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Promoting the Plantation of Cotton in Memot (Kampong Cham)



Samdech Hun Sen and Madame Bun Rany watered the newly planted cotton at the Memot Cotton Farm in Kampong Cham.

"... On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) I personally would like to commend the efforts deployed by the management of the Manhattan Textile and Garment Corporation for making investment in this strategic sub-sector and for the courage of investing in the Kompong Cham Textile Factory since February 1999. This testifies to the fact that the corporation is committed to this project and is looking at long-term investments, thus encouraging government ministries and agencies, as well as the Cambodian authorities at all levels to work closely with it in order to rehabilitate cotton, which constitutes an important industrial crop.

This campaign to promote cotton plantations is a practical step in an effort to implement the RGC's poverty reduction strategy, especially its agricultural development strategy, which embraces rapid, sustained and equitable agricultural growth. The main thrust

of this strategy is to invigorate and modernize the agricultural sector, generate employment, enhance household incomes and improve the access of the less privileged to food. Indeed, in these endeavors we should ensure that farmers would be able to make use of appropriate technological innovations so as to have effective control over the production process and promote environmental conservation and protection.

The second prong of this strategy for agricultural development is to empower farmers to enhance their ability to participate in the growth process. Therefore, the authorities at all levels should focus on improving these farmers' access to land, water and other production inputs for sustainable livelihood, food security and overall socio-economic development.

"... The cotton project also reflects increased private sec-

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September 11, 2001

Raising the Public Awareness on Information Technology (IT)

"... This conference on IT Awareness is of great significance, since it is a timely response to the immediate needs and requirements of Cambodia and helps the country to bring about the introduction of IT in all sectors, to join the bandwagon of development and to catch up with the region and the world.

To this end, an Authority was established to consider the benefits and implications of IT use and to study and establish appropriate institutional organization to meet Cambodia's current conditions. Its objectives also include human resource training, introduction of international standards and the establishment of a sound legal

and regulatory framework... The papers to be presented by all presenters and the brainstorming on each topic will become a comprehensive database, information and a strong foundation for the development of a vision for the IT development. This will play a key role in building up Cambodia comparative advantages in the world of globalization...

... Information, broadcasting and telecommunications have increasingly become an important factor, which underpins the development of human civilization.

Relationships and exchange between communities and
(Continued on page 3)

September 20 (am), 2001

Celebrating the Sixth Anniversary of the Children's Committee

"... Children are the bearers of our common future, the pillar and the uniting force for our nation. It is therefore an opportune moment for me to discuss with you all the problems and share with you my personal ideas of how can we work together to address the problems that our children and society are facing.

Although it was not until 1998 that Cambodia's National Programme of Action was introduced, in order to gather momentum in Child Rights and to catch up with global developments, the RGC undertook steps to make progress in its commitment to children. Cam-

bodia ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992 and inscribed to the Declaration and Plan of Action in February 1993. Moreover, the global goals for children were adopted for inclusion in the First Socio-Economic Development
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tor participation in agricultural development. Hence, to promote private investments in this crucial sector the RGC's role is to provide essential infrastructure for the economy, such as roads and bridges, irrigation facilities and access to markets. The government should also take actions to cut costs, reduce time for transportation of products and ensure adequate water for crop irrigation. Another priority areas are human resource development and agricultural research.

Cotton has proved to be an economically efficient crop that has had a significant impact on export and economic growth, and on the development of rural areas. Cotton growing has its own specific characteristic. It constitutes another steps toward promoting agro-business development by linking a downstream production phases from the beginning to the end. Cotton production starts with the growing of cotton and end with the harvests, which constitutes the first phase. The second phase is processing cotton into cotton fibers or woven fabric. The third phase is the production and marketing of garments on the market. The three phases, while depending on each other, should be continuous in order to ensure a viable agro-business cycle and the development of the cotton industry.

According to the experiences of some countries in the world, several factors have usually contributed to making cotton production a success:

- broad application of technical packages that include effective measures for soil nutrient replenishment, pest management, and seed varieties well adapted to local conditions;
- provision of good support services and infrastructures;

- guaranteed output markets at stable prices;
- well organized village-level farmer associations.

