

Stoeung Trang-Kroch Chhmar Bridge

(23 November 2021 — Extensive Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)



Stoeung Trang-Kroch Chhmar Bridge in Use; NR 71C Starts Construction

Today, we are gathering here to hold two ceremonies – firstly, the inauguration of the 1,131-meter-long Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge, between Stung Trang (of Kompong Cham) and Kroch Chhmar (of Tbong Khmum), and secondly, the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of National Road 71C, 114 kilometers long, under both the PRC financing and the RGC counterpart funding. Please allow me to take this opportune moment to express my respects to compatriots in the district of Stung Trang and the district of Kroch Chhmar. I still remember that we organize the bridge construction ceremonial site on this side (of Stung Trang), and planned to go to the other side for the inauguration ceremony. However, due to the unfavorable location conditions, we had to celebrate the inauguration at the same place. This does not mean that I favor my district, as I am a resident of Stung Trang, and neglect the people of Kroch Chhmar. As I came across a moment ago, I saw my relatives, cousins, distant cousins in Stung Trang district who came from Peam Koh Sna commune, and also

some relatives from the district of Kroch Chhmar.

Today, we have a new bridge – the Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge, Stung Trang-Kroch Chhmar, which is the 10th bridge built with the financial assistance of the People’s Republic of China. I wanted to give the bridge another name in addition to the official one – Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge. I wanted to call it “the Bridge of Predestiny”. The temperament here defines a broad meaning. The bridge could temperamentally connect one side is Cambodia and another is China. It serves the goal of Cambodia-China friendship. The second point is the connection between Kampong Cham and Tbong Khmum provinces, which was previously just one province. We split it into two [...] the other is the connection between Stung Trang and Kroch Chhmar districts, and lastly, it represents the bonds tied between I and my wife over the past 40 some years, from which we have grown into a big family with many children and grandchildren. In this understanding, I think that besides the name of the Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge, between

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Closing First Round Vaccination Campaign

(01 November 2021 — Extensive Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

Four Stages: Prevention, Infection Management, Immunity Development, New Normal Re-activation

I should now summarize what we have worked on in each step through the stages from the beginning of Covid-19 until now. We have been going through four stages.

Stage 1: The fight against communicable disease in the community from March 2020 to October 2020.

Stage 2: Controlling/managing the spread of Covid-19 into the community from November 2020 to February 20, 2021.

Stage 3: Building immunity in the community through the implementation of the national Covid-19 vaccination campaign, combined with the continued management of Covid-19 transmission into the community from 20 February 2021 until now or the end of October.

Stage 4: From now on, the full re-launch of the country in all fields and living with Covid-19 in a new normal path starts [...]

Today, with pride in the good results achieved by the Royal Government in anti-Covid-19 vaccination, I would like to announce the official closure of the first round of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign for people aged 6 and over throughout the country. We are launching a vaccination campaign for the 5-year-olds and re-opening the country from today. Maybe there I have left some issues and the press may ask as I will try my best to answer.

BTv: [...] I have some questions ... I am interested in the remarks made by Samdech with

regard to education for children aged 3 and 4 years ... Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports confirms today we reopen (schools) at all levels ... including kindergarten ... (where) most children from 3 years old attend. We have just started to vaccinate children aged five years old now. Are we still closing kindergarten or not? Would the Royal Government say that it give injections to children aged three and over any time soon? [...] will the government continue to spend money on vaccines [...] if we spend big, we are also worried. Is the Royal Government of Cambodia concerned?

In relation to the full reopening of Cambodia in all sectors/ fields, what are the key areas that the Royal Government expect will improve our economy in the context of the new normal trajectory? [...] If there is a major outbreak when we reopen the country fully, does the Royal Government of Cambodia have any preconceived notions about preventive measures or measures to prevent Covid-19?

Answer: Thanks for the question. First involved those grandchildren aged 3 and 4 years old who would need to go to kindergarten. We are still studying. It is because I do not want to wait for a long time study I suggested that the 5 years old kids to get vaccination first. They will soon enter primary school when they are 6 years old. We still do not give up on consideration of vaccination for those aged 3 and 4 years old. We continue to think about this. If we can’t inject the 3-year-

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Stung Trang and Kroch Chhmar, we can also call it the bridge of predestiny [...]

Human, Water, Roads, Electricity – the Four Priority Set Since 1987

Here is not the only location but there are still many places, that unfortunate things happened in the past. The sad case was that while someone got sick and could have been saved, the patients could die on their way to hospitals as they had to wait for the ferry ... there is a time limit for the ferry service. Normally, the ferry workers are tired and were not responsive to late night calls. Suddenly, there could be a pregnant woman who could not deliver and had to be sent to the hospital for surgery. That did not happen because there were no roads and/or bridges. That was the point why, since 1987, for more than 34 years, I have announced a specific policy as Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, later on the State of Cambodia, to give investment priority to water, roads, electricity and people. These four areas must have the prioritized fund. Later to this stage, we moved the angle related to human resource development as the first angle. In the past, we used water, roads, electricity and people. Now, we shift the development of human resources to top. However, the priority is still given to continuous infrastructural development.

Every Construction Sites to Clear Mines and Unexploded Ordnance

Today, we have built this bridge with the efforts of the relationship between Cambodia and China, from the efforts of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, relevant institutions, and the local authorities of the two provinces and districts, as well as the support of our people. *The (mines action) units have also contributed to the removal and destruction of landmines and unexploded ordnance. As I said times and again, our country*

has always had to watch out for landmines and unexploded ordnance. (We) have to check on the project land area here as it was a former battlefield where there were fighting and bombing. Anyway, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, relevant institutions, local authorities at all levels, the Armed Forces of all kinds, and the people for their cooperation. They have made the construction of this bridge and connecting road a success. My thanks go to the construction company, which includes Shanghai Construction Company and Wang An Technical Inspection Company. Thank you to the workers who participated in building this bridge [...]

