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FUNAN TECO CANAL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT KICKS OFF

The construction of the US\$1.7 billion Funan Techo Canal broke ground on 5 August with the sounds of unity throughout the nation.

This auspicious event was held at Prek Takeo in Samrong Thom commune, Kean Svay district, Kandal province, under the chairmanship of Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia and First Lady, Lok Chumteav Dr. Pich Chanmony.

As dawn breaks in Cambodia today, the people of all walks of life took part and witnessed this historical celebration.

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CAMBODIA TO TAKE PART IN MEKONG-LANCANG FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING THIS WEEK

Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Sok Chenda Sophea, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation will lead a delegation to take part in the 9th Mekong-Lancang Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Chiang Mai on 16 August 2024, at the invitation of his Thai counterpart H.E. Maris Sangiampongsa.

The meeting, under the theme "Towards a Safer and Cleaner Mekong-Lancang Community", will provide an opportunity for the Foreign Ministers to review progress under the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (MLC) mechanism, said the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in a press release issued on 13 August 2024.

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FIRST-EVER UK-STANDARD UNIVERSITY OPENS IN CAMBODIA



De Montfort, a leading British university, has opened its first-ever campus in Cambodia to contribute to enhancing the Kingdom's human resources.

The grand opening ceremony of De Montfort University Cambodia was held on 8 August under the presidency of Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Samdech Thipadei Hun Manet, who had his education background in the UK, expressed his warm welcome to the presence of this university in Cambodia.

"I am so proud that De Montfort has decided to choose Cambodia as its first campus in Southeast Asia," he underlined.

The Premier also shared some of his experience during his study in the UK and highlighted the progress of the education sector in Cambodia.

Moreover, Samdech Thipadei Hun Manet expressed the Royal Government's commitment to education development.

"I think that De Montfort's decision to open its campus in Cambodia reflects the strong trust in investment in Cambodia and the purchase power of the education sector in the country," he said.

The presence of De Montfort will be a catalyst for the higher education competition in Cambodia. This will add high value to higher education in Cambodia.

According to Samdech Thipadei, when De Montfort University chose Cambodia as the place for its next branch campus, it did so recognising the value that Cambodia places on education and higher education. De Montfort University saw the impact education is making to the Kingdom's development and the Royal Government's continued focus on improving

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FUNAN TECO CANAL CONSTRUCTION ...



After Samdech Thipadei Hun Manet finished his public speech, he pressed the button to official kick off the construction of Funan Techo Canal, then drums, gongs and bells were resonated at the same time from pagodas, ministries, institutions, schools, enterprises at both national and sub-national level throughout the Kingdom.

Addressing the function, Samdech Thipadei Hun Manet emphasised the importance of this collective celebration. "Today, as we embark on the Funan Techo Canal project, we are not just building a canal; we are crafting a future that honours our heritage and celebrates our unity. This event is a testament to our shared commitment to progress and cultural pride," he underlined.

The Funan Techo Canal will help Cambodia strengthen its political independence in terms of waterway transport, but will not affect the environment and the flow of the Mekong River, the Premier added.

Samdech Thipadei Hun Manet took the opportunity to reaffirm that this project will not make Cambodia lose any territory or sovereignty. "[...] If you don't believe, let's come to see the real outcomes in the next five years," he said.

The Funan Techo Canal is Cambodia's first historical transport project linking the Mekong system to the sea route. The project has very little impact, while the economic analysis and evaluation show that it will provide great benefits for the areas of trade, tourism, urban planning and construction, etc.

According to the project's feasibility study, the US\$1.7 billion and Funan Techo Canal project is 180 kilometres long and 100 metres wide upstream and 80 metres downstream, and a total depth of 5.4 metres with two navigation lanes. The construction would take around four years to complete in the form of BOT (Build, Operate, Transfer).

The canal will link Prek Takeo of Mekong River to the sea in Kep province crossing four provinces: Kandal, Takeo, Kampot and Kep with a total of 1.6 million people living on either side of the waterway.

CAMBODIA TO TAKE PART IN MEKONG-LANCANG FOREIGN MINISTERS' ...



This includes implementing the substantive outcomes of the 4th MLC Leaders' Meeting in December last year, jointly addressing emerging challenges and exploring better

ways, based on the Five-Year Plan of Action on the MLC (2023-2027), to move MLC forward for the benefits of peoples in the Mekong sub-region as a whole, the source added.

