



31 May 2010 — Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen and the PRC Ambassador Pan Guang Xue at the inauguration of the Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge Prek Kadam (Kampuchea Thmei)

31 May 2010 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Inaugurating Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge Prek Kadam

... May I convey my respect and appreciation to our people for spending time to participate in the inauguration ceremony of the Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge and the groundbreaking event for the rehabilitation of the national road 61, formerly was part of the national road 6, which is running 16 kilometers from the bridge to the intersection with the national road 6A on its connection to the national road 7.

The bridge, after its groundbreaking event on June 11, 2007, was officially connected since September 14, 2009. I should recall that upon my visit in honor of the connection, the contractor company – Shanghai Construction (Group) General assured me that the bridge would be ready for use in April 2010. I then discussed it with HE Jan Kim Fang, former Am-

bassador of China to seek the company's effort in getting the bridge ready for our people to travel on during the Khmer New Year. The response from the contractor company has been positive. Four days before the Khmer New Year, on April 10, HE Yim Chhai Ly, Deputy Prime Minister of Cambodia, and HE Tram Iv Toek, Minister of Transports and Public Works joined our people in putting the bridge into official use.

I must say that today the people of Cambodia witness a new and marvelous achievement among the various outcomes from the cooperation between Cambodia and China. I am so glad to see so many achievements that have sprung up on the Cambodian territory in the time of peace and gradual development, which I used to compare to the speed of a frog leap.

Please allow me to get you the background of how do we come to achieve this realization. HE
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12 May 2010 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Inaugurating Provincial Administrative Building of Preah Vihear

... It is a great pleasure indeed that I have come back to the province of Preah Vihear once again and this time to the provincial city after I was here to put into official use the building of the Cambodian Red Cross on February 10, 2010. I am here today to put into official use the provincial hall that commenced building in 2006 and was completed in December 2009. I am so happy to see that many achievements and progresses have been made and this building here will become the head-

quarters of the provincial governing board and the provincial council, who would have to provide good service to our people.

I would like to take this opportune moment to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Ministry of Interior as well as the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the provincial authority and the construction company for making efforts to get the building ready in according to the plan.
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15 May 2010 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Building Cho Ray—Phnom Penh Hospital

... It is my pleasure to be able to join in the groundbreaking ceremony to build the Cho Ray - Phnom Penh Hospital on the five hectare size land. I must say the hospital could perhaps be one of the largest hospitals in terms of land size and capability for medical checkup and treatment. I also should recall that this has been my call for about ten years ago. According to HE Truong Vinh Trong it has been truly a short time to get the project started after the conference on investment last December 2009. It has taken only six months for the project to get off.

time. In fact the discussion started when HE Le Kha Phieu was in his position as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the most powerful person, in 2000. As of the moment of speaking, we are in 2010, which means it has taken us some ten years. I could recall that Oknha Sok Kong has come to me with many versions and more than one time to get my approval for the hospital architecture blueprint.

However I may need to recall a little background in relation to the hospital construction and investment project. There could be two ways of thoughts in relation to this. First, from December 2009 up to the present, it has indeed taken just a short time. But if we go back further to when the dialogue started, it has indeed taken us quite a long

Today I am witnessing the reality of the project commencement and I am sure the project will be healthy. HE Mam Bun Heng, the Cambodian Minister of Health, and his counterpart from Vietnam, have mentioned already about cooperation between the hospital of Cho Ray and the company of SOKIMEX – two leading companies with big shares in the two countries. The investment also enjoys financial investment from In-
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Wen Jiabao, the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China was on his official visit to Cambodia in April 2006, in which he offered on behalf of the People's Republic of China a credit assistance of USD 200 million for infrastructural development projects at the Cambodian Government's wish. That does not include projects for the construction of the hydropower station and dam at Komjai and the office of the Council of Ministers at all.

We have used one part of the loan for the construction of the national road 76 that is running between the district of Snuol of Kratie province and Sen Monorom of Mondulkiri province, one part for the construction of the national road number 8, the brand-new road and the bridge at Prek Tamak, Kandal and Prey Veng provinces, and one part for the construction of the bridge at Prek Kadam. We also use a sum of the loan to build the national road 62 from Tbeng Meanjei to Preah Vihear province's Koh Ker and the national road 57 from Battambang to Pailin city and the border area with Thailand.

I would like to take this solemn occasion to express my sincere thanks for the efforts made by the Ministry of Transport and Public Works and the Ministry of Economy and Finance in conducting negotiation with project counterparts and construction companies involved while providing counterpart funding, whereby making the task implemented in a speedy manner. I also thank the local authority for their efforts to help in providing protection and security for construction sites.

Also in this solemn occasion, I would depend on HE Pan Guang Xue, the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to convey my sincere thanks to the Government of the People's Republic of China who always

provides massive credit assistances for the development of the Cambodian infrastructure. I also thank the Guangzhou Wanan Consultant for making a good cooperation with the Shanghai Construction (Group) General Co. I must present to you my assessment on this project implementation by the Chinese assistance that it is the Chinese style of doing things more than just talking.

