

Groundbreaking Construction of Phnom Penh Overpass 7 and 8

(31 August 2022 — Extensive Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)



Preah Monivong Overpass and Kong Sam Ol Overpass – Roads Are Not Up for Transportation Demand

[...] since these bridges have long names, I would like to suggest we call the first bridge “Preah Monivong Flyover/Overpass” [...] and the second bridge [...] “Kong Sam Ol Overpass” [...] it is not that we are starting, but continuing to build rather. We continue to build the necessary infrastructure. Where does it start? Why do we have to build these overpasses? It is clear that it starts from the fact that we are finding a way to respond to the need. This is an era where we have different demand from the past. Thirty years ago, our needs were the main link between supply and demand in terms of food, education, health and other areas, including housing. At present, we are launching the construction for this infrastructure due to the need for travel and the lack of roads or overpasses [...]

The requirements for each stage are not the same. What makes such a difference? In the 1980s and 1990s, we were addressing the imbalance between demand for food supply. The population is growing and there is a short-

age of food. Today, food is not a problem for us [...] we have more than 6.6 million tons of dry season rice, which is about 4.2 million tons of rice left. On the contrary, we are facing the travel needs of the people. Not that (the people) lack the means (of transportation), but the need of the roads since they are not yet compatible with the means of transportation (that the people) have. Narrow roads need to be widening and/or more flyovers to build.

Today’s flyover is different from the flyover of the past [...] we named this three-story flyover the Preah Monivong flyover because (it was King Preah Monivong) who built the first bridge in this area in the history of our country. It is here that I want to emphasize that the progress of the nation has led to a change in supply and demand [...] there are (problems of imbalance) between more mechanical transportation and travel means to the narrow roads that we need to expand. The growth has led to such changes [...]

Proceeds from Investment Cooperation Used in Infrastructural Development to Expand Economic Growth

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Acceptance of RUPP Honorary Doctorate in Development

(05 August 2022 — Extensive Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

As long as I Can Breathe, I Will Continue to Study

First of all, let me express my deep gratitude to the Royal University of Phnom Penh for deciding to award me the honorary doctorate in Development. I would like to thank the Board of Directors of the Royal Academy (of Cambodia), especially the Ministry of Education, for evaluating my works and deciding to award me the honorary doctorate [...] I would like to thank His Excellency Dr. Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, for concluding excellent remarks and I am satisfied with the five assessments related to my character, which has made me a lifelong learner, not just today. I still believe in myself that as long as I can breathe, I will continue to study.

I would like to thank the university leadership as well as the professors at the university for giving me a high rating, and

starting from the Royal University of Phnom Penh that I had a basis for seeking a postgraduate opportunity, a PhD in Political Science. That picture (right there) is the one that I did my bachelor’s dissertation here before proceeding to getting a doctorate in political science. Of course, so far, according to what has been published in this book, I have received at least ten honorary degrees, two of which are in the country and several others from foreign institutions [...]

Two Factors Allow Cambodia to Hold the ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh

What I should talk about today, since it is quite a broad topic. This draft speech is not enough for me to say. What should I share during our get-togethers? I would like to take a practical topic that is happening right now to share and point out that one of the successes associated with the development or political leadership in the country and abroad is that Cambodia is now organizing the ASEAN meeting and the relevant meetings with external partners, the superpowers included, who gathered for meetings in Phnom Penh. I should share this to point out why Hun Sen is so resolute with (bringing Cambodia) into ASEAN [...] Before getting to that point, I should clarify a bit why we can have these (ASEAN) MM and related meetings in Phnom Penh after a three-year interruption or maybe two years – in 2020-21. ASEAN did not meet in person due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Cambodia is now hosting a live meeting in Phnom Penh. What

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Puthisastra University Graduation

(17 August 2022 — Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

Covid-19 Leads to Concerns over Human Resource Training

First of all, I would like to express my appreciation for the leadership of the board, the management, as well as the efforts of the professors in this university, that despite the crisis of Covid-19, they are still struggling to keep the university working. *The major concern in*

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[...] We have already built and put into use five overpasses, while the 6th one is under construction. We are launching the construction of the 7th and 8th overpasses today and we may continue to build more when we see there are needs [...] where does our budget come from?

The history of the construction of flyovers and some infrastructure in Phnom Penh requires the “use of palm leaf to pack the palm sugar” methods. It means taking the money made in the city to build the city itself. Through cooperation with OCIC, we have used the proceeds from Koh Pich revenue, from Koh Nora revenue, from Chroy Changvar revenue to build this necessary infrastructure. My strict order has been not to use the benefits from these investments for current expenses but only in infrastructure to boost economic growth.

So far, we have spent a budget of more than 226 million US dollars, that we have granted the right for investment to OCIC, to build both the bridges over the river and the flyovers ... five bridges across the river, and 8 flyovers [...] it has not only become a city inhabited by many but also where we organized international convention [...] ASEAN is scheduled to meet at the Sokha Hotel (at Chroy Changvar) and also host a big party at the OCIC. Just the taxes that come out of it, it is also part of the state revenue. I am not talking about the income of the business profit. I am just talking about the income from the property tax. That is the way to use money to make money, which is the meaning of the development [...]

Establishing a New City in Kandal Province in Consideration;

Subway May Be an Option for Cambodia in the Future;

Three More Bridges in Demand

[...] From more than 300 square kilometers, Phnom Penh is now reaching 700 square

kilometers. This is an increase in both size and depth, expansion and intensiveness. I have already issued sub-decrees five times on cutting off land from Kandal for Phnom Penh [...] So far, we have conducted study aimed at building the district of Lvea Em into a city a city [...] I have made it clear with Samdech Krola Haom Sar Kheng that after the study, the city will not be attached to Phnom Penh. We will keep it under the Kandal province. We will not attach it to Phnom Penh anymore. Let Kandal province have their taxes [...] the governor of Lvea Em district, I suppose if that happens, becomes the mayor [...]

