

15 March 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

Launching Construction of NR 8, Prek Tameak - Anlong Chrey



15 March 06—Samdech Hun Sen with people and the Chinese construction workers during the opening construction of the NR 8 at Svay Antor district, Prey Veng province.

... It is indeed my pleasure to be with you all today. On our people's behalf I would like to express the Cambodian people's gratitude to the people and Government of the People's Republic of China for all of their assistances to the Kingdom of Cambodia, take for instance the NR 8 which never exists in the country's past. Just now HE Chang Jin Feng, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, mentioned about the two country's relationships in the past over ten years - which is remarkable and memorable. The provision of assistance, grant, non-interest and commercial loans are making contribution to the socio-economic development in the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Madame Ambassador has also asserted that the on-going assembly of the People's National Congress of China reaffirms PRC's foreign policy in its relations with neighbor-

ing countries by showing clearly the Chinese role in contributing largely to peace and stability in the region and the world as well. It has been a long time that Cambodia affirms its One China Policy. What is important here is that China's development and emergence is no threat to any country but on the contrary every country is benefiting from China. Take for instance it would be a plus for Cambodia if it could attract 3 million Chinese tourists and I am sure this figure will one day be happening.

The twin provinces has also been established between the Province of Prey Veng and the Autonomous Region of Quangxi. China allocated 300 million US dollars of its 5 billion US dollars for Cambodia. We have made use of the sum and we are asking more. The NR 8 is using a part of the said amount together with
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10 March 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

Inaugurating RUPP's Multi-Study Hall

Since it is March 10 today, just two days from the International Women's Day, please allow me to congratulate our women and female students here and wish them the very best five Buddhist blessings. I am glad to come back to the RUPP once again to officiate two events at the same time - 1) the inauguration of a multi-study hall after a thorough renovation and 2) the graduation ceremony and degree conferment for 1,695 graduates that are new human resources for the country. I wish to give my compliment to the Ministry of Finance and

Economy and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for their joint efforts in renovating this hall to a new state of being.

I first came to this hall on February 03, 1988, or 19 years ago, to declare the establishment of the superior pedagogical school and the Institute of Foreign Languages. I came for the second time on September 27, 1996 to preside over the degrees conferment to 1,398 graduates and today is my third presence here. In 1997, I also

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04 March 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

Inaugurating Junior High School Hun Sen—Srah Banteay

... My wife and I are pleased that we join you all once again in Kompong Thom's district of Barai. In the past one year I came five times to Kompong Thom and also to many different parts of Cambodia. Today I am at the centre of the country itself. I am so glad to see that there has been new achievement as is stated by the HE Governor Nam Tum's report.

years and this situation is similar to everywhere in our country. Take for instance in the district of Barai we then had only one High School compared to now we have five of them. HE Governor Nam Tum also wished to build and upgrade this into a Senior High School as well.

We have a junior high school in all communes but we still need more to satisfy our demand. I wish to take this opportune moment to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for generous donations and contributions for the

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those road projects of NR 76, etc. The NR 8 opening construction will be followed by the project to build the Prek Ta Meak bridge to connect the NR 8 to Phnom Penh city over the Mekong and the project of the Prek Kdam Bridge.

The NR 8 is composed of two segments - the 57 Kilometer segment between Prek Tameak of Kandal province and the NR 11 at Svay Antor of Prey Veng province and the 52 Kilometer segment between Svay Antor and Anlong Chrey on the border with Vietnam. Before this road was given three digit number and now we have only two digits. We would soon change the road numbering on the Cambodian map. We no longer have NR 315 and 316 anymore but the NR 8. Take for instance, a new map is necessary since we have many new bridges like the bridge of Prek Ta Meak and Prek Kdam, for example. We also will have the unprecedented Ta Khmao Bridge. These are positive changes indeed.

After I first announce the plan to build the NR 8, despite our small budget, the Royal Government spent already 6 million US dollars for the renovation of the road to provisionally improve circulation of traffic. But we have to look further as to where and when this project came into existence. In 1989 or 17 years ago I came to this part of the country from Prek Ta Meak to Vihea Suor and the road was so bad that we all had to travel on bikes to the district of Srey Santhor of Kompong Cham and from there back to Sanlong commune of Khsach Kandal district. I spent a night in Sanlong because there was a huge rain that day. My trip in the next day

brought me to a rickety boat ferry that I finally had this idea of building a bridge in its replacement. Students failed to get to school which is on the other side of the water way because of the ferry. This is quite clear in my memory. I also wrote a song "A Golden Gift of Bridge Preah Kunlong." I came for the inauguration of the bridge with my wife in 1990. Riding along the dam I had another idea that this road may have to be built anew and some efforts have been made to improve the road condition and the late HE Sin Song and Oknha Theng Bun Ma contributed in building a bridge at Kampong Popil and I also came for its inauguration.