This project has come to its final stage some 15 months before schedule. But as I said China talks less but does more. I have noticed that that happens not only among the lower rank officials but also among the Chinese top leaders too. They have the same working approach. It has taken the contractor to finish the job in just 34 months, while it was scheduled to be finished in 50 months. They have been able to do a quick but high quality job. This has positively responded to our expectation.

Longing for something has been our people's anxious situation. Since when the country came into being, the bridge has in fact been our people's wish and expectation. Today we officially put it into use though I know that our people have used it for about more than a month now. The Ambassador of PRC, HE Pan Guang Xue said just now about when I was a young boy and had to accompany the monks to and from across the river here by a ferry. I also could recall that by late 1991, Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, the heroic King Father and Samdech Me - the King Mother Monineath Sihanouk took their last ferry trip upon their visit to Kompong Cham, after they returned from residing in Beijing.

In one of the recent visit to the district of Joeng Prey of Kompong Cham province, in her capacity as the Honorary President of the Cambodian Red Cross, again Samdech Me - the

King Mother traveled across the river again only this time by bridge. As you can see all of us could now cross the river by bridge and I am sure this is the best way to redistribute the fruit of economic growth in an equitable manner. In fact the first to benefit from the infrastructural development are the people because HM the King, Samdech Ov and Samdech Me, for instance, I too, would rarely travel on the bridge.

In China, correct me if I am wrong, there is a proverb that goes "to be rich, one has to first build the road." Whereas in Cambodia we say "where there is a road there is hope." Our people have applied the term and concept into their daily life already "are there or are there no ways?" to mean if it is hopeful or not hopeful for what they are actually trying to do or pursue. In fact another component that constructing bridge is of benefit to the country could be understood that it does save people's lives. In time of difficulties, I traveled from place to place and instructed construction and mounting of Bailey bridges through various river ways in the effort to save our people's lives from death of sickness as they could be saved if they could get to hospital for treatment and care in time.

It is in this belief and understanding that Cambodia has sought for the Chinese assistance in developing its infrastructure, whereby at the moment of speaking, three bridges, two of which have been put into use already as of today, have been constructed. The first bridge is at Steong Treng province to run over the Sekong River, whereas the second one is the Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge at Prek Kadam. Before long we will be officially inaugurate the bridge at Prek Tamak. I have two more bridge projects to request China for assistance - one of them would be a new bridge along the existing bridge

of Jroi Jangvar and the other would be a bridge across the Bassac river at Takhmao district of Kandal province.

HE Jan Kim Fang, former Ambassador of PRC, was attending 15 (inaugural) ceremonies with me and today is the first time for HE Pan Guang Xue, the new Ambassador and I am sure it is not his last. I hope that he could break the former Ambassador's record. Aside from the Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge at Prek Kadam we will have more inaugural ceremonies to preside together such as the forthcoming Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge at Prek Tamak, national roads 76, 62, 57, 8, and various roads in the district of Kamrieng. We also have up to four hydropower stations to put into official use too.

It must be noted that working with the Chinese leaders has been simple and encouraging. It is easy to communicate with them and they tend to have a good understanding. After all China does understand and help Cambodia's four priority areas that I first set out in 1987 - water, road, electricity and human resources. It was correct then and it still is after 23 years now and will be in some 20 years ahead. In this line, China is the first to help us with irrigation project at Kanghot rice land in Battambang province. They also do the same for the irrigation project at Kompong Trabek of Prey Veng.

As far as hydro-electricity is concerned, PRC has done a great help in developing stations and dams at Komjai, Kirirom, Atai, Arai Russei Jroi and transmission gridlines too. In term of human resources development, PRC provides help for training of students at the Agricultural School at Prek Leap and many have been sent for studies in PRC. Therefore, China has covered all the four prioritized areas.

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As far as its benefit is concerned, the Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge at Prek Kadam is closing the gap between national road 5 and 6, whereby all provinces around the lake of Tonle Sap are now linked up together. It has been known to be those along the national road 5 – Kandal, Kompong Chhnang, Pursat, Battambang and Banteay Meanchey, and along the national road 6 – Kompong Thom, and Siemreap. Now we have included Kompong Cham into the system and the bridge serves as the connection. People in provinces along the national road 5 who have had to go for business at the southern part of the country, like the sea area, may not have to take the detour to Phnom Penh anymore. Those from the other side of the river and lake system could also do the same.

For those who before have had to pay for each time river crossing, they could take it that the Royal Government is covering the cost for them now. Moreover in case of sickness, our people who happen to get stuck because of the river crossing, whereby ferry's lateness or not-in-operation could cause them death for simple and curable diseases, can now travel anytime they may need. We no longer wait while we need anymore. So I am sure you can see how the bridge helps in reducing people's difficulties if not poverty.

