



France in Laos

Newsletter of the French Embassy in Laos

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Front Page News



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On 22 October, François Hollande met with Choummaly Sayasone, President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, at the Elysée Palace.



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A word from the Ambassador

Two events this fall were important for France and Laos.

The first was an airplane accident on 16 October in Pakse. A Lao Airlines ATR 72-600 crashed into the Mekong River 8 km from Pakse with 49 people aboard, including five crew members, seventeen Laotians passengers, and seven French passengers. Eleven nationalities were represented in all.

At the time of this writing, two French nationals remain legally unidentified, though unfortunately there is no doubt that they were killed in the tragic accident. Identification should be confirmed by the Unité de Gendarmerie d'Identification de Victimes de Catastrophes [Police Unit for Identifying Catastrophe Victims], with the help of the French Embassy, the crisis centre at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, victims' families, and experts from the Australian police force.

We hope that the cause of the accident will be pinpointed soon. On 18 October a joint effort to search for clues on the ground was launched by a team from the Bureau Enquêtes Accidents and plane manufacturer ATR. The investigation is being overseen by Laotian authorities. However, it is the plane's two black boxes, recovered by Laotian divers working under difficult conditions, that will be key in determining the cause. Flight recordings (data and conversations) are being analysed in France at the behest of the Laotian government.

The Minister of Transport, Sommad Pholsena, unhesitatingly chose to be transparent in the matter, demonstrating a desire to continue our partnership in the aviation and tourism sectors.

The second event was a happier affair: the first official visit to France by a president of the Laotian PDR. Choummaly Sayasone visited France from 21 to 25 October, accompanied by a large delegation of ministers and businesspeople.

The meeting at the Elysée Palace was described in a joint press release and resulted in the signing of three documents, which the reader may view. Attendees witnessed great warmth between the two presidents one year after their initial meeting at Vientiane. Representatives from across France came to proclaim their interest in Laos, including the President of the Senate, Senate and National Assembly Parliamentary friendship groups, the international MEDEF [Movement of the Enterprises of France] which includes many businesses, and public and private companies from Lyons and Rhône-Alpes in France. The Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Airbus and ATR in Toulouse, while the delegation of businesspeople visited the Calvados Chamber of Agriculture.

This autumn will mark a high point in French-Laotian relations as we prepare for visits to Laos by Yamina Benguigui, Deputy Minister for Francophony, and Senators Eblé and Bourzai. The highlight of the trip will be the Rendez-vous de Vientiane from 25 to 30 November.

Kind regards,

Yves Carmona

Official visit by Yamina Benguigui, Deputy Minister for Francophony

Yamina Benguigui, Deputy Minister for Francophony, made an official visit to Laos from 16 to 17 October.



Yamina Benguigui with pupils in bilingual classes at the Lycée de Vientiane

The trip was a high-level visit between Laos and France and comes in preparation for the official visit to Paris by the president of the Lao PDR, S.E.M. Choummaly Sayasone.

During her visit, the Deputy Minister for Francophonie met with the Vice Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the President's cabinet chief, the head of the national commission for mothers and children, and the head of the Laotian section of the Association Parlementaire Francophone [Parliamentary Francophone Association].

In the meetings, Ms Benguigui emphasised her solidarity with the Laotian government and offered her sincere condolences to families of the victims of the 16 October plane crash in Pakse.

Ms Benguigui also spoke of the historical ties that bind Laos and France and the excellent state of the countries' bilateral relations. She declared that francophony meant not only defending our common language, but building a strong community based on human rights, democracy, the promotion of cultural diversity, and multilateralism. As part of this vision, Ms Benguigui organised the World Francophone Women's Forum, to which Laos sent three representatives.

The Deputy Minister also stated that France would stand by Laos as it continues to grow, open up economically, and become a developed country. She said that being a francophone country was "a boon to the economy", since the ability to speak French gives businesses a competitive advantage in francophone markets such as Africa and Asia.

Ms Benguigui concluded her trip by visiting the Résidence de France where she met with members of the Laotian francophone community.

