

VISIONS of CAMBODIA

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DRAFT TRADE UNION LAW APPROVED

The weekly cabinet meeting, which was held at the Peace Palace under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Hun Sen, discussed and approved the Draft Trade Union Law, said a press release of the Press and Quick Reaction Unit of the Council of Ministers.

According to the press release, the draft law is consisting of 17 chapters and 100 articles cover all enterprises, institutions and individuals that are under the provisions of the Labor Law.

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MEKONG-LANCANG COOPERATION LAUNCHED

Foreign Ministers from China, and Mekong Countries including Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam held the First Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC) Meeting this week in Jinghong, Yunnan Province. The Meeting agreed to lay out a framework for Lancang-Mekong cooperation to promote sustainable development. The cooperation focused on three priority areas, politico-security issues, economics-development, and people-to-people exchanges.

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CAMBODIA MARKS 62ND ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE DAY



People celebrated 62nd anniversary of Independence Day with more than ten thousand people in Phnom Penh on November 9, 2015.

Kingdom of Cambodia celebrated the 62nd anniversary of national independence from France with the participation of about more than ten thousand people from all works of life, held on 9 November 2015 at the Independence Monument, Phnom Penh.

His Majesty Norodom Sihamoni, King of Cambodia, along with Prime Minister Hun Sen, National Assembly President Heng Samrin, and Senate President Say Chhum, as well as foreign ambassador accredited to Cambodia were also presented at the event with many other dignitaries, arm forces, civil servants, monks, students and local residents.

On the occasion, His Majesty the King laid a wreath at the Independence Monument and light a symbol victory flame which was kept

burning for three days to symbolize the country's independence from the colonial rule.

Dozens of white doves and balloons were released into the sky at the end of the event as a sign of independence and freedom.

In the evening, there were fireworks over the Tonlé Sap River in front of the Royal Palace.

Cambodia received full independence from France on Nov. 9, 1953 under the late royal leadership of His Majesty King-Father Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk, the father of national independence, territorial integrity and national unity.

France had ruled Cambodia for 90 years from 1863 until 1953. ■

RGC COMMITTED TO DEFEND CAMBODIA'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY



The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) led by Samdech Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister, has determined to defend the country's territorial integrity, in the West, East and North. The remarks were made by Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation H.E. Hor Namhong in his lecture at a forum on "Experience of Legal Strategies to Protect Preah Vihear Temple and Surrounding Area at the International Court of Justice (ICJ)", held at the Institute of Technology of Cambodia, Phnom Penh on November 9, to celebrate the 2nd anniversary (Nov. 11, 2013-2015) of Cambodia's victory in her request for the ICJ to interpret its verdict on June 15, 1962 in the case concerning the Temple of Preah Vihear.

H.E. Hor Namhong recalled Thailand's invasion of Preah Vihear Temple in 1954, the ICJ's judgment in 1962, the listing of Preah Vihear Temple as a World Heritage Site on July 7, 2008, and the encroachment on Preah Vihear area and attacks of the Thai side at common border since the temple's registration.

H.E. Hor Namhong also laid stress on

Cambodia's request to the ICJ to interpret its verdict in 1962, as well as the hearings and the final decision of ICJ on November 11, 2013, ruled that Cambodia had sovereignty over the whole territory of the promontory of Preah Vihear.

In consequence, Thailand was under an obligation to withdraw from that territory the Thai military or police forces, or other guards or keepers that were stationed there.

In the present proceedings, Thailand has accepted that it has a general and continuing legal obligation to respect the integrity of Cambodian territory, which applies to any disputed territory found by the Court to be under Cambodian sovereignty, the Court notes.

The Court affirms that the Temple of Preah Vihear is a site of religious and cultural significance for the peoples of the region and is now listed by UNESCO as a world heritage site. In this respect, the Court recalls that under Article 6 of the World Heritage Convention, to which both States are parties, Cambodia and Thailand must co-operate between themselves and with the international community in the protection of the site as a world heritage.

In addition, each State is under an obligation not to "take any deliberate measures which might damage directly or indirectly" such heritage. In the context of these obligations, the Court wishes to emphasize the importance of ensuring access to the Temple from the Cambodian plain. ■

ANGKOR TEMPLES HITS 1.6 MILLION TOURISTS

Over 1.6 million foreign tourists visited Angkor temples for the first ten months of 2015 shown an increased compared to last year.

APSARA Authority, a government's body established to protect and manage Angkor and the region of Siem Reap, recently issued a report of the rising number of international visitors to the Cambodia's cultural site.

More than US\$47.6 million, added the report, was the income from the sale of entry ticket alone

This year, it's optimistic that the number of the international tourists visiting Angkor temples will be at least the same as the previous year of about two millions. ■

MEKONG-LANCANG...

In addition, the Foreign Ministers from six countries raised 78 cooperation projects, which cover areas like water resource management, poverty alleviation, public health, infrastructure, personnel exchanges, science and technology.

The first LMC leaders' meeting will be held next year to provide political guidance to LMC's development in the future.

The Lancang- Mekong River runs through China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam, a natural link between the six countries.

The LCM is the first sub-region cooperation by involvement of the six countries, and the cooperation agenda is in accord with development demands, and the fundamental, long-term interests of the six countries.

The initiative was put forward at the 17th China-ASEAN leaders' meeting in November 2014 was proposed by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, the first and second LMC senior officials' meetings were held in April and August this year. ■

DRAFT TRADE UNION LAW...

