

24 December 2007 (Unofficial Translation)

Inaugurating Achievements in the Kandal's Viheasuor Pagoda



24 December 07—Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen and Madame are warmly welcomed by elderly Buddhist devotees in the Khsach Kandal district's Viheasuor pagoda, Kandal prince.

... My wife and I are so happy that we meet today to celebrate this important ceremony and to sincerely thank our people from near and far who believe in the power of the Buddha in the pagoda of Viheasuor. We all expect to be blessed by merits performed in the Viheasuor Buddhist temple. I wish to take this opportune moment to express my sincere thanks to HE Aun Poan Muniroth and Madame who have represented me in the last few days in preparing all the ceremonies concerned.

This pagoda as reported by HE Chhun Sirun has been here for nearly ten decades already (979 years) and is related to many legends in the Cambodian history. People also believe in the power of the Viheasuor Buddha and some of them have come from afar and abroad to fetch water from the pond. It is also noted that even fish in this pond could not be fished or there would be serious conse-

quences. HE Em Sam An and me when we dug this pond, our wish is to provide water for our people's demand for water but it has turned out to be a sacred pond, the water from which the people believe in its magic power.

Yesterday I was at Siemreap and I came across the place where there was an attempt on my life by four B-40 rockets. I was so shocked of how narrowly I escaped. It was thanked to the protection of invisible powers of the black Buddha in Angkor Wat and also partly, I am sure, helped by the Buddha in the Viheasuor temple. However from a fortune-bible reading I would have no more ill-fortunes. As long as my wife and I are safe, our people would also be living safely too. Or to say it in another term if the CPP wins the elections, all can work and co-exist with us.

I could recall that when Sam-
(Continued on page 2)

17 December 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

Celebrating Birthday of the Buddhist Patriarch Luos Lay

... My wife and I are so pleased that we join you all in celebrating this "Longevity Ceremony" for Patriarch Luos Lay who turns 93 years old and enters his 94 years today. I would take this time to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Patriarch Luos Lay for his acceptance to take today as his anniversary and not the exact date of September 06 (1914) because of busy schedules. In 2004, we also missed his anniversary date because of tense schedule as

well. Again with the communication help by HE Pen Siman, Patriarch Luos Lay agreed to move his anniversary date to today.

I would like to take this opportune moment to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to his pupils and followers in putting together a good program according to the Buddhist norm. I am so pleased that Samdech Supreme Patriarchs of the two
(Continued on page 2)

26 December 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

Presenting Diplomas to Chamroen Polytechnics Graduates

... My wife and I are glad to join with all of you today to celebrate the graduation of 1,222 students among whom 683 are senior Government officials. I am here to express my sincere thanks and appreciations to the efforts made by the Chamroen Polytechnics and every student in achieving their common goals. I am glad to see the development of the Chamroen Polytechnics from a small school to become a University with opening opportunity for senior Government officials and dignitaries to continue and finish their studies.

Khan are members of the parliament and they have reserved their time for studies too. We also have in the group the police, military police and military commanders. This is a great achievement and it is a strategic thought of the CPP in building human resources for our nation and not solely for the Party... After January 7, 1979, we reserved the School of Yukunthor for our officials to complete their studies. Right after the liberation of our nation we picked up a correct and long-term decision on building human re-

(Continued on page 3)

To finish studies while working requires commitment and determination. Take for instance HE Bun Sambo, he always goes with me to meetings like ASEAN Summit, etc. He had to make a lot of sacrifices for achieving the study. HE Ho Naun and Hem

In This Issue

- Vihiesuor Temple — p. 1
- Patriarch Luos Lay — p. 1
- Chamroen Polytechnics — p. 1
- Flood & Sewage System — p. 3
- CIT Female Dormitory — p. 4
- Organic Law — p. 4
- Tuol Sambuor Temple — p. 7
- Kandal Stoeung Irrigation — p. 8

(Continued from page 1)

dech Ov (the heroic King-Father) and Samdech Mae (the heroic Queen-Mother) first returned to the country, they also came to the Buddhist Pagoda of Vihiesuor to perform their gratitude to the power of the Vihiesuor Buddha for granting the chance for them to return to the country after being absent from 1970 through to 1991.

How do I come to have close relation to this place? In 1989, I made a journey to this part of the country, which has instilled in me a lot of memories from heavy rain, my stay in the village of Sanlong, the ferry-boat and my initiative to build for the people in those days a steel bridge called the Bridge of Hun Sen-Preah Kunlong. I also wrote a song "the Bridge of Gold and Silver" which is still popular up to the present.

