



26 December 2013 — Samdech Techo Hun Sen with Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung during the official welcoming ceremony in Hanoi (Kampuchea Thmey)

Recaps of Meetings in December 2013

Samdech Techo Hun Sen's Official Visit to Vietnam AKP Phnom Penh, December 27-28, 2013

Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen paid separate courtesy calls on Vietnam's National Assembly President H.E. Nguyen Sinh Hung, President H.E. Truong Tan Sang, and Party General Secretary H.E. Nguyen Phu Trong, on Dec. 26 in Hanoi, during his three-day official visit in Vietnam.

In the meetings, both sides expressed satisfactions with the close, strengthened and expanded ties of friendship and cooperation between the two neighboring countries. Samdech Techo Hun Sen thanked the Vietnamese hosts for their warm hospitality and praised Vietnam for its development in all domains. He also expressed his profound thanks to Vietnam for its support to Cambodia so far. The premier further suggested the visit exchange between both countries' youths to build closer ties between them. In the bilateral talk with Vietnamese Prime Minister H.E. Nguyen Tan Dung, the two countries were committed to raise the two-way trade up to US\$5 billion by 2015.

The two premiers witnessed the signing ceremony of nine cooperation agreements related to bilateral trade enhancement, extradition, physical infrastructure construction, education, information, security and so on... The Cambodian and Vietnamese leaders agreed to boost the tourism sector, in which there had been some 700,000 Vietnamese visitors in 2012. The two sides expect the figure to reach 800,000 in 2013 and to one million in 2014. While encouraging more Vietnamese investors to do business in Cambodia and urging for more cooperation on energy sector, the two sides agreed to continue negotiations, especially on the use of water resource along the border, and to expand more cooperation in combating cross border crime.

Visit in Japan Fruitful

Phnom Penh, December 18, 2013

The visit of Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen in Japan was very fruitful, H.E. Kao Kim Hourn, Delegate Minister Attached to the Prime Minister, said at a press conference upon the arrival of the high-ranking Cambodian delegation from Japan. During his stay in Japan from Dec. 12 to 17, Samdech Techo Hun Sen attended the 40th ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit and the 5th Mekong-Japan Summit, and held bilateral talks with his Japanese counterpart H.E. Shinzo Abe.

According to H.E. Kao Kim Hourn, both premiers agreed to upgrade the relationship between the two countries to the strategic level and pushed for bilateral

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Response to Opposition's Demands

(20 December 2013 — Unofficial Selection and Translation)

Question: *The opposition Party has put into action its phase-ii strategy to demand Samdech Techo to step down, to organize a re-election and to reform the National Election Commission. Kem Sokha also warns of phase-iii strategy, which they would also block roads, close down ministries. What is your reaction?*

Samdech Techo: I would clarify to all of you that, unlike in other country, where the Constitution allows the Prime Minister to dissolve the Parliament, in the Kingdom of Cambodia, the article 78 of the Constitution stipulates that the National Assembly of each term will be for five years. It cannot be dissolved before end of its term, unless, within a respective legislative term, the Royal Government has been dissolved twice within twelve months. This means that in Cambodia, according to its Constitution, no one, neither the Prime Minister nor HM the King, nor the National Assembly, has the rights to dissolve

the National Assembly. I would suggest that everyone looks at the law of the country. On their demand for me to step down, (I would ask them) what did I do wrong? In addition to that, removing me (unconstitutionally) of my post would not be what the Cambodian People's Party and my supporters want to happen. It is true those who do not support me have done so since we liberated the country from the regime of Pol Pot. Right after the liberation, those people wished to remove me already. I am not surprised. I know that the one who has formulated a slogan "Hun Sen to step down" is not a simple demonstrator but a political leader. That I have been (elected to the post of Prime Minister) by the Constitution, I would step down only in accordance with the Constitution.

Having said that I would reaffirm there is no such thing as re-election because no one has the mandate to dissolve the

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National Newsbreaks of December 2013

Industrial and Dry Port Zone in Snuol District, Kratie

AKP Phnom Penh, December 31, 2013

A project of commercial, industrial and dry port zone has begun the construction on a 1,000-hectare area in Snuol district, Cambodia-Vietnam bordering province of Kratie. The project was formed by a joint venture between the local Cambodian owned UBA Development Co., Ltd. and China's Zhongqi Holding Group. From 15 to 20 years, the concession land granted by the Royal Government of Cambodia will be developed into the construction of infrastructures such as roads, bridges, factories, enterprises, modern trading centre and tourism resort to provide job opportunity to thousands of local Cambodians. The project will also share the knowledge, technology, and new experiences from abroad, thus contributing to heighten the livelihood of Cambodian people and preventing those who migrate to other countries for work. The investment will be carried out in three phases (1) the production of processing items such as wood furniture, cable, electricity wire and plastic, (2) the creation of rubber-processing factory for vehicle tires and (3) the development of cassava-processing plant for methanol and alcohol.

