

VISIONS of CAMBODIA

ISSUE 19: 01-08 MAY 2016

9TH MEETING OF CAMBODIA-EU JOINT COMMITTEE HELD IN PHNOM PENH

Cambodia-EU Joint Committee began its 9th meeting to discuss a wide range of issues of bilateral cooperation to ensure the smooth cooperation and effective implementation of the agreement on 2 May.

The three-day meeting is co-chaired by Cambodian Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation H.E. Ouch Borith and Mr. Jorge De la Caballeria, Head of Unit of Development Coordination South and South East Asia of the European Commission Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development.

Continued on page (2)

CAMBODIA SEES PROGRESS WHILE MARKING THE WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY 2016

Over 300 national and international journalist professionals, professors, students, concerned delegates and experts gathered on 3 May at Cambodiana Hotel here in Phnom Penh to celebrate the World Press Freedom Day.

Information Minister H.E. Khieu Kanharith who presided over the event cheered the progress of the press freedom in Cambodia so far and shared

Continued on page (2)

PRIME MINISTER SHARES STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR NPP 2016-2030 IMPLEMENTATION



Cambodia's Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen presides over the launching ceremony of the National Population Policy 2016-2030 at Peace Palace on 3 May, 2016.

Cambodia's Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen presided over the launching ceremony of the National Population Policy 2016-2030, jointly organized by the Ministry of Planning and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), at Peace Palace in Phnom Penh on 3 May, 2016. At the ceremony, he highlighted key strategic directions for the implementation of National Population Policy 2016-2030. Clear indicators and on-going monitoring of the policy rollout along with necessary capacity building for relevant officials is vital for its success, he said.

At the same time, he added, the Ministry of Planning needs to ensure smooth coordination with other ministries, especially the Ministry of Economy and Finance, to generate other

development policies and strategies in order to sustainably and fully cover all the elements of the population.

Samdech Techo Prime Minister made the instruction on 3 May at Peace Palace, Phnom Penh, when presiding over the launch of the National Population Policy led by the Ministry of Planning.

According to Minister of Planning H.E. Chhay Than, the policy does not aim to replace any existing policies, but to supplement to them. The National Population Policy indicates significant interrelation between population change and development interventions – insightfully captured by Samdech Techo Prime Minister. ■

CAMBODIA SEES PROGRESS WHILE

shared open and participatory process of the ministry in drafting the Access to Information Law which will serve as another milestone to facilitate information flow.

“In Cambodia, there is no censorship, both Cambodian and foreigner can run a media institution and there is no imprisonment of journalists who misreport,” added H.E. Khieu Kanharith.

The half-day event was organized by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in cooperation with the Club of Cambodian Journalists, Swedish Embassy, and leading media schools, agencies and networks in Cambodia.

According to the ranking of Reporters Without Borders, Cambodia is improving well in terms of press freedom, from 139th last year to 128th in 2016 – placing the country in a better position compared to others across the region.

Ambassador of Sweden H.E. Ms. Anna Maj Hultgard and UNESCO Representative in Cambodia Ms. Anne Lemaistre appreciated the press environment in Cambodia and the hard work of the Ministry of Information as a primary enabling actor.

The forum also engaged presentation, and reflection of press situations in China, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam to pick up good practices and lessons learned.

While congratulating the progress, President of the Club of Cambodian Journalists Mr. Pen Bonna encouraged further professional improvement among journalists as well as media institutions to be responsive not only to the national, but also regional work space.

Celebrated since 1993, the World Press Freedom Day falls on May 3. This year theme is “Access to Information is Your Right!”

United Nations source highlights that, “More than 700 journalists have been killed in the last decade – one every five days – simply for bringing news and information to the public.” ■

THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR ZERO HUNGER CHALLENGE LAUNCH IN CAMBODIA

The Royal Government of Cambodia in collaboration with the United Nations launches the National Action Plan for Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia on 4 May, 2016 at the Office of the Council of Ministers, Friendship Building.

The launching ceremony presides over by H.E. Yim Chhay Ly, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development, and Ms. Claire Van der Vaeren, UN Resident Coordinator, it pointed out.

