



Samdech Techo Hun Sen bestowed blessing by his mother in law on day eleven of the fifteen Pjum Ben Days

## Diploma Presenting at Puthisastra University

(22 September 2016 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

### Human Resource Grows Up

Today, I have a great pleasure to join with you in this graduation and diploma presenting ceremony of the Puthisastra University. I am proud to note that our human resource is growing up day after day. This is possible because of our joint efforts.

Early this week I presided over the graduation and diploma presenting ceremony of the Panha Chiet University. As for today, we are presenting diplomas for three levels of 1,694 graduates – undergraduate, bachelor and master degrees. The University’s board director made a report about progress realized in the past, encompassing also humanitarian actions by the University.

I hope that we will continue these actions and make further efforts to improve quality of tertiary education. We will do them all together from primary, secondary to tertiary levels. As you knew already, yesterday I had a meeting with grade-A high school gradu-

ates, accompanied by their families. It was an event to offer encouragement for more than 50,000 graduates, or 62% of exams takers. This is a better achievement compared to 40% in the first year of reform.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Puthisastra University for the efforts it makes in training our students here. I thank the University for allocating scholarships to me, and that I have provided to students in need.

### Learning More to Strengthen Capacity

I would like to take this opportune moment to express my sincere thanks for graduates who received diplomas today. I hope that all of you will make use of your gained knowledge to serve in whatever you wanted to. However, I am calling on all of you to make further efforts to continue your study so to strengthen your capacity.

I have advised very often that things evolve fast and funda-

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## Meeting 2016 Grade-A High School Graduates

(21 September 2016 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

### Meeting with Mention-A High School Graduates Every Year

... Before I am with you here, I had a meeting with your parents in the room downstairs. We do not have a room big enough to put everyone together. We decided to allow only the graduates, a school director, and a deputy governor of the province to sit in here. We have made it a clear responsibility that a provincial deputy governor and director of provincial education office are to be present all along. It is indeed a pleasant meeting this year. I think we may as well have an annual meeting of

mention-A high school graduates. In the first year of reform of education and senior secondary school exams, there were only 11 graduates with mention A. The number grew to 108 graduates in the second year, and in this year, we have up to 405 graduates. I think we will continue to have this meeting though there will be thousand of them because it is the fruits of our reform efforts. We have reaped the benefits of reform now and parents as well as the whole society welcome this development.

I would like to take this opportune moment to express my

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## Inaugurating the Sunrise Japan Hospital

(20 September 2016 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

### Japan Provides Assistance and Builds Many Hospitals for Cambodia

I am so pleased today to join with all of you to put into official use “The Sunrise Japan Hospital”- which the first of its kind of the Japanese private investments. Prior to such investment, the people and government of Japan have provided numerous hospitals for the people of Cambodia in form of its grant aid. If I could recall, over the past years, I have worked with many Japanese ambassadors to put into official operation and use of hospitals in Phnom Penh, Kompong Cham and Banteay Meanjei, for example. This has clearly revealed efforts and care given on wellbeing, by the government and people of Japan, to the people of Cambodia.

The report by Dr. Shigemi Kitahara has set lights on points that there are needs further private sector assistance can be of help. I would like to take this opportune moment to express my sincere thanks to HE Kiyoshi Odawara, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, for kindly making his presence possible to this event and for delivering us such an important message from the Japanese Prime Minister HE Shinzo Abe. It is encouraging that some of the points raised in the letter have singled out importance of relation be-

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mentally and so does technology. Nothing in this world stays idle. The world encounters more and more challenging issues – contagious diseases, climate change, and terrorism are serious concerns. Heads of states and governments or Minister of Foreign Affairs are meeting now in New York drafting declaration on those matters.

I have a strong hope that graduates who have not yet found a job will seek for one because there are more jobs available now in the market. According to the report by the University's governing board, some 81% of graduates from the University got jobs.

I hope the remaining number would find ones. I am taking this opportune moment to express, together with families of graduates, my congratulations and appreciation for the efforts they personally made as well as those of their parents, grandparents, superintendents, brothers and sisters, spouses.

**Holding on a Verbal Battle**

I should not talk much as things calm down a bit since Monday. There was a bit of an exchange of fire from Monday through to Tuesday.

As a verbal battle seems to be in place now, there is no need to make any further comments. I will keep watch throughout the period that Cambodians are celebrating Projum Ben days to see if anyone would break up the verbal battle.

I wanted a calm environment for the whole Projum Ben days. We will see if the verbal battle holds. I do not talk politics today and I did not since yesterday. It is good. Let us celebrate the Projum Ben days and it is already day six of the event today.

**The 23-September Cabinet Meeting to Endorse Treaty****of Climate Change**

I have two meetings to do this afternoon – Minister of National Defence from Laos and Minister of Information from Vietnam [...]

Tomorrow morning, there will be this agenda in the Cabinet meeting to endorse process to seek legislative ratification what is going to be the treaty on climate change signed in Paris.

