

# BIDV **R**eview



A Newsletter of Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam JSC • Issue No.29 | Jul 2017

## KEY TO ADDRESSING BAD DEBT

**BIDV**  
named amongst  
**TOP 1000**  
world banks





*BIDV Headquarters in Hanoi*

#### **ABOUT BIDV**

Established in 1957, BIDV is the largest commercial bank in Vietnam by assets. The bank boasts subsidiaries in finance, banking, securities and insurance. BIDV has expanded its business to the international markets including Lao PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar, Czech Republic, Russian Federation and Taiwan (China). BIDV stock (BID) is listed on the Ho Chi Minh City Stock Exchange (HOSE). For more information, please visit [www.bidv.com.vn](http://www.bidv.com.vn)



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# Editor's Letter

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Dear readers,

Entering the second half of a busy year, BIDV has been active in its business activities and seen great achievements.

The bank has just announced its consolidated financial statement for the second quarter of the year, seeing growth in almost all business lines. The bank alone earned USD180 million in pre-tax profit, a rise of 24.7 percent year on year.

BIDV also expanded partnership by signing agreements with the State Treasury on collecting the state budget in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, contributing to the extension of tax collection points while facilitating enterprises and citizens in fulfilling their tax obligations.

Following the central bank's decision on cutting the refinancing rate, rediscount rate and overnight rate, BIDV cut lending rates applicable to short-term loans denominated in Vietnamese dong to meet the need for capital in a number of economic sectors, with a maximum rate of 6.5 percent per year.

During this month BIDV was named among the top 10 most prestigious Vietnamese commercial banks by Vietnam Report. The bank was also listed by Forbes Vietnam as one of the top ten most valuable companies in Vietnam. This is the second year BIDV has made Forbes Vietnam's top 10 list. Globally, BIDV was named among the Top 1000 World Banks 2017 in a report recently released by

The Banker magazine, ranking 497th, up three places from 2016.

For the third year in a row BIDV has won the Vietnam Domestic Technology and Operations Bank of the Year award from the prestigious Asian Banking & Finance. BIDV's securities subsidiary BSC also won the Best Investment Management Company award from World Finance for the second consecutive year in recognition of its outstanding performance in risk management and operation in accordance with international standards.

Looking at the broader picture, Vietnam's economic situation in the first half of 2017 showed stable macroeconomics and an improved business climate. Gross domestic product was estimated to climb 5.73 percent year-on-year with the first quarter seeing 5.15 percent growth while the second quarter performed better with growth of 6.17 percent.

As part of the bank's welfare activities, BIDV has contributed to various social security projects including accompanying the annual blood donation programme Red Journey in its fifth year. The bank also committed to provide VND3 billion for the construction of a boarding school in the mountainous province of Son La.

This month's issue brings readers informative stories including a look at how Vietnam has become one of the world's fastest growing travel destinations and a snapshot of Venice in the lifestyle pages. ♦



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# BIDV's profit grows 25 percent

BIDV has just announced its consolidated financial statement for the second quarter of the year with profit growth in almost all business lines.

The bank continues to operate stably, following the business roadmap of the year. Total assets reached over VND1.1 quadrillion (USD49 billion), up 9.3 percent year to date. Total

outstanding loans and investment were VND1,024,008 billion (USD46 billion) as of 30 June, of which loans to customers were over VND800 trillion (USD36 billion) up 11.56 percent year to date. Credit quality was controlled with non-performing loans of 1.9 percent. Total mobilized capital reached VND1,026,269 billion (USD46 billion) of which customers' deposits were over VND811.5 trillion (USD36 billion), up 11.8 percent year to date.

Operating income surged 24 percent to VND16.8 trillion (USD746 million). Of this, net interest income increased sharply by 37 percent year-on-year to over VND14 trillion (USD623 million), while profit from services increased by 21.9 percent year-on-year to VND1,401 billion (USD62.3 million). Net gain from foreign exchange activities was VND303 billion (USD15.5 million), a 1.5-fold increase compared to the same period last year.

The bank alone earned VND4,050 billion (USD180 million) in pre-tax profit, a rise of 24.7 percent compared to the same period last year and equivalent to 54 percent of the 2017 year plan. BIDV makes full provision according to loan classification and provides adequate provision for VAMC bonds as regulated. The bank's other ratios are ensured according to regulation.

BIDV's business activities in Q2/2017 show a positive trend, creating good momentum to complete the business plan for 2017. The good credit growth from the beginning of the year has helped foster net interest income growth. Services, foreign exchange trading, as well as off-balance sheet collection contributed to the business growth of the bank in the first six months of the year. 



*BIDV's net interest income increased sharply by 37 percent year-on-year*

KIEU LINH

# Son La unlocks potential

On 17 July Son La province held an investment promotion conference attended by the prime minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc and senior officials at central and local levels. At the conference, BIDV committed to provide VND3 billion to the province towards social security projects.

The prime minister spoke at the conference about how Son La is bestowed with three outstanding strengths including a unique climate; magnificent natural scenery, and special cultural identity. Son La has been active in making effective changes and transformations, particularly in the introduction of hi-tech agriculture. Thanks to its promotion activities, the province has seen an influx of Vietnamese and foreign investment.

BIDV's senior executive vice president Mr. Tran Xuan Hoang recommended that Son La province focuses on improving its competitiveness and investment environment; renovating and improving the quality of planning including the public investment plan for 2017 and subsequent years; building infrastructure in a coordinated and focused manner; and managing costs to minimise loss and waste in public investment projects.



BIDV announces to sponsor the construction of a boarding school in the province of Son La

Under the witness of the prime minister, Son La province handed over investment approval decisions and granted investment registration certificates for 26 projects with total investment capital of VND8,560 billion (USD380 million). Memorandum of understandings were also signed with investors of 17 projects totaling VND14,932 billion (USD664 million).

At the conference the State Bank of Vietnam also announced its social security programme dedicated to Son La province, whereby the banking

sector will finance the construction of a boarding school in Muong Cai commune, Song Ma district with a total cost of VND10 billion. BIDV committed to sponsor VND3 billion (USD133,000) for the project.

With its potential and specific investment policies as well as the support from BIDV, Son La province has new opportunities to make breakthroughs and become one of the most attractive investment destinations in the northern midlands and mountainous region. **B**

# Resolution 42 key to addressing bad debt

The National Assembly's Resolution 42/2017/QH14 (Resolution 42) on the handling of bad debt of credit institutions has been issued, followed by the Prime Minister's Directive 32/CT-TTg and the State Bank Governor's Directive 6/CT-NHNN which show the priority given to handling bad debt to help improve the business climate in Vietnam. BIDV defines the implementation of the resolution as a key task in the coming five years.

Resolution 42 is considered a medium-term solution, with the expected outcome of removing bottlenecks in dealing with bad debt, creating a basis for reducing lending rates and helping the economy to gain strength. From the promulgation BIDV has thoroughly grasped and implemented this resolution.

