

**03 April 2007** (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)  
**On Results of the Second-Term Commune Council Elections**



01 April 07—Samdech Hun Sen casts his vote in Kandal Province in the Second-Term Commune Council Elections.

... Since today is my first appearance after the commune elections I wish to make some clarifications. After the elections of the second-term commune councils the Royal Government of Cambodia is not going to make any changes at all. In some countries local elections could lead to changes in the local administration but for me I am to affirm that the current Royal Government led by CPP with Funcinpec as its partner will continue till the end of its term though Funcinpec has gone down to number four in this elections and even if Funcinpec is going to gain no further votes in the coming general elections in 2008. Funcinpec is a trusted partner.

Through the local elections, CPP gamers unprecedented number of votes. CPP broke records from previous elections. According to foreign press, CPP has received some

3.1 million votes over 5.1 million votes. It is the first time that CPP won support that is exceeding 3 million votes or 61% of the valid votes counted so far. We continue to maintain 98% of post of commune head and expanded our presence from 68% to 70%. Two other contested parties put together got 100,000 votes less than CPP. The gap between CPP with the second runner is 1.8 million votes and this shows that the second runner could not match with CPP like what happened between the Republicans and the Democrats in United States of America. The difference here is between 25% and 61%.

After the general elections in 2008, CPP also would not set up a monopoly government even though the above figure of its support could translate into 90 seats in the National Assembly which is exceeding  
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**25 April 2007** (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)  
**Inaugurating Achievements in Prek Prang Pagoda**

... I have a great pleasure to be with all of you and the Buddhist monks of all levels to officiate the achievements in the Buddhist pagoda of Prek Prang. On behalf of my wife I wish to express my sincere thanks to Holy Samdech Udom Pannha Doang Phang for giving her and me this honor to cut the ribbon in this very joyous occasion that lasts fifteen days starting from the first moon day of the month of Pisakha. It is indeed the first longest ceremony of its kind in the present day.

I wish to take this solemn

occasion to express my respect and appreciation in the name of the Royal Government of Cambodia at the efforts made by Holy Samdech Preah Udom Pannha together with contributions made by generous persons in all these achievements in the pagoda that has a long history in Cambodia. Before talking about achievements realized by Holy Samdech Preah Udom Pannha Doang Phang in this monastery I wish to recall a bit about achievements he had made in his native village of Roka Khnor

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**04 April 2007** (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)  
**Inaugurating Samdech Supreme Patriarch Tep Vong Road**

... My wife and I have a great pleasure to join with all of our Buddhist monks and people in putting into official use the "Tep Vong Safety Road" which the people and Government offered as token of appreciation to Samdech the Great Supreme Patriarch Tep Vong who has returned the 26 kilometer road for use by the people in the district of Stoeung Hao and the public at large.

I could recall that on December 30, 2001, at the Pagoda of Chant Burei Vong in the Province of Kandal, there was a request made by Samdech the Great Supreme Patriarch (GSP). I at that time thought maybe the request itself could be for the construction of residential hall or a Buddhist temple. However, I was caught

by surprise that Samdech GSP has indeed paid great attention to our people's hardship in this rural coastal area. In fact if it were not for his request we might not deem it urgent to build this road yet.

The people in this area, road users in general, would not only be grateful to those who built it but also to those who initiated the construction - Samdech GSP Tep Vong. Upon reception of my approval, a one-month feasibility study was conducted by the Military Engineering

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09 April 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

**MAFF's Stock-Taking and Directions Setting Conference**

*In addition to prepared text, Samdech Hun Sen gave his comments that are selected as followed.*

... I wish that HE Chan Sarun, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and those concerned pay attention to condition of bush area. Some people suggest that bush are useless and should therefore be replaced by other agricultural plants or forestry. Of course, bush areas are not places for woods but they are feeding ground for wild animals such as deer, rabbit, etc. If we leave the bush and turn them into other forest or cropping areas, we stand to lose those animals that depend on them.

From this area, good wood for railway line could be found. We may think of turning it into commercial fruit area but we risk losing other benefits for wild animal and also there could be problem of land erosion. This is just my opinion and it should not be a command to you. We should define areas of bush to be kept and where those bush areas to be replaced by other agricultural activities. Some bush areas are also being diminished and these areas should be transformed into social concession land for our people or economic concession for investors.

As far as bush areas that are in good condition we should not turn them into such concession lands, if there were any, we should reconsider. If we were to lose our bush we also stand to lose our wild animals...