The Secretary General of the United Nations, while meeting in Vientiane, made insisting request that Cambodia ratifies the treaty.

I told him it is just a matter of internal procedure. Now we have our Foreign Minister in New York, and on 24 September, he will tell the world that Cambodia is in its process of ratifying the treaty. The cabinet meeting will go through it before sending to the legislative body seeking a ratification. The treaty will be in force when there are supports from a certain number of countries.

In the G20 summit in China's Hangzhou, the Chinese President and the US President handed this document to the Secretary General of the United Nations. He also wanted Cambodia's participation in the framework of supporting the initiative. HM the King of Cambodia also went for a conference in Paris.

The Cabinet meeting tomorrow will adopt the document and notify the Minister of Foreign Affairs who is now in New York to inform the world organization of Cambodia's internal procedural preparation before the legislative assemblies – National Assembly and the Senate, will ratify [...]

**Registering for Voting Right**

... Two more things that I need to talk about, though. Firstly, I am appealing to the Cambodian people to continue to register for their voting rights. No matter how busy

we may be, we should not neglect our right to vote.

The National Elections Committee (NEC), political parties, etc. have all appealed to people to register for voting right. Please keep going and registering wherever you may like to.

Take for instance I do not register in Phnom Penh but in Takhmao, in Kandal, because it is my constituency. People from rural areas (and work in Phnom Penh) may want to register in any registration offices closer to their workplaces. People may also want to register in their native places.

It is absolutely the right of every individual. On behalf of the Royal Government, I am calling on our people who have not registered yet, those working in foreign countries also included, to go and do so [...]

**Forecast of Water Level in the Mekong Basin**

I hope that seasonal flooding this year does not seem to rise high. This morning we had a forecast that water of the Mekong River may rise a little bit. In Stoeng Treng province, the water level will stay at eight meters, though. It was 9.50 meters when I was in Mondul-kiri and I had hoped it would rise to ten meters. It was just a hope. I called to the provincial governor and he told me the level of water has instead dropped.

I am glad to see though that water has filled our lakes and reservoirs already because the seasonal Mekong flood did reach 9.5 meters. According to our weather forecast, it seems there could instead be flood from rain [...]

One other matter that is clearly going to happen is that we will organize the water festival's boat race. We are committed to do that. If we could not organize boat race for longer

boats, we may do one for shorter ones. It would be impossible to transport longer boats to the racing event [...]

**Rice Market; Dry before Selling**

Secondly, it is an issue relating to market for rice. In the last few days, we have intervened to save price of rice. However, that is not sufficient and requires collaboration and understanding from our rice farmers who have rice to sell.

The difficulty here is that in one instance, our people harvested tens of thousands of rice at the time that our silo has a capacity to dry only 1,000 tons of rice per day.

Well I have called on our people to grow rice with a statement 'harvesting rice in wet condition is better than there is nothing to harvest.'

This instruction is applicable in time of drought in 1994. I made this statement in the commune of Puthsar, Bati district, Takeo province, in 1994. Farmers then dare not cultivate short-term rice because they may have to harvest in the rainy season. I made the statement and even wrote song to encourage them to do otherwise.

We have brought about peace everywhere, we dug canals for people, and in drought time, we offered assistance to pump water for our farmers. However, people sell wet rice. If they do not sell them in time, rice may germinate. People nowadays do not harvest with sickles but by harvesting machines.

Harvested rice came in big amount all at once but our drying capacity could not handle that. I am calling on all farmers, if they can, to dry their rice first before selling. It is hard though to dry rice in rainy season. However, if you can, please do. You can sell at a better price when the rice

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congratulations for the mention-A high school graduates as well as everyone who passed the exams with every other mention, though it is impossible for all more than 50,000 of us to meet. I am also urging those of you who have failed the exams to continue to make further efforts to pass the exams next year. You are in your age of 18 or 19 years old, or even 20 years. It is not beyond making efforts yet. I hope you make efforts, and will make it next year. HE Dr. Hang Chuon Naron has said it that “you will make it if you have the knowledge.” It is something we must do. Well let me tell you that the Peace Palace is where many heads of states and governments come and work. The room in which your parents are now is one for the heads of states and governments to have their meals.

**More Female than Male Graduates in 2016**

Last night I stayed up working until 7pm and I had to check some more work when I got home. In the course of searching, here is what I have discovered. According to the figures sent to me, 55,753 students passed the high school exams, in which 28,807 or 51.6% of them are female students, after making a calculation. Only 26,946 male students or 48.4% made it. For the 405 Mention-A graduates, 204 are female and 201 are male. In percentage, female graduates made it 50.37%. In mention B, 1,466 graduates or 52.33% of 2,801 are female. This means there are 1,335 or only 47.67% graduates are male. For mention C, among 5,595 graduates, 2,967 or 53.02% are female, and only 2,628 are male. In mention D, 8,835 graduates scored it. 4,664 or 52% of them are female and 4,171 are male. In mention E, 38,117 scored it and 19,506 are female graduates.