Agenda

OCTOBER

17 October

Visit to Laos by the Deputy Minister for Francophony, Yamina Benguigui

21-25 October

Visit to France by the President of the Lao PDR, Choummaly Sayasone

NOVEMBER

3-6 November

Visit by the President and Deputy President of the Senate's France-Laos friendship group, Vincent Eblé and Bernadette Bourzai.

25-30 November

First Rendez-vous de Vientiane

DECEMBER

2 December

Laos National Day

4 December

EFEO conference at the IFL: "The Round Cities of Southern Laos"

13 December

Student Christmas party at the IFL

Bilateral relations

Visit by the President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to France



The president of the Lao PDR, Choummaly Sayasone, made an official visit to France from 21 to 25 October. On 22 October he met with the president of France, François Hollande (joint press release).

François Hollande, President of France, hailed Laos' role in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). The latest summit of state and government leaders was held in Vientiane in November 2012 and was presided over by Laos.

The heads of state discussed the historic ties and close bonds that united their countries and the excellent cooperation and relationship between them. Mr Hollande reaffirmed France's commitment to Laos' development and regional integration, including a cooperative effort with countries in the Mekong Basin.

The leaders also expressed their desire to improve relations and dialogue with the European Union and agreed to strengthen the economic and commercial ties between the two countries. They would like to see more investment from French companies, more small businesses, and productive economic relations, especially in the areas of food processing, energy, infrastructure, health, tourism, and transport.

They also cited the importance of cooperation in improving institutions, reforming administrations, and governance, stating their common desire for decentralised cooperation and involvement from civil society and non-governmental organisations.

The presidents also reaffirmed the importance of cultural cooperation and development and their joint commitment to the French-speaking world. They expressed their pleasure at the agreement by Laotian authorities to expand French lycée Josué-Hoffet. They also wish to improve training programs for teachers of French in Laos.

During the visit, the leaders signed an agreement to finance an AFD programme to develop mountainous regions in northern Laos and another agreement to provide funding from FSP to care for southern Laos heritage sites and restore Vat Phu, a world heritage site. They also signed a joint declaration for a feasibility study to expand the Nam Theun 2 hydroelectric dam.

Finally, the two presidents honoured the victims of the 16 October 2013 plane crash and agreed to work closely to identify victims and determine the cause of the accident.

Recipients of scholarships from French government depart for France

In order to prepare new recipients of scholarships from the French government for their visit to France, on 20 August CampusFrance Laos organised an information session followed by a cocktail reception attended by the French ambassador.



Departing pupils spent the afternoon hearing from three former scholarship recipients who came to speak about their own experiences in France and answer questions from young Laotian students.

At a cocktail reception organised by the French Institute, the new scholarship recipients met Yves Carmona, French ambassador to Laos, and Lammai Phiphakhavong, vice president of the National University of Laos, who congratulated them warmly. Some forty people attended the occasion in all, including university directors and professors, former scholarship recipients, members of the Association de Promotion de la Langue Française [Association for the Promotion of the French Language, or APLF], and the French Embassy's Cooperation and Cultural Action Service team.

This year, about forty new Laotian pupils will be attending French universities, including eleven new scholars—mostly master's and doctoral students—who will be continuing their studies in engineering, teaching, economic science, and architecture. Scholarship recipients receive a grant that covers tuition, social security, a round-trip plane ticket, and daily expenses for two to three years.

While living in France, pupils will continue to receive aid and assistance from CampusFrance Laos, who will be available to guide them.

CampusFrance and the French Embassy in Laos both wish the students bon voyage and an excellent year!

CampusFrance in Laos



Laos' CampusFrance centre will host multiple programs in 2013-2014 to encourage young Laotians to begin or continue their studies in France:

- **Individual interviews:** personalised travel assistance for candidates (aptitude tests, education information, degrees and life in France, visa applications, etc.)
- **Workshops on specific topics:** preparing departing pupils for life in France, providing them with guidance on administrative hurdles, housing, social security, cost of living in France, etc.
- **Events at secondary schools and universities:** to introduce pupils to education, paths of study, and degrees in France.
- **And events by the Association des Anciens Etudiants Laotiens en France [Association of Former Laotian Students in France]:** the APLF helps its members maintain their love of the French language and culture, encourages and promotes education in French, and helps young graduates find jobs upon their return.