[...] Oknha Pung Kheav Sae introduced one of his engineers who graduated here and then went to Japan to study design [...] in the past, it was not the right subject. Making the subway is also not in demand. Now the need for subways is obvious. *Phnom Penh's real possibilities [...] is perhaps the subway. Subway can be connected from Phnom Penh to Kandal province (and to other provinces) and run contiguous in Phnom Penh, maybe (make a railway line) below. I do not know which generation, but the current generation of young engineers can foresee it [...]*

I should take this opportunity to add that *in Phnom Penh, there is a need for up to three more bridges. The first bridge is under negotiation and seeking approval. The study is done by the Republic of Korea, linking Phnom Penh to Svay Chrum.* When I met former President Moon Jae-in, I asked him to take the option of connecting this bridge from the night market at the Phnom Penh Old Market to Chroy Changvar and up from Chroy Changvar to Svay Chrum. I hope our Korean friend will continue to give attention to helping us build that bridge, which will be called the Cambodia-Korea Friendship Bridge.

The second bridge, we need, maybe from the Ta Koy (commune) crossing the Mekong River to the other side to

ensure traffic diversions. And on the Bassac river, both the Monivong Bridge and the Takhmao Bridge solved the problem, but the traffic is far heavy to resolve. That is why I instructed HE Sun Chanthol to negotiate with the Chinese side.

We will build another four lanes bridge around Prek Pra, which is 845 meters long, [...] at an estimated cost of US\$ 60 million, the price is being negotiated. We consider that it is our priority too, if the Chinese friends agree with this project, we may launch the construction site next year [...]

Land Use Allocation, 5 Types of Forests, 13 Types of Agricultural Crops Land

[...] Say Samal, Minister of the Environment [...] wrote me briefly about the distribution of land use in Cambodia in 2022, in terms of where we are now? [...] in calculating the increasing number of dwellings or infrastructure, crops and land use, generally speaking, land use. What is not found yet is how much land has been taken up by roads in Cambodia? How much land taken up by canals in Cambodia? [...] from January to April 31, 2022, the dry season, we have had 491,253 hectares of surface water left, 661,651 hectares of grassland, and 377,357 hectares of residential land, which is an increase in the number of land areas inhabited by people. This number will continue to increase [...]

we have recorded five different types of forest – Type 1 – jungle is 3,572,513 hectares; Type 2 – green forest covers 37,495 hectares; Type 3 – semi-dense forest covers 1,444,539 hectares; Type 4 – flooded forest covers 719,668 hectares; and Type 5 – mangrove forest covers 78,913 hectares, [...] some forests are lost, but they are replaced by rubber, [...] by cashew nut, by palm oil. Development is like that [...]

Hope Countries Where Cambodian Workers Quit Jobs Do Not File a Claim for Compensation or Associate that with Other Cambodian

Workers;

Intention to Turn from Superstition into Politics;

Two Orders

[...] What has been happening over the past week [...] let the Government of the Republic of Korea, Japan, Thailand, especially the Republic of Korea, allow me to apologize for the shortcomings of Cambodian workers, who was cheated and quit their jobs there and returned home. *I am begging the governments of those countries [...] do not file a claim for compensation from the Cambodian government or from employees who have run away from their jobs, and please do not associate other Cambodian workers with workers who make mistakes due to Brahma deception in Cambodia [...]*

I do not dare to conclude that (Khem Veasna – President of LDP) has no conscience or is insane. I do not dare to judge because I am not a psychiatrist. However, *Khem Veasna at least did not call for people to overthrow the government. He did not call for the people to revolt and overthrew the government like someone else. He did not call for the armed forces to point their guns to destroy the government. He did not call for foreigners to cut off aid from Cambodia. He only enticed people with his superstition that everyone in the world will be drown and die, and only his place is safe [...]*

At the time that the event broke out, *I gave only two orders. Order 1 – be careful to keep security as the third hand may use that time to destroy our people [...] because it can see the gathering without permission [...] order 2 – people should not try to seize land in Run Ta Ek village where we are distributing land to people who move out of Siem Reap Angkor area [...] if anyone goes to occupy land [...] we must take immediate legal action [...] in addition, we must work hard to provide security, including*

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checking to see if there are any sick people, because they all are our citizens whom he cheated to come over [...] Khem Veasna does not belong to an extremist group. If he is extremist, he is extremist only in terms of religion/faith. He only wants to establish the religion of Brahma of Khem Veasna himself [...]

I would like to call on all the families who have some differences, not to break up the family, and to reunite the family. Their partners may have misunderstood and been misled but it is now over. Let them – husband and wife – be back together. Local people, do not discriminate them for the fact that they got lost and deceived, and let us all pretend that nothing happened. S/he may have had wrong beliefs, but we must be clement, besides, I told the governor to arrange transportation for those who have no transportation to go home by using the military vehicle of the 4th military region and the 2nd division [...] Let us get ready and be helpful to transport people to the local level, and when transporting, let us provide them with rice and water, and some may also have small children. Take them homes, and ask the village/commune people there not to discriminate against these people, this is the most appropriate solution [...]

I am calling on His Excellency Khem Veasna or I may call him brother Khem Veasna to end the call (for people to come to his farm), and please do not confine the people in there [...] let the people return home. Khem Veasna [...] may keep his faith, but he should be open that whoever wants to listen (may stay), and who does not want to listen may leave and go home [...]

