

# សាស្ត្រនោទស្សន៍: កណ្តាល Cambodia New Vision

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28 June 2020—Samdech Techo Hun Sen presides over the Inauguration Ceremony of the Cambodian People's Party Headquarters Building

## Covid-19 Cash Transfer Program

(24 June 2020 — Excerpts of Elaborations and Unofficial Translation)

### [Elaborations 1]

#### Social Assistance during Covid-19 Crisis

[...] on this point, please let me affirm in addition to the report of Deputy Prime Minister Aun Pormmoniroth. I must stress that (what we are launching today) is social assistance during the time of Covid-19 crisis. It is not a permanent state feeding program.

As some people have caused incitements and misunderstanding (about this program), I think they should go back to school to learn the difference between permanent feeding program and social assistance (in time of such health crisis) [...]

#### Decade of Saving Allows RGC to Launch Cash Assistance

Before talking about issues relating to this cash transfer program, let me remind you that the Royal Government of Cambodia, since the time when HE Keat Chhon was Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance, and now in the time of Deputy Prime Minister

Aun Pormmoniroth, has always been strict on saving liquidity.

Proving people with social assistance is not about showing them figures on papers. It is about giving them real money. Thanks to its saving efforts, the Royal Government is in this time of crisis able to use the saving as cash assistance for our people. We will release it to the people in the days to come in this month and again next month.

Deputy Prime Minister Aun Pormmoniroth confirmed to me this morning that 125 million USD has already been available for the next five months. Although I said the cash transfer (to targeted households and individuals) would happen every two months, we already sent the amount of 125 million USD for that purpose already.

It came to my mind those days when the Royal Government had had no liquidity/cash for payrolls. Some had joked there were 60 days per month in Cambodia. We had to borrow money from the National Bank

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Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei  
Techo  
Hun Sen  
MP of Kandal  
Prime Minister

## PPIA Construction Inspected

(22 June 2020 — Extensive Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

Today, I am glad to come inspecting the construction site [...] I have listened attentively to the report of Deputy Prime Minister HE Chea Sophara, who leads this committee to promote construction of new (Phnom Penh) International Airport. I also listened to the report of Pung Khieu Sae, Chairman of the company and watched the VDO [...]

### Covid-19 Could Not Hinder Infrastructural Development

Covid-19 could not hinder process of infrastructural develop-

## Preah Sihanouk's Infrastructures Development

(01 June 2020 — Extensive Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

### In 7 Months, 94% of 34 Roads Constructed

My presence here today is mainly to inspect results of physical infrastructural development in the city of Preah Sihanouk. This morning we also had a form of meeting in the time of Covid-19 [...] with someone talking from behind and those of us listening sitting in front without seeing each other. The construction projects started in November [...] and as of beginning of June, or about seven months, we have realized 94% of the works [...]

When I came to the city of Preah Sihanouk in a rescue operation of a collapsed building, I observed that the city has changed its landscape to skyscrapers with beautifully decorated lights, while roads were in ruins and muds [...] I could remember that we have in sav-

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for that purpose.

Thanks to our efforts in saving and gathering incomes, while exercising austerity measures on expenses, we have gradually been able to ensure regular paydays for civil servants and the armed forces [...]

### Cash Assistance for Initial 560,000 Households

It has now come the time when there is a need for cash assistance. Should we have no liquidity, what could we hand out to our people? I used to say that we have at least some three billion USD in cash available in hand. Some countries, though they wished to do this kind of program, they could not because they did not have cash. Cambodia, as you know it, is a poor country. Cambodia cannot run after those rich countries who provided bigger cash assistance to their people. We have this much capacity, though, to start with 560,000 households.

### More Households May Fall Below Poverty Line

Let me affirm on this point. Now we are working to transfer cash assistance to 560,000 households. However, in every provinces, through the Ministry of Planning's poverty update project, more may fall below the line of poverty. We must be serious on this issue. We have pulled poverty rate to a little below 10% but as we are in impacts of Covid-19, more households who have gone slightly above the line, may fall back below again.

At this stage, we have identified 560,000 households. In two months from now, perhaps, 100,000 or 200,000 more households could add to the list. We would need to spend more [...] people are entitled to apply for assistance [...] and we must make sure they are really in the poor categories defined by the Ministry of Planning [...]

Phnom Penh has not yet finished the process (of poverty assessment) but we can start providing those already listed in the poor categories. We must

keep working to list more through. As for provinces where poverty assessment and listing finished, they should continue to monitor as some staying slightly above the line in the meantime may drop to below. They are households added to the list to receive cash assistance from the state. At the present rate, I think we would spend as much as 25 million USD/month but as the number of households falling below the line of poverty increased, we would be looking to somewhere at 30 million USD or more.

We must make sure no Cambodians died of hunger without us knowing and helping them. Let me clarify further points raised in the speech of Deputy Prime Minister Aun Pommriroth. We have two categories of target groups – Poor 1 and Poor 2. They are of two different definitions. Let me elaborate the formula by which the two categories will receive.

### Cash Assistance Formula for Poor 1 and Poor 2

On 21 June, there was this interview by a foreign radio broadcasting in Khmer language [...] the interviewee (Ph. D) seemed to be naïve when he said in the interview "what would people use the amount of 18,000 Riel for?" Even if it is a small amount, I think it is even better than nil. The Royal Government would in that case be relieved because people, if they were to reject the assistance, could assist themselves and did not depend on the Royal Government. However, the Royal Government provided people not with that little.

