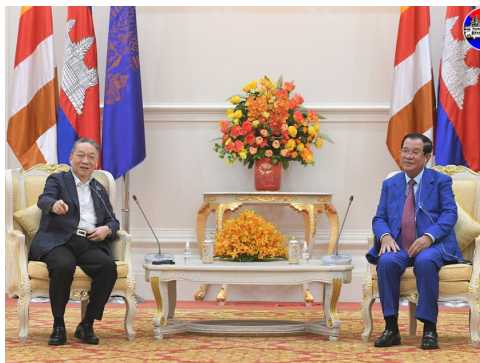


VISIONS of CAMBODIA

ISSUE 100: 16-31 August 2022

30 CAMBODIAN CHILDREN TO GET TRAINED IN GO GAME IN THAILAND



Thirty (30) Cambodian children, aged from 10 to 12 years old, will be selected to be trained in Go, a well-known Chinese board game, in Thailand. Visiting Mr. Korsak Chairasmisak, Chairman of the Executive Committee at CP ALL Plc., raised the planned training during his courtesy call on Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, at the Peace Palace on 16 August 2022, according to H.E. Eang Sophalleth, Assistant to the Prime Minister.

CP All will bear all the costs, he underlined, adding that his company will also provide 20 scholarships to Cambodian students, 10 of which for bachelor's degree and 10 others for technical skills.

Besides, Mr. Korsak Chairasmisak sought recommendations from Samdech Techo Hun Sen over the areas his company could expand its investment in Cambodia.

In reply, the Cambodian Prime Minister advised Mr. Korsak Chairasmisak to work with H.E. Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports over the training on Go Game and the scholarships, and with H.E. Sok Chenda Sophea, Minister Attached to the Prime Minister and Secretary General of the Council for the Development of Cambodia over the investment potential in the Kingdom.

Samdech Techo Hun Sen also suggested CP All to invest in paper production which is currently in high demand and the creation of an organic fertiliser factory in Cambodia.

According to an online source, Go is an abstract strategy board games for two players in which the aim is to surround more territory than the opponent. It was invented in China thousands of years ago.

CAMBODIA ASKS UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR TO MAKE ACCURATE AND BALANCED REPORT



Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, has called on the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UN Special Rapporteur to make an accurate, practical, transparent and balanced report on human rights situation in Cambodia.

The Prime Minister made the appeal in a meeting at the Peace Palace on 16 August 2022 with visiting Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn, UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Cambodia, according to H.E. Eang Sophalleth, Assistant to Samdech Techo Hun Sen.

The Cambodian Prime Minister also asked the OHCHR and UN Special Rapporteur to pay attention to worrying tendencies undermining human rights such as hate speech, slander, false information, provocation, and incitement under the pretext of freedom of expression.

Regarding the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, Samdech Techo Hun Sen laid stress on the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC)'s successful COVID-19 vaccination programme as well as its attention to the citizens' well-being by promoting social protection, providing assistance to the poor and victims of COVID-19, increasing salary for civil servants and armed forces, adjusting retirement pension, and launching retirement pension for all workers and employees under the labour law.

The RGC has taken urgent, thorough and effective measures to support the economy and improve social protection such as the implementation of Cash Transfer Programme for the Poor and Vulnerable Households during COVID-19, the promulgation of Law on the Management of the Nation in Emergency, and the adoption of administrative measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other severe and dangerous contagious diseases, aimed to ensure national security, public order, people's lives and health as well as protect properties and environment.

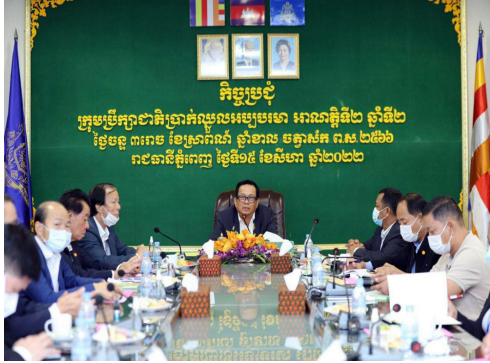
Samdech Techo Hun Sen thus rejected an accusation saying that the adoption of laws and regulations is to restrict the civil space, considering it as a groundless accusation.