It is also well-known that Vihiesuor in the time of war between 1970 to 1975 had been a fierce battle between the soldiers of Lon Nol's Khmer Republic and the Khmer Rouge. Untold sufferings and destruction had took place because of the war and the genocide. Piece by piece and little by little we have been able to put back various Buddhist buildings in the pagoda and finally with the leadership of HE Aun Poan Muniroth, the pagoda has now changed its look to become a nice place for our people. I wish the achievements in the pagoda will help defend our nation, religion and HM the King and also to each and every one of us.

As I said earlier if CPP wins, Hun Sen will become the prime Minister. Taking this opportune moment I would like to express my sincere appreciation and joy to the

success of the elections in Thailand that was conducted in a free and fair manner yesterday. Cambodia is waiting to continue working with the civilian Thai Government which is to be set up in the near future. I hope that the relationship between Cambodia and Thailand will be promoted to a new height by working with the new Prime Minister and Government. The current Prime Minister also declared that the elections have been free and fair too.

I would like to take this chance to thank the working group that is working to help improve the people's living condition here. You may be assured that I have sent to Khsach Kandal my best brain or what we called the Cambodian Supreme National Economic Council. I am sure they have a way to study and initiate changes that will improve and develop livelihoods in the district of Khsach Kandal. Take for instance aside from what you already received today I unveil a project to build a College of Vihiesuor with a complete set of necessary teaching and studying materials. This project has been sponsored by the Government of Qatar 4.4 million US dollars and the counterpart fund provided by the Royal Government of Cambodia making it in all 5.5 million US dollars.

Another important project has been the construction the national road 8 and the Bridge of Prek Tamak which will shorten the distance to go from this area to the city of Phnom Penh. This area would in a short time after the road and bridge are done become a satellite city and through which people from other provinces - Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, etc. would travel across this place. This would encour-

(Continued from page 1)

Buddhist sects have taken their presences in this important event. This clearly shows the strong solidarity of Buddhism in Cambodia - Maha Nikaya and Dharmayuth. We wish on this joyous occasion longevity for the Patriarch Luos Lay so that he continues to see the Buddhist development in the country in particular and the national development as a whole.

HE Mayor of Phnom Penh Kep Chuktema has read already the Patriarch's brief biography and according to the compilation Samdech spent 82 out of 94 years for the Buddhist development. The Patriarch shared the ill-fate of Buddhism under the Khmer Rouge regime like other Buddhist monks throughout Cambodia. After disrobing him, the Polpotists attempted to take his life twice but every time there was always something to help evade the ill-fate.

You may know that there are many Cambodians whose lives have been saved because of this unexpected event. Thanks to the rapid offensive by the liberation forces (National United Front for Salvation of Kampuchea - NUFSK) and the uprising of the Cambodian people against the Pol Pot's regime, the planned murder of Cambodian population was foiled. My wife also was facing similar situation because at that time Ke Pauk (one of the Khmer Rouge's Commander) in the Northern region already ordered to take the people (my wife included) by ferry in

age ideas of satellite city in the area of the district of Muk Kampoul, and establishing factory zones because there are roads and labor forces available...■

that region to a prepared killing field. She survived because she asked to be on the second journey for our son had a pain in his ear. She then escaped.

Now we survive and after our senior Buddhist monks had all been killed, the Patriarch Luos Lay has been working hard and actively in the re-building of Buddhism. He takes up once again the life of a Buddhist monk. We are glad that the Buddhist development has been in full swing as we now have up to 60,000 monks throughout the country and there are 4,000 Buddhist wats/pagodas too.

The Buddhist followers and disciples have today come joining together in making this program possible and I would also like to note that the event is so honorable to have the presence of Buddhist hierarchy of all levels. In one of the meetings I had with the Patriarch I was so enlightened by his broad wisdom of establishing an assembly of Buddhist disciples. The Patriarch is one of the Buddhist disciples who has survived through many reigns of head monks - Samdech Chuon Nat, Samdech Huot Tat, etc.

I may recall that in the Longevity Ceremony that was organized in honor of Samdech Preah Moha Sangharaja Tep Vong, we were unanimous to build a corridor road at Sihanoukville. The road is named after Samdech Preah Moha Sangharaja Tep Vong. On this auspicious occasion I would like to share with all of us that we will have a new Buddhist temple built thanks to the contribution made by various disciples at this time - 243,200 US dollars and 105,350,000 Riels. I would ask HE Pen Siman to take up

(Continued on page 3)

13 December 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Officiating Construction of Flood Prevention & Sewage System

... Today, together with HE Shinohara, Ambassador of Japan to Cambodia, and all of our people here, I am pleased to launch the official construction of the second phase of Flood Prevention Dam Project and the Improvement of the Sewage System in Phnom Penh. I would like to take this opportunity to express through HE Shinohara to the people and Government of Japan for their generous assistance to the people of Cambodia as a whole, and to the city dwellers of Phnom Penh in particular. As far as the sewage system is concerned, it is already a second phase project in addition to other projects also provided by Japan, take for instance electricity, water supply, hospital and many other professional centers.