As far as fish is concerned we should seek a common understanding that if we were to depend solely on fish in the

natural system, we would face serious inadequacy in fish (protein source) provision for our growing population. Before all natural systems were deep and therefore we had more fish to feed our small population. But they turn shallow now and we have more people to feed. In this situation, we have to take measures in conserving existing fishing lots while preventing to our best the act of clearing inundated forest and taking serious counter measures for illegal fishing instrument, take for instance tools to electricute fish. Having fulfilled those measures, we have in the last few years noticed the increase of fish population.

Fish culture so to speak is another important issue for food security among our population. Therefore in each province or area where there is water resource for fish we should try and release more fish into the natural system. Soon the commune councils will take their posts and they should conduct a survey whether their geographical water resource should be protected as public or state possession and deepen it as reservoir. Only by doing so will we be able to keep our ancient slogan that goes, "where there is water there is also fish." Fish culture should be a promoting activity and as I have raised some fish myself I know that we could do this work. I warn that actions will be taken against harming water resources and I should make clear that not that we allow filling those lakes with soil but instead we would deepen it so as to protect our fish species.

As far as chemical substance, fertilizer and animal feeding are concerned I would urge

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both a two-third majority and 50 + 1 formula. CPP's current 73 seats have put it in a winning position already according to 50 + 1 formula. But CPP believes in attracting intellectuals from all political tendencies to work together for the country's sake. With the presence of HE Ung Keng Yong, the General Secretary of ASEAN here, you all could recall how many countries in ASEAN 10 that have conflict and have peace. Ten years ago this country was still at war and divided into two parts. We have conducted elections throughout the country in 1998, 2002, 2003 and 2004. We have brought this country to unity and this unity is hard to find.

There was a survey by an Institute that I do not have to disclose its name that there was a 79% response to a question whether Cambodia is on the right track. It is indeed a high rate of approval. In 2006, belief in the central Government was recorded at 73% and it has risen to 82% in January 2007. The Central administration is the leading institution of the country's

the Ministry of Information, especially TV stations to get to learn about its license or it would cause disastrous problems to our health. Taking guava into consideration, any guava grown by nature is small and those with fertilizer and chemical pesticide are bigger in size and look edible. But what happens after we eat them? We are now at a time when we have to be cautious with what we eat. This is not the time of Pol Pot when we got to eat whatever we could find but to eat good stuff for good health. In Pol Pot's time most of us were bags of bones and had to eat anything no matter what it might be. But

macro-economic and political stability. I did not appear in the campaign despite I am the head of the CPP campaign committee because 1) I have to maintain political stability and 2) to maintain macro-economic stability.

I have the pleasure to inform you that we have made a positive change of the situation of tax collection in elections period. It used to be that tax evasion activities are on high rise in the elections period, but this time we have made an increase in tax collection that we never would have before. I am talking about customs duties and that does not include internal tax. Offenders used to commit crimes when the country is busy at its election period but the situation has changed almost totally in the 2007 elections. Tax evasion has been noticeably small. Cash in our treasures in 2003 to 2007 is 100 times better or to put it in simple term in 2003 we have one in 2007 we have one hundred. This has clarified that issue of Guidance which is the main topic of the Forum today stands out to be very important...■

now we all are afraid of being fat and we have on TV advertisement of ways and means to reduce weight. That is why health is the most important factor. We have to satisfy our hunger but also to keep good health...

It is now eight days from the commune election. As CPP is busy making national effort to increase fish population and forest products, the opposition is seeking all means to topple CPP in 2008. They rally the democrats, the royalists to do so and I see that it is the same old stuff. They said so in 1998, again in 2003 and they

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 action plan and to appeal all relevant ministries/institutions, all hierarchical authorities, National and International NGOs to provide moral and financial supports for the successful implementation of committee's activities... I would like to urge all relevant institutions like newspaper, radio and television to promote the public awareness on Law on Traffic and Road Transportation adopted by the National Assembly and educational spot on traffic precautions... As far as the traffic accidents are concern, I observed three main reasons:

**Human:** most of drivers do not have driving license; some drivers have it without went through driving test; some do not follow traffic law, signs, road marks, and light; some drive exceed speed limits, overweight, overload, bulky loaded and drink driving.

**Roads:** they were technically and wrongly constructed such as too curvy, too narrow and there is no traffic sign.

**Vehicles:** Right drive-wheel is another issue. On March 18, 2006, the Royal Government of Cambodia decided to legalize the right drive-wheel, thus to pay taxes and obtain number plate. Another problem that we need to control is vehicle technical safety standard... I would like the Ministry of Public Work and Transportation to cooperate with all relevant ministries/institutions to take proper measure to regularly control the technical safety standard. In this sense, I would like the Ministry of Public Work and Transportation further improves the process of issuing driving licenses, registration card and other permits for the management of road, water and sea transportation by making it

easy, quick and to reduce unofficial costs.

