

38 Roads Groundbreaking and River Banks Improvement at Siem Reap

(30 November 2020 — Extensive Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)



30 November 2020 - "In the past eleven months, Cambodia has avoided community outbreaks. We fought hard on three battles ..."

Today, we hold a groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of 38 roads and the improvement of the Siem Reap River, which we had previously planned to do on November 16, but coincidentally the "November 3 event" took place, we postponed it. For today, according to the original plan, we were to invite about 1,500 of our people to participate, but due to the situation that arisen, below I will talk about COVID-19, we reduce the number of participants to only 150, to avoid crowds that could lead to community outbreaks when we have not had clear knowledge of it.

Covid-19 may hinder our progress, but will not stop our efforts to build these roads. As Senior Minister Sun Chanthol mentioned in the report just now, on September 4, 2020, during the plenary session of the Council of Ministers, I announced deliverance of a budget between 100 and 150 million dollars to build 38 roads for the city of Siem Reap. In addition, with the specific study by Deputy Prime Minister HE Chea

Sophara, today we also launch the improvement project of the Siem Reap river, which is 8,440 meters (nearly 9 km) on each side. At its completion, it will become a place for people as well as tourists who come to Siem Reap to spend their times.

The Cambodian Economy Third Pole

After the completion of the construction site in Sihanoukville, which we invested nearly 300 million US dollars there, we also have to invest more for the infrastructural development here, a place that we used to call the third pole of the Cambodian economy. The first pole is Phnom Penh, the second pole is Sihanoukville and the third pole is Siem Reap. The province of Siem Reap is an attractive tourist area with guesthouses and other beautiful buildings, but the roads are not good enough to respond to this beautiful city's busy activities. Therefore, (as we have no tourists) because of COVID-19 and while we have been saving some money over the years, we have been able to now allocate

(Continued on page 2)

Meeting with RGC Lawyers and Volunteer Lawyers of Samdech Techo

(24 October 2020 — Extensive Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

Rapid Reaction Mechanism Prevented Widespread Infection

[...] the November-3 (Covid-19 infection) event has involved directly and indirectly 1,802 people in eleven cities and provinces – including Phnom Penh, Kompong Chhnang, Pursat, Kep, Preah Sihanouk, Prey veng, Kompong Cham, Kompong Thom, Preah Vihear, and Ratanakiri. I can proudly say that the complex November-3 event was not a minor thing. It is a big issue. If we do not have a quick reaction mechanism (taken parts) by our medical team and the authorities (as well as) the relevant actors, we cannot control the situation. If we

did not manage this situation immediately, it would be able to infect the community, and the problem will arise then [...]

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Health, all health officials and authorities at all levels for their participation in preventing and successfully ending the "November-3 event", which I considered a public health disaster. We have been able to achieve this because of the thoroughness and quick response of existing mechanisms (as well as) the participation of the people in the management of this issue. Some countries have installed tracking machines. We do not have that ability. What we have done from the beginning until now was to seek and stop the circuit [...]

Messages on Covid-19 Pandemic

(November 2020 — Extensive Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

Community Covid-19 Outbreak, 29 November 2020

On November 29, 2020, the Ministry of Health identified seven new Covid-19 cases. Among them, six are in one single family and one Covid-19 infected person coming from the United States. As this outbreak in the same family spread to others, we can define its pattern as "the first community infection in Cambodia," because of which, this morning we temporarily closed Aeon Mall 1, Phnom Penh Hotel and a private American Intercon School in Chak Angre. This new case may involve Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Banteay Meanchey and Monduliri.

At this time, the Ministry of Health and relevant authorities

(Continued on page 8)

Making Efforts for Fewer Infections and No Deaths

After I announced the end of the "November-3 event," people seemed to have left their face unmasked again. When Hun Sen disappeared (into quarantine), people knew the situation was serious. If I were to stay in quarantine a little longer, people might put on facemasks for a long time. Doing so however would put the country's socio-economic problems at risk [...] although the "November-3 event" has passed, we must be clear that we must continue our efforts to ensure that Cambodia has fewer infections, and no deaths [...]. I am proud (that we have been) able to control the

(Continued on page 4)

In This Issue

- 38 Roads—Siem Reap
- RGC/Volunteer Lawyers
- Covid-19 Pandemic

(Continued from page 1)
the budget to build all 38 roads in Siem Reap.

Remaining Funds from Preah Sihanouk City Used to Improve Siem Reap River

In addition, as we have left five million US dollars from the construction budget in Sihanoukville, (which) I previously ordered to return to the national budget, when HE Chea Sophara reported to me, now I am directing the budget straight from Sihanoukville to Siem Reap for the Siem Reap River improvement project. At this time, we will improve the Siem Reap River as a package, as mentioned in the report of HE Sun Chanthol, and there are already sewers, canals for sewage and rainwater, as well as plumbing, security cameras, which will make it a really tourist city – making it fit as the former capital of the former Khmer empire [...]

2022 – Angkor Sankranta Event May Happen Again

We really hope that Siem Reap will remain a potential province of tourism after COVID-19 has passed. We hope that the Siem Reap people will benefit and people who have visited Siem Reap in the past and seen bad roads will see better roads in the future. If COVID-19 declines in 2022, there may be reconsideration of the Angkor Sankranta event in 2022, when Siem Reap will be a city of good clean roads after we have clean ones in Phnom Penh and in Sihanoukville [...]. It is our hope that the people in Siem Reap province, in particular, and the people all over the country will benefit from the construction here. Of course, we have to build them in every province, but we have to prioritize provinces to receive them first and those to receive them later. Investment in Phnom Penh must be on a regular investment, investment in Sihanoukville has already been done, while the remaining \$ 5 million will be sent here, in addition to the national budget of about \$ 150 million, which we have already advanced 20% to this site [...]

