



14 July 09 — Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen with President Nicola Sarkozy of the Republic of France — in Paris (Photo: Ngin Sophea, TVK)

30 July 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Stocktaking: Cambodian Tourism and World Crisis

Visa Granting Upon Arrival - Interests and Concerns

Indeed it is a point of interest as it is a key tool in securing income for the country because, as our people could simply think of twenty US dollars for a visa for one tourist to visit Cambodia, then we could collect twenty million dollars from the arrival of one million tourists. Visa exemption with five countries for about 40,000 tourists will be worth 8 million dollars. However, tourism is not just visa (income) but everything else including more works and pays for the locals...

Visa exemption could be extending to other parts that are not within ACMECS framework and a point of consideration here is the provision of visa upon arrival, which to the tourist industry has been quite attractive. However, real tourists do not seem to have been attracted by that. It seems that those who are not seasonal

tourists have a better knowledge of the system of issuing visa upon arrival better.

The policy has brought us some concerns though. Many foreigners arrived in Cambodia with upon-arrival visa option. Lately we have those coming from Nigeria and Serra Leone that have been relating with drugs issue. Having said so, I would suggest that there are numerous illegal immigrants who have been residing in Cambodia after their visas validity are over ... What I wanted to share with you is that upon-arrival visa is a means to attract tourists and therefore their money, but there is a negative side of it to be concerned about. We need in many ways to improve management for the sake of national security.

At the time our country was at war, the Cambodian people fled the country in search of
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22 July 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Cambodian Visual Arts National Seminar: 30 Yrs of Revival

Development and Conservatism of Arts

... I am so moved by the Bassac (a kind of Cambodian classical music) song which urged us Cambodians to think about development and conservatism of the Khmer arts in general. The performance has indeed shown us about a blend of development and conservatism altogether. As you know normally we use traditional music instrument to perform the Bassac ... but as you and I have seen just now, both traditional and modern music instruments have pooled the play together ... No matter what we have the basic form of Bassac, this

is what I wanted to talk about.

... Months ago I noticed that the Cambodian TV (CTV) station slotted the show of singer Him Sivorn who enacts a song "A Pitiful Son, A Miserable Mom" that depicts my life and my wife's ... CTN music performance was by the orchestra of mixed instruments - traditional and modern ones. It was superb. As you see now both forms of instruments could get along with one another ... In South Korea, where some of our music professionals have visited, all instruments played together all ASEAN countries' music ... I see this a
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07 July 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
National Forum: Food Security and Nutrition

When Will Crisis End?

... Up to now no one, including most learned economists of International Monetary Fund (IMF) or World Bank (WB), has the courage to affirm as to when the current economic crisis will end. Some came up with a promising date of 2010, while others believe it will be 2011. It is therefore important to foresee what impact might there be on the Cambodian economy. The Asian financial crisis in 1997 some way affected some parts of the world economy but countries like the People's Republic of China did not suffer the impact while on the other hand reaching out to help those countries in crisis

... Countries like the United States of America and Japan had played very important roles in solving the situation ...

As this time, the crisis came from a larger part of the world economy and rendered its greater effects in all continents ... As far as Cambodia is concerned we have tried to lower the rate of poverty from over 40% to over 30% in 2007. The question here is
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security and better life in foreign destinations, but it seems that now Cambodia has become a destination for foreign nationals because of instability in their own ... Again, we should give more thought on that and I specially request the national police to come up with effective management system in prevention of and dealing with this matter ...

As in the case of going to the United States of America, taking an interview at the US embassy would not be easy to get a pass, and I would in this instance warn our officials of being on the US black list ... Some people request for being on the delegation list in journeys to so and so country ... If the accompanying member of delegation did not return the head of delegation will indeed be responsible ...

We will continue to provide/issue visa upon arrival, but it is also our major concern and duty to monitor visa validity thereafter so that altogether we could keep our country safe from those who takes Cambodia as their refuge and/or a means to get through to a third country.

Development Vs Preservation/Conservation

May I say a few words about a development that is in balance with preservation and/or conservation ... These matters are to be complementary to one another and not for one but also not the other, as it sometimes has been thought and done by some of us ... I usually use simple mythical terms like it is important to see the forest as a whole rather than focusing on a particular tree ..

Take one case as an example, there have been some people

came to me and talked about development project that they are for possible extinction of indigenous livelihood ... I got them back on one critical point that development we are doing is for alleviating people's poverty ... which I think they would agree with me that we should not leave our indigenous people to go on depending on bush tucking ... so that they would continue to be an eye catching moment for western tourists ... The area is good for rubber and our people there no longer depend on bush tucking but on own rubber plantation ...