**Third,** need to rigorously implement the project to connect Asia Railroad Singapore - Kunming, especially connect from Poipet to Sisophon and to Thai and from Phnom Penh to Lokninh, Vietnam.

**Fourth,** continue to cooperate with development partners and donor communities to make the law on water, sea and road transportation and regulations required within globalization framework and for regional and global integration processes.

**Fifth,** strengthen the management of all ports in the country by utilizing existing mechanism to promote fair, equitable and transparent competition in businesses activities aiming at mobilizing more budget revenue.

**Sixth,** I would like to remind again that, the joint committee on controlling overweight transportation should determines the maximum weights and to introduce further serious measures to prevent the damage of roads and bridges due to overweight transportation... At the same time of fighting against "**land encroachment**", "**thieveries**" and "**gangsters**" that remain a serious issue, we now facing with other problems such as "**traffic safety**", "**fake number plate**", "**overweight vehicle and over speed driving, overloaded and drink driving**" that are the difficult matters for the Royal Government...

#### **Selected Comments**

... Please allow me to give my remark. HE Minister Sun Chan Thol has just reported to me before I came here that there was an increase of 28.33% of overloaded trucks

in the first three months of 2006. For the first three months of 2007 we noticed a increase to 9.33% or 19% more... I am to instruct you all that this has to be amended. I see that this matter should be cooperated by transport company heads, vehicle owners and drivers. We now have to reconsider measures are not necessary for instance we have to impose weight lifting for trucks along the national roads and it looks as if we have problem of checkpoint along the road with hundreds of staff. This is not the time of Pol Pot threat when we faced ambushes along the roads. In those days we cleared 100 or up to 200 meters of forest along the national roads so that they do not have a bushy or forest area to hide and operate. But we do not have war anymore and now we have to use our force, which consists of military police, police, MPWT ... to check the weight of the trucks. That is what I say we have used forces in matters that are indeed unnecessary.

I have warned that any companies caught with trucks charging exceeding the weight allowed I would not hesitate to order a closure of companies. Having said so some people would say that the measure seems to be too strong but it is for people's and companies' sakes, and drivers' lives. So I recommend MPWT to work with owners of transport companies to sort out misunderstandings on this issue. Now we have seen trucks loaded with heavy construction materials like steel, cement, etc. to remote areas. This is possible now because we have better roads than before. In addition to that we have more cars and mechanized transport means growing every day. Facing this issue, we have to set a line for

discussion with owners of heavy trucks so that we can protect our roads and bridges. I would also like to draw your attention on another matter aside from overload in weight. That is to say about overload in size and shape. In 1979 we had far less transport means and we saw less road accidents. But I have now seen our people traveling on roofs of vehicles. This clearly indicates that there is not enough transport means yet.

I think that we should pursue this idea of taking a particular road to try and set a good system for business and passengers taking. They should have an association of taxi or transports groups so that passengers taking would not be a matter of concern and it would evade also issue of fighting for being the first to leave or competing for passengers. Traffic accident has become issue number one in causing death now following by HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS used to be the first and mines to be the second to cause death. As far as road renovation is concerned I have instructed the Ministry of Economy and Finance to cooperate closely with MPWT to work out funding for the maintenance of roads in bad conditions. We should not overlook small pot holes because if we are late the road would be severely damaged to a great extent.

Fixing small hole would take us less resource and time while bigger ones would take us more resource and time. We also have to see that disbursing fund for maintenance should be quick as prolonged decision would increase the project's expenses because of the fact that the hole is getting bigger than the measured expense at first. Sometimes

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my instruction to the Ministry Economy and Finance was responded with silence while the requested roads have been damaged more and more. In Siemreap I see that tourists almost have to walk in mud. I ordered a reconstruction and I do not care the money from where but you have to fix the road. We should not wait for money from World Bank as we badly need the road.

My wife and I went to Sa'ang and we saw the maintenance efforts. But the size to be maintained is far exceeding the size of resource provided. I called HE Uk Rabun the Secretary of State for Economy and Finance to discuss with HE Sun Chan Thol to work our a plan for the reconstruction of national road 21. I used to hold a cabinet meeting on a bus along the national road 1 when the road was in extremely bad condition.

I also have urged Kompong Cham province to get a part of the road fixed for the national road 7, while another part from Phnom Penh has yet to get fixed. If it is not to be fixed I would organize another meeting as such. I almost set up a bus meeting for the cabinet on issue of the national road 6A for similar reason. That is why I demand that MEF to get some of their stuff to work with MPWT and some fund should be disbursed to the office of PWT at the provincial level and inspection could be conducted in retrospect.