November-28 Community Event

As we have had a new related event, I would like to take this opportunity to speak to our compatriots about what I said the night before last and last night that I call “November-28 community event.” This is the first time we have infection started in the community, an event that we have not yet identified where the head and/or tail is and where they are hiding. At this point, we have the great concern. I would also like to emphasize that such an event requires us to operate quickly, as we can see that our operation has been swift and on a large scale, but in some places it is not yet as fast as we would like it to be.

In Siem Reap, yesterday, I thought there were only 40 testing cases, but as night fell, the number rose to more than 190 cases tested. Nationwide, 3,332 samples taken for tests by the Institut Pasteur and the National Institutes of Public Health. Out of 1,247 samples, 14 found to be (Covid-19) positive. One case found in Siem Reap but the Institut Pasteur has not yet confirmed. If the case sent from Siem Reap confirmed as positive, the number of infections in the community increased to 15 cases in just two days. What is interesting is that (the infection only occurred) in the cluster of those who work in the Ministry of Interior and the family of HE Chhem Savuth only [...]

Prevent Imported Cases, Community Infections and Treat Infected People

We have to find them all. We need to do it at a swift pace and on a larger scale. Now is more time than ever, and it is not the time to blame each other, nor is it the time to blame this or that person. It is time for us to unite to fight COVID-19. This is a sad situation. It is not unique to Cambodia. In the past 11 months, Cambodia has avoided community outbreaks. We fought hard on three battles – to prevent the imported cases, to prevent the spread of the disease into the community, and to provide effective treatments to

those infected [...]

Firstly, Swift and Large Scale Campaign

This is a serious issue for Cambodia, which I would like to take this opportunity to call for, and it has already issued regulations, but I would like to emphasize that firstly we need to act at a fast pace and on a large scale, which we have done already and will continue to do today and days onwards. Apply the theory that it is better for one to think that one might have it (Covid-19) than to think that one is uninfected. It is better for us to take a sample, to have a test and to stay in quarantine for 14 days than to think that I might not be infected. This ensures personal safety and security for family and others who come into contacts with them [...]

Secondly, Establish Quarantine Centers in Provinces

Secondly, I would like to appeal and issue an order to set up the Quarantine Center (QC), which I have organized since the beginning of the year in all provinces for those who cannot afford to have a place of quarantine at homes [...]. We have test sites – one in Siem Reap, two in Phnom Penh, one is under preparation in Sihanoukville, and one in Battambang province. We cannot issue regulations to establish a QC that requires testing and treatment (in one place) due to our limited possibilities. Even now, there is only one in Siem Reap, and sample found positive by that land has to have reaffirmation from the Institut Pasteur [...]

Thirdly, End of School Year 2019-2020 on November 30

Thirdly, yesterday, I agreed to the request of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to close the school year 2019-2020 by today. Therefore, today – 30 November – is the closing day of the 2019-2020 school year, and is the day of the lower secondary school exams in their respective schools. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has already issued its announcement [...] therefore, the remaining 12th grade stu-

dents can study preparing for high school exams. We will open the school year 2020-2021 on January 11, 2021, but we will check whether the situation will be favorable for us to do so [...]

Fourthly, People Take Samples to Tests and Quarantine Themselves

Fourthly, I would like to call on the people to participate voluntarily, take samples, test and do self-isolation. Wear a mask and wash your hands. Do not go out when not needed. Those who have been in quarantines at home must do it for 14 days and the local authorities may need to help monitor and supply food to poor families (in quarantines). If there are any doubts, our citizens should go to the hospital for examination by doctors and have samples taken and sent for testing. Homeless people who do not have place appropriate for quarantines should come to QC organized by the local authority with the supervision of the health sector [...]

All Levels Authorities Supply Food, Cash to Poor in QC

Some families are poor. That is why I ask the authorities at all levels to help supply food and money to them when they are in quarantines. Sometimes the one who has to be in quarantine is the one who earns money to feed the family. As s/he her/himself has to stay in quarantine, we have to take care of them and provide them with food [...]. We have to work hard. No one would want to go to QC. When in doubt, however, take a sample and be there. Maybe this is the only case where in Cambodia people in quarantines have living supplies delivered to their homes [...]. I set a principle that each family receives 20,000 riel per day. We have to count only the poor, who have Identified Poverty Cards [...]

Ministers/Provincial Governors Authorized Power to Close down Activities

This is a battle for which ammunition and weapons given to fight [...] food and authority,

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

which last night I announced the authority for ministers and governors to decide on closing down locations within the framework under its control [...]. For example, the Minister of Defense may close any General Department or may order the Commander-in-Chief of the army to close any army barracks [...] to avoid the export of such diseases [...]. I request His Excellency Sun Chanthol to cancel the program of connecting Steung Trang and Krouch Chhmar bridge of Kampong Cham and Tbong Khmum on (November) 7 because I have to travel by helicopter (but pilots are going to be in quarantines still) [...]. Let them finish it first, and sometimes we can connect it just five days before the inauguration [...] we all have to remember that whether we can control it or not is in the next 15 days will depend entirely on our efforts, both the state and the people [...]

Afraid of but Not Panicked and Losing Control – to Defeat Covid-19.

Fighting Covid-19, one must be afraid of it [...] because we are scared we have to wear masks, to wash our hands with alcohol, etc. Right now, I am not just wearing a mask but wearing gloves. It does not mean I hate our people. I am putting them on to protect myself, on the one hand, and I am protecting the people on the other because I am not sure whether I am positive or negative (of Covid-19). It is an invisible disease. I reiterate that the way to defeat Covid-19 is to pretend to be a loser, but not a panic and a losing control one [...]