Cambodia-China Inter-governmental Coordination Committee's Preparatory Meeting

Phnom Penh, December 31, 2013

Members of the Cambodia-China Inter-governmental Coordination Committee (CCICC) gathered at a preparatory meeting under the chairmanship of Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Hor Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and Chairman of CCICC, before their participation in the CCICC's First Meeting to take place in Beijing, China from January 1-3, 2014. The meeting was attended by CCICC's members from 16 relevant ministries-institutions and focused on the fields of security, economy, trade, industry, agriculture, mines, energy, water resources, telecommunications, media, education, culture, health, tourism, and local, regional and international cooperation. The First Meeting of CCICC will be co-chaired by H.E. Hor Namhong and H.E. Yang Jiechi, Chinese State Councilor and Chairman of the China-Cambodia Inter-governmental Coordination Committee. The upcoming meeting will exchange views on the implementation of the Action Plan of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Cooperation between the two countries on the development in all fields of common concerns. Three documents - the Minutes of the First Meeting of CCICC, the Air Services Agreement and the MoU on the Establishment of CCICC between the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Government of the People's Republic of China will be signed.

Garment Workers' Monthly Minimum Wage to Increase to US\$100

Phnom Penh, December 31, 2013

The Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training (MLVT) decided to increase the garment workers' minimum wage to US\$100 per month from February 1, 2014 and to set up a working group to study the garment workers' pay raise in the future. On December 24, the Labor Advisory Commission decided to augment the monthly minimum wage of the garment workers to US\$95 from April 2014 and up to US\$160 by 2018 with an annual raise of about US\$15. However, a number of trade unions did not agree

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National Assembly and there has not been such mechanism to determine re-election before the end of the (legislative) term too. Aside from what is stipulated in the Constitution, the Election Law states that every five years, on Sunday of the fourth week of the month of July, Cambodia organizes general elections.

Concerning the would-be closing down of roads by demonstrations, I would just share a thought that the closure would not affect only the Royal Government or a number of institutions, but the people in general.

It is illegal. That it is illegal. It would leave the Royal Government with no choice but respond with legal action. I would urge our people to stay away from the appeal to block roads. Blocking roads is blocking one's own blood vein. The Royal Government has been patient and respecting the people's rights in organizing peaceful demonstration but, I may emphasize, it would not consent with illegal action and acts of stirring instability. We would not allow action that would jeopardize the national security and I would urge a precaution of the third hand...■

with the resolution and incited workers to join street protests to demand for a monthly minimum wage of US\$160 in 2014. Garment and textile industry, which has some 500 factories and employs about 510,000 workers, is a main contributor for Cambodia's economic growth. From January to November 2013, Cambodia has exported garment products with a total value of US\$5.07 billion, up 22 percent from US\$4.15 billion in the same period last year. MLVT also issued earlier a public announcement calling on all employers to continue the factories' operations, workers and employees to go back to work on January 2, 2014 and the authorities will take strict legal measures against those who continue to incite and disturb the workers, employees and factories, stressed the public announcement.

The Law on Geographical Indications Approved

Phnom Penh, December 30, 2013

The National Assembly's session approved the draft law on geographical indications (GI), which aims to protect the intellectual property of producers and operators as well as to protect consumers. This draft law of 17 chapters with 41 articles will maintain the national identity of the country's GI status for each product and will protect the quality of a product to its origin under international law and create brand recognition on the global stage. The most well-known Cambodian products with GI status are Kampot pepper, Kampong Speu palm sugar, Kampot durians, Takeo lobsters, Thmar Kaul rice (Battambang), Phnom Srok silk (Banteay Meanchey), etc.

Cambodia-JICA Coop. on Water Resource Management

Phnom Penh, December 30, 2013

The Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MoWRM) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed a new cooperation deal on water resource management, which will provide new ideas and build the capacity of the ministry's human resources as well as set up a management mechanism for development plan elaboration and water resource management of targeted water reservoirs across the country. The cooperation serves as a bridge to promote more understanding and contribute to the friendship and cooperation between Cambodia and Japan.

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military exchange. H.E. Shizo Abe pledged to provide more support for Cambodia's development and was convinced that direct flight between the two countries will be established soon. After the bilateral talks, the two leaders witnessed the signing ceremony of four documents – the Exchanges of Notes of the Projects for Improvement of the National Road No. 1, Sihanouk Provincial Referral Hospital, and the Equipment for the Restoration of the Western Causeway of Angkor Wat, and the Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges between the Ministry of Defense of Japan and the Ministry of National Defense of Cambodia.

Samdech Hun Sen also met with H.E. Masahiko Kumura, Deputy President of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) of Japan, Mr. Mitsuo Hidaka, New President and CEO of Mitsui Oil Exploration Co., Ltd. (MOECO), and H.E. Fumiaki Takahashi, Chairman of Japan-Cambodia Association. The meetings focused mainly on the promotion of bilateral trade and tourism exchanges. Besides, Samdech Techo Hun Sen and his entourage visited Kyoto prefecture and suggested the establishment of a sister city relationship between Kyoto and Cambodia's cultural province of Siem Reap.

