

Cambodia New Vision

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26 July 2010 Business Luncheon Address on the Visit to Singapore



26 July 2010 — Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen and HE Lee Hsien Loong during the visit to Singapore on July 26-27 (Straits Times)

... I am greatly honored and delighted to participate in this auspicious business luncheon. I would like to deeply and sincerely thank the Minister for Trade and Industry His Excellency Mr Lim Hng Kiang for hosting this very important event. I also thank all the Singapore investors for their presence and interests in Cambodia.

I am confident that this visit will greatly contribute to the further strengthening and development of the close friendship and fruitful cooperation between Cambodia and Singapore.

I also take this opportunity to extend my profound gratitude to the people and the Government of Singapore for their continued support to Cambodia through the training of

Cambodian officials in Singapore and in Phnom Penh and in particular for the establishment of the Cambodia-Singapore Training Center in 2002, where as of today, nearly 5000 officials have benefited from its short term training courses. This support is invaluable as Cambodia still requires to further develop its human resources and will contribute to Cambodia integration into ASEAN as well as to the economic development of the country.

As an ASEAN member, Cambodia wish to acknowledge the critical role of Singapore in many ASEAN initiatives such as the Initiative for Asean Integration (IAI) aiming at narrowing the development divide and enhancing ASEAN's competitiveness as a region.

Although Europe, and to a lesser extent, the USA are still under threat of a double-dip
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19 July 2010 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments) Address to the Graduation and Inauguration Ceremonies at SRU

... My wife and I are so happy for taking part in the three-in-one events together – first, the graduation and diploma presentation for 837 graduates, second, the inauguration of the new building which is named after the late HE Hok Lundi and third, the groundbreaking ceremony to build a new library that consists of seven rooms.

First of all, taking this opportune moment, I would

like to seek an apology from our people and Buddhist monks, as well as our compatriots, students and graduates, that I was not able to come for the events on June 30 as scheduled.

My presence had to be prolonged for 19 days later, July 19. Though my coming here is 19 days late but to have come at last is better than not to come at all.

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17 July 2010 Addressing the Launch of Angkor Sentinel 2010 Exercise

Today, I have a great honor and pleasure to participate with Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, National and International Distinguished Guests in a Multi-national Peacekeeping Operation Training Exercise, named as “**Angkor Sentinel 2010**”.

On behalf of the Royal Government and Cambodian people, I would like to extent my warmest welcome to the presence of Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, Military Officers and Privates of the friend countries in the Kingdom of Cambodia and wish you a happy and the most pleasant stay.

I would like to express appreciation and highly evaluate the Management of the Ministry of Defense, Headquarters of the Royal

Cambodian Armed Forces and related ministries/institutions, particularly the management team of the Multi-national Peacekeeping Operation Training Exercise 2010 for their close cooperation with US Military Headquarter in Pacific Region to organize this training exercise.

The reports by **H.E Senior General Tea Banh**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense and by **H.E. Admiral Willard**, the Commander of the U.S. Headquarters in Pacific Region, illustrated the history of the participation of Cambodian Armed Forces in the UN Peacekeeping Operation and the preparation of this exercise that is hosted by Cambodia this year.

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recession, East Asia seems to have recovered from the global financial and economic crisis. Largely thanks to China and India, the region's output, exports and employment have mostly returned to the levels before the crisis. Real GDP growth in developing East Asia is poised to rise to 8.7 percent in 2010.

However in order to ensure growth's sustainability, countries in the region will have to adopt appropriate policies to readjust their economic structure and enhance their competitiveness.

As for Cambodia, the Royal Government has carefully and proactively prepared and implemented a set of key policy measures to weather the global financial and economic crisis. Our basic philosophy was to closely monitor the national economic pulse and ensure a sound macroeconomic environment conducive for economic activities, more importantly, maintain people's livelihood.

Thus, Cambodia has responded vigorously and effectively to the crisis by undertaking budgetary measures in conjunction with monetary policy and close supervision of the financial system in order to maintain monetary stability and a sound banking system which will sustain economic growth.