If we were to wait for evaluation first before disbursing fund, we would not be able to get the job done and done right. But I also warn provincial Governors that in this instance they should not divert fund for other purposes or their own interests.

Last year we have a growth of 60 billion Riels but in 2007, road maintenance fund has gone up to 85 billion Riels and because we have longer road to fix than before too. That is why reducing issue of overloaded vehicle would play a great deal in making use of the fund. I keep on hearing comments that there is a concern about the fact that Cambodian would soon have fuel as its resources.

I would say again that what we should be afraid and concerned of is when the country does not have a resource. We have fed our children since when we had nothing in hand but now we have gold so we know how to manage it in an effective manner

They are concerned that Cambodia is not making good use of fuel resources and I am grateful for that. One other remark was that Hun Sen would not listen to western advice so it is clear that they wanted us to listen to them.

We fish in shallow water to feed our children and they all are growing well since 1979 and I do not think we could not manage it when we have gold. All rural roads must be asphalted. But those who say they are concerned are not those who live inside the country but those from outside. I just remind them that do not take everyone to be incompetent.

Some people are coming from countries where poverty level is very high and there is no security. Some could not make peace in their own countries but claim to be adviser on peace for us. I tell them if you talk about this matter I could give you recommendations on that because I used to work on transforming from war to peace...■

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repeat so at the present. They all seek means to win over CPP while CPP does all it can to win over poverty and negative development. In 1979 and after that they collaborated with Pol Pot and foreign powers to topple CPP with an aim to take the power. CPP on the other hand never does anything to trouble them but to improve the people's living condition...

Despite the fact that we are not yet in the rainy season but we have seen some advance rains and our people living along the river have started sowing sesame, corn and they indeed go on a venture with dry season. If we have some rain in dry season, sesame would grow well and give plenty of seeds.

In fact they could not grow well with drought but since we have some rains our people are ready to begin the venture. While we are thinking how to help our people get their yield, those opposition forces attack CPP to its fall in 2008. I think that facing with this strategy of defeating CPP, it is time for CPP to come up

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their votes whereas during the commune council election in Cambodia, 70% of the Cambodian voters cast their votes. Voting is the individual rights but we wish that our people go to vote in great number because each vote counts in the destiny of the country.

I would also declare that I instructed the Municipality of Phnom Penh to build a 2 kilometer DBST road from the main road to the pagoda of Samraong Andet to the market of Pochentong. I would recall that my wife and I during the Khmer New Year have sent a greeting message

with a counter-blow strategy. At the time of Paris negotiation CPP's strategy was to liberate our people from hunger and prevent the return of the genocide. Its later stage strategy was to seek a political solution to the Cambodian conflict on the basis of preventing the return of the genocide, while taking arduous measures to protect social achievements. At the later stage, preventing return of the genocide continued to be CPP's important banner. Now the CPP's banner has been peace, stability and development. I warn them now that in response to their irrational attacks CPP is in the process of making its strategy for the attack in response. CPP also wish to win the elections but by development not by irrational attacks...

It is absurd that they said they would take the rubber and distribute among people, but whose rubber is it? It belongs the state and who is the state? It is the people. They should not lie to the people. I just reiterate that as long as CPP rules the country, anyone could live with us and our real enemy is poverty...■

to our soldiers in Sudan. We also went out to Saang in the district of Koh Thom and I have noticed the bad condition of the NR 21. I have called HE Uk Rabun of the Ministry of Finance and Economy to look for budget for renovating the road... I learned that there is this move to set up a village election in the district of Russei Keo. I warn them that they should respect the law and the law did not mention about village election. I would warn them secession is illegal. I wish to thank Oknha Tri Heng for such a valuable contribution...■

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where he led the construction of a pagoda at Roka Khnor and another at Kroch Chhmar district of Kompong Cham.

Achievements in this monastery of Kompong Prang have taken shape in a period of eleven years and at the cost of nearly two million US dollars. Constructions in this monastery have drawn on a long time in the history of Cambodia as mentioned by HE Governor of Kandal Mr. Khim Bo. The construction covered a vast area and took a lot of resources. Take for instance we have here a Buddhist statue stands facing west which not a usual phenomena for a Buddhist statue. But it originates from the idea that the King went west to the river for water - the Tonle Sap lake is at the west end of the pagoda and it was before a quay where former Kings went for bath. The place was in Khmer Kampong Hluong. The place has a close memory of the dynasties of HM the King Soriyo Puor and later of HM the King Ang Duong.

