

Cambodia independence day

Peace, stability just rewards of struggle for democracy

Hor Monirath
AMBASSADOR OF CAMBODIA

This year is a very exciting year as the Kingdom of Cambodia celebrates the 60th anniversary of independence from French colonial rule Nov. 9, 1953. Simultaneously, the peoples of Cambodia and Japan mark the 60th anniversary of their diplomatic relations, which were officially established in January 1953.

On this auspicious occasion, I have the great honor and pleasure to convey the warmest greetings of His Majesty King Samdech Preah Boromneat Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia, Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen and the people of Cambodia to Their Imperial Majesties

Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, members of the Imperial family, His Excellency Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the great people of Japan.

I wish also to extend my warm greetings to readers of The Japan Times and my sincere appreciation to the management of this renowned newspaper for publishing this special Cambodia Independence Day supplement.

Speaking about Cambodia's independence, no one can ignore the historical role of the late King Father Norodom Sihanouk. In this sense, I wish to recall that a few weeks ago, the entire nation held the first Memorial Day for the late heroic King Father, who passed away at the age of 90 on Oct. 15. His Majesty was well-known for leading Cambodian compatriots to gain peaceful independence from French colonial rule. He was not only a heroic king for the Cambodian people but also a great states-

man internationally recognized in the 20th century.

Thanks to his entire life dedicated to the cause of independence, national reconciliation and development, and historically perpetual contribution to Cambodia's peace, stability and prosperity, His Majesty had been regarded as a symbol of the nation, titled "Father of Independence, Sovereignty, Unity and National Reconciliation." In this respect, even though His Majesty the late King Father left his people forever, his love for his people and his achievements will never vanish, and will live on in the heart of every Cambodian, inside and outside the kingdom.

Today, Cambodia's image has been steadily transforming from a post-conflict nation to an emerging country with a miracle in terms of economic progress after long decades of civil war and internal strife. Since 1998, full peace and stability have been

in place thanks to the "Win-Win Policy" of Samdech Techo Prime Minister Hun Sen that put an end to the political and military organization of the Khmer Rouge. Based on the infant stages of peace, we have made our greatest efforts to catch up with the region and to recover time lost to civil wars.

According to the World Bank, Cambodia ranks 10th among 174 countries for best growth during the last decade. Over the past 20 years, the country's economic growth has resulted in a huge expansion of its GDP from approximately \$3.0 billion in 1994 to an estimated \$15.6 billion in 2013. This expansion has made per capita GDP increase to above \$1,000 this year and will enable Cambodia to become a lower-middle-income country in the very near future. Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen has announced Cambodia's vision of achieving the status of

high-middle-income country by 2030 and moving toward developed country status by 2050.

In line with this policy, the poverty rate has significantly declined from 50 percent in 1993 to around 20 percent in 2012, and is expected to drop to 19 percent in 2013, ranking Cambodia among the best poverty reductions in the world.

It is imperative to note that growth in 2012 was 7.3 percent, with agriculture's growth at 2.4 percent, while growth in industry reached 11.8 percent, supported by the good performance of the garment, service and tourism sectors, with growth rates of 14.5 percent, 6.8 percent and 7 percent, respectively. According to major international financial institutions, Cambodia's GDP growth is projected at 7.2 percent in 2013 and 7.5 percent in 2014. In addition, the tourism sector, which is a main driver of the economy, has been rapidly

growing as foreign tourist arrivals reached more than 3.6 million last year. Based on the current trend of tourist arrivals, it is projected that Cambodia will receive 4.2 million foreign tourists this year and could reach 7.5 million by 2020.

The above-mentioned efforts yield fruit as Cambodia rapidly turns itself into an active member of the international community.

Last year, as the newest member of ASEAN, Cambodia took pride in successfully chairing this regional group at the important turning point when the association is close to being integrated as the ASEAN Community in 2015. Another important note is this year's national election, which was held July 28 in a smooth, peaceful, transparent and fair manner widely applauded by the international community. This election demonstrated the consolidation of democracy and rule of law that is taking root in Cambodia. In addition, the election result obviously proved that the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) under the leadership of Samdech Techo Hun Sen won a comfortable majority enabling the party to form the legitimate government of the fifth mandate of the National Assembly within the framework of Cambodia's Constitution and laws.

