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Funcinpec's Criticism of CPP Grows

BY LOR CHANDARA
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

Funcinpec President Prince Norodom Ranariddh, party lawmakers and Funcinpec officials have been speaking out against the government and the CPP recently, calling their coalition partner "unfair."

At least one Funcinpec official said that if Funcinpec officials do not make a stand now, before the national elections slated for July 2003, the party could be further marginalized.

The recent announcement by controversial Prince Norodom Chakrapong that he is founding the Norodom Chakrapong Khmer Spirit Party also threatens to divide Funcinpec, which experienced heavy losses during February's commune elections.

One Funcinpec lawmaker who recently took a stand against the CPP was Phan Chanta, who this week spoke out on the National Assembly floor and accused the CPP of buying votes during the commune elections.

Phan Chanta, known as an outspoken lawmaker, accused the CPP Tuesday of "breaching communal election laws by [bribing] voters within the banned 24 hours before the February 3, 2002, election."

His allegations against the CPP
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Explosive Growth in Siem Reap Not Enough

BY KAY KIMSONG
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

SIEM REAP - Hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, transportation companies and souvenir shops are going up by the day in Siem Reap as the tourism industry around Angkor Wat races to meet a growing demand for services.

Two five-star hotels, at least 20 three- or four-star hotels and 30 guesthouses are under construction and will open in the next few years, tourism officials said.

They had better hurry—the area currently has only half the guest rooms it needs to accommodate the estimated 600,000

tourists who will visit Angkor in 2003, said Kousoum Saroeun, director-general of the Ministry of Tourism.

As of early this year, Siem Reap town's hotels and guesthouses had a combined 3,000 rooms—not enough for the 480,000 tourists projected for 2002, Kousoum Saroeun said.

The problem will intensify next year. To house 600,000 tourists a year, a total of 6,000 guest rooms will be needed, he said.

"This means that this year we must build 3,000 hotel and guest-house rooms," Kousoum Saroeun said. But in the last three

years the number of guest rooms has only increased by an average 600 per year.

Tourism continues to grow rapidly in Cambodia, with the famous temples of Angkor the main attraction.

The country's tourism industry—considered its best hope for short-term economic growth—is projected to achieve yearly increases of 25 percent to 30 percent in coming years, said Thong Khon, a secretary of state for the Ministry of Tourism.

In the first four months of this year, 194,624 visitors came to

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Criticism...

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were the first accusations made against the ruling party inside the National Assembly since March, when the Funcinpec Congress was held and party leaders promised to speak out against the coalition government's senior partner.

Other Funcinpec members, however, have also spoken out recently against the CPP, but have used a much more subtle approach than Phan Chanta or the Sam Rainsy Party, which is known for its verbal attacks against the government.

Prince Ranariddh, for example, indirectly came out against the CPP last week during a legislative hearing on the postal service law. During that assembly discussion, he criticized the high costs of telephone calls in Cambodia, asking, "Why are phone costs getting so expensive in Cambodia if the air is free of charge?" But rather than making his own attack, the prince said an "old man" asked him the question.

Minister of Posts and Telecommunications So Khun, who is a CPP member, has been criticized for taking a monthly salary from MobiTel, the largest telephone company in the country.

In another instance, Funcinpec lawmaker Sok San reacted strongly Tuesday at the National Assembly after Finance Minister Keat Chhon credited the CPP for

making the commune elections possible.

Sok San demanded that Keat Chhon stop talking about the CPP's interests in parliament. CPP National Assembly First Deputy President Heng Samrin, however, disregarded Sok San and replied, "No, [Keat Chhon] was just describing the facts."

Heng Samrin serves as chairman of the National Assembly when Prince Ranariddh is absent during meetings.

From there, the argument gained momentum. Outspoken

Funcinpec lawmaker Nan Sy also jumped into the fray, saying that, "It's not a political party we should be grateful to for organizing the commune elections. It was the people who made it possible."

Nan Sy then criticized the government for discouraging foreign investors from doing business in Cambodia.

More substantially, Funcinpec members have drafted legislation calling for the restructuring of the National Election Committee recently, which is now being reviewed by the National Assembly's legislative commission.

The NEC bill was touted as "legally the strongest Funcinpec challenge to the CPP," according to the bill's author, Funcinpec lawmaker Keo Remy.

The NEC bill, among other things, challenged the partisan membership of the NEC.

When talking about lessons learned from the 2002 commune elections Tuesday, Prince Ranariddh said people didn't vote for Funcinpec because they believed "[Funcinpec] was too quiet. So we had better speak out."