Cambodia-Japan Strategic Bilateral Relations

Tokyo, December 15, 2013

Leaders of Cambodia and Japan spoke highly of the progress of both countries' relationship and agreed to upgrade it to the strategic level. Prime Minister H.E. Shinzo Abe affirms Japan will continue to provide more support for the development of Cambodia and expresses his strong hope that direct flight would be established between Cambodia and Japan soon. Concerning the request made by Samdech Techo Hun Sen for Japan's support for the electoral reform in Cambodia, HE Shizo Abe affirms that the Japanese experts will be dispatched soon to the country for a study visit on this matter. Samdech Techo Hun Sen expressed his gratitude to the Government and people of Japan for their development assistance to Cambodia and noted that H.E. Shinzo Abe's visit to Cambodia last November and his visit in Japan this time were a positive step to expand the relations between the two countries to the strategic level.

More Japanese Investors To Be Appealed

Phnom Penh, December 16, 2013

During his official stay in Tokyo, Japan, Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen received H.E. Fumiaki Takahashi, Chairman of Japan-Cambodia Association. Mr. Chairman recalled the creation of Japan-Cambodia Association 10 years after the establishment of the two countries' diplomatic relations, adding that it had been 50 years of age since then with the exchanges of the leaders and good practices. H.E. Fumiaki Takahashi further stated that there were only 25 Japanese companies invested in Cambodia when he served as the Ambassador to Cambodia, but the figure had grown up to more than 100 Japanese companies to date.

In addition, he pledged to attract more and more Japanese businessmen to invest in Cambodia. Samdech Techo Hun Sen congratulated H.E. Fumiaki Takahashi on his appointment as the Chairman of Japan-Cambodia Association and hoped that the Association will be of great benefit for the two countries. Samdech Techo also underscored Japan's dynamic role in Cambodia in the last two decades, Japan's formal and informal assistance in the 1990s in seeking peace, its contribution to rebuilding Cambo-

dia from destruction by war to development as seen nowadays.

Siem Reap and Kyoto Sister City Relations

Tokyo, December 16, 2013

Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen called on the Kyoto prefecture of Japan to establish a sister city alliance with Cambodia's Siem Reap cultural province because the many similarities Siem Reap and Kyoto share. The two provinces were former capital cities and they are homes to World Heritage Sites. Samdech Techo said he was very happy and proud to visit Kyoto as he often mentioned about the Kyoto Protocol, but he had never known the city. During his stay in Kyoto, Samdech Techo Hun Sen visited the Golden Pavilion, Rokuon-ji Temple, attended a tea ceremony, met with Japanese businessmen and investors, and so on.

Seeking Support from Diet for Assistance to ASEAN

Tokyo, December 13, 2013

Speaking at the lunch reception hosted today by Japanese-Cambodian Parliamentary Friendship Group and attended by Japanese parliamentarians from different political parties, Samdech Techo Hun Sen requested the Japanese parliamentarians to support their government's project proposals for assistance to Cambodia and ASEAN, while lauding the 60-year and 40-year relationships between Cambodia and Japan, and between ASEAN and Japan, respectively.

Samdech Tehco noted that Japan has been playing a key role in promoting the ASEAN's integration and minimizing the development gap between the old and new ASEAN members, as well as helping Mekong countries, most of them are new ASEAN members, towards the ASEAN Economic Community building by 2015. On the next day, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan announced at the end of the 40th ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit held in Tokyo that Japan will provide two Trillions Yen in Official Development Assistance (ODA) to ASEAN countries over 5 years for the two Pillars of "Enhancing Connectivity" and "Narrowing the Development Gap."

For "Enhancing Connectivity," Japan will introduce high-quality and resilient infrastructure mobilizing Japan's expertise and technologies, including emphasizing safety measures, disaster management, environment and maintenance, and promote assistance for transportation infrastructure, such as East-West and Southern Corridors, railways, ports and airports, as well as harmonized systems.

For "Narrowing the Development Gap," assistance to Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV) countries will be promoted through the steady implementation of Tokyo Strategy 2012 for Mekong-Japan Cooperation. The four countries will get in total 200 billions yen. Looking ahead to ASEAN Integration in 2015 and beyond, Japan will contribute US\$100 millions to the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) for urgent agendas laid out in the Med-to-Long Term ASEAN-Japan Vision, which includes four priority areas – Partners for Peace & Security, Partners for Prosperity, Partners for Quality of Life, and Heart-to-Heart Partners.

Inclusion of Teachers with Disabilities in the Civil Service

Phnom Penh, December 10, 2013

Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen asked the Ministry of

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Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation to include disabled teachers working for different NGOs in the civil service. The Cambodian premier made the request while he was holding a get-together with 3,000 disabled persons across the country to mark the National and International Day of People with Disabilities (December 3).

The inclusion will enable them to get monthly salary from their NGOs and financial assistance from the government in order to improve their living standard. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation have so far included teachers with disabilities at Kruosar Thmey Organization in the public service. Samdech Techo also suggested the two ministries to add Braille and sign language into the school curriculum. It is estimated that there are approximately 200,000 people with disabilities in Cambodia, or 1.4 percent of the country's total population.

RGC Committed to Combating Corruption

Phnom Penh, December 09, 2013

Samdech Techo Hun Sen expressed the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC)'s irreversible commitment to fight against corruption to remove obstacles to development, economic growth, and efforts in alleviating poverty. In his message on the National and International Anti-Corruption Day (December 9) to the Cambodian compatriots, Samdech noted that "corruption is the main factor of social injustice."