Working with PRC Four Times in Two Weeks

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the People's Republic of China, represented by His Excellency Ambassador Wang Wentian, for financing the construction of infrastructure in Cambodia. Last week and this week we worked together, if I am not mistaken up, to 4 times. First, on November 15, a video meeting between me and Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang lasted for about three hours. (We) discussed issues related to strengthening bilateral relations and other issues of mutual concern. Next, on the 17th (November), I went directly to the airport to receive an additional two million doses of vaccine for the first round of vaccine supply to (achieve) the success of the immunization process for Cambodia, covering up to more than 88% of the population.

As of yesterday, we have injected 14,100,043 people. This is the number recorded and distributed by the Ministry of Health and the National Committee for Vaccination throughout the country. Yesterday, there was the 30th anniversary meeting between ASEAN and China, attended by President Xi Jinping and other ASEAN lead-

ers. Today, we have gathered here to inaugurate the Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge, also known as the Temperament Bridge, with the announcement of the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of National Road 71C, which connects National Road 7 to the commune of Sanlob with backup roads, before continuing all the way to Kampong Thom province.

Political Relations Expand with the Supports of Economic, Trade and Investment Ties

In my experience, at the age of 27 as Minister of Foreign Affairs, (I have learnt that) political relations grow thanks to the supports of economic, trade and investment ties. Look at countries that do not have much contacts with others on economic issues, trade and investment, and just depend on political relationship, this relationship is not strong. But if there is a lot of relationship in the fields of economy, trade, investment, this relationship really has many for them to work together. We have many more projects left. (In) the month of December, we will have the inauguration of National Road 11 in Prey Veng province, and three projects to inaugurate in Kratie [...] so there are four projects, not including the hospital, funded the construction by PRC, which I'm definitely going to the grand opening. (Hospital project construction site) in Tbong Khmum is now 97% and by 2022 I am sure will be ready for use.

China Contributes 3,000/15,000 Km Road, 10/20 Bridges

The people of Stung Trang of Kampong Cham will have easy access (to healthcare) because now this bridge crosses to the other side where they can travel to a big hospital constructed by China. Thus, *Kampong Cham and Tbong Khmum provinces, with connection to Kandal and Prey Veng, there have been infrastructural developments provided by China all the way up to Kratie and Stung Treng, to the border with Laos. China*

has contributed more than 3,000 kilometers of roads ... as mentioned by HE Sun Chanthol. Of the 15,000 km of roads, 3,000 are Chinese built. Of the 20 bridges, 10 were built with funding from China. We will launch more construction sites. We submit proposed projects. We still have a bridge (which) the Chinese friend (helped to build) at Kratie (and) a bridge project connecting Kampong Chhnang with Kampong Thom, and a bridge somewhere between Takhmao and Monivong Bridges – which will be our new projects. (We) are studying (road) connection between Battambang and Siem Reap.

Roads and Bridges Are Equitable Distribution of Economic Growth

That is the priority of my policy. *We must do everything so that people have roads and streets, bridges, hospitals and schools at their disposal. On this point, I have often reminded that the best way to divide the fruits of economic growth is to use the resources of Cambodia's economic growth, or foreign aid and foreign loans, to build infrastructure.* (Having done) that (is) the most equitable (way) because rich or poor, they all use them, they all go to the hospital, etc. The children of the poor go to school, the children of the rich also go in. Well, it's all fair. It is better to use this method. The first factual benefit was (the duration spent) on traveling [...]

Nowadays, children born into later generations do not know what is called torch lighting. We have the intermediate phases, in which we used resin, and then kerosene lamp phase. Now there is electricity, there is a paved road. I may not be aware about what happened on the other side, but in my village, for one small road ... people rode bikes in it, ox cart also traversed in here, everything is here. Now the roads have been asphalted, connected to Kratie province, to Kampong Cham provincial town and from there on to Phnom Penh. On the other side, (Continued on page 3)

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there is a connection between the Kizuna Bridge, connecting up to Chhlong district town and up to Kratie provincial town [...] people also have access to clean water. People do not have the difficulty to carry water like in the past [...]

Were There No 18-March-1970 Coup, Cambodia Would Have Prospered

A questioning thought stays in my mind. If not for the coup d'état of March 18, 1970, which led to the war in the country, and then the genocidal regime of Pol Pot, which came to existence because of the coup d'état of March 18, 1970, overthrowing His Majesty King Father Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk. If there were no coup d'état and the King Father were to continue to lead our country, we could not know how much we might have prospered. We just started to recover after we overthrew the genocidal regime of Pol Pot [...] we began to have roads and bridges. We initially built on your own strength along with some helps. But the Chroy Changvar Bridge, the Monivong Bridge, built by His Majesty the King Father himself, the University, the High Schools, even the Olympic Stadium were built under his leadership. Well, the ability to build in those circumstances is amazing. We are all the beneficiaries of the popular socialist era. We must not forget this case.

Though Cambodia regained independence in 1953, the real construction (of the country) began only in 1955, when there were elections, under the Geneva agreement, with inspections of India, Poland and Canada. That much Cambodia was able to build at that stage, one may consider amazing. If they left it to the King Father, without destructive war, [...] he would have certainly extended the construction from one location to another, just as we do these days. Unfortunately (war) smashed. The Chroy Changvar bridge collapsed and along National Road No. 7 from Kratie down to Kampong Cham, so to

speak, all destroyed. Peam Ter Bridge, Chhlong Bridge were destroyed. While the Prek Chrey bridge was smashed, so was the bridge at Tbol Chonkub. What the war did was destroying bridges. The war in Vietnam avoided causing destruction to the bridges. In our country, we blew off the bridges. Look at the Moat Khmung bridge. Totally destroyed. We just built a new one.

