

Presenting Land Titles in Kg Chhnang

(27 October 2012 — Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)



30 September 2012 — Samdech Techo Hun Sen offers the land title to people in the commune of Chhnal Moan, Kuas Kralar district, Battambang province (Kampuchea Thmey).

First Handing-out after the First-Phase Mourning Period

Today I am so glad to be able to come and hand out 730 land titles of the total size of 369 hectares for 297 families in the village of Patlang, Krangleo commune, Rolea Pa Ea district of Kompong Chhnang province. For our people to have a better idea of the location where we are handing out the land titles, I would clarify that it is within the area of the (unfinished) airport of Kompong Chhnang. I am here to do this after I already did it in the provinces of Kratie, Battambang, Pursath, Svay Rieng, Banteay Meanjei, Kompot and Kompong Cham. As far as handing out land titles in Takeo province is concerned, which was on 22 October, I wish to have our people's understanding that I could not make it since I have to see through matters relating to the mourning for our Heroic Great King. I did send Deputy Prime Minister HE Sok An on my

behalf though.

After the first mourning phase for our Heroic Great King, today I have the chance to continue the handing-out land title schedules, starting from the province of Kompong Chhnang. After the ceremonial event with my presence today, I will have HE Tram Iv Toek, Minister for Transport and Public Works, HE Uk Rabun, Secretary of State for Economy and Finance, to represent me to continue to hand out the titles as scheduled. I have been scheduled to go to only one place in a province to do so. Take for instance in the province of Battambang, I went to one place and Deputy Prime Minister HE Sar Kheng went to numerous places. I still have to go to the province of Preah Sihanouk on December 5. As for the province of Kompong Chhnang I already arrange it to be on the 30 of November in the district of Santuk.

Mourning for the Former Great King-Father Signifies

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Asia-Europe Diploma Presenting

(29 October 2012 — Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

A Surplus of 150,000 Ha of Rice Cultivation

Please allow me to inform all of our people that according to weather forecast, the rain condition of this year will not be extending to end of November at all. It will be over in the first week of November. I am asking our people to take extra measures to keep water in the reservoirs for the need of irrigation. I have noticed that rice in general are growing well while some are either being harvested or milking their grains. I would advise you to be watchful for the need for water. This year we are producing rice over a total area of 2.51 million hectares compared to 2.36 million hectares planned. Judging from these figures, we have cultivated over an extra 150,000 hectares of land. This year we do not have flood damage, except a minor flood incident in Pursat province.

The Mekong Flood Depending on Rain in the Mekong Basin

We have learnt a good number of factors in relation to the Mekong River (flooding pattern). The point is that the height or level of flood of the Mekong River does not subject to whether there is or there is not construction of the hydropower plant but to the amount of rain that falls into the Mekong basin. Last year there was lot of rain in the Mekong basin in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. The Sayaburi damn did not start yet. This year the rain does not fall in the Mekong basin and the Sayaburi does not build too. However, there is not much

water in the Mekong, either in Cambodia or in Vietnam. The Mekong flood has been low.

Taking this into consideration one should finally reconsider. The projected Sayaburi dam is 1,200 Kilometers away from the Cambodian-Lao border. In that case, if the rain falls in the Mekong basin, flood will certainly happen and the city of Pursat would not be an exception. The data collated this year has brought us a great experience. It is obvious now that where there is much rain the flood situation is very likely. If the Sayaburi dam is the cause of disaster, the city of Vientiane is the first to be affected because it stands only 220 Kilometers away from the projected site. If the Sayaburi causes the Mekong to gather no water the city of Vientiane will suffer lack of water before anyone else.

We could draw a conclusion that the flood situation will depend almost entirely on the amount of rain that falls. If it does not fall in the Mekong basin, the flood in the Mekong would be minimal like this year. Vice versa, if there is much rain in the Mekong basin, we all should anticipate maximum flood strength. So the conclusion is that minimal or maximum flood strength would depend on the amount of rain that falls into the Mekong basin and not on the construction of the dam. The most important here is even if the dam is constructed, diversion of water current out of the Mekong basin would be dangerous. This year is the year of Dragon, but instead of being big, this year's flooding
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Cambodian Prides in
Gratitude

Please allow me to seek your understanding, especially among all heroic youthful students, that my wife, who have made calls to every youth group and has the intention to also come to this event, could not make it because of the ailing condition of my father. It has been the case these days that when one of us is out, the other one will have to be home looking after him. It is the reason why in the last year, you may have noticed, that I rarely travel in couple as before. That should include also when I went in accompany of HM the King to Beijing to return the body of the former Great King-Father to the country. Before talking about land issues, let me share with you a few thoughts about our mourning and what we have decided and have been prepared to do for our most revered Great King-Father, who passed away on 15 October.

On behalf of the Royal Government, I would like to take this chance to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for the Cambodian armed forces, the monks and people in the whole country for taking part in mourning in grand style for the late Great King-Father. It is my understanding that there has not been any event that attracted so many people – from everywhere, all walks of life, ages, political tendencies and faiths- as in the funeral ceremony of Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk – the Great King-Father. This has signifies the Cambodian prides in showing their gratitude to the Great King-Father, whom they always refer as the Father of the Nation, the King-Father, the King-Grandfather, who always regards his subjects as his children and grandchildren.

