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Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia

Sīla Samādhi Paññā

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Buddhist Honorary Title Conferment Ceremony



Remarks by Dr. Kol Pheng. (Photo PUC)

Committed to the highest quality education which is embedded in its motto, Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia (PUC) has created many institutions over the year to enhance students' learning and to accommodate human resource development and capacity building in Cambodia and the region. With the guidance of PUC's motto, Sīla Samādhi Paññā, inspired by the teaching of Lord Buddha, PUC aims to nurture more than students' academic success, but also their good character, social responsibility and, above all, compassion. With such a commitment, Buddhist teaching is a perfect vehicle to reach out to students to show their compassion, their talents, their individualism, and their collective leadership.

To this end, the PUC Buddhist Academy is dedicated to spread the teaching of Lord Budda to students, faculty, and the general public through different media including radio broadcasts, publications and academic studies. In support of its commitment, PUC cel-

ebrated a ceremony on January 26, 2014 to inaugurate the Tripitaka Commentaries in Pali, which were newly developed and published by the PUC Buddhist Academy. "The Khmer translated Tripikata Commentaries in Pali will exist in the world after publication," said Dr. Kol Pheng, PUC President and Founding father. There are in total 50 series of tripitaka commentaries which were carefully verified. With help from the Corporate Buddha Educational Foundation in Taiwan, over fifty thousand books were published. These will be distributed to local pagodas and international libraries. "The books will be useful resources to the next generation for further study and research," added Dr. Kol. As part of the ceremony, PUC also conferred Budhhist Honorary titles to over 100 Buddhist Masters who have devoted all of their lives to teach Buddhism and have contributed their knowledge of Buddhist Teaching to Cambodian society, both in the country and abroad.

NakruSothormmea MOM Sokheng, a Buddhist laywoman on radio FM106.25 in Siem Reap commented that she was very glad to be offered the books. She was very proud that Cambodia has the Tripitaka Commentaries Pali translated and these are important especially to the Buddhist followers who wish to delve into more research.

Collecting Trash from the river in Kampot, Cambodia, by ZenTrips*

One hundred students of Environmental Sciences from Paññsastra University of Cambodia (PUC), moved along with their teachers on July 16, 2014 to Kampot province where they were picking up trash from Kampot River and giving talks to the public about the importance of protecting the environment.



PUC students were collecting trash from the river in Kampot. (Photo ZenTrips)

The aim of this action was to sensitize about the harms of throwing trash to the river for the people's health and for the environment. Unfortunately there is very little environmental awareness in Cambodia yet, as well as about the benefits of living in a clean environment. While it is true that a large part of the problem is the lack of infrastructure for waste management, there is also a work to be done for raising awareness, starting with education on hygiene and health related with garbage and water pollution.

Hence the enormous importance of these actions in a country where life expectancy at birth is 11 years shorter than in Spain and where infant mortality is 13 times higher (source: World Bank), caused mainly by diseases such as diarrhea and cholera transmitted by contaminated water consumption according to UNICEF.

Kampot is a small town which river flows into the Gulf of Thailand's sea. The ecosystem of its coastal area consists of mangrove and seagrass beds, fragile ecosystems fundamentals to the local economy, mainly based on fishing. That is why this town was selected this year for the environmental awareness action by PUC, where Environment is a compulsory subject included in all Bachelors for educating students on these important issues.

Tim Sretom and Sorn Sokhret are some of the students that explained their project with enthusiasm while collecting floating garbage from the river. Sokhret and his team had just given a talk to a group of people who were sitting under a tree along the riverside. Even at first these people were laughing at them and their initiative, their spirits did not flag and were confident that eventually they will understand the benefits of keeping the environment clean.

"The goal of this action is to promote environmental awareness, collect trash and explain to people that polluting the water can affect their health". Sretom told us her concern about the lack of awareness for the categorization of different types of trash and also the lack of infrastructures to collect and selective treatment of them.

Ecologically it is considered that the trash should not exist, because in nature everything produced and created is reintegrated to the environment. That is why recycling and reuse techniques are recommended for trash. Those wastes that cannot be reinstated to the production cycle should be addressed to avoid damaging the environment, especially those highly dangerous or unhealthy wastes.