Within this framework, the National Bank of Cambodia has introduced a set of measures to adjust the level of capital reserve requirement, improve banking supervision, tighten regulation, and undertake on-site inspections in order to strengthen risk management and corporate governance among commercial banks so that they are well

equipped to tackle any economic and market shock.

Along with this, the Royal Government has taken measures to promote the domestic economy by increasing public expenditures to develop a social safety net, and provide re-training as well as job opportunities for people in crisis-hit sectors. We have also established an agriculture support and development fund in order to improve productivity and diversify our growth base. Regarding public investments, we have given priorities to physical infrastructures development which will contribute to the agriculture sector growth.

These efforts have enabled us to overcome the adverse impacts from the world economic and financial crisis last year and preserved the foundation of the Cambodian economy. Indeed, in 2009, despite drops in the manufacturing and real estate sectors, as well as the weakening of the services sector growth, the agriculture sector continues to achieve good results with a growth rate of over 5%.

Given the vast production potentials and market opportunities for agricultural product's exports, the Royal Government has recently adopted the rice production and export promotion policy, paving the way for the exports of other agricultural products in the following step.

In this context, our target is to achieve a paddy production surplus of over 4 million metric tons by 2015, so that Cambodia can export at least 1 million metric ton of rice. I believe this policy offers good opportunities for all investors, especially those from the region including Singapore investors.

In 2010, economic growth is expected to rebound and forecasted at around 5%. Inflation has drastically decreased due to the drop in food price, and the exchange rate remains stable against the dollar. Foreign reserves have increased from USD 2.3 billion at the beginning of the year to USD 2.5 billion by May which can accommodate 4 months of import.

Based on these new indicators, we can confidently conclude that the Royal Government has successfully weathered the hardest stage of the crisis along with the other Asian economies. Over the course of this tough journey, we have been able to maintain a sound financial sector as well as macroeconomic and social stability, particularly maintain the livelihood of the entire population.

Cambodia has gone through a rapid transition; starting from scratch and civil war to the current situation in which the country enjoys peace, political and macro-economic stability and social progress.

Cambodia has learnt that peaceful, stable and a secure environment are the prerequisites for its future growth and prosperity. Based on this solid foundation, Cambodia has actively endeavored to integrate itself into the region and the world, the ASEAN cooperation being of highest priority.

Since Cambodia is back on the path of strong and sustained economic growth, testified by considerable and encouraging achievements during the last few years, I believe that this is most opportune time for the business community and all investors to assess Cambodia's potential and to seize investment

opportunities.

I wish to bring to your attention that Cambodia has great potential in several important sectors such as agriculture, agro-industry, infrastructures, labor intensive industries, export oriented industries, exploitation of natural resources such as oil and gas, mining as well as tourism. These sectors have not been fully capitalized and still offer many investment opportunities.

It is important for me to reiterate that Cambodia treats equally and provides the same rights to both local and foreign investors except for land ownership. However foreign investors can use land through long term leases of up to 99 years. We have opened our economy to Foreign Direct Investments in all sectors including banking, insurance, and telecommunications.

I must stress here that in many countries in such sensitive sectors, foreign investors are not allowed to control 100% shareholding without local participation. Moreover, we are actively expanding and deepening our financial sector by strengthening the banking and insurance system and by establishing the Cambodia Stock Exchange which operation is due in mid 2011. This openness has already provided Singaporean companies, pioneer investments in banking and insurance sectors among others, ahead of investors from other countries.

Along the improvements of physical infrastructures in the past years, on the soft side, Cambodia has made significant progress in strengthening its legal framework: although as mentioned earlier, owner-

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ship of land is still reserved to nationals, I wish to inform this distinguished gathering that on 5 April, 2010, the National Assembly passed legislation allowing foreigners to own private units in co-owned buildings. In combination with earlier legislation organizing separate titles of ownership for condominium units, this is a significant development for the real estate sector.