Hun Sen's Children Respect Family Hierarchy;

Hun Manet's Visit to Vietnam;

Miss Grand Cambodia Controversies;

Son Under the Full Moon Could Be on Screen within a

Year More;

Maintaining Roads for Durability

The fact that I am addressing Khem Veasna as Excellency, or even brother, would make some people (interpret) that we belong to the same mind and they would cling to the interpretation that I was behind all (Khem Veasna's) doing. Yesterday something happened regarding my two children. It is a coincidence. Mr. Chhay Sophal wrote a book about the eldest son of the Prime Minister. Mr. Leang De Lux wrote a book about Hun Many. According to the Cambodian Daily, my two children are running in competition for prime minister position. (They concluded that) there is an internal family dispute and Mr. Hun Sen must come out and mediate.

If your family is in that pattern, please do not think of my family as your family [...] my family is different. My children, my grandchildren, I only talk about my children and grandchildren, they have their hierarchy. They (the younger brothers) listen to their elder brother. He has no ambition to be prime minister instead of his elder brother. Initially, they only analyze about the inside of CPP. They guessed that within CPP there is no agreement in appointing Manet (as future Prime Minister candidate). Now they go further to put Hun Manet and Hun Many in the spotlight about competing to become prime minister, and the family disputes has been serious that requires Hun Sen to come out and mediate [...]

Last night, I added the analysis of Manet's visit to Vietnam. I explained once, and yesterday on his visit to Laos, I posted it again [...] they only talked about the visit to Vietnam, but they did not mention Manet's visit to Japan, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, and now in Laos, and before long, he will visit India. In Laos, the prime minister and the president received him. What does that mean? For the visit to Japan, Japan had sent a plane fetch Manet to Japan

because there were no flights at that time (due to Covid-19). At the end of the visit, the plane had to bring Manet back to Phnom Penh without paying a penny. Japan is in charge. The Cambodian government did not rent a plane for the army chief for the flight. Why not take it for analysis. Why did Japan treat Manet like that? In Singapore, the prime minister, defense minister and the foreign minister have greeted him. In Japan, too, the prime minister, the foreign minister and the defense minister have received him. In Thailand, the Deputy Prime Minister received. While in Vietnam, he met with the Minister of Defense and the President, some commented he went there to receive orders from Vietnam [...] I would also like to ask Lok Chumteav Phoeung Sakona (Minister of Culture and Fine Arts) to review about (the Miss Grand Cambodia contest program) [...] I have seen comments posted and exchanged in the social media. Can you have a meeting on that to find out how did that happen? [...] that is the duty of the Ministry of Culture and you should get to work immediately. Would you be observing a bit in the future?

I do not make judgment, but the public opinion has been so disappointing. We need to listen to this and make adjustments. The actress who are going on stage are not at fault, because they are asked to perform. They have to wear what they have been told to. If they do not wear it, it is not a standard match. It is not wrong for the kids who joined the competition, but the leaders are [...]

The movie (Son Under the Full Moon) is in the making. Out of the 1,270 scenes, we are now writing more scenes [...] and we have shot only some 300 scenes. It will take about another year for this story to be on screen. The most difficult job is to find an actor or actress, why? Many are too fat and are too beautiful. That is why when I met the actors, I said that we may have to discipline actors for 6 months in order for them to fit into the story correctly.

Some characters are too beautiful. No matter how we painted them, they are still beautiful [...]

I should [...] ask the district governors, as well as the capital governors and other deputy governors who are especially responsible for public works to see the roads. I urge you to look at the road. The day before, the mayor of Takhmao was removed. Why? He was removed due to the fact that he failed to look at the road [...] the Royal Government has prepared to amend the law to increase the number of seats for the capital-province-town-district-khan, because there are more and more works since we transfer power from the top to the bottom. This transfer (of power) is not for you to sit and play chess [...] heaps of works transferred to the local level [...]

You just need to see which road needs to be repaired, [...] do not collate with each other or just wait for the Ministry of Public Works to come down and do it. It is not just Phnom Penh or Kandal province (but) all the provinces responsible for looking at road in their areas. Some roads may have a hole of a cup size today [...] but the next day or week it will turn out to be a buffalo swamp, if we do not repair it in time. While we have more/longer roads, we also have more need for repair. There must be a responsibility to maintain it to make the road durable [...] ■

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Ukrainian ports to other countries, reducing external food shortages. For the ASEAN region, food is not too big a problem. Asians are producing a lot of rice, especially among ASEAN countries (such as) Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, and even Laos also produce enough. Of the four countries alone, not less than 15 million tons of rice are left. Besides India is the country with the most rice (left). The problem of food shortage is not a big problem, but the big concern is related to oil, which can bring about inflation [...] ■

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are the factors that enable us to open (ASEAN) meetings and bring together participants within the framework of ASEAN family partners and external developed partners, among which, in terms of the permanent members of the Security Council, three superpowers are present? [...]

The biggest factor is safety. This safety [...] is possible because of the peace that we have won with difficulties and we have protected it vehemently. Some countries do not require us to provide a bullet proof car [...] this factor of peace and political stability provides an opportunity for an external (security) assessment of our partners to come to the Kingdom of Cambodia for a meeting. More importantly (we) observed that our partners, such as the Vice President of the European Commission in charge of foreign policy and security, before coming to Phnom Penh, he visited (temples in) Siem Reap. Yesterday he bragged to me that he was flying 12 hours to visit the temples. I told him that he has beaten me because I have never traveled much in connection with the temples. The Indian Foreign Minister, also a superpower, went and dined at the Kravan temple at night.

