

Inauguration of Ampor Voan Secondary School

(30 March 2016 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)



30 March 2016 - Samdech Techo Hun Sen with people in Tbong Khmom's Kroch Chmar district to inaugurate school and bridge.

A School for Many Generations to Come

... My wife and I are so happy to be here. Indeed, my wife went to the Ampor Vorn Secondary School in her childhood days. She met a few of her former classmates. However, it was not a reason for us to build a school here. Even if she did not go to this school, we would still build one too. We did rebuild the school in stages since 1996. In 2000, the reconstruction of the school was not up to standard. Well, it was here in Rokar Khnao that I came and stayed. I met my wife here and I went to see their parents before we got married. I returned to my commanding post under a heavy rain and had to stop along the way to catch fish in Boeng Thom ... There was a song about that. I hope the Bayon radio station put the song "Love at Boeng Thom Lake" on today.

I apologize for defects happened while the school construction carried out by the Pagoda Boy Company and General Kong Ieng. The school was useable for only a

short time. I thank HE Chea Sophara for leading the architectural design and carrying through the construction project. I hope that our students will benefit from this school, not only in this generation but also for generations to come, as long as we keep up good maintenance of it.

This should illustrate efforts of the Royal Government in dealing with shortage of school buildings not only in this place but also everywhere in the country. In the district of Kroch Chhmar, there was only one junior secondary school at Jomka Mlu and there was no senior secondary school. There was a senior secondary school in Kompong Cham. Before dividing the province into two – Kompong Cham and Tbong Khmom, there were two senior secondary schools – one in Kompong Cham town and another at Prey Totoeng district.

A Revenge of Lack of Schools, Salary Increases

As of now, in the district of Kroch Chhmar, we have four senior secondary schools and

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Education's 2015 Review Conference

(31 February 2016 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

All Logs Arrested to Go to Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

... I would take this opportune moment to talk about a number of issues. Minister HE Hang Chuon Naron just listed three challenges and sent them to me. I would like to answer to the three points, and from here, I declare something that is unprecedented. Firstly, in relation to lack of school buildings, especially some made built of wood. Whether we should build schools of wood or concrete is one matter. The big story here is I would like to transfer all illegal logs arrested to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. I checked

with General Sao Sokha, who heads the investigation of illegal loggings, and he told me there are between 30,000 to 40,000 cubic meters of illegal logs. HE Hang Chuon Naron may use it for building schools, tables, chairs, or even houses for teachers, all in the interest of education.

From today on, any illegal log arrested will go to the Ministry of Education. We no longer auction them because they will try to find license to export afterward. This would create again intention to go on logging illegally. I may clarify with the Ministry of Economy and Finance that while giving

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UMA "Peace & Development Award"

(29 February 2016 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

For Competitors, "Am Just a Dictator"

I rejoice to receive the Award of Peace and Development presented by the Union Media of ASEAN (UMA). I deeply thank UMA for choosing me for this award. I have listened closely to the speeches of HE Khieu Kanharith, Minister of Information, and Mr. Prasit Sangrungrueng, UMA Secretary General, relating to my past. I should reaffirm why I should receive this award. In fact, I would not accept just any proposed awards. The fact that I accepted this award is because I wish that neighboring media association became an institution that strengthens friendly and cooperation relation in the region. I wish to take this opportune moment to express my appreciation for the initiatives taken by media associations in countries in the

Greater Mekong Sub-region, which also extends to the ASEAN framework.

HE Khieu Kanharith already mentioned in his report that the union would help journalists not to inflame any further differences between governments. I see that this important motto, though the union is a new institution, should carry on and the alliance should meet regularly. I find your activities a satisfaction and I am happy with the Phnom Penh meeting. I have a prepared speech here but I think I am going to talk with some

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nine junior secondary schools – Ampor Vorn, Jamka Mlu, Prek Aji and Poeus. I am sure this many of junior and senior secondary schools is for the sake of our students' benefit. My wife went to this school. However, none of my children and grandchildren goes to school here. I build thousands of school buildings with tens of thousands of classrooms for the sake of people's children to study in. My revenge is on this point. It was not a revenge on human life. When I was 13 years of age, I had to migrate from my village to Phnom Penh to stay with a Buddhist monk to continue my study. While in power, what I did before anything else was building schools. Some asked why Hun Sen built so many schools and some teased that there were many schools, but small salary for teachers. Well, the issue has to go in tandem now.

In just two days, we will exercise salary increase again. It is March 30 today. After March 31, on April 1, we will exercise salary increase. The lowest salary to receive by maternal and primary school teachers will be 200 USD per month. By 2018, the lowest salary will be 250 USD or equally to over one million Riels. It is a real increase. It is not an empty promise. We will also provide a New Year bonus of 50,000 Riels for every civil servants, starting from clerks in villages and communes. The bonus may be small but the Royal Government has had to spend a sum of USD 6 million. To do this, the Minister of Economy and Finance has had to figure out how much will need to be spent and whether our income would correspond to it or not. Making empty promise, like some people do, would not cost a dime.

In the near future, our elderly people may remember that there will be auctions by politicians to give higher stipend – a party would go for 80,000, another for 100,000 and another even for 150,000 Riels ... On this issue, as a ruling Party, the Cambodian People's Party

would not dare chase the figure. We would do it as long as our coffer allows. We would not opt for printing money to pay salary. I do not want to make a political message before elections. However, some already did and I just talk about fact, and, while running the Royal Government, say what is going to happen.