During his stay in Chiang Mai, the press release pointed out, H.E. Deputy Prime Minister will join other MLC Foreign Ministers to pay a courtesy call on H.E. Srettha Thavisin, Prime Minister of Thailand. He is also expected to have bilateral talks with other foreign ministers to further strengthen ties and cooperation under bilateral and multilateral frameworks.

FIRST-EVER UK-STANDARD ...



quality, increasing access, and promoting internationalisation. It also saw that we have a dynamic and engaged youth population. A youth population that is actively focused on their own development and importantly engaged with the communities they live in and broader society.

H.E. Dominic Williams, UK Ambassador to Cambodia said this university will play a role in providing skills that will power next stage of Cambodia's development and build ties between UK Higher Education sector and be part of the world driving global growth, and which will increasingly be at cutting edge of innovation – mutual benefit.

De Montfort University (DMU) is one of the UK's most prestigious higher education institutions, founded in 1870, and has been operating for more than 150 years. The university has approximately 35,000 students studying in the UK and at its overseas branches.

The university maintains international standards, with branches in the United Kingdom, the Middle East (Dubai), East Asia (Kazakhstan), and now Southeast Asia (Cambodia). It is ranked among the UK's top 20 universities for helping students secure employment. De Montfort University is the only university in the UK recognised by the United Nations as a global hub for sustainable development goals.

CAMBODIA PLAYS A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN PROMOTING ASEAN'S EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS



Cambodia has played a crucial role in advancing ASEAN's external partnerships, said Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation H.E. Sok Chenda Sophea in his ASEAN Day Message on 8 August.

“The Royal Government has made significant efforts to enhance and expand ties with dialogue and sectoral dialogue partners. We recently concluded our role as country coordinator for ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Relations for three years. We've now assumed the role as coordinator for ASEAN-US Dialogue Relations from 2024 to 2027,” he pointed out.

With this new responsibility, he underlined, Cambodia is committed to bolstering ASEAN's centrality and regional integration. The Kingdom

will collaborate closely with all stakeholders to effectively fulfil this role, contributing to our collective efforts in community-building and regional stability.

H.E. Sok Chenda Sophea added that Cambodia has been a steadfast member of ASEAN since 1999, contributing significantly to regional cooperation and integration. The Kingdom has helped nurture its values and guiding principles including independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference, consensus-based decision-making, and peaceful settlement of disputes. These principles promote a region that flourishes with peace and opportunity.

Over the past two and a half decades, he recalled, Cambodia has successfully held the rotating Chair of ASEAN three times in 2002, 2012 and 2022. Cambodia is committed to harnessing the spirit of togetherness.

“We will uphold and promote ASEAN unity, centrality, and solidarity to address common challenges - and enhance our contribution to regional and global peace, stability, security, and sustainable development,” the Cambodian diplomat stressed.

MINISTER OF COMMERCE CLARIFIES CONCERNS OVER THE CLV-DTA

Her Excellency Cham Nimul, Minister of the Ministry of Commerce had an exclusive interview with TVK on 9 August, addressing concerns surrounding the Cambodia-Laos-Vietnam Development Triangle Area (CLV-DTA), which has led to fears among some that it could result in the loss of Cambodian territory.

Her Excellency clarified that the CLV-DTA does not involve sharing or exchanging of territory. She emphasised that each country remains independent and self-sufficient in its development efforts. Moreover, she noted that all regional developments occur individually, with Cambodia utilising its national development budget, including the commune development budget.

“You might wonder: If you are developing your own village or commune using your own funds, why participate in the CLV-DTA? The answer is simple – it brings additional benefits and strengthens connectivity,” she posed and answered.

Her Excellency explained that the country's involvement in the agreement is aimed at enhancing connectivity through infrastructure projects such as road networks that facilitate the exchange of goods, transit between neighbouring countries, and access to medical services.

“If we establish a point of intersection that allows people to exchange goods and facilitates easy crossing, isn't that beneficial? They continue to develop their side, and we continue to develop ours. What we focus on is identifying and agreeing on connection points that offer mutual benefits. To reach these agreements, negotiations are essential,” she said.

