

Angkor Sangkranta 2023

(14 April 2023 — Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)



(1) Angkor Sankran-ta initiates the Cambodian’s understanding, love and promoting of culture, civilization, traditions and valuable traditions of Cambodia

[...] I am pleased to once again attend the opening of Angkor Sankranta 2023, the 10th anniversary of the inauguration of this major cultural event. The event is meant to inspire the Cambodian people, especially the next generation to understand, love and promote the culture, civilization, traditions and valuable traditions of Cambodia in order to maintain national identity and create national pride [...]

(2) Angkor Sankranta creates a triangular meeting among people, intangible culture and tangible culture

[...] Angkor Sankranta has created a reunion of people and intangible heritage, intangible and tangible [...] welcome and congratulations to the Bokator that has just been listed as the World Heritage [...], and is a creation of a good situation to revive the place that used to be quiet to become an attractive place for tourists as well. In addition to the triangular meeting between people with intangible and tangible cultures, the

president of the Union of Youth Federations of Cambodia said that there will be a fourth meeting – a meeting between women and men [...] this year has created a situation in which we are able to organize not only the Angkor Sankranta in Siem Reap, but national Sankranta has been organized everywhere in the Kingdom of Cambodia, from the provincial level, district, commune and educational institutions [...] people are happy despite the economic impacts affecting us caused by Covid-19 and due to some ex-

(Continued on page 2)

Krouch Chhmar District Referral Hospital Opened

(03 April 2023— Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

(1) Unfatal sickness can be fatal due to lack of hospitals, doctors and infrastructure

[...] for the celebration of the new achievements we have received in the territory of Kroch Chhma district, I would like to thank HE Chea Sophara for leading the efforts to build this great hospital. As HE Mam Bunheng made the report just now, it is an effort to create

(Continued on page 6)

Royal School of Administration

(27 April 2023 — Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

(1) The six Cambodian Muslim students in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, have been evacuated

[...] About our Cambodian Muslim students studying in the capital of Kathmandu, Sudan, which there is fighting [...] have been evacuated from Sudan by ship [...] arriving in Saudi Arabia with the help of Malaysia [...] according to the

announcement of HE Osman Hassan, these six students are on their way to the hotel [...] please inform the families of these six students that their children are safe. Take this opportunity, I thank the Malaysian government and officials for taking care of the Cambodian people in the evacuation (from the war in Khartoum) and also to the Saudi government and officials for providing short stay for those Cambodian students [...]

Graduation of Teaching Staff and Educators

(25 April 2023— Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

(1) Collect and retrain teachers for the school year of 1979/80

[...] Compared to before, we have come a long way. The starting point was that we relaunched the school year 1979-1980. At that time, we gathered the remaining teachers from the killing (by the Khmer Rouge Democratic Kampuchea regime) and selected those who were able to teach, to do the retraining, and send them to teach. This National Institute of Education (NIE) has always been a place for training and retraining of teachers since then, and moreover, it has done teachers training/retraining jobs for a long time. Since my house is close by, I had in the past been in charge of lecturing political introduction to the teachers who came for retraining here. Sometimes I could not finish my lecture during the day, and we continued to do it at night. There was no electricity like we do today. We had a

(Continued on page 4)

(2) Revocation of sub-decree on February 27, 2023, re-implementation of sub-decree on September 25, 2012

[...] Launching the construction of the bridge across the Mekong River in Kratie province, I recommended setting up a core

(Continued on page 3)

National Pediatric Hospital Maternity Ward Inaugurated

(20 April 2023— Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

(1) In time of Covid-19 strike, no construction projects suspended

I am pleased to attend the inauguration, at the beginning of the new year the new achievement – the 100% investment from the Royal Government made in the difficult Covid-19 phase of 2021. We already know that Covid-19 had been exploding in 2021 and we should not have been able to build a hospital. On the contrary, *even though Covid-19 attacked us, construction sites all over Cambodia, not only the ones with the national*

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 1)

ternal factors [...]

(3) Six factors make the preparation of Angkor Sankranta possible

I think we have six factors that lead to the preparation of Angkor Sankranta this year [...] (firstly) we have peace prevailing in the country [...] peace, political stability are the main factors that provide opportunities for the people to enjoy the event [...] secondly, leading to reopening the country and the celebration of new year – Angkor Sankranta, we have been able to control Covid-19. It is not a serious case [...] thirdly, the country has infrastructural connectivity that we have built a lot of roads [...] people can travel from one place to another [...] fourthly, our people have the means of transportation whether it be their personal transportation means or hired ones [...] fifthly, although a little difficult, people have saved for traveling [...] and sixthly, the Union of Youth Federations of Cambodia, according to its initiatives and activities, has done this (organizing Sankranta event) a good job [...]

(4) Nearly 4 million paper hearts folded by people from 4 to 80 years old, breaking the world record

The largest number of origami hearts in the world is what impressed me. I got this number (here of paper heart) of 3, 917, 805, which is a lot. It can be said that the Cambodian people are interested and supportive of this process. We have broken the record for the largest number of hearts (previously held) by the United Kingdom at just over 50,000. Previously, we (thought of) trying to achieve only one million hearts, and did not expect that we came close to almost 4 million hearts. This (demonstrates determined) participation. According to the report, those involved in folding the heart paper ranged in age from 4 to 80 years old. This effort can be considered as devotion of love and the participation of our people. (Thus) one can understand the meaning of

the heart. It's not a coincidence that I think it's one of the deepest thoughts of young people [...]