Samdech Techo highly appreciated the achievements of the Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) as well as the active participation from all ministries and institutions, local authorities at all levels, NGOs, private sector and the public in preventing and combating corruption.

The Prime Minister asked the ACU to continue to cooperate closely with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to include anti-corruption program in the school curriculum from the 2014-2015 academic year. He also sought more participation and cooperation from all milieus in continuing to fight against corruption under the slogan "Together against Corruption."

Samdech Techo Receives 40 Australia Scholarship Winners

Phnom Penh, December 09, 2013

Received at the Peace Palace 40 Cambodian scholarship students to pursue their postgraduate studies in Australia, Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen admired the selected students and advised them to study hard and bring back their knowledge to develop the country. Samdech Techo stressed about the government's endeavors in developing all sectors for the sake of the young generations.

The 40 students have been selected from among 1,000 candidates and will depart for Australia in early January 2014 to continue their studies in different majors including Public Administration, Environmental Management, Public Policy, Finance and Banking, Climate Change, Water Resource Management, Economic Development, Accounting and Finance, Public Health, International Relations, Media and Communications, etc.

Hosting World's Most Beautiful Bays Club Ninth Congress

AKP Phnom Penh, December 06, 2013

At the 9th Congress of the World's Most Beautiful Bays Club

under the theme of "Blue Sea, Green City," the 2nd CLMV Tourism Ministers Meeting and the 32nd GMS Tourism Working Group Meeting held at Kampot coastal province, Samdech Techo Hun Sen called on the Ministry of Tourism and National Committee for the Management and Development of Cambodian Beach Areas to explore the possibility of establishing a Permanent Joint Forum to manage coastal areas based on the four principles of Public, People, Private and Partnership in accordance with the model of ICC-Angkor.

Samdech underlined it is a joint forum that gathers and enables all stakeholders to jointly think and jointly act with collective responsibility through dialogues, recommendations, joint development of tourism sector as well as sustainable development of Cambodian coastal areas. Samdech also requests private sector, national and international organizations, development partners and stakeholders to join the Royal Government of Cambodia in producing and developing joint tourism products, organizing joint tours, developing joint cruise tourism and so on.

In addition, we must create mechanisms for joint development of coastal tourist destinations based on the public-private partnership, joint development of new tourism products, joint enhancement of service quality in the cause of clean beaches to up to the reputation: "Cambodia's Bay: Rising Start of the Southwest." According to the Cambodian premier, Cambodian coastline has played an important role as the second pole for attracting investment to promote economic growth after Phnom Penh.

Cambodian coastline has been considered as not only an attractive and competitive nature tourism destination in Cambodia and the region, but also a major tourism destination after the historic site of Angkor and Phnom Penh city. In this connection, he highly appreciated the investment and compliance with environmental requirements of all companies in the tourism sector, reflecting the private sector's role as "real locomotive of economic growth" and critical contribution to socio-economic development.

Samdech Techo Hun Sen encouraged dialogue, within both CLMV and GMS frameworks, to strengthen inter-regional cooperation on inland, waterway and air connectivity, facilitation of movement, and joint development of coastal tourism products in the region. Cambodia's coastline stretches about 450 kilometers in four provinces – Preah Sihanouk, Koh Kong, Kampot and Kep provinces. It became member of the Club of the World's Most Beautiful Bays in mid-2011.

In the first ten months of 2013, the number of international tourists visiting the coastal areas reached 420,000, an increase of 84 percent if compared to the same period last year. The Cambodian coastal region is projected to welcome one million and two million foreign visitors in 2015 and 2020 respectively.

Samdech Techo Received French and Japanese Guests

Phnom Penh, December 06, 2013

Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen held separate talks with visiting H.E. Ms. Aurélie Filippetti, Minister of Culture and Communications of the Republic of France, and H.E. Mr. Yasumasa Nagamine, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, following the opening ceremony of the 3rd Intergovernmental Conference on Angkor held on December 5 in Siem Reap provincial city.

In the meeting with H.E. Ms. Aurélie Filippetti, Samdech Techo

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Hun Sen informed his guest of challenges faced by Angkor temples, particularly the flooding in 2011 and 2013 and requested the French side to continue to help safeguarding Cambodian ancient temples, both in bilateral and ICC-Angkor Frameworks. Samdech Techo also sought cooperation from French forces in Mali for soon-to-arrive Cambodian forces to Mali for the UN peacekeeping operations in the near future.

To H.E. Yasumasa Nagamine, Samdech Techo Hun Sen recalled his bilateral talks with his Japanese counterpart H.E. Shinzo Abe in Phnom Penh last November. Samdech Techo stressed that this year 2013 is the 60th anniversary of Cambodia's National Independence as well as the 60th anniversary of the establishment of Cambodia-Japan diplomatic relations. That means Japan did not hesitate to establish its diplomatic ties with Cambodia once the latter got its independence.