For connectivity and development to succeed, public and private investment, as well as the participation of development partners, is crucial. Her Excellency noted

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OUP, OXFORDAQA LAUNCH FUTURE-READINESS INITIATIVE IN CAMBODIA



Oxford University Press (OUP) and OxfordAQA on 6 August introduced their ground-breaking event, “Future Readiness: Shaping Tomorrow's Leaders,” aimed at equipping Cambodian students aged two to 19 with skills essential for future success.

The event showcased the comprehensive Oxford International Curriculum and OxfordAQA International Qualifications, emphasising a whole-school approach to future readiness.

Mr. Luke Sweetman, Head of Global Partnerships at Oxford, highlighted the evolving landscape of education.

“Education for the future goes beyond mere knowledge acquisition. Students need resilience, skills, and adaptability to meet the demands of future job markets,” he explained. “We are excited to bring the Oxford International Curriculum and

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OUP, OXFORDAQA LAUNCH FUTURE-READINESS INITIATIVE ...

OxfordAQA International Qualifications to Cambodia. This whole-school approach ensures students reach their full potential with a comprehensive curriculum, world-class resources, quality professional development, and internationally recognised qualifications.”

The British Ambassador to Cambodia, H.E. Dominic Williams, endorsed the initiative, emphasising the UK’s commitment to education in Cambodia.

“Education is a top priority for the UK in Cambodia. Institutions like Oxford help young Cambodians develop essential skills for securing good jobs and supporting Cambodia’s development. I am confident that both students and the broader education sector in Cambodia will benefit greatly from Oxford’s commitment,” said Williams.

Meanwhile, Ms. Khuon Vichheka, Provisional General Director of Teacher Education from the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoYES), also praised Oxford’s approach.

“Oxford’s curriculum sparks curiosity and empowers students through project-based learning,” she said.

“Oxford integrates wellbeing and sustainability into core subjects, equipping students with adaptability, empathy, and global citizenship. Our students are not just learners; they are stewards of our shared humanity. We at MoEYS are honoured to support this collaboration with Oxford,” she added.

The initiative arrives at a pivotal time for Cambodia, which is undergoing rapid transformation and seeing a growing demand for high-quality international education.

First introduced in 2021, the Oxford International Curriculum is employed by over 100 educational institutions worldwide and is now available for schools in Cambodia.

It focuses on all core subjects, including English, Science, Math, Computing, Global Skills Projects, Wellbeing, and Sustainability, from early years to lower secondary, preparing learners for international GCSEs, AS, and A-level exams.

MINISTER OF ...

that there are currently 12 partners involved, including the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and USAID.

“If we do not develop remote areas, how can we expect people to continue living there? Without substantial investment, no one would want to remain in these areas. If you’re alone in a remote place and fall ill, who would you turn to for help?” she questioned.

“The CLV-DTA strengthens the efficiency of interconnected projects, making trade easier and more efficient,” she added.

In response to concerns about the loss of territory and the free movement of citizens within the CLV countries, Her Excellency clarified that while the agreement facilitates the movement of goods and people, it does not allow unrestricted entry and exit; all individuals must comply with existing laws.

“Currently, within the 10 ASEAN member countries, we only need our passports to travel to the other nine. There’s no need to apply for a visa in advance. For instance, when we travel to Singapore, Thailand, Laos, or the Philippines, we simply buy a flight ticket, no visa required, and we can stay for up to 14 days,” she noted.

Her Excellency also mentioned a cross-border pass agreement between Cambodia and Laos, which allows citizens of both countries to travel within each other’s borders for up to 12 hours.

“The CLV-DTA is primarily about economic connectivity and boosting trade activities. It transforms isolated, remote regions into prosperous areas with improved infrastructure and communities living in harmony.

“And I want to make it clear: we are not losing our land, and we are not losing our sovereignty. Each country continues to enforce its own domestic laws,” the minister said.

ANGKOR WAT 7TH MOST TAGGED LANDMARK ON SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE WORLD



A new survey says that Angkor Wat, the heart of Cambodia, ranks 7th as the place with the most tag posts on TikTok and Instagram.

The report, from Titan Travel, states that Cambodia’s icon is the most tagged place in South East Asia, with only Singapore’s Bay Garden appearing in the top 10.

New York’s Central Park took top place.