However as I said, we have to come up with a solution that is addressing the whole problem and not a single case incident ... Take for instance, we have just seen here the preservation of a coffin which is about 500 years old ... Things like these, forest or other spirits of those sorts that are respected and observed by the indigenous would be preserved and conserved ...

Cambodian or foreigner alike, who blame us for development in negligence of preservation and conservation area and who take one way criticism on our action, would not be our source of concern but how do we go about balancing the elements related to development ... Take for instance tourism, plan to develop destinations for this industry should bear the two complimentary elements and should keep development from abusing preservation and conservation, and vice versa.

A Green Belt for Local Exports

Another matter that I want to share is the efforts made by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in urg-

ing for development and progress in the field of food processing as well as products that can be a supply for hotels and restaurants ... In Siemreap, take for instance, the German organization GTZ is in the process of helping the city to establish what is called a green belt, which could become a source of provision of vegetables and protein to the city. I wish this to be common efforts for the whole countries, especially in Siemreap, Phnom Penh, and other cities and provincial towns ... Once they are up in functioning, we would eventually reduce to a great extent those imported from other countries ...

... In fact service relating to tourism industry is broad and far reaching than other sections, take for instance textile. A tourist would pay for a visa, airport tax, taxi, hotel, restaurant ... and as you may see how many Cambodians who might be working in providing those services ... I have noted that the Ministry of Tourism has made a big advertisement on the Cable New Network (CNN) of Cambodia but what I am sure will do the best means of advertising would be what we could provide them and what will they talk about Cambodia ...

A Peaceful Country

When I was in Great Britain for a short visit not long ago, I happened to watch BBC. There was this about 45-minute documentary film about Cambodian culinary. The film depicts presenter who took lessons of Khmer culinary in a trip all along from Kompot (in the southern part of Cambodia), Kompong Chhnang (central part of Cambodia) through to Siemreap (where Angkor Wat is). It is a good thing to see our culture being learned by for-

eigners ...

However, one element came in to my mind that makes the whole picture meaningful and complete — Cambodia is now in full peace, free from war and terrorism, and maintaining a fact of everyday life, political stability. Imagine who would be going to visit a country where their lives are in dangers ...

We have achieved peace but for the sake of social and personal security of tourists, we have to take measures to deal with disobedient youngsters as it may be a detriment to tourist image in Cambodia as well ... Especially areas where there are frequent foreign visitors, tourist police must increase their patrol and be alert for tourists' call ... Their safety and security is our utmost concern ...

Visitors Tell Others to Come

We have to find a way to get those who have come to want to come back again and those who have returned tell good things more about Cambodia and urge others to visit Cambodia ... This is business. One regular customer is a good thing but more coming with him or her will even be better ... Information and judgment of Cambodia told to others would be very important ... The case of fighting to get a hand on transporting tourists cause so much ill image for the industry. Many efforts have been made to put things back in order but more need to be done ...

I also like to express my sincere appreciation for the Ministries of Health, of Forestry, Forestry and Fisheries, as well as the National Committee of Disaster Management, whose

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core relation not only between music instruments and performance but also among cultures ...

No Rail if Cambodia to Pay Alone

Having been absent from the country for a while, I come back to face heap of dossiers ... One of them is about the construction of the Cambodian rail ... I have come to a pause if Cambodia should go on with the project. Cambodia at this moment could get money from nowhere else other than China ... They call it ASEAN rail but none of the countries involved expresses any intention to assist in this matter ... It is impossible to let Cambodia fund the project all alone ... It is true that the rail will be in Cambodia but it is also true that once it is built everyone will benefit from it ...

Internationalize Cambodian Arts

On the point about internationalization of Cambodian visual arts and culture ... Internationalization in the sense that we want our arts to be learned and well known among other cultures ... I have even asked the Ministry of Tourism to classify and offer rewards for hotels that have incorporated the Khmer arts the most ... There is this recent feeling that Samdech Ov Preah Norosdom Sihanouk is an artist. But to be frank, Samdech Ov led the movie productions in the 1960s and they have been kept to today ...

Look at it this way. Tourists have come from afar to see and learn about our arts. Why do we in some instance serve them of what they have at where they are from? I do not

mean we should stop using their instruments but we have to find a way to get them along with what we have and can resemble what they used to have ... like violin and Cambodia Tro (a kind of instrument with two strings) ...