As the former Great King-Father passed away, people come from everywhere to express condolences to and grieve for his

soul. The Royal Government with close cooperation of all national and sub-national authorities as well as the Cambodian armed forces organizes solemn event as a gesture of gratitude and respect from everyone of us – his subjects.

The Great King-Father's
Body Lies in State at least
Three Months

Please allow me to recall, at the night that we received the news (of the demise of the Great-King Father), our people must have waited for instruction from the Royal Government of what to do. I would take this time to clarify to the monks and people in the whole country that, though HM the King and the Prime Minister are here in Phnom Penh, the Royal Government could only inform of the news and could proceed to do nothing at that stage since the King-Father's body as well as the Heroic Queen-Mother were in Beijing. We in Phnom Penh could not decide or do anything at all but wait till we arrived in Beijing, where we had a discussion on what to do.

What we did first of all while receiving the news was to account for a plane for traveling to Beijing. Both HM the King and the Prime Minister could not do more but embraced each other and wept while boarding the plane to Beijing. We met and boarded the plane. HM the King was weary because he did not sleep the whole night before already. (You may note that) HM the King was informed of the state of the Great King-Father at around 7:30 pm. HM the King did not sleep. I had slept about twenty minutes as I usually go to bed after 1 am. With the news, there are so much to be done. On board, since HM the King was weary, there was no discussion. HE Tia Banh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for National Defense was with us. We had all windows closed and lights

turned off so that HM the King could have some rest. I also had some rest too.

Arriving in Beijing, we resume our instruction into the country. With HM the King, myself, Samdech Kong Sam Ol, Minister of the Royal Palace and HE Tia Banh, we sought the instruction (from the Queen-Mother as to what to do) and informed Phnom Penh to convene a meeting led by Deputy Prime Minister Sok An on the preparation and organization of funeral event as well as the King-Father's body to lie in state for at least three months.

I have noted with my own ears the words of Samdech Me, the Mother of the Nation, that the late King-Father shared his will that in his demise, a ceremony should be organized not too long so that not to waste the national budget. It was obvious that the King-Father was quite considerate about expenses to be brought on our nation. HM the King, who was in deep sadness, could not respond but I proposed at the time that we could not do that, because it is a national honor and it is also important that our people will pay their last respects to the soul of the King-Father. We have to have his body lying in state and a proper royal cremation must be set up in honor and respect of Samdech the Father of the Nation as well as of the Cambodians. Many details in relation to the preparation were discussed and we also had to seek horoscopic calculation as to when would be the best time for the King-Father's body to return to the country.

Horoscopic Calculations
at Every Stage

Also present at the time was Samdech Preah Vannarat Noi Jroek and Mr. Kun, the wise man. Mr. Kun the wise man recommended that the King-Father's body should return on Wednesday since HM was born in the Year of Dog. This royal

horoscopic calculation by the wise man and the monk had to be approved by the HM the King and Samdech Preah Meata Cheat Khmer – the Queen-Mother. You may therefore noted that the instruction was signed on 15 October but not stated where it was signed. In fact, it was signed in Beijing.

The second point in the circular, the body of the late King-Father will be lying in state for at least three months. We did not specify the exact date. We then have a problem with our plane, though it is small, it can still load the task, but its door is smaller than the coffin. As far as the flight is concerned, we had to first request for a flight route as we had to do that in almost 2 am in the morning and in about an hour later we received positive response. We then took the commercial flight of Cambodia Angkor Air for our immediate need to go to Beijing.

PRC Offers Bigger Plane
for the Return

Because we had to bring along the coffin from Phnom Penh with us, we then reviewed if the coffin would be fit to go through the plane's door. It was obvious that the coffin size is larger than the door's width. We have HE the Chinese Ambassador here as witness. I then informed him that I need a bigger plane to return the body back to the country. The flight from Phnom Penh landed at about 4:30 pm. The Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs (Yang Jiechi) came to welcome HM the King and the delegation at the airport. I asked if he has received the proposal that I sent through HM the Chinese Ambassador in Phnom Penh. The Minister said he got it and approved the request.

In relation to this assistance, I would like to express our special thanks to the Government of the People's Republic of China and every level of Chinese leadership – President, Prime Minister,

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President of the People's Assembly, Vice President, etc. for taking part in the preparation for the return and expressing their deep condolences over the demise of HM the King-Father. The PRC is a great country with so much work to do but gestures that its leaders made towards HM the King as well as our people had provided us the ability to accompany the body of the late King-Father arriving in Phnom Penh a little before 3:00 pm as scheduled by the horoscopic calculation.

About 1.2 Million Peoples Joined the Return Procession

With this helpful assistance, we have been able to organize events in Phnom Penh according to the schedule and plan of the Ceremony Commission as well as the Royal Government. At first, we anticipated that there would be about 10,000 people who would join the return procession of the late King-Father's body from the (Phnom Penh International) airport through to the Royal Palace. It is because of deep love, faithfulness and respect for the King-Father, it was estimated that there were at least 1.2 million people taking part in the return procession. One more thing to note is that in fact our people grieve for the demise of the King-Father not on the official date 17 October but since the time when the news broke out.