The rights of private property investors, both Cambodians and foreign nationals are now better secured while reducing the risk for developers and for the final consumer. In practice it will now also become easier for end consumers to finance condominium unit purchases, as the titles serve as secured collateral.

Furthermore a number of legal and judicial reform efforts in the Government's programs, such as the creation of the National Arbitration Center, will address some of the existing gaps.

Commercial arbitration will be implemented. Currently private sector arbitrators are being trained by international experts.

The Insolvency Law has been promulgated, significantly improving the rights of creditors and the transparency of enforcing debts.

It is also noteworthy that Cambodia is one of the few countries in the region where security on movable goods can be registered online in real time, a procedure that is highly popular with the private sector.

A new Law of Commercial Contracts, which is being drafted, will also improve the

legal certainty relating to the most common contracts that are used in business.

In addition to the strengthening of the legal framework, the Royal Government is paying great attention to the business environment and welcomes public-private dialogue. Through the Government Private Sector Forum (GPSF), the entire Cabinet and I meet regularly with the business community to consider and address private sector development, trade and investments issues the private sector is facing.

Since its inception in 1999, the GPSF has convened 15 times with the last forum being held on the 27 April 2010. For ten years now, the GPSF has provided us with many success stories of partnership between the Royal Government and the private sector.

I am proud to share with you all that in a 2009 World Bank report on public-private dialogues, Cambodia was ranked first out of the 24 countries surveyed. Thanks to this dialogue mechanism, the business and investment climate has been steadily improved.

In this context, I strongly encourage Singaporean investors in Cambodia to participate actively in this dialogue mechanism.

Notwithstanding the above mentioned progress and achievements, the Royal Government of Cambodia will pursue its efforts to streamline processes and formalities for private investments; we will implement necessary measures to reduce the cost of doing business in Cambodia, in particular by strengthening governance and lowering transportation

and electricity costs.

Concerning the latter, the Royal Government expects considerable improvement from 2010 on with the energy generated by our hydropower plants.

Also as a first step towards simplification of administrative procedures is the establishment and operation of Special Economic Zones at the borders with Vietnam and Thailand, in the vicinity of Phnom Penh and in Sihanoukville where is located our deep sea port. The One Stop Service at each of those SEZs has already reduced time and cost of transactions.

I wish to invite Singaporean businessmen who have not visited Cambodia yet to come for fact findings, explore investment opportunities, meet and discuss with the Cambodian business community looking for partnership, join hands together to ensure a win-win outcome. You have the capital, the know-how and the experience.

Let's combine yours assets with our endowments and potentials. I see so much room for complementarities between our two economies. I am personally committed to assure you a conducive and friendly business environment.

My key message today, therefore, is that Cambodia is open for business to you Singaporean investors. We wait to welcome you.

Finally, I hope that the Singapore Government will continue its support to Cambodia and further improve the cooperation in all fields in order to contribute to Cambodia's socio-economic development. Indeed, I strongly believe that

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forces from various countries into to become the UN peace keeping forces in the future.

Cambodia is very proud and pleasant to host the multi-national peacekeeping operation training exercise "**Angkor Sentinel 2010**" today.

I strongly believe that this two-week event will enable Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen to exchange knowledge and experiences and strengthen closer cooperation in the name as supporters of the regional and global peace in the future.

Once again, I would like to thank the Headquarter of the US Military in Pacific Region for supporting to organize this training exercise as well assisting to transform this center of the former Tank Commanding Headquarters into a center for training the multi-national peacekeepers in the future.

Finally, with the opening of "**Angkor Sentinel 2010**" training exercise, May I wish Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen the four gems of Buddhist blessings ... ☸

our closer cooperation will bring prosperity to our peoples and both our countries, and will strengthen the long-lasting Cambodia-Singapore friendship.

Before closing, I would like to wish Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen attending this Business Luncheon, Happiness, Prosperity and Success in all your endeavors ... ☸

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Taking this opportunity, I would like to emphasize that this training exercise is not a military maneuver that can be the source of threats or worries to any countries, but it is merely a training that is complying with the UN standard and practices in order to provide opportunity for the armed forces of any countries to share their experiences and to strengthen closer cooperation for regional and global peacekeeping operation.