This success definitely further cements the kingdom's security and stability, and has secured an extension of the political platform of Samdech Techo Hun Sen's government for the next five years, which will see a better standard of living for the Cambodian people.

The aforementioned remarkable successes would have been impossible without Japan's extensive involvement in the peace-building process in Cambodia, and its constant support along with all donor countries in the country's rehabilitation and development efforts. Especially, Japan remains Cambodia's largest



Set in stone: The Independence Monument in Phnom Penh commemorates Cambodia's independence from France on Nov. 9, 1953. EMBASSY OF CAMBODIA



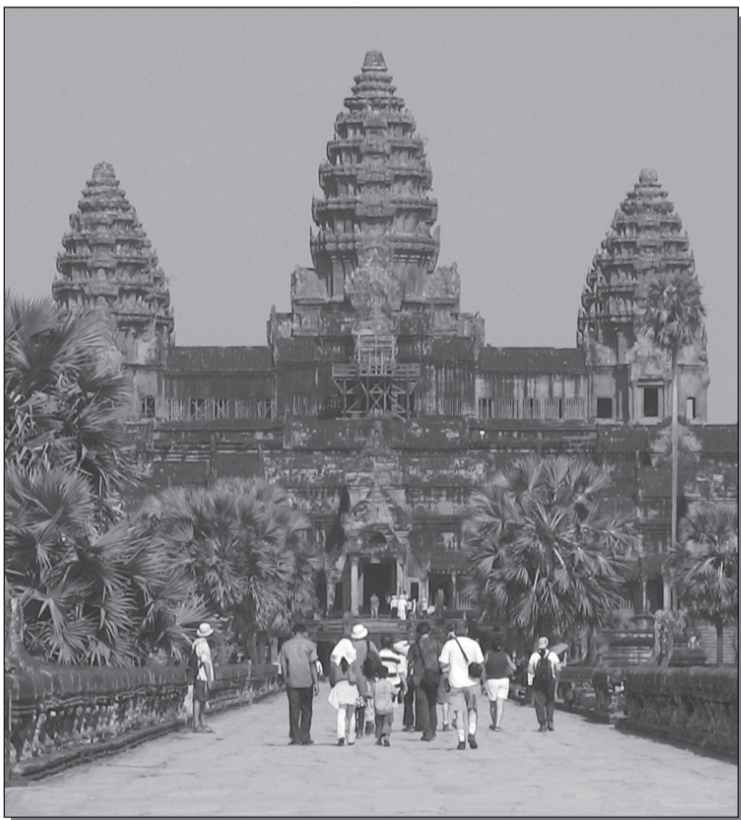
Farewells: (Left) Queen Mother Norodom Monineath (middle) and King Norodom Sihanouk (left) escort the late former King Father Norodom Sihanouk's coffin during a funeral procession in Phnom Penh on Feb. 1, 2013. (Above) A chariot carrying the portrait of late former King Father Norodom Sihanouk rolls past thousands of onlookers during the ceremony. EMBASSY OF CAMBODIA

est ODA donor despite facing critical challenges at home. Japan's ODA came in various forms of support in areas of social and economic infrastructure development, improvement of basic social services, including health and education, promotion of agriculture and rural development, and human resource development.

On behalf of the Royal Gov-

ernment and people of Cambodia, I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation and heartfelt thanks to the government and people of Japan for their continuing support of Cambodia's reconstruction and economic development that have significantly contributed to the government's endeavors in poverty alleviation.