Now we are still in the phase of unofficial mourning period. We have instructed all TV presenters and artists to wear mourning signs in the period before the body is cremated. During days of mourning, people from all provinces have flocked to Phnom Penh to pay their last respects to the King-Father and it all went smoothly. We could agree with the idea that this is because of the King-Father's charisma. I was so concerned of rain on the day that we returned the body to Phnom Penh as it

was the rainy season during Phnum Ben Day. It did not rain that day.

The Cambodian Army Did Well in Lifting and Moving the Coffin

There had been some comments that our army did not do well as the Chinese army officers in lifting, carrying and moving the coffin. It is true there is a difference and it is the fact the Chinese army officials have their training to do so while our coffin was brought there. Their training was also for lifting and moving the coffin from the hospital to the procession carriage. While conducting training at the airport, they have a plane for practicing the lifting and moving of coffin from the bus into the plane itself.

So I must admit that there are three differences (between ours and the Chinese army officials' way of handling the coffin). Firstly, our army officials did not train with actual means (coffin and plane). Secondly, the Chinese army practised lifting and moving the coffin up into the plane and our officials were lifting and moving the coffin down the plane and accompanying the coffin in a procession. Thirdly, In Beijing, the lifting and moving was carried out with coffin without its cover, which made the coffin's weight differently. In Phnom Penh, we had to have coffin's cover on. All in all our army officials have done a great job, though they had less training, carried heavier coffin and had to go through a different setup from the Chinese.

A Great Media Coverage on Biography and Personal Achievements

Within the span of seven day and night ceremony, it should be noticed that our people have proven to be united and helpful to one another. In front of the Royal Palace, self-motivated people organize their mourning ritual until the last day. Monks and people got to the

organization of the ceremony themselves, and at one point were joined by Samdech Me, the Queen-Mother and HM the King. The media had gone into great lengths to provide coverage on the King-Father. We heard his voice and watched his actions in documentary films about his life and achievements. The coverage were hosted by both state and private TVs.

The Cremation Could Be Held in February 2013

Let me add a little more on what will be next after the seven day and night mourning period. We have not yet come to the end of the ceremony. At first I had a discussion with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for the Royal Palace Kong Sam Ol about the possibility of having the royal cremation ceremony after the Chinese New Year. I also sounded this idea out in the Cabinet's meeting yesterday. However, if we were to do that, according to the Chinese calendar, it will go into a new year which is the Year of Snake. Well, according to the Korean and Japanese, because they pass into new year right at the international calendar, their Year of Snake starts (in January) right away. China and Vietnam will change their zodiac at the same time. Cambodia will change in April's Khmer New Year. According to the horoscopic telling, it has been suggested that the cremation of the body of the King-Father could be held in the first week of February, which is before the Chinese New year. However, this is just a preliminary thought and when is the time to exactly hold the ritual will be decided by the Queen-Mother with the help of the royal horoscopic teller.

In another instance, we should not overlook the Cambodian book of formulas which tells about the time when the King demises. According to Cambodian belief, or one may also say it is Chinese as well, the time when the King-Father

passed away at 1:2 am, on 15 October (ending of dark moon and starting of new moon) means that HM leaves everything for his subjects. In between past midnight and 5 am is the best time. My mother also passed away at 3 am. The horoscopic telling was good too as at this time she left good luck for her children and grandchildren. Any time later like 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning, the good luck remains smaller. Taking all this into consideration, we have to choose the best time to do all this starting from laying the body in state for at least three months. We also have to set up a grand crematorium and HE Kong Sam Ol has to seek the instruction and approval of the Queen-Mother and HM the King on the crematorium design so that the construction would commence.

Accompanying Preah Norodom Sihanouk 21 Years Before and After

Furthermore, I would inform our people of the oath that I made before the body and soul of the King-Father. I had no idea that I was taped but it was a true case. I am so shocked and deeply moved because 21 years ago, my wife and I were accompanying Their Majesties – the King-Father and the Queen-Mother – from Beijing to Cambodia. And 21 years later, I also had to accompany Their Majesties once again but with different state and mood. That was my deep sorrow. I accompanied both of them home 21 years ago. You may compare what you have seen on TV of the two return journeys. In 1991, my wife and I accompanied Their Majesties from Beijing to Phnom Penh's Pochentong International airport.

It is a sad feeling that 21 years later I went to accompany their Majesties without my wife and only Hluong Me (the Queen-Mother) was there while Samdech Ov (the King-Father)

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was in a different state of being. Seeing the picture that HM the King, Samdech Me and I were meeting with HE Dai Bingguo, the Chinese State Councillor who accompanied the King-Father's body, in the plane, I was so moved because the setup was almost identical to the one I had in 1991, while both Samdech Ov and Samdech Me were on one side and my wife and I were on another. Today, Samdech Me was on one side of the table with HM the King-Son and I sat on another with HE Dai Bingguo. These are the sad moments.

The King-Father's Portrait Will Stay, A Statue to Build

As the exact date for the cremation is to be set later we still have to think about people who wish to maintain their respects to the King-Father. There have been conflicting opinions from state to private institutions about how to hang the portraits of Their Majesties the King, the late King-Father and the Queen-Mother. The Royal Government sees that it is important to provide instruction on that matter immediately. After securing approval from Samdech Me and HM the King, a circular was issued to the effect that the portraits of the three Majesties are hung in unity order as before. Let me clarify that first of all, all three portraits would maintain their status, and would stay as they are without change. The exception will be when the portrait of the late King-Father will be on display alone for respect in the process of the funeral ritual.

