



Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen with President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea in Phnom Penh (Photo: Reuters)

28 September 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
New Tourism Building — Inauguration Ceremony

I would like to take this chance to share with all of our staff and leaders of the Ministry of Tourism who have been joining hands together to make this achievement possible. It is magnificent and hopeful that it will be a professional setup for work for a long time to come.

HE Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism has already briefed us all about how the Ministry of Tourism is being formed and developed. First of all we had a small Office of Tourism in Phnom Penh and Siemreap but we had no supervising authorities. We later initiated the set up of a General Directorate of Tourism, which the late HE Preab Pijei, Vice Minister of the Council of Ministers, had been given additional task of supervising the new directorate.

When HE Preab Pijei passed away, HE Cheam Yiep was given the task to take over the supervision of tourism. Then we have come to the creation in 1993 of the Ministry of Tourism.

We have made many dignitaries ministers in various stages later. HE Eng Roland, in the period of provisional Government from 1993, was then appointed minister.

There is a misconception of the Paris Peace Agreement, as far as this matter of provisional Government is concerned. The Agreement stipulates no provisional government only that there was going to be an election that will eventually set up the constitutional assembly, who, after adopting the Constitution, would become the National Assembly. But for the sake of reconciliation, the former State of Cambodia agreed to dissolve itself and to become a member of a provisional Government with two Prime Ministers, two Ministers for National Defense and two Ministers for Interior.

If there were to be any disagreements, could we achieve a Constitution for the nation as there required an approval from a two-
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14 September 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Visiting New Bridge Prek Kadam, Connecting Last Segment

Please let me offer my heartfelt congratulation to the delegation of the Shanghai Company and friends. I also would like to share this joy with our people of all ages who have come here in honor of the last segment connection of the new Chinese assisted bridge at Prek Kdam, which is to be officially named the Cambodian-Chinese Friendship Bridge at Prek Kdam.

We will call all bridges across the river “the Cambodian-Chinese Friendship Bridge” at various points along the river. For instance we named the bridge at Sekong in Steong Treng “the Cambodian-Chinese Friendship Bridge at Sekong” – the first bridge ever built there.

We also will have another bridge named “the Cambodian-Chinese Friendship Bridge at Prek Tamak,” the construction of which was launched before this bridge. And this is the third bridge that is named similarly at Prek Kdam. If we have five more bridges to be built, we will name them all “the Cambodian-Chinese Friendship Bridge.”

I was here to preside over the groundbreaking ceremony on June 11, 2007 and if I were to recall what happened then, in just two weeks we launched two major bridge constructions – Prek Tamak on June 6, 2007 and Prek Kdam on June 11, 2007. Minister of Public Works
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07 September 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Presentation of MoP’s Final Population Census

Our survey of population has indeed involved not only counting of population but also related data many other areas. What remains to be concerned is whether this census result can be trusted.

It is indeed a trusted one because the survey enjoyed cooperation from our people and the survey teams have had the support and leadership from HE Deputy Prime Minister Sar Kheng and HE Minister Chhai Than, and assistance rendered by UNFPA, JAICA and the Government of Germany.

local dialect “identity card of a deer” and the deer here is meant to be a person in hiding.

After the 1998 win-win policy has been put into practice, the country’s situation has brought about a possibility that we can conduct census every where.

In some countries it is still impossible to do like this as war is still there. This is so important because no matter what you are talking about, peace and national unity have to be primary conditions.
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It should be confirmed that this is a general survey, which means that there is no one in Cambodia that is not being identified or in

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third majority in the Constitutional Assembly? What the Paris Peace Agreement wanted to achieve but UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia) could not fulfill was that peace did not prevail in Cambodia.

UNTAC mission pulled out scandalously leaving Cambodia a country with two Governments and two areas under separate controls – which meant one side was the Government in Phnom Penh that consisted of the SoC, Funcinpec, the Khmer People National Liberation Front (KPNLF), under one Constitution, one National Assembly, HM the King and the Government.

Another was a Government at the border with a full Cabinet, a radio station and its own currency that was affixed thereupon with the signature of Khieu Samphan. In 1994 I went to Pyongyang for a political negotiation at Chang Su'un palace between the Royal Government of Phnom Penh and the outcast Government at the border. There were many of us - Samdech Chea Sim and Samdech Krom Preah were also present. The Buddhist Patriarchs – Samdech Tep Vong, Samdech Bou Kri, Samdech Um Sum, etc – were also present. Samdech Chea Sim and Samdech Krom Preah gave me the task to negotiate with Khieu Samphan.

Khieu Samphan was there with Son Sen, obviously who was killed by Pol Pot in 1997. Khieu Samphan proposed the formation of what he called a “minimum political program”...

I asked him right away was it what he wanted to replace the Constitution? He said it meant we would suspend the Constitution for a while. This has brought us to a scenario now that whether the trial of the Khmer Rouge

would be possible if the Khmer Rouge was not dissolved politically and militarily? Simply ask, who would do the job?