“... Cotton is a crop planted in Cambodia long time ago. By the end of the 19th century, Cambodia had produced around 8,000 tons of cottons. This crop can be planted on the riverside, in the black soil areas in Andoek Hep, Battambang Province and in the areas with basaltic red soil. At the end of the 1960s the cultivated areas for cotton amounted to 20,000 ha. But it decreased drastically to almost nothing during the war. In the 1980s, I tried to re-introduce cotton growing on a pilot basis with the assistance of the Soviet experts. However, the security problem, a major issue at that time, prevented the experts to go to provide technical assistance on the ground.

With security and peace now fully restored in the country, the RGC decided to rehabilitate cotton plantations in order to supply raw materials to many garment factories in Cambodia and to diversify agricultural production and avoid depending on just a few crops, which has threatened the economic security, stability and the livelihoods of the Cambodian people. Furthermore, with low rubber prices prevailing on the world markets, cotton growing is a good option to increase income for our people.

This cotton growing campaign constitutes an efficient measure to create jobs for the local people. I have this statement in many fora, both inside and outside of Cambodia. As the Head of Government, I am designing an economic development strategy which focus on the future of agro-industry sector in Cambodia that can generate jobs for our people. With our high population growth rate of 2.5% per year, from 100,000 to 150,000 people look for job each year. Under such circumstances, only

labor-intensive industry or agro-industry would be able to absorb labor surplus and allow them to have decent living standards.

Should this endeavor become a success, this region will turn out to be a cotton powerhouse for Cambodia, which would attract additional investments and will provide raw materials for the garment and textile industry, developing a downstream production process.

The most important issue however is that both government and the private sector should ensure that farmers would be able to sell cotton outputs at competitive prices. A stable market is key to ensure the sustainability of agricultural production. Thus, the cotton sector would make contribution to poverty alleviation and to the establishment of a modern, highly articulated, and rapidly growing agricultural sector. Another important aspect is that cotton production will improve the ecological balance, but attention should be made to sustaining soil nutrient and productivity, prevent the threat of pest and the drop in productivity. Thus, cotton plantations will make contribution to the increase in agricultural productivity, establish a high value-added cash crop and create jobs for the rural people. To meet the conditions mentioned earlier, farmers' participation in the development process and this project is a sine qua non condition...

In order to promote cotton plantations and make them a sustainable, efficient agro-business, I would like to take this opportunity to table some recommendations to relevant government ministries and agencies, the company and our farmers as follows:

First, *I urge the MAFF to actively campaign and promote the cotton growing by publicizing and raising public aware-*

ness on the economic benefits of cotton and growing techniques and include cotton growing into the priority of government's agricultural development policy. The MAFF officials and relevant agencies should conduct study, drawing on the experiences, policies and cotton growing techniques in some countries in the world by closely cooperating with international organizations and the private sector.

Second, *it is very important to raise public awareness on the benefits of cotton plantations, government's policies to promote this crop, as well as disseminate technical guidelines on how to plant, care, fertilize, monitor, provide treatment for cotton trees.*

Third, *the company should import high-yielded seeds, pesticides and fertilizers for commercial distribution to farmers.* To encourage agricultural development the RGC has already decided that it will pay taxes on the imports of cotton seeds, pesticides and fertilizers.

Fourth, *farmers should take an active part in this important production process for their own benefits and the interests of our national economy.*

I strongly hope that the launch of the cotton plantation campaign in Memot District (of Kampong Cham province) will strengthen and develop and foster prosperity in this local community - the priority of the government policies...

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countries on arts, culture, politics and scientific achievements are conducted by using the state-of-the-art telecommunications.

The radio, national and international TV networks, and the Internet are being recognized as the most efficient communication medium, which speed up the dissemination of information.

The use of multi-media technology and IT has become an imperative and a large number of countries have used these technological achievements to facilitate business, commensurably with the pace and the magnitude of market operations.

Therefore, technological revolution has rapidly changed the world. Transactions are being made on-line. Almost all products and services, including banking, consultant and accounting services, can be purchased on line using the Internet.

