

VISIONS of CAMBODIA

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CAMBODIA TO HAVE LAW ON POLITICAL PARTIES IN 2016

Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister, said Cambodia will have the Law on Political Parties no later than 2016.

The law approval will be made without obstacle despite disagreement from other parties because the Cambodian People's Party has enough voices to pass the law, underlined the Cambodian premier while presiding over here this morning a graduation ceremony of the Royal University of Law and Economics.

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2014-2015: ALMOST 6,000 ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS DEPORTED

Cambodia's General Department of Immigration (GDI) has arrested and deported some 5,731 illegal immigrants of 52 different nationalities between 2014 and 2015, Major General Ouk Hay Seila, Director of GDI's Investigation and Procedure Enforcement Department, told local media.

Of them, 1,307 undocumented immigrants of 24 nationalities were deported in 2014 while the rest (4,424) of 49 nationalities have been expelled this year, he added.

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CAMBODIA HOLDS 24TH CONGRESS OF BUDDHIST MONKS IN PHNOM PENH



National Assembly President Samdech Akka Moha Ponhea Chakrei Heng Samrin addresses the participants while he was presiding over the opening ceremony of the 24th Congress of Cambodian Buddhist Monks, held on 28 December at Chaktomuk Conference Hall, Phnom Penh.

Cambodian Buddhist monks from across the country have been gathering in their 24th congress opened on 28-29 December at the Chaktomuk Conference Hall under the presidency of National Assembly President Samdech Akka Moha Ponhea Chakrei Heng Samrin.

The two-day congress is aimed to review the outcomes of the implementation of the declaration made by the chief monk in the previous year through the discussion and exchange of opinions on the religious affairs and to set forth objectives to strengthen the implementation in accordance with the structure of the management for the growth of Buddhism.

In the name of His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni, Samdech Heng Samrin highly valued the congress, stressing that this annual event will draw attention to the strengthening of the structure of the management and governance, respecting and executing the dharma and discipline.

Currently, there are 4,755 pagodas and 59,516 Buddhist monks throughout the country, according to H.E. Min Khin, Minister of Cults and Religion.

Buddhism is the state religion in Cambodia, where more than 90 percent of the population is Buddhists. ■

CHINA TO INVEST SOME US\$400 MILLION IN RICE WAREHOUSE PROJECT IN CAMBODIA



Chairman of Chongqing Grain Group; Mr. Yu Yang, Chairman of Chongqing Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (Group); and Mr. He Sili, Vice General Manager of Guangdong Foreign Construction Co., Ltd.

On the occasion, Mr. Winston Wang told the Cambodian minister of his delegation's investment plan which, he said, will contribute to boosting Cambodia's rice export to the international markets, including China.

In reply, H.E. Sun Chanthol voiced his support to the project, stressing that it will not only contribute to achieving the country's goal of exporting 1 million tons of rice, but also to preventing any exploitation from traders.

The state warehouse project would begin in 2016, pointed H.E. Minister. ■

China's three major companies are planning to invest some US\$400 million in the construction and operation of a state rice warehouse project in Battambang, Pursat and Kampong Thom provinces.

The investment project was made known on 29 December during the meeting between Cambodian Senior Minister and Minister of Commerce H.E. Sun Chanthol and a Chinese delegation which included Mr. Winston Wang,

KOICA GRANTS ALMOST US\$300,000 FOR LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) has agreed to provide approximately US\$291,000 for the Local Civil Society Partnership Program (LCPP) under the KOICA's local Civil Society Organization (CSO) support program, said a KOICA's press release.

The grant agreement was signed by Ms. Baek Sook Hee, Country Director of KOICA Cambodia Office and representatives from three local NGOs – KHEMARA, Khmer Youth Association (KYA), and Youth Resource Development Program (YRDP) – at KOICA Office here on 29 December, it pointed out.

According to the press release, LCPP is a newly adopted program in KOICA for supporting grassroots level organization.

This year, in line with the Korean presidential initiative "Better Life for Girls", which aims to promote and encourage girls' education, health, and profession, KOICA has selected three competitive NGOs in education field as one year pilot program in 2016.

Through LCPP grant, it added, each NGO provides educational services in its target areas. KHEMARA will provide Early Childhood Development activities for children from the poor families in Kandal province while KYA will help young girls to remain in school by scholarship, community campaigns, and school activities in Kampong Chhnang province, and YRDP will implement civil education programs for the Cambodian youth in Phnom Penh so that they can be responsible and responsive to the society. ■

CAMBODIA TO HAVE LAW ON POLITICAL ...

Under this new law, presidents of each political party, the Senate, the National Assembly, the Constitutional Council, the Supreme Council of Magistracy, the National Anti-Corruption Council have to hold only one nationality, i.e. Cambodian, he underlined.

Furthermore, all politicians can be punished for insults, said Samdech Techo Hun Sen,

adding that the culture of dialogue is also included in the law.

Worth noting that in 2015, there were a total of 64 political parties in Cambodia and only 41 of which have been registered and 24 have been erased from the list. ■

2014-2015: ALMOST 6,000 ILLEGAL ...

Most of the deportees are Vietnamese and the others are Chinese, South Korean, American, French, British, Japanese, Thai, North Korean, and so on.

The Royal Government of Cambodia is working hard to address the issue of undocumented immigrants threatening social security.

