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CAMBODIA, INDONESIA SATISFIED WITH BILATERAL TRADE GROWTH

Cambodia and Indonesia have expressed their satisfaction with the steady growth of bilateral trade, which exceeded US\$1 billion in 2023, and agreed to expedite the conclusion of a bilateral MoU on Rice Trade.

The satisfaction was highlighted during the 5th Meeting of the Cambodia-Indonesia Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation (5th JCBC), held in Phnom Penh on 21 August under the co-chairmanship of H.E. SOK Chenda Sophea, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International

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MINISTER OF COMMERCE SIGNIFIES ROLE OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN TRADE

The Minister of Commerce has stressed the importance of women's perspectives in the trade sector, allowing a more effective exchange of knowledge and experience.

H.E. Ms. Cham Nimul, Minister of Commerce, made the note while presiding over a workshop on SheTrade Outlook Validation at Hyatt Regency Phnom Penh Hotel on 26 August.

Representatives of relevant government agencies, embassies, and development partners joined the workshop co-organised by the Ministry of Commerce and International Business Centre and supported by the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom.

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CAMBODIA AND PHILIPPINES AGREE TO BOOST TIES AT JOINT COMMISSION MEETING



Cambodia will host the Fifth Meeting of the Cambodia-Philippines Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation (JCBC) in Cambodia in 2026.

The schedule was agreed during the Fourth JCBC Meeting, held in Manila, the Philippines from 27 to 28 August.

The 4th JCBC meeting was co-chaired by Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister H.E. SOK Chenda Sophea, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and H.E. Enrique A. Manalo, Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines.

According to the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, at the JCBC meeting, the two sides expressed deep satisfaction with progress in bilateral cooperation since the Third Meeting in 2021 and committed to further enhancing relations in multiple fields.

On political cooperation, both sides underscored the benefit of frequent exchanges of visits and engagements between their executive and legislative bodies, and recalled the strategic importance of two meetings between Samdech Thipadei and H.E. President Marcos over the past year.

On defence and security cooperation, the ministers applauded the productive Third Meeting of the Cambodia-Philippines Joint Defence Cooperation Committee last year and agreed to enhance information sharing and capacity building as well as the existing good cooperation in fighting transnational crimes, particularly trafficking in persons.

On economic cooperation, the two sides acknowledged vast potential and opportunities and agreed to increase trade and investment by encouraging business-to-business contacts and trade fairs. They also discussed ways to boost trade in rice and other commodities and develop agricultural businesses.

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Cooperation of Cambodia, and H.E. Ms. Retno L.P. Marsudi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, according to a press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

The Ministers emphasised the importance of food security, and affirmed commitment to expedite the implementation of the MoU on Agricultural Cooperation, signed in September 2023, and the signing of the MoU on Cooperation on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

To improve connectivity and facilitate economic and cultural exchanges, both sides concurred to endeavour for more direct flights between tourist cities of the two countries, conclude at the earliest an MOU on Cultural Cooperation, renew Sister-Province cooperation between Siem Reap and Central Java and establishment Sister City relationship between Phnom Penh and West Sumatra.

To further promote inbound and outbound investment, the Meeting agreed to expand cooperation between the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) and the Indonesian Ministry of Investment. The Meeting also welcomed the intention of the Indonesian company Perum BULOG to develop agricultural business, namely rice mills and warehouses.

On Political Cooperation, both sides applauded several joint activities conducted to commemorate the 65th Anniversary of the Establishment of Cambodia-Indonesia Diplomatic Relations this year.

The Ministers stressed the importance of maintaining and promoting frequent interactions

of the executive and legislative bodies of the two countries at all levels, and also highlighted the strategic significance of the exchanges among top leaders, including two recent meetings between Samdech Thipadei Prime Minister HUN Manet and H.E. President Joko Widodo in Jakarta in 2023 and in Melbourne this year.

On defense and security cooperation, the Ministers highly appreciated and agreed to continue ongoing productive engagements, including Army-to-Army Talks, scholarship and training and other exchange activities such as the recent port call by Indonesian Navy Training Ship KRI Bima Suci with 212 crews at Sihanoukville port from 16 to 19 August 2024. The Ministers reaffirmed commitment to enhance the existing good cooperation in fighting transnational crimes, particularly trafficking in person by effectively and fully implementing relevant instruments under bilateral and ASEAN frameworks

The Meeting had an extensive deliberation on other key areas of cooperation including energy, ICT, health, cooperation in river basin management, industrial cooperation, cooperation on digitalization, and labour and vocational training.

