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## More Than 5,000 Cambodian People Commemorate the Day of Remembrance



AKP Phnom Penh, May 20, 2013

A traditional Buddhist ceremony was held this morning at Choeung Ek killing Field to wish for peace for the soul of victims who died during the Khmer Rouge regime from 1975 to 1979.

The ceremony was attended by more than 5,000 Cam-

bodian people including members of National Assembly, Senate and Government, civil servants, monks, students and Phnom Penh residents.

May 20 is a historical day of Cambodia which marked and incurred in the heart of Cambodian people the barbarous atrocities committed by

the Khmer Rouge regime against its own people, said a student of the Royal University of Fine Arts in an oration.

A stage of drama was performed by a group of the students of the Royal University of Fine Arts to recall the past atrocities and food offering to 270 Buddhist monks was made

afterward.

The Choeung Ek Killing Field is located in the southwestern outskirts of Phnom Penh where there are 129 graves in total. Most of the victims were sent from the S-21 prison known as the Museum of Genocide.

## CRC Signs MoU with Happy Tree Social Services



*Phnom Penh Red Cross Branch signs a Memorandum of Understanding on the Partnership Cooperation with Happy Tree Social Services Organization in Phnom Penh on May 28. Photo: Ok Sokhoeun*

AKP Phnom Penh, May 30, 2013 –

Phnom Penh Red Cross Branch and Happy Tree Social Services have signed here a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on partnership cooperation.

The MoU signing ceremony was held on May 28 at Raffles Hotel Le Royal in the presence of newly-appointed Phnom Penh Governor H.E. Pa Socheat

Vong and Mr. Nick Vujicic, a well-known speaker and a humanitarian elite.

The presence of Happy Tress Social Services reflected the cooperation and partnership between the Cambodian Red Cross (CRC) and civil society organization network to increase public attention on humanitarian sector in Cambodia, said H.E. Pa Socheat Vong.

Also, the presence of Mr. Nick Vujicic revealed a

wonderful activity and was very important to inform the disabled people to have strong spirit to struggle for their lives, he underlined.

“It is my great honor to come to Cambodia for the second time,” said Mr. Nick Vujicic, “There are my races in the world having no respects at all for the disabled while in some tribes the handicapped children have been killed.”

“However, in Cambodia, it can be seen that the assistance to the disabled has surged and we have many tasks to work together for long-term period,” Mr. Nick Vujicic stressed.

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## Cambodia's Strong Support to Persons with Disability

AKP Phnom Penh, May 29, 2013 —

Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia, presided over here this morning the Official Launching on Commitment of Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Incheon Strategy "Make the Rights Real" for Persons with Dis-

abilities in Asia and Pacific 2013-2022 and the Continuation of National Disability Strategy Plan (NDSP) 2014-2018.

It is a historic event that opens new historical page for Cambodian disabled people to gain an international norm of the UN in Asia and Pacific, in addition to the existing policies of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and the law of the Protec-

tion and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, being actively implemented with fruitful results, said Samdech Techo Hun Sen.

This event is also aimed at showing the RGC's will and commitment to continue the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities in conformity with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability,

he added.

The RGC is ready to cooperate with UN to gather support for the Incheon Strategy "Make the Rights Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and Pacific 2013-2022, underlined the Cambodian premier.

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## Ministry of Women's Affairs, NGOs Cooperate on Elimination of Violence Against Women

AKP Phnom Penh, May 23, 2013 —

Cambodia's Ministry of Women's Affairs and relevant non-governmental organizations will strengthen their cooperation in fighting violence and abuses against women and girls in the country.

The remarks were made known here on May 21 during a press conference under the presidency of

H.E. Dr. Ing Kantha Phavi, Minister of Women's Affairs, as well as government institutions and NGOs' representatives.

"In order to save women from violence, exploitation, discrimination and any abuses in the country, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and government institutions as well as relevant NGOs must continue implementing the existing mechanisms including the

establishment of multi-service center, underlined H.E. Dr. Ing Kantha Phavi.