Localize Khmer Art Performance

HE Him Chhem, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts, requested promotion of mobile art activities to rural areas ... I think this can be done if there is a good cooperation with the local authorities ... I may have your attention on this though. Professional art performance of any kind at the present could be at disposal in any given events ... The art and cultural performance by teams from the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts would be only to complement those groups ... Look, after the liberation, the country had so many visual art performances and the team led by Samraing Kamsan from Kompot province was well known ... but up to the present, only three teams survive – Kompong Cham, Phnom Penh and Takeo ...

I have a lesson that I learned from what is defined to be “Arts to Survive Arts” ... and I have seen that many groups have been making progress this way ... It would not survive if the group is organized to depend solely on government budget support. The group has been allowed to perform in group or in smaller groups which they could do three things at the same time – 1) they do publicity which educates and get the message across to viewers, 2) they make perfect from practicing, and 3) they made additional income that will support their families and will serve as a source of encouragement

them to improve their art skills ... In the past, the government or Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts covered the cost of performance but as of present it is the host of event that pays for it ...

More of Economists than Talented Artists

I could recall the time when I met Ta Nai (Nai is a famous Cambodia soloist, Japei, who plays Cambodian two-string guitar along with lyrics that are improvised) in one trip that I made to my native village in 1980. The village was not yet peaceful and under constant threat from the Khmer Rouge ... It is now almost 30 years ... I have, because of their hard-to-find skills and commitments – decided to financially help them with their livings and there have been many of them. It would be easier now if I were to look for two to three hundred economists but to find just a bunch of good Ayai (a traditional Khmer art normally performs in sole, in pair or in playwright by singing lyrics that are either pre-written or improvised) singers or Japei soloists.

Imported Arts, Culture and/or Movies

Aside from traditional visual arts like Japei, Ayai, Bassac, etc. we have one other issue of concern. It is imported culture and/or movies at the time that our movie industry is starting to make a return. On this occasion I would suggest our script writers and directors to think harder of improving quality ... Whether your production will get a hit or not should be story itself too. Efforts must be made to have own and not to copy from others ... the Bayon TV had in the past aired two films that are almost

whole copy from foreign movies ...

In one of the three songs – 1) Hard life of a Husband-Disappeared Wife, 2) Life of the Pagoda Boy and 3) Cry of a Dirt Road - that Hang Meas VDO requested my permission to enact in Karaoke, every body knows “Life of the Pagoda Boy” is depicting my life ... It was well done, though, if I may, it is a bit too straight forward that I have been depicted to have left my wife, had corn instead of rice, crossed a river, and returned being a hero. It was not delivering the right message and true event ... please take it as both my complimentary and constructive opinion ... ■

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has been given out for people’s use ... Peasant revolution in this case would not be a subject for you to preach ... It was indeed I who warned about this ... I warned against the abuse of people’s rights of their land or there could be a peasant revolution ... The absolute majority of farmers have had their accesses and titles to lands on which they cultivate ... Note that land grabbing and abuse are indeed the issues found to have happened in former war zones ...

Some of our dignitaries may still remember when I had to travel around Ton Le Sap Lake on my way to the border with Thailand at Poi Pet, under the Khmer Rouge’s threat from either side of the road ... Funnily enough, some claimed to have occupied the land since 1987 or 1979. How could so and so resorted to such lies ... I am no stranger to these areas ... where war, not normal human beings, reigned ... ■

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when the world economy is suffering slowdown, our national economy is also one of them, will we be able to reach our target of 1% per annum poverty reduction or not? In fact the impact has brought its weight for the poor to bear ... In this situation if we could not increase the rate of poverty reduction, it is utmost important to keep those who have come out poverty from going back in to the cycle again ... That is why I would say the forum on food security, food safety and nutrition is indeed the right thing to do and that is the point here ... Our aim here has come to the fact that we have to try our best to keep the Cambodian people survive and not die of hunger ...

The world has become a dangerous living place ... We have facing what is termed climate changes and various other challenges, and the most recent one is A/H1N1 virus threat ... Can anyone imagine, what else will happen in the world? It is good that we have thought of this matter quite sometime before it really happened – as a policy makers and implementation monitors ... It was quite unusual to see surplus in the US current account ...

It gave us concern as the US economy is indeed the locomotive of growth, whose negative development would result in unfortunate condition for others ...