The history of Cambodia in the mission of UN Peacekeeping Operation started 5 years ago together with the decision making made by the Royal Government to send demining forces to Sudan. That was a tremendous decision that I must be responsible for the history, the nation and Cambodian people as a whole.

Although Cambodia has cleared mines from its territory, as state member of UN, a state party of Ottawa Convention and as a war-torn country, Cambodia has to share its demining forces to assist other countries that are now facing danger caused by landmines and unexploded ordinance as we have experienced.

From a war-torn country, Cambodia has earned full peace in its territory and has participated in the peacekeeping operation in other countries. From a country that has received assistance from blue-cap forces to maintain peace now is a Country that has sent its forces for peacekeeping operation in other countries.

As indicated in the report by **H.E.Tea Banh**, Cambodia has been internationally recognized with appreciation as a leading country in global peacekeeping operation.

The success of RCAF in Sudan, Chad and Central African Republic proves to the world that Cambodia is a key contributor to international security and peacekeeping.

Last month, a new demining unit traveled to Sudan in order to replace a team on peacekeeping mission in the fifth year; and in the next few months, a team of engineering corps accompanied with manual and mechanical mine clearing unit will proceed to be on peacekeeping operation mission in Lebanon.

Similar to the participation of our Royal Cambodian Armed Forces in peacekeeping mission of the United Nations, this multinational peacekeeping operation training exercise **“Angkor Sentinel 2010”** has opened a new page to integrate Cambodia into the region and the world.

This training exercise will also strengthen and expand Cambodia’s capacity in supporting peace operation, enhancing multi-lateral cooperation as well as strengthening international relations and regional partnership for the cause of peace and humanity.

Cambodia could send its military to participate in the United Nations mission and host this multinational peacekeeping operation training exercise simply because our coun-

try has gained full peace, political stability, unification and territorial integrity due to the **Win-Win Policy** which unifies all fractioned armed forces to live together with happiness.

This training exercise is a fruit of military cooperation between Cambodia and the United States of America in which during the past few years, there has been the progress in the reform of national defense, border and marine border security, anti-terrorism, civil-military operation and mine clearance.

At the same time, the Royal Government of Cambodia had closely cooperated with bilateral and multi-lateral international countries in order to contribute to the national development in all sectors for poverty reduction, as stated in the **Rectangular Strategy-Phase II** of the Royal Government.

The involvement of Cambodia in bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation with countries and security mechanism in the region has remarkably increased and is contributing to maintain stability and peace for regional development. In the past several years, beside military peacekeeping, Cambodia had also actively involved in natural disaster emergency aid, military health and marine security.

Cambodia has truly traveled its long journey in the development process and has overcome countless impediments until earning peace, political stability, security and social order, democracy, respect of hu-

man rights and dignities, macro-economic stability, international cooperation and global and regional integration as well as achieving success in infrastructure development and improvement of governance system.

The Royal Government will continue its foreign policy based on the principles of neutrality, co-existence and non-alliance, friendship building, and cooperation with all countries around the globe with equity, respect of independence and sovereignty of respective territories.

The Royal Government will reinforce its bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation with other friendly countries, international organizations and regional and sub-regional organizations to underpin development with the objective to actively participate equally with equal rights with the world community in order to deal with global challenges such as terrorism, cross-border crime, environmental protection, aiming to maintain and strengthen peace, stability, security, cooperation and regional, sub-regional and global development.

Along with this, the Royal Government will continue to take part in humanitarian acts and international peacekeeping operation through sending Cambodian forces to peacekeeping mission in various countries in the framework of the United Nations, within its capacity and resources as fulfilled before; and Cambodia is also very proud to become a training center of the

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My wife and I are of the opinion that it is important that we have to come presiding the graduation since it is the first of its kind for the University of Svay Rieng. It is in this thought that I did not send any proxy to preside over the events on my behalf. Maybe I should first say a few things about what we have gained here. It is said while eating a fruit, one should think of those who grow the fruit trees.