This is not the time to blame each other. The day before, it was outrageous when Cambodia ranked No. 3 in the world and No. 1 in Asia in the management of Covid-19, but a foreign press listed all its merits and ignored efforts of the Cambodian people, the Royal Government of Cambodia as well as relevant partners [...]. If that financial institution does not consider the role of the Cambodian people and the Royal Gov-

ernment of Cambodia as important, it should at least consider ones of other development partners, financial institutions and especially partners in healthcare such as the World Health Organization, the Institut Pasteur du Cambodge, who have been long-term partners with us [...]

I hope that those who are infected may not reach the stage of death. I have received (reports) that the treatment is very strong, expecting the treatment to be the most effective. We have in stock. It is a (strong) drug, because infections in the family of HE Chhem Savuth found to be in severe stage. The Minister of Health announced there will be three tests, while usually we only test twice. So please do this and I hope our people will join in to end the “November-28 community event” [...]

Successive Statements on “November 28 Community Event”

I have to take direct command and maybe this time I will not come out to the Peace Palace. I have to watch from home and can broadcast live from my home on national television. Maybe I need to have a national television team on duty (at my house ready at all time) when I need to make a statement, I have to use (and broadcast) on national television [...]. As there are new developments concerning November-28 community event, I will broadcast live from my home. I do not go out to avoid more problems for reporters. Those who go to my house have to have samples tested and they may have to stay over there. This is bigger than a border war. The war against COVID-19 has no time. I have to keep in touch, and since I am the Chairman of the Commission against COVID-19 and as the Prime Minister, I have to do this work with the Minister and the Ministry of Health are taking the leads with other stakeholders [...]

Tests, Treatments, Quarantines – Covered by the State

Statement by the Prime Minister is an order. Today, the budg-

et released to the provinces, and the provinces must set a regime for the poor doing quarantines at home or come to QC. Those considered poor will receive 20,000 Riels/family [...]. We dare to spend this kind of money to prevent them from infecting others and help her/him in quarantines from suffering because being unable to conduct routine business leading to family members starving. No one should run out of food, even if there is no reserve money in the bank that the Minister of Health has to release according to my order, we can release the national budget. We can afford to do this much, since by comparison, we are helping three million people from 760,000 families (suffered from Covid-19 impacts) [...]

(Let us make efforts to) solve this problem. It does not collapse the Cambodian economy, and we do it without discrimination at all. Whoever has COVID-19 will get what the RGC are supplying, and we provide free medical treatment. There is no charge for the test. Our citizens do not pay for those assistances. Anyone demands payment is a mistake. Doctors who have to do this work receive \$30 in addition to their salary. Once samples brought to laboratory, the state will pay the Institut Pasteur and the National Institute of Public Health. When it comes to medical treatment, the state pays for the treatment. The Hungarian Ambassador asked how much the treatment cost him because he needed to charge money from Hungary. I instructed a reply that it was free [...]

Those who take quarantines at the government QC facilities – like the 128 students returning from Israel in quarantines at two peacekeeping centers, the state provides them food too. For foreigners or Cambodians who come from abroad, need to stay and pay for hotel and food from their pockets. But for the case of November-3 event and the case of November-28 community event, the state will cover the costs for quarantines at the 500-rooms five-stars Sokha Hotel [...].

November-3 Event Ends

(18 November 2020 — Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

The fourth test or the last one has proved that my wife and I, and people working in our house, are Covid-19 negative. Stemming from this result, starting from tomorrow, 19 November 2020, I will bring myself for physical exercises outside my house as I have been doing before November 4 [...]

Let me remind the local authorities, where there are people still in quarantines and have not yet reached their last date, to instruct them to continue their quarantines properly. Failing to do so would put us in jeopardy of going to another 14 days quarantine again. The instruction of the Ministry of Health has been that the 14 days quarantine starts counting from the first day of taking sample for test [...]

The “November-3 Event” operation has been wide ranging and complicated in searching for those involved as it culminated in numerous people in many cities, districts, communes and villages. Thanks to correct leadership, efforts, solidarity and good cooperation, we have been able to identify related ones without losing a single trace as losing it could have been a cause of disastrous community transmission.

The experience as well as lessons learnt from the past have been based on our speedy effort to manage in a timely manner and cooperation from every involved persons to identify target persons directly and indirectly to get sampling for tests and to send in for the 14 days quarantines.

To declare ending the “November-3 Event” does not mean that we end our efforts to combat Covid-19. On the contrary, we must make further efforts to prevent this hidden killer by wearing facemasks, washing hands, and maintaining social safety distancing, etc.,

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 1)
situation. We must not be negligent. Today, (the figure of infected person has gone) up to 307 people, plus the one infection today. Yesterday, there were 10 people left in treatment, and plus one today, we now have 11 people in treatment (of Covid-19), while 296 people treated, and no deaths yet [...]

Contribute to International Community, Provide Assistance According to Ability

Taking this opportunity, I would like to confirm that we have donated two million masks, like the ones you are wearing, to our Lao friends, and 100,000 fabric masks that we make by ourselves, plus other medical equipment worth 2,224,000 US dollars. Coincidentally, when our aid arrived in Laos, 14 people infected on that day. They were imported cases, not a community infection. (One reason that) we provided masks to Laos is because Laos shares a border with Myanmar. Tomorrow, HE Mam Bunheng (Minister of Health) will accompany our donation of masks and medical tools/equipment (to Myanmar) in three (commercial) planes [...]

