020 respectively.
- Salary entitlement in the event of work suspension (the amount is to be agreed upon between the parties but shall not be lower than the regional minimum salary stipulated by the Government of Vietnam for the first 14 days of work suspension; after the first 14 days, the amount can be agreed on by parties) for employees subject to quarantine.
- Financial support for the Lunar New Year 2021 by the Vietnam Trade Unions to employees who have worked at an enterprise or an entity for one year or more (as at 31 Dec 2020) and are adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic or natural disasters in 2020.

The background of the slide is a grayscale photograph of a construction site. It shows a complex network of steel beams and scaffolding forming the skeleton of a building. Two construction workers are silhouetted against the bright sky, standing on a higher level of the structure. The overall scene is industrial and captures the early stages of a large-scale building project.

PART 3 REAL ESTATE & CONSTRUCTION

<p>1. Has the government instituted any limitations or closure of public or privates spaces?</p>	<p>The government has extended the lockdown period of all public and private spaces until 28 April 2021, declaring that the whole of Bangladesh is at risk of the COVID-19 outbreak. To further prevent the spread of COVID-19, the government has provided certain directions to the citizens including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) All government/non-government/autonomous offices will remain closed. b) The Supreme Court will issue necessary instruction for courts. c) All modes of transport (road, river, rail, air) will remain suspended. But vehicles involved in carrying goods, production and emergency services will not be restricted. d) Factories and industries will remain open under the authorities' arrangement, maintaining health safety guidelines. The authorities will ensure there are transport services arranged for the respective workers. e) Law enforcing agencies, emergency services like transporting agricultural products (seed, fertilizer, pesticide, machines, etc), food and food grains carrying vehicles, relief distribution, health services, COVID-19 vaccination, power, water, gas/energy services, port activities, telephone and internet (government, private), media, private security services, postal services and offices of emergency products and movement of their staff will be out of the purview of the restriction. f) No one will be allowed to go out except for emergencies (buying medicine, daily commodities, medical treatment, and burial). Vaccine recipients can go out to take the vaccine but they must show vaccine cards. g) Hotels and restaurants will remain open from 12pm to 7pm and 12am to 6am only for takeaway and online services. Shopping malls and stores will remain closed. h) Kitchen items and other essentials can be sold in open spaces from 9:00am to 3:00pm, within health regulations. Market authorities and local administration will be present to enforce it.
<p>2. Are there any specific exemptions for construction activities?</p>	<p>No, there are no specific exemptions for construction activities.</p>
<p>3. Are there any recent rule changes governing liability for labour contracts during construction project shutdowns? (if applicable)</p>	<p>No, there are no new laws or regulations relating to labour contracts during construction project shut downs.</p>
<p>4. How are constructions costs allocated in the event of a force majeure event? (i.e. Construction costs absorbed by the contractor or the owner)</p>	<p>There are no specific regulations on construction cost allocation in the event of force majeure. This can be carried out under the terms and conditions of the contracts and subject to mutual agreement between the contracting parties.</p>
<p>5. Is there any measures which addresses obligations in relation to real property rent or excuse of performance? (i.e. right to delay rent payments, right to waiver of rent)</p>	<p>No, there are no directions from the government as of date.</p>
<p>6. Are there any specific circumstances arising from COVID-19 affecting the real estate sector?</p>	<p>Considering delays in completion of the real estate projects including all mega projects in 2020. Construction of infrastructure has been kept outside of the purview of the restriction.</p>

