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# ព្រឹត្តិប័ត្រសារព័ត៌មាន

**Press Review - Revue de presse**

**2009**

**UNESCO office Phnom Penh**



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

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## ■ Education

# Education & Careers

your complete guide to jobs and education opportunities in Cambodia

Organisers hope a weeklong science and technology camp kicking off in Phnom Penh on Friday will raise awareness of the importance of the field to Cambodia's development

## Touting technology training

BY NATHAN GREEN

**C**AMBODIAN youth and their peers from throughout Southeast Asia will take part in a weeklong educational camp starting Friday in Phnom Penh to boost interest in science and technology among Cambodian youth and the country's policymakers.

The second Unesco Regional Science and Technology Camp, which was co-organised by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and Unesco, will be hosted at the Royal University of Cambodia's Cambodia-Japan Cooperation Centre.

The organisers have invited 52 students aged 12 to 15 years from Cambodia, Malaysia, East Timor, Thailand, Indonesia, Laos, Singapore and Brunei to take part.

Phal Des, the director of RUPP's Information Technology Centre, said the Education Ministry selected the best students from high schools throughout the country, including poor rural provinces.

"Science and technology is not only for rich people," he said. "Poor people can do science and technology as well."

A key goal was to educate students

of employment opportunities in careers like engineering, he added. "We want students in high school to know there is a future in this field," he said. "But we also want to encourage the government to make a commitment to science and technology education because it is a key for our country's development."

The students will work on hands-on laboratory activities, including renewable energy kits, such as solar cars and windmills. A creativity workshop will also be held in which they will design, build, program and test scavenger robots.

The robot is easy to build, said Teresa Diez, a spokeswoman for the education department in Unesco's Cambodia office, but provides students room to express creativity.

On the last day of the camp, a competition will be held in which the students will be graded on their robot's ability to throw ping pong balls into specific holes.

### Addressing Cambodia's challenges

Diez said nations and regions face a number of challenges in the quest for sustainable development, such as meeting the Millennium Development Goals, coping with climate



RUPP IT Centre Director Phal Des sets up for the UNESCO Regional Science and Technology Camp Wednesday. HENG CHIVAN

change, improving natural resource management and strengthening disaster preparedness.

They needed to develop a strong science and technology base to address these challenges, particularly in terms of human capacity, she said.

"Cambodian kids have been left behind in many aspects of science and technology education, especially when compared to the experiences of kids in developed countries, so it was felt that this was an ideal place to hold the camp," she said.

"We want to raise awareness among policymakers that they need to do something about science and technology education in Cambodia."

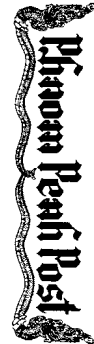
She identified the lack of financial resources, curriculum development experience and skilled technical human resources as a key reason students in Cambodia – and many Asean nations – were often excluded from the benefits of the interactive educational and hands-on learning opportunities only available through experimentation and laboratory classes.

"We want them to have their first contact with science and technology so that they are not afraid and so that they realise that with good teachers and trainers they can do whatever they want to do in life," Diez said.

Diez added that governments in the region have tried to boost science and technology education but that cooperation was needed between the private, nongovernment and inter-governmental sectors.

"The government and all partners in Cambodia education need to work in the same direction," she said.

The first Science and Technology camp was held in Brunei Darussalam in December 2006. ■



Thursday 26 February 2009





Thursday 26 February 2009

# Government set to double public investment in 2009

Finance Minister announces plan to spend US\$1 billion mainly targeting transport, infrastructure and irrigation projects

BY CHUN SOPHAL

**F**INANCE Minister Keat Chhon announced Wednesday that the government would spend around US\$1 billion this year on public investment. He said the money would be focussed mainly on transportation, infrastructure and irrigation.

Keat Chhon, who is also a deputy prime minister, said during a review of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework that the public investment total would be double that of last year.

"I hope that we can also

discuss the implementation and achievements of the important and ongoing UN reforms intended to ensure that the UN delivers as one," Keat Chhon said.

Wednesday's joint review between the government and the UN officials – described in a UNDAF press release as "frank, open and lively" – was designed to assess how well the 23 UN agencies, funds and programs in Cambodia were helping the Kingdom meet its development goals.

Keat Chhon said the review provided a good opportunity to identify new challenges and emerging risks, thereby help-



Keat Chhon, deputy PM and finance minister, at a UN review Wednesday. HENG CHIVQAN

ing to ensure that UN support remains effective.

Douglas Broderick, the UN's resident coordinator, said the UN's duty was to be a good facilitator in addition to a financial backer.

"As the world economic crisis deepens, it is more important than ever that the UN be a stronger partner and continue to give voice to the poorest of the poor," Broderick said.

The UNDAF guides the UN's development work in Cambodia. The UN focuses its efforts on four key areas: agriculture and rural poverty; capacity building and human resources development; development of the national strategic development plan; and good governance and human rights. ■

# CAMBODIA - UNDAF REVIEW JOINT ANNUAL RESULTS

BY AUN PHEAP

The Royal Government of Cambodia and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) have conducted a meeting to review joint annual results for 2008. The conference was held on February 25 at the Council for the Development of Cambodia, under the presidency of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance Keat Chhon. In his opening remarks, he stated that the UNDAF provides the framework within which all UN support to Cambodia is programmed, implemented and assessed.

Total resources to be mobilized in support of UNDAF strategies during the five-year period from 2006-2010 are estimated to be over US\$ 400 million, according to a report issued by the United Nations. The report stated that about 22 percent of the total will be spent within the focus area of good governance and human rights, 27 percent on agriculture and rural poverty alleviation, 47 percent on human resource development and 4 percent to support the national development plan, including aid coordination.

"I am looking forward to our discussions today for two principle reasons. Firstly, the development challenges that we face currently center on human resource development and the UN is just the right organization to advance these humanitarian values. Secondly, I see a close correlation between the objectives of the United Nations and the priorities of the Royal Government of Cambodia," said the Deputy Prime Minister Keat Chhon.

The UNDAF 2008 Joint Annual Review-Summary exercise represents the combined results and achievements made possible under the UN



Photo: Khem Sovannara

Cambodia-UNDAF review joint annual results

system since 2006. This summary of results complements and informs the full-scale Annual Joint Dialogue between the United Nations and the Royal Government of Cambodia and forms the basis for results and issue based discussion.

These results also draw on the annual individual discussions UN agencies hold with their national implementation partners and serve as a guide to UN agency level annual planning to help meet the challenges of implementation and the advancement of national development priorities.

"I am pleased to be able to note at the beginning of our meeting that the four priority areas for UN support to Cambodia, namely good governance, agricultural improvements, reduction of rural poverty and capacity development are well aligned with the national development priorities set out in the

second phase of the Rectangular Strategy and the Cambodia Millennium Development Goals," said Keat Chhon.

So far, the Royal Government and UN have pulled together to implement improved laws on public demonstration and freedom of association in accordance with international standards. The Royal Government also strengthened community participation in the planning, management and implementation phases of local development activities, especially in the management of natural resources. The meeting will also strengthen the capacity of civil society through civic education and engagement with parliament, local representative bodies and state actors.

The review will also support an improved voter environment and strengthened management of free and fair elections at national and lo-

cal levels. It will provide improved public access to information related to management of public resources, judicial decisions and civil rights. It will support independent quality news coverage and public news services, strengthened the interface between the judicial systems, allow for alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and ensure community justice through legal recognition and institutionalization of informational justice systems.

"We will be able to focus our meeting on each of these issues, and we will also discuss the implementation and achievements of important and on-going UN reforms that are intended to ensure that the UN "delivers as one," he said. "We must be mindful of the context in which our meeting takes place and use this review to identify new challenges and emerging risks so that, together, we can ensure the support of the UN remains relevant, focused and effective," he added.

Douglas Broderick, UN Resident Coordinator, said during his introduction that the United Nations country team in Cambodia is committed to support the efforts of the Royal Government and the Cambodian people, the goal being to improve life for all citizens.

"We have been working closely with the government and all development partners to identify key achievements of the Cambodia Millennium Development Goals Review and to support government reforms and the realization of human rights," he said. "We have ensured the transparent and accountable use of the resources made available to us for this purpose," he added. (CW)



March 1-7, 2009



Thursday 26 March 2009

# Millennium Development Goal progress a mixed bag

Cambodia is within striking distance of its 2015 MDG target for primary enrolment but is off pace in other areas

BY ROBBIE COREY-BOULET

**T**HOUGH Cambodia's mixed performance in the field of education manifests itself in a number of ways — gender disparities at some levels but not at others, for instance, or urban-rural resource gaps — few have been so direct as the description of the national education system found in UNESCO's "Education For All" report released late last year.

The report listed Cambodia among 63 countries to have achieved nearly universal primary enrolment, but it also listed it as one of the worst-performing countries with regards to literacy. It warned that the Kingdom was at "serious risk" of not attaining universal literacy by 2015, one of the targets under the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) pertaining to education. Cambodia was one of just five countries, and the only non-African country, to appear on both lists.

Suggestions of uneven progress surfaced again in a report released this month by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport assessing its 2007-08 academic year performance. At the primary school level, according to the report, Cambodia's net enrolment ratio reached 93.3 percent, moving within striking distance of the 2010 MDG target of universal primary enrolment. On the other hand, the primary school survival, or retention, rate was 52.5 percent, far short of the 100 percent MDG target.

Looking ahead, perhaps Cambodia's biggest challenge in meeting the goals is at the secondary level, where the net



Cambodia's progress on primary enrolment masks problems in other areas. UNESCO

enrolment rate last year was just 34.8 percent, less than half of the 2010 target of 75 percent.

Teal Nipp, public relations manager for The Cambodia Project, a US-based nonprofit that looks to increase access to secondary education in rural provinces, said that the gap between primary and secondary enrolment "is definitely not unique to Cambodia".

## Diverted resources

Nipp said she believes the desire to meet the MDG target for primary education, a particular focus of the goal, has led many countries to funnel resources to grades one through six while paying less attention to grades seven and above.

To help extend enrolment gains to the secondary level, The Cambodia Project plans to open three secondary schools in rural provinces over the next five years. The first school, to be built in Kampot province, will seat 980 students. Construc-

tion should begin by December, said Jean-Michel Tijerina, the project's founder.

In addition to providing health care for students and staff and employing green construction methods, Tijerina said he hopes to create schools that are locally managed and financially sustainable.

To that end, project leaders said they plan to set up for-profit businesses to support each school that will likely involve the sale of local organic products such as Kampot pepper. Tijerina said students "could contribute to the business in some way potentially", but noted that business plans had yet to be fully developed.

Though the details have yet to be fleshed out, Tijerina said the general plan was "definitely a model that looks to be scaleable". However, because it will likely take until 2015 — the year the first school is to become financially sustainable — to determine whether

the model works as envisioned, the project and other long-term efforts that are just getting off the ground will likely have little impact on Cambodia's ability to meet its MDG targets.

In explaining why Cambodia has fallen behind on the targets, Judy Baldwin, management adviser at NGO Education Partnership, a networking organisation that facilitates communication between the government and education NGOs, cited everything from a lack of textbooks to access issues to long-held views about appropriate gender roles in the Kingdom. "There's no silver bullet" to get back on track, she said.

But Baldwin emphasised that she does not believe the MDG effort should be abandoned altogether.

"The answer is not to say, 'We're not going to achieve it, so we're just going to do the best we can,'" she said. ■

# CONFERENCE ON DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY IN MATHEMATICS EDUCATION

BY BUTH REAKSMEY KONGKEA

The First Cambodia International Conference on "Mathematics and Technology in Mathematics Education" has been conducted. The conference took place for four days from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> of September in Phnom Penh. The conference was a joint effort of the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS), the Royal Academy of Cambodia (RAC), and the Cambodian Mathematical Society (CMS) in Cambodia.

Dr. Neth Barom, Vice-President of the Royal Academy of Cambodia, said that it was the first time that Cambodia has organized an international conference on this subject in Cambodia. He said the main purpose of the conference is to promote development of mathematics and technology in mathematics education in Cambodia.

Teruo Jinnai, Representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to Cambodia, said that science and technological literacy has been flagged by member countries of UNESCO as an essential reinforcement of human development. Sustainable development and



Photo: Buth Reaksmeay Kongkea

Speakers at the first ever math conference in Cambodia

an improved quality of life are to a large extent dependent on our ability to understand and utilize science and technology. He added in this competitive globalizing society, lacking policy attention to and how level of

mathematics and science education hampers economic developments.

"UNESCO education programs aim to expand basic education in order to improve our quality of live, we try have to make the best use of the

“ UNESCO education programs aim to expand basic education in order to improve our quality of live, we have to make the best use of the present technology to advance mathematics and science in Cambodian education systems ”

—Teruo Jinnai

present technology to advance mathematics and science in Cambodian education systems.”

Dr. Neth Barom pointed out that nowadays, experts and scholars all over the world are facing a rapid growth of technology and great social and educational changes in the era of globalization. And therefore the goals, concepts and practices of education should be redefined by integrating high technology, basic science and math in the curriculum. Times are changing, technology is changing, and education is changing, too. As educators and students of today, we are different from those of yesterday. (SEAW)

September 6-12, 2009

The  
**Southeast Asia**  
Weekly

# THE UNITED NATIONS PRESENTS THE CAMBODIAN YOUTH SITUATION ANALYSIS

BY BUTH REAKSMEY KONGKEA

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Phnom Penh has hosted the United Nations Day 2009 and presented the Situation Analysis of Cambodian Youth to mark the signing of the United Nations Charter in 1945, highlighting the achievements and aspirations of the organization; and also to draw attention to the situation of young people. The event was supported by Ministry of Education Youth and Sport, in cooperation with UNESCO, UNFPA, ILO, UNIFEM and UNICEF.

The Celebration of the United Nations Day 2009 and Launching of the Situation Analysis of Youth was held on October 23 at the National Institute of Education in Phnom Penh with the participation of 500 people including, UN and NGOs' representatives, Cambodian government's officials and students.

Douglas Broderick, United Nations Resident Coordinator, said that the youth of Cambodia represent the future. Their vibrancy signifies a key opportunity for Cambodia to move ahead as a nation. He said that young people have enormous potential and they are also Cambodia's most valuable resources.

"This year the United Nations Country Team in Cambodia is extremely proud to dedicate UN day to the needs, values and aspiration of young people. We recognize that young people are both the beneficiaries and drivers of growth in Cambodia. Thus, our goal is to bring the voice of young people into this development and our achievement will be to work with you to address the barriers which prevent young people from reaching their full potential," he said during opening remark at the United Nation day 2009.

Douglas pointed out that since 2007 the 23 agencies of the United Nations Country Team have increasingly turned their attentions towards youth and young people. This is because the young people in Cambodia like other young people around the world face a unique set of opportunities and challenges.

According to the Situation Analysis of Cambodian youths 2009, only half of all young people in Cambodia complete primary school education; unemployment among youth is higher than for any other age group; gender-based and drugs related violence is a growing concern; a third of young people live in poor house-

hold; and youth voices are left out of planning and decision-making in Cambodia.

Douglas stated that over 30 percent of Cambodian population is aged between 10 and 24; the major industrial sectors of manufacturing, tourism, construction, and agriculture are dominated by young workers; and there are over 300,000 young people enter the labor market each year.

"The United Nations sees this document as a first step which reviews the situation of young people ever taken in this country. It is the first compilation of data, and is not, by any means, the final word on youth issue. Already we realize that we will need to continue to build on the information presented, to keep the analysis alive and constantly useful for all of us," he said.

The situation analysis of youth in Cambodia was designed by the UN Country Team and conducted by the Cambodian Development Research Institute (CDRI). The process involved contributions from UN youth specialists and UN Youth Advisory Panel. It concluded consultations with key line ministries including the Ministry of Education youth and

Sport, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, and Ministry of Social Affairs Veterans and Youth.

"We expect that this report will generate and inspire further research, particularly where information gaps have been identified," he said. "We hope that it will stimulate action. The findings clearly show that young people are facing enormous challenges in the areas of education, employment, health, participation, rights and vulnerability."

Douglas stated that United Nations repeats its commitment to assist the Cambodian government to advance the effective National Youth Policy and it will remain as active partner to ensure that this policy development is as consultative as possible.

"We will actively collaborate with all partners to make live better for young people, to deliver greater results and to target our work. We will encourage and exchange ideas with the members of our UN Youth Advisory Panel. And most importantly we speak less...listen more and learn more from all youths and young people," he said. (SEAW)

October 25 - 31, 2009

The  
**Southeast Asia**  
Weekly

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

# Drugs, Unemployment Among Challenges for Youth, UN Says

BY KAREN LEIGH  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

Young Cambodians are facing daunting challenges, including rising unemployment created by the materialization of 300,000 new job seekers each year and the temptation to become one of the 80 percent of the country's illicit drug users who are under age 24, according to the UN's Situation Analysis of Youth in Cambodia.

Issued Friday, the 222-page report brings together all available data about issues affecting the youth population of Cambodia—including education, employment, health, vulnerability and participation and rights.

According to the report, two out of every three Cambodians are under age 25, more than 30 percent between ages 10 and 24, giving it one of the largest youth populations in the region.

One of the biggest concerns highlighted in the report is the lack of sufficient waged work for the young. Around the country, the report said, seven percent of people between ages 15 and 24 are unemployed, though in Phnom Penh, the number is as high as 20 per-

cent. It added that 750,000 children under age 12 are economically active.

The report was a joint effort by the UNDP, Unesco, the International Labor Organization and the UN Population Fund.

Also addressed in the report are illegal drugs, with 80 percent of illicit drug users under age 24 and alcohol being consumed by 15.9 percent of children not attending school. The report called for more attention to be paid to reproductive health through education.

"There is a clear need to address the causes and consequences of youth risk behavior, and to expand access to sexual reproductive health and HIV related information and services," said Alice Levisay, UNFPA representative in Cambodia. "Drug and alcohol abuse and gender-based violence are also serious concerns and must be addressed," she said.

"Cambodia's young people have different expectations and options than their parents, and high risk behavior is on the increase," she added.

*(Additional reporting by Cheng Sokhornng.)*

■ Natural Sciences

■ Social and Human Sciences

## *The* CAMBODIA DAILY

Saturday-Sunday, February 28-March 1, 2009

### **Dozens of Children To Take Part in Technology Week**

Some 52 children from seven countries met Friday at the Cambodian Japan Cooperation Center on the Royal University of Phnom Penh campus to launch a science and technology week that will have them designing robots and other technical gadgets. "We hope to build a regional awareness for the need of an improved curriculum in science and technology," Teresa Diez, spokesman for UNESCO's Education Department in Cambodia, said by telephone. The technology camp includes children from Cambodia, Malaysia, East Timor, Thailand, Indonesia, Laos, Singapore and Brunei ranging in ages from 12 to 15. The children will begin today by constructing a model robot in teams of three as one of two workshops they will participate in during the week, Teresa Diez said. "The robot kits are easy to build, but it allows them to use a lot of creativity in building them," she said. Camp participants will also use Lego blocks to build solar cars, windmills, dragsters and sweepers. "In terms of experiencing a 'science culture,' children in the Southeast Asian region have had a distinct disadvantage relative to their peers in more developed nations," Teresa Diez wrote in an e-mail. The camp concludes Thursday. (*Adam Harju*)



# THE 2<sup>ND</sup> REGIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CAMP

BY BUTH REAKSMEY KONGKEA

The Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS), in cooperation with the United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) will organize the 2nd Regional Science and Technology Camp. The event will open on 25<sup>th</sup> February until the 5<sup>th</sup> March at the Cambodian Japan Cooperation Center (CJCC), in Phnom Penh.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Science and Technology Camp was prepared by the Royal University of Phnom Penh, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA Cambodia) with support from the Japanese Funds in Trust, the University of Indonesia, LEGO Education and Tokyo Institute of Technology.

The camp was attended by children aged between 12-15 years from nine different countries in the Asia and Pacific Region including Cambodia, Brunei, Laos, Malaysia, Indonesia, Timor Leste, Japan, Singapore, and Thailand.

Im Sethy, Minister of Education Youth and Sport, has warmly welcomed and expressed his heartfelt greetings and hospitality to all national and international delegates and children from the partner countries in the region who have attended this event.

“Through this culture, they will be able to access training and education systems which also would allow them to have practical knowledge. Furthermore, it encourages and promotes regional cooperation and understanding of the diversity of cultures in Asia, particularly Southeast Asia, in order for the children to create better friendships, solidarity and cooperation in the region as well as in the world. This would not only be meaningful for them, but also for the young generation,” Im Sethy said during opening remarks delivered to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Science and Technology Camp on February 27.

The Minister said this event promotes science and technology education for the children via partnership building and exchange of scientific knowledge in the region, especially between children of developed and developing countries who are given opportunities to practice and interact in harmony.

The camp also illustrates the establishment of a culture of science for the children in Southeast Asia who do not receive enough opportunities in science and technology education like the children in developed nations do.

“We hope that for the next gen-

eration the issue of “Development and Equity” will be bettered and addressed soundly in a sustainable way, and the attitude “CAN-DO” will be fostered.

The Minister pointed out that global history has proved that there is a strong relation between economic growth and the development of science and technology. Countries whose sciences and technologies play a leading role in development usually have developed economies and societies, and in return their economic growths help promote the development of sciences and technologies. “Encouraging children to stay in school is a priority for MoEYS. Although science and technology education has not been yet incorporated into the country’s priority policies, MoEYS has paid attention and is fundamentally committed to this sector,” he said.

Lav Chhiv Eav, Rector of the Royal University of Phnom Penh, said that the event will provide a good opportunity for our students from various high schools of Cambodia and other countries in the region to learn, to live, to share experience and to work together in the field of science and technology.

“I believe that the Second Re-

gional Science and Technology Camp will be successful and useful for all of us and the Camp will continue annually to promote the science and technology activities locally and globally,” he said.

Teruo Jinnai, UNESCO Representative in Cambodia, said that science and technology is a key to development.

The UNESCO Representative said the event shows the unity in commitment toward the promotion of science and technology for the young generations. He pointed out that nowadays, governments, nations and regions faced a number of challenges, for example how they can attain the Millennium Development Goals, cope with climate change, how to improve natural resources management and strengthen disaster preparedness, and how to respond to the voices of young people seeking a brighter and better world.

“We strongly believe that the new generations are our most valuable assets to re-generate social and economic development. The enhancement of knowledge in science and technology will provide them with a key tool to ensure the sustainability of the development not only in Asia and the Pacific, but also in the world,” he said. (CW)



March 1-7, 2009

# Phnom Penh Post

Tuesday 10 March 2009



## Domo arigato, Mr Roboto

Deputy Prime Minister Sok An views student-made robots Thursday at UNESCO's 2nd annual Science and Technology camp. SOVANN PHILONG

## CAMBODGE SOIR

5-11 Mars 2009

### Phnom Penh, les jeunes et la science

Après Brunei en 2006, la capitale cambodgienne vient d'accueillir le deuxième « Camp scientifique et technologique international », du 25 février au 5 mars. Des participants venus de toute l'Asie du Sud-Est, de Birmanie au Timor Est en passant par la Malaisie, ont assisté aux ateliers proposés au sein de l'Université royale de Phnom Penh.

Cette rencontre, parrainée par l'Unesco et l'agence de coopération japonaise Jica, a pour but de promouvoir l'apprentissage des matières scientifiques auprès des jeunes de la région. En effet, à cause du manque d'infrastructures technologiques dans les pays en développement, lycéens et étudiants montrent un faible intérêt pour la science. Les

participants, âgés de 12 à 15 ans, ont appris à dessiner, programmer et construire des robots ménagers. Une activité censée développer leur créativité et leur esprit d'initiative. Ils ont également pu poser toutes leurs questions aux experts et étudiants volontaires venant de l'Institut de Technologie de Tokyo et des universités d'Indonésie et de Phnom Penh. « *Il est important de promouvoir la science auprès des jeunes et de montrer que cette discipline peut être amusante. Les nouvelles technologies permettent par exemple d'améliorer l'exploitation des ressources et de mieux prévenir les catastrophes naturelles* », a déclaré Teruo Jinnai, représentant de l'Unesco au Cambodge.

■ Culture



Wednesday 21 January 2009

# Border row to be raised at Asean

## PM to hold talks with Thais on sidelines of group meeting

**BY CHEANG SOKHA**

CAMBODIA'S border dispute with Thailand will be the focus of talks between Prime Minister Hun Sen and his Thai counterpart on the sidelines of next month's Asean summit, the premier said Tuesday, warning that the protracted military standoff over disputed territory should not be allowed to affect tourism and trade.

The issue, however, is not on the agenda of the wider Asean talks and likely will not be raised by bloc members when they convene in Hua Hin, Thailand, on February 27, Hun Sen said.

He said that Cambodia will try to limit the effects of the conflict with Thailand, and expand cooperation with all neighbouring countries.

"The dispute is in one place [Preah Vihear], so we should not expand it along our shared border," he said, adding that the dispute should not be allowed "to affect tourism, trade and the economy".

Tempers flared on the border after Preah Vihear temple was listed as a Unesco World Heritage site in July, angering Thai

nationalists who demanded that the then-government reclaim territory they claim was lost to Cambodia, including the 11th-century ruins and surrounding lands.

Cambodia and Thailand have never fully demarcated the 805-kilometre shared border.

"Cambodia has no intention to take Thai territory and will continue to be patient in resolving the issue bilaterally," Hun Sen said.

His meeting with the new Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva will be the first between the two leaders.

"We have thanked friends from the other countries of Asean who have paid attention to the border dispute with Thailand," Hun Sen said, speaking at the opening of Oddar Meanchey provincial hall near the Thai border.

Thai Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya plans to arrive Sunday in Cambodia for further talks on the border issue, which sparked the largest recent buildup of soldiers and military equipment on the countries' shared frontier. The dispute turned violent in October in a shootout that left four dead. ■

# The CAMBODIA DAILY

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

## — National Brief —

### Ministry Declares Preservation a Priority in 2009

The Ministry of Culture on Tuesday declared preservation of historic buildings and temples to be among its priorities in 2009, according to an official in the ministry. In a speech at the opening of a three-day summit on cultural preservation, Culture Ministry Secretary of State Khim Sarith said that the ministry recognizes the importance of “preservation and development of national culture.” Culture Minister Him Chhem said in a speech at the forum that the ministry was still assessing the potential benefits of better cultural preservation before setting specific goals for the year. He said the ministry had invited NGO and business officials, as well as representatives from other relevant government ministries, to the three-day summit to exchange ideas on how to “convert Cambodia into a center for advertising Cambodian culture.” Ho Vandy, president of the Cambodian Association of Travel Agents, praised the renewed focus on preservation, but noted that Cambodia’s French colonial-era heritage also deserved attention and preservation. “Existing ancient colonial buildings should be preserved.... Those buildings serve as tourist attractions,” he said by telephone Tuesday. On Thursday, Unesco waded into the fight to save the historic Renakse Hotel from the wrecking ball, asking in a letter to senior government officials, for the building opposite the Royal Palace to be preserved and renovated. *(Rann Reuy)*

# The CAMBODIA DAILY

Saturday-Sunday, January 24-25, 2009

## Shift in Tourism Leaves Some Questioning Preservation Plans

BY ADAM BECKER  
AND RANN REUY  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

“Preservation for development, and development for preservation”—that was the catchphrase repeated this week by government officials at an annual three-day Culture Ministry summit in Phnom Penh.

Government officials focused much of their discussion on protecting cultural sites from Cambodia’s Angkor period and earlier at the conference on cultural preservation organized by the Ministry of Culture.

However, some international organizations and government officials said the government should place an increased emphasis on maintaining some of the country’s urban heritage, including preserving French colonial-era sites in Phnom Penh.

Cabinet Minister Sok An, speaking at the closing ceremony Thursday, said Cambodia’s ancient temples, long the backbone of the country’s tourism sector, needed to be at the forefront of any preservation campaign.

“Cambodia’s tourism sector depends upon cultural tourism,” Sok

An said during his 1½-hour speech.

“Nobody can cut out tourism from culture,” he said.

But with the abundance of resources that already go toward preserving Angkor, and more foreigners visiting Phnom Penh than Siem Reap province last year, the argument that the temples need extra attention is losing validity, Constitutional Council member Son Soubert said.

The Tourism Ministry reported a 19 percent increase in foreigners visiting Phnom Penh in 2008 to a total of 1,065,595, which is slightly more than the number of foreigners visiting Siem Reap.

“I think the history of Cambodia is not only focused on the pre-Angkorian era,” said Son Soubert, who is also on the board of directors of Heritage Watch in Cambodia.

“There are centuries of other history and culture just as important to Cambodia as the pre-Angkorian period...including, of course, the pre-independence era,” he said.

Several international organizations, such as Heritage Watch and Unesco, already provide aid for preserving the Angkor temples, Son

Soubert said, so resources already put into the park should be enough to allow the government to divert some attention to the country’s pagodas and urban heritage.

And it was a new threat to the urban heritage of Phnom Penh that prompted Unesco Country Director Teruo Jinnai to write to several top government officials earlier this month, urging them to take into account a series of recommendations made by his agency more than three years ago.

In a letter dated Jan 15, Teruo Jinnai said suggestions made at a January 2006 Unesco forum in Phnom Penh—which were endorsed at the summit by Sok An, Phnom Penh Governor Kep Chuktema and Princess Norodom Marie Ranariddh—appeared to be neglected in the dispute over the future of Phnom Penh’s Renakse Hotel.

Teruo Jinnai said the letter was prompted by reports that the French colonial-era Renakse may soon be destroyed.

“It can be difficult to do sometimes, but it is possible for cultural preservation and private economic interests to complement each

other,” Jinnai said in an interview.

“There is so much history in Phnom Penh’s buildings, and it would be a shame to do something that cannot be undone.”

Ok Sophon, director of cultural heritage in the Culture Ministry, said in an interview at the forum Wednesday that while ancient Khmer temples are a top priority, preserving colonial-era architecture was important as well.

“We consider protecting ancient temples to be the top priority for the Ministry of Culture, especially the pre-Angkorian temple Sam Bor Prey Kuk in Kompong Thom,” he said. “But besides those temples, all the buildings that have historic, architectural and artistic value also need to be preserved,” he added.

But Son Soubert said the government’s actions are not living up to their words.

“I don’t think they really care about anything post-Angkorian,” he said. “Angkor is what gets most of the attention, and there is so much else that is being forgotten because of that approach.”

*(Additional reporting by Neou Vannarin and Steven Kurcz)*

# The CAMBODIA DAILY

Thursday, January 29, 2009

## Trade in Khmer Antiquities Flourishes Online

BY ADAM HARJU  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The chisel marks are clearly visible on the finely carved fragment of a 12th century Angkor lintel.

The representation of a dancing Shiva appears between two rearing horses surrounded by lotus buds and scrollwork. Below Shiva is a tala, a representation of a demon.

However, those all too visible chisel marks are not the work of the 12th century artist who created the frieze; they are those of the looters

who removed the panel from above a Khmer temple doorway.

And now anyone can own it for as little as \$3,900—the “Buy It Now” price on the online auction website eBay.

“This piece was taken from a site,” Bertrand Porte, Khmer sculpture expert and conservationist with Ecole Francaise d’Extreme-Orient, said by telephone after viewing photos of the eBay auction item Wednesday. “It was clearly looted from a temple,” he said.

A word search for “Khmer” on US-based eBay Wednesday returned 250 items, including the 12th century Angkor fragment. About a third of the items returned from the search were antiquities or artifacts. They range from trinkets to a 14th century Angkorian lion sculpture costing \$11,000.

There is no provenance—what auctioneers call documented proof that an artifact was obtained in a legal manner—available for the

*Continued on page 2*

## Antiquities...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Khmer artifacts up for online sale. An interested buyer must contact the seller to determine if there is any provenance.

In Cambodia, it would be illegal to buy the items available on eBay, said Hab Touch, director of the National Museum of Cambodia.

“Based on Cambodian law, these items are not for sale,” he said. “It is illegal.”

Laws are in place that make it illegal for cultural heritage artifacts to be brought across Cambodia’s border without government permission. It has been a crime to move antiquities across the border since the adoption of the 1970 Unesco “Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.”

The trade in Khmer artifacts probably reached its peak in the mid-to-late 1990s, when parts of the country were still off-limits due to continued fighting with elements of

the Khmer Rouge.

In 2003, Cambodia ratified a 1995 Unidroit convention that requires the holder of an artifact to return it to the state of origin if it is stolen.

Also in 2003, Cambodia and the US signed a memorandum of understanding regarding the import of Khmer archaeological material into the US, Teressa Davis, project coordinator for Heritage Watch, said via e-mail. That agreement was renewed for another five years and expanded in 2008.

eBay warns sellers to “comply with all governmental laws and regulations,” but warns shoppers that the “[s]eller assumes all responsibility for listing this item.”

The dealer selling the Angkor lintel on eBay, Kaizen International, located in Singapore, wrote in an e-mail that the Shiva artifact was obtained legally a long time ago.

The piece was acquired by an American living in Thailand who acquired it legally in late 1960s when he was in the army during the US War in Vietnam, Kaizen wrote in the e-mail.

There was a period before cultur-

al and national laws were established, too, when artifacts left the country freely. Possession of those items is technically legal.

Davis said it is quite possible that the Internet auctions are legal; it just depends on the particular sale.

Whether online sales are legal or not, officials agree there should be no doubt in people’s minds that much of what is going on is not morally upstanding.

“A lot of pieces still move from Cambodia to the international black market of antiquities,” Hab Touch said.

“We don’t have enough resources to look worldwide,” he said. “We would welcome the co-operation of the international community.”

“I am sad that such remarkable pieces stand in private houses for so few to enjoy,” Hab Touch added.

If an artifact is identified as belonging to Cambodia under cultural heritage conventions, the Minister of Culture must contact Unesco in Cambodia, said Son Soubert, Heritage Watch board member and member of the Constitutional

Council.

“Usually the country Cambodia acts, contacts Unesco with photography, documentation, and Unesco puts out an announcement to the world,” Son Soubert said.

Whether the item is returned of ten depends on cooperation from the country where it is located. And not all countries are interested in returning items or slowing the illegal antiquities trade.

Cambodia’s porous border with Thailand allows smugglers easy passage. And though Thailand is not a member of Unesco, this week it did agree to negotiations with Cambodia to return 43 artifacts in its possession, Hab Touch said.

Though officials agree the larger problems are smuggling and loose import laws, online sales grease the wheels of the trade in stolen antiquities, they say.

For now, it’s up to potential buyers to do the right thing when it comes to Cambodia’s lost and stolen heritage, Hab Touch said.

“We will also rely on the individual out there buying these artifacts to do what’s right,” he said.



February 1-7, 2009

# SWITZERLAND PROVIDES AID TO REPAIR BANTEAY SREI TEMPLE

BY SOY SOPHEA

Switzerland has provided one million Swiss Francs (US \$1.15 million) in aid for repairs to Banteay Srei temple in Siem Reap province. A signing agreement was held on January 26, in Phnom Penh, signed by Sun Saphoeung, Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and Swiss Ambassador to Cambodia Rodolphe S. Imhoof.

The agreement between Switzerland's Banteay Srei Temple Maintenance Team and Cambodia's Apsara Authorities will help in the development of international cooperation a Foreign Ministry official said, adding that the Swiss side is responsible for preparation, implementation and financing the project.

Samraing Kamsan, Under Secretary of State and Representative of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, welcomed the Swiss fund as the ancient temple is a crucial component of Cambodian culture.