In 1992, UNTAC's leader Yasushi Akashi and his Commander General J. Sanderson visited the Khmer Rouge stronghold at Pailin. Two Khmer Rouge underage soldiers placed a bamboo stick across the road as checkpoint. They withdrew. I asked Ee Chhien later to find the two so I could give them my praise. That was how weak UNTAC was.

All UNTAC leaders, as far as I could remember, left Cambodia at night. Finally Cambodian issue has been resolved by the win-win policy. All I am saying is not for us to forget what good UNTAC had done to our country at all. But we should not go too far in placing ourselves under foreign influence. If we were to fulfill no win-win policy, a question could be asked if there would be any peace, end of war and a chance to have about two million tourists or so coming to our country.

It was the win-win policy that allows us to bring about peace in the whole country, whereby we could expand tourism to a certain development level. The Government of the first and second legislatures of the National Assembly appointed HE Veng Sereivuth as Minister of Tourism and in the third legislature of the National Assembly, over half of the term, HE Lay Prohas, was appointed Minister, and then followed by HE Thong Khon. If he is doing the job well, he would go all the way to the end of the fourth legislature of the National Assembly Royal Government's term and would be there in the fifth too.

I would like to see that the new Ministry building will conform to the need and proposition for development of tourism. We

have here a nice building but what would be more important is perhaps work efficiency.

Talking about this you may have seen that we have been working in the former Council of Ministers building until recently that our Chinese friend offered to build us a new one. And our work efficiency has been noticed then.

We are now building a new permanent international conference hall, whereby we will host all major international and regional events in Cambodia. There will be two buildings of the Council of Ministers, one is built by the Chinese assistance and the other by the Cambodian, and one of which is for international meetings. I have an intention to host the ASEM meeting in our country so that I could invite European counterparts for a visit to Cambodia.

Tourism has been affected by world economic downturn but we have developed this sector quite well. We have brought about a new figure of two million tourists visiting Cambodia, despite impacts from external factor, which is world financial crisis and economic downturn. However, we are trying to expand our economic growth by way of broadening agriculture so as to reduce our dependency on tourism and garment export, which are easily affected by external factors. Customers have had problem of losing their income would eventually bring about fall in their demands for new or expensive clothes. They also would opt for canceling trips for a visit to Cambodian tourist destinations.

In the first six months of this year, we noticed that there was a sharp fall in tourist number who visited Cambodia. However, starting from June, we have noticed a recurrence of arrival of regional tourists to Cambodia.

We have not seen yet arrival of non-regional tourists, except a slight increase in the same period last year of tourists from the United States of America, Germany, France, and Britain. But starkly contrasting to this, increase has been noticed about tourists coming from countries in the region such as Vietnam and Laos. There have been in this period about 30,000 tourists coming from Laos.

If we were to compare the number of tourists this year to that of last year, we seem to have more or less the same figure. However, we noticed that there has been less money spent by regional tourists. These tourists do not need to stay in high class hotels at all. Some of our big hotels in this case have had difficulties.

There is an issue that I wanted Minister of Information and Minister of Culture to jointly discuss ways to deal with it. It is the problem of OK condom spot. I have suggested all TV stations to provisionally suspend the spot from broadcasting and the two ministries should take a look at it. My point about the spot is whether the main idea of the spot is just to sell well condom and not to provide education on HIV/AIDS to viewers.

Some of the spots have been broadcast even I have warned them already of their downgrading effect on the Cambodian cultural value. I would not give my judgment on that particular spot that was on last night as I suggested the two ministries to work on it.

HE Hong Sun Huot, when he was Minister for Health, I told him I doubt the effect of a huge advertisement board about OK condom and he said to me they did that in Europe. Well don't you agree that this is Cambodia and we should have our way of

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and Transports, HE Tram Iv Toeuk, has said in his report that about 89% of the construction has already been done and the final stage will be complete in April 2010. But I have a confirmation here from the contractor that they will be able to finish the bridge before the 2010 Khmer New Year and I am grateful for that.

I may share with you a little history on how this bridge has come into being. In April 2006, Prime Minister of China, HE Wen Jiabao, conducted a visit to Cambodia. Aside from providing other financial packages and investment, such as the construction of the Council of Ministers' Building, the Kamjai hydro-power plant, he set aside 200 million US dollars for Cambodia as credit for infrastructural construction. We have divided the amount into one part for the construction of the bridge at Prek Kdam and another for the construction of a bridge at Prek Tamak and the National Road 8. It is a brand new road that there has not been before. We also set a part for the construction of the NR 76 from Snuol to Sen Monorom of Monduliri and another NR 57, formerly NR 10 from Battambang to Pailin and on to the border with Thailand.

Later we had been provided with another sum of 100 million dollar loan during one of my visits to China, which I use for building the NR to Preah Vihear province. After the agreement came into force, as we see it in front of us, the speed of construction has been noticeably fast. Because we have the bridge construction site shown on TV both locally and internationally, no one could make a joke out of these important projects.