Moreover, the current state of technology allows us to codify knowledge and know-how and transfer them through e-mail, fax or the Internet. Thus, almost all human beings in the world can obtain assets, goods, services and resources almost at the same time from different places.

In this context, electronic commerce has emerged as a dynamic, modern form of transactions, which has received adequate attention, especially from the World Trade Organization (WTO). E-commerce has become one of the most important forms of cooperation in ASEAN.

At the ASEAN plus three Summit Meeting held in Singapore,

on 28 November 2000, I stated that the world has recognized that in the current of globalization concerted efforts to reduce the digital divide is key to poverty alleviation, improvement in people's well-beings and the strengthening of each nation's comparative advantages in order to promote sustainable development.

The developments of IT and telecommunications have an important role to play in this process. Then, I welcome and voiced a strong support for Japan's initiative at the G-8 Summit in July 2000 to provide US\$15 billion over the period of five years to assist developing countries in information and telecommunications technology. Moreover, within the ASEAN framework, all members are in the process of implementing ASEAN IT development projects, such as the E-ASEAN project and the projects to build up IT capacity for new members.

This shift in the development paradigm imposes a new development scenario for Cambodia. In the long run, key factors of production will shift from land and natural resources to information, knowledge and innovation embodied in Cambodia's human capital.

In other words, knowledge, skills and expertise of the Cambodian people will become increasingly crucial to the country's future economic growth. Extensive economic growth and development will be gradually giving way to intensive economic growth.

This type of growth requires more added values from ideas and innovation. Cambodia should not be marginalized from the development of human civilization.

Thus, the RGC has endeavored

to promote the use of modern technology in Cambodia's e-mail systems to enable the country to respond to the current needs in all sectors, especially to the development of e-commerce. However, the government's top priority is to use IT to serve and to meet the day-to-day needs of the people.

IT should become as an efficient means for the public to exercise their rights to get information related to the decisions made by the government and the conduct of government business in accordance with the principles of transparency and good governance.

In the long run, the introduction of decentralization and deconcentration as part of the government's administrative reform efforts will require the increasing use of IT to link the communes and local communities with Phnom Penh with a view to promoting efficient management and facilitating timely exchange of necessary information.

Thus, from the point of view of the political and administrative aspects, IT will help strengthen democracy, ensure transparency, promote good governance in government and community businesses.

With regard to the economic and social aspect, IT will improve major public service delivery to the local people and allow them to monitor and receive regularly and timely all kinds of information, especially the necessary information about the markets, which will facilitate their economic decision making.

The experience of many neighboring countries show that human resource development is key to promoting IT developments. IT development should be linked to the increase

in labor productivity and the knowledge of the people, the transfer of expertise and technology, diversity and access by the people to health care and education, the development of entrepreneurship and the accumulation of new cultural assets.

To achieve the above objectives, Cambodia needs a long-term IT development strategy, which responds to the realities of the country, the changes and new developments in regional and world economies. This vision should be supported by a detailed action plan for implementation.

The common vision for IT development, with all the supporting policies, strategies and multi-discipline measures to be elaborated by the government, as well as concrete actions being undertaken at the national level, should guide Cambodia towards a bright future, strengthen the culture of peace, promote virtues, knowledge and living standards of our people, and more importantly Cambodia's prestige in the international arena.

As the Head of the Government and as a Cambodian, I wish to make a humble contribution to the development of this vision by drawing your attention to the following:

First, *the sine qua non conditions for the increased use of IT is the development of telecommunication infrastructures through the policy of liberalization, strengthening the authority responsible for the supervision and regulation and open access to instill fair competition.*
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tion.

In this sense, attention has been given by the RGC to formulate policies and establish a legal and regulatory framework for the development of the telecommunication sector. At the same time, the RGC is committed to provide incentives to attract investments in the telecommunications sector.

As a result, Cambodia is being recognized as a country with the state-of-the-art telecommunication network, which will pave the way for further development of the sector.

Nevertheless, much more remained to be done with our partners to ensure that Cambodia will not be marginalized from the telecommunication and IT revolution.