"Cooperation between the two nations assures the conservation of the temple," Kamsan said during an interview with the Cambodia Weekly January 28. "I believe the Swiss government will consider providing more aid to the Kingdom of Cambodia," he added.

Romana Redeschi, Project Manager and architect of the Banteay Srei Conservation Project, said that the fund will support the project for one year starting from March 2008, aiming for completion in February 2009.

She said that this project was a continuation of another started in 2002 and will safeguard and add to the convenience of tourists. There will be a car park and commercial stands which should help ensure the sustainability of the project.

"I do not know whether the funds will continue or not," she told the Cambodia Weekly by telephone.

The Banteay Srei Conservation Project involves architects, engineers and archaeologists, specialists and students. They are trained in the meth-



(Photo supplied)

Banteay Srei temple now under care of APSARA/SWISS

ods and techniques of monumental conservation within the context of an SDC – APSARA collaboration. Furthermore, they take advantage of the expertise that UNESCO provides at its annual ICC conference, according to the Apsara Authority website.

The website said there are two main phases to the conservation project: diagnosis and restoration. During the first phase, architectural and archaeological studies were conducted inside the monument and around its perimeter to assess the site as a whole. The comparative analysis of the surveys carried out on different levels and scales and the progressive interpretation of the disorders will allow for the diagnosis to be completed and for a detailed restoration

program to be established appropriate to the site.

This diagnosis revealed the extent of the damage to the structures and the importance of environmental issues. Subsequent analysis produced four main categories of architectural disorders. Category one refers to structural disorders caused by the effects of water and the weakness of the foundation. Category two refers to structural and accidental disorders caused by surrounding trees. Category three refers to degradation of the stone due to the effects of water and micro fauna and flora. Category four refers to damage caused by human influence (looting, mechanical stress, and so on).

During the Cambodia Develop-

ment Cooperation Forum held in Phnom Penh in late 2008, Switzerland had pledged to provide 7,498,750 US dollars in aid for national development in Cambodia from 2009 to 2011.

In February 2007, Swiss President Micheline Calmy-Rey visited Cambodia and pledged to help Cambodia in welfare and cultural matters. Calmy-Rey, who is also Swiss Foreign Minister, visited the Swiss-funded restoration works at the Banteay Srei temple of the Angkor Wat complex in the north of the country. There she saw children's hospitals set up by Swiss doctor Beat Richner during the visit, which coincided with the 50th Anniversary of diplomatic relations first being established between the two nations. (CW)



# PRIME Location

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO REAL ESTATE IN CAMBODIA

Officials claim Phnom Penh's iconic Hotel Renakse is over 100 and hence a threat to public safety. Critics question how old it really is, and say it should be saved regardless

## What's age got to do with it?

BY ROBBIE COREY-BOULET AND MAY TITTHARA

When officials and police entered the compound of the Hotel Renakse early last month to evict its manager, staff and guests, they came brandishing a Phnom Penh Municipal Court order that had some observers scratching their heads. The order cited two reasons for the hotel to be cleared out: that it had fallen into severe disrepair and that it was more than 100 years old.

In recent interviews with the *Post*, a handful of architecture historians and urban planners have called into question the reasoning behind the order, challenging whether the Hotel Renakse is in fact 100 years old and, more importantly, whether that should matter given that age is only one determinant of a building's safety.

Not only is the Renakse not older than 100, they say, but it would be difficult to determine which, if any, French colonial buildings in Phnom Penh fall under that category. As a result, the age put forth in the order was essentially meaningless.

### How old is it anyway?

The age of the Hotel Renakse has been a point of contention ever since the eviction order became public. Kem Chantha, the ousted former manager, told the *Post* this week that a 20-year lease she signed on the hotel in 1992 indicated that it was built in 1934. She also said a Phnom Penh guidebook published in 1920 features a picture of the Royal Palace that includes the plot of land on which the Renakse now sits. In the picture, she said, the plot is home to nothing but a garden and some trees.

This dovetails with documents uncovered by Unesco. Philippe Delanghe, a program specialist in culture at the organisation's Phnom Penh office, said archival materials

indicate that construction began on the hotel in 1926.

"This is information that we got through French archives, which were given to us by French experts," he said. However, he clarified that because it was "secondhand" information, it was not possible to say with absolute certainty that 1926 was the correct date.

Darryl Collins, an art historian and co-author with Heler Grant Ross of *Building Cambodia: New Khmer Architecture 1953-1970*, wrote in an email that part of the difficulty in pinning down the exact date the hotel was built lies in the fact that it might have been built in stages, with parts of the foundation being built "just over 100 years" ago and the current facade being built during a renovation in the 1920s or 1930s.

But Teruo Jinnai, head of Unesco Cambodia, said that even if the foundation was in place 100 years ago, the hotel "wasn't in its current structure or current form".

When asked which other buildings in Phnom Penh are more than

they don't usually survive that long," Grant Ross said via email last week.

Neither Jinnai nor Delanghe could give specific examples of buildings close to the 100-year mark.

"I am sure there must be some French archives that would give you more information on this, but I cannot say," Delanghe said.

"I don't know what material is available, but I'm sure that somewhere out there it must exist."

### Age no benchmark for safety

No one interviewed for this story had ever heard of the government treating 100-year-old buildings differently from younger ones. Many also expressed doubts about the sense in using an arbitrary date when marking historic buildings for preservation or destruction, suggesting it was little more than a pretext for a takeover.

Officials in the municipal Department of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction, which was cited in the court order as having determined that the building was unsafe, could not be reached for comment this week.

Delanghe said the age cited in the order seemed somewhat meaningless. He argued that the length of time a building has been standing is just one factor influencing its structural soundness and safety.

"We have lots of buildings all over the globe which are much older than 100 years and are still in perfect condition," he said. "But we also have examples of buildings less than 100 years old that need to be demolished because the structures are becoming dangerous for people to live in or to be around. It all depends on where these buildings are standing and how they have been built."

When it comes to assessing an individual building, he said, "You need very careful analysis of the structure before you can say it must be or must not be demolished".

Walter Koditek, an urban planner based in Battambang, wrote in an



The Hotel Renakse is now barred to visitors, wrapped in netting and slated for demolition. TRACEY SHELTON

100 years old, those familiar with local architecture said only a small number of buildings might fall under this category.

"The local tradition was to build wooden lightweight structures, and



**Darryl Collins' former home has been reborn as The Chinese House, showing the restoration potential in Phnom Penh's "architectural masterpieces".** TRACEY SHELTON

email that factors to take into consideration include the construction style and materials of the building in question, how that building has been maintained and the different functions it has accommodated over time.

With this in mind, he wrote, "I think combining such a directive with the limit of 100 years (or any other age) makes no sense".

According to Collins, destruction is not the only solution for buildings that have fallen into disrepair. "There are relatively simple remedies and opportunities to reverse these conditions; to renovate and restore fine examples of secular, public and sacred architecture," he wrote by email.

However, the city seems to have little interest in preserving its past, he said.

Many historic buildings have already been destroyed in the name of development, and there are few examples of old buildings being renovated and reused.

He singled out his former residence

on Sisowath Quay, which has been renovated into a lounge bar and gallery called The Chinese House, as a model to follow.

A dilapidated colonial-era building behind Phnom Penh's FCC also points to the preservation and reuse potential of many of the city's historic landmarks.

The building was bought by the FCC and is currently being used as an art venue until it can be restored to its former glory and put to an economic use, most likely as a boutique hotel.

In the absence of private enterprise, government intervention is needed to ensure more of Phnom Penh's heritage buildings survive the wrecking ball, regardless of age.

But Collins lamented the lack of interest on the part of city authorities.

"Neighbouring Asean countries have policies to redevelop and treasure early architectural masterpieces," he said.

"Shortsighted destruction will leave a city characterless and with absolutely no sense of history." ■

## Phnom Penh Post

Wednesday 11 February 2009

# Culture ministry looks to register *chapei* and *khol*

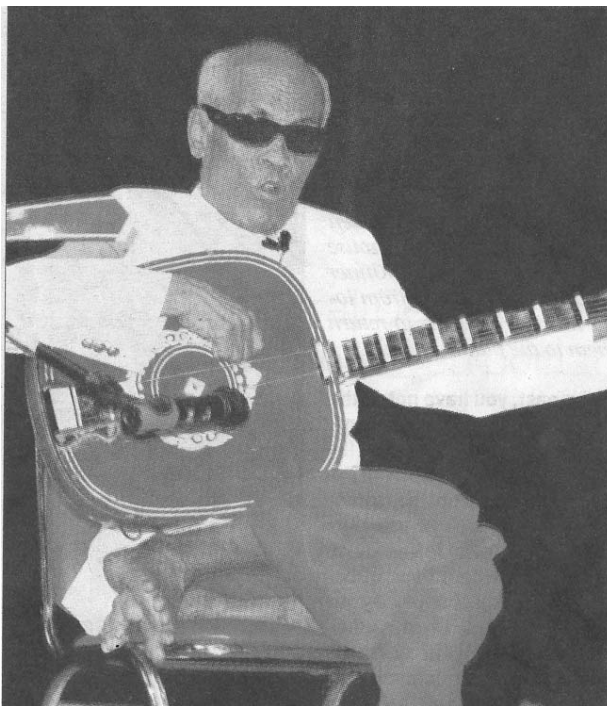
The process of registering both art forms with Unesco, seen as crucial to preserving them, could take up to one year

BY NETH PHEAKTRA AND  
ROBBIE COREY-BOULET

**T**HE Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts plans to submit applications to register *chapei*, a form of sung storytelling, as well as *khol*, a type of theatrical performance, under Unesco's Intangible Heritage of Humanity program, Meas Sarun, the ministry's general director of technique of culture, told the *Post* Monday.

Meas Sarun said he did not know when the applications would be completed. Unesco Country Director Teruo Jinnai said the process of approving the applications once they are submitted would likely take about one year.

The applications must include a detailed historical and artistic background of each art form as well as a DVD recording of a performance. Teruo Jinnai said his office would likely assist in revising and polishing both applications before they are sent to Unesco headquarters, where experts will evaluate them and then submit them to a vote by member states.



Cambodia's most celebrated *chapei* player, Kong Nai, performs in this file photograph. HENG CHIVON

Proeung Chheang, the vice rector of the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, said the registration of *chapei* and *khol* would enhance

Cambodia's "glory and reputation" as well as encourage ordinary Cambodians to better appreciate the two forms of performance art.

He said he expected that "Cambodian people will learn these skills generation by generation" once they are registered.

In addition, he said, the Unesco registration would ensure that Cambodia receives aid from the international community as it struggles to protect and preserve both traditions.

Teruo Jinnai said preservation was particularly important with regard to *chapei*.

"We really have to be very careful because [*chapei*] is a one-man show, and many of the performers are very old," he said.

Cambodia currently has two World Heritage sites and two cultural entities registered with Unesco. Angkor Wat was registered as a World Heritage site in 1992, as was Preah Vihear temple last July. Both the Royal Ballet and *sbeik thom*, a form of shadow puppetry, were registered as Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, in 2003 and 2005, respectively. The name of that designation was shortened to Intangible Heritage of Humanity last year, Teruo Jinnai said. ■

## KI Media

Wednesday 11 February 2009

PHNOM PENH, Feb. 11 (*Xinhua*) -- The Cambodian Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts plans to submit applications to **register chapei, a form of sung storytelling, as well as khol, a type of theatrical performance, under UNESCO's Intangible Heritage of Humanity program**, said English-language newspaper the Phnom Penh Post on Wednesday.

Meas Sarun, general director of technique of culture, told the newspaper that he did not know when the applications will be completed.

Meanwhile, UNESCO country director Teruo Jinnai said that the process of approving the applications will likely take about one year.

His office would assist in revising and polishing both applications before they are sent to UNESCO headquarters, where experts will evaluate them and then submit them to a vote by member states, said Teruo Jinnai.

Cambodia currently registered with UNESCO two World Heritage sites, namely the Angkor Wat and the Preah Vihear Temple, as well as two cultural entities including Royal Ballet and sbeik thom, a form of shadow puppetry.

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Friday, February 20, 2009

### *Puppeteer To Share Unique Craft at Art Cafe*

BY MICHELLE VACHON  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

By the time he was 15 years old, Aneng Kiswanto had already become a “dalang,” or master puppeteer, in the tradition of the Indonesian island of Java.

Aneng Kiswanto had more or less been born to the art, as his family had been puppeteers for seven generations and he had been training with his father since he was 5 in his hometown of Yogyakarta—the center of Javanese classical arts and culture.

Now a veteran artist of 28, he performs “wayang golek,” as this type of handheld puppet theater is known, and also teaches at the Indonesian Institute of Arts in Yogyakarta.

Aneng Kiswanto will give a puppet show at Art Cafe on Saturday night—the first time in recent memory that wayang golek has been presented in Cambodia, said Rahendro Witomo of the Indonesian Embassy.

According to a tradition believed to be at least 1,000 years old, Aneng Kiswanto performs alone to music, holding one or two puppets, and speaking or singing a story that can range from a chapter of the epic Ramayana to a love story, he said.

While he holds the sumptuously painted and dressed puppets, moving their heads and arms with rods, he also vibrates a metal plate with his foot either gently or hard to punctuate moments in the story.

Puppets are made of wood and leather and their clothes fashioned of colorful fabric.



Pring Samrang

**Aneng Kiswanto is a master in wayang golek, Indonesia’s handheld-puppet traditional theater.**

Although they are done according to tradition, styles may slightly vary from region to region on Java, said Aneng Kiswanto. For example, he said, “[the character] Petruk holds an ax in Yogyakarta and a kitchen utensil in Solo,” also called Surakarta city.

During performances, Aneng Kiswanto wears a traditional costume complete with a cap made of fabric and a kris—an Indonesian dagger with a wavy blade. “Dalangs used to carry them for safety,” he said. Now part of the costume, the one Aneng Kiswanto brought to Cambodia is not a real weapon, but a soft, fake blade in a nice casing, he said.

Aneng Kiswanto’s visit is part of a cultural exchange project between Cambodia’s Art+Foundation and the

Tembi House of Culture in Yogyakarta, which is supported by the embassy and will include four more Indonesian art events this year, Rahendro Witomo said.

The project will also involve Cambodian artists performing and attending workshops in Yogyakarta, said Anton Isselhardt, program director for Art+Foundation. This will start with violinist Uy Tach, who will play Western classical music with an international trio in Yogyakarta in April, he said.

The Unesco proclaimed wayang puppet theater a masterpiece of oral and intangible heritage of humanity in 2003.

Cambodia’s large shadow puppet theater, or lakhaon sbaek thom, was also put on the Unesco list in November.

# KHMER TRADITIONAL ART EXHIBITION

BY BUTH REAKSMEY KONGKEA

The Khmer Traditional Arts Paintings Exhibition will open its doors for ten days over 19<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February in Phnom Penh. The venue will be the Department of Plastic Arts and Handicrafts in the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts. It was organized by Chhim Sothy, professional painter, with support from the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts (MoCFA).

"I am proud to be involved with such a rich and wide ranging exhibition," said Meng Hour, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts. "I think these paintings will provide an insight for both national and international visitors into the importance and values of Khmer identification and culture," he added.

The Secretary of State added that the exhibition had helped his ministry place the preservation of traditional arts and culture back into the spotlight highlighted the value of the arts and handicrafts in Cambodia.

"I support his art works and I appeal to national and international visitors to buy his paintings as they are valuable artifacts of Cambodian culture," he told the Cambodia Weekly during the event.

Artist Chhim Sothy, said there

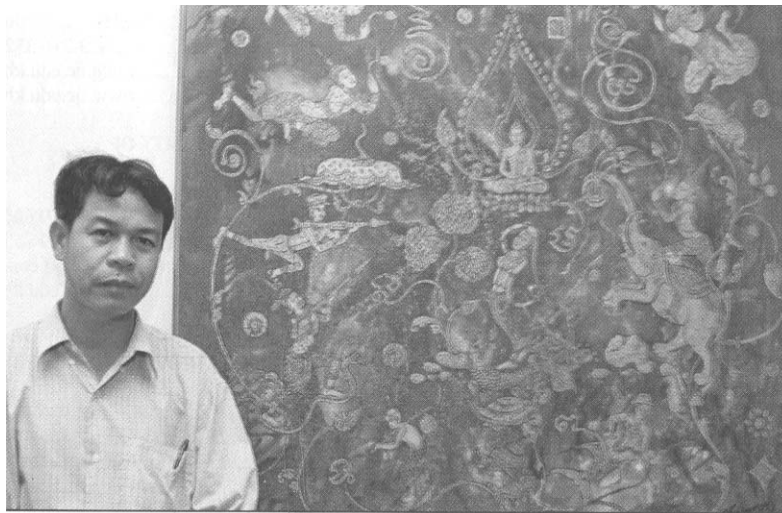


Photo: Khem Sovannara

## Artist Chhim Sothy stands beside one of his paintings

are over 40 paintings on display in the galleries. Sothy said that he executed these works in the traditional style over the course of a year.

The painter noted that all paintings depicted scenes of the Ramayana and incidents in Buddhist History. He said that the paintings range in size from 40 cm x 50 cm up to 101 cm x 142 cm. He

added that the paintings cost between US\$200 and US\$1,500 per piece.

"This is the first exhibition of my paintings in the Department of Plastic Arts and Handicrafts," he said. "The main objective of the exhibition is to promote my achievements and to sell my works to make money for further preservation in the world

of Khmer arts and culture" he added.

A Japanese visitor, Michiharu Handa, 45 spoke of his interest in the works.

"I am highly impressed with the works on display here and I think I will be taking one home for my family," he said.

Chhim Sothy was born in Kandal province in 1969 and he had graduated from the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, in 1996.

He worked in the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts from 1998-1999, applying his talents to landscape and furniture design. In 1999, he worked on a project with UNESCO Phnom Penh dealing with various aspects of the Khmer arts.

Sothy's style reflects traditional sources combined with contemporary elements. Recently, he has tried breaking away from lessons learned in his student years to form his own manner of expression in paint. He often chooses to depict Buddhist themes or scenes from the Ramayana.

His works can be found in Cambodian collections as well as in France and Japan. He was chosen by ASEAN in 2000 to represent Cambodia. Art historians can find many of his works reproduced in Asian Art News, January-February, 2001. (CW)



February 22 - 28, 2009

## CAMBODGE SOIR

26 fevrier au 4 mars 2009

### 19 langues en danger

Dix-neuf langues seraient menacées d'extinction au Cambodge, selon un atlas mondial mis en ligne par l'Unesco<sup>(1)</sup>. L'équipe de linguistes, dirigée par l'Australien Christopher Moseley, dénombre parmi les dialectes en danger le brao, le cham de l'ouest, le chong, le chuang, le chung, le kaco', le kasong, le kraol, le kravet, le krueng, le kuay, le pear, le phnong, le samrai, le samray, le samre, le so-ng, le stieng, et le tempuan. Selon l'anthropologue et linguiste Jean-Michel Filippi, les quatre langues les plus menacées sont le s'zoch, le poa, le somray et le samré.

1- [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)

**Phnom Penh Post**

Thursday 5 March 2009

# Revival of Khmer dance

*Cambodian Dance: Celebration of the Gods* outlines the history and revival of the Kingdom's traditional dance

BY ZOE HOLMAN

**W**ITH the global notoriety of the relatively recent Khmer Rouge atrocities, dance does not immediately spring to the fore in public images of Cambodia. And yet, author and journalist Denise Heywood describes traditional Khmer dance as an "embodiment" of the country's past. As Heywood explains, "The story of Cambodian dance is ... in fact, the story of Cambodia. Every chapter in Cambodian history includes dance."

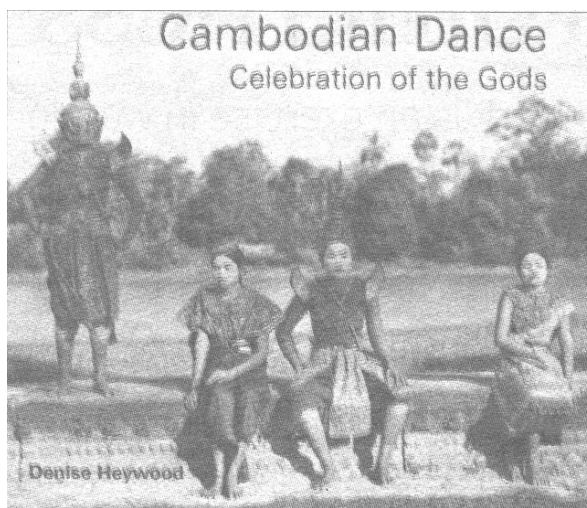
Heywood's most recent publication, *Cambodian Dance: A Celebration of the Gods*, explores the many phases of this variegated history through the prism of one of the country's oldest artforms. A lavishly illustrated 144-page work, the book is described by Heywood as a "labour of love".

Despite her tangible passion for the topic, dance was far from Heywood's mind when she first decided to visit Cambodia. Arriving during the initial stages of UN peacekeeping operations in 1993, Heywood initially came to the country as a traveller and a journalist.

It was the graceful spectacle of Cambodian dance that lured Heywood to remain here and dedicate herself to the study of the tradition.

"The very first time I saw Cambodian dance was children performing at the foot of Angkor Wat. I just fell in love with it," she said.

In contrast to this idyllic



scene, however, it was the brutalities suffered by classical dancers under the modern Pol Pot regime that most inspired Heywood's fascination.

"I love dance generally, but I was most touched by the plight of Khmer dancers," she said. "I just found their story so moving and so heroic."

Dance in Cambodia had historically been the domain of royalty, with dancers serving functions of entertainment, worship and diplomacy in the nation's courts for over a millennium. As a result, dance became an emblem of the Cambodian monarchy, and subsequently under the Khmer Rouge, of all that was abhorrent and outlawed.

Like others from artistic and educated classes, dancers were singled out by the regime and

transported to rural camps or the killing fields, where 90 per cent of them were slaughtered.

An epic task awaited those who survived. As Heywood describes, "The remaining dancers walked barefoot and starving back to Phnom Penh, where they attempted to restore together their art."

#### Piecing together tradition

Classical dance has historically existed only in the minds and bodies of performers.

"Expertise was handed down through the generations from master to pupil and never documented in written form," Heywood said.

With the lives lost to the Khmer Rouge then, so too, whole swaths of knowledge and skill became irrecoverable.

Yet, through their combined knowledge and reference to

the Ramayana tradition from which Cambodian dance arose, survivors were able to gradually piece together much of what was destroyed.

The commitment of survivors to restoring their craft mitigated this loss, as dancers continued to practise and pass on the art to a new generation of Cambodians in refugee camps in Thailand.

So too, a renascent Khmer dance has received modest sponsorship from international aid organisations and NGOs. The art has been embraced both within Cambodian and internationally, with the Royal Ballet of Cambodia added to Unesco's 2004 list of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Like the performers in classical dances who emerge from temples as living incarnations of the gods, so too Khmer dance has re-emerged as an embodiment of national culture.

It is the original spiritual function of the art that holds most appeal for Heywood and informs the title of her book.

"Cambodian dance is ... first and foremost ... a sacred artform. It originated in the ancient temples and is tied up with cosmic symbolism." So too, this mysticism has bound Heywood to Cambodia since her initial visit. "I came here by chance, although I always say it was my destiny," she said.

Denise Heywood will present a talk on the content of her book today at 7pm at Monument Books.



# The CAMBODIA DAILY

Tuesday, March 10, 2009

## **Meeting To Discuss Ways Of Saving Angkor Area**

Scientists are expected to meet in Cambodia next week to present research on how to counter the damage being done to Angkor and the surrounding area, a Unesco official said Monday. Topics at the March 17 symposium in Siem Reap and a March 18 seminar in Phnom Penh could include everything from dealing with increased air pollution to making sure nearby residents benefit from tourism, said Philippe Delanghe, head of the cultural unit of the Phnom Penh office of Unesco. "It's really a gathering of international experts on the environmental situation in and around Angkor," he said, adding that recommendations can be expected. The growth of Angkor as an attraction has led to a strain on resources, Delanghe explained, such as the "huge utilization of water" and problems with waste management. The events, which are open to the public, are being organized by the Japanese project Environment Research Development in Angkor, Cambodia, with help from a handful of organizations, including Unesco. *(Clancy McGilligan)*

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Thursday, March 12, 2009

### Caveat Emptor Online, Where Sales of Khmer Antiquities Flourish

BY ADAM HARJU  
AND RANN REUY  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

A severely weathered Khmer sandstone head carving that appeared this week on online auction website eBay had an asking price of \$15,500, even though it has been fractured into six pieces and is quite possibly fake, experts said.

Determining if the piece was an original would be impossible without being able to touch it, experts said, and even then it would be difficult.

"Part of the face has been rebuilt [with mortar]," Bertrand Porte, Khmer sculpture expert and conservationist with Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient, said during an interview Tuesday while viewing images on the website.

"You'd be crazy to buy that; it is very corroded," he said.

The seller, The Unique Things Store located in Australia, claims the piece is an 11th-century Shiva in the Baphuon style, and that it comes with a certificate of authenticity. The seller did not respond to an email sent Tuesday morning.

The sandstone head was one item in a batch of around 15 Khmer antiquities listed on eBay in just the last few days. The site is teeming with such items listed as "genuine," "original" and "one of a kind."

A Restoration and Conservation Workshop archaeologist at the National Museum of Cambodia Chea Socheat said one of the items



**This item, as it appears on the online auction website eBay, is reported to be a Khmer sandstone head from the 13th century. One antiquities expert said it has discernible chisel marks on it, something that would not appear if it were genuine.**

listed as a "Khmer antique Buddha headed bust statue BE 12th" actually matched the Bakheng style from the 10th century and represents a Brahma or a Shiva, not Buddha.

"I think this is a copy," he said during an interview Wednesday while viewing images of the antique,

adding that the eight-faced bronze item is not true to Khmer mythology.

"If it is supposed to represent Brahma, there would be four faces and if it was a dancing Shiva there would be five faces," Chea Socheat said. "It is Khmer art, but the makers didn't know the mythology of

Khmer art," he said.

The other item he believed to be a copy was a sandstone head claimed to be from the 13th century that has discernible chisel marks on it, something that would not appear if it were genuine.

Added to the flood of genuine Khmer antiquities offered online, fakes merely muddy an already out-of-hand illegal trade.

Government officials said that any sales of cultural artifacts are illegal because of a 1970 Unesco convention and a 1995 Unidroit convention that Cambodia ratified in 2003.

"I am not aware of bidding on websites to buy Cambodian statues, but if they are real statues it is illegal," Ministry of Culture and Fine Art's Deputy Director General of the Cultural Heritage Department Prak Sunnara said by phone Wednesday.

Fake statues, he added, that are passed off as genuine make the larger problem of illegal sales more difficult to sort out.

With the illegal nature of sales of antiquities and a flood of fake cultural artifacts, it makes for a dangerous market for the consumer.

Yet online sales continue to flourish largely because they cannot be properly policed.

"It is a growing problem that will continue to get worse," Son Soubert, Heritage Watch board member and member of the Constitutional Council, said by phone Wednesday.



Thursday 12 March 2009

## Unesco official calls for more border talks

**BY KHOUTH SOPHAK CHAKRYA**

THE chairman of UNESCO's executive board expressed support Wednesday for further discussions between the Cambodian and Thai governments related to the dispute over Preah Vihear temple.

In a move Thailand opposed, UNESCO listed the temple as a World Heritage site last July, triggering a troop buildup on both sides of the Thai-Cambodian border.

During a meeting at the Council of Ministers, Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yai, who is visiting Cambodia for one week, commended Cambodian officials for their "patience" in ongoing border talks and encouraged them to continue to work towards a peaceful resolution to the dispute, which led to clashes that claimed four lives last October.

Because of the temple's designation as a World Heritage site, he said, the talks concern not only Cambodians but people the world over.

Deputy Prime Minister Sok An said during the meeting that the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces would defend the temple and the border. He also said Cambodian officials would strive to keep negotiations productive and amicable and to strengthen ties with the Thai government.

"We are never violent and we never invade other countries," Sok An said.

In addition to visiting Preah Vihear, the UNESCO official said he would visit Siem Reap and other provinces during his visit to the Kingdom, which ends on Tuesday next week. He said he was excited to visit many of the Kingdom's "wonderful" temples. ■



Monday 16 March 2009

# Unesco visits Preah Vihear

Top official says other temples suitable for World Heritage status, govt says

**BY SAM RITH**

A HIGH-level Unesco delegation paid a visit to Preah Vihear temple Friday, its first since the Angkor-era temple was listed as a World Heritage site in July last year.

Council of Ministers spokesman Phay Siphon said the delegation, led by Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yai, president of Unesco's executive council, travelled Friday to Preah Vihear, and that the delegation would also make trips to other temple sites and the Tonle Sap Lake as part of its March 10-17 visit.

Dim Sovannarom, media officer for the Council of Ministers, also said the delegation spent the remainder of the weekend visiting temples in Siem Reap province, raising the possibility more temples will be earmarked for recognition by Unesco.

"On March 14, Yai led the delegation to visit Beng Mealea, Koh Ke and other temples such as Damrei and Leung [Balang]" he said. "[Yai] has complimented the temples and said other temples in Cambodia are suitable for listing as World Heritage sites."

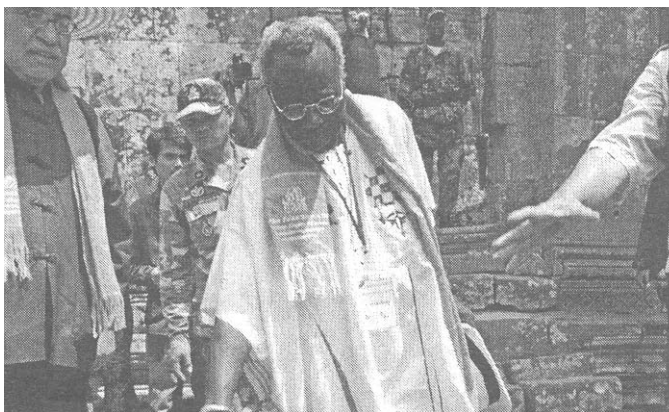
The group were to visit Banteay Srei temple before departing, he said.

He added that the trip would be followed by a technical team made up of experts from the US, France, Belgium and India, which is scheduled to visit the temple early next month.

Culture Ministry Secretary of State Som Sokun said Cambodia has long been preparing other temples throughout Cambodia – including Sambo Preykub and Banteay Chhmar – for nomination as Unesco sites. Over 3,000 ancient temples remain in Cambodia, but so far just two have been listed as World Heritage sites: Angkor Wat in 1992 and Preah Vihear temple in 2008, Som Sokun added. ■

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Monday, March 16, 2009



Reuters

**Olabiya Babalola Joseph Yai, center, chairperson of the executive council of Unesco, examines a piece of stone during his Friday tour of Preah Vihear temple.**

### Visit to Preah Vihear Temple by Unesco Delegation

A delegation from the Unesco headquarters in Paris on Friday visited Preah Vihear temple, which was listed as a World Heritage site in July, officials said Sunday. Olabiya Babalola Joseph Yai, chairman of Unesco's executive board, led the delegation, said Preah Vihear Authority Secretary-General Hang Soth. Council of Ministers and Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts officials accompanied Yai, said RCAF division 3 commander Srey Dek. "The Unesco delegation complimented Cambodia on building a great temple," said Srey Dek, who is based at the temple. Unesco officials could not be reached Sunday. "They toured the temple, walked along with the RCAF to visit this World Heritage temple," said Chim Phy, a Preah Vihear border police officer. He added that authorities Sunday had sent back to Thailand a Thai monk who, after a stay in Siem Reap, had attempted to pray at the Cambodian pagoda near the temple. Authorities "suspected that if he was allowed to stay and pray in our pagoda, then more monks might come to follow him," he said. *(Fang Mendeng)*

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

### Briefing

#### Gov't Wants Temple Listed As World Heritage Site

The government said Monday that it is seeking to list the Sambo Prey Kuk temple, located in Kompong Thom province, as a World Heritage site. The temple was built between 615 and 650, making it considerably older than the Preah Vihear temple and much of Angkor in Siem Reap, both of which already have World Heritage status. Kum Polin, deputy director-general of the cultural heritage department at the Ministry of Culture, said about 50 percent of the requirements for listing Sambo Prey Kuk have been met, but help was needed. "We need more financial support from the government and other organizations to work on the problem," he said. Teruo Jinnai, UNESCO Cambodia country representative, said the government has not yet drawn up an official application, but that they will likely agree to apply for listing. But, as with past applications, it can take anywhere between one and seven years for anything to be approved, he added. According to UNESCO, sites on the World Heritage List receive stronger protection, enhanced local and international recognition as well as access to technical and financial assistance under the World Heritage Fund. *(Rann Reuy and Simon Marks)*

## Phnom Penh Post

Thursday 19 March 2009

# Fostering a sense of heritage

UNESCO's Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yai sees stubborn pursuit of peace as the key to healing the rift between clashing cultures



**Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yai, president of UNESCO's executive council, tours the Preah Vihear temple complex near the Cambodia-Thailand border on Friday. PHOTO SUPPLIED**

**What were your impressions of Preah Vihear temple?**

I knew the site before because I was vice chairman of the World Heritage Committee when the file was submitted [to UNESCO]. So I knew the file and the controversy. On the spot, I was not surprised because it was chosen for the universal value of its heritage.

But I said to myself that we did not make a mistake and that we should have listed it as a World Heritage site a long time ago if history would have allowed us to do so. Concerning the recent events, I saw pieces of shrapnel, bullets and the Thai soldiers at the border.

As I said to the Cambodians, I encouraged them to be patient and to look stubbornly for peace and for dialogue. Both sides have to hold on to the rule of law and on what international law says. This is a conflict that will resolve itself with the time.

**Does UNESCO play any role in the negotiations between Thailand and Cambodia to solve the conflict?**

No, we don't.

**Before choosing Preah Vihear, you were aware of the tensions between the two countries?**

A country petitions for the World Heritage's list. The file was technical, not political. We delayed our decision in order to allow the states to agree. We are interested in the universal value of the site. We would have preferred that this border heritage unite [Cambodia and Thailand].

**Cambodian newspapers interpret your visit as showing political support for Cambodia. How would you characterise the purpose of your visit?**

Does Cambodia need political support? You know, I could have come before. I was invited for a very long time. If my visit reinforces Cambodia, this is not my intention -- but good! I am acting as the president of UNESCO's executive council.

I have come in order to see Cambodia's heritage and to encourage Cambodians to submit more sites for World Heritage status. A lot of them deserve it. At UNESCO, we are interested in the heritage because it does more for peace than politics.

**In what ways does heritage serve the cause of peace more than politics?**

When heritage is known and shared by people who are strangers to your culture, they have to put their own culture in perspective. The other day I was joking: 'The French probably had to relativise Versailles when confronted by Angkor Wat! When you look at Angkor Wat, you have to think about the history, the ideas and the philosophy that led to it. This thought is an ingredient of peace, with education of course. And that's how humanity will appropriate this heritage. Peace grows in people's minds.

After that, if a country wants to declare war and the heritage is threatened, there will be people to say, 'Stop'!. This is the sowing of peace.

**Among the sites you have visited (Banteay Chhmar, Sambor PreyKub, Beng Mealea, Koh Ke, Damrei and Leung Balang), which one do you think deserves World Heritage status?**

I did not visit a single site that does not deserve it, natural sites included. I've visited a sanctuary for birds on the Tonle Sap Lake [Prek Toal], which maybe could

be part of a mixed natural and cultural heritage [site] because of the fishermen's lifestyle in the lakeside village. It is like in my country, in Benin.