Secondly, in order for the people to continue to pay their respects I have made a request to HM the King and Samdech Me to make October 15 every year a holiday so that people can worship and organize religious ritual for the soul of the late King-Father. Let me clarify that the holiday on October 31, the King-Father's birth day, according to this year holiday calendar, will be

observed for the people, the armed forces and government officials to mourn the demise of the late King-Father accordingly. The holiday on October 15 every year will be observed from 2013 on. In this way, for every memorial ceremony of the death, as I made the point to HM the King and Samdech Me, which is religiously and traditionally organized every one year, two years or three years, will be celebrated not only in the Royal Palace but in the whole country and Buddhist temples.

Thirdly, so far we do not have yet the national hero for our people's respect. We all heard of King Jayavarman VII but none of us knew how and where he died. We also never celebrate any ritual respect for him. As Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, our King-Father of the nation inspires us all with faithful respect among people, the Royal Government and the armed forces, we will see that a statue (of the late King-Father) will be made and placed in the best location between the Independent Monument and the spraying Dragon statue to the east. In India, the official delegations go to pay respects for the statue of Mahatma Gandhi as they do in Vietnam for Ho Chi Minh.

In Cambodia, our tradition is to cremate the body and we cannot safeguard the corpse like in other cultures. So we need to have a statue so that foreign delegations can pay their respects after they present wreaths of flower at the Independence Monument. As for people, they will be free to go wherever they wish to pay their respects to the late King-Father, either in front of the Royal Palace or at the Independence monument. It was a coincidence that while the Royal Government is preparing for this project and is seeking approval from HM the King and Samdech Me, there have many letters and requests in the media for such a statue to be built for people to pay respects to at their

own time.

October 15 – the Day for Respecting the Soul of the King-Father

As Prime Minister I have to sign every year the calendar of annual holidays. I would like to take this opportunity to insistently urge any Prime Minister thereafter – no matter which political party they come from – not to remove the October 15 from the calendar, which has been sub-decreed firstly by (Prime Minister Samdech Techo) Hun Sen as the day that we respect the soul of the late King-Father. It is true that decision will be up to the newly elected Prime Minister. The elected Prime Minister can remove sub-decree or decree. Still, this is my request for those who succeed me or the new Prime Minister other than Hun Sen.

Sharing – A Strong Point of Our Nation

While grieving and mourning, we also have found our national pride when we notice that people from all walks of life, classes, ages, political tendencies and faiths are taking part in this event. The youth volunteers also celebrated the mourning day in Koh Pij on October 18 too, under the presence of HE Im Chhunlim. In the provinces, there have consecutive mourning and respect sessions too. Some of our youth have even shaved their heads for that. We also notice that at this very moment our people are sharing with each other what they have. They brought water and food for sharing among those who spending their time respecting the soul of the late King-Father in front of the Royal Palace and the youth are keeping the place clean. This is a good example and good action will be rewarded with good karma.

No Throne Crisis, Monarchy Belongs to the Nation

Let me share with you my opinion on a huge matter that the late King-Father had prepared

for us but analysts did not bring it up. While leaving us to a different world, let me remind you, the late King-Father had made a preparation for a smooth departure and left us in peace. The point is the late King-Father already abdicated the throne for his son, the current HM the King Preah Baat Samdech Preah Boromneat Norodom Sihamoni, who in just six days from now we will celebrate his coronation day. One could assert that the late King-Father already foresaw the situation after his demise at a particular point and he did not want the situation of 1960 – when the late HM the King Norodom Suramarit died and no one was able to be elected as King, to repeat itself. The Kingdom of Cambodia then was without the King but only Head of State.

As for us this time we did not have the issue of who would become King and the question of the future of the monarchy in Cambodia also does not exist. If there were no abdication of the throne, at this very juncture, we would be placed in a crisis situation. Where is the crisis? The crisis is in that situation we would not have adopted the Law on Organization and Functioning of the Throne Council because no one would dare do that. Some dignitaries approached me and suggested if we should come up with such a law I responded that we should not because moving that direction, in that particular state of being, was like we were preparing for the demise of the late King-Father. However, as the the late King-Father abdicated, the formulation of the Law on Organization and Functioning of the Throne Council came into being.

That is why I am saying that if there were no prior preparation, we may have to convene the National Assembly for a session in order to adopt the Law. Cambodia is different from other country where HM the King

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possesses the right to select crown prince for succession. We abide by the system of elected constitutional monarchy, i.e. HM the King is being elected and HM the King does not possess the right to crown successor. Those with rights to choose the king are members of the Throne Council, which include President and the two Vice-Presidents of the Senate, President and the two Vice-Presidents of the National Assembly, the Patriarchs of the two Buddhist Sects, and the Prime Minister.

Now you see if it were not for this farsightedness of the late King-Father, we now might have to adopt the law on the one hand and organize the funeral on the other. What is worse is that after we have the law adopted, the Throne Council will have to convene and choose a King, according to the Constitutional requirement, within seven days. In this state of situation, let us imagine how things would go? The big question when the news of the late King-Father's death reached us was definitely who will succeed him. We will have a crisis in the Head of State's institution. The fact that the new King would have to be elected in seven days while we had to see through the funeral and to pass the law, we would be in a mess.