This has shown that in every mention, female students scored better. I think this is a remarkable achievement in the sense of gender. This has also indicated positive results in gender that we have achieved along with educational reforms. Among provinces, number of graduates broken down into female and male percentage varies accordingly. Ranking by mention A, there are 16 in Bateay Meanjei, seven of them are female students. In Battambang, 24 out of 34 graduates with mention A are females ... In Kompot, eight female students scored mention A out of eleven in the whole province [...]

**Rural Vs Urban Education; Connectivity and Infrastructure Support Education**

... Mondulhiri has up to 80.80% students in the province that passed the exams successfully. It has been within this range for two years in a row. It is not true that more students in Phnom Penh and/or lower areas are doing better at all. There is a high school in Kon Mom, Ratanakiri, where every student passed. All 22 of them passed. Traveling by Rovieng district of Preah Vihear, I learnt that 78% of their students taking exams passed. It is not true anymore to say that students of families residing along the national road are doing better in exams. They have now come to more or less close to each other [...]

... The fact that I brought up the issue of Iv Srey Lin of Mondulhiri, I wished to illustrate to you how difficult it was to travel then to Mondulhiri. In those days people had to travel sometime to Vietnam before entering Cambodia again at the province. One other idea is to single out the fact that education makes progress thanks also to connectivity and other infrastructure. Should there be no roads Mondulhiri could have been idly isolated. Knowledge would not go into Mondulhiri because no teach-

ers would want to come to Mondulhiri. Nowadays, with road and infrastructure in place, from Phnom Penh people will travel and have lunch in Mondulhiri of the same day.

**Moving Junior Secondary School Closer to Primary; Senior to Junior Secondary**

... It is worth noting that higher rate of passing the exams successfully among female students was a result partly of our policy to move schools closer to their homes or villages. In the past, we had one or two secondary schools in a province. Now we have one or more in district level. In the course of my journey of over 3,000 Kilometers, I had participated in reorganizing educational geography in the province of Preah Vihear, Uddar Meanjei, Ratanakiri, and Mondulhiri because I noted that the distance between primary schools and junior secondary schools are too large. We need to provide them with more buildings so some of the primary schools could become junior secondary schools. Next year, primary graduates will not have to go far away from home to study and some who are currently going to junior secondary schools away from home will be able to do so nearby.

**Price of Peace**

Today we are able to bring our students to Phnom Penh without any fear along the road. I would take this opportune moment to express my sincere thanks to those who had contributed in peace building in Cambodia. I wish to remind everyone of hardships that your parents, grandparents, etc. met in the past. In time of war and genocide, no one could go to school in peace. War inflicted us with impacts like what current Syria, Libya, Iraq, Yemen and other countries are encountering. The Royal Government is currently concerned for our troops stationed in conflicted areas of

Somalia, Central African Republic, Sudan, and top a lesser concern Lebanon. In the past, we encountered hardship from war on the one side and lack of infrastructure on another. That is why for us, before anything else, we must have peace. I thank our people and concerned parties for accepting, cooperating, and implementing the win-win policy until we are able to make full peace.

**Win-win Policy Transforms Battlefields to Development Zones**

Over a long distance journey on land to many provinces, about four fifth of the whole was formerly battlefields. However, these regions have now become ones of development. Peace has provided us – everyone and everywhere chance for development. The Royal Government expresses its sincere thanks, especially my own thanks, for our people and involved actors for accepting the win-win policy. Take for instance Pailin, formerly a battlefield, now has mention-A high school graduate too. We also had one from Uddar Meanjei. We may ask ourselves, without peace would it be possible for us to build up schools? I could recall that in older days, when the US and Lon Nol regime dropped bombs all over the country in between 1970 and 1975, teachers had to dig up trenches for their students and themselves. Under Pol Pot there were no education, but after the regime fell, fighting continued. Again, they dug trenches to hide themselves and their students. In those circumstances, how could a country build anything, either schools or bridges?

The win-win policy created chances for everyone. I thank my colleagues, the Cambodian people, and involved actors for joining with me under the win-win policy to end a divided country status and to estab-

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lish one that is under one rule, one Constitution, one King, one Royal Government, and armed forces. National division occurred in the past. We ended it. We replaced it with one under one rule. That is the invaluable meaning of peace. We must therefore protect this hard-won peace. I reiterate, without peace nothing no one can achieve anything.

### **Cambodian Children and Youth to Have Better Chances**

... Allow me to express my sincere thank to everyone involved in building more schools and investments relating to education because they have provided facility for students. I have made it a clear point that I would not leave Cambodian children in unfortunate circumstance as I did when I was a small boy. I had to part from my parents when I was 13 years old in search of education. At present, millions of children have reaped the fruits of peace in which the state provided fund for the construction of schools, and those assistance provided by development partners as well as resource sharing among our people. These collaborative efforts have provided more chance for our children and youth than in older days [...]

