

New WB Vice President visits Laos

THE World Bank's new Vice President for East Asia and the Pacific Region, Mr James W. Adams, arrives in Laos today for a four-day official visit, in what will be his first trip to the country.

Mr Adams, who was appointed the Bank's vice president of the region in September 2006, will be meeting with high-level government officials, members of the donor, civil society and private sector community, and visiting World Bank-financed projects in Xaythany district in Vientiane, Khammuan and Savannakhet provinces.

"This is a very important time for the Lao PDR and for the World Bank," said the Country Manager for the Lao PDR Mr Patchanmuthu Illangovan. "In the last few months the country has laid out its development plan for key reforms in the new 5-year plan, revised the budget law, presented their plan on governance reform, signed the Vientiane Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and taken important measures to reduce the threat of Avian and Human Influenza, among others, all crucial steps towards achieving the country's goal of being out

of Least Developed Country Status by 2020."

As part of its Country Assistance Strategy, the World Bank has 14 active lending projects in the country, and is conducting a number of analytic works aimed at supporting the Lao PDR's National Socio-Economic Development Plan.

The Bank's strategy focuses on sustaining growth, improving outcomes through better service delivery, strengthening capacity development and supporting Nam Theun 2 implementation.

—World Bank office in
Vientiane