Democracies Show No Regret to Acts Against Cambodian Revival

That had passed. We strive to trade our lives as capital to liberate the country and for the country to have peace, after which we set the goal of socio-economic development. We have had complete peace since December 29, 1998. Let us think how many years had we spent to solve the problem of Khmer killing Khmers. Does any foreigner ever regret that the coup (in 1970) had led to war? They never show any remorse for what they did. Some democracies supported Lon Nol's military coup and Lon Nol's seat at the United Nations. They have shown no remorse for what the wrong they did. How could they be democracy while they supported military coups? Later, they supported the Khmer Rouge to sit at the United Nations for 12 years. Have they ever expressed any remorse for their actions against the resurrection of the Cambodian people?

As Long As People Voted for Me, I'd Continue, Paving Way for Next Generation

So, this time, I must affirm that *at whatever cost it may be, Hun Sen cannot bow to any oppression that leads to instability and loss of peace. Hun Sen announces again in his hometown, even if my term is extended for a few more years, I will let it be. As long as the people voted for me, I'd continue.* Do not be misled that Hun Sen's health is bad. I am on a stationary bicycling exercise for at least 80 minutes a day, non-stop [...] *let me have a play*

with these extremist thugs (to) protect this peace. Some extremists think that Hun Sen is old. Yes, I am old, but you are older than me [...] I will finish playing with you so that I can pave the way for the next generation.

They seemed to have high hope. A few months ago, they were of this thought that Hun Sen already died. They blamed all photos of me in actions to have been montaged. Already there was drinking in the United States to celebrate Hun Sen's death. Then (every photo of me) became fake ones about Hun Sen, even if I were in the meeting. Everything of or about Hun Sen was fake. It's too bad being a politician that wishes someone to die. I do not wish you to die. I wanted you to watch me talking, inaugurating bridges, roads, schools, hospitals. My journey resume after I have reactivated the country [...]

Covid-19 Consumed US\$ 2.3 B – Enough to Build Many Bridges

I have authorized building roads not for me to just use it. This is a requirement for the people. I'm very sorry that the Covid-19 ate (a sum of money that was enough to build) about 20 bridges – each of which we give a high cost calculation. The bridge here is only about 56 million and the contribution budget that the Ministry of Economy and Finance has calculated, including taxes, to get a good knowledge of how much the bridge costs, so that we could later figure out the capital depreciation. So, this bridge, if you take into account the taxes and the budget, cost in all 71 million dollars. Out of this, we used over 56 million USD as Chinese budget. Why did I bring this up? I have authorized the Ministry of Economy and Finance to save cash. We deducted 400 million USD from the saving account for the purchase of the 400 MW generators from Finland and Germany and placed them near Phnom Penh. In 2018, was the year we lacked electricity. All hydro-power plants dried up. We had to contact Vietnam and Thai-

land for supports. There were shifts of power shortages in Phnom Penh [...]

After that, we threw in to Kampong Som (Preah Sihanoukville), some 400 million USD more. The next spending was when we threw in nearly 200 million USD to Siem Reap. As you can see, for the three direct investment projects, we spent nearly one billion USD. We had about 3.5 billion USD left in cash. What was my goal then? I would use at least two-thirds to forcefully invest in the necessary infrastructures. When the capital or savings reached a certain level, I would point out what to use it for like this bridge or that bridge. My intention was for Prek Tnaot, example, where we now have only a few bridges, to have a bridge every two kilometers from each other. We wanted more bridges for the small river (Tonle Touch), the Pursat river, the Mongkul Borei river, and the Sangke river, at a calculated cost of one million USD each, we would have 100 bridges across rivers, at a cost of 100 million USD. That was my aim and plan. We put more bridges across the Mekong River, the Bassac River, and the Tonle Sap river, but it was expected that the Covid-19 consumed 2,300 million USD [...]

Chinese Friends Provide Loans in Line with Cambodia's Priorities

We have had to ask our Chinese friends for more help. Chinese friends will continue to help according to the projects we have put in place. *The special good point of the Chinese friend is that where Cambodia considers a priority or wants to submit the project with careful study, the Chinese friend gives credit with respect to the wishes of Cambodia. This special point differs from capital sought from other sources that would say there instead of here as we wanted. The difference is in that point. We wanted (the money) here. Chinese friend put it there.* When this road and bridge is completed, our brothers and sisters will make a lot of profit. Now, obviously, before
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crossing the ferry, how much did it cost? With the bridge in place, people here do not have to pay anymore. Previously, it was impossible to cross the river at night by ferry [...]

Take China as a Strategic Reference in Vaccines Supply

I still remember a few workers who passed through the net and got to Kroch Chhmar. According to the report I received they are residents of the commune of Poes and Kroch Chhmar, who came from Phnom Penh. (We were concerned) they could be transmission patients. We took strict measures which include forbidding a large assembly of people too. What Hun Sen hoped to deal with this pandemic challenge the most is vaccines. Through various discussions, I told my colleagues in the government, who have a fairly good acknowledge of my leadership, that *we must use China as a strategic reference in the supply of vaccines, while others are supporting source. If it is given, we take. We review the Covax channel. We thank the World Health Organization for thinking of us, but through the Covax channel, so far less than 1 million doses of vaccine were provided. If we waited for Covax alone, when would we have vaccines for our people? This is the first point. Secondly, we could not search and purchase Pfizer [...] AstraZeneca.* That was how I came up with this decision that we must look to China for vaccines. (China vaccines) assistance was provided, but I told my colleagues that as long as China said they had to sell, we placed our purchase order right in. Sign the contract and pay the shipping fee immediately. We bought 28 million doses with own fund [...]