Youth Should Focus on Study and Sports

... We had small number of school buildings in the past. There was high rate of school dropouts because children could not go to school away from home. As of present, our people, compatriots, children, youth, may not do so. You should reach out and grab chances. Firstly, we now have peace in the whole country. We do not have to run and displace ourselves from war and fighting. No one destroys school buildings as the Pol Pot regime did. Now schools are moving closer to those who need to study ... Secondly, please do not overlook chances available for drugs and gambling.

Schools have literally come to our feet and though some may have to travel some distances to reach school, it would not be as far as going to Phnom Penh or the city of Kompong Cham. As for this province, Tbong Khmom, we do not have a name for its city yet. We may call it May Sak or teak wood, because there was a teak forest here before. There is one other facility for students. It is the good road condition. Children and youth might have to walk in mud to reach school. These days, on the way to school, there were mud no more. As you can see, we have an asphalted road built from the district and city of Chhlong to Tonle Bet of Kompong Cham, the Kizuna Bridge. Students residing on either side of the road find it a lot better to travel to and from schools.

I used to travel here and crossed the Ta Koch tributary. There was no bridge in the past. I travelled by bicycles and

motorbike. I was hospitalized once in "P 1" hospital, which situated in a pagoda. I had a bicycle then. When it was too difficult to ride it in mud, I had to carry it on my shoulder. In 2000, we built a Bailey bridge over the Takoch tributary. It was broken once for trucks with overloaded logs. We now have this concrete bridge in its place. We moved the Bailey bridge to other place needed ... and I would urge transporters not to overload their trucks and pass the bridge [...]

As for football, the Muslims here play very well. I would urge everyone not to involve in drug use but in sports. I do not seem to see football field here. We have the volleyball terrace. We will build a football field after the inauguration. The field cannot be in this school compound. We must find a field somewhere. I wish that students from Ampor Vorn good in volleyball and basketball. It would even be better if they were famous in football. You may not forget about our traditional sport of boat race.

Making Every Efforts for Farmers' Interest

... HE Prach Chan mentioned about problems relating to rice, corn, cassava, etc. It is the same issue that the whole world is facing. In Thailand, millions hectares of land under rubber left untapped because price of rubber plunged and would not pay the cost. In Malaysia, on top of rubber, they also have problem with palm oil prices. Countries producing oil also suffer from drop of price. We are seeking every means to guarantee that (Cambodian) farmers will benefit increasingly from their efforts, despite unfavorable condition encountered in the world.

... I wanted to clarify to you that this is not a problem only to Cambodia. It is one common issue facing the world. Some people try to make gain from this. They go around telling people that they would make the price of rice 2,000 Riels per Kilogram, if they

have power. They say they would make a kilogram of corn from 800 Riels to 5,000 Riels. However, leaving people in the field and meeting people in market, they would say otherwise. They said 3,000 Riels for a kilogram of rice is expensive, if they have power, they would bring it down to 1,500 Riels. They gain it either way. However, this monkey business would not last long. The blade of a knife would one day cut its handle.

Wiring to National Electricity Lines

... In the near future, people will benefit from wiring to national electricity line, which will help bring the price down. On April 1, 2017, or a year from now, the price of electricity will go down to 610 Ri/KWH. In the policy regarding pricing, use of electricity for agricultural purpose, like irrigation, would cost only 480 Riel/KWH. At present, because of too far a distance of some villages, we depend on private group of electricity to provide power and lines. However, because the price of oil has gone down, I am calling on all private groups of electricity providers to reduce the price. For those groups already hooked up with national lines, they must make sure their prices go down. In some places, we may buy electricity from private groups to provide it to our people at a further lower price. Well, it is not time for fish oil, torch and tree sap lighting anymore. It is time of electricity and battery...☐

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lice, custom, etc. to subscribe to disciplinary working manner to make Cambodia an attractive place for tourists. We need to make everyone who came once to come back again, not alone but with family members or friends. We must refrain from actions that would make them feel frustrated and never come back again, from arriving at airports to tourist destinations. If we could do that, we would be able to attract more arrivals than making advertisement on CNN ...☐

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selected points from it. You all in UMA consider me a democratic person, a promoter of media development in Cambodia. However, for those who compete against me, in their mind “I am just another dictator.”

You may think clearly that before Cambodia had only one or two black and white papers – one run by Khieu Kanharith, Kampuchea, and another run by Som Kimsuor, Procheachun. We had only one AM radio and one black and white TV channel. Now, Cambodia has up to 20 TV Channels, 800 newspapers and magazines, and online. The fact Cambodia has turned out like this now would it prove to you that if I were a dictator.

Thank UMA for Knowledge of Hardships under Pol Pot

... Moment ago, Mr. Prasit talked about absence of freedom in the time of Pol Pot. It was true. Human would have rights equal that of animal. Animal in those days could still protect their babies. For me, what happened to my first child was a tragedy that I can never forget in my whole life. On 10 November 1976, when my first child was born, a nurse slipped him of her hands and broke his spine. He died. I asked permission from accompanying commander to bury my child properly and take care of my wife. He said to me “even if you stay, your child would not have life again and your wife would just still be like that. Let other bury your child and you have to join me for work.”