As far as cash assistance is concerned, let me emphasize, there will be an equitable amount that each household will receive. No matter how many member/s in their households, treated as a single unit, each household (in Phnom Penh) will receive an amount of 120,000 Riel (or 30 USD). Those households in rural areas will each receive 80,000 Riel, no matter how small or big their households are.

Then, we will count number of

each household members. Take for instance, cities/towns other than Phnom Penh, as a single unit each household will receive 120,000 Riel. Each member of the household will receive an addition of 40,000 Riel per member [...] kids under five years old will each receive 40,000 Riel, and the aged of 60 years old and over, and those with disease such as HIV/AIDS will each receive 28,000 Riel.

In Phnom Penh, beside the same amount of 120,000 Riel per household, every members in the household will each receive 52,000 Riel. Phnom Penh residents received larger amount than those living outside Phnom Penh. What I have elaborated so far are under the category of Poor-1. Those listed under Poor-2 will receive less. Those members of households who are five years old and below, the aged of 60 years old and above – classified under Poor-1 category will each receive 40,000 Riel and Poor-2 will each receive 28,000 Riel [...]

Those in rural areas, each household will receive 80,000 Riel. One household member under Poor-1 category will each receive 24,000 Riel and Poor-2 will each receive 16,000 Riel. Households' members who are five years and below, the aged of 60 years old and above and those with disease such as HIV/AIDS will each receive (another 24,000 Riel).

Let me stress here a single-headed household owner, a widow, will also receive 120,000 Riel [...] that is the formula by which we are working to get cash assistance through WING, a specialized bank, to people soon [...]

### Cash Assistance to People's Hands in June and Again in July

Some analysts said the amounts (we are providing to those poor and vulnerable households) are small. I would thank them, by saying so, if they told their households not to take the offer. The Royal Government has had burden in building the countries and there are many people to

help. We have so many social assistance programs undergoing. However, this is the responsibility of the Royal Government to help relieve people's difficult livelihood in time of Covid-19.

As I confirm earlier, this is not a feeding program but only a supplementary assistance. People are able to farm and/or doing other jobs [...] I am not responding to that Ph. D person, but I have the need to explain it to the people [...] I think people wanted to see the program's cash come to them as soon as possible. It is urgent there after that concerned institutions and authorities get the cash assistance to their hands in June, a few days left, and again in July [...]

### Be Prepared for Protracted Situation, Assistance Ends When Things Improves

Our country is poor but we have good habit of saving. We are not like "leaking buckets." We have cash/liquidity [...] we already got out 125 million USD for the job. We are prepared to spend more should the crisis prolongs. Our program ends once the situation improves. According to the report I received on a weekly basis from the Ministry of Agriculture, by this time, we have cultivated rice on 1.5 million hectares already. We are in the process of harvesting dry season and upper-land rice. Cambodia's economy is still functioning, especially in agriculture. A large part of industry is functioning and so is service sector [...]

I never declare closing or locking down economy. We have imposed restriction in education sector because of many small children and other concerns, Karaoke, discotheque, gyms, etc. but we never close factories or markets. In a more comprehensive approach, we have thrown capital of 100 million USD to rural area to help those losing their jobs to find works and earn income from cash for works. I visited the construction project of the Phnom Penh In-

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ternational Airport. They currently employ over 1,000 workers but once they are in full swing, they will employ about 20,000 workers. In Preah Sihanouk province, we employed about a thousand workers for infrastructural development project. Other roads and bridges projects, especially those implemented with companies from China are all functioning [...]

**Poor State Helps Poor and Vulnerable People**

Though it is a huge social assistance program, I think we will need to drag on doing it as long as required [...] for this year, we have a period of six months to go. Should Covid-19 prolongs thereafter, we must continue. I am calling on our people to look for jobs themselves that they can do, except old aged and underage people, for additional incomes [...]. I think this is an explanation for people to see efforts of the Royal Government to look after our people on this matter. Our compatriots may see how responsible this poor country is. This poor country works hard to help its poor and vulnerable people, especially thanks to its decade long saving, mainly the last five years [...]

In the 21-June interview, (I mentioned above), interviewee said the program came too slow as the Covid-19 outbreak was since January or February. By then nobody knew not much about Covid-19. Even the World Health Organization had not yet declared emergency for the world. That they said so, those people chose to disregard the Royal Government's efforts [...]

**Equity and Transparency in Poverty Data Collections**

On this point, I am calling on all of us to make efforts together. My message to provincial authorities and the Ministry of Planning to work and monitor closely (process of poverty data collection) and send it to the Ministry of Economy and Finance [...]. Some of our people may not be poor at this time but months later, they may because

they could not find jobs [...] we must ensure equity and transparency in collecting data regarding poverty [...] this country has started from scratch. It would not be fair to compare Cambodia with other countries of different historical background. Some countries has been in peace 200, 100, 60, or 50 years already. As for Cambodia, what had Pol Pot left us?

We have had full peace only from 1998 thanks to our implementation of win-win policy, through which we have been able to score socio-economic development, to reduce poverty, pulling it down to below 10%. We are now concerned how many percentage has Covid-19 brought poverty rate up? It is not a simple matter. This is not an issue only for Cambodia. Countries in the world, including those with advanced economy, also face with this problem.

There are great number of people losing jobs applying for benefits. Countries with cash in hands can respond to them. Those without could not because social assistance has to have cash [...] it is good that we have cash in hand to respond to this social issue [...]