<p>1. Has the government instituted any limitations or closure of public or private spaces?</p>	<p>By decision No. 49 SSR dated 14 April 2021 (“Decision 49”) and Decision No. 50 SSR dated 17 April 2021 on the modification of the measurement for lockdown as mentioned in Decision 49, the Royal Government of Cambodia decided that Phnom Penh and Ta Khmao City of Kandal Province will be placed in lockdown for 14 days from 12 am of 15 April 2021 to 28 April 2021 in order to curb the spread of COVID-19.</p>
<p>2. Are there any specific exemptions for construction activities?</p>	<p>By decision No. 042/21 dated 15 April 2021, the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training authorized construction sites that have an accommodation next to it to carry out their activity during the implementation of the lockdown. However, no more than 25 persons shall be allowed to come to work.</p> <p>In addition, the construction works shall be suspended from 8 pm to 5 am.</p> <p>Also, on 19 April 2021, the Phnom Penh Governor issued a number of decisions (Decisions No. 92, 93, 94) to determine some Sangkats and Khans as red zones where all business activities (except for some special business activities, i.e. water, electricity and gas supply, noodle supplies, and medical supplies) are temporarily not allowed.</p>
<p>3. Are there any recent rule changes governing liability for labour contracts during construction project shutdowns? (if applicable)</p>	<p>No, there are no new laws or regulations relating to labour contracts during construction project shut downs.</p>
<p>4. How are construction costs allocated in the event of a force majeure event? (i.e. Construction costs absorbed by the contractor or the owner)</p>	<p>There are no specific regulations on construction cost allocation in the event of force majeure. As a result, the allocation of construction costs will largely depend on the contract between the contractor and the owner.</p>
<p>5. Is there any measures which addresses obligations in relation to real property rent or excuse of performance? (i.e. right to delay rent payments, right to waiver of rent)</p>	<p>On 26 March 2021, the Phnom Penh Governor has notified landlords to reduce or to waive the rent for the tenants who are living in Phnom Penh. The Phnom Penh Governor has requested the landlords to excuse the tenants who are in default, in consideration of the situation. For example, to not apply late interest penalty, forfeiture of the security deposit and/or eviction. These measures only apply to residential leases.</p>
<p>6. Are there any specific circumstances arising from COVID-19 affecting the real estate sector?</p>	<p>The real estate sector, like many other sectors, are impacted by the current lockdown.</p>

<p>1. Has the government instituted any limitations or closure of public or privates spaces?</p>	<p>On 21 April 2021, the Prime Minister’s Office issued notification No. 15/PMO imposing a 14-day lockdown in Vientiane from 22 April to 5 May 2021 and called for the implementation of 18 measures designed to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19. This was extended by notification No. 462/PMO until 20 May 2021 and all provinces have implementing corresponding measures.</p> <p>Relevantly, some of the 18 prevention and control measures for COVID-19 include: (1) requiring residents to stay at home for all but essential reasons; (2) requiring public and private sector enterprise to reduce the number of staff working to ensure social distancing (e.g. through work from home arrangements or rotations); (3) restricting inter-provincial travel, specifically to and from Vientiane; (4) suspending public transportation throughout the country; and (5) requiring the closure of entertainment venues.</p>
<p>2. Are there any specific exemptions for construction activities?</p>	<p>Large-scale construction activities may continue provided the construction projects apply the required measures for the prevention and control of COVID-19 as required by the directives mentioned above and of: (1) the relevant sector (e.g. health and public works and transport), and (2) the COVID Task Force.</p>
<p>3. Are there any recent rule changes governing liability for labour contracts during construction project shutdowns? (if applicable)</p>	<p>On 1 June 2020, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (“MLSW”) issued Notification 1559/MLSW and on 5 May 2021, the MLSW issued a further Notification 1532/MOLSW which sets out obligations relating to the employment relationship. Please refer to Labor & Employment section for details.</p>
<p>4. How are constructions costs allocated in the event of a force majeure event? (i.e. Construction costs absorbed by the contractor or the owner)</p>	<p>The Government has not provided specific instructions regarding the application of force majeure to construction projects as part of the COVID-19 response measures. A force majeure event may excuse contractual performance if: (1) the event falls within the definition of force majeure under Article 3(3) of the Civil Code (No. 55/NA, 6 December 2018) (“Civil Code”), or (2) the event falls within the definition of force majeure provided under the terms of the construction contract.</p> <p>Article 394 of the Civil Code provides for the non-liability of a contracting party in case of breach of the contract due to a broadly defined force majeure event (per the Civil Code definition). However, Article 394 does not define or limit the allowable scope of force majeure. It is, therefore, unclear whether a party to a construction contract could successfully rely upon the force majeure provisions of the Civil Code to excuse a contract breach that is not excused under a more limited force majeure clause in a construction contract signed between the parties.</p> <p>If a construction contract does not contain force majeure provisions, then the general provisions of the Civil Code would apply.</p>
<p>5. Is there any measures which addresses obligations in relation to real property rent or excuse of performance? (i.e. right to delay rent payments, right to waiver of rent)</p>	<p>No, there is no direction from the Government of the Lao PDR in this regard yet as of the date of this publication.</p>
<p>6. Are there any specific circumstances arising from COVID-19 affecting the real estate sector?</p>	<p>While construction activities may be allowed to continue, the requirements for social distancing may affect the scope and type of works that can be completed in accordance with governmental requirements. As in most jurisdictions, the sectors most affected are the retail leasing and the hospitality sector.</p>