Students who participated in this action later met with 200 other students from Kampot schools to discuss these issues.

*ZenTrips strongly supports these initiatives and congratulates these young Cambodians and their teachers for their enthusiasm on their environmental awareness tasks in Cambodia.

PUC Conference Examines the Roles of Cambodian Youth and Online Media



Remarks by Dr. Raymond Leos (Photo PUC)

On Saturday, January 11, 2014 at Srey Dim Conference Hall, the PUC Faculty of Communications and Media Arts, with support from the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh hosted a day-long conference, "Social Media and Cambodian Youth: Where Are We Now and Where Are We Going?"

The conference brought together speakers from the sectors of education, media, NGOs, and private sectors to engage in panel discussions on a wide range of issues related to online and social media and its impact on Cambodian youth, now and in the future.

Roundtable discussions were held on such topics as the growth of Facebook and other social media platforms such as Twitter, social media and journalism, the increased use of social media for business, and a concluding discussion on the future of social media in Cambodia.

Anne Elizabeth Moore, a Fulbright Senior Specialist and Professor from the School of the Art Institute in Chicago (USA) served as a moderator and speaker in two of the roundtable discussions. Prof. Moore, who is also a noted writer and scholar on media and gender issues, spent six weeks at PUC as a scholar in residence in the Faculty of Communications and Media Arts, where she assisted with curriculum development and taught a five week tutorial in alternative publishing for fourth year PUC mass media and journalism students.

According to Dr. Raymond Leos, Dean and Professor in the PUC Faculty of Communications and Media Arts, changes in demography and technology have altered the behavior of Cambodian media consumers, with youth increasingly using social media platforms to share news and information. According to a recent World Bank study, Cambodia ranks among the most youthful countries in the Asia Pacific region, with over 60 percent of the population under the age of 24.

"Cambodian youth have created a new demand for media content and accessibility", stated Dr. Leos. "They are constantly seeking alternatives to the content that traditional media outlets (Radio/ Television / Print Media) currently provide."

Dr. Leos noted that because of the increased use of online media, young Cambodian consumers can access media anywhere, anytime, through laptops and smart phones. "They participate and engage in information sharing and actively give feedback and comments in real time, and they can even help traditional media by becoming citizen journalists.", Dr. Leo added.

Internet penetration in the country continues to increase, with over 3 million internet users as of this past year, a 60 percent increase from 2012. Mobile phone subscribers also continue to increase, and today nearly 90 percent of the population has a mobile phone. About 40 percent of those users have a type of smart phone. Many of these smart phone users are also in their twenties or younger.

Shortage and Deficient Textbooks, Rising Concern for Future Education

Textbooks are manuals that not only contain factual information but also interactive spaces to engage with the readers. This is especially important to children who need to familiarize themselves with books and enhance their reading capacity. As a result, textbooks should be kept in place ready for students to learn with their teachers. With the "New Curriculum" methodology supported by the government, textbooks play a critical role in helping implement this curriculum, affirmed on January 23, 2014 during a live-broadcast at Voice of Democracy (VOD) by Mr. Keo Phirom, a teacher and member of Cambodia's Independent Civil-Servants Association (CICA). "Students can learn from textbooks at home instead of relying entirely on teachers.", she added.

Proper distribution of textbooks to students, in particular to the secondary school, still encounters many ongoing issues such as shortage of textbooks, deficient textbooks and late deliveries of textbooks. According to an investigation of 33 high schools by two NGOs, Khmer Institute for National Development (KIND) and Affiliated Network Social Accountability-East Asia and the Pacific (ANSA-EAP), many textbooks funded by ADB and intended for delivery to secondary schools were found instead putting on sale in the market. Mr. Rong Chhun, President of the Cambodian Independent Teachers Association (CITA), stated that this illegal action must be addressed immediately and officials who commit such action must be held responsible.