We have taken a bunch of measures for banking system in Cambodia ... At the time those bankers were not happy with our measures to increase reserve obligation from 8% to 16% while placing a ceiling for those who borrow money for assets development ... The measures have indeed kept

Banks in Cambodia healthy and able to reduce reserve obligation at a gradual pace to 12%. In some countries banks gave out loans 100% to customers for purchasing assets like houses, etc. As the situation has evolved, Banks now asked for 100% repayment ... Some people I know coming from the United States told me s/he had to give her/his house which he bought on loan from the Bank because s/he could not repay them ...

As I said earlier it seems that no economists could do any evaluation ... Some economists have confused themselves that they ranked Cambodia number 6 countries after Chad in terms of being facing high risk ... They have classified Zimbabwe, Sudan, Angola, Congo, Chad, and Cambodia ... as the high risk countries in face of the current financial crisis and economic downturn ...

A Culture of Wealth Sharing

After the fall of the genocide, no country in the world had more orphans and widows than Cambodia – take the percentage rate into consideration ... We had also more disabled and elderly people who could not survive on their own ... It was thanks to the culture of wealth or resources sharing - a good tradition and custom of the Cambodian people, the country had been able to save those in need – orphans, widows and dependent elderly people ...

In one of the hearings in the Extraordinary Chamber in the Court of Cambodia (ECCC) on the genocide which was broadcast live, there is a young witness, who back in 1979 was a small child, talking about what he saw and heard in Tuol Sleng genocidal

camp ...

However what is the most important topic I wanted to talk about is the fact that we had so many mouths to feed and a major number of them lived in what we called the state orphanages ... Also some were saved by the pagodas ... Many elderly people took shelters in pagodas too ... It is a good thing that Cambodia has this resources sharing practice which could do a lot of good to needy people ... Feeding and caring for them was and will be the country's morale ...

World Economic Impacts on Cambodia

... We acknowledge that the impacts have firstly noted in trade of garments as we had less order and some garments workshops have closed down ... We have immediately set up a package of fund for re-training of workers, who lost their jobs, so as to transfer them to new jobs ... We also noted impact on tourism industry when there were less number of guests booking to hotels in Siemreap but to my surprise tourists surged in the first five months of this year in Phnom Penh ...

Another area that is facing problem is construction ... of course some have had their foundations built and construction continues but in a smaller and slower scale ... no new construction is shaping up ... We also noticed downfall in incoming flow of investment capital as there has been a need for rearrangement of investment capital flow back in their countries as well.

One country that keeps its investment capital intact, at least in Cambodia, is the People's Republic of China ... PRC is bold to uphold and

implement all approved projects and is also working on new projects as well ...

PRC has been active and continued to be active in broadening their investments, especially big projects like hydro-power station, which is Cambodia's need ... PRC has been working on stations of Komjai, Kirirom, and Atai and is on the process of working at Russei Jum and Kheng Areng as well ...

Agriculture for Broad Based Economic Growth

Here I wanted to say a few things about agriculture ... because I see it as an opportunity for Cambodia in time of energy and food crisis ... because Cambodia still has a potential in agriculture ... We by no means wanted the price of rice to go high so that we take advantage from those in need ... That is definitely not our intention ...

Within the framework of ACMECS, Cambodia together with other members, especially Vietnam and Thailand, have got potential for cultivation and export of rice ... Again agriculture in Cambodia is a prioritized sector ... Whether being hit or given opportunity by crisis, rice cultivation, production and export is indeed our priority as it has a good strong potential for a broad based economic growth for the country ...

You all may have heard and remembered that I and other dignitary leaders of Cambodia have spoken in one voice for over five years and now preparing for development in agriculture so that we will achieve a broad based economic growth leading to a state that Cambodia no longer depends almost entirely on

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garments and tourism which are usually associated with high risks from external factors ... We have talked about this five years ago ... It is not a new thing ...

In the last years numerous rural irrigations have gone into function because the Royal Government has made continuous investments in countless of irrigation projects – building new ones and/or repairing economic efficiency ones ... I would say we have to go on with the targets that we have already set out and urge our people to gradually change their cultivation practice from extensive to intensive farming ... aimed at keeping rice cultivation within manageable and environmentally harm free size of land but to increase rice yield ... This means people will not be encroaching upon reserve forest and national parks ...

Indeed we have land that is left in drought and not irrigated ... they are the land that can be used for more cultivation ... Land in Thailand and Vietnam has been to some extent overused and their export seemed to have reached their peak already ... Cambodia has just cultivated land where water can be managed and irrigated while more land that can be cultivated are waiting for water canals ... Once that is solved we will be able to grow more rice and therefore export more as well ...