Second, *expanding the coverage for the use of the Internet by considering measures to attract private investments and modern technology, and by ensuring free and fair, market-based competition.*

This will create necessary conditions for cost reduction, improvement in public services, so that the government, the private sector, the educational and research universities and the Cambodian people in general will be able to make use of this instrument as efficient as possible.

Third, *language is an important vehicle to promote development and IT transfer. The use of IT in Khmer language will open access to millions of people who will be able to benefit from these technological developments.*

Therefore, standardization of Khmer language in computers will improve efficiency and

capability of this sector and facilitate communications at all levels. I suggest to the Authority for ICT Development to pay considerable and immediate attention to this problem. Nevertheless, improvement in English language is of critical importance in terms of acquiring and deepening IT knowledge. To become competitive in the future within the context of ASEAN and globalization we should promote English as the second or working language of Cambodia, while Khmer language should always be Cambodia's official language.

In general, I support the idea that every Cambodian should know at least four languages (Khmer, English, French and a language of one of the countries of East Asia). In the future, language skills will become an important comparative advantage for Cambodia.

Fourth, *computer literacy, as is the case with foreign languages, must be promoted among Cambodians.*

Computer literacy is currently one of the most important tools that exist for communications, economic management, trade, domestic and international investment, as well as for knowledge accumulation and management expertise. This is true for every country in the world, and Cambodia is no exception to this.

The most important direction is to include computer literacy in the curriculum of every secondary school, faculty and university throughout Cambodia.

Fifth, *continuous efforts should be given to promote the activities and encourage the participation of the private sector in IT develop-*

ment.

This is also related to government's policies to ensure the sound management of foreign direct investment. It should provide sufficient incentives for companies to transfer to Cambodia technical skills and new technology for the country's development while at the same time allowing other companies and individuals to access the ideas that flow from the research.

Sixth, *attention should be given to protect intellectual capital and use the Internet for development purposes by preventing the use of such technology for committing crimes or other purposes that are contrary to morality, traditions and good mores of the society.*

These are the main elements of our strategy, which should be taken into account while considering the preparation of a long-term vision for IT development in Cambodia.

In all these endeavors, human resource and effective and efficient use of these resources are the key to success... I am confident that this conference will provide opportunity for lively discussions on this very important topic and contribute in a concrete and substantial manner to raise public awareness and formulate a vision for IT development in Cambodia...

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such as English and French. Khmer should be Cambodia's official language, while English and French should be introduced as second or third language...

Fifth, Computer literacy should be widely promoted among Cambodian school children and students...

Sixth, care should be taken to re-direct young people and students in choosing their profession. After graduation each of them should have a skill to make a living.

Seventh, give due attention to physical education and sports to improve the health of the students and the general public.

Eighth, priority should be given to increasing general knowledge for students and young people, in particular issues related to environment, AIDS and human rights.

Ninth, participate in building up the culture of peace in education starting from school, family and end up in the whole society.

Tenth, last but not least, I appeal to all parents and guardians to help take care of their children and grandchildren, to keep them in school, at home and entertain them with the family and in the circle of good friends... We should join hands to prevent and eradicate these wrongful acts by strictly implementing the existing measures, notably strengthening the relationships between school, family and society...

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 opment Plan (1996-2000). These goals include reduction of under-5 child mortality rates, reduction of maternal mortality rates, reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition among under-5 children, increased access to safe drinking water, better access to basic education, reduction of the adult illiteracy rate, with emphasis on female literacy, and protection of children in especially difficult circumstances.

It is every Cambodian's obligation to help make our beloved country a better place for children - a place where every child can grow to adulthood in health, peace and dignity. Therefore, we should put children and women first in the government's social development program. Each adult has the obligation to be part of the large-scaled and multi-faceted campaign to promote the cause of the children, such as care for every child, fight HIV/AIDS, stop harming and exploiting children, listen to their opinions, educate every child, protect children from war, take action to eradicate polio among Cambodian children, protect the environment for children and fight poverty by investing in children.

