

In the first three quarters of 2000, the Binh Dương Customs, although understaffed, managed to overcome difficulties and complete their tasks, collected over VND198 billion in tax payments (much higher than the planned target of VND190.2 billion for the year 2000) accounting for 21.3% of the provincial budget income. Of this sum, income from customs and excise duties equals 105% of the planned target while that from the VAT 108.6%.

The Binh Dương Customs kept on reforming customs formalities to facilitate export and import by local companies and held regular meeting with businesspersons from industrial parks with a view to handling their complaints and helping them go through formalities.

Security and social order at two border gates, Hoa Lư and Hoàng Diệu, are ensured. People who do cross-border trade have become more law-abiding. The Customs also cooperated with border patrol and local governments in struggling against smuggling.

Regarding the foreign investment in Binh Dương in the past three quarters, licenses were granted to 68

new projects worth US\$252.8 million, 22 existing projects were allowed to increase invested capital, making the total number of licensed projects amount to 317 and registered capital to US\$2,190 million. The targets set by the provincial government for the year 2000 was to increase the foreign investment by US\$300 - 350 million (equaling the increase realized in 1999) and raise the total foreign investment in Binh Dương to US\$2.2 billion. Thus, from 72% to 84% of these targets were achieved in the first three quarters. Most industrial parks (such as Sóng Thần II, VSIP and Đồng An) in Binh Dương are developing well and becoming more and more attractive in the eyes of investors.

In the first nine months of 2000, 437 companies (329 are local ones and 108 are from other provinces) completed customs formalities at the Binh Dương Customs.

The Binh Dương Customs have been equipped with computers needed for improvements in their jobs. The General Department of Customs also provided them with necessary software used for processing customs declarations, making daily reports, and controlling codes

granted to exporters and importers. Their computers are connected to the office of Binh Dương People's Committee. A plan has been made to equip all customs offices with multi-function management software.

Generally, all companies in Binh Dương are law-abiding but there are still some violations: three smuggling cases, 17 commercial frauds and 59 violations of custom formalities were detected in the past nine months; the Customs fined 57 cases a total of VND121.75 million.

Up to now, the Binh Dương Customs have done many things to improve their performance: rearranging and downsizing their offices and agencies, beefing up their consultative services to the People's Committee, opening a new office to serve companies outside industrial parks. At present, they have five offices where companies could complete formalities and have their complaints handled. All formalities and regulations are publicized with a view to making the Customs an organization that helps companies accomplish their financial obligations to the State and improve their businesses. ■

## THE BÌNH DƯƠNG CUSTOMS AND THE REFORM IN THEIR FORMALITIES

by LÊ THỌ