If there is no peace in this country, not to mention those leaders representing the country and the European Union to go there, even tourists do not dare to travel. That is why we need to see the importance of peace, which I always say, "let us not wait until we lost peace to cry and seek for it." We must safeguard peace because peace relates with human life and the country's development [...] peace (and security) the first factor that gives us the opportunity to hold meetings in the country with external partners to be present, except for the Philippines, where her foreign minister is Covid-19 positive Kovid-19 [...] – other than that, we have here foreign ministers from Russia, China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, US, India and Pakistan came

and other foreign ministers of some European countries who came to sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia.

What is the second factor? That has to do with how we put Covid-19 under control.

Previously, we did not have the ability to convene meetings in person, even as we chair the Asia-Europe Meeting in 2021, we met online. We called it a hybrid meeting because we had both live and online meetings. We dare not do it. But because we are able to put Covid-19 under control, we have been able to reopen the economy and everything, including the reopening of schools. (On the school matter,) I was very concerned as I fear of losing the pace of human resource development. As His Excellency Hang Chuon Naron just said in his speech, he used to receive my message that I sent to him at 1 am, and that was the stage where we had to work like that [...]

If our country is still in danger of death of Covid-19, we do not have time to hold such a meeting, and other countries are afraid to travel to Cambodia. Of course, the disease is not over yet, but such security provides an opportunity for meetings and friends who are partners in the world to come to Cambodia. This is why I wanted to say it is our success, which gives us (the possibility of organizing) these meetings (and they are based on two reasons) **the security that I divide into two parts: safety and peace, political stability, security, order, society, on the one side, and the control of Covid-19 on the other side [...]**

Four Factors for Cambodia to Join ASEAN

Now I would like to point out to all those who (have) participated as well as those who listened outside on the point of why Prime Minister Hun Sen decided to join ASEAN. What are the reasons and factors behind pushing us to join ASEAN? There are 4 things I should share and I used to share with

our officials (already) especially the youth team before they participated in the ASEAN-Japan Peace Boat [...] **the first factor is the principle of non-interference in internal affairs [...]** it is very attractive point. If we do not enter this association, we are alone outside. We are in isolation in the region. This point is an important part of attracting us to become a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

What is the second factor? That is the community spirit.

What I want to say about the community spirit is that I want to talk about how to work by consensus. This is the point that attracts us to ASEAN. I should point out that in 2007 we were divided over whether to work by consensus or by majority vote [...] in Cebu, Philippines 2007, again some raised this issue on how should we (take a decision) – by minority vote or what? I said that if we use the principle of minority vote, ASEAN will be divided. Deciding something (by) voting will always bring forth a majority and minority. It can easily lead to division. We use the principle of consensus, although it is a bit slow, but it ensures strong unity among the ASEAN families. My suggestion was accepted. So far, the spirit of the community spirit working through consensus continues to have its value, and that is why Cambodia has joined ASEAN.

The third factor [...] related to socio-economic development through the promotion of integration.

It can be seen that we have old and new members of ASEAN. The old ASEAN is more developed and the new ASEAN is less developed. Although Vietnam entered first, Vietnam is considered as the new ASEAN who is lagging behind. Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia are both least developed countries. When we join ASEAN, we have achieved economic development, especially in the field of human resource development, which has now been demonstrating Cambodia's capabilities in interna-

tional and regional affairs and is in full swing [...] socio-economic development within the framework of AFTA, the ASEAN Free Trade Area [...] provides Cambodia with the opportunity to develop from its membership in ASEAN.

What is the fourth factor? That is Cambodia's vast diplomatic exit.

ASEAN has so many partners, as soon as Cambodia joins ASEAN, Cambodia has a wide range of partners, whereas existing partners in dialogue with ASEAN – in Europe, US, China, Korea and Japan – become our partners. We also wanted to invite the African side to join. In 2002, when we held the ASEAN Summit and related summits, we also hosted the first ASEAN-Africa meeting, represented by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, in Phnom Penh within the framework of which Cambodia chaired the meeting at the time.

Cambodia Capable to Respond and Coordinate Meetings with Unprecedented Topics

These four points give us the opportunity to implement domestic and foreign policies together to accelerate Cambodia's progress. In actuality, people see clearly now that our friends and partners have come to Phnom Penh. If we do not join ASEAN, why do these people need to come to Cambodia? That is one of the points of Hun Sen's political decision, it is not too common [...] I should also say a little bit that our friends are all tolerant of us, realizing that during Cambodia's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2022, there are many hot topics that have never happened before. Even arranging a seat is difficult because there is now conflict in Europe and in some places. They do not want to sit next to each other. It is not easy, and making a statement is not easy too. Cambodia however has made efforts to respond and mediate that.

This year, we already met with a partner, the United States, in

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May, in Washington. It was in that meeting that we have decided to upgrade ASEAN-US relations to a strategic partnership. This is something we have already done, but *apart from this meeting in Phnom Penh (in) November, we still have to organize another meeting and co-chair, and that will be the ASEAN and Europe meeting in Brussels, at the EU headquarters [...] as the chair of ASEAN, I received an invitation from the G20 countries [...] to attend the G20 summit, and I also received an invitation from the APEC chair (for a meeting) in Thailand [...] where all these start – they are starting from our right decision to become a member of ASEAN. Hopefully you students and those who listened to this speech should know what (factors) are attracting us into the ASEAN framework [...]*

Establishment of RCEP Secretariat with Phnom Penh Proposed

My sharing is for our understanding of ASEAN, which this year we host, and we must continue to address issues within our framework [...] Cambodia has an ambition to become the location of the 15-member RCEP Secretariat. RCEP has 10 ASEAN members nations and 5 partners – China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. We would like to have a separate RCEP Secretariat and Phnom Penh would be a good location. While working with our ASEAN partners, we also work with others. I have already made a proposal with China. I have made a proposal with Australia. Tomorrow I will raise a proposal with Japan [...]