We still have problems of drainage and flood to tackle after the study conducted by JICA the first phase project was completed and put into official use on September 29, 2004. HE Ambassador Takahashi was with me to preside over the inauguration of the project that was implemented in the area of Bowung Tumpon which is designed to collect waste water from the southern and southwestern parts of the capital Phnom Penh - i.e. Khan Chamkar Mon, Stoeung Mean Chey, Tuol Kork. But we still have problem with the eastern area of Phnom Penh - which covers sections near Phsar Thmey, the Royal Palace, the National Assembly, and the National Museum. In fact we have been very concerned that we have problem of water underground and on the surface during flood time.

I could recall that in the 1980s the city was under flood threats many times and we

took the measures by getting all ministries build levee to hold out the flood. We did that to prevent the flood from reaching into the city but it has infiltrated not from the surface, but into the sewage system (designed to get the sewage out from under the city but its outlet is lower than the flood level). The city was reduced to a ghost town without residents 29 years ago, and we had to start from scratch. We have to keep a good memory of what happened in our country and city. Japan never forgets what happen in the country's history about forty or fifty years ago. Memory can be used as measurement of later development.

... After the project completes we will not have problem of flooding from rain water in the area around the Royal Palace, and its vicinity. It will be equipped with four water pumps and hopefully we settle this problem. The climate change phenomena have been real and it has already changed the weather pattern of the world. Places used to be dry have had so much rain and on a reversal order those places used to have more rain. In this connection I would like to note that Cambodia offers its support to the plan for a cooler earth in 2050 as is declared in the recent (24th) ASEAN Summit...

... Since Japan is a big economy their growth of 5% would be huge. In our meetings at the sideline of the ASEAN Summit in Singapore, Japan has declared to provide non-project grant more than the previous year to Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam and will increase aid for three consecutive years to promote development project at the sub-Mekong region...■

(Continued from page 1)

resources. Having toppled the Pol Pot group we had to upgrade the soldier capability because we need higher skill and expertise in managing regiment and higher units. We have to wait till 1981 to set up the high command of the armed forces. You may know that you need certain skills to lead the forces at brigade level but more different skill and expertise for regimental leadership and commanding. Lacking skill, expertise and experience would bring about death tolls to soldiers under commands. This is also applicable to civilian structure from province to ministry and to the whole nation. A negligence or incompetence would bring devastation to the whole country.

Therefore I would urge our Government officials and others - though they may have old ages - to take up further studies and should take the time to get oneself informed with news. I would like to remind that to make yourself fully informed will help you in making decision while on the contrary you would not be able to help in any way. I would not insult the Kenyan UN envoy to Cambodia but because of his remark I would urge our people to see what happens in Kenya and Cambodia - when he comes to Cambodia we can give him the news on air. Many deaths happened in the course of the presidential election campaign in Kenya. This news would help our people understand about the person who tries to tell us he is the best. News could be biased but we have the mind to analyze.

I accept the offer of ten scholarships by Mr. Chea Chamroen as "Samdech Techo Hun Sen- Best Students." When we give chance to the best

students we also should prepare to give them the best careers. Take for instance in the US, students graduated from Harvard or Columbia Universities would have a better chance of being taken by various companies. The same is true in France - School of National Administration, or in Great Britain. But you have to be the best among the best... I would urge our people to get education for their better chances in life... We have increased our reserve to 1,692 million US dollars. You may know that we started from zero dollars in 1979. As of mid next year our foreign reserve would be sizing to two billion US dollars and over. Therefore we do not have to use the 12 tons of gold in reserve...■

(Continued from page 2)

this matter which also includes road and drainage system improvement.

Taking this moment I would take the time to make one thing clear. There has been an inappropriate remark made by ill-willed politicians that "as the Government has been given a lot of money by foreign countries, they should not give our people between 10 and 20 kg of rice like this."

It is our tradition that when someone goes to meet people in rural area they always bring with them something for them - for instance rice, sarong (a piece of cloth used to wear around the bottom half of the body) and sometimes a scarf (a piece of cloth that is handy in covering any part of the body - from the sunlight, etc).

They blamed us for making merit to the poor. I think those who obstruct these offers in good faith would face bad karma...■

12 December 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Inaugurating CIT's Female Student Dormitory

... My wife and I are so happy that we join with all of you here today to put into official use of the dormitory for female students - and to be frank, we have been waiting so long for this to happen. I could remember that I have said more than ten times about need to have this kind of dormitory. It is a good thing to see that among other social achievements, we now have this dormitory in place which is a major contribution to women's affairs and the investment in women. It is indeed time to mention again that gender issue can not be addressed only by seminars and workshops but there has to be actual investment so as to provide women with capacity building opportunity.