1.1 M Domestic Tourists Boost Rural and Urban Economy

After we have achieved the inoculation across more than 88% of the population, we first gave it a try to reactivate movements during the Pchum Ben holiday. Of course, if we were

cautious to still forbid crowds the Buddhist temple at that time for concern that there could be breakout in the community, starting from the pagoda. We also sent out messages that find a way for people to celebrate and also to keep themselves safe. That is why some people came as far as the Buddhist pagoda gates to offer alms. We saved lives. We allowed civil servants, workers to take holidays. This was a trial reopening (of activity) during the Pchum Ben holidays. The number of (infections) seemed to have risen slightly, but then decreased. On this note, *I told my colleagues about the Water Festival and worshipping the moon festival that the opportunity has come for us to push for local tourists' activities. Indeed, the three days of the Water Festival, plus one Sunday, more than 1,100,000 people roamed the country, boosting the rural and urban economy.*

Pride 1: 14/16 M Cambodians Vaccinated

Now the wedding music started to sound out. There is now a shortage of wedding priests. It's time to reactivate. However, do not forget about protection. *I am extremely proud. The first pride here is the fact that the Cambodian people, despite some frightened them that the vaccines will kill, out of 16 million people, we vaccinated more than 14 million people. What does that mean?* In the case of the referendum, those who prevented the vaccination were defeated. We have free vaccines for the people. The day before, I broke my Facebook record with more than 200,000 comments and likes. It was about a young kid named Seiha who has his vaccination card in a plastic bag hanging around his neck to prove his vaccination in order to get admission to class [...] *this means that our vaccine is not only available in the city. Our vaccine reaches rural areas and reaches children 6 years of age and older, regardless of political affiliation or color or caste. I would like to thank the Cambodian people for accepting the Royal Government's arrange-*

ments for their own health. This is a great pride.

Cambodia Ranks No. 1 in Asia, No. 5 in the World for Most Vaccinations

Countries are protesting. Demonstration in Europe is in full swing because Europe is closing the countries again. (This closure) generates two currents. Those who refuse to be vaccinated are still protesting and refusing to be vaccinated. While those who have been vaccinated have been unhappy for the fact that they have been vaccinated, why they are not allowed to go out. That is why it is a matter of pride for our nation. We do not have to force. As far as I remember, through comments in my Facebook page, once we sent vaccines to Stung Trang, perhaps for vaccinating people in Peam Koh Sna, I saw comments that *people from Sopheas (of Steung Trang) going for vaccination in Peam Koh Sna. It was because we have issued and implemented this principle that whoever and from anywhere showed up, we must give him/her the vaccination. That's a good point. We mobilized medical staff for the injection and an overwhelming majority of the population participated. That has stood our country the top rank vaccination in Asia and the fifth most vaccinated in the world.*

Pride 2: People Adopted Attitudes Changes, Practice 3 Dos and 3 Don'ts

My second pride is that our people have changed their attitudes and we must dare to acknowledge and encourage this change of attitudes to become a habit of our people. During the Royal Water Festival, floating lanterns, flattened newly harvested rice consumption and moon worshipping holidays, we have observed that people were persistent with their behavioral changes as they had been wearing masks, using alcohol, washing hands, keeping distances, while going out to enjoy the holidays. Yesterday, there were only 37 newly infected cases. Today, we

have 39 cases. All are under 50 cases. I am urging people to continue to adopt this new attitude. This new attitude is for whom? It is not for me. It is primarily for that individual. Mother cannot get sick for children and/or child/ren cannot get sick for mother. This Covid-19 pandemic prevention starts with the fact that each person and each family must know how to protect themselves [...]

Kindergarten for 3 and 4 Years Old on Hold, Nightclub after November 30

For the immediate future, I just suggest that *the kindergarten should not be too fast to open on consideration of 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds kids who have not been vaccinated yet. If it is open for 5-year-old kids, who have already had their vaccination, it does not matter.* We vaccinated children (who are 5 years of age already). For markets, if there is an infected person in one stall, take the infected person for treatment either at home or in hospital, and then disinfect his/her shops. Someone in the family can come and sell instead. We do not have to close the whole market as before. *What remains to be seen are Karaoke, Disco and nightclubs. Those who wanted to go to karaoke, please wait till after November 30. So, in December, we are getting more ready. Only a few days away.* We will reopen. The economy will be back in the current and return to growth.

Economic Growth Predicted to Exceed Plan

In such a situation, *I predict that economic growth, by the end of this year, will be beyond what we put into the plan, which tomorrow will begin to pass the budget law. We set a growth rate of 2.4 percent for 2021. An organization came in with an estimated 2.8 percent. If the economic growth in the last two months of this year is good, I think that our growth could reach around 3%. For next year, we put the growth rate at 4.2 percent. However, I hope that Cambodia's economic*

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growth can exceed 5 percent, as there was organization estimated it would reach 6.8 percent. I can only say that it can be more than 5%. On what ground we are so optimistic? First, the agricultural sector is still operating normally, and even more than planned, while agricultural sector exports are much larger.

Cambodia-China Free Trade Agreement ... Potential for Agricultural Products Export

The day before, in the discussion with our Chinese friend, the Chinese Prime Minister, we will have a package discussion on the issue of direct import of Cambodian agricultural products to China. That day, HE Li Keqiang was interested in longans from Pailin. China will provide online inspections [...] in the past, to relieve lack of market longans, I had to send my bodyguards and money to help buy them in Pailin and to distribute to people in hospitals. The Chinese premier said China would make efforts to buy directly from Cambodia without passing through other countries, where previously some Cambodian goods entered the Chinese market through third countries. Now we go in directly.

