



NEWSLETTER



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KAS CAMBODIA OFFICE

LENA RUGE

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The following articles are a composition of last two weeks' (01.02.2014–13.02.2014) press releases in Cambodia. They give a review on current developments in the country.

Sub-Decree for strong acid control just "paper tiger"



Source: Siv Channa,
www.cambodiadaily.com

On 31st of January 2013 the Sub-Decree on Formalities and Conditions for strong acid control was ratified and came into effect half a year later. It provides regulations regarding e. g. sale, purchase, storage, transportation and packaging.

Until now, this legislation is nothing more than a "paper tiger": It seems to have high potential changing the current situation, but in fact it does not have any impact. Suppliers and retailers on Cambodia's streets don't

even know that such a law exists and attend their businesses as ever.

The acid is most likely used in the jewelry production process, but also as a harmful tool of revenge. Even though there have been fewer attacks since 2012, accidents and suicides involving acid have increased according to the Cambodian Acid Survivors Charity (CASC).

One main problem is that it is not clear who is in charge of enforcing the law. While the Council of Ministers refers to the Ministry of Interior to be the institution in charge, Ministry of Interior Secretary of State, Prum Sokha, explains that he had not been informed about this law at all.

According to Sharon Beijer, who published a paper on how to achieve justice for acid victims, another issue of concern is the lack of experts in the legal sector and victim protection programs. In the fewest cases the victims are courageous enough to file a complaint, because they are too frightened to do so. Additionally, just 11 out of 41 cases monitored by CASC ended up with a verdict. To make the law effective, all key players have to put in effort to make it work.

Further Reading:

"Justice still elusive for acid victims":

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/justice-still-elusive-acid-victims>

„A Year After Law, Acid Easily Available On Streets“:

<http://www.cambodiadaily.com/news/a-year-after-law-acid-easily-available-on-streets-51663/>

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“Alleged Reforestry”: Monocultures replacing evergreen forests



Source: Heng Chivoan,
www.phnompenhpost.com

According to a recent report by the Ministry of Agriculture, the government achieved to reforest 80.693 hectares of land between the years 2008 to 2012.

This impressive number is clouded by the fact that the lumbered forests were not replaced by adequate, comparable trees, but by planting rubber trees and other agricultural crops.

The major part of 70.095 hectares got recultivated by private firms granted economic land concession. The remaining 10.598 hec-

tares were reforested by the forestry administration, the army and citizens on the annual “forestry day”.

Satellite maps released by Open Development Cambodia (ODC) in December 2013 show a decrease of forest cover to 46.33% from former 60.18%. Dense forests dropped by 52%, whereas mixed forests just declined by 2%. Forestry administration chief Chheng Kim Son countered that the ODC releases are biased, because of the technique used; the 2013 results are not accurate and reliable due to clouds on the satellite pictures.

Marcus Hardtke, ARA (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Regenwald und Artenschutz / Rainforest and Wildlife and Conservation Association) program coordinator, stated that planting agricultural crops is not equivalent to reforest evergreen forest. Also the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is not taking its task seriously by planting monocultures as substitutes for dense forests. The Ministry’s report just notes that their administration is far from being faultless.

Additionally, the National Resource and Wildlife Preservation Organization published its finding about illegal logging in October 2013, stating that they found prohibited logging in all protected forests.

Further Reading:

“Reforestry claim ‘a stretch’”:

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/reforestation-claim-%E2%80%99stretch%E2%80%99>

Trash collectors successfully on strike for higher salary



Source: Vireak Mai,
www.phnompenhpost.com

Cintri, a subsidiary of Canadian company Cin-tec, increased its employees’ wages after 4 days of strike and Phnom Penh piling the garbage on its streets. Being responsible for the waste collection since 2002 after getting the tender for collecting and disposing the city’s garbage for 50 years, the company employs 1.200 -1.400 people today.

Street cleaners will earn 80 USD instead of former 65 USD in future, night truck drivers 120 USD instead of 110 USD. These raises don’t nearly meet the demand of 120 USD respectively 200 USD, but Cintri agreed to build up health centers and provide the company uniforms free of charge.

The representative of the Trade Union Federation for Increasing Khmer Employees Lifestyles at Cintri, Mey Phan, stated that the agreement is good for the moment, but that there will be more discussions in a few months.