NEWSMAKERS

■ Tomb raider **ANGELINA JOLIE** is back in Phnom Penh after the shooting of her most recent movie "Beyond Borders" in Thailand. The actress returned to Cambodia to finish the US visa application process for her adopted Cambodian child, **MADDOX**, Jolie said Tuesday. Authorities have completed a thorough investigation to ensure the child was in fact an orphan, and Jolie said she expected no problems with the rest of the procedure. Jolie, who is married to actor **BILLY BOB THORNTON**, will also spend time in Phnom Penh finding a home here where the child can spend part of his youth, she said. Maddox, 9 months old, is healthy, quiet and "curious," Jolie said. (*Brian Calvert*)

■ They would have loved to get the whole film, but the Cannes Film Festival audience in France was grateful enough to get 20 vivid minutes of "Gangs of New York," **MARTIN SCORSESE's** still unfinished epic. Scorsese brought along two of his stars, **LEONARDO DiCAPRIO** and **CAMERON DIAZ**, for Monday's preview of the 19th-century drama. Fans waved signs saying "Welcome, Leo!" The theater appeared to like what they saw: a huge period production with brawls, blood feuds and knife-throwing. They also saw an all-star cast that includes **LIAM NEESON**, **JIM BROADBENT** and—most notably—**DANIEL DAY-LEWIS**, lured out of semi-retirement. (*AP*)

Workers End Strike Despite Refusal to Rehire Activist

BY YUN SAMEAN
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

More than 1,500 striking garment factory workers returned to work Tuesday, ending a two-day walkout but leaving the rehiring of a fired union activist up in the air, officials from both sides said.

After a meeting between the factory owner and representatives of the workers, the Gen Non factory agreed to rehire Seang Chanda, 18, and let her resume work today, said Phourng Motry, spokesman for Free Trade Union of the Kingdom of Cambodia. Management also agreed to let workers end work at 3 pm on Saturdays, the union chief said.

But management still refuses to rehire union activist Yun Chany because she is too unruly, said Meon Sophal, a Free Trade representative at the factory.

In a temper tantrum, Yun Chany stepped on some of the clothes at the factory. Also unresolved is the issue of overtime bonuses, Meon Sophal said.

The workers walked off the job Monday morning over the overtime issue and firings, but returned later when management promised to negotiate, Meon Sophal said.

Seang Chanda was fired be-

cause she altered a company schedule, Meon Sophal said. The worker had asked for a full day off, but the company only gave her a half-day off. When Seang Chanda saw the schedule, she changed it, Meon Sophal said.

After the firings, the factory workers put their thumbprints on a petition asking to have the two workers rehired, Meon Sophal said. When management refused, they walked off the job.

Factory owner Gackay Mau acknowledged Tuesday that there was a strike but said it had been settled.

Management fired Yun Chany because she ruined very expensive clothing in the protest, Gen Non spokeswoman Hum Pesey said. But she said the company merely tried to transfer Seang Chanda to another section rather than fire her because she could not get along with her supervisor.

Hum Pesey also said the company wants to stop paying bonuses to new employees who miss more than 2 1/2 days in one pay period.

If the issues are not resolved quickly, workers could return to the picket lines, Meon Sophal said, calling the factory's actions "exploitation."

Growth...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Siem Reap—a 35 percent increase compared to the same period last year, said Koy Song, director of the provincial tourism office. More tourists came in those four months alone than over the entire year 2000.

Such an onslaught of eager visitors has overwhelmed Siem Reap, which, for all its money-making potential, still has the feel of a sleepy provincial town.

"The hotel industry and other [tourist] services need to rise to meet the level of demand," Thong Khon said.

In addition to the dearth of rooms, there is a shortage of skilled hotel workers. "Just because we have rooms does not necessarily mean we have guests," said Kham Phally, owner of the mid-range, 180-room Angkor Hotel.

"A good hotel operation needs good service. I teach my staff to always smile and to solve customers' problems quickly."

Siem Reap's 47 hotels currently employ about 1,800 workers, who make an average of \$60 a month, said Sam Heang, president of the newly formed national hotel association, which aims to coordinate tourism strategies and promote Cambodian hotels as a group.

Officials are also planning some new gimmicks to attract tourists. At the end of this year, the ministries of Tourism and Culture, the Apsara Authority and the Grand Hotel d'Angkor will stage a gala benefit concert featuring Spanish opera star Jose Carreras, one of the "Three Tenors" whose albums have sold millions of copies, according to Thong Khon.

Tickets to the high-profile event—1,000 already have been sold—cost \$1,500. Some \$250,000 of the profits expected to be generated by the concert will go to the Cambodian Red Cross and organizations that aid wildlife and land mine victims.

Prime Minister Hun Sen and Cambodian Red Cross President Bun Rany will attend the Dec 6 concert.