Without schools, we would be in serious problem. The art of sharing resources allow us to build more schools. We cannot depend only on the state coffer. We noticed that community and even Buddhist monks have paid high attention on this matter. In Kratie, at the pagoda of Thmor Kre, a pagoda divided its land into two – one for primary, and junior and senior secondary schools. In between Mondul-kiri and Ratanakiri, in the district of Koh Nhek, I had to build schools there. I saw the need for more schools. When I handed out land titles to people, I discovered challenges. Places where people resettle,

we need to address the needs for schools, clean water, hospitals, and communication – all four of them [...]

### **Deep Reform in Education Deserves Praise**

I appreciate and bestow my praise to the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, especially HE Dr. Hang Chuon Naron, for leading a deep reform in education. It is now giving our people its fruits. People may say anything, for instance, our diplomas are not of any value, but most of the students study in the country. I told my colleagues, I have a strong hope that in twenty more years, Cambodian human resource will be remarkable [...]

Every time I travel abroad, my priority request was to ask for scholarships. It is in this reason that thousands of students we have in foreign countries in this stage. We cannot depend only on foreign help. We need to improve local training capacity. We have gradually every year chances from state and private investment efforts. Reform efforts led by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports lately have proven through actions to help prop up students before taking exams. When I was in Kompong Chonang and Pursat provinces, it was when students took junior secondary school exams. I saw students coming to school for supplementary classes [...]

... There has been a huge interaction from reform in the secondary education level. I thank everyone involved, especially the working group of the Cambodian People's Party everywhere for making their effort to sustain teachers' effort to provide supplementary classes. I am sure other political parties also did the same. I thank them for it. Here we are not talking about political parties but about education for all. In case that they did not do anything to help, it is fine. In

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## **Diploma Presenting at Panha Chiet University**

(19 September 2016 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

### **Human Resource for Cambodia's Development**

Today I have a great pleasure to join with all of 1,362 graduates of the Panha Chiet University. I would take this opportune moment to express my sincere appreciation and thanks for every efforts made by professors and management of the University.

The Chairman of the University board, Mr. Run Rothveasna, reported in his speech that we have made great efforts together on a long journey and what we have achieved today signified common endeavors – state and private, to work together to build human resource for Cambodia's development at this point in time and for long-term need.

I have mentioned on various occasions that should there be no correct policy taken, participation from the private sector in the field of education, so to speak, we would have no means to absorb tens of thousands of students who graduated from secondary school level and are in need of tertiary education.

People also have taken their parts of efforts by accepting fee-paying option for their tertiary education. Some, however, received scholarship from the state and other sources, including those offered to me by the Panha Chiet University (PCU) and I gave those to students in need.

### **Study Is a Continuing Process**

I would like to take this opportune moment to express my sincere congratulation to all graduates today – bachelors and masters programs, for turning themselves into human resource for the present need of development as well as further education. Study is a continuing process and without an end.

Things evolve and change endlessly. That requires close and relentless monitoring. We have made efforts to do works but on instance of a negligence of endeavor to study and research, one could become a conservative as one loses touch with the situation.

I have come across such officials who have parted away from where we stand, not in front of us but behind. Some have taken their roles as advisors or assistants but they do not even know where things are now.

Some advised me as if we are in the 1980s, for instance things about road connectivity and new settlement in certain area. I wish that advices or recommendations be in conformity to the present situation. Some suggested Cambodia should do this or that as they do in the US or Japan or France. These people went to another side of the extreme ... I would just insist that students, officials and armed forces to monitor evolution of the situation because it will help them deal properly and in a timely manner with whatever situation that may happen.

### **Being Conservative Is Dangerous**

As we are celebrating the graduation and diploma presenting ceremony today, I would take this chance to appeal to students of all levels to continue to make efforts and increase capacity by any means, not from only what you have learnt in school. With internet access, people can download knowledge and improve their understanding of things.

There are also computerized libraries with so many books available. Should anyone neglect efforts to increase knowledge, s/he would soon become a conservative and it

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(Continued from page 4 B) would be dangerous. We could compare it to a big piece of rock preventing small plants from growing. I am calling our people – both the young and old, to make studying efforts [...]

### Resolving Rice Price on Mobile

Lately I took a trip of 1,250 Km by road from Phnom Penh through Kandal, Prey Veng, Kratie, to spend a night in Mondulakiri. After wrapping up our works in Mondulakiri, on National Road 76, I headed to Ratanakiri province, where I worked and stayed for one night. I left Ratanakiri after lunch and headed to Stoeng Treng. I did not return to Kratie. I crossed the Mekong

at Stoeng Treng and travelled along the road that is going to be National Road 9 to Preah Vihear. On NR 9, I did not travel to NR 62 to connect to NR 6 but travelled through the district of Rovieng to see a number of preserved zones. I had a chance to try Khmer noodle there. It was coincidental [...]

Along the trip, I had a chance to see things and hit on a number of lingering issues that are waiting for solutions. We studied the problems together, made decisions and took solutions on the spot and many problems resolved. I exposed myself to a bit of rain when I stopped by the secondary school of Kon Mom, on the trip between Ratanakiri to

(Continued from page 4 A) case they did, I thank them. I thank teachers for spending efforts to provide supplementary classes for students before taking exams. I thank the students themselves for taking part in the classes [...]

