

NEWSLETTER
KAS
CAMBODIA OFFICE
36th EDITION
March 2012

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The following articles are a composition of last two weeks' (01.03.2013-14.03.2013) press releases in Cambodia. They give a review on current developments in the country.

Ieng Sary dead



Source: Voice of America¹

Ieng Sary, former Khmer Rouge Foreign Minister, has died in a hospital in Phnom Penh at the age of 87. He has been on trial in Case 002 for war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity since 2011. The second case of the Cambodian and United Nations tribunal is trying former leaders and high-level officials of the Khmer Rouge. The communist regime claimed it was building a pure socialist society by evicting people from cities to work in labour camps in the countryside. At

least 1.7 million people died in the Khmer Rouge's regime between 1975 and 1979 through executions, starvation, disease and overwork.

Ieng Sary co-founded the Khmer Rouge movement in the 1970s with his brother-in-law, Pol Pot. He was part of an inner circle of students who earned royal scholarships to study in France and was one of the founding member of the Marxist Circle of Khmer Students. After returning back to Cambodia Sary became a teacher holding a professorship in history and geography. In 1963 he became a full-rights member of the standing committee of the Workers Party of Kampuchea. Sary was announced as the Khmer Rouge's prime minister for foreign affairs in August of 1975. He helped persuade hundreds of Cambodian diplomats and intellectuals to return home from overseas to help the new revolutionary government. The returnees were sent to "re-education camps," and most were executed.

Co-prosecutor Chea Leang said in a hospital press conference that the octogenarians cause of death was "irreversible cardiac failure." No autopsy will take place, and hospital authorities have released the body to Sary's family for funeral services.

Further reading:

Ieng Sary dead

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/2013031461924/National/ieng-sary-dead.html>

Ieng Sary, Dead Before Justice Is Done

<http://rendezvous.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/03/14/ieng-sary-dead-before-justice-is-done/>

Khmer Rouge leader Ieng Sary dies

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/340462/khmer-rouge-leader-ieng-sary-dies>

¹http://gdb.voanews.com/0C4FB190-2ED1-45EB-BFBB-8A4BEEDB646C_mw1024_n_s.jpg

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Khmer Rouge's Ieng Sary Dies Amid Genocide Trial

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/khmer-rouge-insider-ieng-sary-dies-trial-18725321>

Ieng Sary, Khmer Rouge Leader Tied to Genocide, Dies at 87

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/15/world/asia/ieng-sary-khmer-rouge-leader-tied-to-genocide-dies-at-87.html?_r=0

"Historic" factory deal



Source: The Cambodia Herald²

Saramax, which supplies Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and the supplier of Swedish Hennes & Mauritz, New Archid, agreed to pay 145,000 \$ in back wages and benefits to about 200 workers at the Kingsland Garment factory in Phnom Penh, that closed unannounced in December 2012. Furthermore about 60,000 \$ are expected to be raised by a government-sanctioned auction of the company's assets.

Protests began at the factory, in Meanchey district, after the Hong Kong-based owners fled in late December last year. Owing to the fact of reduced production for several months, the owners left the workers without wages, seniority benefits and severance pay. During their protesting, the garment workers, that were mostly female, blocked National Road 2, slept outside the factory gates, in order to hold the machinery inside hostage and started a hunger strike. In addition they marched on the US and Swedish embassies and H&M's Phnom Penh office. "It's an enormous moment in Cambodia's labour history, brands sitting down with the poorest workers," American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS) country manager David Welsh said. "The \$200,000 has been secured and a committee will be established... to distribute this money." he added.

