

## Opening Sixth Sea Festival in Kep

(23 December 2017 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)



Samdech Techo Hun Sen with people at the Opening Ceremony of the Sixth Sea Festival in Kep province

### Sea Festival to Organize Every Year; Next Time in Koh Kong

On behalf of the Royal Government and my own, I am delivering my warmest welcome to presences of Samdech, Excellency, Ladies, and Gentlemen who have come from every part of our country to enjoy the 6<sup>th</sup> sea festival held in Kep province. I wish to take this chance to extend my warmest welcome to the presence of our friends and artists coming from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Thailand, India, Indonesia, China, and those artists of the Kingdom of Cambodia. We are celebrating the sea festival every year and the whole country is working on it together, not just the provinces that are bordering with sea. It is an opportune moment for our people in the whole country to get together.

That we have so many stands exhibiting various goods and works of various institutions indicates a general understanding of progress of our country. Our people are getting together to celebrate sea festival every year in rotation of provinces along the sea as they are doing so for Sangkranta in Siem Reap. Today, we all are pleased to

celebrate once again, after we did so last year in the province of Preah Sihanouk. Next year we hope to meet again in the province of Koh Kong [...]

### Green Beach, Future is Present

I am taking this chance to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to efforts made by Minister Thaong Khon of Tourism, related institutions, especially the Ministries of Trade, Culture and Fine Arts, as well as provincial governing council for such a wonderful celebration. I also share my appreciation and thanks with authorities of every level. Here in Kep, we have a female district governor and city mayor, which clearly encourages our vision on gender and future leader of the Kingdom of Cambodia. We are gathering here today at our beautiful beach in Kep. This year we are celebrating this event under the slogan “sustainable tourism for development” under the theme “green beach, future is present.” This topic covers various aspects of the present and future.

### Breathing No Oxygen Provided Anyone

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## Meeting Workers/Employees NR 3

(27 December 2017 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

### Sharing Natural Disaster Grief with the Philippines

... Compared to natural disaster happened in the Philippines, what Cambodia has endured is not serious. I wish to take this opportune moment to express to the Government of the Philippines as well as to her people who had just encountered a fierce storm that took hundreds of lives. The country is indeed in its recovery stage.

We are expressing condolences over their deaths and sorrow over destruction caused by the natural disaster. Of cause the weather condition had caused destructions in many countries in the region ranging from

South Asia through to Vietnam, China, etc. [...]

### 2018 – Salary Increases for Civil Servants, Armed Forces; Advantages for Workers

Take this opportune moment I wish to express my congratulation to workers who in just days ahead will receive their basic monthly salary increase from 153 USD to 170 USD, along with various other social protection policies in place, including free-of-charge health checking and treatments in state hospitals for workers both registered and non-registered systematically. We also implement this policy

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## RGC’s Prizes for Gold Medal Sportsmen

(15 December 2017 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

### Sportsmen with Honors

I have a great pleasure to have met once again our sportsmen. I would like to take this opportune moment, on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, to express my sincere greetings and congratulations to sportsmen who have won gold medals in international competitions or matches to bring our country fames and glories [...]

Sports bring us progress and HE Hang Chuon Naron already reported to the ceremony already that the amount we spent on awards has surpassed the amount of money we have reserved [...] while congratulating our sportsmen, please allow me to take this opportune moment to seek understanding and place yourselves higher than “men who compete only for money.” Any posting of intolerance (for slow disbursement of prize) on social media would on

the contrary devalue you and/or your fans, along with your honors [...]

This year our sportsmen have improved their ability to win medals in every competitions that make their number grow exceeding the number we have expected for the year [...] maybe our sportsmen do not complain over this lateness in prize award and it was their fans or someone else who had done them on social media [...]. I am asking you personally and/or your fans to understand this procedure and prepare your heart and mind, as well as physical means as real sportsmen who would not compete only

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We are celebrating this event to reflect progress of our economy. I wish to deliver a clear political message that “Cambodia is not breathing oxygen provided by anyone.” Cambodia is a man with nose and mouth. Yesterday, the Cabinet’s meeting met to review progress of Cambodian economy, in which a report has shown that service sector in present day Cambodia contributes a share of 45% to the country’s GDP. Industry landed at 30.1%, while agriculture picked up 25%. This has also indicated that Cambodia is not producing only one or two products by many. I am so proud of the works we have done and so much that we have achieved for local supply and also exports to foreign market.

### **Tourism – Prioritized Sector and Green Gold**

This has also manifested progress of national economy, and it has also singled out a share of 13% from tourism to the country’s GDP. We also consider tourism our country’s prioritized sector, a green gold, that we all are taking responsible efforts for its promotion. For this year, as we are still counting, tourist arrival to the Kingdom of Cambodia is over 5.6 million. It is a reasonably big number. However, we are not satisfied with it. We are doing whatever we can to get to our goal that is to receive some seven million tourists by 2020.

Tourism plays an important part in providing jobs, trades, incomes, and our efforts to help our people to export their produces on the spot [...] arrivals of 5.6 million tourists this year have provided opportunity for our people to sell them food, meat raised, and fruits grown in the Kingdom of Cambodia through hotels in the country. That is the concept of exporting on the spot.

### **Beautiful Beaches and Magnificent Temples from Draw Nil to Over Five Millions Tourists**

... Although Cambodia is still a poor country, it has become

owner of its destiny. Cambodia is recognized as one of the most beautiful beaches countries in the world. We have issued a slogan “rising star in the Southwest,” which should cover provinces of Kompot, Kep, Preah Sihanouk and Koh Kong. We should see these progresses, development, and especially initiatives and ownership of our officials and people.

