

**NEWSLETTER**  
**KAS**  
**CAMBODIA OFFICE**  
33<sup>th</sup> EDITION  
January 2012

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

## The following articles are a composition of last two weeks' (15.01.2013-31.01.2013) press releases in Cambodia. They give a review on current developments in the country.

### National Election Committee refuses talks with opposition



Source: Voice of America <sup>1</sup>

The National Election Committee chairman Im Suosdey refused to meet with leaders from opposition Sam Rainsy and Human Rights parties. The opposition parties recently asked to meet the NEC Chairman to discuss the procedures of the 2013 parliamentary election, as they are concerned about the NEC being biased towards the ruling party (CPP) and whose near monopoly on

broadcast and print media. Furthermore the opposition parties are worried about the CPP's use of state property and civil servants for campaigning as well as a lack of opposition representation in local election committees. The NEC secretary general, Tep Nitha, said that the NEC chairman wouldn't have time to meet the opposition party leaders due to insufficient time. There would be a lot of NGO's and political parties and it would be impossible for the chairman to meet them all on request. Instead, the opposition parties should put their request in formally, in writing. An opposition's official said the NEC has continually ignored proposals for improved elections from the opposition in the past.

NEC chairman Im Suosdey replied that the NEC was independent and not controlled by the government. Past elections would have been free and fair and were always supported by national and international communities and organisations.

Further reading:

#### NEC Chairman refuses to meet with opposition leaders

<http://www.thecambodiaherald.com/cambodia/detail/1?page=11&token=NzI4OTc1MGZMGVjZmNkZGZmMDQxMzU2YTk5Y2Zm>

#### Opposition Seeks Talks With National Election Committee

<http://www.voacambodia.com/content/opposition-seeks-talks-with-national-election-committee/1586340.html>

#### Im Suosdey reiterates NEC independence

<http://www.thecambodiaherald.com/cambodia/detail/1?page=11&token=MmI4YzcxMDZjZWQ3NTIyNjg1MWEyMDk0YTdiMTY3>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://gdb.voanews.com/3F17C69B-D114-4188-B6B0-520896EB9782\\_w268\\_r1.jpg](http://gdb.voanews.com/3F17C69B-D114-4188-B6B0-520896EB9782_w268_r1.jpg)



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**Biased Policies Jeopardizing July Election, Opposition Says**

<http://www.voacambodia.com/content/biased-policies-jeopardizing-july-election-opposition-says/1590999.html>

**Concerned Ruling Party Already Making Election Unfair, Opposition Says**

<http://www.voacambodia.com/content/concerned-ruling-party-already-making-election-unfair-opposition-says/1592281.html>

**Opposition program ordered off air in Siem Reap**

Authorities have ordered Sovann Angkor Radio in Siem Reap to stop broadcasting a program of the opposition League for Democracy Party. Khem Veasna, a former Sam Rainsy Party lawmaker, said the Ministry of Information had told the owner to stop renting out air-time to political parties. His program "Our Dream" has also been blacklisted by the Angkor Ratha, Mongkol Sovann and Moha Nokor radio stations. The program revelled in criticising the ruling party CPP and according to larger opposition groups was therefore shut down by the Ministry of Information. The radio station's manager denied the cancellation because of a letter from the Ministry of Information, but due to the management staff being incapable of handling a political show. An official of the ministry confirmed the station managers statement, saying " the ministry was unaware of the situation until the media called him up".

However, the director of the Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia, Koul Panha, said the cases of suspensions and cancellations could increase with national elections nearing, and the order from the ministry may not arrive as an official letter.

Further reading:

**Opposition program ordered off air in Siem Reap**

<http://www.thecambodiaherald.com/cambodia/detail/1?page=11&token=NjllOWIzYTAXNTk2YTE0OGJhMTIzYzIyM2NINzc0>

**Dream over for Siem Reap radio show**

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/2013012560976/National/dream-over-for-siem-reap-radio-show.html>

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**Prisoners win clemency for royal funeral**



Source: The Nation<sup>2</sup>

King Sihamoni has approved a request by Prime Minister Hun Sen to grant clemency to more than 500 prisoners for the royal funeral which will take place on February 1st. Overall 412 prisoners will be released and 89 will have their sentences reduced. Even two Thais sentenced for espionage will benefit from the clemency. One of them will see a six-month reduction in his sentence while the other one will be released immediately. The six-month reduction in yellow-shirt leader Veera Somkwamkid's jail term makes sure

he will stay in custody until the International Court of Justice has ruled in the Preah Vihear case which has led to fatal border clashes between Thailand and Cambodia. Cambodian authorities believe that, if Veera Somkwamkid would be released now, he might launch a rally to pressure Thai authorities over the case.