I have one more wish and that has to be done by people of younger generation. I would insist that brothers and sisters of my age or younger should take their elders out to see the bridge that has never existed before in the history of the country. Look at the Phnom Preah Raja Troap (royal property mountain) and huge stupas in the background of the green scenery in front of the bridge to the west. I am sure the souls of our late Kings and ancestors are happily looking at and blessing us - their younger

generations – for the construction and development efforts we have been making.

Also I have to agree with HE Pan Guang Xue that since tomorrow will be June 1, the International Children's Day, let's all devote this achievement for the children and in fact whatever we have been doing are all for our younger generations. I am sure they will appreciate what we have been doing for them.

We have lost so much time in developing our country because of local conflict and war, therefore construction effort in those circumstances had not been fruitful, take for instance the Japanese assistance bridge at Jroi Jangvar. It was blown up in the war of 1970s. Now the time has come for us to develop and construct our country. What remains to be done henceforth for the bridge here and elsewhere is that commuters must refrain from traveling at speed excess and from loading exceeding permitted weight.

I would also like to take this opportune moment to share with you the result of my visit to Chendu of Sichuan of the People's Republic of China, in which I conducted a negotiation with Prime Minister Wen Jiabao and he offered Cambodia Yuan 100 million to deal with the aftermath of the Ketsana after-effect. Again in my visit to Shanghai to participate in the World Expo event, HE Hu Jintao, the President of the PRC declared a grant of another USD 100 million, in which a part of the grant is in the form of 257 vehicles and clothing for 50,000 troops. I am going to ask for more for the police forces.

Last but not least I would recommend the Ministry of Land Management, Urbanization and Construction to figure out how to update information on the Cambodian map. As far as I know the map we have been

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vestment and Development Bank of Vietnam and Investment and Development Bank of Cambodia, and because of the two Banks' commitments I am sure the two phase project for the hospital construction and operation will be achieved as planned.

I would like to take this opportune moment to thank HE Le Kha Phieu, former Secretary General of the Communist Party of Vietnam and HE Truong Vinh Trong, Deputy Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and other Vietnamese leaders for taking their precious time to take part in the groundbreaking ceremony to build this huge Cho Ray - Phnom Penh hospital ...

It is known to many that the Cho Ray hospital is one of the famous hospitals in Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh city with a reputation known not only at national but also at regional level. There have been a record that about 250 Cambodian patients who have traveled to Vietnam per day for medical reason and treatment, and about two thirds of them go to Cho Ray hospital.

I also used to go for medical checkup at Cho Ray hospital and I have found out that the efficiency I got from there is no less than those I am getting from medical service in France, Japan, Singapore, China and Malaysia. Not only people in general but many Cambodian leaders have also visited the Cho Ray hospital in Vietnam as well. Seeing that the hospital service has a great significance for our

using does not seem to be updated and by doing so I suggest that we have to send the updated version to concerned agencies, take for instance Google, who have been posting the Cambodian maps with either insufficient or not-up-to-date information ... ©

people, I have proposed my initiative to get the hospital built and operated in Phnom Penh to the Vietnamese leaders.

The idea has been proposed to various Vietnamese delegations from Vietnam, especially those coming from the city of Ho Chi Minh and the Minister of Health of Vietnam has been a key person to help speed up the process. Before we came to this Cho Ray - Phnom Penh project, we have in fact established what we call the Cho Ray - Phnom Penh liaison office. However, the office could no longer respond to a growing demand and requirement for facilitation. In fact HE Sok Kong thought of building the hospital near the Royal Palace, but because the area is small, he then has to move out here to this side of the city that SOKIMEX has had to pump sand and level up the land. This has taken time from the Cambodian side as well.

Then came a question, if we were to build the hospital on this side of the river, how do we go about sorting out traffic as at the time of thought we had only one Monivong bridge? Thanks to the development plan of the Phnom Penh city, we have a new bridge that traveling to and from the hospital to the main city area would not be in question anymore. And because we will have a new bridge too at Neak Loeng (further down the Mekong River on National Road 1 toward Vietnam) this part of the city is no longer a suburban area ...

Once the hospital construction is done we would be seeing a new material and technical facility that is available locally and use of these facilities would help in cutting down time wasting and other expenses.

I would like to thank the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for creating and providing favorable conditions

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 dance to expectation. The building has in fact cost over Riel one billion or about two and a half million US dollars and I think it is a reasonable amount for this size of building.

At the same time we have here the old building of the previous provincial governorship that the late Governor HE Preap Tan made great effort in building it up on credit from the Government and from cooperation partners. Unfortunately, his wife passed away and then he followed while their children are in the stage of pursuing their studies and in search for jobs. In this joyous occasion though, we should also think of those who have contributed for the development of the province too.

Along with this joy that the provincial city has been developed from a quiet city into a lively progress in all fields as I said in last February, we have made major changes to the provincial condition in terms of roads and other infrastructures thanks to massive investment of the Royal Government so as to get the province well connected with and accessed to/from other parts of our country.