"Indeed, the adoption of laws and regulations in the COVID-19 context by adhering to the principle of integrity, necessity and proportion has the sole intention to rescue lives, protect citizens who obey the laws and prevent all offenses provoking social instability, affecting people's well-being and public order," he explained.

Democracy must go in parallel with the rule of law, he added, stressing that the practice of democracy without the rule of

Continued on page (2)

TALKS ON 2023 MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE FOR GARMENT SECTOR BEGIN



The Labour Advisory Council started discussions on the annual increase of monthly minimum wage for the textile, garment, footwear and travel goods industry for 2023. The meeting was held on 15 August 2022 in the presence of H.E. Ith Samheng, Minister of Labour and Vocational Training and Chair of the Labour Advisory Council as government representative, with the participation of representatives of employers and employees.

The council presented key statistical updates on socio-economic criteria and inputs such as current inflation, competition and market situation from the representatives of employers and employees to form the wage. Further internal discussions will be made as next meetings are scheduled on 24 and 31 August 2022 and 7, 14, 22 and 23 September 2022.

The Kingdom exported US\$6.6 billion worth of goods in the first half of this year, up 40 percent from the same period last year, according to the General Department of Customs and Excise.

The monthly minimum wage for the sector is US\$194 in 2022, up from US\$192 in 2021, US\$190 in 2020, US\$182 in 2019, and US\$170 in 2018, without counting other allowances on transport, housing, and regular attendance bonus, etc. per month.

The textile, garment, footwear and travel goods sector consist of about 1,100 factories and branches with around 750,000 workers.

CAMBODIA'S ADULT LITERACY INCREASES SIGNIFICANTLY



Literacy rate for the citizens aged 15 years old and above in Cambodia has seen a significant rise, reflecting the government's successful efforts in eradicating illiteracy rate, said a senior official of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports.

The literacy rate among Cambodian adults has increased to 87.8 percent in 2020, up from 77.6 percent in 2008, said the ministry's spokesperson H.E. Ros Soveacha.

"The figure clearly reflects the Royal Government of Cambodia's efforts to reduce illiteracy rate," H.E. Ros Soveacha said at a press conference held on 16 August 2022 by the Royal Government Spokesperson Unit.

Cambodia currently has a total of 18,430 public and private schools, ranging from kindergartens to high schools, with 3.58 million students, stated the ministry, adding that there are also 130 higher education institutions, 48 of them are state-run.

Cambodia's Education Strategic Plan 2019-2023 aims to encourage students to finish primary school, increase enrolment and promote regular attendance.

JAPAN PROVIDES GRAND AID FOR TECHNICAL INSTITUTE OF MINE ACTION'S BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

The Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have discussed JICA's Grant Aid for construction of buildings at the Technical Institute of Mine Action and outreach facility. The discussion took place at the CMAC headquarters late last week between

H.E. Heng Ratana, CMAC Director General and a working group from JICA led by Mr. Yuji Shinohara.

During the meeting, the JICA side briefed on the results of its cooperation with CMAC, in particular to prepare a meeting with JICA officials from Tokyo and Okinawa on Grant Aid

CAMBODIA ASKS UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR...

law will lead to anarchy. "In this sense, Cambodia wants all actors in democratic process to be responsible to make constructive criticism, not to incite for racial discrimination and sow hatred between Cambodians, which would lead to civil war," he said.

Samdech Techo Hun Sen also emphasised the importance of human right respect while maintaining peace and stability. Cambodia has regularly organised elections since 1993, and up to now 6 general elections and 5 commune/Sangkat elections have been conducted with appreciation from national and international observers and high turnout rate.

Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn has been on a 12-day visit in Cambodia since 15 August 2022. According to the OHCHR, during this first official visit to Cambodia, Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn will assess the situation of human rights in the country and the government's efforts towards creating an enabling environment for the enjoyment of all human rights including political and civil rights and economic, social and cultural rights following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UN special rapporteur will meet with national and local government officials, international and local civil society representatives, and other relevant representatives during his visit. He will present his preliminary observations during a press conference to be held on 26 August 2022 at 14:00 local time.

Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn will present his next report to the Human Rights Council in October 2022.