### Graduates to Take Exams for Teaching Careers

... There is an issue. I wish to address to you. Please concentrate and be brave. As a policy, the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports prefer to have best mention graduates to take up teaching careers. Last years, 1,200 high school graduates with mention A, B and C could take up teaching careers automatically. It was a smaller number. We have allowed new recruitment only 3,000 teachers per year. As for this year, there are 2,800 graduates with mention B and 5,595 with mention C. I think it is better for you to take exams to ensure it is just for everyone.

... Those of you who are picking up teaching careers, you will have to take a twelve years plus two years (12 + 2) training. I learn that in the new system, they would have a 12 years + 4 years training pro-

gram. This will set our teaching staff a standard. We must ensure that there is a standard set to guarantee professional level. You all must take exams to ensure entrance to teaching careers [...]

... It is unfortunate that we have not time to get it organized or we could have thrown a dinner together. Finally, I would take this opportune moment to express my heartfelt appreciation and congratulations for achievements scored by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, Education offices at all levels, sub-national authority, especially parents and superintendents, as well as the students themselves, for making this progress possible. Everything is Cambodia, for everyone, who will be the future of the country. I hope there will be many of you who will come and work in the Peace Palace [...]

... You may want to take a look of the building with parents and relatives. You may also see the working office of the Prime Minister and places where we conducted the ASEAN summit. It is a symbol of national power ...

Stoeng Treng, where all of their secondary school level students passed their exams. All 22 of them passed. They are great. This has suggested that standard of education between those in urban and in rural area is not different.

While being on mobile, rice price issue happened and I had to resolve the matter. I have followed up the matter for while and some even teased that I played with my phones. In fact I have to keep up with situational development concerning prices of rice and many of those information came into my phone. Senior Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance, Aun Pormmoniroth, led the meeting to seek immediate, medium, and long-term solutions, and most importantly the immediate step.

I had to check with the paper and gave my instruction in there. We then had to take photo and send to the Minister of Economy and Finance. Everything was possible thanks to the availability of electronics and internet. It is good to have e-government.

### High School Graduates to Take Entry Exams for Primary Education Teachers

Once again, I would like to bestow my sincere appreciation to the steady efforts of the PCU and its generous offer of some 346 scholarships since 2010 to me to provide to those in need. I am so happy and share this joyful moment with families' members of the graduates like their spouses, parents, and/or children. I wish to take this time to clarify a few things.

I am preparing to have a meeting with 405 top-scored high school graduates, whereas in the first year of educational reforms there were only 11 people and over 100 students last year. Last year, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports allowed A, B and C

scored high school graduates to become teachers automatically. There have been some protests from some students who scored D and E.

Considering their demands, I have discussed with the Minister of Education, Youth, and Sports, HE Hang Chuon Naron. I would urge the Minister to reconsider the decision with other leaders in the Ministry. We have the need to recruit some 3,000 teachers a year, after we allowed recruitments in the last six or seven years of 5,000 teachers a year.

I am asking the Minister to think about responding to their demands. I just share this thought in advance in case the Ministry would not allow the A, B, C scored high school graduates to claim teaching careers automatically. They should not be concerned about taking another exam.

### Water Festival's Boat Race to Happen

This year, no matter how low the water will be in the river, we will have the water festival's boat race event. Yesterday, water level in Stoeng Treng dropped low to 8.61 meters. However, the water level this year is better than the year before ... On my way back I stopped by Prek Kadam and saw that water flow into some lakes and reservoirs through canals.

The 16<sup>th</sup> typhoon approached Japan causing some depression leading to change of atmosphere for low ICTZ area. This will prolong rain over Cambodia until end of September. As for the Mekong basin area, from 21 through to 25 September, rain will continue to pour in area of Laotian Pakse and below [...]

### Allow Nobody to Destroy Peace and Social Order

As for political matter is concerned, I just wish to affirm that there is no such thing as political crisis in Cambodia.

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As you can see, graduates celebrated their diploma presenting ceremony and high school graduates are preparing themselves to go to University, people are registering for voting rights.

According to latest report, the National Elections Committee has registered over two million voters as of now. If the country is in crisis, could we have done all this? Please do not make personal case as political and do not consider it legal right of expression. I warn again that a political organization cannot prevent (legal action of a) personal wrongdoing. Culture of dialogue is for issue under the competency of political party or the Royal Government, where they will discuss things [...]

Cambodia is not in political crisis and there is no such thing as internal crisis. Individual with court matter must proceed with the case with the court. It is not competency of political party or the Royal Government.

I cannot interfere in the court affairs unless the court reached its final decision. Then the matter will come back to the Prime Minister. While the law allows Prime Minister to request for royal pardon, I would also have a look into the issue ...