(5) Recommendation of Goh Chok Tong in 1994 to launch a direct flight is right

There are many other things that I will not repeat, as the Governor of Siem Reap and the President of the Union of Youth Federations have already made their reports. I want to highlight a little bit about the development of Siem Reap. A few years ago, in 2014 or 2015, I had received the advice of former Singaporean Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, who then said to me in 1994 that “if I were His Excellency Hun Sen, I would open Siem Reap to direct flights to transport tourists here”. This is definitely the right recommendation [...] whether the decision to open skies or direct flights in Siem Reap is right or wrong one can make an observation. If we did not open direct flights to Siem Reap, no one would invest billions of dollars in hotels like today. This is because tourists would come and go back to sleep in Phnom Penh. We would have few tourists who will be coming to Siem Reap. When we opened direct flights here, investors came in and hundreds of hotels were built [...]

(6) During Covid-19 Investment in Urban Infrastructure and Siem Reap River Improvement

The government had made major investment, at the time when Covid-19 declined tourists' arrivals. The Royal Government has invested in infrastructure in the city building 38 roads, and the river of Siem Reap [...] through the investment of a large airport in Siem Reap, probably no later than October, we will open, which is to say that it is a process that we can reach to a possibility to receive large aircraft flying directly from other countries to Siem Reap [...] in the future, the Siem Reap airport will also make the province a tourist attraction [...]

(7) Siem Reap – the rising

Meeting with Wisemen & Wisewomen

(08 April 2023 — Excerpts and Unofficial Translation)

(1) About 20 years ago, there was this crisis of lacking wisemen-women

[...] Maybe all of you, or maybe some of you, remember that *about 20 years ago I declared a crisis of wisemen-women and for cultural extinction in connection with the Chapey Dang Veng (two strings guitar like music instrument) and Ayai (monologue or dialogue singing with music) issues* [...] when this emergency was declared, the Ministry of Cults and Religions, which was still involved in the training of priests, organized this training and revisited our traditions. The Ministry of Culture and

Fine Arts has been working to promote the training of Chapey Dang Veng, Ayai and other areas [...] the role of Buddhism in relation to society may be a topic for discussion today.

Broadly speaking, we can say that religion plays a role with society, or in other words, “religion and the state.” The relationship between the Buddhist and the secular world is all subjective [...]

(2) Political Science Thesis – Mutual interests between religion and society/state

Cambodia is not only a country of Buddhists. We have Islam, (Continued on page 7)

north star as the third economic pole will contribute to solving difficulties and incomes

I have declared Siem Reap to be our rising North Star. As the third economic hub, Siem Reap will become more attractive not only to tourists but also to some industrial sectors. I expect that this development will contribute to solving the difficulties and incomes for our people. At the same time, we have also worked to protect our historical heritage by mobilizing people in illegal locations – whose residences are in location in violation of the UNESCO principles – to set up new residences in the Pak Snaeng and Run Ta Ek areas, where we are now working to put infrastructures in place [...]

(8) United States and the United Kingdom actively bring back Cambodian lost cultural heritages

[...] I would take this opportunity to thank all the foreign friends who are present here for having contributed to the conservation of Angkor Wat, as well as other existing temples in Cambodia. I would like to thank the US Ambassador (Patrick) Murphy and his wife here, as well as the British Ambassador, who in the past have been active in restoring the stolen cultural

heritage that has been traded or looted to the United States or to the United Kingdom. It is my hope that more countries will join the work of bringing lost cultural assets back to Cambodia with the efforts of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts to actively work with external partners – the United States being one of the leading countries in the field [...] hopefully other countries will join us to bring them back together [...]

(9) War broke up the family/ descendants of the God; Peace reunites the family of God

I would like to inform you that during the war and the genocidal regime, even the divine family was torn apart. The day before, I went to a ceremony to receive with a trembling heart those antiquities artifacts, and I was shocked to learn that the Shiva and his two sons, who had been separated during the war, had returned. It is Skanda. Shiva has two sons. Such was a war. Even the lineage of the gods is divided. Peace brings the gods together. This is the true value of peace. If peace is lost, even the descendants of the gods are separated, speaking in a way [...] when there is peace, the families of the gods come together in the shade of peace of our day [...]

(Continued from page 1)

area (where the fresh water dolphins reside in the Mekong) and banning fishing with nets. The implementation of the Sub-decree from February to April, we continued to have this situation of dead dolphins, with impacts on thousands of fishing families [...] the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries has suggested five options to me [...] at 12:31 pm, the Minister of Agriculture sent me a PDF new draft sub-decree repealing the old sub-decree [...] I could have signed it at night [...] but the font has got some misspellings. We repeal the new Sub-Decree dated 27 February 2023 (on the preparation of the core area for dolphin residence, prohibiting fishing with nets) [...] and re-implement the former sub-decree on September 25, 2012. Please provide information to the provincial authorities of Kratie and Stung Treng and ask my cabinet to expedite the sub-decree for me to sign so that the proclamation can start [...]

(3) To repeal decisions that do not serve the interests of the people is reform

[...] (About the sub-decree on dolphin preservation areas) I made a decision with the nature of reform [...] not every decision one makes is right. There could be decisions that are right and that are wrong. If we find it wrong, we have to correct it. That is called reform. It is important to make decisions based on the interests of the people [...] what we decide is not always right. If we see that the decision does not serve the interests of the people, we correct it. There is nothing wrong [...] we must strengthen controls to ban the placement of large mesh pattern fishing nets that could be deadly to the Mekong dolphins [...] this is to inform people living in Kratie province who used to fish in that area and had been prohibited from fishing [...] to maintain the safety of the dolphins and avoiding harming the interests of thousands of families, we repealed the most recent sub-decree in favor of the older one [...]