Besides the delay in textbook deliveries, ANSA-EAP conducted a study that shows textbooks distributed to students are poor in spelling and content, deficient for students to adapt, and often arrive after the school year is finished. "This does not bring quality or comprehensive learning to students." said Mr. San Chey, country representative from ANSA-EAP in the VOD live-broadcast. Poor performance by students and low capacity of reading can result from such issues. Education Minister Hang Chuon Naron told VOA on December 31, 2013 that actions taken to address these issues are being put in place to improve monitoring and distribution of books. Based on the newest study, in order to rectify the shortage of textbooks, up to \$7 million per year needs to be added to textbook spending. A serious measure tackling the illegal sale of textbook in the market, together with improvement on book deliveries, can enhance the learning quality of students in the secondary schools.

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The 6th commencement ceremony



Dr. Kol Pheng taken photo with graduates. (Photo PUC)

Sitting in a chair wearing a graduation dressing gown, a young lady in her thirties smiled and said "I am so excited to be here on this occasion; especially because my family—my husband and my one year-old daughter—are here for me." Ms. Bun Rachana is a graduate student receiving her Master's in Business Administration, and is also a staff member at an organization. She stated that studying at PUC gave her knowledge. She commented that the professors were qualified and the curriculum is excellent so that it was worth her effort to fulfill the university requirements. PUC was the best choice for her, she added.

The 6th commencement ceremony of Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia (PUC) was held on May 24, 2014, under the high Patronage of H.H. Samdech Preah Abhisiri Sugandha Mahasangharajah Dhipati Bour Kry, who is The Samdech Preah Mahasangharajah of Dhammayuttikanikaya of the Kingdom of Cambodia; and H.R.H. Norodom Arunrasmy, Privy Council of H.M. the King of Cambodia. PUC was established in 2000 with a vision to play an active role in the building process for future generations, and a mission to build capacity for a better life with education as the foundation of sustainable development.

Currently, PUC has an enrollment of 23,600 students (including the Battambang and Siem Reap branches) of which 9,400 are females. Out of this number, 13,900 students are in the pre-academic programs of PUC's Institute of Foreign Languages. The remaining of 9,700 students are in academic programs for bachelors, masters, and doctorate degrees. PUC actively cooperates and exchanges with a number of higher ranking institutions worldwide, including universities in the USA, European Union, and the Asia-Pacific region.

The graduates of the 6th commencement ceremony totaled 654, with 72 receiving associate degrees, 532 receiving bachelor degrees, and 50 receiving master degrees. Sixty-five of these students graduated with

honors, fulfilling their academic requirements with GPA between 3.70 and 3.96. It was noted that 90 percent of PUC graduates are now serving in the public sector, or working at private corporations or NGOs, and the remaining 10 percent work for their own businesses. To close the proceedings, Dr. Kol Pheng, PUC Founder and President, conferred degrees on the successful graduates by announcing, "With the power invested in me by the Board of Trustees of PUC, I hereby declare you all graduates of the class of 2014."

The commencement ceremony was also attended by parents, guardians, relatives, and friends of the graduates. Their presence made the event more enjoyable and meaningful. Mrs. Mao Sophorn, a civil servant at the Ministry of Agriculture and an aunt of a graduate, sat smiling as she was waiting for her nephew to receive his bachelor degree in architecture. She stated, "I am very proud of my nephew and I am happy to be here today. Being his guardian, I give my heartfelt warm regards to my nephew so that he will feel we are family. We belong to each other."

A delegate of National University of Malaysia visited PUC

On March 11, 2014, Dr. Fredolin Tangang, Professor of the School of Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences, Faculty of Science and Technology at the National University of Malaysia (NUM), visited Paññasastra University of Cambodia (PUC) to introduce SEACLID/CORDEX Southeast Asia.