At its mid-year review meeting, BIDV management determined that the implementation of Resolution 42 is one of the tasks which will contribute

to the fulfilment of the business plan for 2017. The bank said it would actively develop an action plan to effectively implement the resolution, restructuring credit portfolios; speeding up the handling of large, complex balance sheet debts; and developing plans for the settlement of non-performing loans for the period 2017-2020.

Thanks to Resolution 42 and its related documents 15 bills related to the handling of loans by credit institutions have been amended and synchronised. According to bank experts, Resolution 42 and the relevant documents have created a liberal corridor for credit institutions to deal with bad debt. For BIDV, Resolution 42 provides a new opportunity for the BIDV system to handle bad debt faster and more effectively. The question the bank must address is how to take advantage of this opportunity.

The government has set a general target for non-performing loan ratios of credit institutions (including on-balance sheet debt and debts sold to VAMC) to be below 3 percent by 31 December 2020; and for state-owned commercial banks to be lower than 3 percent by 2018. This is a very



challenging target that requires BIDV to identify specific solutions and plans.

The BIDV leadership has identified solutions to implement Resolution 42 with the following contents: (i) Establishing a Steering Committee for implementing Resolution 42; (ii) Setting up a working group to assist the Steering Committee in the implementation of the work; (iii) Reviewing models of credit management and debt settlement within the system and making the necessary adjustments to ensure BIDV has an effective management model; (iv) Appointing sufficient officers



A conference of BIDV on implementing regulators' policies and setting plans to hit the year's targets

with professional skills, ethics, legal knowledge and determination in debt settlement; (v) Resuming the operation of BIDV Asset Management Company; (vi) Taking measures according to Resolution 42, and Decision 1058 to handle collateral, collect debts, restructure debts, and reduce or waive interest, amongst others.

Vietnam finalised the first phase of bank restructuring in the 2011-15 period, which has helped the sector to become more secure and gain the trust of both the general public and investors. 

On 21 June, with the approval of 86.35 percent of the deputies, the 14th National Assembly adopted Resolution 42 on piloting the settlement of bad debts of credit institutions. The resolution provides for a number of measures to deal with bad debt and collateral in order to remove current legal problems and difficulties related to the handling of bad debt and collateral. The resolution is effective for five years from 15 August 2017.

On 19 July, the prime minister issued Directive No.32 / CT-TTg to implement Resolution 42. The following day, the governor of the State Bank of Vietnam issued Directive No.6 on the implementation of the above guidelines of the National Assembly and the government. In line with this directive the governor requests credit institutions to implement Resolution 42 having familiarised themselves with the contents; develop a restructuring plan associated with dealing with bad debt for the period 2017-2020; and ensure they closely follow Resolution 42 and Decision 1058 and submit the relevant documents to the State Bank for approval.

PHUONG THAO

# Increased opportunities for Vietnamese businesses

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Vietnam Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinated with the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) to hold a conference titled: “ASEAN at 50: AEC and the opportunities for Vietnamese businesses”.

The conference which was held on 19 July was attended by about 200 delegates, including ASEAN secretary general Le Luong Minh, Vietnamese deputy minister of foreign affairs Nguyen Quoc Dung, and representatives from ministries, prestigious research institutes and the Vietnamese business community. BIDV acted as the supporting unit of the conference, making recommendations and other significant contributions.

At the conference, the ERIA released the results of its recent study on the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). The institute also analysed the opportunities and challenges of the AEC amid unexpected changes in the Southeast Asia, Asia-Pacific and the world.

ASEAN is an important driving force for Vietnam to maintain its sustainable economic growth, and is Vietnam’s

second largest trading partner. According to the General Department of Customs, Vietnam’s two-way trade with ASEAN increased to USD41.36 billion in 2016 from about USD19 billion in 2006.

According to ERIA, amid the slowing-down trend of multilateral trade agreements in the region, understanding the situation of the AEC in particular and ASEAN in general would help Vietnamese enterprises to address their weaknesses. In addition, businesses will have the opportunity to increase their strengths through effective integration in the region, paving the way for reaching the global market.

Professor Hidetoshi Nishimura, president of ERIA said over the last half century ASEAN has made great achievements, ensuring peace and stability in Southeast Asia. “ASEAN has created opportunities for Vietnamese businesses. ASEAN is the seventh largest economy in the world which means Vietnam will have many opportunities in a diverse range of fields including services, construction and tourism thanks to the formulation of the AEC community”, Hidetoshi Nishimura said.

ASEAN secretary general Le Luong Minh affirmed that ASEAN has been an attractive destination for foreign investors. However, the secretary



general outlined difficulties which ASEAN should overcome such as the development gap among countries, legislations, and awareness of the business community and the people. Many issues also arise from the integration process such as different



Mr. Le Ngoc Lam, BIDV's senior EVP (3rd, L-R) speaks at the conference's panel discussion

development goals, aging population, middle income traps and inequality, amongst others.

The conference participants exchanged views on the opportunities of the ASEAN Economic Community for

enterprises through unleashing creativity, entrepreneurship and strengthening capacity for Vietnamese enterprises, especially small and medium ones as well as micro-businesses.

In the panel discussion, Le Ngoc Lam, BIDV's senior executive vice president said that BIDV coordinated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government agencies to organise numerous investment promotion seminars and conferences in ASEAN countries over the years. Currently, BIDV has nearly 200,000 SME customers and has designed tailored products and services for this segment. Lam also outlined the difficulties facing SMEs in joining the global value chains and requested solutions to support SMEs.

As part of the conference an AEC business networking event and 50-year anniversary of ASEAN exhibition were held. The conference was an opportunity for businesses and localities to introduce culture, tourism, potential, and investment opportunities to the AEC community. At the conference the leader of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented the 50-year ASEAN logo to the BIDV representative. 

BIDV has taken on the chairmanship of the Vietnam Banking Association (VNBA) for the sixth tenure. The association will host the 47th ASEAN Banking Council Meeting which is scheduled for November 2017 in Da Nang City.

# Cooperation on tax collection



*Representatives of BIDV (R) and State Treasury shake hand after signing an agreement on collecting the state budget*

## BIDV signed agreements with the State Treasury units in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city on collecting the state budget.

Under the agreement, the State Treasury Office in Ho Chi Minh City will open a specialised account at BIDV Transaction Centre 1 for the purpose of state budget collection and centralised electronic payment in the capital city.

At the signing ceremony six district-level State Treasury units in the city also signed agreements with BIDV

branches, increasing the number of State Treasury units who authorised BIDV to collect the state budget to 17 throughout the city.

The agreement contributes to the extension of tax collection points for the State Treasury in Hanoi, contributing to the tax-related administrative reform, facilitating enterprises and citizens in fulfilling their obligations of paying taxes to the state budget.

Businesses and individual customers can access all BIDV's 34 branches and 163 transaction offices in Hanoi to pay

taxes, fees, charges and other duties to the state budget in a fast, convenient and safe manner.

Earlier, on 11 July BIDV also signed an agreement with the State Treasury on collecting the state budget in Ho Chi Minh City. 24 State Treasury units in Ho Chi Minh city authorised BIDV to collect the state budget. Taxpayers can access the bank's 136 transaction points in Ho Chi Minh city for tax purposes.

