



**CAMBODIA
CONNECT**

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South Korea to Continue Support for Cambodia's Development



The South Korean government highlighted the success of regional summits in Busan, noting its government's pledge in support of socio-economic development of Cambodia.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn represented Prime Minister Hun Sen at the ASEAN-Republic of Korea Commemorative Summit and Mekong-Republic of Korea Summit.

South Korea pledged to continue its contribution to the kingdom's socio-economic development as well as its recent pledge for a concessional loan of \$700 million for 2019-2023 and its grant support of \$10 million for mine

clearance in Battambang, Pailin and Banteay Meanchey provinces.

In addition, Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn thanked his counterpart for an increased quota of Cambodian migrant workers, noting that more than 61,000 Cambodian workers are living and working there.

The two countries signed two important legal bases: an agreement for the elimination of double taxation with respect to taxes on income and the prevention of tax evasion and avoidance, and a treaty on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.●

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Cambodia Celebrates 30 Years of UN Children's Rights Convention



Children, dignitaries and major stakeholders met in Phnom Penh to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

The event marked the launch of a joint three-month “#everyright4everychild” campaign by the European Union, UNICEF, Save the Children, USAID and Child Rights Now. The campaign aims to strengthen and protect the rights of every child.

The event was attended by around 300 Cambodian youths where a youth representative and guest speakers from the government and development partners raised ongoing issues regarding children's rights and the corresponding efforts that had been taken to preserve them.

Cambodia ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child on October 15, 1992, after the UN adopted it in 1989. It is known to be the most ratified human rights treaty in history. •

Union Law Amended

The National Assembly unanimously passed amendments to the Trade Union Law to promote workers' rights and ensure union freedom.

The Trade Union Law became effective in 2016, but unions complained that some articles restricted their freedom. The lawmakers voted in favor of amendments to ten articles that were highlighted by unionists in their previous meetings with government officials.

The amendments aim to give more freedom to workers and unions. For instance, the unions are no longer required to make and submit a copy of activity and finance to the Labour Ministry, but the ministry has an obligation to demand those reports if requested by union members or donors. •

Mekong Countries to Jointly Address Drought

The Mekong River Commission (MRC) Council approved a five-year strategy until 2025 allowing Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam to prepare for and manage drought collectively.

The approval comes as the MRC's preliminary data analysis shows that severe to extreme drought is expected to hit countries in the lower Mekong basin, while the Mekong water levels have dropped to their lowest points in living memory or at least since the last 60 years.

The analysis noted that Cambodia and Thailand would be hardest hit compared to Laos and Vietnam.

The strategy is part of the commission's ongoing efforts to assist member countries to deal with present and future drought that exerts both national and transboundary impact. •

Outgoing Australian Ambassador Assures Continued Support for Cambodia



The Australian government is committed to strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries and will continue aiding the kingdom's development, having already provided about \$1 billion in funds from 1992 until last year.

The Australian government gave about \$1 billion from 1992 to 2018 in support of infrastructure, agriculture, commerce, water resources, fisheries, education, health, mine clearance and the UN-backed Khmer Rouge Tribunal.

Australia is committed to offering roughly 70 million to 80 million Australian dollars yearly to help Cambodia. •

Cambodia, South Korea to Explore Bilateral FTA



Cambodia and South Korea signed a statement on the launch of a joint study on a potential Free Trade Agreement between the two countries on the sidelines of the ASEAN - South Korea commemorative summit in Busan, South Korea.

The Cambodia-South Korea Bilateral FTA is expected to not only strengthen the relationship and promote bilateral trade between the two countries, but also create more employment and investment opportunities and promote services export that will contribute more to the economic growth and bring more benefits to the people of the two nations.

The trade volume between the two countries increased noticeably to around 756 million U.S. dollars last year, a 14.7 percent rise compared to a year earlier. Cambodia's main exports to South Korea included garments, electronics, shoes, luggage, aluminium, beverages, medical supplies and natural rubber. The kingdom's main imports from South Korea included trucks, bulldozers, clothes, mineral water, electronics, and cosmetic products. ●

Cambodia to Host Global Child Nutrition Forum in Siem Reap

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of Cambodia in collaboration with the UN World Food Programme Cambodia and the UN World Food Programme Regional Bureau in Bangkok will host the annual Global Child Nutrition Forum (GCNF) in Siem Reap province in early December.