Poverty and underdevelopment remain immense obstacles to child rights and well-being. Eradication of the worst manifestations of poverty is not only a moral imperative. It is a practical demonstration of the RGC's political will and it starts with investing in children. As you are aware, the physical, emotional and intellectual impairment that poverty inflicts on children can mean a lifetime of suffering and want and a legacy of poverty for the next generation. That is why to break this vicious circle, the RGC has proposed a "New Social Policy Agenda" for

Cambodia, which envisions the creation of a socially connected, educationally advanced, and culturally vibrant society in Cambodia.

The basic foundation of sustainable development is a healthy, well-educated populace and investments in health, education and stability for Cambodia's children will be repaid many times over. Child development is key to achieving poverty reduction and sustainable development over the long term. Only investment on children can put young Cambodians on a path to economic and social empowerment; help them make the most of their abilities; and provide a means for promoting national development and improving their own living standards.

In response to the above policies, the RGC knows what needs to be done and nothing speaks louder than financial commitments for the development of those sectors.

Hence, considerable efforts have been deployed by the Royal Government of Cambodia to increase investment in this sector by increasing budget allocations for education and health, mobilizing foreign aid and encouraging contribution from the society. Over the last four years, the RGC increased more than two folds the spending for education from CR (Cambodian Riel) 102 billion in 1998 to CR 223 billion in 2001. Spending on health increased more than three times from CR 43 billion in 1998 to CR 140 billion in 2001.

... In 2002 the Royal Government of Cambodia will launch a Poverty Targeted Program to address the needs of poor populations living in remote outback areas, especially the problem of malnutrition among the population.

Until now, I am proud to say that the Cambodian children have been fully liberated from the scourges of war. With the restoration of peace following the implementation of the win-win policy, the Cambodian children are no longer displaced by fighting, no longer losing their parents and are no longer recruited as soldiers or to service the war. Moreover, through the campaign to eradicate polio, the Cambodian children have fully been liberated from this cruel disease. This should be considered as a tremendous achievement for the Cambodian children at the end of the 20th century and the dawn of the 21st century.

Even with those achievements, much remains to be done for children. We have seen the presence of the street children and families living in Phnom Penh and other urban areas. This phenomenon has been caused by breaking relationships in the families and poverty.

They are the most vulnerable group and are increasingly facing with the problem of drugs, HIV/AIDS, prostitution, "Big Brothers", health risks and the feeling of no future and exclusion. A number of NGOs have been involved to help poor and street children by cooperating with the local authorities and relevant ministries and agencies.

I myself have used my own resource to help some orphans to live decently, to get access to health care, education and to become a good citizen in the future. Indeed, such action is not adequate. We should cooperate closely and join hands to address the outstanding problems.

At the same time, we should recognize that in all our a-

deavors to promote children's rights and welfare, we should not regard the children as only the object for care and leave children themselves totally outside the process.

It is important to listen to children and to require participation by children. In this sense, the presence of the Children's Committee headed by a child, an independent body working for the genuine and noble interests of the children is vital to achieve our sustained and common efforts.

I am extremely pleased and proud that Mr. Em Chan Makara, President of the Children's Committee, was elected as a delegate to represent children from Asia and the Pacific at a fifth Ministerial Consultative Meeting on the Future of Children in Asia and the Pacific held in Beijing.

This testifies that at both national and international level, Cambodian children are capable to exercise their rights to express their own views and opinion on various issues. It also allows our foreign friends to see the national identity and capability of Cambodian children.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely congratulate the Children's Committee and commend all members of this committee for their good work. I encourage you to continue this noble work and take a pro-active stance in all these activities that benefit the future of all Cambodian children...

September 22 (pm), 2001

Addressing the Inauguration of the Earth Station of the Television of Kampuchea (TVK)**The Editor's Note:**

Readers may find some repetitions in this speech as compared with the speech on IT that is printed in this issue. Some of them have been retained for the sake of keeping the meaning in context for readers.

"... This new edifice is the testimony to the fact that Cambodia has made serious strides to promote large-scaled investments in telecommunication infrastructure, which constitutes a backbone of the knowledge and information-based digital economy.