With the advent of the Free Trade Agreement between Cambodia and China and between all regional economic partners on January 1, 2022, Cambodia has the potential to further strengthen agricultural sector and agricultural exports, a large part of it would be going to China. We also export good quality rice to Europe. We still have rubber, cashew nut, pepper, rice, mangos ... and even bananas from this area [...]. As for the industrial sector, although workers have had some (jobs) suspensions in the factories, but only a small number remained, there have been additional investments in some other factories, making Cambodian goods exported larger. On this note, agriculture and industry have grown, and only services remain.

Cambodia Ready for Full Vaccinated Tourism

The biggest affected service is tourism. Judging from what we have seen these past days, I think tourism is back. We already restarted local tourism, including more than 10,000 foreigners living in the country. But in the future, we will have tourists coming to our country, without the need to be in quarantines. There are conditions, though. First, they have to have two doses of vaccine in their own country and come with some sort of letter certifying that they are COVID-19 negative. Second, while arriving at the airport, they had to go through a rapid test. (If they are seen) negative, they can go anywhere. Previously, we thought of doing a five-days quarantine in the province (where they planned to stay), but not just in the room. Now it is not necessary (to quarantine them) and they do not even have to take a PCR (test) [...]

RGC Has a Duty to Protect People's Right to Life

We hope that our people found it acceptable when the Royal Government exercised lockdowns which was for the sake of keeping peace and protecting lives of the people. The right to life must be protected. If the government did not take drastic measures at that time, maybe some of our people could not have come today because they could have died of COVID-19. At that particular time, I announced into the night that we were on the brink of death. It was a tough moment as a commander in the fight with invisible enemies. (I had to resort) to preparing everything from the ground for burial and crematorium to coffins. Some had rebuked me for insulting people's lives. They could have seen with their own eyes so far that in Cambodia, no corps have been thrown away. We cremated them. The family of the deceased received two million riels, while another one million Riel is given to the authority for a decent cremation of the COVID-19 patient [...]

500 More Scholarships from China

Indeed, yesterday, HE Xi Jinping announced the Summer Olympics to be held next year. Right now, China, with a population of 1.4 billion people, had yesterday in one day 27 newly infected cases. I looked up in the Worldometer website. This means that China is moving towards zero COVID-19 phase. China will open up opportunities for athletes to compete in China this summer. Yesterday, in my speech, I also called for the relaunch of flights and tourism promotion, but perhaps China may not dare to encourage tourism out of fear of bringing COVID-19 back into China. However, on the day we met, China announced to offer Cambodia (scholarships for) an additional 500 students. Our students will have the opportunity (to get a scholarship to study in China) as they have already been vaccinated [...]

Cambodia Awaits Arrival of Build Back Better World (B3W)

Well, now I'm slowing return to (action again). My working schedules/programs will be ongoing. *The following schedule, we will inaugurate the road and water supply infrastructure on December 2 in Sihanoukville city. After that, on December 6th, there will be a series of programs. In short, we have inauguration programs for infrastructural development (projects only with) China, Japan, and South Korea. Apart from that, there have been declared assistance on this or that but for the infrastructures, mostly China, Japan and Korea have. (South) Korea prepares (for the construction of the) Svay Chrum Bridge and National Road No. 48.*

As of present, *I'm also looking forward to the arrival of the Build Back Better World (or B3W). While welcoming this concept, I also hope that the ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the Foreign Ministers of the G7 rich nations will give Cambodia a chance to get some projects. We still lack bridges and roads. This is within the framework of Cambodian cooperation and lies in the strategy of the China*

Belt and Road Initiative. We did not rule out other projects like Build Back Better World. It is on this note that we are sending out a message. We are ready to always welcome.

If Not on China or Japan, Whom Does Cambodia Rely? Others Do Not Help but Blame

Do not say that we are biased towards China. During a meeting, suddenly someone asked the question "Your Excellency seem to be too close to China?" I said, "If I am not allowed to rely on China, who should I rely on?" I explain about the needs for bridges, roads, and finally about the vaccines. If there were no China, if I do not rely on China, can Cambodia achieve what it did in vaccination so far? Let us be honest. I must also dare to say that the Kizuna Bridge in Kampong Cham at Tonle Bet, if not on Japan, whom should I rely on? The Tsubasa Bridge, at Neak Leung, if not on Japan, whom should I rely on? National Road 1, if not on Japan, whom should I rely on? National Road 5 from Prek Kadam to the Thai border, if not on Japan, whom should I rely on? Let's be honest with each other. We have to rely on those we can count on. Others did not help us and they came to blame us for being close to China. When we got close to Japan, they said we were only close to Japan. But what do you do yourself? I'm not going to blame anyone but just explain clearly.

To Draw a Share from 1,500 M USD from China for ASEAN Development

China has been able to provide us help. Yesterday, *China announced a pledge of 1.5 billion USD for ASEAN to be used for development. China has offered to contribute and announced the sum to be given to ASEAN countries. In that, ASEAN also has Cambodia in it. We must draw a part of it to be used in Cambodia. Today we have this achievement and we will have another achievement that will connect us by road to Chhlong*

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district. That goes for that side. Via Stung Trang and then going up to Chamkar Leu, and up to Kampong Thom, travelers then decide from there where will they go – to Preah Vihear, to Siem Reap or returning to Phnom Penh. How much more freedom in Cambodia? No one contained or confined your movement. Only prisoners are confined. And there are no political prisoners in Cambodia, only politicians convicted with criminal penalties [...]