**[Elaborations 2]**

**Benefit Requests Applicants**

On this point, let me reaffirm. There are two type of applicants requesting for benefits. Firstly, some people who have not been included in the first round of poverty assessment. They are entitled to apply for benefits later because they are poor. We may have left them out. Take for instance, there are two or three households left in a village, who are poor but have not been listed under Poor-1 or Poor-2 categories. They are entitled to apply. Another kind of applicants are those who may not have been poor at the time of assessment but would in one or two months later. They are entitled to apply too. We must be serious on this matter to guarantee that our people truly receive benefits from this huge social assistance program.

**[End of Elaborations 2]**

This official launch of the "Cash Transfer Program for Poor and Vulnerable Households during COVID-19" demonstrates the Cambodian People's Party-led government under my leadership would never allow any citizen to die of hunger. For this reason, I ask all relevant institutions to strive to implement this social assistance program in a responsible and effective manner.

At the same time, I urge all relevant institutions, especially the technical working groups and local authorities to continue to effectively implement the established methods and principles to identify poor households with the aim of ensuring their access to this social assistance program and all other future assistance following the applicable criteria.

**[Elaborations 3]**

Besides mechanisms permanently functioning at the communal level, we also have working group from the national level that can help monitor effectiveness of the implementation. I am calling on those who lead the working groups in every provinces bring to attention of Deputy Prime Minister HE Aun Pormoniroth in a timely manner since he is the chief of staff of Cambodia's economy and finance, where there is only one commander and one Chief of Staff. Some matters, the Chief of Staff or the Minister of Economy and Finance can settle in his capacity. Some needed to have decisions from commander or the Prime Minister. Let us all monitor identification and assessment process of households in poverty to make sure that no one is left out [...]

**[Elaborations 4]**

**Continue to Implement Other Social Equity Programs**

We are talking about social equity programs that we have been implementing. We will continue to observe free of charge medical checkup and treatment, for instance. I received a report from Minister of

Labor and Vocational Training about increasing number of female workers delivering babies. The spike could have happened perhaps since before Covid-19 [...] because of Covid-19, in 2021, we may expect higher birthrate [...]

We have set out numerous programs already and this today is a new one. Social equity programs we set out so far – such as cash for women of poor households in pregnancy and delivery, etc., will keep going on a permanent basis. We do not backtrack. Except for this program that we launched today that is extraordinary and applicable in the time of Covid-19 only [...]

**Building Fees Should Go Down for Education Foundations**

We have talked a lot already on this issue. I also saw that the National Bank has been working on this matter. Let me take this chance to appeal to owners of buildings (leased out to education foundations) to scale their fee down. Previously I appeal as a whole. As we can see now that hotels have also brought their price down. In restaurants, some has offered 30% or even 50% discounts. Some educational foundations with their own buildings have had no problem. However, those on rents, do. In time of crisis, I am calling on owner of those buildings to be flexible and apply understanding with those foundations [...]

**Loans Reorganizations for Private Educational Foundations**

On another front, the National Bank of Cambodia should discuss with private banks and other banks. I already instructed in writing to Deputy Prime Minister Aun Pormoniroth, Senior Minister Hang Chuon Naron, NBC Governor Chea Chanto about loans reorganizing. We have reorganized loans for over 100,000 households already. I am calling on concerned parties to include loans reorganizations for private edu-

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cational foundations. They have put in collateral what they have already. They do not have anything left to deposit for a new loan. Can we reorganize loans for them? For instance, of the collateral that is worth five million USD, they took loan 500,000 USD, maybe the bank can allow another 300,000 USD perhaps further. For what they would use it? Some have not had online teaching program because they do not have fund [...]

**More Money in Banks, Less Borrowers**

There have been some going around telling people to withdraw money from banks. People do not seem to follow their advice. Some banks seem to have money that there are no borrowers. Some abroad have wished for banks in Cambodia to fall by calling people to make no (interests) payments to and to withdraw money from banks. They must have been very disappointed. From my part, I am calling on banks to exercise understanding in time of difficulty but people must repay banks. As for those who fooled people around to make no repayment to banks, I favor banks to bring the case to court and/or confiscation to happen should there be people who follow advice of those politicians [...]

I do not wish confiscation to happen, though. I used to say already that there should not be any confiscation during Covid-19 period. However, if they continue to spread propaganda for people who owed banks never to repay them, [...] suing them to the courts for confiscation would be the option [...] we are asking banks to reorganize loans because we have brought down reserve requirement from 12.5% to only 7% [...] as of this moment, some banks complained there are no borrowers. People are not heeding advice of some fools to draw their money out of banks. This has indicated confidence in the management of the Royal Government [...]

**Post Covid-19 Economic****Restoration, Food Security, Traffic Congestion**

We are prepared with own fund and working with partners for restoration in the post Covid-19 period. We have already started what we called stimulus package through continuing infrastructural development projects using both own investment funds and fund from abroad. We also place cash flow in the rural area to resolve both economic and social interrelated issues.

We are promoting agriculture. This year, in Covid-19 crisis, we could export more rice. While before we exported between 40,000 to 50,000 metric tons of rice per year, this year we do 80,000 metric tons. No matter what, Cambodia is equipped with its strong point of having an annual surplus of nearly six million metric tons of rice. We have millions of hectares of cultivable land. We just recorded rainy season rice cultivation of 1.5 million hectares already. In weeks to come, in July especially, people harvest their dry season rice. Cambodia is going to be food secured. Negotiation is undergoing with Timor-Leste on a rice trade deal [...]