It will open a new horizon of opportunities for ICT development in Cambodia and create favorable conditions for economic take-off, thus having positive effects on poverty reduction and sustainable development in the country.

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and on my own behalf, I greatly appreciate this commendable achievements, which marks a substantial progress of the Television of Kampuchea (TVK) to grasp the advanced techniques and ICT in line with the current trends of media development in the world.

I would like also to take this opportunity to sincerely commend to the management and officials of the Ministry of Information (MOI) for making serious strides to accomplish these noble duties in promoting the development of the information and television sector and upgrade it to a new high.

This will respond to the needs of the RGC and the private sector in providing vital information necessary for the management and decision making, as well as the need of Cambodians from all walks of life, in

urban and rural areas, to improve their knowledge and know-how in all areas. Moreover, the launch of this earth station will help Cambodia make a big step in the area of broadcasting, allowing overseas Cambodians and other nations to closely follow real developments, obtain the facts and get first-hand information on Cambodia.

This is a crucial contribution to raise awareness on the multifaceted progress achieved by Cambodia, especially our cultural assets, multi-cultural traditions and our glorious past.

In this sense, the RGC commends the efforts made by the management of the MOI for installing state-of-the-art equipment to allow the TVK to expand its transmission power and coverage of broadcasting to all parts of the country, as well as 126 countries in Asia, Oceania, Europe and Africa.

As H.E. LU LAY SRENG, Senior Minister and Minister for Information has stated in this speech, the expansion of the transmission power and coverage with the use of TV, radio, written news and Internet-based services constitute sine qua non conditions to meet the broadcasting need. We should build up our own image and show our existence as an independent, sovereign, democratic and peaceful country.

As I stated in my address to the workshop on Public Awareness about Information Technology, held on 11 September 2001, the development of hi-tech in all areas constitutes a timely response to the immediate needs and requirements of Cambodia and helps the country to build up capacity and strengthen comparative advan-

tages in the age of globalization of the third millennium.

Taking this rare opportunity, may I share with you all my own views, which hopefully could be instrumental in developing the vision for the development of the information and television sector, in particular, and the promotion of ICT in Cambodia in general.

If we look beyond the horizon towards a future, we can see that at the dawn of the new millennium the world is moving very fast, fueled by globalization, towards a new, unfettered ICT development.

Thus, development in Cambodia should not be marginalized from these global trends. The miraculous development of new high tech and computers has shortened the distance of the world and is giving way to the emergence of a new, digitalized and knowledge-based economy...

... The use of multi-media technology and IT has become an imperative and a large number of countries have used these technological achievements to facilitate business, commensurably with the pace and the magnitude of market operations.

Moreover, facing the current of globalization, the RGC has played an active role in regional and international affairs. Integration into ASEAN and preparation for Cambodia's accession into the World Trade Organization (WTO) are our top priorities.

As part of this process, all state media should have adequate capability to exchange news, which should not be restricted to politics and diplo-

macy, but more importantly to broadcast and receive quickly and timely reliable and accurate data and information on the economy, trade, social, cultural and services sector. This will allow us to maximize the benefits from globalization to promote development of Cambodia and improve the living standards of our population.

Of course, the Royal Government's outlook on the information age, the attraction and utilization of hi-tech goes beyond the need to catch up with our neighboring countries and irrational competition with the rich countries.

... Our philosophy is that ICT and the media should play a crucial role in promoting democracy, the respect for human rights, the improvement in public services to be delivered to the people in all parts of the country. This will allow them to monitor and receive on a regular and timely basis, all kinds of information for their daily livelihoods and needs.

In this sense, I am convinced that the new earth station will improve the efficiency in delivering important information broadcast by the TVK to the people from all walks of life in rural and urban areas.

All kinds of information, especially those regarding the market developments, which are important for economic decision making must be available to small farmers as well as to large agro-business plantations, to small and medium enterprises as well as to big corporations on a regular and timely basis.

Thus, our objectives are to

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maximize the benefits of the IT revolution to meet the daily needs of the people. It must enable them to link up with the global storehouse of knowledge and must be used for more effective education, informal as well as formal.