Japan Provides Loan for Sihanoukville Deep-Sea Port Development

We have met with Japan and signed an agreement that Japan will provide credit for the development of the port of Sihanoukville to allow docking of the 12,000 tons ships. At this point, Cambodia does not have enough capacity to receive large ships. We have to spend extra

money and time as our shipment is currently transferring to Singapore or Vietnam and/or Thailand [...] it was discussed under the late Shinzo Abe's power [...] sadly he died. I will also attend his funeral on September 27. I asked him that Japan offers help to pump our seabed to a depth that ensures large ships coming in without touching the rocks below. It is now necessary to sign up for the loan [...] tomorrow, after meeting with the Japanese Foreign Minister, we will have a signing ceremony [...]

Children and Grandchildren Encouraged to Get Involved in Politics

[...] These days, they (opposition leaders) call me "the stupid." I do not want to take my birthday to retort. That person, after arguing with the father, cursed my child. These days, they say I am very stupid. Let me just say a little bit, if Hun Sen were stupid, Hun Sen would not have been able to stand for more than 45 years – 43 years in power, with more than 37 years as prime minister, you might want to think about that [...]

At first, when my wife came to see me in Phnom Penh on February 24, 1979, she asked me to return to the village to work in the fields and stop being involved in politics. I told her that I could not abandon the people while the Khmer Rouge were (still) trying to fight back. I always discipline my children not to get involved in politics, but just willing to be a soldier. Now (because of those insults,) I will call on my children and grandchildren to get involved in politics [...]

I just explained to the people that if Hun Sen is stupid, who else could be better? While he said that Hun Sen is stupid, it is Hun Sen who used his hand on a key issue to amend the Constitution from 2/3 majority to 50 + 1. That is equivalent to handing over the land to Hun Sen. In a way, the country is lucky that it is under Hun Sen, because he has maintained peace and stability every day and developed the

country. *The 2/3 supremacy in the house had had political deadlocks in the past [...] now they accused Hun Sen of carrying out a constitutional coup. In fact, amending the Constitution from 2/3 supremacy to 50 + 1 should be a constitutional coup. However, it was not a constitutional coup but a way-out to avoid a post-election political stalemate.*

Tenth Constitutional Amendments to Prevent Stalemate from the Fall of the Cabinet, the Permanently Vacant Prime Minister Post and the Convening of a Meeting by the Dean

His Excellency Keut Rith, Minister of Justice, has already explained (about the need to have the tenth amendments of the Constitution) [...] I wanted just to give examples of points where they may lead us to danger. If we do not think about it now, when the post of Prime Minister is completely vacant, a cabinet must be reorganized. At this point, plus the government is dissolved, there is no provision written anywhere at all (to fix the situation). Should the Prime Minister die, immediately the Royal Government was dissolved. Should we reserve it in the Constitution? That is why there is a separate paragraph related to the government about dissolution.

The article does not say about who would be taking charge once the Prime Minister is removed from office. In that sense, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Ministers, all the ministers of the ousted Cabinet just went home. Who would rule the country? Thus, we have stated in the Constitution that the outgoing Cabinet must lead the day-to-day work until a Cabinet is formed. Now look at Great Britain. Prime Minister Boris Johnson has resigned and is now the caretaker Prime Minister. A new prime minister is being elected [...]

Now let's talk about *the post of Prime Minister that is completely vacant. There are two types of situations. One situation is that the Prime Minister is dead*

[...] the post of the Prime Minister is completely vacant here (according to the previous article) in the Constitution. It is very dangerous that (we) have not yet filled it because it creates a chaotic situation (when) there is no government. Just saying that if the post of Prime Minister is completely vacant, a Cabinet will be reorganized. We may ask who is in charge of organizing? Therefore, if the Prime Minister dies, the Deputy Prime Minister who was appointed as the Acting Prime Minister shall be responsible for directing the day-to-day work so that before the new government takes office there is no shortcomings here to fill in the gaps [...]

As for *the post of Prime Minister who is completely vacant, because the Prime Minister resigned, nothing stated in the Constitution. Generally speaking, in the Constitution, the position of the Prime Minister is completely vacant, either death or resignation is not stated at all. Some have suggested that the case of the prime minister's resignation should file to the National Assembly, or they meant to implement parliamentary system. Please do not forget that the King is the head of state. If the head of state nominates you, you must submit your resignation to the nominator, the King, who is the head of state, with a carbon copy to the National Assembly. It is said that bringing the matter straight to the king is by passing the National Assembly. It is not like that. The National Assembly has not lost any role [...]*

Let us ask a question. *Where does the President of the National Assembly and the Vice President of the National Assembly come from? They are from the winning Party, or the Party with majority votes. (In Cambodia), [...] although the King appoints the Prime Minister, but the government appointed by the National Assembly. The one who can dissolve the government is the National Assembly. If the National Assembly does not vote to confide, the King's appointment will not*

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vincial governor. *I gave the order to hold them accountable as they really committed the mistake (gathering people) to encroach on forest land. Should he be punished or should we let it go? He even used the image of the People's Party. Now there is no guilt, I promise. However, you must come in and talk about this? If not, you should be careful, they will issue you an arrest warrant.*