<p>1. Has the government instituted any limitations or closure of public or private spaces?</p>	<p>The Ministry of Health and Sport (“MOHS”) Order No.38 requires residents living in certain townships to stay at home with restrictions on the number of people permitted to leave the home, restrictions on the reasons for leaving and requirements to wear masks when outside. This restriction will be effective until 31 January 2021.</p> <p>In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population (“MOLIP”) issued an announcement on 20 September 2020, Order No. 107/2020, mandating that all factories and establishments in Myanmar be shut down unless their operations are related to banking and financial services, gas/fuel distribution (gas stations), food and frozen meat providers, pharmaceutical equipment and medicine production/distribution, purified drinking water production and daily personal care products manufacturing. Governmental offices and departments are to operate with 50% of employees (divided into two teams) on a rotation basis. Recently, no third parties have been allowed to enter any government offices. These notifications have not been abolished nor updated since the military took over the state administration power and form a State Administration Council since 1 February 2021.</p>
<p>2. Are there any specific exemptions for construction activities?</p>	<p>No. Construction workplaces are subject to closure under MOHS Order No. 107 until 21 October 2020. The MOHS again issued an announcement on 25 October 2020, that all factories and workplaces can be opened effective from 22 October 2020. The State Administration Council notified the business establishment through the related township city development committee.</p>
<p>3. Are there any recent rule changes governing liability for labour contracts during construction project shutdowns? (if applicable)</p>	<p>No specific rules or instructions from the government as part of COVID-19 response measures.</p>
<p>4. How are construction costs allocated in the event of a force majeure event? (i.e. Construction costs absorbed by the contractor or the owner)</p>	<p>No specific rules or instructions from the government as part of COVID-19 response measures.</p>
<p>5. Is there any measures which addresses obligations in relation to real property rent or excuse of performance? (i.e. right to delay rent payments, right to waiver of rent)</p>	<p>No specific rules or instructions from the government as part of COVID-19 response measures.</p>
<p>6. Are there any specific circumstances arising from COVID-19 affecting the real estate sector?</p>	<p>No specific rules or instructions from the government as part of COVID-19 response measures.</p>

<p>1. Has the government instituted any limitations or closure of public or private spaces?</p>	<p>The Regulation Issued under Section 9 of the Emergency Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situations B.E. 2548 (2005) (No. 16 and 17) granted power to local authorities of each province to issue regulations allowing for establishments to operate under certain restrictions and preventative measures. For Bangkok, for instance, measures according to the Bangkok Notification in relation to the Temporary Closure of Establishments (No. 16 and 17) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Schools, and tutoring institutions must be closed from 1 January 2021 to 31 January 2021; b) Food restaurants can offer sit-down dining-in up until 9.00pm; c) Meeting rooms and event venues cannot provide alcohol beverages; and d) Fitness centers may open provided that exercise machines must be placed 2 meter away from one another.
<p>2. Are there any specific exemptions for construction activities?</p>	<p>No, there are no specific exemptions for construction activities.</p>
<p>3. Are there any recent rule changes governing liability for labour contracts during construction project shutdowns? (if applicable)</p>	<p>Ministerial Regulations on Compensation for Unemployment due to Effects from Economic Conditions B.E. 2563 (2020) entitles the insured employees who find themselves unemployed during the period 1 March 2020 to 28 February 2022 to receive compensation under certain conditions as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employees who had their employment contract terminated during the abovementioned period, shall be entitled to 70% of wages per day. However, this must not exceed 200 days' in total (wages not in excess of THB 15,000 per month); and ▪ Employees who become unemployed due to resignation, or expiry of their fixed term contract, shall be entitled to 45% of wages per day. However, this must not exceed 90 days' in total (wages not in excess of THB 15,000 per month). <p>The Ministry of Labor has issued a notification forbidding employers from locking out employees and forbidding employees from striking during the emergency period, in accordance with the Emergency Decree on Public Administration in an Emergency Situation B.E. 2548 (2005). The notification has been in effect from 8 May 2020 onwards. Please note that the effect of this notification is based upon the effectiveness of the emergency situation in all areas of Thailand in which it has been currently extended to 31 May 2021 pursuant to the Extension of Duration of the Declaration of an Emergency Situation in all areas of Thailand (11th Extension).</p>
<p>4. How are construction costs allocated in the event of a force majeure event? (i.e. Construction costs absorbed by the contractor or the owner)</p>	<p>No specific instruction or guidance from the government as part of COVID-19 response measures. This can be carried out under the terms and conditions of the contracts and subject to mutual agreement between the contracting parties.</p> <p>A force majeure event may excuse performance (i.e. payment of construction costs) if (i) the event falls within the definition of force majeure under Section 8 of the Civil and Commercial Code; and (ii) the performance of obligations is not possible due to such force majeure or (ii) as provided for under the terms of the contract.</p>
<p>5. Is there any measures which addresses obligations in relation to real property rent or excuse of performance? (i.e. right to delay rent payments, right to waiver of rent)</p>	<p>No, there are no directions from the government as of date.</p>
<p>6. Are there any specific circumstances arising from COVID-19 affecting the real estate sector?</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>