More importantly, it must allow the poor to have more access to public information on agronomic techniques and marketing, which is meant to increase farmers' incomes.

Thus, IT and broadcasting will play an important economic role in improving productivity and ameliorating the living standards of Cambodian farmers, workers and the poor.

Apart from the concepts and government policies mentioned earlier, I wish to make a humble contribution to the development and strengthening of the information and television sector by drawing your attention to the following recommendations:

First, in this light, the sweep of the information age through Cambodia presents us also with severe challenges. The new technology demands new skills, new mindset, changes in economic and social policies, and shifts in cultural norms and mode of living.

The information revolution poses the danger of widening gaps both within and between the countries. Those who are already well advanced in these essential conditions - in science and technology, in education, in economic reforms, in modern organization and improving productivity - will go faster and even further ahead.

And those who are weak in terms of capacity will not be able to catch up with such rapid developments and will lag be-

hind in the trap of a vicious cycle of poverty. Therefore, Cambodia's biggest challenges are to develop in large number and use more efficiently human resources in order to fully grasp the management of technology and not allow the technology to manage us.

Second, in the process of information liberalization through the opening up of the country for the purposes of economic development, trade and tourism promotion and regional integration, all nations have to face with the massive influx of foreign culture and civilization, in part due to the miraculous progress of the IT revolution.

In particular this comes from countries with strong political, economic power and tremendous broadcasting capacity, creating a phenomenon called cultural supremacy of the powerful states. It creates a lot of problems for under-developed countries, like Cambodia, bogged down in weak broadcasting facilities, and have to face with the inflow of similar cultures from neighboring countries.

In this sense, our immediate priority is to work out how to strengthen our capacity and improve the quality of all national media - TV, radio and printed media. It will require the improvement in production, upgrade and diversify programs geared towards developing, conserving and supporting national culture in terms of information delivery, education, knowledge and entertainment.

Therefore, the MOI should play a key role in establishing an appropriate environment and system of incentives to redirect and improve the quality of broadcasting.

Third, I urge the MOI to provide incentives to the TVK to make the utmost in using the new facilities to increase its broadcast to 24 hours per day in the near future by diversifying production and programs, especially programs on education, general knowledge, culture and entertainment that are in support of our national culture.

As I have stated on many occasions, there is a virtuous cycle between "the conservation and development of culture", a close link between conservation for development and benefits from development for conservation. The MOI should cooperate closely with the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, strengthen the capacity of local producers and encourage them to produce films, video, songs, classical and modern theater, sports, dances, folklore and traditional dances and other cultural spots.

Fourth, another priority is to disseminate agricultural extension work, especially agronomic techniques and agricultural production processing, marketing, which I think the TVK can prepare and deliver.

This will require close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Commerce. It is extremely vital in generating economic growth and reducing poverty of the farmers.

These are the main points of our strategy to which we must pay attention in strengthening the capacity and improving the quality of broadcasting by the TVK.

At the same time, I share the concerns of Senior Minister and Minister for Information regarding the difficult situation faced by its two directorates,

the Directorate of Cambodia's Press Agency - AKP and the Directorate of Cambodia's National Radio - RNK. Their equipment are run down and obsolete, thus incompatible with the current trends in IT revolution age.

As the Head of Government, I recognize the importance and the imperative of the two areas of broadcasting, thus I will consider the proposals of the Ministry once a reasonable development or modernization project has been worked out.

However, I urge the MOI management to provide incentives to the two directorates to maintain equipment and use both human resources and the equipment to ensure sustainability of the ministry's business.

On behalf of the RGC and on my own behalf, I would like to express our profound gratitude to the Government of Japan for funding the important facilities, such as the state-of-the-art studio in front us. I sincerely appreciate the partnership between the MOI and Thaicom-3 and its cooperation with TVK in modernizing its broadcasting facilities, the earth station which we officially inaugurate today...