The CampusFrance guidance office is open Monday to Friday, 9.00 to 12.00 and 14.00 to 17.00.

Espace CampusFrance Laos - Institut Français du Laos,

Avenue Lane Xang, BP 6572 Vientiane

Tel : (856-21) 21 57 64 - E-mail : campusfrance@if-laos.org

Social Development Fund aids associations representing the disabled

The Laotian government and people are committed to promoting inclusive development for the disabled in Laos. France believes that associations representing the disabled play a crucial role in this development process. As such, France helps improve associations' capacities and participation in development through a Social Development Fund (FSD).

After authorisation was granted in April 2009 to create local associations in Laos, a number of associations representing the disabled were founded. The associations facilitate access to health care and services and educate the public about the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

France supports the cause by providing aid to associations through the FSD. The goal of this support is to improve Laos' ability to create local programmes that help the country develop socially and economically. So far the Fund has provided financial and technical assistance to six associations specialising in support for the disabled by:

Lao Disabled Women Development Center (LDWDC) - Supporting a home

and rehabilitation centre for disabled Laotian women. The women receive professional training in hands-on workshops to learn sewing, weaving, massage, reiki, etc.

Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise (COPE) - Spreading awareness about undetonated landmines and helping the Centre grow by improving its communication abilities and advocating for the disabled.

Quality of Life Association - Providing professional training in artisan work for landmine victims, giving them a source of income and greater independence.

Association for the Deaf - Supporting inclusion of the deaf and hard of hearing, helping develop a Laotian Sign Language, and

teaching sign language to the public

Association for People Living with Epilepsy - Improving access to treatment by persons living with epilepsy, spreading awareness, and helping reduce the stigma of epilepsy.

Oudomxay Disabled People Association - Promoting inclusive education for disabled children ages 3 to 11 in Oudomxay.

Through grants of \$40,000 to \$80,000, support from the FSD has helped expand these associations' capacities and aided them in their work to create a Laos that is structured, recognised, and active in the promotion of a society that is inclusive of the disabled.

Meeting with the Association for the Deaf

About the Association for the Deaf...

The Association for the Deaf is the only association known for promoting the rights of the deaf and hard of hearing in Laos. We are active in advocacy work, educating people about the deaf and hard of hearing, researching and developing a Laotian Sign Language, and sign language training and interpretation.

We also work with the government and NGOs to promote inclusive education and the right to information, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

What kinds of work have you been able to do with the help of the FSD?

We have been able to hold sign language training seminars in five provinces for over 250 people in the deaf community, their families, the government, police officers, and teachers.

Thanks to these seminars, the deaf and hard-of-hearing can now communicate

with their families, the government is better informed, and some institutions are even asking us to provide translation services.



We have also provided free sign language classes to the general public. The classes are held once a week for three months in Vientiane. Finally, we have been able to continue our research into creating a Laotian Sign Language and have added 246 words to the existing vocabulary. We also created the first short film about the deaf and hard-of-hearing community in Laos. The success of the project and the FSD's support have

allowed us to become a nationally registered association with independent status. We are the only association known for promoting the rights of the deaf and hard of hearing in Laos.

What are your next challenges?

Although we are a leading association for deaf rights in Laos, there are still many obstacles to overcome before Laos becomes an inclusive society that provides equal opportunities for the deaf and hard-of-hearing, especially in the areas of education, teacher and interpreter training, creating schools for the deaf, and developing a Laotian Sign Language.

The association is working to create an inclusive society that will give deaf persons access to education and employment. We will continue our advocacy work to train future deaf leaders, expand the association and increase its membership and partnerships, diversify our revenue sources, and strengthen our internal abilities to reach the organisation's goals.

Five questions for Jérôme Letemplier, hotel manager in Pakse

Jérôme Letemplier and his wife have lived in Laos for thirteen years. They recently purchased and renovated the Hôtel Pakse. He describes his move to Laos and his experience in Pakse and gives advice to French investors interested in Laos.

When did you come to Laos?

We moved here in 2000, after a few exploratory visits. My wife is from Pakse. She's the one who brought me here. Before that, I didn't really know the country at all.

