



NEWSLETTER



KAS CAMBODIA OFFICE

75th EDITION
July 2016

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Markus Kloppenburg

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Newsletter: 1st – 31st July 2016

A selection of the latest local news in Cambodia

Prominent Political Analyst Kem Ley Shot and Killed



People pay their respects at Kem Ley's funeral (Hen Sinith/AP)

On Sunday, 10th July 2016, the prominent political analyst Dr. Kem Ley was killed. Dr. Ley was shot while having a coffee at a gas station's convenience store in central Phnom Penh. He was an outspoken critic of both the Cambodian government and the opposition, and a co-founder of the Cambodian

'Grassroots Democracy Party'. The killer was caught the same day. His

explanation that Dr. Ley and he had been in dispute over money he had lent to the victim has been highly contested. Dr. Kem Ley's body was brought to the Wat Chas pagoda in Phnom Penh where it remained until transported to Ley's hometown in the province of Takeo. Kem Ley's death has caused great distress in Cambodia as he had been not only highly appreciated as an extraordinarily outspoken political analyst and activist but also widely liked as a kind, approachable person and admired idol for young Cambodians. Thus, the transferral of Dr. Ley's body on Sunday, 24th July 2016, developed into a grand procession with tens (if not hundreds) of thousands of followers making their way to Kem Ley's final resting place.

Further Reading

Prominent Political Analyst Kem Ley Slain

By Ouch Song and Alex Willemyns | July 11, 2016

The Cambodia Daily

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/thousands-fill-streets-phnom-penh-bid-farewell-kem-ley>

Kem Ley's Last Journey

By Vannarith Chheang | July 25, 2016

Khmer Times

<http://www.khmertimeskh.com/news/27586/kem-ley---s-last-journey/>

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Thousands fill streets of Phnom Penh to bid farewell to Kem Ley
By Shaun Turton | July 25, 2016

The Phnom Penh Post

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/thousands-fill-streets-phnom-penh-bid-farewell-kem-ley>

Image Source

http://www.lemonde.fr/asiе-pacifique/article/2016/07/23/le-pouvoir-cambodgien-etouffe-les-critiques_4973825_3216.html

ASEAN Issues Joint South China Sea Statement

On Monday, the 25th July 2016, after a meeting in Vientiane, Laos, the foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) eventually released a joint statement referencing the dispute revolving around the South China Sea. The waters have been the object of overlapping claims by several littoral states such as China, Vietnam, the Philippines or Malaysia. The ASEAN statement followed a ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague that the Chinese territorial claims were not supported by legal or historical rights. Thus, the court ruled in favour of the Philippines which had brought forward the case. In accordance with its original position, China does not acknowledge the authority of the court or its ruling. Cambodia has drawn special attention during the aftermath of the ruling as it has been frequently portrayed, by numerous anonymous diplomats, as blocking the issuance of a joint ASEAN statement. Presumably due to Cambodia's reluctance to agree to any immoderately formulated communique the released statement does not cite or reference the PCA ruling. Many have criticised the outcome as instantiating a questionable consonance of China's interests in the matter and Cambodia's conduct during the ASEAN meeting in Laos. These objections have been underscored by public speculation about the nature of 600\$ million of aid that China promised to Cambodia in close proximity to the meeting. In contrast, China praised the result, and particularly Cambodia's contribution, as conducive to the preservation of impartiality.



The Chinese and Philippine Foreign Ministers at the ASEAN meeting in Laos (EPA)

Further Reading

Cambodia Blocks ASEAN Statement on South China Sea

By Alex Willemyns | July 25, 2016

The Cambodia Daily

<https://www.cambodiadaily.com/news/cambodia-blocks-asean-statement-on-south-china-sea-115834/>

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China thanks Cambodia for efforts to water down ASEAN SCS statement

By Ananth Baliga | July 26, 2016

The Phnom Penh Post

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/china-thanks-cambodia-efforts-water-down-asean-scs-statement>

After Days of Deadlock, ASEAN Releases Statement on South China Sea Dispute

By Charlie Campbell | July 25, 2016

TIME Magazine

<http://time.com/4421293/asean-beijing-south-china-sea-cambodia-philippines-laos/>

Image Source

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/1995991/most-asean-countries-want-stay-out-beijings-south-china>

Rainsy Asks EU to Cut Clothing Imports



Sam Rainsy answers questions during an interview at a hotel in Manila, the Philippines, on June 29. (Romeo Ranco/Reuters)

