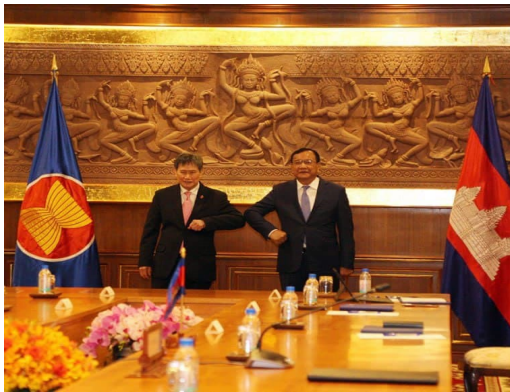


VISIONS of CAMBODIA

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OUTCOMES OF ASEAN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S OFFICIAL VISIT IN CAMBODIA



The following is the outcomes of the official visit of H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN, to the Kingdom of Cambodia, on 15-19 January 2022, released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation:

"At the invitation of His Excellency PRAK Sokhonn, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cambodia, His Excellency Dato LIM Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN, led a delegation to pay an official visit to the Kingdom of Cambodia from 15 to 19 January 2022.

During the visit, H.E. Dato LIM Jock Hoi paid a courtesy call on Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN, Prime Minister of Cambodia, and held a bilateral meeting with H.E. PRAK Sokhonn, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

During the courtesy call, Samdech Techo Prime Minister emphasised Cambodia's firm commitment, as the ASEAN Chair in 2022, to further advance the ASEAN Community building process through the strengthening of the ASEAN centrality, solidarity and cooperation. In response, H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi expressed the ASEAN Secretariat's readiness to support Cambodia's chairmanship in promoting the latter's priorities as well as realising deliverables that are beneficial for ASEAN and its people.

At the bilateral meeting between H.E. Deputy Prime Minister PRAK Sokhonn and H.E. Dato LIM Jock Hoi, both sides exchanged views on how to carry forward ASEAN community building efforts during Cambodia's ASEAN chairmanship.

ASEAN TOURISM FORUM 2022 OFFICIALLY KICKS OFF IN SIHANOUKVILLE



Cambodia has been hosting the 40th ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF 2022) from 16 to 22 January 2022 in Preah Sihanouk province under the theme "ASEAN – A community of peace and shared future."

The official opening ceremony took place in Sihanoukville under the presidency of Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia and ASEAN Chair 2022.

Speaking on the occasion, Samdech Techo Hun Sen expressed warm welcome to all national and international delegates and highly appreciated the latter for travelling to attend the forum in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

This reflects the common commitment to restore the ASEAN tourism, aiming to bring prosperity and growth to the ASEAN people, he underlined.

This important event is a good opportunity to reopen ASEAN tourism officially and reaffirm Cambodia as a safe tourism destination in the region, said recently H.E. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism.

Some 100 national and international delegates are physically attending the ATF 2022 and other related meetings.

Buyers from 40 companies and 20 media institutions from 27 countries will participate in the TRAVEX -- the forum's travel trade fair that will host 187 stands, including 61 international stands.

The AFT 2022 will go along with side meetings, such as the Meeting of ASEAN National Tourism Organisations (NTOs); the Meetings of ASEAN Tourism Ministers, ASEAN + China, Korea, Japan Tourism Ministers, ASEAN + Russia Tourism Ministers, ASEAN + India Tourism Ministers. According to its online source, The ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) is a cooperative regional effort to promote the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as one tourist destination. This annual event involves all the tourism industry sectors of the 10 member states of ASEAN: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

ATF was established in 1981. Each year, the hosting of ATF is rotated among the member countries.

CAMBODIA REMAINS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT BANGLADESH'S REQUEST TO BECOME ASEAN SECTORAL DIALOGUE PARTNER



Cambodia remains optimistic about Bangladesh's request to become ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partner.

The reaffirmation was made by Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation H.E. Prak Sokhonn during a telephone conversation with

H.E. Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bangladesh, on 18 January 2022.

The Cambodian top diplomat added that both countries will continue to support each other in various ways in hope to further strengthen our bilateral friendship and cooperation.

"We share concerns regarding the vulnerability of the refugees in Cox's Bazar to radicalism and extremism, and we wish that the repatriation process will be in a safe and dignified manner," wrote H.E. Prak Sokhonn on his official Facebook page.

"We also hope that Myanmar will soon be stable and peaceful in the best interest of all of the people of Myanmar and our region at large," he underlined.

THREE CAMBODIA'S PROVINCES WIN ASEAN CLEAN TOURIST CITY STANDARD AWARDS

Battambang, Seim Reap, and Preah Sihanouk provinces of Cambodia have won the ASEAN Clean Tourist City Standard Awards for their cleanliness, green environment and smart facilities.