Together with my wife I am so pleased to see that what we have wished for has in fact become a reality. I would on this special occasion take the opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the efforts made by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS), under both the former and incumbent Ministers, especially Im Setthi, MEYS's Secretary of State whom I have always instructed to look into all matters concerned since 1979. I also take this opportune moment to express my sincere thanks to the Embassy of the Republic of France and French Speaking University in Belgium for their contribution in these efforts.

HE Senior Minister Kol Pheng has mentioned that we are putting into use officially this dormitory which consists of six buildings, five of which were built with the national budget at the total cost of over two million US dollars and another building named

Building B was built with the financial contribution from the French Embassy (US\$ 94,390) and consortium of French Speaking Universities in Belgium (US\$ 85,678). Four of the six buildings will be for use by Cambodian female students, one for use by both male and female students from foreign countries and another named Building E for male students from the Cambodian Institute for Technology (CIT).

It has been years that I talked about hardships of female students who have continued their studies to tertiary education, especially in Phnom Penh, and do not have relatives who are residents of Phnom Penh. It is not simple for them as for male students because the latter would be able to find a proper lodgment in the Buddhist pagodas. I would therefore seek the understanding from the male students for this gesture of the Government in providing some assistance to female students. I said to HE Kol Pheng last night that because we now have a building for foreign students, I would hope that it will help us in promoting student exchange program. We have been doing this with Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand but we will go for more. With this facility we will be able to accommodate students from the Mekong River region and more to come.

I am so glad that we have now tens of thousands of female students pursuing their studies in Phnom Penh. This is a high figure. We would not be able to provide assistance to all of them. It is right that HE Kol Pheng mentioned in his report just now that the

(Continued on page 6)

06 December 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Addressing Workshop on Public Administration Organic Law

... If we were to discuss about provincial, district/Khan assembly we should also think of providing some financial power. What concerns us is how much is enough as too much would cause problem of secession, and in the worst case like in Kosovo. This system needs to be in conformity with the general system where a clear law needs to be developed to define property to be governed by the district/Khan level, and its inter-connection between the law and financial system. Otherwise we may have this situation that heads of district/Khan sell all state property. As of now the state property at the communal level has not been infringed upon...

In any circumstances I would not allow a state to exist in the state at all. We will give you the power but we would not give all so you become a state (another powerhouse) in the state at all. To my mind, what has been done so far is already viable. The country's future is the top priority. It would be absurd to practice the pattern of concentrating resources to one's accessibility and not to segregate it to lower level authority, take for instance the provincial and the district levels. It is not right to feel good when one is in power to concentrate all resources for one's sake. That is not the pattern of thought for the future of the country. We would go backward if we tend to follow this path.

I have proposed an amendment to the National Assembly in relation to the administration of province, municipality, district and Khan. It was well written in the State of Cambodia's law and that formula was applicable. In those days minor damages of

roads or bridges could be fixed right way. As of now a minor damage has to come all the way through to the central level for financial decision because there is no money at the local level. Facing with over all development, it is advisable that we have to amend some articles in the Constitution so as this problem could be averted.

Take as an example, Poi Pet, which has become a town in Banteay Mean Chey province, it would not be applicable anymore to keep the whole town under the framework of communal administration. O Chrov (also in Banteay Mean Chey province) could no longer be administered by the communal level. It should not be administered by the district of O Chrov because it has become a town, a municipality which should be dependent to the central administration. Take Siemreap town as another example. It is no longer applicable to administer Siemreap Town by the district of Siemreap. Therefore it is necessary to transform it into the City of Angkor for example. Flexibility is important and we need to adapt to everyday situation.

I used to mention about a situation that I call "bring with oneself the prospect of one's immunity" or literally I mean one who used to have a bigger share of power at the provincial level, s/he also asks to have similar share when s/he comes to the Ministry. This is preposterous. These are perhaps things that need to be well thought through. Behavioral change is a big issue in reform. If there were no behavioral change, a reform program would not be successful. We should bring in

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 8)
has the capacity to produce more for exports. However I would stress today on the agricultural sector, the biggest sector in our economy that provides food security and nutrition to our people's need. I do not agree with Pol Pot's view of "having rice is having everything." We have to think of other commercial crops as well, not only rice. In order to achieve good result in agriculture, we have to have water management and irrigation system. With irrigation one can talk about intensive culture and we could bring about change of attitude from extensive to intensive cultivation.

Facing explosion of population, extensive cultivation cannot afford to feed us all or people will resort to clearing off forest to get land for cultivation because according to normal thinking we used to reserve two hectares of land for a household of ten persons. Take for instance, before they called a province in our country Prey Veng or literally translated as "long line of forest." Now we all know that it should be called "long field". Like I said in one of the seminar the other day about how population explosion puts pressure on land issue.

