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## Australia's Frigate HMAS Anzac to Visit Cambodia

The frigate HMAS Anzac of Australia is visiting Sihanoukville from Oct. 18-20, as part of its flagship regional engagement activity, Indo Pacific Endeavour 2021 (IPE21).

This is the first Royal Australian Navy ship visit to Cambodia since 2016 and will be a contactless visit due to COVID-19, according to the Embassy of Australia in Phnom Penh.

HMAS Anzac brings personal protective equipment (PPE) and other COVID-19 related medical supplies to support Sihanoukville province and the Royal Cambodian Armed Force's (RCAF) fight against COVID-19, it added.

"The visit also provides an opportunity for us to build our practical naval cooperation and exchange ideas on women peace and security through a virtual seminar to be held during the visit," the embassy underlined. "We thank Cambodia for facilitating this visit in the midst of ongoing COVID-19 logistical challenges."



## Samdech Techo PM Highlights Key Strategic Actions Against COVID-19



Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia has highlighted Cambodia's key strategic actions against COVID-19 pandemic to international community.

"For Cambodia, we have responded to this crisis energetically with a comprehensive strategy. In the fight against COVID-19, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has identified vaccination as a key strategic measure, combined with three other measures including: (1) preventing and detecting infections in a timely manner, (2) strengthening the capacities for effective treatment and use of drugs and (3) thoroughly

implementing administrative, health and legal measures, as well as attracting active participation from the public from all walks of life," he underlined in his written address at the virtual Global COVID-19 Summit, hosted by H.E. Joe Biden, President of the United States of America.

Concerning the socio-economy, the Royal Government has already introduced nine rounds of intervention measures to help stabilize businesses and the livelihood of citizens, especially workers-employees, poor families, as well as those vulnerable from the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, he said.

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## EU to Provide US\$17 Million for Cambodia's Rural Infrastructure Development

The European Union through Europe Investment Bank (EIB) will provide €15 million grant (approximately US\$17 million) for rural infrastructure development in Cambodia.

The grant is part of the project to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Assets for Agriculture Markets, Business and Trade (SAAMBAT), according to recent press release.

SAAMBAT is a €105 million (approximately US\$120 million) partnership investment made by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the EIB and the Royal Government of Cambodia.

It is designed to improve living standards and the ease of doing business for some 200,000 rural Cambodian families by creating a reliable and safer road network year-round, better rural infrastructure and a reliable food supply.

The SAAMBAT project will finance improvements in road infrastructure, road safety and the country's resilience to natural hazards, and support the development of key rural infrastructure such as local markets. These are vital for Cambodia, where two-thirds of all rural households face seasonal food shortages every year due to underdeveloped infrastructure.

The project will also create up to 4,500 jobs and 500 new small and medium-sized enterprises, and train 25,000 Cambodians to use digital technologies to improve their businesses and increase trade.

With Team Europe and IFAD investments and grants, and funds from the Royal Government, Cambodia will build some 650 kilometres of paved road and 150 kilometres of gravel road, and improve 50 rural market areas and about 25 other value chain logistics facilities.

H.E. Hem Vandy, Secretary of State, Ministry of Economy and Finance of the Kingdom of Cambodia said the grant resources are an important contribution to the rapid and sustainable development of rural communities in Cambodia and to the green recovery from the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Head of Cooperation at the EU Delegation to Cambodia Bryan Fornari said that with 105 million Euro of investment in Cambodia, SAAMBAT will help farmers and rural families to have better access to markets, supporting the growth of SMEs in the agriculture sector.

"This will contribute to the growth of rural economy and create new job opportunities in Cambodia's countryside. Through our work with European Investment Bank, this project brings the spirit of Team Europe to our partnership with the Royal Government of Cambodia, together with IFAD," he said.

The project will be financed by a US\$53.3 million loan and a US\$1.2 million grant from IFAD, a €65.2 million loan from the EIB and a US\$12.41 million contribution from the Royal Government of Cambodia.

## At least five Cambodian artifacts from England returned to Cambodia

At least five Cambodian artefacts handed over by the family of the late antique collector Douglas Latchford will be returned to Cambodia yesterday (29 SEP), Ministry of Culture and Fine arts said.

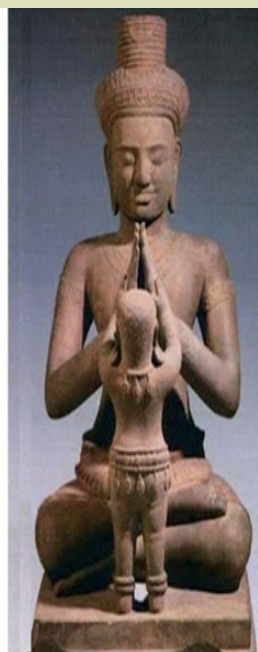
In a statement issued today (30 SEP), the ministry said "In this initial stage, five Khmer masterpieces, including a stone sculpture of Shiva and Skanda, originally from Koh Ker, a half male half female statue and a bronze boat prow will be returned from the United Kingdom to their homeland Cambodia on 29 September 2021."