It is indeed a good think that we have a good workplace but what the Royal Government wants the most is work efficiency. What remains to be seen is the work efficiency of the Governors and provincial council who have just been elected. We will see how efficient they are in new and better building comparing to when they worked in old building. To be working in new and well equipped building does not necessarily mean one would achieve good work result.

That is why for the 25 years that I have been Prime Minister, it was just last year that I went to the new office of the Prime Minister. I give priority to work efficiency and I would warn you that being in air-conditioned

room, one may not be excused for being leisurely handling one's responsibility and task. We have a new building that is to meet the new demand and development but we should also pay attention to the need for making steps of public administrative reform where efforts must be made to successfully fulfill related tasks in decentralization and de-concentration agendas that are widely known to be sub-national democracy.

My presence here today also illustrate how much attention the Royal Government has paid on this matter as I have so far presided over the inaugurations of three provincial cities headquarters already – first the province of Battambang, then on January 20, 2009, the provincial hall of Banteay Meanjei, and today the province of Preah Vihear. At first I was thinking of sending HE Sar Kheng to fulfill the duty on my behalf but because of its distance from the capital and significant role the area has in the national agenda while confronting with foreign invasion, I have change my mind and decided to come.

HE Um Mara, the Governor of Preah Vihear, said already in his report that investment seems to have been massive to the province in terms of infrastructure such as roads, both asphalted and laterite, and I have a bird's eye view from my flight here the national road 62 that is under busy construction. Also under busy work schedule are the road extension from Tbeng Meanjei to Preah Vihear and to Koh Ker. The province also has its link to Sa Em to the temple of Preah Vihear, which runs through to Anlong Veng and also to Siem-reap province.

As is said by HE commander Chea Tara that the road is compared to that of the fish bone structure we have had many road links built and also a number of villages have been established for families of our sol-

diers and police that HE Chea Sophara, who is placed in charge, has just reported that about 50% has been done. I may seek cooperation from the Phnom Penh Municipality to organize student study tours to the temple of Preah Vihear and Mom Bei and in the course of the visit they may hire rooms or houses from our people there.

HE Chea Sophara has proposed the establishment of another 15 villages in Banteay Meanjei and I have agreed already. However because some seven villages seem to be bordering with protected zone of Kulen, I would seek Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries HE Chan Sarun to have his input in the matter.

It is true that Preah Vihear before was a far away place but as of the moment, especially this year, the province of Preah Vihear is one of the leading provinces that attracts tourists. I believe that next year there will be more tourists coming to Preah Vihear. I would like to take this opportune moment therefore to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to local authority at all levels and the armed forces for providing security for our people during their visit to the temple of Preah Vihear.

Everyday, the temple of Preah Vihear welcomed thousands of visitors during the Khmer New Year. I hope that next year number of tourists will increase because of better security and infrastructure which as I said we have road access from various directions and the province serves as one of the promising economic potential for our country too.

I would like to take this time to express my sincere appreciation and thanks for state institutions and private companies for the alliances they build with the military and police units. During my visit to the area in February I have put forth the initiative of

alliance building and made a decision that state and private institutions could go into alliance with the armed forces that are at the forefront. In so far as I know and see, activities seem to have been well organized and some have gone into signing ceremonies already.

I am so glad to see that support from the rear for the front has become a massive national movement for the national defense at a time that we have to face with foreign aggression. Also noted here is that the three objectives and ten actions that I have proclaimed on February 6, 2010 at the commanding headquarters of the division III have mostly been implemented.

Work Efficiency, Forest and Land Protection

Because today we have a great number of provincial governors present I would like to have their attention on a number of tasks. Again, as we have a better building to work in, we must try to increase work efficiency and especially, I may stress again, public services must be improved for our people. To many people who are present here today, I must have the attention that the provincial hall belongs to no particular person but a common property of the people. I wish that the hall does everything to help people solve their problems.

I also would like to depend on the provincial authority and armed forces to protect forest and land. As I have said before the province of Preah Vihear has been noticed for illegal logging and land grabbing offenses. So in the name of the Royal Government that has been elected by the people through the parliament, I would seek cooperation with those responsible such as the local authority and the armed forces, including commanders of divisions or battalions as well as police

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forces in looking after our forest and land.

Days ago I have asked Chea Tara to make immediate inspection on activities in the military zone of Preah Vihear province. I may have to talk frankly here that I have sent you commanders here for the defense of our nation and territorial integrity. We defend against infiltration by foreign forces but also protect them from own forest destruction too. If there is a need for land, demand must be made to mechanism that are listed in the land law and/or to the development committee at the border area. Land is not available for just anyone. I heard that people in Phnom Penh have also registered with so and so companies so that they could be entitled to a piece of land. That is not what it is supposed to be.

I must make in clear again that as far as land issue is concerned, we need to uphold a clear principle. No one could get the land (in the said area) not even if you are a minister. The Prime Minister issues a sub-decree to transform public land into private state land and offer land on social concession to families of soldiers or people who have access to no land. A newspaper ran an article recently that so and so companies would send people to so and so areas. Why? How could they get them land, agricultural tools, and housing? So the armed forces must defend forest and woods in their area of responsibility.

