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OUTCOMES OF PHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN CAMBODIAN PM AND UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT

Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation released the outcomes of a telephone conversation between Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, and H.E. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine, at his request in the afternoon of May 29.

According to the MFAIC, at the outset, President Zelenskyy recalled and expressed his profound appreciation for Cambodia's support and co-sponsorship of the United Nations General Assembly's Resolutions and Cambodia's position on the War in Ukraine.

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CAMBODIA-UK JOINT TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM LAUNCHED

Cambodia and the United Kingdom have launched the inaugural Joint Trade and Investment Forum (JTIF) to boost their trade relations.

The launching ceremony took place here at the Cambodian Ministry of Commerce on May 26 under the presidency of H.E. Pan Sorasak, Cambodian Minister of Commerce and H.E. Dominic Williams, British Ambassador to Cambodia.

Both sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to underpin the new forum which will provide an opportunity to shape and strengthen the trade and investment of relationship.

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HIS MAJESTY THE KING DEPARTS FOR THREE-DAY STATE VISIT TO INDIA



His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Boromneath Norodom Sihamoni, King of Cambodia, departed for a State Visit to the Republic of India from 29 to 31 May 2023.

His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Boromneath Norodom Sihamoni was seen off at Phnom Penh International Airport by Samdech Vibol Sena Pheakdei Say Chhum, President of the Senate, Samdech Akka Moha Ponhea Chakrei Heng Samrin, President of the National Assembly, and Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister, as well as many other senior officials and royal family members.

At the invitation of H.E. Ms. Droupadi Murmu, President of the Republic of India, this State Visit is made as the two nations are commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations.

According to the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, during the State Visit, His Majesty the King will hold royal audiences with H.E. Ms. Droupadi Murmu and H.E. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

of the Republic of India, during which bilateral and multilateral cooperation will be discussed.

His Majesty the King will also grant separate royal audiences to H.E. Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice President, and H.E. Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs.

His Majesty the King will lay a wreath at the Memorial of Mahatma Gandhi and attend a State Banquet hosted by H.E. Ms. Droupadi Murmu.

“The State Visit of His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Boromneath Norodom Sihamoni to the Republic of India will mark a significant milestone in the two countries’ enduring relations and contribute to further deepening the bonds of excellent friendship and close cooperation, which are deeply rooted in the shared historical, religious and cultural heritage, for the mutual benefits for the two peoples,” the press release underlined.

OUTCOMES OF PHONE CONVERSATION ...



President Zelenskyy thanked Cambodia's humanitarian assistance in helping train Ukraine's deminers last January 2023. He commended Cambodia's success as Chair of ASEAN in 2022, enabling Ukraine's signing of the Instrument of Accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) in Phnom Penh and Cambodia's support for Ukraine's bid to become an ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partner.

Samdech Techo Prime Minister expressed his pleasure in having again the opportunity to hold a phone conversation with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for the second time and stressed the

importance of seeking dialogue with means at disposal in order to bring an end to the war and the sufferings of the Ukrainian people.

During the call, Samdech Techo Prime Minister reiterated Cambodia's principled position on the war in Ukraine. Cambodia deeply respects and strictly adheres to the Charter of the United Nations and to international law.

On the ASEAN-Ukraine cooperation, Samdech Techo Prime Minister welcomed and congratulated Ukraine's accession to the TAC. Samdech Techo reaffirmed the continuing support of Cambodia for Ukraine's desire to become an ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partner and sent his best wishes to the People of Ukraine.

H.E. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy thanked Samdech Techo Prime Minister for the cordial conversation and warmly congratulated the Cambodian Government and People while wishing them continued peace and prosperity.

WORLD BANK: CAMBODIA'S ECONOMY ON FIRM PATH TO RECOVERY

Cambodia's economy is firmly on a path to recovery, led by manufacturing exports and growth in services and agriculture, the country's economic growth is thus forecast to accelerate to 5.5 percent in 2023, according to the World Bank's Cambodia Economic Update: Post-COVID-19 Economic Recovery.

This report says Cambodia's economic recovery solidified in 2022, when real growth accelerated to 5.2 percent.

A strong rebound in services, especially trade, travel, and hospitality has helped bring Cambodia back to pre-COVID-19 growth levels, with foreign arrivals accelerating as the country hosts the Southeast Asian Games and ASEAN Para Games. This revival is also boosted by easing domestic prices as global oil and food prices stabilise, it added.

"With the agriculture sector expanding due to improved access to regional markets following newly ratified trade agreements, economic growth is forecast to accelerate to 5.5 percent in 2023. However, an extended slowdown in external demand could weaken export-oriented manufacturing, while continued global financial tightening might expose risks in Cambodia's highly leveraged financial sector," it underlined.

To safeguard its economic recovery, Cambodia needs to diversify its tourism products and destinations and improve its trade competitiveness by boosting connectivity, reducing trade barriers, and streamlining customs procedures, said Ms. Maryam Salim, World Bank Country Manager for Cambodia.

CAMBODIA-UK JOINT TRADE AND ...



According to the British Embassy in Phnom Penh, the JTIF brought together leaders of the UK and Cambodian governments, policymakers, industry leaders, and discussed policies, trading schemes including the Developing Countries Trading Schemes (DCTS), Cambodia's New Law on Investment and UK's prioritisation towards green and resilient growth.

The forum has also provided the BritCham Cambodia and the Cambodian Chamber of Commerce a space to talk through key opportunities, challenges, and barriers in doing business in UK and Cambodia, the same source pointed out.

