

## Press Briefing on Recent Developments

(31 July 2013 — Unofficial Translation, Selected Impromptu Comments)



24 June 2013 — Samdech Techo Hun Sen with people at the Inauguration of the Buddhist achievements in the pagoda of Kiri Muni Sarvoan, Batehay District, Kompong Cham province (Kampuchea Thmey)

Visiting the construction site of intersection roads and overpasses at Stoeng Meanjei, southern part of Phnom Penh, Samdech Techo Hun Sen gives press briefing to journalists on the recent developments regarding the elections, the rumors on his where about after the election, the need for preparation for flood threat and the readiness for dialogue to resolve the remaining issues.

I am so happy to show up again before our Buddhist monks and compatriots throughout the country. I have been absent and made no speeches in over one month already. This is partly so because I also have to mourn over the death of my father, for whom I am still in mourning now. You may know that on July 12, my father passed away. As his children, we have decided to mourn over his death until it is 100 days, when we will celebrate another farewell ceremony.

During my absence, there has

been continuous fabrication of information instigating the public that I already left the country, I was forced by the army to leave office and/or I already transferred power to Deputy Prime Minister Sok An. In fact, as far as this trip is concerned, I had wished to come to this construction site since we were in the electoral campaign because the Phnom Penh Municipal informed me that among others, a few lines of roads, which are parts of the project (for the intersection and overpass), would be ready. I could not do that because I already told our Buddhist monks and people that I would not make public appearance or make public speeches during the electoral campaign period, except when I had to accompany HM the King and the Queen-Mother to the city of Sihanoukville to participate in the National Arbor Day on July 9<sup>th</sup>.

Today is the time that I have to

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## Reviewing Rice Cultivation and Politics

(02 August 2013 — Unofficial Translation, Selected Extempore Comments)

Observing early-rainy season rice cultivation in 2013, Samdech Techo Hun Sen visited the district of Khsaj Kandal, Kandal province, where he joins with farmers to prepare land and to transplant rice. Samdech Techo also takes the chance to share with them, and the people of Cambodia as a whole, the latest developments on the process of forming the committee to address the election irregularities, the legal process of setting up a new Cabinet and urgent matters that the new Cabinet will need to attend to.

### Photos from 1989, Memories from Past Many Years

Where is (Hun) Mani? Let find me a photo from 1989, which someone has brought me this morning. In 1989, I was only 37 years old. Please let me borrow this photo for making a copy (there is a voice from the audience that s/he has so many photos of Samdech Techo). It is a great memory photo. The commune of Sanlong, Khsaj Kandal district of Kandal province is not a place where I never come. I was here since when the war was on and the peace negotiation was in process. I stayed in the village of Sanlong.

At the time, I left the village of Prek Tamak and rode the motorbikes through to the district of Srey Santhor of Prey Veng province. The trip brought me back to the village of Sanlong, where we spent the night. We left the next morning to inspect the ferry at Preah Kunlong, where we now replaced it with a bridge on the national road 8. I remember a daughter of a sister I met in Sanlong, who

came to me saying that it was not easy to use the ferry service. Since the ferry was man-powered, it all depended on the mood of the man who pulled it. That young girl is now a woman of three kids here. She even has a child who already is in the first year of the University.

I crossed the Preah Kunlong pass with my wife and I spent a night at the house of a brother, who passed away already. He went to my house once to collect the money for the construction of a school building. I came here once again to Roka Junloeng village. It was a hard ride in a dirt road full of fine sand. In 2003, we built a water canal along the sandy road and widened the road itself. We placed a water pump floating station. In 2006, I came again by helicopter. I came a few more times to the Buddhist pagodas of Prey Bang and Vihear Suor, etc. There were demands that people here thought one floating water pump station was not sufficient and there was a need for enlarging the canal to improve irrigation capacity.

HE Lim Kean Hor then designed to place more water pumps. We now have three floating water pump stations. We also have one pump in extra on standby. In addition to enlarged canal, we now also have sub-canals providing water through to Roka Junloeng. We also are working on a water pump station at the lake of Pa Ae to push water down here. This man here has his finger blackened by the ink (proving

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come here and I am held by so much surprise that many journalists hunted for information from me all the way here. In fact, I have scheduled to come to this project site on such a short notice. I cannot withhold my admiration for your information seeking efforts. With regard to the construction of the intersection and overpass here (at Stoeng Meanjei), some of the roads in the project would be put into official use in the days to come. It is a normal practice that the Phnom Penh Municipal would invite me to inspect the project prior to the official inauguration. This had been the cases of the overpass at Kbal Thnal and the overpass of Prampi Makara (7 January).

Coincidentally, taking the opportunity that you, the press people, are here, I would like to take this opportune moment to make a statement to our Buddhist monks and people that here I am in the country and still Prime Minister of the fourth legislative term of the National Assembly. I may reaffirm that no one, the army or other forces included, has the right to force incumbent Prime Minister and Prime Minister elect to abandon his work, because doing so would be against the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

On July 28, the elections have passed and our people have already expressed their opinions after one full month of campaigning. Our people have made great efforts and been patient to maintain dignity with political maturity and pluralistic liberal democracy. On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I would like to express my sincere thank to the National Election Committee as well as the authority of all levels, the armed forces, our Buddhist monks and people for taking parts in the Cambodian democratic process. The official results of the elections have yet to come, but it is everyone's knowledge that there will be

only two political parties in the fifth legislature of the National Assembly.