We currently have the Bailey Bridge at Preah Kunlong enlarged to seven meters wide and when we have this NR 8 project underway, those bridges will have to be removed and brought to other places.

These Bailey Bridges are from China too. It is noted that China has a major role in the efforts of rebuilding roads and bridges in Cambodia. As those projects are complete, China has been building the longest roads and bridges in Cambodia. Well, in my latest meeting with HE Premier Wen Jia Bao in the Philippines, I requested China's assistance to build the NR 78 from O Pornmgoan to Ratanakiri's Baanlung. He responded that let's wait for the completion of the construction of the last segment of the NR 7 and we now have achieved that. I would insist that the NR 78 should be built with a new financial package as the latest 100 million US dollars is for the construction of the NR 10 from Battambang to the border with Thailand in Pailin.

We also have the vision of connecting the NR 8 to the NR 7 and on to Monndulkiri. When I was asked by reporters about China's possible threat to the international community prior to its accession to WTO, I responded, should we be hosting Chinese tourists or its refugees? When China was invaded by foreign powers in the past, refugees spilt all over the region, Cambodia also included. The best thing for us is to make China a market for our product and it is indeed impossible to contain China's development. China has its rights to develop the country.

In the course of building this road the Royal Government has to provide its counterpart fund of 13 million US dollars and this has not included yet the amount in compensation for the local residences which are to be affected by the project yet. This road is to be built using the Shanghai standard which consists of the three elements - 1) low price 2) good quality and 3) speedy implementation of the project. We have tried to make this road as straight as possible to save us 19.6 Kilometers from previous length. The total length is now 109 Kilometers only. As for the 19.6 Kilometers that are cut out from the main road re-direction, we also have covered the cost of asphaltting it too. This road is going to be the largest road in Cambodia as it is to be asphalted in concrete up to ten meters wide. For other roads we cover in asphalted concrete only 7 meters.

The 19.6 Kilometer road cost the Royal Government as extra sum of over two million US dollars. The Shanghai Company is to cover a length of 4,600 meters at Svay Antor at the cost of over half a million US dollars, whereas the

rest I recommend that the Ministry of Transports and the Ministry of Finance and Economy discuss with the Chinese counterparts to use the package of 200 million US dollars to complete the deficit. So people whose residences have been left out of the project are not disappointed as the road in front of their houses is also asphalted.

We started the project from here (Prey Veng's Svay Antor) to the border with Vietnam at Anlong Chrey but we also will see to the construction of another extension from Krabao to Moeun Chey which is 6 Kilometers long with a projected fund of two million US dollars. This will indeed be a plus for Vietnam according to a study tour made by HE Deputy Prime Minister Sar Kheng that it will help the province with more trade access points with Vietnam. We also have to build a 20 Kilometer road from Anlong Chrey to the district of Punnhea Krek from the new package of 100 million US dollars, a 20 Kilometer road to Moeun Chey, to Romeas Hek, etc. Those travel from Phnom Penh to provinces in northeast - Kratie, Mondulkiri, Ratanakiri, Stoeung Treng will save their trip 20 Kilometers by NR 8 instead of by NR 7.

This is a great effort made to integrate Cambodia internally and if Cambodia could not integrate itself, how could Cambodia do to other countries in the region? Cambodia also has its part in the framework of the Greater Mekong Subregion and this road indeed is a dam which has to be higher than flood level of 2000. It is important to pay attention to water pressure and flood power diversion as to water outlets. It took three and

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a-half years for the feasibility study of the NR 8.

As the communal elections are approaching I would appeal to the armed forces, local authorities to provide all favorable possible conditions for a neutral environment, security for the coming elections. HE Deputy Prime Minister Sar Kheng is security chief for the elections. I appeal to all political parties to launch their campaigns in dignity while refrain themselves from using provocative and insulting rhetoric which could lead to violence.

As things could be easily reduced to political motivation, I warn members of party campaign to exercise self restraint in face of insults from others. Now it has become a political issue when the Royal Government demands for return of state fund that has been misappropriated or in other money case. I would warn that if an individual commits mistake and the Party should not be the one to take the consequences. If I were to be sentenced for wrongdoing, it is I alone to bear the sentence and not the CPP.