Indeed I am so joyful to learn that HE Chivoan Munnirak, the First Deputy President of the Senate and HE Sok Chinda my advisor, are practicing their monkhood in this monastery. I would in this respect express my sincere appreciation at the fact that Cambodia enjoys its harmony among different religions as we have here with us today for example Hakems of Islam.

While in some countries conflicts among different religions take place, in Cambodia, not only does conflict among religions not exist but also some achievements are noticed being done with efforts by many religions together. Take for instance the Buddhist monastery in Kroch Chhmar

district of Kompong Cham province Buddhism and Islam always make a peaceful coexistence. It is with this incident that I believe if it were to be replicated to throughout the country it would do the country a world of good. Indeed there are different beliefs but it should not be an obstacle in the way of the country's development or better living condition. It is indeed a positive point that we should try to expand it.

In this world we noticed at the present day that one religion is attacking on another, one sect against another. There are different sects in all religions. Take for instance we also have two sects in Buddhism - Mahayana and Hiniyana. If were to find a common point that culminates in harmonization of all religions for the sake of socio-economic development, we would see that we have a better time than fighting among different sects of one religion or different ones. I wish to make an appeal for such a development to be achieved. It should serve as a good example of peaceful coexistence, harmonization, reconciliation, unity between Buddhism and Islam as I used to say that in Cambodia one could not tell who is the first in its birth between Allah and Buddha because the two religions were re-born at the same time on January 07, 1979 - the fall of the non-religious group of Pol Pot.

Belief in any particular religion should not be an obstacle for our country's development. Belief in a religion is an individual right. Though we stipulate in our Constitution that Buddhism is the state religion, we should not allow this become a problem for us. Let's look into the respect of animism and Brahmanism. The respect for soul has been

23 April 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

### Inaugurating Phnom Penh Thmei College

... Together with our Buddhist monks and people I am glad that today we put into use a new achievement which is a contribution to education and a benefit to our children in this area. Taking this opportune moment I wish to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to Okhna Tri Heng for making a donation of his per-

sonal resources of about 300,000 US dollars in building this college as is reported by HE Kep Chuktema, Mayor of Phnom Penh. As far as school and education facility, the country has indeed making its initial steps from 1979 and 1980 in a very difficult condition. In between 1982 and 1985 there has been a school what we called the Samraong Andet's first level secondary school and now we have put in here a college.

Okhna Tri Heng's assistance has contributed to the Royal Government's development policy whose final aim is to provide our people with what they need. I would not be successful in getting people to help me build my house but get them help build social achievements take for instance education sector or Buddhist interest. The Royal Government has striven to gather contributions - national budget and those from foreign donations, and foremost the sharing among our people for such an achievement to take place.

I am proud that the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) policy during the past 28 years has proven to be successful by the fact that those who are able and wealthy contribute to helping those who are poor - or to say in other words the spirit of resource sharing among our people. Those of us who are present here today are passing their thirty years of age and you may all remember what had happened in the past 30 years. On April 17, 1975 Pol Pot evacuated our people out of Phnom Penh and other cities. It was a time when the country suffered numerous deaths. Sick people, disabled

about 90% in our society. Although there has been a clear differentiation as to this or that belief, people have the rights to belief. The most important point is the fact that all religions never teach human to be devil... The fact that we have chosen to respect Buddhism or other religions has indeed facilitated a lot in the state affairs and its management. We have also made clear to everyone that there is a clear inseparable relationship between Buddhist world and secular world. If the Buddhist followers are in hunger, the situation would indeed be a curse on Buddhist religion as well. Take for instance there would not be many people coming to this ceremony. The Buddhist parishioners are the one who support Buddhism. As long as Buddhism here draw a lot of supports from everywhere, people who have made better living in secular world would contribute their resources to the efforts of Buddhist achievements. Buddhism teaches people and its followers to perform good deed and other merits, it would facilitate state management as well. Take for instance 5,866 monks in 390 pagodas in a province would be messengers of good deed to a great number of people. This is where I see the correlation between state or secular world and religion or Buddhist world...■

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Team (MET) of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) led by HE Khvan Siem. According to report by HE Khan Siem, the construction of this road has come through many difficulties ranging from construction materials such as rock of all sizes have to be brought in from Kompong Speu. Efforts have also been made to get a path by edge of the mountain and this area is prone to much raining in the year.