My point here is why have we assigned the third legislature Royal Government and the following ones to be that of "Road

and Hydrology"? It was because the twos are important.

In order to develop a country there is no choice but to develop infrastructure. China has a saying that if you want to be rich, first you have to build roads. Cambodia also has its saying that "where there is a road, there will be hope." And our army at the border says "where there is road, there will be hope and victory."

I have a memory from 1968-69, when I was about 16 or 17 years old. I traveled with my mentor the Venerable Jreng from Phnom Penh to Andoung Po in Kompong Thom province. It was a trip to a religious rite there. As a boy attending to the monk I had to follow him there. I remembered I had to sit in the coach section of a passenger bus and the bus had to wait for a long time for the ferry to come from the other side of the river. I had no idea then that 41 years later I had the ability to get this river connected by a bridge.

Again in 1991, when Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk and Samdech Preah Akka Mohesei Monineat Sihanouk returned to Cambodia, after staying a while in Phnom Penh, they were satisfied to travel to visit Kompong Cham. We traveled though Prek Kdam and was taken to the other side of the river by a ferry. Maybe that would be the last time that we had to cross the river by a ferry.

Now I would like make known to our people what China has done for infrastructure in Cambodia. They have done a lot not just roads and bridges. As far as road is concerned, already put into official use is the 196 kilometers of the NR 7 along with so many bridges, which include the 1,000 meters Sekong bridge. Those that are under construction include the NR 8, the brand new road that never exists be-

fore, which will run from Kandal to Prey Veng province and on to the border with Vietnam and also a connection will be extended to bridge with Punnhea Krek district of Kompong Cham province.

The NR 76 is also under construction which will run 127 kilometers from Snuol of Kratie to the provincial town of Sen Monorom of Monduliri. There is also this NR 62 and 210 which runs through Koh Ker and Tbeng Mean Jei of Preah Vihear province. Also under construction too, we have the NR 57 that runs between Battambang town and Pailin and on to the Cambodian-Thai border. We also have finished negotiation on the NR 78 from O Pong Moan of Stoen Treng province to Ratanakiri, and it will be launching in November. Also earmarked to be constructed are extension roads from the NR 8 between Anlong Jrei and Punnhea Krek district of Kompong Cham, 18 kilometers, and from Krobao to Moeun Je, 5 kilometers.

On the NR6 we already have a groundbreaking of construction of the part from Tbeng Mean Je to Sa Em and on to Koh Ker at Siem Reap province. Now we are putting into operation another 128 kilometer road from Kompong Thom to Tbeng Mean Je. The NR 3762 between Sen Monorom and Dak Dam of Monduliri or from the town to the border with Vietnam, another 26 kilometers, will be new a project. For what I have mentioned, in all, road construction with the help from China is 984 kilometers in length.

We still have 11 more projects under discussion with China which include the roads 57B which runs through Thmor Kol, Bovel, Sampeo Loun and Vilave 30 – 179 kilometers, 59 from Kon Damrei, Melai, Sampeo Loun, Phnom Preouk, Kamrieng through to Pailin and

the border with Thailand – 139 kilometers, the NR 6A from Phnom Penh to the cross section (to Kompong Cham) will be enlarged to four lanes – 40 kilometers. HE Wen Jiabao has not declared it in Pataya but notified the Governments of ASEAN nations that China will provide some 15 billion US dollars, whereas what I request is somewhere 400 million US dollars only.

We also have to enlarge the road 61 which is stretching from the eastern end of the bridge to the cross section because it is small, the NR 41 from Thnol Toteoung to Jum Kiri in Kompot, which is a road that is truncating from NR 4. We also have the NR 5 section between Phnom Penh and Prek Kdam Bridge to be enlarged to four-lane road – 30 kilometers. Also in the pipeline are the Ta Khmao Bridge and a bridge on the NR 21 – which makes them all 521 kilometer project under negotiation. If the projects were to be approved, we would have in all a total length of 15000 kilometers of road built by China and China is the country that builds the longest road segment in Cambodia.

As far as bridge I concerned, already in official use in the bridge over the Sekong River (1,057 meters) at Stoen Treng, and those to be completed soon are the bridges at Prek Kdam (981 meters) and Prek Tamak (1,066 meters). We have had 800 million US dollars of Chinese financial credit for road, and about 100 million dollars for bridges. Including other sectors, roughly, I would come up with a figure of 6.7 billion US dollars that China has been providing to Cambodia.

Breaking down figures are 1.4 billion dollars in infrastructural sector, 4 billion dollars in tourism, close to 1 billion dollars in industry and close to 300 million

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tions before anything can start thereof.

Could we do a survey at all after 1970? In those days we had no idea how many people were living in the forested areas. It was even far from knowing of how many would be Red Khmer, White or Blue? The country was divided into many factions under control of different groups, so who would provide any figures of their men?