(4) Fighting Covid-19 and resolving disasters demonstrate the success of decentralization and de-concentration or sub-national democratic reforms

[...] We have gradually benefited from the reform of public functions, the reform of public administration, and the reforms related to decentralization and de-concentration. It is noteworthy that the success of the fight against Covid-19, and in tackling disasters such as floods and droughts, hurricanes, etc., indicates that decentralization and de-concentration reforms, or sub-national democracies, have been successful already [...] if we did not reform, did not give the grassroots power, would we be able to control the situation of Covid-19? Certainly not. Can the central authority travel everywhere? I remember that during the Covid-19 campaign, we reformed the health sector, transferring more power to the sub-national level. That is the achievement of management reform by transferring power – both budgets and civil servants to the grassroots. If at that time we did not do that, we would not be able to solve it and the central authority would not be able to fix everything everywhere [...]

(5) After the 1993 election, if the local power system of the former state of Cambodia is maintained, we can move 5 years faster

I should remind a little on this issue. Under the former State of Cambodia, (the government) had given great power to the provincial level, even we were in war. A bridge of 10 meters was blown up, (the local authority did not bother to) ask the Ministry of Public Works to repair it. They basically do it all. The local level authority gathers forces to protect the provincial town, protect their geographical location and protect the people. If, after the 1993 elections (the coalition government at the time) maintained the local power system, we would have been at least five years faster. I went down to work on plans to attack Pailin [...] Ung Samy was still

the provincial governor (of Battambang) and Serey Kosal was the first deputy governor, the then Royal Government permitted each province to spend one million riel per month. What could they do (with that amount of money)? In fact that was just an attempt (by the opposition and partners) to overthrow the administration organized by the former State of Cambodia. We are now reforming and moving back to our original version to give more power to the local level [...]

(6) Ministries and national and sub-national institutions to strengthen the capacity of civil servants at all levels

It is not over yet. There are still more reforms that we must complete. In addition to the points I made, I should make some more recommendations for the Ministry as well as for the Royal School of Administration or other institutions. *All ministries, national institutions and sub-national levels must continue to pay attention to strengthening the capacity of civil servants at all levels. We need to develop a concrete plan for the development of civil servants by ensuring the quality, qualifications, and virtues based on the principles of meritocracy [...] in general, we require all institutions participate because the management structure starts from people. If you want to reform the institution, it is necessary to reform people to be capable, to make people knowledgeable, to make people think, to make people up to date [...]*

(7) Royal School of Administration must organize public sector leadership training program

[...] The Royal School of Administration must organize a leadership training program in the public sector by establishing leadership forums and innovations in the field of public administration [...] the (Royal) school (of administration) itself must reform. Do not repeat the old and not updated theory [...] there needs to be reform in school [...] in institutions now, there are many experienced officials that we can invite to

give talks [...] I am still an honorary professor (to RSA [...] I do not come to teach, but to give a talk like this at the closing as the last course [...]

(8) After leaving the position, may find time to answer questions at the Royal School of Administration

[...] In the future, if there is time, I will come to give lecture. I do not come to talk but to let students ask questions [...] a little word of welcome, students can put questions in the framework of works we are doing. This is a possibility that I can think of, but wait and see when this Prime Minister leaves office to transfer to the next one. Now it is not over [...] every day is a work day. If I do not have work to do, I am bored [...] in sports, football, volleyball or golf, you can compete but not with destiny. I have never thought of being a district governor, a provincial governor, a minister, or a prime minister [...] just a teacher. Unexpectedly, I have been the Prime Minister for almost four decades [...] that is fate [...] some people dream of being the Prime Minister. As for me, 80% of the nightmare is not about being the Prime Minister, but a farmer or a soldier in a state of fear that the shadow of the past binds me. I already said that physical wounds are easy to heal, but the mental ones are difficult to heal. Take for instance, the tragedy that befell my family, the tragedy that befell my son who died because of a medical staff's negligence [...]

(9) Public officials are servants, not masters of the people

[...] What I should always remind public officials is that *they should remind themselves that they are the servants of the people, not the masters of the people. Do not pretend to be an official and use power in unethically. We are the faithful servants of the people, not the masters of the people.* If they do not hold on to this concept, the public officials will easily slip away, and like the Khmer people say – even the dog does not

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 1)

small generator whose sound got into our class. Sometimes the engine operator forgot to refuel [...]

(2) There are now three levels of teacher training: national, sub-national, and regional

At that time, the teachers we chose did not have pedagogical skills in teaching. Although we had brought them in for short-term training, most of the rural teachers' knowledge were slightly above those of their students [...] through our efforts, an education system has been put in place to train and retrain teachers. *There are now three levels of teacher training. At the national level, we have the National Institute of Education here. At the sub-national level, we have the regional level, where teachers will receive training in the 12 (years) plus 1 (year of pedagogical training) [...] and in addition, we have the provincial pedagogical schools for teachers training as well.* All the three levels (of teachers training/retraining facilities), each year release a large number of teachers. The national level turned out not many, but the regional and provincial levels do a large number. Otherwise, we cannot respond with student growth. Now, most of the former teachers from 1979-1980, or 80s, are retired and replaced by new teachers, whom we trained in an orderly manner [...]