Prime Minister Hun Sen Leads for a Long Time because He Did Not Betray the King

On my mother's side, my uncle is 100 years old, but by the time he came (for injection), he was probably less than 100 years old. He did not receive (donations) ... I heard that his son had already taken him to see the bridge [...] they can now be aware of Hun Sen's gene. A 98-year-old uncle has not died yet. Why did he wish for Hun Sen to die? There have been three prime ministers originating from this district of Stung Trang – Prime Minister In Tam, Prime Minister Hang Thun Hak and Prime Minister Hun Sen. The two previous Prime Ministers betrayed their owners. His Majesty the King Norodom Sihanouk then supported him to be the provincial governor from Kampong Cham to Battambang, and later to be the Minister of the Interior under his reign. Later on, he became Lon Nol's Minister and overthrew the King Father. Hang Thun Hak seemed to have followed the same path. *Hun Sen did not. (That is why) Hun Sen stayed for a long time, because I have never betrayed anyone. "They overthrew your father. I am calling my children to go the Marquis" the King Father appealed. Hun Sen immediately responded. Well, I did not have the curse from God [...]*

Fight Against Covid-19, Do Not Obstruct Administrative Process for People

There is one more request. I

commend the authorities at all levels, the armed forces of all kinds for their efforts over the past two years. The most recent one has been to facilitate the safe and peaceful travel of the people everywhere. Our brothers and sisters – provincial governors, district governors, village chiefs, commune chiefs, are really tired. *We mobilize the fight against Covid-19. Let me tell you – as we are busy fighting with Covid-19, let us not obstruct the normal functioning of the administrative process, which is the need of the people. The commune chief must have a staff member permanent on site. The commune chief must enter the commune office at 7 am [...]* people need commune chiefs, district chiefs, provincial governors to solve problems. There must be someone to deal with [...] though the government has reduced the number of rallies, but it is still possible to do this online. But at the commune level, it is not possible to do it online because people have to come and meet in person to solve land issues. I have talked about land before and at the inauguration of the Ministry of Land Management's office building. Strive to resolve outside the judiciary [...]

Eliminate Extremism, Ensuring Peace for Cambodia's Future – a Mission

[...] I would send words from here to a niece – Chara, in the United States. About two or three weeks ago she came out and apologized. Someone sent me the clip. First, James Sok or Sok Sokun. Then I received it from Chetra. I watched it. In the clip, she apologized to me for insulting "Monsieur Hun Sen in the past, while her boss never did." By bosses, she meant Reagan, Obama, Donald Trumps, or Joe Biden. Let me send words to this niece that she has no need to apologize to this uncle. This uncle has never seen you insult him. Uncle did not watch. When you talked with reasons, I watched [...] she was born in the United States and speaks unclear Khmer. *Thank you and do not worry [...]* it is with this note that I must contin-

ue in the mission to eliminate the extremism of some people to ensure peace for Cambodia development in the future.

January 1, 2022: Take Over Rotating ASEAN Chair; November 25: Chair of ASEM

Whatever they say. They pool on international pressure. Come on. Some people dare to say that even ASEAN does not want (me) to attend the meeting. As (I represent Cambodia) I am becoming the chair of ASEAN. From January 1 onwards, I will show my face. I have received the hammer, but I have not used it yet because it is still used by the Sultan of Brunei. Yesterday, the Sultan of Brunei and President Xi Jinping co-chaired the Special Summit to commemorate the 30th anniversary of China-ASEAN dialogue relations. From January 1, Hun Sen will use the hammer. (How come they misunderstood this that) the chairperson of ASEAN could not attend the ASEAN meeting. That was helpless. How could they deceive people with that? The next 25 days (I will be representing Cambodia) and chair the Asia-Europe Meeting. We can see now that the registrar continues in alphabetical order. The German Chancellor, the President of France from Europe and there are 52 countries from Asia [...]

From a "Dictator's Mouth" to Revoke US citizenship

Now they are threatening to remove anyone who supports the CPP and/or the government. They would revoke American citizenship. There they come, President Joe Biden. Withdrawing American nationality from Cambodians who support the Royal Government. (I really admire him for) he could have said that. That stirs reactions from the Cambodian people, including this niece Chara. There have been strong reactions from Cambodians living abroad. Some of you here are also of dual nationality – Sun Chanthol is Cambodia American, Pan Sosak, a Cambodian American [...]

Why did he threaten stripping their nationalities while he is

not even in power? To threaten to revoke US citizenship instead of the US government, what kind of people are they? [...] it has come from dictatorial mouths and dictatorship starts from the mouth [...] Their argument was that "China is an enemy of the United States. If any Cambodians support Hun Sen's government, s/he is also an enemy of the United States that the United States must revoke its citizenship." You know little about the leaders of the United States and China. The day before Xi Jinping and Joe Biden met, they had a clear approach to managing Sino-US relations. Despite the rivalry, the two have decided not to clash [...]/👁

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not for that generation. We put it in the Constitution not for just today, not for 5 years, for 10 years but another 100 years to avoid any influence through the role of the Prime Minister, the President of the National Assembly, the President of the Senate, and the President of the Constitutional Council [...] What we are doing is not referring to anyone. The biggest goal is to defend this nation to avoid foreign interference and you have to show loyalty to the nation, do not leave the people. Leave a passport that has no place to run and stay with the people. That has to be clear [...]

1 The day before, just as (the US President) Joe Biden came to the ASEAN-US meeting, some went on live shows taking about Joe Biden "would put pressure on ...". *I went in first and suddenly Joe Biden came in. I raised my hand as welcoming sign to him. There is nothing wrong. He is the President of the United States. He is not the President of Cambodia. (I am the) Prime Minister that represents Cambodia. We met in two meetings – ASEAN-US Summit, and the one with East Asia. Why in the ASEAN-US and East Asia Summits, the issue is about putting pressure on Cambodia? They have the political morality of a leader. I do not understand [...]/👁*

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olds, we inject the 4-year-olds. It is also a possibility. There are up to three possibilities that can happen here.