Having developed irrigation system, we should be able to increase our people know-how and expertise in intensive cultivation ranging from the irrigation facilities, new seeds, pattern and technicality in cultivation, etc. so as to increase the capacity of feeding of one hectare of land for five people to fifteen or twenty people. This is calculable because we would increase the current yield of 1.2 ton per hectare to 2.2 or 2.5 tons per hectare. If we succeed in doing that we could increase our feeding capacity and prevent

the people from encroaching upon forest for cultivation land that would destroy our forest and environment.

Water for irrigation is the primary factor and I am proud that from twenty years ago up to now this vision is still proven to be correct. In 1987, in between July and August, there was a meeting to prioritize our development objectives at the time when the country was in a situation of both war and peace. We then prioritized four targets - irrigation, roads, electricity and human resources. As far as human resources are concerned, it will be proven to be correct even twenty years hereafter. In 2006 and 2007, and the forthcoming 2008, the budgets reserved for irrigation and water resources have been the largest.

As for the irrigation system in Kandal Stoeung, it is not only an irrigation system but also a flood prevention dam for Phnom Penh's districts of Dankao, Knadal Stoeung and Takhmao, and a part of Angsnuol, which used to be threatened by flood. In 2006 we had a flash flood to Dangkaio district for the damage of the Sak Sampeo dam. HE Shinohara, the Ambassador of Japan and the director of JICA have studied a project that I term it as "an arrow that shoots two birds" - preventing flood from the western side of Phnom Penh and establishing irrigation system that does not inquire pumping from one level to another.

That is why we have to continue developing the second and third level irrigation channels in the near future. HE Lim Kean Hor mentioned already that the irrigation system here in Kandal Stoeung will be replicated to other places throughout the country.

We should put more thought on the second and third levels of sub-canals and perhaps in some instance the fourth level too. We should mobilize people with resources to help build these sub-canal system. It is unfortunate that when we have the capacity to develop the country, there is this problem of high oil prices. But we should be able to fulfill some of the plan. When I talked about subsidy on oil price, etc. at the construction of the flood prevention and sewage system in the capital of Phnom Penh, some politicians criticized me of not being transparent. I was talking about our subsidy to help curb the price of oil and I am sure HE Keat Chhon explained many times about that but they do not seem to understand.

The person had some time ago been my subsidiary spy and I have everything as evidence on CDs and papers. He followed up issue of Ta Mok for me and collected Funcinpec officials from Bangkok to Phnom Penh. How do you define the nature of the work? Just now HE Ly Thuch said to me that in Pursath, they told people that the Royal Government does not want our people to sell rice at a high price because it prevents heavy lorry from entering the villages. They would say however that the Royal Government does not care the damages of roads when we allow the lorry to drive on dirt roads with heavy load of rice.

He asked why I did not say clearly what is that subsidy? We already said many times that for example we charge 10% of tax for a ton of oil at the price of 150\$ and we continue to maintain this amount even when the price of import of oil has gone up to 1,000 US dollars per ton. We do not charge import tax at the new

(Continued from page 8)
attack from insects but in general we expect to have surplus because of extension of rice cultivation coverage. Rubber also makes an outstanding development because we have the figure of 26,000 hectares of household rubber plant. In Kompong Cham province, it is expected that there will be a lot of rubber/latex. From the helicopter I notice green rice on one side and endless line of rubber on the other. We have some urgent demands to be responded to in terms of education facilities. I would urge HE Teng Lao and Oknha Sim Vanna to see to the locations that we want senior junior and high school built within access for female students in the surrounding villages.

Yesterday was December 2. It was the 29th anniversary of the establishment of the United Front for National Salvation of Kampuchea (UFNSK). You should be reminded too that it was my historic meeting with Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk in France. It is absurd that some politicians have claimed themselves to be negotiation partner with Hun Sen, where it was indeed the Sihanouk-Hun Sen forum and it is impossible to twist that fact. It is known clearly already who have liberated the country, brought about a real peace, dismantled the Khmer Rouge organization, brought the former Khmer Rouge leaders to stand trial, etc. No one could distort the historic reality... ■

price of 1,000 US dollars per ton but only 10% of the previous price. Some measures have been taken to prevent the price of electricity. As you can see the price of oil has gone high but the price of electricity has been stabilized... ■

(Continued from page 4)

dormitory is intended for students from five defined categorized priorities - 1) who are orphans, 2) who are from poor families with strong intention to study, 3) who are from families of many children, 4) who are from remote provinces and 5) who are from regions defined as having difficulties.