In between 1979 and 1998, it was hard to conduct a survey, and which was aimed for major part to address our concern on issue of polio. I went to Kompot to give vaccination and I came up with unending questions how could we go about ensuring that every child is safe from polio while we had yet to bring to the national fold areas like Phnom Voar, Taken Koh Sla, etc.

Soon after my trip there was this incident of kidnapping and killing by the Khmer Rouge of three foreign nationals – a French, a British and an Australian.

To the north of National Road 5, from Melai to Pailin, Amlot, Viel Veng, etc together with integration policy, HE Ee Chhien may have remembered, I brought with me a campaign to provide vaccination against polio to the areas.

Later by 2002, it was proclaimed that Cambodia is a polio free country. As of present, country like the Philippines, there is this Mindanao area which is under the Moro front and Islamist Abu Sayaf, could they in any way do the population survey there? Can they therefore tell the exact figure of their people?

Again I want to stress that no matter what you wanted to do you have to have peace and national unity. Our people have the freedom of mobility which they

are free to go wherever they may wish to. Except this morning they could not travel on national road 4 as rain has flooded parts of it. In the old days fighting brought about disruption on the roads.

We sought consensus in trying the Pol Pot's regime in the past. Not only that no one showed any interest in it but they supported the Khmer Rouge at the United Nations. But now trial is in process, they came out and said what it is we are doing is not enough.

Now look at the survey results, we have brought this country from zero motorcycle, bicycle, car, radio, TV, phone, etc to what we have at present. How could some people say that Cambodia is going from being poor to poorer?

Please give your understanding to the fact that the win-win policy has stayed at the core of this development. It is not easy to challenge Ee Chhien (former Khmer Rouge commander, currently Governor of Pailin) out from his lair. Reviewing the world history, no country could have ended a war without wasting a single bullet. Leaders of fighting factions were invited to the house of the leader of the Government.

Photos of our meeting at the time were under relentless attack and I rebuked that why I cannot receive those people at my house while the same people were given diplomatic visas to foreign countries and the United Nations.

In fact my reception of those leaders was for three basic reasons – 1) sending a message to the rest of the Khmer Rouge leaders that their top ranking leaders already surrendered; 2) assuring people with a message that Cambodia has ended the war; and 3) informing interna-

tional community of the development and giving them a signal that Cambodia is now a target for investment and tourism.

Why else we do with the Khmer Rouge is wrong while in the process of peace settlement, you may look again at the documentation, people had been shaking hands with and smiling at them.

In context of a fragile peace if trial of the Khmer Rouge were to be conducted in negligence of national reconciliation and peace, and if another war were to take place, who would stand to be responsible?

Would some people who made comments so and so about this be staying and dying in Cambodia if such a war takes place? It was the opposition who had challenged many junior leaders of the Khmer Rouge that it would soon be their turn to get arrested at the time when their top leaders like Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan were taken into custody.

If they were to take to the forest, this time who is going to call them off? I have traded my life for this land. My mother and my aunt warned me of going into the Khmer Rouge controlled area as though I was not afraid of death.

I explained them if I were to die, only a few people died with me but if I were to survive, the whole country will get the land back and be united. I have done this with success.

I would not stand to let this land be destroyed or this people be brought to instability at all. The prize of peace is enormous, while justice is being sought for within a justifiable legal framework. I would warn them on one instance that they could not threaten Cambodia about being lack of funding or so and so. The legal agreement has pointed out

clearly that if foreigners were to leave, Cambodia will replace them with local judges and prosecutors to bring the process to the end.

In Paris I demanded that the suitable place for the Khmer Rouge leaders was not in the Supreme National Council, but no one gave an ear to it.

HE Cham Prasidh and Khieu Kanharith, who were note takers at the Khemarin palace, may have remembered that Khieu Samphan at the time said "we offer our understanding that we have accepted to let the puppets to be included in the SNC..."

That was how far he went. I also returned my words to them "I am so grateful that the killers have offered to let us in."

I think it is best to leave it to the Court. So I would ask for clarification from Mr Chhang Youk if he did mention to Kampuchea Thmei that if more senior Khmer Rouge leaders were to be accounted for, reason has to be brought up to Hun Sen.

I am to defend the country's peace and to allow no one to destroy it. This is why we can do the survey at night to count our people. Let's imagine, would it be possible if we were to be still at war?

Talking about the survey, I have noticed our concern on irregularity in people's settlement. It has shown here that population density has increased from 74 to 75 per square kilometer. Density of people in the plain has been recorded to be 261 per square kilometer. That is our national pride.

I went in 1996 to integration area of Samlot and met with people who had just arrived from the central part of the country. In the latest years we have noticed our

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people's migration, one part to find job in Phnom Penh and another to the northeast and north west to work in agricultural sector. This is a good thing that we need to promote further.

That is also what I have written twenty years ago in 1988. I have predicted that there would need to be a redistribution of labor aimed at serving socio-economic development purpose and for national defense. We were not able to do before but now we have more ability.

Firstly, we have peace throughout the country. Secondly, our people have a good solidarity and refrain from revenging and being regionalism, and thirdly, we have improved infrastructure.

