



## Khmer Version of UNESCO's Handbook on Journalism, Fake News and Disinformation Launched



KT/July 24

UNESCO in collaboration with the Ministry of Information launched the Khmer version of UNESCO's handbook titled "Journalism, 'Fake News' and Disinformation: A Handbook for Journalism Education and Training".

The launching ceremony was presided over by Cambodian Minister of Information, UNESCO Representative in Cambodia, and First Secretary at the Embassy of Sweden in Phnom Penh.

Addressing at the function, the Minister said the handbook is a useful tool for the general public, particularly media professionals. He strongly hoped that through the book, Cambodians will know more about what the freedom of expression is.

He reiterated that the law on fake news is unnecessary, stressing that dealing with fake news does not mean to use administrative or legal measure, but to use facts to counteract fake news and disinformation.

According to a recent joint press release, this handbook explores the very nature of journalism with modules on why trust matters; thinking critically about how digital technology and social platforms are conduits of the information disorder; fighting back against disinformation and misinformation through media and information literacy; fact-checking 101, social media verification and combatting online abuse. ●

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## Cambodian Women's Financial Literacy Knowledge Gets Boost



KT/July 29

The National Bank of Cambodia (NBC) and the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) organised a training programme on "Financial Literacy for Women Entrepreneurship Development".

The training was part of the cooperation between the NBC and MoWA and also one of the key priorities set in the National Strategy on Financial Inclusion 2019-2025, especially women financial inclusion and financial literacy improvement.

Minister of Women's Affairs laid stress on the importance of the training in reducing the vulnerability of women entrepreneurs, saying that it will help women not only in expanding their businesses, but also in increasing their ability and confidence in family financial management and decision making.

For her part, Director General of the NBC's Central Banking said that empowering women with financial literacy will contribute to improving the living standard of their respective families and communities. •

## Draft Digital Policy Speeding Up

KT/July 30

The government is speeding up its draft digital policy to adapt the economy to e-government.

Minister of Post and Telecommunications said digital government encapsulates the modernisation of government systems and public service management through digital technologies to facilitate public administrative duties, decision-making processes and public service provision to the general public, private sector and relevant institutions in an efficient, transparent, accountable and inclusive manner.

He has urged relevant officials and working group members to expedite the completion of the draft concept note.

The ministry of Post and Telecommunications also discussed the review and revision of the postal draft law to replace the 2002 postal law in response to the current technological development of postal sector.

The Ministry will implement related documents from countries in the region such as the Asian-Pacific Postal Union and Universal Postal Union to help draft the new law. •

## Exports Rise in Value, Lower Imports



KT/July 30

Cambodian total export values amounted to \$5.9 billion, a year-on-year increase of 11.7% in the first five months of this year. The value of Cambodia's total imports amounted to \$8.1 billion, a decrease by 1% in the same period, compared with 2019, according to data from Economic Diplomacy – Socio-economic trends from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC).

The decline in the growth of import values was because of the sluggish economic activity in March (0.4%) and negative growth in April (13.9%) and May (26.5%).

Meanwhile, the import of major goods decreased, especially construction materials, textile products (especially cloth) and machinery.

In general, Cambodian exports still maintained a favourable growth level although trading partner countries and the world have faced the COVID-19 pandemic. The steady growth was attributed to a high growth of export values in January (25.4%) and February (22.8%) and May (25.3%).

From January to May 2020, the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) approved 92 private investment projects (excluding special economic zones – SEZs), which have increased by 11 projects.

Total number of construction project proposals was 2,107 in the first five months of 2020, which increased by 495 with a total area of 7.8 million square metres and a total value of \$3,483 billion, compared with the same period last year. •

## Evaluating the Net Worth of Social Media to the Kingdom

KT/July 29

The impact of the internet on the world has been evolutionary. In a mere 30 years, it has become a dominant global medium for communication. Since its inception, with each decade, a new generation takes its functionality to another level with its rapid development continuing to shape the future.

Although Cambodia was late to the party – only setting up its first minuscule 64 kbps internet connection in 1997 – the Kingdom’s citizens, businesses and the government have since embraced technology as a tool to enhance their own livelihoods and future respectively.

This is no truer than through social media, which all of the aforementioned have adopted as their go-to information sharing platform, creating a distinctive dynamic.