JAPAN PROVIDES GRAND AID...

for the said building construction, as well as the forthcoming Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) meeting.

In response, H.E. Heng Ratana commended the team for working well with CMAC to achieve a common goal to strengthen the capacity of CMAC's officials in the mine action sector, especially to provide opportunities for CMAC's officials to join the JICA's SDGs Global Leader Course to obtain a master's degree in Japan as well.

AUSTRALIA SUPPORTS A RESILIENT E-COMMERCE ECOSYSTEM IN CAMBODIA



Through the Mekong Australia Partnership, Australia supported participants from the Government of Cambodia and industry representatives to take part in a short course on 'Developing a Resilient E-Commerce Ecosystem in Cambodia'.

Delivered by Flinders University based in South Australia the course supported the development of Cambodia's digital trade policy, including studying effective regulations and laws for consumer and business protection, and effective e-commerce ecosystems, according to the Embassy of Australia in Phnom Penh.

On 12 August 2022, H.E. Pablo Kang, Australian Ambassador to Cambodia, presented course completion certificates at the embassy to participants.

During the ceremony, participants also enjoyed delicious Aussie meat pies made by the local Ausbake Phnom Penh wholesale bakery.

Australia is a longstanding friend and partner in Cambodia's national development, and its investment in skills and knowledge in e-commerce development is another thread in the fabric of both countries' strong relationship.

USAID'S NEW SUPPORT TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN CAMBODIA ANNOUNCED

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) on 16 August 2022 announced a new initiative to support Cambodia's criminal justice responders investigate and prosecute human trafficking crimes.

According to a USAID's press release on 16 August 2022, the new initiative - to be overseen by the International Justice Mission (IJM) - is a part of USAID's Cambodia Countering Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) activity, implemented by Winrock International. CTIP works in partnership with the Cambodian government, the private sector, and civil society to protect Cambodians from human trafficking.

"Our countering trafficking in persons work, in partnership with IJM, will ease the suffering of human trafficking victims and help bring perpetrators to justice," said Benjamin Wohlauer, Chargé d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh. "We are proud to assist the Cambodian government's efforts in the fight against human trafficking."



USAID
ជំនួយពីពលរដ្ឋអាមេរិក

IJM will build on USAID's CTIP activity, in collaboration with the Royal Government of Cambodia, to improve services to and protection of identified trafficking victims. The United States continues to work with stakeholders in Cambodia to strengthen efforts to monitor private labour recruitment for trafficking indicators as well as to prosecute traffickers, protect victims, and prevent human trafficking, it added.

CAMBODIA TO HOLD "CAMBODIA BIZ FAIR 2022" IN PREAH SIHANOUK PROVINCE IN NOVEMBER

Cambodia is going to organise a mega fair - "Cambodia Biz Fair 2022" - in Sihanoukville, Preah Sihanouk province from 5-9 November 2022.

According to the Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia Biz Fair 2022 is the most comprehensive event

template in most sectors such as tourism, food and beverage industry, agriculture, and technology, multi-trade, a reliable address for the exploration and trading of prestigious internal importers, leading distributors in Cambodia and the world in the field of Multi-Trade.

CAMBODIA TO HOLD "CAMBODIA BIZ FAIR 2022"...



The exhibition provides an excellent opportunity for food industrialists and beverage professionals who are looking for new technology machinery and business solutions for food processing, packaging machinery, drink technology, and other related products and services from ASEAN and Worldwide, it pointed out.

The exhibition has great opportunities to catch up walk-in buyer and pre-arrangement buyer from Cambodia and ASEAN, the source added.

There will be 700 booths including 300 from Thailand, 200 from Vietnam, 100 from Cambodia, and 100 from ASEAN and the Asia Pacific Region.

AMRO PROJECTS CAMBODIA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH AT 5 PERCENT THIS YEAR

Cambodian economy is projected to grow by 5 percent in 2022, up from 3 percent in 2021, a report of the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) said on Thursday.

In its Cambodia Economic Outlook 2022, the AMRO said the Cambodian economy has been resilient, adding that the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions boosted domestic activity while strong external demand supported the economic recovery in the first half of 2022.