The event to take place from Dec. 2 to 6, 2019 will be the first time that the international conference is held in the Asian region that offers many examples of how school feeding programmes can act as a safety net for children, families, and the local community.

The Forum will provide an opportunity to focus on the experiences matured in the region and beyond, so that strengthened, well targeted, and nationally-owned school meal programmes and services, embedded in national education and social protection systems, are leveraged to advance more effective, inclusive and comprehensive policies which lead to enhanced food and nutrition security.

More than 350 leaders from over 60 countries will meet in an effort to help governments around the world build nutritious national school meal programmes that are locally sourced and country-operated. Participants will discuss the theme *“What we’re learning: Enhancing value and exploring challenges and good practices in school meal programme implementation.”*

The Global Child Nutrition Forum is a learning exchange and technical assistance conference designed to support countries in the development and implementation of school feeding programmes.

Representatives of governments, NGOs, businesses, UN agencies, and academia are expected in Cambodia. The Forum is the largest annual international conference on school feeding in the world. ●

Japan Funds Environment Education

The government of Japan, via its embassy to Cambodia, granted more than \$190,000 to Nature Centre Risen, an NGO for environmental education at kindergarten and secondary schools in this Southeast Asian nation.

The grant is for a project “Realization of Sustainable Life Environment through the teaching of practical environmental education in Teacher Education College”. In this project, Nature Centre Risen will establish a continuous training system of environmental education from pre-school to lower secondary schools in Cambodia.

This will be done through revising instruction books for teachers, publishing the environmental education textbooks for students and providing support for the Pre-School Teacher Training Centre.

Japanese Ambassador Masahiro Mikami expects the project to help raise awareness about environmental protection in order to preserve the biodiversity of nature and a green living environment for the people. ●

Cambodia, Germany Sign Two Cooperative Financing Agreements



Minister of Economy and Finance Aun Porn Moniroth and German Ambassador to Cambodia Christian Berger signed two cooperative financing agreements worth 67.1 million euros, equivalent to US\$74 million.

The German government will provide 30 million euros concessional loan and a grant of 2 million euros for financing energy efficiency projects for rural electricity supply, under the 2018 Cooperation Agreement.

Additionally, the German government will offer another 30 million euros concessional loan for rural infrastructure development projects for Cambodia and 5.1 million euros for project financing certain, under the 2019 Cooperation Agreement.

The two cooperative financing agreements represent the good friendship between the government of the two nations in support of Cambodia's social development and economy. •

Better Factories Cambodia Renewed

“Better Factories Cambodia” (BFC), a program of the International Labor Organization (ILO), has been extended for another three years and expanded to cover travel goods.

The memorandum of understanding to extend the program has recently been signed by ILO, the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, the Ministry of Commerce, and the Garment Manufacturers Association of Cambodia (GMAC).

The program, which has been renewed six times since it began in 2001, will run from Jan 2020 to Dec 2022. This time, however, its scope has been broadened to include travel goods.

Adding the travel goods and bag sector is a significant step forward in the government's mission to improve working conditions and align with internationally recognized core labor standards and the labor law of Cambodia.

The Labor Ministry has always considered ILO-BFC and GMAC key stakeholders contributing to ensuring labor rights and working conditions and improving competitiveness and productivity in the garment industry of the country. •

UNESCO Listing for 10 Other Cultural Heritages Sought



As Cambodia marks the first anniversary of the inscription of traditional Cambodian dance drama Lakhon Khol on Unesco's cultural heritage list, the government is preparing to have 10 other forms of tangible and intangible heritage registered with the UN body.

To commemorate the inscription of Lakhon Khol, 280 artists gathered in Siem Reap for what a senior culture official said was the biggest ever performance of the traditional dance drama.

Cambodia had already registered three tangible cultural heritages with Unesco – Angkor Wat, Preah Vihear and Prasat Sambor Prei Kuk. The UN body has also listed five Cambodian intangible cultural heritages including the Royal Ballet, *Sbek Thom* leather shadow puppets, Khmer tug-of-war, *Champey Dong Veng* and *Lakhon Khol* Wat Svay Andet.

Cambodia is hoping to have three tangible cultural heritages and seven intangible cultural heritage listed. The former includes Khmer noodles, ancient Cambodian martial art l'bokator and silk-weaving. The latter are Kulen Mountain resort, Beung Mealea Temple, Banteay Chhmar Temple, Preah Khan Temple Kampong Svay, Nokor Borei Phnom Da, Banteay Prey Nokor, and Oudong Mountain resort. •