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Congratulations to the People of Cambodia on the Occasion of the 60th Anniversary of Cambodia's Independence 9th November 2013 and the 60th Anniversary of Cambodia-Japan Diplomatic Relations 1953 – 2013

The Honorary Consulate of the Kingdom of Cambodia in Fukuoka is honored to have developed the following activities:

- ❖ Visa issuance
- ❖ Promotion of Japanese tourism according to the agreement between the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Honorary Consulate of Cambodia in Fukuoka
- ❖ Organizing cultural events in Fukuoka to showcase Cambodian arts and culture
- ❖ Introduction of Cambodia to the young people in the Kyushu and Okinawa regions to promote their interest in building bridges between Japan and Cambodia



Haruhisa Handa
Honorary Consul of
the Kingdom of Cambodia in Fukuoka,
Advisor to the Royal Government of Cambodia
with the rank of Senior Minister



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Cambodia independence day



Peace, stability just rewards

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

In the context of the bilateral relationship, 2013 is a symbolic year for the peoples of Cambodia and Japan as the two nations have been celebrating the 60th anniversary of their diplomatic relations. Throughout the year, many events have been held in both countries to commemorate this historical milestone.

It should be recalled that in relation to bilateral ties between Cambodia and Japan, His Majesty the late King Father was the architect of our existing healthy friendship. With the late King Father's wisdom and broad vision, and his deep personal feeling of sympathy toward the Japanese people, Cambodia announced in 1954 that it renounced the rights of the state to ask for compensation for damage caused by the Japanese Imperial Army in Cambodia during World War II.

His Majesty was the first king in Asia to visit Japan, in April 1953, after World War II. During the visit of then Prince Norodom Sihanouk in 1955, Japan's House of Representatives passed a reso-

lution of thanks for Cambodia's renunciation of compensation. In the spirit of this historical event, the Japan-Cambodia Treaty of Amity was signed Dec. 9 by His Majesty, then Prime Minister of Cambodia and Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu and then Prime Minister Ichiro Hatoyama.

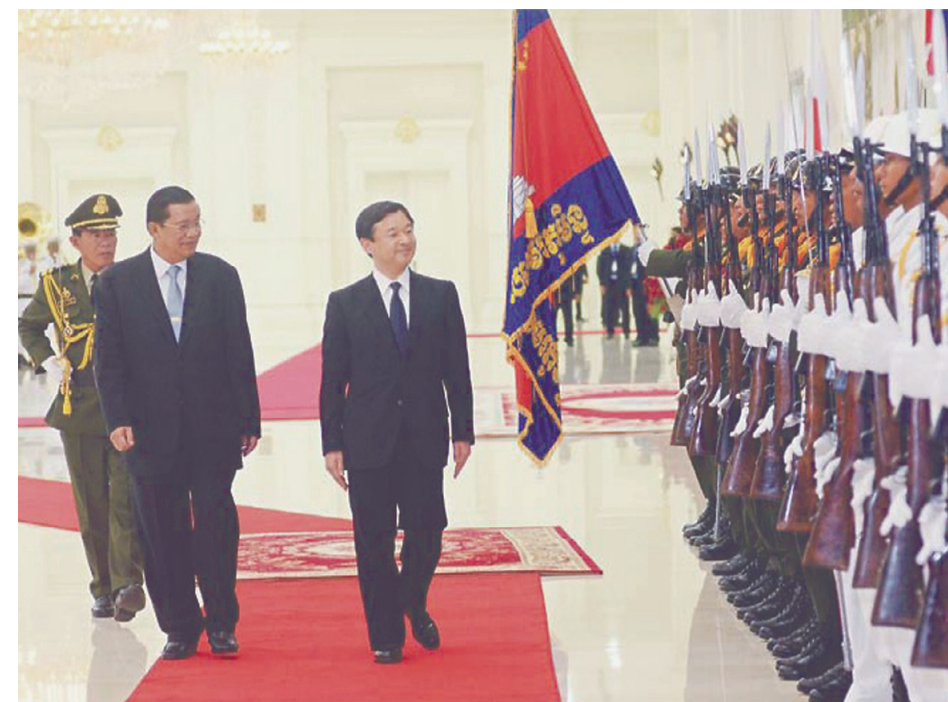
In this sense, I am very pleased to note that our relationship has been gradually developing and flourishing on the basis of mutual respect, understanding, conviction and cooperation exchanges of high-level visits, continued provision of Japan's ODA, growing bilateral trade and investment, and specially increasing people-to-people exchanges, which are an effective means to further boost a stronger bond of friendship and understanding between the two peoples.