I wish to take this opportune moment to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to authorities of every level, national and sub-national institutions, our people residing along the sea, and other tourist destinations in the whole country for their contribution to guaranteeing development in this sector. Beautiful beaches has added to what we are famous of – ancient temples such as Angkor Wat, Sambo Prey Kuh, Preah Vihear, Koh Ke, etc., left by our ancestors, Kings and Queens in the Kingdom. They have attracted tourists that we started from having none to over five millions, from few small and outdated hotels left from wars and Pol Pot’s regime to hundreds of them.

### **Places for Local Tourists to Stay**

I have learnt that Kep is short of hotels and guesthouses. Some have had to travel back to Kompot and the Bokor resort to find available accommodations. Last year, I recommended the province of Preah Sihanouk to look for and prepare public spaces to accommodate local tourists in event like sea festival. It is not something to do only for the province of Preah Sihanouk but for every provinces that we are celebrating in rotation the sea festival. People may have means of transport to come join the festivities but they may not be able to find provisional accommodations.

It is in this understanding, I have the need to provide some recommendations for which we are making efforts to continue to move ahead with the theme “green beach, future is present: sustainable tourism for development” and the concept of

“rising star in the southwest of the country.”

### **Permanent Presence of Peace and Permanent Absence of War**

Firstly, *we must secure a permanent presence of peace and permanent absence of war and turmoil.* It is the first and foremost point relating to development of all nations in the world. You may see that no tourists would risk to visit countries in war. You may look at Iraq, Syria, Libya, or Yemen – were there any tourists visiting them? Look back into Cambodian history, were there any tourists visiting us in time that we were at war? Even in 1994, three foreign tourists – French, British and Australian, were abducted and killed at Phnom Voar. That was a real happening in Cambodia. As of present, tourists can travel anywhere in our country. They can visit any places they wish to free of fear.

It is in this understanding that we must have peace and keep peace as preconditions for other development. I wish to say that a permanent presence of peace and a permanent absence of war is critical and we must not allow anyone to create turmoil. Were there no peace, there would not be development, respect of human rights, and democracy. I am calling on the Cambodian people in the whole Kingdom to unite together to keep our hard-won peace. This pitiful country of ours has suffered more than enough. We should not allow anyone country or group to destroy peace and we must, at any cost, keep peace to guarantee development.

### **Maintaining Status of Rising Star in the Southwest**

Secondly, *we must maintain our status of a country with one of the most beautiful beaches in the world, and the rising star in the southwest,* mainly the four provinces bordering with sea.

We all must make efforts to safeguard interest of our country and people as I said in one of my speeches on 17 July 2017 to welcome accession of the Sambo Prey Kuh temple as one of

the world heritages – “let us not kill a hen to feast our taste but to keep it for many generations to come.” We must make further efforts to safeguard beaches, forests, environment and nature. Just now I have seen a water treatment system that cleans waste water before reaching to sea. We continue to keep our sea and beaches clean. No one would want to take a bath or play in water that would infest them with diseases. I am placing hope on local authority and people for the understanding of long-term interest of the country.

### **More Infrastructures for Tourism**

Thirdly, *continue to build necessary infrastructures, which includes airports, roads, clean water, electricity, hotels, resorts, etc., to serve tourism purpose.* We still need more of these. Take for instance in Kep and Kompot, we still have problem of water supply, though we have solved their needs for electricity.

We must focus our efforts on supplying clean water for the two provinces. As far as connectivity is concerned, land, rail, and air, we have already made tremendous efforts to connect the central parts and other tourist sites to Preah Sihanouk, and in the future, Koh Kong. Direct flight from abroad to Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, and Preah Sihanouk, has been our efforts to provide chances for tourists who visit temples in inner part of the country to also have a chance to visit and enjoy nature at sea [...]

### **Paying Attention on Security and Public Order**

Fourthly, I recommend that *we pay attention on issues of security and public order.* It is another important matter. Peace is important at a macro level. Public order is but another both at macro and micro levels.

In every tourist sites, we must make efforts to keep security, public order, and stop and prevent drugs, gangsters, thefts, robberies, which could be detri-

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on female workers who will deliver their babies, along with cash support program. You will receive these benefits while I am still the Prime Minister. I will take care of this policies directly and will follow them up to address your difficulties [...]

In days the year 2017 will be over and the year 2018 will come with many advantages for workers/employees ready for our workers, civil servants, armed forces, and people in the whole country, especially a new increased salary. We will implement salary increase policy right away on 1 January 2018.

The civil servants will benefit from the same policy in two stages – firstly, in January, basic salary increase, and secondly, in April, 2018, before the Khmer New Year, bonus in connection to functions, all of them combined will ensure basic salary of civil servants and armed forces no less than one million Riel or 250 USD per month.

#### **For Socio-economic Development and Poverty Alleviation**

As the New Year is approaching, we have new situations to endeavor. The fifth legislature of the National Assembly will end in 2018 as the Royal Government is set up in 2013. It will be the last effort to fulfill our ambition listed out from the beginning of the legislative term on reforms. If we are to look on conditions relating to workers, we will see that in 2013, when their basic salary was only 80 USD, in 2018, it will be 170 US. This increase is even more than 100%. It is a crucial part of the Royal Government's efforts to implement policies relating to socio-economic development and poverty alleviation [...]

