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Lao PDR Steps Up Its Bid to Become a Logistics Hub with First Dry Port

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Cargo trucks pass through the Second Lao–Thai Friendship Bridge over the Mekong river, which connects Savannakhet City with Mukdahan province. The bridge has helped improved the Lao PDR’s access to seaports in neighboring countries. Photo: ADB.

The Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) is operating its first dry port in Savannakhet province, where it is strategically positioned along the [Greater Mekong Subregion East-West Economic Corridor](#) [3], at the mid-point between the nearest Vietnamese seaport of Danang, and Thai ports in Bangkok and Laem Chabang.

A dry port is an inland terminal directly linked to a seaport by rail or road. It is an important component of intermodal transport, which offers door-to-door freight service through the integration of different modes of transport (such as ship, rail, and truck) in the logistics chain, making the handling of goods more efficient and less costly. It is designed to connect carriers, freight forwarders, importers, and exporters with their markets.

The Savannakhet dry port is a free trade zone with onsite customs clearance, inventory tracking and quality control, and provides for transfer, transshipment, and distribution services. It is located in Savan Park, in the Savan-Seno Special Economic Zone C, and is operated by Savan Logistics Co., Ltd. A report from Vientiane Times in early October said Savan Logistics plans to further upgrade its services, such as having agricultural quarantine and inspection services and food and drug inspections at the dry port.

Setting up an inland container terminal is important for Lao PDR, a landlocked country that aspires to become a logistics hub in Southeast Asia.

The East-West Economic Corridor runs straight across mainland Southeast Asia and links important commercial areas in Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam. A key passageway in the corridor is an international bridge that links Savannakhet City to Mukdahan in Thailand. The Second Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge, which officially opened in December 2006, has helped improve the Lao PDR's access to seaports in neighboring countries.

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