In recent years, we have seen growing exchanges of high-level visits such as the state visit to Japan of His Majesty King Samdech Preah Boromneath Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia on

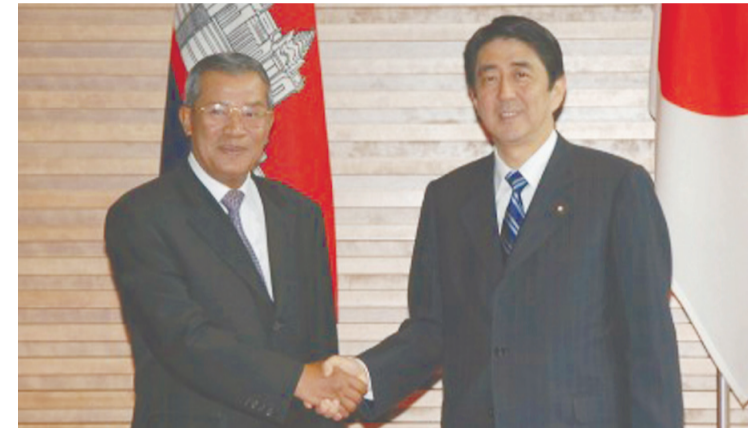
May 16-20, 2010, marking the 55th anniversary of the Treaty of Amity. Last year, His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Naruhito made an official visit to Cambodia on June 27-29, highlighting the growing bond of friendship between the two peoples. The honorable attendance of His Imperial Highness Prince Akishino at the royal funeral of His Majesty the late King Father in February this year also underlined the solidarity of the two nations.

Furthermore, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's official visit to Cambodia on Nov. 16 will certainly reflect the highest esteem accorded to the diplomatic relations of the two countries. This will be also an opportune moment to explore ways to further deepen our bilateral ties on the basis of mutual understanding and conviction, and expand the existing cooperation for mutual interest.

In the context of bilateral economic ties, today's economic and trade relations between Cambodia and Japan have been growing as Japanese business



Friendship: (Clockwise from left) The official logo for the 60th anniversary of friendship between Japan and Cambodia; Prince Norodom Sihanouk meets Emperor Hirohito (right), then Empress Nagako and then Crown Prince Akihito during his visit to Japan in December 1955; King Norodom Sihanouk is welcomed by Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko on May 17, 2010, during his visit to Japan; Crown Prince Naruhito is welcomed by Prime Minister Hun Sen on June 27, 2012, during a three-day official visit to Cambodia; Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe sign the Investment Protection Agreement in Tokyo on June 14, 2007. EMBASSY OF CAMBODIA



and investment in Cambodia saw a rising trend in recent years. In terms of two-way trade in 2012, the total volume reached \$641 million as Japan's exports to Cambodia accounted for over \$253 million while Cambodia's exports to Japan amounted for around \$405 million. Bilateral trade continues to grow as its total volume reached \$347 million during the first half of 2013, representing a 19 percent increase, compared with \$291 million for the same period of 2012.

For private investment, Japan injected over \$300 million in 2012, which was a sharp contrast from the accumulated investment of only \$147 million in the past 15 years from 1994 to 2009. During the last three years, many

investors flocked to visit Cambodia, particularly the country's seven active Special Economic Zones (SEZ). Members of the Japan Business Association in Cambodia (JBAC) also increased from 50 in 2010 to around 100 in 2012. Along with these trends, approximately 180,000 Japanese visited Cambodia last year.

It is observed that Japanese companies are increasingly confident in doing business in Cambodia and have acknowledged the country's tremendous advantages in terms of political stability, positive sentiment toward Japanese, competitive low labor costs, and the potential of agro-culture and natural resources. Moreover, Cambodia

and Japan have the so-called Investment Protection Agreement, which was signed by Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007.