We have now started to turn insecure areas into development zones, especially border areas of northwest and north, starting from distributing our people, first of all families of military staff.

We have over 11 million people in 1998. There are 13 million in 2008 and we should therefore expect to have 16 million in 2018. I have asked HE Deputy Prime Minister Keat Chhon to prepare for a policy package providing concession land to the armed forces members who would retire.

It is a new social safety net that guarantees that our staff after leaving the army, the police or the military police has one or two hectares of land for cultivation. They could not support their living with their pensions. They need something to be inherited to their children too.

I may have to stress this point clearly that we need to fulfill three objectives. Firstly, reform of the armed forces, whereby the number of troops would be reduced and the way to do that is by sending them into retirement.

By doing that we will make sure that if 100 soldiers are going into retirement, only ten perhaps would be recruited. Secondly, as a safety net measure, this will help prevent retired soldiers from being victimized in the poverty cycle. I feel the need to explain this otherwise some people might either misunderstand or misinterpret what I mean by that.

We should have a good understanding that soldier is nothing else but a citizen. Soldiers in Cambodia might have their wives, children, dogs or chicken with them at the front. So it is not wrong to provide them with land as they all are Cambodian people.

Thirdly, what we have done is to transfer non-productive to be productive forces. Take for instance we used to have 20,000 strong workforce in idleness, now we have 20,000 strong workforce in production and they could put about 30,000 to 40,000 hectares of land under cultivation, whose production would generate the economic capability of the country. I wish to reiterate that what we have been doing so far is for redistribution of labor forces aimed at serving socio-economic development and national defense.

Retired soldiers would then be automatically incorporated into agriculture. The first factor needed to consider here is indeed a provision of land. 15,000 soldiers had been laid off and though this option was proposed, there was a flat denial as funding for laying off soldiers was provided from outside. This time we do it our way and we do not care what they say.

Last Friday the Cabinet has decided to cease the land tiling project partnering with World Bank that is to be ending at end of the year. They may take their money back. We should go on

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dollars in agriculture. It is a big amount.

As for electricity, China is taking the lead in building hydropower plants for Cambodia. Already put into use is the one at Kirirum and the next one in line is at Komjai that I will preside over the inauguration of electricity generation by first turbine. It is planned to be completed in 2011 and its power generation will be 20 megawatts. We also have other power projects in Pursat whereby power of 700 megawatts would be produced. Grid-line will be built all the way from Pursat to Kompong Chhnang and on to Phnom Penh. Also transmission line will be built between Pursat to Battambang province.

China has a way of doing thing. They talk less but do more. Before anyone knows it there we get bridges, roads, etc. They are all without conditions. In 1999 I met HE Ju Rongji who visited Cambodia in 2002. In fact I have had a good chance to be working with three generation leaders of China – HE Li Peng, HE Ju Rongji and the current Prime Minister Wen Jiabao. They all speak very simple language. They said whatever projects will be up to the Cambodians as long as they guarantee economic gain and reduce poverty. No conditions are placed. China respects Cambodian decision. This is the special characteristic of the Chinese.

Judging on this manner I have told the Chinese leaders that Chinese assistance not only helps Cambodia develop its socio-economic development but also Cambodian political independence as well. It is a great value and I appreciate what the Chinese have done for the poor and developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In fact if it were without trust, such a credit could not have

happened. I have enjoyed working with the Chinese leaders. Cambodia has got 13 million people whereas China has got up to 1.3 billion people. It is easy to see that Cambodia is 1% of the Chinese figure.

But their nature and character expressed to us has always been friendly, cooperative, understanding and respectful. I have observed that the Chinese leaders, no matter who I have met, have been my seniors and they all said Excellency Hun Sen is an old friend of China. The expression has been a great value not only for me personally but for the whole Cambodian people. Any interpretation may do but one special element in this remark is the fact that it has brought to light the heritage of relationship from Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, who have implemented always one China policy up to the present, on which basis we could build up a lot more.

I will visit China in October to participate in an exhibition in Sichuan province. We have discussed a number of projects and if they were to be approved, we will sign agreements there and groundbreaking will take place upon my return. Many groundbreaking ceremonies will be held in the near future. I wish to thank ministries and institutions involved for making this project running smoothly. It is for your knowledge that Cambodia contributed a sum of 3 million dollars, while our Chinese friend provided 28 million dollars in the construction of the Prek Kdam Bridge.

Taking this chance, I would like to call on our people to take part in maintaining the bridge because it is our common property. We have three bridges across the Tonle Sap River – Jroy Janvar Bridge, Prek Kdam Bridge and Prek Pnov Bridge. We are

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studying the possibility to build another bridge at Jroy Jangvar. However may I have your attention on issue of overloading trucks and I have called HE Chan Sarun, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, about long truck that they used to load animals like cows that caused a lot of trouble and damages to the road. Such company stands to be closed down if they go on doing so.