In the medium term, growth is expected to rise to 6 percent, bolstered by strong goods and services exports and a substantial increase in investment, especially under public-private partnerships for large infrastructure projects such as seaports and roads. Cambodia can aid this growth through investing on connectivity infrastructure and human development, safeguarding financial stability, and promoting diversification of

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CAMBODIA EMPHASISES CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY

“Cambodia’s commitment to a multiparty democracy remains steadfast,” affirmed The Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in a press statement. The full press statement dated May 26 reads as follows:

“The Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation notes the multitude of discourses surrounding Cambodia’s political environment in the run-up to July’s national elections. The Spokesperson is obliged to make clarifications to rectify some narratives deemed misleading, unfounded, and politically biased.

1. To state that the Candlelight Party is precluded from participating in July’s national elections is incorrect. The fact is that the party itself did not scrupulously observe the electoral law despite repeated notifications and instructions from the competent authorities. Such failure to comply with the registration process is the responsibility of the party as an applicant.
2. The National Election Committee is responsible for enforcing the election process with one single standard based on the principles of fairness, equality, and due process as would any electoral governing body operating in other countries respecting the rule of law. If 18 other political parties could comply with

the election registration process, fairness would dictate that non-compliant political parties should not be given special privileges. To do otherwise would be considered as a double standard. Khmer National Unity Party is another political party that did not meet the documentation obligation, but willingly accepted the decision of the authorities concerned.

3. Cambodia’s commitment to a multiparty democracy remains steadfast. Only when all political parties exercise their rights within the boundary of the law can a conducive electoral environment be guaranteed. Not all rights are absolute, and a crime cannot be justified as a moral crusade for democracy and human rights. The absence of two political parties from the electoral process due to their non-compliance does not negate the liberal, pluralistic and democratic nature of the Kingdom.
4. As to the presence of election observers, Cambodia welcomes all interested stakeholders to come and witness the election process. As a sovereign state, the votes of the Cambodian people must be respected, and this open invitation is a demonstration of Cambodia’s goodwill and openness to the outside world.”

TECHO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT SCHEDULED TO COMMENCE EARLY 2025

The Techo International Airport (TIA), whose construction is about 50 percent complete now, is scheduled to commence in early 2025.

Mr. Charles Vann, Director of Cambodia Airport Investment Co., Ltd. (CAIC), mentioned the construction progress at the signing ceremony of the MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul) joint venture agreement at Techo International Airport with Singapore-based SIA Engineering Company on May 30.

“Currently, we have completed 50 percent of the construction and we are continuing and monitoring how to put the airport into operation by early 2025,” he said.

The Techo International Airport project has been authorised by the Royal Government to CAIC, a joint venture between the Royal Government of Cambodia through the State Secretariat of Civil Aviation and Overseas Cambodia Investment Corporation (OCIC), to

WORLD BANK: CAMBODIA’S ...

exports to enhance the economy’s resilience and competitiveness.

A special focus section of the report examines how Cambodia has been able to increase social sector spending in recent years, notably on health and education, while noting that the quality of that spending could be improved. A stronger focus on both allocative and operational efficiency could help address the uneven distribution of teachers among grade levels and low public trust in state health facilities.

CDC APPROVES THREE INVESTMENT PROJECTS WORTH OVER US\$15 MILLION

The Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) has given green light to three new investment projects with a total capital of US\$15.4 million.

The new projects belong to BOLITO GARMENT CO., LTD., XIN LI AN SHOES CO., LTD. and NEW HM KNITTING CLOTHING (CAMBODIA) CO., LTD., the CDC said in a press release issued 29 May. The three companies will invest in the manufacturing of clothes in the provinces of Kandal and Kampong Speu and shoe accessories in the capital of Phnom Penh, it pointed out.

More than 3,000 jobs are expected to be generated for the locals by the three newly approved projects, the source added.

build and develop the new Phnom Penh International Airport in Kandal and Takeo provinces, about 20 kilometres south of Phnom Penh capital.

TIA (Phase 1) is a greenfield airport with a total investment budget of US\$1.5 billion. TIA, to be developed in three phases, is designed for 50 million passengers, with three runways and a satellite terminal across a total land area of 2,600 hectares.

DOCUMENTATION TO LIST BATTAMBANG PROVINCE AS MEMBER OF UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK IN 2023

The Royal Government of Cambodia has scheduled to prepare documents for listing Battambang province as a member of the UNESCO Creative Cities Networks (UCCN) in 2023.

The news was shared in a workshop on the preparation of documents for listing Battambang province as UCCN's member in Battambang province on May 23.

The workshop aimed to consult with all stakeholders, collect more inputs, update the required documents, and promote the UCCN to other Cambodia's potential cities.

UCCN was established in 2004 to promote the cooperation with cities identified creative as a strategic factor for sustainable city development in economy, society, culture and environment.

Organized by the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, the Ministry of Tourism, UNESCO in Phnom Penh and Battambang provincial administration, the two-day workshop took place under the presidency of H.E. Chhay Matinal, Deputy Governor of Battambang province.

H.E. Siyonn Sophearith, Director General of Techniques for Cultural Affairs General Department of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, H.E. Chuk Chumno, Director General of Tourism Development and International Cooperation of the Ministry of Tourism, and Mr. Masanori Nagaoka, Culture Specialist of UNESCO Office in Phnom Penh were among the dignitaries in the workshop.