(Left to right) Prof. Sao Sythoun, Prof. Chea Leng, Dr. Srey Sunleang, Mr. Fredolin Tangang, Dr. Sin Meng Srun, Prof. May Sam-Oeun and Mr. Justin Dara Op. (Photo PIARD)

SEACLID (Southeast Asia Climate Downscaling Experiment) was recently incorporated into CORDEX (Coordinated Regional Climate Downscaling Experiment), a project under the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP). To conduct climate change assessment, scientists need to collect high-resolution climate change scenario, which is expensive and time-consuming to

extract. These challenges are the reason to establish SEACLID/CORDEX Southeast Asia, which consists of countries and institutions sharing the same interests to study climate change. They will be sharing tasks and research to accommodate the data collection. The high-resolution climate change scenario will be available for Southeast Asia region as a data portal. As a result, Dr. Tangang came to discuss how PUC can involve in the project, and to provide opportunities for Cambodian students to pursue Master or Ph.D. degree in Sciences at NUM. Coupled with the support and assistance from institutions and countries partners, climate change assessment studies will increase in the future.

NUM was established in 1970, and is one of five Malaysian Research Universities. NUM has 13 faculties, 16 institutes, and 18 centers. The Faculty of Science and Technology is the largest science based faculty in Malaysia. While addressing the exchanging programs for students in both universities, Mr. Tangang proposed a visit of Professor May Sam-Oeun, PIARD Chair and his delegates at NUM, and added that he looked forward to signing a MOU with PUC in the near future.

Birds of Cambodia

On Saturday July 19, 2014, the Faculty of Mathematics, Sciences and Engineering of PUC opened an environmental talk on the birds of Cambodia. Students and the public had an opportunity to learn more about bird species and bird conservation in Cambodia.



On behalf of Dr. Kol Pheng, PUC Founder and President, Professor May Sam-Oeun, PIARD Chair and PUC Vice President, gave an opening remark followed by presentations from two prominent speakers, Mr. Simon Mahood, technical advisor of Tonle Sap and Vulture Project of Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and Mr. Suy Senglim, founder of Bird of Cambodia, Education and Conservation. Mr. Simon talked about the general perception for bird conservation and new bird species in Cambodia. He also introduced a new bird species from his discovery, Cambodian tailorbird which was found just six kilometres north of Phnom Penh. To his

surprise, it lives very close to human. With passion and caring love for birds, Mr. Senglim told the audience that he is determined to change Cambodian chronic mindset from hunting animal to loving them instead. He also presented bird education and conservation in Cambodia which was inspiring and informative.



Cambodian Tailorbird or Orthotomus chaktomuk (Credit Mr. Simon Mahood)

This event mainly aimed to fortify the understanding of birds to Cambodian youth and to drum up their interests in birds and conservation, which is so critical for the long term sustainable ecology. The birds of Cambodia is the least well known, especially to the younger generation. That is why this discussion of birds was fundamentally essential.

"Understanding bird conservation means understanding ecology. Bird and wildlife conservation is critical to the richness and diversity of the globe. Birds are one of the most populous life forms on the earth, and that biodiversity leads to a richness of life and beauty. The incredible number of bird species demonstrates amazing evolutionary adaptations. By learning how birds are able to adapt throughout the world, we can begin to adapt our own behaviors to live in our world, rather than to force our world into an artificial and unsustainable mold", said Professor May Sam Oeun in his opening remark.



"Bird conservation can also highlight the diversity of different habitats. All birds cannot live in the same habitats. Understanding the needs and requirements of different species can lead us to have more compassionate tolerance for different peoples and cultures."

Launch of Master Program in International Human Rights Law

On April 04, 2014, Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia (PUC) launched a new master program in international human rights law which was jointly developed by the Faculty of Law and Public Affairs (LPA) and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI) of Sweden. The purpose of this program is to bring together students from different sectors, including government, civil society, private institutions, academia, media, judiciary and freshly graduated students, to study, share ideas and debate in class. It is hoped that after finishing their studies, they can contribute their knowledge to help develop society.



H.E Dr. Han Chuon Naron, PUC leadership and Ms. Anna taken picture with scholarship awardees. (Photo PIARD)

At the ceremony, PUC had the honor to have in attendance H.E. Dr. Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports; H.E. Ms. Anna Maj Hultgård, Swedish Ambassador to Kingdom of Cambodia; and Prof. Goran Melander, RWI

Founder. Prof. Melander came to launch the program and to congratulate the 15 newly recruited PUC-RWI students who received scholarships funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) to study in this master program.