What made you decide to move to Pakse?

A desire for something besides the same old life in France, to experience something different.

It was also a personal challenge to restore an old building that was highly unusual for what we wanted to do with it, and then to run it as a business with my wife.

The economy and tourism at the time were not very developed in Laos, but we sensed enormous potential, especially in southern Laos, which is a hidden tourist jewel. It has a variety of landscapes, changing scenery, preserved lands, history, nature, and social and cultural relationships.

For my wife, who is part of the Laotian diaspora, it was also an opportunity to return to her roots.

Tell us about the move.

It was a bit complicated, because there weren't many foreigners living in Laos at

the time, especially in the south. But with the relative kindness (and probably a lot of curiosity!) of local authorities, everything worked out in the end. Without the help of my wife and in-laws living in the area, it would have been much more difficult!

In general, if you don't know anything about Asia, moving to Laos can cause a lot of different feelings. The difference between daily life in Europe and Laos are enormous. It can be very educational, often frustrating, but also motivating if you look on the bright side of things.

Overall, it's been a unique experience!

Have you seen a change in clientele?

The type of customer has changed over time. Before the early 2000s, the country was still very closed. Most visitors were backpackers. When the borders officially opened, we began seeing a gradual increase in the class of travellers. Demand has changed in that people are seeking a more Western-style quality of service that is still authentic. With the recession in the Western world, the clientele has stayed the same, but they have less money to spend.

We are also seeing more business travellers, mainly from ASEAN countries, and more crossborder tourism.

There have also been more new luxury

clients seeking high-end establishments and services.

What would you say to French business-owners who want to move to Laos?

First of all, considering the legislative and administrative environment, the first thing is to choose the right partner.

Then you should position yourself in the market in such a way that cultural expertise makes a difference. You need to provide real added value compared to your competitors, so you can find a niche and avoid fast-moving, undercutting copycats.

You should also remember that the definition of success here is different from what you would expect in a country that has been developed for a longer period of time. Most administrative matters are still conducted in French, which is an advantage for French companies moving here. However, the next generation is leaning towards learning English as a second language.

Finally, don't think you can move here on just a few thousand euros. You will need quite a large budget to come here legally.

The **Hôtel Pakse** is an imposing building built by Prince Chao Boun Oum in the early 1960s. It began as a popular gathering place in Pakse and included a hotel, casino, and film theatre. It was becoming rundown when Mr Letemplier and his wife purchased it.

"We tried to preserve its original charm as much as possible and give it the character we thought travellers to ancient Indochina expected a more histori-



cal than completely modern aspect", he says.

However, the hotel still offers modern amenities such as an elevator, cable and satellite television, and high-speed internet.

"It's not a five-star hotel, more like a 3+ star hotel—above average. We just want guests to feel at home, but without the pretension, like a big family hotel. One of our priorities is our relationships with our guests and providing a personal touch!"

One of the hotel's highlights is its restaurant and bar, which are located on a terrace with a breathtaking panoramic view overlooking the city, the Mekong River, and the nearby mountains.

An excellent table at a unique establishment in Pakse!

<http://www.hotelpakse.com>

The Rendez-vous de Vientiane

The first French-Laotian week

The first Rendez-vous de Vientiane will be held from 25 to 30 November 2013 in multiple locations around the capital city. Featuring economic, scientific, cultural, and even sporting events, the week is a perfect way to close out the year!

To better understand the advantages of French-Laotian relations and the benefits to French businesses and politicians of having a greater presence in Laos, the French ambassador to Laos and the French and European business community have organised the first Rendez-vous de Vientiane.

A number of events will be held throughout the week to showcase France's work in Laos, promote business between the two countries, and improve the image of and knowledge about Laos in France.

Encouraging businesses to invest in Laos

Events are being organised jointly by French businesses in Laos, the CGPME, the CNCCEF, and the European Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Lao PDR (ECCIL).

A multi-sector trade fair, where French and Laotian businesses can meet

One of the highlights of the week will be the three-day multi-sector trade fair where French and European businesses wishing to export their services or skills can exhibit their products and knowledge. Businesses already operating in Laos or the region will be available to share their experiences with French visitors.