However, to move slowly in the construction is better than doing nothing. I used to refer to the infrastructural development at the pace of a frog-leap. Some politicians say they would not apply the frog-leap strategy and I warn our people of what Pol Pot used to say under his time - the great leap forward. According to the Ministry of Economy and Finance, MET has yet to pay more for some companies and it has made efforts in making money available for the clearance of debt involved in building this road. Total cost of the construction is 27,348 million Riels.

Today we also celebrate the inauguration of the 16-kilometer road - Hun Sen - Keo Phos that connects the Tep Vong Safety Road to the village of Keo Phos in the Sre Ambel district of Koh Kong Province, which is built by Oknha Mong Rithi at the cost of 58,000 US dollars. Though this road is still a dirt road, I hope Oknha Mong Rithi to make it DBST in the near future. Who benefits from the road really? Before its construction, people in the area have to travel to Tum Nob Rolok in Sihanoukville and by the NR 4 to get their catches to the market in Veal Rinh. The distance is 71 kilometers and they would travel

in two and a half hours. Aside from this, fuel companies also transport their fuel through a small road at the Tum Nob Rolok area before they get to the NR 4. With the Tep Vong Safety Road in place, traveling through the above mentioned itinerary would take only 20 minutes and cost only 4000 Riels. Transports of fuel would benefit from 56 kilometer road shorter and also shorter time to get to the market. In this instance, the Royal Government, through making this road available at their disposal, helps deduct their cost of transport and save their time.

Some persons say "a gift is for short term, a job is for life" What do you think when people in this area used to have difficulties in getting their catches to markets, while with this road built the catches get to the market easily? Are they saying this is not a Government's efforts in job creation? I warn them to stop lying about or they would end up in a fate of Le Pen in France who, in his 70's, has become opposition for life as his support never once increases. They should not apply similar strategy in Cambodia. Take for instance they should not use the strategy of "no conciliation" or "me exists only when thee not." CPP would not be against any political parties or take someone as enemy. I do not mean that they should stop oppose me or CPP at all... I learn that we have fuel companies like Tela, Sokimex, Caltex, Shell, PTT, Pheapimex, Edwoods, Kok An, Kith Meng, etc. using this road and it is their duty to voluntarily make contributions. I would insist that people and small companies other than these would not have to pay for maintenance. What I am talking about is voluntary contribution in road

maintenance.

Samdech GSP just proposed another project to build a nine and half kilometer road from here to the Oil Factory and according to the study made by HE Khvan Siem, this road would cost up to 1.9 million US dollars. This road has indeed been once rehabilitated by HE Cham Prasidh, Minister of Commerce, as a laterite covered road. I wish to declare to Samdech GSP that the requested road would be built by Edwoods Co. and the rest nine kilometers from here to the NR 4 has to be improved as well.

This area we are talking about is the dragon's head (in my imagination of Cambodia as a dragon). Months ago I traveled a lot to the tail part of the dragon shape (Stoeung Treng, Ratanakiri, Kratie, Mondulkiiri provinces which are in the north-eastern part of Cambodia) whereas its body lies along the provinces of Kompong Cham, etc. We would soon have a new seaport in the Stoeung Hao district of Sihanoukville which is to start the construction in July this year between a local company - Edwoods and a company from Japan. The port will be in use by 2012. Judging by the fact that more growth is anticipated by 2021 we would need to export more and existing port facility would not be adequate for such an economic expansion.

I would warn against any land grabbing and encroachment since this area would be soon an industrial area. I would order pulling out any markers planted on public land property. Some people have guts to claim land in front of Angkor Wat. We have proofs and one of the leaders is an activist from a political party. They did that because they know

that the authority would not do anything to them since it is election season. Any actions taken against them would allow them to accuse the authority of politically motivating.

A Non-Governmental Organization made a survey about three months ago. The response is that 82% people have been using new infrastructural development. This clearly affirms that the policy to improve infrastructure is correct and if I were to get support for the next-term leadership of the Royal Government I would go on with this policy at the frog-pace development. I would say that today's frog is powerful and could make stronger and faster leap than before. We would continue to see that roads, water canals, schools, hospitals and public constructions would be on our agenda.

If the whole country continues to be in segments because of no bridges, no roads, etc. we could not get the economy going. In the same poll, 82% also said they have trust in the central Government, while 95% said they have a plot of land of some kind, only 5% said they do not have. We should try to see that the 5% will get their shares in what we call land for social concession and 70% said the central Government is on the right track. Efforts must be made to get the dream of the rest to be fulfilled.

On this solemn occasion I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the local authority of all levels and the armed forces for their efforts in keeping security during the communal election making it free, fair, just and transparent one. I wish to thank everyone and

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every institutions involved and the media - state and private - for their helps in making the electoral messages and electoral procedure across to the voters. I also thank the CPP officials for exercising self-restraint to their utmost to avoid conflict with other party provocative rhetoric and actions. Patience has indeed brought about a better electoral situation.