"In line with Cambodia's strategy of living with COVID-19, we expect the domestic economy to continue to improve, supported by high vaccination rates and enhanced health protocols," said AMRO deputy group head and senior economist Mr. Jinho Choi.

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CAMBODIA'S INTERNATIONAL TRADE UP 21% IN JANUARY-JULY

Cambodia's international trade was amounted to US\$32.82 billion in the first seven months of this year, a year-on-year increase by 21.3 percent. From January to July, Cambodia exported US\$13.78 billion worth of goods to foreign markets, up 30.7 percent compared to the same period last year, the General Department of Customs and Excise' report showed.

The Kingdom's total imports rose by 15.4 percent during the said period to US\$19.05 billion, it pointed out.

The U.S. remains the biggest market for Cambodian products, accounting for 43 percent of the Kingdom's total exports or US\$5.69 billion, a 47.3 percent year-on-year increase, the report underlined.

Vietnam and China were ranked second and third, importing US\$1.32 billion and US\$701 million worth of products from Cambodia, respectively, it added.

Garment, footwear, travel goods shared almost 50 percent of the total commodity exports, followed by non-garment products and agricultural products.

AMRO PROJECTS CAMBODIA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH...

The promulgation of the new Investment Law and the greater market access through recently agreed bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) with China and Korea, and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), will provide a strong boost to investments that will help modernise and diversify Cambodia's economy.

The outlook for exports, however, will be challenging as the US and EU are expected to slow down sharply in the second half of this year, which could weigh heavily on the garment sector, Mr. Jinho Choi said in a press release.

It also highlighted some downside risks to Cambodia's growth, including a slowing global demand amid the Russia-Ukraine conflict and monetary tightening in the United States and Europe.

WILDLIFE ALLIANCE APPRECIATES GOVERNMENT'S DECISION

Wildlife Alliance has expressed its appreciation for the decision of the Royal Government of Cambodia to cancel development projects at Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Centre's forest area in Bati district, Takeo province.

"Our Beloved people! There are so many calls to the government to preserve the forest around Phnom Tamao Zoo," Wildlife Alliance quoted as saying Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen who heard these calls and took action; revoking all deals to develop the area around the Centre.

This is a success for all Cambodia and a positive sign of the Royal Government's commitment to forest protection, it underlined.

On hearing the news, Wildlife Alliance CEO Dr. Suwanna Gauntlett expressed her thanks to Samdech, saying "a big thank you Samdech Hun Sen. I am so happy that the wildlife populations there will keep their home. Thank you for being part of this journey and for using your voice to save the forest and wildlife of Phnom Tamao."

Similarly Nick Marx, Wildlife Alliance's Director of Wildlife Rescue and Care expressed his gratitude to Samdech and other key actors. "I really appreciate PM Hun Sen's order to stop the developer and I also appreciate Leng Navatra Group for complying with PM Hun Sen's order."

In a Facebook post on 07 August 2022, Samdech Techo Hun Sen wrote, "As the highest responsible person of the Royal Government, I would like to issue



the following order: 1. Cancel all permissions for exchange and development. 2. The land and forests around Phnom Tamao Zoo are protected and conserved by the Ministry of Agriculture. 3. The company that cleared the land must stop its activities and replant the trees on the cleared land."

BENGAL FLORICAN ATTRACTING TOURISTS TO KAMPONG THOM PROVINCE



Bengal Florican (*Houbaropsis bengalensis*) are attracting more tourists especially from the European Union (EU) to visit Cambodia's Kampong Thom province.

According to H.E. Neth Pheaktra, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Environment, there are around 550 of them inhabiting in protected area of Tonle Sap lake, including Kampong Thom's Baray and Staung districts.

The number of Bengal Florican in Cambodia represents about 70 percent of the species of Bengal Florican around the world, said H.E. Neth Pheaktra.

The Ministry of Environment in cooperation with development partners is implementing projects to preserve the Bengal Florican's shelters and to support the local community to help protect the bird. Bengal Florican is globally endangered and was included in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.

There are currently about 800 Bengal Florican worldwide including the 550 Bengal Florican, 230 of them are male, in Cambodia, he added.

The Ministry of Environment is managing Bengal Florican conservation area on a total of 31,159 hectares of land surface in Kampong Thom and Siem Reap provinces.