During an EU parliamentary meeting on July 13th, opposition leader Sam Rainsy (Cambodia National Rescue Party) asked the European Union to cut down clothing imports from Cambodia in an attempt to put economic pressure on the government and force them to respect human rights and freedom of speech. Mr. Rainsy pointed out that in his opinion, the decrease of clothing exports to the EU would have no lasting effect on the workers. In addition he mentioned that investors and big local companies

are profiting off the back of workers just to use their accumulated money to strike better export deals for themselves by using corruption. Phay Siphon, Spokesman for the Council of Ministers, argued against Rainsy's thoughts and mentioned that the European Union would never consider something that would indeed affect average citizens of Cambodia. "If you decrease the number of purchase orders, the number of garment factories will go down, and if garment factories cannot find other markets to replace Europe, they will reduce production, and when reducing production, the size of the labor force will be reduced," Mr. Sophal said.

Cambodian union representatives appreciated Sam Rainsy's efforts to strengthen human rights and freedom of speech but also mentioned that politicians should rather work out sustainable proposals than ideas that would cause the average citizen to lose money.

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Rainsy Asks EU to Cut Imports

By Taing Vida | 18 July 2016

Khmer Times

<http://www.khmertimeskh.com/news/27332/rainsy-asks-eu-to-cut-imports/>

Rainsy's proposed garment embargo would hit jobs, unions say

By Ananth Baliga and Sen David | 20 July 2016

The Phnom Penh Post

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/rainsys-proposed-garment-embargo-would-hit-jobs-unions-say>

Unions Blast Rainsy Over Remarks on EU Garment Trade

By Khuon Narim and Sonia Kohlbacher | 20 JULY 2016

The Cambodia Daily

<https://www.cambodiadaily.com/topstory/unions-blast-rainsy-over-remarks-on-eu-garment-trade-115659/>

Image Source

http://www.phnompenhpost.com/sites/default/files/styles/full-screen/public/field/image/biotech_story1_vannrith_rong.jpg

Cambodian Factory Conditions Improving

Based on the latest 33rd Synthesis Report covering the period May 2015 to June 2016, produced by the ILO's Better Factories Cambodia (BFC) program, the International Labor Organization (ILO) outlined that conditions in Cambodia's garment factories have improved since ILO's last report in 2014. The Synthesis Report is divided into 8 broad categories and is further divided into 33 sub-categories including occupational safety and health, compensation and worker contracts as well as child labor. The report's key message is that 47 percent of 381

examined factories complied with its most crucial working conditions - up from 28 percent in 2014. Although there are some critical issues still existing, overall the ILO's conclusion and outlook is rather positive. The public reporting initiative is driving a substantial change in Cambodia's factory working conditions. The BFC report found a substantial drop in child labor - people working at the age of 15 or under - from 65 confirmed cases in 2013 to 16 cases in 2015. As BFC only investigates a sample of workers at the factories the dark figures could be higher.



A garment factory in Phnom Penh's Meanchey district, where multiple fainting's have occurred due to high temperatures (Kimberly McCosker)

On the negative side the report mentioned that 87 percent of all investigated factories lacked adequate lighting, 69 percent provided bad

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climate conditions and 59 percent were not offering sanitary drinking water.

Further Reading

Cambodia's Factories Improving, Report Finds
By Ananth Baliga and Sen David | 04 July 2016

The Phnom Penh Post

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/cambodias-factories-improving-report-finds>

ILO Says Factory Conditions Improving

By Peter Zsombor | 04 July 2016

The Cambodia Daily

<https://www.cambodiadaily.com/news/ilo-says-factory-conditions-improving-114970/>

Better Factories Cambodia: Garment Industry 33rd Compliance Synthesis Report

By ILO | June 2016

International Labor Organization

http://betterfactories.org/cambodia/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/SR-33-BFC-FINAL_ENG.pdf

Image Source

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/cambodias-factories-improving-report-finds>

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Global Witness Report Outlines PM's Family's Business Involvements



Prime Minister Hun Sen (front, center) surrounded by family members (Reuters)

On the 7th of July 2016, the London based NGO 'Global Witness' released a report, 'Hostile Takeover: The Corporate Empire of Cambodia's Ruling Family', detailing the involvement of relatives of the Prime Minister in a multitude of Cambodia's business sectors. The report accuses the wider family of the Prime Minister of corruption, abuse of political power and amassment of a large family fortune. Furthermore, the interconnection of business and the ruling elite is claimed to have questionable implications for the

possibility of legal control of the companies in question should inappropriate behaviour on their part occur, such as the causation of environmental damage. The report has been widely commented by the Cambodian public and media, as for instance by the late Dr. Kem Ley.