... About one month before my wife gave birth, I collected herbs for medicine and was bitten by a mom dog that protected her babies. I came to a comparison that even the mother dog could had every right to do so, while I wouldn't have that right like hers. It was a motivating point for my resistance. At the age of 25 years old, I became a leader and I can say with pride that I was a young man that changed Cambodia through toppling the

Khmer Rouge. It was lucky that I came to meet and cooperate with movements of Samdech Heng Samrin and Samdech Chea Sim. We became a stranded force to overthrow the Pol Pot regime. While obtaining victory, it was so unfortunate that there was nothing left from the regime of Pol Pot. While feeling like our hands chopped off, the UN and other countries imposed sanctions on Cambodia.

Let me tell you that when I first came to Phnom Penh 37 years ago, there were about 70 people. Most of them were women, children, and elderly. At around March or April, people in Phnom Penh then came to about 10,000. At present, we have too much and traffic jam is a reality. One may not think that Cambodia today has not gotten its past. Some may not have known that when they see normal activities of trade and tourism like in other countries. At 27 years old, I was Foreign Minister and reunited with my family and my second son. It was a difficult and sad feeling to have my only son calling me “uncle.” He would not allow me to get any closer to my wife. They were unforgettable. I thank UMA for its knowledge and truth recognition about our hardships in the time of Pol Pot. We did so much and tried hard to rebuild the country without assistance except punishment. I became Prime Minister in 1985 and it is now over 31 years that I have been in this post.

In Search for Reconciliation and Peace

... The question why Cambodians fought one another has become a topic of my research not when I was Prime Minister in 1985 but since when I was Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. I had come to understand that armed conflicts arose because of the one-party rule and allowed no rights to set up associations and/or free press. Only one option left was to carry out armed resistance. Everyone should remember this point.

Leave room and rights for others to avoid armed conflict. I nurtured intention to resolve the problem and carried it out at the time when internal and external environment was not favorable to Hun Sen.

I would tell you that my life was dear to have survived to today. My life was a target of assassination many times, including the one on 24 September 1998, when four rockets fired on me. It was my lucky day that only one of the four exploded and missed my car. When I became Prime Minister, I started reforms on two fronts – firstly, political and secondly economical. Economically, we had to get the country ready to move from centrally planned to market oriented and free market economy. Politically, we had to set out policy in search for political settlement of conflict in Cambodia. That had led us to the Hun Sen-Sihanouk negotiation at Fere-en-Tardenois on 2 December 1987. It was in fact the opening of a way in for concerned parties to the negotiation process and intervention from the United Nations.

One may ask a question, what if Hun Sen did not sign the agreement, who would then? I would affirm that there was a consensus within the Party then. You already met with Samdech Heng Samrin and unfortunately, Samdech Chea Sim already passed away. It was with internally political consensus that I could carry out negotiation, though as Prime Minister I had to make final decisions on every issues. One of the people used to be a member of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia here is HE Ieng Moly, who in fact was a member from the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) then led by Son San. He now is a member of the Cambodian People's Party. We are not carrying politics of minuses but pluses.

Win-win Policy Reunites Cambodia

I would tell you that the UN presence in Cambodia had

spent up to 2 billion USD. When they left, Cambodia was still a divided nation – two rules. Along the Cambodian-Thai border, Khmer Rouge remnants were there, and inside the country, there were places that they occupied too. Sometimes, when the government forces moved out of one area, they moved in. In the end, we came up with a win-win policy that eventually ended the Khmer Rouge organization politically and militarily. Cambodia then became a reunited country for the first time in its past 500-years history, (taking into consideration its division) since 1473, after the time of King Punhea Yat, Noray Raja and Preah Srey Raja.

In the last 500 years, Cambodia suffered times of many divisions and rules. Before 1970, Cambodia was divided into four factions – the Phnom Penh government, the Khmer Rouge's territory, the White Khmer territory, and the Blue Khmer territory. Between 1970 and 1975, Cambodia was divided into two parts – one controlled by Lon Nol, who, with the US support, launched the coup against Preah Norodom Sihanouk, and another was a liberation area led by Preah Norodom Sihanouk. On 17 April 1975, the regime of Lon Nol fell. People should have peace after a five years war, but the brutal regime replaced the Lon Nol one of bombardments.

There were no options left. We could not fight with pen as we do today. We could not fight in the National Assembly. The remaining option was to carry out armed and political resistance to overthrow the regime of Pol Pot. We came, however, to a question whether we continued to fight just like that? The answer was no. There is no country in the world that ends war completely by crushing the other side. Except perhaps Sri Lanka that defeated the Tamil, but it will end there, hopefully. We had to put an end to the war that UNTAC could not with its two billion USD. The win-win

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policy did end it and reunite the country for the first time.

Historians, and other learned persons, recognize and accept reasons and actual development of the country. However, those in opposition consider me a warmonger and a dictator that restrict everyone of press freedom. Only time will give an unbiased judgment. It would not be certain yet that those who promised them otherwise would do it better. You may have seen some of the Chinese movies. There was a dialogue and I quote “traveling far will tell how good or bad the horse is.” ... 37 years of the Heng Samrin-Hun Sen administration, when Samdech Heng Samrin was head of state and I was Prime Minister, why should we called for negotiation, if we were dictators?