I wish to underline that which party is the winner or loser is not important for political parties but we should ensure that our nation wins. I made political messages one after the other on this very important issue. My last message on that was at the district of Batheay, Kompong Cham province, where I demanded that let's not make this election a cause of disunity of our nation. We may ask important questions as to what do our people want? Do voters want to close down markets, shops, cafés, gas stations, banks, etc? People have already expressed their opinions. All political parties contested have received some kind of supports - some with more, some with less. Whose victory is that? It is the victory of our nation.

While the election is now over, what more do we want? Does anyone want the situation to return to that of 1975, which would create turmoil and people leave the city? As you may already know, on the night of July 28, some went to withdraw money from banks, filled up their cars' tanks and/or flocked the malls and purchased stuff. Today, though, I am so happy that our people in Phnom Penh and provinces have shown their political intelligence. On my way to the place, I have noticed renewed traffics and shopping. It is in this observation that it is important for our nation, no matter who wins or loses, to make sure that it emerges winning and conciliatory.

We have gone through insurmountable hardships before reaching national unity, united territory without secessions like before 1998, when the country was under so many factional rules and armed groups. We have now transferred from fight with weapons and bullets to with votes. This is the win-win status of the whole people of Cambodia. I may add a few

words on the fact that if anyone person would continue to instigate social unrest, what would be the impacts that one can anticipate to have brought on political stability of the country. Moreover, economically speaking, does anyone of us like to see people queued up to purchase rice, bread, gas, etc? There may not be gas for sale too because of the would-be turmoil.

It is on this note that I am appealing to the Buddhist monks and people all over the country to place their trust in the Royal Government of Cambodia in keeping the situation under control. Importantly, they should trust themselves to resolve the vital problem of our nation. It is not possible that every voter would become Prime Minister or Minister. I urge that people who have so far created so and so problems, instigations to cease their actions. You may have seen that they have used facebook in a not normal way. Would those chaps become Ministers? What is in their interest of fabricating such atmosphere? Is it to sink our country? Let us sleep on that.

As people already expressed their opinions, what remains is to continue to resolve the problems based on existing laws and mechanism. We cannot do anything more than that.

Let me affirm that according to the information that I have received, not yet official, the National Election Committee would proceed to resolve the remaining problems with participations of various political parties and non-governmental organizations, civil society. As Prime Minister, candidate for National Assembly member and a leader of a contested party, I have maintained no communication with the National Election Committee, but if what I heard is true, I understand that it is a positive move that will open way for resolving the remaining problems accord-

ing to law.

For all problems occurred during the elections, it is indeed the task of the National Election Committee at all levels to resolve. However, in case that the National Election Committee understands that it is necessary for participations by political parties and civil society, on behalf of the Royal Government as well as the Cambodian People's Party, I would welcome such opening so as to attain transparency and acceptable solution for all. You may remind that the Cambodian situation had been this way before but we always found a way out. For the elections of 1993, 1998, 2003 there had been problems, except in 2008, when there were less since no party could block the quorum for the session of the National Assembly.

As far as coordination between political parties involved, the Cambodian People's Party would like to inform that in its July 29 meeting of the permanent committee, we are ready and open for political dialogue with parties with (contested-) seats in the National Assembly to discuss about the setup of the National Assembly leadership. I think that for this process, no one could do it one our behalf, but the Cambodians. Foreigners could not resolve this problem for us, and more so, they would encourage us to dialogue. You may have learned already about the declarations of various foreign observers of the elections as well as those from abroad, which encouraged Cambodian political parties to work together. I also believe that the Cambodian citizens trust that their political leaders will be able to resolve the problem politically in such a way that the National Assembly could function soon.

It is true that we are waiting for the official results from the National Election Committee. We must continue our maturity

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he already went to vote). It is not removable yet. I have mine too. Let us leave it inked for while longer. We ink it once at the communal election and again at the national elections. In every five years, we ink it twice.

Let me ask the man who fish, or Mr. Ngim. Look at the photo when I was 37 years old and I am now 61 years old. I still look more or less recognizably similar. As you know, my fa-

ther just passed away and we — his sons and grandsons — are in mourning. All have their hair shaved in that process. This one is my youngest son and he had his hair shaved too. He was bald since when he was in school. No one in my family has baldhead. He could have used a wrong product when he was studying in the US. I was not so heavy according to this photo. I could have been 60 Kg or so. Now I am 80 Kg. My problem is the belly is getting

big and I do not feel comfortable with it. I had a hard time just now pulling the seedling.

In Pol Pot time, we used to say the rice seedling pulled the men, because they did not have power to pull them and once trying to do so the gravity retracted them. Since I have practiced my golf, I had done it otherwise as I thought I would need to spend more power to pull them. I could have fallen back just because they were pulled through easily. If anyone

has taken that photo my picture could have been on facebook already.