If there were more than one candidates, definitely we would be in a state of disarray because certain members of the Throne Council would vote for certain candidates. There would also be an option to launch a Constitutional Amendment too to allow both prince or princess from Norodom and Sisovath lines to claim the throne. This was the case in Japan too. We all should not overlook this key issue and should see that as a wise preparation by the late King-Father.

The same is true that I would in that case not be able to come hand out the land titles today because I would have to stay in

control of the situation and maybe it would be impossible too for our people to celebrate the event at this scale. We would not know for sure then who would want to be King.

We now are in the period of mourning and we have gone through all crisis and the Constitutional monarchy in Cambodia is still strong because we still have HM the King in throne and Samdech Me. Having come thus far I could say now that we do not have throne crisis because the late King-Father had already abdicated from the throne since six years already. The (Constitutional) monarchy in Cambodia is strong and we will go on safeguarding it as the monarchy is not for any particular individual but for us and the whole nation.

Synchronous Actions Everywhere in the Whole Country

As far as land issue is concerned today I thank the efforts made by the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (MLMUPC), the provincial and district authorities, and other subnational administrations for taking concerted actions in the framework of new actions in existing policy on land. With the cadastre officials from MLMUPC and the groups of heroic voluntary students, concerted actions have been taken everywhere in the whole country. I must give my appreciation to all of them, especially those sons and daughters. Some of them called me and my wife dad and mom. This effort will be recorded in the Cambodian history to be one that helps establish strong confidence among our people (regarding land issue).

I thank all involved institutions for this action. I thank the subnational authorities for taking part in this job. I thank the Cambodian people for providing their love and trust on the cadastre officials and the youth

volunteers. I also thank those of you who help with the provision of food and other supplies for the cadastre officials and youth volunteers, in all provinces, to perform their tasks of measuring for the people. My wife often calls to all youth volunteers groups and yesterday she told me she called to eleven groups, Kompong Chhnang is one of them.

120,000 Hectares of Land for 66,992 Families

Yesterday we issued a sub-decree to take out thousands of hectare of economic land concession in the area of Oral of Kompong Speu province. I signed a sub-decree. I could not take it here because I have too many documents already with me, to give land back to the people. In some case the land has had the sub-decree for transference already. As far as Kompong Chhnang is concerned, though we are handing out today 770 land titles for 290 families, we should not forget that we have a total of 120,000 hectares of land to be measuring and issuing titles for 66,992 families.

Now I think we have come to the phase of displaying collated data and HE Tram Iv Toek and HE Ouk Rabun will have to continue presenting titles to the people as I already instructed. HE Ouk Rabun will do that on October 29 and HE Tram Iv Toek will do that on November 1 in Toek Phos district. On the 6th November, HE Ouk Rabun will hand out the land titles in Samaki Meajei district.

No Land Belongs to Hun Sen and Bun Rany Hun Sen

There is a matter that I wish to bring up right now and I would suggest that (Hun) Manit is going to have a look at it. I heard that in the province of Kompong Thom, there has some land that belongs to the First Lady (Kittapritta Bundit Bun Rany Hun Sen). It is said that she has up to 500 hectares in Kompong

Thom (issued) as the Cambodian Red Cross land. I have told my wife to send our son Manit to take a look. At this time I would inform the youth that wherever there is this information of land that belongs to the First Lady, you measure them as fast as you can for the people. It is said the land was proposed by the Cambodian Red Cross. Why should the Cambodian Red Cross have land?

The best to do is wherever people claim any land belongs to Hun Sen or the wife of Hun Sen, you must measure them immediately for the people so that those crooked could not hold us in disrepute. Any land claimed to be mine or my wife's, just measure them. That they use Cambodian Red Cross as shield would also bring ill reputation for the institution too. Why does the Cambodian Red Cross need the land for? Can they produce on it themselves? They would sell those lands later. Those stated 500 hectares of land must be measured for the people and the remaining sum must be recorded for social concession land. If in any other provinces has similar problem, it is best they withdraw themselves and return the land to the authority to measure them for the people.

Annulment of the Royal Decree 1296/91 on Free Enterprise Area in Kompong Chhnang

There is an issue that I need to make a correction today. I just learnt about the issue yesterday and I could not bring myself to undersatnd it. I have seen the report by HE Im Chhunlim and a letter by HE Touch Marim, which came to me on October 25, and I have found a Royal Decree on the establishment of a Free Enterprise Area, as stated in the text, which is adjacent to the airfield of Kompong Chhnang province (reading the royal decree). It is said the authority to develop the province of

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Kompong Chhnang is placed in charge of developing the airport of Kompong Chhnang to manage the establishment of the Free Enterprise Area and coordinate with related institutions ... In Article 4, the whole project area as stated in Article 3 is the state land.

I, as second Prime Minister, and Samdech Krom Preah, as first Prime Minister, countersigned the royal decree and the late King-Father signed it on 18 December 1996. However, we could not locate the subdecree. The Governor of Kompong Chhnang Touch Marim cannot inquire for land re-use plan as long as the Royal Decree has not yet been annulled. If we could not find the sub-decree means we also do not know the size of the proposed project. Having found or not found the sub-decree is no longer a question. We just annul the Royal Decree and HM the King signed yesterday. I told HE Im Chhunlim to get the paper ready since yesterday and HE Prak Sokhon has to bring it to me for signature the next day and send to the Royal Palace before I came for the Cabinet meeting.