Higher Middle Income Country by 2030, Developed Country by 2050

We did everything we possibly could for the country since when Cambodia had only 5 million people. We now have 15 million people. The country had gone from the time that there was no money. Now we crossed from low-income country to lower-middle income country. We are now taking extra measure to avoid being trapped as in other middle-income nations. We have put out objectives to reach a target that our people will achieve higher-middle income in 2030 and become a developed nation by 2050. We may not live until then but it is an indicative map in the field of agriculture, industry and other sectors. People of later generation may or may not change them. It is up to them. ... Today, you all present me with the Peace and Development Award in the Peace Palace, where President Barack Obama also dined and other summits conducted here [...]

A Get-Together between Prime Minister and Media

One day, as time would allow, I would offer a lecture in win-win policy as I did twice for

officials and students at universities. HE Kheiu Kanharith requested for a meeting between Prime Minister and the media on an annual basis to create a close bond between the media people and leaders of the Royal Government. I accept it with pleasure. I would urge that we should follow from meeting to a dining and dancing session. I am sure the Minister of Information would know very well to organize the entertainment. In the afternoon of April 4, I will meet with sportsmen and sportswomen for a meal. I would seek HE Kheiu Kanharith to help me with number of journalists and figure out which restaurant to go. Dining, while discussing, is a good way to have a taste. I hope there would not be anyone accusing me of buying the media's morale.

In Cambodia, if anyone were to meet most media people, it must be Hun Sen. If he went quiet, they would lose their jobs. When Hun Sen speaks, they would write for days. There are also groups of “speaking about” and of “analyzing.” The speaking group would continue to talk about it for days and acted as if they all know every issue. Please allow me to give you a tip, if I may, for both local and foreign media, to reason your media with readers or users, you must write the truth. To write something untrue, readers or users would soon find out and their trust would vanish.

It was because of this note that I said we have two Cambodias – a true Cambodia and a descriptive Cambodia by the media. I would not say every media does that. On some, while being in the most favorable situation, they presented Cambodia as hell. In fact, we now have a better situation here. In 2015, we have received some 4.7 million tourists and this year we hope to have a new figure, if not five, closer to five, million tourists too. The reason is easy to understand. Many regions suffered terrorist attacks. Tourists alter their destinations to South

National Road 21 Groundbreaking Ceremony

(28 March 2016 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

Assistance from Republic of Korea to Rebuild National Road 21

I am so pleased today to be able to join with all of you to launch the groundbreaking ceremony to rebuild the national road 21. Actually, the project has commenced for nearly a year now. Today we are launching the groundbreaking ceremony to rebuild the national road, but in fact, we are building a completely new road because nothing of the former road is left. We say so just to reflect that we had built it and repaired it previously.

I would take this opportune moment to express our greatest thanks for the Government and people of the Republic of Korea for their commitments to provide assistance for the people of Cambodia. In relation to financing of the construction, we can say that RoK has been generous to either build, rebuild or in the course of discussing roads projects in the southern part of Cambodia – national road 3, 33, national road 2 and 22, for instance.

East Asia, a safe place and not too bad weather.

Once again, I thank UMA for presenting me with this Award in relation to peace and development, the two that are in dialectical relation. You may remember that without peace, one would not be able to talk about development. Should there be no development one would not be able to keep peace. The two will need to go in tandem. To keep peace, there must be development to reduce poverty, to do away with ill actions – corruptions and social injustices. You may ask who would wish to invest in Iraq, Syria, Libya, or Yemen, now. They were like Cambodia in the 1970s and 1980s. Now that peace and development prevails, we have achieved 4.7 million tourists. We have infrastructure, airports, hotels [...]

Discussion is underway for the construction of national road 48.

National Road 21 – Many Bridges Needed

I thank Cambodian friends near and far, especially the Republic of Korea for providing assistance in forms of grant and concessional loans for these projects. We can say that it was hard to seek financial assistance to rebuild national road 21, which was seven meters in some width and more or less in various segments. The 2000 big flood caused damages to the road and we have used national budget for the engineering team to rebuild it. The road is not that far from Phnom Penh but the condition was poor. We have here over 50 canals. We had built in the past some wood or Bailey bridges over them. In the 1990's and early 2000's we were satisfied with Bailey bridges. It helped us connect internally but also with other countries.

What concerns us now is the present development. Roads that were seven meters in width have now enlarged to eleven meters and are still small. We have growth of various kinds of vehicle and that has put pressure on country's difficulty because of lack of bridges. The cost of rebuilding this road is 61 million USD, of which the Republic of Korea financed 52 million USD and the Royal Government of Cambodia provided its counterpart funding of over ten million USD. This will see us through only the phase-i project. We still have phase-ii project that consists of another 8 kilometers of road.

We have expenses to cover on impacts on people's homes and building bridges. We could have spent less should there be fewer bridges to build. In Cambodia, we have so many water passages from rivers to lakes and they are

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good for agriculture and use of water for irrigation or consumption. However, they are obstacles to transports and communication for which we are to spend more money to build bridges. Former minister of Transports and Public Works was right when he said water is enemy of the road. It is true. We need both water and roads/bridges. We must spend on infrastructure so that our people could benefit from both.

I would like to take this opportune moment to express once again my gratefulness to the Republic of Korea for providing, after the two countries reestablished relations in 1996/1997, investments, grants and concessional loans, and lately increasing number of Korean tourists.