US\$ 600 Million on Northern Infrastructure

I have a report of HE Kiet Chhon, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economy and Finance, HE Aun Poan Munirath, Head of the Supreme National Economic Council (SNEC) and his colleagues, have visited our sol-

diers along the border ... I agreed with the reported that construction of roads and infrastructure along the border recently has cost the country some 600 million US dollars ... We will from there move to set up housing complex and agricultural development ... We will have to set up “Nature Villages” for families of our soldiers ...

A committee will be established to look into this matter of housing construction and I think HE Chea Sophara, Minister for Rural Development will be given the task to head this committee ... I wanted him to be successful in project along the border though it has not been so at the project of Tonle Cham with the World Bank at Memot of Kompong Cham ... Each families could be give two or three hectares as land with concession, owners of which do not have the rights to sell it ... We have invested hundred millions of dollars to transform the area into economic development zone ... People who are landless will have land and who are jobless will have land to work on ...

A Nation of Dictatorship Falls Off Democratic Standard!

Some people have come to us telling that Cambodia is slipping through from being a democratic country. When did they rank us a democratic nation? How could the country which has not been, according to what has been defined by a certain group a democratic country to be falling from the democratic standard?

First they labeled us a nation under dictatorship and now they say the country is falling back from democracy. Would this not literally mean that the

27 July 2009 (Excerpts from Speech) Launching National Airlines: Cambodia Angkor Air

... I and my wife have a great honor and pleasure to be here in the launch of “**Cambodia Angkor Air**” which is jointly owned by the private sector and the state. Taking this opportunity, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to **H.E. Truong Vinh Trong**, Deputy Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam ... The launch of **Cambodia Angkor Air** represents another pride of Cambodia in its effort to revive its National Airlines ... This launch indeed does not imply the start of Cambodia National Airlines.

country has indeed been a democratic nation? They said freedom of expression has been restricted. How come you can talk and blame anyone you wish ...

... The Plaintiff lawyer – Mr. Kong Sam On, was being sued by the Government lawyers. Yesterday I had a letter from him making his written apology, proposing a withdrawal from the case, and seeking a membership of the Cambodian People’s Party. As it is not my wish to seek anything else but justice, and as the person committing guilt seeks for my forgiveness, and I should be reciprocate with an approval ... I have asked my lawyer to consider a case separation ... So my legal action on the case of Mr. Kong Sam On has been withdrawn ...

Public Park Abuse ... Human Rights Issue?

Which country in this world would let a public park to be a place for residence whereas action taken to prevent illegal land grabbing has been branded a violation of human rights? Some have resorted to set up living spaces on open

Cambodia started its National Airlines in 1956, and later on, due to the war and lack of human resources, the national airlines ceased its operation.

Thus, we can see that **Cambodia National Airlines** has its history ... by having gone through both difficult and prosperous period. In particular, Royale Air Cambodge was launched in 1956, with 60% stake owned by the Royal Government of Cambodia and 30% stake owned by Air France. This com-

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drainage system, while actions taken for them to move out has given reason to some people to lambaste the Government of human rights abuse. I wonder if they have looked into the issue before making any baseless comments. Some foreigners have turned themselves to be spokespersons of the opposition parties, because of which misunderstandings between governments ...

Mr. Peter Lepretch once accused the Royal Government of sending the Cambodian people to reside in minefield in Poi Pet ... How could a person like him make such a comment? Some people have even raised issue of land revolution but I would seek their understanding that I have defended successfully a thesis on people’s democracy and it has now become a major part of the Cambodian People’s Party political platform on the relevant topic.

We have started based on this concept a policy of imposing no cultivation land tax on our people, while about 56% of total fishing lots from the Government’s accountability

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because of infrastructural development that helps integrate the country so that wealth distribution will not be in favor to one but not to others ...

Also last year we put into use the national road 48 from Koh Kong to Sre Ambel linking up with the national road 4 – it is what we term as the sea corridor which has not been there in the Cambodian history ... In my meeting with HE Abhisit Vijijsiva in Pattaya on April 10, I have requested for his help in building the road 68 from O Smatch to Kralanh ... I would be grateful if HE Suthep could inform this with the Prime Minister HE Abhisit so as to reach and to sign an agreement soon ... and Your Excellency Suthep could come to Cambodia again for the groundbreaking event ...

... Transportation and travel to and fro between the two countries have been better ... It had been so difficult to transport fruits and goods from Koh Kong to Sre Ambel before the road is there ... improvement has also been obvious in the trip between Poi Pet and Siemreap thanks to the completion of the ADB project road segment between the two places ... Tourists who got off from the border at Poi Pet to Siemreap took almost a day have now shortened their trip to just over an hour ... Also trip from Anlong Veng to Siemreap, which took two days and one night in between, now has improved because the national road 67 ...