In recent years, BIDV has accompanied the State Treasury, the General Department of Taxation, the General Department of Customs and other relevant ministries and agencies in the collection of taxes, fees and other charges managed by the tax and customs departments, contributing to the successful implementation of the tax administration reform, and non-cash payment in accordance with the policy of the government, contributing to the implementation of the e-treasury strategy of the State Treasury.

Over 60 years of development, BIDV has steadily grown to become Vietnam's leading bank by assets, employing modern technology and professional staff, and providing diverse products and services through its wide network. **B**

VAN NGUYEN



Mr. Phan Duc Tu, chief executive officer of BIDV and chairman of VNBA (standing) speaks at the preparation meeting

# VNBA prepares for ASEAN Banking Council meeting

On 31 July at BIDV Head Office, Vietnam Banks Association (VNBA) held a meeting to prepare for the 47th ASEAN Banking Council Meeting, scheduled for 22-24 November 2017 in Da Nang City, Vietnam.

The meeting was attended by leaders of the VNBA, BIDV, Vietcombank, Vietinbank, Agribank, MBBank and various other banks. BIDV is currently taking the chairmanship role of the VNBA and actively advising the association on the organisation of the event.

Mr. Nguyen Toan Thang, secretary general of VNBA, said that the association has been actively preparing for the 47th ASEAN Banking Council Meeting, adding that VNBA has held

discussions with both the ASEAN Bankers Association (ABA) and the Association of Banks in Singapore (ABS) about the meeting. Mr. Thang also said that the association has sent the first invitation letters to chairpersons of bankers' associations in ASEAN notifying them of the date and venue of the 47th meeting. The ABS and ABA also advised the VNBA on the online registration system and provided updates on some notable issues regarding the organisation of the event.

At the preparation meeting, participants also agreed to select the logo of the 47th ASEAN Banking Council Meeting as well as the contents and sideline activities.

The ASEAN Banking Council Meeting is an annual internal event of associations of banks in 10 ASEAN

countries, rotationally held by bankers' associations of the member countries. This year's meeting is expected to receive 200 delegates and is of great significance amid the 50th anniversary of ASEAN and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum - APEC 2017.

The ASEAN Bankers Association was founded in 1976. The original five members of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand became six when Negara Brunei Darussalam joined as a member in 1984. In 1995, Vietnam was accepted into ASEAN as the seventh member and in May 1999, Cambodia became the eighth member. In July 2001, Myanmar joined as the ninth member, with Lao Bankers' Association becoming the tenth member in 2004, making the constituent membership of the association complete. 

**THANH LIEN**



*BIDV has taken*

# Lending rates cut

On 10 July BIDV announced further lending rate cuts applicable to short-term loans denominated in Vietnamese dong to meet the need for capital in a number of economic sectors.

The State Bank of Vietnam made the decision on 7 July to cut the annual maximum refinancing rate, rediscount rate and overnight rate applied to electronic inter-bank payments. It also cut the rate of loans in order to offset capital shortage in clearing of payments between the SBV

and domestic banks by 0.25 percentage points. The new rates came into effect on 10 July.

Accordingly, businesses operating in agricultural, export and auxiliary industries; small and medium-sized enterprises; and high-tech firms can borrow loans at a maximum short-term rate of 6.5 percent per year, instead of 7 percent.

Following the decision, several commercial banks announced rate cuts. BIDV said it would further cut lending rates applicable to short-term loans denominated in Vietnamese

dong to meet the need for capital in a number of economic sectors, particularly:

Maximum lending rate of 6.5 percent per year applicable to short-term loans denominated in Vietnamese dong of businesses prioritised by the State Bank of Vietnam.

Maximum lending rate of 6.0 percent per year is applicable to: (i) five priority areas according to the State Bank's regulation, satisfying BIDV's loan conditions including: agriculture and rural development, export goods manufacturing, small



various measures to help businesses access bank loans

The rate cuts make it cheaper for businesses to borrow

and medium enterprises, supporting industry, and hi-tech enterprises; (ii) start-ups, environment companies, and businesses who have had an established credit relationship with BIDV for three years or more and have financial capacity and feasible projects.

Maximum lending rate of 5.5 percent per year is applicable to enterprises, individuals, and households affected by the flood in central provinces.

In addition, BIDV also launches preferential credit packages for enterprises, particularly: 30 trillion credit package for enterprise customers with lending rate from 5.0 percent per year; 10 trillion credit package for short-term loans denominated in VND for new customers including SMEs, FDIs, importers, exporters and micro-businesses with lending rates from 5.5 percent per year; and medium and long-term loans for renewable energy, clean energy with lending rates lower

than the normal rate by up to 1.0 percent per year.

As the leading commercial bank in Vietnam, BIDV has taken measures to help businesses access bank loans, reforming lending procedures and tailoring loan products to meet the capital needs of enterprises and individuals.

Statistics from the General Statistics Office of Vietnam show that capital mobilisation of credit institutions increased by 5.89 percent in the first six month of the year. Meanwhile, credit from January to June grew by 7.54 percent, the highest rate in the past six years.

According to Bloomberg, while Vietnam's unexpected lowering of

interest rates for the first time in three years may help to support economic growth, it also raises credit risks in a nation still grappling with a hangover of bad debt.

"These rate cuts will make it cheaper for businesses and individuals to borrow, so it will help spur loan demand and bolster consumption," said Do Ngoc Quynh, head of Treasury at Bank for Investment & Development of Vietnam in Hanoi.

The central bank said in its statement that the move was aimed at boosting economic growth and keeping inflation under control. Vietnam is among the fastest-expanding economies in the world, but growth is still below the government's ambitious target of 6.7 percent. **R**

**QUANG KHANH**

# BIDV Yangon First year highlights

BIDV Yangon Branch officially opened its doors in July in Myanmar this year. During its first year of operation, the branch has steadily built a solid foundation, establishing its prestige and brand name in the country.

**A**lthough BIDV has several overseas commercial presences, BIDV Yangon was the first branch of the bank to open in a foreign country. Its establishment has faced challenges related to legal requirements, customer base and Myanmar’s banking system context. However, with the comprehensive support of the headquarters the branch has achieved remarkable results.

The branch’s initial achievements include the completion of its infrastructure and document management system, effective recruitment and training to ensure the bank’s continuous and smooth operation, and a focus on the Intellect core-banking system. The branch worked with a contractor over several months to install, provide training, and operate the Intellect system smoothly to meet customers’ demands for products and services. The branch is coordinating with the headquarters to introduce other IT applications such



*BIDV Yangon branch in Myanmar*



*BIDV Yangon branch leaders and officers*

as SMS, e-banking, database and an automatic reporting system.