Beyond the aforesaid advantages, Cambodia enjoys privileges as an LDC member of ASEAN to export many kinds of products without tariffs to EU markets under "Everything But Arms" initiatives. Within ASEAN frameworks, investors can also take advantage of ASEAN's free-trade agreements with China, India, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. It is also very encouraging that the FTA with all the six partners will soon be combined into a single Regional Compre-

hensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement. The launch of the RCEP negotiations was officially announced in Cambodia last year and they are expected to be completed by the end of 2015 in conjunction with the launch of the ASEAN Community.

To maintain sustainable growth, the Royal Government considers it important to diversify the country's industry to avoid overdependence on the garment and tourism sectors, which are vulnerable to external shocks. In this respect, we have to thank Japanese manufacturers for their great contribution in diversifying our manufacturing industry, such as among many others, the establishment of electronic parts

giant Minebea, Sumi (Cambodia) Wiring Systems Co. and Japanese auto parts maker Yazaki Co. Their presence has changed the landscape of Cambodia's export industry and labor market from non-skilled labor-intensive industry to light industry with higher-skilled manufacturing.

Therefore, I earnestly invite Japanese investors not to overlook the great advantages of Cambodia's geographical proximity to and special treatment granted by those massive global consumer markets.

In closing, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to The Japan Times for giving me this excellent opportunity to address its many readers.

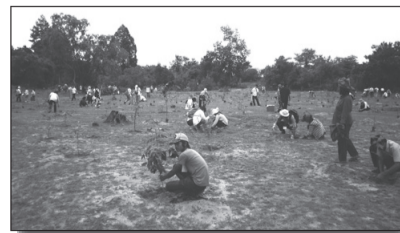
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Strengthening bilateral ties will profit all of Asia

Takeo Hiranuma
REPRESENTATIVE, JAPAN
RESTORATION PARTY



I offer my best wishes for King Norodom Sihamoni's continued health as well as for further prosperity for the Kingdom of Cambodia under the leadership of His Majesty.

I have the pleasure to convey my most heartfelt congratulations on Cambodia's 60th independence anniversary Nov. 9, as well as the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Cambodia since January 1953. My sincere respects and gratitude are paid to all who contributed in fostering mutual trust, friendship and goodwill between the two nations for many years.

Unfortunately, last September devastating floods claimed many lives and caused significant damage in Cambodia. I extend my deepest condolences and I am praying for Cambodia's speedy



Majestic: The Royal Palace in Phnom Penh, capital of Cambodia. EMBASSY OF CAMBODIA

recovery. We never forgot that Cambodia gave Japan donations in money and goods, as well as condolence letters after the Great Hanshin Earthquake in 1995 and the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. I express my sincere appreciation for the heartfelt kindness of the people of Cambodia, and in return, I truly hope that we can be of any help in relief and reconstruction in Cambodia.

Cambodia underwent brutal domestic chaos and hardship in its modern history. Japan must

offer firm support in response to Cambodia's every endeavor to overcome the pain to build a truly peaceful, secure and stable future.

In recent years, Cambodia achieved GDP growth of 6 percent and its economy is on the steady track of economic growth. Japan-Cambodia economic ties have expanded substantially with increasing numbers of Japanese companies operating in Cambodia. Also, Japan contributes to the restoration of Angkor Wat Temple with the role of chairman of the International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Site of Angkor and with the Japanese Government Team for Safeguarding Angkor operating at the work site.

Both countries are tied by a very close and amicable relationship. I am convinced that the further development of bilateral relations between Japan and Cambodia based on friendship and goodwill, coexistence and co-prosperity will lead to peace, stability and prosperity for all of Asia. I would like to continue to contribute my humble efforts to the prosperity of both countries.



World-famous: Angkor Wat is the largest remaining structure of Angkor, one of the most important archaeological sites in Southeast Asia. EMBASSY OF CAMBODIA

Cambodia truly a kingdom of wonders for all visitors

Tourism in Cambodia is one of the most important sectors in the country's economy. The following are some of the major tourist sites.