Wining or losing is not the most important issue for the Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia. What is the most important is that the elections are being conducted in a free, fair, just, transparent, and non-violent manner. It is indeed the Royal Government's victory. On behalf of the CPP leaders, HE Samdech Chea Sim and HE Samdech Heng Samrin, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the CPP members in the whole country and its supporters who enabled the CPP to break the previous vote records. In 2003, CPP received over two million votes in its favor out of total five million votes. This time communal elections CPP received 3,100,000 votes in its favor out of 5,100,000 votes or 61% of the total ballots throughout the country. This figure - put in general elections context, CPP would occupy at least 90 seats in the National Assembly out of its 123 seats. I would say that the Cambodian people have voted for what they already have in hand - peace, political stability under the leadership of the coalition government comprised of CPP and its partner.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks for the Office of Customs and those companies that continue their import-export activities

and also the Sihanoukville Seaport staff and workers for their works - day and night. The Customs Office has proven to combat smugglers who are normally taking their chance from the time when the whole country is in electoral period. The March - tax income has increased to highest level that never exists in the past three years. According to the report the provincial authority payrolls have all been ready for the month of March since March 15 and I would urge those involved making efforts in paying the salaries for the sake of enjoying the coming Khmer New Year.

I take this opportune moment to appeal to the commune councils to continue their work till the take-over by the newly elected ones. The official electoral results would be announced on April 24. Those who function in standby have to provide security and public order for our people to enjoy the New Year. I also appeal to our people to unite though they indeed have voted for different political parties. They have to unite and do not let the electoral results be a divisive factor of their community and unity. Let the elections become a vote for development and security for the country. The commune council is not a political party and it does not have opposition. They have to cooperate and to make decision on the basis of the 2003 Law on Commune Administration. Any discussion necessary should be done with the Minister for Interior. Some politicians mislead the people of what they call to be short-term gifts. I would urge them to think that those short-term assistances - in flood, in drought, in fires, skill training, building roads, schools, hospitals, etc. have all been the life

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persons then died along the way in the course of being evacuated. Hospitalized patients had been discharged irrespective of their conditions and their final fate was death. On January 7, 1979, our people moved back to Phnom Penh and other cities and their pictures were captured by photographers and documentation. Twenty eight years before our people were in a bad shape condition. One could see that our people carried their ragtag belongings on rickety bicycles, carts with a pair of ox on one side and one human on the other, etc.

We have just passed the Khmer New Year. The Khmer New Year in those days in the whole country we had only seven Buddhist monks. Now we have about 60,000 monks which I used to joke, outnumber the police and military police. After the destruction caused by Pol Pot, our country encountered an unjust economic embargo situation in line with threats by remaining Polpotists' return to power... Today we have a different situation. The Mayor of Phnom Penh has

enrichment from the part of the Royal Government. Take another example, my wife has been collating assistances to help the Cambodian army especially those in rural areas - on islands, etc. Any request from so and so for a negotiation on decentralization at the local level was just an attempt to meet with leaders of CPP in order to send a signal that they would join the coalition Government in the fourth term. It is easily predictable. It is their attempt to separate CPP and Funcinpec. Whatever happens to Funcinpec at the local level, we still have the coalition and we will continue to work with each other...■

said in his report that the 1979 school year was opened with only 40 primary schools and three junior colleges, and there were no senior colleges with 42,000 students. As of now we have over 250,000 students in Phnom Penh and many in tertiary educations. All I am saying is for us to know from where we come and where we are now. Some people say they do not care about the past. I would suggest that it is important to know the past in order to judge the direction for the future. In fact those people are afraid of talking about the past since some of them collaborated with those forces who attempted to downfall us.

If they do not recognize their lives, their identities, how could they lead this country? I would urge our people to give their thorough thought on this matter. Last Friday I submitted a report to HM the King and giving some background on issue of ownership after 1979. The abolishing of ownership by Pol Pot has created a difficult situation for us. There is this question whether we should recognize ownership from before 1970 or recognize ownership based on the fact that holders factually occupy the piece of land. This has indeed been a serious point of decision making. A small mistake would bring about horrible conflict throughout the country... If we were to recognize ownership from before 1970, we would stand to evacuate our people in the whole country once again. How could we go about doing so? We have a current population up to 14 million and there is demand for further construction of housings. We have here the Phnom Penh Thmei (new) residential area but this would in ten years from now be

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**24 April 2007** (With Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)  
**Closing MPWT 2006 Performance and 2007 Directions Meeting**

... Rehabilitation, development and maintenance of transportation infrastructure still potential means in terms of “engine of economic growth” and socio-economic development consistent with the Rectangular Strategy of Royal Government to promote economic growth, employment generation, enhancing social equity and strengthening efficiency of public services.