The National Action Plan for the Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia reflected the Royal Government of Cambodia’s strong commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal to “End Hunger, Achieve Food Security and Improve Nutrition, and Promote Sustainable Agriculture”, said the news release, adding that the National Action Plan for the Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia will provide comprehensive guidance for all stakeholders engaged in adapting the Second Sustainable Development Goal to the Cambodian context.

According to the news release, the National Action Plan for the Zero Hunger Challenge in Cambodia is fully aligned with the Rectangular Strategy III and the National Strategic Development Plan 2014 – 2018. It builds on and complements specific sector and cross-sector policies and strategies already in place. As such, the National Action Plan aims to support integrated actions to eradicate hunger and malnutrition by 2025 under the guidance of one overarching framework. Moreover, the National Action Plan will be implemented through government institutions that are already in place. CARD has been mandated to coordinate the work that will be implemented by the respective line agencies. CARD will also work closely with development partners and civil society organizations to ensure that sufficient financial resources are available. CARD further recognizes the important role that the private sector must play in eradicating hunger and malnutrition in Cambodia.

Going forward, there are several key tasks that must be addressed during the initial period of implementation. Most importantly, all relevant

9TH MEETING OF CAM...

The meeting is aimed to enhance the mutual coordination and cooperation between Cambodia and the EU as well as their partnership for their mutual interest, H.E. Ouch Borith said in the meeting.

H.E. Ouch Borith added that the EU has actively contributed to the development of Cambodia in the multilateral framework from 2014 to 2020 as well as to the elaboration of her National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018.

The Cambodian secretary of state further recalled the EU’s support for the public financial reform and the democratisation process in Cambodia, as well as its assistance in waste management and promotion of children’s rights.

EU is one of Cambodia’s main development partners, said H.E. Ouch Borith, stressing that the EU has provided more 10 million euros to support the UN-backed Khmer Rouge Trial process for 2015-2016 and another 10 million euros for the election reform in Cambodia.

For his part, Mr. Jorge De la Caballeria underlined the EU’s commitment to help develop Cambodia’s economy and poverty alleviation. He also recognized the Kingdom’s reform efforts and affirmed the EU’s continued cooperation with the Royal Government of Cambodia. ■

stakeholders will need to work closely together to coordinate efforts to mobilize resources and ensure effective and efficient investments in sustainable food security and nutrition solutions, including access to clean water, hygiene, and sanitation for the people. Also, the attention on developing stronger co-ordination mechanisms across sectors needs to be focused to ensure that sector specific policies and strategies are designed to achieve the full range of synergies of complementary investments in areas including agriculture and rural development, maternal and child health, climate change, and gender equality. The development of a comprehensive and robust monitoring and evaluation framework will be especially important to ensure transparency and accountability concerning the collective efforts of all stakeholders. Relevant stakeholders will also need to continue their efforts to raise awareness and build capacity at all levels of government and society about issues pertaining to food security and nutrition. This will require more specific knowledge about certain aspects of the food supply chain as well as the socio-economic dimensions of hunger and malnutrition in Cambodia. ■

MANGOES BOUND FOR EUROPEAN MARKET



Almost 60 tons of Cambodian mangoes were exported to the European Union during the harvesting season this year, according to Mong Reththy, who runs the country's largest agricultural export company.

According to Mong Reththy, the exportation contained Aiwen and Keo Romeat mangoes.

"The European market needs Khmer mangoes all the time and does not limit the imported amount or the season," he added. "Mangoes have to meet the EU food standards and the plantations have to be in line with the technical norms and not use chemical fertilizers."

Mango growers now also have access to the South Korean market following an agreement signed on 29 April 2016 between officials from Korea and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

According to statistics from the Ministry of Agriculture, over 9,000 tons out of the 9,117 tons of mangoes were exported to Vietnam in 2015. ■

CAMBODIA TO BUILD A 5 MILLION TONS/ ANNUAL OIL REFINERY

Cambodia is going to construct a 5 million tons/annual oil refinery soon, pointed out a news release of the Ministry of Mines and Energy.