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Further Reading:

“Street cleaners strike for \$ 150”:

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/street-cleaners-strike-150>

“Messy strike comes to an end”:

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/messy-strike-comes-end>

“Trash Collectors Back to Work With Pay Raise”:

<http://www.cambodiadaily.com/news/trash-collectors-back-to-work-with-pay-raise-51536/>

Judiciary reform enters final drafting stage



Source: Meng Kimlong,
www.phnompenhpost.com

Being in process since 2005 as well as being a key goal of Prime Minister Hun Sen, the judicial reform, consisting of three fundamental laws, is supposed to be completed by the end of February. It includes

- the Law on Organization and Functioning of the Courts,
- Law on Amendment of the Supreme Council of Magistracy and
- the Law on the Status of Judges and Prosecutors.

Chief of cabinet at the Justice Ministry Sam Prachea Manith stated that the draft regarding the organization and functioning of the courts has been finalized. The Law on Amendment of the Supreme Council of Magistracy and the Law on the Status of Judges and Prosecutors, on the other hand, are still being screened by legal teams. After completing this final review stage, the drafts will be forwarded to the Council of Ministers for approval.

The whole process also got a push after several Western states criticized Cambodia’s judiciary at a UN human rights review recently. Cheam Yeap, senior lawmaker for the ruling Cambodian People’s Party (CPP), said that CPP members of parliament would be willing to adopt the laws with or without the presence of opposing Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), which refuses to join the National Assembly since last years’ election. CNRP spokesman Yim Sovann responded that they will not end the boycott and passing the laws will be meaningless as long as the CNRP is not attending the National Assembly.

Further Reading:

“New laws on judiciary due by ‘end of month’”:

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/new-laws-judiciary-due-%E2%80%98end-month%E2%80%99>

Pushing forward: Prohibition of smoking in public



Source: Pha Lina,
www.phnompenhpost.com

In cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Ministry of Health issued a new advisory circular on measures to ban smoking in public and at work. The document emphasizes on the need of education or putting up warning signs by e. g. workplace managers.

Health Minister Mam Bun Heng explained that around 50% of the citizens are exposed to tobacco smoke at work and even 90% at restau-

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rants. He likes to see ministries and other institutions distributing this advisory paper to many private businesses and local authorities to ensure positive impact. On the other hand he stated clearly that a system based on fines would not work in Cambodia; also taking in consideration that two issue related laws had already been enacted.

According to Pieter van Maaren, WHO country director, approximately 30 people die from tobacco-related diseases daily. Further Cambodia should consider following other Asian countries' example like e. g. the Philippines, Thailand or Vietnam, which successfully implemented guidelines provided by the WHO Framework Convention.

Further Reading:

"Ministry of Health Pushes Directive to Ban Smoking in Public":

<http://www.cambodiadaily.com/news/ministry-of-health-pushes-directive-to-ban-smoking-in-public-51981/>

"Push to ban public smoking":

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/push-ban-public-smoking>

Phnom Penh in the spotlight of international hoteliers



Source: [www.phnompenh.gov.kh /photo-phnompenh-en-landscape-11.html](http://www.phnompenh.gov.kh/photo-phnompenh-en-landscape-11.html)

With constantly increasing numbers of foreign visitors over the last years, Cambodia's capital gets more and more interesting to international hotel chains to set up new branches.

Between 2003 and 2012 the number of tourists, travelling through the country, raised from 700.000 to 3.5 Million. Just within the last year there has been an expansion of 1/3 in total; data recorded for Phnom Penh showing a growth of 8.1%.

With these growing numbers and an enduring infrastructure, the capital is drawing attention to itself as a lucrative hotel site. Luu Meng, President of the Cambodia Hotel Association stated that each month a hotel chain is interested in Phnom Penh as a potential place of location. According to these developments, Aman Resort's spokesperson Anjali Nihalchand confirmed that their next project in Cambodia will be in Phnom Penh and the Rosewood Hotel chain is already planning to open a branch next year.

Further Reading:

"Hoteliers Are Warming Up to Phnom Penh":

<http://www.cambodiadaily.com/business/hoteliers-are-warming-up-to-phnom-penh-51460/>



Impressum

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