Subsequent sections of the ceremony involved presentations and discussions related to human rights education, provided by Cambodian and international human rights experts. Prof. Melander also lectured on international human rights law in the event.

The Master Program in International Human Rights Law started on April 26, 2014.

The visit of Harvard Yenching Institute (HYI) to PUC



Dr. Kol Pheng and Delegates from Harvard Yenching Institute (Photo PUC)

On November 25, 2013, members of a delegation from Harvard Yenching Institute (HYI) visited Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia (PUC) to offer a scholarship grant in higher education to potential PUC students and staff members. The delegation included: Ms. Linda Grove, Head of

Scholarship Program and Ms. Lindsay Strogatz, Executive Assistant & Program Manager.

"A maximum of three PhD candidates will be selected. They will choose to study at either Hong Kong University or the National University of Singapore, with 10-18 months of dissertation research at Harvard University," said Ms. Linda Grove. The institute will also provide Master support at Harvard's Regional Studies-East Asia (RSEA).

HYI is an independent foundation located on the campus of Harvard University. It was founded in 1928 through the generosity of the es-

tate of Charles M. Hall, inventor of the process for refining aluminum and founder of ALCOA.

Currently, the institute has more than fifty partnership universities and research centers in East and Southeast Asia dedicated to support doctoral scholarship, visiting fellowship, academic publications, advanced training programs, conferences, and other scholarly initiatives in Asia, at Harvard University, and elsewhere. Their goal is to increase scholarly communication and to promote graduate and postgraduate research in humanities and social sciences, especially Asian studies.

PUC hosts the Delegation from China.



Delegates from China with PUC faculty members taken picture together. (Photo PUC)

A delegation from the First Institute of Oceanography (FIO), The State Oceanic Administration (SOA) in China visited Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia (PUC) to talk about a cooperative relationship between the two schools.

The First Institute of Oceanography (FIO), State Oceanic Administration (SOA), China is a comprehensive oceanographic research institute

engaged in applied and basic research, high technology development and serving the public.

SOA is the most active institute in marine science and technology cooperation and exchange with membership in 7 international organizations, and joining with more than 100 cooperative relationship institutions, and 23 cooperation agreements.

Revisiting of Handong Global University



Dr. Kol Pheng signed MOU with Delegates from HGU. (Photo PUC)

Delegates from Handong Global

University (HGU) visited Paññāsātra University of Cambodia (PUC) on January 31, 2014 in their second visit since 2010. It is noted that in the last two years HGU has signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with PUC. The delegation from HGU returned to PUC to discuss the possibilities of creating a center of entrepreneurship in the Faculty of Business.

"PUC and Handong Global University has a similar vision. We will work well together for employment de-

velopment in Cambodia," said Dr. Dosoung Choi, Vice President for Global Advancement and Professor of International Development and Entrepreneurship.

Handong Global University is a privately run, four-year university located in Pohang, North Gyeongsang province, South Korea. HGU strives to be a "World-Changing Global Leadership University," educating 21st century leaders for Korea and the world.

Paññasastra University of Cambo- and the ten ASEAN countries. Every dia (PUC) to show their dynamic year 28 international youth and one experiences, successes, and leader- leader are selected to join the proship skills. "A good leader empow- gram.

SSEAYP International Cambodia is an alumni association of past participants, and was established in 2004. So far SSEAYP has 644 members in Cambodia. Members try to do their best to spread Khmer traditional culture. It is proud and honored to represent Cambodia on the international stage.

Meet the Young Inspirational



Dr. Kol Pheng and Youth from SSEAYP taken photo together. (Photo PUC)

Recently 28 Cambodian youth from the Ship for South East Asian Youth Program (SSEAYP) came to dia (PUC) to show their dynamic experiences, successes, and leadership skills. "A good leader empowers group members to achieve success. Whether or not the leader is present, group members can continuously work successfully", said Dr. Kol Pheng, PUC President and Founder father.