Traffics again congested with cars. When we appeal for people to stay home if there were no necessary things to do in time of Covid-19 outbreak, there were not many people in the streets. They heeded the appeal. Now, they came back full and congestion returns [...]

We are working with partners such as Asian Development Bank, World Bank, Asian Infrastructural Investment Banks (AIIB) with whom we are negotiating for 250 million USD for rural asphalt roads works. More asphalted roads in rural areas, we will be able to score more development. We are working with China, Japan, and EU, who just announced about 60 million USD for restoration works. It is under discussion. We also are working with South Korea. I have spoken more than reading to make sure we understand better [...] ◻

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Covid-19 impacts [...]

**2030 – New PPIA to Inaugurate**

The new PPIA is indicating a vision for 2050, the final stage of development of the airport. I do not know how many of us present here will be alive by then but we will at least by 2023 inaugurate the new PPIA, with its initial capacity to handle some 13 million passengers. Later on, in 2030, I hope I will still be around and even if I am not going to be in official position, I will still come as a guest for the inauguration of the second stage development, where the PPIA's capacity would be able to handle up to 30 million passengers. As for the third stage development, we are not sure yet if we would still be around [...]

**Three Airports On-Going Constructions**

As far as airports construction is concerned, let me reaffirm to you that three airports are under on-going construction. Firstly, the new PPIA; secondly, the airport of Siem Reap, and thirdly, the Kong Keng airport of the province of Preah Sihanouk, which, thanks to latest runway extension efforts to 3,200 meters, has allowed landing larger commercial aircrafts. We are aiming to complete passenger terminal by 2022 according to confirmation from VINCI – the French company that implements the airport development project. As for this project (of new PPIA), I have noticed that many foreign companies bid for architectural development and construction. I am sure that the new PPIA is going to be a good airport where there will be not one but two runways [...]

**Covid-19 Changed Human Habitual Behaviors**

Some may ask while the country is facing with Covid-19, why is it necessary to build a new airport. Days ago, when the army and the National Police General Commissariat distributed among them the 290 trucks (purchased from China)

some have questioned why in Covid-19 time, it is necessary to purchase them. That would have been though of a beast. I could not have fathomed their foolish reactions and wonder if it is this much only they could be? In rage of Covid-19, there was not a single international flight, except domestic ones in Siem Reap. International flights landed in Phnom Penh and the province of Preah Sihanouk [...]

It is clear now that Covid-19 has placed us in a new uncertainty. The point is when will it end? What would entail in the post-Covid-19 period? Covid-19 has now changed human habitual behaviour, which has been around for thousands of years, to a new normal [...] returning from a foreign country, one must stay in quarantine for 14 days before reuniting with families [...] while before everyday planes are everywhere in the sky, they are now landed and many airports in the world are without activities [...]. Out of this uncertainty, one thing is certain and it is the fact that Covid-19 would not be able to destroy the planet. As soon as scientists found vaccines, development would surely return to usual. It may be a new normal way of habituating, which the World Health Organization appealed for human to learn to live with Covid-19 [...]

**Many Economies to Have Negative Growths**

Covid-19 placed us all in a new uncertainty with impacts on numerous fields, especially those on world and every national economy. This year, there may not be many countries reporting positive economic growths. Most of them have predicted falls. Some countries have even declared its negative growth predictions [...] to -7% or even down to -10%. According to assessments given by economists of Asian Development Bank, IMF and World Bank, the Cambodian economy is going to be poised to land somewhere between -1.5% and -2.9%. Cambodia's own assessment has been certain that its

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**(Continued from page 4)** economic growth would land somewhere at -1.9%, a situation that Cambodia has never had in the past 20 years. Again, the question is in light of economic crisis, why building a new airport? Let me affirm to those posed such questions that as of this moment no companies in Cambodia has declared bankruptcy or lack of investment fund. For instance, this (new PPIA) development project that required an investment fund of 1,500 million USD, the company has not said a word about lacking of funding and cancelled it [...]

### Some Lost Jobs, Some Created and Increased Jobs

On this point, it has indicated that there are job losses from Covid-19 in tourism and industry, while, however, we also have sectors that created and/or even increased jobs. While some factories are scaling down their scope of works and/or suspending completely, some factories are increasing scale of production. For instance, factories in the Special Economic Zone of Kompong Cham and Svay Rieng, where they make medical tools and personal protective equipment, of brand name like Du Pont, are busy taking purchasing orders from many countries. They have increased their production capacity. The airport development is proceeding according to plan, and so are other infrastructural development projects [...]

### 24 June – Cash Assistance for over 60,000 Poor/Vulnerable Households

I hope that people looking for jobs can come and have jobs here. I am sure this project is keeping its momentum and there will be continued incomes. No one can live without a job. State intervention would only be possible for a specified period. No country in this world would be able to feed for life while people are at their working age and with working ability. On the coming June 24, I will declare financial assistance program for over 60,000 poor and vulnerable households, in

addition to our on-going financial supports for workers who lost their jobs (for Covid-19), for female workers with pregnancy and delivery, and for women with pregnancy and delivery of poor households [...]

### Current Income Enough for Current Expenses

This company has suffered no financial setback for this construction project. It is financially strong. In general, no company or construction project in Cambodia shut down for lack of fund. It has been peculiar that some said Cambodia's economy is in crisis. They are right but such crisis incurred not only for Cambodia but also for the whole world. Rich countries have exercised stimulus packages for economy and social intervention. Some countries have resorted to selling treasury bonds to rescue economy. Some claimed on their Facebook postings that Cambodia would have no money for salary next year.