### From Depending on Sky to Canal

People said I was so good at pulling the seedling. How else could it be different since I am a son of farmers? Though I was in Phnom Penh for my study, I still hold with me the nature of the farmer, who would not lack the skill of pulling the rice seed-

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and patience and altogether we must make efforts to safeguard and ensure normal functioning of political stability, livelihood and socio-economic stability. Should we fail to ensure that, people would be disappointed. They think there has always been problem for every election. They could not trust election anymore. Our people would not want to see the haunting past and the country to sink.

I would like to affirm for you all about rumors that I already left the country or already resigned. Let me ask what country should I go to, and are any of you Polpotists that I should run away from like in 1975. We all are Khmer and though this or that party win, I hope we all are Khmer that I have no need to run away. It is Hun Sen's nature that in hardships I would stay with the people. In 2003, it took me one week after the elections to take my appearance in Sak Sampeo. In 2008, it took me close to a week before I joined people transplanting rice in Ang Snuol district. From tomorrow, I will have to follow my work program. I may receive diplomatic corps, visit construction sites.

Since you have found me, let me tell you that Hun Sen has not got a style of running away from the people. The harder it gets, the closer I would stay to the people, no matter who they voted for. Therefore, I am tak-

ing this opportunity to place an appeal to the authority of all levels, the armed forces and concerned officials, the Cambodian People's Party working groups included, to get back to serving people as usual.

In days ahead, according to the report of the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology, Minister HE Lim Kean Hor stressed that there would be heavy rain and the Mekong River flooding will be high. I think it is calling for urgent preparation by the authorities of all level and the armed forces to safeguard our people and move them, if necessary, from dangerous zones.

We also have the news that flood is spilling from Thailand to Banteay Menajei, Cambodian side. It is therefore necessary to get ready with the rescue mission. We need to pay our attention on and do these works, not the issue of who would remove me from office. Concerning this let me ask who would take it from me when the term lasts another two months only. Who would remove me in this situation?

Let me affirm that it is not Hun Sen's way to run away from the people. I would urge the Buddhist monks and people to place your trust (in what I have said). There has also been words that Hun Sen has been pressured to leave by the Cambodian People's Party because the number of seats has gone down. Let me clarify that to

gain more or less seats is the matter to be decided by the people. According to provisional figures, the Cambodian People's Party is taking the lead, how much would be in the authority of the National Election Committee to announce.

Some have also said that Hun Sen would not be Prime Minister in the fifth legislature of the National Assembly. Let me ask who would take up this post. The Cambodian People's Party congress unanimously adopted that Hun Sen will be Prime Minister for the fifth legislative term of the National Assembly. Moreover, the number of votes for the Cambodian People's Party has clearly affirmed Hun Sen to the post of Prime Minister. No one would challenge that unless I die or am incapable to conduct my duty.

I think that political parties will have to make compromises. It is inevitable. We open our heart to compromise to set up the leadership structure of the National Assembly to make our country fully democratic. We must respect the people's decision. If anyone does not respect it and resort to violence, it would be contradicting to the constitutional framework. I think this will lead to turmoil throughout the country. People would not want to see that. I am so pleased that during and after the elections, the exchange rate in Cambodia has maintained with minor fluctuation, though

there had been some changes on the night of July 29 and early morning of July 29. As of now, the situation has returned to normal.

Once again, I would appeal to Buddhist monks and people to continue maintaining calm and waiting for the commencement of the mechanism to resolve the remaining problems from the elections and political compromise to allow our country to march onward. (We must ensure that) the election would not disunite our country but become a national reconciliation where our nation, we all, will win. I think I have covered various topics that you all may have waited for and perhaps there would not need to have any more questions.

*(Responding to the question of someone from the DAP news website about the possibility of a meeting between Samdech Techo and Sam Rainsy)* I think that I have given this task to HE Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, HE Say Chhum, and HE Sok An, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister in Charge of the Council of Ministers. HE Sam Rainsy also write a letter to express his condolence over my father's death.

I think HE Sam Rainsy understands the difficult mourning circumstance that I am in. If ever there is a need for me to do so, still, I will use my difficult time for such a dialogue too ...■

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ling, transplanting, and preparing land. It is in this note that I understand the need of farmers only too well. In this area of the country, as far as I know, our cultivation of rice depended mainly on rain or sky, which could not be predictable. We have now ensured the cultivation with more water canals thanks to my help. People could not turn to anyone to do so. Hun Sen has no choice but help.

We started with building small canals just to get the water through for irrigation. We could only put one floating water pump station – 44. I could recall that it was in the cool weather time. People caught lots of fish. At one point, I thought I should join the locals in grilling fish, but I could not because of my time. Once we completed the canal, in 2006, I came again to see it and listen to the people's other need. They asked for bridges. We then built four bridges for them. I also instructed HE Lim Kean Hor to improve the irrigation capacity so that we can provide water for cultivation in drought area like Roka Junloeng.

Here we have the lakes of Sambuor and Pa Ae, where we could estimate to be reasonably deep since this man here has been putting some ten big fish traps. You can go on using this traditional bamboo traps since they are legal tools for fishing. Please do not electrocuting the fish. I heard him say he caught various kinds of fish there.