Some people make insinuation that while being unable to solve own problem, (I was trying to) solve other people's. No matter who says what, as a contributor to the international community, I (or Cambodia, rather) has an obligation to join other states and nations to provide assistance as we can according to our possibility. Cambodia does not just provide masks/medical tools to our Lao and Myanmar friends. I am preparing to intervene in Timor-Leste. Yesterday, I briefed the Vietnamese Prime Minister as we discussed bilateral relations on all issues, including the fight against Covid-19 for each country and in the region.

Timor-Leste, however, is less contagious. Laos could have had less infection cases than Timor-Leste, but because of the one-day infection of 14 persons, Laos comes up above. We are not just providing assistance in

such forms. We are providing assistance as life and flesh by sending our troops to join the peacekeeping operation under the United Nations umbrella. Now, coming back from missions in foreign countries, our troops are in quarantines. We will continue to send troops to Mali, Central Africa, South Sudan, and those in Lebanon would return rather next month. Cambodia is small and poor but with generous heart [...] (1)

RGC Lawyers Group Regulations Defining Roles and Responsibilities

I appreciate the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) lawyers who have worked hard on all the tasks assigned by the Royal Government. I wholeheartedly accept the proposed requirements of proper regulations and organizational structure. I am advising His Excellency Bin Chhin (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister in Charge of the Council of Ministers) discuss with His Excellency Ky Tech (Head of RGC Lawyers Council) to prepare the required regulations, whether there needs to be the Royal Decree or only the sub-decree. Samdech Krala Hom Sar Kheng (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior) also made a request to me to appoint lawyers in the provinces/capitals, because there are some cases that need to have lawyers to proceed to trials.

Indeed, like the lawyers in the structure of the provincial level, I suggest to provide a fee of 1.1 million riel or equivalent to (the salary of) commune chief. However, the lawyers can also defend other people's cases besides those obliged by the RGC. Each ministry may look into organizing required lawyers for its institution. For the proposal of HE KY Tech regarding the preparation of regulations defining the roles and responsibilities of the Royal Government's lawyers, (I) agree, and in that (the regulation should state) the budget (must) come from the state, which is included in the budget package of the Office of the Council of Ministers.

In my opinion, a sub-decree may be enough, but the appointment (of lawyer) is made by a royal decree. There is nothing wrong with each other. The Ministry of Justice has just requested the appointment of more than 60 lawyers who are also duty lawyers, where they are not paid. For the lawyers of the Royal Government, I would like to commend and support the drafting of the regulations. Please study them together. Let us find out whether we should just issue it in sub-decrees or the royal decree which is necessary for the process of organization and functioning of the Royal Government's lawyers [...]

Volunteer Lawyers of Samdech Techo for Poor Women, Humanitarianism, Environment

As for Samdech Techo's volunteer lawyers, I think I should just call Samdech Techo because "Sen" is already my name. As for Techo, a titled bestowed by HM the King, I am researching whether there was truly a Techo Damdin or not, or was it just in the story. In researches, there were Techo Meas and Techo Yot [...] if, in the absence of a real Techo Damdin, I was the third person after the 16th to the 21st century to receive the title of Techo. I just call Samdech Techo's volunteer lawyers, but you can call it in full [...]

I commend all the efforts our lawyers have made in contributing to the protection of our poor women. We used to have more than 60 members, now we have more than 150. We have distributed them to other provinces and cities, and they have a team leader. Our lawyers are not just being there to defend, but we are involved in humanitarian work. We have done out-of-court mediation, one of the successes in resolving disputes. We are involved in environmental protection through tree planting and other activities.

I would like to offer my appreciation and urge continued adoption of this attitude. Of course, the budget so far, ac-

ording to the report, we have more than 1.6 million USD or over six billion Riel left. This proves that our lawyers did not use this money to do their jobs but spent their own money to help the poor. The budget used has been to organize the workplace, while for the most part the volunteer lawyers have done both the job of putting together the workplace and the personal budget to help defend poor people.

State's Provided Budget Aims at Serving the Poor

I would like to ask His Excellency Ly Chantola to review the expenditures of the state budget provided to the Bar Association. Spending must be on objective, which was to serve the truly poor. If possible, please file me a report. Let say, in the many years started receiving funding, how many cases have it defended for government or how many legal consultations they have offered. The Ministry of Justice is responsible for that issue because it is the (budget) holder. This year (the budget provided by the state is) 1,600 million Riels, while next year it will increase to two billion Riels. The (budget) manager must review the budget as well. For me, regarding the budget, I do not think there is a problem for Samdech Techo's volunteer lawyers.

Legal Aid to the Poor on Three Factors

We need to see the needs to provide legal assistance to the poor, like where to start. *Firstly, a clear understanding of the law is essential for citizens to exercise their rights properly in a society governed by the rule of law.* However, due to the variety of laws and court procedures and the increasingly complex technicalities, in general, the public cannot clearly and deeply understand the meaning of the laws and procedures of the courts. Therefore, in a society governed by the rule of law, the legal profession established to play an important role in providing legal assistance through the provision of coun-

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

selling and defense services before the courts to protect citizens' rights legally [...]

Legal Advice Part of Judicial Reform

Legal aid is not just for those involved in the crimes they have committed or something, even business people may need legal help. The rich as well as the poor need legal help. Our goal is to reach out to the poor who need legal advice. This requires our lawyers to help raise public awareness, and we must consider this legal advice and the work we are doing as parts of our judicial system and court reforms. That is why we are not only dealing with defense before the court, but more than that, we are legal consultants, because we are lawyers, we understand the law, but the people do not know. Sometimes people need us to help write a complaint or a land tenure application. Sometimes they depend on us, and we should help explain to them how to do. For example, in relation to land tenure, what they needed to do according to the land law [...]