The Royal-Decree 1296/91 issued on December 18, 1996 on the establishment of the Free Enterprise Area and all regulations whose contents are not in conformity with the new Royal Decree will be annulled ... Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia, must take the responsibility to see through the successful implementation of the Royal Decree.

The October-26 Royal Decree Recognizes Public and Private Ownerships

It was partly my mistake that I countersigned it. I do not understand. Perhaps they want to build what is now understood to be Special Economic Zone, but they could not yet find the word for it. No matter what the decision has infringed upon

19,484 hectares that belong to the people and four districts – Boribo, Rolea Pa Ea, Toek Phos and the city of Kompong Chhnang. That put an end to the ownership titles issued by the State of Cambodia here. We have to annul that today.

I just learnt about this yesterday. I accept full responsibility and I order for annulment yesterday. All the land that were forbidden by the Royal Decree in 1996 has now replaced with the Royal Decree on October 26. The new Royal Decree recognizes public ownership such as schools, pagoda, hospitals and private ownerships in the region too.

A New Airport in Kompong Chhnang Province

Having come to that I would seek our people understanding with regard to the land inside the airport. The total area of the airport is 1463 hectares and some 768 hectares have been claimed by the people. What can we do about that? Let me tell you that the vision of an International airport that I never mention its name before will be the one in Kompong Chhnang.

We will not be able to use the Phnom Penh International Airport anymore after 2030. We can say that the new International airport will be built here in between 2025 and 2030. This airport will be connected with Phnom Penh in just 90 Kilometers by fast train and/or express road.

The Phnom Penh's Pochentong International Airport would not be able to support our tourist activities which we have estimated to reach some 7 million or more. That is why we are looking at this airport to be the one to take up that responsibility.

It is in this knowledge that I beg our people, who have been cultivating in the airport area, to understand that we will not be able to issue you land titles. You can possess the land and cultivate on it but by 2030 we,

maybe I am no longer there, will keep it for our children to build the airport. On this note I am seeking our people's cooperation not to (1) expand your possession area and (2) build solid construction within the stated 1463 hectares.

1,463-Hectare Airport at the Heart of the Country

Aside from the stated 1,463 hectares, the measuring and land titling may go ahead. In the annulled Royal Decree, the total size of land was 19,484 hectares and now we are taking out only 1,463 hectares only. Also, we do not demand people leave the place because the project has yet to start. In the long run, as a vision, we will have an international airport right in the heart of the country, where we could also have airforce activity and pan-ASEAN air transport as well.

There has this formula known to be $2 + x$ that was co-visioned by former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin and former Singaporean Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong. The whole idea was to have airports in Thailand and Singapore and other countries wishing to be members, Cambodia included.

It is on this note that we have to keep this Kompong Chhnang airport as a part of the $2 + x$ vision, where emergency landing could also be welcome. In addition to that we could also use the facilities for military operation as well. Again with all these reasons I am seeking our people's understanding not to expand your current areas and that we are not able to issue you land titles.

The key issue we have to put in mind is that when we see the need for expansion of the airport, we should not only think of landing and taxi roads, but will have to think about parking and hangars for many airplanes. I would no longer be around then but we must keep up this vision and be prepared for it...■

him and his family).

Here we do not take this point of buying or not into consideration but this chap forcefully demanded the youth volunteers to measure land for him. I gave my instruction in red ink and requested HE Sar Kheng to send me Doen Sovan's ID number so that I could file a request to HM the King to remove him from his positions. There has a long process from land measuring to titling. How could this three Star General order the students to measure land for him? He even threatened in his writing at the end of the letter to take the matter to court ...

In its first move, the Royal Government will take administrative measure to remove him from his rank... This chap misinterpreted my words too. I would seek HE Im Chhun Lim to convene a meeting of the lawyers to figure out (this man's action) in comparison to the existing law. The land in question is in fact in the white area along the Cambodian -Thai border that both Cambodia and Thai would not allow each other to do anything in this area yet. It is even more so when the land does not belong in the established cadastral index map and register.

CPP to Work on the Salary Policy for 2013-2018 Term

There have been some who interpreted that Hun Sen is against the salary increment. I never object it. What I am objecting to is the way you do to increase the salary. Since 2008, the Royal Government increases 20% salary per annum and it will be so until 2013. You may add them up to find out how much has increased. I do not bother engaging in words because it is the time for Pjum Ben but they do not seem to care. Let me tell you that the Cambodian People's Party is in the process of formulating a policy on salary for the term of 2013 through to 2018 ... ■

Presenting Land Titles in Kg Cham

(13 October 2012 — Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)

Youth Volunteers Group 23 and 139 in the District of Stoeng Trang

Nephews and nieces, sons and daughters, today I have a great pleasure to be in my native district and to preside over the job that is relating directly to our people's interest after the measuring efforts by the youth and student volunteers in the region. The heroic youth volunteers of group 23 led by Chou Danit has been fulfilling their missions in three districts now – first, the district of O Raing Ov, where the provincial governor of Kompong Cham already handed out the land titles; second, the district of Stoeng Trang's Prek Kak commune; and third, the district of Dambe. As far as I know, the group 23 youth volunteers was requested for a mission to Tuol Sambuor, but because it consists of numerous female members, the group has then been delegated to work in the district of Dambe instead.