I would order the Ministry of Trade together with Ministry of Transports and Public Works to cooperate and bring companies in violation of rule and regulation to a closure as I do not trust on using weight lifting or measuring

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lead in various important stages – land reform, when HE Pol Sareon was the Governor of the province, transference from floating rice cultivation to that of dry season rice, and from long term and medium term rice to short term rice. Takeo now is advancing into another stage of new intensive cultivation phase that people increase yield of rice through new growing technique and using less seeds.

Takeo has also been in the lead in terms of fish breeding and farming and as far as I have been informed there is also this technique and expertise to breed and farm lobsters. So this is going to make people live better and the province is going to be well known.. It is known to all that people in Takeo used to have rice shortage and there used to be high level of migration out of Takeo for other places in the country.

But after the liberation in 1979, Takeo has become a rice surplus province. When there was a rice shortage situation at the central level, Takeo stood out to be provider, especially for the army at the time we fought against the return of the Pol Pot's genocide ...◎

along the road. It is a machine and it is human that operates them. Cash would blind the machine reading. I take this time to declare to all companies with trucks to heed the rule and regulation.

On behalf of the people of Cambodia, in this opportune moment, I would like to express Cambodia's thanks and gratitude through HE Ambassador Jang Jing Fang to the people and Government of the People's Republic of China for their offers and efforts in helping Cambodia develop its infrastructure that are corresponding well to the four priorities put out in Cambodia – road, electricity,

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with our national financial capacity. I told HE Keat Chhon and HE Im Chhun Lim weeks ago about this but it seems it was pronounced by their end of the line. And in Cambodia Daily this morning it seems that the story has evolved the other way round. I would not allow them to trick others that they were the one to cease the project. I beg your understanding that I made some provocative remarks.

Assistance provision is one thing but the way work being performed is another. You have an obligation to provide assistance and as a recipient nation it is our duty to see that it is fairly done. HE Ambassador of the United States of America is here present and in addition to providing more assistance, the US seeks to get debt repayment from Cambodia. Maybe it is better to clear it of because so many bombs had been dropped on Cambodia.

Cambodia has come through so much difficulties before we could realize national unity. Everybody knows that the Cambodian history has been smeared with blood and tears ...◎

09 September 2009 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Buddha Statue at Phnom Jita Pij, Takeo — Inauguration

Today my wife and I have a chance to return to Kirivong once again to join with our Buddhist monks and all of you to inaugurate achievements in Phnom Jita Pij in the village of Wat Phnom, Kompeng commune, Kirivong district of Takeo province.

I would first of all like to express my thanks for the Great Lady Vej Hong as well as HE Sok An and Lok Jumteav, and other generous persons for giving me the honor to my wife and I to participate in the inauguration of these marvelous achievements.

HE Srei Ben, Governor of Takeo, has just made a report about the construction phases. Firstly there is this huge 13.5 meter Buddha statue standing on top of the mountain, which is a sculpture of lam rock, which he said it is the biggest statue of Buddha in Takeo province.

Secondly, there are two other statues – one of another Buddha and another of an abbot also made from limestone.

Thirdly, there is a 400 meter access road from the NR 2 through to the mountain and the 243 stairs. Fourthly there is a space for paying homage to parents, etc.

I have learned that here there is this solar energized lighting system and lightning protection system, whereas all achievements cost 495,000 US dollars.

They are the contributions from the Great Lady Vej Hong and families of Deputy Prime Minister HE Sok An and generous donations from Buddhist followers in and outside the country.

On behalf of the Royal Government, my wife and myself, I would like to express my pleasure in seeing that these achievements have been realized and if I am not mistaken, two aspects

have come to being according to my view.

One is that the achievements have reflected gratitude for Buddhist religion and parents. Another is they will be national heritages for generations to come as the Great Lady Vej Hong already signed a paper providing the achievements to be placed under the management and control of the Ministry of Cultures.

I think perhaps in the future the area could be developed into an agro-tourism because we have a location and historic culture that is surrounded by agricultural activities. It is a nice scene here that some people are harvesting and some are in the process of taking care of their crops.

Kirivong district is not too far and has a good road access. We have a long story though to get the National Road 2 built. It was during the Japanese Prime Minister Kaizo Obuchi's visit to Cambodia that he offered what is called "non-project grant" and I asked for his permission that the money was to be used in building the NR 2 from Takeo to the border with Vietnam.

So the money had been saved until the construction started in 2004. We also have a plan to build a NR 2 segment from Phnom Penh to Takeo.

Cambodia is making a move to seek registration of its heritages of historic cultural values as international appreciation. These heritages have been built by and left from our former Majesties over one thousand years or hundred of years at least.

We have prepared a plan which would register them one after the other, like in the case of Angkor Wat and Preah Vihear, whereas in the near future we will look into the possibility of registering

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doing it. Don't take me wrong. I have nothing against condom but we have to preserve our social and cultural values while trying to adapt to new situation. Advertising fact but protecting the Cambodian women dignity while keeping youngsters off negative social impact activities.