Secondly, the legal profession is a free profession that performs its duties independently of the executive, the legislature and the judiciary, as opposed to public officials. Not paid by the state, lawyers receive fees from citizens who are their clients through the provision of legal counseling or defense services in court, as the use of the lawyer's services is subject to a fee. As the lawyers determined fee freely, it impossible for poor people to seek legal help from lawyers.

Lawyers Governed by Lawyers Statutes

I would like to emphasize this point that the legal profession is one outside the executive, legislative and judicial frameworks. There is, however, like these days, the statute. I have the right to vote (to elect the President of the Bar Association). Mr. Ly Chantola also received a vote from me because I swore (as a lawyer) in 1996 or 1997. I am a

lawyer who suspended practice. When I retired, I am sure my volunteer lawyers club will continue [...]

Defamation Lawsuit in France Takes Up to Three Years

The legal profession is not part of the legislature, the executive or the courts, but it is an integral part of the proceedings. Without a lawyer, it is impossible to carry out the proceedings. I filed a defamation suit in a French court. The court will now schedule a hearing at 1:30 pm on September 1, 2022. The hearing can last for two and a half hours. This is just a defamation lawsuit (filed) since 2019. Why some foreigners urged us to try quickly certain court cases in Phnom Penh the soonest. (They may) look at that issue themselves. We cannot force the court. If they cannot force the court in France, they also cannot force the court in Phnom Penh. They said those were minor offenses. Cases congested due to Covid-19. Lawsuits here congested by Covid-19 too [...]

Economy and Finance to Provide 500 Million Riels to National Council for Women

(I have) gradually increased budget for the Cambodian National Council for Women and in recent years, it has reached 500 million Riels, but next year it seemed that the amount will be deducted to only 300 million (Riel). I would like to confirm to His Excellency Aun Porn Moniroth (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of economy and Finance) to supplement the full 500 million (Riels) by taking the unallocated budget or from that of the Office of the Council of Ministers [...]. Last year, at the meeting of the Cambodian National Council for Women, I initiated the establishment of a Samdech Techo Volunteer lawyers. After it has taken shape, we raised fund. My initial investment was 500,000 USD. Then there is the participation of up to 1.5 million US dollars. Our lawyers, however, did not use this money. This is a real volunteer [...]

Thirdly, the provision of legal services to the poor has become a responsibility and an important part of the Royal Government's policy to ensure the right to justice of the poor in a society governed by the rule of law. Considering legal aid, a part of public services, some countries have established mechanisms to provide free legal aid. This free legal aid service helps the poor, including consulting, legal services, and defence services at all stages of court proceedings, but the implementation of the policy to provide free legal aid to the poor is impossible as it becomes a huge financial burden for the state. As a result, some countries that do not yet have sufficient financial resources have devised various mechanisms to ensure that the poor have access to legal aid in the exercise of their rights to a minimum. That would include defence in the face of court by lawyers, or by arbitration or authorization for defence by a citizen or volunteer with legal knowledge but not a lawyer [...]

Frameworks for Legal Services and Defense Lawyers Provision

Speaking of the current situation in Cambodia [...] provision of legal and defence services should carry out in three frameworks. *Firstly, provision of legal aid and lawyers for the poor.* So far, such assistance was provided by the Bar Association of Cambodia (and through) the Cambodian National Council for Women, by associations or non-governmental organizations, in accordance with Article 29 of the Law on the Statute of Lawyers, and internal regulations, with obligation to help the poor [...]. At the same time, the Bar Association must have its own special fund, which receives contributions from all members of the Bar Association to pay the lawyers who protect the poor. Therefore, providing legal assistance to the poor is also part of the Bar Association's responsibility.

However, to help the poor who need to defend themselves be-

fore the courts, the Royal Government has provided an annual budget since 2013 (amounting to) of 200 million Riels, and this budget has continuously increased. In 2020, there is 1,600 million Riels and in 2021, the amount will go up to two billion Riels, which the new President of the Bar Association will carefully use for that purpose. In addition, we have provided through the Cambodian National Council for Women 500 million Riels [...] I guarantee to return the full 500 million Riel.

Some NGOs and Lawyers Take Opportunity to Push for Protests

In fact, the provision of a defence lawyer for the poor applies only when the case comes to court, and when the court requires a defence lawyer only. However, this provision does not cover the provision of legal advice at the local level. In the past, some associations or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been active at the grassroots level, meeting directly with people in need of legal services, providing assistance, counselling, as well as assisting in filing lawsuits and defending the poor. These associations or non-governmental organizations receive foreign funding to open offices in some provinces, as well as to hire permanent lawyers to provide legal assistance to the poor and those who needed them.

This point is also part of the support that I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude and appreciation to some of the NGOs that have been active in providing lawyers as well as legal consultations for local people. I would also like to send a signal that some organizations and lawyers are taking the opportunity to push for demonstrations. Not that we (the Royal) Government do not know about it. We encourage the provision of legal aid or protection to the poor, but we do not encourage instigators to push for demonstrations.

I am thankful, but I also show some disappointments. I en-

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

courage foreign-funded NGOs to provide legal services and protection for the poor, but do not encourage incitement to demonstrations. (There have been) some issues (they) pushed in Kampong Som, Koh Kong, and Kratie. Some NGO lawyers (were doing this). It is not that we do not know, only that these negative points we never mentioned. I sent a message saying I was thankful but I (also) expressed my displeasure. That we are required to apply the rule of law, it is then a legal process and not forcing citizens to take such action [...]