<p>1. Has the government instituted any limitations or closure of public or privates spaces?</p>	<p>The government has placed different areas of the Philippines in varying degrees of community quarantine: (i) enhanced community quarantine (“ECQ”), (ii) modified enhanced community quarantine (“MECQ”) (iii) general community quarantine (“GCCQ”), or (iv) modified general community quarantine (“MGCCQ”).</p> <p>During the ECQ and MECQ periods, strict home quarantine shall be observed in all households and the movement of all residents shall be limited to accessing essential goods and services. Working in permitted offices or establishments may be allowed. Establishments permitted to operate during the ECQ and MECQ periods may operate with full on-site capacity, 50% on-site capacity, or with an on-site skeleton workforce depending on the business industry involved.</p> <p>During the GCCQ and MGCCQ period, the movement of people shall be limited to accessing essential goods and services, and for work in offices or industries permitted to operate. During the GCCQ period, permitted offices and establishments may operate anywhere between 50% on-site capacity to full on-site capacity as may be determined by the Department of Trade and Industry. During the MGCCQ period, permitted offices and establishments may operate anywhere between 50% on-site capacity to full on-site capacity, while encouraging work-from-home and other flexible work arrangements.</p>
<p>2. Are there any specific exemptions for construction activities?</p>	<p>For areas under ECQ and MECQ, essential projects, whether public or private, are allowed to operate at full operational capacity. However, small-scale projects which are intended for private and personal use, shall not be allowed. Essential public and private construction projects include but is not limited to: (a) quarantine and isolation facilities; (b) facilities for the health sector; (c) vaccination centers or facilities necessary for the supply, distribution, and administration of vaccines; (d) facilities for construction personnel who perform emergency works, flood control and other disaster risk reduction and rehabilitation work; (e) educational facilities and government structures, offices, or buildings; (f) sewerage projects, water service facilities project and digital works, (g) priority public infrastructure projects; and (h) priority private infrastructure projects (i.e. refers to food production agriculture, fisheries, energy, housing, communication, water utilities, manufacturing, and business process outsourcing).</p> <p>For areas under the GCCQ and MGCCQ, all construction projects are allowed subject to DPWH safety guidelines and PEZA Construction Safety Guidelines for developers and locators within the PEZA zones.</p>
<p>3. Are there any recent rule changes governing liability for labour contracts during construction project shutdowns? (if applicable)</p>	<p>No, there are no new laws or regulations relating to labour contracts during construction project shut downs.</p>
<p>4. How are constructions costs allocated in the event of a force majeure event? (i.e. Construction costs absorbed by the contractor or the owner)</p>	<p>No specific instruction or guidance from the government as part of COVID-19 response measures.</p> <p>A force majeure event may excuse performance if (i) the event is provided for under the terms of the contract or (ii) the event is considered a fortuitous event under Philippine law (i.e. the cause is (i) unforeseeable or unavoidable; (ii) independent of human will; (iii) renders it impossible for the obligor to fulfill his or her obligation in any manner; and (iv) the result of the injury to the creditor and such cause is not aggravated or participated in by the obligor.</p>
<p>5. Is there any measures which addresses obligations in relation to real property rent or excuse of performance? (i.e. right to delay rent payments, right to waiver of rent)</p>	<p>No, there are no directions from the government as of date.</p>
<p>6. Are there any specific circumstances arising from COVID-19 affecting the real estate sector?</p>	<p>The community quarantine weakens the real estate sector in the Philippines. Construction activities are suspended, restricted, or limited during the implementation of the community quarantine. Further, leasing activities and residential sales remain slow. As in most jurisdictions, the retail and the hospitality sector were the most affected by the quarantine.</p>

