

billion), down 9%, while production and consumption of natural minerals totalled about VND7.99 trillion (US\$347.4 million) - up 38%; production and sale of electricity hit VND7 trillion (US\$304.3 million) - down 5%; and consumption of coal hit 22.53 million tonnes, down 5% year-on-year.

The General Statistics Office (GSO) announced that in the first six months of 2021, 70,200 enterprises nationwide halted operations and are awaiting disbandment, up 24.9% as compared to the same period last year. On average, each month witnessed about 11,700 businesses leaving the market.

"However, the momentum for economic growth in 2021 will continue coming from the industrial-construction and the service sector, especially from processing and manufacturing industries, an increase in investment and expansion of trade activities through effectively taking advantage of free trade agreements that Vietnam have signed with foreign partners," Minister Dung said.

Expectations

The government hopes its policies in favour of enterprise will help businesses strengthen their confidence and performance.

"In the context of COVID-19 becoming increasingly complicated, Vietnam is the only economy in the globe that have been raised to a 'positive' rating in terms of its economic outlook by the three global rating firms of Moody's, S&P and Fitch," Minister Dung said.

The World Bank Group recently ago enacted its Global Economic Prospects report for June 2021, forecasting that Vietnam's economy will grow at 6.6% in 2021 and 6.5% next year, relatively high given the pandemic is now raging in the economy.

"Vietnam has been successful in containing COVID-19 and has benefitted from fiscal

measures supporting public investment and robust foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows," the report read. "Among the smaller ASEAN countries, only Vietnam has seen output surpassing pre-pandemic levels. Mobility around retail areas remains subdued, reflecting the continued spread of the virus amid the slow progress of vaccination. Consumer spending has therefore been lagging, but industrial output has mostly recovered, helped by a quick rebound in regional goods exports."

At present, Vietnam's economic growth relies on the recovery of the global economy as its GDP value is equal to 63% of its total export-import turnover. Thus, a positive impact from new demand-stimulus bailouts in big economies in the world who are Vietnam's trade partners is hoped to push up demand for Vietnam's goods.

Additional fiscal solutions announced in some nations in the past few months will add to the overall support this year, including in the US, Japan, Germany, Canada, and India. Many nations have also extended their current income support schemes, or are planning for their reintroduction, as in Brazil.

In Europe, spending of €2.018 trillion (US\$2.45 trillion) from the Next Generation recovery fund is due to begin later in 2021, but the total discretionary fiscal stimulus this year appears likely to be relatively mild, at around 1% of GDP in the euro area, despite considerable capacity.

The extent of fiscal support in the US for 2021 is set to be remarkably bigger than in many other nations. The Consolidated Appropriations Act passed in December 2020 contained temporary solutions valued at US\$900 billion or 4% of the US' GDP. It is largely centred on emergency assistance for households and the unemployed.

In March, US President Joe Biden signed the