Nearly 10,000 Cambodian-South Korean Children

... We have recovered from the difficult stage of finding fund for the construction. The Republic of Korea has answered to our request today. I hope that HE Ambassador will report to HE Park Guen-hye that Cambodia could use additional fund and it should not be a deduction from other projects requested. I may have the attention of Mr. Hong Young Pyo that Cambodia still needs about ten million USD for the phase-ii construction of another eight kilometers of the road. I must say that I am so proud with the foreign policy that I determinedly set out to establish relation between Cambodia and South Korea or Republic of Korea. I conducted official visit to South Korea right after we have the agreement signed. It was the time of President HE Kim Young-sam. It was the first visit of the Royal Government of Cambodia's leader to the Republic of Korea.

Since then, the Republic of Korea's Presidents HE Roh Moo-hyun and HE Lee Myung-bak visited Cambodia. I hope HE Park Geun-hye will visit Cambodia soon as our two countries are in good rela-

tions. The two countries are like the in-laws as we now have many Korean-Cambodian children. Many Cambodian women married off to Koreans. Last year, in the ASEAN-Korea meeting, I visited Korea. If we are to count, there are now nearly 10,000 Korean-Cambodian children. The Korean Minister of Education said to find a way to let those children know both Korean and Khmer languages [...]

National Road 21 Strengthens Cambodian Trade Advantage

... Previously, we encountered difficulty from lack of roads and bridges. Once the road and bridges are here, our people living along who suffer from construction impacts like dust and noise, will enjoy the fruit of it. People's income will increase and we will be able to compete with products from neighboring countries because our good road will lower transport costs. In trade, local or foreign, competition rests in transportation. Example, we need to transport produces from Sa Ang or Koh Thom to Phnom Penh. When the road is bad, it would increase cost of transportation. This would lead to a situation that produces from Koh Thom and Sa Ang could not compete with those coming from Kien Svay or Punhea Loeu or other places.

I am seeking our people's understanding for the hardships caused by this construction. I would take this opportune moment to express my sincere appreciation to the Ministry of Transports and Public Works as well as the Ministry of Economy and Finance for providing fund in a timely manner. Constructing this road requires lots of money. We had had to face it though to resolve related impacts [...]

National Road 21, Bridges of Jrey Thom & Tonle Bassac Ready in 2017

I would take this solemn occasion to express my sincere appreciation to sub-national authorities – provinces, dis-

Conference on Microfinance Development

(14 March 2016 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

In addition to the prepared text, Samdech Techo made the following adlib comments:

Illegal Microfinance or Non-Governmental Organizations Use Loans as Baits

On this point, I should clarify to our people. Lately, there have been organizations who conducted works on their own, first as non-governmental organizations, but later transform themselves into microfinance institutions. They seem to have done that on purpose. For example, normally, loan principle would allow access only when creditors are aware of repayment ability of loans takers. What are they taking loans for, production or something else?

The creditors do not seem to care about that and have been carefree for such loans. Some people asked for loans to purchase new motorbikes. In that case, how are they going to make up money to repay the debt? When they fail to repay on deadline, (creditors) started confiscating their houses or lands.

There was a case the other day that loan taker paid the debt later than schedule and creditors hesitated to accept and tried to establish reason to bar house owners from entering their home and put the house on sale. If someone did not see and intervene, the family

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tricts as well as villages where the road go through. Today we are launching the groundbreaking ceremony here. We also have a bridge – Jrey Thom – Long Binh, whose construction is underway, linking Cambodia and Vietnam, will be completed in 2017. The bridge over Tonle Bassac will be ready in 2017. I hope that after we achieved this road, people will benefit from shortening their travel time, while more tourists and trade activities will improve and increase.

Just now, I came across people from Kraing Yov. Previously, Kraing Yov is far and disconnected. At present, Kraing Yov has its own colleges and becomes a connecting location from Sa Ang of Kandal to Prey Kabas district of Takeo. I hope that one day I will visit Kraing Yov to see achievements and fruits of development from 1995 project ... When the national road 21 comes through here, situation of Kraing Yov will even be better.

I am grateful for our people who gather here today. We will receive new deity at 8pm this year. I will welcome the new deity in Siem Reap for the commencement of the Angkor Sangkranta event. I hope that our people will continue to

progress through efforts that we are making together. I hope our people will think and remember hardships from the past and will make headway to new stage with more progress.

Let Us All Respect Traffic Law

I would not take much of your time. I would just reinforce what HE Tram Iv Toek, Minister of Transports and Public Works, has appealed to our people to respect traffic law. People should think about respect one's own life and refrain from lethal traffic accident. I think that we should respect our own life and others'. I thank Buddhist monks and people for taking their precious time to participate in the ceremony to launch the construction of the national road 21 ...

After the liberation on 7 January 1979, our people grew from about five million people to about 15 million now. Population growth rate is high. Finally, with this ceremony to launch the construction of national road 21, financed by the Republic of Korea and RGC's counterpart fund, I wish you all the end of old year of Goat and beginning of the Khmer New Year of Monkey, Buddhist Era, 2560, the four Buddhist blessings...☸

Inaugurating PPIA New Passengers Terminal

(05 February 2016 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

A Real Cambodia and Cambodia Portrayed by the Press

... At this moment, where are we? I am asking this question because it seems that there is a Cambodia that is real and the other is the one portrayed by the press, in which some people blamed Cambodia to be (a likely) hell. I hope that Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Ambassadors of France and the European Union, who are present here with us today, feel that you are in a Cambodia that is real. In foreign press, some wrote, Cambodians themselves included, that Cambodia is not a place desirable to live or visit. We are standing right here to put into official use a new passenger terminal invested by Societe Concessionair de l'Aeroport, with its mother company VINCI.