I have frequently mentioned before, wherever there is road there will be hope, hence the development and rehabilitation of road-bridge infrastructures are the key strategy for implementing the policy of peace and integration of Cambodia and those policies that promote and advocate economic growth and poverty reduction... Roads and bridges allow our people to access to credits, healthcare and education services, and can be connected to the source of clean water supply to support and improve their living standards.

In this sense, without any doubt, the rehabilitation and improvement of every physical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, national roads and track roads in the remote rural areas is still the strategic priority, the driver of economic growth, and the most effective means for poverty reduction, because roads and bridges are the mainstems of our economic sector which will contribute to the enhancement of economic growth and ensuring equitable distribution of growth aims at upgrading the living standard of the people and for poverty reduction.

Furthermore, an important factor that we should not overlooked is that roads and bridges are necessary for nation-wide economic integra-

tion which was badly disconnected parts by parts during the war and internal conflict more than two decades ago as well as for the integration of Cambodia into the region and the world.

... I highly value the work and once again appreciate the profound intention of all the development partners who have been actively participating in promoting economic growth and developing Cambodia's society by providing both the financial and technical supports for the development, rehabilitation and maintenance of transportation infrastructure in Cambodia... I would like to also praise and continue to encourage the government officials and management of the concerned ministries/institutions, and local authorities to continue in this work... I would like to provide some recommendations and guidance as follows:

**First**, please continue to take high responsibility and thoroughly monitor the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges for quality and safety in order to ensure the sustainability in traffic transportation and reduce road accidents.

**Second**, must pay high attention and successfully fulfill the duty as the chairman of the national road safety committee by having cooperation with related ministries/institutions, local authorities, national and international NGOs, to transform the 15-points traffic safety action plan into concrete action with high quality and to prevent road accident which is a worrisome issue at the present time... I would like to fully support the road traffic safety

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Phnom Penh Chah (old). Now it is in the suburb but in ten years it could be in the central part of the city. Map of Phnom Penh from before 1975 could not be applicable anymore and this is a situation for all provinces throughout the country.

More constructions that are completed and those that are on the way -- take for instance the bridges of Prek Ta Maak and Prek Kdam - would in all alter the landscape of Cambodia in its map. This year's New Year celebration (April 14, 15 and 16) has been noted with the fact that our people left Phnom Penh for provinces. The city was so quiet. In 1975, after the New Year our people also left Phnom Penh but at that time at gunpoint. But this time our people left in peace to their provincial towns since April 12 and some also celebrated their Devada's welcoming in the provinces.

We have noticed that starting from 2002 the city has always been left almost empty at the time of the Khmer New Year and the Prochum Ben day. There are three main factors involved. Firstly, the country has full peace and stability so that they could travel anywhere they wish. Our people go to far places. Those who used to go Sihanoukville, this time went to Siemreap or further to Koh Ker, Anlong Veng, etc. Secondly, the country has more good roads and bridges in place so that traveling to remote places is possible. Thirdly, perhaps I should mention the fact that our people are also wealthier that they possess transport means by which they could make their travels possible. The fact that they have more cash translates that they could travel to far places as

well... This could prove that the Royal Government's policy in building roads and bridges is responding to our people's demand not only for those living in the rural areas but also those urban dwellers because they also are people from rural areas and always return to their native places in times of traditional and religious ceremonies. We have noticed that in celebrating the Year of Pig water splashing at one another has been markedly reduced because the Municipality of Phnom Penh well instructed our people to refrain from doing so. Indeed like what they say as long as we keep the forest, we have no problem about seeking for firewood. I mean we have to maintain peace and political stability that we have achieved from our hard struggle. If we were to lose them we would not even keep the pace of overall development, let alone traveling.

When Cambodia celebrates New Year, there were fighting in Iraq and school shooting in the USA, etc. Let's ask a question here "what do the Iraqis receive in return for political instability?" There have been clashes in Afghanistan and in Thailand. Without peace the school we built in front of us would not stand long. Some countries have problem of population decline because they have many older people and less number of young ones. Some countries allow only one child per family and when two old people die there remains only one child. In five years this issue of population will be a serious matter. In Europe, in between 25 and 30 years ahead, population structure would change, and the change of power structure ensues.

Yesterday French voters cast  
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