



Cambodia Permits MS Westerdam's Entry Amid COVID-19 Fear



KT/FEB 14

Being aware of the risks, Cambodia has taken very bold and decisive steps to assist those in need to deal with common global threats such as the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

The Cambodian government made a bold decision with good faith to allow the Westerdam cruise ship to dock in Sihanoukville, after six countries have denied its entry due to the concern over the spread of COVID-19.

The premier was in Sihanoukville to welcome the passengers. He stressed the importance of moral responsibility and international partnership in dealing with the outbreak of COVID-19.

Among more than 1,455 passengers and 802 crew on board, there are more than 600 American tourists.

The PM has directly instructed his government to take all measures to ensure that all passengers and crew are safely and smoothly returning to their home countries. He has also urged Cambodians to warmly welcome the passengers, without discrimination or fear.

Cambodia is not a developed country, but it has big heart to offer to the international community. Helping others to live in dignity without discrimination and protecting the right to life are the most important elements of human rights.

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Cambodia Leads the World in Support for China's Fight Against Novel Coronavirus Epidemic



KT/FEB 12

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen is currently the first and only world leader to visit China and personally lend his support – including material aid – as China battles the novel coronavirus epidemic with military precision.

The decision of the Prime Minister Hun Sen to visit China reflects a sense of international responsibility to reduce the widespread panic and anxiety as this fear is more harmful and dangerous than the virus itself.

More state and government leaders and heads of global institutions have expressed their sympathy to China over the novel coronavirus outbreak and voiced support to the country's fight against the epidemic.

China has made great efforts against the outbreak, United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said, adding that the UN firmly supports the measures taken by the Chinese government and people to tackle the epidemic, and hopes that all countries work together to deal with the outbreak in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation.

The global health agency firmly supports China's efforts to prevent and control the epidemic, and sent a team of specialists to work with Chinese experts, the WHO chief added. •

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UNHCR to Increase Capacity...

Mr Vincentiis also pointed out that the refugee issue in the current social context is becoming more complex, adding that global figures show that at the present there are nearly 70 million people who have become refugees for a variety of reasons, including war and economic crisis.

Interior Minister Sar Kheng told Mr Vincentiis that as a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, Cambodia is responsible for evaluating and accepting those who suffer suppression for political reasons and those who flee from wars as stipulated in the convention. •

Rubber Exports Increase 17%



PPP/FEB 20

Cambodia exported 27,445 tonnes of rubber worth \$40 million in the first month of the year, up 17 per cent compared to the same period last year.

Khuon Phalla, Director of the General Directorate of Rubber's Department of Administration and Legislation said an increase in global demand was the main driver of the industry's growth last month as China remains the largest market for Cambodia's rubber.

The average price last month was \$1,433 per tonne, up \$207 from December. "I expect that the price of rubber will continue to increase over the next few months," he said.

Cambodia exported 282,071 tonnes of rubber last year, a 30 per cent increase from 2018's 217,501 tonnes, a ministry report said.

The commodity reeled in \$377 million in revenue last year, up 32 per cent from 2018's \$286 million, it said.

The data also showed that a total of 406,142ha of rubber had been planted last year, with more than 247,113ha having been harvested. •

Swedish Ambassador Praises A2I Drafting Process



AKP/FEB 19

H.E. Mr. Bjorn Haggmark, Ambassador of Sweden to Cambodia, has lauded the good and open drafting process of the law on access to information (A2I).

While paying a courtesy call on Cambodian Minister of Information H.E. Khieu Kanharith, the Swedish Ambassador noted that the process is open for all stakeholders to contribute their views and comments for a better A2I draft law.

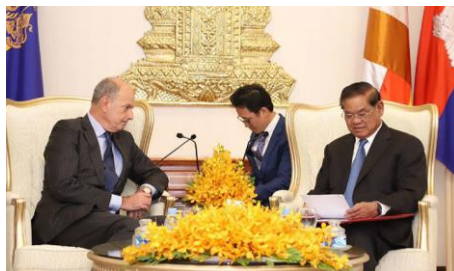
He also expressed his conviction that through the Ministry of Information, the draft law will be adopted soon and the implementation will be also successful.

The minister said that the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Justice are now working on the penalty point and once the discussion ended, the draft law will be submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval.

He took the opportunity to thank the Swedish government for its technical and financial support for the A2I law drafting process.

This cooperation between Cambodia and Sweden will continue when it comes to the dissemination of the A2I law, underlined the information minister. •

UNHCR to Increase Capacity Training for Refugee Protection



KT/FEB 13

UNHCR has pledged to increase capacity-building training for its officials to support Cambodia's continuing efforts to protect refugees and asylum seekers under international conventions.