Four Events to Celebrate

On this occasion I would like to express my sincere appreciation and thanks for the late HE Hok Lundi and Madame, as well as HE Hun Neng, who are founders of the University from the beginning. I also thank those generous fellows for making contributions to the construction of the University, which is one of the first Universities ever and early built in provinces.

So far we have built and put into operation Universities in Siemreap, Svay Rieng, Banteay Meanjei, Battambang, Prey Veng, etc. We are also in the process of organizing and building more tertiary education facilities in some major provinces.

Today, along with the graduation and diploma presentation, also we have a new building, for which both of my son and daughter have spent some two hundred thousand US dollars for the construction, to inaugurate.

The building is to be named after and in memory of the late HE Hok

Lundi (former General Director of the National Police).

Also we have here the duty to perform the groundbreaking for building a new library that is consisting of seven rooms, for which I have sent some 50 pieces of computer already.

As is reported by HE Tum Saravuth, Rector of the University of Svay Rieng, because the University already received fifty sets of computers from before, the new fifty sets make them one hundred sets for the University. As we have three events in line to celebrate today, it is my own idea, and perhaps the University should take it into consideration, to propose to build a lecture hall like the one we have at the National Institute of Education or the University of Agriculture at Jamka Daung, where some two thousand people could attend in anyone event.

I am sure that it is not by chance that the graduation ceremony today is proceeding under tent in open air as was normally done during 1980s and 1990s. We are now in the 21 century and its first decade is coming to its end already, so I am sure the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Governor of the province of Svay Rieng as well as the University, could have done so to test the Prime Minister's reaction.

For instance, whether the Prime Minister would allow this situation (of organizing such a ceremony in the open) to continue or would he think of it in any

other way?

Indeed it is not a bad idea to organize a big ceremony as such in the open but we should also have a lecture hall in which all sorts of ceremony, whether it be for a meeting, a study session or graduation ceremony could be held.

It is this thought that my wife and I propose to the University and our participants here the fourth program for today and that is the provision of a new building to be used as a multi-purpose hall for the University of Svay Rieng.

I would suggest that the building is to be a replica of architecture, plan and size of the one that is built for the University of Agriculture at Jamka Daung.

The architectural plan is bigger than the one at the National Institute of Education and it could house up to two thousand people. I would give the company of Oknha Mong Rithy to build the said building as the company owned the architectural plan and already built the one at Jamka Daung, which cost close to half a million US dollars. Anyone here present could well contribute if they like, if they do not feel like it, it is also fine.

Also present here today is our guests from the provinces of Long An, Tay Ninh, and Tan Sri Dr. Chen Lip Keong, President and CEO of NagaWorld Cambodia. It is quite honorable. My son and daughter have spent some 200,000 US dollars for the classroom building and another 165,000 US dollars for the new library. So

my wife and I will take up the cost of building the multi-purpose lecture hall.

I would not rule out further contributions from my children. I see that two of my children and my two children in-law to look after the matter here because one couple would take over their father and father in-law place (HE Hok Lundi) and another couple would take over the place of their grand uncle (Hun Neng) who started the project of the University when he was Governor of Svay Rieng province.

Building University, Providing Jobs and Encouraging Further Education

It is indeed not simple a task to set up a University as it is not only to make the building happen but to make sure it gets all infrastructure it needs. Once it is ready, the University could lease it for occasional meetings (to outsiders) and the income thereof could help secure the operational costs like electric and water supply bills for example. The provincial authority of Svay Rieng, me also included, could in this case borrow or lease the hall to organize some of its meetings. This will indeed take quite some time to get it done.

Now things that are concerning with students, my wife and I would like to take this opportune moment to express our joys and appreciations for the 837 students, 217 of whom are female, for their graduation in 2006-2007, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009. Some of them have already

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started works, and according to the report of the Rector, some 71.46% who have got jobs, 45.94% are doings works that are corresponding to their trainings.