PART 4

TAXATION

CAMBODIA

- Tax relief for the garment, textile, footwear, travel products, bags, and tourism sectors that may be affected by the outbreak of COVID-19, specifically include the monthly tax payments exemptions. The RGC continues to provide the monthly tax payments exemptions to hotels, guesthouses, restaurants and travel agents registered with the General Department of Taxation (“GDT”) that operate in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Preah Sihanouk, Kep, Kampot, Bavet or Poi Pet in 2021 for six months (from January 2021 to the end of June 2021). For the tourism sector such as hotels, guesthouses, restaurants and travel agents that carry out business activities in the locations mentioned above are still required to file their Annual Tax on Income Return for 2020 by 31 March 2021 however they will be exempted from having to pay taxes.
- Exemptions on Patent Tax payments and Signboard Tax for tourism agents and other segments of the tourism sector will continue for the year 2021.
- The Minimum Tax exemption provided to all airline entities operating in Cambodia will be extended to the end of June 2021.
- The 4% Stamp Duty that applies on the transfer of immovable property in Cambodia will continue to be exempted on the transfer of residential property that is valued equal to or at less than USD 70,000 for the period from January 2021 to December 2021, subject to certain conditions.
- Cambodian financial institutions (banks and MFIs) that obtain financing whether from domestic or offshore lenders, the applicable withholding tax rate (“WHT”) on interest payments will continue to be revised. For new loans, the WHT rate in respect of loans from both domestic and offshore sources (including those from both Double Tax Agreement (“DTA”) countries and non-DTA countries) will be reduced to 5% for 2021 and 10% for 2022 respectively. The standard WHT rates will apply from 2023 onwards. For existing loans held by Cambodian financial institutions, the WHT rate will continue to be reduced to 10% for 2021.
- Payment of aviation fees by airline entities by airline entities operating in Cambodia are deferred for a further period of three months until the end of June 2021 with the permission for those airline entities to settle those payables via installments after the suspension period.

MYANMAR

- Removal of 2% Advance Income Tax on exports until 31 April 2021.
- Extension of tax payments until 31 January 2021 to prioritized industries (Cut Make Pack, Hotel and Tourism, and Small-and-Medium Enterprises).
- Social security relief as provided by the Ministry of Labor, Immigration, and Population
- Extension of annual tax return filings for FY 2019-2020 (ending 30 September 2020) until 31 January 2021.
- A 10% non-refundable tax credit and additional 25% deduction for the incremental wages and salaries.
- A 10% non-refundable tax credit and additional 25% depreciation for the incremental investment on capital equipment.

THE LAO PDR

- The Ministry of Finance (“MOF”) has issued the Notification (№ 2081/MoF, 30 April 2021) on the postponement of the filing of the annual financial statement for FY 2020 to 30 June 2021 (31 March 2021 under the Income Tax Law and Tax Administration Law).
- The Prime Minister’s Office issued Notification (№ 532/PMO, 20 May 2021) providing guidance on policies and measures to be implemented by the MOF, namely:
 - (a) A three-month exemption for personal income tax payments for public and private sector employees with a salary up to 5 million Kip for April, May and June 2021;
 - (b) A three-month exemption for micro-enterprise income tax for April, May and June 2021;
 - (c) An extension of the deadline for the submission of the FY 2020 Financial Statements up to 30 June 2021 pursuant to the MOF Notification 2081 above;
 - (d) An extension of the deadline for payment of road tax fees up to 30 June 2021;
 - (e) An exemption on customs duties and taxes for import of goods to serve the prevention and treatment of COVID-19 such as vaccine, masks, hand washing, gloves and other medical equipment; and
 - (f) The MOF will act as the focal point in exploring appropriate policies to reduce the VAT rate, especially for businesses in the tourism and services sector.
- Under the same Notification, the MOF will also aim to accelerate and modernize its revenue collection from potential sources that the COVID-19 pandemic has not directly impacted. This includes turning to more modernized revenue collection methods and amending several decrees and subordinate legislation relating to revenue collection to build an immediate basis for revenue collection.