Let me affirm to them that Covid-19 could not kill the Royal Government led by Hun Sen [...] from custom department we could, in normal time, collect approximately two billion USD or more. If we fail to get to that record, we could still come to 1.2 billion USD. It would not take us to a short of cash for salary [...] Cambodia's cash in hand is more than three billion USD and I do not talk about the 20 billion foreign reserve. Cambodia has been saving in cash, not figures [...] there is no need for us to take our saving to serve our need. Current incomes are enough to cover current expenses [...]

### Military Trucks Ordered Since February

Why we bought the 290 military trucks, [...] we placed order since February but because of Covid-19, we had had to wait for the production line to resume in China. From where did this idea purchasing the military trucks come? One day there was this dam accident in Laos. Laos sent us the news. We have this district of Thala Borivat

sitting along the border with Laos. The Stoeung Treng province sent about 1,000 forces – military, police and military police to help evacuate people from possible flooding area. We had come to a difficulty that we did not have enough military trucks to do the job [...]

As I am of the opinion that we could not use national fund for this need, I mobilized generous people to help provide means for military region and divisions stationed in the upper parts (of Cambodia). We have military trucks at the division 99 of Ministry of National Defence and division 90 of the Cambodian army [...] it is the military regions and divisions, however, who would be able to respond in a timely manner.

We did not use even a single cent from the state coffer. People's defence foundation has been Hun Sen's policy and there is nothing new about it. It is a successful policy. Where situation demanded, the private sector contributed to the army [...] if they are not beasts, they should have been happy to see that we have equipped the army with means to carry out their tasks like when they helped with incidents of collapsed buildings in the provinces of Preah Sihanouk and Kep. The army was at the centre of the operation. They needed means for transportation [...]

### 28 June 2020 – Inaugurated New CPP Headquarters Building

Some could not rest but dispute the Cambodian People's Party for its new headquarters building. Let me tell you, no matter what you talked about it, we are going to invite the Buddhist monks to bless our inauguration day on 28 June [...] where did we get the money from – many asked. My answer to them is the Cambodian People's Party have its members in every circles from workers, farmers, traders to millionaires. It would not be difficult to raise 30 million USD for the construction of a party headquarters [...] Pung Khieu Sae is also a member of the Cambodian

People's Party; why would he be unwilling to contribute [...]

### 25 Million USD/Month for 60,000 Poor/Vulnerable Households

In this time of Covid-19 pandemic, none of our people died of hunger without us knowing and helping them. Let me just remind them not to underestimate the Hun Sen's government and its capacity to resolve (hardships). If Hun Sen were not capable, he would not be able to stand firm among Cambodian politicians for the past 41 years [...] I am not using this forum to trade words with anyone but I have the need to explain about where the money come from. On 24 June, I am announcing it once more that we will spend every month a sum of about 25 million USD from current account fund to save and assist over 60,000 households.

In the time of Covid-19 pandemic (relief efforts), we may spend as much as 400 million USD, if not 500 million USD, since we only needed over 200 million USD for salary [...] having said that does not mean to encourage provinces and institutions to waste spending [...] they should not underestimate Cambodia's ability. We have medical tools and personal protective equipment in stock of the Ministry of Health and in strategic stock of the Royal Government. We have always 11 million facemasks in warehouses. We have thousands of personal protective clothes and equipment for health workers.

We have in stores rice and instant noodles, and we are working on producing and keeping in store fish and soy sources too. We have gone to very detail completely differing to those of the opposition people thought [...] since for them, national achievements would not be in their benefit [...] as a Cambodian, I am happy to be patriotic seeing more means of transports coming for Cambodia's army and forces [...] I needed more means of transports whether fire extinguishers and ambulances

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[...]

### **Phnom Penh Pochentong Airport for Visiting Dignitaries**

As far as this new PPIA is concerned, I am encouraging and hoping that Deputy Prime Minister Chea Sophara, mayor of Phnom Penh and governors of Kandal and Takeo, work together to resolve whatever remained for this airport to finish construction as planned. Let me take this opportune moment to share with you that according to my primary consideration, the Pochentong airport (current PPIA) would continue to serve as (1) a military airport, (2) an airport for domestic flight since we are going to have numerous domestic airports, and people will be able to afford to travel by air within the country. We are looking to have airports development in Battambang and Ratanakiri too for domestic flights. Thirdly, we can use it for air cargo, and for private jets. More importantly, planes of dignitaries as King, heads of states and/or governments would continue to land in Pochentong airport.

### **Seeking Office for Ten More Years**

Some said Pochentong would turn to be a satellite city. That would not be so. Maybe not in my time as Prime Minister. Every day, having come to this, some talked about transferring to Hun Manet. If I am still holding this post as Prime Minister and I already declared to go on for another ten years, how could my son take power from his father? Let me tell them, in Cambodia, Hun Manet is not the only candidate for this position. There are many in the Cambodian People's Party. However, as a father, I support and educate my son [...] and the point is voters will decide. Firstly, whether his candidacy would have the support within the party and secondly, it has to go through people's decision – whether the party wins the elections. Three years ago I declared (to seek office) no less than ten years. Now, I am declaring

once again that no less than ten years. As of this moment, Hun Manet is 43 years old. In ten more years, he would turn 53 years old. I became Prime Minister when I was 53 years old. Why would he, by then, not?