The government also called for good cooperation with both regional and international countries to put the issue under control. ■

CAMBODIA DISPATCHES 184 ARMED PERSONNEL FOR UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION IN LEBANON



The sixth batch of 184 Cambodian blue helmet troops from Engineering Unit 936, including 10 women, departed here on 2 January for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

H.E. Gen. Sem Sovanny, Director General of the National Center for Peacekeeping Force, Mine and ERW Clearance, saluted them at their departure by special flight to Lebanon.

They will replace their counterparts of Unit 639 who ended successfully their one-year mission and will return home on 10 January.

Since 2006, Cambodia has dispatched over 3,150 blue helmet troops to take part in UN peacekeeping missions in Sudan, South Sudan, Chad, Lebanon, Mali, Central African Republic, and Cyprus. ■

CAMBODIA REQUESTS EDCF TO CONTINUE STRENGTHENING QUALITY OF DRY SEASON RICE



Cambodian Minister of Rural Development H.E. Chea Sophara has requested the Economic Development Co-operation Fund (EDCF) of the Republic of Korea (RoK) to continue providing technical assistance on dry season rice cultivation so as to improve its quality in order to compete in the ASEAN markets.

The request was made while H.E. Chea Sophara received Mr. Jongbok Lee, Director of EDCF, at the ministry on 30 December.

During the meeting, H.E. Chea Sophara expressed

his support to all EDCF's projects for the quality enhancement of rice cultivation in Cambodia. He also showed his appreciation for the interest of EDCF in the agricultural sector, mainly rice growing and rural development in Cambodia, and encouraged EDCF to strengthen cooperation with the Ministry of Rural Development through the creation of a commission to promote paddy rice development at rural communities.

H.E. Chea Sophara recommended EDCF to examine the possibility to link rice production to RoK's Saemaul Undong movement (New Village Movement) implemented in Cambodia.

For his part, Mr. Jongbok Lee pledged to go on cooperating with Cambodia's Ministry of Rural Development, especially in strengthening the quality of rice by dispatching technicians to work with Cambodian agricultural officials. ■

SIHANOUK PROVINCE RECEIVES NEARLY 120,000 VISITORS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL NEW YEAR CELEBRATION



Preah Sihanouk province of Cambodia welcomed some 116,240 national and international visitors during the celebration of the International New Year.

According to Mr. Nou Sophal, Head of the Provincial Department of Tourism, the said number is only for the period from 29 to 31 December, especially for countdown event during the last day.

Of the figure, some 98,700 were local tourists, up 1.03 per cent and some 17,540 were foreign visitors, up 1.67 per cent, he pointed out.

Provincial authorities in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce organized various events, such as exhibitions, concerts and popular games to entertain the visitors.

There are a total of 63 hotels of 3,065 rooms, 250 guesthouses of 3,450 rooms and 114 restaurants in Preah Sihanouk coastal province.

Preah Sihanouk province is Cambodia's most famous beach town. It is about 230 km southwest of Phnom Penh and boasts pristine white-sand beaches, unspoiled tropical islands, and a dynamic nightlife. ■

VEHICLE IMPORTS UP 27% IN FIRST 11 MONTHS

During the first eleven months of 2015, the number of imported vehicles, both new and used ones, rose to 61,894, up about 27 percent compared to the same period last year, according to local media reports.

This augmentation was explained by better living standard of Cambodian people and national economic growth.

Most of the vehicles were imported from the United States, Japan, China and Korea.

Mr. Seng Voeung of RMA Cambodia affirmed his company's success in car business. This year, he added, the company has imported about 1,000 cars, up from 700 in the previous year, and it planned to increase its imports by 20 percent next year. ■

CAMBODIA PREPARES FOR ACTCS ROLLOUT

Cambodia is preparing the rollout of ASEAN Clean Tourist City Standard (ACTCS) to further improve quality, competitiveness, greenness and sustainability of tourism in the country as well as the region.

"The ACTCS requires arrangements and developments in a manner that makes cities in ASEAN, including Cambodia, tourist sites of choice, attractive and qualified. This will contribute to the region's social and economic welfare," said Tourism Minister H.E. Thong Khon when chairing a recent workshop for rollout preparation of the standard.

ACTCS is a collection of assessment indicators for ASEAN member countries to continuously reflect the progress of their cities and improve them. It includes a wide range of assessment ranging from public toilets to hotels.

The ASEAN Clean Tourist City Standard is well aligned with the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2016-2025 to be adopted next month. ■



SAMBO PREY KUH TEMPLE ATTRACTS NEARLY 140,000 TOURISTS

In 2015, Sambo Prey Kuh Temple attracted 138,526 tourists, of whom national and international visitors were 122,286 and 16,240, respectively, said Mr. Seng An, Director of Kampong Thom Tourism Provincial Department.

Sambo Prey Kuh Temple is a historical and cultural resort of more than 1,350 years old. It is located in Sambo village, Sambo commune, Prasat Sambo district, around 30 kilometers from Kampong Thom provincial city.



According to the Ministry of Tourism, founded by King Isanavarman I during the seventh century, Sambo Prey Kuh was once the capital of Chenla known as Isanapura, and was a religious center dedicated to the worship of Shiva.

Collectively, the complex consists of more than a hundred temples built of solid bricks, laterite and sandstone and from the remains. It is understood that several successions of kings have maintained this site as their capital, each time adding more temples and monuments to the capital city.