The first possibility is that the chances of getting vaccinated are high because (some) countries are vaccinated (children from the age of 2) and the availability of vaccine allows us to vaccinate children as young as 3 years old. The second possibility is not to inject the 3-year-olds but to inject from the age of 4 [...] and the third possibility is not to inject them, but that will be a bad choice, because these grandchildren have to go to kindergarten [...]

For the fourth dose, we know that we have a budget pressure. It is difficult for us, but the Royal Government may reduce other expenses to get money to buy vaccines. *We can still do it. That the government goes bankrupt is not going to happen. At least we still earn an average of USD 400 million per month, although the last two months we earned less than USD 400 million, it is close to USD 400 million per month. Therefore, the Royal Government cannot become a bankrupt government.* However, it has shrunk our investment and expenses in other areas. We have to reduce those expenses. We are now drastically reducing the recruitment of staff in various institutions, because the staff burden should be kept low so that the staff burden is not too heavy [...]

The Royal Government will make efforts with the support of development partners, including the Asian Development Bank, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, who have supports for the vaccination process. *We have not spent their money yet but we have the ability to spend that money. There could probably be questions whether we are going to spend their money. I think that when the time has come, we will ask companies take responsibility for their employees with regard to their vaccination according to their choices ... they may want to use Pfizer, Moderna, Astra-*

Zeneca, etc. [...]

Now is the time for us to help the people. We used to help not only vaccinate them, now we spend USD 40 million a month to feed them. What are we afraid of in doing this much? Private companies think they can afford to do this. When it is required to have the fourth dose, I think by then our economic performance will increase our income. At that time, the payment would be possible. We used to earn USD 500 to USD 700 million a month, before Covid-19. We still make USD 400 to USD 500 million/month. When we reopen the economy, I hope it revives our income. It is as if the business only pays the medicine bill.

Let me tell you that the saving we have used so far was more than USD 3,500 million. *What Hun Sen wanted to do was an explosion like a landmine. It means that within a few years, we would have built the bridges across the Mekong, Tonle Sap, and Tonle Bassac rivers [...] by own money and none from foreign sources [...] unfortunately, we had to spend the money on Covid-19.* That was the reason why I tried to keep up the savings. We are lucky to have done so, though. With savings on one side and we have sources of supply that we can buy on the other. Not a wastage way in economic management. Some say that the Hun Sen government is about to go bankrupt. Please wait. If the Hun Sen government has not gone bankrupt, you are where you are and I am still me [...]

... As for the economic process, I have already stated that our industry is operating normally and there are more investments, especially the garment industry. *Our garment and footwear exports are growing with new investments. Our agriculture is in full swing. What suffered a big impact was the service sector, mainly tourism sector, which causes loss of employment leading to loss of income. Once the people lose income, the state revenue does too. However, some in service sector are still running normally,*

including those that are profitable in this process. For instance, information technology related business makes more and more money in time, because everything depends on it. As you know, smart phone is now like a money pouch [...]

Tourism services, restaurants, etc. have had serious impacts. So far, we have put efforts in promoting domestic tourism. It is an integral part to our economy. If this domestic tourism recovers to its state before Covid-19, our economy will spread from urban to rural. Now, because our people cannot travel abroad for tourism purpose, it is a good opportunity for them to get to know their own country. That makes our community with tourist areas benefits, our people have better knowledge of their own country [...] then income will increase, jobs will be restored, factories are operating normally, people are selling things near factories and workers are still working, and support services such as shopkeepers, inns are still in businesses. Our revenue will increase [...]

We are going to open a safe tourism or vaccination tourism that attracts tourists from abroad. We are planning further details. We have already arranged to allow vaccination tourism in Kampong Som or Sihanoukville first. Based on experiences from Sihanoukville, we will be set to open vaccination tourism in Siem Reap and even in Phnom Penh where there are direct flights. We will be able to make adjustments. We would administer a 5 days quarantine, during which tourists would not be locked in the room. They could travel and visit places [...]

The hotel sector resumes functioning and so does the civil aviation sector. That is the beginning of economy. The point that we suffered hard is not industry and agriculture, and not the 20% of EBA loss ... We are not dead because of the 20% EBA loss and on the contrary, *the supply chain has now turned to Cambodia because Brazil, Bangladesh, Vietnam,*

Myanmar, etc., have not been able to do their parts. In just a few months, how many factories have been set up in Cambodia? This is a market demand, not a political demand that you sanction with this or that much EBA. You raised taxes on us and your people suffer. Where they used to buy one item for USD 100, now the same item would add another USD 20. They had to pay USD 120 [...]

In addition, we have signed with China and South Korea, which in coming January, the comprehensive economic partnership will enter into force after the ratification by ASEAN countries and partners. Our market is becoming more wide open. We strive to produce to import into those markets. We must strive on how to make our products compete in the international markets. No matter what some may say but Cambodia is like that. Again, we would not absolutely trade national sovereignty for aid or anything [...]

In construction, I asked, they are still building houses. They are still selling houses. The good thing now is [...] while before Cambodians with money would take them abroad, now they cannot deposit them in foreign banks. According to information from the Banks Association, currently a sum of some USD 37 Billion are sitting in banks waiting for borrowers. Those who have money now do not have to invest in foreign countries like in the previous generations. Where does the money go? They keep it in the local banks. Some would buy houses [...] to sell for profit after one year or so [...]

Let me now talk on issue what to do if something happens. I think we all must be aware that *no one knows what else would have happen after Covid-19. We cannot give it a correct guess. It could be that Covid-19 may subsided to become a Covid-19 cold [...] or suddenly something else happened. At that time, we will examine how to respond.* Here we are just talking about the way things are

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now and in such a case, if a few people found infected, we do not need to close the whole market. However, for example, suddenly a disease occurs, and only by touching each other, immediately people are in seizures and falling over, then it would be necessary to lock down to protect people's lives. Such diseases, however, may not occur yet. Let me just clarify this much.