The difference is that in Benin, the people who live this way were forced to leave their land because of raids by those who wanted to catch slaves. They were refugees. They built their houses on piles on the water and created a new lifestyle. In this nature reserve of the Tonle Sap Lake, I was told that there is a great variety of birds and a great biodiversity. I am sure there are also a lot of different reptile and plant species.

**Why did the site of Koh Ker make such a strong impression on you?**

It never occurred to me that there was a pyramid in Cambodia! I was amazed. The pyramid is a way to express oneself that people have in common. All these civilisations were not contemporaneous: Khmer, Inca, Aztec. It proves the uniqueness of the human spirit, its univer-

sality. But these are not stories that are written in the newspapers.

**Why have you said that Cambodians are very discreet about their heritage?**

Some countries that have a tenth of this heritage would make more noise about it.

**What are the most important factors for implementing sustainable protections of cultural heritage?**

Besides conservation efforts, the involvement of the local communities is very important, so that they appropriate this heritage and understand that it belongs to them.

It is necessary to educate people about heritage because you can never take this notion for granted.

Education is a long-term process. You need to train one generation before getting the dividends of this education while heritage is visible and alive at the present time. **INTERVIEW BY ANNE-LAURE PORRE** ■



Cambodian soldiers stand guard at the Preah Vihear temple complex in January. VONG SOKHENG

## CAMBODGE SOIR

19-25 mars 2009

# Un haut responsable de l'Unesco se rend à Preah Vihear

Le président du Conseil exécutif de l'organisation est venu soutenir le projet de conservation des temples.

À 10 h du matin, le lourd pick-up Cadillac Escalade blanc, transportant le Béninois Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yai, président du Conseil exécutif de l'Unesco, s'arrête devant la pagode de Preah Vihear, à 500 mètres en contrebas du temple. L'institution des Nations unies pour l'éducation, la sciences et la culture a officiellement inscrit le site au patrimoine mondial en juillet 2008.

Huit mois après, un haut représentant de l'Unesco s'est rendu sur la plus haute montagne (620 m) de la chaîne Dângrek, pour contempler les cinq temples khmers pluriséculaires. Le président exécutif de l'Unesco était accompagné par des représentants de la Commission nationale du Cambodge pour l'Unesco (CNCU), et du ministère de la Culture, pour une visite sous haute surveillance. Entouré de gardes du corps, sur le chemin escarpé qui le menait jusqu'au temple, le Béninois a traversé le champs de bataille où se sont affrontés les soldats thaïlandais et khmers en octobre dernier.

Si le caractère culturel de cette visite est mis en avant, l'aspect politique n'a pas été négligé. Les autorités locales n'ont pas manqué de montrer à Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yai les parties du temple endommagées par les tirs d'obus et de balles. Chuch Phoeun, secrétaire d'État au ministère de la Culture a guidé la délégation, tout en retraçant l'histoire du site. Il leur aura fallu deux heures pour faire le tour des cinq bâtiments.

« C'est une visite importante. Nous pouvons montrer les travaux de conservation et de maintenance entrepris autour des temples, comme cela était prévu



Le Béninois Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yai, président du Conseil exécutif de l'Unesco, lors de sa visite du site de Preah Vihear.

dans le plan de gestion du site que nous avons soumis à l'Unesco », a expliqué Hang Soth, directeur général de l'Autorité nationale de Preah Vihear.

### Des travaux de restauration utiles

Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yai n'a pas souhaité commenter les rixes entre les Cambodgiens et les Thaïlandais, lesquels revendiquent une partie de la zone frontalière. Néanmoins, le Béninois s'est contenté de répondre ainsi à un journaliste : « Nous ne sommes pas là pour condamner. Évidemment, nous prônons pour le dialogue. C'est regrettable qu'il y ait eu des tirs, j'ai vu moi-même les impacts. Je peux seulement espérer que les auteurs ne vont pas récidiver. » Preah Vihear semble bien être un cas unique où un site inscrit au patrimoine mondial se trouve au milieu

d'un conflit armé. « Je crois que cela vaut la peine d'effectuer des travaux de restauration ici, c'est utile », a-t-il ajouté.

Partout sur la zone du temple, du pied jusqu'au sommet de la montagne, des panneaux ont été implantés, rappelant l'interdiction d'actes visant à détruire les constructions. Le Cambodge et la Thaïlande ont tous les deux signé le traité international de 1954, sur la protection du patrimoine en cas de conflit armé. Sur ce point, Hang Soth, de l'Autorité nationale de Preah Vihear a rappelé que « les déploiements de troupes cambodgiennes ne sont pas illégaux. C'est le droit du pays propriétaire de protéger le temple et d'appeler à l'aide les autres pays signataires de la région ».

Sur la question des travaux de conservation, la Commission nationale du Cambodge pour l'Unesco souhaite accélérer le mouvement. « Le projet de

conservation et de développement a été décidé par l'Unesco, et les budgets sont prêts. Vers la fin mars, un autre groupe technique nous aidera à établir le plan de gestion », a précisé Chan Tany, secrétaire générale de la CNCU.

La visite du président du Conseil exécutif de l'Unesco a été programmée en réponse à l'invitation formulée par Sok An, président de la CNCU, a rappelé Chan Tany. Durant son déplacement dans le royaume, le représentant de l'Unesco s'est également rendu à Siem Reap, pour admirer Angkor Wat, lui aussi inscrit au patrimoine mondial. Les temples de Koh Ker et de Bœung Meala, situés au nord du pays, ainsi que le Tonlé Sap, qui étaient au menu de ce déplacement, pourraient un jour être présentés pour une inscription au patrimoine mondial.

Leang Delux



# Manque d'eau ou pas ?

Après le grand froid du mois de janvier, les soldats cambodgiens basés en première ligne près du temple de Preah Vihear souffrent du manque d'eau. Ils l'utilisent principalement pour cuisiner et peuvent rarement se laver.

**T**rois sources d'eau se sont tariées dans la montagne abritant le temple en raison de la saison sèche et de la surconsommation. Il faut savoir que beaucoup de soldats sont arrivés dans la région de Preah Vihear à partir du 15 juillet 2008, date à laquelle la Thaïlande a envoyé

ses troupes sur la zone pour disputer un territoire qu'elle considère comme le sien. Les échanges de tirs qui ont eu lieu le 15 octobre ont poussé l'armée cambodgienne à renforcer son dispositif autour du temple. Ses soldats consomment évidemment de l'eau, provenant des sources alen-

tours : les deux grands anciens bassins du temple et un étang se trouvant à un kilomètre de ce dernier, derrière la pagode que l'armée thaïlandaise occupait à son arrivée.

## 60 litres par jour et par famille de soldat

Difficile donc de connaître exactement le nombre de soldats déployés dans la zone pour protéger le temple et l'intégrité territoriale du pays. Sur la montagne, on dénombre trois corps différents : l'Autorité nationale



Un des anciens bassins sacrés du temple de Preah Vihear, aujourd'hui à sec.



Sans ce pick-up Toyota transformé en camion-citerne, l'approvisionnement en eau des soldats stationnés autour de Preah Vihear et de leur famille serait encore plus compliqué.

de Preah Vihear, la Police du patrimoine et une unité des gardes du corps du Premier ministre.

Mais alors, l'eau manque-t-elle ou pas ? « On ne manque pas d'eau. Tout simplement, il n'y en a pas beaucoup. Elle nous manque un peu comme notre maison nous manque. En plus, ici, c'est une forêt transformée en champ de bataille », répond un soldat,

pourtant en train de recueillir le précieux liquide au fond d'un bassin sacré récemment vidé. Seul un mince filet d'eau coule au ras du sol. L'homme, d'une trentaine d'années, va stocker cette eau dans un seau avant de l'utiliser pour faire sa toilette. « Il y a suffisamment d'eau pour la cuisine car on la ramène d'un étang qui se trouve à cinq kilomètres du pied

de la montagne. Mais c'est vrai qu'il y en a pas suffisamment pour pouvoir se laver correctement » ajoute le militaire sous couvert d'anonymat.

Des mesures ont tout de même été prises. Un pick up Toyota a été transformé en camion-citerne pouvant transporter 1 000 litres d'eau. Chaque jour, il apporte trois citernes aux soldats stationnés sur la montagne. La plupart d'entre eux, présents depuis plusieurs mois, sont venus avec femmes et enfants. Chaque famille reçoit donc deux bidons de trente litres par jour. Ils leur sont indispensables. Au milieu du chemin qui monte au sommet, les soldats ont creusé des puits pour distribuer l'eau sur toute la zone. Malgré tout, l'eau reste une denrée rare. « Nous essayons de consommer peu. Avant nous prenions une douche par jour mais maintenant on ne se lave que tous les trois jours. Mais nous pouvons supporter cela. Quand j'ai fait la guerre contre les Khmers rouges, c'était beaucoup plus difficile : isolé dans la forêt, je cherchais des lianes d'eau pour me désaltérer », raconte un soldat de l'unité des

## Des incidents à la frontière avec la Thaïlande

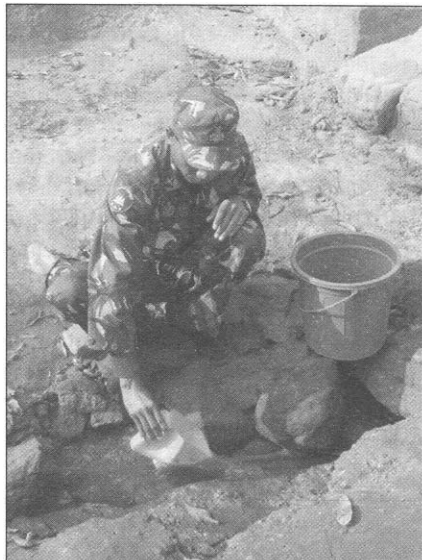
Le 27 février, un civil thaïlandais a été arrêté au poste frontière de Choam Sangam, dans la province d'Oddar Meanchay, en possession d'une mine. Il a été transféré à Phnom Penh où il est encore détenu. Le 10 mars, quatre autres Thaïlandais, armés de fusils, ont été arrêtés à Pro Lean Ta Tum, dans la province de Preah Vihear, avant d'être relâchés quelques jours plus tard. Le 12 mars, un bonze thaïlandais a été arrêté au pied de la montagne de Preah Vihear, côté cambodgien.

L.D.

Ces difficultés liées à l'approvisionnement en eau ne dont en revanche pas familières aux membres de la police du patrimoine, qui patrouillent depuis juillet autour du temple. Les policiers se sont plaints du manque d'eau. Tous doivent donner leur bidon aux personnes chargées de la citerne pour qu'elles leur rapportent de l'eau. « Avec le peu que nous avons, on peut simplement se rincer le corps. Pour le reste, je mets un peu de parfum » raconte Ngat Arundara avec un grand sourire au milieu de nombreux bidons vides ou pleins. Il rajoute que pendant la saison sèche, il transpire plus vite et doit donc cacher les mauvaises odeurs avec du déodorant car ce policier du patrimoine est parfois au contact des touristes qui viennent visiter le site de Preah Vihear.

### La route est prête

L'eau manque. Mais les soldats se réjouissent des réalisations de voirie entreprises, notamment la route qui mène au sommet. Grâce aux fonds de la chaîne de télévision Bayon, propriété de la fille de Hun Sen, la construction de la route montant jusqu'au temple a été achevée le



Un soldat cambodgien récolte de l'eau au fond d'un des bassins sacrés du temple.

mois dernier. « Cette route fait 3,6 kilomètres de longueur sur 7 mètres de large. Elle a coûté 1,5 million de dollars, soit 200 000 dollars de plus que la somme que nous avons collecté », affirme Huot Kheang Veng, assistant de la directrice générale de Bayon TV.

Pour le général Srey Deuk, commandant en charge des affaires militaires, cette voie de circulation est cruciale pour le transport du matériel et du ravitaillement. Depuis l'arrivée des soldats thaïlandais, les infrastructures routières se sont considérablement améliorées dans la partie nord du royaume. Actuellement, deux des trois accès au temple sont en pleine rénovation. Mais, les routes venant de Kampong Thom, de Dom Dèk et de Siem Reap sont néanmoins toutes carrossables.

**Leang Delux et Im Navin**



March 22 -28, 2009

**Cambodia Asks UN to list Ancient Temple**

Som Sokun, Secretary of State for the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, said Cambodia will ask the United Nations to register Kampong Thom's Sambo Prey Kuk temple, which was built during the Khmer King Isanavarman I, as a World Heritage Site. "We are preparing the proposal for the United Nations to register the temple with the Committee of World Heritage," Sokun recently said at a seminar on cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, UNESCO and the Vaseda University of Japan. Sokun said the government must organize a master plan for development and conservation of the temple. He added that the temple was even older than the world-renowned Angkor Wat in Siem Reap province, which has been the most popular sightseeing spot of the kingdom. It was built with clay, not stones like Angkor Wat, he said. The Sambo Prey Kuk temple is expected to become a place for people to study and research Khmer culture, construction, arts and history, according to Sokun. So far, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) already listed the Angkor Wat and the Preah Vihear temples in Preah Vihear province as World Heritage Sites.

## Phnom Penh Post

Tuesday 24 March 2009

# Old battlefield to welcome thousands for New Year

Ta Moan Thom Temple opened up by new road, border stability

BY THET SAMBATH

**H**UNDREDS of tourists have flocked to Ta Moan Thom temple in Oddar Meanchey province ahead of the Khmer New Year, following the completion of a new road to improve access to the remote border province.

The area around the small temple, which was drawn into the Preah Vihear conflict last year, continues to be a source of tension between Thai and Cambodian troops. Last month, Thai shells landed on the Cambodian side of the border.

Despite this, Neak Vong, deputy commander of Brigade 42

based at Ta Moan Thom, told the *Post* that more than 600 people visited the temple on Sunday.

"We are seeing that many tourists are coming to visit Ta Moan Thom temple, and they are giving encouragement to our soldiers," Neak Vong said.

"Ta Moan Thom is changing from a place accustomed to armed conflict to one that serves tourists. It is no longer a battlefield."

Kao Houn, governor of Ampil district, where the temple stands, said that between 30,000 and 50,000 Cambodians visited the temple last Khmer New Year. But he said visits dried up later in 2008 as armed



A tourist smiles at a soldier stationed at Preah Vihear temple in July last year. AFP

tensions grew following the listing of Preah Vihear Temple as a UNESCO World Heritage site in July.

But now, tensions have eased and the final 9-kilometre stretch of road connecting the temple to Rom Chong village – which is

linked into the provincial infrastructure – is complete.

"From now on, we will have tourists visiting the site every day, but the military commanders are asking them to come just twice a week to the temple itself, since they [still] need to provide security for the people amid the tensions between the two sides," he said.

Kao Houn added that he had asked the provincial governor to authorise the building, about a kilometre from the temple, of a village for the military and a new market for the tourists.

"Many thousands of people will visit the temple over the New Year. We will make sure they are safe," he said. ■

The CAMBODIA DAILY

Tuesday, March 31, 2009

## Briefing

### Eight Unesco Officials To Assess Preah Vihear Plan

A group of eight officials from Unesco will be at Preah Vihear temple today to assess the implementation of a management plan required by the temple's listing as a World Heritage Site, according to a government spokesman. The July 2008 inscription of Preah Vihear temple as a World Heritage Site allowed access to a \$4 million funding pool for the preservation and promotion of the ancient site. Council of Ministers spokesman Phay Siphon said by telephone Monday that the three most pressing issues are the stabilization of the temple's structure, development of facilities for tourism, and the issue of archaeological excavation. "These issues are critical for conservation," he said. A management plan was submitted in February 2008 and the Unesco officials will evaluate whether it is effective or needs changes, Phay Siphon said. He added that the standoff at the border with Thailand has not hindered any of the management efforts at the temple. Unesco Country Representative Teruo Jinnai could not be reached for comment. *(Adam Harju)*



April 5 -11, 2009

## UNESCO EXPERTS ASSESS DAMAGE AT PREAH VIHEAR TEMPLE

BY BUTH REAKSMEY KONGKEA

A group of technical delegations from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) visited Preah Vihear temple to examine and study how to protect and conserve it for the future. The three-day visit, from March 31 to April 2, was led by Professor Azedine Beschouch and accompanied by the Cambodian National Committee for UNESCO.

Phay Siphon, Secretary of State and Spokesman to the Council of Ministers, said the main purpose of the UNESCO visit was to directly examine and study the possibility to develop and preserve Preah Vihear temple in accordance to the agreement signed by the Royal Government of Cambodia and UNESCO in Quebec, Canada, on July 15, 2008, after the temple had officially been included into the World's Heritage.

"The main purpose of the UNESCO's visit is to examine the temple's status and staircases which were damaged by Thai rockets during the clashes on October 15, 2008," Siphon said. "Another objective of the visit is to see the real things happening at Preah Vihear temple, which is world property, to verify and evaluate how UNESCO will take actions and measures to preserve and protect the temple from being damaged in the future," he said.

Hang Soth, Director General of the Preah Vihear Authority, said the authority has reported and asked the UNESCO to make an examina-

tion after Thai soldiers shot into the temple during a border clash with the Cambodian troops in October 2008.

Soth said the authority also submitted a project proposal for temple's conservation to the UNESCO headquarters, based in France, through the Cambodian National Committee for UNESCO last year.

He said to create a protection zone around the World Heritage site, the authority also posted three UNESCO and World Heritage signs around the temple on November 7, 2008, to prevent further damage of the site. He added that the new signs have demarcated a new protection zone to deter fighting in the area at the Preah Vihear temple site.

"We hope that with the strong helpful support from the Royal Government of Cambodia and UNESCO, we will be able to protect and preserve the Preah Vihear temple for the next generation," Soth said.

The temple is one of the most striking to have been built during the 600-year-long Khmer empire and it was mainly built over a 100 to 150 year period during the reigns of the kings Suryavarman (1002-1050) and Suryavarman II (1113-1150), according to the Cambodian documents and historical books.

The Preah Vihear temple's carved friezes one is of particular interest as it shows King Suryavarman II going about his devotions and presenting gifts of white parasols, gold bowls and elephants to his spiritual leader. *(CW)*



Monday 6 April 2009

## Copyright handbook targets sellers, producers

BY MOM KUNTHEAR

THE Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts is set to distribute a new UNESCO-funded copyright handbook in a bid to educate local producers and DVD sellers about the importance of intellectual property rights, according to ministry officials.

Sim Sarak, director general of administration at the ministry's Copyright Office, said Friday that more than 7,000 copies of the *Asian Copyright Handbook* will be handed out to film and music production companies, as well as CD and DVD vendors.

"This book is very important to teach

actors, producers and retailers more about copyright and the fact that they should stop copying other productions from now on," he said.

Sim Sarak said the book, donated by UNESCO's Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre, was a basic source of information about local and regional copyright laws.

"I want Cambodia to become a cultural centre," he said. "But if the writers, actors and production owners don't know anything about copyright laws, it will be difficult to reach that goal."

Som Sokun, a secretary of state at the Ministry of Culture, expressed similar

hopes the book would raise awareness about the problems of intellectual theft.

On March 19, Commerce Minister Cham Prasidh signed a directive ordering a crackdown on the airing of films and karaoke videos on commercial television without formal permission from the producers, with offenders facing punishments of up to three months in jail and/or 10 million riels (US\$2,440) in fines.

"Some TV and cable TV stations broadcast karaoke films from illegal copied discs without permission from writers," Cham Prasidh said in the directive. "This is a violation of intellectual property law." ■

# Border talks open in capital

## Cambodia's top border negotiator says before the talks that last week's violence occurred because 'Thais did not respect international law'

BY SAM RITH AND VONG SOKHENG

TALKS over disputed territory between Cambodia and Thailand opened Monday with the Kingdom's chief border official, Var Kimhong, blaming Thai soldiers for last week's clashes that marked the worst violence yet during a nearly nine-month standoff over land around Preah Vihear temple.

"The Thais have to understand international law," Var Kimhong said before the two days of discussions that, although scheduled before Friday's fighting, are likely to be dominated by the bloody shootout that left at least three

Thai troops dead.

"I would like to say that the accident last week occurred because the Thais did not respect international law," Var Kimhong said, adding that one of the aims of the talks was to reach agreement on redeploing soldiers away from a pagoda near Preah Vihear temple that has been a flashpoint for conflict in the past.

"We have to resolve the border dispute soon in order to avoid another incident like the one that occurred last week," he said.

Heavy fighting broke out twice on Friday after RCAF troops said the Thai military crossed into Cambodia's Veal Antri, or Eagle Field, a section



Cambodia's top border negotiator, Var Kimhong, speaks to reporters after bilateral talks on Monday. SOVANN PHILONG

of the border where fighting also broke out last October.

Elsewhere on the Cambodian side of the border, a market burned to the ground after taking small arms and

rocket fire, witnesses said.

The clashes also damaged the 11th-century Preah Vihear temple, which was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in July, just before Thai

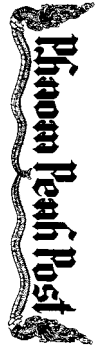
troops first occupied what Cambodia claims is its territory around the monument.

### On the agenda

Var Kimhong said the agenda for this week's meeting of the Joint Border Commission had been set before Friday's clashes.

A draft agenda distributed before the meeting Monday showed that officials would discuss the minutes from the February commission meeting in Bangkok, plans for fact-finding missions to determine the condition and location of boundary markers and a "draft provisional agreement" to move soldiers away from the area near Preah Vihear temple. ■

Tuesday 7 April 2009



## Hun Sen Orders Burned Border Market Rebuilt

BY PHANN ANA  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

Prime Minister Hun Sen has ordered the immediate reconstruction of the market that was burned to the ground at the base of the Preah Vihear temple stairway during Friday's clash between Thai and Cambodian troops, government officials said Monday.

The details and timeline of the market's reconstruction, however, were not available, as government officials say they are continuing to discuss rebuilding efforts with Unesco experts.

"As the principle order from Sandech Prime Minister, the market needs to be rebuilt," said Council of Ministers Undersecretary of State Suos Yara, who led a government team to survey the damage from the brief battle Friday.

"His principle is that, [between] heritage and life, he prefers to choose life before heritage. So the protection of the people's interest is a real need," he said.

During an hour-long skirmish  
*Continued on page 2*

## Market...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

where the sides battled each other with rockets, mortars and heavy machine-guns, shells from the Thai side set the ramshackle market ablaze, utterly destroying it. At least one Thai soldier was confirmed killed in the fighting, but RCAF officials and soldiers believe the death toll to be higher, and the unofficial count at the temple among Cambodians for their Thai adversaries is 22 dead and 30 injured.

Thailand has long claimed that the Cambodian market was on Thai territory and should be removed.

On Monday morning, Suos Yara briefly met with more than 200 families of now-homeless vendors who fled to Sa'em town—located around 20 km from the mountaintop Preah Vihear temple—to escape Friday's fighting. There, he told the vendors of the government's plans to build new stalls for them at the old site.

Suos Yara declined to provide further details on the date and the cost of the restoration plan for the market.

"During the meeting on Friday, Unesco officers were saddened

over the damaging of the temple and the market," Preah Vihear Authority Secretary-General Hang Soth said, adding that the market would be rebuilt at the same location but needed to be a more attractive facility with environmental safeguards. "The fighting among the troops is their jobs. Our job is to continue with our work plan, and we are going to rebuild that marketplace," Hang Soth said.

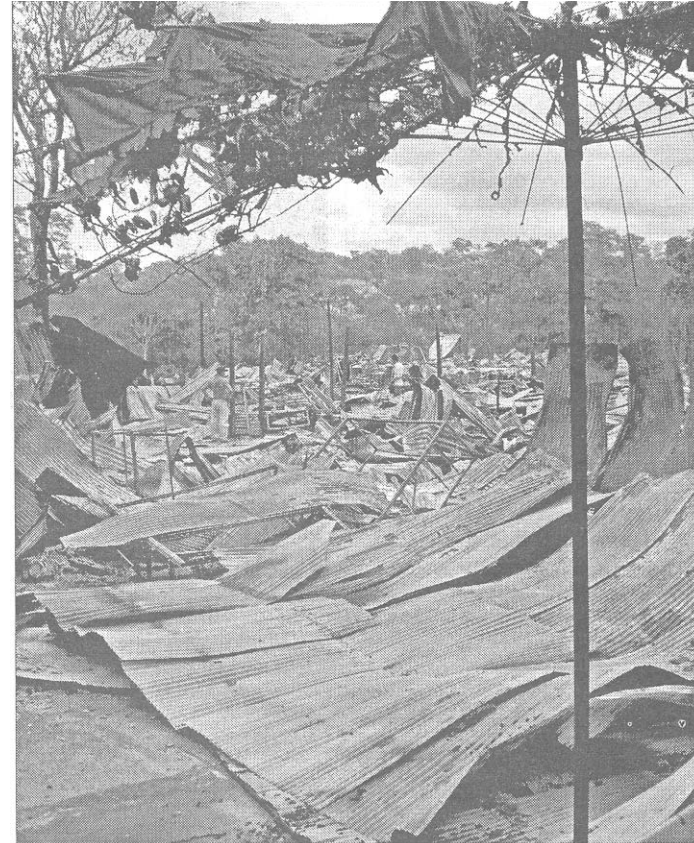
He said the fire had destroyed around 257 stalls at the market that had been developed at the base of the temple's stairway starting around a decade ago.

The presence of the market, a rickety affair of narrow, warren-like passages and extremely poor sanitation, had drawn concern from heritage experts over waste management and pollution. The presence of the market has also greatly annoyed Thai authorities.

Officials with Unesco could not be reached for comment Monday.

Preah Vihear Provincial Governor Preap Tann said the new market would be remade of wood in a traditional Khmer style and roofed with red clay tiles.

Keo Neang, a storeowner at the burned out market, said the currently shop-less vendors cheered



Kevin Doyle/The Cambodia Daily

The scorched remains of the Cambodian market at the foot of the Preah Vihear temple staircase Saturday.

The news of the government's reconstruction plan announced by Suos Yara.

"We have hope again after hearing the announcement," she said.



## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Tuesday, April 7, 2009

# Cambodia Seeks Unesco Aid in Temple Dispute

BY ADAM HARJU  
AND CHENG SOKHORNG  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

Cambodia on Saturday asked Unesco's head office in Paris to intervene to prevent further damage to Preah Vihear temple after clashes Friday led to damaged stonework on a staircase and a razed market at the base of the temple.

"The temple is facing serious risks," Cabinet Minister Sok An said in the letter penned Saturday.

"This is a solemn and urgent appeal to protect the cultural heritage of the temple that is under the banner of Unesco," Sok An wrote, adding, "The Royal Government waits for your intervention in order

to protect an irreplaceable, priceless diamond of World Heritage."

During the fighting, bullets and shrapnel chipped the 900-year-old temple and the Cambodian market at the foot of the temple stairs has been reduced to little more than ash and scorched sheet metal.

Preah Vihear temple was listed as a Unesco World Heritage Site in July 2008, flaring tensions with Thailand over the disputed land around the site. The rising tension escalated to the first armed clashes in October last year when the temple suffered its first superficial damage as a rifle launched a grenade from the Thai front lines.

Phay Siphon, Council of Minist-

ers spokesman, said by telephone Monday that the government will supply evidence of the damage at the temple to the executive board council of Unesco within a few days.

Unesco serves as the secretariat for the World Heritage Committee, the body responsible for selecting World Heritage sites.

"It is our obligation to report this to Unesco World Heritage...seeking the protection of Preah Vihear temple as a World Heritage Site," Phay Siphon said.

Several calls to Unesco officials in Phnom Penh went unanswered Monday, and e-mailed requests for comment received no response.

# Angkor avant Angkor

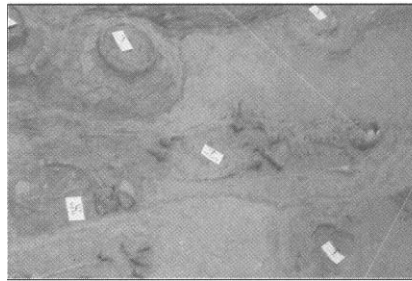
Au musée national de Phnom Penh, une exposition explique le travail des archéologues et l'origine des pièces, parfois très anciennes, retrouvées autour d'Angkor.

Le musée national de Phnom Penh abrite sans conteste la plus belle collection d'art khmer du monde. Mais, jusqu'à présent, les visiteurs admiraient la plupart du temps ces œuvres sans forcément savoir comment elles avaient été découvertes et ce qu'elles avaient appris à l'homme sur les civilisations anciennes. Ce constat a conduit Hab Touch, directeur du musée, et Christophe Pottier, membre de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, à superviser une exposition didactique au musée, pour que chacun puisse comprendre ce que les pièces apportent aux archéologues.

« Il fallait retisser un lien entre le musée et le terrain de la recherche », commente Christophe Pottier qui sait de quoi il parle. En effet, depuis neuf ans, il dirige des fouilles près de Siem Reap. En 2004, il a ainsi découvert le plus ancien site d'occupation humaine de la région, dans une partie centrale du Baray occidental immergée la plupart du temps. Les éléments qui ont été retrouvés ont permis de dater une oc-

cupation des lieux entre 1500 et 1000 avant Jésus-Christ. Le deuxième site sur lequel il a travaillé longuement, celui de Prei Khmeng, couvre la période suivante, jusqu'au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, soit peu avant les débuts de l'époque angkoriennne. Point commun entre cette néropole située sous un temple et le Baray alors à sec : une seule et même population y vivait, la même qui a fondé Angkor et lui a légué ces monuments uniques.

L'exposition présente les constantes qui caractérisent ces civilisations, comme cette étrange coutume qui visait à enlever les canines supérieures chez les filles. Des crânes retrouvés sur les deux sites ne laissent aucun doute sur la persistance du rite. L'anatomie n'est cependant pas la seule technique décortiquée dans cette exposition. Sont aussi mises à contribution l'anthropologie, la génétique (avec l'utilisation de l'ADN) ou encore la zoologie. Sur ce dernier plan, les archéologues ont ainsi retrouvé des dents de tigres et des oreilles de dauphins, attestant de la



Reconstitution d'un squelette retrouvé lors de ces fouilles.

présence de ce mammifère marin dans la région.

Toutes ces techniques sont rigoureusement expliquées en trois langues (khmer, anglais et français) sur des panneaux illustrés devant des vitrines tout aussi pédagogiques. Ainsi, l'une d'entre elles reprend tout le processus qui part du tesson jusqu'à la reconstitution d'un vase en entier, tandis qu'une tombe a été reconstituée avec les éléments traditionnels qui accompagnaient le défunt, tels qu'un sac de riz ou une tête de cochon.

Autre mise en scène remarquable, un champ de fouilles a été reconstitué à l'entrée de l'exposition, dans la continuité de la visite classique du musée. Sur un quart de la surface réelle, soit 5 m<sup>2</sup>, le public découvre, puis traverse

sur un pont de bois, les emplacements des découvertes de la campagne de 2005. Pour l'anecdote, la terre a été rapportée de Siem Reap, car elle ne correspond pas à celle de la région de Phnom Penh.

Les visiteurs de la capitale auront vraisemblablement jusqu'à la fin de l'année 2009 pour découvrir ces bracelets en ivoire ou encore ces outils de l'Âge de bronze. Mais le rêve des concepteurs de l'exposition serait qu'elle puisse ensuite être visible à Siem Reap. En effet, explique Christophe Pottier, « Angkor n'est plus que le squelette de la civilisation cambodgienne ». Une exposition comme celle-ci, en mettant les pièces d'archéologie dans leurs contextes, aidera forcément les visiteurs à mieux comprendre les origines de la civilisation khmère.

Exposition « les ancêtres d'Angkor », au musée national de Phnom Penh, ouverte depuis le 6 mai, financée par Friends of Khmer culture, l'autorité nationale Apsara, Mme Béatrix Latham, l'Unesco, l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, la Commission des fouilles archéologiques du ministère français des Affaires étrangères.

**Guillaume Clément**

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Thursday, May 7, 2009

# Outcry Over Demolition of Crematorium at Wat Ounalom

By RANN REUY  
AND ADAM BECKER  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The crematorium at Phnom Penh's Wat Ounalom pagoda should be preserved because of its historical value and potential for tourism, authorities on religion and culture said Wednesday, days after demolition began on the structure that highly respected Supreme Patriarch Chuon Nath played a key role in erecting in the 1950s.

Bich Song, former deputy director of the city's culture and fine arts department, said the building should be preserved not only because of its role in Buddhist ceremonies, but because it offered value as a tourist attraction as well.

"I think there is no point in destroying that crematorium, because it was only built on a few square meters," he said. "I don't know why they want to destroy what previous generations did."

"If it can be preserved, it can be used for tourists as well, like other temples across the country," he added.

Mr Bich Song estimated that

more than 12,000 people, including many high-ranking officials, had been cremated in the building, which was erected in 1955.

The crematorium was ordered closed by Great Supreme Patriarch Tep Vong in February, in accordance with a plan announced in 2004 by municipal authorities, citing air-quality and traffic-control concerns, to close all of central Phnom Penh's crematorium sites and build four large electric cremation machines on the city's outskirts. On Sunday, demolition of the stepped chimney began, with plans to build housing for monks in its place.

Asked by telephone about the crematorium's destruction Wednesday, Mr Tep Vong said only, "It is not necessary to ask me this question."

Chuon Nath, who died in 1969, wrote in the book "The History of Wat Ounalom" that the crematorium there was the first of its kind. He also said the crematorium was built after he and then-King Norodom Sihanouk granted permission to a donor to arrange for the crematorium's construction.

"This is the newly invented cre-

matorium, like Cambodia has never had in the past," Chuon Nath wrote in the book, published in the late 1950s.

Teruo Jinnai, country director for Unesco, said the building held personal significance for him, as at least two of his friends had been the subjects of ceremonies at the crematorium.

He said one friend, a Japanese man, was shot and killed during the run up to the 1993 UN-backed elections, and was cremated at Ounalom. The ashes of another friend, who died in the US in 2007, were also sent to Cambodia for a ceremony at the pagoda, he said.

He said the building also had "historical value," but said he wasn't sure if it was enough to warrant keeping the building standing.

"Probably more than educational value, it has historical value, but I cannot say" if destroying the building would be a significant blow to cultural preservation, he said.

However, Son Soubert, a member of the Constitutional Council as well as the board of directors for Heritage Watch, decried the

decision to destroy the crematorium, as well as the municipality's plan to force crematoriums to the city's outskirts.

"The argument is that it is polluting the city, which is not a very good reason, because with modern technology they can address these kinds of things," he said. "Even in Thailand, in Bangkok, they have crematoriums in the middle of the city."

He said cremation ceremonies played a central role in Buddhist culture, and that destroying the crematorium would be an affront to that culture.

"In any Buddhist country, they must have crematoriums," he said. "It served for such a long time, I don't know why they would destroy it."

Phan Davy, director of the municipal religions department, said the decision to preserve or destroy the city's crematoriums was up to individual abbots at each pagoda, but said he supported preserving the structures.

"It is the abbots' decision, but it is also good if our ancestors' achievements are preserved for memory," he said.

# King has royal pedigree in arts

While his father was synonymous with the arts and politics, King Norodom Sihamoni leaves the politics to his brothers to focus on his born love for classical dance and Khmer culture

BY NATHAN GREEN

UNLIKE his brothers, who were active in Cambodia's royalist Funcinpec party and have waged protracted power struggles with the current premier, King Norodom Sihamoni has dedicated most of his life to the arts, especially classical dance.

In this regard, he has taken after his father. While King Norodom Sihanouk was certainly no shrinking violet when it came to Machiavellian manoeuvring, arguably his greatest positive legacy was the flowering of the arts under his patronage in post-independence Cambodia.