The pledge was made by Giuseppe De Vincentiis, a representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in a meeting with Interior Minister Sar Kheng.

Mr Vincentiis had commended the Kingdom, a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, for its efforts to protect refugees and asylum seekers since 2009.

The representative of UNHCR is committed to continuing supporting and sharing experiences with the Interior Ministry and its subordinate units in efforts to protect refugees and asylum seekers, especially through capacity building for officials. He also welcomed Cambodia's progress in establishing a civil registration system, which is an important contribution toward processing people for refugee or asylum seeker status.

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Switzerland to Provide \$12 Million to Kantha Bopha Hospital

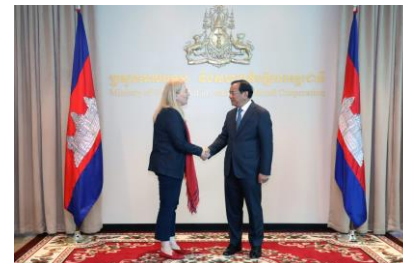


KT/FEB 14

New Swiss Ambassador to Cambodia Helene Budliger Artieda said that her government will continue to provide \$12 million to Kantha Bopha Children's Hospitals for three years.

The Swiss government promises to continue to provide aid to Kantha Bopha Children's Hospital to support Cambodia in the health sector. Even though the hospital is now managed by Cambodian doctors, the Swiss still supports the children.

The Cambodia government and the Cambodian Red Cross also donated \$16 million a year to the hospital for operations. The Cambodian government has introduced a number of steps and initiatives to ensure the financial sustainability of this hospital. •



Ministry Drive to Better Protect Children

KT/FEB 20

The Social Affairs Ministry launched its Strong Family Communication Campaign aiming to end violence against children and unnecessary family separations.

Minister Vong Sauth said key messages would be disseminated nationwide through the mass media, social media and community activities.

The campaign targets children, parents, caregivers, community members, service providers, policy makers, the judiciary and the media.

“The campaign is to make sure people know a safe family environment is the best place for a child to grow and develop,” Minister Sauth said. He added the government is also looking into creating the Child Protection Law to ensure comprehensive protection for children.

According to joint press statement released by the ministry and UNICEF, the authorities have formulated and implemented national and provincial action plans to improve childcare.

Cristain Munduate, UNICEF’s representative in Cambodia, said the strong family campaign needs to be taken to every family, school, community and media.

“Violence affects all of us! This campaign is an opportunity to mobilise all Cambodians to say NO to violence and to secure a healthy, safe environment for their children and their families,” she said. •

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Cambodia Permits MS Westerdam's...

Cambodia continues to earn praise for its humanitarian act of allowing the *MS Westerdam* cruise ship to dock at the Preah Sihanouk port. The praise also comes from US President Donald Trump.

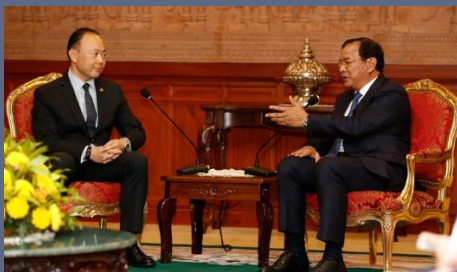
World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus thanked Cambodian government for allowing the Holland America owned *MS Westerdam* cruise ship, which has been turned away from many countries to dock at Sihanoukville Autonomous Port.

“This is an example of the international solidarity we have consistently been calling for,” he said. “Outbreaks can bring out the best and worst in people. Stigmatizing individuals or entire nations does nothing but harm the response.” he added.

US Ambassador to Cambodia Patrick Murphy said the Cambodian government did the right thing for humanitarian needs by allowing *MS Westerdam* to be anchored in Sihanoukville and passengers to disembark.

“It is very touching for me to see all of the passengers and crew on this vessel who are being warmly welcomed by the people of Cambodia,” Mr Murphy said. •

Australia Continues Support for Landmine Clearing



KT/FEB 12

Australian government provided \$10 million for landmine clearing in Cambodia.

The aid was announced when new Australian Ambassador to Cambodia Pablo Chiho Kang met with Foreign Affairs Minister Prak Sokhonn.

Australia, the Cambodian Mine Action and Victims Assistance Authority and the UN development programme last year signed a joint statement reaffirming their ongoing commitment to working toward a mine-free Cambodia by 2025.

The government cleared about 1,900 square kilometres of land from landmines over the last 20 years, making the land safe for cultivation and raising incomes for more than 5.3 million people living in the rural areas in Kingdom’s northwest and along the border with Thailand. •