(3) Previously, the community provides for construction of schools

[...] If we look back at the time when Cambodia was under the French, even I was not born yet, and under the Sangkum Reastr Niyum era, we used the combination of the *state and the people's efforts as a method to allow for a good expansion of education. The government at that time provided only teachers, and there could be a small amount of school construction. However, most often than not, especially primary schools in villages/communes, the community did everything [...]* in the wartime, we do not need to say.

There were only a few schools in some towns or cities occupied by the Lon Nol regime [...] and under the Pol Pot regime, schools were destroyed. *We rehabilitated schools and education after the fall of genocidal regime of Pol Pot [...]* some of our students studied under the Buddhist monks' wooden tilted residences where there were no monks then. Some studied under tilted houses as there were not many schools opened yet [...]

(4) Tell foreigners who like to discipline Cambodia – “do not make the third mistake”

Our country (at that time) was under sanction. For this, I had to go back. I always told foreigners who like to discipline Cambodia – “please! do not make the third mistake” (on Cambodia) [...] the first mistake you made was, while claiming to be a democracy, supporting the Lon Nol's military coup to overthrow Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk and plunged my country at war [...] what does that mean? Democracy is up to your mouth [...] the second mistake you did was supporting the Khmer Rouge at the United Nations from 1979-1991, beknowing that the Khmer Rouge killed the people. Why you supported the Khmer Rouge at the United Nations? (Based on these testimonies) I have always warned them not to make a third mistake on our country [...]

(5) Never apologize or regret supporting the coup and the support the DK in the UN

The so-called sanctioned country is that no development aid is provided. They can provide primary aid in the form of food, medicine, but not development assistance such as books, chalk, study materials [...] however, the fact has proven that their punishment was ineffective, and cannot stop the efforts of the Cambodian people, who have escaped the killing regime [...] *witnessing their mistakes, they never apologize or even express regret for supporting the Lon Nol in the coup or for supporting the Khmer Rouge at*

the United Nations. They just do not say it. No matter what they do to entice Cambodians to forget, the Cambodian people will not easily. Well, what we earned easily could easily lose. What we earned with difficulties we try very hard to protect it [...]

(6) Cambodia has a population growth of more than 300,000 per year

Some old schools are even more difficult to repair. We have to build new ones [...] (those schools I built initially have been) in use for for more than 20 years [...] now those schools are in gradual damages and we need to replace them with new buildings with higher quality for the sake of keeping our students and teachers in good health [...] along with efforts to replace old and dilapidated school buildings, let us not forget that we have an additional population of more than 300,000/year.

The 300,000 figure is calculated based on the total population of only 16 million, whereas the Worldometer website at the time of Covid-19, put the figure at more than 17 million people [...] in 1979, we had a population of around 5 million, and Laos had 5 million too. Now that Laos has recorded its population to over 7 million people, we have 17 million [...]

(7) The Santuk Statement 2002 – one secondary school at least for a commune

Increasing population requires more schools. Nowadays, schools are looking for students, not students looking for schools like in the past. I used to talk about the fact that when I was 13, I had to leave my parents to find a school (in the city). Now there is no need to do that. The 2002 statement that I declared that a commune must have a secondary school [...] has now reached the stage where one commune should have at least one secondary school [...] as a result, school dropout rates are declining [...] I hope that the teachers (will work harder to learn) to ensure that their status will change (from teaching at

the primary level to secondary and higher levels), as in the case of the two teachers (whom I met) outside [...] We will need to invest more in building schools and school buildings, and building teachers' homes/hostels. In this way, with money given for their functions as teachers, we can attract teachers because we have a house for them to stay [...]

(8) Having been in the government without interruption – winning three records

[...] For the (communal) election in 2027, I could be thinking of running for commune chief once [...] I wanted to try it out for a few months before resigning [...] I want to try it when I leave the post of Prime Minister. It could be a possibility for me to run for commune head position. I can give it a try for 4 to 5 months to see how the commune chief and clerks work? What complaints could there be? [...] I have been in power in the government without interruption from January 8, 1979 until now [...] from the Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister.

More than 38 years as Prime Minister, plus 44 years as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister. There has not been such a case in the world. I won three records. The first record is the youngest foreign minister in the world. The second record is the youngest prime minister in the world. The third record is the longest-serving prime minister in the world. Those who wanted to be the Prime Ministers are felling tight chest [...]

(9) From the age of 25, serving only the people, not believing in politicians

[...] When I retired in politics, I will give talks [...] students or politicians, researchers (can ask me questions like) how do you do it [...] I started my political career as a leader from the age of 25. From the age of 18 to the age of 25 is the stage when I served as a soldier. From the age of 25, I was determined not to listen to anyone but the people

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 1)

budget, but the foreign-funded ones were not suspended. We invested about 400 million US dollars in Sihanoukville to build roads. We invested about US\$ 200 million in Siem Reap (to improve infrastructure). We have also made counterpart funding for various investment projects, and even this hospital [...]

(2) Progress made in the health sector since war and peace coexisted

Our health sector also flourished during that period. Today is one of the examples where all of you here, as well as our compatriots, can see the progress of our health sector, starting from a difficult journey in a country with peace and war coexisted. At that time, the war broke out in certain places and for some time, but this war after the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime could not prevent the country's development.

To look a little further back, 48 years ago, our people were forcibly leaving Phnom Penh, when some of whom died on the streets, some were killed on the streets, some were separated from their spouses and children. It was so unfortunate.

In the next 48 years, according to statistics, more than 13 million people travel around the country to celebrate Sangkranta or the Khmer New Year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people all over the country who have joined in and rejoiced in the recent New Year celebration [...]

