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| **Trade surplus hits $19 billion, highest since 2016**  HANOI – Vietnam is estimated to enjoy a trade surplus of US$19.1 billion this year, the highest since 2016, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.  The country’s total trade revenue has hit $543.9 billion, up 5.1 percent year-on-year. Of the total, export value is $281.5 billion and import $262.4 billion, year-on-year rises of 6.5 percent and 3.6 percent, respectively.  Phong from the GSO’s Trade and Service Statistics Department said the trade surplus is a bright spot contributing remarkably to economic growth and aiding the exchange rate and foreign exchange reserves in the context of Vietnam needing more resource for post-pandemic economic recovery in 2021.  While the world economy is seriously affected by the pandemic, the trade surplus of $19.1 billion shows Vietnam has taken advantage of opportunities brought by signed free trade agreement, especially the EU-Vietnam FTA and the quality of the country’s exports has improved, meeting the requirements of **choosy markets**.  According to the GSO, in 2020, 31 commodities enjoyed export turnover of more than $1billion, with six posting export values of more than $10 billion, accounting for 64.3 percent of the total export turnover.  The heavy industry and **mineral** sector enjoyed the biggest export value of %152.5 billio, up 11.3 percent year-on-year.  On the other side, 35 commodities posted import values of more than $1 billion this year, with four reaching $10 billion accounting for 49.4 percent of total import revenue.  **Vietnam becomes second biggest exporter to US**  Vietnam moved up four spots to become the second-biggest exporter to the US in 2020, with its export turnover to the country surging 24.5 percent to an estimated $76.4 billion.  Besides traditional exports like textiles, footwear and **aquatic products**, Vietnam has also shipped electronics, **spare parts** and wooden products to the market.  However, Vietnam’s exporters to the US account for only 2.7 percent of the American country’s total imports from all countries and territories worldwide.  Phong suggested Vietnam make more efforts to help US businesses operating in Vietnam deal with difficulties, and import more from the US, particularly commodities such as energy, agricultural products, pharmaceutical products and machinery.  Accordign to the Vietnam Trade Office in the US, the two countries have withnessed a strong breakthrough in bilateral trade turnoverm especially Vietnam’s exports to the US.  Statistics from the US side show that two-way trade increased to $75.7 billion in 2019 from just $450 million in 1995 when the two countries established diplomatic relations.  Apart from trade cooperation, the two countries have also enhanced toes in investment, research, etc. | **choosy markets:** những thị trường kén chọn.  **Mineral:** quặng, khoáng vật.  **aquatic products:** thủy sản.  **spare parts:** phụ tùng. |