### **CPP for 50 to 100 Years to Come**

Well, that would be a matter for younger generation and there are many with qualifications as Hun Manet has in the Cambodian People's Party [...] people may see the Cambodian People's Party headquarters from central to provincial levels. We are not in for two or three years. We are preparing for 50 or 100 years ahead. We are investing in infrastructure and human resources for a long-term, not hasty, leadership. If they hope for the government of Hun Sen to go short in cash for salary, those beasts failed in working on numbers [...] ADB, IMF, World Bank, and other partners working with Cambodia would know Cambodia's economic capability since they predicted growths to be anywhere between -1.5% and -12.9% [...]. In 2005, Cambodia's growth was 13.3%. It was 12% in 2006, 11% in 2007, and in 2008, it fell to 6.8%. In 2009, growth was somewhere at .5% or .6% but Cambodia's economy did not lose macroeconomic stability.

### **Observing MoH's Instructions to Keep Safe**

I heard from people around that there are full of people in restaurants, except the space can place less number of people. They exercise social distancing rule. People working in restaurants are now going back to work. Foreign tourism has not yet returned but local ones are recovering. I am calling our people to continue to practice measures instructed by the Ministry of Health to prevent themselves from Covid-19 pandemic infection. Social distancing, wearing facemasks, washing hands with disinfectants and/or soap, and other necessary measures, starting from each individual, to keep families, society and nation safe [...] □

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ing then over three billion USD [...]. I decided an allocation of 100 million USD right away for the infrastructural development project. Deputy Prime Minister HE Chea Sophara then came to me with this principle of wrapping palm sugar with its leaves [...]

### **Economic Growth Corridor Linking First and Second Poles**

We have allocated, in all, 340 million USD to 350 million USD to the province of Preah Sihanouk. In comparison, if we were to invest this amount of money to build bridges over the Mekong, the Bassac or even the Tonle Sap rivers [...] we could have built five bridges [...] why do we spend it to build all 34 roads [...] The most importantly is we need to transform the city of Preah Sihanouk, the only sea hub of the province of Sihanouk, as a corridor of economic growth corridor, linking pole 1 and pole 2 [...]

Let me remind you that we have set up three economic poles in Cambodia – Phnom Penh, Preah Sihanouk and Siem Reap. I hope that we will be able to have the fourth one in northeastern part of Cambodia. It will be a strong economic pole of agro-industry along with mineral resources development in the future [...] I have said it many times that I am thinking of connecting these dots to establish links of economic poles 2 and 3 altogether, using national road 4 to the western corridor [...]

### **Infrastructures Attract Tourists**

I think that the province of Preah Sihanouk would be able to attract more visitors/tourists with its newly developed infrastructures. I instructed the governor Kuoch Chamroeun to decorate newly built streets/roads with lights to attract visitors to this Southwestern province/city of Cambodia. That we have been building 34 streets, this morning I have travelled on three avenues – Chumteav Mao, Sen Chey, and Chhne Ream [...] each one has drain-

age system built and people's homes can connect theirs to the main system [...]

### **Smart LED Streetlights in Preah Sihanouk City**

I am so happy to see such remarkable progresses of Preah Sihanouk City infrastructural development. I thank the people in the province of Preah Sihanouk, especially those in the Preah Sihanouk city, for cooperation and support given to these enormous projects, which also included this beach development project. We have more works to do. As for lighting up the streets, I would say that the city of Preah Sihanouk would be the first using smart LED streetlights. Deputy Prime Minister Chea Sophara signed an agreement with Minebea (Cambodia) Ltd. [...] to provide over 5,000 smart LED streetlights. I think elsewhere in the country should consider using smart LED streetlights too. It is smart because the light would dimmer should no cars were passing through [...]

### **Connecting Road between O Traes and O Chheuteal**

This morning I traveled past and area where we were not able to build a road connecting between O traes and O Cheuteal because of legal land holding along the beach. I met with the landowner this morning. I thanked him for his cooperation. Even if he does not, by law we would take the needed land for public interest [...] people in O Cheuteal already moved their stands and they have one request. We must apply one rule and standard for everyone and not only on them but not on those with power [...]

The connection will link up O Traes and O Cheuteal and all the way to Ream [...] we must continue to build more drainages and culverts. We do not have enough yet. We needed to find more financial resources – local and/or external, to build more [...] in order to avoid releasing dirty water/wastes into sea [...]

### **Three Places Named – “Cambodians Can Do,”**

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**“Love Waiting Rock,” and  
“Love Waiting Tree”**

This morning I named three locations respectively. For a place where the engineering teams sliced through the hill/mountain, I named it “Cambodians Can Do.” Later on, where there was a huge rock standing in the middle and we had to build roads on either sides, I named it “Love Waiting Rock.” There is a huge tree standing in the middle of the road too in another place. We run our road construction in detour of it. I named it “Love Waiting Tree” [...] let me stress that this location of “Cambodians Can Do,” it means not only the technology to slice the hills and build the road through, but also the process of thought, building technology, financing – all are Cambodian. There were no foreign involvements [...]

### **A Multipurpose City of Preah Sihanouk**

Our main objective here is to set up a multipurpose city. We must see that this city plays a central role in connecting land, water and air transportation together from the region into Cambodia [...] we also aim to transform the city into one of the international financial center in the future. It is an imagination. Maybe we need the next generation to fulfil this dream. The city is also a concentration of industry. As you can see, we have two special economic zones – one invested by China and another by Japan [...]