Secondly, the branch has taken full advantage of BIDV's prestige, experience and knowledge in consulting, supporting Vietnamese businesses and investors in Myanmar and gradually expanding its customer base. Drawing on the knowledge and experience of BIDV employees who have worked at BIDV's representative office in Myanmar since 2010, the branch has provided consultancy for Vietnamese businesses. Up to two thirds of the 150 Vietnamese enterprises in Myanmar have received consultancy from BIDV. In addition, the branch also focuses on developing its foreign customer base. The branch has more than ten foreign enterprises amongst its customers including ones from Myanmar, South Korea, Singapore, China and Germany.

Thirdly, the branch proposed ideas and new products to increase business efficiency and support customers'

business. Despite the lifting of the entire embargo, Myanmar's legal system is still outdated and limited, affecting the country's exports and imports. To date, FDI enterprises in Myanmar have not been allowed to import and trade apart from through local businesses. Meanwhile, local businesses also encounter difficulties when using trade financing and international payment services provided by local banks. The Yangon branch worked with a legal firm and received approval from the Central Bank of Myanmar to implement a payment system which will help remove these payment difficulties.

BIDV Head Office and Yangon branch concentrated almost all payments from Vietnamese banks to Myanmar through BIDV/BIDV Yangon. At the same time, a scheme whereby BIDV is the intermediary bank for USD payments for the entire Myanmar market is also being studied, evaluated and planned for implementation at an appropriate time.

In its initial phase of operation, with high investment and a light customer base the branch's business result is still modest. However, the branch has effectively conducted its business activities such as balancing revenue and expenditure, managing the liquidity of Nostro accounts, and purchasing foreign currency from partner banks to serve the needs of customers.

In addition, the branch sought approval from the Central Bank of Myanmar to provide funding for effective projects and/or businesses as well as coordinating other foreign bank branches in Myanmar to co-finance effective projects in the area. This will form the foundations for the development of the branch in Myanmar in the near future.

The Yangon Branch is proud to be a new overseas commercial presence of BIDV and to actively contribute to the development of economic relations between Vietnam and Myanmar. **R**

**THANH BINH**

# Facilitating small businesses' growth

In line with its commitment to accompanying small and medium enterprises, BIDV has continuously implemented programmes to support the sector, prioritising start-ups, micro-businesses and new enterprises which began as household businesses.

At the end of last month the bank cooperated with VCCI to organise a workshop entitled "Transforming household businesses into enterprises - the current situation and solutions". The workshop attracted the participation of more than 120 representatives, including state regulators such as the Central Institute for Economic Management (CIEM) and the General Department of Taxation, as well as industry associations, media, manufacturers, and trade and service suppliers in Hanoi and the surrounding areas.

In the past few years household businesses have grown significantly in volume, making a tremendous contribution to the economy in terms of job creation and service provision.

The important role played by this sector is increasingly recognised by the government, agencies and general society, especially for the contribution it makes to the development of Vietnam's private sector.

According to VCCI, around 100 large household businesses in the country



*A workshop on transforming household businesses into enterprises held by BIDV and VCCI*

are contributing to a quarter of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

At the conference, Mr. Tran Trung Kien, deputy director of BIDV's SME Banking Department, emphasised the benefits for household businesses in transforming into enterprises. These include preferential capital access, both domestic and international; flexible collateral when making loans; eligibility for trust loans; and eased collateral requirement based on the prestige, effectiveness and feasibility of the company's projects.

BIDV is the most active bank in the market in providing financial incentives to SMEs in programmes such as the VND3000-billion package for SMEs and micro-businesses,

Vietnam Sustainable Agriculture Transformation Project (VnSAT), and the Small and Medium Sized Enterprises Finance Project funded by JICA (SMEFP), amongst others.

Previously, BIDV cooperated with Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) to organise a course on Business Production Planning and to provide business and financial solutions consultancy for small and medium enterprises in Hai Phong City.

BIDV said it would continue to organise a series of networking and consulting events for small and medium enterprises nationwide. In addition, the bank will continue to launch credit programmes for SMEs as well as start-ups and micro enterprises. **R**

NGUYEN TRAN



# Top 10 most valuable brands

A report recently released by Forbes Vietnam Magazine named BIDV as one of the ten most valuable companies in Vietnam.

Forbes Vietnam said in its statement that the total value of the 40 most valuable firms reached more than USD5.4 billion, an increase of 20 percent from last year. This is the second year BIDV has been among the top 10.

In terms of industrial sectors, companies of the consumer goods sector remain at the top, followed by the banking and finance sector. Information technology ranks third with three representatives. This year several new companies have made the list, including

Quang Ngai Sugar JSC, Petrolimex, Saigon Tourist, and LocTroi Group.

Behind Vinamilk, the highest ranking company, was military telecommunication group Viettel and property developer-retailer Vingroup, whose estimated values are USD849.6 million and USD299.3 million, respectively. The list closed out with the agriculture group Loc Troi, whose value was assessed at USD13.1 million.

According to Forbes Vietnam, the evaluation was conducted based on the contribution of the company's brand to its business performance. The most valuable brands were the firms that recorded high revenue and earnings in the industries they were leading.

Brand valuation is determined by how

much a brand can contribute to the business success of a particular industry. The brand valuation is calculated on the company's share price-to-earnings (P/E) ratio versus the market's average P/E ratio for listed ones.

For unlisted companies, Forbes Vietnam compared the firms to others of the same scale in the same industry to calculate the company's value.

In May this year Forbes magazine released its Global 2000 - a list of the 2000 biggest and most powerful listed companies. BIDV has made the list for the past three years. According to the Global 2000, BIDV ranks 1682nd with revenue of USD3.3 billion and market value of USD2.6 billion. The bank's ranking rose nine places from last year. **B**

BUI HANG

# BIDV wins ABF award

For the third year in a row BIDV has won the Vietnam Domestic Technology and Operations Bank of the Year award from the prestigious Asian Banking & Finance (ABF).

The award was presented on July 13 in the framework of the ABF Wholesale Banking Awards in Singapore. According to ABF, BIDV meets the requirements for the operation and management of its information technology (IT) system. In addition, BIDV Home Banking, a product for corporate customers, was assessed as a unique, creative technological product that effectively supports the bank's business.

BIDV Home Banking for corporate customers is a system which is built on state-of-the-art technology, providing API connection to the customer system, enabling customers to integrate the system with the company's internal IT systems such as ERP, HR management and payroll. The integrated system will help automate the company's operation and straight-through processing (STP). Customers can immediately update their transaction status when completing transactions through BIDV via API. This is an innovative feature that differentiates BIDV Home Banking from other internet banking systems in Vietnam.



*BIDV representatives receive the 'Vietnam Domestic Technology and Operations Bank of the Year' award from ABF*

Developed in 2015 by BIDV's IT specialists, BIDV Home Banking has attracted a number of important major customers such as Vingroup, Viettel and Muong Thanh Group. Using digital signatures, digitalised documents bring enterprises many benefits such as cost saving and management time reduction while ensuring data integrity, validation and responsibility on the signed content, helping businesses feel secure with their electronic transactions in the internet environment. With BIDV Home Banking, wherever customers are connected to the internet they can use services such as making payments, cash flow management, state budget

payments, and accessing online balance statements.