September 25, 2001

Addressing the Diploma Awarding and Groundbreaking Ceremony at the Faculty of Pedagogy

“... The Government’s policy priority for education is to ensure equitable access and quality improvement for the “Nine Years of Basic Education for All,” particularly among girls, by around 2010. It is essential to promote gender equality and inculcate equal value to the girl-child in the same manner as the boy-child. The Education-for-All policy also requires that priority be given to ensure that poor students be given access to education from the primary level. At the same time, government’s priority is to enable a growing private involvement in the development of the education sector in the country, while the RGC will pay more attention to the strengthening of the legal and regulatory framework to ensure good quality education through the monitoring and following-up of results at each level to match up with the international standards...”

To encourage and commit teachers to teaching, the Priority Action Program (PAP) has been put in place to improve disbursement to education, which is geared towards encouraging education quality at the grassroots level. In 2002, PAP budget will increase from CR28 billion to CR80 billion. With the PAP, teachers have been able to work overtime leading to a remarkable reduction in student’s drop-out and repetition rates. In 2002 the RGC will launch a Poverty Targeted Program (TPT) to improve teaching quality in remote areas, such as in the Udor Meanchey, Preah Vihear, Stoeung Treng, Mondul Kiri and Rattanakiri.

Increased public spending on education will adopt clearly

defined pro poor policies, in particular attention is given to the gradual increase in teacher’s salary to the extent allowed by the budget, provide schools with all necessary means and materials. Better availability of means and instructional materials to teachers and schools assures quality improvement in the country’s education sector... These measures are designed to reduce direct and indirect costs to parents, which constitute a major impediment to providing poor students an access to have better education.

Teachers play a vital role in the development of human resources in the formal system. However... the family is a vital social asset, which should direct the children to go on the right track. Our custom of caring for children from the extended family is a particularly important tradition that reflects the importance of the Cambodian culture. On the other hand, we must acknowledge that family breakup is also the context in which many crimes and sins take place. In this sense, strengthening the family fabric is crucial in improving education.

Human resource development is a daunting task, time-consuming and capital intensive. At both international and regional fora I have appealed for strengthening cooperation in human resource development and considering this area the top priority on the agenda of ASEAN and ASEAN plus three, which would contribute to the reduction of the gap between new and old members. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all donors, such as the European Union (EU), UNICEF, Japan and France for

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| 05/09/01 | Address to Launch a Campaign to Promote Cotton Planting in Memot, Kampong Cham Province. |
| 06/09/01 | Address to Inaugurate New Terminals at the Pochentong International Airport (French only). |
| 11/09/01 | Address to the Workshop on Public Awareness about Information Technology. |
| 12/09/01 | Letter to HE Mr. George W. Bush, President of the United States of America on the terrorist attacks. |
| 20/09/01 (am) | Address to Mark the Sixth Anniversary of the Children’s Committee. |
| 20/09/01 (pm) | Address to Inaugurate the Earth Station of the Television of Kampuchea (TVK). |
| 25/09/01 | Address to the Diploma Awarding and Groundbreaking Ceremony at the Faculty of Pedagogy. |

their active involvement in the rehabilitation and development of primary, secondary and tertiary education in Cambodia. In this context, the Royal Government highly appreciates the role of Japan, a good friend of Cambodia and the Cambodian people for taking a leading role in promoting human resource development in both Cambodia and the region. The people and the government of Japan has provided considerable assistance in the rehabilitation and the reconstruction of our country in many areas, notably in economic, social, health and education development.

... We have witnessed the strengthening of the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the Government of Japan and the RGC in education, notably through the JICA-funded school building project... This building will house the training of science and math teachers at the Faculty of Pedagogy. The assistance in training science and math teachers will improve teaching quality and science and math education... The bond of friendship and coop-

eration between Japan and Cambodia will become fruitful and will prepare Cambodian students for a bright future...

... May I humbly contribute the following ideas and recommendations to strengthen the education sector.

First, continue to implement government’s education policies, notably universal education, modernization of education, link education to market demand and promote youth and sport-related activities.

Second, gradually upgrading teaching quality by improving curriculum, textbooks, teaching methodology and equipment for teaching and training.

Third, improve further the educational infrastructure, especially establish a state-of-the-art, computerized library, which is capable to collect all data and documents for research purposes.

Fourth, while promoting Khmer literature and culture, actions should be taken to teaching foreign languages,

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