I would also place my appeal today to members of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) to take the highest patience. They have to defend themselves and retreat with dignity from any conflicts so as to allow the elections to go on in a peaceful and just manner. It is worth reminding that sometimes it is not a majority that threatens the minority, but vice versa. Look the situation after the elections in 2003 - the small threatened the big. They said no Hun Sen (in any political solution after the deadlock of the 2003 elections) but it is not they who decide, it is the people of

Cambodia.

As it is the commune elections campaign will start tomorrow, I just warn those people that they should not come for my intervention anymore - take for instance those who want to strike a business deal seeking the Government's permission for tax evasion as my response is that no tax evasion is permitted. When the Government urges for refund, the person seems to have implicated it to political matter. Today HE Koeum Sokha called me about his "Rights March" that was stuck in Siem Reap and I called HE Su Phirin the Governor of Siem Reap to let the march go on. In Cambodia, we have Rights March, Dharma March, etc. This is my interpretation of the situation, which does not violate the election law because it is not the campaign time yet.

As far as request for a panel discussion between candidates for the post of Prime Minister, I would make it clear today that there is no necessity for such a debate because CPP has only one candidate for the post and the CPP Congress of 1998 and 2003 made Hun Sen its candidate and proposed my candidacy already for 2008. My reason for not taking part in such a debate is that Hun Sen is a member of the CPP who has led the country for 28 years already and secondly the Cambodian people recognize Hun Sen as a candidate for the post of Prime Minister in the present and in the future terms. The people of Cambodia know full well of what is happening in this country and Hun Sen is part of it. What is important here is that the candidate stands for the post and never becomes a Prime Minister that has to present him/herself to the people and as

for me everything is clear already.

Cambodia is no longer painted to be blue, red or pink anymore. It is a united country where infrastructure is making steadfast improvement. Hun Sen with the leadership of CPP has brought the country its peace and this is yet to be proven by other candidates. Farmers till the land that the State imposes no tax and has other candidates ever made this happen as the CPP? If they were to do what has been mapped out by the CPP, they have no reason to be in the opposition. CPP has affirmed its position on land tax since when all political parties reached a Paris Peace Agreement - no tax on land between ten and 15 years if the CPP won the elections. If they were to make similar promise, it is no use for them to be an opposition and there is no point that people vote for them since it is following the same.

CPP cut out 56% of its fishing lot for the benefit of the people, are they going to do the same? If they promise so it is better to vote for Hun Sen. The same is true in its foreign policy as Cambodia has proven to resolve all differences with neighboring countries, and settle the border issues in a peaceful manner. Hun Sen brought Cambodia into ASEAN already and chaired the meeting of ASEAN summit too.

Cambodia brought India to be partner with ASEAN and is a country that initiated the 15th anniversary of Cambodia-China relations in Nanninh. Hun Sen also brought Cambodia into the forum of Asia-Europe, WTO and other international organizations and we are in the process of making Cambodia

a member of APEC as well. HE Ambassador of China just mentioned about the Cambodian position toward China and this issue is very sensitive to China. I remembered the late HE Deng Xiaoping said "I cannot smile at you when you shake hands with me but step on my feet at the same time".

One opposition party leader frequently visited Taipei in 2004 and it is not secret to anyone. In a few weeks past, an MP of an opposition party wrote to HM the King for the permission to establish a representation of Taipei in Phnom Penh. We have taken a serious stand in this matter and also the problem of Korea. The President of South Korea requested Cambodia to convey a message to North Korea that South Korea does not have ill intention against the North at all. We deliver the message to North Korea...

Hun Sen does not have to join in debate with any candidates that never become a Prime Minister at all. I just warn them to not take this as a fear from Hun Sen because in my life I have taken more salt than rice in the peace negotiation and sometimes I was in a three to one position. What I want to make clear here is that if CPP is to win the elections, anyone could stay with us. As far as Royal family in politics is concerned, CPP does not bother to discuss anymore. Let it go the way it is. We are placed equal before the law. This means that it is equal in the parliament, in the Senate, in the Royal Government and also in prison.

To clarify issue of the throne, CPP has made it clear twice already - firstly, in 1993 when the monarchy no longer exists in Cambodia since 1970, not

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to examine the feasibility of establishing a “Tonle Sap Authority” or a “Supreme Council of Tonle Sap” under the guidance of the Royal Government of Cambodia...

Selected Comments

Some comments have been selected and provided here in addition to that is already posted on the website.