The division III has a large area under its control and inspection so they need to be vigilant. As far as I know there was this lady being nicknamed “Mab” who operated this illegal business. But after she was arrested, there does not seem to have loggers on the Dang Rek mountain range anymore. The main reason for that is because there is no market for it. Soon when the road link between Stoeng Treng

and Preah Vihear province completes, the two governors may have to cooperate on safeguarding the forest in between their provincial boundary. However, the area from Preah Vihear to the Stoeng Treng’s district of Thala Borivat has been confirmed to be under protected zone by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

So we must continue to manage and control our forest. I would not accept it if anyone would exploit a permission to log for building a line of road to deforest the area. Not only would no permission as such be allowed but also such action would damage heavily the road. So safeguarding roads is defending the land. The land belongs to our nation and needs to be protected. I would repudiate issuance of land titles by the commune, district or provincial levels if they are not being done in line with the Royal Government’s sub-decree or decision.

More Come Residing in Preah Vihear in the Future

We should foresee that in the near future Preah Vihear will absorb more population and land developers, and bad people who exploit from land availability would come to Siemreap province. It is in this understanding we have to take a strong measure for forest management. Meetings must be held with the armed forces so that they could be well informed and would not allow anyone to disguise under the armed forces in grabbing land or we would have to solve so many consequences as a result of their actions.

We now have a provincial building but we also need to think of those offices at the district level. I would like concerned authorities to reserve some plots of land for future need. As far as I know in some provinces, some of their subordinate offices are still locating in block buildings that it is no

longer appropriate anymore. We have tried out the one-window office program in Siemreap and it has proven to be quite efficient and successful in providing their services as the provincial authorities are being placed close to one another in one place.

Take some other country’s experiences as example, for instance Malaysia. They moved out of Kuala Lumpur to newly developed area, and that also included area for diplomatic missions. In China’s Guangzhou they also build Kuya as a new administration city. As for Cambodia I would suggest it is wise to look for land where they could build like four or five provincial offices in one place such as the office of agriculture, environment, health, finance and economy, etc. Once they are all in one place it would help increase our work efficiency.

HE Um Mara, the Governor of Preah Vihear, talked just now about issue of tourism and it is closely relating to one common field that we have been promoting “clean city.” The three elements of our campaign for tourism “Kingdom of Wonders” have been clean city, beautiful tour sites and great service. So it is indeed true that the province and city of Preah Vihear, especially the city of Tbeng Meanjei that was built after 1979, after the provincial town was moved from Rovieng, has to work up to this expectation.

Investment in Existing Market not Allowed

What do we mean by clean city? I am sure you all know better than I do. But I have a special demand that because of mismanagement and inappropriate solution some provincial authorities have had their policy consequences haunting me everyday. It is the issue relating to market area. So I must make it clear on that. I would not object your effort in putting into order and some actions have to be

taken against street vendors but what you have done has caused me trouble. How come you always come up with proposal for investments on the existing markets? I may give you a piece of advise - if anyone would like to invest in market development, please ask them to build on a new location but they must not be interested only in operationally existing markets.

If you only throw me a hot potato I would be patient to hold it as it would be edible but if you pass me a hot iron ball, how would you expect me to hold it? We have just settled investment issue at Takeo’s Kirivong market. When our official decides to accept investment for the market development, I am not informed, but when people are not happy with your policy they come to me. So I have to attend to their request. Last night I instructed HE Uk Rabun, Secretary of State for Economy and Finance, HE Suy Sem, Minister for Industry, Mines and Energy, HE Chhay Sareth and HE Khoi Sokha of Pursat province to look into matter concerning a market at Krokor.

I must send a message to people at the Krokor market of Pursat as the company has yet done what they have planned to and I would ask Mr Tri Chhieng who has requested for the Krokor market development to build a new market elsewhere and to interfere with no one at Krokor market. According to the letter sent to me a reason has been provided “for the beauty” of the city. So the people have got their resources and they are for developing the market, why else they are not allowed to do so? So my message to the Ministry of Economy and Finance is clear that before they decide anything about the market they may have to let me know so as not to keep me standby for clearing up consequences. Now the company has not started anything yet so it is wise to cancel the contract.

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for the Cambodian citizens to cross the border for treatment on the Vietnamese side. Our two countries have had many easy land access points and transfer of patients to and from has not been that hard. I also notice that some hospitals in Vietnam also implement favorable policies for the Cambodian patients, such as the same rate of service charges as those of the locals. This has in fact been a favorable policy that encourages Cambodian patients to go over for treatment and checkup in Vietnam when the local healthcare system lacks facility and could not provide alternative option for their conditions.