Open-Sky Policy in Action

Just now, Deputy Prime Minister HE Sok An filed a report relating to progress of the construction. Mr. Xavier Huillard, General Director of VINCI, also had his intervention on this project to you all. In the framework of open-sky, open-land and open-water policies, we really need to have better infrastructure to support the country's development. I could say that the implementation of the open-sky policy allowed us to adjust agreement (between the Royal Government and company) consecutively, up to six times. Primarily, there was a requirement only to have a fully functioned airport in Phnom Penh and no others. By 1997, we decided to allow direct flight into Siem Reap airport.

It was not our concern which company would lose or gain in that policy as long as it benefits national economy. I could recall that at the time, people in tourist businesses reacted strongly in Phnom Penh to the open-sky policy that allowed direct flight to Siem Reap airport. Later, they all see clearly that our way of doing thing is correct. VINCI then grew from

handling the betterment of the Phnom Penh International Airport to Siem Reap province and then to the Preah Sihanouk province too. This is a simplified background of why the French company VINCI has expanded its project from Phnom Penh to the provinces of Siem Reap and Preah Sihanouk. (I reiterate that it stemmed out of our open-sky policy that allowed direct flight into Siem Reap and Preah Sihanouk provinces.

PPIA Handles Big Flights

I would take this opportune moment to express my sincere appreciation for VINCI. When the world economic downturn and financial crisis approached, Cambodia was so concerned about projects invested by foreign companies, VINCI's ones included, whether they could implement the projects to its end. VINCI did not let us down. The economic downturn and financial crisis did not hinder VINCI's activities in development projects for the three airports – Phnom Penh International Airport, and those in Siem Reap and Preah Sihanouk provinces [...] PPIA already handled landings of heavy flights, especially when Cambodia chaired ASEAN in 2012, Air Force One of the US President Barack Obama landed safely and stayed.

Were there safety concern, no leader of anyone country would use big airplane and land at PPIA. It is a true Cambodia. It is not a Cambodia portrayed by the press. Lately, before I went for the ASEAN-US Summit in the United States of America, another flight brought the US Secretary of State John Kerry here. PPIA lacks tarmac roads, though. It is not VINCI's problem. It is the Royal Government's part for being unable to provide more land area. I became Prime Minister since 1985 and in those days, there would not be a problem of overcrowded

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would have lost their land and house. We must not forgive those non-governmental organizations that operate illegally. The Ministry of Economy and Finance, and the National Bank of Cambodia should keep eyes on this issue. Their action would destroy our people ('s wealth and living condition) through using loans as baits to extort interests from them. (Judging from what happened) it seems that they plotted for families to owe debts beyond their ability to repay so that they proceed to confiscate their houses and lands. I think it is an urgent matter to look into [...]

Every Level Authority Not to Collude with Microfinance in Confiscations

... I must advise local authority of every level, the police head included, if there were no clear instruction, they should not go right in to support actions of microfinance in confiscation people's homes or lands. Normally, the issue would have to go through court first. Why, as I mentioned the case of the other day, microfinance (agents) barred people from entering their homes when they finally got money to repay? It was (creditor's) intention. Loan taker owed 720,000 Riels and they just wished to take the house and sell it off. Where is the bank coming from? Why take no actions on it? Would you mayors, head of Khan or police posts support its action too? Please readdress this issue. (I also call for microfinance institutions) to check out (if loan takers would use loan in a business) to let them get a loan [...]

There is one other concern about cheating. It happened in Battambang province, if I am not mistaken, and I issued an urgent statement on it. A microfinance institution lured people to deposit money promising to pay them 12% interest per month, or 144% in one year. Our people lured by high interest did what they could to attain money and deposit in

those banks. I wish our people to think about this together, would there be any bank (or microfinance institution) in this world give interest over 100% per annum. Some people who have small sum of money, as I found my way to know about it, had even borrowed from other banks at lower interest (about 7%) to deposit in microfinance institutions that promise higher interests (12%) to benefit from the 5% differences [...]

RGC's Deposit in National Bank of Cambodia

I wish to inform you that as far as state is concerned in this matter, National Bank of Cambodia is its only bank. It does not offer loans for interest. National Bank of Cambodia used to allow loans to the Royal Government, not to the people. You may remember that there was a time when we borrowed money from the National Bank of Cambodia to cover salary payment and HE Keat Chhon was the one that entered the loan-taking plea. It took us sometimes to repay the National Bank of Cambodia. When we borrowed from the NBC, it required us to pay both principle and interest. As the Royal Government of Cambodia has a reserved amount of fund deposited in the National Bank of Cambodia for time of economic emergency, has the NBC used the money (in giving loans to others)? They should give the RGC's deposit some form of interest symbolizing that the state gives loan to the National Bank of Cambodia (to loan out for investment). We have put some money in the National Bank of Cambodia to get ready for disposal when it is necessary. No one would know whether this year there would or would not be a natural disaster [...]

Political Party Must Stop Fooling about Cancelling People's Debts

I am sending a message to political parties. They must stop doing cheap actions by cheating people that "should they win elections, they would

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anywhere at all. Cambodia was under economic embargo while the UN recognized and allowed the Khmer Rouge to occupy Cambodia's seat. It was a misery.

Rescued from the regime of genocide, we had had to go through economic embargo. No one cared for investment in Cambodia. (At that time) there would be plenty of land. However, we let people reside until these days that we cannot take back from them. It is a true story of what happened. However, despite lacking road access facility, big flights of leaders of other countries landed safely in PPIA ...