We will enter a new year in days. However, that does not mean there will be no risks for us to face. Look, we have rice – both rainy and dry season species - to harvest. Our farmers have so many crops to harvest, while their prices in the world market seem to have risen better. Though prices seem to rise slowly, compared to previous

years, still it is now a good time for our farmers to reap from their harvests, while our workers are also benefitting from higher incomes and advantages.

It is quite an opportunity for Cambodia to promote its socio-economic development and poverty alleviation efforts through issuances of new policies relating to promotion and implementation in support of small and medium industry enterprises.

In the very recent Cabinet meeting, I have called upon concerned institutions to pay attention to establishing a specialized bank to provide financial support for small and medium enterprises. These would not only provide and secure jobs for our workers but every field will benefit from such progress, and thus jobs creation and diversification will provide higher incomes for our people.

#### **Poverty Rate Continues to Shrink**

Poverty rate continues to fall. Number of people who have resources and incomes passing the poverty line has increased. Though we have yet to run a survey on that subject, we could envisage that the present poverty rate of Cambodia remains less than 10%. We could suggest of figure of 9%, while in 2014, the survey figured it at 13%. We have estimated a 1% fall of poverty rate per year. We started with a 100% poverty rate after the liberation of Cambodia from the genocidal regime of Pol Pot. It was quite a speedy recovery compared to other countries that spent more times than us and still are stuck at their poverty rates of 20% and/or 30%. According to the UN poverty survey for millennium development as well as sustainable development goals, their poverty line was 1.25 USD a day.

However, our workers have now made their incomes of no less than 5 USD per day. We are not yet satisfied with this much income, though. We have moved our countries from low-income country to one in the lower-middle income nations.

We have an ambition to advance further to become one of a higher-middle income countries by 2030 and high-income countries by 2050.

#### **CPP's Good Roadmap**

Some of us who are sitting on this stage here will not survive till 2050 or live to 2030. However, the Cambodian People's Party has issued a roadmap for Cambodia for short-term, medium-term, and term-term developments. They are not short-lived policies issued only to attract voters. It is in this readiness that in every situation, the Cambodian People's Party has never lost its radar, ranging from taking up challenges of various risks to dealing with natural disasters [...]

Though some of us sitting up here will not live to 2050 or even 2030, we are sure that Cambodia has its roadmap in place, which only with some minor adjustments will be able to lead the way forward. We also have in place infrastructures will support the map, for instances we have built already roads, bridges, etc.

Those who will take over, except if they have a Pol Pot's ideology and style of leadership, will never destroy them. I wish to take this chance to express my sincere appreciation for workers, your parents and grandparents, for always supporting the Cambodian People's Party resolve problems and challenges, while making contributions for the country's development.

Without their supports, and now your supports, the Cambodian People's Party political platform would not have achieved such successes. It is quite a turning point resulted from what we have foreseen and laid out.

#### **Many Events in December**

December – is a month with rather many events in Cambodia. In the past, Cambodia became in 1955 a member of the United Nations. We also have the Angkor Wat temple registered as one of the world heritages in December, 1992. What is even

more important to remember is that on 2 December we established the National United Front for Salvation of Kampuchea. It was a time when the Cambodian people in certain areas almost died from the Pol Pot's massacre.

The Front saved them and liberated Phnom Penh on 7 January 1979. Prior to that date, a number of areas were already falling apart and liberated. Our people were full of joy to have been liberated. It has been 39 years already at this moment.

Also, on 2 December 1989, at Fere-en-Tardenois, France, the late Samdech Preah Sihanouk and I, Hun Sen – the father of a nation and a farmer's child, conducted our first peace negotiation, leading to seeking a political settlement that ended the war. I was then 35 years of age.

I went everywhere for the meetings with an aim to put an end to this policy of “water rises, fishes eat ants; and water recedes, ants eat fishes.” Prolonged armed conflicts was always in my memory and those of your parents and grandparents too.

We then have this 2 December 1998, when we issued for the first time in the first Cabinet meeting of the second legislative National Assembly Royal Government the “Triangular Strategy” to reap chance for stepping up. The three angels we embodied was firstly to ensure national pacification, secondly to achieve speedy integration of Cambodia in various international bodies and institutions, and thirdly, to take advantages of the first two angles to mobilize and concentrate efforts for socio-economic development and poverty alleviation [...]

#### **29 December 1998 – War Ending Day**

We have finished about 60% of our construction of the Win-Win Memory Palace. We have taken 29 December 1998 as the day that Cambodia ended completely internal war through conduct of the win-win policy.

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Why have we set that war ending date in December, when the last falling out of the Khmer Rouge stronghold in Anlong Veng was since March or April 1998?

The problem was the political and military organization of the regime remained. We set 29 December 1998 as the day because Khieu Samphan, the former Head of State and Prime Minister, Nuon Chea, former President of the National Assembly, and the Khmer Rouge Cabinet surrendered and came to see me at my house in Ta Khmao.

There has never been a country in this world to end a war without losing a bullet, and President, Prime Minister, etc. of one party in conflict came surrendering to the house of the Prime Minister in opposition in a war [...] I am taking this up just to remind you all the important roles played by the Cambodian People's Party, by me, and by your parents and grandparents in time of war, negotiation, and peace.

Thanks to the peace that we have won hardly through win-win policy that we have this scarcely gold and diamond opportunity to score Cambodia's socio-economic development. Particularly, works that you are doing and benefits that you are receiving are not here because of anyone but the Royal Government led by the Cambodian People's Party [...]

