



# CAMBODIA OUTLOOK

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Royal Embassy of Cambodia accredited to the Republic of Turkey, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and the Republic of Tajikistan

## CAMBODIA, HUNGARY CONCLUDE FIRST FRUITFUL SESSION OF JOINT COMMISSION ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION

The First ever Session of Cambodia-Hungary Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation was wrapped up on 21 January 2021 after two days of discussion.

According to H.E. Ms. Tekreth Kamrang, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Commerce, the two sides agreed to expand cooperation in potential areas including trade and economy; agriculture, food security and forestry; water resources management; education, youth and sports; culture; tourism; industry, technology and innovation; and civil aviation.

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## CAMBODIA RATIFIES UN NUCLEAR BAN TREATY

Cambodia ratified a treaty banning nuclear weapons on 22 January 2021, becoming the 52<sup>nd</sup> party to take the step.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons took effect on Friday having reached 50 ratifications by last October. It considers the development, manufacture, possession and use of nuclear weapons to be violations of international law.

Ministers and ambassadors from around 20 countries joined an online gathering to mark the treaty coming into force.

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## EU'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION STRATEGY WITH CAMBODIA 2021-2027 FOCUSES ON THREE MAIN AREAS



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On 28 January 2021, His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister PRAK Sokhonn, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia, had a meeting with Her Excellency Carmen Moreno, Ambassador of the European Union to the Kingdom of Cambodia at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The meeting centered on consultations regarding the EU's development cooperation strategy with Cambodia for the cycle 2021-2027, according to a press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation issued on 30 January 2021.

The European Union's Development Cooperation Strategy with Cambodia 2021-2027 focuses on three priorities namely: 1) Economic Growth and Job Creation; 2) Agriculture and Natural Resource Management, with a strong focus on Fisheries; and 3) Governance and the Rule of Law, said the EU Ambassador.

The Ambassador also reflected on a number of achievements made under Cambodia-EU

development cooperation; among which is the Bakheng Water Supply Project, which is funded by grant aid from the EU and the French Development Agency (AFD), and loans from the European Investment Bank and will create around 16,000 jobs and supply clean water to the people most in need.

During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on the ASEAN Regional Integration Cooperation in particular the development gap within ASEAN countries including the support of the EU to Cambodia's efforts to integrate into the regional market and value chains, migrant workers, the European market access for Cambodian rice, tourism industry, private sector engagement, skills and social protection, bilateral investment promotion, and the strategies for which both sides agreed on the need to adapt and enhance in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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## KINGDOM TO RECEIVE 20 MILLION DOSES OF COVID-19 VACCINE



Cambodia would receive up to 20 million doses of vaccine against the COVID-19 pandemic, affirmed a senior official of the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

While presiding over a Public Forum on “Macroeconomic Management and Budget Law 2021”, held on 27 January 2021, H.E. Vongsey Vissoth, Delegate Minister Attached to the Prime Minister and Permanent Secretary of State at the Ministry of Economy and Finance, said that of the total amount, 7 million doses will be given to Cambodia via COVAX mechanism, 1 million doses are China’s donation, and 3 million others are Australia’s support.

Cambodia will have access to the rest 9 million doses through assistance of China and Russia

and purchase with financial contributions of local charitable people of US\$57 million, he pointed out.

COVID-19 vaccination is a strategy to boost Cambodia’s economic recovery by building confidence of investors and businessmen, he underlined.

Some 600,000 of China-donated 1 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine will arrive in Cambodia in February.

Samdech Techo Hun Sen also shared the Royal Government’s plan to find more vaccine through three main channels – COVAX mechanism, bilateral means (with China, India, South Korea...), and direct negotiations with vaccine manufacturers.

As of 31 January 2021, there are in total 465 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Cambodia, of which 443 have been successfully cured with zero death recorded. ■

## SSEZ’S GOODS EXPORT INCREASES BY 26 PERCENT IN 2020

China-invested Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone (SSEZ) reported the growth in its goods export last year, a remarkable achievement despite the COVID-19 crisis.

The export of goods produced in the SSEZ was valued at US\$1,556 million, a year-on-year increase of 26.52 percent, according to the firm’s report.

The main products exported from the zone are clothes, electronic devices, bags, construction materials, and furniture, read the report.

In a congratulatory message dated 26 January 2021 to SSEZ’s President Mr. Chen Jiangan, Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, welcomed and supported innovative ideas to mobilize more investment that will accelerate the development of SSEZ.

“The Royal Government of Cambodia has always recognized that the private sector is a necessary partner that must complement each other in contributing to the growth of the national economy,” the Premier wrote in the letter.