Japan has been financing and helping to expand our deep seaport at the province of Preah Sihanouk. I have discussed it with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to find a way to deepen our port to 14 meters so that ships do not have to transfer goods at Singapore and/or Vietnam in order to enter Cambodia [...]

As for airport, while managing it, VINCI Company would complete its construction of runway extension to 3,800 meters and will be in operation in this year 2020. VINCI also

determined to finish arrival lounge by 2022. We have two companies – Malaysian and Chinese that supply coal-generated electricity to Phnom Penh and the whole country from here [...]

### **Ream Base Welcomes Foreign Ships**

[...] I have the necessity to reiterate Cambodia’s stand to avoid repetition of suspicion regarding the military base in Ream. Weeks by, an Ambassador of a country sounded to me through Deputy Prime Minister and Senior Minister about us allowing the military seaport used by China exclusively [...]. Reiterating its independence and sovereignty, Cambodia does not align itself with one against the other; or allow a foreign military presence in its territory; and does not station its military in foreign soils, unless under the flag of the United Nations [...]

We have the right to do what we wanted such as maritime centre. We moved it from former location to a new location. I am inviting foreign friends to help finance the centre. A study conducted and suggested we move the Maritime Centre location to another place. Should any countries wish to help – America, France, Japan, China, etc., they are welcome. As also needed to proceed with our plan to have a dockyard [...] the question is does Cambodia have right to have a dockyard for its military, passengers, and/or fishing vessels?

It is true that we are asking for financial funding from China to build it. However, if anyone wishes to help us with that, we welcome. The Ream naval base welcomes every country – America, France, Canada, India, UK, Japan, Australia, etc., wishing to have their ships to call on and/or to join military exercises with Cambodia. We do not restrict it to doing only with China. Some already blamed us about providing exclusive rights to China for 50 or 90 years. The Cambodian Constitution does not allow it [...]

### **Three Messages about Ream Naval Base**

I think that foreigners working in Cambodia keep their ears and eyes on this issue. Let me send them the following messages:

Every country is welcome to contribute to developing the port. We would also welcome help to the Maritime Centre, which has had to relocate. It is our master plan.

We are building a dockyard to render services to every foreign vessels not only those from China.

From this moment onward, whoever wish to help, we welcome. We would collaborate in combating terrorism, human and drug trafficking, smuggling and naval exercises.

I wish to have naval exercise only on two topics – combating against terrorism and rescuing operation in time of disaster. I do not wish for any exercise to fight against enemy.

I think I have made it clear now on this declaration on the matter from the province of Preah Sihanouk. We should understand each other now. What benefit would China yield from placing its naval forces in Kompong Som (Preah Sihanouk) since it has naval base in South China Sea. Previously they claimed Tara Sakor a hidden Chinese port and airport. Now they talked about Kompong Som and a few days ago about Koh Rong. I do not know why they like painting colour [...]

### **Independence, Neutrality, Non-alignment**

I wish to reaffirm that Cambodia is implementing a policy of independence, neutrality, and non-alignment. Should a vessel of anyone country can enter and dock in Cambodian port facilities, other countries also can do it. We welcome. [...] agriculture is playing smaller role here but by promoting agroindustry, material resources needed to bring in from Koh Kong, Kompong Speu, Takeo for processing. I am calling on foreign helps but Cambodians are keeping ownerships. Foreign investments is a normal occurring [...]

### **Managing Covid-19**

I still have this Covid-19 issue to talk about [...]. As of this moment, we could say that Cambodia did quite well to restrict Covid-19 pandemic. Our country has come to a more relaxing mode along with those in the region and the world. However, it is not yet over and Cambodia must keep it vigilance [...] our medical professionals have been working hard on this pandemic. Those in Phnom Penh and Preah Sihanouk have been doing lot of works. We do not have foreign flights in Siem Reap, we have flights in Preah Sihanouk province and night flights in Phnom Penh. Passengers are in quarantine and taking samples for tests at the military airport [...]

Years ago, people have not been happy with our medical staff and physicians. Now many songs written and sung about “soldiers wearing white uniform” [...] people have seen sacrifices of our medical professionals and staff at the frontline. People’s feeling towards our medical staff changed [...] in just one day, when I issued order to get ready for combating the pandemic, we were able to register in all over 3,000 rooms for isolation need [...] voluntary medical staff have been taking samples and helping with quarantine of workers who went to home villages for the Khmer New Year [...]

### **New Ways of Life, Perhaps**

We are now living in a time that possible Covid-19 would take away our old way of life. We are on the path to a regular new way of life. Our old way of life that we had been living for hundreds of year now destroyed by Covid-19. Should we go on having no vaccines, the new way of living could be forever. We may have to keep observing social distancing and wearing facemasks. For hundreds or thousands of years, we embraced one another and wore no facemasks [...]

I thank over 90,000 workers returning from the Kingdom of Thailand for bringing not even a single Covid-19 case back to

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Cambodia [...] the other day, the Thai Ambassador brought to me two million Baht or about 60,000 USD from Prime Minister HE Prayuth Chan-ocha. I thanked him for working together to do this job [...]

I am seeking understanding from parents of students [...] that we have to enforce schools closures longer. The first wave of Covid-19 pandemic may have passed but concerns are now on possible second wave warned by the World Health Organization based on spikes of infected cases in China and another time in South Korea. I believe it is possible. For the first wave (of pandemic), we have taken countering measures, Cambodian and every other countries.