**Samdech Techo Receives
Indonesian, Malaysian Ambassadors**

Phnom Penh, December 05, 2013

Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen held separate talks with H.E. Soehardjono Sastromihardjo, Outgoing Ambassador of Indonesia to Cambodia. Samdech Techo highly valued H.E. Soehardjono Sastromihardjo's endeavors in boosting the diplomatic relations between the two countries and in encouraging more and more Indonesian investors to Cambodia, especially in promoting the purchase of Cambodian rice.

On the same day, Samdech Techo Hun Sen received H.E. Raszlan Bin Abdul Rashid, newly appointed Ambassador of Malaysia to Cambodia, whom Samdech Techo sought more cooperation between the two countries, particularly in the field of economy and trade. The new Malaysian diplomat pledged to try his utmost to further strengthen the close relationship and cooperation between both countries, in particular in the areas of economy, investment, tourism, infrastructure, agriculture and information technology.

Samdech Techo Met Vietnamese and Lao Fronts Delegations

Phnom Penh, December 04, 2013

Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen held separate talks with visiting delegations of Vietnam Fatherland Front (VFF) Central Committee and Lao Front for National Construction (LFNC) Central Committee led by their Presidents H.E. Nguyen Thien Nhan and H.E. Phandouangchit Vongsa, respectively. Samdech Techo thanked H.E. Nguyen Thien Nhan and H.E. Phandouangchit Vongsa for their presences at the celebration of the 35th Founding Anniversary of the Solidarity Front for the Development of the Cambodian Motherland (SFDCM). They also were present at the inauguration ceremony of the "December 2" Memorial Monument to commemorate the establishment of the SFDCM, formerly known as the United Front for National Salvation of Kampuchea, founded on December 2, 1978 at Choeung Khlou village, "December 2" commune, Snuol district, Kratie province to liberate the country from the Khmer Rouge genocidal regime.

Samdech Techo Appeals to Japan, China for Restraint

Kyodo News International, December 3, 2013

Samdech Techo Hun Sen voiced concern Tuesday over heightened tensions between Japan and China, appealing to both countries to exercise self-restraint and warning of "serious and unpre-

dictable consequences" for the region if they act otherwise. "Cambodia is a good friend of both Japan and China. Both Japan and China are very important for Cambodia and have contributed to the promotion of peace and development here," Hun Sen told Kyodo News in an interview.

"I wish to see the two countries exercise utmost restraint and to avoid any (provocative) actions and incendiary words," he said. If Tokyo and Beijing engage in risky undertakings, he warned, it "will lead to serious and unpredictable consequences." Hun Sen urged Japan and China, which are embroiled in a territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, to peacefully settle their differences through negotiations, either through a bilateral mechanism or a regional one.

He suggested that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, of which Cambodia is a member, could play a role in facilitating, or at least encouraging, dialogue between the two powers for the sake of peace and stability in the region. "If China and Japan need ASEAN or any other mediator -- we are happy to do it ... But they are superpowers, and even though they are having problems, they still need each other and complement each other. ASEAN is really worried, because ASEAN Plus Three has been the most important mechanism for ASEAN," he said, referring to the forum that functions as a coordinator of cooperation between ASEAN and China, Japan and South Korea.

Hun Sen also voiced concern over the impact of a Sino-Japanese confrontation on the 10-member ASEAN, saying its less-developed members such as Cambodia would be "the most critically affected because of the loss in development assistance" as well as trade and investment. In the context of ASEAN, he said, it "would pollute the political environment and it might interrupt ongoing cooperation and the path forward."

"ASEAN, Japan and China would all lose a great deal," he added. Hun Sen said ASEAN should appeal to Tokyo and Beijing to act responsibly by factoring into their decision-making the interests of East Asia and recognizing their key role in spearheading the region's economic growth and in tackling problems of global scale such as poverty, climate change and natural disasters. Besides Cambodia, ASEAN includes Brunei, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Samdech Techo Meets IMF Managing Director

AKP Phnom Penh, December 02, 2013

Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen received at the Peace Palace visiting Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Ms. Christine Lagarde. During the talks, Ms. Christine Lagarde expressed her appreciation to the political and macroeconomic stability in Cambodia, and congratulated the Cambodian People's Party on its success in the national election in July.

Ms. Lagarde also highly valued the Royal Government of Cambodia's rectangular strategy, which focuses on health, education, and finance, the key factors for the future of Cambodian people, in particular the youths. The visiting IMF managing director expressed her optimism over Cambodia's economic growth, stressing that it would reach more than 7 percent. She further affirmed that IMF would continue to support Cambodia as a partner, and encourage the RGC to continue the financial reform. Samdech Techo Hun Sen laid stress on the significance of RGC-IMF partnership and thanked this international financial institution for its support and recommendations to Cambodia so far...■

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Live Fire Drill Successfully Conducted

Phnom Penh, December 30, 2013

The Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) held officially at the military field in Kampong Speu province the live fire drill under the presidency of the RCAF Commander-in-Chief Gen. Pol Saroeun. The drill was conducted by nearly 2,000 armed personnel, three helicopters, 20 BM-21 rocket launchers, 39 BMP1-Tanks, 28 military trucks aimed at building up the RCAF's capacity in defending territorial integrity. In April this year, RCAF also conducted a live fire drill in Kampong Speu province of BM-21 rocket launchers and 130 mm heavy artillery.