National Briefs

EU Pledges \$75 Million for Rural Development

More than \$75 million in European Union funds will be sent to Cambodia over the next three years to finance rural development, trade, education and health projects, a Reuters report said. The funds, announced by the EU May 17, will help Cambodia develop its food security, livestock rearing, fisheries development, water management, crop diversification, micro-enterprises, and vocational training and mine clearance, an EU statement said. It will also go toward technical assistance for the government as it pursues membership in the World Trade Organization and to meet commitments required by the Asean Free Trade Agreement, the statement said.

New Philippine Ambassador Presents Credentials

New Philippine Ambassador Voltaire Gazmin presented his credentials to King Norodom Sihanouk on May 15. He replaces the departed Francisco Atayde. Gazmin was a lieutenant general in the Philippine armed forces and most recently served as commanding general in the southern region of Luzon. His only prior diplomatic post was a stint as defense attache in the Philippine Embassy in the US from 1992 to 1994. After retiring from the armed services, "the president decided to give me the post. And like a good soldier, I followed the orders," Gazmin said. Anxious to adjust to life in Cambodia, Gazmin had his first Khmer language lesson on Monday. (David Shafel)

Cambodia's Oldest Couple Visit King and Queen

Sek Yi, who at 119 lays claim to being the world's oldest living person, and his 107-year-old wife spent last weekend in Phnom Penh as guests of King Norodom Sihanouk and Queen Norodom Monineath. The couple made the journey from their home in Kompong Cham province where Sek Yi fathered 12 children from two marriages. They had about 70 offspring who have produced about 420 great-grandchildren. Some of them accompanied the couple. The couple received gifts of rice, electric fans, a tape recorder, batteries, food and money. "Their majesties hope that this donation would make the two oldest people in Cambodia happy so that they can live longer," a palace official said. (AFP)

NATIONAL Briefing

4 Convicted of Burning Fisheries Office

A Battambang province court has convicted four fishermen of burning down a government fisheries office. The four men had been charged with arson and damage to property, and were sentenced last week to six months in prison. The four are Sok Sambo, 41, Pom Noeum, 45, Long Toan, 45 and Sorn Heang, 33, Battambang province Judge Pech Chhoeut said. On Dec 15, about 120 fishermen in Battambang's Kbal Toal floating village on the Tonle Sap lake set fire to the boat housing the village fisheries office. The fishermen said they had run out of patience after waiting months for new fishing grounds and were upset that their current fishing grounds were overgrown with aquatic vegetation. The four men have already served five months in jail and are therefore scheduled to be released in late June, the judge said. The convicts' families have agreed to repair the destroyed boat, Pech Chhoeut said. Another four fishermen, who remain at large, were sentenced in absentia to 12 months each in prison, the judge said. The verdict also ordered the four men now in prison to pay approximately \$700 to Battambang fisheries officials, Pech Chhoeut said. (Van Roeyn)

2 Students Knocked Out By Fireworks Blast

Two 12th-grade students were rendered unconscious and another 11 felt dizzying effects from smoke inhalation after another student lobbed fireworks into a crowded schoolroom at Indradev school in Tuol Kok district late last week, police said. The perpetrator was identified as 17-year-old Sann Narin, but no warrant has been issued for his arrest, said Tuol Kok District Police Chief Kim Houn. Instead, the officer said, the student's parents will be brought in for a conference at the police station. The two unconscious students were immediately sent to Calmette Hospital by the school director. Kim Houn said police confiscated several packages of Thai-made fireworks from a vendor's stall directly outside the school's gates, though the vendor was not arrested. (Phann Ana)

6 Felons in US To Return in Landmark Deal

By THET SAMBATH
AND MATT MCKINNEY
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The government agreed Tuesday to take six convicted felons from the US in a landmark deal that begins the eventual return of some 1,400 Cambodians, officials said.

No schedule has been set for the arrival of the first deportees, according to Cambodian government spokesman General Khieu Sopheak.

The agreement, reached Tuesday in a meeting between US Embassy charge d'affaires Alex Arvizu and co-Minister of Interior Sar Kheng, includes guarantees from the US not to send too many deportees at once, Khieu Sopheak said.

"Sar Kheng asked the US not to send hundreds of cases at one time, because we will have difficulty," he said.

The returnees will likely spend their first few days in Cambodia in a government center in Phnom Penh before they are relocated throughout the country to places where they may have friends or family members.

The returnees were kicked out of the US because they were convicted of an aggravated felony and never fulfilled the requirements for becoming US citizens. The names and criminal histories of the deportees have not yet been released.

Similar cases involving other countries have already led to thousands of deportations elsewhere, but extra consideration was required for Cambodia because many of the Cambodians living in the US arrived as refugees without paperwork or documentation of their home,

according to US Embassy spokesman Franklin Huffman.