In 2016, 149,018 transactions were made through BIDV Home Banking. The app is evaluated by the ABF as a new, dynamic, innovative and effective product for the bank.

The fourth Industrial Revolution has facilitated IT application to all areas of life and will continue to completely change banking distribution channel and services. It is also an opportunity for BIDV to confirm its technological strength with smarter banking applications. 

QUANG HUY

# BIDV named amongst top 1000 world banks



Thirteen Vietnamese commercial banks have been listed among the Top 1000 World Banks 2017, a list recently released by The Banker magazine.

The banks to make the list include BIDV, VietinBank, Vietcombank, Agribank, Military Bank, Sacombank, Techcombank, SCB, Maritime Bank, VPBank, Eximbank, ACB and SHB.

The Banker's rating is based on three key criteria including total assets, pre-

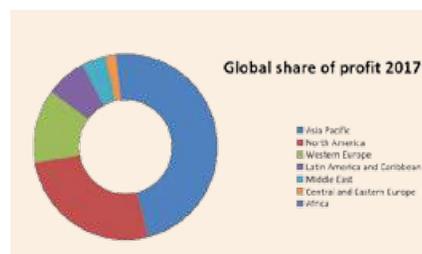
tax profits and tier 1 capital.

With capital levels now under control, The Banker's Top 1000 World Banks ranking shows profitability to be the global banking sector's biggest problem. Emerging market

lenders have proven resilient to the commodity crunch and their national crises, but their European rivals are struggling, and there is more than interest rates to blame.

Asia-Pacific still accounts for the lion's share of global profits, but over the past four years North America has chipped away at its dominance. With the US Federal Reserve on course to lift interest rates to 1.5 percent by the end of 2017, the trend looks set to continue into next year's rankings. Other regions, however, are battling significant macro-economic headwinds, and with varying success.

The Banker's Top 1000 World Banks 2017 did not see much change from 2016. The Top 10 features mostly Chinese banks and United States banks. They include ICBC, China Construction Bank, JP Morgan Chase & Co, Bank of China, Bank of America, Agricultural Bank of China, Citigroup, Wells Fargo & Co, HSBC Holdings and Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group. 



The Banker magazine is the key source of data and analysis for the industry. The Banker's Top 1000 World Banks ranking has been setting the industry benchmark since 1970, providing comprehensive intelligence about the health and wealth of the banking sector.

# Most prestigious banks 2017

Vietnam Report JSC has officially announced its list of the most prestigious Vietnamese commercial banks in 2017. BIDV continues to rank in the top three.

According to the Vietnam Report, the prestige of banks is assessed and ranked based on three main criteria. These include financial capacity as shown on the financial statements of the most recent audited year (total sales, effective use of capital and bad debt ratio), accounting for 35 percent of the score; media credibility evaluated by means

of articles on banking in the media (30 percent of score); and an online survey assessing the level of consumer satisfaction with the products and services on offer (35 percent of the score). Vietnam Report also carries out investigations, in-depth interviews with financial experts regarding the position and reputation of banks in the sector; and surveys of banks' operations until May 2017.

All banks to make the list are assessed to have high prestige in the industry, and have strong financial capacity and high growth potential in the period 2016-2017.

The online survey, conducted by Vietnam Report in May 2017, also shows the three most important factors when choosing a bank's products and/or services: high information security (77.2 percent), simple and quick procedures and good customer service (75.7 percent), and having preferential policies in place (62.1 percent).

"In the development era of information technology, customers often make transactions through mobile or internet banking services, so investing in technology and customer information protection is an urgent requirement of commercial banks", Vietnam Report recommended.

The Prestige report has been conducted since 2012 and receives the attention of the public and media.

The list of the top ten commercial banks in Vietnam comprises BIDV, Vietcombank, ACB, Techcombank, the MB Bank, Sacombank, TP Bank, SHB and SCB. 



*BIC is among top 10 non-life insurers in Vietnam*

## Top non-life insurers in Vietnam

According to Vietnam Report, BIDV Insurance Corporation (BIC) is ranked amongst the top 10 most prestigious non-life insurance companies in Vietnam. This is the second year in a row that BIC has been listed and the company is now in seventh place on the list.

MANH TRAN

# BSC named Best Investment Management Company



*Mr. Do Huy Hoai, CEO of BSC (R) receives the award from the World Finance Magazine*

**BIDV Securities Company (BSC) has recently been named as Best Investment Management Company by World Finance.**

This is the second consecutive year BSC has received the award in this category. The company maintains its position as one of the top 10 best securities companies in Vietnam.

The World Finance Investment Management Awards highlight the brightest names in the business and

offer an insight into where the future of the sector may lie. The awards offer an insight not only into what it takes to succeed in today's market, but into the ways in which the industry is likely to change in the coming years. By looking at a wide cross-section of performance indicators, the judging panel at World Finance, together with its readers, selected the highest flyers in the business.

Since 2007, World Finance has been celebrating achievement, innovation and brilliance in their annual awards. Their judging panel boasts over

230 years of financial and business journalism, supported by a research team that works round the clock to ensure the award winners are the most deserving in their sector. World Finance relies on reader insight and experience to provide nominations to the judging panel, and relishes hearing about new experts in the field and burgeoning markets.

In September 2014, BSC was awarded the Best Investment Bank by Alpha Southeast Asia magazine. In 2015, the company received two awards "Best Bond House" and "Best Equity House" in Vietnam from the Alpha Southeast Asia magazine. In late August 2015, the company won the Best Debt Capital Market House award from Finance Asia, one of Asia's leading financial magazines.

In the first six months of this year, BSC's revenue saw an increase of 174 percent year-on-year, far higher than the target set at the beginning of the year.

World Finance is a global trade magazine with high readership. The magazine covers topics related to world trade and finance and is a reliable source of information for local and international business people and investors. [R](#)

**THU DINH**

# Foothold in life-insurance market

**B**IDV MetLife, a joint venture between BIDV and MetLife Inc., celebrated its third year of operation in the Vietnamese market. To date, the company has achieved nearly two percent of the market share, securing a solid foundation in the country's life-insurance market.

Mr. Gaurav Sharma, chief executive officer of BIDV MetLife, highlighted that in just three years, BIDV MetLife has acquired nearly two percent of the market share of new underwriting revenue, taking ninth position out of 17 market competitors by the end of Q1/2017.

BIDV MetLife completed its nationwide network extension and the company's products are now available at over 1000 transaction points of BIDV. With the recent launch of new comprehensive investment and protection solutions, BIDV MetLife expects to leverage the retail and corporate customer base of BIDV.

"With strong support from BIDV, we have developed our sales force and quickly expanded distribution. I believe that this partnership will drive BIDV MetLife towards reaching our business target," said Mr. Gaurav Sharma.

Mr. Damien Green, regional

executive of MetLife Asia noted that MetLife was very excited about the business potential in Vietnam and the partnership with BIDV - the leading retail bank in the market. He expressed his thanks and appreciation to BIDV as a partner, and to BIDV MetLife leadership and employees who have helped the company to grow and prosper. Mr. Damien also acknowledged the great energy the

company employees have shown and the great effort that is being made to bring BIDV MetLife to the forefront of bancassurance in Vietnam.

