



CAMBODIA IN FOCUS



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South Korean President to Visit Cambodia

At the invitation of Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, H.E. Lee Myung-bak, President of the Republic of Korea will lead a delegation to pay a state visit to the Kingdom of Cambodia from Oct. 22 to 23.

H.E. Lee Myung-bak will be received in Royal Audience by His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Boromneath Norodom Sihamoni, King of

Cambodia, said a press release of the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation dated today.

Besides, H.E. Lee Myung-bak will also receive courtesy calls by Samdech Chea Sim, President of the Senate, Samdech Heng Samrin, President of the National Assembly, and hold the Bilateral Summit Meeting with Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Samdech Hun Sen and H.E. Lee Myung-bak will witness the signing of two following agreements by H.E. Deputy Prime Minister Hor Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation of Cambodia and H.E. Mr. Yu Myung-hwan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea :

1. **Agreement on Extradition**
2. **Framework Arrangement** concerning Loans from the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) for 2009-2012.

During this visit, five other documents are also expected to be signed:

1. **Agreement on Cooperation** between the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Cambodian Chamber of Commerce.
2. **Agreement** on the Co-Production of Broadcasting Programs.
3. **MOU** on Cooperation for the Field of Mineral Sector.
4. **MOU** on Cooperation for Joint Mineral Exploration.
5. **MOU** concerning the Cooperation on Investment in Forest Plantation and Climate Change.

Government Guarantees Transparency and Fairness in Oil Exploration Bidding

Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen assured the delegation of the Worldwide Petroleum Services led by Mr. Stephen Bridges that the royal government guarantees equality, transparency and fairness in the bidding for oil exploration in Cambodia.

Mr. Bridges, former British Ambassador to Cambodia, informed the premier during a courtesy call on 6 October that his company had already submitted documents for the bidding for oil exploration in Cambodian sea water at block 4 to the National Petroleum Authority of Cambodia. He affirmed that his company had enough competence, budget and experience in oil exploration.

Last month, the American Chevron and Japanese MOECO Companies have submitted their application for oil exploration in this block to the National Petroleum Authority of Cambodia

Ketsana's Cost Estimated at US\$29m

Typhoon Ketsana cost Cambodia at least US\$29.3 million when it tore through the country with wind speeds of up to 185km/h earlier this month, the National Committee for Disaster Management estimated on 12 October 2009.

Keo Vy, communication officer at NCDM, said the "primary figure" of \$29.3 million may yet increase, as provincial authorities from across the Kingdom would gather on 16 October in a bid to calculate the exact national cost, reported the Phnom Penh Post on 13 October.

The initial impact of the typhoon left 24 dead, but as many as 30 more died when severe floods swamped the country in the storm's aftermath. Further downpours have made recovery efforts painfully slow, relief workers have said.

Kampong Thom province is the most-affected in the Kingdom – about 30,000 hectares of paddy fields and crops were destroyed, according to provincial Governor Chhun Chhorn.

He said the province has not yet calculated the total cost of damage because further rainfall has flooded rural areas and made them hard to reach. "In our province, 17 people died because of the typhoon and flooding," he was quoted by the Post as saying.

More than 20,000 families have received emergency relief from the Cambodian Red Cross (CRC), and on Tuesday, 500 more families will receive food. "We prioritise the most-affected areas," added Chhun Chhorn.

Uy Sam Ath, director for disaster management at CRC, said Monday that thousands of families have been given immediate assistance, said the Post. "CRC has already donated food to 2,500 families in Ratanakkiri province and plans to go to Banteay Meanchey province to give food to 800 families on Wednesday," he said.

Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen ordered government officials to respond to the needs of people affected. "It must be guaranteed that no one dies of hunger," reported the Post.

Mekong - Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting

The Second Foreign Ministers' Meeting between the five Mekong countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam) and Japan was held on 3 October 2009 in Siem Reap province, Cambodia. The agenda for the meeting chaired by Cambodia's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Hor Namhong was to review progress made since the first meeting in Tokyo, Japan in January 2008.

In a Chairman Statement released after the meeting, "the ministers reaffirmed their determination to closely cooperation on regional and global issues of common concern, and to deepen and broaden the existing Mekong-Japan cooperation and cooperation under other frameworks, such as the ASEAN-Japan Dialogue Relations, the [\(see page 3\)](#)

Mekong - Japan Foreign

(Continue from page 2)

ASEAN+3, the East Asia Summit as well as the ASEAN Regional Forum to ensure peace, stability and prosperity in the region."