Established in 2008, the 1,113-hectare SSEZ is situated about 13 kilometres from the Sihanoukville Autonomous Port in southwestern Cambodia’s Preah Sihanouk province. ■



For agriculture, food security and forestry, the two sides have exchanged the discussion on long-term cooperation in exchange of knowledge and experience in animal husbandry and high-efficiency farming.

On the education, youth and sport sector, both sides agreed to promote more cooperation on scholarship programme and Vocational Education and Training 4.0.

From 2017 to 2020, the bilateral trade between Cambodia and Hungary reached a total amount of only US\$16 million. ■

## EU’S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION...

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister also extended appreciation to the EU for the latter’s development assistance to Cambodia, which has been implemented both bilaterally and jointly with European countries and has contributed significantly to Cambodia’s socio-economic development over the last two and a half decades. H.E. Deputy Prime Minister welcomes this initial consultation to improve and refine EU development activities and looks forward to the conclusion of the EU’s development cooperation strategy with Cambodia for the cycle 2021-2027.

Between 2014 and 2020, EU provided the financing of US\$1.4 billion (including US\$1.1 billion grant-aid and US\$300 million soft loan) to support the European Development Cooperation Strategy for Cambodia 2014-2020, and about 410 million Euros to support the EU Multiannual Indicative Programme 2014-2020. ■

## CAMBODIA, HUNGARY CONCLUDE FIRST...



In term of trade and economy, both sides have shown a strong will to implement the existing agreement on the promotion and protection

of investment between Cambodia and Hungary, which entered into force in August 2017, and welcomed the participation of stimulus agencies, including the Hungarian Investment Promotion Agency to facilitate and attract Hungarian investors to Cambodia, as well as to learn more about Cambodia’s potential products for export to the Hungarian market.

## CAMBODIA, INDIA DISCUSS DIRECT FLIGHT CONNECTION AND TOURISM COOPERATION

Cambodia and India have discussed direct flight connection when COVID-19 crisis eases, and other tourism cooperation.

The discussion took place in a recent meeting between H.E. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism, and H.E. Dr. Devyani Uttam Khobragade, newly appointed Indian Ambassador to Cambodia at the ministry office in Phnom Penh.

The minister asked the Indian side to continue organising the ASEAN-India Car Racing and Self Driving Tour Movement to further strengthen the friendship ties as well as to promote land tour movement between ASEAN countries and India.

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The Indian diplomat appreciated projects of Cambodia's beach development and digital tourism, adding that India will help coordinate the virtual training for Cambodian tour experts.

She also pledged to support the improvement of infrastructure at cultural and eco-tourism areas, assist the renovation of roads and train local people on hospitality skills.

H.E. Thong Khon thanked the Indian ambassador, and spoke highly of the long-lasting historical relations and good collaboration in all sectors between the two countries, especially in diplomacy, culture, religion and tourism. ■

## MORE CAMBODIA'S MILLED RICE EXPECTED TO REACH U.S.' MARKET



Cambodia Rice Federation (CRF) has placed high hopes on the export of more Cambodia's milled rice to the world's largest economy.

Mr. Song Saran, President of CRF and CEO of Amru Rice (Cambodia) Co. Ltd., said with the American-standard silo installed at Amru Rice's rice mill in Battambang province, the quality of Cambodia's rice will be further enhanced and more rice exports are expected for the U.S. market.

The remark was made during a recent visit by U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia H.E. W. Patrick Murphy to the rice mill, according to a CRF's Facebook on 21 January 2021.

"American standard is so-called gold standard, so we believe that the American technology will boost the Amru Rice to get more successful on investment as well as support the whole rice supply chain," Mr. Saran said.

With the high technology in the rice production chain and government's efforts to promote milled rice on the international markets, American people will know and acknowledge the quality of Cambodia's rice, the CRF president added.

For his part, the U.S. ambassador lauded the good cooperation between Amru Rice and U.S. firm reflected by this American-standard silo installation.

H.E. W. Patrick Murphy said the U.S. is happy to support Cambodia, especially in the rice sector, in order to ensure the progress and sustainability of the agricultural sector in the Kingdom.

Cambodia's milled rice was shipped to 60 countries around the world, including China, 24 countries in the European Union, six countries in ASEAN, and 29 other countries, and 76 companies engaged in the exports.

Last year, outbound shipments of milled rice accounted for 690,829 tonnes worth nearly US\$539 million, up 11 percent from 2019. ■

## GOLD PRODUCTION EXPECTED LATER THIS YEAR



In the wake of oil production starting in Cambodia, the nation is also placing high hopes of becoming a gold producing country, with the first mining of the precious metal due to start later this year than originally planned.