Earlier this year, the ministry said over 100 Khmer cultural objects in stone, as well as numerous other Khmer cultural properties, will be shipped to Cambodia following the parties having signed an agreement on September 18 last year.

After three years of negotiations, the family of Latchford decided to give his entire extraordinary collection of Cambodian antiquities back to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Latchford passed away last year at the age of 89 and was alleged to have acquired ancient artifacts through Cambodian and Thai smugglers as far back as the 1950s and 1960s.

The five antiquities will be stored at the National Museum in Phnom Penh for experts to evaluate, clean, repair and install necessary pedestals for an official handover ceremony by the government.





## Cambodia, Australia Collaborate in Promoting Agri-Food Investments

The Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) this morning (29 SEP) organised a virtual signing ceremony of the MoU on financing arrangements to operationalise the Agri-Food Investment Desk (AFID) at the CDC in the framework of the Cambodia-Australia Agriculture Value Chain Programme (CAVAC).

The ceremony was presided over by H.E. Sok Chenda Sophea, Minister Attached to the Prime Minister and Secretary General of the CDC and H.E. Pablo Kang, Australian Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia, with the participation of the AFID Desk's focal persons.

This signing ceremony marks a milestone in reaffirming joint commitment of the CDC, the MAFF, and the DFAT to promote particularly investments in agri-food to contribute to sustain food safety, poverty reduction through job creation, economic growth and environmental sustainability, pointed out a CDC's press release.

This MoU will serve as an important instrument to bring about more investment, promote agri-food development and to enhance competitiveness in the agriculture sector, it said, adding that the activation of the Agri-food Investments Desk at the CDC will enable stronger foundation for a resilient agri-food sector in Cambodia through investment diversification in terms of resources and level of technology and innovation usage while creating higher value-added employment for Cambodians in the agri-food sector.

H.E. Sok Chenda Sophea expressed his deep gratitude to the DFAT via the Australian Embassy in Cambodia for its technical assistance to the CDC and the MAFF to undertake investment promotion activities under the CAVAC programme. In addition, he gave his high appraisal to the Australian Embassy in Cambodia for her role in providing technical assistance to accelerate the recovery of Cambodia's economy in the Post COVID-19 new normal transition.

Moreover, the new Law on Investment of the Kingdom of Cambodia will provide smart incentives scheme for investment made in different sectors while the agriculture and agri-food have been classified as priority sectors that shall be further promoted to ensure that these sectors will be resilient and sustainable enough to contribute to economic stability amid the COVID-19 crisis.

H.E. Pablo Kang highlighted the Government of Australia's commitment to support Cambodia's economic development process, especially the enhancement of productivity in the agriculture sector by way jointly promote investment in the agri-food sector. This financing arrangement is one more step in reinforcing Australian contribution aimed at complementing the Royal Government's efforts to promote, attract, and retain investments in agriculture, agri-business and agri-food sectors.

As of August 2021, the CDC has approved some 376 projects for investments in the agriculture and agro-industry sector amounted to nearly US\$9.7 billion.

## Samdech Techo PM.....

As a result of the aforementioned efforts, Cambodia has become a country with a high vaccination rate.

From February 10 to October 3, Cambodia has vaccinated a total of 13,441,093 of its citizens, including members of the diplomatic corps and expatriates working and living in Cambodia against COVID-19.

In addition, on Sept. 17 2021, the RGC decided to launch the vaccination campaign for children aged 6 to 12 and the booster shot vaccination campaign for all citizens aged 18 and above. On this basis, Cambodia has been gradually achieving the herd immunity as the cases of infection, illness and death have been declining remarkably.

For the way forward, Cambodia will continue to implement the measures of prevention, treatment and vaccination, as well as preparing a comprehensive risk-assessment framework to re-open full socio-economic activities, on a step-by-step approach and in a vigilant manner. Moreover, the RGC will continue to promote investments in the social sector, especially the strengthening of social protection and health systems, so as to respond timely and effectively to any pandemic that may happen in the future, he mentioned.

## Sustainability Selected as Theme for Cambodian Pavilion at Dubai Expo 2020

Cambodia, as a member of the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), has been participating in the Dubai Expo 2020, taking place from Oct. 1, 2021 to Mar. 31, 2022 in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates.

The two-storey Cambodian national pavilion was designed according to the Khmer style by mixing key historical eras including pre-Angkorian, Angkorian, Longvek or Oudong, and Chaktomuk or current Phnom Penh. The Dubai Expo 2020 is expected to welcome 25 million visitors.