... I have a great ambition to turn former battlefields into development zones ... I just went to release fish at Phnom Voar – former fighting zone ... I also have a wish to turn all our border with Thailand, Vietnam and Laos to be those

of peace, friendship and cooperation for the sake of development ... People along the border are usually poor and full of fear ... In the history of many countries those who were guilty often would be sent to reside or work at the border ...

... We have achieved that already with Vietnam and Laos and a major part of our border with Thailand ... Areas where both sides installed and aimed artilleries at each other have now become destination of factory investment and tourism ... These are the visions that Hun Sen wanted to achieve when he is still in power and alive ... and talking about being alive, I would turn to be 61 only in 2013, so it is not unreasonable to look to 2018 (elections) ...

... In fact HE Suthep and HE Prawit and I had a good discussion last week on a range of issues – common maritime development, and I urge both side to start negotiation the soonest we can as there are abundance of oil under the seabed ... More is also on the way between Cambodia and Laos, and Vietnam in terms of connecting places by air ...

... We all are Khmer here and we are proud that the Khmer of this generation do not opt for fighting or taking revenge on each other, taking senior advise and opinion for consideration, and together working for the country's development. Take for instance next year we will have a national road between Battambang and Pailin ready and we have just secured the Chinese assistance to build a road from Thmor Kol to Sampeo Loun and Phnom Proek. We also have projected to seek Kuwait's assistance in building a road that will link Pailin to Malai ... We have more com-

01 July 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
National Fish Day: Fishes, Amphibians & Reptiles Released

It is indeed a great pleasure to be back in the province of Kep once again after my last visit in 2003. I am glad that we are here today for a get together that might not be possible before as this is the place considered to be one of the most frequently disturbed by war activities ... To our left is what is called the Phnom Voar where in 1994 three foreigners – one French, one British and one Australian – were arrested and later killed by the Khmer Rouge forces. Imagine if we were to organize a meeting as such here at that time, the Khmer Rouge remnants would have shelled on us ... and truer of all, our people would not have come and joined us here as they do today ...

Going a bit further in the Cambodian history, right here was indeed the Japanese military airbase in the time of the second world war ... However, this field of about two hundred hectares would not be rebuilt into airbase

mitments from China as more projects have been planned to be finalized by July this year ... However, let me assure HE Suthep that for the construction of road 68 I will not ask it from China because it is nearby Thailand ...

... I would like to take this solemn occasion to thank people in Siemreap for giving five from the six parliamentary seats, and Uddar Mean Jei for giving their only seat to the Cambodian People's Party in the last elections ... It shows that people support the CPP and Royal Government policy and those who made false remarks on that would not be able to win their support ... ■

again but the state property ... I am so glad that today we will put about one million small fishes into the natural system along with those amphibians and reptiles such as tortoises, frogs, eels and lobsters ... National Fish Day is annually celebrated and as of 2002 we have issued September 25, 2002 sub-decree to make it an official event and to urge our people to conduct fish farming to lessen dependency on those from the natural system ...

In the past, the systems were all deep and there were not many people to feed. Now those systems have gone gradually shallower and more people need to be fed, making the systems no longer viable and strong enough to do so ...

A reverse trend between over population and environmental degradation requires us to carefully think about nutrition and food in general for our people ... We leave no stone unturned by taking measures to protect and also to raise fish ... It is so good now that everywhere in our country fish can be released and raised because of the absence of war ...

Please allow me in this opportune moment to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for the efforts made by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in fostering development from one stage to another and the progress has been made clear by the speech of HE Chan Sarun, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries that throughout the country, we now have 165 fish breeding sites from which about 60 million baby fishes would be hatched and released thereafter into the natural system ...

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efforts have been quite effective in preventing and dealing with the spread of A/H1N1 influenza ...

According to the record that has been brought to me, with one French and one Japanese citizens, who came from Thailand, infected case has increased to 19 people and none has died. We are poor so we do things our way but it has proven to be effective as we have the situation under control ...

Among the 19 infected, seven US students, one Filipino, one Japanese citizen, one French citizen, we have to keep their embassies informed of their conditions ...

The past experience has shown that Cambodia prevented well the spread of SARS, which was followed by bird flu. The current health threat of A/H1N1, up to the moment, has proven to be under control too ... Frankly speaking, as the flu burst out in Mexico, Cambodia already took its precautionary measures and called for an urgent ASEAN meeting to deal with the new threat ... We should go on to be alert and take decisive measure to study what happens and to be ahead in taking measure and in control.