A National Journalists Federation to Be Established

Phnom Penh, December 30, 2013

In its effort to coordinate the establishment of a National Journalists Federation of Cambodia (NJFC), the Ministry of Information chaired the discussion on the NJFC's establishment on December 29. All associations of journalists in Cambodia unanimously agreed to form the NJFC, which will act as national-level institution to represent all the Cambodian journalists. The Ministry will convene another meeting to discuss the NJFC's process and other key points in order to ensure its functioning. The Federation will facilitate knowledge sharing in the field of journalism among Cambodian reporters and unite approximately 30 press associations and councils in Cambodia to fulfill the work as a big team and upgrade their professionalism, respect, and honor. Cambodia has currently 13 TV channels, 123 cable TVs, 118 radio stations, 656 printing publications, 67 imported publications and some 20 journalists associations.

KOICA's Final Report on Master Plan for Railway Network Development

Phnom Penh, December 25, 2013

The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) handed over 20 hard copies of the Final Report on Master Plan for Railway Network Development to Cambodia. KOICA provided on that occasion 4 HP desktop computers with printers and a Hyundai Motors SantaFe 4WD/2200cc to the MPWT. KOICA and MPWT signed the 2.8 million USD Record of Discussion (R/D) in 2011 to implement the "Project for the Master Plan for Railway Network Development in Cambodia" for 24 months (from December 2011 to December 2013). The project aims to help formulate an efficient and systematic national railway network by analyzing feasibility for priority routes and establish the comprehensive railway master plan for Cambodia. From 1991 to 2012, KOICA's development assistance to Cambodia reached approximately US\$105 million. The annual grant aid volume in Cambodia has steadily increased in recent years, surpassing US\$24 million in 2013.

Opposition Party's Demands, a Coup against Government

Phnom Penh, December 24, 2013

A petition signed by CPP lawmakers considers anti-government street protesters of the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) a coup against the legitimate government led by Cambodian People's Party (CPP). It underlines "the anti-government protesters' calls for Prime Minister Hun Sen's resignation and a re-election no later than early next year are a clear act of coup against the current legitimate government." The petition notes that the Cambodian Constitution is different from those of

other countries where Prime Ministers can dissolve the National Assembly. In Cambodia, according to the Article 78 of the Constitution, the legislative term of the National Assembly shall have five years term. The Royal Government shall not be dissolved before end of its term, except when it is twice deposed within a period of twelve months. It goes on stressing that neither the Prime Minister nor the King, nor the National Assembly itself has the right to dissolve the National Assembly. On this note, the petition of the CPP lawmakers calls on CNRP to read clearly the Constitution.

AFD Loans US\$26 Million for the Irrigation Sector

Phnom Penh, December 23, 2013

French Agency for Development (AFD) has provided nearly US\$26 million in sovereign loan for the rehabilitation of about 40 irrigated schemes and Preks in Cambodia. It is the first sovereign loan granted by AFD to the Kingdom of Cambodia, following a Memorandum of Understanding establishing the modalities of intervention of AFD for sovereign loans signed by Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Keat Chhon and AFD Chief Executive Officer on March 11, 2013. This credit facility complements a grant of US\$5.2 million in March 2013 to the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology aims at strengthening the capacity of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders involved in the management of water resources. Through this new financing module, AFD continues to support hydro-agricultural and water resource management sectoral policy implemented by the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology.

This project will carry on rehabilitation works of about 40 irrigated areas and Preks. Since 1997, AFD has granted about US\$50 million to Cambodia for the rehabilitation of hydro-agricultural infrastructures and the reinforcement of the capacity of stakeholders in this sector resulting in the rehabilitation of more than 50,000 ha of irrigated areas. The rehabilitation works carried out through these interventions led to a significant increase of "paddy" rice yields of Cambodia and represent a milestone towards achieving the government's target of exporting one million tons of rice by 2015.

Cambodia Earns 47 Medals from the 27th SEA Games in Myanmar

Phnom Penh, December 23, 2013

Cambodia won in total 47 medals - 8 gold medals, 11 silver and 28 bronze medals from the 27th SEA Games in Myanmar. Cambodia sent over 200 athletes to this biennial multi-sport event and 133 of them won medals. Of the eight gold medals, four won in wrestling, two in vovinam, one each from petanque and taekwondo. In the 26th SEA Games held in Indonesia, Cambodia won 39 medals including 4 gold, 11 silver and 24 bronze medals in nine types of sports. The next SEA Games will take place in Singapore in 2015.

Nearly US\$90 Million of Telecommunications Tax Collected

Phnom Penh, December 23, 2013

Cambodia expects to collect some US\$90 million of telecommunications tax in 2013 thanks to the rapid growing of telephone services in Cambodia since by the end of November this year, the General Department of Taxation of the Ministry of Economy and Finance have collected some US\$ 80 millions of telecommunications tax. According to the figures of Ministry of Posts and Tele-

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communications, there are nine fixed-line and mobile phone operators in Cambodia, while the number of telephone subscribers (both fixed and mobile) reached 19 million in 2012, up from 16 million in 2011 and the Internet users were some 2.7 million.