Secondly, providing duty lawyers in a criminal case or case involving a minor. According to Article 301 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the assistance of a lawyer must be available absolutely in criminal cases and in cases where the accused is a minor. Meanwhile, Article 6 of the Juvenile Justice Law also states that all juveniles who are suspected or accused of committing a crime must have the basic right to receive the assistance of a lawyer by choice or by assigning free of charge, in accordance with the conditions stipulated by the Law on the Statute of Lawyers from the very first stage of the proceedings." The appointment of a lawyer in both cases is a prerequisite by law, called a duty lawyer, in order for court proceedings to proceed. Legally, defendants can choose their own lawyer. However, if the accused refuses to choose their own lawyer, the court must ensure that they have a free lawyer to defend them, even if they are not poor.

"The President of the Bar Association Can Appoint a Free Lawyer for the Poor only"

This is a challenge within the legal framework of the Bar Association, which stipulates that the President of the Bar Association may appoint free defence lawyers only for the poor. This is the point at which the Minister of Justice (and/or) the Bar (must look into if it) can amend this point. What if some

people are not poor but without a lawyer (the case) cannot proceed. Cases congestion. We cannot proceed because our law only protects the poor. What if you are not poor but do not want a lawyer. If they refuse to get a lawyer and they agree to be their own lawyer, then it does not matter. The matter here is if s/he refuses to take a lawyer, it means that the trial cannot proceed.

Experiences show that in some countries, lawyers for the poor and duty attorneys assigned by the court president from an annual list of attorneys to defend suits before the courts, and they charged a fixed rate predetermined by the state. However, for Cambodia, the state has not yet been able to afford fully the implementation of the policy to provide legal aid, including the provision of consulting services for local people. Therefore, in the face of the mechanism of volunteer lawyers to help defend and provide free legal advice to citizens in need of legal services, this is the best option to address the current challenges.

This point (needs) join consideration altogether. The former bar refers the duty lawyers. Should there be an amendment to this reference to by the President of the Court? This is a point, which, besides the word "poor," in addition to the one on those who refuse to take a lawyer, also need to think whether to point out by the President of the Bar or the President of the court for duty lawyers? I only recommend for consideration regarding our judicial and judicial reforms. We are talking today about some aspects of legal and judicial reform. Therefore, in the face of the mechanism of volunteer lawyers to help defend and provide free legal advice to people, who need legal services, this is the best option to solve the problems facing [...]

Do Not Boycott Hearings for Speedy Proceedings

In the past, there have been some cases where lawyers have been naive. S/he wanted to pro-

ceed with the case as soon as possible, but s/he boycotted (hearing) walking out of it. This is a mistake of legal strategy. As I am saying this, maybe those involved in the case, and who have boycotted may before realize that they have committed a legal mistake. I am not a lawyer, but [...] have been leading law enforcement for decades [...] I would urge Techo Sen's volunteer lawyers not to boycott the court. Boycotting the court will cause the court to adjourn the trial. Do not act like some lawyers who, while wanting to speed up the process, walk away in turn. So, who caused the delay? From the lawyer of the accused. It is not the fault of any court [...] under the months-long campaign of the new Minister of Justice, Keut Rith, the congestion of unprocessed lawsuits has greatly reduced, but the number of new cases has also increased, which requires us to act incessantly.

Consistency between Law on Lawyers Statutes and Code of Criminal Procedure

In order to solve future problems, the Ministry of Justice needs to review the amendments to the Law on Lawyers Statutes and on the Code of Criminal Procedure to address current challenges, especially to ensure easier implementation in assigning lawyers as well as ensuring conduction without hindrance of court proceedings regarding the lack of lawyers. Make it consistent between the law on the statute of lawyers on the one hand and the Code of Criminal Procedure on the other so that it is consistent on these two legal issues [...]

Thirdly, the provision of legal assistance by Samdech Techo's volunteer lawyers and the Cambodian National Council for Women Lawyers, which has 500 million Riel in the annual budget. I would like to point out to Techo Sen's volunteer lawyers that I am grateful for the speedy preparation and the willingness to take on the duty of protecting poor women. I think people may need (it) [...] (but) in the past,

many may not have been aware. We might have not given our people wider access to this information. Today there are many TV channels going live from here. More people may find us [...]

Legal Protection Only for Journalists Who Adhere to Professional Ethics

Earlier this year, when meeting with journalists, Minister (of Information) Khieu Kanharith requested that Techo Sen's lawyers help protect journalists. I also accepted, but (I also made clear that) only journalists who have worked in accordance with professional ethics and have been sued for that. As I said that day, some started by cursing others. That caused the other persons to sue. The day before, one (journalist) has had two lawsuits. In order to get rid of them, he requested to join the Cambodian People's Party (CPP). I said no. There is no exchange on this matter [...] many CPP officials have been imprisoned. If ones break the law, ones must serve prison terms obviously, like the former governor of Takeo province, he is in prison. Our lawyers, in addition to their duty to protect the poor, we also have an obligation to assist professional journalists. In some instances, even I have to sue. I have spoken a lot; why did they not post it. Why did they just take a part (out of context) ... I have to sue because this is not very common. It is a matter of creating provocation and chaos [...]

Resolve Disputes outside the Judiciary

I would like to urge our lawyers to first work on this as in the past we had done some already. If our lawyers make efforts to reach an out-of-court settlement, it would be great. Help resolved by my advisor/assistant, experience in recent months show that some disputes, lasting 10 years or 20 years, can resolve through out-of-court mediation. Our team of volunteer lawyers did one of them in Siem Reap [...] (If someone) wanted to solve this

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

problem, s/he must not relate to any interests. The dispute will quickly reach settlement. (Owing to such importance that) the former Minister of Justice, Ang Vong Vathana, is now the Senior Minister of Special Mission (assigned the role) to be responsible for out-of-court dispute resolution. If lawyers try to resolve dispute out of court, even if the matter is in the hands of the court, they can take it out of court [...] I would urge our volunteer lawyers to focus on settling disputes out of court as that will lead to a win-win solution. Every side in the conflict should take a step back to find a win-win solution.