Phnom Penh

Phnom Penh, once known as the "Pearl of Asia," is the capital and largest city of Cambodia. It is an economic, commercial, cultural

and tourist center.

Tourists can experience a fresh wave of Cambodian hospitality in this city of more than 2 million people. Cambodians are by nature cordial and friendly. In the capital city, people are more enterprising. The city is a center of diverse economic and urban development.

Phnom Penh is architecturally developed with several new high-rise buildings, including a 30-story business center. More high-rise buildings are being developed. Hotels catering to every level of desire have also mushroomed all over the city.

The riverfront is lined by chic pubs, bistros and boutique hotels. Smart little silk boutiques and galleries dot the side streets. A budding arts scene and a heady dusk-to-dawn nightlife are examples of what this pearl

has to offer.

There are many places to visit when in Phnom Penh. Visitors can visit the Royal Palace and the Silver Pagoda located just next to the palace grounds, then stroll about 100 meters to visit the National Museum. After which, walk along Sotheas Boulevard to patronize some neat "antique" shops that sell silver trays, betel boxes, belts, ancient coins, silver or wooden statuettes and famed marble carvings from the province of Pursat.

It is pleasant to take leisurely strolls around Phnom Penh, browse the shops and take in the city. Boulevards peppered by beautiful colonial buildings and a parklike riverfront with cafes and restaurants make this a beautiful city to visit. The art galleries on Street 178 between the National Museum and Wat

Sarawan are a real treat.

The "Phsar Toul Tum Poug" or The Russian Market as its most commonly known, offers antique pieces and the opportunity to buy factory overrun designer clothes at huge discounts. For the visitor who prefers air-conditioned comfort, there are a few modern shopping complexes; the Sorya Shopping Center, Sovanna Center and the City Mall.

Siem Reap province

Siem Reap, located in northwestern Cambodia, is the gateway to the world-famous Angkor temple complex, which includes the magnificent Angkor Wat. The province also contains a vibrant capital city boasting many luxury hotels, beautifully aged colonial buildings, a buzzing Pub Street, CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



Looking ahead: A computer graphic shows Cambodia's Neak Loeung Bridge, which will be the longest across the Mekong River when it is completed in 2015 with Japanese aid. EMBASSY OF CAMBODIA



Prosperity: The Sorya Shopping Center is the first and largest modern retail complex in Phnom Penh. ENGSAMNANG/WIKIPEDIA

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Japan-Cambodia Friendship Association

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Mr. Tadasu Kikuchi, Acting President

West Japan-Cambodia Friendship Association

Masanori Yatohji, President
Kenji Otani, Executive Director

The Saitama-Cambodia Friendship Association

Mr. Masao Ichimura, Chairman

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Respectfully greeted from:

Mr. Hideo Yamada, Honorary Consul of Cambodia in Osaka and Spouse
Mr. Seiki Takada, Honorary Consul of Cambodia in Nagoya and Spouse
Mr. Seiroku Takizawa, Honorary Consul of Cambodia in Hokkaido and Spouse

Cambodia independence day

Truly a kingdom of wonders

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6
silk farms, markets and much more.

The city of Siem Reap, also the capital of the province, is a "must-visit" destination for all visitors to Cambodia. This is where the glorious 12th-century Angkor Wat temple, the largest religious building in the world, is located. Situated on the northern bank of Tonle Sap Great Lake, this mesmerizing eighth wonder of the world can be easily accessed by plane, land and boat.

The ruins of Angkor, located in thick jungle, are a UNESCO World Heritage site. There are over 1,000 temples ranging in scale from nondescript piles of rubble scattered through rice fields to the awe-inspiring Angkor Wat — the best-preserved temple.

Apart from the legacy of the vast Angkor temple complex, Siem Reap has a lot more to offer to tourists, from the spectacular floating village on Tonle Sap Lake to the heritage site of the Kulen Mountain, to the recently discovered Koh Ker ruins.