Keep Cities Clean

This matter is of interest and concern. We have put out various measures but because of ineffective mechanism we never have gone far. HE Thaong Khon has today proposed a committee that I have been asked to be its honorary President ... I would take this opportunity to thank provincial towns and cities who have made efforts in cleaning up their cities and towns, especially Phnom Penh ...

This is one way of putting it. There is another way to look at this matter. It is so astonishing that Phnom Penh that every one saw 30 years ago as a ghost city has now re-emerged once again a city of beauty beyond imagination ...

Those present here today may have learned or seen that the city of Phnom Penh at that time had most of its parks and gardens filled with coconut trees ... Having liberated the city in those days we had left it mostly the way it was because we had no resources to manage and we had a big famine to solve ...

We have houses and apartments left empty where people were scared to occupy one all by oneself. Some shared it with a couple of colleagues while others shared with relatives, who, to our understanding, had fought later for ownership of the house or apartment that no one would want it in those days ...

I am so happy that Phnom Penh people are going out every morning and evening to do exercises ... especially in Phnom Penh. Unlike Takhmao town of Kandal that was left unmanaged ...

I travel to and fro in the town of Takhmao and I noticed that grass has grown unmanaged. It is even more shrubbier than the town of Pailin of Pailin province of HE Ee Chhien. I have instructed our officials to take care of our roads and it means two things – to check the road if there are any unrecorded and illegal checkpoints and also to see if there are any damages. We should not let small damages become bigger holes in the roads and everyone should take care of things without having to get warned ... ■

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I also urge the Ministry of Water Resources to build and renovate more canals, water ways and systems so that more fish could be released ... Cambodia has been known and classified to be the world number one fish consumer according to a released figure of an average of 50 kg of fish per person per annum versus that of the world's average figure of 30 kg per person per annum ... It is in this meaning that we have reviewed the fishing lots and decided to cut a size of about 56% from the total fishing area for use by people ...

According to a study, fisheries and fishing give works to 1.4 million people and about 6 million others have their businesses or careers more or less related to fisheries ... take for instance they not only catch but also buy and sell fishes ... Prime Minister of Vietnam said to me once that his people raised Tilapia fish along the seashore, the catch of which allows an export worth of two billion US dollars per annum ...

Relating to this, consideration must be given to allowing our people to raise fish in river, canals, streams, etc. but one point that needs to be clarified here is no ownership of any kind would be allowed for such activities ... I have already stated a prohibition of sand pumping in the sea. I have a concern that I would be blamed later in the Cambodian history ... As far as sand extracting from the river system is concerned in Kompong Cham's Koh Pen there are plenty of sand but no one seems to be interested, only those at Neak Loeung and further down the Mekong that could result in land erosion, etc. Companies wanted to

pump sand from deep river beds because it will be clean as sand on shallower levels would need to be refined and cleaned ... Coupling with lack of knowledge and professional opinion on possible consequences from those actions, I have ordered closure of sand business ...

I would urge all fishing lots as concessions from the state to conserve fish varieties and to have their own fish breeding culture and system as they have to be stated clearly in the contracts ... Make stronger efforts to collect income for the state from fishing ...

As for the province of Kep it is true that some developments are quite obvious but from the helicopter I have noticed that some residential lands have been left empty and unmanaged ... grasses and bushes have grown wildly into the streets, which I think owners have to take measures about that either to put up a fence or get to manage it in some way ... For the sake of Kep city to be beautiful and entertaining tourist destination, I would urge our people who have their residential areas there to take part in improving the beauty of the city.

I wish to share with our people that in my recent visit to Jeju island of the Republic of Korea, I have proposed some projects to its President HE Lee Myung Bank ... If approved ... the Republic of Korea's investment would be prevalent in the south and southwest of Cambodia ... We are looking for approval of the national road 31, from Takhmao to the border with Vietnam, national 22 from Takeo to Ang Tasaom, and a new road around Phnom Penh, plus a bridge at Takhmao ... ■

04 July 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Inaugurating Road 67 with Thai Deputy Premier Suthep

It is indeed a great pleasure that we are present here today to put into official use the National Road 67 of 131 kilometers with the presence of HE Suthep Thaugsuban, Deputy Prime Minister, highly representing HE Abhisit Vijjajiva, Prime Minister of Thailand making the event more meaningful for the sake of friendly and cooperative relations between the two countries – Thailand and Cambodia.