It is in this regard that I hope that once the hospital starts its operation, Vietnam would continue with these policies so that Cambodia could go on sending their patients who are in need of more

advanced cares for checkup and treatment as before. Also once the hospital operates, those who benefit from the service would not be only the people of Cambodia but foreign citizens who are in Cambodia for business and investment or tourism would also enjoy the service too. This will in effect increase confidence and trust in the local facilities too. Tourists, though some are quite old, would not hesitate to come for a visit to Cambodia as we have trustworthy healthcare and service in various locations.

For those of our students who have graduated from the school of medical nursery and midwife and who have yet to find a hospital to practice their careers, you may agree with us that building healthcare infrastructure ranging from hospital and training medical persons to other concerned services need to be

set as priority. Having them in place those who have graduated from this profession would have a better chance to find a job. I am so happy to have met here just now with those who have graduated from midwife branch. It should be noticed that when I presided over the inauguration of the School of Medical Nursery, midwives was not on its curriculum. Having seen that I have pushed for consideration on providing training of midwives that will in effect be helping us to bring down death rate of delivery among child and/or mother.

I have a story to share with you. It is indeed my own story but it is also a story for all. I wanted to have a wife who has medical training background. In fact my wife is a midwife. I have an advice for you that all of you who would want to get married to a medical person must be

prepared. In Pol Pot time, my wife was pregnant, and she had to attend to a delivery. This is a case in point not only for men but also for women. Anyone married to a medical person must be prepared to share their time and must consider sharing time and help is an obligation.

In my capacity as the Prime Minister and on behalf of the leaders of the Cambodian People's Party I sent a letter of invitation to former leaders of Vietnam – former Secretary General of the Communist Party of Vietnam, HE Le Kha Phieu and former President of the State of Vietnam HE Tran Duc Loeng for a visit to the Kingdom of Cambodia. As of now HE Le Kha Phieu is my guest and his visit has been organized in line with the groundbreaking ceremony here today. He was one of many former generals from Vietnam who helped in liberating Cambodia and its people on January 7 from the genocide of Pol Pot.

I have a wish to invite the Vietnamese leaders whose contribution in the past have brought about the present Cambodia to see Phnom Penh, a city they use to see no residents, to witness current achievements and progresses that are totally different to what they found under the Pol Pot's genocide. From April 30, 1975, it has been over 35 years now that South Vietnam was liberated and the whole of Vietnam has been united. During the ASEAN summit in Hanoi, on behalf of Cambodia, I wish Vietnam the 35th anniversary of the liberation of Vietnam and the unification of the country – 30 April 1975 through to 2010.

In 1977 I fled from Cambodia and went into Vietnam in search for a path to salvage the nation from the genocide of Pol Pot and later to enjoy the support from Vietnam to form national liberation armed forces, who present here today are some

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Let the people do it themselves with help from the working mission of CPP, while in case of shortage I would cover the rest.

Have you all ever thought that for one reason our people are doing their business there and secondly they have had to pay between 1900 and 8000 US dollars for a stand that it may not be affordable for them? My message today is for Governors throughout the country to avoid this matter. Again I urge you not to disguise under the pretext of making the city clean and chase people out for investors. It is better to work it out with our people to build infrastructure such as roads, drainages, etc.

The April 17 Incident

Today I also have something to talk to the army officials. When I stepped out of the car I already said a few things to Chhin Janpor and Chea Tara about the incident of April 17. I asked them on April 19 and I was told the soldiers from the other side were

drunk. It was so ridiculous. I asked HE Pol Saron and I got a different answer. I kept having different answers from different commanders. My question is why do all 25 soldiers (on the other side) were drunk at 7:40 am and again at 9:40 am? They all got drunk not one or two of them. You all should be careful in reporting to your senior command. My instruction has been clear that if Cambodian side causes incident for any reason, they have to get disciplined and bilateral negotiation with the opposition side has to take place and visa versa if the other side causes the problem.

I order that all commanders to report to me in details. Incomplete or hidden information would lead to a misleading strategy analysis, especially at the time that a group of extremists in Bangkok was prepared to remove the border poles.

So I must order that whatever happens here, whoever causes the incident, a report in detail must be done to me. I would

warn you again our soldiers are here to defend our territory and not to serve as a target for drunken shootout incidents. Next time a misleading report by any standard would be reprimanded.

Cambodian commanders have done great jobs but we also have to sort out our shortcomings as well. I would urge you to receive a "private number" call as I sometimes have to get down to field commander because the report does not make me comprehend the situation. Also it is a way to check if my command has been forwarded. Today there has been in the news that Hun Sen is to visit the provincial city of Preah Vihear.

The press may report anything they like but coming here or proceeding to the temple of Preah Vihear is up to me and that would not have the bothering effect on anyone or no foreign power could prevent the Prime Minister of Cambodia in his tour of the country. It is entirely up to my mind ...©

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when they came to see me that Cambodia has only one input and one output in the Cambodian national budget. Nothing has been set aside. Though in the framework of signing agreement for exploration, there has been signatory reward and social fund, the money has been placed in the national coffer too.