There are two multi-service centers in the country (Kampong Thom and Siem Reap) so far that provide lawyers and police for urgent intervention whenever the violence against women takes place, she pointed out.

She also said the ministry has been implementing a

project supported by GIZ and AICID in order to provide mental services to women who suffered from any violence and abuse.

In 2012, 13 percent of women in Cambodia were victims of domestic violence and discrimination.

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## Senate First Vice President Receives President of Swiss Council of State

AKP Phnom Penh, May 30, 2013 –

Cambodia's Senate First Vice President H.E. Say Chhum received here on May 27 visiting Swiss Council of State (Senate) delegation led by its President H.E. Filippo Lombardi.

In the meeting, H.E. Filippo Lombardi highly valued the good relations and cooperation between Cambodia and Switzerland and the rapid devel-

opment in Cambodia in all sectors, in particular the economic growth, poverty reduction, democracy and human rights respect.

In addition, H.E. Filippo Lombardi praised Cambodia on the implementation of deconcentration and decentralization policies.

He also invited a delegation of the Cambodian Senate to visit Switzerland in order to further boost the cooperation between the two legislative bodies.

For his part, H.E. Say Chhum accepted the invitation and expressed profound thanks to Switzerland for its contribution to the development of Cambodia, especially for its financial aid to Kantha Bopha Foundation since the establishment of the Kantha Bopha Children's Hospitals in 1992.

H.E. Say Chhum asked the Swiss government and Senate to increase bilateral trade volume as well as to encourage more investors

and tourists to Cambodia. On the same day, H.E. Filippo Lombardi also met with Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister in charge of the Office of the Council of Ministers H.E. Sok An.

During the talk, both sides pledged to try their utmost to further boost the cooperation between the two countries.

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## Germany Provides 5 Million Euro for Infant and Maternal Health Care

AKP Phnom Penh, May 22, 2013 –

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany has provided some 5 million Euro as financial and technical cooperation assistance for 2012 to support infant and maternal health project in Cambodia.

The financial aid agreement was signed here on

May 20 by Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance H.E. Keat Chhon and German Ambassador to Cambodia H.E. Wolfgang Moser.

During the signing ceremony, H.E. Keat Chhon, who is also First Vice President of Council for Development of Cambodia (CDC), said that the 5 million Euro financial

assistance will be used to promote family planning and reduce infant and maternal mortality rate.

The Federal Republic of Germany is Cambodia's major development partner among the EU countries. It has provided a financial assistance of some US\$40 million annually to Cambodia to support various projects including rural development, health,

public administration, statistics, etc.

From 1999 to 2011, the Federal Republic of Germany has extended in total US\$404 million in aid to Cambodia.

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## WHO Gives Special Award to Phnom Penh Capital City

AKP Phnom Penh, May 29, 2013 —

The World Health Organization (WHO) today gives a special award to Phnom Penh Capital City for its outstanding contributions to tobacco control, especially in the enforcement of the sub-decree on banning tobacco advertising, promotions and sponsorship, a WHO's press release said.

This award is to commemorate the World No Tobacco Day, which falls on May 31, it added.

WHO takes this opportunity to convey its heartiest congratulations to Phnom Penh Capital City on being given a special World No Tobacco Day Award from WHO, indicated the press release.

"This is a burning issue because studies have shown that exposure to cigarette advertisements is strongly associated with smoking initiation among teenagers. Nicotine, in cigarettes, is a potent psychoactive drug, and once smoking has begun, cessation is difficult and smoking is likely to become a long-term addiction," said Dr. Pieter Van Maaren, WHO's Representative in Cambodia.

"The devastating results are there to see with tobacco use linked to heart disease, cancer, lung disease, hypertension and other non-communicable diseases," added Dr. Van

Maaren. The tobacco industry usually adopts a technique called 'surrogate advertising' in which they promote other products to drill the brand name into the consumer.