### **Cambodian Economy Does Not Depend Solely on Agriculture**

... We have now stepped into a new phase of national development. According to figures and data of economic growth, our GDP, one can note that previously, our economy had a bigger share from agriculture. As I said in Kep province, as of this time, agriculture shared only 25% in our GDP, while industry made it up to 30%, and service sector, including tourism, made up to 45% share.

In saying so, that agricultural share shrank from 80% to only

25% share does not mean that Cambodia has not had enough rice to feed its people. On the contrary, while agriculture shared up to 80% to GDP, Cambodia had difficulty feeding its population. As for the present, that Cambodia shared only 25%, we have a surplus of over five million metric tons of rice for export, and many more crops – ranging from rubber, sugar to other produces [...]

### **Let Us Keep Peace**

Were there no participations and supports, nothing can be achieved. You may need to remember that what you have in hands these days, after the liberation from Pol Pot's genocidal regime, are provided and facilitated by the Cambodian People's Party. We are taking measures to prevent the return of the Pol Pot's regime.

We made every efforts to conduct negotiations to resolve problems and implement the win-win policy to bring and secure peace for lasting development. You may need to remember that to keep your jobs and incomes, you will need to contribute to keeping peace, and allow no one – Cambodia or foreign – to destroy it as they did in the past. At whatever price, we must dare to stand up in defense of independence, national sovereignty, and peace to guarantee continued development [...] it is our rice pot.

The past experiences taught us enough. Your parents and grandparents had lost so much chances compared to you in younger generations. The previous generation, people were hostages of war, and lost their chances, lives, and some, including me, maimed.

Current generation, youth have so many chances if they would not lose them in traffic accidents. They have more schools to go to and now they have more factories set up not far from their homes. They have jobs and incomes. Soon we will promote small and medium enterprises and handicrafts in local levels. This should provide more jobs for the people too [...]

### **Eight Tasks to Focus**

[...] I would have to remind us and concerned institutions of our resolutions and give more recommendations for institutions and people, workers of eight important tasks that we should continue to focus on:

#### **Strict Measures to Implement Provision of 170 USD Basic Salary**

First, *to strictly implement a basic minimum salary increase at 170 USD.* Any factories that provide below 170 USD will be against the law, and those who provide more will be fine [...] there is a need for follow-up and inspection. Our workers have known of this policy very well, and in just days ahead the policy will go into force.

#### **Free-of-Charge Health Checkup and Treatment at State Hospitals**

Second, *to monitor implementation of free-of-charge health checkup and treatments at state hospitals.* The Ministers of Health, Labor, and concerned authorities must take this policy seriously and ensure its actions. Starting from 1 January 2018, workers, both registered and non-registered sectors, sportsmen and sportswomen, village heads, deputy heads, and assistants, commune councilors in the whole country will benefit from this policy. They must monitor its implementation.

I urge them to pay attention to providing services. I would not wish to hear that while workers are going for checkups and/or treatments, the Doctors have not got instruction to carry through the policy yet [...]

#### **Female Workers in Delivery Entitle to Three Month Convalescence and 120% Salary**

Third, *to monitor and implement adhesively policy to allow three months recuperation and 120% salary for female workers who deliver a baby/babies.* The social security fund will cover 70%, employers will cover 50% for their salary makeup. In the past you only receive 50%. Starting from 1 January, you are

entitled to the new policy arrangements [...] we are not here to speak nicely like other parties would propagate. We must make it happen. This is the voice of a man who holds top executive power – the Prime Minister [...]

#### **Cash Assistance for Female Workers in Delivery from Social Security Fund**

Fourth, *to provide cash assistance for female workers delivering a baby/babies from the Social security fund.* You may have known that anyone to give birth to a child from zero hour of January 2018, the child will entitle to a 400,000 Riel cash assistance. In case of two babies, the cash allowance will double, and triple in case of triplets.

I also offer cash assistance of five million Riel for those who give births to three babies but there are not many cases like that anymore ... There were only 320 families. I met some of them too. I will follow this up to make sure it will take place. Please send in news on this development to my Facebook account [...]

#### **Employers Pay 100% on Healthcare Fund**

Fifth, *to monitor the 100% expense on healthcare covered by employers.* In the past, workers would pay 50% and employers would cover another 50%. Starting from 1 January, you no longer have to pay. Employers, factories owners will cover 100% of the healthcare benefits for workers, from which you will save between 8,000 Riel and 13,000 Riel per month [...] this is something that we need to follow up as it is not a matter of one or two days works.

We must make it known in every forum and there should not be rooms for trading blames. Ministers are in charge and be responsible before the Prime Minister and the National Assembly [...]

#### **House Rents, Water and Electricity Charges**

Sixth, *to monitor issues in-*

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for money. You gold medals winners have to have your prizes and we encourage you to work even harder [...]

### **Towards Hosting SEA Game 2023**

I just take this opportune moment to meet you to advice on this matter. I do not mean to rebuke anyone. We will work together towards hosting the SEA Games 2023, which is not far away. It will be not even fully six years. Our stadium, building with the Chinese assistance, would be ready in 2022. That would include some infrastructures. We have created conditions favorable for such regional competition [...]