Listening to the interview conducted by (CNC TV announcers Sam Chaya and Ms Thana) it seems that Chou Danit has a crush on a daughter of some people in Dambe district. He said daughters of those in Stoeng Trang do not catch his eyes. Please do not underrate children in Stoeng Trang. I am one of the sons from Stoeng Trang too. I also learnt that the youth volunteers group 139 is going to measure land in Tuol Sambuor. Did you get to Tradak Pong? I was there when I was a poor lad. It is unfortunate that a huge Cambodian tree, probably the oldest one there, is no longer in sight. The tree's top was an attractive place always for Marabu to build its nest and breed. The big tree is gone now.

My native village – Peam Koh Sna - is on the other side of the river but we crossed the river there to cultivate rice in Tuol Sambuor, where we had both

higher and lower rice fields. I do not know what happens to those lands now because since the time of Pol Pot, my family never cares to claim back the lands that we had there. I could recall that we had over ten hectares of land and one of them named Kanseng was more than one hectare and there was another field that was even bigger. We had higher rice fields in Tradak Pong and lower rice fields in Veal La. I lived at Tradak Pong for about 13 years only. I left the village and spent most of my time living in Dambe, Mehmot, Tbong Khmum where you are now working.

Prime Ministers from Stoeng Trang District, Techo in the 21 Century

I would like to remind you that the district of Stoeng Trang of Kompong Cham province has produced three Prime Ministers for Cambodia. The first one was In Tam and the second one was Hang Thun Hak. The third Prime Minister from there is Hun Sen. I doubt what does the land have to produce three Prime Ministers for the country. Among the three, In Tam, died in the United States, and Hang Thun Hak, killed by Pol Pot, was among those set the fire of war. They both were Prime Ministers for the Lon Nol's regime and supported the coup against Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk.

I am the one that responded to the appeal of Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk to stand up against the foreign invasion. On this note, between I and the two other Prime Ministers, we are completely different. The remaining Prime Minister of Stoeng Trang is now holding the title of Techo. In the Cambodian history, we had a Techo Meas and Techo Yat, in the 17th or 18th century. We now have another Techo in the 21 century and it is the son of Stoeng Trang people. I doubt if anyone from Stoeng

(Continued from page 1) is minimal or smaller than the Year of Rabbit.

The Economic Growth to Be 7%

While appealing to our people all over the country to look after their rice cultivation I would inform you that this would not be a bad year for us. We could still achieve the expected 7% growth and the rate of inflation stays below our prediction too. We have placed inflation rate at around 5% but in real term, it has come to only 3.5% (lately, the prediction has recorded only 2.9% as we have two months more to go). I am sure in the remaining two months we might have no further inflation because we will have rice harvested and plenty of fish caught. Cambodia will not be food insufficient.

What remains our big worry is the processing for export. I would urge that we do everything not to export paddy rice without processing in the country. As far as garment exports are concerned, despite uncertain economic condition in the Eurozone and the United States, we could still maintain our exports. We should note that the property market has risen a bit. Land, housing and construction move to a rising price state. We also note the rise in tourism in the last three months when we received up to 2.33 million of tourists. It seems that we have scored all positive numbers in all fields. There are no minuses.

We also hope that the agricultural sector will come with a plus sign though we have yet to ac-

count for it. Industry, tourism and agriculture are the three main agents of growth of the country's economy and they all are making positive gains.

Current Account Surplus at 1.67%

The Royal Government continues to implement carefully all of its reforms, including also the public financial management reform, which has moderated the surplus of the current account at 1.67% over expenses. This obviously means that we have a larger income than expense. Our income has gone higher than planned about 3%, while our expense has exceeded only 2% over the planned figure. We have invested surplus in real term in the road and bridge construction and made the yearly 20% increment of salary. We have set a clear goal for our budget. How much we would spend on what or how many percentage of the GDP. Our expenses on administration staff – government officials, armed forces, teachers, members of parliament and the Senate, etc., have been framed to stay within 4% of the GDP or 40% of the current account. Now we spent up to 42% of the current account or 4.7% of GDP. This should be an explanation in relation to some who raise their voices why (the Royal Government) does not increase higher salary. I think to increase salary your way, if you are in power, I would say you could stay for one month and would be chased out after that because you would not be able to find the required sum ...

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Trang will reach this position. Despite the fact that I said all this, you may not hold me for being factionalism or cronyism.

I never came to Stoeng Trang district for a long time after 2005 when I came to preside over the groundbreaking of a pagoda in the commune of Peam Koh Sna and again in 2006 to the pagoda of Tuol Sambuor. It has been six

years now. People in Stoeng Trang may be of the opinion that having become very important person I turned out to forget my native village. It is on the contrary, the more frequently I would come, people would take me to be regionalism. It is for this reason that I am asking for understanding from the people

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of Stoeng Trang district.