SSEAYP was established in January 1974. It promotes mutual understanding among the youth of Japan

PIARD: the First Board Meeting



Paññāsāstra Institute of Academic Research and Development (PIARD), held its first Board meeting on February 24, 2014 since its official registration with Ministry of Interior as a NGO on November 13, 2014. This meeting aimed to address certain points regarding its activities and accomplishments, and to discuss the challenges and future plan among

Board members. To this end, PIARD has published three bulletins and have actively participated in many workshops, training and academic seminars, mostly focusing on research and development.

Mr. May Sam-Oeun, the Chair of PI-ARD, and the four Board members including Dr. Sam Sam-Ang, Dr. Pak Thavin, Mr. Mak Vann, Mr. Dara J. Op, joined the meeting with excitement and enthusiasm to talk about the strategic plan for PIARD. The vision, objectives and roles of PIARD are all guided by its bylaws, which is standardised in accordance to the laws of Cambodia. The crucial part of the meeting with its agenda is to reach approval from the Board of Directors associated with budget, staff recruitment and structure of PIARD.

After a compendious discussion, the Board of Directors reached an agreement and approved the following:

- 1. To develop a plan to lobby for funding the operations of PIARD
- 2. To have three departments: Department of Finance and Administration, Department of Research and Publication, Department of Grant and Policy Development
- 3. To recruit professional employees, whose skills and activities must comply with the policies and bylaws of PIARD, and must retain professionalism at all times.

The meeting adjourned with a fulfilling discussion, which hopes to eliminate any impasses and to fortify the operations to reach a securing future for PIARD.

PIARD: A registered NGO with Ministry of Interior

PUC is pleased to announce that Paññāsāstra Institution of Academic Research and Development (PIARD) has been officially registered as a NGO with the Ministry of Interior (MOI), Cambodia, on November 13, 2014. PIARD aims to promote innovative research and collaboration with both private and public institutions to bring development to Cambodia.

With the mission of becoming one of the leading institutions for research and development study in Cambodia, PIARD will determine cultural and academic foundation that can successfully establish future near and long term scientific research and development projects.

In cooperation with faculty members, other research institutions, and regional and international scholars, PIARD is committed to meet any challenges posed by ever-changing global technology and economies. In addition, PIARD hopes to bring out insightful knowledge through academic research and development not only Cambodian students, but also to the world, and thereby enhance student quality and standards to meet the global competitive market.

(Attached letters in Khmer and English below.)



The official letter of PIARD NGO from MOI, Cambodia. (Photo PIARD)

Kingdom of Cambodia Nation Religion King

Royal Government of Cambodia Ministry of Interior

No. 1740

Phnom Penh, 13 November 2013

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior

to

Mr. May Sam-Oeun, Chairman of Paññāsāstra Institute of Academic Research and Development

Subject: The registration of Paññāsāstra Institute of Academic Research and Development with the Ministry of Interior.

Reference: Letter No.01 dated on 10th October 2013 concerning the request for the registration of Pañāsāstra Institute of Academic Research and Development.

In response to the above-mentioned subject and reference, I would like to inform the chairman that the Ministry of Interior agreed to register Paññāsāstra Institute of Academic Research and Development with the headquarters at No.06, street Somdech Pan, Sangkat Chey Chumneas, Khan Daun Pench, Phnom Penh. Paññāsāstra Institute of Academic Research and Development must conform to its same bylaws submitted at the Ministry of Interior, and acts within the frameworks as a neutral, non-racist, non-religious, no political tendency, no political activities, and not being an instrument of any political parties.

Once the Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations will be in effect, Paññāsāstra Institute of Academic Research and Development must re-register accordingly.

Therefore, please Mr. Chairman be informed and proceed accordingly.

Yours faithfully,

For the Minister, Secretary of State

Signature and Stamp: Pol Lim

ce:
- Council of Ministers

"for information"
- Phnom Penh Municipality

"for service"
- Document - Archives

I, the undersigned, _____, attorney before the Cambodian Courts in Phnom Penh;

Certify that I have translated the present Authorization by the Ministry of Interior from Khmer into English, and swear that the statements are true and correct according to my best knowledge and abilities.

No.

Phnom Penh,

The unofficial translation of the letter (PIARD NGO) from MOI translated from Khmer. (Photo PIARD)

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