From Nil to Over 4 Million Tourists

Today we are putting into official use an achievement invested by Societe Concessionair de l'Aéroport. We are proud with increasing number of tourist arrivals. If there were no tourists, there would not need to build more facilities like this. We have started from nil but in 2015, Cambodia received some 4.7 million tourists. Why I brought this nil figure up? There were not many people living in Phnom Penh. PPIA suffered devastation since the coup on 18 March (1970). In just two days, it will be the anniversary when the Lon Nol clique brought down Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk. It was the beginning of destructive war in Cambodia. I was in my 18 years of age when it all started. Though there were still flights, tourists number went down from before the coup because many areas of Cambodia were already at war.

By 1975 through to 1979, the airport almost closed completely. There were just a few flights landing in Phnom Penh quietly. Later, there were only two airlines landing in Phnom Penh – Vietnam (airline) and Aeroflot from Moscow. (It was because of such slow development) that we did not reserve land for expansion of the airport. Even our reception room was that tiny, there were no guests to receive. However,

there are more flights now, in matter of minutes, in Phnom Penh as well as in Siem Reap. Thank to peace, no more war, because of the win-win policy, Cambodia has disposed more tourist destinations, leading to arrival of some 4.7 million of tourists. That calls for expansion of airport and its passenger terminal.

A moment ago, Mr. Xavier Huillard talked about free Wifi. I welcome this move. I hope you make it a successful story. Everyone, myself included when stepping out of the plane, first thing to do was to search for internet access to send news of arrival to family members. With 3G people could also send their pictures with messages. I suggest you make it work well in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Preah Sihanouk provinces. Make sure it works all the time [...]

A Message of International Standard Airport

I wish to appreciate efforts made. I have implemented my promise that I made with VINCI in Paris, in presence of the French Ambassador on 25 October. I promised that I would come for the inauguration ceremony. It is an obligation for the Prime Minister to launch the inauguration sending a message to tourists that please come to visit Cambodia because now we have international standard airport invested by French company VINCI and its partners. I thank Deputy Prime Minister HE Sok AN, and his aides, for their efforts. I thank the efforts made by Societe Concessionair de l'Aéroport and VINCI as well as support rendered by the French Government and Cambodian institutions, the Cambodian Civil Aviation also included. What we need to keep on doing is to provide safety to our airport ... Long ago, along the fence there was a huge canal, where buffalos had their baths in. In this airport development project, we then levied it and increased safety for landing. I would urge staff working in the airport – immigration po-

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logs to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, it is a new investment and no cut of budget should occur. I am urging HE Ang Vong Vadhana, Minister of Justice, to make sure things go fast in court so that we can get hold of illegal logs/woods. Illegal logging did not ask permission from the court, but when we arrest them, we had to go through court. Well, please speed things up there to get hold of the wood in a timely manner.

Placing Some Forest under Protection Approved

I am placing leadership and management on this issue in

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participation in operations in other countries should there be request from the United Nations. Friends helped us. We also helped them in return. Though Cambodia is short of money, Cambodia is not poor in heart. Meeting two French Prime Ministers visiting Cambodia – Jean-Marc Ayrault and Francois Fillon, I asked them for cooperation in the UN system. Meeting with President Francois Hollande in the 2014 Asia-Europe Summit in Italy, and in my recent visit to France, I also asked him for increase of information sharing in this regard. I also did the same work with a number of countries who also send their troops for peacekeeping missions abroad in order to make sure that our troops have access to credible information to avoid accidents as well as to strengthen cooperation where necessary. I also did the same with Prime Minister of India, where in South Sudan, our troops stationed not far from each other. Our troops had a unit that produced clean water and we shared it with the Indian troops.

Should Cambodia become an economically rich country, Cambodia would provide assistance of 0.7% of its GDP to foreign countries. Cambodia is not there yet. Cambodia is still poor and is able only to deploy its troops for UN peacekeeping

HE Hang Chuon Naron. I just know that all illegal logs arrested will go and use in the interest of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. They can use those logs/woods to build housing facility for teachers serving the purpose of dispersing teachers to local level. Take for example I built a number of houses for teachers. It is an attraction for teachers to come work and live there. I may declare now that I agree with the proposal for discussion between the Ministries of Environment and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, to place some of the forest, such as Prey Lang forest, under protection
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missions to eliminate accident caused by mines and UXOs or to provide medical services. However, gradually, we are ready to send some assistance to African countries, who already made some requests to me already. I am thinking about it and consider actions.

I thank the Cambodian people for supporting my foreign policy, especially the decision to deploy the Cambodian forces for peacekeeping operation, which has put Cambodia in equal status and footing with other countries deploying troops in the UN peacekeeping operations. Cambodia continues with this engagement from small to a bigger scale. It is my wish that Mrs. Claire Van Der Vaeren report to the UN Secretary General about Cambodia's readiness in responding to requests of the United Nations, whenever there is demand for troops.