He was also responsible for introducing his son, then Prince Norodom Sihamoni, to the arts, even collaborating with him on *The Little Prince*, which was shot by the King in Cambodia when the

Prince was 14. Filmed among Angkor's temples, the 18th-century story was about the just reign of a young orphaned prince over a small kingdom and his struggles against his uncle's evil wife.

By that stage, the young Prince had already moved a long way down the road to a life in arts, according to Julio A Jeldres, Sihanouk's official biographer.

## Czech upbringing

While he was introduced to art by his father at an early age, it was his experiences in Prague, where he was sent by his father at age 6, that arguably led him to favour performance arts.

The Ministry of Education of what was then Czechoslovakia, placed a tutor, Karel Polak, at the young prince's service. One of his duties was to escort the young prince to the theatre, opera and films. The language barrier meant the young



King Norodom Sihamoni takes to the stage to congratulate disabled Chinese artists at Chaktomuk Conference Hall in Phnom Penh on January 17, 2008. HENG CHIVAN

Prince initially warmed to ballet, finding the physicality of the art form easier to grasp than the strange new language he would eventually come to master.

In December 1962, Polak reported that the prince's scope of interests had

widened proportionally with the improvement of his Czech language skills, Jeldres told the *Post* by email. "Initially, he was interested only in ballet, but now he has added film and opera to his favourites. Sometimes he invents various plots that he can even

express in Czech, or by dance and music," Polak wrote to Sihamoni's parents.

According to a school report reproduced in the book *Royal Ties*, which was published in English by the Czech government in 2006, Sihamoni had, for his age, a

"highly superior knowledge of music, especially opera, and in the field of literature, dramatic arts and film".

As a student, then-Prince Sihamoni portrayed the title character in the Tchaikovsky ballet *The Nutcracker Suite* at the Prague National Theatre. In 1975, aged 22, he graduated from the Czech Academy of Performing Arts, where he wrote a thesis titled "Utilising European Classical Dance in the Cambodian Dance Culture".

He then left for North Korea for a year of cinema studies, which was interrupted by a trip to visit his parents in Cambodia in October 1975 following the Khmer Rouge uprising. Forced to work in the fields for a month, he was allowed to return to Pyongyang, but on his next visit the following year he was detained under house arrest alongside his parents.

This interrupted his plan to enrol in doctoral studies in ballet or theatre history at Charles University, while political events in Czechoslovakia in the 1980s also prevented his return after Cambodia's emancipation from the Khmer Rouge.

Instead, Prince Sihamoni taught and danced in France following the fall of the Khmer Rouge, spending the years from 1981 to 2000 at the Marius Petipa conservatory, the Gabriel Faure conservatory and the Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart conservatory in Paris. In the late 1980s, he created his own dance company, Deva, which performed in France, China and North Korea, and produced two dance films, titled *Dream* and *Four Seasons*.

In 1993 he became Cambodia's ambassador to UNESCO, where he was involved in the international efforts to protect and preserve Angkor Wat and other Khmer temples in Cambodia. He also drew the world's attention to the traffic in stone antiquities from Angkor Wat and promoted exhibitions of Khmer art outside Cambodia and tours of the Royal Ballet to France and other countries.

He relinquished the position upon his 2004 coronation but his ties to the organisation continued. In 2006, UNESCO selected him to deliver the message for International Dance Day, an honor previously bestowed on dance greats like US choreographers Robert Joffrey and Merce Cunningham.

Today, says Jeldres, King Sihamoni takes a keen interest in Cambodian art, personally attending events if his schedule allows, or sending a senior member of the royal family.

However, because the King reigns and does not rule, much depends on the willingness of the royal government to fund the arts. ■

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Friday, May 15, 2009

### *Gov't, Unesco To Digitize 200 Years of Buddhist Texts*

BY BETHANY LINDSAY  
AND RANN REUY  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts signed an agreement with Unesco this week to digitize approximately 14,000 manuscripts of Buddhist text, all written on palm leaves, ministry and Unesco officials said Thursday.

The project is an extension of an 18-year effort by the Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient that saw experts traveling to 1,500 temples throughout Cambodia to inventory the texts on microfilm, said Teruo Jinnai, the Unesco representative in Cambodia.

"From the Cambodian perspective, [this project] is about ensuring the preservation of an unique

endangered movable heritage," Mr Jinnai said in an e-mail Thursday. He added that the project will take a year to complete, and the contents of the palm texts will eventually be distributed on DVDs and through the Internet.

Mr Jinnai estimated that about 98 percent of Cambodia's Buddhist texts were destroyed by warfare and lost to climactic conditions.

"We're therefore left with only 2 percent of these exceptional testimonies to Cambodia's religious behavior, and sometimes biographies of esteemed monks," he said. "The oldest must be approximately 200 years old."

Financing for the project will be provided by Singapore, according to Mr Jinnai, but he added that

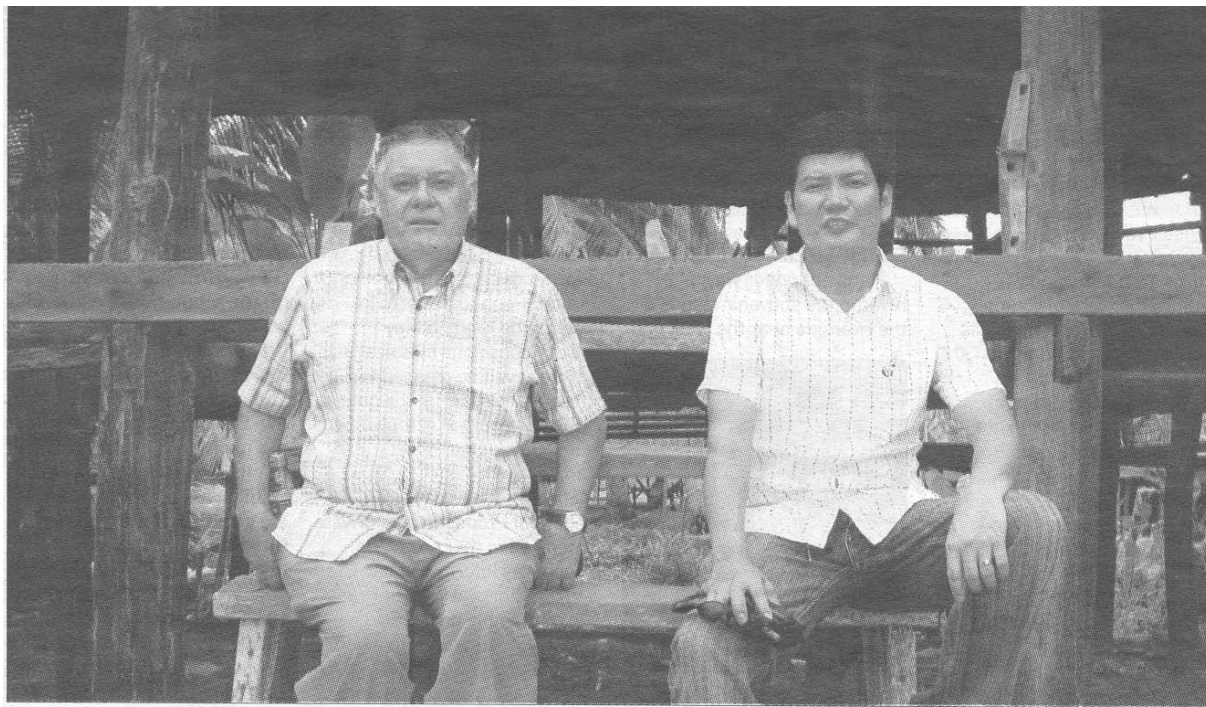
the total price tag could not yet be revealed, as it is currently under negotiation.

The ministry's role in the project, which is headquartered at Wat Ounalom in Phnom Penh, is to provide "institutional support," Mr Jinnai said.

Meas Sarun, the ministry's general director of technique of culture, said Thursday that the May 11 agreement signals Cambodia's official support for the project.

"When this is done, everyone will want to read the good advice in our ancient scripts," Mr Sarun said.

Representatives of the Singapore embassy and the EFEO could not be reached for comment Thursday afternoon.



Darryl Collins (left) and Hok Sokol on the steps of the almost-disassembled Khmer house. PETER OLSZEWSKI

# A moving experience with an antique Khmer house

Having saved one old Khmer house in 2006 by moving it 300 kilometres, Darryl Collins is set to repeat the feat in Siem Reap

**PETER OLSZEWSKI**

**S** IEM Reap-based Australian art and culture historian Darryl Collins is at it again – moving house.

But unlike ordinary folk who simply move possessions and belongings, Collins moves the entire house. With the aid of Khmer architect and colleague Hok Sokol, he embarked on his first moving experience in 2006.

This was a herculean odyssey involving relocating an entire 100-year-old historic Chinese-Khmer wooden house from an island in the middle of a river in Kampong Cham – disassembling it, then carting it more than 300 kilometres to Siem Reap, where it now stands, resplendently restored.

Last month he applied for the house to be given a Southeast Asian Heritage award, an annual prize handed out by

the regional UNESCO office in Bangkok each September, and is now awaiting the result.

But instead of resting on his chaise longue, Collins, together with Hok Sokol, started to move another house this week.

This house, another century-old wooden Khmer home, is not quite so grand as the Kampong Cham residence, and the moving experience is not so overwhelming.

The house is nestled beside the Siem Reap River rather than on an island, and instead of having to be carted 300 kilometres, the old house in Aranh Sakor village only has to be moved 2 kilometres.

This house is also special because, further research withstanding, it could well be Siem Reap's oldest domestic structure.

Hok Sokol said, "It's maybe just over 100 years old, and I think it's the oldest house in Siem Reap."

Collins is a tad more cautious.

"It's quite an old structure. Sokol has mentioned an age of approximately 100 years, but we can't verify that yet because we have to do more research on its history.

"I would think it would be one of the oldest domestic structures in Siem Reap. It wouldn't, of course, hold against some of the wats, but they're religious structures and are quite different."

As with the Kampong Cham residence, this house first came to the attention of Hok Sokol, who then alerted Collins to its existence and its need for preservation.

"When I was a student in 1997, my university professor had a small grant to invite four students to study the architecture of the houses in Siem Reap," Hok Sokol said.

"We travelled along the Siem River, observed the housing and buildings surrounding

the area, and found that there were very interesting houses. But the owner has already modified and remodeled one of these houses. With this one, the owners recently abandoned it because they'd built a new concrete house, and decided to sell it.

Collins said he bought the house "basically to save it".

He added, "I'd known about the house for several years and Sokol and I came to see it a couple of times. It became vacant, more derelict. Its condition was fading fast."

This week, Collins has begun disassembling the house and moving it to its new nearby location where it will be stored during the rainy season and then rebuilt. He said, "We built a structure on the new site to protect the wood and it will be okay to be kept dry for one rainy season. You can't store these houses for very long, and it will have to be rebuilt as quickly as possible." ■

## CAMBODGE SOIR

28 may au 3 juin 2009

# Théâtre brûlé : les artistes reforment le cercle

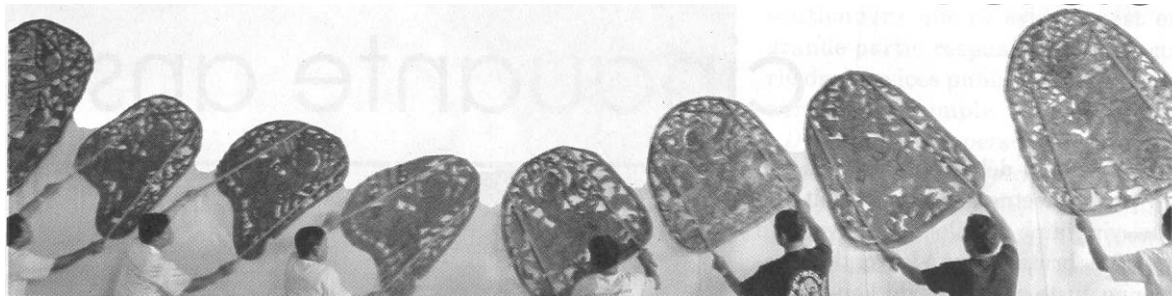
À Phnom Penh et dans les villages reculés, les acteurs et musiciens de la troupe de Kok Thlok ressuscitent les formes théâtrales en déshérence.

**A**près le drame de l'incendie, la menace de l'oubli... Le yike, le théâtre d'ombres et le mahori peuvent-ils renaître des cendres du Théâtre Preah Suramarith, dont les locaux ont été dévastés par le feu en 1994 ? Les musiciens, acteurs et danseurs de la compagnie de Kok Thlok, qui écument les villages de province depuis deux ans pour perpétuer la tradition, veulent le croire. Ils ne ménagent pas leurs efforts, que ce soit dans les pagodes de la province de Pailin, au temple de Bantey Tchmar ou, comme samedi 16 mai dernier, lors d'un concert donné en privé à Phnom Penh.

Malgré le classement formel, en 2005, du théâtre d'ombres Sbek Thom sur la liste du Patrimoine mondial immatériel de l'Unesco, les formes théâtrales traditionnelles khmères sont menacées de disparition, notamment en raison du manque de moyens accordés aux artistes. « *Ceux du Théâtre Preah Suramarith sont restés quelques années sur les lieux après l'incendie, se souvient Deth Thach, coordinateur de Kok Thlok. Il y a trois ans, j'ai rencontré Eing Hoeung, qui devait déménager car le théâtre allait être vendu. Il m'a proposé d'organiser un spectacle.* » Celui-ci, en 2006, aurait pu être un dernier hommage ; il fut le point de départ d'un véritable engouement. Les tournées en province – une trentaine en 2008 – permettent de constater, auprès des villageois, la ferveur qui entoure ce symbole de la tradition ancestrale du Cambodge.

*« En octobre dernier, nous étions dans la province*





d'Oddar Meanchey. *Ce sont les militaires qui nous ont accueilli, qui ont construit la scène, nous ont fait à manger...* », s'amuse Deth Thach. Lors d'une autre tournée, il s'aperçoit qu'une spectatrice âgée explique à son petit-fils le déroulé du spectacle, d'après ses souvenirs. « *Les gens n'ont souvent pas vu cela depuis trente ans, voire plus... Dans les années 1980, il y avait eu quelques spectacles dans les villages, mais le plus souvent, dans un objectif de propagande.* »

### Soutien royal

Les représentations dans les villages attirent parfois plusieurs milliers de personnes, de quoi satisfaire les bailleurs de fonds comme Friends of Arts Culture et Amrita Performing Arts. En 2007, lors du festival de théâtre organisé par le Centre culturel français, le roi Norodom Sihamoni a également apporté son soutien.

Les formes théâtrales mises en avant sont le yike, mettant en scène des histoires dramatiques, et dont *Tum Teav* est la pièce la plus connue, le mahori, qui se conclut en général par une fin heureuse, et le théâtre d'ombres Ayang avec les « petits cuirs ». Impossible, pour l'instant, d'assurer une représentation de Nang Sbek, ou « grands cuirs », avec d'imposantes figurines opaques en peau de buffle. « *Il n'y a plus grand monde au Cambodge qui sait les fabriquer*, note Deth Thach. *Il faudrait lancer un programme avec les Beaux-Arts pour organiser un*

*atelier... Cela demande beaucoup de moyens.* »

En attendant, la compagnie de Kok Thlok envisage de monter, avec le Théâtre parisien du Soleil, une version khmère de la pièce *L'Histoire terrible mais inachevée de Norodom Sihanouk, roi du Cambodge*, écrit par la romancière Hélène Cixous en 1985, une œuvre qui s'éloigne de la biographie officielle du roi-père. Ce ne serait pas la première fois que la compagnie se frotterait à des thèmes sensibles : lors d'une tournée à Sampoev Loum, ex-fief khmer rouge des environs de Pailin, le thème du spectacle portait sur... la question de la loi divine et de la justice humaine.

**A.L.G.**



# FUTURE OF TRO KHMER IN DOUBT AS STUDENT NUMBERS FALL

BY BUTH REAKSMEY KONGKEA

The Tro Khmer is a traditional Khmer musical instrument. The future is in doubt for this instrument as there is a lack of students willing to attend school and learn its intricacies. This concern was voiced by Professor Proeung Chhieng, Vice-Dean of the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA) in Phnom Penh.

Professor Chhieng said on an average year, about 30 students register to learn how to play traditional Khmer musical instruments, as well as learning about other aspects of Cambodian high art. Understanding the Tro Khmer forms part of the syllabus.

However, he said this year only about 20 students have applied for study with RUFA. He said that with this small number to work with, the community of traditional artists would start to dwindle, taking their irreplaceable knowledge with them.

"I am very concerned about student registration here at RUFA for courses studying the major traditional Khmer musical instruments, especially the Tro Khmer. I suspect that students are not keen to apply here because the school is located in

a flooded area and the road turns into a quagmire during the rainy season," he said during a telephone interview with The Southeast Asia Weekly.

To promote understanding of traditional musical instruments, RUFA recently gave teachers the authority to conduct lessons in traditional music at their homes in Phnom Penh. Thus students will continue to enjoy learning their lessons without having to wade through muddy puddles, according to Chhieng.

Chhieng said RUFA has increased salaries for those teachers who conduct traditional music classes from home. The university is also working hard alongside relevant NGOs and development partners to organize traditional Khmer music concerts and other cultural events. This will increase publicity and interest in the traditional arts.

Yun Khean, Vice-Dean of RUFA and also professor of Khmer Traditional Musical Instruments with the Faculty of Music, said only two students applied to study the Tro Khmer this year. Last year, five students studied the musical instrument with him at his house.

"I will be very sad to see the end of

Tro Khmer performances in future. I think the problem is that students can see no employment prospects, armed only with a qualification in traditional music," he told The Southeast Asia Weekly. "Nobody is going to become rich, nor will they be able to support a family very well on wages earned by players of traditional musical instruments."

The Vice-Dean stated that to preserve the voice of the Tro Khmer and other traditional musical instruments, he wrote a book in 2003 on "Traditional Musical Instruments of Cambodia." This was achieved with financial support from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural organization (UNESCO).

Relating to the history of Tro Khmer, Professor Khean said the Tro Khmer is a bowed string instrument numbered among those which are played in the Areak Orchestra, or Apeapipea (wedding orchestra). It has played a part in daily life for the Khmer for centuries and has thus become a well loved feature of Cambodian culture and tradition.

The Tro Khmer has a body made of half a coconut shell in the shape of an elephant's head 16.5 centime-

ters long and 14 centimeters wide. It is covered with the skin of a pangolin (itself an endangered species), said Khean. The instrument's neck is made of hardwood such as black wood, neang nuon wood or Kran-houng wood. The neck is 83 centimeters long.

There are three tuning pegs, each one 11 centimeters long, also made of hardwood like the neck, and inlaid with decorative ivory or bone designs. There are three strings made of twisted silk; however metal strings are more likely to be used today. The black bow is 77 cm long and made of wood, while the hair is of sugar palm leaf fiber, horse hair or synthetic fiber.

The bowing method strokes above the string, rather than between strings as is the case with the Tro Sau or Tro Ou. A bridge, made of bamboo, wood, bone or ivory, rests on the skin near the rim of the instrument. A finger-sized lump of wax or promo (a mixture of wax and lead) is stuck on the skin next to the bride in order to make the sound resonate across the sounding skin, yet the promo prevents a harsh tone. The three strings are tied to the neck by a locating chord, firmly attached to the neck beneath the tuning pegs. (SEAW)

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Wednesday, June 3, 2009

# Light Fixture Installation at Angkor Wat Still Under Debate

BY NEOU VANNARIN  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

A Siem Reap province opposition lawmaker has written an official complaint about the installation of wall lamps at Angkor Wat, a project that has yet to be given the green light by UNESCO, officials said Tuesday.

In a May 25 letter addressed to Cabinet Minister Sok An, who chairs the Apsara Authority, which manages Angkor Archaeological Park, SRP lawmaker Ke Sovannroth wrote that 20 new spotlights installed in the corridors of the famed 12th century temple will damage its bas-reliefs.

"The wall drilling activity is making Angkor Wat temple, which has already decayed because of nature and war over a hundred years, face more serious ruin," Ms Sovannroth said in the letter.

Apsara Authority Director Bun Narith could not be reached for comment Tuesday, but he said last week that the lamps were only installed in previously existing holes in the temple's walls. He explained that wood was inserted into the

holes, and the lamps were attached to the wood.

"We do not believe that they can put a piece of wood in the hole and it will just stay still," Ms Sovannroth said by telephone Tuesday.

Var Chhouda, owner of the Sou Ching company, which installed the lights, said last week that the lights were installed under monitoring by UNESCO and Apsara. When contacted by phone Tuesday, he said only, "I will not elaborate on the case."

UNESCO Country Representative Teruo Jinnai said by SMS Tuesday that his organization's International Coordinating Committee for Angkor does not have the power to approve or disapprove the project.

"The approval given to any project offer [is] to be made by the Apsara National Authority on the basis of the positive recommendations made by the ICC for Angkor," he wrote.

He added that the ICC will discuss in a meeting today whether it will give a positive recommendation for installing the lights.

*(Additional reporting by Bethany Lindsay)*

## CAMBODGE SOIR

4 au 10 juin 2009



# Sauvegarde d'Angkor : L'eau, question-clé

À l'occasion du CIC, la mise en place d'un groupe de travail dédié à la préservation de cette ressource dans la zone des temples a été annoncée.

**M**ardi et mercredi s'est déroulée la 18<sup>ème</sup> session du Comité international de conservation et de sauvegarde du site historique d'Angkor (CIC), à Siem Reap, grand raout biennuel consacré à la protection du site prestigieux. L'occasion d'abord pour les nombreuses équipes archéologiques travaillant sur place de présenter à leurs pairs l'état de leurs recherches. Mais au-delà de cette expertise historique, il s'agit de faire le point sur les enjeux liés au développement durable du site : au premier rang des préoccupations, la gestion de l'eau, question récurrente ces dernières années. Une première, cette année, le contenu d'un « prakas », un arrêté mettant en place

un futur Groupe de travail sur l'eau, vient d'être rédigé et présenté durant cette session. La tâche qui attend les membres du futur groupe (regroupant des membres de différentes administrations cambodgiennes, comme la municipalité de Siem Reap, le ministère de la Planification...) est en effet d'importance. « *Le problème de l'eau à Siem Reap est crucial, rappelle Bun Narith, directeur de l'autorité Apsara, partie prenante du CIC. Il concerne aussi bien l'alimentation en eau potable de la ville, le Tonlé Sap, que les soubassements des temples d'Angkor.* » Les nappes phréatiques de la zone sont en effet fortement mises à contribution par le développement au pas de course de ces dernières années, et

pourraient finir par fragiliser le parc archéologique. « *Il nous fallait un organe qui puisse rassembler les différentes bases de données, afin de dresser un constat précis de la situation* », explique Philippe Delanghe, spécialiste du programme culture de l'Unesco, institution qui soutiendra le futur groupe. La mise en place de ce Groupe constitue « *un grand pas en avant* », selon ce représentant de l'Unesco, pour qui une photographie exacte de la situation permettra de mieux cerner les éventuelles mesures à adopter à l'avenir. L'enjeu : préserver les ressources et améliorer le traitement des eaux usées de Siem Reap. La prochaine session du CIC, l'an prochain, sera l'occasion pour le Groupe de travail de présenter ses premières conclusions

sur cette menace du manque d'eau dans la région des grands temples, et les moyens d'y pallier.

Le CIC, coprésidé par la France et le Japon, avec le soutien de l'Unesco, veille depuis 1993 à coordonner toutes les initiatives entourant le patrimoine mondial des temples d'Angkor. Tous les acteurs concernés, des chercheurs aux pays bailleurs de fonds, y participent, lors de la session technique (comme celle de ce mois de juin) chargée d'examiner les différents projets et activités sur le terrain, ou de la session plénière, où sont délivrées les grandes orientations. Les deux sessions ont lieu chacune une fois l'an environ.

**Ronan Vial**

# The CAMBODIA DAILY

Friday, June 5, 2009

## Unesco OKs New Lighting for Angkor Wat, With Stipulations

BY SAING SOENTHRITH  
AND PAUL VRIEZE  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

SIEM REAP TOWN - After several days of increasing public concern and attention over lighting being installed at Angkor Wat, Unesco gave a positive recommendation to the project Wednesday, on the condition that it is conducted in close cooperation with its International Coordinating Committee for Angkor.

The ICC, which advises government body the Apsara Authority on management of the World Heritage Site, issued a recommendation at its 18th technical session Wednesday evening advising the authority to limit illumination to the entranceway to the temple and its bas-relief gallery on the north side.

"We have to abide by the recommendation, but the decision is still from the Apsara Authority, as sovereignty from Cambodia," Council of Ministers spokesman Phay Siphon said, adding that the lighting project was still in a study phase.

Local press and opposition officials questioned the scheme,

which includes the installation of lights near the ceiling of the northern gallery of the temple. Some speculated that holes were drilled into the sandstone walls of the temple to affix the lights, but the Apsara Authority said that only existing holes that once held wooden support beams were being used.

Unesco Country Representative Teruo Jinnai denied that a test setup of the lights had damaged the temple. "There was no direct damage and all the holes were made a long time ago," he said Wednesday.

Earlier Wednesday, Ros Borath, deputy director-general of the Apsara Authority, and Phay Siphon explained the proposed project at a news conference Mr Borath said his organization had conducted a study into illuminating Angkor Wat that concluded that light-emitting diode, or LED, lamps would be most suited to the project.

"The LED lights emit no heat; that's why we see no problem with using these lights," he said. Mr Siphon added that according to experts, "LED's emit less heat

than moonlight."

Lighting up Angkor Wat enables tourists to visit the temple at night and is one of several initiatives being developed by the Ministry of Tourism to attract more visitors, particularly as the tourist sector feels the pinch of the global economic crisis, Minister of Tourism Thong Khon said Wednesday afternoon. Setting up lights is not an issue, Mr Khon said. "The problem we need to focus on is how we can attract more tourists."

Var Chouda, owner of Sou Jhin

company, which is handling the illumination of the temple, said he had already invested \$12 million in the project, as he strongly believed in the government assurances that the project would go ahead. He added that his company signed a 30-year contract to operate the lights at Angkor Wat.

"I hope we will attract more visitor to visit at nighttime," he said, adding he had learned that similar lighting projects at other World Heritage Sites had significantly boosted tourist numbers at those monuments.

## Gov't Files Disinformation Suit After Light Installation Criticism

BY PHORN BOPHA  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The government on Tuesday filed disinformation and incitement lawsuits with the Phnom Penh Municipal Court against the president of a local cultural organization for criticizing the installation of lights at Angkor Wat, officials said Thursday.

According to Pol Chandara, the government lawyer who filed the lawsuit, the remarks made by Moeung Sonn, president of Khmer Civilization Foundation, that were quoted in the local media could cause "outsiders" to think negatively about the government.

"The government sues him since he produced untruths related to the lights installation.... He discredited the government's name," Mr Chandara said, adding that the government is asking for 10 million riel, about \$2,500, in compensation and for a retraction of his statement.

According to a transcript of an interview posted on Voice of America's website Monday, Mr Sonn said the heat generated by the lights would damage the temple walls.

"In reality, lights produce heat. We had some aluminum surrounding the light [and] it became red and burned.... Before I took the picture of the aluminum and now I saw it is burned. This kind of...heat light should not happen," he was quoted as saying.

Mr Sonn could not be reached for comment Thursday.

The government's lawsuits were filed a day after Mr Sonn filed his own defamation and disinformation lawsuits against a well-known government confi-

*"The government sues him since he produced untruths related to the lights installation.... He discredited the government's name."*

—POL CHANDARA,  
GOVERNMENT LAWYER

dant, TV journalist and newspaper publisher Soy Sopheap, over an article that accused the NGO president of interfering in government affairs.

A May 30 article printed in Mr Sopheap's newspaper, Deum Ampil News, stated that Mr Sonn had upset unnamed government officials by interfering in negotiations over the border standoff at Preah Vihear temple.

The Angkor light installation has been also criticized by opposition officials, who claim the project could damage the 12th century temple. However, the Apsara Authority, the government body that manages Angkor, has said the lights pose no danger to the temple.

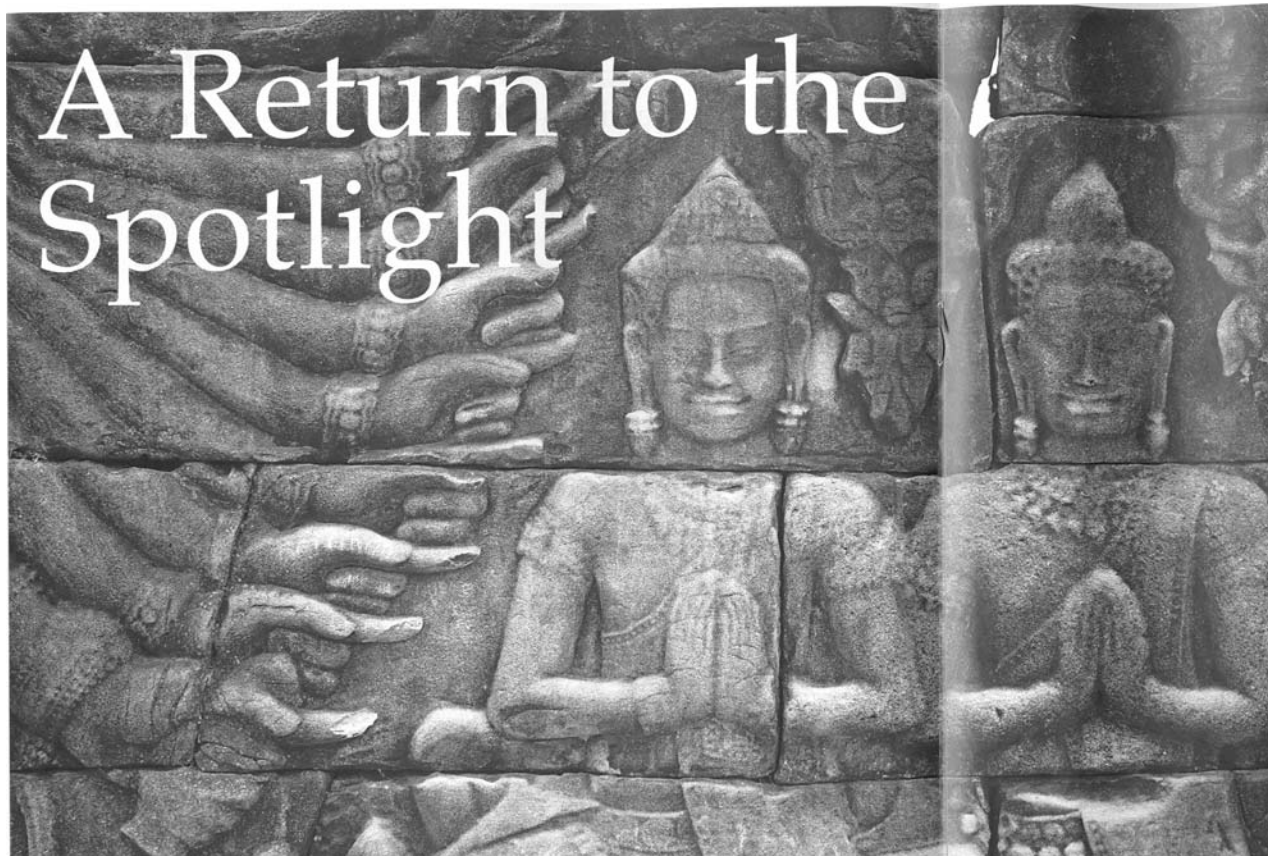
The International Coordinating Committee for Angkor also approved the lighting project on Thursday, but only if it is kept on a limited scale and monitored by the ICC.

"The ICC ad hoc experts will check on the follow ups," Unesco Country Representative Teruo Jinnai said via SMS text message Thursday.

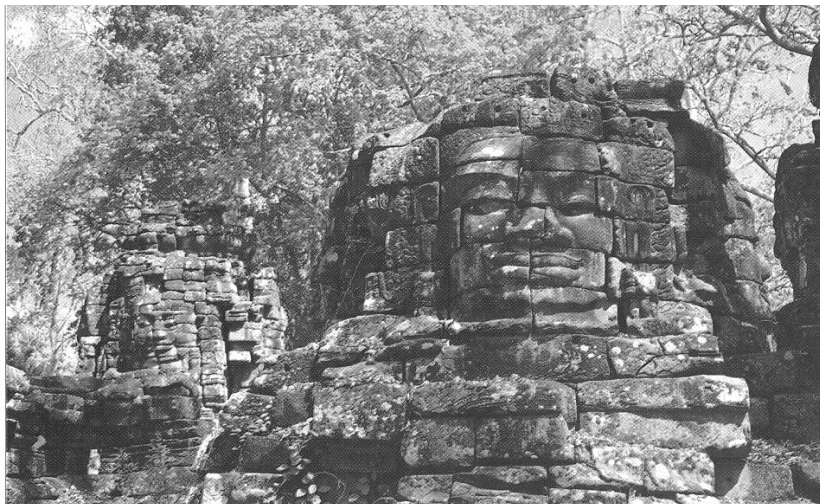
*(Additional reporting by Cajsja Collin)*

## *The* CAMBODIA DAILY

Saturday and Sunday, June 6-7, 2009



### Coaxing Banteay Chhmar From the Jungle's Embrace



BY ROBERT TURNBULL  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

To reach the temple of Banteay Chhmar from the Cambodian town of Sisophon in the dry season involves a two-hour drive through parched forests coated with brown dust. The temple is breathtaking. Bas-reliefs depict naval battles between ancient Khmers and their Cham rivals in remarkable detail. Giant sandstone faces loom over thick vegetation strewn with collapsed lintels and broken naga heads.

Visitors to Angkor Wat will have seen something like this. But the glory of Banteay Chhmar is its raw, unadulterated state. Sitting 100 km northwest of Siem Reap, this is Cambodia's "forgotten" temple. You will probably find yourself alone, able to rekindle the experience of colonial French explorers as they first stumbled upon Khmer antiquity.

But the same isolation was not lost on those who vandalized Banteay Chhmar in the late 1990s. The Cambodian military not only mined the complex but made off with large sections of bas-relief destined for private homes in Bangkok and beyond. Local guides like Seng Samnang remembers the ox carts loaded with artifacts being wheeled out of the temple.

"There was nothing we could do," he said. "If we had challenged these men we would have been killed."

About 115 pieces, a truckload, have been recovered and they are sitting in the National Museum in Phnom Penh. Of the rest—there is allegedly much more—reports of Buddha heads appearing in Thai generals' gardens have done little to ease longstanding tensions over Thai claims to Cambodia's patrimony, an issue that resurfaced last year, and remains unresolved, at the northern temple of Preah Vihear.

Banteay Chhmar is returning to the spotlight, but now the news is good. In 2008 the Culture Ministry handed control of the temple to Global

Heritage Fund, an organization in California that tries to safeguard the world's most endangered sites. Established in 2002, the fund has a budget of \$6 million and 44 employees to rehabilitate the temple, the eventual aim being its inclusion on Unesco's World Heritage List.

John Sanday is leading the project. He is a British architect who first set foot in Cambodia in 1992 to work on the 12th-century Preah Khan, a temple famous for its outer wall of garudas, the mythic birds of Hindu legend. To help attract financing, the savvy Sanday, a former employee of the World Monument Fund, managed to persuade a number of private individuals to "adopt" a garuda for \$30,000.