A presentation on "Investing in Laos, the Crossroads of ASEAN"

Organised by the European Chamber of Commerce, the presentation will provide participants to the region and opportunities to which Laos may be a gateway.

In a series of round tables and meetings, businesses already operating in Laos will share their experiences with potential investors and offer opportunities to make industry field visits.



In addition to these two economic events, **CampusFrance** conferences will offer Laotian pupils job prospects through French apprenticeships.

Three days dedicated to urban planning

A science symposium

A two-day international science symposium on "Emerging Cities in Southeast Asia: Urban governance, real estate, and regulation" will bring together scientists, experts, political decision-takers, and businesspeople from France, Laos, and the subregion.

To close the symposium, on 28 November, a day dedicated to "Better City Living", workshops and professional meetings will showcase the knowledge of small businesses and large companies from France in the fields of urban planning and

construction, municipal-service management, and green development.

Cultural events throughout the week!

The weekend before the Rendez-vous de Vientiane, the international Fang Mae Khong festival will offer spectators two evenings of modern dance.

On Tuesday and Wednesday evening, **trumpet-player Erik Truffaz and French-Beninese singer Mina Agossi** will liven up the Culture Palace with two jazz concerts.

On Thursday, the public will be treated to a **fashion show** put on by French-Laotian stylist Nithaya Somsanith and a **ceramic arts exhibition** featuring works by plastic artist Yiumsiri Vantanapindu and other Laotian artists. There will also be a **cinema** with French and Laotian films screenings at the French Institute (Wednesday) and the Lao ITECC (Friday).

Finally, **electro band La Femme** will perform on closing night at a dance!

Food and sporting events

Throughout the week, a cuisine tour will offer tasting menus for a single price. The event is sponsored by French restaurants in Vientiane.

Finally, a **pétanque tournament** is being organised with the support of the Fédération Française de Pétanque [French Federation of Pétanque] and its Laotian counterpart.

Come join us in celebrating this first week of French-Laotian relations!

RENDEZ-VOUS de VIENTIANE AGENDA



Saturday and Sunday
Boulodrome
Opening of the competition
Pétanque

Monday 25 november

Tuesday 26 november

9:30 - 9:00
National Convention Center
Official Opening

19:00 - 21:00
National Convention Center
Laotian Welcome Evening
(invitation only)

9:00 - 17:30
National Convention Center
"Investing in Laos"
Economic Seminar

9:00 - 17:30
National Convention Center
"Emerging cities in
South East Asia"
Scientific Conference

11:00 - 18:00
National Convention Center
Multi-sector Trade Fair

17:00 - 19:00
National Cultural Hall
Erik Truffaz
Jazz Concert

19:30 - 22:00
French Residence
Gala Dinner
(invitation only)

Wednesday 27 november - Parisian Soirée

MAIRIE DE PARIS

9:00 - 18:00
National Convention Center
"Emerging cities in South East Asia"
Scientific Conference

9:30 - 18:00
National Convention Center
"Investing in Laos"
Professional Meetings

10:00 - 18:00
National Convention Center
Multi-sector Trade Fair
Open to the public

CAMPUS
FRANCE

14:00 - 18:00
French Institute
"Paris au présent"
Cinema

18:00 - 20:00
National Cultural Hall
Mina Agossi
Jazz Concert

Thursday 28 novembre

9:00 - 16:00
National Convention Center
Multi-sector Trade Fair

9:00 - 12:00
National Convention Center
"Enhancing urban living"
Presentation Workshops

12:00
National Convention Center
Awards Ceremony
& Official Ending
Scientific Conference

14:00 - 17:00
National Convention Center
"Enhancing urban living"
Professional Meetings

18:00 - 21:00
National Cultural Hall
Cultural Evening
*Art ceramic Exhibition
Fashion show & concerts*

Friday 29 novembre

All day
Boulodrome
Ambassador's Cup
Finals
Pétanque

14:00 - 18:00
ITEOC
French-Laotian Movie Festival
Cinema

19:00 - 23:00
Place to determine
La femme
Doll, Electro-pop concert and Official Closing

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Updated agenda 28/10/2013 (can be modified)

What's on at the French Institute

New sessions of French courses at the French Institute!