... We are actually talking about six provinces that are bordering with the Lake namely Kompong Chhnang, Pursath, Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Siemreap and Kompong Thom. As a whole we should also take into consideration whether the province of Kompong Cham should be regarded as bordering with Tonle Sap Lake or not as two of its districts - Baray and Choeung Prey are actually in the Tonle Sap area.

Also Kandal province should

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only by CPP alone but by four main political parties but the other three could not decide on this matter if it were not with the participation from the CPP because the decision has to be made with the approval of two third majority in the parliament.

This point should be clear as some people seem to have falsified that it is they who re-established the monarchy. Secondly in 2004, if CPP was not in favor of monarchy, it would not have approved a law in just one week to choose a successive King at all. Those who make these remarks never have been voting for the law.

The one who really protect the monarchy is the ruling party and do not be mistaken that this matter could be ful-

be taken into consideration as the province is actually sitting at the way-in and out of the Lake. It is indeed important to be geographically clear in defining areas that are relating to the Lake.

... A few days ago the Cambodian People's Party Central Committee's Plenum issued more resolutions in which power has been granted to me to resolve issue relating to land grabbing by the CPP officials. It does not mean that I did not have power to resolve this before the Plenum but I sought for maximum approval on that matter. As far as land grabbing is concerned, along with its importance for the Plenum to resolve, some of the issues are within the Tonle Sap Lake area.

... In the last two days there have been some officials withdrawing themselves from the problem. I warn them if

filled by a few royalists at all. The monarchy should be considered belonging to everyone and not to a few Royalists and worse still if it is used for making political profit against anyone. I would declare that what Hun Sen could not do and do not want to do is to have dual citizenship and I hold on to sole Cambodian citizenship. Could other candidates say the same? Could they declare leaving foreign national? Some not only hold foreign passports but even married foreign spouses. This is their rights.

But let's ask if they do not love the country and people, who could they love? We will have a law that requires them to clarify their property and I would seek the French Government to also help in this matter....■

they were stubborn they would be stripped off their power. I wish to declare that the war against the land grabber has started but my method is not to attack the barrack to hold captives but to circle the barrack and call them to lay down their weapons.

There was one case at Taken Koh Sla and I have given my strong warning. I have discussed with HE Tia Banh, Minister for Defense, as to who will have their positions to be relieved. I just want to ensure that this problem is solved peacefully but in seriousness and I also guarantee an honorable exit for them.

... CPP would be removing some officials from positions and they should not be shocked. CPP could not afford to have those who would give us bad image, and this is a decision by the whole CPP leadership and its Central Committee. This is not to lay bare internal affairs of CPP but it is a CPP's political line for the sake of our nation and people.

Last night I was reported that a couple of thousand hectares were returned without condition. I order to return the land to the Ministry of Agriculture. Some people claim they bought land from the ex-Khmer Rouge. Are they owners of the land? The land is the national asset and they could not take the national land to sell to you at all and I will remove a three-star general this week.

... The establishment of the Tonle Sap Authority or the Supreme Council on Tonle Sap should be another point of consideration. It is true that we have various authorities that are directly dependent on the Royal Government but at this stage of development

whether we should or should not have another authority to coordinate management of all related provinces is a critical issue.

It would involve a great deal of discussion and consideration as to its term and function or else it would be a decision that is ineffective - to create more expenses and positions ... while it is contradicting with the provincial authority for that matter.

It should not be a must to get that kind of authority established when it gives more problems than solution. Sooner or later we will have more to deal with on issue of oil and other ores. We have ores and oil not only in the sea but in the Tonle Sap Lake as well.

A serious coordination and collaboration would be important. As far as issue of trying to get recognized as one of the world heritages, we should give a thorough thought on whether we could go on fishing or not. Take for instance the Mount of Kravanh, if we have it classified as a world heritage, we stand to lose 800 megawatts of power from the dam that is to be - a battery stock of Cambodia...

... It is worth noting that the lake is a stock of fish for Cambodia since ancient days and any improper decision that prohibits our people from fishing would indeed invite conflict. Our decision should not be to the extreme - either to right or to left. We should try and get a middle path so as people would be able to go on fishing in the lake, if being classified as a world heritage is prohibiting them from doing so. I demand total and comprehensive solution to all problems concerned in that matter...■

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came here but not in this building to put into use the Hun Sen Library while presiding over the diploma conferment too. The need for renovation of the hall was urgent, but because of unexpected incidents in 2003 -- when the Thai Embassy was on fire and other Thai businesses were under attack -- the Royal Government was in a position to pay for those liabilities with regard to foreign property being destroyed in the Cambodian territory.