Further Reading:

"Historic" deal for workers

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/2013030461726/National/historic-deal-for-workers.html>

Wal-Mart and H&M Suppliers Pay Workers at Closed Cambodia Plant

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-03-02/wal-mart-and-h-m-suppliers-pay-workers-at-closed-cambodia-plant.html>

Walmart, H&M at table

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/2013030161688/National/walmart-h-m-at-table.html>

²http://www.thecambodiaherald.com/images/upload/cambodia/NTqwYjBiZDU0MGY2NDQ2NWM3NDg1MjI30GE4Yjg1/760_450/cambodian_factory_workers.jpg

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Cambodian activist Mam Sonando will be released from prison



Mam Sanando, journalist and owner of the independent radio station "Beehive", will be released Saturday 16th 2013 after the Appeal Court reduced a 20-year sentence as politically motivated. He was arrested on July 15th 2012 of leading a secessionist plot in Kratie province, where villagers had been protesting against evictions for a rubber plantation. The area was stormed by government forces in May last year and thousands of villagers were evicted, claiming they were doing so to

Source: Radio Free Asia³

halt a separatist movement. The forces opened a fire, though, by all accounts, villagers were unarmed. A 14-year-old girl was killed. A court judge said that Sonando had been instrumental in inciting villagers to try to form their own state in the eastern province.

Sonando is the president of the pro-democracy movement "Democrats Association" and a critic of Prime Minister Hun Sen. His radio station allows dissident opinions against the government.

"I won't speak now as I'm not yet free, but come see me in Kien Svay," he said, referring to his home that doubles as the headquarters of Beehive radio station.

Different donor countries, legal experts and human rights groups demanded for a scrutiny of the "Sonando-case". In November 2012 also US President Barack Obama urged that Mam Sanando had to be released, when he met Prime Minister Hun Sen.

Chan Sovann and Touch Rin also convicted alongside Sonando and sentenced to three and five years, respectively, saw their sentences reduced and will be released, too.

Further Reading:

Cambodia jails journalist Mam Sonando over 'plot'

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-19783123>

Cambodian activist Mam Sonando to be freed in days

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/mar/14/cambodian-activist-mam-sonando-freed>

Mam Sonando to be freed

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/2013031461925/National/mam-sonando-to-be-freed.html>

Sonando appeal begins

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/2013030661787/National/sonando-appeal-begins.html>

³<http://www.rfa.org/english/news/cambodia/charges-03072013171803.html/cambodia-mam-sonando-appeal-march-2013.jpg/@images/5b78663d-05a3-4da1-8d06-cdc5a37c3704.jpeg>

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Beat down of Boeung Kak protesters



Source: Bangkok Post⁴

The Cambodian police have beaten demonstrators who were marching toward the Prime Minister Hun Sen`s house to protest being evicted from their homes and to deliver a petition asking for the release of jailed activist Yorm Bopha. She had championed the right to housing for residents forcibly evicted from Boeung Kak Lake. In December 2012 a municipal court ordered her to serve three years in jail for committing "intentional violence" in connection with the beating of a suspected thief.

At least 10 people were seriously injured. The protests started in front of the Ministry of Justice, when no one from the ministry was willing to meet with the protesters, they marched towards the Prime Minister`s house on Sihanouk Boulevard. A clash ensued after they were confronted by about 200 police, military police, Daun Penh security guards and commune officials.

The protestors were residents of the Boeung Kak lake area in Phnom Penh. In 2007, the government awarded a \$79 million contract to the Chinese-Cambodian Shukaku Inc., owned Cambodian Peoples Party senator Lao Meng Khin, to develop Boeung Kak. The contract made the way for draining the lake and luxury residential development. Since 2008 the protests over Boeung Kak lake evictions have been ongoing.

The eviction of Boeung Kak`s neighborhood has drawn international attention. The U.N. `s expert on housing rights pointed out, that the evicted families from Boeung Kak can be seen as a prime example and that the World Bank needs to focus on human rights in its land sector programs.

Further Reading:

Beat down of Boeung Kak protesters

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/2013031461947/National/beatdown-of-boeung-kak-protesters.html>

Six Cambodians Injured in Capital Land Clash

<http://www.rfa.org/english/news/cambodia/clash-03132013184900.html>

World Bank`s Boeung Kak failure cited in UN report

<http://www.cambodiadaily.com/news/world-banks-boeng-kak-failure-cited-in-un-report-14120/>

New building on Boeung Kak draws ire

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/2013030161694/National/new-building-at-boeung-kak-draws-ire.html>

⁴<http://www.bangkokpost.com/media/content/20130313/481150.jpg>