The French Institute in Laos offers a wide range of French classes for the 1,200 pupils that attend the Institute each year. Here is a glimpse into what's new in 2014.



As in previous years, all courses will meet the exacting guidelines set by the Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages] and are taught by a team of instructors specialised in teaching French as a Second Language.

Every year the Institute also offers several DELF and DALF exam sittings for all levels, including the junior version. The first session of DELF for schools will be held in 2014 as part of an agreement between the IFL, the French Embassy, and the Lao-tian Ministry of Education and Sports. The session is intended for pupils in bilingual classes in their last year of secondary school anywhere in the country.

Over the years, the IFL has diversified its training programmes and has expanded

tools targeted to local audiences. Programmes include general French, French for tourism, French for the workplace, and early French, and are designed to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse audience.

The IFL, which has been approved by the Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration [French Office of Immigration and Integration], gives long-stay students in France an introduction to the French language and France's values. To apply for a residence permit and language classes, contact consular services at the French Embassy.

This new session, along with next year's session, will be just as fun and effective. Some of the courses at the IFL will use digital textbooks and interactive whiteboards to make learning languages more active and exciting. Younger pupils will benefit from revised methods. "Les Loustics" and "Adosphère" are two new programmes debuting next year and will also make use of digital resources.

A new special website will allow pupils to access learning resources from any

computer and even send questions to their instructor. Additional resources can be found in the Institute's media library, whose holdings are constantly being updated.

The session will include the new Coffee Corner, an English conversation course based around a coffee hour where pupils can improve their skills in the peaceful, inviting IFL gardens and cafeteria.

In partnership with the British Council, in 2014 the Institute will begin offering more English courses for all levels and an option to study both French and English. This option will help prepare pupils for the increasingly specialised demands of potential employers.

But it's not all work and no play at the IFL language centre!

Pupils can mix business and pleasure at the Institute's francophone and francophile events, which include a Christmas party and contest, video contests, a francophony week, and the now-famous Miss and Mr IFL pageant.

Delphine BOURGEOISVOLALONG
Course Director



The Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient

Although it has only been in Vientiane since 1993, the Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient [French School of the Far East] and its researchers have played (and continue to play!) an essential role in broadening knowledge about the Far East. Its directors, Yves Goudineau and Christine Hawixbrock, agreed to tell us a bit about it.

The Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient (EFEO) was originally created in 1898 as the "Archaeological Mission to Indochina" by Orientalists seeking to found a French institution dedicated to Asian studies. Built on the model of the Ecoles Françaises [French Schools] of Athens and Rome, and placed under the patronage of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, it received its current name in 1900. Its headquarters was initially located in Vietnam (specifically in Hanoi beginning in 1902) but was permanently transferred to Paris in 1954. Since then, the EFEO has been under the purview of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research.

The school's original purpose of archaeological research has morphed into a more generalised mission of preserving and promoting historical monuments in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. In the first half of the 20th century, some 2,000 cites were inventoried and mapped, and monuments that needed it were cleaned up. Many were restored. Such was the case in Angkor, whose monuments the EFEO was responsible for until 1974 (and where the EFEO remains very active today).

The EFEO also worked in Cham in Vietnam (including on the My Son monument) and in Laos (the Pha That Luang and Wat Phrakaew monuments). The Ecole also built museums to teach the public about various civilisations. The museums were nationalised after independence. The EFEO's exceptional document archives are still used for research today.

The organisation also works in other fields essential to studying Asian civilisations, such as history, epigraphy (the study of inscriptions), philology, religious anthropology, and ethnography. Early in its history, the geographic area that the EFEO studied was expanded to



include China and Japan, and then India and southeast Asia with countries like Thailand and Indonesia.

Today, the EFEO has 18 locations in Asia featuring research branches and centres accessible to researchers and students. Many of the locations, including the Vientiane centre, are a rich resource of documents and information open to the public. The Ecole currently has 42 permanent scientist members in addition to visiting and contract researchers. It works on projects in cooperation with its host countries and forms a part of French and European science networks.