Women Encouraged to Continue Education

It should be noted that another thing that Lok Chumteav Ing Kantha Phavi (Minister for women's Affairs) should mark in this is (that we have more female than male students). Yesterday I also spoke with the UN Secretary-General's Special Rapporteur, who also addressed women's issues. Now we also see here that for bachelor degree, there are up to 71%, and

master degree, 77%, [...] by the time they get to Ph D, there are only 24% of them. It can be difficult to find gender equality at the postgraduate and doctoral levels, but we have taken a step towards in ensuring equality at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels until undergraduate and graduate levels through the location of schools to the grassroots and provide greater value for women's education. But to get a master's degree and a doctorate, it is difficult when our women reach the age of marriage. It's time to have children [...] we must encourage women to continue their education, even if they have a husband/child, and (must) continue (study) as much as possible [...]

Foreign Affairs Relevant Officials' Efforts Appreciated

The next thing I should have said is the ASEAN Meetings with relevant partners, including the ASEAN Regional Forum

and East Asia, where dozens of countries are meeting in the Kingdom of Cambodia. I commend the relevant authorities for providing security for our guests who come to Phnom Penh, both security and health officials. It is unknown at this time what he will do after leaving the post. Other than that, no.

More importantly, *I would like to thank and commend the Foreign Affairs' senior officials of Cambodia for their excellent work in facilitating the release of documents at a time when our world is in controversial time. We invited friends to come sit comfortably, adapt and issue a statement well. It is known that when we host the conference, a lot of things happen – Myanmar is a regional issue. The South China Sea issue continues to conclude the COC. The Korean Peninsula issue and the issue of the war in Ukraine. Complicated developments in the US House of Representa-*

tives visit in Taiwan that shook the sky and earth and almost had Phnom Penh in tremble.

But in the end, according to Cambodia's ability to mediate, I said at the Royal University of Phnom Penh on August 5, 2022, that even the chairs are difficult to arrange, *on the contrary, when attending the meeting, everyone shook hands, talked and contributed to the success of our meeting. I should thank and appreciate the ability of the Foreign Affairs' relevant officials, especially the Senior Ministers, to do a good job (in) facilitating the issuance of a statement, and for the countries in opposition to make attendance. Together and issue a statement is not easy. It's difficult, but we can do it [...]*

[...] I thank our friends who came to the (meeting) in the Kingdom of Cambodia, including the countries that came to sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia [...] *this is the basis for the ASEAN Summit in November [...], the ground for successes of the meeting of 20 developed countries (G20) [...] in Indonesia, and also the APEC meeting in Bangkok [...] the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in the beginning of this month creates a convenient feature for the November ASEAN Summit. The November Summit also facilitates the (G20) meeting, followed by the APEC meeting [...] and I have to travel (to attend those meetings) [...]*

The Effects of Ukraine War Plunged the World to Chaos

Now the effects of war and sanctions have plunged the world into chaos. Europe itself, which is punishing Russia, is suffering [...] we are a small country affected by the global economic crisis, because our economy is also linked to the world market. We also need to find a way to prevent this [...] hopefully the war crisis in Ukraine will end in a short time through negotiations.

Now a compromise has been reached for grain exports from

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be valid because the Prime Minister lists the members of the Royal Government without the trust of the National Assembly. Where would the National Assembly lose its role? Or are you just talking out loud to make noise? [...]

Some suggest waiting a little longer for a referendum. We did numerous (amendments) before without calling for a referendum and we are now facing with bCovid-19, we should carry it through quickly. This is probably the last time to fill in the gaps (in the Constitution). Even the dean, [...] the first session of the National Assembly has to be carried out under the chairmanship of the dean. But if we put (it openly like that) the issue of the dean will have the National Assembly in hostage [...] what is the situation like? It is a situation of power impasse. Example: The dean comes from the opposition, and may not want to lead the National Assembly session. That is why it is stated clearly in that paragraph that, "the dean refers to the oldest person," but "that person has to be the one who comes to

work." If the person does not go to work, then the one who does must lead the meeting. You may ask why do we do this? [...] is this in the national interest or is it the way of inheriting Hun Sen's family? [...]

A Reconsideration of Sanctions on Russia Proposed

As for the issue of discussion within the ASEAN framework, let the ASEAN officials do so. The issuance of the statement of the chair of ASEAN or the whole of ASEAN is still ongoing [...] of course, there have been some news in media about the point that I have asked both Europe and the US to look at sanctions. We know very well that the problem started from Russia going to Ukraine, and the Russia-Ukraine war. That was the point that started to have this punishment and/or sanction. As far as sanctions are in place, they create crisis not only on Russia, but also on Europe and on us that oil prices are hiking. Therefore, it is suggested that the issue be reconsidered. How to reduce the impact on the world economy [...]

This point has been picked up

by a country that is small but is practicing its equal rights and footing. You have the right to speak, I also have the right to think and speak. There is an opportunity to speak and we must speak. We met in person with the Vice President of the European Commission in charge of Foreign Affairs and Security. He acknowledged that the percentage of gas consumption has now been reduced in Europe. This is not yet winter. What happens when winter comes? Russia keeps only 20% of supply now. What if Russia cut all out? [...]

I have put forth an argument whether or not the climate change agreement still has any meaning. The world has announced to stop building coal-fired power plants. At a meeting in Britain, they announced that they would stop producing coal-fired power. But Europe itself now uses coal because it lacks gas supplies from Russia. If Europe uses coal, other places can also use coal. If so, at the end of the day, what the main concern closely related to climate change would mean? [...]