Peace and security have been critically basic issue for development of tourism. They have been vital to the industry as well as other related fields. Peace, political stability and social order have been important that I would take this opportunity to express my appreciation and thanks for local authority of all levels and the armed forces that have made great efforts in making this country a peaceful and politically stable destination. We have established police to help protect tourists and they have done a good job. I wish they continue to uphold this value.

The country is in its effort to advance the concept of what is called "Kingdom of Wonder" whereas cities are in competition for being singled out as the best performer in process of keeping clean, attracting and providing best services. In fact what the Ministry of Tourism has done will give fruits to our people who will actually benefit from growth in this industry, whereas its result would help reduce poverty among our people.

Therefore I demand that all cities and authorities must take actions and perform their duties to get the best result in providing security, social order as well as measures related aimed at attracting tourists to our destinations. Banteay Meanjei's Tropeang Thmor water reservoir for example has become a destination for local tourists. Romlich (water reservoir) in Kompot has also been a source of major attraction too. First our people who have made themselves local tourists to

all destinations and then foreign tourists will follow.

Phnom Penh in this case has become a nice capital that I must give my consent and appreciation to. As the city is getting cleaner we should increase our efforts to ask our people to participate more actively in cleaning our cities. A long-term plan needs to be developed and ready for action. Developing our cities as tourist destinations would involve putting in place infrastructure, providing high level services, identifying and developing new destinations, reserving areas where cultivation and animal husbandry could be catering sources for tourist services. They all are inter-related elements in the process of tourist development.

HE Thong Khon is also head of Poi Pet entrance-exit at the border between Cambodia and Thailand. I seem to have doubt why there have been so many problems there. I have had reports of cart moving people being asked to pay. I am asking governor of the province of Banteay Meanjei to take a look at those who forced people who move carts to pay at the bridge there. Again, I warn all of you anything that happens and relating to the people, no matter how small it is, is not that simple. They carried fruits across the border in carts. How awful to see that they were forced to pay from their mean income for that matter.

There is one other committee that the state has decided to provide 20% of tax evasion collection for their efforts. And why has not that been enough and opting to perform such activities that are social detestation. I would recommend you to take an immediate look and fix. I thank our people in Poi Pet and also the CTN TV station for getting this to our viewers in the last few days. I do not have

agents who could provide me facts whether they are true. But this morning there has been a live broadcast from Poi Pet and I doubt if you have not had a chance to look at it. There seemed to be too many problems – from fighting for guests, for second-hand clothes, and now for pressuring people to pay for their life feeding activities.

These are no new outfits but because you (local authorities) are in negligence that they tend to recur and this issue that I have just mentioned is in fact lying within the responsibility of the Deputy Police Chief. Would he be taking responsible actions? Or would he be colluding with his men? As faithful servants to our people's interest you all have to take initiative in taking actions and should not be waiting for order from Prime Minister. I know you have the ability to get things done but the problem is whether and when you do it.

In relation to this matter I would offer my appreciation and thank to the press that is providing information both inside and outside the country, both good and bad too. Cambodia is observing freedom of expression. In France it seems former Prime Minister and President are in legal discomfort with one another and they said it is the French rule of law. So it is not a separate matter in Cambodia that a parliamentarian has been stripped off immunity.

Let's talk more about off-the-record checkpoints which I think there are numerous. HE Sar Kheng has already mentioned and given instruction on this matter already. We have proclaimed and invited people to give their respect to traffic law, while on the contrary they placed more checkpoints. This is what I call providing a contrary service for people.

Recently we have new eco-

nomical predictions provided by International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), and Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Cambodia. My position here is that whatever they say would not concern me at all. What concerns me is the people's living condition. We have to make sure if we have sufficient water in canals for them to irrigate their rice cultivation and if they are food shortage. People's everyday life is what we care about. We must observe if Cambodia is facing a situation that people die of hunger or not.

The Royal Government has in fact provided financial assistance in training and re-training services for those who have been discharged from works in industries that are being affected by world financial crisis and economic downturn. In addition to that we also have this issue of natural calamity causing by storms. Usually, flood would recede after the Cambodian traditional ritual of Projum Ben. As Ketsana is now bearing on Vietnam, we must expect that it will also come to Cambodia, which eventually river level is not predictable. I would take this opportunity to thank our armed forces for protecting our people during the celebration of Projum Ben.

In the last few days there was this incident of land erosion in Kompong Chnang which caused damages to about over 90 houses. There expects few smaller storms coming. I would take this opportunity to give my regards to our armed forces at the border at Preah Vihear. It was our Projum Ben days that the Thai People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) movement came with instigation actions in the Preah Vihear's area. From this forum I would like to thank the Thai armed forces and its authority of Si Sa Ket and the people there for doing every-

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 thing they can to put a stop to the yellow shirt extremists who have nurtured their aggressive ambitions on Cambodian territory.