The Royal Government was in short of money so it decided to use the budget in priority of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for the renovation, which cost us 1,900 million Riels. This building - for its antiquity and historic being - has been renovated for preservation but its structure - as everyone can hear - does not allow sound to travel well.

The same is true for the Olympic Stadium where one could hear nothing because of the inside echo. Nothing can be done to improve it. It is indeed a lesson for our architects to think about when they have to design something like this.

RUPP - as is said by HE Lao Chee Iv - has been through both hardship and favorable time but to my mind it at some points suffered truly difficult situation. Teaching in between 1970 and 1975 was in a war-threatened situation, in between 1975 and 1979 there was no teaching under the Pol Pot's regime. From 1979, we were able to do the teaching and reconstruction step by step and up to the present, HE Lao Chee Iv mentioned just now that there had been 17,357 graduates and there are 9,128 under

enrolment. In all we have over 20,000 students who have been educated and trained by RUPP so far.

HE Senior Minister Kol Pheng just mentioned that it is the people's qualification and knowledge that are the measuring factors for a nation's virtue and civilization. I would like to take this opportune moment to express my sincere appreciation for efforts pooled together to overcome those hardships and to improve library access for students and researchers and users at large.

I also learned of an intention to enlarge the library and this has indeed indicated that there are more and more readers/users. I wish to recall that we have been building another library at the School of Boeung Trabek with the fund contributed by many private educational institutions.

Before we were talking about geography of school buildings to urban and rural areas but as of now we are talking about geography of library or increase of library number so as to improve and provide more accesses for readership.

I think that this is an encouraging sign. What I am very concerned of is the state of reading, listening, watching to obtain news, knowledge from hard copy, audio and video sources. Learning more you will be better in understanding and analyzing. I think it is indeed important that the Rector of RUPP to make a design to see how large and in which part could the library be expanded as well as its estimated cost.

I wish just to have a rough idea on that as I could not say anything right now. I just approved the construction of

three Universities last week - one in Kompong Thom province and two others in Kompong Speu.

I also ask the Ministry of Finance and Economy and the Ministry of Education to study the space available here if more building could be concentrated and incorporated by the national budget projects or make it an objective for discussion with development partners. The Cambodian People's Party has provided to the RUPP the building - which was formerly a School for Party Ideology and once was proposed for a half-million dollars rental by the United Nations' Transitional Authority for Cambodia (UNTAC) as its headquarter. Soon our students here will see new buildings along with the Institute of Technology where we will be providing for female students as their residences and this should in fact a practical matter in gender issue. I used to face disadvantages and the pagoda in which I stayed when I was a student could be seen from here. I have a desire that every young Cambodian does not suffer the plight like Hun Sen in their education age.

There has been strong desire for parents to send their children to school and yesterday I requested a withdrawal from the drafted law on education an article (50) which calls for punishment - imprisonment and fine - on parents. I suggested it is an obligation that parents have to send their children to school and this should be good enough.

What I want to have your attention here is the Royal Government's intention not only making into law and policy but also in mobilizing and encouraging people to implement them too. I wish to

have the students' and graduates' attention that one has to make effort in his/her study to acquire sufficient knowledge and I hope that some of you would go on to master or doctorate degrees.

What you should think of now is that today we have peace and peace has created a favorable condition for you to get education. This could not be fulfilled if the country was in continuing war. We also had a short-while war in 1997 and HE Nhek Bun Chhai is a living witness as he knows how the Khmer Rouge troops had been sent from Samlot (Battambang province) to the Samdech Paan Residence and to engage an attack on the residence of HE Hok Lundy - the General Director of the National Police. That is why I urge you to first think of peace that we have achieved. Peace would create favorable condition for us to be able to do more for our students - and about 500 of them today have the sponsorship from the Royal Government.

We also noted that thanks to sacrifices of parents and supervisors, more students have been enrolled and/or finished their studies as fee-paying students. Parents would not have anything more valuable than education to give to you as it is a precondition for children's ability to survive and a provision that is prone to no risk of being stolen or taken off.

In my capacity as the Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia and my own self as a citizen of the country I want to share a contribution by building school buildings, libraries, pagodas so that Cambodian children can acquire knowledge and know-how as you know that

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education has to be acquired by own efforts and no one could do on your behalf. In the CPP political platform as well as those of the Royal Government of Cambodia, the policy and strategy have been defined in providing education, training and job creation. This is not paying lip service. It is practical. Political stability is a key to job creation and without it job could not increase because of lack of investment.