We should see that this has indeed addressed two major issues - 1) concerns of families, especially their parents, etc. and that of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, but also 2) a long term investment in female human resources, which indeed will enhance gender equality in our country. In order to address issue of gender, one could not make it happen by talking but only by making actual investment from top to bottom which means through our efforts to bring education access to rural areas and to provide them with lodgment and necessary facilities when their daughters reach tertiary education.

It is true that with this facility established and open for use, we still need more of this service because we have lots of female students, who may fall into one of the five categorized priorities. We will see from here what needs to be done and where should we build more of these. If we were to fail in making investment in capacity building we will not be able to talk about gender or others. What I wanted to add here is that I would seek those who stay here to help maintain the building and facilities here-with provided.

I would today say something about what has happened in the recent days and reported in the press. After HM the King bestowed upon me the title of

Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo, a group of students have proposed another title - the Great Statesman. When I see that I was shocked and would make it clear to those proponents that such a title would be fit only to leaders like King Jayavarman VII and also only for Samdech Preah Karuna Preah Baat Preah Norodom Sihanouk. What has been bestowed upon me lately has already been above anything I would have imagined.

First I do not meet the criterion as a Great Statesman. Not just for today but for all my life that I would say I will not reach that height. Second, the title has to be provided by HM the King and I would seek your consideration not to propose this to HM at all. I understand that you have a good intention but it will be suicidal for the political life of Hun Sen if I were to be excited by this. The title upon which I have just been bestowed is already a great one. We did not have a Techo in the twentieth century. I would remind you the fact that I was a pagoda boy and I have now become a Samdech with the title of Techo (Techak in Khmer means powerful) is already a marvelous thing. When I accept the offer of the Techo title, I indeed asked if it was only for me. Since there are three actors in the Cambodian People's Party, if I were to be offered alone I would have kept quiet. This has indeed been a well-thought issue by HM the King that we three were offered the title of Samdech together, the Five-Star General together and again the latest title together.

You all may have read a piece of news in the press concerning what I called "long-term tourist" to Cambodia and I have warned already that person (I do not have to mention

his name) could come anytime but I would never accept to meet with him. As long as the General Secretary of the United Nations delegates this man the power to deal with Cambodia, I will never work with him. You are personnel that can be swapped. Hun Sen here is a man mandated by the people, who also voted for the CPP, and then parliament voted in approval of my Government. I am not selected by any person in particular.

They may continue staying in Cambodia as long as they like but they would not have a chance to be working with. They may in the past support the Khmer Rouge but they have been criticizing the Government about the court process for the trial of the remaining leaders of the Khmer Rouge. They blamed the Government for a stalemate of the trial procedure. They concluded that the Royal Government does not want the trial to happen. They have been saying wrong things. Now the Khmer Rouge leaders have been arrested on court orders. However, whatever they did wrong in the past is never compensated. They only know that they are right and they never can accept that they are wrong. In the past they supported the Khmer Rouge to occupy the Cambodian seat at the United Nations and today they demand the Khmer Rouge trial. It is indeed a slap in their face but they never say that their policy in the past supporting the Khmer Rouge was wrong.

Today we have fulfilled everything in our capacity as a sovereign state through our contribution in the implementation of agreement with the United Nations on the trial of the Khmer Rouge leaders. Why is it so difficult for them to accept their mistakes? For

instance they could say they are sorry that they misunderstood the attitude of the Royal Government. This would be enough. Unfortunately, the only thing they know is that we are the one who take the wrong, but they ignored the wrong they have done to us. It is actually the same group of people that are talking ill of us while in fact they should have compensated for the damage incurred upon Cambodia because of economic sanction and acceptance of the Khmer Rouge in the United Nations between 1979 and 1991, and including it in the peace process between 1991 and 1993. But they never did.

I do not have the right to change the decision made by the General Secretary of the United Nations but it is absurd that that person advised us on issue of human rights while he could not make this issue in his country better. It is just a message to the General Secretary of the United Nations that as long as this person is here to work with us Hun Sen will not cooperate, though he can work with others in the Government. On the same issue of human rights, HE Ambassador of the United States of America said it is good, but this guy on the other hand seems to have a negative perspective. No one is blinder than a man with two eyes but does not want to see.

Take for instance the development in Myanmar, it is a hindrance rather than a solution to put pressure or sanction on them with human rights report. Cambodia will take an opposing stand. If they all do like that to Myanmar, the issue will never be solved. We should give them chance and time. The issue in Myanmar is not between one or two people but a national matter. I say

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 4)

for consultation the Law on Government Officials.