I would like to take this opportunity to re-affirm that claims made by the Thai Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister and other Ministers over the 4.6 square Kilometer area is not acceptable as it based on a unilaterally drawn map by Thai side. Cambodia recognizes no overlap or conflict area. It recognizes only the maps that are left by the convention and treaty between France and Siam in 1904 and 1907 and by The Hague in 1962 and the MOU in 2000 between Thailand and Cambodia. I would urge Thai leaders to use Preah Vihear no more for internal political ends. I seek no confrontation with them but as the Cambodian top leader in its executive power I have the duty to explain it to my people.

You have made so much explanation to your people in the parliament, the senate, by radio, TVs and press on the 4.6 square kilometer land. Cambodia resolutely grants no recognition to such a claim. HE Suthep declared that the road to access Preah Vihear temple that is built by Cambodia will be used jointly.

In this regard I must make clear that it is the road that Cambodia builds and therefore it is Cambodia and Cambodia only will use it. Cambodians at the borders, please be informed that the Cambodian territory has nothing to be concerned with what has been said by the Thai leaders. We recognized no maps that unilaterally drawn and presented by Thais. HE Pol Saroeun, Chief of General Staff tore such a map in a negotiation at Srah Keo and I would do no difference to that if it were to be brought to my attention.

Preah Vihear has been used as a

core matter in toppling one another in Thailand. The Thai Government has been toppled and the minority has come to power. I do not want to exchange this with the Thai side but it is my obligation to reveal it to my people. I intend to raise none of this at ASEAN summit but if it continues to be provocative in such a way I would have to bring it to the Summit's attention somehow.

I have confirmed with Prime Minister Abhisit that the issue would not be raised to multilateral forum and we would keep it for bilateral resolution.

At that time I was under constant attack from Sien Peng Se's group in France who demanded that the Royal Government to bring the issue to the attention of Paris Peace Agreement Co-Chairmen. I even rebuked them that they had been naïve as the Paris Peace Agreement is not a mechanism that can solve this matter and because they have been so naïve that they always failed. In 1990, there was a former general who came to me and assured me that it would need to regroup former Lon Nol soldiers to fight the Khmer Rouge to its end. I asked in return, you had all you wanted then why did you not win in 1975.

Back to that Thai provocation, I would reaffirm to all our soldiers at the border, whoever — soldiers or civilians — cross the border to enter Cambodia illegally must be brought to action. We will not allow the previous situation to take place. I have ordered to take back dogs and police who had been sent to take care of the situation. They are not for that kind of job. They are for ensuring law and order inside Cambodia only. At the border we have no use for that. I would make clear to the Thais that if ever they wish to occupy Preah Vihear temple, it would not be

like when the yellow shirt roamed and occupied the Thai Government House in Bangkok or Don Moeung and Sovannaphum Airports at all. That will not be happening.

If ever you have been misled in the Thai history it would then be up to you but you should not be misled yourselves in the Cambodian history. It is a history of my country. Since when have you come live in the 4.6 square kilometer area? They should not repeat what was happening last year. Cambodia was in middle of its elections or you might find already what happened on October 15, then April 3 and 4. If you intend to come again, then again we will give you what we had given before.

It is the Prime Minister who led this intention of annexing Cambodian land and declared his sovereignty over other country's land. I would tell you I may see no need to take part in the ASEAN summit. They have abused us but failed militarily, and then civilian trick and now by public opinion. I have the need to see those tricks smashed. I have ordered my commanders in case of infiltration the first explosion has to happen in the Cambodian territory. I am ready to go to Thailand and they have mobilized a demonstration against me. If you are the most civilized nation, please take it to Hua Hin. If they do that the whole ASEAN will fall apart. It is in fact Thai internal matters but how come they brought us to concern with them?

One thing I warned them is that Cambodia has been unified from top to bottom. Of course we have the opposition who voiced their unrealistic opinions. Cambodia will bring the matter to the UN Security Council only when Thai invaded Cambodia. We have suspended that step for the time being...©

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 Banteay Chhmar and others.

We have set up a National Heritage Committee (NHC) who will have to look into this matter.

Take for instance, the achievements in front of us today no one knows what would happen in one hundreds of years from now. In our country as of now we have so numerous heritages of cultural and historic values that are to be searched and accounted for.

Taking this opportune moment I would like to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to our people who have made their sacrifices and efforts in fighting against drought that has been caused by uneven downpour.

Drought has indeed affected some areas in parts of which are in Takeo province. However I have noticed that there has been active intervention of irrigation by water pump by CPP working groups.

Having discussed it with the provincial Governor Srei Ben, we have come to a conclusion that from now to the Pchum Ben Day (religious rite in which Cambodians offer food and utensils to the Buddhist monks, which they believe will pass them on to their ancestors) our people will be able to complete their rice transplanting.

Now that water has come, our seedling is either too young for being transplanted or too old to be doing so.

What has been an impression about Takeo is the fact that our people have increased the dry season rice cultivation area from 20,000 hectares to 31, 759 hectares.

It is indeed considered the success of Takeo province in the field of rice cultivation.

Takeo has always been in the
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