I would say here that whether their jobs are corresponding to their educational backgrounds or not should not be our concerns as long as they all have got jobs. I used to say at the National Institute of Education that we should in no way underestimate people who are not working in areas of their expertise. The fact that s/he works in an area that is new to them is in fact meaning that s/he is picking up a new expertise.

As efforts by graduates are well understood and recognized, I would therefore appeal to all of them to continue to make efforts and paying attentions in their studies.

I would encourage you to make further time available and efforts to continue your studies as well as to acquire new skills and experiences so as to be really capable workers with knowledge and know-how, which as of present is not only responding to demands by local but also regional and international job markets and standards too.

Our country also has a tough competition to face at present as well as in the future, especially at the time when we have flow of service as well as human resources among countries member of ASEAN in the context of ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA).

In Search of Better Local Human Resources

Taking this concept into consideration, if we have strong and capable human resources, and in response to demand for better human resources and skills by foreign investment, you may take note that they would first consider those with well acquired skills and also it is our wish that more of our citizens are to be hired and/or incorporated in their projects, rather than having to bring in costly foreign experts.

In this sense you must agree with me that as long as Cambodia could not provide them with skilled workers, investors would then be obliged to hire foreign experts, which is normally costly, for the projects of investment in Cambodia.

In the recent passing years we have been proud to see that various foreign companies who came to invest in Cambodia have opted to recruit more Cambodians, while reducing more of their previously hired foreign expertise. Those retained only are for highly and unavailable skills locally.

Here with us today is Tan Sri Dr. Chen Lip Keong who not only provides scholarships for some of the students to take up studies here but also assures that he will hire some of the well-achieved students to work in his company.

Therefore I hope that some of the Lok Chumteav and/or Oknha who have big companies would consider recruiting and providing

jobs for students who have graduated from the University of Svay Rieng, whose helps, I am sure, will certainly be great encouragements for our students here.

With this in mind my wife and I would like to express our appreciation and share the joy with superintendents and/or parents of students who have graduated and presented with diplomas today. It is truly their sacrifices and contributions from the parts of their parents and/or superintendents, along with the correct policy of the Royal Government in the field of education, that their combined efforts have endeavored students to achieve personal goals.

According to a report by the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, there are 3.5 million students in 14 millions population of the Kingdom of Cambodia. This could literally be translated to one in every four Cambodians is in school. This has been possible in part because of the Royal Government's policy in building schools at community level, which have changed our situation from students traveling in search for schools to schools getting close to students everywhere.

Also HE Im Setthi, Minister of Education and Sports, said to me that he has found a partner with whom some 700 schools will be built in distant places. This would be an impetus for the Royal Government's policy in providing basic education for all, where a positive result has shown that one in every four Cambodians

is in school as of the moment of speaking.

My declaration at Santuk commune (the province of Kompong Thom), which I set a vision of one junior college for every commune, up to now, seems to have almost achieved the goal already. Perhaps the province of Svay Rieng has achieved that already.

A University for Each Province — Vision

My goal now, and it is what I wanted to achieve, is that there will be a University in each province. I would not include Kandal and Phnom Penh because there have been universities already, and provinces with one university, not to include branches of universities from Phnom Penh, are Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, Battambang, Siemreap and Banteay Meanjei.

So you can see that my goal has been set high that there will have to be one university for each province so as to facilitate our students' movement in every province in searching for higher educational facilities. This is not a dream because we have already achieved our goal for primary education, and are in the process of achieving our goal of attaining a junior secondary school for each commune or a set of communes that are in remote areas.

Our goal would change a province where there may be one secondary school to one with dozens of them and some district would have more than one too. Because we have achieved a commune with one or

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more than one secondary school, it is not unfeasible that we are aiming to have one university for each province.

This objective is to be achieved not in one year but a long term vision for the Cambodian generations who will continue until the goal is reached. I would like the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to study this objective and goal, take for instance the way this University of Svay Rieng is being built.