A research study by the Asia Foundation on mobile and internet use in Cambodia said that in 2016, the internet surpassed television at 29% and radio at 15% as the most important channel through which Cambodians access information. This accounted for 30% of the population’s preferred method.

In Cambodia, the internet is mostly accessed through mobile phones, with Facebook being by far the most popular app with over seven million users, as reported by the Telecommunication Regulator of Cambodia in February.

Cambodia utilises the multifunctional platform for almost everything, from selling a vast variety of products via the online live feature and host private tutoring to publishing official ministerial statements and even national announcements by Prime Minister Hun Sen. •

## Gov’t, NGOs Launch Policy to Improve Services for Children



PPP/July 29

The General Secretariat of the Cambodian National Council for Children (CNCC), Plan International Cambodia and ChildFund Cambodia has recently announced the launch of the National Policy of Child Protection System (NPCPS) at a ceremony.

The announcement signalled the Kingdom’s willingness to invest in children’s education and development.

Minister of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and CNCC chairman said the NPCPS expresses the government’s commitment to strengthening and expanding its policies related to children. The national policy was initially planned as a 10-year project lasting from 2019 to 2028.

A major aim of the policy is to improve the protection of children from all forms of abuse and exploitation in the country.

The government acknowledged the need to invest more in social workers and ensure children have access to legal and social services. The policy also plans to improve the government’s response to children affected by disasters. •

## Three Institutions Collaborate To Prevent and Eliminate Interference to Aircraft Radio



KT/July 28

The Ministry of Information, Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications and the State Secretariat of Civil Aviation (SSCA) signed a joint Prakas on measures to prevent and eliminate interference to aircraft radio.

Minister of Information, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications and Minister in charge of the SSCA were the signatories.

Speaking on the occasion, the three ministers expressed their strong hope that the cooperation will resolve the frequency interference issue which has imposed a high risk to aircrafts.

The nine-article Joint Prakas is aimed to control, prevent and eliminate the interference of radio frequencies to Aeronautical Radionavigation System VHF Air Band 108-137MHz of the SSCA.

Up to now, there are more than 200 radio stations in Cambodia and 49 airline companies operating in the Kingdom, of which 44 are international and 5 are local air passenger carriers. •

## Demining Provides Land to 5.7m People



KT/July 29

Some five million people across the country have reportedly gained safe access to agricultural land, livelihood activities and development amid Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority's Clearing for Results (CfR) Phase IV project.

The fourth phase, which kicked off this year and is set to last until 2025, is part of a demining initiative launched in 2006 to support the Kingdom towards achieving its 2025 mine-free goal. The figure was provided in a statement made after a board meeting which saw the attendance of the Ministry of Economy and Finance representatives, donors and development partners, including the UN Development Programme, Korea International Cooperation Agency and the governments of Australia and New Zealand.

During the meeting, CMAA first vice-president said the fourth phase of the CfR does not solely focus on mine clearance but also on victim assistance, mine-risk reduction, socio-economic development and gender mainstreaming in mine action.

As of June 2020, over 2,043 square kilometres of mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contaminated land areas have been cleared and released for productive use by the affected communities and development purposes.

The clearance operation saw the destruction of 1,088,677 antipersonnel mines, 25,361 anti-tank mines and 2,858,071 ERWs. Such progress, he said, has benefitted 5.7 million people. •

## Cambodia, China Conclude Bilateral FTA Negotiations

KT/July 22

Negotiations on the establishment of a free trade agreement (FTA) between the Kingdom of Cambodia and the People's Republic of China were officially concluded on July 20, 2020, after half a year of negotiations.

Cambodian Minister of Commerce and his Chinese counterpart spoke highly of the Cambodia-China FTA, which reflects the traditional and long-lasting relationship as well as the comprehensive partnership of cooperation between the two countries.

The successful conclusion of a free trade agreement shows the strong commitment of both countries' leaders to strengthen closer and broader relations. This FTA will bring about many economic and social benefits to the people of the two countries through the liberalisation of trade in goods and services, the promotion of comprehensive investment, as well as cooperation in a number of areas.

For the next step, both sides will implement their respective internal procedures leading to the signing of the bilateral FTA this year. •