Some politicians have gone so far as to state that if they were elected they would confiscate property from the rich for giving out to the poor. One should not forget that one rich man could create jobs for many people take for instance when he or she build factories.

I wish that all of you take your knowledge to serve development of your families and not yet to speak for community or nation. If a family in a society develops and its living condition improves, positive impact would be spreading to the whole society.

In 1979, Cambodia has a total 100% poverty and we had the survey in 2004 to have it reduced to 34%. There has been some reevaluation that poverty could have gone down by this time to 28%. But we have yet to work out on that figure.

As you all may know that I rarely work on March 10 because this is the date of my mother's death. What happened here in 1997 (the July-5/6 armed clashes in Phnom Penh) has brought about the death of my mother. The loss of loved one is deep and bitter. In that incident I could not even save my parent from war. I took her to the hospital

where she lay unconscious. I mentioned this many times already and hope you understand what war can be for you.

It was all because of political mistake. I still have a tape from a secret meeting in Sihanoukville where they seemed to have a misconceived idea on a military balance between the former Soviet Union and the USA that the two could not strike a war with each other. They instructed HE Nhek Bun Chhai to build up force to an equal size of the CPP's or to say in other words to create two military apparatuses.

We warned them not to mobilize force into the city, they disregarded our warning and further incidents that happened were leading to capturing Chao Sambat's house in O Baek Kaam. There was a two-star general from a foreign force but he was lucky that he escaped before being caught red-handed. I warn that no forgiveness is to be proposed and one has to serve the prison term according to the court's sentence. Forgiveness would be considered only after 2/3 of the prison term has been served. Last time we forgave and did not take to court the issue of acquiring weapons illegally and transported them into the city.

Some of them involved in the coup also had been forgiven. Being politicians we are equal before the law and no one could claim for forgiveness because of ancient records - as First Prime Minister, President of the National Assembly, son of the former King and brother of the current King, ... More witnesses and proofs have been collated and will be given to the court as a basis for a just decision. ■

11 March 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

Inaugurating Bayon TV/Radio Broadcast Station

Today my wife and I are happy to be here for the inauguration of the Bayon TV and radio station as is reported by the director of the station that it consists of a headquarter, a new technology setup but not a different Bayon Station. The broadcast of Bayon Radio started ten years today or between 1997 and 2007, and the Bayon TV started roughly a year later in 1998.

The station played a very important role in time of incident in July 1997. At that time since broadcast from other channels disappeared the two stations strived to get on air despite difficulties. Later in the framework of win-win policy, broadcast was directed to various regions for internal integration, together with other stations aimed at providing people with information of the fact that our country is united and the civil war came to an end.

Cambodia in the 16th century was divided into three control areas - 1) Dhama Raja who controlled Chadomuk, 2) Preah Srey Raja controlled area from Rolea Pa Ae in Kompong Chhnag up to Pursath, etc. and 3) Preah Soriyotey controlled this part of the country. So when one thinks of the three kingdoms in the Chinese history one has to remember the three kingdoms of Cambodia too.

Later on an ordinary Khmer became King - Sdech Kan or Preah Srey Jeddha who set up Sanlob Dauntey as his city and ordered the use of Sloeng currency for the first time in the Cambodian history. But the country at that time was divided into two - the east and the west parts and fought endlessly.

The country's long history of division had continued and by 1998 the country has once again united. I must say the Bayon TV and Radio has done a great deal in disseminating the Royal Government's policy on the pacification and unification while allowing for regeneration of human resources for the reconstruction of our homeland.

As far as the Radio is related it covers larger areas than other stations - and perhaps this is a reason why Bayon is operating at a loss. From Phnom Penh, Bayon Radio is broadcasting at 30 KW, plus 10 KW in Siemreap, plus 10 KW in Kompong Cham and more for Stoeng Treng, Sihanoukville, etc.

According to a report by Minister for Information HE Khieu Kanharith, in the whole country we have numerous TV stations and 53 Radio stations. We also have 293 newspapers, 30 bulletins, 90 reviews. We have 39 foreign language press registered and 9 imported ones. We have 11 permanent news agents in Cambodia and 15 journalist or press associations. When politicians say there is no democracy, I doubt about it.

We have provided important points in press freedom where publication can be done without censorship, no imprisonment for expression of opinion unless it is a defamation or/and discredit. This was clearly written in the UN law - UNTAC law - for Cambodia and the Royal Government amended this point by withdrawing it from the criminal law.