EFEO members conducted scientific research regularly in Laos from 1900 to the 1960s. Amongst them were Henri Parmentier working in archaeology, Louis Finot in Laotian literature, and Charles Archaimbault in ethnology. But a permanent centre was not opened in Vientiane until 1993, with the help of the Ministry of Culture. The centre (and notably researcher François Bizot) initially focused on studying and writing Laotian Buddhist texts, but today it works in a variety of fields that include history, anthropology, archaeology, and art history.

The main current research programs involve the inventorying and publication of Laotian Inscriptions (Michel Lorrillard),



the ethnology of ethnic Austroasiatic minorities with research mainly in southern Laos (Yves Goudineau), Khmer archaeology with a particular focus on the Vat Phu site (Christine Hawixbrock), and other studies of the dissemination of Laotian historical, religious, and technical literature.

Since 2005 the centre has had a research library containing 4,800 works (freely-accessible books), including a unique collection on Laos that is updated constantly. The library is open to the public Monday to Friday.

**Yves Goudineau,
Christine Hawixbrock**

For the history of the EFEO, read *Un siècle pour l'Asie. L'École française d'Extrême-Orient (1898-2000)*, by Catherine Clémentin-Ojha and Pierre-Yves Manguin, EFEO, 2001

EFEO Centre of Vientiane
1 rue Sisangvone
Ban Naxay, Vientiane
8.00-12.00 – 13.30-16.30
www.efeo.fr

The Headmaster's remarks

One month after the start of the school year, the new headmaster, **Mr. Sébastien Mathey**, shares school news and events.

French lycée Josué-Hoffet currently educates 530 pupils from eighteen different countries.

The large increase in enrolment is partly due to the school's excellent results (100% of pupils passed the baccalaureate exam in 2013, 91% with honours) as well as its multicultural language courses. All pupils between year 6 and year 12 study for the main English language certifications, the IELTS and TOEFL.

The lycée is currently working to implement two new certifications:

- HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) in Mandarin in collaboration with the Confucius Institute
- In Laotian in partnership with the local ministry.

One of the year's most remarkable events was Vissa Chanthaphassouk's July victory in Paris at the



Mr. Sébastien Mathey, new Headmaster, took up his functions on September 2013.

world "Budding Ambassador" competition held by UNESCO and AEFÉ.

This year again, the school will be organising historical activities, such as field trips for pupils in primary school, year 7, and year 9; sporting events in the Asia-Pacific region, such as athletic competitions in Singapore and swim meets in Shanghai; and pilot activities for global learning, such as the Budding Ambassador 2 and the One Hundred Year Anniversary of World War I.

There are many more activities not listed here. You can visit the school's website any time to read the latest news.

The school year was punctuated by the arrival of a Bangkok-

based regional adviser for orientation and higher education. The adviser is the director of the information and orientation centre. His primary responsibility is to provide skills and expertise to instructors to give pupils the key to successfully continuing their studies.

Like Vientiane itself, French lycée Josué-Hoffet is growing rapidly. To meet the growing demand and to fulfil more stringent quality and teaching needs, we will continue our expansion to a new bigger site.

We wish everyone an excellent school year in 2013-2014!

Sébastien MATHEY, Headmaster

Lycée Josué-Hoffet's website:
<http://www.lyceehoffet.org/>

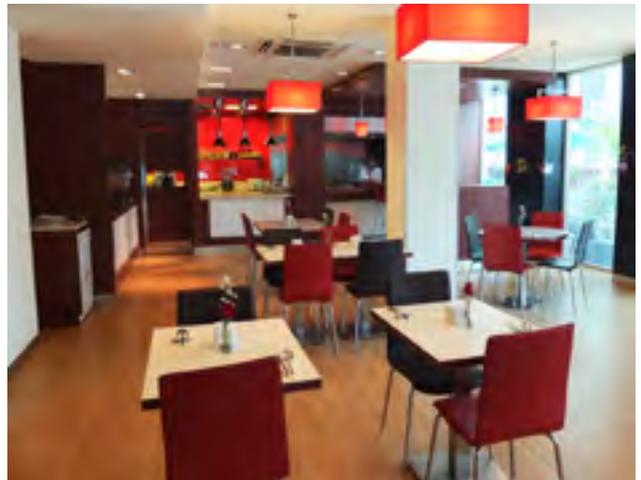


The Hôtel Ibis Nam Phu in Vientiane

Newly opened this summer, Vientiane's new Ibis Hotel overlooks the famous Nam Phu fountain. The hotel offers a restaurant and bar and 64 rooms that meet the French hotel's standards of quality.