Sharing the view on the crucial importance of peace for socio-economic development, both sides touched on some regional and international issues. The Ministers underscored the importance of strengthening the ASEAN centrality and unity in engaging with external partners through ASEAN-led mechanisms and reaffirmed the commitment to the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific as a guide for ASEAN's engagement in the Asia-Pacific and the Indian Ocean regions. The Ministers also affirmed resolve to enhance mutual support and cooperation on international stage.

The meeting was concluded with the signing of the Agreed Minutes of 5th JCBC Meeting. The 6th Meeting of the JCBC will be held in Indonesia in 2026.

During her stay in Cambodia, H.E. Ms. Retno L.P. Marsudi called on Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei HUN Manet, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, and H.E. Prak Sokhonn, First Vice President of the Senate.

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On tourism and cultural exchanges, both sides noted with satisfaction increased tourism and agreed to jointly promote tourist destinations, establish more direct flights and finalise the implementation programme for the MoU on Tourism Cooperation for 2024-2028. They also agreed to expedite the renewal of the Agreement on Prevention of Looting and Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property.

On labour and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), the two sides agreed to renew the Memorandum of Agreement in the Field of Labour and looked forward to the signing of an MoU on cooperation in TVET.

The meeting held extensive deliberations in other fields including health, information and communication technology, environment, connectivity, transport, housing, urban development and planning, civil service, and media and information.

The two ministers exchanged views on regional and international developments of common interest and concern. They emphasised shared resolve to contribute to global and regional peace, security and stability, and committed to continue strengthening coordination and support for each other in regional and international fora.

The meeting concluded with the signing of Agreed Minutes of the Fourth JCBC Meeting.

Besides the meeting, DPM H.E. SOK Chenda Sophea paid an official visit to the

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INVESTMENT LANDSCAPE FLOURISHES UNDER 7TH MANDATE GOVERNMENT

The remarkable surge in investment activities in Cambodia during the first year of the 7th mandate Royal Government reflects a growing confidence among investors in the country's economic stability and future prospects.

The Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) has reported a significant increase in the number and value of investment projects approved during this period.

Those investments are in key sectors such as manufacturing, tourism, agriculture and real estate. In the first eleven months, between August 2023 and July 2024, CDC registered 237 investment projects worth more than US\$6 billion.

This positive trend is attributed to a combination of government policies that promote business development, infrastructure improvement, and a favourable

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MINISTER OF COMMERCE SIGNIFIES ROLE OF WOMEN ...



Addressing the ceremony, the Minister said that this workshop is a valuable forum for exchanging knowledge, experience, and excellence related to women's entrepreneurship in the field of the business sector. It is an important event for Cambodia, and it shows a joint commitment to promote gender equality in the business sector, which can examine data gaps and identify areas that are essential for inclusive policy reform.

Her Excellency continued that the Royal Government of Cambodia pays close attention to and has set out the National Policy on Labor 2015-2025 and the Cambodian Digital Economy and Social Policy Framework 2021-2025, which has a mechanism to address gender inequality by promoting equal opportunities and access to decent work between men and women, as well as empowering women to actively participate in the digital economy.

In addition to these policies, the Minister emphasized that the Ministry of Commerce has been actively playing a role in creating a fair

business environment and supporting both men and women by providing various training and education programs to help women achieve their goals in business and promoting policies that recognize and appreciate women's achievements. In addition, the Ministry of Commerce has launched several specific programs, such as the Women Entrepreneurship Development Program, which provides training, mentoring, and financial support to women entrepreneurs in various fields, including trade.

Before concluding, she added that to address the challenges and promote the economic empowerment of women, we need to implement a comprehensive strategy, including: (1). Increase financial inclusion for women entrepreneurs through the provision of targeted loan programs, the provision of microfinance institutions and the provision of financial literacy training to women (2). Policy reforms are necessary to promote gender equality in trade, including measures to combat violence and discrimination against women (3). Investing in skills development programs for women with a focus on business-related areas such as business management, export procedures, and digital literacy is essential; and (4). Promoting mentorship and networking opportunities will help women in business connect with role models and build support networks.

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Philippines, at the invitation of his Philippine counterpart H.E. Enrique A. Manalo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines.