### **Cultivate Rice Twice a Year, Profound Developments**

I am here today to see a work-site that I have entrusted HE Lim Kean Hor and HE Aun Poan Munirath, together with working group of the Cambodian People Party, to work on. Ta Ngim here told me before he only cultivate once a year. Now he could do it twice a year. He started with sowing directly the seed to the plowed soil and harvesting in August.

He then started again with transplanting after that. I would say this area has now entered our category of profound development approach. As we lacked water, we could only cultivate once a year. Now that we have water, our people could do it twice. My only suggestion is that where there is water, our people should change their cultivation schedule and techniques, which include the use of new seed, better land preparation, etc.

We must make sure that the land is well prepared, and there is a better way to manage with irrigation. Hence, I am issuing a stern order that there must be sufficient fuel for the two water pump stations, or three or four, if there is a need for them. However, there could be a problem with any standalone rice field that stretches farther than one kilometer from the canal. Provision of water this far would not be possible. I would suggest that we provide them with money for their rice that is beyond help instead of working on irrigation since pumping water for it in this case and moment would cost more.

Cambodia is not an oil producing country and even one like Thailand fuel is not cheap. Indonesia too has been jacking up the price of fuel. Oil producing country like Vietnam benefits from short distance transportation. That could help maintain lower price for fuel. As for our pumps, they are half-a-meter or three-decimeters in diameter. They would consume a lot of fuel to do the job. It would be economical if we pay them for their rice beyond providing irrigation assistance. We may also instruct our people whose lands locate far from the canal to grow other vegetables. Those whose lands locate adjacent to the canals may remain with rice cultivation. We also have big market for vegetable. As far as I know, these days we import big amount of vegetables from neighboring countries.

I am neither agronomist nor technocrat on this particular issue but our people need to know what they have to grow to make profit. I noticed on my way here a rice field that turns into mango farm. They may go on growing rice in between young mango trees lines now but once the mangos grow bigger, I am sure the owners would stop growing rice and depend only on mango instead. S/he may even grow more mangos in the future or people can grow other plants instead.

### **More Than Just Rice**

According to the report of HE Chan Sarun, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, other than rice, we have corn, sweet potato, and cassava. Cassava has been cultivating on some 370,000 hectares, corn on some 120,000 hectares and sweet potatoes and other vegetable on 24,000 hectares. Cambodia's consumption demands more and imports of these products have come from many countries. In Phnom Penh, just in one day, the collection of wastes has recorded some 1,400 tons or even 1,600 tons. The amount consumed by our people has increased many folds. Our people now choose the best for their consumption taking into account their concern for health.

Also recorded this year, sugarcane has been collecting on 17,000 hectares, jute on 210,000 hectares, and tobacco on smaller size of land. (Talking to Ta Ngim) "Though I also am a heavy smoker, I do not encourage you to do the same." If people could in anyway change their cultivation crop from tobacco to other crops, I think it would be good because it would not serve the course of encouraging people to smoke. I am a heavy smoker but I do not encourage anyone to smoke or to advertise on tobacco. I should say a few words about plowing as I had a trial of the pulled tractor just now. I think I can plow and

rake the soil altogether. This pulled tractor is a good stuff since it also pulls a cart and pumps water.

### **More Pulled Tractors, Better Income**

I have noticed that the speed of transplanting is making positive momentum as it already reaches 69% according to the report provided to the central level and HE Chan Sarun signed on it yesterday. As of the moment of speaking, the figure may have changed to 70% already because this report came to me since yesterday. I am sure the real figure at the local level is higher than the ones gathered at the central level. We have already reached 1,665,000 hectares and I am sure by now it is coming to 1,700,000 hectares already. As far as plowing is concerned, people have already plowed 2,400,000 hectares, of which 625,113 hectares plowed by animal power.

I have with me here the comparative figure from each different year to prove the increasing use of machines in agricultural activities. After liberating the country and people from Pol Pot, the whole people had their bare hands. Under the leadership of the Cambodian People's Party in the past 34 years, we have made much differences. Under Pol Pot, they took away a pair of oxen from us and our plowing and raking tools. After the liberation, leaving the collective farming mode, people could not get them all back. Some got ox but not plowing and raking equipments. Some got the ploughshare but not the ox. Pol Pot's organization ordered people to bring their personal kitchen belongings to the collective kitchen. Upon its collapse, some got back their spoons but not their cooking pots.

Let me now compare with you the difference happened within five years period, under my premiership, between 2008 and 2013. In 2008, on August 6, we

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plowed only 2,008,342 hectares, in which 1,123,492 was done by animal. You can see that then about half of the plowing job was done by animal. In 2009, on August 5th, we plowed 2,244,618 hectares and 1,099,102 hectares were done by animal. This has shown us that the area plowed by pulled tractors increased to over half of the total. In 2010, compiled for the report on August 4, the total land plowed was 2,174,031 hectares and 858,304 hectares only were done by animal.