(3) Two measures – mask wearing and testing – waived

After the Khmer New Year celebration this year, I am more confident (about our effort to control Covid-19) [...] while after Pchum Ben in 2021, the infection rate dropped allowing us to start reopening the country gradually. On November 1, 2021, we reopened the country, but we had maintained certain measures.

By the time of the Khmer New Year in 2022, I was really

scared [...] I saw a sea of people everywhere (going out celebrating the Khmer New Year). I think to myself, is it a right or wrong decision to allow people to gather without maintaining safe distance, while we continued to observe the “3 dos and 3 don'ts measures” [...]

I do not know how others would feel, but for me, as a leader, although I do not consider the people my own children and grandchildren, but I have a duty to protect them as I do to my parents and my children [...] (with such confidence of control over Covid-19) *some measures were waived yesterday. The first one is to waive the duty to wear a mask [...] and another to take no test before joining assembly like this [...]*

(4) Achievement made for the treatment of pediatric diseases

Now about the inauguration (of this hospital's maternity ward) using state budget together with the help of equipment from the Czech Republic. We thank the Czech Republic for helping us to equip this building. We have made an *achievement that gives us more opportunities in the treatment of pediatric diseases [...]*

I hope that it is necessary to improve capacity building of the health sector in all areas. In the past, we have done a lot through aid and direct investment [...] now, some parts of the hospital with a capacity of 10,000 beds is running [...]

(5) CPP's government social protection policy for poor women will continue

We must ensure that people get access to (adequate) health services. Most importantly, we must increase the treatment capacity and ability for women and children. We call this building a maternity ward, a place to give birth, or a place where we are keeping our people healthy.

We are carrying out the social protection policy for poor women from pregnancy to childbirth until the child is two years old is an important policy of the CPP that will continue [...] and we

are expanding the amount of money to be received for women [...] I myself was saddened by the loss of my first child [...]

(6) March 2023, total customs and tax revenue augmented to US\$ 1,012 million

[...] At the end of each month, when the customs and taxes revenue are finalized, I send them to the permanent groups of the Party's Permanent Committee and the Royal Government for information on incomes [...] *last year, (in March) we got about USD 900 million dollars.*

This year, we have more than USD 1,012 million dollars [...] due to the global economic health difficulties and the country's income tends to stagnate or decrease, (I had written) the following message: “Do not increase the spending while seeing that we have more money.”

Yesterday, I signed a counterpart funding of US\$ 8 million for three projects, though. We needed to have a contribution budget with various projects [...]

(7) To make no charge on food and lodgments on SEA Games athletes

With only 15 days away, the SEA Games hosting will arrive. Please join us in receiving our guests. What we are doing this year will be different (from what they usually do). Despite it is a requirement, (we will show to the world that) Cambodia is a small country but with a big heart.

(We all learnt that no country allowed) the Westerdam cruise ship to enter (in time of Covid-19 outbreak). Cambodia rescued thousands of people on board the ship. This time, Cambodia accepts players to participate in the SEA Games without having to pay as other countries used to [...] however, it will be free only for the athletes. We arrange for them not to pay (for their food and lodgments). I have made the decision already [...]

(8) From war to peace, although not yet rich, Cambodia

has no food crisis

[...] Cambodia, a small country with a big heart [...] welcomes players to participate in the SEA Games without having to pay (for food and lodgments) like other countries used to. We do it this time so that they know Cambodia better. Before, we Cambodians were forgotten. Now [...] the Cambodian people are known, first, by the Khmer rice which is going to 73 countries [...]; by cashew that is going to various markets [...]; and black pepper, for instance, [...] we are evolving from a Cambodia that was divided by war to a peaceful Cambodia, from a degenerate Cambodia to a resurrected Cambodia. Although not yet rich, Cambodia has no food crisis [...]

(23) If 50% of the world's spending on weapons transfer to producing drugs/medical equipment, the world reaps great benefit

In the world [...] if only 50% of the money spent on weapons was transferred to producing medicine and medical equipment, and they are sold in the world only 50% cheaper, the world's population would reap great benefit. Some countries, however, do not think so. They only think of excelling in one kind of weapons, and the other is finding a way to stop it [...] and the one who really benefits is the manufacturer of the weapon that it has destroyed human life [...]

(24) Next Khmer New Year there should be water blessing and not water spraying

[...] The day before, the court refused to charge an officer, the Deputy Director General of Civil Aviation [...] if the court does not prosecute according to the law, I will apply the discipline first [...] this is just a removal from office. Do not just possessing a gun and carry it to threaten others. Water guns are also uncomfortable. Seeing a posting that a British tourist being shot in the eye (with water) [...] next year there should be no water spray. (We should change it) to water blessing [...]

(Continued from page 1)

better conditions for the healthier lives of rural people. Originally, Kroch Chhmar (district) was a rural area [...] we were in a difficult situation. Unfatal sickness could become fatal due to lack of hospitals, lack of doctors, lack of medicine, and it is even more difficult when we do not have the infrastructure to transport patients to the hospital [...] now it is much easier with regard to transporting patients to various hospitals due to improved connectivity. Sending patients from other places to the referral hospital in Krouch Chhmar district is also easy [...] this is a large hospital [...] with up to 400 beds [...] and is an ally of various hospitals in Phnom Penh, including the Khmer-Soviet Friendship hospital [...]