Located in the heart of the city only 15 minutes from Wattay International Airport, guests at the Hôtel Ibis Nam Phu have easy access to the nearby neighbourhood, which features historic monuments such as Wat Si Saket and Wat Phrakaew, embassies, and restaurants and cafés along the Mekong.

The hotel provides good value and offers WiFi and snacks all day long to make guests feel at home. The Open Pasta & Grill lets guests create their own meals by choosing a pasta, meat, sauce, and side.



Suitable for both business travellers and tourists to the capital city, the hotel's 64 double rooms (available with a double bed or two single beds) offer contemporary lodgings complete with wood floors, bay windows, and numerous amenities (television, coffee, teapot, safe, etc.).

French group Accor, the leading European hotel company, operates in 92 countries. The Hôtel Ibis Nam Phu is its second location in Laos, after the Hôtel Mercure in the city centre. One of the company's new hotels, Pullman, may also open a location in Luang Prabang in the next few months.

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Association Vientiane Accueil

As a francophone welcome association in Laos, we organise various activities for children and adults, such as drawing, music, football, water exercise, swimming, archery, tai chi, lacquer work, mah-jong, theatre, etc.

Our motto is friendship!

To see our schedule and participate in the meetings and cultural events we organise, contact us at

vientianeaccueil@yahoo.fr

Chair: Jean-Jacques Beudelot (020 78 10 45 08)

Departures - Arrivals

- Ms Marie Keller is replacing Mr Guillaume Habert as Head Adviser.
- Mr Jérôme Dubois-Mercent is taking over from Mr Jean-Pierre Galland as the Cooperation and Cultural Action Adviser.
- Mr Sébastien Mathey is replacing Mr Olivier Decloître as headmaster of the Lycée Josué-Hoffet.
- Mr Hugues Labyt is taking over from Mr Olivier Huant as estimator.
- Ms Micheline Assier is replacing Ms Nafissa Payen as secretary of the Diplomatic Chancery.
- Ms Aurélie Bellon is replacing Ms Delphine Auzanneau as head of the FSD.
- Ms Marie Pluche is taking over from Mr Adrien Ansart as press intern.

Digital archives



This quarterly newsletter is published in French and English.

Back copies can be downloaded in PDF format from the Embassy website :

www.ambafrance-laos.org/484

GOOD TO KNOW

Useful numbers and other practical information can be obtained at any time on the website of the French Embassy to Laos: www.ambafrance-laos.org

Regularly updated, the section "Service aux Français" covers all information concerning consular activities, as well as health and safety recommendations.

USEFUL CONTACTS

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Emergencies only (+856) 020 555 14 751

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Vientiane Police station (+856) 021 21 27 06
Fire Department (+856) 021 21 27 07

Embassy Medical Centre (+856) 021 21 41 50
Emergencies only (+856) 020 56 55 47 94

Mahosot Hospital (+856) 021 21 40 18/19
Friendship Hospital (emergencies) (+856) 021 41 33 00
Vientiane Ambulance Station 195 or 021 26 11

Thai hospitals

- Wattana Nong Khai (+66) 42 46 52 01
International contact: Mr Paul, (+66) 8 18 33 42 62
Contact in Laos: Mr Assanaï, (+856) 021 24 00 97
- Wattana Udon Thani (+66) 42 24 19 56
- AEK Clinic (Udon)) (+66) 42 34 25 55

Alarm Center in Bangkok: (+66) 22 56 71 46
Friendship Bridge Immigration Service:
(+856) 021 81 20 40 / 81 20 37

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Cette année, profitez dès avril de nos tarifs basse saison à la Villa Maly et au Kamu Lodge !
This year, enjoy low season tariffs at Villa Maly and Kamu Lodge!

Pour tout complément d'information contactez votre Agence de Voyage ou Julien Moret.
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