

VISIONS of CAMBODIA

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CAMBODIA COMMITTED TO COMBAT ILLICIT TRAFFICKING OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES

The Royal Government of Cambodia is committed to join other countries and partners in combating illicit trafficking of cultural properties.

The remark was made via videoconference by H.E. Prak Sakhonn, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, at the International Conference on Cultural Property Protection: The Prevention of the Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Properties – An ASEAN Perspective, in Siem Reap province on 05 September 2022.

Cambodia was able to secure the return of 30 looted masterpieces through bilateral cooperation with the United States, said H.E. Prak Sakhonn, expressing his profound thanks to the U.S. government and international partners for their collaboration in returning the looted antiquities to Cambodia.

Among the 30 artworks were a 10th-century sculpture of the Hindu deity Skanda, seated on a peacock, as well as a three-tonne sculpture of the Hindu god Ganesha, which hail from Koh Ker (the capital of the ancient Khmer Empire from 928 to 944 C.E.).

“We expect that through our commitment to the cultural properties, many more national treasures that had been looted and now in the United States and other countries will be returned to Cambodia,” he added.

The international conference, which runs for four days from 05 to 08 September 2022 is co-organised by Cambodia’s Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and Antiquities Coalition.

The conference is focused on the protection and prevention of illicit trade in cultural properties, which is threatening Southeast Asia’s rich heritage, local communities, and national economies.

The event brings together government officials and experts in cultural policy, law enforcement, museums, and the art market and civil society from around the world.

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CAMBODIA, UNFPA TO FURTHER PROMOTE EXISTING CLOSE COOPERATION



Cambodia and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have expressed their satisfaction with their good cooperation and shared the same commitment to further enhance it.

The commitment was made by H.E. Prak Sakhonn, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and Ms. Sandra Bernklau, newly appointed UNFPA Representative to Cambodia, in their courtesy meeting on Wednesday 31 August 2022, according to a press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation made public on 02 September 2022.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister expressed his warm welcome to Ms. Sandra Bernklau and reassured on the Royal Government of Cambodia’s commitment and support toward her and her team for the critical work of the UNFPA.

The Deputy Prime Minister underscored the importance of the Country Programmes and Action Plans between the Royal Government of Cambodia and UNFPA Cambodia that have contributed into achieving Cambodia Sustainable Development Goals, and also thanked UNFPA Cambodia for its effort on family planning, sexual education and reduction of violence against women, especially in helping vulnerable women as well as young girls.

The Deputy Prime Minister appreciated all the support and assistance provided by UNFPA Cambodia in contributing to reduce maternal mortality ratio by almost two-third, which was one of the biggest achievements by only 9 countries, including Cambodia, with regard to the Millennium Development Goal 5 target to reducing the material death ratio by at least 75 percent between 1990 and 2015.

Ms. Sandra Bernklau was impressed by socio-economic development and the Royal Government of Cambodia’s commitment toward achieving the “Three Zeros by 2030” (Zero violence or harmful practices against women and girls, Zero unmet needs for contraception, and Zero preventable maternal deaths).

The new UNFPA representative also appreciated the Royal Government of Cambodia’s guidance and initiatives, particularly the establishment of the Special Committee for Accelerating the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action. She hoped her presence and experience would strengthen partnership and cooperation between the Royal Government of Cambodia and UNFPA.

CMAA, EUROCHAM SIGN DEMINING PARTNERSHIP



Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) and EuroCham Cambodia have entered a memorandum of understanding on mine action partnership and community development.

The signing of the partnership agreement was chaired by H.E. Ly Thuch, Senior Minister and CMAA First Vice President on 24 August 2022 at CMAA office in Phnom Penh.

Thanking EuroCham Cambodia team led by Mr. Tassilo Brinzer, H.E. Ly Thuch considered the engagement of the chamber of commerce as another good example of private sector's contribution to Cambodia demining activities.

This will allow safe land for households and farming, and create smiles among grassroots community, he added.

Mr. Tassilo Brinzer, Chairman of EuroCham Cambodia, lauded the success of Cambodia demining activities in the past 30 years under the CMAA leadership.

He vowed to mobilise support from members of EuroCham Cambodia to further contribute to making Cambodia a mine-free country.

CAMBODIA HIGHLIGHTS PRIORITIES TO TRANSFORM EDUCATION SYSTEM

Cambodia has highlighted priorities to transform the country's education system to a new level.

The insights was unveiled by H.E. Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports when addressing the G20 Fourth Education WG and Ministers' Meeting in Bali, Indonesia on 01 September 2022.

The priorities include safe school reopening, learning recovery and continuity of learning; school reform focusing on accountability, autonomy, assessment and participation; and the development of high-quality teachers.