Fresh News: [...] *I am very proud of Samdech's leadership that because of it, Cambodia can better manage the situation of Covid-19 ... Could you please share with us, as a leader, how important was it and what are the bases for making the decision to succeed in managing situations, such as managing the Covid-19 situation? [...]*

Another question [...] Would Samdech help clarify that so far, how much money has the Royal Government of Cambodia spent to fight Covid-19 disease and on other current costs, such as support for vulnerable people as well as workers, etc. [...]

Finally [...] students who have to take the 12th grade exam make a request to Samdech [...] that since their learning seemed to have many problems during the outbreak of Covid-19 disease [...] they wanted to ask Samdech whether they can be allowed to pass automatically like last year or not? [...]

Answer: Thanks for asking about basis (on which a leader would have to make a correct decision). Making decision on a particular issue is an important issue to be a leader. Whether you are a leader for a country, or even within a family, it is an important thing to do and to be careful because decisions bring good and bad results [...] *certain way of management would bring consequences or benefits for the place. The decision made in position as the leader of the country is even more important and must-be-right to make. To begin with, it is important to have subjective*

and objective understanding of the situation. In my life, I may have decided on many big issues related to my life and the life of the nation [...]

When I was only 25 years old, (the decision that I had to make was) what should I do to liberate this country and this people from the Pol Pot regime? From what/where would I start? I needed to assess the situation and figure out steps to take. I used to say it already about the choices I had. With forces under my command, a fight could be my first choice. The second option was to leave and lead the resistance again. The third option was to let the Khmer Rouge capture and kill without doing anything. The fourth option is to commit suicide. In the end, I took the second option, which was to organize the struggle that led to the liberation of the country [...]

I am proud of the mechanism of the Royal Government, by which the Ministry of Health serves as its staff officer and other relevant parties involved jointly make proper assessment of the situation. We do not work alone. We need to have enough inputs. We do not work without proper study of the situation, without data in hand or with nothing in hand. Some people think that Cambodia or Prime Minister Hun Sen just do whatever his mind led him. That's your story. My story is my colleagues have jobs to carry out. Some skipped their sleep to make proper evaluation. On the vaccine issue, for instance, many countries have adopted the wrong way. So far, even with money, they cannot purchase their needed vaccines. Cambodia – a poor country with a weak health system, has instead achieved the vaccine coverage rate of over 85%.

This is because we have learned that if we depend on so and so country, it will definitely be impossible. We then set our goals, for example, that China is a strategic reference source in the supply of vaccines, and other sources as supporting ones. (This decision) starting from what? It was starting from

us studying the different partners [...] just now I talked about *purchasing another three million doses of vaccine from Sinovac. That was starting from the reason of the promises made that we cannot know when they will become true. Cambodia cannot take the risk of lacking vaccines [...]* this is an experience sharing. *Whatever comes out of the informative assessment of the situation would allow us to take correct measures [...]*

The second point of expenditure already spent, let ask the Minister of Economy and Finance, last year we spent USD 821 million. This year, as of now, we have spent USD 920 million. Until end of the year, let us say we spent USD 1.5 billion. Together, we would have spent more than USD 2 billion to control the situation. I cannot let people go to the hospital and get hungry there. They have three good meals [...] (the state) feed them well so they will recover soon and can return home [...] in Phnom Penh cost of feeding was more expensive than in the provinces, where they spent Riels 30,000 per person a day [...]

I am very happy that even HM the King and HM the Queen Mother always check on what we have done and help [...] with the encouragement and support of HM the King and the encouragement of Luang Mae (Queen Mother), the Prime Minister works in coherence with colleagues as one flesh and one blood. *Of course, there was times when, as I say, 95 percent of the time I was staff officer and only 5 percent did by the ministry, but that was how we learnt from each other and learn to work together [...]*

Now, how prepared are we? Miss Reaksa from BTV already asked how prepared are we. I said something already above and I would now like to emphasize that we have strengthened hospitals at the provincial and regional levels to avoid transporting patients to Phnom Penh. We did it in Battambang and Siem Reap provinces. We have oxygen production facilities in

the provinces. We are now preparing for the treatment of 50,000 with this American drug as the first step [...]

Our expenses figure is reasonable. *This year we may have spent USD 1,500 million while we spent USD 800 million last year. In rounded figure, we would have spent altogether USD 2.3 billion. One may say the Hun Sen government is about to go bankrupt. Let them say it. We still, however, have our income. I just beg the civil servants and the Armed Forces that the state does not increase their salaries in 2021 and in 2022. In addition, we will not recruit civil servants [...] to save money to solve Covid-19 first [...]*

Talking about (senior secondary school) exams. There have been comments in my Facebook page, but I do not answer. They are asking for consideration of letting them pass automatically (without taking exams) [...] my grandchildren, if you only think about passing while not learning, what could you do? No, we will arrange for an exam. Last year there was a good reason (to allow passing automatically) because students did learn a lot and they stopped because of Covid-19 only for a short while. At that time, we could not organize exams [...] because of community event breakout. We skipped the exams. We allowed them all to pass, but without a score [...]

As for this year, you have to study hard to get to the exam. If you do not pass the exam this year, next year you will study for the exam again [...] if possible, let us say we can reschedule the exam dates to a later date and that would depend on the Minister of Education. My suggestion was that you should speed up direct learning in preparation for the exam [...] I am asking for this understanding. It is for your own lives, not for anyone else [...]

The Senate will meet tomorrow. *(The topic of dual citizenship issue is) for the long-term future of the country. We do it*

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