

**NEWSLETTER**  
**KAS**  
**CAMBODIA OFFICE**  
44<sup>TH</sup> EDITION  
**July 2013**

Allan Tran-Sam

[www.kas.de](http://www.kas.de)

[www.kas.de/kambodscha/](http://www.kas.de/kambodscha/)

## Newsletter

# GENERAL ELECTION SPECIAL

28<sup>th</sup> July marked the end of a one-month long political campaign which saw less violence than in 2008, but also more complaints filed with the National Election Committee (NEC) regarding improper practices on both sides. This could hint towards a normalisation of the electoral process in Cambodia.

Nevertheless, many aspects foreign to any definition of a fair campaign were still to be deplored. Among them: intimidation, vote buying, lack of access of the opposition to mainstream media, lack of policy debate, and personal attacks.

The vote itself was carried out in a fairly peaceful manner on Sunday, exception made of clashes at a polling station in Stung Meanchey district, Phnom Penh, where a group of voters who could not find their names on the voter list started a demonstration. Clashes followed and two military police vehicles were set on fire. Similar frustrations happened throughout the country as citizens turned up to cast their



*Source: Cambodia Daily*

vote, only to realise someone had already voted under their name, or to witness people who never lived in the area voting in their village. Some racial tensions also occurred when ethnic-Vietnamese Cambodians reported being prevented from voting by other villagers, on the ground that their origin made them unqualified to cast a ballot in a Khmer election.

Sam Rainsy was the first to comment on the outcome of the vote, a couple of hours only after the polling stations closed at 3pm. He claimed in a statement that his opposition party, the CNRP, had won this year's general election. This affirmation was later withdrawn and said to have meant that the day represented a success "for Cambodia," not the opposition party. It was later the turn of Khieu Kanharith, the Minister of Information, to be the centre of interest as he announced on Facebook the victory of the ruling party, the CPP, with 68 of the 123-seat National Assembly won, against 55 for the CNRP. This post was then confirmed by preliminary results published on the NEC website, which indicated that the CPP indeed arrived ahead in the polls, with an advantage of only 260,000 votes.

The opposition strongly rejected these estimations, citing mass irregularities, and immediately asked for the set up of a joint committee including both political parties, the pro-CPP NEC, the UN, as well as local and international NGOs to investigate these matters. Initially said to be "out of question" by NEC representatives, the idea received a favourable

**NEWSLETTER**  
**KAS**  
**CAMBODIA OFFICE**  
44<sup>TH</sup> EDITION  
**July 2013**

Allan Tran-Sam

[www.kas.de](http://www.kas.de)

[www.kas.de/kambodscha/](http://www.kas.de/kambodscha/)

opinion from the Prime Minister himself on Tuesday. In his first appearance since the election, Hun Sen was reported saying that the NEC and the CPP would join other political parties and the NGOs to "solve the problem." He did not mention whether this would also include the international community, as the CNRP had been calling for.

More details about this committee's composition and missions are expected later this week. Official results have been announced for 10<sup>th</sup> August by the NEC.

Further reading:

**NEC Records Less Campaign Violence, More Youth Involvement**

<http://www.cambodiadaily.com/elections/nec-records-less-campaign-violence-more-youth-involvement-36949/>

**Ballot Parked by Peace, Inclusion; Marred by Irregularities, Bias**

<http://www.cambodiadaily.com/elections/ballot-marked-by-peace-inclusion-marred-by-irregularities-bias-36947/>

**Election Results Stun Cambodia**

<http://www.mmtimes.com/index.php/national-news/7648-election-results-stun-cambodians.html>

**Cambodia Election Challenge Raises Fear**

<http://asiancorrespondent.com/111247/cambodia-election-challenge-raises-fears/>

**Analysis: Strongman No More**

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/361996/hun-sen-strongman-no-more>

**Viewpoint: The Cambodian People Have Spoken, Time to Level the Playing Field**

<http://world.time.com/2013/07/29/viewpoint-the-cambodian-people-have-spoken-time-to-level-the-playing-field/#ixzz2aUtFjeXw>

**Cambodia: Ruling Party Orchestrated Vote Fraud**

<http://www.hrw.org/node/117726>

**Social Media's Growing Influence on Cambodian Politics**

[http://www.eastwestcenter.org/sites/default/files/private/apb\\_222.pdf](http://www.eastwestcenter.org/sites/default/files/private/apb_222.pdf)