"The ministers also reaffirmed the importance of improving, through closer consultation of all its



Thai Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya, Vietnam's Deputy Foreign Minister Dao Viet Trung, Japan's Foreign Minister Kasuya Okada, Cambodia's Foreign Minister Hor Namhong, Laos' Foreign Minister Thongloun Sisoulith and Myanmar's Foreign Minister U Nyan Win pose for a photo during the second Mekong Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting at a hotel in Siem Reap province, 230km (143 miles) north-west of Phnom Penh, October 3, 2009. (Xinhua/Reuters Photo)

stakeholders, the business environment of each country and of the region as a whole to accelerate trade and investment," it said.

The statement, however, said the ministers recognized that the Mekong region, despite its recent development, still confronts challenges that need to be overcome as soon as possible.

In a joint press conference after the end of the meeting, Cambodia's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hor Namhong said Japan had pledged to provide and increase assistance to ASEAN nations, especially, the Mekong sub-region.

He said the assistance from Japan to the region would focus on "infrastructure, investment, human resource development, cultural exchange and youth exchange."

For youth exchange, Japan pledged to accept 10,000 youth from Mekong countries for five years, starting from 2007, said Hor Namhong.

Japan Vows to Continue Aid to Cambodia

Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada assured Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hor Namhong on October 3 that Japan would continue its financial assistance to Cambodia despite the change of government in Tokyo last month, reported the Phnom Penh Post on October 5.

Okada met with Hor Namhong on the sidelines of the Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers Meeting in Siem Reap to discuss aid and diplomatic ties, with Foreign Ministers from Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam also in attendance.

Kodama also said that the number of Japanese companies interested in investing in Cambodia had risen since last year, adding that Japan "hopes the Cambodian government will help to further improve the investment environment in Cambodia".

Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Emerald Triangle Cooperation

Foreign Ministers of Cambodia, Laos and Thailand, during the Second Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Emerald Triangle Cooperation held on 3 October 2009 in Siem Reap province, Cambodia, agreed on joint effort to boost the economic welfare of the peoples living along the border shared by the three countries.

The meeting, chaired by Cambodia's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hor Namhong, touched on enhancing agricultural sector, physical infrastructure development and commercial initiatives in the said areas joining the three territories.

The First Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Emerald Triangle Cooperation was held in Pakse, Laos in 2003 where Cambodia, Laos and Thailand agreed on tourism cooperation and foresaw further joint effort that have finally been realized during this second meeting.

The decision has also been reached for Thailand to host the First Summit of the (see page 4)

Foreign Ministers' Meeting

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Emerald Triangle Cooperation in 2010. Also, Thailand would grant more scholarships to improve the human resource in Cambodia and Laos.

Cambodian FM Optimistic of Cambodia-U.S. Bilateral Relations

Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hor Namhong expressed his optimism towards the future relations between Cambodia and the United States.

Speaking at a press conference at Phnom Penh International Airport on October 1 upon his arrival from the 64th UN General Assembly in New York, H.E. Hor Namhong said during their bilateral talks, U.S. State Secretary Hillary Clinton had praised for the development of the good relationship between Cambodia and the U.S., reported the Cambodian news agency AKP on 2 October 2009.

He continued that on the occasion, he asked the U.S. government to consider writing off the debts owed by the U.S.-backed Lon Nol regime in the 1970s. If not possible, he expressed hope that the U.S. would shift most of the debts as development aid for Cambodia, said the Cambodian top diplomat, adding that Mrs. Clinton said she would pay attention to this issue.

H.E. Hor Namhong further pointed out that during the talks, both sides also discussed about the cooperation between Mekong and Mississippi rivers, saying that Cambodia was preparing to host the meeting of technical expertise cooperation between the two rivers.

Cambodia Not Surprised to Resolve Border Dispute with Thailand at Regional or International Forums

Cambodia is not surprised at all to raise and solve the border conflict with Thailand at the regional or international forums, by either a neutral

organization or the International Court of Justice in The Hague or the UN Security Council, the Cambodian news agency AKP reported Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation H.E. Hor Namhong at stating in a press conference in Phnom Penh on 14 October 2009.

"I sent a letter to Thai Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya on Oct. 9, proposing Thailand, the ASEAN Chair, to include this border issue in the agenda of the upcoming ASEAN Summit," said the Cambodian Foreign Minister, adding that Cambodia had not received any reply from the Thai side yet.