Mr. Nguyen Trung Thanh, BIDV's senior executive vice president, concluded by identifying the four factors that both partners possess that have contributed to the company's success as ambition, devotion, dynamism and innovation.



MANH HAI

# BIC strives to hit year targets

On 21 July BIDV Insurance Corporation (BIC) held a conference to review its business in the first six months of the year, announcing premium growth of 8.2 percent.

According to Mr. Tran Hoai An, chief executive officer of BIC, the company earned total premium income of VND855.8 billion (USD38 million) in the first half of 2017, up 8.2 percent over the same period last year and fulfilling 45 percent of the year's target. Of this, direct premiums reached VND772.8 billion (USD32 million), up 9.9 percent year-on-year and higher than the overall market growth rate, estimated at about 8 percent according to data from the Insurance Association of Vietnam.

Consolidated profit before tax was VND91.8 billion (USD4.1 million). In recent years the company has restructured its product portfolios and managed operating and compensation costs while increasing the application of information technology to improve productivity and reduce costs.

In addition, BIC has completed the reassignment of credit rating with the leading financial credit rating agency



*BIC holds a mid-year review meeting*

A.M. Best. The results are expected to be officially announced in August this year. BIC is also honoured by prestigious organisations in Vietnam with many accolades and awards including being named amongst the Top 10 most prestigious non-life insurers 2017, Top 50 most performing companies 2017, and Top 100 excellent brands in Vietnam 2016.

Looking forward, the company's chief executive officer affirmed that the company is focusing on completing the business plan set for 2017, aiming

for total insurance premiums to reach VND1,900 billion (USD84.4 million) and consolidated profit before tax to hit VND186 billion (USD8.3 million).

Mr. Tran Luc Lang, chairman of BIC, appreciated the business results that BIC has achieved in the first six months, while asking the company to pay special attention to building a good income mechanism for staff, expanding the network, and investing in modern and advanced information technology systems to improve the company's competitiveness. ■

# New money transfer service



From July 5, BIDV's customers can receive instant money transfers from other banks. Senders only need the receiver's ATM card number information printed on the front of the card.

This feature is part of the service "24/7 money transfer" from BIDV in cooperation with National Payment Corporation of Vietnam (NAPAS).

With the advantage of speed and convenience, customers can receive transferred money a matter of seconds after the sender completes the

request via internet banking, without any information required about the receiver's bank or branch name. In addition, customers will no longer encounter problems when making transactions on holidays or weekends.

Previously, BIDV's customers could only send money using the card and account number, via Internet and mobile banking, ATMs, SMS Banking, or at a transaction counter.

With the new service, BIDV's customers can make instant money transfers to cardholders or account holders at other banks, as well as BIDV.

BIDV has received positive feedback from customers following the introduction of the 24/7 money transfer service. The bank will continue to research and develop new services to meet its customers' needs.

BIDV has been pioneering in researching and launching new products and services to serve nearly 9 million customers, supported by a network of over 1,000 transaction points, over 32,000 ATMs/POS and 1,000 agencies across the world. 

**HIEN GIANG**

# Free transfers with BIDV Bankplus

BIDV is waiving charges on all internal transfer transactions including 24/7 money transfers made through BIDV Bankplus until 30 September 2017.

**B**IDV Bankplus is the result of joint efforts between BIDV and telecom giant Viettel, allowing customers to conduct banking transactions on a mobile phone in a quick, safe, and accurate manner.

BIDV Bankplus features include checking bank account balance and transaction histories; bank transfer within the bank; 24/7 money transfers; and bill payments (telecommunication, electricity, water, game cards, phone cards, etc.) and comes with many attractive offers.

BIDV Bankplus consists of two security layers to ensure transaction security and is compatible with all mobile phones. The transaction takes just 30 seconds to complete and can perform bank transactions without requiring wifi or 3G network.

Customers can register via USSD by dialing \*123\*666# and following the instructions, or visit their nearest BIDV branch.

BIDV was honoured to be named



Electronic Bank of the Year in Vietnam for two consecutive years (2014 and 2015), as voted by Vietnam Banks Association & International Data

Group, and the Best Retail Bank in Vietnam for three consecutive years (2015, 2016 and 2017), as voted by The Asian Banker Magazine. 

HANG VU

# Credit package for individual customers



BIDV has launched a VND7000 billion (USD310 million) credit package aiming to meet the needs for capital of individual customers.

Flexible options are available for customers with preferential rates from 6.7 percent per year applicable for loans with term of less than six months and from 7 percent per year for loans with term from six months or more. Actual lending

rates will be subject to the discretion of each BIDV branch. The package applies to new disbursements during the effective period of the programme - until 30 September this year or until the package has been fully disbursed.

The VND7000-billion credit package with preferential rates rolled-out across the BIDV system is part of the bank's commitment to accompanying and supporting individual customers, helping to ease difficulties they encounter in their business. Applicants will also be entitled to other services such as e-banking and insurance.

BIDV successfully launched a VND10,000-billion (USD445 million) credit package for business and production in May this year. The programme was well received by customers and fully disbursed by June 2017.

BIDV has been named the best retail bank in Vietnam for three consecutive years, 2015, 2016 and 2017 by the Asian Banker Magazine. The bank was also the only bank receiving the title Outstanding Retail Bank 2016 as voted by Vietnam Banks Association (VNBA) in cooperation with International Data Group (IDG).

For more information, visit [www.bidv.com.vn/uudai](http://www.bidv.com.vn/uudai), or the bank's nearest branch or call the 24/7 hotline on 19009247. 

# VND15 trillion for home loan



**B**IDV has launched a credit package worth VND15 trillion (USD667 million) aimed at individual customers requiring capital for house purchases or home renovation. The programme will take effect from 4 July and last until 30 November 2017.

Customers can enjoy flexible preferential interest rates, including a rate of 7.1 percent per annum for the first six months of the loan term, 7.6

percent for the first 12 months, 8.1 percent for the first 18 months or 8.6 percent for the first 24 months from the first disbursement. Customers can choose different loan packages tailored to their needs, conditions and financial plans.

At the same time, when applying for a loan customers can enjoy benefits from other insurance products and e-banking services to help manage their finances. [B](#)

## Enjoy life with BIDV cards

**F**rom 23 July to 15 October 2017, BIDV is running the promotion programme “Enjoy life with BIDV cards”. The total promotion value reaches over VND5 billion (USD223,000).

New customers applying for domestic debit cards can receive issuance and one year’s fee waiver with no required account balance. For new international credit and debit cardholders, customers can get a refund of up to VND2 million (USD89) paid into their account.

In addition, when making payments with BIDV cards, including debit or credit cards both domestic and international, customers will have the chance to win attractive gifts including a Sony Shake X7D sound system and vouchers for Vinpearl and various supermarkets. The luckiest customers can win a European tour worth VND150 million (USD6,700) for two, or a South Korean tour worth VND30 million (USD1,330) for two, or an iPhone 7 32G worth VND18 million (USD800).