The award hand-over ceremony has been held at the ASEAN Tourism Forum in Preah Sihanouk province, according to the Cambodia Clean City Committee's announcement on 17 January 2022.

Valid for 2022-2024, the ASEAN Clean Tourist City Standard (ACTCS) aims to equip ASEAN member countries with a tool that will improve the quality of tourism in their cities, increase their marketing competitiveness.

It also contributes to improving the livelihood of the residents, alleviating poverty, and protecting the environment to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

It is expected to offer ASEAN member countries with benchmarks to aim for and ultimately lead



to greater tourist satisfaction, greater numbers of visitors and better conditions for the local population.

The selection of the winning cities is based on a set of indicators that evaluate how sustainable the nominated ASEAN cities are, assess the quality of the tourism they offer, and identify areas that can be improved.

WORLD BANK'S FINANCING TO STRENGTHEN LEARNING, ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA

The World Bank on 19 January 2022 approved financing that, along with a grant from the Global Partnership for Education, will provide US\$69.25 million in new funding to help Cambodia improve equitable access to basic education and respond rapidly to crises affecting the education system.

The World Bank will provide a US\$60 million credit through its International Development Association while the Global Partnership for Education will deliver a grant of US\$9.25 million.

OUTCOMES OF ASEAN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S OFFICIAL VISIT ...

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister highlighted major challenges that ASEAN is facing namely post-Covid 19 social economic recovery, superpower and major powers rivalries, existing traditional and non-traditional security issues, and ASEAN's institutional challenges in addressing complex issues. Under the theme ASEAN A.C.T.: Addressing Challenges Together," Cambodia will endeavour to steer action-oriented efforts of ASEAN to address those challenges for the benefit of peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

H.E. Dato LIM Jock Hoi shared his views on how to accelerate the existing tasks of ASEAN, and the need to depoliticise certain areas of cooperation so as not to disrupt the ASEAN Community building and regional integration efforts.

Both sides discussed at length Cambodia's priorities and deliverables in 2022, and also touched on regional and international developments including situation in Myanmar and how to enhance humanitarian access for better delivery of humanitarian assistance to those in need in Myanmar.

H.E. Dato LIM Jock Hoi also had meetings with Samdech Pichey Sena TEA Banh, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of National Defence, H.E. Dr. AUN Pornmoniroth, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Economy and Finance, H.E. Mr. SUN Chanthol, Senior Minister, Minister of Public Works and Transport, H.E. Dr. HANG Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, and H.E. Mr. PAN Sorasak, Minister of Commerce."

WORLD BANK'S FINANCING...

The funding will support the five-year General Education Improvement Project (GEIP), which aims to support Cambodia in achieving the vision outlined in its Education Strategic Plan (ESP 2019-2023), which seeks to "establish and develop human resources that are of the very highest quality and are ethically sound in order to develop a knowledge-based society."

WORLD BANK'S FINANCING...

To realise this objective, the government of Cambodia has expressed a commitment to address two main challenges: low student learning outcomes and inequitable access to quality basic education, which includes early childhood, primary, and secondary education. Cambodia has certainly made great achievements in expanding access to education, but equitable access to education for certain groups of children, such as those living in remote areas, coming from poor families or ethnic minority communities, and those living with disabilities, remains an issue, said World Bank Country Manager for Cambodia Maryam Salim.

Further, student learning outcomes have been greatly affected by the prolonged school closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, she said in the statement issued on 19 January 2022.

"We strongly hope that the project will address these challenges and build back better," she said.

The funding comes at a crucial time, with the new COVID-19 variant worsening the pandemic's impact on education systems around the world, said Global Partnership for Education CEO Alice P. Albright.

"We hope these funds will allow Cambodia to continue increasing access to quality education and ensure that the most vulnerable children are in school and learning," he said.

The project's key activities will include implementing a school-based management programme, chunk providing capacity development to teachers, school leaders, teacher trainers, and educational staff, and improving learning environments.

The project calls for construction and rehabilitation of school buildings, science laboratories, teacher training institutions, dormitories for teachers, and special education schools; purchase of education technology equipment; and support for students with disabilities, including disability screening.

The project will also include a pilot education technology (EdTech) programme for mathematics.

OVER US\$208 MILLION INVESTMENT PROJECTS APPROVED

Eight more investment projects worth US\$208.5 million have been approved by the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC), according to its press release made public on 17 January 2022.

The newly-approved projects are expected to generate in total 4,844 jobs for the locals.

The eight investment projects cover the creation of a five-star hotel, a plywood processing factory, two garment factories, a meat processing and packaging factory, a solar panel production and assembly plant, and so on.