Why do we have cable TV with so many channels? We

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building of the Srah Banteay School ... I called it "art of sharing" and as far as I know that a piece of adjacent land has been reserved for further needs as this school serves the interest of those from the district of Barai and also from the district of Chamka Loeu of Kompong Cham province.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks and appreciations to the CPP work team led by the Vice President of the National Assembly HE Nguon Nhel, the National Bank Governor Chea Chanto, HE Thaong Khon, etc, for providing assistance and care to the people in this province as a whole, and the district of Barai in particular.

Thanks to the team, the CPP's President Samdech Chea Sim, Honorary President Heng Samrin and me Hun Sen have been able to keep abreast with what is going on out here and direct our actions right to where and how help is needed.

I have the belief that local area and work is indeed a school of inexhaustible knowledge not only for officials but also top politicians or else they would not be ready in making their responses. Take for instance we had a mission to save about 100 hectares of rice.

An old man came pointing to a rice field far away and said that it was indeed one hundred hectares that need water but irrigation had to be channeled across an area of about 600 hectares because that was the only way to get the water there.

It was true that the rice around is ripe but the rice in the middle was in need of water. So the mission had to pump wa-

ter that runs through all 600 hectares. This indeed gives us a lesson as to how to manage with water irrigation and the seeds that need to be used in the area. So local area and work field is indeed a University that provides inexhaustible knowledge. If one does not know local problem one could not resolve our people's needs while being unable to lead them.

I wish to make clear one thing as the communal election is coming and because this issue is politically and socially relevant. It is about the art of sharing which is a part of the CPP's policy in bringing about development to the country from 1979 to the present.

Are we to see if it is not necessary or we need to stop it? There was an article in the Cambodia Daily that Chief of General Staff HE Ke Kim Yan and other generous contributors and donors are involved in sharing their resources for the construction of a University in the Province of Banteay Mean Chey...

In their reactions to the news, a woman and a man were asked to give his/her comments and I do not have to mention their names. The man said politicians should keep clear of education sector and that Government officials should not be allowed to build school privately because it is indeed the task of the Government.

The woman said the school will have impact/influence on children. I think this has brought us to a clear political and social line. Sharing resources has been a tradition of CPP since 1979 and it was also done in the time of Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk's Sangkum Reast Ni-

yum or to be frank since when the earth exists because Cambodia also enjoys donation and assistance from the rich countries as well.

Judging from what they said as soon as CPP loses the elections there will be no more sharing and people could not request helps from leaders of CPP. This would help our people make political choice in the upcoming elections. What do they mean when they said schools that we build will exert the influence on students' mind while at the same time they say that the majority of young people support them?

Under the CPP leadership, while the national budget is limited we have resorted to the art of sharing in different forms - the Flower Festival (gathering money for a specific purpose), Katina (gathering utensils, money etc. for Buddhist monks in pagodas), etc.

According to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the national budget allows the construction of about ten school buildings, loan from foreign sources allows about 250 school buildings in five years whereas our need has been about 1000 school buildings in one year. How are we going to meet the objective as set out in Dakar of "education for all and all for education?"

Concerning our people here I am glad that when you all have difficult problems you always think of Samdech Chea Sim, Samdech Heng Samrin and Hun Sen. As we already have our pumping machines, I have ordered to station them in Barai district and 5th Region of Development, which could be utilized for the local people's sake. The question here is how to

finance the supply of fuels. I have seen a proposal for a square kilometer water reservoir that need 70,000 liters of fuel. This again needs the sharing of resources. Those sitting here will contribute and I will cover the rest. The reservoir could hold back water before releasing to Tonle Saap Lake and it could irrigate about 500 hectares of land.

Talking about resource sharing maybe we should ask our people and students here whether they agree with HE Governor Nam Tum's proposal for upgrading this Junior High School to Senior High School or not! (Agree! people's applause). Now in response to your need and approval I order the construction of a two floor school building of 12 classrooms and a five room building for sewing and for computing or library.

A song from the old time goes "the bridge is broken, the water is so deep that I cannot go to see my darling." As of now we have six bridges to build this in concrete and/or Bailey that they would not be broken easily anymore.