I wish to take this moment to express my sincere appreciations for efforts placed together so far. Some of our sportsmen won their medals in countries that are sources of the games or sports themselves. Take for instance Petanque, it is a game originated in France. Former Prime Minister of France Francois Fillon sent me boules as gifts. It is a symbol of creation of France. As he plays boules or Petanque and he knows I also played boules, he sent me a set of boules as gifts [...]

### **Sports and Politics on Similar Playground**

Every sports federation has been making steadfast efforts to achieve progress [...] there was this sports Wushu sport that seems to have earned no recognition yet [...] I wish they tried to measure it fully. Sports and politics are two similar playing in more or less similar ground. For instance, sportsmen will grow old in some years ahead but that does not mean that we must bring down the competition facility along with old-growing sportsmen. In this world, in some cases, sportsmen banned from competition as a team or as an individual. However, in doing so, they do not remove or destroy their practices facilities or eliminate the sports [...]

### **Elections 2018 to Happen as Scheduled**

The elections in Cambodia in 2018 will happen as scheduled. Though some have committed mistakes and banned, 15 millions other people will keep on to elections as scheduled. I wish to speak nothing about politics. However, I have the need to clarify a few things. Some have placed their hopes on possibility of freezing property of Cambodian leaders abroad. I invite them to do so to find out who have their money kept abroad. That would have no impacts on Hun Sen unless you send troop to invade my country. If you did, you would leave your corpses in Cambodia too.

At this phase in the world, no one country would resort to doing such thing. They would just use some in against another in respective country. They had left some of their remains unaccounted for yet in our country. They should not just threaten us. I am calling on them to impose those measures quickly. They may indicate right away and now who will not be welcome to enter your countries. We may ask, even when they do not impose that entry prohibition rule, why would those people need to go to those countries [...]

### **Cheer Oneself Up, Wait and See**

Some even said that this matter would go all the way to the UN Security Council [...] they should have learned more about the UN Security Council. They cannot just go about and knock on their doors [...] more so the UNSC has no skills on discussing internal matter of any country at all. Among the five member nations – China, Russia, France, US, and UK, only one of them vetoes, the matter would stall. I should wish that Cambodians inside the country should not allow those bragging abroad to fool them [...]

The UN General Assembly resolution has no forcing effect. Only the UNSC resolution would do so. Decisions taken by the US Congress has no power to force the Trump's administration to implement them. Decisions taken by the

European Parliament also could not force the European Commissioner and President of the European Council to implement them. It is in this understanding that whatever that person says is just to console his mind and heart from day to day, week to week, and month to month. They would just wait and see. The world cannot just do whatever one wishes to. Everything has reciprocation.

### **Searching for MIA to Continue as long as US Agrees to Cambodian Proposal**

The search for remains of the remaining 49 US MIA will resume on condition that the US will give us back what they have taken away from us. We have not said that we ended the agreement. We propose for a discussion to amend it [...]. I have proposed the US to pursue a humanitarian principle and amend their decision about sending 600 Cambodians back and four of them committed suicides. It was with our wish for human rights and humanitarian purpose that we have proposed our position to the US. How come the US groups us with countries that does not cooperate with them in receiving back own citizens. They tighten their visas on us. We also take responsive action to suspend searching for remain of MIA. We will give them back as long as they give back what they have taken too. We are conducting interviews with 70 more, some of whom are in critical illness. We are asking the US for cooperation on that matter.

I allow discussion for the return of those people who have gone and lived in the US after 1994. I would not want to see them deported to countries other than Cambodia [...] I listened to what you had to say. Some hope that the Phnom Penh administration will stall. They may know that in older days, we worked only for rice and in encirclement. We survived. Why can we not survive now? How often do you go to their countries in a year when they issue you visas? I was in New

York only for the UN events. I went to Washington only because UNTAC requested my presence in confirmation with the US congress.

### **Leave Everything on the Land of Cambodia**

So far, since 2014, the European parliament has issued five decisions on Cambodian issues. We should ask if the governments of Europe have ever taken them into actions. They kept saying that those countries would freeze properties of leaders of the Cambodian People's Party. Well, I wish they did that if anyone of them would do that. I pray they do it. I detest anyone who keeps money abroad. If they do, let those countries take them. Most of the CPP officials, including Hun Sen, have no money in foreign countries [...] I just offered some money for Vitamin C (a comedian actor) to have this liver operation. (I keep my money in the country) to save lives. It is more humane and important to do. I have not any money abroad. When I die, I will get only one coin with me. I cannot bring anything with me. I will leave everything on the land of Cambodia.

Someone said that Hun Manet has 200 million Euro in the French Bank [...]. Hun Manet said if they could find any, they should take them. I am sending a message today that I am encouraging Europe and the US to freeze properties of the Cambodian leaders. I encourage them to act and not to just threaten of doing that. I have only one nationality. Well, I am not a narrow-minded person on nationality issue. How many officials in the Royal Government and in the CPP would have their properties kept abroad? If they were so naive, let them do so. My properties are in schools, pagodas, water reservoirs and canals, wells, etc.

### **Sports Competition on Equal Rights and Footing**

The present world notices different independent political tendencies at differing levels.

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## Meeting Workers at Tuol Pongro

(20 December 2017 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

### Beware of Cool Weather

Today there is a cool wind coming. Yesterday, if you notice, I was in sweat when I visited workers and employees. On the contrary, everyone is putting on jackets of some kinds to protect their body heat from cool temperature ... the Ministry of Water Resource and Meteorology has informed days ago of this coming low temperature weather and warned our people, especially elderly ones, of it. We had distributed cold weather jackets since October among soldiers.