This should clarify that the rate of land plowed using animal power decreased largely for increasing use of pulled tractors. In 2011, April 3, it was recorded that 2,361,439 hectares of the land were plowed, only 890,557 hectares were done by animal power. Again, this has signified the increasing trend of use of pulled tractors. In 2012, on August 1, we plowed 2,331,324 hectares and only 724,640 hectares did by animal power. It is another big increase. For this year, as of yesterday, we have plowed 2,409,263 hectares, of which 652,113 hectares were plowed by animal power. As we note the increasing trend of using pulled tractors, we may ask what has caused this. Of course, this means we have more pulled tractors. How can we acquire more pulled tractors? It is because our people possess the purchasing power. Talking about they have the ability to purchase pulled tractors, we must not overlook the fact that our people have made actual income.

### Being Both Farmers and Workers

(Talking about daily fee for laborer in harvesting rice) our country has come to a situation that it is hard to find human labor to do the agricultural jobs. When there was no factory, everyone in the family involved in cultivating and harvesting

activities. Now, young people flock for work in the factories. The money they make from working in the factories is partly used for hiring human labor to plow the soil, transplant and/or harvest rice. People who sell their labor transplanting rainy season rice are mostly people who farm the dry season rice and they are free in the rainy season. They earn 17,000 Riel per day, with two meals included.

Here we have a man who put the fish traps but also grow rice. He goes to check on his traps on his motorbike. What I am trying to draw up for you here is the fact that we are entering the mode where our people who are actually farmers are also engaging in worker's status. That is what I say people who are holding status of being both farmer and worker. Look, we have factories nearby where our people can find extra or main jobs while holding on to traditional rice cultivation. Here in Khsaj Kandal we also have factories. This is what we should see as complementary role between the two. They earn between 120 US\$ and 170 USD per month and more if they have better skills.

It is prime that in a family people work out their labor arrangement as to who would go and work in factories and who would stay on with traditional farming. No one could plan it all out except family. (Labor arrangement by anyone outside family) would remind us of Pol Pot's way, which they set so and so number of people to work in the farm and so and so number to work in rubber plantation, whom they gave status as workers. However, to be able to work in factories, we need to have investors. Investors come only when the country is at peace and stability. With these conditions, they would put money in our country and build factories for our people to work in. We work in the factories to get money to help our parents, who would

use parts of them to hire labor to work in the fields. That is the gradually evolving pattern of development of our country.

### Loss and Profit

Once the lack of water for irrigation is resolved, I would urge our people to work mindfully on their farms with consideration between loss and profit. Take for instance, brother Choey here should keep record of his expenses with regard to his agricultural activities. We need to calculate cost and profit to figure out if our action would be paid back with profit. You may record your expenses on hiring pulled tractors to plow the soil, and you need to quantify your labor in cash too to get a better sense of how much you have put into the project. Your labor needs to be quantified according to the market value. At present, 17,000 Riel a day with two meals and you are two people – you and your wife. You must count yourselves in and quantify the cost.

After all calculations, you may learn in the end how much you have spent for rice cultivation per hectare. If you harvest three tons of rice from it, you may want to work out your loss and profit ratio to figure out if you make any gain or loss. You may want to keep track of those expenses and send your report to me. You should send me a letter and I am sure you can make it. (Talking more about the fisherman's poor eye-sight).

### Rat and Snail Attacks

As we have here the presence of Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Chan Sarun, I may bring up this issue, which I also learnt from the people here that it has come to them too, of rat and snail attacks. I learnt it started in Prey Veng province and it has rampaged to this area as well. The Ministry must assist people in every way to fight against this attack. The Ministry of Agriculture, as far as I know, has had some specific method of com-

bating with snails that eat and destroy the rice plantation. In addition to this, because seasonal flood from last year was too small, we also have this problem of rat population increase.

Where are these rats coming from? They are the consequence of small flood from last year. I am one of the sons of a family that was residing along the river and at the Sambuor highland, where we grew rice. This situation is no stranger to me. People residing along the river are worried when the flood does not reach to nests of rats, grasshoppers, etc. The second reason of their worry is that without flood infiltration, their land would lack silt topping which is rich in nutrients.

In fact, when our people were in flood disaster as in 2011, I also came by to witness the bridges along what would be now National Road 8 that were damaged by flood power. Now we no longer have that problem since we have built a strong National Road 8 already. We do not have "this world-class advanced ferry" anymore. We only have it in photo or VDO tapes. It has been replaced by bridges and roads. With better roads and bridges though, I am calling for our people's attention and respect for traffic rules.

### Predicting 7.6% Growth, Risks of Flooding and Land Erosion

This year it is important that we must make efforts to achieve better in every sector of economy, which many experts have predicted that the economic growth would reach 7.6%, a better performance compared to 7.1% in 2011 and 7.3% in 2012. I would urge our people to do whatever they can to make sure their rice harvest is on the better side. What has been an encouraging sign is that, unlike the earlier prediction that there would be a short-span dry season in the third week of July, actually we do

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not have that period of no rain at all. We have a concern of flooding though. We have had water coming from the Thai side of the border and this morning the water level checked in the Stoeng Treng station is 9.24 meters or two decimeters higher than the day before. The flood emergency level for Stoeng Treng is 10.7 meters.