(2) Kampong Cham province divided into two because of its large population

Originally, we were only one province, where Stung Trang district is on the other side, and Kroch Chhmar is on this side (of the Mekong River). I myself proposed to separate the province into two provinces because it was too big to provide effective services. The population of Kampong Cham province has risen to nearly 2 million in the past. So now there are more than 1 million people left in Kampong Cham and 870,000 in Tbong Khmum. If we look at the population [...] in total, there are now more than 1.9 million people. Covid-19 has taught us a lesson that we need to strengthen human treatment, rescue and health services both in quantity and quality [...] always be vigilant with public health [...] let us always be vigilant to protect the health of the people, on the one hand is to take preventive education measures that doctors always say that prevention is better than cure and on the other hand, we need to strengthen the capacity of the technical base to serve the treatment [...]

(3) Kroch Chhmar Hospital and other hospitals produce oxygen on site

At Kroch Chhmar Hospital, we do not need to transport supply of oxygen from other places. We have oxygen production facilities here [...] oxygen production facilities are available in hospitals for supply to the people [...] I myself have instructed the Ministry of Health, including the army, to help set up oxygen production facilities to avoid shortage. When needed, patients need oxygen to help them breathe. Without oxygen, it would push patients to death, which is unfortunate [...] we have built a hospital with a capacity of up to 10,000 beds, the preparedness qualifications to respond to public health emergencies [...]

(4) Different races, religions, and political tendencies have common needs

[...] Racial and religious differences are not an obstacle to Cambodia's socio-economic development. There is no discrimination about this disease, no matter who you are, when it comes to sickness, everyone is the same. We all need a doctor. We come here from different religions – Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity, and from different political colors, but the common requirement is that when we are sick, we need to find the doctor. Some may belong to this political party and some may belong to that political party [...] there may be Muslims, there may be Buddhists, there may be Christians [...] despite the political differences, racial and religious differences, we all have common needs [...] such as medical treatment in this hospital, including [...] peace, which is a common need of all of us [...]

(5) Schools and the army should sing the Nokor Reach national anthem

Recently, we have sung the full version of the national anthem – Nokor Reach (the King's realm) to honor the kingdom. We should do this in all schools without having to replay from tape the national anthem. When we were little, all of you were probably not born yet, we saluted the (Cambodian national)

flag, singing (the national anthem in full) in the school, there was no (recorded) music like we do now [...] every school should have their students salute the flag by singing live. Soldiers also have to learn to do that. Let us all rehearse. That is something that we should do. Our songs are very meaningful. Samdech Preah Sangha Reach Chuon Nath wrote it [...]

(6) The demanding job is protecting peace for the sake of development

... In order for the democratic process in the country to grow, I am asking the people to vote for the CPP, because in doing so it will ensure peace, on the one hand, and development process, on the other, [...] I have responded lately to some people (who mentioned) that "why is it necessary to talk about keeping the peace, when peace already exists." I replied, "while there has been peace since 1945, after World War II, why this year Germany had a coup attempt to overthrow the German government? Why in Germany, there are people whom the German government calls traitors? [...] in the case of Ukraine, who could have imagined that there was going to be a war? Protecting peace for the sake of development is our job [...]

(7) The Royal Government defends the constitutional monarchy, does not tolerate the desire for power by undemocratic means

[...] Some have been calling for the armed forces to turn their guns at the government. Some are calling for the king to step down from the throne, and to demand overthrow of the monarchy [...] a few weeks ago, they called for the king to step down. As the government, the armed forces and the Cambodian people, do we have a duty to protect the King? Defend the throne? Defend the constitutional monarchy? Do we have a duty to protect our peace? elections must be happening, but anyone who betrays the nation or destroys peace is not tolerated in the democratic process because you wanted power by

non-democratic means [...]

(8) They are bad press, let them go

[...] We should ask the question – can a worker who is unemployed be able to sit and think only about protesting without finding a job to support him/herself? Those foreigners should not think that Hun Sen does not know. *Speaking of press freedom, if any press is bad, let it go. Tens of thousands of people are covering the news every day, why bother thinking about those in the bad press, some media outlets that are violating the law. Why think of the minority, do not think of the majority [...]*

I am not campaigning before the election, but I have an obligation to explain to the people, "if the CPP continues to rule, clearly the country is stable, peaceful and developed. For the other party, you all are clear or lest people had to run over each other." When the CPP is in power, there is no running anywhere [...]

(9) A choice between a group of wrongdoers and a country with diplomatic relations

There is a choice for our foreign friends to choose. *Either choose Cambodia as a country or choose a group of individuals who made mistake.* If you need people who have been punished by law, you may want to leave Cambodia as a country. Maybe you have to think that this is a relationship between countries with diplomatic ties. What I say is no different from what said His Excellency Anwar Ibrahim, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, who visited Cambodia a few days ago. "Great powers should stop interfering in the internal affairs of other countries," he said.

I am very supportive, and happy that I have a good partner in ASEAN" [...] the task now is that Cambodia must maintain its independence and comprehensive partnership in all areas. Cambodia is not hostile to anyone. I am just telling you whether to choose a group of wrong people or a country? [...]

(Continued from page 4)

ple, whom I could serve. Other than that, I do not believe in any politicians. While the country was in peace, they launched a coup d'état. I joined them in the (struggle, when they had victory,) they killed the people [...] (I did) start withdrawing myself. I have never made anyone my boss. No one can come and pretend to be Hun Sen's boss. From June 20, 1977 until now, no one came and claimed to be Hun Sen's boss. Hun Sen is otherwise the boss is more like it. You may ask Samdech Men Sam An [...]