The Cambodian people are in need of peace, political stability, security, and social order for development. Someone from lower Cambodia wrote a comment to my Facebook page mentioning that one side had the army and another side had people. I am saying that what the person said was wrong.

Normally, a ruling party has more people's support. It has the people's supports and those of the army and administration. I would earn them not to threaten calling for a demonstration to put pressure

for a negotiation. No way for that ... There is only one place to go – the National Assembly. That they have abandoned the National Assembly, where else could they meet? It could be a wonderful place to get things sorted out. Shaking hands with each other there, people could get their matters to light and solve them [...]

**Distaste Foreign Interference in Internal Affairs**

I wish to make it clear that foreigners may not want to poke their noses. I would not go all the way like the President of the Philippines did but I tend to think we are two of a kind. I have put it this way. He is older than I am. It is I then who had to liken myself to his.

He distastes foreign interference in his country's internal affairs. He blamed preaching about human rights and held human rights responsible mentioning about the US soldiers killing his people. He railed his anger at the Secretary General of the United Nations over his remark on his fight against drug ring.

Well, the President of the Philippines had his right to speak before anyone else as he is going to chair ASEAN next year. Stepping out of the meeting, he showed me his paper and said "let's go for wherever international conference together."

**It Is an Order**

While I was in China, they threatened with demonstration in the country. Fresh News reacted and I posted one more on Facebook. It is an order and I have envisaged that some would come out and say – "Hun Sen threatens." It is not a threat. It is more than a threat because it is an order to eliminate whoever would destroy security and social order ...

If an individual committed a mistake he had to serve what he did before justice. That is end of the story. There is no need to bring everyone else to

his/her problem. Well I must stress this as it falls on what they called "Black Monday." The one staying in France raised his voice about demonstration everywhere. Well, let them come. I order to deal with them wherever they are.

While you claim rights to demonstrate, why do we not have the right to respond? Someone have rights to support the opposition party, there are people who have rights to support the Royal Government too. It was they who started first to threaten with demonstrations should there be no negotiation ...

The Royal Government has every rights to order military exercise at all time. One day I need to know how responsive was the forces – infantry, navy and air. I had ordered from Singapore. We got it together in about 36 minutes ... there is no threat in nature. We must get ourselves prepared and ready. What if there is going to be a terrorist act. We need to get our force together in no time [...]

**Fall of Rice Price**

Fall of rice price or food price happens not only in Cambodia. We should notice that many developing countries have been competing with similar products, while developed countries have none or less number of competitors over theirs. Everywhere I went I checked to see what TV brands those countries used, for example. As far as TV is concerned, from two to five star hotels, they all use Korean TVs. We developing countries are competing with each other over similar products. Within the Mekong Sub-region or ACMECS frameworks, every country produces rice.

Thailand has ten million tons, of which at least two million tons needed to sell out. Vietnam sells some millions tons too. Only the Philippines expressed its intention to purchase a million ton of milled

rice. Myanmar exported rice too. Laos is self-sufficient [...]

So far, I have made efforts to expand market for Cambodia's agricultural products. Initially China bought nothing from Cambodia. Later, they bought 100,000 metric tons of milled rice from us. Not long ago, Premier Li Keqiang declared China buy in addition to the previous quota another 100,000 metric tons. Cambodia has therefore sold to China a sum of 200,000 metric tons of milled rice.

That does not mean China does not have rice for consumption. China on the contrary has a big rice stocking. However, because of our good relations and helping friend feeling, China increases import quota of rice for Cambodia ...

This time of year is in fact not a harvest season but because of our farmers' efforts, and the Royal Government's investment in irrigation system, plus better technology, the country is able to produce more and harvest at this rainy time [...]

We disbursed urgently an amount of 20 million USD, plus seven million USD from the Rural Development Bank, to purchase some 100,000 metric tons of rice. We have jacked up the price of rice to stay at 840 Riel per Kilogram or 840,000 Riel per metric ton. That is how much we could do at this stage to stop intermediary traders from lowering the price of rice. We must make information known to our people. It seems the news travels slowly. There seemed to have some congestion. According to HE Ke Kim Yan, Deputy Prime Minister, the area that our people have harvested is reasonably big.

**Banks Should Help Farmers in Difficulties**

... Some people advised us to group our farmers together and call them production group, not collective farm, so

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that they could protect and bargain the price or keep rice in stock if they have too. As for now, people sold their rice in wet. We do not have enough silos to fry rice. Our silos have limited ability.

We are calling on all concerned parties, beside Oknha Phu Puy, like Canada and others with silos to dry rice, to help deal with this task. We will delegate capital to them to purchase rice. From a country that we had to depend on other for rice for consumption, we have now become a country with surplus rice in search of marketing absorption [...]

I am calling on all banks that the state has undertaken 50% risk for them to provide loans to companies that purchase and process rice. I am placing an appeal to microfinance institutions to exercise understanding for people who are in hardships because they may not have ability to pay you back. They could not sell their rice at all or sell at a recoverable price.