With modern and convenient banking services, BIDV cardholders can enjoy life whilst securing their financial future. [B](#)

# Rewards for overseas students

**B**IDV has launched a promotion programme effective from 1 August to 30 October 2017 for customers buying foreign currency for the purpose of studying abroad. The programme offers a number of valuable prizes.

Customers can win a return ticket to countries in Europe, the Americas or Asia as well as other attractive gifts such as an Apple Sport 42mm Series 2 watch, a WD Elements 1TB power bank, or an international debit card with VND1 million credited to the account. 



*A poster of the programme*

Prize	Condition	In kind	In cash (in case customers decline to receive the reward in kind)
<b>1 first prize</b>	The largest cumulative sale volume during the effective period	1 return ticket to a European/ American country worth a maximum of VND40 million/prize (USD1,780)	1 international debit card plus VND30 million/prize (USD1,340)
<b>2 second prizes</b>	The second and third largest cumulative sale volume during the effective period	1 return ticket to an Asian country worth a maximum of VND20 million/prize (USD890)	1 international debit card plus 15 million/prize (USD 670)
<b>3 third prizes</b>	The fourth, fifth and sixth largest cumulative sale volume during the effective period	1 Apple Sport 42mm Series 2 watch worth VND 11 million/ prize (USD490)	1 international debit card plus VND6 million/prize (USD267)
<b>30 consolation prizes</b>	The first 10 customers in August, September, October to trade an amount equivalent to at least USD3,000 per transaction	1 WD Elements 1TB power bank worth VND1.5 million/prize (USD70)	1 international debit card plus 1 million/prize (USD45)
<b>36 other prizes</b>		VND158 million (USD7000)	VND108 million (USD4,800)

VIET DUNG

# Demand drives growth in Southeast Asia

**Robust domestic demand, particularly private consumption and investment, will continue to support economies in Southeast Asia this year.**

According to the report “Asian Development Outlook 2017” released by Asian Development Bank (ADB) in late July, the growth outlook for Southeast Asia remains at 4.8 percent for 2017 and 5.0 percent for 2018.

High growth in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore is dampened somewhat by disappointing growth in Brunei Darussalam. Robust domestic demand will be the growth driver for the region. Higher public investment boosted first quarter growth in the Philippines and Thailand, while private investment was strong in Malaysia and Vietnam. Exports rebounded in Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Vietnam.

In Vietnam, sectors remained strong including services, agriculture and foreign direct investment. This supplement retains ADB’s growth forecasts for Vietnam at 6.5 percent for 2017 and 6.7 percent for 2018. However, these will be revisited if the industry and construction sector remains sluggish.

The inflation forecast for Southeast Asia is 3.3 percent for 2017.

Upward revisions for Cambodia, Malaysia, and Singapore are balanced by downward adjustments for Brunei Darussalam, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, and Thailand. Strong domestic demand and increases in local food prices underpinned the upward revision to Cambodia’s inflation forecasts. In Malaysia, higher transportation costs, cuts to cooking oil subsidies, and a weak currency are expected to push prices up further, with inflation now expected at 4.0 percent in 2017, revised up from the 3.3 percent forecast in April. Singapore’s inflation is revised slightly upward to 1.1 percent from 1.0 percent in 2017 as prices in the first

half, in particular for transport and food, increased faster than anticipated. Conversely, the inflation forecast for Brunei Darussalam is downgraded as feeble oil and the gas sector undercut growth. In the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, government cuts to recurrent public expenditures will help control inflation.

For 2018, ADB’s subregional inflation is revised down slightly to 3.4 percent from 3.5 percent, reflecting a substantial downward adjustment for Thailand to accommodate lower prices than expected for oil and, with the end of a drought, food. [R](#)



MINH HAI

# Vietnam economy robust in first half

The General Statistics Office of Vietnam recently released an overview of Vietnam's economic situation in the first half of 2017, showing stable macro-economics and improved business and investment climate.

Gross domestic product (GDP) in the first half of the year was estimated to climb 5.73 percent year-on-year with the first quarter seeing 5.15 percent growth while the second quarter performed better with growth of 6.17 percent. The industry and construction sector increased 5.81 percent and the service sector saw an increase of 6.85 percent. This was the highest growth compared to the same period over the past five years. Average CPI in the first six months ticked up 4.15 percent while inflation slowed, averaging at 1.52 percent against 2016.

According to Dr. Can Van Luc, economic expert, three key points need to be addressed to support continued growth.

First, stipulating consumption, as domestic consumption currently accounts for 75 percent of GDP. If the consumption stipulation increases by 1 percent, the economy will

receive an additional VND30 trillion (USD1.3 billion) - a figure four times higher than that of the exploitation of one million tons of oil. In 2016, consumption brought VND3.7 quadrillion (USD165 billion) to the economy.

Second, focusing on the service sector, particularly tourism. Vietnam has great tourism potential. The sector is expected to see growth of over 30 percent this year which will add VND7,000 - 8,000 billion (USD355 million) to the economy.

Third, improving the business climate. Over 60,000 new companies were established in the first half of this year and a good environment is needed to support their effective operations.

Lending far outpaced money supply, increasing 5.69 percent in the six-month period. Deposits at banks, meanwhile, rose 5.89 percent from end-2016 compared to 8.23 percent in the same period of 2016. According to the GSO, annual interest rates commonly range between 6 percent and 9 percent for short-term loans and 9 percent to 11 percent for long-term loans, which are higher than those in many regional countries.

To date, the insurance market has maintained positive momentum of



growth. Insurance premiums of the entire market in the first six months were up 19 percent year-on-year, with life premiums seeing growth of 30 percent and non-life premiums growth of 9 percent.

Export turnover in the first six months of this year was estimated at USD97.8 billion, up 18.9 percent over the same period last year, of which the domestic economic sector gained USD27 billion, up 13.8 percent, while the foreign-invested sector (including crude oil) reached USD70.8 billion, an increase of 21 percent.

Foreign direct investment as of 20 June



Da Nang City, Vietnam

attracted 1,183 new licensed projects, with total registered capital reaching USD11.84 million - an increase of 56.3 percent in the number of projects and 57.9 percent in registered capital year-on-year. Realised FDI capital was estimated at USD7.7 billion in the first half of the year, up 6.5 percent against 2016.

Of the 56 countries and territories with investment projects newly licensed in Vietnam in the first six months, Japan was the biggest investor at USD4.57 billion, accounting for 38.6 percent of total newly registered capital, followed by Singapore with USD2.73 billion (23.1 percent), South Korea with USD1.63

billion (13.7 percent) and China with USD1.1 billion (9.3 percent).

Regarding the government bond market, according to a report from BIDV Research Centre, as of end-June 2017, the State Treasury successfully issued VND125,745 billion (USD5.6 billion) through HNX. In June alone, more than VND22,000 billion (USD980 million) was issued. The high success rate of the 30-year term shows investors' confidence in Vietnam's long-term prospects. Compared to December 31 2016, government bond yields continued to decrease by 0.24% - 0.55% for all terms, currently standing between 5-7.5% p.a for terms from

5 - 30 years. Interest rates of all terms are low, facilitating the issuers, and fluctuations are not expected.