Digital education and STEM education to develop 21st century skill for young people; establishment of the Centre of Excellence in Higher Education; and strengthening of education system and building institutional capacity are also part of the set priorities.

The meeting themed "Recover, Reimagine, Rebuild Stronger", is a good opportunity to discuss an overarching subject of immediate importance to all, he said thanking the Indonesian counterpart for excellent arrangement of the gathering.

Education, training and skill development are critical to equip young people for productive employment and decent work inline with SDG8 on decent work and economic growth.



The Minister expressed Cambodia's full support for the draft G20 Education Ministers' Declaration, which emphasises the commitment to SDG4, balanced use of digital technology, partnership and solidarity for education recovery, universal values of education, digital transformation of education, and the future of work. He called on joint effort to address education challenges together and to advance regional and global collaboration to rebuild, transform and strengthen education system for the future generation.

CAMBODIA COMMITTED TO COMBAT ILLICIT TRAFFICKING ...

The get-together will allow all relevant parties to exchange views on specific strategies and actions to advance the progress of the protection of our cultural heritage, said Minister of Culture and Fine Arts H.E. Dr. Phoeurng Sackona.

Cambodia and ASEAN have universally recognised the urgent need to protect the common heritage of Southeast Asia by combating illegal cultural trade and creating a responsible art market, she added.

In recent years, she stressed, Cambodia and the ASEAN Member States have taken an active step in their noble historical work to work tirelessly to prevent vandalism and theft in order to strengthen the responsibility of cultural exchange with foreign governments, museums and the private sector.

JAPAN'S SUPPORT REQUESTED TO TRAIN CAMBODIAN PEACEKEEPERS

Cambodia has asked Japan to continue training Cambodian peacekeeping troops deployed under the United Nation umbrella.

The request was made by H.E. Gen. Sem Sovanny, Director General of the National Centre for Peacekeeping Forces, Mines and Explosive Remnants of War Clearance (NPMEC) during his meeting with Colonel Ishihara Masanao, Japan's Military Attaché to Cambodia in Phnom Penh this week.

H.E. Gen. Sem Sovanny briefed Colonel Ishihara Masanao that since 2013, Japan has conducted 9 training courses for a total of 140 Cambodian peacekeepers in engineering and measurement skills.

Japan also provided the training of trainers virtually to five Cambodians during the COVID-19 and seven others went to get trained in Japan.

This year 2022 is the 30th anniversary of the Japan Self-Defence Forces' participation in the peacekeeping operation (PKO) in Cambodia, he added.

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CAMBODIA'S POTENTIAL AS BUSINESS DESTINATION PROMOTED



A "Briefing Session on Economic Diplomacy, Investment, Trade and Tourism Environment in Cambodia" was held in Siem Reap province on 02 September 2022 to promote Cambodia's potentials as a business destination.

The event was presided over by H.E. Dr. NHIM Khemara, Secretary of State and Head of the Economic Diplomacy Coordinating Group (EDCG), high representative of H.E. Deputy Prime Minister PRAK Sokhonn, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, with approximately 100 participants from 19 diplomatic missions in Bangkok, Thai delegation, and line ministries in attendance. According to a press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC), the Briefing Session is the 2nd Study Visit for Heads of Diplomatic Corps and Families

to Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey provinces, from 01 to 04 September 2022, initiated by the Royal Embassy of Cambodia in Thailand in collaboration with the EDCG of MFAIC.

It aims to exhibit Cambodia's vast potential as a business destination, and promote the new investment law, Economic Diplomacy Strategy 2021-2023 and other related economic and tourism development strategies for the Post COVID-19 recovery.

H.E. Dr. NHIM Khemara expressed his appreciation to H.E. Ambassador OUK Sophorn and the Royal Embassy of Cambodia in the Kingdom of Thailand for initiating this opportune visit, thereby contributing to effective execution of the Economic Diplomacy Strategy 2021-2023. He added that this 2nd Study Visit offers an insightful experience to the Kingdom, and expressed hope that it would further strengthen connectivity between Cambodia and the rest of the world.

The delegates were received by H.E. OUM Reatrey, Governor of Bantay Meanchey province, and H.E. TEA Seiha, Governor of Siem Reap province, during this mission.

Later in the evening, H.E. Dr. NHIM Khemara hosted a Welcome Dinner for the esteemed delegations, and took the opportunity to promote Cambodia's culinary arts, traditional performances, and a plethora of wonderful Khmer products.

FREE ANGKOR AND KOH KER PASSES FOR FOREIGNERS RESIDING IN CAMBODIA

Foreigners residing in Cambodia for two years and over can now visit the Angkor Archaeological Park and the Temple of Koh Ker for free.