In the last few days a group of thief-minded people in London seem to have been making noise again. They asked to the Rural Development Bank where the money might have been placed. It seems there has been a connection between those thief-minded abroad and those inside. By social fund, here we place it in the national coffer and it is being used in line with the national budget.

I doubt it if foreign agencies who have been working here do not seem to have been bothered by the Global Witness's discrediting the Royal Government, though some of you may be working with some of the thief-minded local contacts? It has been meant that the Phnom Penh Government is a thief so I have to return the favor that there has been cooperation between those abroad and those inside. How could they blame us to be thief when there has not been any money to steal? Have they forgotten that the majority of the Cambodian population voted more than two-thirds of the parliamentary seats to us?

If we were not that trustworthy, they would not give us this much and even lost the poll. I have to bring this matter between the Government and the Global Witness out to the public. Where did it start? It started from a sex scandal of its staff. Because of this fact and the cooperation it developed with thief-minded insiders. I do not mention names, they have put us in a bad karma situation. Maybe HE Ambassador of the UK could do something to help with these

people.

Let me make it clear that there has not been any money from mineral extractions yet. I told many Ambassadors concerned that it is good if they could help us make money than to teach us on how to spend the money that we do not even have yet. It would be helpful if they could tell those companies conducting businesses here to give a bigger share of profit to Cambodia, which could be considered a way to help Cambodia make bigger money too.

So the country's economic base could still be expandable in relation to agriculture and mineral resources. By mineral resources we mean more than just oil and gas but also include bauxite, gold, iron, etc. They could do a lot to help us with paper works, investment laws and managements so as to help us achieve sustainability, accountability and transparency. Has there been any country that establishes diplomatic relations with a failed or childish state? I should make it clear today because there are many foreign guests here who could ponder on this thought.

If Cambodian (People's Party) Government is incapable they would not have won the absolute majority in the elections and what happened to those of you who have claimed yourselves to be the best among all? You should put a question on that. There has been nothing more to lecture against Hun Sen except corruption matter. If they have proof and constructive advice I would not hesitate to accept it but would reproach if they made it a wrong case. I must say everyone should not assign themselves as teachers to Cambodia.

Cambodia has put its divisive past behind because of the win-win policy and who in the whole wide world could claim to be its master? We put out the flame of war and united the

country using no single bullet. We have reunited the four divided factions of the nation all by the win-win policy, which has now put the country in peace and stability for 12 years already. It is the Cambodians who have done it by themselves, whereby they have created a situation that all are on the winning side. If they could do that why spending money is that difficult? We have so many projects – to build bridges, roads, etc. that are waiting for money.

I wish to make some comments in relation to this so as to relieve our people's concern on impact on environment if this is to proceed. I have seen people expressing their concerns on the national TV program too. It is clearly important that our thought has to be thorough and if we were to find out any oil reservoirs in the Tonle Sap area, we may not abandon them. But how to do it in a way that the Tonle Sap Lake would not suffer from negative impacts would be a serious concern. The Government is of the opinion that we will balance economic interest from mineral resources with impacts to be challenged on environment before any such decision for extraction and exploitation would be made.

That is why I have to confirm once again that this is the stage of preliminary study with a focus on impacts to be incurred on environment. Though we may have some rare mineral resources here and there and our people may have had extracted some from the uppermost surface of our land, but it is still a major issue for us to come to a conclusion if there is potential of such mineral resources in the lower deposit whereby extraction and exploitation could be operational. One company, with its expertise and experience, perhaps says mineral resources of so and so in this particular area could be measured up to this much with this long exploi-

tation but for the same resources and places, perhaps other companies with different expertise, experience and resources could say it otherwise.

I may assure you that before making decision on extractive operation the Royal Government would thoroughly assess its economic, social and environmental impacts. Because of lacking of information together with agitation by some ill intent people, our people have been so stressfully concerned.

With environment friendly technology, finding and extracting resources in a particular area does not necessarily harm the whole flora and region. Having said so I wish to express my pleasure to share your concerns and would assure that effort will be made to get the best done for our people and country in this regard ... ©

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and that has in fact been fulfilled along the Cambodian-Vietnamese border. My ambition is to achieve the same situation with Laos and Thailand whereby a borderline of friendship, peace and cooperation will be built. Areas transformed from former 1970-75 battles into economic zones have been that of Chantrea, Anlong Kreh and Tralok Bek of Svay Rieng, where insecurity is no more the term but special economic zone between Vietnam and Cambodia ...

As weather turns out to be nasty, advance rains came with deadly lightning, and diarrhea breakout reported, I appeal to our people to exercise hygiene to protect families and communities from diseases and be alert for lightning and dengue as rainy season arrives. Local authorities and the Ministry of Health must raise vigilance and be prepared to help people deal with the situations ...©

26 May 2010 (Unofficial Translation of Selected Comments)
Cambodia's Opportunity: Extractive Industries

... Let me make some comments on this point. First I would like to clarify that up to this moment Cambodia has not yet benefited from utilization of its mineral resources. We have started with bare hands by standing up out of ashes and economic embargos as well as protracted war. Mineral resources utilization has not yet been an option yet. However, from that state, we have lifted 70% of our population from under poverty line with growth in agriculture, tourism, garment and other sectors. That is why we have deemed it is necessary to expand economic growth base where a number of sectors will be its dependence.