(10) Will teach three theories to CPP officials to analyze the situation

[...] Given the observation that the analytical skills of some officials seem to be weak, I am thinking that in the future the CPP may organize training courses [...] for which I will teach myself three basic theories used in analyzing situation. Firstly, the dialectical materialism, [...] secondly, the historical materialism, [...] and thirdly, the leadership and working methodologies that I wrote in 1983, and that I taught senior officials [...] it is like learning the diagnosis by a doctor – if the analysis of the disease is not correct, how can you give the patients correct medicine? The case of politicians is the same – wrong analysis, wrong measures [...]

I use *three methods for analysis*. The first method is *dialectical materialism*. The second method is *historical perspective*, and the third method is *based on logic*. Combined these three together, Hun Sen rarely evaluates the situation wrong. I am not bragging, but the party respects my assessment of the situation. You all know that when the assessment is wrong, the wrong measures are taken. Let us compare it with doctors. For malaria, with wrong diagnosis, a medical person prescribes something for stomach ache, that would be a fatal decision [...] I saw the weakness of the opposition, their weakness of analyzing and evaluation the internal situation of the CPP.

They were never right. That's why I told my colleagues to let them misjudge us [...]

(11) Bouyoung provides funding to buy 1,000 buses and builds a health university

[...] President of the Bouyoung Company [...] handed over 200 buses to Phnom Penh Capital Hall. Seeing the effectiveness of the buses he provided us in transporting people during the Khmer New Year [...] he met with me and asked to provide 1,000 more buses [...] he would like to hand over the money to Cambodia to order the buses [...] in his own words – he will not take the return on investment from Cambodia (to Korea) but keep it here to help expand jobs availability and help the social works of the Cambodians. Is it not a good thing? Yesterday, he also proposed to build here a university of health science [...]

(12) Budget allocation for education includes salaries, school and dormitory buildings

[...] The annual budget allocation for the education sector is not just for issues related to salary increases. I mean we have to focus on schools building in places of dilapidated buildings. On the one hand, we have to build more new schools and buildings to meet the growing needs of students, and on the other hand, the homes of teachers and students. I am calling on all stakeholders to participate in this process. I want to see Cambodia having good schools [...] in the era of the state of Cambodia, our government officials received nine items ranging from salt, fish sauce, rice, soap to kerosene among other things. That was the generation that we had no electricity but kerosene lamps, if we reminisce about teaching at that time. One teacher I asked just now has a salary of up to 1.87 million (Riel) [...]

(13) Equitable economic growth through investments in education, health, and infrastructures

The past [...] has taught us

(Continued from page 2)

Christianity and other religions. We can talk about the role of religion with the state or religion with society as a continuous relationship [...] fortunately, I received a report that my dissertation was available at the library. I sent for it. I looked into the thesis and find what I wrote more than 30 years ago when I defended my doctoral dissertation in political science. I am talking about the relationship between religion and soci-

many lessons [...] strengthened Cambodia's human resource capacity building efforts. Do not let Cambodia be as unfortunate as when I was 13 years old, and had to leave my parents (seeking education) [...] it is in this regard that at the stage where I was able to lead the country, I tried to work in the field of education and bring its access to the grassroots with infrastructure. Connectivity – good roads and safety makes it easier for students to get to school. As a policy framework, to share the fruits of equitable economic growth we must invest in education, health, and invest in what the people need such as roads/bridges [...]

(14) Spending US\$ 7million on food/accommodation for SEA Games athletes

Some criticized us from abroad that while we have money, and people cannot earn money, why we do not charge money from the athletes to compete in the SEA Games event (this year held in Cambodia). You abroad think the way you do. I think the way I do. With only 10 days left, the SEA Games will start and this time everything (for athletes and coaches are going to be) free. *Look, that Cambodia has to spend about US\$ 7million more on accommodation and food for foreign players and coaches, with their fans coming to visit Cambodia, what benefits will Cambodia get. If we collect the fees, it does not make Cambodia any richer. If we do not collect the fee, we give a lot of people the opportunity to come to Cambodia and get to know Cambodia [...]* ■

ety, religion with the state, and their mutual benefits [...] we can say that relation between religion and the state, or in a narrower way, between Buddhism and the secular world is inseparable [...] (therefore) we are working together to create a religion again after all religions in Cambodia were dissolved by the Pol Pot regime [...] now there are more than 50,000 monks. It is a large number, compared to the medical force, where we have only 20,000 or 30,000 [...] the number is almost 50% of the total number of troops in the country [...]

(3) The dialectical relationship between the secular and the Buddhist worlds – once the secular is in crisis, the Buddhist world is too

[...] When the secular world faced a crisis, the Buddhist world also experienced a crisis [...] In 1970, when the coup began, the engine of the state was shaken and disintegrated into the engine of war. At the same time, the entire Cambodian people suffered the consequences of this war. Buddhism, like other religions, suffered the same fate [...] We need to see the dialectical relationship between the secular and the Buddhist worlds. When the secular world faced a crisis, the Buddhist world experienced the same crisis [...] In the crisis from 1970 to 1975, the bomb did not know the pagoda, did not know the monks. During the Pol Pot era [...] the monks were disrobed and killed, the monks were forced to leave the pagoda [...]

(4) The Buddhist world benefits from the progress of society

When a nation has a crisis, which we call a secular world or a state has a crisis, it creates a crisis in every way, in which religion also suffers. But when our country was liberated and after the liberation, the country gradually got rich. When the Buddhist parishioners are doing prosperous business, the Buddhist sector benefits from the progress of society [...] in a

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 3)

look at him/her because of the people's hatred for the bad deeds of those officials [...] in this regard, I have always made recommendations on appointing officials. For local administration, appointing local officials is better than taking someone from a distance [...] appointing officials, we must give justice to the sub-national officials who are working there. I do not believe that we cannot find the right pick. At the central level, when there is a promotion, there comes the application immediately. In response to that, I immediately sent out a message to warn against it. My next step was to tell Samdech Krala Hom and discuss how to go about deciding on that matter [...]