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the Covid-19 phase is the possible loss of human resources, the loss of the pace of human resource training, which is an important part of the national development. Not only Cambodia, during the Covid-19, the whole world is facing this problem and is considered a big risk and a danger for the progress of the society and that the path of sustainable development goal of the United Nations in 2030 may not be achievable. Through the efforts of each country, including Cambodia, however, we have been able to prevent the infection and death of Covid-19, and we have reopened the countries. The reopening of the country is also the beginning of the opportunity for our students to resume face to face study [...]

Digital/Information Technology Developments Enable Online Learning

In that, we should also see what are the opportunities that emerge from the Covid-19 crisis? It is often said that in crisis there are opportunities. What does it mean? That is, in the face of the Covid-19 crisis, *the digital means has taken a significant leap forward. It has played a significant role in the field of education. Our students learn online. Yesterday, a spokesman for the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports said that our digital sector has grown about ten years faster than planned. Although I have not been able to draw conclusions over time, we can still see, however, the realities that have happened in the country regarding the advancement of information technology in the Covid-19 phase.*

It is the good fortune of the world and of Cambodia that *information technology has taken a step forward before Covid-19 arrived [...] should the advent of Covid-19 had not arrived, communication in our world and our country would have been difficult.* Last year we chaired the Asia-Europe Meeting. We could not hold a face-to-face meeting in Phnom Penh that would put together the

heads of state/government of more than 50 countries. The choice we had was an online meeting. For the past two years, ASEAN has been operating online at all levels, including ministers, heads of state and heads of government, both in Vietnam and Brunei. But this year, through our efforts, we have pushed for face-to-face meetings.

Blanket Vaccination and High-rate Community Immunity Leads to Prevention of Infection and Non-serious Infections

We have made such effort to overcome and to lead our country out of the Covid-19 crisis. For more than 100 days, Cambodia has been free of Covid-19 deaths and for 52 days without infection. There are now less than 50 re-infections/day, [...] *with full coverage and high rates of community immunity leading to prevention of widespread infection, and despite there are still infections, they do not lead to serious illness. That is the good point giving us the chance to return to a situation that we stopped more than two years ago, which is to distribute diplomas once again [...]*

With IT Platform Development, No Less Than Three Million Students Study Online

Now let me talk about digital issues. In connection with the Covid-19 crisis, all countries are constantly evolving in the field of information technology. Cambodia has been considered a country that is keeping pace with the overall development [...] students go to online study. All universities/schools create programs for online learning. At this point, it can be said that the information technology system has moved fast and the coverage in this field of education is very large. Among nearly four million students, no less than three million study online [...] we need to see that this is an opportunity for Cambodia. Besides, there is still this E-government working method too. It is even faster [...] I have said many times that for civil

servants, we do not appoint anyone who does not know the information technology system. They must be IT literate, at least one information technology system around the phone system [...] because only if you know that much, then you can work with others.

The Royal Government Encourages Competition, No Monopoly Mechanisms in Telecommunications

I am glad that the day before HE Chea Vandeth (Minister of Posts and Telecommunications) announced ending the monopoly of telecommunications companies in satellite cities. I myself used to communicate with people who reside in those satellite cities and it was very difficult to communicate with them. When I asked what was the problem, they said their satellite cities signed a contract with so and so internet company. The company has an exclusive right as far as service provision to that particular city or location [...] *in our country, there are four main telephones systems, but certain areas have had no service coverage because the monopoly of one company. What are we to do? I said that (Royal) government does not recognize your contracts. The Royal Government needs competition, needs communication services. Therefore, it is necessary to process it the soonest possible. For companies to install in satellite cities, (if there will still be) no (services, the Royal) government will cancel (the contract) because this is a false contract regarding fair competition [...]*

Encourage All Sectors to Go Online to Accelerate Entry to Digital Economy.

What I admire is that in Cambodia we have taken a quick step in the digital sector, in line with the stages of Industry 4.0 that we have to strive for. And in the Covid-19 phase, we see that some of works continue in the old way and is still slow. Those working in the new way is fast. What is old? What is new? In some places, the minister is not very good. He submits the documents according to normal

practice. S/he had to sign and seal. With more steps taken to avoid spreading infection, how long does it take before the paper gets to me [...]

There are still smart ministers. They send the file through the normal administrative route to be stamped coming in and going out, but they also sent me a PDF file. I have two ways to deal with it. One is I use my digital pen to write on and send it back [...] on the other hand, we can print it out and check it, and then I would write instruction either I agree or disagree, and then we take a photo of the page with instruction and sent the photographic image back and a copy to relevant institutions such as the Cabinet and to the Office of the Council of Ministers [...]

Well, I should encourage all sectors to go and use online. Now everything is online. Taxi/Tricycle are also providing services online. They all go online. They all go digital. This is what I mean by picking up opportunities in crisis that we have driven, and we start from this base, and continue with this pace, while we are moving into digital economy [...]

A Leader Who Does Not Continue Learning Will Become a Conservative

Congratulations to all the students who passed at this difficult stage to graduate and get a degree today. I would also like to join the parents, guardians, as well as the spouses of our students, because some of our students are already married and we need to encourage them. *I hope that you do not end up at that level, you will continue to learn for life. It is not just a matter of graduating with a degree. You have to learn for life, not just the students sitting in front of me, but everyone, including at 90 (years of age), 80 (years of age), 70 (years of age), you have to study. If not, you become conservative. If you are the leader or the previous generation and let oneself fall into conservatism, it is no different than a piece of stone sitting on*

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germinations of other plants. Therefore, everyone must learn and learn regularly. By “learning” (here, I mean learning) for a lifetime [...]