The measures in place – sites set for isolation and treatment, served as defence line against the second wave. However, if we risk allowing reopening of schools the new wave could be detrimental to the existing defence line. For Cambodia, you may note that the first wave was mainly imported cases. If we were to suffer in the new wave with community transmission, [...] we would not be sure to win the battle. We would be facing this dilemma of less number of medical staff to take care of outnumbered patients [...]

We have relaxed restriction on some sports activities. We allowed boxing in closed doors. In the time to come, we are considering allowing football competition. Sports competitions and practices are to resume but they have to follow instructions of the Ministry of Health. Again, that is what I said earlier about new ways of life [...] we have to change from shaking hands to raising the two palms together in respect of each other [...] I ordered a primary production of two million washable face-masks from cotton scarf for workers and people with limited resources [...]

### **Economic Sabotage - an Act of Terrorism**

Yesterday there was attempt to have a meeting at 8:30 pm in Cambodia led by someone abroad. They failed to carry through. They have plan to bring down banks in Cambodia. Their nature was for national destruction. Whomever s/he delegated works to carry out (sabotage) inside the country, we will have him/her arrested. Economic sabotage is tantamount to act of terrorism [...]. While they do nothing to help the country, they nurture their attempts to cause trouble by mobilizing people to refuse payments to banks, and finally to benefit from them falling down. I give you no chance [...] that they have planned to carry out economic sabotage leading to national destruction, there is no reason for us to leave them be [...]

I have not heard anything from Brad Adams. Where is human rights? When Cambodia took measures against demonstrations, they blamed us for violation of human rights. When other countries did the same, they said necessary measures for social order. In China, when they lockdown Wuhan, Hebei, they said a violation of citizen rights. When Western countries lockdown the countries, they said measures necessary to combat Covid-19 [...] Brad Adams must say something about what happened in the US or he would not have right to say anything about Cambodia. Human rights people have all gone silent [...]

### **Small USD Notes in Circulation**

Let me take this opportune moment to reaffirm [...] (because there has been a) bad person declaring – “the small notes of 1 USD, 2 USD and 5 USD will be out of circulation” (in Cambodia) [...] if s/he continues to spread such rumours, arrest her/him [...] once s/he devastated the nation, s/he would not be spared. Let us continue spending those small notes of USD. After they reached the Bank, perhaps they will not let them out again. The Bank already clarifies there would be no loss for our people [...] would be

great if we could encourage our people to spend in Khmer Riel [...]. Some accused me of rejecting the USD in order to accept Chinese Yuan. They are so troublemaking. If s/he goes on doing things like that, how could I work with them?

### **Carefully Resuming Socioeconomic Activities**

I am calling on people to act together to combat against Covid-19. Let me clarify that Cambodia never close down its economy. Some may confuse to use term as reopen tourism. We never close down tourism. We just do not have tourists coming. I never declare closing down factories. Some factories closed down because they lacked raw materials and buyers' countries irresponsibly cancelled their orders for soaring demand of pandemic treatments. However, they purchase rice. This year, our rice exports grows 42% compared to the same period last year. We allowed exports of rice, fish, etc. I never forbid trades and/or close markets/shops. We closed KTV, Beer garden, casinos, cinemas. We have allowed more activities for museums.

We are pondering some sports activities such as swimming, but exercising social distancing. No projects sites are on hold, including those in Kompong Som, from roads building to bridge construction across the Mekong River. Real estates, according to some surveys, pricing from 50,000 USD to 200,000 USD, or even half-a-million USD continue to sell. However, people purchased more houses pricing under 70,000 USD because there is not registration tax or stamping duty [...] (those in opposition) may not hope for me to die. People still have their money to gas up their vehicles [...]

Concerning tourism, we do not prohibit trades but I am asking our people to protect themselves. Restaurants may exercise social distancing and regular and strict hygienic and sanitation manner. People may want to come to Kompong Som to see newly built roads,

the “Cambodian Can Do,” “the Love Waiting Rock,” and the “Love Waiting Tree.” Tourists to Kompot went up 90% recording 17,000 of them in May. Some foreigners have travelled to islands of Rong and Sangsar [...]

### **Enforcing Land Traffic Law for People's Own Life**

Some said that that we are enforcing land traffic because we needed money to pay police and soldiers salaries [...] I am happy to lose some of my popularity and I know about it but I have the need to protect people's life through enforcement of land traffic law. I received encouraging report of less accidents and decreasing loss of lives every day from Net Saveurn, National Police Chief. If people respect the traffic rules, police would not fine them [...] I continue to appeal to our people to respect traffic rules and law to keep safe your own and others' lives. Let us have no traffic accident today and tomorrow [...]

Well, my apology to the US Ambassador for the fact that I talked about the White House instruction of President Donald Trump and violent demonstration in America. The US have right to speak about Cambodian problems. The Cambodians also have right to speak about the Americans. It is a reciprocation.

In some instances the US Embassy and/or the State Department issued statements concerning situation in Cambodia, while on its part, Cambodia never issues statement but only I speak in comparison [...] If Brad Adams does not say anything (about what happened to human rights in America at this time) he is not a human being [...]

In the time of my 100 days mourning of my late mother in law, much the same as I did for my father and mother, I am performing my full capacity as Prime Minister. Let me warn not to take advantage of Covid-19 to bring down the Royal Government and/or cause trouble [...].