No Political Prisoners, Only Crimes Committed Politicians

That much I can do. I can put out the flames of war that we used to fight to the death. I can help find a solution through an assistant/lawyer on some lawsuits. For some matters though, I cannot do to help. It would not be possible to (bring about solution) when someone makes it his/her policy of “either you or me.” What can I do? Since 2003, “where there is Sen, there is no (Sam Rain)Sy” has been a fact for seventeen years now. Every side must win. That one side plotted to kill the other side is not a game to play. If they usher in a policy to reconcile among Khmers, (I would say it is) Okay. If they (continue to) make it their policy to eliminate the Hun clan, let me tell them they will not have it. Hun Sen will not allow. That you are ready to attack me, why should I let you do it [...]

(Some said) that Hun Sen educates people to mediate but he himself does not know how to do it. I have already coordinated. I have no time to (waste seeking to) reconcile with some. The legal process must continue according to law. Once the legal process is over, political mediation can take place. There is no political compromise before legal process. The legal process continues. (For the wrongdoing that) one

has to go to jail, one has to serve it before political mediation. Those who have not yet been tried must be tried. Today is like sending a message to others that there is no political solution. There are only people who have conflicts with the law. There is no political conflict. Cambodia has no political prisoners, only politicians committed crimes.

The Minister with Smell of Milk Still

I have no conflict with anyone. You are in conflict with the law. Just wait until you finish settling legal issues to talk about politics. Some of you are waiting for a solution saying there would be one. (I say) No. There is not going to be a second Paris Agreement, and there is going to be no a third, a fourth, or a fifth pardon too. They never stop talking about Hun Sen do everything to stay in power. At the same time, they say Hun Sen seeks ways to transfer power to his son. This morning, a former Cambodia Daily staff writes that Aun Pornmoniroth appears to be potential candidate for the post of Prime Minister. While Hun Sen is still in power, who could take it from him? To stay by his side is true. To replace him is not yet the case. More so, Hun Sen has not yet left.

This does not mean that there is no vision to vet and prepare people for the next generation. Why did the Democrats choose Joe Biden as their presidential candidate? Is it not because they could not find anyone younger than him [...] considered the oldest American president ever. Let me tell you a story. I was not yet 27 years old considering I was born on August 5, 1952, but appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs on January 8, 1979. At that time, the other leaders were in their 40s and 50s. Some ministers even joked that Hun Sen is a minister who has not lost the smell of milk yet. This language makes me work and learn harder [...]

Initially, I thought of holding the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs for only eight months. Finally, from January 8, 1979

until now, I have been in the government round-the-clock. From Minister of Foreign Affairs to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs for a while. Now that I hear their voices to defeat the “Hun” clan, I am more determined now that I would draw back when they and their ringleaders are no more [...]

From Factual to Legal Issues

I would leave another message to our lawyers. People have raised and talked about factual and legal issues. In order to defend the case, the judge, before making decision, must hold on to the facts. After, they examine the legal body as by which law should the issue be charged? We as lawyers must do the same. Grasp the facts from our client before we examine the legal body. Why do I have to say this? It was because a few days ago, I went to open a construction site (to build a bridge connecting Koh Pich) to Koh Norea I played the voice of Ho Van, who ordered to the protesters here from the United States [...]

Suddenly some say if “wiretaps are unconstitutional or not?” If a politician answers that it is wrong, it is okay, but one of the lawyers said that it is unconstitutional, while this lawyer does not yet know how I get the voice of Ho Van. This is the stupidity of a lawyer. Maybe those who have followed this know and I do not need to say his name. If ones are not sure, ones should say – “If he really intercepts the voice, his action will be constitutional [...]” He should have thought about it.

Let me send them a message. Ho Van gave his command in his Facebook Group, and in the group, there are our people in [...] receiving messages in groups on Telegram, Facebook Messenger, what wrong would it be? There are also two laws that allows intercepting voices – anti-graft and anti-terrorism laws. That is why I am reminding you lawyers that we need to hold on to facts before going to

law. I could not have imagined that a lawyer, considered one of the bests, had shortcoming about facts and dare to give legal conclusion [...]

(Predicted) Negative Growth but Export Volume Up 18%

On the 30th of November, I will show up again in Siem Reap. This year, however, we went through some difficult events (including) Covid-19, flood, the November-3 event. Our economy is (predicted to be) negative, but the volume of our exports has increased by 18%. Covid-19 can destroy us, but Covid-19 has not killed us yet. We must all be careful and act together in a synchronized manner.

Still No Increase of Salary of Civil Servants and Armed Forces in 2021

Once again, I am asking for the understanding of the civil servants and the Armed Forces, for who, in 2021, we could not increase their salaries. We only asked for an increase in the pensions of retirees (civil servants) and the veterans to draw closer a gap between the former retirees and the later retirees [...]

During Covid-19 Phase, Workers Base Salary Increased by Two USD

For factory workers, it is increased by only two US dollars from 190 to 192 (US dollars) during the Covid-19 phase. State expenses for (supporting) workers (suspended from works because of Covid-19) have come down from about 150,000 to about 50,000 individuals as some factories have reopened and some new ones are going into operation [...] we help support about 40,000 people, before was 150,000, and about 10,000 hotel staff. Then, we have about 50,000 in all.

Nearly 200 Million USD for 670,000 Poor Families and Pregnant Workers

We need to help feed people in poverty and the number has increased to more than 670,000 families or about three million

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

people. We have now released nearly 200 million USD for (program to help support) pregnant women. For (female) workers, there has been high birth rate every day. We continue to support women (of poor households) with pregnancy. We must continue. In addition, we have to shoulder the more than three million people. Fortunately, we have saved more than three billion US dollars.