These projects belong to eight different companies located in the provinces of Oddar Meanchey, Kandal, Kampong Speu, Battambang and Kampong Thom, and Phnom Penh capital.

Such investments demonstrate confidence of investors in Cambodia's macroeconomic, political and social stability as the country is recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

CAMBODIA, SECOND ASIA'S BEST PLACE TO RETIRE IN 2022

The Kingdom of Cambodia was ranked 2nd and 14th among the best places to retire in 2022 in Asia and the world, respectively by International Living's 2022 Annual Global Retirement Index.

The top ten world's best places to retire are Panama, Costa Rica, Mexico, Portugal, Ecuador, Colombia, France, Malta, Spain, and Uruguay.

The 1st best place to retire in Asia is Thailand, which was came 11th in the world's ranking.

Recently, the Kingdom of Cambodia was ranked among the 10 coolest places to go in the next 10 years by Forbes, a well-known American magazine, while the Angkor Wat Temple of Cambodia, a UNESCO's World Heritage Site, was crowned the most famous temple in Asia, according to Touropia Travel Guides.

A MOVIE "SURVIVING BOKATOR" WINS AWARDS IN THAILAND



The update was shared by Mr. Ou Tara, Secretary General of Bokator Federation of Cambodia, adding that the movie has just screened at Thai Film Festival in December 2021.

The main actors in the movie included Kun Bokator Prof. San Kimsean, Cambodian martial arts fighters, movie star Mr. Tha Rath nicknamed "Little Frog", and Kun Bokator coach Mr. Ing Darith.

Surviving Bokator is coming back to Cambodia in 2022 and this film is scheduled to screen across Cambodia, as the country is requesting Bokator to be included in the UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage.

A Cambodian-Canadian movie titled "Surviving Bokator" has won the International Documentary Awards (BKK DOC Awards) in Thailand.

NEW VISITING CIRCUIT AT BAYON TEMPLE LAUNCHED



APSARA National Authority launches a new visiting circuit at Bayon Temple in Siem Reap province.

Mr. Seng Sotheara, Deputy Director of the authority's Department of Angkor Tourism Development, underlined that the preparation of this new circuit is to arrange better flow of tourists at the temples as well as to avoid being crowded during the visit.

It also, he continued, aims to make tourists appreciate more the value of temple, such as the history of sculptures in all the galleries, and maintain a safe distance for tourists to prevent the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are three options for the new visiting circuit – the first lasts 1 hour and 45 minutes, the second 55 minutes and the third 45 minutes, the deputy director said, adding that besides the new visiting circuit, there are photo spots for tourists to take pictures of themselves with special scenes.

The authority has also set up new information boards in three languages: Khmer, English, and Chinese, he pointed out.

According to Mr. Seng Sotheara, by far, the authority has already established such visiting circuits at other temples including Angkor Wat, Ta Prohm, and Banteay Srei.

At the same time, he said, the authority is considering preparing the visiting circuits at other temples in terms of organising the flow of tourists and highlighting the values of those temples.

MANY SPECIES OF ENDANGERED WILD ANIMALS FOUND IN WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES OF THREE PROVINCES

Automatic wildlife tracking cameras have captured many rare wild animal species in protected areas of Cambodia's Pursat, Battambang and Koh Kong provinces.

The good news was shared on 14 January 2022 by H.E. Neth Pheaktra, Secretary of State and Spokesperson at the Ministry of Environment, stressing that this is the second round of the tracking under the Cambodia Sustainable Landscape and Ecotourism Project of the Ministry of Environment.

The two-month and-a-half tracking from late October 2021 to early January 2022 captured ten endangered wild animal species, including Asiatic elephants, asbestos, small bears, big bears, wild dogs, hogs, yellow-throated marten, northern pig-tailed macaque, and some other mammals and birds.

The second-round tracking had installed 49 automatic cameras: 23 in the wildlife sanctuary in Pursat, 16 in the protected area in Battambang and 10 in the sanctuary in Koh Kong.

The main purposes of the tracking are to increase knowledge of on collection biodiversity data methods, identify the presence and absence of endangered and threatened wild animal species, and assess the status and distribution of important wildlife.

The first round of similar tracking was conducted from May 29 to June 4, 2021 at the wildlife sanctuaries in Pursat, Kampong Chhnang and Kampong Speu provinces, and images of endangered wild animals such as Asiatic elephants, clouded leopard, small bears, gaur, and deer.

Lasting from 17 October 2019 to 31 December 2025, the Cambodia Sustainable Landscape and Ecotourism Project is funded by the World Bank and implemented by the Ministry of Environment.