Internal Peace Allows Cambodia to Engage in Peacekeeping Operations

Frankly speaking, should Cambodia be without peace, it would not be able to send troops to foreign countries. We have seen replay of win-win policy that reunited our territory for the first time in a history of about 500 years. We have been able to transform Cambodia from a country divided into many controls to a united one, which is rare in its history...■

10-Years Achievements of Peacekeeping Missions

(01 march 2016 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

In addition to the prepared text, Samdech Techo Hun Sen made the following adlib comments:

Correct and Proud Decisions

Please allow me to remind something. In my political career, I have made decisions on numerous major issues from taking action to topple the Khmer Rouge forces until those relating to war or peace in the country. Decision to accept the UN peacekeeping operation to Cambodia was not a simple one at the time that I was head of negotiators and Prime Minister of a Government in conflict with other Cambodian factions. There were urgent demands from other political factions and international community for presence of the UN operation in Cambodia. I had a discussion with my colleagues in those difficult negotiation times and decided that we must (do it to) create confidence for every involved factions ... in searching for peace and national reconciliation.

... Later, we had to take up another decision. It was not a simple one and more importantly at the time when Cambodia was in its internally difficult situation. We decided to deploy our troops to foreign countries (for UN peacekeeping operation missions). In the past, many Cambodians also fought on foreign soil. I met one of them and he passed away some fifteen years already. He told me he fought in Algeria and Morocco as a French soldier. Cambodia was a French colony then. This time, we send our troops abroad for peacekeeping operation as a sovereign state and a country member of the United Nations in response to the call of the Secretary General of the United Nations for de-mining troops.

Cambodia Deploys Its Troops under UN Operations Only

On 1 March, I made the deci-

sion. I did not leave this role and responsibility be carried out by any Minister or Deputy Prime Minister, the President of the National Assembly or the Senate. It was clear that the Prime Minister was responsible before national history. I am so proud. I said at that time “to jump into the water to learn to swim,” by which I meant we must send our troops abroad to know what it was like. Before we made that decision, a country approached me and probed if Cambodia could send a small number of its troops (for operation abroad). I denied because it was unconstitutional.

Cambodia can send its troops to foreign soil only within the framework of the UN operations. The fact that we deployed our troops abroad, Cambodia has so far enjoyed reputation from our troops’ behaviors. You may have remembered my recommendations to the first company of 135 troops. Cambodia had experiences with some troops of the UN operation in Cambodia, who even involved in smuggling. We have collated those experiences and enriched our troops with moral before taking up peacekeeping missions abroad. What we had to take out as experiment was the fact that there were hybrids and HIV/AIDS in Cambodia under UNTAC time. It was true. Based on these lessons, we have made it a rule that all Cambodian blue-beret troops must have their blood checked to make sure they are HIV/AIDS free before joining the missions [...]

Ambition to Expand Cambodian Peacekeeping Troops

... Let me tell you that I have a very big ambition. I just told you about my intention to expand the deployment of Cambodian peacekeeping troops in foreign countries. Cambodia is now in the rapid UN troop mobilization system. We will take into consideration our

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tion. We may allow those who involve in protecting the trees to help with the protection movement of the forest. The same is true for forest in the area of Kravanh (cardamom) mountain [...]

I am asking the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in principle if they dare accept the proposition. There would be certain procedures involved. We will go a step further on those. We may have to set up a mechanism to help each other with this. I am sure it is not the Ministry of Education’s power to act on this matter but I just want to ascertain that you will accept the offer. I think it is a good thing that we will invest hundreds of millions of USD into education from 30,000 to 40,000 cubic meters of logs. My concern here is to make sure that transporting them would not cause damages to the roads [...]

Dispersing Teaching Staff to Rural Areas

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cancel people’s debts.” If they say so, please record the voice and exercise arrest on spot. The person, though s/he may be a member of the National Assembly, would face arrest in flagrante delicto ... I stressed on the three points. Firstly, in relation to illegal microfinance institutions, their objectives seemed (to loan) to confiscate ...

Secondly, (people must be careful with) those who call themselves microfinance institutions or loans givers without legal recognition for high interest, but are in fact with nature of cheating.

Thirdly, (people must be aware of) political parties or members of the National Assembly or political party leaders who would deceive people that they would cancel all debts because they are debts to the state.

I would urge an arrest on the spot as it would be a deception and an actual offense in violation of financial regulation. It was not debts to the state [...]

The second challenge was too few and too many teachers. It is not a new issue. In education as well as in health sector, I always say, especially in health, that about 70% of physicians serve some 30% of our population in urban areas, while 30% of our teachers only serve 70% population in rural area. We worked successfully on dispersing our teachers to rural areas in those days. Now, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports will have to tackle this matter itself. We encourage efforts to disperse teachers once again to match the need in rural area. We have too many teachers in urban, but too few in rural areas.

We must make sure that a number of things has to be there for teachers to go live and work in rural area. I just mentioned that if we wanted to mobilize teachers to work in rural schools, one of the best way to do it is to solve housing problem. That we have this many logs, up to 30,000 or 40,000 cubic meters, we could use them to build housing for teachers. If, in any case, we cannot provide them with houses, we may make sure that they have access to some form of financial helps for them to hire a place [...]

School Director Position Vacant for a Month, Ministry of Education Will Act

... There one other problem about assigning someone to the position of school director. The Ministers of Education and Environment are of the will to see through decentralization and de-concentration efforts to delegate power to local authority. However, they do not seem to use it. Previously, the Ministry of Education did the task of making someone director of a school. Later, they let lower level authority to carry out this task. It is in the power of the provincial authority, with the evaluation from the district level, to make someone secondary school director. Sometimes, sub-national level demands power but does not use it adequately. I think, in that case, we should bring some power back then [...]