One Commander-in-Chief Mechanism – A Financial System Reform Success

Now we will release 150 million USD to build 38 roads in Siem Reap. We are not a rich country, but that would be how to manage a country. We are taking care of (our financial situation) as a housewife [...] the single Commander-in-Chief and single Chief of Staff mechanism is the success of Cambodia's financial system reform. We have the ability to share cash with the people [...] the population is growing. From the start, we had less than 600,000 (families). Now there are more than 670,000 families. We will continue to administer (support program) in November/December. If Covid-19 does not end in December, we will continue it. As I said earlier, we are preparing (the program) for ten months. Where previously we thought of spending only 25 Million USD/month, now we are spending 30 million USD/month.

Covid-19 and 20% EBA Cannot Kill Us

Cambodia is not yet dead. Some say it would be dead in a little while, because 20% of the EBA (everything but arms) is cut. The EBA has nothing to do with it. On the other hand, there are very few Cambodian products related to the European market.

Neither Covid-19 nor 20% EBA could kill us. It has given our people opportunities, especially in the growing agricultural sector. Rice production is good though there have been damages from flood. Replanting is underway [...]

Customs and Tax Revenues Close to Five Billion USD Current Budget Revenue

I think, in 2021 there will be a resurgence. This year, despite losses, so far our revenue has recorded about 4,500 million US dollars. Although it is less than the amount we planned for, but we have collected already 4.5 billion USD. Of that, more than 2.5 billion US dollars are from taxes and 2.1 billion US dollars are from customs. The score has moved close to the 5 billion USD of this year current budget revenue. As for the cash we saved, we spent only a small amount so far. We have about three billion USD left in our hands [...]

Cambodians Follow the King's Humanitarian Heart

There are people who blamed that we are raising fund for Covid-19, for floods, for party, for everything. They posted on Facebook. At that time, I was in Banteay Meanchey, I said that I do not make enemies with money. If they want to make enemies with money, do it alone, because this is voluntary. I did not go to ask for them [...] the poorest king in the world is the King of Cambodia, but he is also the most generous king for the people, our children and civil servants to follow his example.

The Queen Mother was the first to lead the contribution for Covid-19. Initially, Their Majesties contributed 500,000 USD and later two million USD. Learning of Their Majesties' contributions, Oknha/tycoons followed their leads finally bringing this (Covid-19) budget to 19 million (US dollars). We spent 11 million (US dollars) and the remaining 8 million (US dollars) are ordering more equipment. Some countries issue presidential decrees to cut their government salaries.

For us, once I declared donating (my salary), immediately, tens of thousands of our officials have contributed so far the total is 42 billion (KHR) equal to 10 million USD (US). We have not used this money yet [...].

(Continued from page 1)

are actively working to ensure the health safety of our people.

Our people, however, should not panic until losing control. Increase your attention in protecting your personal health and that of your family by wearing a mask and washing your hands with soap, gel, or alcohol, while adhering to proper hygiene as directed by the Ministry of Health. In case of any doubt, please report to the doctor as soon as possible. For those who need to be tested for Covid-19 and to go into quarantine, they must be doing it correctly and thoroughly to avoid the spread of Covid-19 to other places [...]

Over Two Million Masks and Medical Tools to Myanmar, 24 November 2020

"In the spirit of long-standing friendship and solidarity, and in joining hands with Your Excellency's efforts in prevention of Covid-19 pandemic, on behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia, I would like to provide a donation of two million masks and other medi-

(Continued from page 3)

as instructed by the Ministry of Health. Let us remember that people in the world as a whole and the Cambodian people in particular hate Covid-19 but it does not hate us but love us and its love for us will cause us health damages and deaths.

Let us bear in mind that that Cambodia has had less number of infected people and fatality is not because we Cambodians, as some people said it, are immune by the Angkorian red blood cells against Covid-19. [I hope those who have said this are courageous to help serve the Covid-19 patients without wearing personal protective gears to see if they really are not infected, and the so-called "special red blood cell" Cambodians have to wear no masks. If they can prove their arguments right, the World Health Organization would recognize them as the second-to-none scientists in the world]. (And, Let us bear in mind that that Cambodia has had less number of infected people and fatality) is not be-

cal facilities, the detail of which is attached herewith, to the government of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar" – wrote Samdech Techo in a letter dated 24 November 2020 to H.E. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar [...]

2.1 Million Masks and Medical Tools to Lao PDR, 6 November 2020

On the morning of 6 November 2020, Samdech Pichey Sena Tia Banh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense, representing the Cambodian Prime Minister, Samdech Techo Hun Sen, took a special flight bringing 2.1 million masks and 12 other medical equipment/tools for our Laotian friends to fight against and to prevent the Covid-19. The pandemic has been spreading in the world and there has not been any medical cure for it. Lok Chumteav Yuok Sambath, Secretary of State for Health, is also accompanying Samdech Pichey Sena [...].

cause we Cambodians are living in climate that is not transmittable by Covid-19. Our success has happened because we have made efforts altogether – the royal institution, legislative and executive bodies, where the Ministry of Health, especially the effective medical teams, and more importantly every Cambodian people taking parts in implementing measures issued by the Royal Government [...]

We are closing down the "November-3 Event" so that the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, and the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training can prepare for the reopening of schools and vocational schools, as well as every sectors can return to regular activities as before November-3. However, combating Covid-19 is still the work of priority for us all. The "November-3 Event" has taught us, reminded us, advised us and instructed us to be vigilant always to win over Covid-19. Preventing it is a better approach than curing [...].