... On June 12, Prime Minister, if I may recall, Abhisit Vijjajiva conducted an official visit to Cambodia and I have requested him to send a representative to inaugurate the road on July 4. Here with us today is HE Suthep Thaugsuban, Deputy Prime Minister, who came to visit me with HE Prawit, Minister of Defense of Thailand, weeks earlier for a luncheon ... The presence has indeed proven what two neighboring countries can do and I hope, as the Cambodian Prime Minister and you (HE Suthep) and the Prime Minister of Thailand, that this will go on ...

... Please allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate what has been said in a meaningful speech of HE Suthep which stressed the importance of Thai as well as Cambodian focus on infrastructural development for neighboring countries ... It is feeling good to hear determination of the Kingdom of Thailand to continue to treasure friendly relations and cooperation between the two countries and to commit to building a road that will link the northern part of Cambodia to Si Sa Ket of Thai northeast ... We also hope to make Juam Srangam border pass an internal one ...

... Taking this opportune moment I would express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Ministries of Public Works and Transports, Economy and Finance, the Mine Clearance Organization, as well as local authorities of Uddar Mean Je and Siemreap for the efforts they made to get the task completed ... We all may remember that on December, 27, 2006, together with HE Ambassador of Thailand, we put into official operation an 18 kilometer road between Juam Srangam and Anlong Veng as grant from the Kingdom of Thailand ...

... Particularly I have to thank two persons – HE Sun Chan Thol and HE Tram Iv Toeuk who, in their former functions as Minister and Secretary of State for Public Works and Transports and their colleagues, have made efforts to get the tasks done ... HE Suthep has already mentioned a great deal about what this road means and can do in terms of benefit for both countries ... On behalf of the Cambodian people I think perhaps I would say a few words about the road from the Cambodian perspective ...

... We have to trace back to the time when we implemented my win-win policy which was put into operation in 1996 and had come to a successful end in 1998 ... What had been the thrust of such a speedy implementation was the fact that the policy enjoyed supports from all factions and players involved ... What I wanted to underline here is the fact that political and military integration of the former Khmer Rouge forces into the fold of the nation would not have created such an impact ... if it were

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 pany's operation was notably successful, unfortunately, due to some domestic crisis and political instability; it ceased its operation after the Khmer Rouge took power in 1975.

After 1979, the People's Republic of Kampuchea established the National Airline Company called "**Cambodia Airlines**" which was 100% owned by the state. The operation relied on aircrafts and utilities produced in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and were not fully commercial ...

In 1995, we moved from fully state-owed company by forming a joint venture with a Malaysian company and the operation of that company was purely commercial. In spite of pure commercial operation and support from the experienced Malaysia party, the company's operation was not successful and the blame goes to unstable market and 9/11 terrorist attack. Later on, the company stopped its operation ...

Based on the potential of the current tourism sector and the legacy we have inherited, I realize that **Cambodia National Airline Company** will further fill in the gap and create a full supporting mechanism for national economic infrastructure. Through this means, the Company will actively contribute to the improvement in the areas of transportation, trade and tourism as well as directly contributing to the job creation, which is the basis for socioeconomic development in Cambodia...

During the first stage of the Company operation, the Royal Government has decided to provide support and incentives to make sure our

National Airline Company can be operated with full confidence, strong position and be competitive with other airline companies in the region. This supporting policy is aimed at making sure the **National Airline Company, "Cambodia Angkor Air"**, can be operated with success as well as ensuring revenues for the national budget.

Along with this, I would also like to support the business plan of this new National Airline Company, which is going to provide flying services from **Siem Reap - Phnom Penh - Sihanoukville** and the international flight route from **Siem Reap - Bangkok**. The initial flight through this route is to facilitate the transportation of visitors from Sihanouk province, who have traveled into Cambodia through big tourism ships, to have opportunity to visit Angkor temples, and add more flights from Siem Reap - Bangkok, which is responding to the policy and strategy of the Royal Government in the face of Global Economic Crisis in order to revive tourism sector in Cambodia, especially in Siem Reap province, who receive impact from this crisis.

In the near future, the flights might be connected to other regions of **Vietnam, Luong Prabang city of Lao PDR** and other cities of tourism in the region and other countries as many as possible. The connection of coastal areas to the **Tourism City of Angkor** in Siem Reap is the significant strategy in expanding the visiting ability of visitors more than before and to make sure that those visitors are able to visit Angkor and coastal areas within a tour package and will also facilitate visitors to see many places and stay longer. ■