As far as I know, some officials at the local level have not been encouraged. Those who have been clerks for a long time have not been promoted at all. Those at the ministerial level have been promoted from clerks to Anu Monthri (under-senior official level), Vorak Monthrei (senior official level) and Udom Montrei (supreme official). That is why I suggest that in the foreseeable future we have to figure out the law on officials at the local level. Take for instance a health official working at the local level - what type of official should we rate him/her? This is important when we think of human resources distribution and development. We may think of establishing a law about officials working at the local level... I wish to stress further that we have made effort in suggesting amendment to the Constitution so that this organic law is being formulated at the end of the third legislative term of the National Assembly. But it will come into effect and implementation in 2009 or in the fourth legislative term. Take for instance the election of the municipal, provincial and district councils could not be held in 2008, whereas it is feasible in 2009.

Therefore the three-day discussion here has brought about two packages - 1) the Organic Law which has been passed in the Cabinet's meeting without having to organize a ministerial meeting at all. We then sent it to the National Assembly for approval. This package deems to be important to analyze functions and relations to financial issue; 2) the package of implementation. Before we had a three-tier financial system (central,

provincial and communal) and now we have evolved to four-tier financial system (central, provincial, district and communal). This would require us to seek for the best way to implement, coordinate, etc.

It is in this meaning that this arrangement is not a re-division of our territory but to change our behavior and readjustment of a number of features. It is indeed important to have your comments or feedback on this law. We will then set up a national budget package to get this moving... It is urgent that we have to pass the law because in just months from now the National Assembly would hold no more meetings. In 2003, the National Assembly ceased its meeting in March and then there was this movement of politicians to change party. The law to be adopted will bear the weight not for those who win or lose but will be a roadmap to go on...■

(Continued from page 6)

so is not because I received Prime Minister recently here but we understand that Myanmar also wanted a national reconciliation, democracy and human rights respect. Let's recall what happened in our country in front of the pagoda of Botum. We had the information that there were fake monks infiltrated into the march at that time. They are monks with underwear. What happened in Myanmar may not be different from this, though, we do not agree with the strong measures taken to crackdown the protest. We want both sides to be self-restraint. Since what I have said may surprise the Kenyans and their president, I would seek their understanding because the person I am talking about is a particular Kenyan...■

03 December 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Inaugurating Tuol Sambuor's Temple in Kompong Cham

My wife and I are very pleased to join with our people in Kompong Cham province's district of Stoeung Trang to put into use the Buddhist temple in the Ubolkiri or Tuol Sambuor pagoda as well as other religious achievements. I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the achievements that have been realized in the pagoda and personally to Oknha Sim Vanna as well as other generous contributors - near and far - to help our pagoda of Ubolkiri with these achievements.

I would also seek apology from the people in the district because I have not been here for such a long time - about 29 years since the country's liberation from the genocide. Though I did not come here in person, but as you could see these achievements have been my contributions with the help of Oknha Sim Vanna and others in my representation. I recall that 40 years ago (in 1967) I left this area. My home village is not far from this place along the river. In relation to Tuol Sambuor (a high ground named after a tree called Sambuor) I remember two main events. First I used to come to this place to cultivate rice with my father and my two elder brothers. We had about ten hectares of land then as rainy season rice field and some for dry season rice cultivation at the field of Tradak Pong (Nest of Leptoptilos).

I do not know why my grandparents possessed so much land in Tuol Sambuor. They gave land to five children and all of them lived along the river of Mekong. Because we had some land here and the land that was inherited from my mother's side eroded into

the Mekong River, my father then decided to come here to cultivate rice. Unfortunately, we failed in the first year of cultivation whereas in the second cultivation year we made between eight and ten tons of rice... There used to be a tall tree and many Tradaks (ala. Leptoptilos) hung in there. But it is no longer here. An old man just now told me that it was felt down under Pol Pot's time. I did not stay actually in the village because we had a small hut set up by the mountain. As the middle son I had the lighter task to fulfill - collect wood, cook rice, look after the buffaloes and feed them with rice stalks. My elder brothers who were grown up then had to share labors with nearby villagers so that they returned their help when we need them.

One of my unforgettable impressions was when I accompanied my father from Peam Koh Snar (my home village) during a flood time to see our rice in Tuol Sambuor. My father got up to the boat with dead rice stumps and tears came into his eyes. It was a shock for any farmers to see that their rice - the only valuable asset they had for the year - had gone. I could recall that it was sometime between 1966 and 1967.

Second is the question of why we moved from Peam Koh Snar to Tuol Sambuor and then to Memot in the same province of Kompong Cham. I wrote two songs narrating lives of farmers and of other crop cultivators. It is true that I never return to my home village in these years but I also make it clear that I never fail to keep myself a son of the farmers. I used to sit on the

(Continued on page 8)

19 December 2007 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Inaugurating Irrigation System in Kandal Stoeung District

... Together with HE Katsuhiko Shinohara, the Ambassador of Japan to Cambodia, and our people and monks, I am very pleased to put into official use a new achievement among many others that we have made in the district of Kandal Stoeung of Kandal province. This is another grant aid project kindly offered by the Royal Government of Japan, plus the Royal Government of Cambodia's counterpart fund. I would like to take this opportune moment to express to HE Shinohara, the Royal Government and people of Japan, who through JICA conducted various projects, which the irrigation system in the district of Kandal Stoeung is one of them. These projects will help our people improve their income generation and reduce poverty.