Opposition leaders and Cambodian rights groups were seeking clemency for famous opposition figures like exiled opposition leader Sam Rainsy, former radio station owner Mam Sonando, Khmer Civilization Foundation President Moeung Sonn and land activist Youm Bopha. Hun Sen and other government officials have frequently rejected calls to drop charges against Sam Rainsy and Mam Sonando during the cremation ceremony.

Further reading:

**More than 500 prisoners win clemency for royal funeral**

<http://www.thecambodiaherald.com/cambodia/detail/1?page=15&token=NDQzMzk0MjBhNzc4NDRmMzgZODRjM2Y2YzY4MmZk>

**Clemency a 'win-win' for Phnom Penh, Bangkok**

<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/politics/Clemency-a-win-win-for-P-Penh-Bangkok-30197699.html>

**Rong Chhun seeks clemency for opposition figures**

<http://www.thecambodiaherald.com/cambodia/detail/1?page=11&token=MGE4ZGY1YzY2NzNmMWE3NjZiYzUxNzYyNjUxMThi>

**Amnesty Sought for Four**

<http://www.rfa.org/english/news/cambodia/amnesty-01222013175052.html>

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.nationmultimedia.com/new/2013/01/11/politics/images/30197699-01\\_big.jpg](http://www.nationmultimedia.com/new/2013/01/11/politics/images/30197699-01_big.jpg)

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**ECCC complains of insufficient fundings**Source: Radio Netherlands Worldwide<sup>3</sup>

The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) also known as the Khmer Rouge tribunal hasn't paid about 300 Cambodian staff members salaries' since December. The tribunal calls to foreign aid donors for the contribution of additional funding. ECCC's spokesman, Neth Pheaktra said that \$9.3 million is needed for salaries and daily operating costs in 2013 for the Cambodian component of the operation. Currently the Cambodian part of the court falls short \$7 million in fundings

for the year 2013. So far only Japan has announced a \$ 2.5 million funding for the international part of the court.

Around 200 people of the Cambodian staff threatened to boycott work unless they are paid their salaries until January 31st. But observers say, they hope to see an increase in US support for the tribunal, as US Senator John Kerry is appointed for Secretary of State. Kerry is seen as the "key architect" of the hybrid court who helped broker compromises to reach a final agreement between the UN and Cambodia on how the court would work.

The court, which has spent more than \$160 million since its creation, has so far achieved just one conviction, sentencing a former S21 prison chief Kang Gech Eav to life in prison for overseeing the deaths of some 15,000 people. The tribunal is expected total costs of \$230.7 million by its anticipated conclusion in 2013.

Further Reading:**Japan announces \$2.5 mln for Khmer Rouge tribunal**

<http://www.thecambodiaherald.com/cambodia/detail/1?page=11&token=ZDQ4ZjhINzVhOWIwZjM0NDZhYTFkZTVjYTAyOTUz>

**Cambodia's Khmer Rouge tribunal says local staff will go without pay unless donors add funds**

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2013/01/18/cambodia-khmer-rouge-tribunal-says-local-staff-will-go-without-pay-unless/>

**Cambodia Khmer Rouge tribunal faces fund crunch**

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/a5b306fc-f936-4a89-9518-a119d709103f.aspx>

**No Funding Yet Found to Resolve Tribunal Staffing Crisis**

<http://www.voacambodia.com/content/no-funding-yet-found-to-resolve-tribunal-staffing-crisis/1590982.html>

**In Kerry Appointment, Hopes for More Tribunal Support**

<http://www.voacambodia.com/content/in-kerry-appointment-hopes-for-more-tribunal-support/1593104.html>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.rnw.nl/data/files/imagecache/must\\_carry/images/lead/ECCC\\_IJT.JPG](http://www.rnw.nl/data/files/imagecache/must_carry/images/lead/ECCC_IJT.JPG)