The long-term goal is a



Phnom Penh Municipal Deputy Governor H.E. Ms. Mak Vansitha (2nd L), representative of Phnom Penh Municipality, and Mr. Pieter Van Maaren, Representative of World Health Organization (WHO) to Cambodia. Photo: Ok Sokhoeun

Maaren.

According to 2011 data from WHO, it is estimated that close to 10,000 people die every year from diseases related to tobacco use in Cambodia. Consequently, tobacco use imposes enormous economic costs to the country and to the individual.

The tobacco industry spends astronomical sums of money around the year in advertising, promotion and sponsorship. In the Kingdom of Cambodia where direct advertising is banned, the tobacco indus-

try usually adopts a technique called 'surrogate advertising' in which they promote other products to drill the brand name into the consumer. The long-term goal is a total ban on direct and indirect tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship (TAPS), as provided in guidelines to Article 13 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). This will substantially reduce tobacco consumption and protect people, particularly youth, from industry marketing tactics.

To fulfill WHO FCTC Article 13 obligations, the Royal Government of Cambodia adopted a sub-decree on Feb. 24, 2011, on measures to ban the adver-

tising of tobacco products. The Phnom Penh Capital City played a leading role as the local authority that implemented this ban.

In 2012, the Phnom Penh Capital City issued letters to the nine district governors to take stern action to enforce the TAPS ban. The nine districts started to warn owners of points of sale, including restaurants, cafeterias, grocery stores, and street vendors about the ban. Then districts started campaigns to confiscate TAPS materials (cigarette selling stands, posters, light-boxes, umbrellas, etc). This in turn resulted in wide media coverage in TV and radio stations, newspapers and web-sites.

Recently, one tobacco company sought permission from the Phnom Penh Capital City to launch a rock music concert promising that the company would not promote cigarette brands at the whole event. Nonetheless, the company wanted to place on stage a large picture of the Tour Eiffel, symbol of a well-known cigarette brand. The Phnom Penh Capital City was resolute in its stand and turned down the request.

## The Metropolitan Museum in New York to Return Ancient Khmer Statues to Cambodia

AKP Phnom Penh, May 10, 2013 –

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York has recently decided to repatriate to Cambodia two 10th century stone statues of “Kneeling Pandavas or Kneeling Attendants” illicitly removed from Prasat Chen in Koh Ker at the time of the country’s civil war in the 1970s, following discussions with the Office of the Council of Ministers of Cambodia (OCM).

These two statues form part of an ensemble representing the famous duel between Bhima and Duryodhana from the Mahabharata, all of which were brutally severed from their pedestals and found their way to various museums and private collections around the world. Metropolitan Museum’s Director Mr. Thomas P. Campbell has recently expressed the museum’s commitment to applying rigorous provenance standards not only to new acquisitions, but to the

study of works long in its collections in an ongoing effort to learn as much as possible about ownership history. “This is a case in which additional information... has led the museum to consider facts that were

stitutions and colleagues in Cambodia and to foster and celebrate continued cooperation and dialogue between us,” he added.

H.E. Chan Tani, Secretary of State at the OCM



not known at the time of the acquisition and to take the action...,” he said in a museum’s press release.

“In returning the statues, the museum is acting to strengthen the good relationship it has long maintained with scholarly in-

told the International Herald Tribune on May 4-5, 2013 that the above gesture clearly shows the high ethical standards and professional practices of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and its Cambodian counterparts in the area of cultural heritage.

On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), H.E. Sok An, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister in charge of the Office of the Council of Ministers and Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee stated from UNESCO Headquarters in Paris today, “We would like to take this solemn occasion to express our sincere thanks and profound gratitude to the Met in New York, which has taken such a laudable decision to return these priceless ancient Khmer artifacts, which represent part of the soul of the nation. We also thank the U.S government for its support in this endeavor.”

“Furthermore, the RGC appeals to other museums and art collectors around the world to follow this example of returning plundered treasures to their rightful owners as part of the worldwide campaign for the protection of cultural heritage,” he said.

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