In town, there are a bevy of ethnic craft shops, galleries, cafes, eateries and top-notch restaurants serving every type of cuisine. The famous "Pub Street" and the night markets of Siem Reap are renowned tour destinations in their own right. Additionally, silk farms, rice-paddy countryside, fishing villages and a very rich bird sanctuary near Tonle Sap Lake make Siem Reap one of the most captivating places in the world.

• Location

The province of Siem Reap is conveniently situated 314 km northwest of Phnom Penh, along National Road No. 6. It can be reached all year round by this route from Phnom Penh, Poipet Border Checkpoint from Banteay Meanchey, Kampong Cham Province and Kampong



Thom Province, and by National Road No. 5 and 6 from Kampong Chhnang province, Pursat province and Battambang province.

• How to reach Siem Reap

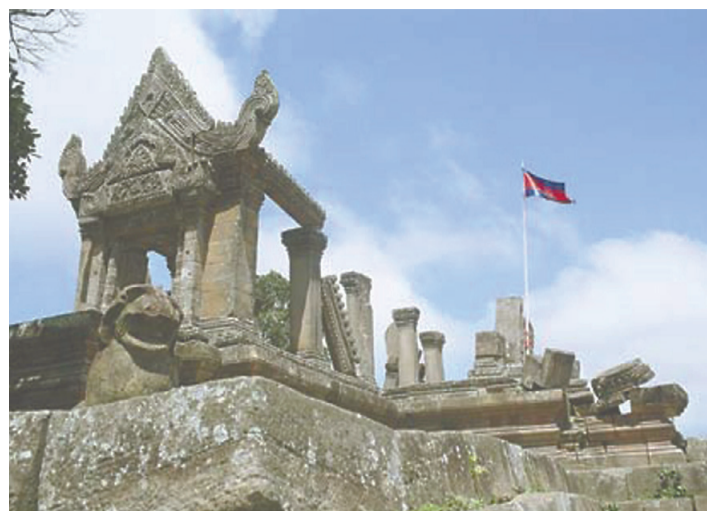
Siem Reap is accessible by direct flights from many major cities in the region, including Bangkok, Da Nang, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Paksé, Vientiane, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Hong Kong, Kunming, Taipei, etc. From the capital Phnom Penh, Angkor Air operates several direct flights per day to and from Siem Reap.

There are also speedboats operating along the Tonle Sap from Phnom Penh and Battambang Province.

Preah Vihear province

Preah Vihear province, which borders Thailand and Laos to the north, is home to three of the most captivating temples of the Angkorian Era: Preah Vihear temple, Koh Ker temple and Preah Khan Kampong Svay temple. It also houses communities of many ethnic hill tribes.

Koh Ker used to be a capital of



Landmarks: (Left) As head of state, Norodom Sihanouk visits Preah Vihear Temple in 1962 after the International Court of Justice ruled for Cambodia in the dispute with Thailand over ownership. (Above) Preah Vihear Temple, a National Pride of Cambodia, was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site on July 7, 2008. (Right) Women in traditional dress perform the Aspara Dance, whose gentle movements were inspired by classical myths and religious stories. EMBASSY OF CAMBODIA

linked by a system of pavements and staircases, this temple is an outstanding masterpiece of Khmer architecture, in terms of plan, decoration and relationship to the spectacular landscape environment.

Preah Khan Kampong Svay, also known as Prasat Bakan, is a complex of gigantic proportions located in the southwest corner of Preah Vihear province. It covers an area four times that of Angkor Wat with a 3-km-long Baray and a large number of towers or Prasats within the compound. Largely unknown and rarely visited, the temple had been very badly looted over the years.

Through the energetic efforts of the Royal Government of Cambodia under the wise, brilliant leadership of Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, prime minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Preah Vihear Temple was listed and declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO on July 8, 2008.

This text is an edited excerpt of articles in the official website of the Ministry of Tourism of Cambodia.

A unique architectural complex of a series of sanctuaries



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