THE PHILIPPINES

- Extension of deadlines for filing position papers, replies, protests and other documents falling due on 05 April 2021 and during the ECQ period, including extensions thereof, for ongoing BIR audit investigations. Extension of deadlines for filing VAT refund with VAT Credit Audit Division.
- Exemption from VAT, excise tax, donor's tax, and other fee exemption for the procurement, importation, donation, storage, transport, deployment and administration of COVID-19 vaccines subject to compliance with certain procedures and submission of requirements.
- Exemption from VAT from 01 January 2021 to 31 December 2023 on the sale and importation of capital equipment, its spare parts and raw materials, necessary to produce personal protective equipment components such as coveralls, gown, surgical cap, surgical mask, N-95 mask, scrub suits, goggles and face shield, double or surgical gloves, dedicated shoes, and shoe covers, for COVID-19 prevention, provided that the Department of Trade and Industry certifies that such equipment, spare parts or raw materials are not locally available, insufficient in quantity or not in accordance with the quality or specification required.
- Exemption from VAT from 01 January 2021 to 31 December 2023 on the sale and importation of all drugs, vaccines, and medical devices specifically prescribed and directly used for the treatment of COVID-19. The Department of Health ("DOH") shall issue a list of prescription drugs and medical devices covered.
- Exemption from VAT from 01 January 2021 to 31 December 2023 on the sale and importation of drugs for the treatment of COVID-19 approved by the Food and Drug Administration ("FDA") for use in clinical trials, including raw materials directly necessary to produce such drugs.
- Importation of COVID-19 vaccines is exempt from import duties, taxes, and other fees subject to the approval of licenses issued by the DOH or the FDA
- Income tax rate of non-profit proprietary education institutions and hospitals is reduced from 10% to 1% from 01 July 2020 to 30 June 2023.
- Minimum Corporate Income Tax Rate is reduced from 2% to 1% from 01 July 2020 to 30 June 2023.

VIETNAM

- The Vietnamese Prime Minister approved Decree 52/2021/ND-CP on 19 April 2021 allowing the deferral of value added tax, corporate income tax, personal income tax and land rental fee payments.
- Eligible taxpayers include enterprises, individuals and household businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in some areas, including certain specific industries in manufacturing, construction and service sectors, small and micro enterprises, supporting industry product manufacturing, credit institutions and branches of foreign banks providing support to their clients impacted by COVID-19.
- The deferral of Value Added Tax payments is from three to five months from the normal regulatory deadlines for the tax periods from March to August 2021.
- The deferral of provisional Corporate Income Tax payments is three months from the statutory deadlines for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of 2021.
- The deferral of taxes payable by individuals and household businesses is 31 December 2021.
- The deferral of land rental fee for the first payment of 2021 is six months from the due date (31 May 2021).
- Eligible taxpayers must self-assess their eligibility and notify the local tax authorities in order to avail of the tax deferrals no later than 30 July 2021.

THAILAND

- A 90% reduction of the land and building tax for categories such as Agricultural, Residential, Commercial and Vacant land.
- Land and buildings having multiple uses and falling into several categories will be assessed on an apportionment system.
- A reduction in registration fees for real estate transfers from 2% to 0.01% and real estate mortgage registration fees from 1% to 0.01%, for the following types of property - Land with buildings, detached houses, twin houses, row houses or commercial buildings being sold by an authorized land developer; or condominiums with registered prices below THB 3 million per unit (the measure will last until 31 Dec 2021).
- The tax filing deadline for personal income tax returns (form PND.90 and 91) is extended from 31 March 2021 to 30 June 2021.
- The tax filing and payment deadlines for withholding tax (form PND.1, 2, 3, 53, and 54) and value added tax (form PP.30 and 36) are extended to the last day each month, starting from February 2021 to June 2021.



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Should you wish to more comprehensively understand the impact of these initiatives, government relief efforts, and how these may affect your business in the relevant jurisdictions, please contact the following representatives below.



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