In order to observe the flood strength, I have decided to come by helicopter. I have seen water at a height that might spill over the bank. It is threatening for Khsaj Kandal of Kandal and Srey Santhor of Prey Veng. I noted that land erosion happened on either side of the riverbank. I would urge our people residing along the rivers, Mekong and Bassac alike – from Stoeng Treng in the north through to the border with Vietnam in the south - to take high precautionary measures. In fact, people residing along the waterway would not worry about flooding, if it is not threatening as those of 2000 and 2011, which we called the millennium flood threats. They were too big and causing damages to roads, bridges, water canals, homes, etc. The best flood level we are looking for is 9.5 meters in Phnom Penh flood check station ...

I am urging people living along the rivers to take high precautionary measures for land erosion and the local authority must be on high alert to warn our people regularly of flood level in addition to news and notification broadcast by radio and TVs. As far as land erosion is concerned, because I used to live along the river, I think no one could swim like when I was a small boy from one side of the river to the other. When the land erosion happened in Peam Koh Sna, my birthplace, the washed away soil was stuck on the other side, Kroj Chhmar, my wife's birthplace. That is the nature's course of action ... All we can do now is to divert

the course of water by exhuming some of the sand at the riverbed.

### **Mourning the Father**

Like what happened to my late mother, my late father was in coma for eight consecutive days. I touched his feet and I felt he was still there but he could not talk to us. After the New Year, he could give me his Buddhist preaching and he kept asking for me all along. When I was on mission abroad, he would wait for my return. I am over sixty years old already but to my father I am just a kid. My children have graduated with Ph. D. and M Sc., etc. but to me they are still young. I am sure my father also looked to me this way. He used to be worried when it rained since he was afraid that the plane could not take me down safely. He was there though he could not talk to me when I touched his feet.

My father entered his critical stage after I accompanied HM the King on July 8 and 9 to Preah Sihanouk province. At first, it was planned that we both — my wife and I will accompany HM the King. However, my wife had had to stay home to look after him. The specialists from Singapore told me that my father would stay on until 3 am. He was still there at the predicted time. His heart briefly gave up four times. Until 4:10 am his soul left and his body rested in my arms. I have not been used to having loss him yet. This morning, after waking up, I thought I had to go see my father in his room. My father and I have spent hard lives together. I left him and the family when I was 13 years old to Phnom Penh to pursue my study. Indeed, we have done the best we can to look after and take care of him. He died having got 30 grandchildren and 66 great grandchildren.

### **Always Docile I Am, Our Nation Truly Wins**

For what I spoke yesterday,

some people said Hun Sen started to be docile. In fact, I have always been docile. I do not know how to make them feel so as it is my nature to speak in big voice or I could not spit the words out. Yesterday, when I thanked the Chinese ambassador for expressing her condolence over the death of my father, I could not hold my tear. The Chinese ambassador got me the tissue to wipe out my tear. I lost weight.

Some politicians said that I have become docile because the number of seats won by the Cambodian People's Party decreased. In fact, I have said many times that winning or losing is just a matter of competing. Increasing or decreasing number of seats is just a process of democracy and people would be the ones to decide. Winning or losing is not that important for a particular party but our nation must win.

### **Elections Over, Solidarity for National Development**

As the election is now over, I would request that we stop talking about who wins or loses the election. No matter one supports and votes for any political party, please try to have understanding on one another and stronger solidarity as we all are living in the same village. It is personal rights that grandfather Ngim chose Party A and brother Choey chose Party B, but they both should not be in conflict. They both are Cambodian. No one can infringe upon and/or violate your rights. We already cast our votes. We are still living in the same village, sharing neighborhood. During the election campaign, I saw that members from different political parties were holding hands together. I was so happy, though in the election campaign period, I could not make any comment.

I still want to see those pictures. I wish to see that our people, no matter what party they belong, could love each other. I would not like to see our people in the

state of division. I would first ask for this from members of the Cambodian People's Party, if I could not do so for supporters of other parties. I urge that the CPP members be the first to carry out friendly behavior. If you all like me, the Cambodian People's Party and are longing for the country's peace, I would demand from you an abandonment of feeling discontent and hatred caused by exchange of words and opinions during the election campaign.

I am making this plea for the whole country and if I could not have positive response from members of other parties, I would cling on to the response of the members of the Cambodian People's Party and those who have voted the Cambodian People's Party to win the majority. Nationwide, 24 constituencies, the majority of the Cambodian electorates have voted for the Cambodian People's Party. It is in this development that I demand the majority of our people to act first.

The Cambodian People's Party has been holding power so far and will continue to do so for the time to come. I am still the Prime Minister and will be one for the fifth legislative term of the National Assembly. In this thought, with love and pity on me, or the Cambodian People's Party, most important of all our country's peace and stability, the factory to go on working, so that all seven children of our brother here can maintain their jobs, I am calling urgently on our people not to be discriminate as far as political parties are concerned. It would not be an appropriate development that (politicians) in Phnom Penh are talking to one another and our people in the villages are in disputes with one another.