Cool weather has come this year not only to Cambodia. It has come to countries in South Asia all the way to South East Asia, and more naturally to East Asian countries like China, Japan, and Korea. It is a normal pattern of weather condition and every family must take care of their loved ones. We also need to see if our people have what they need to protect themselves. I am sure those who sell cold-weather coats are making good businesses.

We are not sure yet if this weather is going to go away on 22 December. Weather can change abruptly. This was just a weather forecast. The matter is now that we are in cool weather. We are calling on our people to make efforts to protect their family members, especially old aged one, from cold and other related diseases [...]

I wish to take this opportune moment to express my sincere thanks for the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, the Municipal of Phnom Penh, and factories owners, for organizing this meeting and allowing workers to join it [...]

My presence here and in previous other places has been very enjoyable. I thank you workers and employees for your conferment of affections to me as your leader. What I have noticed was that your gesture has come straight out from your hearts and minds, and they are no different to the ones you are giving

to your grandparents and parents. That has brought me the feeling that you have a good feeling and understanding on works that your grandparents and parents, and I had been going through until we are getting to where we are now [...]

### No Growing Figures of Smokers, HIV/AIDS Carriers Wind Down

I wish to take this opportune moment to share my pride of Cambodia. As I went through meetings with some 300,000 populations so far, I have had lot of selfies with our people. I have noticed that there was no smell of cigarettes of any kinds at all. That is the pride of our nation. We do not have growing number of smokers among younger population and I see that old aged people also stopped their smoking. Many countries cannot achieve this. They have problem of smoking among younger population. The figure is going up. In Cambodia, we are scoring a great success in preventing, reducing and eventually ending smoking [...]

Another pride for Cambodia is that we have reduced number of HIV/AIDS carriers. HIV/AIDS came to Cambodia during UNTAC time ... we have done a great job as the number of HIV/AIDS carrier has not grown and on the other hand has winded down thanks to efforts to provide infected ones with medicines to prolong their lives and measures to prevent further outbreak. In my second meeting with factories workers and employees at the Canadia Park, I met a female worker who told me she is an HIV/AIDS carrier and her husband too. It was a good thing that factory owners give them jobs. That has indicated no discrimination among HIV/AIDS carriers.

Lately, I also met with disable people recruited by factories for jobs that they can do. I also meet just now a young person with disability from birth who has a job too. These are Cambod-

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mental to local and foreign tourist activities. I am calling on every tourist site to safeguard tourists and keep our beaches and sea safe, and no shelters to drug and human trafficking agents, as well as cross-border criminals.

We must cooperate with neighboring countries, especially the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Kingdom of Thailand, to guarantee that groups involved in illegal activities, terrorists included, are not present here [...] and using our country as base for their activities in other countries, tourist destinations in Cambodia too.

### Production for Local Exports

Finally, my recommendation is to produce to supply for local export for tourism industry. Our people have more chances of feeding over five million tourists. We must promote and ensure standard productions to serve requirements in tourism.

We must set up a greenbelt around tourism areas. I mean to promote growing vegetables, and conducting animal husbandry. We would be able to save currency that is flowing into the Kingdom of Cambodia or they would flow outback for supplies that we import for hotels. We also need to train our people to produce handicraft objects that is answering to tourist demands.

I am asking hotels in the Kingdom of Cambodia to purchase those produces and objects from our people to serve tourist demands. This should be a contribution for the tourist development and poverty alleviation goals.

At the same time, we must train our people to make handicraft objects that symbolize Cambodian identity to sell as souvenirs for tourists [...] I have received so many presents and souvenirs from many exhibition stands and I am sure tourists would also want them.

### Sustainable Tourism for Works, Trades, Local Exports

These are some recommendations that I think are still valid and I understand that we must continue to observe actions according to recommendations that I listed out at the previous sea festival at the province of Preah Sihanouk.

We work together to continue tourist development and to create jobs, trades, and income for our people. Tourism will help alleviate poverty and promote local exports.

Once again, I thank you for your participations. There is going to be a festivity tonight by artists from the Kingdom of Cambodia. My colleagues and I will stay here for the event and perhaps we can dance together tonight. I am declaring the opening of the sea festival under the theme – “green beaches, future is present: sustainable tourism for development” in the province of Kep [...]/.■

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When one of their children came on us, robbed us, and we broke his legs, it is quite normal that the father would be angry [...] who command color revolution. It is quite natural. Father reacted when his son, who intruded and bombed our houses, was caught and broken his legs.

Naturally, as a father, he is angry. They would have so and so reactions because they are big and rich countries. However, do not forget that no matter how poor a country, it would know how to struggle for independence.

The victories you all have gained for the country, they raised our flags high and put on our national anthem. We must protect these medals. We have won them on equal right and footing. In the world, no matter how small or big a country would be they all have equal right and footing in sports competition and games [...]. If my speech happens to displease anyone, please understand that I am saying what I said for dignity of sportsmen and I just ask some not to react prematurely to things on social media [...]/.■

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dian prides and affections. This feeling is not for me personally but for the contributions with pride shared by your grandparents and parents, and by you too, for supporting the Cambodian People's Party to continue to lead the country. It is our common pride, and with this pride, you have chance to have jobs and incomes.