During the meeting, H.E. Sok Chenda Sophea paid a courtesy call on H.E. President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. The exchange of views with the President covered many areas, including increasing air connectivity, bilateral trade, investment, and tourism.

H.E. President Marcos expressed his strong desire to forge stronger ties with Cambodia and looked forward to his next engagement with Samdech Thipadei Prime Minister HUN Manet.

H.E. SOK Chenda Sophea also called on Philippine Vice President H.E. Ms. Sara Duterte. The two sides held cordial talks on enhancing ties between Cambodia and the Philippines and many aspects of bilateral cooperation.

Prior to this meeting, the Cambodian DPM visited the Rizal Monument and laid a wreath in honour of the Philippine national hero José Rizal.

BRITISH NEWSPAPER PRAISES TECO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Popular British newspaper The Sun has heaped praise on Phnom Penh's upcoming Techo International Airport – calling it a 'massive new airport' that will be the 'the ninth largest airport in the world when it opens.'

The feature, published on the 27th of August, says that 'A massive new airport is opening in a destination often overlooked by Brits, despite being sandwiched by two popular holiday hotspots.

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INVESTMENT LANDSCAPE FLOURISHES UNDER 7TH ...

investment climate, said Mr. Lim Heng, Vice-President of the Cambodia Chamber of Commerce.

"The government's unwavering commitment to economic development and its efforts to create a conducive business environment have played a pivotal role in attracting investors," he stressed. "With trade pacts bilaterally and multilaterally coupled with trade preference schemes, we are confident that Cambodia will continue to be a preferred destination for investment in the region."

The Royal Government's efforts to enhance the country's investment climate have also been instrumental in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI).

These initiatives include the establishment of special economic zones, the simplification of administrative procedures, and the provision of incentives for investors.

With continued government support and a favourable business environment, Cambodia is well-positioned to achieve sustainable economic growth and development, Mr. Lim Heng added.

"The first year of the 7th mandate government has been marked by a significant increase in investment activities in Cambodia. This positive trend reflects the country's growing economic potential and the confidence that investors have in its future," he said.

Prime Minister Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet's official overseas visits have been made not only to build diplomatic ties with foreign countries, but also to promote the country's investment and business environment and to attract investment to Cambodia.

BRITISH NEWSPAPER PRAISES TECHO ...



Cambodia is often forgotten about with holidaymakers from the UK, who opt for the nearby Thailand for their long-haul holiday instead.'

However, Travel Editor Kara Godfrey says that 'This could soon change thanks to a huge international airport set to open in the country.'

She notes that 'the 280million sq. ft airport will have four floors and a huge central passenger terminal.

Along with 22 gates – that can fit up to 40 aircraft – there will also be a huge central garden.

And a pretty roof canopy with "structural trees" will tower 85ft over the airport.'

In addition, the paper notes that five of the world's 'most travelled' people who have visited every single country 'rated Phnom Penh, in Cambodia, as being the best value for money, where you can experience local attractions such as Wat Phnom Temple for as little as £1.'

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR ANGKOR 1 DAY TICKETS TO BE EASED

The Angkor Institute has decided to eliminate tourist information requirements such as photos, nationality, age and gender for one-day Angkor entry tickets, which will be implemented from the end of September 2024, to boost tourism.

The decision was made at a meeting of the Board of Directors of Angkor on August 27, 2024 under the chairmanship of Mr. Aun Porn Moniroth, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Economy and Finance to make it easier for tourists.

The meeting decided as follows:

1. For one-day tickets: Decide to eliminate the tourist information needs such as photos, nationality, age group and gender every time foreign tourists buy Angkor tickets from Angkor from the end of September 2024 onwards.



2. For 3-day and 7-day tickets: Continue to apply guest photography requirements for tickets until the end of 2024.

3. Modify the sophisticated control system: Reduce the checkpoints at the four entrances and keep the checkpoints only at the temple entrances.

4. Agree to Angkor Institute to develop information technology system for card sales: Using Self-Service Machine and developing Mobile App and promoting electronic payment.

5. Angkor Institutions need to study the provision of hand-worn ticket forms to make it easier for visitors to check-in.

6. Establish a joint working group to review and study the reform of the sale of Angkor tickets in the second phase to study and launch the reform of Angkor tickets in the sale of tickets as a group of temples, implemented from January 1, 2025 onwards.