Before my absence during the election campaign, in the district of Batheay, Kompong Cham province, I said loud and clear that we should not make

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the election a cause of breaking our national unity. I am seeking understanding so that we all can keep our country and people in peace. As the election is now over, I would seek every member of the Cambodian People's Party to act first. We must apply a Cambodian slogan that goes "it is not cheap to use your hands and it is not expensive to use your mouth." It is still a correct proverb. There is one other proverb that goes "bending down for full grain, raising head high for empty grain."

Yesterday some politicians said Hun Sen has become docile. I have always been so. The fact that I am talking loud is because I could not express myself. For instance when my father passed away, I also sobbed when HM the King and the Queen-Mother were present to express their condolences. I also wept in Beijing (when Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk passed away). It was not fate. I really wept. I also shed my tear when I talked about my father yesterday with the Ambassador of China. Some would reason that I am docile because the CPP lost many seats. I already said that in the democratic process, winning or losing is indeed up to the people. The most important thing is that we have to make sure our country wins. Now our country really wins and I would like to see it wins more than this.

I am begging with respect and affection for all of us to have pity on our nation that used to be in fracture. I am begging, no matter which party you are voting for, especially those supporters of the CPP to act first in healing this. I do not know whom you voted for but I know that you all are Cambodians whom I must serve.

#### **An Independent Committee Addressing Voting Irregularities**

Today, please allow me to speak a bit about what I have

seen in the press this morning. First, what I have seen in the Cambodia Daily and I would suggest that it quotes everything I said in Stoeng Meanjei intersections and overpass construction site to make thing clear. There has been a confusion that I propose for a formation of an independent committee to address irregularities. I did not do that. According to what they have written, it seems that I am the one that does. In fact, I said I have the news that the National Election Committee (NEC) will pursue the matter with existing mechanism but they would allow political parties and civil society to participate. I would welcome such a move and the Cambodian People's Party would also join them.

This clearly means that we are not going to form a new committee. It has clearly stipulated by law that the NEC will be the one to resolve the problems. In case that they could not resolve them, the matters will be brought to the attention of the Constitutional Council, according to existing law. We cannot afford to do it otherwise. However, should the NEC see that it is necessary for participation from political parties, civil society, or even officials from UN agencies, I would have no objection to that. They could participate to review all irregularities and address all complaints.

I have seen that the NEC issues a communiqué that political parties and civil society could send their staff to participate. Yesterday, HE Sam Rainsy and HE Sar Kheng were in a phone conversation on this issue. HE Sar Kheng clearly affirmed that there is no other way than using the mechanism of the NEC, with the participation from political parties and non-governmental organizations.

Finally, there was an understanding that the Cambodian People's Party and CNRP would send their representatives to consult with the NEC

on the way to do thing. Upon hearing his report, I told him that that could be a good way to do it. This is how much I can clarify the issue and I would ask anyone who has not understood my speech to quote everything I said. Interpretation in newspaper articles have led to a different understanding. I must clarify that I have no right whatsoever to do it, especially when it is not according to law. Now that the NEC opens for participations from political parties and non-governmental organizations, and possibly officials from the UN agencies, under the umbrella of the NEC and existing law, I would say it is great.

#### **National Assembly Session and Formation of Cabinet – Not Stuck**

Yesterday I had a meeting with the Ambassador of (the Federal republic of) Germany. He asked me about what is to be done next and I have told him everything from the beginning. Upon seeing me, first he congratulated me for winning the election and he said even one vote would make you a winner. He conveyed the message from the German Chancellor Angela Merkel. I probed "I heard just now that you congratulated my party for winning the election?" and he said "yes I certainly did." He asked me what is next.

I told him that recognizing no election results is not a new thing. This happened since 1998. The oppositions never recognized the election results. I just repeated what I talked to the German ambassador yesterday. I said, they did not recognize the election results in 1998, 2003 and 2008 but they never failed to claim their seats in the National Assembly. It is in this understanding that I have raised the possibility of creating the leadership mechanism of the National Assembly. After the constitutional amendment of 2006, formation of the leadership mechanism of the National Assembly would not be stuck.

In 1993, it was impossible because we then did not yet have a Constitution. We fully applied the Constitution in 1998.

The number of seats in the National Assembly has increased from 120 in 1993 to 122 and then 123. The Constitution then obliged us to make decision with a two-third majority. That put everything in stalemate situation. Quorum for a meeting was set for seven tenth of the seats or 87 seats. So in every meeting, when an elected party lacked the 87 seats required would need to seek another party's nod for a meeting. That was from before the constitutional amendment in 2006, I repeat. From the 2006 amendment, those problems no longer exist. I am speaking for the whole country to listen to and I do not interpret the law as the competency to do so belong to the Constitutional Council.

From now on, to adopt a draft law, we would need an absolute majority, which requires 63 seats in the National Assembly. Should any elected candidate from any political party choose to boycott the parliamentary session, it is his/her rights. We can convene a session for only 63 seats to adopt the law, to form the Cabinet. It is clear that the process is not stuck. Should the (opposition) party win, they would do the same and they would not need us too. We would not block them from convening a session. I would suggest everyone who made comments in the last few days to look once again at the 2006 amended Constitution. The Cambodian People's Party, though I do not say how many exactly, has received the majority of vote more than enough to convene the session, to form the Cabinet and to adopt laws, especially the annual budget law.