RGC Appeals to Opposition Party to Respect the Constitution

Phnom Penh, December 20, 2013

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) appealed to the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) and its supporters to abide by the Constitution, especially the Article 31. The Article 31 of the Constitution reads: "Every Khmer citizen shall be equal before the law, enjoying the same rights, freedom and fulfilling the same obligations regardless of race, color, sex, language, religious belief, political tendency, birth origin, social status, wealth or other status. The exercise of personal rights and freedom by any individual shall not adversely affect the rights and freedom of others. The exercise of such rights and freedom shall be in accordance with the law."

The Article 37 stipulates: "The right to strike and to non-violent demonstration shall be implemented in the framework of a law", while the Article 41 states: "Khmer citizens shall have freedom of expression, press, publication and assembly. No one shall exercise this right to infringe upon the rights of others, to violate public law and order and national security [...]."

The RGC urged the authorities and relevant competent forces to fulfill their roles and obligations to enforce law by enhancing the respect of discipline, professional code of ethics, increasing cooperation and coordination to ensure security, safety, social order for the demonstrations to be conducted peacefully and non-violently in accordance with the existing laws. H.E. Tea Banh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense, said on the sidelines of the Consultative Workshop on National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018 that the CNRP's demands for Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen to step down and for election re-organization are out-of-date. Good politicians have to respect the laws. They cannot do whatever they want to achieve their ambitions and they cannot 'copy' from neighboring countries, it is in Cambodia, here.

Cambodia Becomes a Member of CPCP in the Event of Armed Conflict

Phnom Penh, December 19, 2013

The Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict for 2013-2017 has elected Cambodia as its member. Cambodia had ratified the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict on April 4, 1962. On September 17, 2013, Cambodia ratified the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. Then, Cambodia deposited its instrument of ratification with the Director-General of UNESCO on October 17, 2013.

This Protocol enters into force for Cambodia three months after the deposit of its instrument of ratification, that is to say on December 17, 2013. Under Article 24 of the Second Protocol, the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict is hereby established. It shall be composed of twelve Parties, which shall be elected by the Meeting of the Parties.

Therefore, on October 23, 2013, the Royal Government of Cambodia decided to present its candidature to the Committee for Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. The Election of the six new Committee Members held on December 17, 2013 during the 5th meeting of the State Parties to the Second Protocol in Paris. Other newly-elected Committee Members are Armenia, Egypt, Georgia, Greece and Mali for the term of four years (2013-2017), while the rest of the Committee whose term will continue until 2015 are Azerbaijan, Belgium, Croatia, El Salvador, Japan, and the Netherlands, pointed out the press release.

Cambodia, Myanmar Agree on Mutual Visa Exemption

Phnom Penh, December 18, 2013

Cambodia and Myanmar have agreed on mutual visa exemption for holders of ordinary passports aimed at strengthening existing friendly relations in all fields and simplifying the procedures of citizens traveling between the two countries. In February 2011, Myanmar established air link with Cambodia with its Myanmar Airways International (MAI) flying between Yangon and Siem Reap, an ancient city of Cambodia.

The flight service was extended to reach Phnom Penh, capital of Cambodia, in November 2011. The airline's extension to Phnom Penh has created a long-term cooperation between Cambodia and Myanmar on tourism, culture, trade and investment. The direct air link between Cambodia and Myanmar was introduced after the 4th Ayeyawady Chaophraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) Summit and 5th CLMV Summit in November 2010 which was aimed at developing tourist industry in the subregion.

184 Engineering Forces Dispatched to Lebanon

Phnom Penh, December 17, 2013

Cambodia has sent the fourth batch of 184 soldiers of Civil Engineering Unit 621 for the peacekeeping operation in Lebanon under the UN umbrella. They will replace the third batch of military engineers who have fulfilled their one-year mission in Lebanon and are scheduled to return home on December 20. Clearing landmines, constructing roads, bridges, shelters and defense posts, producing drinking water, and providing medical treatment to Lebanese people are part of their duties. Claire Van der Vaeren, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative for the Kingdom of Cambodia, highly appreciates Cambodia's active contribution in the UN peacekeeping missions and stresses that "20 years ago, UN peacekeeping forces were dispatched to Cambodia, but now Cambodia becomes a country that sends troops and expertise to join UN peacekeeping operations."

Since 2006, Cambodia has sent over 1,600 troops to take part in the UN peacekeeping missions in Sudan, South Sudan, Chad, Central Africa and Lebanon. The last three batches of 654 peacekeepers in Lebanon have cleared landmines and fragments from more than 2 million square meters of the Lebanese soil, constructed roads, bridges, defense posts for their fellow peacekeepers, and provided medical treatment and clean water to Lebanese people.

Expanding Rice Exports to International Market

Phnom Penh, December 16, 2013

Mekong Oryza and CEDAC (Cambodian Center for Study and Development in Agriculture) reached an agreement to expand the

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export of Cambodia's organic rice to the international markets. Lasting until 2022, both sides signed the agreement worth about US\$ one million from the Rural Development Bank. For the first two years of the agreement, some 10,000 Cambodian rice farmers from five provinces, including Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Speu, Kampot, Takeo and Kampong Cham will produce higher yield of rice crops and have ensured market access.