Please do not take harsh measures to sue them to court to confiscate their homes or lands. In addition to this, I am asking for prolongation of payback time, or if possible, to charge no interest or reduce interest for them. I am intervening only on behalf of those who have borrowed for cultivation and for other purpose would not count in [...]

### **Medium Term Measures – Expanding Rice Market**

In the medium term, I have been working with Chinese leaders and our officials are working with the Chinese counterparts to seek a 300 million USD loans for a drying silo, warehouse and rotating capital to purchase rice.

We do not have sufficient fund. I hope that our farmers understand. The Royal Government continues to expand its market search. However, please understand that we

needed to compete with Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, and even India for that matter because India has a big stock of rice between 30 and 40 million metric tons [...]

... Some countries approached us calling for a friendly price, about 100 USD lower than price available in the market. They also proposed payment by installment, while we also are short of money. That is why some would ask why do we not export to Africa? We did find out and those countries are in difficult financial state. Some countries asked for up to six months installment if they had to buy at a market price, instead. If we have money, we could have done it [...]

... I reckon that our farmers have the necessity to sell their rice urgently to pay back debt, to cover family's expenses. However, I hope that some families could be able to keep it and wait until the right price returns ... For matter about rice and agricultural products I would not hesitate to act [...]

### **Calling on Millers to Purchase from Farmers**

... I urge the twenty million USD to go swiftly to millers and they should purchase whatever amount of rice possible and at the appropriate price from farmers, respecting the ASEAN Free Trade Area framework.

We also allow import of rice with a 7% import tax and 10% value added tax. I hope our traders and people are using local rice rather than importing from abroad. What I am saying does not bother principles of the World Trade Organization and AFTA. We must deal with both inflow and outflow of trade [...]

We will need to make further investment on processing because selling out rice incurred losses of broken parts, rice brand and husks. I am calling for more investment in pro-

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tween Cambodia and Japan, whereby the Sunrise Japan Hospital is also in it.

In the visit of HE Shinzo Abe to Cambodia in 2013, if I could recall, there were discussions in which the Sunrise Japan Hospital investment project was afro mentioned. Days ago, in Vientiane, Laos, at the ASEAN-Japan summit and the Mekong Sub-region, HE Shinzo Abe also reaffirmed efforts and mad a review of what Japan and the Mekong countries have achieved, in which the Sunrise Japan Hospital is an example.

### **Many Works Achieved With HE Shinzo Abe**

HE Shinzo Abe and I have been partners that worked a lot for the relationship between Japan and Cambodia. I worked with many Japanese Prime Ministers but HE Shinzo Abe and I have been working together to promote our two countries' relations to strategic partnership. We did so many things and many achievements scored last year – the Neak Loeng Bridge that our people had waited many past decades with a new name – or Tsubasa. On 1 September, direct flight between Narita, Tokyo, to Phnom Penh started. I am certain that the Vice Minister will take a direct flight this evening from Phnom Penh to Tokyo.

I am looking for appropriate time to be able to travel to Tokyo also with this direct flight. I have been wearing Japanese artificial eye since 1997. Now I have only one left. It would be difficult to find in case it falls breaking for any reason. I am also figuring out my time to go to Japan for some new ones. Please allow me to take this opportune moment to deliver my thanks from afar to the Japanese Prime Minister HE Shinzo Abe, as well as the whole government of Japan for always supporting development of the Kingdom of

Cambodia ...

### **Advanced Hospital Increases Confidence of Tourists and Investors**

I am sharing my joy with the view that this is just the beginning. Dr. Yoshifumi Hayashi has acknowledged that there is a long road to go and he will make this a hospital that supports and answers to people's demands. That we have such high-standard hospital will increase trust and confidence of investors and high-end tourists from anywhere to come to Cambodia. They may need to know before investing in Cambodia or making a tour in the country, whether there are hospitals with complete services to save them. Building a hospital is not one that answers to requirement for health care alone but also other related sectors such as tourism, investment and research, for instance, in Cambodia.

Well, I could have been the hospital's first patient because I am having a fever today. I cannot cancel this pre-scheduled event though. I could not do it for the event yesterday and the same for today. I am having throat infection ... I will have to get back home to finish my paper works. I did yesterday work with it until 1300 hours, and later had a meeting at the office of the Prime Minister until 1900 hours. I will however make myself ready to see Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, HE Kiyoshi Odawara, in the afternoon [...]

### **Keeping ZIKA Away from Cambodia**

I would take this opportune moment to appeal to our people and health sector on this contagious virus ZIKA that rampages from Latin America through to countries nearby us, or we could say right at our gate. It has not been discovered in Cambodia yet but it is not far from us. They discov-

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ered it in Thailand. It is reported to have occurred in Singapore. In this situation, I am seeking care and attention to pool efforts to keep the Kingdom of Cambodia free from this dangerous virus. With controls set up by the Ministry of Health, plus efforts made by people to exercise hygiene and care when they travel from one country to the other, we will be able to protect our people's health.