However, as officials in the Royal Government know already, if the budget law were to be stuck, the Cabinet could not

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be formed by September or October, the caretaker government would continue to function, according to the law on financial system, on a one twelfth of the annual budget. It would be sufficient for the Royal Government to take care of its payroll and small projects. We cannot go into contract with foreign country for bigger loans since we need the adoption from the National Assembly in order to do so. Our national budget is 15 billion USD. So 1/12 of the budget would be about 1 billion USD, we can make it.

I would suggest that no country would threaten us to cut assistance. Some also make noise from Washington to cease so and so assistance. I could not stop you from doing that. However, who would be affected from this cut? It would not be the Royal Government but primarily those non-governmental organizations that are receiving their money. They would not have work to do. Their fifty million USD in assistance is not for the Royal Government to pay for its staff but certain non-governmental organizations. However, those are the voices of just a few members of congress and the Senate, not the government of President Barack Obama.

We were happy and grateful for their assistance. I asked my son, how much is their military assistance? It is roughly about one million USD. Maybe we can do without. In the past, they deducted their offer of about 100 used military vehicles. China then replaced it with 257 vehicles.

As for the military vehicles, I did not demand them or said anything when it did not happen. Is it not too extreme that (when something happened here) cut aid, (something happened there) cut aid. Again, I would stress once again that it is the voice of a few members of congress and the senate only.

It is not the voice of the American people or the US congress or the Senate a whole or the Barack Obama administration.

In case there is a stalemate, could the session of the National Assembly convene, according to what they say the article 76. That was the case in 2008 when finally the opposition parties turned up for the session of the National Assembly. The NEC will issue its decision on candidates-elect until there are 123 members of the National Assembly. Should they fail to clarify all 123 members, the National Assembly would not be able to convene the first session.

Once the NEC declares all required members, HM the King would invite the most senior member of the National Assembly to convene other members to the meeting. It would be within 60 days at the latest for the first session of the National Assembly to take place under the presidency of HM the King, article 82 of the Constitution.

Therefore, 60 days after the elections, HM the King would preside over the first session. Should they choose not to show up they would be facing with a big question if they go against the will of the people? How many would show up is not a matter since there has not been any specification as to how many would validate the session. In order to block the first session, what have they to do then? They have to declare abandoning their seats. The law of the National Election Committee stipulates that if a party abandons its seats or its seats are denied, the NEC will divide the number of seats among the remaining elected parties in the National Assembly.

I did not know what HE Ambassador of Germany had said, but it is not what it was when the Cambodian Daily ran an article that "Hun Sen threatens to take seats of the CNRP to share among other parties." I did not say that. No one takes

the seats from any party. However, if an (elected) party abandons their seats, the NEC will divide those seats among remaining elected parties. If they do not abandon, no one could do that.

Once the NEC publicly declares that so and so is elected, one primary condition is to take swear an oath. If they fail to be present in the first session, they should at least be present to swear an oath. Should they fail to take an oath, they would not have parliamentary immunity. The question would be whether (CPP) could proceed with absolute majority. We will proceed in forming the leadership structure of the National Assembly and the Cabinet. The other party would do exactly what we are doing now if they are elected and we would not object to that.

#### Threats of Demonstration

People who would participate in any demonstration should think of themselves. They have frequently threatened us of their demonstration. The Cambodian People's Party does not say anything about holding counter demonstration. It would be dangerous.

The Cambodian People's Party would not resort to that. Let us just understand that if the oppositions have rights to launch demonstration against the election results, the Cambodian People's Party also does to support them. What situation could this lead to? Have they, who make endless threats of launching demonstration thought about its consequences?

It is high time to talk about political and socioeconomic stability, normalcy of people's livelihood. We also have this senior secondary school exam coming, why would anyone want to lure them into politics? Workers should work in factories and farmers should transplant or harvest and not join demonstration – not for ruling

party or the oppositions.

Since the election is over, we should all reside in peace and work together. From our side, we are ready as I said to the German Ambassador: (1) *participate in the session of the National Assembly, while talk should be conducted about the set up of the National Assembly leadership.* This is a good thing for all of us. (2) *In case we cannot go through the first door, we will have to go through the second one. If they do not join the session, we will still convene it.*

#### Thank Voters, Next Five Years Will Realize Reforms, International Reserve Fund

I am grateful for the people who have cast their votes and participated in the campaign. On the election day we noticed that some people had first gone to the rice field and returned to vote later. I thank the authority, the armed forces, NEC and those security apparatus for the elections that there has not been a single death from this election.

I thank directly to those who voted for the Cambodian People's Party to have the leading majority in the whole country. This shall keep me in leadership for another five years where I am sure we will be able to realize reforms successfully and improve our people's living conditions.

We cannot stay as when we were elected in 2008. We will need to make our rice field better than before, get our worker better pay, and the armed forces and civil servants higher salary. In 2003, our economic condition was more difficult and on the election day we had only 2 billion Riels in the treasury. Today I should declare that we have over 1 billion or hundreds of million of USD in cash in the treasury. We have international reserve of 3.5 billion USD, not including gold reserve ...■