Being Responsible, Apology and Correction

Look, here we have over one thousand families but there are only 178 hectares of land. That is just land for residence. I also have some of my relatives living here. Here lived the father of Di Lamthol and Di Lamthal. I think the latter is still living in Phnom Penh. I do not know that making state investment of the rubber enterprise has brought these problems. I am so sorry and beg those of you who are living here for understanding. I also learnt that there were people who propagandized last night that "provision of land title today is for political gain prior to the elections and those titles will be confiscated after the elections." Why should I take them back? I advised and urged those under my command to give land to the people and reprimanded them when they did not give me one good reason why they did not give the land to the people.

Please allow me to take this chance to clarify that it would not be correct to reprimand the rubber company/enterprise for this matter. The company/enterprise begged us to cut those lands out and give them to the people because while we give the plantation to them for investment, with existing problem, it is like giving them a bomb. The company/enterprise could not do anything but would confront with the people. It would not be appropriate to place all mistakes on the company/enterprise, communes, district and/or provinces. In the Cabinet's meeting the other day I said that a number of people should be caned. HE Sim Vanna should get 20 strokes, former Chairman of Boeng Ket Rubber Enterprise and now Secretary of State for Agriculture HE Chan Tong Iv, 50 strokes, Deputy Prime Minister HE Sok An, Chief of the State Investment Board on Rubber Enterprise, 70 strokes, and Hun Sen

100 strokes, because he is the last to be responsible. However, it is not my habit to place responsibility on other people but take my own responsibility. I beg for your understanding while making correction like what I have been doing about the fishing lots.

The 1985 CPP Congress Recommended Privately Grown Rubber Plantations

I became the Prime Minister in January 1985 and my first and immediate task was to launch a land reform policy. It is obvious that the issue of land and land reform is not a new matter for the Cambodian People's Party or for Hun Sen personally. At the time, the state rubber plantations mushroomed everywhere covering also private rubber plantations in various locations.

I could also recall that in 2000, from the pagoda of Jamka Malu, there was a big flood too that year, I instructed the rubber plantation companies/enterprises to cut out the privately grown rubber land for the people. It was then that we started the process of returning the privately grown rubber plantations from the state registered rubber land holdings to the people.

Charging No Land Tax, Making People Rich

(Talking about) land tax, the rubber company subjects to similar tax placed from before. We do not apply, for rubber land, a tax system that is in place for the economic land concession. We would allow increase only 1% per annum and not 5%. Let me talk a bit more about not charging tax on land. The international financial institutions urged me many times to impose tax on land use. I always responded that the biggest issue for us now is not to charge the farmers land taxes but to measure and give lands out to the people free of charge. What income do we expect then? When our farmers are richer, they will spend more. While spending, take for instance they buy refreshments,

they would pay for the refreshment, and plus 10% as value added tax. The most important thing here is to make our people rich.

For those who consume alcohol, in addition to the 10% value added tax, they would have to pay 25% extra for excise. It was from this excise that we have been able to pay for lighting at night in the city. The rubber plantation at Boeng Ket auctioned at 9.3 million USD and the tax on rubber land started since then. If they could get 4000 USD for every ton of rubber they export, the company will have to pay the state another 300 USD per ton. We first got the nine million USD auction and then we charge tax on land. While paying tax, the company would try to produce and export in big quantity. In that instance, it would be ideal if the company could find a partner like Bridge-stone, for example, to invest in producing tyres using raw materials from Boeng Ket.

Cutting Rubber Land for People

In the past, I used to ride a bicycle with my brother, Hun Neng, to look for a lost dog. That has brought us to various places. I learnt then that this place was not a rubber plantation area. This has proved by the fact that we now have 157 families with 1,297 land holdings but the total area is only 178 hectares. One day in April or May, my son's phone accidentally connected to mine without his knowledge. He was in a conversation with commune head and members of the CPP working team to the commune of Prek Kak.

I probed the matter further later and I learnt in detail about what happened to this land issue. I then sent Deputy Prime Minister Bin Chhin to review the situation followed by the work primarily carried out by the Kolbot Khmer team, in which my son together with an under Secretary of State for Trade are also members.

In a VDO Conference, the Governor of Kompong Cham province told me "Samdech, your commune went into auction already." I was astonished and found it hard to accept that. How would you do such a thing? They ordered pagodas, mosques, houses, communal office and the CPP office out of the area.

If there were more of such people under my command, I would be confused. It is quite fortunate that I come to learn about it soon enough. With the provision of land ownerships to the people today, please accept my apology for the situation that placed you in concerns since early 2008. This is the matter that we cannot find the company's faults. What was the main constrain though was that the company had had to confront with this situation after winning the auction.

Today I am making correction by cutting these lands (from of the state registration) and return them to the people. You may see the papers and no one could annul them. No matter where these people come from, they all now have their lands measured and land ownerships given.

No One Should Order the Youth Volunteers Around

There is one issue that I need to bring up here as it is a dangerous situation. I am also appealing to our people and officials not to do illegal thing of that sort. I am asking HE Im Chhun Lim to proceed on this case with the court. Yesterday I proposed to HM the King to remove Doen Sovan from his rank as a General, the position of advisor to the Ministry of Interior and the police force. Let me read the whole letter (*that Doen Sovan writes to the Governor of the District of Veal Veng, Chief of the District Office of Land Management, Urbanization Planning and Construction, the Thmodar Commune Head to get the youth volunteers to measure land for*

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