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# POLITICS

## PM HUN SEN and His Spouse Donate US$310,000 to Build Buddhist University

Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen and His Spouse, Bun Rany Hun Sen, have donated more than US$310,000 as a private contribution to building the Preah Sihamoni Raja Buddhist University (PSBU).

The Preah Sihamoni Raja Buddhist University is located within 144-year-old Svay Pope Monastery in Phnom-Penh. It will be a four-storey building with an estimated construction cost of some US$480,000.

Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen announced the donation Sunday while attending the ceremony to welcome the achievements made by the pagodas of the Dhammayutta Order throughout the country, and the 66th anniversary of His Holiness Samdech Preah Abhisiri Sugandha Mahasangharajah Dhipati Bour Kry, Great Supreme Patriarch of Dhammayuttikanikaya of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

"We have no discrimination of beliefs by the people in Buddhism of the two Orders, Dhammayutta and Mahanikaya," Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen said.

He pointed out that the physical infrastructures were needed for the

monasteries through donation and contribution from the Buddhist followers, who, in return, would receive the education of ethics, morals, and Dharma.

Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen highly appreciated the excellent, enormous support, assistance and contribution of His Holiness Samdech Preah Abhisiri Sugandha Mahasangharajah Dhipati Bour Kry to the progress and value of Buddhism and the Cambodian society as a whole.

The number of Dhammayuttikanikaya monasteries has up to now increased to 161 with 2,500 monks, and that of Mahanikaya monasteries has a total of 4,307 with 54,861 monks. –AKP

Article in Khmer by CHEY Phum Pul

## *Cambodian Premier: China Is a Good, Close Friend*

Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen considered China as a long-lasting, close friend providing its assistance to the national development in Cambodia, mainly the infrastructure construction projects.

He wished the relationship and cooperation between the two countries to last forever, while presiding over the inauguration of the Cambodia-China Prek Tamak Friendship Bridge in Kandal province on Jan. 24.

He also expressed his gratitude to China for its assistance to the national rehabilitation and development in the country.

The premier further appreciated China's aid to Cambodia, saying that China always carried out all the projects earlier than expected.

He also elaborated on the country's economic growth and the internal and external integrations.

"In my concept, the main investments must focus on infrastructures such as road, bridge, irrigation and human resources," he said.

He said, "I am proud of the policy of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) as well as that of the Cambodian royal government, which created a situation to link people to people, along with transportation as well."

Speaking at the event, H.E. Pan Guangxue, China's ambassador to Cambodia, said the US$43.5 million Cambodia-China Prek Tamak Friendship Bridge was the third Chinese-funded bridge to open in Cambodia, after the Cambodia-China Sekong Friendship Bridge in Stung Treng province and Cambodian-China Prek Kdam Friendship Bridge, also in Kandal.

Phnom Penh and Beijing have inked agreements to build two more bridges, the Cambodia-China Chroy Changvar Bridge in Phnom Penh and another project in Takhmao.

Samdech Techo Hun Sen said several other highway projects have also been signed or are under negotiation, and that China has already funded the construction of more than 1,500 kilometers of roads in Cambodia.

Last month, during the Cambodian premier's five-day visit to China, he and Chinese leaders signed 12 agreements related to infrastructure and agriculture projects.

The Prek Tamak Bridge is 1,060 meters in length and 13.5 meters in width, with a designed speed of 60 km per hour. The contractor of the project is China's Shanghai Construction (Group) General Company.

## *Cambodian First Lady To Be Appointed with UN Senior Title*

Cambodian First Lady Lok Chumteav Dr. Bun Rany Hun Sen is expected to be appointed next month by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon with a senior title for her highly committed endeavor to address joint social issues, in particular in the area of child and woman health promotion in Cambodia.

Lok Chumteav Dr. Bun Rany Hun Sen's restless humanitarian initiatives and leadership earn Cambodian Red Cross a new opportunity wherein the institution

is promised with a budget of US$40,000 for the period of 5 years.

At the same time that Cambodia is on the right track to meet many of its Millennium Development Goals, the country faces a specific maternal mortality issue. The portion of 461 mother death among 10,000 live birth in 2008 makes Cambodia one of the countries in Asia that have such high loss of mother lives.

The most challenging obstacle to tackle maternal mortality rate in Cambodia is the lateness in decision making process of mothers to access pre-natal and post-natal care by well-trained medical staff.

With the appointment of the Cambodia's first lady who has experienced by herself the loss of her first son at a very early stage of his life due to war-limited health care facilities and who possesses midwife skills, it is expected that Cambodia will be able to reduce the maternal mortality rate to 250 per live birth by 2015.

The expectation is also assured by restless effort of the Ministry of Health and its counterparts in achieving the aim.

In 2006, the Cambodian First Lady won the National Champion of the Asia-Pacific Leadership owing to her dedication to combat HIV/AIDS in Cambodia. Cambodia consequently succeeds with its millennium HIV/AIDS goal, the achievement recognized internationally and nationally inspiring new efforts.

## *Government Is Determined to Crack Down on Corruption*

Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen has declared to take serious measures against high-ranking government officials who get involved in corruption.

"Even though [the generals] who have three stars, but also those who have four stars or five or even the 'moon' will be arrested," underlined the Cambodian premier on Jan. 22 at the inauguration ceremony of SOS Hermann Gmeiner School in Sen Sok district, Phnom Penh.