On that occasion Samdech Hun Sen offered ten million Riel to the Buddhist pagoda of Srah Banteay, a two-floor school building of 12 classrooms and a building for sewing practice and computing and 15 to 20 solar energized vacuum lighting, a director's office building and fifty sewing machines to the Junior High School of Kravanh, a school building of six classrooms to the Junior High School of Tuol Andet, a school building of six classrooms to the Primary School of Chan, and the requested amount 70,000 liters of fuel for the construction of the water reservoir. ■

05 March 2007 (With Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Keynote Address at the National Forum's Tonle Sap Initiative

Selected from the Prepared Address

... Notwithstanding these initiatives, the management of the *Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve* is still a great challenge for Cambodia. It needs a step by step action and support from communities living in the Tonle Sap Basin, who depend on the products and services of the Tonle Sap. At the same time, the management of the Mekong's water both inside and outside the coverage of Cambodia is also critical for a long lasting priority of Tonle Sap. In Cambodia we have proposed the "Water Law" for effective use and management of the water resources. The draft "Water Law" has already been approved by the Council of Ministers, and it is now with the National Assembly for consideration and approval.

Without any doubt, all of these works are our institutional and political commitments to the Tonle Sap, and we will continue working toward realizing them for the good of Cambodia, for the benefit of poor people, and for saving our environment.

The growing population pressure, unequal access to receive the fruit of growth and severe poverty of the population depending on its resources for survival, has placed the lake's ecosystem at an enormous risk. The lake is facing a serious threat of over-exploitation and its ecosystem has turned quite fragile. Honestly, if this problem is not addressed decisively and soon enough, Cambodia could face a serious environmental disaster.

... The gains of the TSI are impressive but the battle is not won yet. Much more remains

to be done to ensure sustainable development of the Tonle Sap basin. In this sense, we must continue to address:

- *the acceleration project delivery poverty reduction at the community level by working with the communities to provide them with capital, credit, technologies, markets and improved coordination between government agencies and local communities;*
- *enhancing effectiveness of program coordination at the national level among various stakeholders including government ministries, international communities and NGOs;*
- *more forceful enforcement of Regulations on the Use and Exploitation of the fruits of development by giving independency for the local communities;*
- *evolving a Plan of Action for Basin-wide Management and Sector-wide Development, which identifies medium-term and long-term goals and objectives and provides the resources, both financial and human, from all stakeholders; and,*
- *integrating the TSI with the Centralization & Decentralization program by having clear programs and implementation.*

Being a large ecosystem and sector-wide intervention, the **TSI** will need an effective, proactive, responsible and accountable organization that can mobilize and galvanize supports from all ministries, and from wide-ranging development partners. In this regard I would like this forum

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have our reason. Firstly, it will help our viewers to see what is happening in other countries while instilling them with clear-cut knowledge and understanding. Secondly, investors to Cambodia could enjoy their country's programs since they are from neighboring or far-away countries. They could keep abreast with situation in their home countries from Cambodia. This indeed would make them stay in our country longer.

I also like to thank Bayon TV and Radio for its diversifying programs ranging from health, healthcare, bird flu, environment, etc. I was impressed indeed on spots in which cow tells his owner to clean his hands before taking his lunch, etc.

There is also a good spot from the National Election Committee (NEC) urging our people about going to cast their votes in the communal council elections. It is also worth noting that TV and Radio are also making sacrifices when there is a national event like water festival, boat race, national independence, royal plowing ceremony, etc. during which all TV and Radio stations always made a good collaboration.

It is said that Cambodia has no freedom but Cambodia's passport can be used for one's whole life. Take for instance Prum Manh (a traditional singer) could come to and fro Cambodia anytime he likes as long as he has money to travel. I just propose to him not to cause any trouble outside Cambodia or he will be caught and extradited to the country.

We will have to sign an accord with the United States of America to take to the country

those guilty persons. I wish to seek our people's understanding that they should cause no trouble to those countries they are living in and must abide by the law and order. Under Pol Pot, no travel to and fro was allowed not only between countries but also between villages.

In the course of developing Bayon TV and Radio station, I would urge the Director to pay heed to training staff and try to work out diversified disciplines of knowledge because technology develops very fast. Some people said bad things about my daughter being appointed Director. My response is 1) appointment of Director depends on the fact that who is holding the largest share of the company.

This is a private company; 2) my daughter is over 18 which means she no longer is under my supervision. Some politicians who both husband and wife are members of the Senate, members of the Parliament, and some have even used own names for their Parties but they point finger at others.

I would like to take this moment to inform Samdech Buddhist Patriarch that the road that Samdech requested as a corridor to the sea has been completed already but inauguration could not be held on March 16 because of the election campaign. We move it to April 4 which is also my birthday.

The construction has taken a little longer than expected because we could not use Bailey Bridges but build them all in concrete. What is perhaps the most important is that the road is completed and we will put it into use officially soon. In fact the people have used the road already. ■