Like Preah Khan, Banteay Chhmar was built as a monastic complex by Jayavarman VII, the king who converted Cambodia to Buddhism. But the paucity of surviving inscriptions make it unclear exactly when and why. Writing in 1949, the historian Lawrence Palmer Briggs claimed the temple "rivalled Angkor Wat in size and magnificence."

It has four enclosures surrounded by a moat, a vast artificial lake, or baray, and could sustain a population of at least 100,000.

Romantic it may be, but much of Banteay Chhmar today consists of piles of lichen-stained rubble. Of 400 meters of bas-relief wall, only 25 percent still stands. Faced with collapsed or collapsing structure, Sanday and his team must decide what should be rebuilt or merely stabilized. Whether to replace the missing stones with newly quarried or recycled stone is another question.

A simple paradox lies at the heart of the restoration process: The less you notice, the better the job. Sanday sees overzealous rebuilding as compromising of a monument's natural history, and much of its beauty. On the other hand, donors to projects such as these usually want to see tangible results, if not the revelation of some architectural marvel.

Sanday's solution is to opt for a "presentation" of key areas of the temple, which in the future can serve as a model. Visitors will enter—as did the ancients—past the eastern gopura, along a causeway largely destroyed by 600 years of monsoons. Once that is rebuilt, they will advance toward the southeastern gallery of bas-reliefs and access the temple's central areas along suspended wooden boards.

Under Predrag Gavrilovich, a Macedonian architect and colleague of Sanday's, the fund is working on the southeastern gallery. Gavrilovich was responsible for rebuilding Preah Khan's beautiful Dharamsala and Hall of Dancers almost entirely from scratch. His achievement was to completely disguise that fact by presenting something that seems utterly natural in its decay.

Can he do the same with Banteay Chhmar? His team has already reassembled the gallery's square pillars and corbel vaulting. But the four-

enclosures need reinforcing before those parts can be lifted to their original position. "The building was not well constructed," Gavrilovich said. "Maybe it was built in a hurry."

For the "face towers," Gavrilovich will have the benefit of new software developed by Hans Georg Bock at Heidelberg University in Germany. By scanning all the rubble and carefully analyzing each stone, it is possible to create a three-dimensional database for a virtual reconstruction of the entire monument.

The temple is only one part of Sanday's project. His greater challenge is to turn a heavily mined former war zone with "finite" water supplies and massive scars on the landscape into a fertile and "zoned" area for responsible development as well as tourism.

So water has to come from somewhere. The reservoir the ancient Khmers built just north of the temple is heavily silted. Damming by villagers of the temple's ornamental moat has resulted in flooding and wastage at monsoon time. With no evidence of an underground water table or any deep interventions, Sanday has invited James Goodman, a hydrologist in Geneva to research and map the course of the old waterways.

Goodman has been looking both at images taken by the colonial Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient in 1945 and aerial photos used by the US during the Indo-Chinese war.

The idea would be to rationalize water supplies and to create a well-drilling program. For the project to work requires the support of the 12,000 or so villagers who might wonder what's in it for them.

Community Based Tourism, a French-inspired organization, aims at rewarding local people with 100 percent of tourist revenue. In 2007 and 2008, 512 visitors showed up. For \$7 a night they were offered a tour, a room in a house with hot water and several hours of electricity.

Sanday is determined to prevent the kind of commercial pressures on temple sites that has dogged Angkor over many years. He said he thinks the authorities are behind him.

"The ministry has set out clear zoning rules which dictate the position and size of new building and plans to create a new road that bypasses the temple," he said.

The Culture Ministry's heritage police will soon take charge of security. Only then might the return of the original bas-reliefs be possible under an agreement between the culture minister, the Global Heritage Fund and Unesco. That agency's Teruo Jinnai, for one, welcomed the idea, provided "the security situation meets international requirements."

It should happen. The return of these priceless bas-reliefs would demonstrate a new spirit of cooperation among those concerned with safeguarding Cambodian heritage.

It could also send a clear message to those of ill intent to keep their hands off Banteay Chhmar. ■

Historian Lawrence Palmer Briggs claimed the temple "rivalled Angkor Wat in size and magnificence." It has four enclosures surrounded by a moat, a vast artificial lake and could sustain a population of at least 100,000.

# The Southeast Asia Weekly

June 7 - 13, 2009

## **Cambodia, UNESCO Officials to Discuss Conservation of Ancient Temple**

Government Archaeologists, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Coordination Committee (ICC) and Cambodian Apsara Authority have held a two-day meeting from June 2-3 in Siem Reap province. The meeting was conducted under the presidency of Deputy Prime Minister, Sok An. It concentrated on identifying the best ways forward for conservation of the Angkor Wat temple complex. Phay Siphon, Secretary of State at the Council of Ministers accompanied the Deputy Prime Minister Sok An. He said these meetings were hosted every two years and the purpose of this session was to collect technical information to bring conservation efforts up to international standard. It also called for support from financial partners to help ensure the future of the World Heritage site. The first day of the meeting focused on research conducted by French and Japanese representatives. These two nations serve as ICC Co-Chairs in support of the Deputy Prime Minister's overall leadership in the name of the Apsara Authority. Turning to the matter of the floodlights to illuminate the temple at night, Siphon stated that an expert team of UNESCO and ICC technicians had spent two nights at the complex. They have located the problem and the lights should be repaired soon, according to Siphon.





Monday 15 June 2009

# Foreign dealers, collectors return Angkorian antiquities

## Govt hails pivotal moment for Cambodian culture as National Museum celebrates an upgrade to its ageing lighting system

BY CHRISTOPHER SHAY

**F**IVE foreign donors handed over five Khmer artefacts at a ceremony Friday to celebrate a new electrical and lighting system at the National Museum.

"Cambodia has lost a lot in the last 20 to 30 years. Anything that is given back to them of any value is of great importance," Douglas Latchford, a collector of Khmer antiquities, told the *Post* shortly before giving his speech in Khmer.

Son Soubert, a former lecturer at the faculty of archaeology at Royal University of Fine Arts, pointed to a pendant donated by Latchford as a particularly important antiquity.

An inscription on the pendant dates the piece from 1218 as part the royal collection of a princess under the reign of Jayavarman VII at the height of the Angkorian empire.

The piece, or ones very similar to it, can be seen in Angkorian carvings, but the actual amulet is a unique addition to the National Museum.

"It's exactly what we've seen in the carvings," Son Soubert



Deputy Prime Minister Sok An examines an 8th-century linga at a ceremony at the National Museum on Friday. CHRISTOPHER SHAY

said. "It's a reality."

In a speech at the event, Deputy Prime Minister Sok An thanked the donors for their "kind and generous contribu-

tion", saying that now "the National Museum will be able to continue to improve its storytelling".

Decades of looting and an-

tiquities smuggling have led to many stolen pre-Angkorian and Angkorian-era artefacts ending up on the international market.

One torso of a female divinity, donated by New York antiques dealer Doris Wiener, is on a UNESCO-sponsored list of 100 objects stolen from Angkor.

Sok An also hailed the new electric wiring and lighting as an important step to protect the 89-year-old museum and create a "more fruitful experience" for the visitor.

"The renewal of the electrical system will significantly enhance ... the beauty of the artefacts," he told the audience.

The old lighting, according to Him Chhem, minister of culture and fine arts, was a serious fire hazard.

"Old wiring lay loose in the roof space on top of the timber ceiling. It was largely unprotected by conduit," Him Chhem said.

The new electrical lighting system cost US\$192,500 and the money came from 22 foreign donors, many of whom were in attendance at the ceremony. ■



Tuesday 16 June 2009

## Foreign minister: No word yet on Thai restitution at Preah Vihear

Cambodia is seeking \$2.1m in damages for razing of 264 market stalls

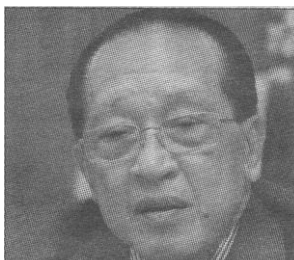
BY CHEANG SOKHA

THE Cambodian government is still waiting for a Thai response to its demands for compensation for a market that was destroyed during border clashes in April, Foreign Minister Hor Namhong said Monday.

Speaking with reporters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hor Namhong said the issue was not on the official agenda during talks between Prime Minister Hun Sen and his Thai counterpart, Abhisit Vejjajiva, in Phnom Penh on Friday.

"The Thai prime minister and the Thai foreign minister have never dismissed our claims, but they asked for time to investigate," Hor Namhong said.

Cambodia is seeking US\$2.1 million in damages from Thai-



Foreign Minister Hor Namhong shown here in a file photograph.  
TRACEY SHELTON

land over the destruction of 264 market stalls at the foot of the Preah Vihear temple, which the government says were destroyed by Thai rocket fire on April 3, leaving around 319 families homeless.

Thai and Cambodian troops have faced off for nearly a year, following UNESCO's listing of

Preah Vihear as a World Heritage site last July.

Last month, Thai Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya told reporters that the government would have to look at the market's location and the damage caused before it could respond to Cambodia's request.

On Monday, about 150 Cambodians gathered at *Deum Ampil*, a Khmer-language newspaper, to celebrate the 47th anniversary of the 1962 International Court of Justice ruling that handed Preah Vihear temple to Cambodia.

*Deum Ampil* publisher Soy Sopheap said the event was to remind Cambodians of the achievement of building the temple, defending it at the ICJ and listing it as a UNESCO site last year. ■



Thursday 18 June 2009

## Thailand to lodge PV heritage complaint

**BY SEBASTIAN STRANGIO**

THAILAND will ask UNESCO to review its decision to list Preah Vihear temple as a World Heritage site when the world body meets in Spain next week, Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva said Wednesday, according to Thai state media.

Abhisit has ordered the Thai World Heritage Committee representative Suwit Khunkitti to object to the 2008 listing of the Angkorian temple when the committee meets for its 33rd session in Seville, Spain, from Monday.

According to the report from the Thai News Agency, Thailand will protest on the grounds that the listing has brought about conflict and losses between the two countries – something that runs counter to UNESCO's aim in having international heritage sites.

"I personally want to see peace in the area and peoples of both countries receive benefit from the historical heritage site," Abhisit said.

Council of Ministers spokesman Phay Siphon said that with the 11th-century temple already inscribed on UNESCO's list, the international community was unlikely to fall for Thailand's "uncivilised" ruse.

He added that he was unsurprised by Abhisit's announcement, saying the Thais had tried various means – including a troop buildup and public demonstrations – to block the listing of the temple prior to its official inscription as a World Heritage site in July 2008.

"They have been making challenges since the first-round inscription," Phay Siphon said.

"Since that time, the Thais have challenged [the listing] in the same way, using their own unilateral maps." ■

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Thursday, June 18, 2009

### *Gov't Criticizes Thai Proposal To Jointly Register Preah Vihear*

BY NEOU VANNARIN  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

A government official on Wednesday criticized a reported statement by Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva saying that he would request that Unesco's World Heritage Committee review last year's decision to register Preah Vihear temple as a World Heritage Site when the body convenes its annual meeting later this month in Spain.

Thai newspaper The Bangkok Post reported Wednesday that Mr Abhisit would request that the temple be registered jointly as a World Heritage site by Thailand and Cambodia.

"I want to see the temple a peaceful area so that the people of the two countries can jointly benefit from this site of high historical importance," Mr Abhisit is quoted as saying.

Council of Ministers spokesman Phay Siphon said the proposal is a pipe dream.

"We have already dismissed what the Thais expect, especially bilateral managing of Preah Vihear," he said. "If [the Thais] want peace, they should keep the situation surrounding Preah Vihear temple as before July 2008," Mr Siphon said referring to July 8, 2008, when the WHC unanimously

approved the inscription of the Khmer temple on the World Heritage list.

Shortly after the inscription, Thailand moved its troops into the area, which sparked the current conflict, he added.

The Bangkok Post also reported that Virachai Plasai, head of the Foreign Ministry's treaties and legal affairs department, had told Unesco's chief of information and knowledge management unit, Clive Wing, that UN officials and experts wishing to visit the Preah Vihear temple would now have to ask permission from Thai authorities in Bangkok.

In response, Mr Siphon said by telephone that UN officials and tourists could choose for themselves how and when to visit the Cambodian temple and are not required to seek any permission from a foreign country. "[Thailand] should not keep Preah Vihear temple as a hostage. Entering or returning of the tourists...is a Cambodian obligation," he said.

Officials from the Thai Embassy could not be reached for comment, and the Thai Foreign Ministry in Bangkok did not respond to e-mailed questions.

*(Additional reporting by Cajsja Collin)*



Wednesday 24 June 2009

## Protecting Preah Vihear: soldiers, weapons and a World Heritage site

BY MARK ROY  
AND THET SAMBATH

**S**INCE decades-old tensions over Preah Vihear erupted into violence last July, images of heavily armed Cambodian soldiers standing guard over the 11th-century ruins have been beamed across the globe.

The photographs of battle-hardened Cambodian soldiers, often ex-Khmer Rouge, in dark green uniforms with well-used AK-47 rifles, sitting on the lichen-covered stones of the ancient Khmer sanctuary, have come to epitomise the conflict. Such images have prompted a frenzy of media attention from overseas, and a huge domestic fundraising drive to support the nation's troops on the Kingdom's new front line.

But allowing armed troops into the temple at Preah Vihear is a direct violation of the Kingdom's Constitution, and the soldiers should leave immediately, according to one of the country's most respected heritage conservationists.

■ ■ **THEY CAN'T DIG TRENCH AT THE TEMPLE SITE BECAUSE IT IS FULL OF STONE, AND IT IS PROHIBITED TO DO THIS.**

"Preah Vihear should also be free of military presence," said former president director general of the Apsara Authority, Vann Molyvann, in an interview with the *Post* earlier this month.

Too many archaeological sites, including Angkor Wat, have been destroyed or damaged in the past by military conflict, he said.

Legally, Vann Molyvann is in the right. Article 71 of Chapter VI of the Constitution of Cambodia, inscribed in 1993 under the auspices of the United Nations, states: "The perimeter of the national heritage sites, as well as heritage that has been classified as world heritage, shall be considered neutral zones where there shall be no military activity."

Preah Vihear was formally listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage site in July 2008.

But Thai officials will ask UNESCO to reconsider its decision to inscribe Preah Vihear temple, as ownership of land surrounding the ruins is still in dispute, at a meeting of the world heritage body in Spain also attended by a Cambodian delegation.

For its part, the Cambodian military claims there is no troop presence within the actual perimeter of the World Heritage site.

"Our soldiers got out of the temple a long time ago," Sao Socheat, deputy commander of Military Region 4, said Sunday. He explained that soldiers were not stationed within the World Heritage site, but based around its perimeter.

Colonel Om Phirom, chief of Heritage Police for Preah Vihear, agreed, telling the *Post* Monday there were no soldiers in the actual temple compound.

"Soldiers do not violate the World Heritage site," Om Phirom said. "They left the temple site many months ago and they have stood 30 metres away from protection site."

Om Phirom said the boundary for the World Heritage site was 30 metres from the edge of the temple's stonework.

"They can't dig a trench at the temple site because it is full of stone, and it is prohibited to do this," Om Phirom said.

However, it is a moot point whether the military is obeying the spirit, or even the letter of the law by digging in their trenches so close to a protected site.

Only last month, Cambodian soldiers were photographed on the temple steps armed with machine guns. A section of the temple was also being used at that time as a bunker to store munitions, including B-42 rockets.

### Protecting heritage

Referring to Article 71, Vann Molyvann said its inclusion in the Kingdom's Constitution had been "a spe-



Armed Cambodian soldiers on the steps of Preah Vihear last month. TRACEY SHELTON

### TEMPLE TIMELINE

- **1904, 1907:** Franco-Siamese treaties create an ambiguous frontier, leaving sovereignty of Preah Vihear in doubt
- **1954:** Thai troops occupy Preah Vihear
- **October 1959:** Cambodia applies unilaterally to the International Court of Justice for a decision on the sovereignty of Preah Vihear and surroundings
- **June 1962:** The ICJ awards temple to Cambodia, but the surrounding land remains undesignated. Thai troops leave the temple site
- **1970s-1990s:** Khmer Rouge occupy the site
- **September 1993:** The Constitution of Cambodia declares national and World Heritage sites neutral zones with no military activity
- **2001-2002:** Thai military blocks access to Preah Vihear over water dispute
- **July 2008:** Preah Vihear temple receives World Heritage listing
- **July 2008:** Both sides move troops to the temple area
- **October 2008:** Troops exchange fire, leaving two Cambodian soldiers dead
- **April 2009:** Further military exchanges damage the temple
- **June 2009:** Thailand announces it will protest the World Heritage listing

cific decision made by Cambodia because of its experience" of war impacting national heritage.

He said Preah Vihear area should be demilitarised and placed under the control of the Ministry of Culture.

In a written response to the *Post* to questions on heritage law, Vann Molyvann pointed to how the Angkor site had been damaged after it was drawn into the Vietnam war in 1970 and taken over by guerrillas fighting in resistance to the Lon Nol regime.

"Angkor became a point of dispute

between all military factions," he wrote. "A shell hit the extremely fine bas-reliefs of the temple's first-floor southern gallery. Several shells fell in a temple courtyard, provoking the collapse of the southern porch of the second-floor gallery."

Between 1975 and 1979, Angkorian temples, spiritual havens since the dawn of Khmer history, were abandoned as such, Vann Molyvann wrote.

"Objects of religious worship were considered without value. Buddha

statues from Angkor Wat's 'Gallery of a Thousand Buddhas' were broken off their pedestals, decapitated and reduced to dust."

Cambodia and Thailand have been at loggerheads over the land around Preah Vihear temple for decades, but tensions spilled over into violence last July following the UNESCO World Heritage listing.

Thailand has long argued that only a joint Thai-Cambodian World Heritage site is suitable for Preah Vihear. In Spain currently, the Thais are asking that the temple grounds be placed under joint Thai-Cambodian maintenance, arguing that most visitors approach the temple from the Thai side.

### Everyone is responsible

"Ensuring the protection of a World Heritage site is the collective responsibility of the international community," said UNESCO's head-of-office in Phnom Penh, Teruo Jinnai, via email Sunday. However, overseeing a demilitarised Preah Vihear was "not our mandate", he added.

Officials from the Ministry of Culture could not be contacted this week as they were in Spain for the UNESCO meeting.

However, Cambodia's Council of Ministers spokesman Phay Siphon said Sunday that Cambodian soldiers were in Preah Vihear to protect the site from the Thai military.

"Now it is one year since Thai soldiers have invaded Cambodian territory, and they do not withdraw from it," Phay Siphon said.

"It is because of the Thai soldiers' invasion into Cambodian territory that our soldiers have been there, to protect our heritage."

However, it is questionable whether the presence of a military force will protect the heritage site or cause it more damage.

Following a brief military encounter in April, an exchange of gunfire left bullet pits in the temple, prompting UNESCO to study the damage and NGOs to call for compensation from the Thai government. ■



Thursday 25 June 2009

# Thai claim on temple dismissed

Cambodian officials say UNESCO  
rejected Preah Vihear complaint

**BY SEBASTIAN STRANGIO  
AND THET SAMBATH**

**U**NESCO has refused to hear a complaint by Thailand over Preah Vihear temple's listing as a World Heritage site at the annual meeting of its World Heritage Committee in Seville, Spain, Cambodian officials said Wednesday.

Last week, Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva announced that Thailand would use the 33rd session of the committee to contest its July 2008 inscription of the temple.

"The Thais tried to put Preah Vihear on the agenda, but the World Heritage Committee won't consider [it]. They are moving ahead with the main agenda," Council of Ministers spokesman Phay Siphon said Wednesday.

Local civil society groups applauded the committee's move.

"It is good news that UNESCO has rejected the Thai government's request. UNESCO doesn't dare to violate Cambodian sovereignty by follow-

ing the Thai PM's request because Cambodia is backed by the 1962 [World Court] decision," said Union leader Rong Chhun, a vocal critic of Thai moves over the temple.

Ou Virak, president of the Cambodian Centre for Human Rights, said that any other ruling would have undermined the committee's own decision to inscribe Preah Vihear last year.

He added that Bangkok, pressured by domestic opinion, had actually created more problems for itself by forcing the issue. "I think the fact they [objected] unsuccessfully just undermines the credibility of their own position," he said.

But following the decision, border troops say they remain on alert for any Thai incursions.

"We welcome the news that UNESCO has refused Thailand's request for a discussion about Preah Vihear temple," said Brigade 8 commander Yim Phim. "If [the Thais] ... do not try any more moves into Cambodian territory, there will be no clashes." ■

# Phnom Penh Post

Thursday 25 June 2009

Heritage experts are encouraging government officials to persist in the quest to retrieve Cambodia's scattered relics

## Bringing lost artefacts home

BY CHEANG SOKHA  
AND ROBBIE COREY-BOULET

ON June 12, the same day Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva presented Prime Minister Hun Sen with seven ancient Khmer artefacts that had been lost to smugglers, Deputy Prime Minister Sok An was at the National Museum for a ceremony in which foreign donors handed over five separate artefacts, including an 8th-century linga and a 13th-century pendant.

The seven severed stone heads – among a group of 43 artefacts reportedly seized from smugglers in 1999 – were presented as a gesture of cooperation and thus carried more political weight.

But heritage experts said in recent interviews that the National Museum ceremony – involving the return of artefacts from private collections rather than a head of govern-

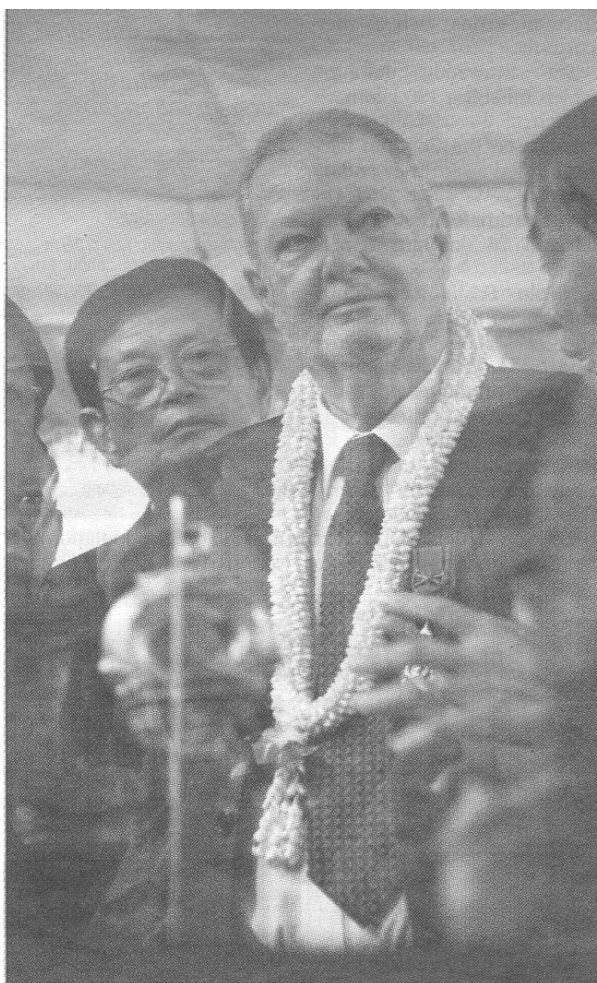
### WE KNOW THOSE ANTIQUITIES WERE SMUGGLED OR STOLEN FROM CAMBODIA.”

ment – was perhaps more significant in the ongoing effort to retrieve as many lost Khmer antiquities as possible.

Because most lost artefacts are believed to be held in private collections, experts said it was necessary for the government to create incentives for more private donors to give smuggled items back to Cambodia.

The number of artefacts taken during Cambodia's decades of civil war is “extremely difficult even to estimate”, said UNESCO Country Director Teruo Jinnai.

“There are more than 3,000 major temples and monuments in Cambodia,” he said.



British collector Douglas Latchford, who received a medal in exchange for a 13th-century pendant during a June 12 National Museum ceremony, looks at the artefact he donated on display. CHRISTOPHER SHAY

“They must have been decorated with statues, steles, bas-reliefs and other artefacts when they were built.”

Once removed from the Kingdom, they were distributed widely, said Chuch Phoeurn, a secretary of state at the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, who noted that the government had recently been informed of artefacts on display in museums in Thailand,

Japan, Switzerland and France.

The fact that most of these artefacts were never registered in Cambodia, he said, has complicated efforts to retrieve them.

“We know that those antiquities were smuggled or stolen from Cambodia, but we don't know the dates, and we can't ask for them back without original documents,” Chuch

Phoeurn said.

### Creating incentives

In an attempt to encourage the return of such antiquities, the government began offering medals to private donors last year.

Hab Touch, director of the National Museum, said there are several medals on offer, including *Sahak Metrei* friendship medals and gold medals that are awarded on a scale designed to reflect the value of the artefact returned.

Hab Touch said seven pieces had been returned in exchange for medals – two in 1998, along with the five returned earlier this month.

Chuch Phoeurn said there were no plans to advertise the medal programme because officials believed awareness would spread naturally among antiquities collectors and dealers.

He said he hoped the programme would serve as an incentive for private collectors to return artefacts, despite the fact that they would receive no financial compensation.

Hab Touch said the government was not focusing on obtaining artefacts currently in the possession of private Cambodian collectors, though he said these people “very often” returned artefacts to the National Museum or provincial museums in exchange for certificates and, sometimes, “a small amount of money”.

Beyond the medals program, Jinnai said the government had adopted or signed several legal instruments designed to facilitate the return of lost artefacts, including bilateral return agreements with Thailand and the US, a series of international conventions and the 1996 Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage in Cambodia. ■



# Crispation autour de Preah Vihear

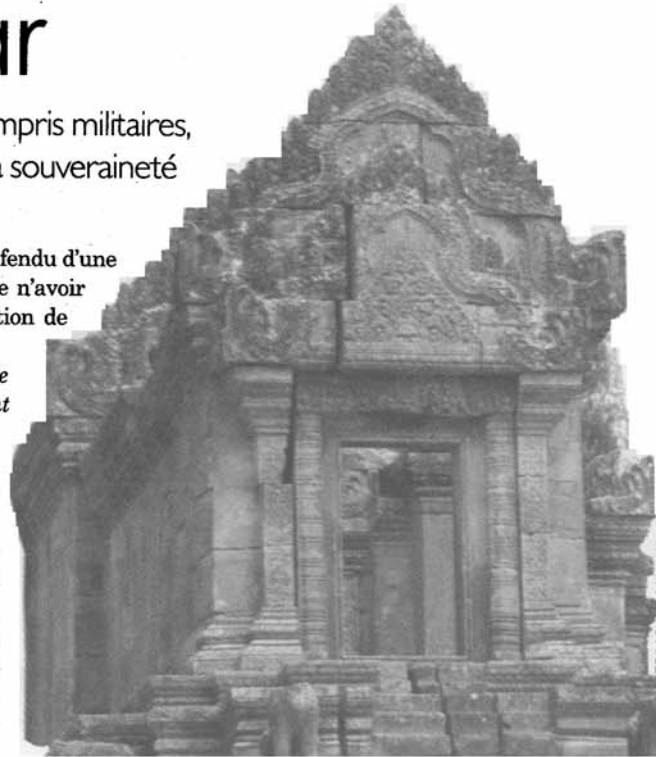
Phnom Penh se dit prêt à envisager tous les moyens, y compris militaires, pour riposter à ce qu'il considère comme une atteinte à la souveraineté nationale de la part de la Thaïlande.

L'escalade verbale intervient après que le Premier ministre thaïlandais, Abhisit Vejjajiva, a demandé à l'Unesco la semaine dernière de revoir les modalités d'inscription du temple daté du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle au patrimoine mondial de l'humanité, pour y associer également la Thaïlande. Des propos qui ont agacé côté cambodgien.

Samedi 20 juin, le ministre des Affaires étrangères Hor Nam Hong s'en est pris verbalement au royaume voisin au cours d'une conférence de presse. « *Je ne comprends pas ce que recherche la Thaïlande. Leur attitude est comparable à celle d'un enfant ou d'un idiot* », a-t-il notamment lâché. Il a rappelé que lors de la venue en mars dernier du président du conseil exécutif de l'Unesco au

temple, Bangkok s'était déjà fendu d'une déclaration pour regretter de n'avoir pas été associé à l'organisation de cette visite.

« *Je tiens à rappeler que le Cambodge prend parfaitement en charge la sécurité des experts de l'Unesco en visite au temple* », a déclaré Hor Nam Hong, qui a réaffirmé que l'appartenance juridique et culturelle du temple au Cambodge le dispensait de demander l'autorisation à qui que ce soit. « *Nous sommes prêts à user de moyens diplomatiques, juridiques ou mili-*



*taires pour défendre notre territoire* », a-t-il encore mis en garde le gouvernement voisin.

Alors qu'il revenait d'une visite officielle au Cambodge quelques jours auparavant, le Premier ministre thaïlandais a déclaré au quotidien anglophone *The Bangkok Post* qu'il soumettrait sa demande au comité en charge du patrimoine mondial de l'Unesco, qui devait se réunir les 22 et 23 juin en Espagne, à Séville. Or, Pay Siphon, porte-parole du Conseil des ministres a indiqué mardi 23 que la présidence de la réunion a décidé de ne pas prendre en compte la proposition de la Thaïlande au sujet de Preah Vihear.

Après les vives réactions cambodgiennes, Abhisit Vejjajiva a annoncé envisager la venue de ses vice-Premiers ministres à Phnom Penh pour préciser la position thaïlandaise dans cette affaire.

Le Premier ministre thaïlandais a réaffirmé qu'il ne souhaitait pas entrer en conflit ouvert avec le Cambodge. Mais les déclarations vis-à-vis de l'Unesco risquent cependant de raviver les rancœurs à la frontière, où les forces armées des deux pays sont engagées dans un face-à-face à haut risque.

Pen Bona

# Unesco Admits Slim Chance of P Vihear Review

BY FRANK RADOSEVICH  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The possibility of the World Heritage Committee reviewing the status of Preah Vihear temple as a World Heritage Site appears slim given the heavy workload at the Unesco-affiliated committee's meeting this week in Spain and the rules governing the group's procedures, an Unesco official said Wednesday.

Thailand has raised Cambodia's ire in recent days by saying it would ask the World Heritage Committee meeting in Spain to grant joint Thai-Cambodian management of the iconic Khmer temple. Last year, the committee granted World Heritage status to the temple at the request of the Cambodian government, a move that provoked a nationalist backlash in Bangkok where the temple became a key issue in Thailand's turbulent domestic politics.

Chief of Unesco's East Asia and Pacific Unit Giovanni Boccardi said that Preah Vihear has not yet come up at the meeting in Seville and might very well not become a topic of discussion at all.

"If the case of Preah Vihear is not among those to be discussed, ie it is decided that it will not be debated,

*Continued on page 2*

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Thursday, June 25, 2009

### P Vihear...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

then there will be no opportunities for anyone to make any intervention on the subject. In this case, the Committee will adopt the draft decision contained in their working document as is," Mr Boccardi wrote in an e-mail Wednesday.

"If Preah Vihear is open for discussion, then Thailand [as well as Cambodia] would be able to request to speak.... It should be also noted that only members of the Committee may propose a change in the draft decision," he added.

He said the Committee is also examining 176 reports on the state of conservation of heritage properties around the world, which would prevent the question of Preah Vihear from being broached.

The Thai premier last week

said the cliff-top temple should be registered with the World Heritage site under the joint supervision of Thailand and Cambodia. According to Thai media accounts, Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva said the country would make the request during the Committee's meeting this week.

His remarks triggered the Cambodian government to reaffirm its authority over the temple and its willingness to defend the site militarily if necessary.

Thai Embassy officials in Phnom Penh could not be reached for comment Wednesday.

Rath Sophea, director of the Preah Vihear provincial information department, said authorities have boosted security near the temple since the most recent diplomatic flare-up. He said officials are cracking down on soldiers who leave the encampments with their weapons as well as vendors trying to bring and sell alcohol to

the stationed soldiers.

"Because of the security situation, the authorities have to check all the trucks or vans driving on the way to the temple," he said Wednesday, adding that civilians and journalists are still allowed to travel to the site.

On Monday, Mr Abhisit announced that he will send his right-hand man, Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Taugsuban, to Phnom Penh on Saturday in a bid to calm rising tensions.

"I will explain to Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen that we have problems with Unesco, not with Cambodia," Mr Suthep told reporters on Tuesday in Bangkok.

"From my personal acquaintance with him, Hun Sen does not want Cambodia and Thailand to have trouble with each other," Mr Suthep said.

Cambodian government officials said on Tuesday that they did not have official confirmation

of the Thai deputy prime minister's visit.

In an interview with Reuters on Monday, Mr Abhisit blamed the border tensions on Unesco for "trying to register and manage the area when the process of demarcation hasn't been completed."

"Since they have been active in this, we have casualties, we have tensions, and tourists can't go there any more. That defeats the whole purpose of World Heritage, restoring the heritage for local people, for tourists," Abhisit said.

The International Court of Justice in 1962 ruled that the temple belonged to Cambodia, but the ruling did not determine the ownership of 4.6 sq km of land next to the temple, which Thailand now claims as its own, and which it appears to be using as leverage to gain joint listing of the site.

*(Additional reporting by Eang Mengleng)*



Wednesday 1 July 2009

# UNESCO meet raises the stakes on Preah Vihear

The favourable outcome for Cambodia in Spain could translate to more confrontation on the border, according to senior military officers

BY THET SAMBATH

**T**HE meeting of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in Seville, Spain, ended Tuesday without discussing Thailand's challenge to the committee's July 2008 decision to list the disputed Preah Vihear temple as a World Heritage site.

But Cambodian military officials at the border say the committee's decision not to review the case could further heighten tensions and prompt another armed clash, following armed confrontations in October 2008 and in April of this year.

Thailand's Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva said last month that a joint listing of Preah Vihear temple would better promote peace and tourism

## ■ MORE THAI TROOPS, TANKS AND ARTILLERY HAVE BEEN SENT TO CONFRONT OUR TROOPS."

around the 11th-century temple complex, according to Thai media.

He pledged that Thailand would use the 33rd session of the World Heritage Committee to challenge the inscription of the temple.

"I would like to see peace in the area and people from both sides benefit from a joint listing of this site," Abhisit was quoted as saying.

But Phay Siphon, spokesman for the Council of Ministers, said that Thailand's inability to get its objections onto the committee's agenda was a "diplomatic failure".

Yim Phim, the commander of Royal Cambodian Armed

Forces (RCAF) Brigade 8 stationed in Preah Vihear province, said that although he welcomed the committee's decision, he worries that Thai soldiers may be angry and start another border clash.

"We are on alert after the Thai failure to get it reviewed," he said. "I am told that more Thai troops, tanks and artillery have been sent to confront our troops."

## Raising the stakes

Phornng Eung, a Cambodian soldier, said that Thailand has been evacuating villages near the Preah Vihear border, a sign Thailand could be planning something.

"Thai soldiers have asked their people to leave villages near the temple, but our villagers at Ko Muoy are doing business as usual," he said.

"Because the Thais did not get their way, they are not happy and might do something at the border. We are on alert 24 hours a day."

But Ros Heng, deputy governor of Chom Ksan district near the Preah Vihear temple, said that villagers in his district are preparing for the possibility of more conflict.

"Some of our people are digging trenches after we informed them in Ko Muoy and Sam Em villages near the front line to protect themselves from Thai shells," Ros Heng said.

"We alerted our people to prevent an accident from happening. It is better to take action first," he said.