Learning to Create Own Business Encouraged

I would like to once again thank the students at all levels, as well as the parents, guardians, spouses who encouraged you to come and learn. In this figure, out of 623 students, 600 are employed, accounting for 96% [...] sometimes business people who have children/grandchildren encouraged their children/grandchildren to study in order to manage their businesses. This is a point that needs further encouragement. It is not just a matter of learning to be a civil servant or working in an institution. Though it is a need, but there are more needs related to self-employment, which not only helps the family but also helps provide jobs for others too [...]

Training Local Human Resources to Attract Foreign Investment

According to the report of the Chairman of the Board, out of 4,058 (students) trained at this university, 96% are employed. Therefore, our human resource training is a work in progress. As our country grows, so does the need for human resources. We will need more human resources in the future. When they come, do you know what did they ask? One of their questions is, how far are we on human resources? They do not want to bring in outside experts (or specialists), it is too expensive. They want to find local human resources who are trained. That is why we promote training to attract outside investment. This is where we must continue to step forward at a steady pace to seize the opportunity [...] we need to encourage the local rich to increase their strength (in investment). The local rich are a solid foundation for the country. We need investment, and our investment, both internal and external is well received, and our local

investment is getting bigger and bigger, and they need human resources [...]

In the Phnom Penh Special Economic Zone, there is a Japanese high-tech company that produces all kinds of motors plus other technologies. Last year marked its 10th anniversary, but because of Covid-19, the president of the company came to meet me and asked me to attend the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the factory in the Phnom Penh Special Economic Zone this year. I set for December 1, 2022 [...] there was another company specialized in producing motors came to me and told me that that company is too small and sought my approval to let his company to take the investment instead. I told the investor who came to see me that [...] Cambodia has its stages. In the stage that the country was scary, we encouraged and accepted investors who dare to come. We just picked up whatever fish swam by [...] I also told them that would they not think that if I violated the decision on this company, the next day I could also violate the decision on your company. The investors accepted and respected the point [...]

Our country is peaceful enough to welcome investors and investors do not care too much about the so-called democracy. Investors even hate discipline demonstrations. To put it in a way. (Saying this) does not mean we block the right to demonstrate, but investors wanted their production line to function normally. Saying so, we do not underestimate the rights of workers and the demands of trade unions, and efforts to deal with cases rationally. I still call on the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training to address the concerns of the workers [...]

Phnom Tamao Decreed a Protected Area

Last night, after I issued a voice message regarding the placement of Phnom Tamao as a protected area through a Royal Decree, there have been many comments. HE Veng Sakhon

must do that. Related to Phnom Tamao, we are in the process of planting (trees). Let me open a bracket here. Planting trees is not difficult as there are already more than 100,000 seedlings. The problem is the process of planting because we needed to prepare the soil. The stump and the twigs must be removed. The land must be cleaned before it can be planted. We have sent in 113 vehicles and more than 1,000 bodyguards (commanded by General Hing Bun Heang) to the area [...]

Now we have decided to leave the forest as a whole. To ensure that there is no loss in the future, the entire area, including the Tamao Zoo/surrounding forest, which was taken away from this private area, should be designated as a conservation area, but still managed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, not controlled by the Ministry of Environment, because there is animal husbandry in that place. That's a definite guarantee [...] I would like the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, HE Veng Sakhon, here to check if there is a source of water for irrigation in the dry season. If there is, we can pull the hose somewhere to store it to reach the seedlings in the forthcoming dry season [...]

Labor Must Solve Workers' Demands

Last night, I saw that there was a group of factory workers went to my cabinet to file a petition which they said had taken more than a month and almost two months without any answer. Please refer to the Ministry of Labor and my Cabinet, upon receiving the petition, how would they go about resolving it? Who received their petition and who have received it? They say that the company is closed and form a new company. (The company) however refused and clarified they did not (do so). Anyway, the company has to pay workers.

I told (Minister of Labor) that this is something we have to do, because it is relating to the workers' well-being. Workers

ran to the Ministry of Labor since May. It is a pity that that person said in the end “I do not know where to go, only to the Prime Minister.” If they come to that place and their problem cannot be solved still, it is unbelievable [...] in the past, I used to lend (the Royal Government's) money to solve problem for the workers. Why don't you do that now? Today there is no (working group) of the Ministry of Labor? [...] report to the Minister, lest the Minister does not see it [...]

On Dam Project in Battambang and Land Grabbing in Preah Sihanou Province

In YouTube, that land where people have lived for many generations and the Water Resources builds a dam sinking the land in Battambang, I downloaded (and sent) to the Minister of Water Resources Lim Kean Hor and to Sok Loo, Governor of Battambang [...] Sok Loo replied that the land is in the inventory list of the Ministry of Water Resources. I told him he already has the power from the Prime Minister to deal with the people. If that state land sinks because of the project, we should not do it [...] according to the interpretation of an (old) person who knows a lot of things, he says that people have lived in that place for many generations, [...]

A news channel GNTimes yesterday broadcast that a person wearing a CPP shirt (shouting) “Samdech, Please help me, they arrested us.” I downloaded it and sent it to Kuach Chamroeun (the governor). Kuach Chamroeun reports that this is the group that gather people to encroach on state land and the person was the mastermind. The mastermind has to appear in the province as soon as possible for talk. Be responsible. You gather people to encroach on state land. That is why they sent people home, but the mastermind of the movement must be responsible [...] we thought it was unfair, but in reality, he was cheating on us. Now he has escaped and now let GNTimes call him to meet with the pro- (Continued on page 6)