The derivatives market is planned to officially operate in August which will bring more investment opportunities to the market. Accordingly, derivative securities and the derivative market will be an attractive market for both local and foreign investors. In May and June, the HNX granted market trading membership to six securities companies - BIDV Securities Co (BSC), Saigon Securities Inc. (SSI), HCM City Securities Co (HSC), Viet Capital Securities Co (VCSC), and VPBank Securities Co (VPBS). 

QUYNH CHI

# Breathtaking Venice

Venice, considered by many as the most romantic city in the world, never fails to enchant visitors.

For many first time visitors, their only regret is not being able to stay longer. After a day of walk and walk, Mai and her friends stopped on one side of the Venice Grand Canal, seeing people come and leave, seeing boats stop at and departure from marinas, and enjoying the blue sky that will make every tourist remember after leaving Venice.

Breathtakingly beautiful with its own unique charm, Venice is best explored on foot. "Visitors should just grab a map and go," says Ngoc Mai, a tourist visiting Venice for the first time. According to Mai, there are many things to do in Venice, many dishes to

taste and many photos to be taken, but for those with limited time, there are two things that should not missed.

## RIDING IN A GONDOLA

Floating serenely along Venice's network of canals in a gondola while being serenaded is a quintessential Venetian venture. Gondolas take passengers through the narrow and intricate waterways and time melts away. The ride is slow enough for tourists to soak up the ancient and peaceful atmosphere in Venice, and close enough to see the doors of many houses turned green from a layer of moss and eroded by the water. Gondoliers are skillful and make excellent tour guides.

## ST MARK'S SQUARE

Lying in the heart of the city and the main place of Venice, St Mark's



Square extends towards a lagoon in its south east corner. The square is often crowded with tourists so those hoping for some time on their own should come early in the morning to admire the beauty of the square bathed in the





first rays of morning sun. At this time the square is almost yours, with only a few joggers or some early morning workers hurrying to the marina.

The square is dominated at its eastern

end by the great St Mark's Basilica, a lovely building with stunning architecture, paintings and other artwork. St Mark's Basilica is the most famous of the city's churches and one of the best known examples of

Italo-Byzantine architecture. It lies at the eastern end of San Marco, adjacent and connected to the Doge's Palace – the former residence of the Doge of Venice, the supreme authority of the former Republic of Venice. 

HONG NHIEU



# *Vietnam among world's fastest growing travel destinations*

Vietnam was recently listed among the world's 10 fastest growing travel destinations by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation.

**T**he United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) published a report outlining the countries around the world that experienced a boom in tourism and visitor numbers in 2016.

According to the report, Vietnam's tourism industry is moving in the right direction, with visitor numbers rising at one of the fastest rates in the world last year.



Ho Chi Minh City



*Ha Long Bay*

Vietnam ranked seventh with a growth rate of 24.6 percent based on the number of foreign tourist arrivals in 2016. The country was the only destination in Southeast Asia to make the top 10, ranked third among Asian countries, behind Nepal (second place, 39.7 percent) and the Republic of Korea (fourth place, 30.3 percent).

Foreign visitors to Vietnam rose 26 percent to a record 10 million last year, earning the tourism industry VND400 trillion (USD17.6 billion). According to the Vietnamese General Statistics Office, international arrivals to Vietnam in the first half of this year reached more than 6.2 million, representing a rise of 30.2 percent over the same period last year. Overseas arrivals to Vietnam came mainly from Asia, which accounted for 72.7 percent, followed by Europe (15.8 percent).

The country has been rising in popularity, with the New York Times late last year naming it as an ideal



*Terraced rice fields in northern Vietnam*

place to travel in your twenties. The Telegraph also recommended Hanoi as a destination for food lovers, while Ho Chi Minh City has cracked various lists of top destinations for solo and retiree travellers. Both cities were named among the world's fastest growing destinations by MasterCard last year, and more recently by Price of Travel amongst the cheapest cities for backpackers.

Vietnam has set a target of developing tourism into a spearhead industry. With visa waiver policies for big markets in Asia and Europe, as well as a new e-visa system, the country

hopes to welcome 17 to 20 million foreign visitors and make USD35 billion per year from tourism by 2020, contributing 10 percent to the country's economy, compared to the current 7.5 percent.

Vietnam has been named amongst the world's top tourist destinations several times, including in the top 10 cheapest countries to travel in 2016 (by US publication The Richest), the top ideal countries for backpacking tourism in 2016 (by UK's the Rough Guides), and the top eco-friendly tourist destinations (by travel experts from Boundless Journeys and Adventure Life). **R**



# Blood donation saves lives

On 10 July the National Institute of Hematology and Blood Transfusion and BIDV jointly held a press conference in Hanoi introducing the programme “Red Journey 2017”.

**B**IDV has accompanied the annual blood donation programme since 2014. In 2017, BIDV will support the Red Journey in its fifth year. The programme has attracted the attention of the community and demonstrates BIDV’s commitment to social and community activities.

As well as acting as a sponsor and communication coordinator for the programme, BIDV also involves its trade union and youth union in the voluntary blood donation. Many other activities were held concurrently: BIDV staff participated in an art performance, promoting the programme and encouraging customers to sign up to donate blood.

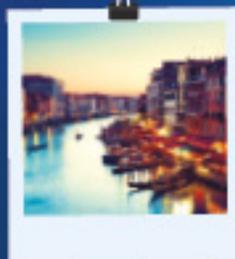
Earlier, on 1 July this year, the Red

Journey – route 1 was kicked off in Ca Mau province. The event is planned to be held in 19 provinces and cities. The second route starts from Hanoi and will pass through nine provinces. Both routes will meet in Hanoi to organise the campaign between 28 and 31 July 2017.

Professor Nguyen Anh Tri, head of National Institute of Hematology and Blood Transfusion, said: “The red journey is a programme imbued with the compassion of the Vietnamese people. It is hoped that the programme will spread widely among the community, motivating people to participate in the voluntary blood donation to ensure blood is available for treatment as needed.”



# Enjoy life with Bidu cards



A tour of Europe  
for two worth  
VND150,000,000



A trip to South Korea  
for two worth  
VND30,000,000



- ◆ Iphone 7 32Gb  
worth VND18,000,000
- ◆ Samsung Galaxy Tab T585  
worth VND7,000,000



Numerous other  
prizes



Promotion programme

## Enjoy life with BIDV cards <sup>7</sup>

Effective from 23 July to 15 October 2017

For more information, visit [www.bidv.com.vn/songlatanhuong](http://www.bidv.com.vn/songlatanhuong)





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**6.7%**  
p.a

**PREFERENTIAL  
RATE**

From 21 Jun 2017  
To 30 Sep 2017

**CREDIT PACKAGE  
FOR BUSINESS AND PRODUCTION**

**VND 7,000  
billion**



19009247

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