I would like to take this special occasion to express my sincere thanks to the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology as well as concerned ministries and institutions for their efforts in the facilitation of the project implementation until we have come to this complete stage. HE Lim Kean Hor, Minister for Water Resources and Meteorology and HE Shinohara, the Ambassador of Japan have respectively mentioned in their reports and speeches about the project's scope of technicality, the advantage in terms of water management and irrigation, and various important points in relation to the project implementation procedure.

I am so glad to witness this achievement because it serves the Royal Government's prioritized objective - agriculture. As a country with a broad based economy on agriculture we could not afford to overlook the importance of irriga-

tion system at all. About 80% of our population employ themselves in agricultural sector. We clearly notice that in the past recent years our economic growth has been narrow based depending almost entirely on clothing and their exports. This does not mean that the exports of clothing materials is not important since it has provided us about 3 billion US dollars in the recent years. We also do not deny the importance of contribution from the tourism sector into the growth increment. Tourism helps provide works for 2.5 person plus other sources of incomes - hotels, services, vegetable plantation.

What I mean is that the two sectors are susceptible to unexpected factors - take for instance SARS or Tsunami disasters which in the end would lead to the fall in the economic growth. This could imply also to the fall of order of purchase from foreign countries to our textile/clothing products. When countries that order purchases suffer economic slowdown, their purchasing power would also be falling. It is in this understanding that the Royal Government of the two parties - CPP and Funcinpec, take a unity of political view that we have to expand the basis of our economic growth which means we will have to advance our agricultural sector on the one hand and on the other hand to make use of available mineral resources - i.e. oil, gas, iron, bauxite, cement, etc.

We will put into official production on January 14, 2008 the factory of cement which would then lessen our import of cement from outside. Aside from local need, the factory
 (Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 7)

back of the buffalo in this area. But because my obligation as a leader that I have to fulfill for the country I do not have time enough to do what I want to do most - to visit the native place. I am glad that I make it today. All my lyrics have brought about my memories from my life here and reflected how deep my affection is for this place.

As far as the re-construction of the temple is concerned, my brother Hun Neng who is the governor of the province and I discussed it thoroughly how to go about doing it. The pagoda has been here for more than 200 years. Instead of going for bigger size, we have opted for the original feature completely, with the exception that the decoration could be more of a modern style. I may recalled that the Polpotists used the old temple as a pharmaceutical lab, while others throughout the country have been transformed into fertilizer mixing places, into torture camps, etc.

It is indeed grateful to see that after the liberation the pagoda has been gradually re-developed and perfected over time and as I said elsewhere it would not be possible without a good leadership of the head monk and leaders of the local authority.

Indeed I have decided to retain old feature and size for three pagodas - one is Botum Kesar and two is Preah Andoung, both of which are no longer standing because they fell into the Mekong because of land erosion. The pagoda of Sambuor is the third but it would not have similar fate as the previous two because it stands some ten kilometers away from the bank.

On the flight from Phnom

Penh, I have a bird's eye-view of more tile or zinc roofed homes than of thatched ones. I also see lines of dirt roads that are covered with red coarse soil with trees of Acacia planted on either side. May I remind you that this place in the war time could be compared to the most insecure place in the country - perhaps like Anlong Veng. This place fell into the liberation forces before other places in the country but was the last to enjoy peace. The commune of Sambuor of Stoeung Trang district is located on the border of three provinces - Kompong Cham, Kratie and Kompong Thom.

It was in fact the central head-quarter of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge in the 1960s. Then Khmer Rouge followers such as Khieu Samphan, Ieng Sary, Nuon Chea, Keo Pauk, Koi Thuon fled from the Government to take hiding in this area in 1970. This place experienced before elsewhere in the country the cooperative and collective system. It was at that time that it had become the liberation zone. People would remember seeing everyone in Steoung Treng, Kratie, Ratanakiri, Mundulkiri dressed in black uniform after being a liberation zone. My relatives had been shot dead in this area too in 1980 (my father in law) and in 1995 (my nephew).

We have now come to a time when we have capability to rebuild the country. We suffered in between 1975-1979 and in between 1990-1998 because of genocide, destruction and war. But we now have chance for country's development. Our people already harvested rainy season rice and some go on with dry season cultivation. This year though we had some

(Continued on page 5)