The University of Svay Rieng could be set as an example. Building of university may start with private initiative and startup capital. When it later becomes a public foundation, then more helps from generous persons are possible. It is in this style that I would like the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to study it so that they could set out a more generalized policy.

However let me have your attention that any efforts put into getting this objective implemented are for serious achievement of the goals of a proper and high standard university to be established, and any one that is lacking standard would not be welcome.

HE Men Sam An, Deputy Prime Minister in charge of education matter, together with HE Kol Pheng, State Minister and HE Im Setthi, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, should work together to study this issue and the possibility to call for state and private contribution in this endeavor.

I am so moved to see that we have achieved this goal of educational facilities not only in Phnom Penh but also in provinces thanks to combined efforts from both state and private sectors, which in the end brings about development of human resources. I have to approve that there has been substantial support from our people, without which we could not achieve this great success of putting one in every four Cambodians in school.

This also has indicated that we are now moving toward being a learning society in which more of our youngsters are in search for education, knowledge and know-how. We will certainly continue to promote our efforts and achievements in the field of education.

Scholarships from Private Sectors

It is a great pleasure that today Tan Sri Dr. Chen Lip Keong is providing 100 scholarships for new enrolments, in which fifties are for master and fifties are for bachelor levels. The total amount of scholarship is worth 74,000 US dollars.

Two special scholarships are now being provided by the Manhattan (Svay Rieng) Special Economic Zone (SEZ) of Mr. Clement Yang for sending winners to study in the Philippines, for whom, each scholarship would be 25,000 US dollars.

I would therefore delegate the organization and procedural management of the scholarships to the Univer-

sity of Svay Rieng, who should be working with my Cabinet, in screening students who could take up the study.

As for the two special scholarships to the Philippines, the procedure has been that the two have to go work at the Special Economic Zone for a specified period and I would seek Mr. Tum Saravuth, the Rector, to discuss criteria and conditions for recruitment with guaranteeing transparency.

Elaboration on Health Issue

I have no intention to respond to the opposition Party for the comments they made in relation to the state of my health. I must say and should tell them straight that they should not make ill-bred effort for people in general, not just for Hun Sen and in relation to works of the Royal Government, the Cambodian People's Party and especially to me personally.

On Tuesday 13, a spokesperson of the opposition, said on Radio of Free Asia that they demanded the Royal Government to elaborate on the health of the Prime Minister *"because people would like to know ... in a democratic society it is important to know and if (he) cannot work, there needs to find a replacement so as to guarantee work continuity."*

I must assert that it is a stupidity from the part of the spokesperson of the opposition party (to have that). Have you not followed up the Prime Minister's actions in his daily

work? The Prime Minister has been on his daily work schedule, despite the fact that we need to be transparent in the case related to a new type of fever caused by AH1N1, as it was discovered in the Cabinet's meeting, in which six people, one of whom is me, were found to be infected.

Have you not seen or heard of declaration and statement of the Prime Minister, for example the order on issue of Lake Tonle Sap, messages to our people on so and so events, including that of the fight against drugs.

All of these mean the Prime Minister is working on a daily basis, only he did not appear in person to welcome guests or visitors as usual in public. And that is the reason why we had to reschedule our event here (at the University of Svay Rieng) to July 19.

A number of scheduled activities I had to cancel were 1) the welcoming of Samdech Ov, the King Father, and Samdech Me, the Queen Mother, upon their returns from their medical checkups in the People's Republic of China; 2) the meeting with the out-going Ambassador of Germany and the incoming Ambassador of Indonesia; 3) the postponement of graduation ceremony here in Svay Rieng and 4) the visit and release of baby fishes in the Melich reservoir, for which I instructed HE Yim Chhai Ly to attend on my behalf, but because of his prior engagement, I got HE Bin Chhin, Deputy Prime Minister to be pre-

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sent on my behalf.

In all there has been no document that sits on my desk over 12 hours. They should not make a stupidity out of themselves or how would they behave when in power?