Firstly, we depend on the *expansion of agriculture*, which still has a great potential, so that our economy no longer relies too much on export of garment products and tourism, which are being severely impacted by world financial crisis and economic downturn. Cambodia has got ample and untapped agricultural potential that our economic base expansion could be applied. *Also applicable is our mineral resources.* According to studies, we have had our precious stone resources depleted by extraction in the 1980s by cooperation between the former Khmer Rouge forces and a neighboring country, the return of which was for making war. What has caught our impression then and now is that such depletion has never been cursed or blamed by anyone. While whatever the government is doing, blame comes from various directions. This is what I called a clear double standard. No one has said a word about that. Inside the country then there had been activities here and there that our people extract soil in search for gold and gemstone. However, major spots for mineral resources have never been touched.

Secondly, the issue that has been repeatedly raised concerning income from mineral resources. It had been quite annoying a few years ago. After some brainwashing for some people, it has been a bit relaxing. I never understand what they want to go for while fish is still in water and they talk about what dish should the fish be served? I have the necessity to talk to a number of international institutions. The issue in point is such a way that the matter on how to spend the money should not be a concern yet. Let's concern about how to make money first. And many conferences were organized to brainstorm the fact that mineral extractions in Cambodia could in fact be a curse or bonanza. It has recurred in the recent weeks too.

I wish to make a point that if the Cambodians are fools they would not have been able to build the Angkor Wat temple, maybe that could be a way to say it. Worse still they could not have brought Phnom Penh and the whole nation out of ashes. In face of this, they may not have to bother us with so many lessons. At the time that we are in short of money they teach us on how to spend it and they even go far as to blame us for corruption while there has not been a sign of money yet. Is it too much to say these people have been the ones who used to do all that themselves that they know full well about how to commit theft? Have they learned it from thief? Or have they been theft chieftain that this has given them the knowledge on how to steal? Let's not have too many lessons for Cambodia on how to spend money.

I have said the same thing to representatives from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB)
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generals from the Cambodian and Vietnamese armies. Though our countries – Cambodia and Vietnam – were liberated at the same time, still the actual state of Vietnam has been different from that of Cambodia. From our bare hands Cambodia has now problem of traffic congestion.

HE Le Kha Phieu was a former soldier and general of the Vietnamese voluntary army that shouldered with our army to topple genocidal regime of Pol Pot and prevent it from returning to power. As of now the genocidal leaders have been brought to confront with justice after 30 years of their fallout. We were blamed for fighting Pol Pot and punishment was brought upon us. However, after 30 years, trial of the former head of the Pol Pot's Tuol Sleng concentration and torturing camp was brought for trial. Sometimes it requires not one or two but up to thirty years to find justice.

It has not been peculiar that Vietnam and Cambodia cooperated in the fight against the genocide and prevent its return as they used to do that in the fight against former colonialists. As is said in the speech by HE Truong Vinh Trong, the situation of Cambodia today is different from that time. As for Vietnam it would be appropriate to say it has proven to be one of the less affected economies from the financial and economic crisis in the world. It has been known widely that Vietnam and China are the two economies that are resilient to the impacts. At the time that investment flow from other countries to Cambodia fell down, it seems that investment flow from Vietnam into Cambodia has leveled out the losing part.

As of last year investment project from Vietnam to Cambodia has been officially stated by Vietnam to be some one billion

US dollars whereas forthcoming projects would absorb some 4 to 7 billion US dollars for the coming years ... For just the passed five months we have inaugurated a factory that produces agricultural fertilizer that is located not far from here. There have been many projects that are for the benefits to agricultural sector and infrastructural developments. The Cambodian national civil aviation and banks are some of the developments so far noted.

The trade flow between our two countries has been noted to be some two billion US dollars and I am sure there have been some unrecorded ones too. A part of electric demand for Phnom Penh has been and is to be supplied by Vietnam. We have first drafted a need for some 80 megawatts from Vietnam for consumption in the city. As of now the amount of electricity to be requested from Vietnam would reach 200 megawatts and the current supply has reached 100 megawatts already. Some 20 megawatts more will be coming sometime in June and this will make some provinces along the Cambodian-Vietnamese border benefit from low price electricity.

I am sure the volume of trade between our two countries will increase and Vietnam will become a new dragon in Asia in the near future because of strong and broad based economic development in the last years, which has in fact empower Vietnamese purchasing might whereby its supply to partners would be increased and cooperation in the field of trade and economics would better position other sectors as well, and politics is to be included.

A pride I am taking is that effort and success in laying out a foundation for good neighborly development in which former battlefields have been transformed into development zones,
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