The World Court ruled in 1962 that the temple belonged to Cambodia, although the most accessible entrance to temple is in Thailand. ■

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Wednesday, July 1, 2009

### *Unesco Declines To Entertain Thai Claim on P Vihear*

BY FRANK RADOSEVICH  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The 33rd session of the World Heritage Committee ended Tuesday without Thailand's having the chance to challenge the registration of Preah Vihear temple as a Cambodian-managed World Heritage Site, officials said.

Giovanni Boccardi, chief of Unesco's East Asia and the Pacific unit, confirmed that the topic of the Preah Vihear temple was not broached during the committee's review of more than 170 global heritage sites.

Instead, the Unesco-affiliated committee decided to accept Cambodia's submitted document on the preservation and oversight of the Khmer structure without further discussion.

"Indeed, the agenda item was adopted without a debate. Cambodia and Thailand therefore did not have an opportunity to speak," he wrote in an e-mail.

The 11th-century cliff-top temple

is the second World Heritage Site in Cambodia, the first being Angkor, which was inscribed in 1992. The inscription of Preah Vihear in July 2008 irritated the Thai government, which saw the move as an encroachment on Thailand's claim to disputed territory surrounding the temple.

Two weeks ago, Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva rekindled the debate when he announced that he would request that the heritage committee re-register the site under the joint supervision of Thailand and Cambodia during its meeting in Spain. Cambodian leaders decried the appeal, saying that it only served to stir up emotions.

Phnom Penh-based attorney Bretton Sciaroni, who accompanied the Cambodian delegation and acted as its legal adviser, wrote in an e-mail that the "Thai delegation petitioned the Chairman of the Session on several occasions to have the opportunity to speak, but the Chair did not agree."

He said the Cambodian group was pleased with the outcome.

"The Cambodian delegation was happy with the result of the 33rd Session of the World Heritage Committee, and the support Cambodia received at that meeting, like the meeting the year before in Quebec City," he wrote.

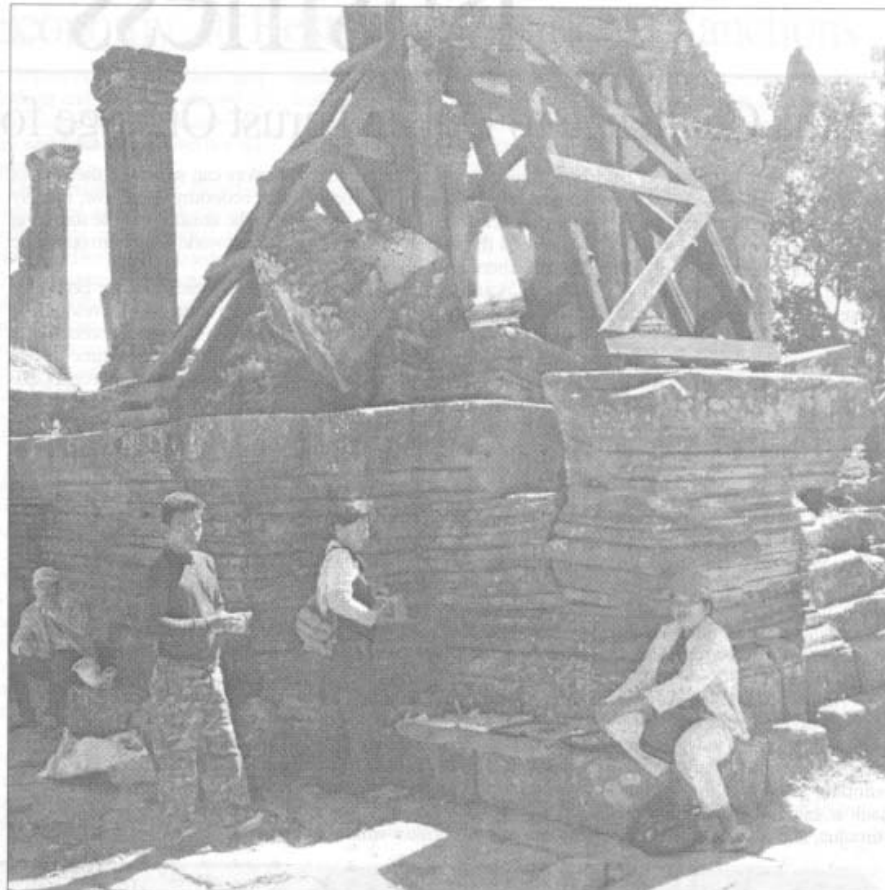
Council of Ministers spokesman Phay Siphon said Cambodia continues its efforts to peacefully negotiate with its neighbor and believes the World Heritage Committee is not the proper place to discuss the ongoing quarrel.

"The Thais tried so hard to submit their agenda but [the committee] did not allow them to do it," he said by telephone Tuesday. "It's over for [the question of] who's the owner of Preah Vihear."

He said the dozen or so members of the Cambodian delegation, headed by Cabinet Minister Sok An, should return Saturday from the Spanish city of Seville, where the meeting was held.

# The CAMBODIA DAILY

Monday, July 6, 2009



## Thai, Khmer Dine Together At Preah Vihear

BY EANG MENGLENG  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

In an effort to reduce tensions near Preah Vihear temple, Cambodian and Thai forces gathered together and shared a Sunday afternoon lunch along the disputed region at the border, military officials said.

Without giving a specific location or number of attendees, RCAF Division 3 commander Major General Srey Dek said the rival sides sat down for a meal of pork and vegetables at the border. He said the lunch was a chance to lessen any friction developing between the neighboring countries after Thai and Cambodian leaders engaged in some heated rhetoric in recent weeks and both sides bolstered the fortification of their respective defensive positions near the hilltop temple.

"We met together for lunch along the border to cut down the tension and foster friendship for both [sides'] soldiers," he said by telephone near the site of the centuries-old Khmer monument.

Chea Dara, deputy RCAF operations commander at Preah Vihear temple, said the troops also shared a drink, though the beverage of choice was Coca-Cola, since imbibing alcohol is frowned upon at the front.

"Thai soldiers brought pork and Cambodian soldiers brought the vegetables to make soup and they

*Continued on page 37*

Sellers of CDs and DVDs on top of Preah Vihear temple on Wednesday.

## Dine...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

were not allowed to drink alcohol," he said in a telephone interview from the border.

He said the situation is stable around the 11th century structure. However, he declined to comment on whether Thai forces have withdrawn their unit of 10 soldiers from the pagoda at the approach of the road to the temple or its 20 soldiers from the valley that intersects Preah Vihear and Thailand's front lines, redeployments that were reportedly agreed to recently by the Thais.

The calm at the border was disturbed before the lunch when a Cambodian soldier stepped on a landmine Sunday morning, wounding his right leg. Mr Dek said officials believe the man stepped on an old landmine on O'Chak Chreng hill about 7 km from the temple. He said the limb was not amputated and declined to name the soldier, who was treated near the temple.

Prime Minister Hun Sen and Thai Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thaugsuban met during an in-

auguration ceremony Saturday for National Road 67 though, according to Cambodian Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesman Koy Kuong, but it was unclear if the pair discussed any politics regarding the border row. According to the Thai News Agency, Mr Suthep told reporters his one-day visit was only aimed at promoting bilateral relations and he did not speak about Preah Vihear or troop reductions with Mr Hun Sen.

Eang Sophalleth, an assistant to

the premier, could not be reached by telephone Sunday, nor could Council of Ministers spokesman Phay Siphon.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon met late Saturday with Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva to discuss a variety of issues, according to a news briefing on the UN's website. It was unknown if Thailand's border conflict with Cambodia was a topic of discussion.

*(Additional reporting by Frank Radosevich)*

## Thai Accounts of P Vihear Progress Report 'Confusing'

A Unesco official called Thai media reports "confusing" regarding the recent claim that Cambodia's submission to the World Heritage Committee for Preah Vihear temple was incomplete and not accepted by the committee. Giovanni Boccardi, chief of Unesco's unit on East Asia and the Pacific, said the committee did not reject Cambodia's progress report on the ancient Khmer temple but rather asked the country to update its developments for next year. "The reality is that the World Heritage Committee has simply taken note of the reports presented to it this year and requested the Cambodian authorities to submit a new report, by 1 February 2010, on the progress made in implementing its previous recommendations" that were laid out during the body's 2008 meeting, Mr Boccardi wrote in an email. Shortly after the June 30 conclusion of the committee's meeting in Spain, media accounts reported Thai officials saying Cambodia failed to offer a plan. The Thai government has protested the committee's listing of Preah Vihear as a World Heritage Site under the management of Cambodia. *(Frank Radosevich)*

## CAMBODGE SOIR

9 au 15 Juillet 2009

### Conservation, restauration et développement durable

La réunion de la 18<sup>ème</sup> session technique du CIC (Comité International de Coordination pour la sauvegarde et le développement du site historique d'Angkor) a eu lieu à Siem Reap les 2 et 3 juin derniers. L'événement, présidé par la France et le Japon, a rassemblé plus de 250 personnes, parmi lesquelles les membres de 22 équipes internationales présentes sur le site d'Angkor. La déclaration finale vient seulement d'être communiquée. Comme à l'accoutumée, les débats ont porté sur la conservation, la restauration et le développement durable du site. Au terme des échanges, plusieurs recommandations générales ont été formulées. En ce qui concerne Angkor Wat, le comité a promis

d'accélérer l'ouverture de l'accès aux parties supérieures du temple (Bakan) via un escalier de bois récemment réaménagé. Le CIC a également annoncé la « mise en place prochaine d'un cahier des charges précis concernant le projet d'illumination du site », précisant au passage que le matériel électrique déjà installé sera retiré en attendant l'achèvement d'un projet d'illumination « conforme aux normes du patrimoine mondial ». Au niveau environnemental, le comité s'est promis de « lutter contre toutes les formes de pollution tant à Angkor qu'à Siem Reap » ainsi que de « veiller à la promotion de l'architecture de tradition khmère dans les nouvelles constructions à Siem Reap. »

**CAMBODGE SOIR** 9 au 15 Juillet 2009



FLORENT CHEVALIER

L'inactivité pèse sur le moral des troupes cambodgiennes. D'autant que les distractions manquent cruellement dans le campement. En face, au moins, les soldats thaïlandais ont la chance d'avoir l'électricité et des moyens de communication pour garder le contact avec leurs proches.

# Preah Vihear : la lassitude prend le dessus

Depuis le 15 juillet 2008, l'armée cambodgienne a remplacé les touristes aux abords du temple de Preah Vihear. La montagne est entièrement couverte de cahutes creusées, en partie dans le sol, et les hangars et autres baraquements abondent jusqu'à dix kilomètres alentour. Malgré des accrochages sporadiques avec l'armée thaïlandaise, les deux camps entretiennent de bonnes relations. Les soldats ont du mal à supporter l'attente, d'autant plus que leurs conditions de vie sont pénibles dans cet environnement isolé.



**T**rois tables en bois, et trente mètres. Voilà tout ce qui sépare les « ennemis » à Preah Vihear. Du côté thaïlandais, protégées par des sacs de sable peints en noir, les tantes sont neuves. En face, les Cambodgiens ont creusé des abris. Les sacs de riz remplis de terre se sont déchirés, laissant une végétation abondante camoufler le campement. Quelques mètres plus loin monte une épaisse fumée : un cochon grille sur la broche, alors qu'un second passe entre les mains expertes des cuisiniers. La veille, dimanche 5 juillet, les Thaïlandais ont fait la même chose. Aujourd'hui encore, les gradés des deux armées vont par-

tager le bay samaki, autrement dit, le repas de la solidarité.

Il n'est pas question d'affrontement ouvert, même si, rappelle un soldat, « les Thaïlandais profèrent de belles paroles d'amitié ici, mais ensuite ils agissent différemment ». « Par exemple, poursuit-il, hier ils ont essayé de creuser une tranchée vers Chak Chreng. Le Cambodge le leur a pourtant interdit, mais ils n'ont pas écouté. Et comme on cherche à préserver le calme pour les cérémonies commémoratives du 7 juillet, on n'a pas répliqué. » Selon lui, il y aurait également des tensions à Sanbok Khrom, Phnom Troab et Veal Intry.

Au bord de la falaise, près du

temple de Preah Vihear, un autre soldat confirme : « La Thaïlande fait l'étalage de sa puissance. L'autre jour, ils ont envoyé un avion en reconnaissance. Mais il n'a pas osé franchir la frontière, parce que dans ce cas les soldats khmers auraient tiré sans hésiter. » Un gradé rapporte ce qu'il a entendu de la bouche d'un commandant thaïlandais la veille. D'après lui, les militaires n'ont aucune intention de se battre, mais les ordres viennent de Bangkok. Preah Vihear serait la ficelle qui permet de tirer sur la corde nationaliste. « Franchement, on ne comprend pas ce qu'il font. Un jour ils envoient de nouvelles troupes, le lendemain ils

les retirent. On dirait qu'ils hésitent beaucoup, ou qu'ils font n'importe quoi ! », résume-t-il.

Du point de vue militaire, les Cambodgiens se montrent confiants. Tous les soldats se disent certains « à 100% » qu'en cas d'engagement, ils obtiendront la victoire. « Avant le 15 juillet [2008] on pensait que l'armée thaï était puissante, qu'elle avait beaucoup d'armes, révèle l'un d'entre eux. Mais finalement ils ne sont pas meilleurs que nous. Le Cambodge possède des armes modernes. Et surtout, nous avons de l'expérience : la guerre contre les soldats de Lon Nol, contre les Vietnamiens, et bien sûr pendant les Khmers rouges... ». Les troupes,



composées en grande majorité d'engagés volontaires affichent un optimisme sans faille : s'ils sont là, c'est parce qu'ils ont « l'honneur de servir [leur] pays ».

C'est d'ailleurs cela qui leur permet de supporter les conditions de vie, qu'ils qualifient eux-même de mauvaises. Cheth, un militaire d'une trentaine d'années originaire de Kompong Thom, fait part de son expérience : « Ici, nous sommes prêts 24 heures sur 24, même si on a pas assez de nourriture. Notre mission de protection du territoire est un honneur. Depuis l'inscription du temple au patrimoine mondial de l'humanité par l'Unesco, on est en permanence sur le pied de guerre. Mais les conditions de vie ne sont pas très bonnes, et les choses ne vont pas en s'améliorant. Avant, on vivait mieux grâce aux dons des visiteurs, mais ils sont de moins en moins nombreux. On doit souvent se contenter de nouilles. »

viennent des différentes régions du Cambodge, et ils sont très généreux, mais ils donnent aux chefs plutôt qu'aux soldats du rang, et ce sont toujours les gardes du corps qui sont privilégiés lors de la distribution. C'est injuste. »

De l'avis général, ce sont les vieilles femmes qui sont les plus généreuses. Elles offrent non seulement de l'argent et de la nourriture, mais rapportent aussi des talismans sacrés censés protéger les militaires. La plupart en portent en permanence avec eux, dans leurs poches ou autour du cou.

Assis sur un énorme rocher à l'ombre des sculptures d'un linteau millénaire, le regard d'un soldat d'environ trente ans se perd dans le ciel. « Pourquoi est-ce que je ne peux pas voir Battambang d'ici ? », soupire-t-il. Je pense à mon fils qui est là-bas, et à ma femme aussi. Cela fait 6 mois que je ne suis pas rentré dans mon village. Je ne regrette pas un seul

que la guerre éclate. Si la situation reste en l'état, je ne vois aucune issue au problème. On vit tout le temps dans l'attente et la peur. Une fois la guerre terminée, on saura qui est le vainqueur, et qui est le perdant. Et évidemment, c'est nous qui allons gagner ! ». Un de ses camarades du même âge tempère : « Il y a déjà eu assez de morts et de blessés comme ça, si chacun pouvait repartir sans se battre, ça ne serait pas plus mal. » Il sont nombreux à s'impatienter, et à vouloir quitter un cadre sublime, mais totalement inadapté à un long séjour. À l'inverse de leurs homologues thaïlandais, les soldats khmers n'ont ni électricité, ni téléphone pour leur confort ou pour garder le contact avec leur famille.

Pour les bonzes de la pagode voisine, la vie suit son cours, même si les militaires en treillis ont remplacé les pèlerins. En tout cas, ils se refusent à tout commentaire sur leur situation. Parmi les commerçants du marché incendié par les troupes thaïlandaises, beaucoup sont partis. Seules deux familles se sont réinstallées en haut de l'escalier monumental, là où arrive la route khmère. Elles ont obtenu un terrain à proximité, mais les affaires ne sont pas florissantes. Une femme tient avec son fils et son mari l'une des deux échoppes. « Il est midi, et j'ai eu quatre clients. Les touristes ont fui. La situation est vraiment devenue difficile », se plaint-elle.

Une explosion retentit. Assis sur la falaise, les hommes en uniforme restent impassibles. L'un deux montre du doigt le panache de fumée. De grands travaux routiers ont lieu, et plusieurs ponts sont en construction. À Preah Vihear, on entend plus souvent la dynamite que les munitions. Et, faute d'ennemis, c'est le temps que les militaires cherchent à tuer.

**Ung Chamroeun  
et Florent Chevallier**



L'heure est aux repas de solidarité entre soldats cambodgiens et thaïlandais.

De nombreux soldats s'endettent auprès des marchands du temple pour améliorer un peu leur quotidien. Un camarade de Cheth, âgé d'une vingtaine d'années, évoque un autre problème : « Ceux du PMBU (Prime Minister Bodyguard Unit, les soldats d'élite de l'unité des gardes du corps du Premier ministre, ndlr) reçoivent plus de nourriture que nous. Il y a bien des touristes qui

instant d'être militaire, car j'ai la chance de défendre mon pays contre l'invasion des étrangers, mais ça commence à devenir long. J'ai demandé plusieurs fois une permission, mais mes supérieurs me l'ont refusée, ils disent qu'il faut rester prêt en cas d'attaque. »

Sur la question des hostilités, les avis sont partagés. Un jeune militaire est impatient d'en découdre : « Honnêtement, je veux

# Un anniversaire pour « être fier d'être né khmer »

Alors que le Cambodge célèbre le premier anniversaire de l'inscription du site de Preah Vihear au patrimoine mondial de l'Humanité, sur le temple, les Cambodgiens entendent montrer que ce monument fait bien partie de leur patrimoine.

Ce mardi matin 7 juillet au matin, plus question de chemises débraillées ni d'uniformes dépareillés. Les soldats sont prêts pour la revue. Ils sont rassemblés le long des routes, le visage sérieux, scrutant et arrêtant les véhicules suspects. Tous sont armés, du simple pistolet automatique jusqu'au lance-roquettes. Ceux qui possèdent des mitrailleuses ou des engins explosifs les exposent fièrement devant les yeux des curieux.

Arrivé près du temple, le visiteur est accueilli par des calicots

rappelant l'anniversaire de l'inscription qui complètent, celui plus ancien indiquant « *I have pride to be born as Khmer* » (J'ai la fierté d'être né Khmer). Si les militaires restent les plus nombreux, le chemin est également emprunté par de nombreux visiteurs cambodgiens venus, par cars entiers, soutenir leur armée et assister au boung suong, la cérémonie propitiatoire.

Le spectacle alterne entre musique, chants et discours. Un achar (prêtre) psalmodit des paroles rituelles. Les danseuses en costume

traditionnel remportent un franc succès. Hing Bunheang, chef adjoint des Forces armées royales khmères, envoie un discours bien rodé : les Thaïlandais veulent reprendre le temple, leurs émissaires changent sans cesse d'avis et tiennent à utiliser dans les documents communs le nom thaïlandais de Khao Praviharn à la place de Preah Vihear. Selon lui, tous les militaires cambodgiens travaillent en bonne intelligence, et bien qu'ils détestent la guerre, ils sont prêts au combat. À la fin de la cérémonie, des oiseaux sont lâchés, ainsi que des ballons gonflés à l'hélium, emportant vers la Thaïlande

le message des autorités khmères.

Interrogé sur le sens de cette journée, Hang Soth, directeur général de l'autorité de Preah Vihear, explique : « *Cette cérémonie est importante pour que les Cambodgiens se souviennent de la date de l'inscription du temple, elle montre aussi notre respect pour les anciens rois qui l'ont construit. C'est aussi l'occasion pour moi de présenter un rapport sur le développement du site, malgré les problèmes que nous posent les Thaïlandais. Nous sommes confiants, car leur action n'est pas approuvée par la communauté internationale.* »

La journée est manifestement un succès. La foule a répondu présente pour se rassembler dans un endroit difficile d'accès, et les Thaïlandais n'ont pas gâché la fête. Le soir, des spectacles de cirque et de danse étaient programmés grâce à la venue d'artistes du ministère de la Culture. L'Unesco n'avait sûrement pas prévu ce scénario, ni celui des soldats dormant à même les sculptures médiévales, lors de l'inscription de Preah Vihear au patrimoine mondial de l'Humanité il y a un an.

**Ung Chamroeun  
et Florent Chevallier**



Des oiseaux et des ballons sont lâchés par les responsables cambodgiens.

## Preah Vihear, une année de conflit

**7 juillet 2009**  
Date anniversaire de l'inscription officielle du temple dans la liste du patrimoine mondial de l'Unesco.

**3 avril 2009**  
Le nouvel accrochage a fait deux blessés côté cambodgien et plusieurs morts côté thaïlandais mais, aucune source officielle ne l'a confirmé.

**13 mars 2009**  
Ola Biyi Babalola Joseph Yai, président du conseil exécutif de l'Unesco en visite au temple de Preah Vihear.

**17 février 2009**  
Une dizaine de roquettes, tirées du sol thaïlandais, ont explosé sur le territoire cambodgien près du temple de Ta Krabei, province d'Oddor Meanchey. Les soldats cambodgiens n'ont pas riposté.

**6 février 2009**  
Une délégation militaire thaïlandaise, composée de 37 officiers, menée par le ministre de la Défense nationale thaïlandaise, Pravit Vongsuwan (ci-contre), est venue au Cambodge pour négocier avec Tea Banh, ministre cambodgien de la Défense nationale. Sans grand résultat.

**26 janvier 2009**  
Kasit Pyrom Ya (à gauche), ministre des affaires étrangères thaïlandais a effectué une visite au Cambodge. Après l'entretien avec Hor Nam Hong (à droite) les deux côtés se sont mis d'accord pour réduire le nombre des effectifs militaires autour de la pagode.

**Fin novembre 2008**  
Son Chhay (ci-contre), député du parti Sam Rainsy écrit une lettre à Hun Sen dans laquelle il l'invite à venir s'expliquer devant l'Assemblée nationale sur le fait que le gouvernement a laissé les soldats thaïlandais envahir le territoire cambodgien. Le chef du gouvernement n'a pas répondu à l'invitation en avançant qu'il s'était déjà expliqué publiquement à plusieurs reprises sur la position du gouvernement face à l'invasion thaïlandaise.

**15 octobre 2008**  
Premier accrochage militaire entre les deux parties. Trois morts du côté cambodgien. Du côté thaïlandais, aucune nouvelle n'a été donnée par l'armée.

**6 octobre 2008**  
Deux soldats thaïlandais ont été blessés en sautant sur des mines près de Phnom Trap, à 150 mètres à l'intérieur du territoire cambodgien.

**15 juillet 2008**  
Déploiement de soldats thaïlandais dans la zone autour du temple et notamment dans la pagode Keosekha Kiri Svarak, au pied du temple.

**7 juillet 2008**  
L'inscription officielle du temple dans la liste du patrimoine mondial, lors de la réunion du comité en charge du patrimoine de l'Unesco, qui s'est tenue au Canada.

# Rivalité toujours vive avec la Thaïlande

Le Cambodge a célébré avec faste le premier anniversaire de l'inscription du temple au patrimoine mondial de l'Unesco. Ses dirigeants en ont profité pour tacler sévèrement le voisin siamois.

**M**ardi 7 juillet, 11h, les gongs des pagodes ont retenti partout dans le royaume. Tous les moines ont prié. Le Cambodge a fêté à sa manière le premier anniversaire de l'inscription du temple de Preah Vihear dans la liste du patrimoine mondial de l'Unesco. Dans l'après-midi, des milliers de personnes se sont réunies au stade olympique pour assister à un grand concert. Ce spectacle a été organisé à la demande du Premier ministre Hun Sen en l'honneur du temple et de sa reconnaissance historique mondiale,

mais aussi pour « fêter » la défaite de la Thaïlande dans ce dossier.

Car l'inscription du temple n'a pas calmé les tensions entre le Cambodge et son voisin siamois. Depuis des décennies, les deux royaumes se disputent le site. Pourtant en juin 1962, la Cour internationale de justice de La Haye a entériné la localisation du monument en pays khmer. Cependant, cette décision internationale n'a pas fait taire les ambitions thaïlandaises.

Depuis un an, des milliers de soldats des deux camps se font face sur la montagne Dangrek, en haut de laquelle trône l'édifice, datant du IXe siècle pour sa partie la plus ancienne... Des coups de feu ont été échangés et des militaires sont morts lors de ces escarmouches sanglantes. L'objet du litige actuel porte sur un bout de territoire de 4,6 km<sup>2</sup>. Il y a encore quelques jours, la Thaïlande a demandé officiellement le retrait de Preah Vihear de la liste. Une requête refusée par l'Unesco.

Ce contexte particulier a bien

entendu été rappelé par Sok An, ministre du Conseil des ministres, et responsable de la délégation cambodgienne auprès de l'Unesco, mardi 7 juillet, dans son discours marquant l'ouverture de la célébration au stade olympique. Devant une foule compacte, Sok An a rappelé que le jugement de La Haye ne souffrait d'aucune discussion : « *Preah Vihear appartient bien au Cambodge, a-t-il tonné. La Cour internationale avait aussi demandé aux soldats thaïlandais de se retirer de Preah Vihear et à leur gouvernement de nous rendre les antiquités qui proviennent du temple.* »

## « Envahisseur thaïlandais »

Sok An a rappelé qu'aujourd'hui, la défense du site fait l'objet d'un consensus dans le pays entre le gouvernement, la population et l'armée. Il n'a pas hésité à ironiser sur l'attitude de la Thaïlande : « *Ce royaume ne se base que sur des cartes établies unilatéralement pour tenter de tromper l'opinion publique et nous enva-*



Les pagodes ont été des lieux privilégiés de célébrations.

## MICRO-TROTTOIR

### La journée de commémoration vue par les habitants de Phnom Penh

Propos recueillis par  
Kang Kallyann et Ung Chansophea

**Kanel, étudiant en informatique à l'Université royale de Phnom Penh.**

« Vers 10h30, tous les étudiants se sont installés devant mon université pour célébrer cette date. On a chanté l'hymne national, puis on a exprimé tous ensemble notre joie. De mon point de vue, il est inutile de donner trop d'importance à cette journée. Tant que les soldats thaïlandais n'auront pas quitté notre territoire, on ne se sentira jamais en paix. »

**San, employé d'une pharmacie près du stade olympique.**

« Je suis très ému de voir tous ces gens se rendre au stade pour assister au concert. Je suis aussi très fier du temple Phreah Vihear. Cette célébration montre clairement que celui-ci appartient au Cambodge et cela témoigne de la solidarité du peuple khmer. De plus, le risque d'invasion de notre territoire, donne encore plus d'importance à notre temple. Mais malgré tout cela,

je suis très inquiet pour la sécurité de nos soldats à la frontière. »

**Phirum, 28 ans**

« Je souhaite que le gouvernement organise une telle célébration chaque année. »

**Chakrya, dentiste.**

« C'est bien de célébrer cet événement parce que de nombreux Cambodgiens ne savent pas vraiment que Phreah Vihear est classé dans le patrimoine mondial. Si c'était le cas, je pense que notre pays et notre temple seraient beaucoup plus réputés. »

**Neth, enseignante au lycée Anuvat.**

« Toute la communication autour de ce temple participe à sa renommée auprès des Cambodgiens, qui ne sont pas tous au courant de son existence, ni de ce qu'il représente. Je me suis réjoui lorsque j'ai entendu des élèves de neuvième, parler de cette fête. »

*hir. Le Cambodge, pour sa part, peut s'appuyer sur la loi internationale, qui est de son côté ».*

Présent à côté de Sok An, le général Srey Deuk, commandant en chef de la région 3, en charge de la zone de Preah Vihear, n'a pas manqué de souligner la détermination de l'armée à défendre le site. « S'il le faut, nous sommes prêts à y laisser notre vie ! Nous protégerons notre territoire de l'envahisseur thaïlandais », a-t-il déclaré.

Le concert du 7 juillet a permis au Cambodge de montrer sa

fierté vis-à-vis du temple, de son inscription à l'Unesco et de fustiger le voisin thaïlandais. Sok An a conclu son intervention en louant le sang-froid du gouvernement : « Nous continuerons toujours à prôner la paix et pratiquer la politique de la main tendue avec tous les pays du monde en général et nos voisins en particulier ». Une attitude de sagesse teintée toutefois d'un fort nationalisme, et de quelques déclarations belliqueuses.

## The CAMBODIA DAILY Tuesday, July 21, 2009



Charles Fox/The Cambodia Daily

The historic Renakse Hotel sits on Sothearos Boulevard shrouded in a green plastic mesh more than six months after its former manager was evicted despite having a 49-year-lease. The Phnom Penh Municipal Court voided that lease on Monday.

### *CPP Takes Back Historic Hotel, Accusing Owner of Violating Lease*

BY EANG MENGLENG  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The Phnom Penh Municipal Court on Monday voided the 49-year lease of the manager of the historic Renakse Hotel and ordered her to pay its former owner, the Cambodian People's Party, \$80,000 for violating terms of the lease.

Reading the verdict Monday, Judge Ke Sakhorn said the court also rejected Ms Chantha's counter-complaint seeking \$6 million for compensation for the termination of the lease agreement, because she did not present enough evidence.

The CPP filed a lawsuit on Jan 3 seeking to void Kem Chantha's lease, claiming that she violated its terms by failing to renovate the property within seven years. The CPP demanded \$3.9 million in compensation.

"She violated the lease so the CPP had to take this hotel from her," Minister of Cults and Religion Min Khin said Monday.

Mr Khin sold the building on behalf of the CPP to local developer Alexson Inc for \$3.8 million last year, and the government evicted Ms Chantha Jan 6, despite the court having not yet ruled.

The minister added that he was not in court and was unaware of the compensation amount Ms Chantha was ordered to pay.

Neither Ms Chantha nor her lawyer were present in the courtroom Monday, and Ms Chantha could not be reached for comment.

Her lawyer, Chong Eav Heng, said by telephone that he sent his assistant to hear the verdict but he declined to discuss the outcome any further except to say he plans to appeal the decision. "I will appeal to the Appeal Court," he said.

Khiev Sepphan, lawyer for the CPP, said after the verdict was read at the court, "It is the temporary verdict of the municipal court and Ms Kem Chantha has her right to appeal to the appeal court after the one-month period."

Ms Chantha previously argued that Judge Sakhorn should be removed from the case because he is related to the owner of Alexson, but the judge refused and said there was no conflict of interest. On Jan 9, Phnom Penh Municipal Court Judge Chhay Kong ruled that there was no evidence Judge Sakhorn was biased in the case.

Reports of impending hotel demolition after the sale to Alexson prompted Unesco Country Representative Teruo Jinnai to send a letter earlier this year to government officials reminding them of recommendations made at a 2006 Unesco forum on the preservation of Cambodia's urban heritage.



Wednesday 5 August 2009

## Workshop aims to net UNESCO temple bid

BY VONG SOKHENG

THE government plans to hold a three-day workshop starting Sunday in Banteay Meanchey province with the goal of securing a place for Banteay Chhmar temple on the UNESCO World Heritage List, an official from the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts said.

"We don't yet know when the temple might be listed as a World Heritage site, but we will study the issue, and we expect to develop a plan at the workshop for the UNESCO application," Him Chhem, minister of culture and fine arts, told the *Post* on Tuesday.

Ung Oeun, governor of Banteay Meanchey province, said he expected around 150 government officials and UNESCO experts to visit Banteay Chhmar temple on Saturday in advance of the workshop.

### Temple damaged by looting

Banteay Chhmar is located about 20 kilometres from the Thai border and has suffered extensive damage from looting in the past several years.

Thailand recently returned seven stolen artefacts from the temple, which were put on display at the National Museum in April.

Ung Oeun said that the Banteay Chhmar site was still endangered, and that government officials hope to work with UNESCO to better preserve it. ■

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Monday, August 24, 2009

### *Former Renakse Manager Continues Legal Battle*

BY EANG MENGLENG  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The lawyer for the Renakse Hotel's former manager said he will lodge a court appeal today demanding that the former manager's 49-year lease for the hotel be reinstated, while a lawyer representing the ruling CPP, which owned the hotel, said the historic Phnom Penh building will be demolished soon.

In July, the Municipal Court ruled that the lease of the Renakse's long-time manager, Khem Chantha, be made void on the grounds that she had violated the terms of her contract by not renovating the hotel, which is located on Sothearos Boulevard opposite the Royal Palace.

The court also rejected Ms Chantha's demand for \$6 million in compensation for her surprise eviction, which took place in January, but ordered her to pay the CPP \$80,000 in compensation. The CPP had demanded \$3.8 million in compensation for the alleged breach of contract related to the renovations.

"I have discussed it with Khem Chantha, and I will appeal to the Appeal Court [today] against the eviction," lawyer Chong Eav Heng said.

Ms Chantha will continue fighting against the loss of her hotel, he said. CPP lawyer Khiev Sepphan said over the weekend that any appeal of the decision by Ms Chantha was futile, and that she cannot defeat the CPP in court.

However, Mr Sepphan also said that the ruling party is still willing to pay Ms Chantha the longstanding offer of \$200,000 in compensation,



Isabelle Roughol/The Cambodia Daily

**The Renakse Hotel before its management was evicted on Jan 6.**

and to now also forgive the \$80,000 in damages imposed by the court.

"We want her to negotiate outside the court, because there is no point in her continuing her lawsuit. She cannot beat the CPP, and it's a waste of time," he said on Sunday. He added that only the older sections of the hotel, which was a courthouse during the French colonial period, will be demolished, though he declined to be more specific.

Despite the controversy and court battle, the CPP sold the hotel to local developer Alexson Inc for \$3.8 million last year, prior to the removal of Ms Chantha. The future plans for the Renakse site have never been revealed, but Unesco has noted the historic and cultural importance of the building.

Darryl Collins, an architecture historian and long-time resident of Cambodia, said yesterday that the

Renakse was built in the last years of the 19th century and that its current importance stems from its location in front of the Royal Palace. As in many other Southeast Asia capitals, there is a "city pillar," or sacred location, marking the spiritual heart of the city. Often such sacred sites are adjacent to a royal palace or a founding site, Collins said.

"Of even greater importance to the Royal Palace and the inhabitants of Phnom Penh are the guardian deities housed immediately in front of the palace and shrines on the riverbank. Do these constitute Phnom Penh's 'city pillar' as they are certainly linked to the palace and monarchy," he wrote in an e-mail.

"The land immediately in front of the palace walls should be inviolate and protected," he added.

*(Additional reporting by Tim Sturrock)*



## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

### *Genocide Museum Documents in Danger of Deterioration*

BY ABBY SEIFF  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

Thousands of photos, biographies and confessions make up the archives at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, but the humid climate and aging building in which they are stored place the documents in danger of rapid deterioration.

This prospect has put the archives at the focal point of a Unesco workshop held this week, which aims to preserve and promote culturally valuable documents that have international relevance. The workshop was the follow up to the inscription on July 24 of the Tuol Sleng collection on Unesco's Memory of the World Register.

The archives of Tuol Sleng are the first Cambodian manuscripts to make the registry. It places them

alongside the likes of Anne Frank's diaries and the Magna Carta and may bring the war crimes museum increased international recognition, as well as funding.