The signing ceremony on the contract of engineering procurement and construction phase 1 of this refinery took place on 4 May between Cambodian Petrochemical Co., Ltd. and CNPC North East Refining & Chemical Engineering Co., Ltd, under the witness of H.E. Suy Sem, Minister of Mines and Energy.

This is a positive sign of oil development in Cambodia, underlined the news release, adding that once the construction completed, the factory will produce high quality oil for local demand and export.

According to the Ministry of Mines and Energy, in the 1960s, Cambodia had an oil refinery in Stung Hav, Preah Sihanouk province. The factory began its operation in 1968, but it was postponed three years later and totally destroyed due to civil war. ■

Q1: CAMBODIA'S GARMENT, SHOE EXPORT UP 13 PER CENT

Cambodia's largest foreign currency earner, Garment and footwear sector has seen a 13 per cent rise in export in the first quarter of 2016, according to a report of the Ministry of Industry on 1 May.

The Southeast Asian country had exported the products worth 1.55 billion U.S. dollars during the January-March period this year, up 13 per cent from 1.37 billion U.S. dollars over the same period last year, the report said.

Major markets for the items are Europe, the United States, and Canada.

Garment and footwear sector accounts for about 80 per cent of the country's total export. The sector is comprised of some 1,007 factories with around 754,000 workers. ■



INVESTMENT VALUE IN CAMBODIA'S CONSTRUCTION SECTOR REACHES US\$1,647 MILLION IN Q1

During the first three months of 2016, Cambodia has attracted some 473 investment projects in the construction sector worth in total US\$1,647 million, showing an increase of 257.51 per cent compared with the same period last year.

The figures were revealed on 6 May by H.E. Pen Sophal, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction, in a workshop on "Development of Phnom Penh Capital: Challenges and Solutions."

H.E. Pen Sophal expressed his optimism over the continued growth of the construction sector this year, stressing that the ministry has so far received many big construction proposals.

The increase in investment capital in the construction sector is thanks to the country's high economic growth, political and social stability, open-skies policy, and favorable conditions for investors, he explained.

In 2015, Cambodia received 2,305 construction projects worth some US\$3,338 million in total. ■

PASSENGER TRAINS TO RUN EVERY WEEKEND

Royal Railways announced on 5 May that passenger service from Phnom Penh to Sihanoukville, with stops in Takeo and Kampot, will run every weekend and on public holidays until further notice.

The passenger service, which debuted over Khmer New Year after a 14-year hiatus, currently takes eight hours to complete the 266-kilometer journey. One-way tickets are priced at \$6. ■



NO VEHICLE IN FRONT OF ANGKOR WAT TEMPLE



No vehicle is allowed to pass in front of the famous Angkor Wat Temple, except fire engines and ambulances, said Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen on 3 May.

“From now on, only pedestrians and bicycles can go in front of Angkor Wat Temple,” underlined the Cambodian premier, explaining that this move is aimed to ensure traffic order and safety as well as to improve the beauty at the area, and thus to enhance the prestige of this UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Angkor Wat is the symbol of Cambodia. Located among the lush tropical forests of Cambodia, Angkor was a 9th-15th century Khmer capital as well as an artistic and architectural icon.

The Angkor Archeological Park is one of the main tourism attractions in Cambodia beside the coastal areas in the southwestern part and the eco-tourism sites in the northeastern part of the country.



ASIAN VISITORS CONTINUE TO LEAD TOURISM SECTOR GROWTH

Kong Sopheareak, director of the statistics and information department at the Ministry of Tourism, said over 1.3 million tourists visited the Kingdom during the first quarter of the year, a 2.6 per cent increase compared to the same period in 2015.

He said the top nationalities of visitors were Vietnamese, Chinese and South Korean.

He added that the Tourism Ministry was aiming to develop strategies that boost these numbers further, including the

introduction of multi-entry visas that encourage return visits.

“The Tourism Ministry plans to provide a three-year multi-entry visa valid for tourists from China, South Korea and Japan, and will submit a request to the government for approval,” he said.

Tourists from Vietnam and other ASEAN countries do not need a visa to enter Cambodia.