Six to ten of small and medium size processing machines of export-quality rice will be established in the said provinces for easier access to the farmers. Facilities to store the harvest, to process and supply it to the international markets will also improve. Last year, Cambodia exported around 1,130,000 tons of rice, formally and informally, to international markets such as Europe and United States. The agreement shall see the rice export to markets in Hong Kong of China.

Cambodia-UK Tourism and Trade Relations

Phnom Penh, December 16, 2013

The Ministry of Tourism reported that visitors from UK reached 110,182 in 2012, up from 104,052 in 2011, and in the first ten months of this year, 98,976 British tourists visited Cambodia. Cambodia received some 3.58 million tourists last year, and that figure is expected to increase to 4.2 million this year. Siem Reap province, the home to Angkor temples, is the country's biggest tourist destination. The outgoing UK diplomat affirmed that UK had been looking to promote trade and investment in Cambodia, indicating that the two-way trade reached US\$1 billion in 2012. In June this year, Lord Green, Britain's Minister for Trade and Investment, was pleased with the British business community that is operating in Cambodia. The UK Trade & Investment Office opened in the British Embassy in Phnom Penh in January 2013.

5.5 Million Citizens To Be Provided with Electronic IDs

Phnom Penh, December 12, 2013

The Ministry of Interior is committed to provide electronic identification cards to some 5.5 million citizens in the near future while the country is in transition from using normal to electronic IDs. In the first phase, up to 2.2 million citizens have been provided with this new type of electronic IDs, and in this second phase, the Ministry of Interior will give electronic IDs to 5.5 million citizens."

The Ministry of Interior will dispatch expert officials to local villages, communes, districts and Khans throughout the country in order to provide training on this new ID technology and equip them with necessary technical equipment. It is hoped that, while the country is moving towards the ASEAN economic integration, effective name registration and identification management will facilitate the management of the flow of people and goods. However, system safety is necessary to prevent hacking or eventual attack, and to guarantee the right to confidentiality.

USAID Provides US\$ 6.3 Million for HIV Research Project

Phnom Penh, December 11, 2013

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provided some US\$6.3 million to the University Research Co., LLC (URC) for a period of four years and half to support the HIV Innovation and Evaluation Project in Cambodia. The fund will be used to assess the cost-effectiveness of various HIV/AIDS activities relative to their impacts in order to build an evidence base for making decisions and plans in the future. Ms. Rebecca Black, USAID Cambodian mission's director, high-

lighted Cambodia's success in fighting against HIV/AIDS. She also emphasizes that the U.S. is a proud partner of Cambodia as it has contributed importantly to this success by providing 40 percent of Cambodia's total budget to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and improve patient treatment.

The project will build a strong foundation in applied research for evidence-based decision making to support national efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS. In 2013, Cambodia has an estimated 71,347 people living with HIV/AIDS including 38,420 females and 6,850 children. Some 85 percent of them have received treatments with antiretroviral drugs. The treatment would reach 100 percent on this care target in 2014.

CPP Committed to Protecting Human Rights

Phnom Penh, December 10, 2013

The ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) expresses its strong commitment to protect and promote human rights. In a declaration issued on the 64th International Human Rights Day, CPP affirms it has been implementing the human rights protection and promotion principles as stated in the Constitution, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as the international pacts and conventions on Human Rights.

CPP further appeals to all political parties, organizations, institutions and compatriots to continue to join hands in protecting, strengthening and expanding the spirit of human rights respect and democracy together with the respect of laws so as to ensure peace, safety and development, and in participating actively in enhancing people's rights and freedoms. For its part, the National Council for Solidarity front for the Development of Cambodia Motherland also issued a declaration, stressing its strong support to all contributions for the cause of human rights respect in Cambodia.

December-2 Memorial Monument Officially Inaugurated

Phnom Penh, December 02, 2013

The "December 2" Memorial Monument to commemorate the establishment of the Solidarity Front for the Development of the Cambodian Motherland (SFDCM) was inaugurated in Snuol district, Kratie province. The "December 2" Memorial Monument was erected on an area of 22.98 ha in Choeng Khlou village, "December 2" commune, Snuol district, Kratie province with a total cost of some US\$3.88 million. Led by Samdech Akka Moha Ponhea Chakrei Heng Samrin, Samdech Akka Moha Thamma Pothisal Chea Sim, Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen and other Cambodian compatriots, the United Front for National Salvation of Kampuchea liberated Cambodia from starvation, heavy labor forces and genocide of the Khmer Rouge Regime, which ruled the country from 1975-1979.

Cambodia To Provide 2,000 Tons of Rice to WFP

Phnom Penh, December 02, 2013

The Royal Government of Cambodia will provide 2,000 tons of milled rice and US\$467,000 to World Food Program (WFP) annually until 2015, Minister of Economy and Finance H.E. Aun Porn Moniroth confirmed in the talk with Mr. Gianpietro Bordignon, Representative of WFP to Cambodia. From 2007 to 2013, the RGC has contributed 15,000 tons of milled rice and some US\$2.91 million to WFP. The RGC's support contributes to achieving its millennium development goals in the eradication of poverty and hunger...■