However, he continued, a spokesman of the Thai Foreign Affairs Ministry had denied that Kasit Piromya had never made such a statement (to seek the approval of the upcoming ASEAN Summit to set up a neutral organization to settle the dispute), accusing the media of quoted him out of context.

"There is not only the Nation, but also Thai News Agency (TNA) which has quoted him along with pictures," H.E. Hor Namhong said. "Two sources with the same information, so it is not wrong."

"As there is no response from Thailand to my official proposal, Cambodia still considers that Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen can raise the issue in the upcoming ASEAN Summit to be held in Hua Hin from Oct. 23 to 25," he stressed.

Koy Koun, spokesman for Cambodia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, told reporters on 15 October that Thai Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya had sent a letter to Deputy Prime Minister Hor Namhong clarified remarks reported in the media claiming the Thai government would like to see a neutral arbitrator in the longstanding border dispute near Preah Vihear temple.

Having received the letter, Cambodia would not raise the issue at the ASEAN summit in Thailand,

Visit to Australia by Commander-in-Chief of Royal Cambodian Armed Forces

General Pol Saroeun, Commander (see page 5)

Visit to Australia by (Continue from page 4)

-in-Chief of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF), visited Australia from 30 September to 3 October 2009. He was warmly welcomed by Air Chief Marshal (ACM) Angus Houston, Chief of the Defence Force of Australia, and received general salute with Australian Federation Guard and Band.



General Pol Saroeun, Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces invited by Guard Commander to inspect the Guard and Band

During the meeting with ACM Angus Houston, Chief of the Defense Force, Gen. Pol Saroeun highly appreciated all kinds of Australian assistance provided to the RCAF, including assistance on human resource development by providing scholarship to approximately 246 Cambodian military students to study in Australia, as well as scholarship to between 15-20 Cambodian military officials a year to learn English at Australia's University of National Defense. Gen. Pol Saroeun expressed his sincere thanks to the Australian government for sending 552 volunteer staff to work in Cambodia and for helping the Cambodian armed forces to establish and renovate several institutes of education and rehabilitation as well.

Gen. Pol Saroeun also touched on the reform conducted within the Cambodian armed forces and the participation of the Cambodian soldiers in the UN peacekeeping missions in Sudan, Chad and Central Africa.

ACM Angus Houston, thanked Gen. Pol Saroeun for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to the Royal Australian Navy ship, HMAS DARWIN

during its recent visit to Cambodia in order to reinforce the close links between Australia and Cambodia through the Australian Defense Cooperation Program.

Both sides had discussion on ways to further promote and broaden the relationship between the military of the two countries and an exchange of views on the international and regional issues of common concern.

Japan Offers Mine Clearance Aid

The Government of Japan has provided US\$1,481,740 for mine clearance and the destruction of unexploded ordnance in Cambodia.

The Grant Contracts were signed on 8 October between Japanese Ambassador to Cambodia Kuroki Masafumi and the representatives of the two recipient organizations.

Of the total grant, US\$652,549 are given to Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) to support mine clearance activities in Battambang and Banteay Meanchey provinces.

The rest (US\$829,191) is provided to Japan Mine Action Service (JMAS) to support the Explosive Ordnance Disposal in Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu and Kandal provinces.

U.S. Provides US\$1.8 Million to CMAC

The U.S. government provided US\$1.8 million to Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC) to support its mine clearance activity, through DynCorp International Company.

The grant documents were signed in Phnom Penh 2 October 2009 by CMAC Director-General Mr. Heng Rattana and DynCorp International Director Mr. Jay Steed, in the presence of Delegate Minister and Vice President of the Cambodian Mine Action Authority (CMAA) Prak Sokhon, and U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia Mrs. Carol A. Rodley.

The one-year-period grant would be used for demining activity in Cham Ksan (see page 6)

U.S. Provides US\$1.8

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district, Preah Vihear province, for unexploded ordnances (UXO) clearance in the provinces of Kampong Cham, Kratie, Stung Treng, Rattanakiri, Mondulkiri and Kampong Thom, and for demining training in Kampong Chhnang province, said Mr. Heng Rattana.

According to Prak Sokhon, the U.S. government has assisted Cambodia in mine clearance activity since 1993 and up to now, the assistance amount has reached US\$61.8 million.

Tourist Ship Docks at Preah Sihanouk Seaport

The Orion Panama Tourist Ship, carrying 86 multi-national tourists and 76 sailors came from Thailand, docked at Preah Sihanouk International Seaport on October 5 and 6, according to the Cambodian news agency AKP on 7 October .