During the past months, some high-ranking officials of the judicial body and the armed forces have been successively arrested for getting involved in drug trafficking and corruption.

Samdech Techo Hun Sen also took the opportunity to call on young people to get away from drug, HIV/AIDS and other negative acts.

The SOS Hermann Gmeiner School in Phnom Penh is the 6th among over 10 projects of SOS Children's Village International already signed with the Cambodian Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation.

According to a news release of the said ministry, the school built at the total cost of US$1.1 million could receive some 400 students from grade 7th to 12th.

## *IRI: Cambodia Is On the Right Track*

Most of the Cambodian people are still saying that Cambodia, under the current leadership of Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, is on the right track, according to the International Republican Institute's survey issued late last week.

The survey conducted between June and August 2010 showed that 76 percent of the 2,000 interviewed people throughout the country said Cambodia is moving in the right direction, the group's opinion assessment focused on the fast growth of the infrastructure including roads, bridges, schools, health centers, irrigation networks and so on.

Only 23 percent of the people who were interviewed said that Cambodia is on the wrong track, and among them 42 percent said Cambodia has corruption.

The questionnaire of the survey also detailed on the activities of the corruption, one of the questions asked how big is the corruption and bribery within the local authorities from communal level to the provincial and the national levels. 16 percent of the interviewed persons said almost all officials at the commune and district levels are corrupt, while 17 percent said almost all officials at the national level commit corruption.

## *Cambodia Promotes Rice Export*

To show government's support and

encouragement, Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Yim Chhay Ly late last week led a delegation to see thousand tons of well processed Cambodian rice produced by 40,000-farmer-family association ready to export to international markets, thanks to the collaboration with Angkor Agriculture Rong Roeung Company.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister appreciated the approach that the Angkor Agriculture Rong Roeung Company is applying with 40,000 farmer families in four provinces – Kandal, Kampong Speu, Kampot and Takeo and the company's high-tech facilities to produce 30 tons of husked rice per hour.

Focusing on organic rice production, the company partners with its target farmers. Under the partnership, those farmers receive quality rice seeds and farming technical support. With the said assistance, the partnered farmers are able to produce between 2 to 3 tons of rice per one hectare of their land.

The company is committed to buy all rice yield produced by those farmers with the price of 1.600 riel [roughly US$0.40] per kilogram. For 2011, the company expects to buy from 60 to 70 thousand tons of rice from its partner farmers.

Seeing the sustainability of the company's approach, the Rural Development Bank provides US$5 million loan to the company to ensure its smooth operation, which H.E. Yim Chhay Ly considered as an effective attribution to Cambodia's economic growth as well as to poverty reduction.

## *CMAA, UNDP Sign on "Clearing for Results" to Support Mine Action in Cambodia*

The Cambodian Mine Action Authority and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Cambodia signed here yesterday an agreement on "Clearing for Results" project's phase II to support efforts to free the country from mines and explosive remnants of war for increased socio-economic development.

The agreement was inked by H.E. Prak Sokhon, delegate minister attached to the prime minister and vice president of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) and Mrs. Elena Tishchenko, UNDP country director, under the presidency of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister in charge of the Office of the Council of Ministers H.E. Sok An, at Mittapheap Building, Office of the Council of Ministers.

Under the five-year (2011-2015) agreement, UNDP will assist CMAA in strengthening its capacity to implement the ten-year National Mine Action Strategy (NMAS) for casualty reduction, economic growth and poverty reduction, especially among poor and vulnerable Cambodians living in rural areas.

## *Cambodian and French Upper Houses To Enhance Bilateral Cooperation*

Cambodian and French Upper Houses have decided to enhance the bilateral cooperation, for the two nations used to have long-standing ties of friendship and cooperation.

While meeting with a visiting delegation of the French Senate led by its Vice President Ms. Catherine Tasca on Jan. 25, H.E. Tep Ngorn, second vice president of Cambodian Senate, briefed the French guests on the long-standing friendly relations and economic link between the two countries, by which he said France's petroleum company currently runs its business operation in Cambodia.

He also asked France to grant scholarships or skill training opportunities in the framework of the cooperation between the legislative bodies of the two countries to the Cambodian legislative officials.

In reply, Ms. Catherine Tasca pledged to do her utmost to boost the cooperation between the two countries.

The talks focused on other issues relating to the common interests of the two countries.

The French Senate delegation arrived here on Jan. 24 for a week-long visit to Cambodia, the purpose of which is to review the cooperation works being implemented with Cambodian Senate, especially in the

framework of the French-speaking countries association (Francophonie), and set forth future perspectives.

## *Cambodia Hosts International Conference on "Mekong Health"*

A four-day International Conference on "Mekong Health" was opened here on Jan. 24 under the presidency of Cambodia' s Health Minister Dr. Mam Bun Heng.

The conference has been attended by medical experts from France, Laos, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, the Philippines, Singapore, Australia, the U.S., the UK, Korea, Switzerland, Germany and Japan.

The international conference is aimed to improve knowledge of medical, pharmaceutical and dental experts and to strengthen the cooperation in doing research and combating infectious and chronic diseases in the countries in the region as well as in other regions.