

# VISIONS of CAMBODIA

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## CAMBODIA COMMITTED TO ATTAIN THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

Speaking at the General Debate of the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on 29 September 2014 in New York, Deputy Prime Minister HOR Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, has expressed Cambodia's strong commitment to achieve the set goals of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

"With the aim of realizing the MDGs, Cambodia has adopted our own development targets, known as the 'Cambodia MDGs' (CMDGs) which are incorporated comprehensively into our National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018," DPM HOR Namhong told the Assembly.

As a result, substantial progress has been achieved, positioning Cambodia to meet some goals of MDGs by the end of 2015.

"Cambodia's target in reducing poverty rate to 19.5 percent by 2015 has already been achieved ahead of schedule as the nation's poverty rate has already reached 19 percent in 2013. As a result, Cambodia received a UN Award for halving hunger before the deadline," he stressed.

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## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVES THE NATIONAL ELECTION COMMITTEE TO BE CONSTITUTIONALLY MANDATED AND INDEPENDENT



Lawmakers unanimously voted for the amendment of the Constitution during the 3rd session of the National Assembly of the 5th Legislature on 1st October 2014 in Phnom Penh.

The 120 Cambodian lawmakers present at the 3rd session of the National Assembly (NA)'s fifth legislature have unanimously endorsed the amendment to the Article 76 and all articles from new Chapter 15 to new Chapter 16 of the Constitution to make the National Election Committee (NEC) a constitutionally mandated and independent body.

The NA's 3rd plenary session was held under the chairmanship of President of the NA, Heng Samrin, with Prime Minister Hun Sen in attendance, under the witness of foreign ambassadors accredited to Cambodia.

The inclusion of the NEC into the Constitution

came after the July 22 agreement between Prime Minister Hun Sen and Sam Rainsy, President of the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), who agreed to end the opposition's 10-month boycott of the parliament in exchange for an overhaul of the electoral system and a power sharing within parliament.

"I have strong confidence that this amendment to the Constitution will help NEC to work independently to ensure free and fair elections and it will help prevent political crisis after elections in the future," CNRP lawmaker Eng Chhay Eang, chairman

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## CAMBODIA COMMITTED TO ATTAIN.....



Deputy Prime Minister HOR Namhong, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation addresses his speech at the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on 29 September 2014 in New York.

In combating HIV/AIDS, he added, Cambodia has made great stride by progressively reducing HIV prevalence to 0.6 percent in 2013. To achieve this indicator, the Cambodian government has further adopted a policy of "Getting to Zero" aiming to realize Zero new infections, Zero AIDS-related deaths, and Zero discrimination by 2020.

According to DPM HOR Namhong, in addition to tracking Cambodia MDGs achievement, the Royal Government of Cambodia has put forth a Cambodia MDG Acceleration Framework with approach to accelerate the progress of the MDGs and other human development goals. This framework could provide the essential inputs for the implementation of Cambodia National Strategic Development Plan to complete the remaining MDGs as well as to set the stage for the preparation of the

Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Cambodia shares the view expressed by the High Level Panel of Eminent Person in their report to be adopted during this 69th Session that "a new development agenda should carry forward the spirit of the Millennium Declaration and the best of the MDGs, with a practical focus on poverty, hunger, water, sanitation, education and healthcare, he said.

Cambodia is of the view that the post-2015 development agenda should be realistic and built upon the lesson learned from the difficulties in the realization of the MDGs, in particular to ensure that any process towards a broader development objective should be truly balanced and comprehensive, underlined DPM HOR Namhong. ■

## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVES THE NATIONAL ELECTION.....



National Assembly President Heng Samrin (Centre) presides over the 3rd plenary session of the NA's fifth legislature.

of the assembly's commission on human rights, complaints, and investigation, said.

Pen Panha, lawmaker from ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP), also chairman of the assembly's commission on legislation and justice, said the amendment to the Constitution was made in conformity with the principles of democracy and the rule of law.

"It will make the NEC implement its obligations independently and neutrally to ensure free and fair elections," he said.

Under the amended Constitution, the NEC will have independent budget for its operations, he said, adding that the body will have the composition of nine members - four will be chosen by the ruling party, four by parties having seats in parliament, and one by the approval from all parties holding seats in the parliament. The term for the NEC members is five years. ■

## ANTI-CORRUPTION UNIT RECEIVES 728 COMPLAINTS

The Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) had received 728 corruption-related complaints in the first nine months of this year, down 16 percent from the same period last year, the agency said in a statement recently.

"From January to September 2014, the ACU had received a total of 728 complaints -- 370 of them were made in conditions of anonymity," said the statement posted on its website.

The statement was released after a closed-door meeting of the National Council for Anti-Corruption. Cambodia is still riddled with bribery and corruption.

The Cambodian government sees corruption as obstacles to economic development, rule of law, democracy, social stability, as well as the main cause of poverty.

Cambodia passed the anti-corruption law

and promulgated it in April 2010; then, in the same year, the ACU was established.