### **1 January 2018 – Workers Are Entitled to 170 USD Basic Salary**

In just 11 days, we will say goodbye to 2017, when our workers' basic salary of 153 USD will be over. We will come to 170 USD basic salary that will commence on 1 January 2018. We also have here some 478 female workers who are in their pregnancies. We will also put into practice our policy to provide cash in assistance for delivering mothers ... the forthcoming year is one that our workers, registered and non-registered ones, will benefit from many advantages such as free medical checkups and treatments in state hospitals. That is a part of social equity fund. We have already made decision. This is just a reminder.

### **Economic Growth, Speeding Up Industrial Development, Poverty Alleviation**

We have made efforts to bring our country from the least income into lower-middle income status. We have ambition to move our country into higher-middle income by 2030, and high-income country by 2050. This is our vision, but also a roadmap for our country's economic progress. It is in this sense that we are working on both implementing industrial development policy and national policy for social protection, which we initially started among workers ... we are also taking responsibility also on reducing mortal rates of mother and child, increasing nutrition among our workers, as well as female sportsmen [...]

We have moved our country out of (100%) poverty (rate) in 1979 after the liberation of our country from Pol Pot. We have

not yet conducted a review of survey of poverty rate yet. According to our survey in 2014, Cambodia's poverty rate has stayed at 13%. We have estimated that the poverty rate may now be around ten percent. We have brought our country out of war and division and have become a country in full peace, and national unity. Cambodia had only recently been a country of division, no less than two factions each time. After the coup against Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, war broke out in Cambodia. Such fate had been here long before then. To track back in a long history, the state of division happened in about 500 years ago. In a shorter perspective, it happened since when the France colonized Cambodia, French was on one side and the guerrilla was on the other ... with win-win policy in place, we have been able to reunite our country ... no victory anyone can score without people's participation. Your previous generations, grandparents and parents have been the ones that supported the Cambodian People's Party, for which I am one of their leaders. In just days ahead, we will be celebrating January 7, and we will come to the 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary that CPP is in power [...]

### **Establishment of Bank for Small and Medium Enterprises**

We will celebrate in a few days the sea festival at Kep province, which is a part of our campaigns for our rising star in southwest of the country to attract tourists along with temples at Siem Reap, for which we received 5.5 million tourists last year. This year, we are expecting to close at 5.6 million or 5.7 million. I wish to take this opportune moment to affirm that, though it is in the stage of consideration, I have already made up my mind to set up a new bank to provide financial access to small and medium enterprises. We have a rural development bank to provide credit for rural development. As we are now into small and medium industry that will provide value added for local processing. That will provide jobs

and resolve local need and competition for export.

We will invest in setting up banks to provide credits for small and medium enterprises for the sake of increasing productivity, creating jobs and trades for our people. Countries in this world are depending on one another. We import goods from outside and we are exporting goods to other countries. We must remember that only poor countries will benefit from favor tax systems when they export into countries like the United States of America. In 1990s, we received also MFN (most favored nations status) but it ended in 2004. Exporting goods to the US, we have exercised normal tax requirement.

As for Europe, anything but arms are waiting for its time. When a country progresses to a certain level, they will remove the favor of "anything but arms." They will provide this status to other least developed countries. As Cambodia has come to lower-middle income countries status, some countries have already wished to demand us to use commercial interest loans already. We have proposed to our partners to maintain concessional interest loans status for Cambodia. That they have agreed to do so, it is a very understanding position taken from the part of our partners.

### **Making Cambodia's Economy Resilient**

It is in this meaning that we have made efforts to make our economy resilient. Many countries are looking for assistance. We also needed it. However, when Cambodia has made progress to certain level, donor countries would gradually withdraw their assistances. Export of goods to other countries would in fact be a meter for measuring our development. Take for instance in 2004 the US had already ceased its MFN on Cambodia and it was in those days that the World Bank and IMF forecasted only 2.5 growth for our economy.

After negotiation, the World Bank and IMF agreed that in 2005, Cambodian economic

growth was 4.5%. I said to HE Keat Chhon (then Minister of Economy and Finance) should Cambodia lose the US's MFN; would Cambodia be dead. I told him to accept their forecast of 4.5% economic growth. In 2005, we have realized 13.3% economic growth. It was a record breaking in Asia. In those days, Cambodian economy was not depending on anyone at all. We just have more options at hands.

Today, I wish to send out a message that the Royal Government will set up bank specialized in providing financial access to small and medium enterprises. We will start from 100 million USD. Prime Minister has already said this and we will not back away. Political parties that are not in power would speak anything but they have no responsibility to make it happen. Incumbent Prime Minister has spoken and must make it happen.

In a short time to come, we will create more jobs for our people. We will promote local productivity and respond to export demand. We have between 25,000 and 30,000 labor forces coming into job market. In this development, we cannot depend only on one sector. We are getting this done in order to respond to demand for jobs in agriculture, industry and manufacturing. Jobs creation in service sector also is a part of national economic progress. Through consolidation of resilience of our economy, we would be able to fight back crisis that comes endlessly from outside.

### **House Owners Should Not Jack Up Rent**

I thank you for a piece of news in social media ... about house rent. I have shared that with Minister of Labor and Vocational Training, and Mayor of Phnom Penh. The house owner already clarified that it was a misunderstanding. The house owner does not jack up the rent. In 2018, house rent must stay where it was in 2017. If anyone house owner demands more,

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he/she may ask for it from Techo Sen. I am declaring now, any house owner, whom I have already asked for understanding not to jack up rent in 2018, wishes to jack up the rent, she/he may ask from me [...]