Most of the tourists are Australians and 77 of them continued their visit to Siem Reap province.

Orion is planning to dock at Preah Sihanouk Seaport once again this month.

Cambodian Film Nominated in 2009 APSA

Cambodia has been nominated in the APSAs for the first time with the nomination of the powerful documentary, *L'important, C'est De Rester Vivant* (*The Main Thing Is To Stay Alive*), for Best Documentary Feature Film, said a media release issued on 13 October 2009 by The Asia Pacific Screen Awards. The documentary is a co-production with France.

Winners of the region's highest accolade in film will be announced on November 26 at the third annual APSA Ceremony on Australia's Gold Coast.

The Asia Pacific Screen Awards has announced nominees in nine award categories with 37 films representing 16 countries and areas. They are: Australia, **Cambodia**, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Palestinian Territories, People's Republic of China (Mainland China/Hong Kong), Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Turkey.

APSA is a unique collaboration between CNN International, UNESCO and FIAPF-International Federation of Film Producers Associations. Films are judged on cinematic excellence and the way in which they attest to their cultural origins.

Standing Ovation for Talented Kids



Srey Lin from Sunrise Children's Village performing the coconut dance in Sydney during their fundraising tour last week.
(Photo by: TRACEY SHELTON)

Monday, 12 October 2009

Tracey Shelton

The Phnom Penh Post

The thing I enjoyed most was seeing their adorable faces peeking out from behind the curtains, full of glee.... (see page 7)

Standing Ovation for

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SYDNEY) - THERE was hardly a dry eye in the room at the Sydney Opera House last week after children from the Sunshine Children's Village in Takeo presented their moving performances.

The 29 ecstatic but exhausted children arrived back home Tuesday after a week in Australia, where they performed Khmer dance, music and song at the iconic opera house.

Their ticket sales alone raised \$75,000 for the Sunrise foundation, while donation boxes and merchandise sales took the figure to more than \$100,000 for the night.

President of Sunrise Children's Villages Geraldine Cox said she had been worried it was only motherly love for the children that had made her believe they had talent.

"It wasn't until the curtain went up and I heard applause after applause after applause that I realised they really are incredibly talented children," Cox said.

She said the trip was funded by 14 corporate sponsors, covering all expenses including airfares, accommodation and day trips for the children. Passports and airport fees were waived by Prime Minister Hun Sen, and the Australian Department of Immigration waived all visa-related fees for the children and staff supervisors.

Cox said the children showed Sydney Australians the "*dignity and beauty of Khmer dance*".

"The love that just flowed over them at the concert hall was like a wave. You could feel it – and the children just loved every minute of being on stage," she said.

The event was hosted by well-known Australian celebrity Ray Martin, and support performances

included country singers Kasey Chambers and Beccy Cole, musician Jane Rutter, and singer David Campbell.

"The thing I enjoyed most was seeing their adorable faces peeking out from behind the curtains, full of glee – bursting with excitement," said one member of the audience, Samantha Florence, 32.

The audience rose in a standing ovation as 13-year-old Chorn Chanvisal belted out the last few words of his powerful rendition of the song "Why". Looking on from backstage, Chambers and Cole remarked: "With lungs like his, there might be some stiff competition coming up in the Australian music industry."

But although Chanvisal said the performance was very exciting and happy, when asked if he would like to be a rock star he replied, "No, I'd rather be an accountant. If I become a pop star, someone might kill me."

Outside of the performance the children with enjoyed a pirate ship cruise around the harbour, a wet but enjoyable trip to the zoo, and a day at Palm Beach.

Despite the excitement of the Opera House, for 12-year-old Thai Sreyleak the highlight of the trip was eating a hamburger and swimming at Palm Beach – despite the temperature hovering around a low 17 degrees.

Cox said in addition to the pride she felt during their stage performance, she was also quite pleased with their behaviour. "Not one event passed without people coming up and remarking on how well-behaved the children were," she said. "They did Cambodia proud."

Tracey Shelton has volunteered at Sunrise Children's Villages since 1998 and assisted in supervising the Sydney tour. She is also the photographer behind a picture book about the children, titled We Can Be..., that was released at the Opera House.

Royal Embassy of Cambodia, 5 Canterbury Crescent, Deakin ACT 2600

E-mail: cambodianembassy@ozemail.com.au Tel: (02) 6273 12 59/ 6273 1154 / Fax:(02) 6273 1053