Since then, a number of corrupt officials in ministries, armed forces and judicial institutions have been brought to court for legal punishment.

Under the law, officials, if found guilty, will receive prison sentences ranging from 5 to 15 years. ■



## PARKSON MALL SLATED FOR OPENING IN LATE 2015

Global commercial real estate firm CBRE has put the call out for retail tenants for the new Parkson City Centre Mall, which stands to become the second foreign mall developer to open in the Kingdom in as many years.

According to a statement issued by CBRE, the five-level, 70,000 square-metre retail mall located on Russian Boulevard is on



track to be operational by the fourth quarter of 2015. Tenant registrations are now open.

“At this stage I can only say that we target at least one-third of the tenants will be new to the market,” Laszlo Fulop, senior retail consultant for CBRE Cambodia said.

“Parkson predominantly positions upper mid-market in the region, in Phnom Penh we hope to have a limited selection of premium brands, which are well-known and commercial.”

Parkson Holdings, a Malaysia-based mall development firm has some 141 stores across Asia. The City Centre Mall is reported to have cost upwards of \$117 million. ■

## GUIDELINES TO TACKLE EXTORTION INTRODUCED

Speaking at a public-private sector forum recently in Phnom Penh, Industry and Handicrafts Minister Cham Prasidh said the government will introduce guidelines detailing inspection requirements in a bid to clamp down on corruption in the small- and medium-sized enterprise sector.

The Minister further said that his office was preparing an Inspection Guidebook to ensure SMEs were clear on the laws regarding government inspections and to help prevent extortion attempts by corrupt inspectors.

“Most of our SMEs still have very limited knowledge regarding the laws and regulations of operating a business. This guidebook will help them understand authorities’ role in inspections, while SMEs can also inspect themselves to ensure they are abiding by the law,” Minister Prasidh said.

The guidelines – which will cover a range of inspections, from food hygiene to health and safety – are expected to be finalised in the next two months and will be publicly available on the ministry’s website, according to the Minister. ■

## KRISENERGY, CHEVRON DEAL GIVEN APPROVAL

According to a recent statement filed to the Singaporean stock exchange, KrisEnergy officially completed the acquisition of Chevron’s 30 per cent share of the Block A site for a reported \$65 million after receiving Cambodian government approval on September 17.

Oil and gas company KrisEnergy has finalised its purchase of Chevron’s stake in Cambodia’s oil reserves in the Gulf of Thailand.

KrisEnergy, which already held a 25 per cent interest in Block A along with joint-venture partners MOECO and GS Energy, now holds the lion’s share in the site, with a combined 55 per cent.

KrisEnergy expects to produce some 10,000 barrels of oil per day once Block A becomes operational. ■

## APPLIANCE SPENDING SURGES



Consumer spending on home appliances such as refrigerators, televisions and washing machines has surged over the past 12 months in Cambodia, according to market research firm GfK Global.

Germany-based GfK’s latest audit of eight Southeast Asian countries’ domestic appliance sales shows Cambodians spent some \$50 million on about 137,000 items between July 2013 and August this year.

The figure represents a 59 per cent increase in sales volume compared with the year prior, according to September 25 statement issued by GfK.

“Cambodia is an emerging market and the demand of major domestic appliances is only just starting to boost thanks to the country’s economic and construction sector growth,” it said, adding that air-conditioners and refrigerators were the two most purchased appliances in Cambodia during the one-year period.

Of all the countries in the region, the Kingdom recorded the largest jump in home appliance spending.

LG electronics Cambodia estimated the local market for home appliances to be around \$100 million, a 30 per cent increase over the last year with demand for new televisions and refrigerators.

Aeon Microfinance Cambodia – which specialises in financing motorbikes, mobile phones and home appliances – reported in August that home appliance loans had increased five-fold between June 2013 and June this year.

“People will go to mobile and motorbike first, of course, and as their income increases, they start to upgrade their lifestyle in the form of flat-screen TVs, home theatre and other home appliances.” ■




# KOH RUSSEY

## A Jewel by the Sea Off the Coast of Sihanoukville

*Long known as a destination for shoestring backpackers, Sihanoukville's Koh Russey is set to host a fully functional island luxury resort complex by 2019.*

*The Koh Russey West Resort, which is a collaborative effort between investment group CityStar, real estate consultancy CBRE, and hotel operator Alila, is set to feature nearly 200 villas and apartment duplexes over 76 hectares.*



*Koh Russey, also known as Bamboo Island, is located 3km from Sihanoukville's Otres Beach and is a popular tourist destination due to its pristine beaches and jungle scenery. In five years, it is set to include 102 one-bedroom villas, 18 two-bedroom villas, 15 four-bedroom villas and 49 two-floor duplex apartments.*

*According to Century 21 (Cambodia), the project had the potential to both directly and indirectly to the country by attracting international investors due to its very good location of the project, with an existing beautiful beach and landscape.*