The move, which came into force on 01 September 2022, was taken by the Royal Government to promote domestic tourism as well as grant an incentive to foreigners residing in Cambodia, the Angkor Enterprise, the state-owned institution in charge of Angkor income management, said in an announcement on 01 September 2022.

Concerned foreigners, including diplomatic officers, investors, officials of international organisations, foreigners working for private

companies and enterprises, experts at ministries and institutions, both public and private, and their family members, can apply for a free admission to Angkor Archaeological Park and Koh Ker Temple once a year.

The request can be made via spass.angkorenterprise.gov.kh from 09 September 2022 onward or directly to the Angkor Enterprise located in Treang village, Sangkat Slar Kram, Siem Reap provincial city, with necessary documents such as a copy of passport and visa and a new 4x6 photo.

JAPAN'S SUPPORT REQUESTED...

The centre is getting ready at the Peacekeeping Operations school to host tripartite project (Japan, UN, and Cambodia) on Heavy Engineering Machinery Training 2024.

Colonel Ishihara Masanao accepted the request and pledged to continue helping the centre to develop Cambodian peacekeeping human resources.

CAMBODIA TO START DIRECT SHIPMENT OF SWEET CORN TO CHINA



The Kingdom of Cambodia will begin direct shipment of its sweet corn to markets in China, after the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC) approved the list of registered exporting companies.

The good news was shared early this week by the Chinese Embassy in Cambodia, adding that Cambodia's sweet corn has completed all export procedures and is allowed to be shipped to China.

Sweet corn is the second Cambodian agriculture product authorised to be exported directly to China in 2022, said the embassy, attributing the achievement to the practical cooperation between both countries.

Cambodia exported more than 2.4 million tonnes of its agricultural products worth US\$1.942 million to the Chinese market from 2019 to the first half of 2022.

Cambodian major agricultural products exported to China include fresh banana, milled rice, dried cassava chips, cassava flour, mango jam, rubber latex, fresh mangoes, processed cashew nuts, cocoa powder, and so on.

BENGAL FLORICAN ATTRACTING TOURISTS TO KAMPONG THOM PROVINCE

The number of vultures recorded in Cambodia this year is higher than that of the previous year, according to the 2022 vulture survey.

The result of the last national vulture census, organised by the Cambodia Vulture Working Group (CVWG) on 10 July 2022, recorded 134 individuals, of which 19 Red-headed Vultures, 44 Slender-billed Vultures, and 71 White-rumped Vultures, a joint press release pointed out.

In the 2021 survey, there were 121 vultures, including 20 red-headed vultures, 35 slender-billed vultures and 66 white-rumped vultures.

However, the joint press release added, CVWG expressed concern about the current hunting, snaring, and poisoning that continue to occur. This pressure would lead to a significant decrease in the vulture population in the near future.

The CVWG conducts each year national vulture censuses to monitor the population trend and improve conservation actions.

CVWG is comprised of members of Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, BirdLife, WWF, ACCB, WCS, NatureLife, Rising Phoenix, CBGA, SVC, and CBC.



All vulture species in the Kingdom are protected under the Cambodian law. The Royal Government has banned the veterinary sale and use of diclofenac (whilst harmless to cattle and other livestock, results in death of vultures if they feed on a carcass of an animal previously treated with this drug) in the country in order to safeguard the remaining Cambodian vulture population.

2022 SEA FESTIVAL, A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO PROMOTE CAMBODIAN COASTAL DESTINATIONS

Cambodia is eyeing the 2022 Sea Festival, to be held in Preah Sihanouk province from 9 to 11 December 2022 as an opportunity to promote its coastal destinations to members of the World's Most Beautiful Bays Club (World-Bays Club).

The remarks were made by H.E. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism, at a preparatory meeting held on 03 September 2022 in Preah Sihanouk province.

At the same time, Cambodia will also host the 18th World Congress of the World-Bays Club from 9 to 14 December 2022 under the theme "Bays of Peace, Bays of Hope".

This will be the second time that Cambodia has organised the Club's World Congress. The first time was in 2013 at Bokor Thansur Resort in Kampot province.

The good example of Cambodia and the province of Preah Sihanouk in responsible coastal development and management will be promoted to all the 26 Club members, H.E. Thong Khon said on the occasion.

H.E. Minister therefore advised the Preah Sihanouk provincial administration to prepare an exhibition stand to show its achievements in developing the bays as popular destinations during this year's Sea Festival.



Cambodia's coastline stretches about 450 kilometres in four provinces — Preah Sihanouk, Koh Kong, Kampot and Kep. It became member of the Club of the World's Most Beautiful Bays in mid-2011.