A memorandum of understanding reached in March between the US government and the Cambodians established a method for handling each of the 1,400 Cambodians who qualified for deportation.

The government also asked that deportees have as much information as possible to explain where each of them comes from to make it easier to return them to their families' ancestral homes, Khieu Sopheak said.

Most of the deportees have spent decades living in the US after fleeing Cambodia at a young age, according to a human rights group in Washington.

The deportees will be given a small amount of financial aid from the US government when they return, Khieu Sopheak said.

Widow Appeals Case of Slain Funcinpec Activist

By YUN SAMEAN
AND DAVID KIHARA
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The widow of slain Funcinpec commune candidate Thon Phally is seeking to appeal the acquittal of two men, one of whom she claims to have seen kill her husband in November during a Kompong Cham province shooting spree that also left Sam Rainsy Party activist Phuong Sophat dead.

The killings took place during the violent months leading up to the February commune council elections. The court case against the pair and three other men convicted in May was seen as a step forward for those seeking justice in pre-election violence cases.

But despite widow Soy Tha's testimony in provincial court that

she saw Eang Veth, who was with another man named Lang Sarin, shoot her husband, the men were let off.

Two other suspects—military official Yun Tony and Chan Ratha, the deputy commander of submilitary region of Tbong Khmum district—were convicted in absentia and sentenced to 18 years.

Seng Sokim, deputy chief of Kompong Cham judicial police, said Tuesday that police are still investigating the case and suspect both Yun Tony and Chan Ratha of escaping to an area near Kompong Thom province.

Only Yun Samoeun was sentenced to eight years for his role in the shootings.

At Thon Phally's urging, the Kompong Cham provincial court will send an appeal to the appeals

court in Phnom Penh, a court official said Tuesday.

Kompong Cham provincial court Judge Khieu San said Tuesday that Soy Tha complained to the provincial court and the court is currently gathering evidence before they send an appeal to Phnom Penh. He did not go into detail why the provincial court is handling the appeal request, which is procedurally irregular.

Both Thon Phally and Phuong Sophat were killed in the same Srolop commune less than two hours apart. Human rights groups and the UN called the killings politically motivated and expressed displeasure with the court's verdict, saying at the time of the decision that justice had not been served.

TV5 Gains Rights for World Cup Coverage

By VAN ROEUN
AND NHEM CHEA BUNLY
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

TV5 has bought the rights to broadcast upcoming World Cup games from a Thai corporation, which authorities hope will be a boon to Cambodian football and television.

Under the agreement, announced at a news conference in Phnom Penh Tuesday, TV5 has the rights to broadcast 56 matches live and to rebroadcast from tape delay eight other matches, officials said.

The television station bought national broadcasting rights from

ML Business Co, Ltd, a Bangkok-based firm, with the help of Cambodian Samart, TV5 Deputy Director General Chen Marido said. Officials refused to discuss the terms of the buyout.

More Cambodian football fans will be able to stick with local programming as a result of the deal, Chen Marido said.

"Football is popular and developing in Cambodia. I hope the majority of the adults will watch the world football matches live on TV5," Chen Marido said.

The World Cup, football's biggest tournament, is held every four years. Nations compete for

months to qualify for the finals and it has a worldwide draw. This year's tournament is being played in both Japan and South Korea. The World Cup is scheduled to open May 31 and will conclude June 30.

TV5 will have an advantage in getting big ratings at home because Cambodia is only a few hours behind the host countries, Chen Marido said. Matches will just be getting under way in the evening here, which means fans can watch the tournament live in "prime time," Chen Marido said.

Cambodia will not be on the broadcast this year.

OPINION

Duties of Lawyers, Notaries Shouldn't Mix

As a member of the Bar Council, I think it is vitally important to address something that is never written about in the newspapers, but is the cause of controversy among Cambodian lawyers, especially in the Cambodian Bar Association.

Currently, in Cambodia, the notary profession does not exist. Notary duties are now performed by lawyers, although it is an incompatible relationship.

In some countries, such as Vietnam, notaries are civil servants who come under the au-

thority of the Ministry of Justice. This is far different from the status of a lawyer, which is fully independent of a government's execu-

**Letter
to the Editor**

tive and judicial powers because of a lawyer's need to represent a client in full objectivity.

In other countries, such as France, notaries are a part of an independent profession.

The notary fulfills his function in a state-regulated and controlled scope, and is delegated by the government to perform a public

responsibility. The notary authenticates contracts under a government seal on behalf of the government.

A notary is different from a lawyer because the notary must act as a neutral adviser to all or both parties. A lawyer is inevitably partial, supporting one of the parties.

I invite parliament to examine this matter, make all needed decisions and take action.

Dr Bin-Heng Paul, attorney
Member of the Bar Council