"They are not in good condition. The paper has turned yellow; already some handwriting has faded. Some will be lost in the near future," said Chey Sopheara, deputy director of the Museums Department, who is in charge of Tuol Sleng.

Yale and Cornell universities in the US and the Documentation Center of Cambodia are among the institutions that have already been working to preserve and catalogue the archives.

Unnecessary repetition of work has proven a topic of discussion this week.

"One of the main points of the workshop has been to review and

audit and see what is missing and what is there to avoid duplication," said Helen Jarvis, head of the victims' unit at the ECCC, who worked on the Memory of the World nomination application.

Dara Vanthan, deputy director of DC-Cam, said his organization had worked closely with the Tuol Sleng Museum and had found that preservation was underway.

"The documents are already on microfilm. What it seems Tuol Sleng really needs is work on the building," he said.

Earlier this year, Mr Sopheara had experts from the National Museum inspect the physical space at Tuol Sleng.

They found the archive room was far warmer and damper than preservation standards dictate. They also found there was too much sun-

light hitting photos in exhibition rooms.

Mr Sopheara said he hoped to get funding from Unesco to address these shortcomings, but a spokesman for Unesco said it doesn't yet know whether money will go to the museum directly. Funding may instead go to whichever company is chosen to digitize the documents, the Unesco spokesman said.

Nevertheless, the prospect of a digital archive, something Mr Sopheara says his staff might begin working on as early as October, is in itself promising.

"I am very happy," he said. "I have worked in this museum [for] more than 30 years and it is so important to save these documents. It is so important for the next generation to not forget our history."

# CAMBODGE SOIR

1 au 7 octobre 2009

DÉTENTE

## UN AUTRE REGARD



Une touche féminine pour l'anniversaire de la classification de Preah Vihear à l'Unesco... - Photo de Pring Samrang

*Phnom Penh,  
juillet 2009*

Si vous aussi, vous avez pris une photo étonnante, insolite, décalée, envoyez-la à la rédaction : [redaction@cambodgesoir.info](mailto:redaction@cambodgesoir.info)

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

# Cambodia Elected to World Heritage Committee

By ZSOMBOR PETER  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

Cambodia was elected for the first time to the 21-member World Heritage Committee after voting in Paris came to a close Monday night, officials said yesterday.

Cambodia was one of 30 nations originally vying for the 12 seats up for grabs this year, and sent out a battery of letters and envoys around the world to rally support for its application, said Phay Siphon, spokesman for the Council of Ministers.

Membership to the committee allows Cambodia a vote in deciding which cultural and historic sites make the annual World Heritage List, and also gives the country a say in how the World Heritage Fund allocates money for the preservation of historic sites.

Thailand, which Cambodia had accused of trying to sabotage its bid for membership of the committee, also secured a seat on Monday, and the challenge for the neighbors now may be to get along on the committee.

At a roundtable discussion in Phnom Penh last week, senators, parliamentarians and border officials accused Thailand of using the longstanding territorial dispute over the Preah Vihear temple to derail Cambodia's efforts to join the heritage committee.

"Thailand stated again that to elect Cambodia as [a] member of the World Heritage Committee will ignite and instigate the conflict between the two countries," the Council of Ministers said in a statement released on Friday.

"We would love to see everyone work together in peace," Mr

Siphon said, adding that he looked forward to seeing Cambodia share its experience in preserving historic sites with others.

"The committee is not meant to deal with the politics or territorial claims," he added. "It is culture only."

Quick to capitalize on the membership of the committee, Prime Minister Hun Sen called it "another new pride for the Kingdom of Cambodia."

"It is the honor of Cambodia and it is also the honor of all Khmer people," Mr Hun Sen said in a speech at the National Institute of Education in Phnom Penh.

The World Heritage Committee's next annual meeting will be held in Brazil in June.

*(Additional reporting by Eang Mengleng)*

## CAMBODGE SOIR

29 octobre au 4 novembre 2009

### Le Cambodge élu au Comité du patrimoine mondial

Le vote a eu lieu lors de la 17<sup>e</sup> Assemblée générale des États parties à la Convention du patrimoine mondial, qui s'est déroulée au siège de l'organisation à Paris. Douze sièges sur 21 étaient à renouveler. « *L'élection du Royaume en tant que membre du Comité est une nouvelle fierté. Cela découle de la décision du gouvernement concernant sa détermination à protéger le patrimoine national et mondial* », a déclaré le Premier ministre dans un communiqué. « *Le Cambodge a une grande expérience dans la gestion et la conservation de son patrimoine* », poursuit-il, avant de conclure : « *Cette élection n'est pas seulement un succès culturel, mais aussi une*

*action pour la diplomatie du Cambodge.* » Du fait de sa nouvelle position, le Royaume se retrouverait dans une position favorable pour faire avancer un certain nombre de dossiers, comme celui du temple de Sambo Prey Kup, à Kampong Thom. Les États membres de ce Comité, au nombre de 21, sont élus pour un mandat de six ans. Cette élection au Comité du patrimoine est une première pour le Cambodge, membre de l'Unesco depuis 1991. Le 23 octobre, lors de la 35<sup>e</sup> session de la Conférence générale de l'Unesco, Irina Bokova a succédé à Koichiro Matsuura au poste de directeur général. Elle est la première femme à accéder à cette fonction.

# Norodom Sihamoni : cinq ans de discrétion royale

Le fils de Norodom Sihanouk, qui n'avait probablement guère de goût pour l'exercice du pouvoir, reste à l'écart des affaires politiques et a opté pour une application stricte de l'article de la Constitution selon lequel « le Roi règne mais ne gouverne pas ».

**P**as d'accroc, pas de vague. En septembre 2008, alors qu'il subissait sa première épreuve du feu en ouvrant la séance inaugurale de la nouvelle législature, Norodom Sihamoni a confirmé ce que de nombreux observateurs avaient anticipé : le nouveau souverain resterait bel et bien à l'écart de la vie politique. Le pays était alors en crise : les députés d'opposition, qui rejetaient le résultat des dernières législatives, faisaient monter la pression depuis des mois en menaçant de ne pas siéger dans l'hémicycle. Le jour dit,

*Srok* et d'un élu local de Kampong Thom, tous deux en prison, Norodom Sihamoni leur a indiqué qu'il avait fait suivre la lettre au gouvernement. De même pour leur requête visant à décerner au syndicaliste Chea Vichea le titre de « héros du travail » à titre posthume, après son assassinat en 2004 par des inconnus.

## « Le mieux placé »

Né le 14 mai 1953 à Phnom Penh, Norodom Sihamoni effectue sa scolarité en Tchécoslovaquie à partir de 1962, où il étudie la danse

*qu'ambassadeur à l'Unesco et professeur de ballet classique à Paris. Mais Sa Majesté est aussi un homme qui comprend bien que quand le devoir l'appelle, il ne peut pas refuser. Son père lui a dit que personne ne pouvait dire non quand son pays et son peuple lui demandaient de prendre en charge une lourde charge. Il était le seul prince majeur de la famille royale à n'avoir jamais été impliqué en politique, la plupart des autres princes étant des militants d'un parti. Sa Majesté était un enseignant et un diplomate, ce qui a fait*



**HUN SEN, PPC** (Premier ministre) ①

**HENG SAMRIN, PPC**  
(Président de l'Assemblée nationale) ①

**NGCEUN NHEL, PPC**  
(Premier vice-président de l'Assemblée nationale) ①

**SAY CHHUM, PPC**  
(Second vice-président de l'Assemblée nationale) ①

**CHEA SIM, PPC**  
(Président du Sénat) ①

**SISOWATH CHIVORN MONIRAK, Funcinpec**  
(Premier vice-président du Sénat) ②

**TEP NGORN, PPC**  
(Second vice-président du Sénat) ①

**TEP VONG, PPC**  
(Chef de l'ordre Mohanikay) ①

**BOUR KRY, royaliste, ex-Funcinpec**  
(Chef de l'ordre Thammayut)

les élus du Parti Sam Rainsy (PSR) opéraient un spectaculaire revirement en participant à la cérémonie. Mais dans le discours du Roi, aucune allusion aux événements : Norodom Sihamoni se contente de féliciter Hun Sen et les autres parlementaires pour leur réélection, et se dit confiant dans le travail qu'accomplirait la quatrième législature.

Un an plus tard, le Roi se fait toujours aussi discret. Mardi 27 octobre, alors qu'il recevait en audience 19 des 26 députés du PSR, il les a écoutés poliment, indique l'un d'entre eux. Alors que les parlementaires évoquaient leur demande de grâce royale, concernant les cas de l'ex-directeur de la rédaction du journal *Khmer Machas*

classique, la musique et le théâtre. Il quitte Prague en 1975 pour Pyongyang, où il étudie pendant un an le cinéma, jusqu'à son retour au Cambodge un an plus tard, où il est assigné à résidence par les Khmers rouges. En 1981, il se rend à Paris où il occupe diverses activités culturelles, jusqu'à sa nomination comme ambassadeur à l'ONU en 1992, puis à l'Unesco en 1993. Le 14 octobre 2004, après le retrait de Norodom Sihanouk, il est élu à l'unanimité par le Conseil du trône pour lui succéder. Son couronnement est organisé à Phnom Penh le 29 octobre suivant. « Il n'a jamais aspiré à devenir Roi, estime Julio Jeldres, biographe du Roi-père et proche de la famille royale. Il était heureux en tant

*de lui le candidat le mieux placé pour succéder à Sa Majesté Norodom Sihanouk. »*

L'inviolabilité du Roi, garantie par la Constitution et élargie en 2004 à ses parents, fait de lui un personnage à part sur l'échiquier politique cambodgien. Personne, journaliste ou parlementaire, ne peut le critiquer sans risquer de poursuites judiciaires. Mais, dans les rangs de l'opposition, certains regrettent la faible marge de manœuvre qui lui est accordée par le Parti du peuple cambodgien (PPC) : « Nous avons beaucoup de chance d'avoir un Roi, qui apporte un élément de stabilité dans notre vie politique, estime Son Chhay, député (PSR) de Phnom Penh. Certes, il lui faudra du temps pour

asseoir son autorité. Mais nous savons qu'il subit de nombreuses pressions de la part du parti au pouvoir. Par exemple, la Constitution fait de lui le commandant suprême de l'armée... Une loi serait nécessaire pour rendre cette disposition effective. De la même manière, il n'a pas les moyens de jouer tout son rôle dans la garantie de l'indépendance du système judiciaire, alors qu'il préside le Conseil suprême de la magistrature. » Mais le député ne tient pas rigueur à Norodom Sihamoni de son effacement : « Il lui est très difficile de dépasser les limites qui lui ont été fixées : il faut se rappeler qu'il a été sélectionné par le Conseil du trône, essentiellement composé de membres du parti au pouvoir. »

Ung Ty, sénateur PPC, nie que le Roi puisse être l'objet de pressions de la part d'un parti politique : « Il est à la tête de la hiérarchie ! D'ailleurs, récemment, il a demandé au ministère de la Justice de faire la lumière sur une affaire judiciaire. » Quand à Norodom Sihamoni lui-même, Ung Ty le trouve « sympathique, souriant et intelligent. » « Il a régné un temps très court mais a déjà un bon nombre de réalisations sociales à son actif, et comme son père, il rend souvent visite aux villageois, ajoute le sénateur. Les Cambodgiens le connaissent bien, grâce à la radio et à la télévision. »

Autre point de vue chez Kem Sokha, président du Parti des droits de l'homme. Le 10 octobre, lui l'a rencontré pour lui remettre 5 tonnes de riz, récoltées en Europe pour les victimes du typhon Ketsana. « Son rôle est dans la main du gouvernement, estime-t-il. Aujourd'hui,

celui-ci lui permet surtout de se consacrer à l'action humanitaire. »

Mais même dans ce domaine, le rôle de Norodom Sihamoni reste effacé. Tous les quinze jours, un bref bulletin rend compte de ses activités : des photos en compagnie d'ambassadeurs, et quelques visites dans des villages. En même temps est expédié le Bulletin mensuel de documentation du Roi-père, au moins cinq fois plus épais. Seule la télévision TVK est autorisée à filmer le souverain dans ses déplacements en province. « Je ne sais pas à quoi attribuer cette discrétion, il s'agit peut-être de raisons de sécurité », estime Julio Jeldres.

La Constitution, pourtant, met sans ambiguïté le Roi en valeur. Même si le premier alinéa de l'article 7 dispose que « le roi règne mais ne gouverne pas », et que cet article est verrouillé par un autre (n° 17), qui proclame cette phrase « inamendable », le souverain dispose notamment d'un droit de grâce élargi dans l'article 27, qui lui permet d'interrompre des poursuites judiciaires à n'importe quel stade de la procédure. Mais depuis son accession au trône, jamais

Norodom Sihamoni n'a utilisé ce droit sans que cela ne lui soit d'abord demandé par le gouvernement. « Rien n'indique que le Roi a besoin de consulter l'Assemblée nationale ou le Premier ministre avant d'accorder une amnistie, c'est simplement une pratique qui s'est développée en même temps que le pouvoir autocratique du Premier ministre », estime Julio Jeldres. Faux, répond Ung Ty : « C'est la tradition qui veut que le Roi demande au gouvernement avant de grâcier, car celui-ci peut l'éclairer sur telle ou telle affaire. »

**Adrien Le Gal**  
(avec Nhim Sophal)



PHOTO SAMRANG



## « Comment s'appelle-t-il, au fait ? »

**D**ans la rue, les commentaires sur le Roi sont généralement bienveillants mais imprécis. « Je ne sais pas grand-chose du Roi actuel... J'attends qu'il se marie pour me faire une idée ». Pour cette vendeuse de disques de 26 ans, Norodom Sihamoni inspire certes de la sympathie, mais les détails de sa biographie n'ont pas marqué les esprits : « Il a l'air très sincère, très aimable avec ses sujets... C'est quelqu'un de souple, je sais que c'est un ancien danseur de ballet. » « Je ne connais pas grand-chose au sujet de notre

Roi, ajoute une jeune célibataire de 30 ans, employée d'une ONG. Je l'ai juste vu à la télévision, sur TVK, pour des actions de charité. Il a l'air calme, se tient droit, est patient... Je pense que c'est quelqu'un qui respecte beaucoup la religion, il se rase toujours la tête. Mais par rapport à son père, il n'a pas encore pu vraiment montrer ses réalisations... Pour les personnes âgées, le roi, c'est toujours Sihanouk. » Même ignorance pour cette jeune élève de neuvième au lycée Preah Sisowath : « Comment s'appelle-t-il, au fait ? Ah oui, Norodom

Sihamoni. Je l'ai déjà vu à la télévision, il est beau, a l'air gentil et intelligent. Je préfère ce Roi-là, il est plus jeune et dynamique que l'ancien. » Dans le Mondolkiri, un habitant d'une cinquantaine d'années, membre d'une minorité ethnique, n'a pas de connaissance plus précise : « Je ne sais pas qui est le nouveau Roi. » Lorsqu'on lui glisse le nom de Norodom Sihamoni, il se souvient : « Oui, j'ai vu sa photo au mur dans les administrations provinciales ! Mais c'est tout ce que je sais de lui. »

**Ung Chansophea**

# The CAMBODIA DAILY

Thursday, October 29, 2009

## **Apsara Official Named To Heritage Committee**

Ros Borath, deputy director-general of the Apsara Authority, the government agency responsible for protecting and managing the Angkor Archeological Park, has been named Cambodia's representative to the World Heritage Committee, according to Council of Ministers spokesman Phay Siphon. Mr Borath is a trained archaeologist and has represented Cambodia to the executive committee of Unesco, which oversees the WHC, Mr Siphon said, adding that he did not know whether Mr Borath's new role would require him to leave the Apsara Authority. Cambodia was one of 12 new countries elected to the 21-member World Heritage Committee on Monday night. The Paris-based body meets once a year to decide which cultural and historic sites to add to the World Heritage List and allocate money from the World Heritage Fund for their preservation. Cambodia's campaign for the committee was marred by allegations that Thailand tried to sabotage its application, allegedly because Thailand is still upset by the listing of Preah Vihear temple as a world heritage site last year. Thailand also secured a seat on the committee Monday. The committee will hold its next meeting in Brazil in June 2010. Mr Borath could not be reached for comment yesterday.

*(Zsombor Peter)*



The CAMBODIA DAILY Thursday, November 12, 2009

## England's Historic Bath Saves Its World Heritage Status...Just

*Unesco shows increasing willingness to de-list sites that don't manage development*

BY JONATHAN GLANCEY  
THE GUARDIAN

LONDON - In April I wrote about the status of Bath as a world heritage site, which was then in doubt. Unesco, the guardian of these sites, had sent a team of inspectors to England's most celebrated Georgian city in November last year, prompted by controversial developments such as its neo-Georgian SouthGate shopping mall, and a scheme for 2,200 apartments (and not much else) on the edge of town. Was Bath about to be dropped from Unesco's list of 890 sites considered to be of outstanding international importance, among them Stonehenge, Venice and the Great Barrier Reef?

Until this year, Unesco had dropped just one of its sites, the Oryx sanctuary in Oman, which had failed to look after the rare antelopes and the stunning wilderness in its care. But in June, the German city of Dresden was taken off the list after the Saxon capital went ahead with a brutal motorway bridge across the River Elbe and its beautiful baroque city center. I thought Bath might follow suit.

While many residents are keen the mall, it seemed the city had been careless of its heritage, unable to find ways of building intelligently. Still, according to the Bath Chronicle newspaper, 30,000 people, more than a third of the population, turned up to last week's opening.

When Unesco's inspectors visited last year, they had been asked by concerned locals to look in particular at the proposed residential development, Western Riverside, which looked like a very big, modern tail about to wag a small Georgian dog. Published this summer, Unesco's report avoided discussion of SouthGate, as if it were best to let one gormless project go while pointing out what might be done to safeguard the city's heritage for the future. Construction has not yet begun on Western Riverside, but it has planning permission.

The report emphasized the need for "social facilities"—schools, clinics, pubs, cinemas, bus stations—to go with the flats, and recommended an architectural competition for the second and third phases of the

enormous development. It underlined the importance of Bath's setting, the landscape that surrounds it—under threat by proposed suburban extensions of the city. But the report was at best a tepid broadside, stopping well short of stripping the city of its heritage status.

Should anyone in Bath care what Unesco says? I think so: its world heritage committee was set up in 1972 by members of the UN, as a means of ensuring that the world's most significant sites were properly cared for by member governments (now numbering 186). Each year, its elected 21-member committee reviews its list of sites, advised by a staff based in Paris (led since 2000 by Venetian architect and planner Francesco Bandarin).

Caroline Kay, chief executive of the Bath Preservation trust, hopes to encourage Unesco to take another look at Bath, and is disappointed the report didn't address the shopping mall. "It's in the world heritage site, and the architecture and planning are hardly world class. From the center of SouthGate, you can't see out to views beyond—a feature of Bath over the centuries. It misses the spirit of Bath... Unesco should have rapped us over the knuckles."

Dresden proves that Unesco has teeth; the city's loss of status may well affect tourist revenue and inward investment. And this year, a Unesco report on Edinburgh (its Old and New Towns have heritage status), has led to the scrapping of two development projects.

Now its toughest fight, and one it is unlikely to win, is in St Petersburg, Russia, a city arguably even more beautiful than Bath. Here, Edinburgh-based architects RMJM have won permission to build the vertiginous Gazprom Tower, or Okhta Centre, as it has since been renamed. Planning permission has been granted by the governor, Valentina Matviyenko, an ally of Premier Vladimir Putin. The tower looks unstoppable.

So Unesco has its work cut out, but the point of Unesco is not to stop all development, nor to attempt to pickle our cities in heritage aspic, but to make us stop, think and try to build the best we can. In the end, short-term expediency and big-buck developments make few of us happy. As for Bath, Unesco will be watching to see if the city can strike the right balance between its heritage, its need for housing, and the modern lust for shopping.

## The Southeast Asia Weekly

November 22 - 28, 2009

### **UNESCO Promises to Help with Master Plan for Tourism Sector**

Upon learning that the Director of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) from France has an expert on eco-tourism and interest in this field in Cambodia, Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism, has proposed that the director of this organization help Cambodia by building a Master Plan and undertaking a study on the potential for eco-tourism development in the Tonle Sap River by connecting the visiting line from Angkor Wat temple. The proposal was made after a meeting in Phnom Penh on November 17 between Cambodia's Tourism Minister, Thong Khon, and Natatajan Iswaran, Director of UNESCO on eco-zone tourism. The Minister Thong Khon asked UNESCO to help in building schools for human resource training for eco-zone experts in Siem Reap province. Tith Chantha, General Director for the Ministry of Tourism, said that the UNESCO Director has seen the tourism potential of Cambodia improving, causing his interest in eco-tourism in the Tonle Sap River. "The area around the Tonle Sap River has a good natural environmental for eco-tourism if we study and make a Master Plan in order to conserve regions to become natural pleasant places and to establish communities along the Tonle Sap River to improve people's living standards through attracting national and international tourist to visit these areas," said Chantha. He added that after visitors begin coming, people in these areas will have new occupations in addition to their old jobs, and they would increase economic income in their communities. "We have seen that of the number of international visitors who came to see Angkor Wat temple, approximately 50 percent of these visitors preferred to continue their trips to see the Tonle Sap River," he said. "Now we have only one pleasant place in the community at Chong Khneas in the Tonle Sap River." UNESCO Director Natatajan promised to help in studying and building the Master Plan, which was proposed by the Ministry of Tourism, because it will help in conserving the environment of the Tonle Sap River.

## *The CAMBODIA DAILY*

Monday, December 21, 2009

### **Preah Vihear Listing Premature, Thai Minister Says**

Meeting Thursday with a Unesco official in Bangkok, Thai Foreign Minister Kasit Piromya said once again that the World Heritage Committee should have waited until negotiations with Cambodia over border demarcation were complete before inscribing the Preah Vihear temple as a World Heritage site. Mr Kasit met with Unesco's Assistant Director-General for Culture Francoise Riviere during a courtesy call and suggested also that Thailand and Cambodia could work together on developing areas bordering the temple once negotiations on the disputed border are finished, according to Thailand's Foreign Ministry website. The 11th-century temple was inscribed to the World Heritage list in July 2008 under the auspices of Cambodia. Spokesman for the Cambodian Foreign Ministry, Koy Kuong, rejected Mr Kasit's remarks. "His statement contradicts with reality, so it's unreasonable to accept what he said," he said. "He usually talks like that. We find it hard working with his team," he added. The Foreign Ministry website also reported Ms Riviere as stating that Preah Vihear's inscription aimed to help preserve the site's historic and cultural importance and that political issues should not be involved. (*Hul Reaksmey and Frank Radosevich*)

## CAMBODGE SOIR

24 au 30 décembre 2009

### Frédéric Mitterrand : Cher Cambodge



© Didier Ploow/MCC

**Frédéric Mitterrand.**

Le ministre français de la Culture et de la communication n'est pas insensible aux charmes du Royaume. Il l'a rappelé, par l'entremise d'un message présenté par l'ambassadeur de France aux participants du 18<sup>e</sup> Comité international de coordination pour la sauvegarde et le développement d'Angkor. « *Le royaume du Cambodge est un pays très cher à mon cœur. J'ai eu la chance de m'y rendre bien souvent* », débute le

texte publié sur le site de l'ambassade de France au Cambodge. Après avoir rappelé la forte implication de la France dans les opérations de conservation et de développement du site le plus célèbre du pays, le ministre annonce qu'un film, réalisé en partie « *sur le travail remarquable effectué par l'École française d'Extrême-Orient en faveur de la restauration du temple du Baphuon* », sera diffusé en janvier 2010 en France. Fin connaisseur du Royaume, il en profite pour annoncer que « *la France accueillera ainsi, en 2010, une tournée du ballet royal du Cambodge, une occasion unique, pour mes compatriotes, de découvrir l'une des expressions les plus remarquables de cette culture.* » Frédéric Mitterrand conclut son message en indiquant qu'il espérait se rendre « *très prochainement au Cambodge* ».

■-Communication and Information

# CAMBODIA'S PROGRESS ON PRESS FREEDOM RECOGNIZED

BY BUTH REAKSMEY KONGKEA

World Press Freedom Day has been celebrated this year under the banner: "The Media's Potential: Dialogue, Equity, Mutual Understanding, and Reconciliation". Co-organized by the Press Council of Cambodia and the United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the event has hosted at the National Institute of Education in Phnom Penh on May 4. Its overall purpose was to remind the world of the media's role in protecting fundamental human rights.

Khieu Kanharith, Minister of Information, said that over the next years, the media and freedom of press have displayed an impressive rate of development and progression compared to other countries in the region. He said that Cambodia's Press Laws of 1997 fully guaranteed rights for local media. He singled out journalists, as it is their duty to help the Royal Government of Cambodia promote and strengthen the rule of law and democracy in Cambodia.

"I affirm that Cambodia's press freedom has indeed developed and Cambodian journalists have used their rights responsibly and in full accordance with the Press Law and Cambodian Constitution," he said during his opening remarks.



Khieu Kanharith, Minister of Information (middle) attends the World Press Freedom Day celebration

“ I affirm that Cambodia's press freedom has indeed developed and Cambodian journalists have used their rights responsibly and in full accordance with the Press Law and Cambodian Constitution ”



May 10 - 16, 2009

The Minister said that currently the government needs the media organizations and journalist groups to work in the full spirit of cooperation for they all provide information and feedback from the people of the nation to the government.

To encourage the freedom of the press still further in Cambodia, Kanharith said his government welcomes all forms of constructive criticism. He also thanked members of the press for their accurate reporting of the Government's many activities as detailed in the second phase of the Rectangular Strategy. Again, he emphasized the media's role in facilitating smooth progress towards achieving the goal.

Om Chandara, Chairman of the Press Council of Cambodia, said that many Cambodian media organizations were established following the Peace Accord of 1991. Whilst there have been cases of journalists going to jail for libelous reporting and a number of high profile murders in the past years, freedom has been ensured and journalists have the right to communicate as they see fit within the scope of libel laws and express opinions freely within Cambodia, said Chandara.

The Chairman said current progress was a result of peace, security and political stability in Cambodia, as typified by Prime Minister Hun Sen's "Win-Win policy". He noted that the freedom of the press was guaranteed not just in the Cambodia's Press Law

clause of the Constitution, but also by Article 19 of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Teruo Jinnai, UNESCO Representative in Cambodia, said that freedom of expression was a fundamental human right, as stated in Article 19 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. He also pledged that his organization would continue to "...collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of all peoples, through all means of mass communication" and "promote the free flow of ideas by word and image".

For those reasons, UNESCO and the Press Council of Cambodia will continue to explore the enormous potential of the media to serve as a platform for dialogue, equity and as a vehicle for understanding and reconciliation, said Jinnai. He further underlined the ability of the media to foster the health of society when it respects and represents diversity of voices. He continued by saying the media has a demonstrated ability in fostering mutual understanding by communicating across divides, thus bringing competing narratives together into a shared story.

"We rejoice in the task of celebrating Equity in Expression, a right shared by every member of our society. We can all express our ideas and formulate opinions for ourselves without threat of persecution," Jinnai said.

Setting aside the matter of press freedom for a moment, the UNESCO representative turned to legal considerations. "To make freedom of expression a reality," he said. "A regulated legal environment must exist and be encouraged, and this will allow an open space where ideas can bloom." He added that the political will to support both the press sector and the rule of law must also exist, as well as laws to ensure open access to information and knowledge: and given the media professional's characteristic adherence to ethical and professional standards is taken into account, all the pillars in support of freedom of expression are in place.

"A diversity of voices, as with other types of diversity, has been a hallmark of our times and this trend has been hastened by the globalized interaction of humanity," Jinnai said. "We can confirm this by looking at the case for Cambodia, the country where all of us live. A brief glance around this Conference Hall reveals a congregation of people coming from different places, people from a range of backgrounds and each one of us blessed with the ability to formulate and live by a set of ideals. In this sense, the challenge is encouraging a media that responds to this diversity with a predisposition towards dialogue."

He emphasized that the Cambodian media is truly free in comparison to other countries in the region.

Still, he noted a climate of hesitation that seems to surround Cambodian journalists and media workers. He suggested that this was a result of their recognition of the existence of limited access to information.

"We must undertake the task of strengthening the security of the journalist on the World Press Freedom Day. We must continue to encourage the flow of information, and we must continue to uphold a media sector that will serve as a platform for dialogue; and we must continue to conduct this dialogue in the spirit of equity, understanding and reconciliation," he said. "This will all tend towards the welfare of the society."

He concluded by saying that key actors in the Cambodian media sector were participating in the conference, including representatives from the Cambodian government, foreign embassies, political parties, journalist associations, UN Agencies, NGOs, with an impressive turn-out from members of the civil society. This shows awareness of and attention given to press freedom, freedom of expression and access to information by the people of Cambodia.

According to the Ministry of Information report 2009, there are about 600 media organizations including 500 print media operations, 49 radio stations, 14 television stations and 93 cable television operators in Cambodia. (CW)



Wednesday 27 May 2009



Participants listen to a presentation about Japanese efforts to protect the Tuol Sleng torture centre's document archives. SOWANN PHILONG

# Japan agrees to help preserve Tuol Sleng prison archives

## Cambodia-Okinawa 'Peace Museum' Cooperation Project will also see the training of Cambodian conservation experts

**J**APAN has signed a three-year agreement to help preserve Tuol Sleng genocide museum, the former central prison camp for Khmer Rouge detainees.

The Cambodia-Okinawa "Peace Museum" Cooperation Project will begin working this month to preserve the remaining remnants of the prison, known as the S-21 security centre under the regime.

"This is very useful because Tuol Sleng has key documents [from the regime], but we do not have tools to preserve them," Cambodia's deputy minister of culture, Chuch Phoeurn, said Tuesday, adding that under the deal, museum staff would go to study in Japan every year to learn particular preservation methods.

Representatives from the Japan International Cooperation Agency, Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum, Cambodia's Ministry of Culture and Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum signed the preservation agreement.

"The agreement focuses on

**THIS IS VERY USEFUL BECAUSE TUOL SLENG HAS KEY DOCUMENTS [FROM THE REGIME]"**

the management of the museum, preservation of documents and education. Right now we are mostly concerned about the preservation of the building and of documents for the future," Chey Sopheara, director of Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, told the *Post*.

"With [the agreement], we hope that Tuol Sleng museum will be preserved and saved because our museum's building is old," he said.

### A long time coming

The Cambodian government last year asked the UN's cultural agency to register the prison and its archives.

The museum was also registered by UNESCO's Memory of the World for Asia and the Pacific region in February last year in a bid to gain international recognition.

"The agreement with Japan is a response to lots of waiting. The first step of agreement will focus on capacity building for Tuol Sleng museum staff and afterwards focus on preservation of documents and other necessary material," said Chuch

Phoeurn.

However Youk Chhang, director of the Documentation Centre of Cambodia (DC-Cam), questioned the need for outsider help.

"Cambodia should take responsibility to persevere its own history, which it has been doing for over three decades now. Tuol Sleng has been established, preserved and managed by Cambodia and it should continue to do so," Youk Chhang said.

The former prison, which was originally a high school, was run by Kaing Guek Eav or "Duch", who is on trial at the country's UN-backed war crimes court for overseeing the torture and extermination of some 15,000 prisoners detained at the camp.

REPORTING BY AFP AND NETH PHEAKTRA

## Phnom Penh Post

Tuesday 16 June 2009

# Ethnic minorities in R'kiri take crash course in radio

Members of the Prov community are trying their hand at radio, in a programme aimed at opening up media to minority groups

BY MOM KUNTHEAR

**F**IVE members of the Prov ethnic minority from Laos arrived Monday in Ratanak-kiri for a radio training course, taking advantage of a pioneering programme that seeks to give traditionally marginalised communities access to and control over local media.

"[The training course is good] because we get to exchange experiences with each other about making radio programmes for ethnic communities and discuss what happens in Prov communities," said Hout Vuthy, UNESCO's technical expert for Cambodia.

For two years, FM 89.5 has been broadcasting in local minority languages in Ratanak-kiri province, and its training courses have been slowly expanding. Since its inception, 22 ethnic minority Cambodians have been trained to broadcast in their local languages.

The Prov ethnic group lives in both Laos and Ratanak-kiri, and the visiting Prov groups are able to communicate in the same language with those in



An FM 89.5 radio employee talks to a local Kreung woman in Ratanak-kiri province, asking for feedback on their broadcasts. PHOTO SUPPLIED

Cambodia.

"We started the programme for ethnic minority groups in 2007, when our radio station started. There are many ethnic minorities in Ratanak-kiri, and they have never had a chance to get information or be educated through the media before, so I had the idea to produce programmes to educate them," said Uy Sothy, the office director of the station said Sunday.

"I produced many programmes related to HIV/AIDS, land disputes, domestic violence, and drugs and human trafficking by making dramas

in their own language. It's easy for them to listen because most of them can understand more in their own language [than Khmer]," he said, adding that his station airs three times a day.

### A familiar tongue

Hoeun Chanroth, 19, from the Prov community in Ratanak-kiri, said local language programming has exposed him to information he would never normally receive.

"I never knew about HIV/AIDS and how to protect myself from it, but after listening to the radio broadcast, I know a

little," he said.

Hout Vuthy said the funding for the radio programme comes from the Asian Development Bank and UNESCO as part of a poverty-reduction project. He said the expansion of community radio in local languages is critical to ensuring ethnic minorities are not exploited due to their lack of education and knowledge about the mainstream legal system.

"The radio programme ... is important because when they listen they know how to protect themselves and their children from cheating or trafficking. ... They know more about the situation in their province and society, even though they cannot read," he said.

There are 13 different ethnic minorities in Ratanak-kiri, including the Phnong, Prov, Kroeng and Jarai, totalling more than 130,000 people, according to Hout Vuthy.

Hoeun Chanroth said he wished the station could broadcast more often in Prov.

"It broadcasts for too short a time," he said, adding that he hopes to one day run his own native Prov language programme. ■



# The CAMBODIA DAILY

Saturday-Sunday, August 1-2, 2009

## **Briefing**

### **UN Registers Tuol Sleng Papers in World Archive**

The UN announced Friday that the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum's archive of photographs, prisoner records and forced confessions had been added to the Memory of the World Register of documents of exceptional value belonging to global heritage. The register, established in 1992 by Unesco, assists in the preservation of documents and promotes digitization and public access. Now the subject of a trial at the Khmer Rouge tribunal, Tuol Sleng was the site of a secret police detention center that meticulously recorded the detention, torture, interrogation and execution of as many as 14,000 people. Over 5,000 photographs and 5,000 written confessions, which were microfilmed in 1991 by Cornell University in New York, survive. The 34 other documents also added to the register on Friday included the diary of Anne Frank, the royal archives of Thailand and Madagascar, the woodblocks of the Nguyen Dynasty in Vietnam and the Magna Carta in Britain. Chea Sopheara, deputy director of the Culture Ministry's office for Tuol Sleng, said Friday that he was unaware of the news but hoped that Unesco would provide assistance in the preservation of the documents, which require a climate-controlled environment. "I think that in the near future if we don't have the preservation of the archives, there will be damage," he said. *(Douglas Gillison)*

## Phnom Penh Post

Friday, September 18, 2009

# Heritage body planned

Officials to create UNESCO-affiliated preservation committee

BY KIM YUTHANA

**O**FFICIALS from the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts said they plan to establish a UNESCO-affiliated committee to preserve documentary information about Cambodia, after the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum Archives were officially inscribed into UNESCO's Memory of the World register last week.