(10) CPP officials live with and protect the people

[...] The success of all leaders to this day begins with the contribution of wives and children. For me, not only my wife and children, I now have come to a stage of taking care of my 22 grandchildren as well [...] sometimes for one or two mistakes, people could be mocking our family. Now we have to rely on their parents to educate their grandchildren. Otherwise, crooked people will take the issue of our grandchildren as the subject of an attack on us [...] *as for the really good officials, they do not brag about being patriots. They love the people and take real actions. In practicality, the Cambodian People's Party's officials never brag that they are patriots. They are the ones who defend and protect the people. They bite the grass and live with the people [...]*

(11) Receive and study information, keep officials who inflame others away

Owing to the many years of experience as a leading official (I would warn you to) try to accept and study the real information and do not take officials who inflame others closer to you. They might have thought that I did not notice that, some officials who came to see me, after reporting to me their

works, they make a negative report on someone else afterward. I am sick of it. Sometimes, they come tell me of some secrets (we have worked on), and I do not know where it sneaked from. If we are not strong enough to make decisions based on the truth, it will lead to the wrong decision [...] to be a leader, do not be deceived by gossip. It is not that we do not want to get information, but upon receiving information, we must check whether it is true or not. When it comes to decisions, I have said above that not all decisions are right, including the issues I mentioned regarding the revision of decisions regarding dolphin areas in Kratie and Stung Treng provinces [...]

(12) Continue reform and stand by the interests and serve the goals of the majority of the people

In the future, we need to have further reforms. This reform is not over yet [...] public administration reform, judicial reform, public financial management reform that we have just introduced, decentralization and de-concentration reforms. We have many reforms to keep up with the situation. *We must make a collective decision clearly. We must stand by the interests of the people to make decisions. People are the core for our actions. Every decision is made to serve the goal (i.e.) the interests of the majority of the people.* A chef cannot please everyone, but it has to be a decision that serves the interests of the people [...] on the other hand, I would like to urge officials to take action according to the law. I have always reminded on this matter. Do not wait for Hun Sen to shout out to take actions [...] and, as I said before, we have to pay attention to the three-step approach to leadership. First, there has to be a specific plan based on comprehensive circumstances. Then, we have to organize the action plan, [...] and be prepared to deal with the random factors that appear in an unpredictable manner. The solution to this random factor shows the true capabilities of officials [...]

(Continued from page 7)

year that people grow good crops, the monks not only have delicious food, but the wisemen-women also received suffixes to build achievements in the temple [...]

I should remind you of the relationship between Buddhism and society, or more broadly, religion and the state in which [...] the state benefited from Buddhism. What does the state benefit from Buddhism and other religions? All religions discipline people to do good deeds.

Those good deeds help the state in governing society. If people do good deeds everywhere, then [...] the state benefits. If people do a lot of evil deeds, the state will suffer [...]

(5) Five major tasks that the CPP government has done in the sixth term in office

[...] We are now at the end of the sixth legislative term [...] what has the CPP government fulfilled? [...] Firstly, we have

(13) Maintain order and dignity to succeed as the host of the SEA Games

I am calling on the people to maintain their dignity as hosts. We are spending hundreds of millions of dollars and recently spending 118 million dollars to organize the tournament, including us not taking the US\$ 50 from athletes – which we have to spend USD 7 million more to support the food and accommodation. Let us Cambodians do this together to let other people know.

The USD 7 million dollars is a reasonably big sum but it is not more than our generous hearts for our friends to know Cambodia [...] if there were violence in the game, what we have spent – the five years that we have been planning since the construction of a new stadium, [...] and the fact that we had to wait for 64 years – would all melt away. Therefore, I am calling on our people to prepare a dignified attitude to host the SEA Games [...] ■

maintained peace, political stability, despite attempts to overthrow (the government), such as the proclamation to arrest Hun Sen on November 9, to have the armed forces turn their guns on the government, demanding that the King steps down, abandon the monarchy, overthrow the throne, [...] we still maintain political stability. But do not neglect these subversives.

Secondly, [...] I thank you wisemen-women as well as the people all over the country for keeping Covid-19 under control. We are among the countries that have succeeded in governing the battlefield, but we have not yet won the Covid-19 war [...]

Thirdly, [...] although Covid-19 has hit us hard, causing economic recession in negative area, down to – 3.1% in 2020, we had revived the economy to 3% in 2021, and 5.2 percent in 2022.

At the same time, the lives of our people have been stabilized, despite some declining incomes [...] we have released more than US\$ 1 billion to help the poor. We will continue to release the monthly budget of more than US\$ 40 million for the victims of Covid-19 and of inflation [...]

Fourthly, we organized successfully the 2022 election of the commune/sangkat councilors, with many parties participating, with remarkably high voters' turnout [...] I thank the people in advance that you will accept the continuing leadership of the Cambodian People's Party on July 23, 2023 [...]

As for the fifth point [...] last year, we did a good job as the host of ASEAN summits and related summits [...] and in 2021, we chaired the Asia-Europe Meeting [...] online [...]

The works we have done in the past is not small [...] we have failed no projects – we continue to build roads, bridges, canals, hospitals and schools. We are not a bankrupt state, but an economically resilient one [...] ■