Further Reading

Report Details First Family's Business Empire

By Zsombor Peter | 07 July 2016

The Cambodia Daily

<https://www.cambodiadaily.com/news/report-details-first-familys-business-empire-2-115112/>

Inside the Hun family's business empire

By Shaun Turton and Phak Seangly | 07 July 2016

The Phnom Penh Post

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/inside-hun-familys-business-empire>

Hun Sen's Family Slams Report

By May Titthara | 08 July 2016

Khmer Times

<http://www.khmertimeskh.com/news/27018/hun-sen---s-family-slams-report/>

Image Source

<https://www.cambodiadaily.com/news/report-details-first-familys-business-empire-2-115112/>

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Inappropriate Dress Banned at Angkor Wat

To 'protect' Cambodian culture Apsara Authority, the public organization tasked with managing the UNESCO World Heritage site Angkor archaeological park, will bar tourists wearing scanty clothing or untidy dress from visiting Cambodia's most famous site. Apsara Authority has identified clothes that reveal bare shoulders, very short shorts and beachwear as inappropriate clothing. The announcement will affect all people including Khmer who, according to the Apsara Authority spokesman Long Kosal, should know clearly about Khmer tradition and culture. Apparently it became necessary because of a couple of incidents which occurred during the 2015 season. In January last year, a Chinese model was posing topless inside the temple area, three French men were arrested while taking nude pictures of themselves and two American sisters were also arrested while taking naked photographs of their bottoms in February 2015. Apsara Authority launched a code of conduct in December 2015 in order to prevent such incidents from occurring again. The code is not just about wearing scanty clothing. It also warns tourists not to touch or climb the ruins, give money to begging children, smoke, urinate on the temple grounds, write graffiti or make loud noise. Relevant ministries, the Travel Agent Association, Tour Guide Association, Hotel Association, Tourist Transport Association and tourism operators around the country have been made aware of the code.



Angkor Wat temple at Angkor Archaeological Park, Cambodia (N.N.)

Further Reading

Revealing Outfits Banned at Angkor Wat

By Chea Vannak | 07 July 2016

Khmer Times

<http://www.khmertimeskh.com/news/26957/revealing-outfits-banned-at-angkor-wat/>

Angkor Wat enforces strict dress code after spate of nude photography

Hazel Plush | 08 July 2016

The Telegraph

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/asia/cambodia/articles/cambodia-angkor-wat-enforces-strict-new-dress-code/>

Cambodia stops scantily clad visitors to Angkor

By AFP | 07 July 2016

Bangkok Post

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/travel/around-the-globe/1030049/cambodia-stops-scantily-clad-visitors-to-angkor>

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Image Source

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/asia/cambodia/articles/Cambodia-from-Angkor-Wat-to-the-island-resort-Song-Saa/>

A New Irrawaddy Dolphin Baby Was Born



Irrawaddy dolphins are found in coastal areas in South and Southeast Asia, and in three rivers: the Ayeyarwady (Myanmar), the Mahakam (Indonesian Borneo) and the Mekong. (Lor Kimsan/WWF-Cambodia)

Conservation experts of the World Wildlife Fund For Nature (WWF) were excited when they spotted a mother dolphin with her newborn baby around 15 km north of Kratie town in June 2016. The baby is the newest family member of the remaining 80 Irrawaddy river dolphins in Cambodia. As the female dolphins only give birth every 2 to 3 years each birth is sensational. The Irrawaddy dolphins are

one of only 3 whale and dolphin species that can live in both fresh and salt water. Once there were thousands of them living inside the Mekong Area, but due to illegal fishing using electroshock devices, explosives and poison, their population has decreased substantially. To sustain the remaining population, the dolphins are now concentrated in 9 deep water pools over a 190 km stretch of the Mekong near the Laotian border. About 68 guards, mostly local villagers, protect the dolphin population from further decreasing.

Further reading:

Kratie welcomes baby Irrawaddy dolphin

By Jack Davies | 05 July 2016

The Phnom Penh Post

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/kratie-welcomes-baby-irrawaddy-dolphin>

Newborn Irrawaddy dolphin spotted in Cambodia - A sign of hope for the beloved icons of the Mekong

By World Wildlife Fund For Nature | 05 July 2016

World Wildlife Fund For Nature

<https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/newborn-irrawaddy-dolphin-spotted-in-cambodia>

Image Source

<https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/newborn-irrawaddy-dolphin-spotted-in-cambodia>