The draft law is designed to protect and enhance the rights and freedom and prevent any irregular activities of trade unions, elaborated by the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training.

Currently, there are about 3,300 trade unions in Cambodia, particularly in 1,087 garment and footwear factories with some 700,000 workers, according to the press release pointed out.

At the same time, the cabinet meeting approved to submit the Agreement of the Establishment of the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity and the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement to the National Assembly for ratification and finally reviews by the Senate before being submitted to His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni for promulgation. ■

CAMBODIA, ADB REACH US\$64 MILLION LOAN AND GRANT AGREEMENTS



Asian Development Bank

Cambodia and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed here this morning loan and grant agreements totaling US\$64 million for two projects which will further improve the country's irrigation schemes and malaria control and monitoring systems.

The agreements, signed by Cambodia's Minister of Economy and Finance H.E. Aun Porn Moniroth and ADB Cambodia Resident Mission Officer-in-Charge, Mr. Jan Hansen, cover the Uplands Irrigation and Water Resources Management Sector Project and financing for the Second GMS Regional Communicable Diseases Control Project.

"The two projects will increase farm productivity and boost incomes for farmers through improved irrigation systems, and help the government strengthen

health services to prevent the spread of malaria," Hansen said.

According to the ADB, the US\$60 million loan for the Uplands Irrigation and Water Resources Management Sector Project will support the government's efforts to increase agricultural production by rehabilitating, modernizing, and climate-proofing irrigation systems in Kampong Thom and Battambang provinces. By 2021, the total cultivated area for both dry and wet seasons will have more than doubled to 29,500 hectares (ha) from 13,500 ha in 2015, and three irrigation systems will have achieved a 100 per cent increase in their efficiency.

The US\$4 million grant allocated for Cambodia under the additional financing for the Second GMS Regional Communicable Diseases Control-Project, provided by the Regional Malaria and Other Communicable Disease Threats Trust Fund, will strengthen the national malaria programs and expand the regional malaria surveillance and response system, focusing on border districts and information exchange between Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, and Vietnam. ■

TOURISM OPERATORS TO BE READY FOR CHINESE VISITORS

Cambodian Minister of Tourism H.E. Thong Khon has urged all tourism operators to get well prepared in order to attract more Chinese tourists to the country as the number of Chinese tourists travelling abroad has seen a significant increase.

Speaking at the recapitulative meeting held recently, H.E. Thong Khon called on private partners working in the tourism sector to be ready in welcoming Chinese tourists who like visiting places, buying brand-name products, and sleeping at luxury hotels, such as strengthening Chinese-speaking people and include Chinese language on foods' and other products' labels.

The tourism Ministry has been encouraging tourism strategies to satisfy Chinese tourists.

H.E. Thong Khon said that the ministry has also been promoting the potential of Cambodian tourism sites to the Chinese people in order to attract more and more Chinese tourists and investors to the Kingdom.

There were 135 million Chinese tourists travelling abroad, mostly to Asia, Europe and America, in 2014. The number is predicted to reach 180 million or 200 million by 2020, according to a report.

650,000 Chinese visitors were welcomed in Cambodia last year, according to a data from the Ministry of Tourism. ■

CAMBODIA'S EXPORTS TO U.S. INCREASE BY 7.76%

For the first nine months of this year, Cambodia's exports to the U.S. were valued at US\$2,332 million, rise 7.76 per cent from US\$2,164 million during the same period of 2014, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Most of the exported products to the U.S. include textile, garment, footwear, rice and so on while the imported products were electronic equipment, vehicles, machinery, medicines and medical equipment, valued at some US\$291 million, up 15 per cent from US\$215 million during the same period last year, it said.

In 2010, Cambodian garment products exported to the U.S. accounted for approximately 44 per cent of the total export, whereas some 30 per cent to the Europe Union (EU), Mr. Ken Loo, Secretary General of Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia (GMAC), reported by the local media.

But 2014, he added, the exports to the U.S. fell to 30 per cent while the EU increased to almost 50 per cent. ■

KITE FLYING FESTIVAL

The 19th kite flying festival was held on November 12 with about 100 kite flyers from across the country by the Ministry of Culture at Koh Pich Island, Phnom Penh.

The annual festival was aimed at conserving Cambodian culture and tradition and introducing a variety of kites to younger generations, according to Culture and Fine Arts Secretary of State.

He added, kites have existed in Cambodia for over 2,000 years and the farmers and rural children play kites during harvest season between December and February. ■

THE BEAUTY OF PHNOM SANTUK

Phnom Santuk is the most important sacred mountain in Kampong Thom province, with the height of 679ft (207 m) above lush paddy.

Santuk's temples are set high above the surrounding countryside, which means there are a lot of stairs to climb- in fact, 809 steps, encircled by stunningly rendered statues of naga and dragons that one can possibly imagine. Alternatively, visitors can drive up a 2.5 km steep road that snakes through thick jungle and past a resident colony of macaques.



Just beneath the Southern Summit, there is a gilded, white-walled central temple. A number of Buddha statues have been carved into the rock face, including a few Reclining Buddhas; several are modern incarnations cast in cement, others were carved into the living rock in centuries past.

The views from the summit towards Tonlé Sap are breathtaking and are a welcome change from the infinite flatness of the lush rice plains.

There is also an active monastery whose friendly monks interested in receiving foreign visitors.

It is also a good place for night spenders in Phnom Santuk, which allows visitors to catch a magnificent sunset over the rice fields.