At a Memory of the World Programme workshop held in Phnom Penh on Thursday, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts Him Chhem said the government hopes to expand its preservation efforts through the new heritage body.

"Our next step is to think of arranging and establishing the National Committee for World Memory like what other countries have already done, in order to further investigate documentary heritage in Cambodia and ensure the protection and preservation of all archives," he said.

Launched in 1992, the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme promotes the safeguarding of historical archives and collections around the world.

National Committees for World Memory exist in 64 countries and are responsible



Visitors view exhibits at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum on Wednesday. HENG CHIVOAN

for implementing the strategies of the broader UNESCO programme.

Teruo Jinnai, president of UNESCO's Phnom Penh office, said it was likely the committee would be created soon.

The next international meeting of the Committees for World Memory will be held in Macau in July of 2010, he said.

The Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum Archives include

documents and photographs depicting the fate of the more than 15,000 prisoners held in the compound between 1975 and 1979, during the rule of the Khmer Rouge.

The archives consist of 4,186 confessions, 6,226 biographies of prisoners and 6,147 photographic prints and negatives of prisoners, demolished buildings, research activities, mass graves and remains of

victims.

These archives, experts say, constitute the most complete existing documentary picture of the prison system under Democratic Kampuchea, a fundamental part of the regime under which an estimated 2 million people (roughly a quarter of the population) lost their lives during a period of three years, eight months and 20 days. ■

## The CAMBODIA DAILY

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

### *Hear Today What Might Be Gone Tomorrow*

BY CHRISTI HANG  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

World Day for Audiovisual Heritage, an international Unesco event, will be marked today at the Bophana Audiovisual Center in Phnom Penh as a celebration of things Cambodian that might not be here tomorrow. Starting at 10 am, the center at Street 200, No 64 will combine the themes of ephemeral heritage and the sounds of Cambodia through documentary screenings, musical performances and lectures.

Jean-Michel Filippi, a doctor of linguistics, will deliver a presentation about the fragile state of the S'aorch language, the dialect of a physical dwarfs tribe living near Kep. He added the language is now spoken by less than 10 people.

"This one is in such a critical state, a case of emergency," Mr

Filippi said. "But this case is far from being uncommon, which is unfortunate."

The S'aorch people were scattered throughout the country, abused during the Khmer Rouge era and have never fully recovered, Mr Filippi said, adding the language will disappear completely in 10 to 20 years.

"It's a totally different language [from Khmer]," he said. "It's like comparing French and German."

According to Unesco, half of the 6,700 known languages in the world now will disappear before the end of the century.

The Bophana center, which was started in 2006, first focused on collecting filmed material, then it worked on accumulating photographs and has now embarked on archiving music, anything from 1960s Cambodian pop to traditional

music, said Gaetan Crespel, who is in charge of the center's archives.

"We want to work more with music now," Mr Crespel said, adding the center is asking the public to bring in their recordings to be copied and saved in its archive.

As part of today's event, the center will be showing music-related documentaries during the morning. The subjects include Cambodian rap music, the trailer for John Pirozzi's next documentary about Cambodian 1960s rock and roll, and popular singer Sapoun Midada. The event will also include musical performances by members of the Cham and Kroeung minorities.

Bophana Communications Officer Noy Chum said it was important to include ethnic minorities because they are part of Cambodian culture.

■-Others

សារព័ត៌មាន ជំនួញ  
**柬 華 日 報**  
Jian Hua Daily

Thursday 11 June 2009

The Demining Group of the Royal Cambodian Arm-forces leave for Sudan



▲ 王家军总司令波沙伦将军在欢送会上发表讲话

【本报10日消息】柬埔寨王家军405号排雷部队今日上午赴苏丹执行维和任务，接替上一批的王家军315号排雷部队，他们的这次任务主要是排雷。王家军总司令波沙伦将军代表王国政府洪森总理到金边国际机场送行。同时前往送行的还有高僧诺艾、联合国驻柬埔寨代理协调员特欧·京迈、各国驻柬使节等。

国家排雷和维和部队管理总局总局长赛速万尼将军在送行活动上表示，王家军405号排雷部队到苏丹执行维和任务，主要进行排雷工作。这支部队将接替上一批的315号排雷部队。315号排雷部队将于本月12日返国。

赛速万尼将军说，赴苏丹的这支部队由52名官兵组成，其中6人来自国防部直属部门、36人来自国家排雷和维和管理总局、2人来自陆军部队、4人来自王家军第二师、1人来自王家军1旅、1人来自王家军31旅，还有2位高级军官。这支部队赴苏丹时还带着一批设备、配件和药品等，这批设备和药品保证可以使用1年的时间。他说，这支部队在赴苏丹之前，已经进行了10个月的严格训练，并通过严格选拔。

波沙伦总司令说，王国政府派遣王家军赴苏丹参与联合国进行维和活动，是王家军的光荣，并具有历史意义，能在国际事务上证明柬埔寨是热爱和平的国家，展现王家军热爱和平和国际人道主义精神。最近，王国政府还派遣柬埔寨王家军官兵赴印度尼西亚参加“2009年多国军事演习”活动，学习取经，为2010年，柬埔寨主办军演积累经验。通过这些活动，让国际社会、合作伙伴、援助方加深对柬埔寨信任，这样相信将吸引投资商到柬投资，吸引游客到柬旅游观光，为国家经济稳定发展、参与政府实现脱贫目标起到积极推动作用。

波沙伦将军说，洪森总理于2006年4月12日在欢送柬埔寨排雷部队首次赴苏丹排雷时说，柬埔寨排雷部队要努力完成任务，尊重他国主权，与该国的人民保持平等友好的关系，不要利用联合国给予的权利偷税漏税。  
(子兴)

# 勤苦训练 严选拔 护和平

历经十个月的严格训练层层选拔 王家军精锐排雷部队前往苏丹执行维和任务

勤勤 勤苦练, 严选



▲高僧洒圣水为维和士兵祈福



▲波沙伦总司令向维和部队授国旗



▲联合国代表向柬埔寨部队授联合国旗



▲ 维和部队家属前往送行并合影



▲ 维和部队整装待发



Thursday, June 11, 2009

**កងកម្លាំងបោសសម្អាតមីនកម្ពុជាចេញពីទឹកដីស្រុកស្រែសស្សីដង**

The Demining Group of the Royal Cambodian Arm-forces leave for Sudan

**ភ្នំពេញ :** កងអនុសេនាតូចបោសសម្អាតមីននៃកងលេខ៤០៥ ចំនួន៥២នាក់ បានចេញពីទឹកដីស្រុកស្រែសស្សីដង ក្នុងបេសកកម្មចូលរួមក្នុងកងកម្លាំងរក្សាសន្តិភាពរបស់អង្គការសហប្រជាជាតិ ។ កម្លាំងនេះទៅក៏ដើម្បីធ្វើការផ្លាស់ប្តូរវេនជាមួយកងកម្លាំងបោសសម្អាតមីននិងថែរក្សាសន្តិភាពនៃកងអនុសេនាតូចលេខ៣១៥ ដែលត្រូវបានបញ្ចប់បេសកកម្មរបស់ខ្លួនរយៈពេលមួយឆ្នាំនៅប្រទេសស្វីដង ហើយដែលនឹងត្រូវធ្វើមាតុភូមិនិវត្តន៍មកកាន់កម្ពុជាវិញ ដែលតាមការគ្រោងទុក គឺក្នុងអំឡុងថ្ងៃទី១២មិថុនា២០០៩ខាងមុខនេះ ។

ថ្ងៃដំបូងនៅក្នុងពិធីជូនដំណើរដែលប្រារព្ធធ្វើឡើងនៅឯព្រលានយន្តហោះក្នុងមូលដ្ឋានកងទ័ពអាកាសកម្ពុជាលោកឧត្តមសេនីយ៍ឯក សែម សុវណ្ណនី អគ្គនាយកមជ្ឈមណ្ឌលជាតិគ្រប់គ្រងកងកម្លាំងរក្សាសន្តិភាពបោសសម្អាតមីននិងកាកសំណល់សង្គ្រាមបានមានប្រសាសន៍បញ្ជាក់ឱ្យដឹងថា កងអនុសេនាតូចបោសសម្អាតមីននៃកងលេខ៤០៥ ដែលត្រូវចេញពីទឹកដីស្រុកស្រែសស្សីដងនាពេលនេះ គឺជាកងកម្លាំងលើកទី៤ ដែលត្រូវបានធ្វើការសម្រិតសម្រាំងចេញពីបណ្តាប្រភេទទ័ពព្រមទាំងទទួលនូវការហ្វឹកហាត់រយៈពេល១០ខែ ក្រោមការធ្វើតេស្តប្រឡងវាស់ស្ទង់សមត្ថភាពនិងគុណភាពជំនាញវិជ្ជាជីវៈយ៉ាងត្រឹមត្រូវនិងមានតម្លាភាព។

លោកឧត្តមសេនីយ៍ឯក សែម សុវណ្ណនី បានបញ្ជាក់បន្ថែមផងដែរក្នុងឱកាសចេញពីទឹកដីស្រុកស្រែសស្សីដងនេះថា កងកម្លាំង





លោក Teruo Jinnai ប្រគល់ទង់  
អ.ស.ប ដល់កង៤០៥ (រូប:ថា ឈាង)

សម្តេចព្រះមហាសុរេមាធិបតី នន្ទ ង៉ែត ព្រះព្រំ  
ដល់កង៤០៥ មុនចេញដំណើរ (រូបថត:ថា ឈាង)

បោសសម្អាតមិនកម្ពុជាក៏បាននាំយកជា  
មួយនូវសម្ភារៈយោធាបរិក្ខារ គ្រឿង  
បន្លាស់ និងឱសថ សម្រាប់បំពេញបន្ថែម  
លើសម្ភារៈដែលមានស្រាប់នៅស្វីដង  
ដែលអាចធានាបានក្នុងរយៈកាលមួយ  
ឆ្នាំ ។

ដោយចាត់ទុកថា បេសកកម្ម  
កងយោធពលខេមរភូមិន្ទក្នុងនាមកង  
កម្លាំងរក្សាសន្តិភាពរបស់អង្គការសហ  
ប្រជាជាតិ ជាជោគជ័យថ្មីនៃនយោបាយ  
សមាហរណកម្មរបស់ រាជរដ្ឋាភិបាល  
កម្ពុជាជាមួយសហគមន៍អន្តរជាតិនោះ  
លោកនាយឧត្តមសេនីយ៍ប៉ុលសារឿន  
អគ្គមេបញ្ជាការនៃ អ.ស.ប បានមាន  
ប្រសាសន៍អះអាងថា រាជរដ្ឋាភិបាល  
បានឯកភាពជាគោលការណ៍អនុញ្ញាត  
ឱ្យកងកម្លាំងកម្ពុជាទៅចូលរួមធ្វើ  
លំហាត់ហ្វឹកហ្វឺនយោធាពហុសាសន៍  
នៅម៉ុងហ្គោលី និងបង់ក្លាដេស ហើយ  
ថ្មីៗនេះកម្ពុជាក៏បានបញ្ជូនកម្លាំងទៅចូល  
រួមលំហាត់ហ្វឹកហ្វឺននៅប្រទេសឥណ្ឌូ  
នេស៊ី ដែលជាឱកាសល្អសម្រាប់ដក  
ស្រង់បទពិសោធន៍សម្រាប់ការរៀបចំ

លំហាត់បែបនេះនៅកម្ពុជាឆ្នាំ២០១០  
ខាងមុខនេះ ។

គួររំលឹកផងដែរថា ចាប់ពីក្នុង  
អំឡុងឆ្នាំ២០០៦ កម្ពុជាបានចាត់បញ្ជូន  
កងកម្លាំងបោសសម្អាតមិន និងរក្សា  
សន្តិភាពក្នុងក្របខ័ណ្ឌអង្គការសហ  
ប្រជាជាតិចំនួន៣កងអនុសេនាធំ ជាបន្ត  
បន្ទាប់ទៅកាន់ប្រទេសស្វីដង រួមមាន  
គ១៣៥, គ២២៥ និងគ៣១៥ ដែល  
ទើបបានបញ្ចប់បេសកកម្មរបស់ខ្លួនរយៈ  
ពេលមួយឆ្នាំ ហើយនឹងត្រូវវិលមកកាន់  
កម្ពុជាវិញ នាថ្ងៃទី១២មិថុនាឆ្នាំ២០០៩  
ខាងមុខនេះ ។

ដោយចាត់ទុកកម្ពុជាថា ជាមិត្តដ៏  
ល្អ លោក Teruo Jinnai អ្នកសម្រប  
សម្រួលអង្គការសហប្រជាជាតិស្តីទី  
ប្រចាំនៅព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា បាន  
សម្តែងនូវមោទនភាពក្នុងឱកាសដែល  
បានអញ្ជើញចូលរួមធ្វើជាសាក្សីក្នុងការ  
បញ្ជូនកងកម្លាំងបោសសម្អាតមិនទៅ  
ប្រទេសស្វីដងនាពេលនេះ ព្រមទាំង  
បានសម្តែងនូវការដឹងគុណយ៉ាងជ្រាល  
ជ្រៅចំពោះ រាជរដ្ឋាភិបាលកម្ពុជា ដែល

ប្រកបទៅដោយគុតិបណ្ឌិតនិងមាន  
ចក្ខុវិស័យដ៏ជ្រាលជ្រៅ ដើម្បីជំរុញឱ្យ  
មានសន្តិភាពលើសកលលោក ។

មន្ត្រីអង្គការសហប្រជាជាតិ ក៏  
បានរំលឹកឡើងផងដែរពីគំរូវិវឌ្ឍនភាពក្នុង  
ការបោសសម្អាតមិនក្នុងទៅនៅប្រទេស  
ស្វីដង ដែលកងទ័ពកម្ពុជាទទួលបាននូវ  
ការវាយតម្លៃខ្ពស់ពីកម្រិតសមត្ថភាព  
និងគំរូលះបង់ខ្ពស់ក្នុងសកម្មភាពបោស  
សម្អាតមិនជាមួយមនុស្សធម៌ដល់ប្រទេស  
ទាំងឡាយដែលខ្លងកាត់សង្គ្រាម ។

មុនពេលចេញដំណើរកង បោស  
សម្អាតមិនទទួលបាននូវការព្រះព្រំទឹក  
មន្ត្រីសំណាក់សម្តេចព្រះមហាសុរេមា  
ធិបតី នន្ទ ង៉ែត សម្តេចព្រះសង្ឃនាយក  
គណៈមហានិកាយ ព្រមទាំងទទួលទង់  
ជាតិកម្ពុជា និងទង់អង្គការសហប្រជា  
ជាតិពីនាយឧត្តមសេនីយ៍អគ្គមេបញ្ជា  
ការកងយោធពលខេមរភូមិន្ទ ប៉ុល  
សារឿន និងលោក Teruo Jinnai អ្នក  
សម្របសម្រួលអង្គការសហប្រជាជាតិ  
ស្តីទីប្រចាំនៅកម្ពុជា ។

យោង

សារព័ត៌មាន ជាន់ហ្វា  
**東華日報**  
Jian Hua Daily

Saturday, June 13, 2009

**The Demining Group of the Royal Cambodian Arm-forces Return from Sudan**



◀王家军315号排雷部人共139人，在苏丹圆满完成维和任务，为柬埔寨在国际舞台上赢得了荣誉。



# 维和勇士 载誉而归

【本报记者耀辉12日报道】柬埔寨王家军315号扫雷部队共139人完成在苏丹的维和任务于今天上午抵达国门，副总理兼国防部长狄班上将代表洪森总理迎接维和部队返国。

狄班副总理高度赞扬315部队完成联合国维和光荣任务，受到联合国方面的表扬。他说，王国政府还将派遣部队前往中非和乍得参加维和行动，同时，柬埔寨还为2010年与联合国联合举办军事演习作准备，到时将有来自20个国家2000多名官兵和代表参加。

狄班说，作为联合国的成员国，柬埔寨王国正在积极努力参与维护世界和地区和平，积极参加人道主义援助活

动，并且在苏丹的扫雷工作上取得巨大的成绩。

联合国驻柬代表特兰杰南高度赞扬柬埔寨扫雷部队完成光荣使命，为柬埔寨在国际舞台上赢得了荣誉。

联合国维和行动协调委员会主席、总理府国务秘书巴速坤表示，柬方已派44名官兵参加蒙古的联合军事演习，派48名官兵参加在孟加拉的联合军事演习，最近还派出60名官兵参加在印尼的联合军事演习等活动。柬埔寨王家军向友好国家学习军事，提高国防水平。

他还说，至今，柬埔寨已派出三批扫雷部队共445名官兵参加维和任务，柬埔寨部队在外面执行任务时遵纪守法，受到联合国的表扬。



Saturday, June 13, 2009

The Demining Group of the Royal Cambodian Arm-forces Return from Sudan

# កងអនុសេនាជំរោងសម្អាតមីនលេខ៣១៥បញ្ចប់យេសកកម្ម រក្សាសន្តិភាពរបស់អ.ស.បនៅស្ទឹងដំរីលមកពីសម្ព័ន្ធកម្មវិញ

ក្នុងគំរូ៖ កងកម្លាំងជោសសម្អាតមីនចំនួន១៣៥នាក់ ក្នុងកងអនុសេនាជំរោងសម្អាតមីនលេខ៣១៥ បានធ្វើមាតុភូមិវិញនិវត្តន៍មកកាន់មាតុភូមិវិញកាលពីព្រឹកថ្ងៃទី១២ មិថុនាឆ្នាំ២០០៩ បន្ទាប់ពីបានបញ្ចប់បេសកកម្មរក្សាសន្តិភាពរបស់អ.ស.ប ដែលមានរយៈពេលមួយឆ្នាំ ដោយជោគជ័យនៅប្រទេសស្ទឹងដំរីកន្លងមក ។

គួរកត់សម្គាល់ថា ការវិលត្រឡប់មកដល់រាជធានីភ្នំពេញវិញរបស់កងអនុសេនាជំរោងសម្អាតមីនលេខ៣១៥ តាមរយៈយន្តហោះអន្តរជាតិប៉ាគីស្ថានដៀវឡាញ (PIA) ដែលផ្តល់ដោយអ.ស.បនេះ គឺបន្ទាប់ពីកម្លាំងផ្ទាល់ប្តូរវេនចំនួន៥២នាក់ ក្នុងកងអនុសេនាកូចរបស់សម្អាតមីនលេខ៤០៥ បានទៅដល់ប្រទេសស្ទឹងដំរីកាលពីយប់មិថុនាមិញ (ថ្ងៃទី១១មិថុនា)នេះ ដោយបានចេញពីរណីវត្តន៍មក កាលពីព្រឹកថ្ងៃទី១០មិថុនា២០០៩។

ថ្ងៃនៅឯពីរទទួលបានដំណាក់កិច្ចកងអនុសេនាជំរោង(គ)ដោះមីនលេខ៣១៥ នៅឯព្រលានយន្តហោះយោធាក្នុងមូលដ្ឋានកងទ័ពជើងអាកាសកម្ពុជាទឹកនៃឯដែលយន្តហោះ PIA ចុះចតក្រោមក្រសែភ្នែកទន្ទឹមមើលផ្លូវយ៉ាងអន្ទះសាតិសំណាក់ក្រុមគ្រួសារ និងព្យាបាលមិត្តរបស់កងជោសសម្អាតមីនដែលទើបបញ្ចប់បេសកកម្មអន្តរជាតិនៅប្រទេសស្ទឹងដំរីនាពេលថ្មីៗនេះ លោកប្រាក់ សុខុន រដ្ឋមន្ត្រីប្រតិភូអមនាយករដ្ឋមន្ត្រី និងជាប្រធានគណៈកម្មាធិការជាតិសម្របសម្រួលសិទ្ធិការបញ្ជូនកងកម្លាំងចូលរួមបេសកកម្មរក្សាសន្តិភាពរបស់អ.ស.ប បានវាយតម្លៃខ្ពស់និងកោតសរសើរចំពោះរាល់លទ្ធផលស្នាដៃ ដែលគណៈ១៥សម្រេចបានលើអាកអន្តរជាតិ ព្រមទាំងបាននិវត្តន៍មកកាន់មាតុភូមិវិញប្រកបដោយសុវត្ថិភាពនិងនាំមកនូវជោគជ័យធំធេងជូនដល់ជាតិមាតុភូមិសារពេលបច្ចុប្បន្ននេះ ។

លោកប្រាក់ សុខុន បានសង្កត់ធ្ងន់ថា ជោគជ័យនៃបេសកកម្មដែលកងកម្លាំងកម្ពុជាសម្រេចបាននេះ ក៏

អាស្រ័យដោយសារបន្ទាត់នយោបាយ ដីត្រឹមត្រូវ និងការយកចិត្តទុកដាក់ ដោយផ្ទាល់ និងជាប់ជាប្រចាំពីសំណាក់ សម្តេចតេជោ ហ៊ុន សែន នាយករដ្ឋមន្ត្រី នៃព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា ព្រមទាំង កិច្ចពិភាក្សាប្រុងប្រយ័ត្នពីសំណាក់ថ្នាក់ដឹកនាំជាន់ខ្ពស់ក្រសួងការពារជាតិ អគ្គមេបញ្ជាការ រួមនឹងបណ្តាសមាជិកនៃគណៈកម្មាធិការជាតិ ។

ពាក់ព័ន្ធដល់បេសកកម្ម រក្សាសន្តិភាពរបស់អ.ស.ប លោក ប្រាក់សុខុន បានប្រសាសន៍ឱ្យដឹងថា ចាប់ពីអំឡុងឆ្នាំ០០៦មកទល់ពេលបច្ចុប្បន្ននេះ កម្ពុជាបានបញ្ជូនកងកម្លាំងចោលសម្អាតមីនមនុស្សធម៌ចំនួន៤កងរួមមាន គ ១៣៥ គ២២៥ គ៣១៥ និងកង៤០៥ ដែលមានកម្លាំងសរុបចំនួន៤៥៥៥នាក់។ ជាមួយគ្នានេះដែរ ក៏បានបញ្ជូននាយទាហានគាំទ្រចំនួន១១នាក់ សម្រាប់ជួយជំនួយផ្នែកភាសាអង់គ្លេស ដល់កងចោលសម្អាតមីនទាំង៤កងទាំងអស់នេះ។

ប្រធានគណៈកម្មាធិការជាតិក៏បានបញ្ជាក់ឱ្យដឹងផងដែរ បន្ទាប់ពីបានទទួលគោលការណ៍អនុញ្ញាតពីសម្តេចតេជោ ហ៊ុន សែន គណៈកម្មាធិការជាតិបានរៀបចំកម្លាំងជាក់ក្នុងប្រព័ន្ធក្រៀមបម្រុងរបស់អ.ស.ប (UNSA) ចំនួន៣កង រួមមាន២កងអនុសេនាធំ ចោលសម្អាតមីន និង១កងអនុសេនាធំរក្សាសណ្តាប់ធ្នាប់ ។

ទន្ទឹមនេះដែរ កម្លាំងរក្សាសណ្តាប់ធ្នាប់ចំនួន៤០នាក់ បាននិងកំពុងក្រៀមលក្ខណៈជាស្រេចសំដៅចូលរួមចំណែកក្នុងកងកម្លាំងរក្សាសន្តិភាពនៅប្រទេសអាត និងសាធារណរដ្ឋអាហ្វ្រិកកណ្តាល។

គួររំលឹកថា ដើម្បីរៀនសូត្រសំដៅលើកម្ពស់សមត្ថភាពរបស់កងខេមរភូមិន្ទលើការងាររក្សាសន្តិភាព កម្ពុជាបានធ្វើការបញ្ជូនកងទ័ពជាបន្តបន្ទាប់ទៅចូលរួមលំហាត់ហ្វឹកហ្វឺនរួមជាមួយបណ្តាកងទ័ពក្នុងតំបន់រួមមានលំហាត់ហ្វឹកហ្វឺន KHAAN QUEST 07 នៅប្រទេសម៉ុងហ្គោលីចំនួន៤៤នាក់ លំហាត់ហ្វឹកហ្វឺន SHANTI DOOT 08 នៅប្រទេសបង់ក្លាដេសចំនួន៤៨នាក់ និងថ្មីៗនេះបានបញ្ជូនកម្លាំង៦០នាក់ទៅចូលរួមលំហាត់ហ្វឹកហ្វឺន GARUDA SHIELD 09 នៅប្រទេសឥណ្ឌូនេស៊ី ។

**អ្នកសម្របសម្រួលស្តីពី របស់**  
អ.ស.ប ប្រចាំទ្វីបកម្ពុជាឈ្មោះ Teruo Jinnai បានមានប្រសាសន៍ក្នុងឱកាសដែលត្រូវបាន រាជរដ្ឋាភិបាលកម្ពុជាអញ្ជើញឱ្យចូលរួមធ្វើជាសាក្សីក្នុងដំណើរការដល់របស់ គ ៣១៥នេះដែរ បានអះអាងថា អ.ស.ប និងភ្នាក់ងារមនុស្សធម៌ព្រមទាំងប្រជាជនស្ទឹងដង បានស្នើសុំសរសើរយ៉ាងខ្លាំងចំពោះកិច្ចព្រមព្រៀងប្រុងប្រយ័ត្នរាល់ការលំបាកក្នុងការសណ្តាប់ធ្នាប់ ។

ដោះមិនដែលធ្វើឡើងដោយកងទ័ពកម្ពុជា។

មន្ត្រីជាន់ខ្ពស់ អ.ស.ប បានសង្កត់ធ្ងន់ថា កម្ពុជាបានបង្ហាញឱ្យឃើញថាខ្លួនជាប្រទេសនាំមុខមួយក្នុងវិស័យដោះមីនក្នុងបរិបទនៃការផ្តល់ជំនួយផ្នែកមនុស្សធម៌ទៅតាមបណ្តាប្រទេសក្រោយសង្គ្រាម ដោយកម្ពុជាបានឆ្លងកាត់ដំណាក់កាលមួយគួរឱ្យស្ងប់ស្ងែងពោលគឺគ្មានពីប្រទេសមួយដែលរងគ្រោះដោយសារមីនទៅជាប្រទេសមួយដែលនាំមុខគេលើវិស័យការងារដោះមីន ។

ជាមួយនឹងប្រសាសន៍លើកឡើងពីគំរូលះបង់ខ្ពស់របស់បងប្អូននាយទាហាន នាយទាហានរងក្នុងការបោសសម្អាតមីនលេខ៣១៥ ដែលបានឃ្លាតឆ្ងាយពីគ្រួសារអស់រយៈពេលជាងមួយឆ្នាំក្នុងបេសកកម្មរក្សាសន្តិភាពរបស់អ.ស.ប នៅប្រទេសស្វីដង់ លោកឧបនាយករដ្ឋមន្ត្រី រដ្ឋមន្ត្រីការពារជាតិ នាយឧត្តមសេនីយ៍ឡៅ បាញ់ តំណាងដ៏

ខ្ពង់ខ្ពស់សម្តេចអគ្គមហាសេនាបតីតេជោហ៊ុន សែននាយករដ្ឋមន្ត្រីនៃគ្រឹះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជាបានមានប្រសាសន៍គូសបញ្ជាក់ថា ឆ្លងតាមរយៈសកម្មភាពដែលកងកម្លាំងបោសសម្អាតមីនសម្រេចបានជាបន្តបន្ទាប់នៅប្រទេសស្វីដង់កិច្ចានុភាពរបស់កងយោធពលខេមរភូមិន្ទកាន់តែត្រូវបានបណ្តាប្រទេសក្នុងតំបន់និងលើសកលលោកទទួលស្គាល់និងចាត់ទុកកម្ពុជាជាប្រទេសមួយដែលបានចូលរួមវិភាគទានយ៉ាងវិសេសវិសាលក្នុងបេសកកម្មស្វែងរកសន្តិភាពជូនដល់ប្រជាជនលើសកលលោក ។

ជាកិច្ចទទួលស្គាល់នូវគុណបំណាច់និងស្មារតីនិងគំរូក្នុងការលះបង់ក្នុងបេសកកម្មនៅស្វីដង់នេះដែរនាយទាហាន នាយទាហានរងគ្រប់ៗរូបត្រូវ បានទទួលការបំពាក់គ្រឿងឥស្សរិយយសពីសំណាក់ឧបនាយករដ្ឋមន្ត្រីឡៅបាញ់ក្នុងឱកាសមារូមិនិវត្តន៍នាឱកាសនោះដែរ។ **យោធិន**



ស្វាគមន៍យ៉ាងកក់ក្តៅដំណើរវិលមកកម្ពុជាវិញ របស់កងអនុសេនាបតីបោសសម្អាតមីនលេខ៣១៥ ពីប្រទេសស្វីដង់ (រូបថត: ជាលាយ៉ាង)

# The **Southeast Asia** Weekly

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## **Cambodia to Send 52 Soldiers to Sudan for UN Peacekeeping**

Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) has sent 52 soldiers to clear mines in Sudan for the United Nations peacekeeping mission. They will replace the previous mission as it reaches the end of its tour of duty. General Pol Saroeun, Commander-In-Chief of the RCAF, said this group is the fourth batch of troops that Cambodia has sent to help support the UN in Sudan. They will return to Cambodia on June 12. "Beside clearing mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) in Darfur, our soldiers have to help in other matters such as supplying purified clean water, digging wells and helping with housing for local people there," Pol Saroeun said in a farewell ceremony at Pochentong Airbase in Phnom Penh, June 10. "All soldiers must be on their best behavior as they represent Cambodia in this operation." General Pol Saroeun said that Cambodia has experience with landmines. Last year, about 265 people were killed or wounded by UXO and mines. Millions of mines still lay hidden and pose a significant threat to the lives of people living in the area. "We all thank the Royal Government of Cambodia for its strong commitment to peace and stability in the world," said Teruo Jinnai, Acting President for UN agencies and representative of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to Cambodia.

## Phnom Penh Post

Monday 15 June 2009

# Kingdom's third demining mission to Sudan a success, officials say

Deminers are lauded for exhibiting courage in the face of adverse conditions as Cambodia continues to make its mark in peacekeeping

BY SAM RITH

A TEAM of Cambodian deminers working as part of a UN peacekeeping force in Sudan has returned to the kingdom, with officials hailing the mission a success.

The yearlong assignment was the country's third since 2006. A fourth 52-man team was deployed last week.

"During our operation in Sudan, we had no injuries and succeeded in doing our work," Mey Sophea, the team's commanding officer, said during a welcoming ceremony.

He said that the 139-man team had successfully removed 800 anti-personnel mines and 17,000 pieces of unexploded ordnance from more than 13 million square metres of land.

Minister of Defence Tea Banh said the deminers had pushed through difficult conditions to receive more awards from the UN for their effort.

"Through heightened consciousness and thorough discipline ... [they] succeeded the mission so that the UN still believes Cambodia is the best among the other [demining] countries," he said.

More than 50 countries are involved in the peacekeeping mission, but only five – Cambodia, Bangladesh, Egypt, Kenya and Zambia – offer their ser-



Cambodian deminers return to the country Friday after a year demining in Sudan. TRACEY SHELTON

vices through demining.

### Valuable experience

Khun Sophal, a 40-year-old deminer, said he was required to work long hours in hostile conditions.

But despite the hard work, he gained more experience in demining during the mission than ever before.

"Every day we worked from 7am to 2pm," he said. "But we have succeeded in our work, 100 percent."

Teruo Jinnai, acting president for UN agencies and representative of UNESCO, said Cambodia had proved itself as a leading country in demining and humanitarian services in post-conflict countries.

"Significantly, Cambodia has made a remarkable transition from being one of the countries most affected by mines to becoming one with the global leaders in mine clearance," he said.

"I would like to ... thank you all for the mission you just accomplished. We applaud your courage and acknowledged the success you have achieved in the challenging circumstances," he said.

Since their first deployment in 2006, Cambodian deminers have cleared more than 57 million square-meters of land in Sudan, according to a report by the Institute for Peacekeeping Forces, Mine and ERW Clearance. ■

# NANG RAVUTH SPENDS HIS LIVE TO PROMOTE AIKIDO IN CAMBODIA

BY BUTH REAKSMEY KONGKEA

**N**ang Ravuth, 52, was the first Cambodian person to introduce the Japanese Aikido to Cambodia in 2002. Ravuth began his training in Aikido with a veteran Japanese coach in Cambodia in 2002 and he later became the first Aikido coach in Cambodia in 2002.

Currently, Ravuth holds a 2-black belt dans of Aikido from Japan and he is now the President of the Cambodian Aikido Club in Cambodia. Ravuth has received four-black belt dans from Japan including one black belt dan of wrestling and one black belt of Sambo in Cambodia. From 1983 to 1990, he was the Cambodian National Competitor of Wrestling, Judo and Sambo, and he has attended many international competitions of wrestling, Judo and Sambo abroad.

Nang Ravuth was a former painting artist for the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts from 1979 to 1990, and a graphic designer for UNESCO in Cambodia from 1992 to 2003.

“I spent almost my whole life training and playing the sport in Cambodia. I am now spending from eight to nine hours training nearly 50 kids and adults every weekend in Phnom Penh and Kandal province,” he told *The Southeast Asia Weekly*. “I decided to train in the sport in order to improve my health as well as to promote the sport playing and development in Cambodia.”

“I can say that Aikido was born by the cooperation between Japan International Cooperation Assistance (JICA)



Photo: Khem Sovannara

**Nang Ravuth (left) pictured with his son after training at his club in Phnom Penh**

and the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS),” he said. “I am the first person who brought Aikido and the first joining Aikido in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge’s terror regime but in the past I also heard that Aikido had been trained during the year 1970s.”

Relating to the history of Aikido, Ravuth described that Aikido is a modern martial art which Ueshiba Morihei (183-169) founded through mastering secrets of traditional martial techniques in Japan and deep spiritual training. He said that Aikido doesn’t rank superiority with other people so it has no match. It aims at the training of mind and body by repeating

exercises according to the level of each trainee, so many can practice together regardless of age or sex. Repeated practice is not only good for health but also develops an aggressive mind for everything in our daily life.

Ravuth went on to say that now, Aikido is leveled in the world as a new human culture in the 21st Century. He pointed out that since the establishment of the Cambodian Aikido Club in 2002, over 400 Cambodian people have been trained in Aikido and another 150 Cambodians are training regularly every day in Cambodia.

He continued to say that since 2002, the Cambodian Aikido Club has had

many trainees demonstrate and attend Aikido seminars in Japan as well as other countries in the region surrounding Cambodia.

Regarding his coaching, Ravuth states that nowadays he has been coaching in about seven different places, some of them international schools in Phnom Penh. He said that with financial support from JICA, he has established the ARK Toul Krasaing Aikido Club in Kandal province. There are now a total of 25 kids training and the training is free of charge.

“With good cooperation from JICA and MoEYS, I strongly hope that Aikido will expand countrywide and we plan to establish more Aikido clubs in Siem Reap, Battambang and Sihanouk provinces next year,” he said. “We also plan to expand our sport activities to state school, private schools, and NGOs in Cambodia.”

To promote Aikido in Cambodia, Ravuth said that he will continue to train and coach Aikido for the people in Cambodia until he dies.

According to Nang Ravuth, there are now a total of eight Aikido clubs in Cambodia. The eight Aikido clubs include the Olympic Stadium Aikido Club, the Royal University of Law and Economics’ Aikido Club, Pour un Sourire d’ Enfant’s Aikido Club, Zamam International School’s Aikido Club, ARK Toul Krasaing Aikido Club, Siem Reap Aikido Club, and International School of Phnom Penh’s Aikido Club. (SEAW)

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