The news was released by Yos Monirath, director-general of mines at the Ministry of Mines and Energy.

The firm involved is called the Okvau Gold Project. It is invested in by Renaissance Minerals (Cambodia) Ltd, a subsidiary of

Australia-listed Emerald Resources NL, in Mondulkiri province.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted gold production, he said, making it difficult to import essential materials and bring in gold experts to inspect the process.

A previous deadline of gold production by Renaissance Minerals (Cambodia) was set to be made in the second quarter of this year.

The exploration firm said its feasibility study revealed the project could produce 106,000 ounces of gold a year on average over seven years from a single open pit.

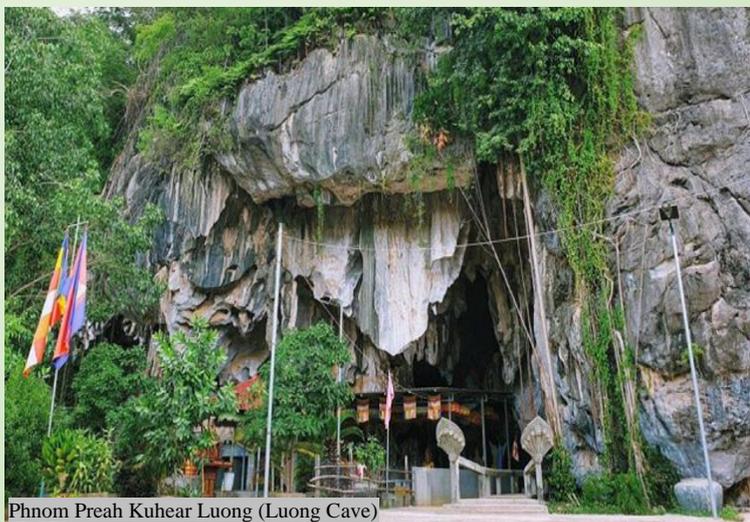
Nearly 1 million ounces of gold are expected to be extracted based on a study of the first gold mine in the Okvau area in Keo Seima district in Mondulkiri province. ■

## CAMBODIA RATIFIES UN NUCLEAR...

The five major nuclear powers as well as Japan and NATO members that rely on the US nuclear umbrella have not joined the treaty.

But governments and international NGOs that have been promoting the treaty hope more nations will join. They vow to boost the number of ratifications to 100 in the coming years. ■

# KAMPOT KARSTS LISTED AS NATURAL HERITAGE SITES



Phnom Preah Kuhear Luong (Luong Cave)

Three areas in Kampot province are now inscribed on the natural heritage list including Phnom Totong, Phnom Toch and Phnom Preah Kuhear Luong (Luong Cave).

The establishment of these natural heritage sites is aimed to ensure the environmental protection, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, stressed the two separate sub-decrees signed by Prime Minister Hun Sen on 22 and 26 January 2021, respectively. Phnom Preah Kuhear Luong (Luong Cave) remains an attraction since the French colonial period and there is a pagoda in the mountain. The cave is an ancient site listed by the Ministry of Culture.

Tourists often go to see bats living in cave when they fly out in the evening from Phnom Totong and Phnom Toch.

Phnom Totong and Phnom Toch encompass a total land area of 83.44 hectares in Dang Tong and Banteay Meas districts while Phnom Preah Kuhear Luong covers a total land area of 25 hectares in Touk Meas Khang Lech commune of Banteay Meas district.

The new natural heritage sites will be under the management of the Ministry of Environment in collaboration with relevant ministries and institutions, the provincial administration and the armed forces.

## ***Ecotourism Is the New Tourism Trend***

Minister of Environment Say Samal said that ecotourism is a new trend in Cambodian society and helps build the local economy, adding that the ministry will pay more attention toward ensuring the safety and health of tourists, dealing with emergencies, sanitation management and cleaning up the environment at protected areas for the long-term benefit of future generations.

The Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Environment have cooperated to boost ecotourism in natural protected areas in order to promote the livelihoods of community residents and conservation of natural resources.

The Ministry of Environment has achieved its goal of establishing 174 local communities in protected areas in order to strengthen the partnership, role and responsibility of local communities to contribute to the promotion of environmental protection, sustainable management of natural resources and poverty reduction of the local people. Also, this trend has helped support Cambodia's domestic tourism sector in particular and helped reopen some tourism businesses in accordance with tourism safety rules.



Phnom Totong