Well, making an assessment about me is all you wanted, I know. Why? On July 6, there was a meeting of the opposition (Party)'s permanent committee at around one o'clock and the discussion was whether to merge or not to merge with another political party as requested by a foreign non-governmental organization.

However, you have spent some 20 minutes and 58 seconds to discuss about me. What is deplorable then is that despite the fact that one person said "with this ailment (AH1N1) he is forbidden to talk or to be in public as it might spread to other people," and another said "he has a side effect from a shrapnel," a Lok Chumteav (a form to address a lady in high position in Khmer) said "his wounded eye is not because of a shrapnel but because a water bird that picked on it." However the Acting President of the Party said "his eye was in fact wounded."

What drew my attention the most is when one said I could have been arrested and sent abroad or placed under house arrest. So it is not by chance that the spokesperson of the opposition demanded clarification on the Prime Minister's health.

They must want to know

whether it is true that Hun Sen is still free or has been arrested.

From what they have said, it seems they infer that foreigners have arrested me and were in the process of looking for someone to replace me. If the situation has come thus far, an armed clash happened already.

Let me clarify this to you that the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia clearly stipulates that in case of *definite vacancy*, a new Cabinet is to be formed according to so and so articles.

If I were arrested or placed under house-arrest, it means that the Kingdom of Cambodia was already in a coup. In absence of the National Assembly's session to discuss a motion of confidence, the process of putting the Prime Minister under house-arrest is nothing but a military coup in action.

In that instance the Government dismantles and the post of Prime Minister is left vacant. Who on earth dare arrest Hun Sen? Lok Chumteav is in the politics of taking out Hun Sen that has been carried out from 1998 through to 2003, and up to the present.

I have learnt about the Manila declaration – as you all flocked to Manila but were refused from taking part in the transfer of power ceremony of the President of the Philippines – to keep up the value of the 09-11 May 2008 decision to cut by half the term of parliamentarian among their mem-

bers. I doubt it if crisis is not happening in the opposition Party in March 2011.

I may need to warn them to think of internal party rather than thinking about my problem. What could happen if the Party decides to reduce the current parliamentarian term by half.

The two oppositions seem to have difficulties in sharing a bed together. One seems to have suggested merging to a later stage, which is in fact a move to prolong the time and/or finally betray.

They should know that though they replace the current with new ones, some among those to replace could well be working with me still. Their discussion about who would be taking over the post of Governor of the provinces of Svay Rieng, Pursath, Kompot and Kandal is about to break out.

I must say in public that whoever attempts to bring down Hun Sen by undemocratic means will meet with a forceful response for the sake of protecting the Constitution and the Royal Government. How on earth could they support a situation that Hun Sen is arrested or placed under house-arrest?

If it is true, why do not they have any reaction? Was not it a coup? A foreign non-governmental organization has been involved in this strategy endeavor to merge the twos. I also have the information that it paid the tickets for them to go to Manila and I must warn the organization to be cautious.

The election laws in Cambodia prohibits assistance from foreign sources and because the foreign organization in this case did so for some officials of the (opposition) Party, and also are members of the parliament, to travel and meet in Manila for a discussion about cutting by half the MP term among their parliamentarians, which in no way a bothering to me, still they should be careful. I just want to advise them to be careful with whatever they say.

I have made my decision to go on for 2023 and 2028. I will not back off and the Party will not let me to back off too. In the Party's foundation ceremony Samdech Thamma Pothisal Chea Sim said in his speech that the Party supports my candidacy for the post of Prime Minister in the next terms, a (opposition) Party Chief said "the Cambodian People's Party is short of human resources and that is why they had no choice but to pick up incompetent person."

I must tell you to be happy because if Hun Sen is incapable it is your opportunity to compete for your victory in 2013.

The Cambodian People's Party has had its support increased from 51 through to 64, 73 and 90 seats in the National Assembly and Svay Rieng has voted all of its seats for CPP. Thank you Svay Rieng. Those of you (in opposition) should not worry about my candidacy since you said I have been chosen because CPP is lacking human resources. Would it not be your chance? ... ■