As I am proud with every efforts we jointly make together to ensure our health sector's progress. I sincerely hope that our medical trainees attending this event will strive in their studies. I am sure this hospital will provide chances to you for your training purpose and I hope the director of this hospital will allow your presence, especially specialized medical staff. As I am pleased with what is happening now, I agree with the statement that this is just the beginning on a long trip we are making.

#### JMRP – A Good Initiative

The state sector of Japan did provide Cambodia with so much assistance in health sector. Japan also provided Cambodia with so much grant aid. In the past years, investments from Japan have brought Cambodia high-tech projects, especially to the Special Economic Zone in Phnom Penh, Koh Kong and other places. I hope that this relation will grow in conformity with strategic partnership and Japanese involvement in ASEAN integration, reducing gap between new and least development and older members, which is now in its third stage.

In fact the Japan-Mekong (Japan-Mekong Region Partnership) aid program, a very good initiative to help with the reduction of gap among mostly the countries along the Mekong, where development levels are lower than those of older ASEAN members. It is

thankful that Japan picked up various projects together with Cambodia. In addition to connection of National Road 1, the project to improve National Road 5 from Preak Kadam through to Pursat, Battambang and to the border with Thailand, will serve as one of the most important southern transport corridor of the Mekong sub-region or in ASEAN.

#### Repairing the Japanese-Cambodian Bridge of Jroy Jangva

I hope that there will be more participations and I must make a point that anything that happens in Cambodia will be remarkably indicative to donors and people. Cambodians had gone through the most difficult period, since when Phnom Penh was without dwellers. It has now become overcrowded. Soon, we will seek our people's understanding on the fact that we will have to close down traffic through the Jroy Jangva bridge for a while for the sake of repairing it.

For the place where we are now, according to map, it used to be land of long reeds. Land erosion has brought this side of the Mekong river to gain high silt and more has built up. We do not allow that to go on. We are pumping sand to make way for water to flow [...]

#### A Rush Judgment Would Worsen Things

There is a story that I wish to share with all of you. It is a story about a manager of a company and his accountant, who happens to be a female. The manager is also a married man. Exchange of messages was on Whsaap or Line of Telegram. The message was coming in fragmented paragraph. The first part received by the manager's end was "Mr. Manager, I am pregnant." Picked up the husband phone to see what the notification was about, the manager's wife saw the message. She hit

her husband. The second chunk came "tomorrow I will inform my father and mother." The manager's wife in rage went on to a harder hit. While the third chunk arrived – "I am asking for your permission to go with my boy friend to see my father and mother." Well, when the truth came in full, the manager enjoyed his wife three hits already.

The same is true for the situation in Cambodia. I would urge people not to make a rush conclusion but wait until they get to a complete set of facts. There was one other story. It is about a mother and child with two guavas. Mother gave two guavas to her child. The child had his bite on one of them. The mother then said please save me one. The child did not say anything but made a bite into the other one. The mother was so disappointed and turned away. Later, the child called her and said "why don't you take this one, mom, it tastes better." Please do not rush to any judgment or one could worsen situation.

This is just a food-for-thought thing. However, I am sure it could be true also in real life. You may liken this story to political affairs. Dr. Shigemi Kitahara made a brilliant point that it is just the beginning. I am calling for more supports to go on. This is optimism for evolving situation of Cambodia's future.

Once again, via HE Kiyoshi Odawara, on behalf of the people of Cambodia, I would convey to Prime Minister HE Shinzo Abe as well as the government and people of Japan for always providing supports for the people of Cambodia.

I also thank companies of Japan, enjoying loan from JICA, for making their decisions to invest in Cambodia. I hope that such investment will continue to happen. I am so anticipating when I heard just now that there will even be a university for health ...

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market goes up [...] Also in this point, I thank Minister, Secretary of State, officials, the armed forces, and traders for purchasing rice from our farmers.

However, I am calling on them to take rice home or give to whom they planned to, rather than leaving them at the milling place. The question here is not that we do not have money to purchase rice but no silo to dry it. If you buy rice and leave it with the millers, the situation will be the same. Whoever purchase rice at this moment must transport it to your home or milling place. If you buy from farmers and leave it with them, the issue is still unresolved. Just be clear that this is not a problem of having no money to purchase rice [...]

Anyway, I continue to call on our people to help farmers. Cambodian rice is good and tasty. I hope that we will consume our own rice. If each family has the ability to purchase rice and store it, they may do so but not leave them at Battambang, Banteay Meanjei or Pursat, but ship it homes or to whom they wish. The issue here is to take rice away to save it from germinating [...]

... I am calling on bus services not to jack up price during the Projum Ben festival period. I am calling on drivers to exercise vigilance and make sure their driving is safe. I anticipate no traffic accident in this festive time ... Please respect the traffic rules ...

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cessing in Cambodia for rice and other crops.

We have made great efforts to expand market for rice. Lately, there is a company from Guangxi invested in a rice mill in Cambodia and now people in Guangxi consume about 10,000 tons of rice per year from Cambodia ...