### Social Protection Policy on Pregnancy Could Be for Whole Nation

In commencing social protection policy, I have singled out women in pregnancy as the first priority. We are reviewing and considering if this policy is applicable for the whole nation. Applying this policy for registered and non-registered workers, we would spend only about ten million USD per annum. According to statistics of the Ministry of Health, we have about 300,000 women in deliveries per annum. With this statistics, we may only spend about 30 million USD. We will take into consideration this point according to growth of our economy.

However, we are implementing this policy initially for female workers to have access to checkup and delivery free of charges in state hospitals, and to provision of cash assistance of 400,000 Riel for one baby delivery, three-month convalescence period, and 120% salary, 70% of which is from national social security fund and 50% is from factories owners [...]

### Prime Minister for Ten More Years

I hope that you will take part in keeping our country developed and free from war. We have already removed those who wished to start color revolution. We gave them no chance to bring destruction to our country. Under how much pressure we are taking, we will not let our people die again. In 2018, we will have elections. The National Elections Committee is posting their voters lists already. Please go check your information and use your voting rights on 29 July 2018 to choose whichever political party you may like for leading the country. On 25 February 2018, we also will have the Senate elec-

tions, for which four political parties have registered and joined the elections. However, it is a non-universal suffrage so only commune councilors, incumbent members of National Assembly, will have the rights to vote ... we will choose new members of the National Assembly, and will have a new Royal Government too. I hope firmly that you and your grandparents and parents will continue to vote for the Cambodian People's Party.

I have already declared that I will continue my Premiership for the next at least ten years. I wish to see continuing development and achievements that you, your parents, your grandparents and I have worked together for them. I wish to see an even lower poverty rate of our country and our people's income will jump from 1,500 USD per person to no less than 3,000 USD per person [...] according to calculation of the United Nations, people living under poverty line earn less than 1.25 USD per day. Previously it was one USD. These days, our workers – registered or non-registered, have earned no less than four USD per day [...] your living condition and that of your parents in the countryside have improved accordingly. They may build new houses, and buy means of productions, etc.

### Cambodia Is No Hostage to Anyone

Democracy and liberal pluralism continue with or without certain people. I just advised them to use their political rights and set up new political parties to compete in the forthcoming elections. They reproached me. I just tell them that it was my good intention. Whether you do or not, will have no impact on national process. With you joining or not, the elections will go on. There is no hope for revival of the dissolved party. I have no need to speak on that anymore ... Cambodia is not a hostage to anyone. Cambodia belongs to Cambodians. When it is time for elections, people will go to vote and parties will run for supports [...]

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*involved house rents, water and electricity charges.* I thank owner of a blue roof renting house for his clarification that there is no jacking-up of rents. I wish to monitor the house rents in the whole 2018. You may opt to increase it, at a low rate, in 2019. Efforts also must be made to monitor charges of water and electricity [...] and to bring state water and electricity connections to their places of accommodations to relieve their expenses.

### Retirement Regime in 2019

Seventh, *to continue to implement social security fund on retirement in 2019.* I wish to share with you that starting from 2019, you are entitled to a regime of pension fund. That means you also have retirement pensions as those employed in the state sector. We will take 2018 to prepare for implementation of pension fund [...] however, you must fulfill certain criteria in order to entitle to a pension fund. You cannot work for one or two years and are claiming entitlements to the fund. You need to implement criteria required by law. Government officials are required to do the same [...] it is in this note that you have to keep a logbook of your works duration. When one factory is closed, you can present a book when you find jobs in another [...] Cambodian migrant workers will also present their previous works durations and claimed a continuation to their works inside the country

It will be up to them. My problem here is to make sure Cambodia is at peace and continuing on the path of development. Cambodia is continuing its path of democracy, liberal pluralism, and will be organizing elections regularly, in a free, just, transparent, and acceptable standard. These are my jobs. For those traitors, it is job of the court. I have no need to talk about it [...] they have misread my good intention. They should not take my advice then [...] we have some new songs to listen today and new singers too [...]./☐

too [...]

### Resolve Problems Encountered by Migrant Workers

Eighth, *to continue to resolve problems encountered by Cambodian migrant workers abroad.* I thank HE Men Sam An and Minister Ith Sam Heng for their times to visit our workers in Thailand, and other leaders to visit our workers in South Korea, Malaysia, etc. [...] we are now in era that work opportunity is available not only in cities, but also in rural areas and even outside the country. This is an era of regionalization and globalization, by which we are expanding our job markets to foreign countries, by which our workers send in about two billion USD per annum into the Cambodian economy [...]

### Hoping for People's Support in Forthcoming Elections

... I have declared already that I will continue to seek the Premiership post for the next two terms, which is not less than ten more years. I hope that you, your parents, and grandparents, should they are still alive, will continue to vote for the Cambodian People's Party on 29 July 2018. I thank you, your parents, and grandparents for the supports to ensure Cambodia's peace and development, and more so your interests. I am in fact very tired but I have no choice but to go along with you to expand our progress and guarantee peace. Luckily, I am no longer a man with big belly [...] I hope you all continue to strive with the eight tasks I just mentioned [...]

I hope to go along with you to see a time when Cambodia is becoming a higher-middle income country, where the poverty rate would go to only 1% or 2%, or even nil. Cambodia has set for itself a rate of 1.5 USD or 2 USD to be above a poverty line [...] in this gathering today that we are meeting here, I am sure you are not here for the 20,000 Riel present but to meet, to express your feelings and to listen to what I have to say [...]./☐