

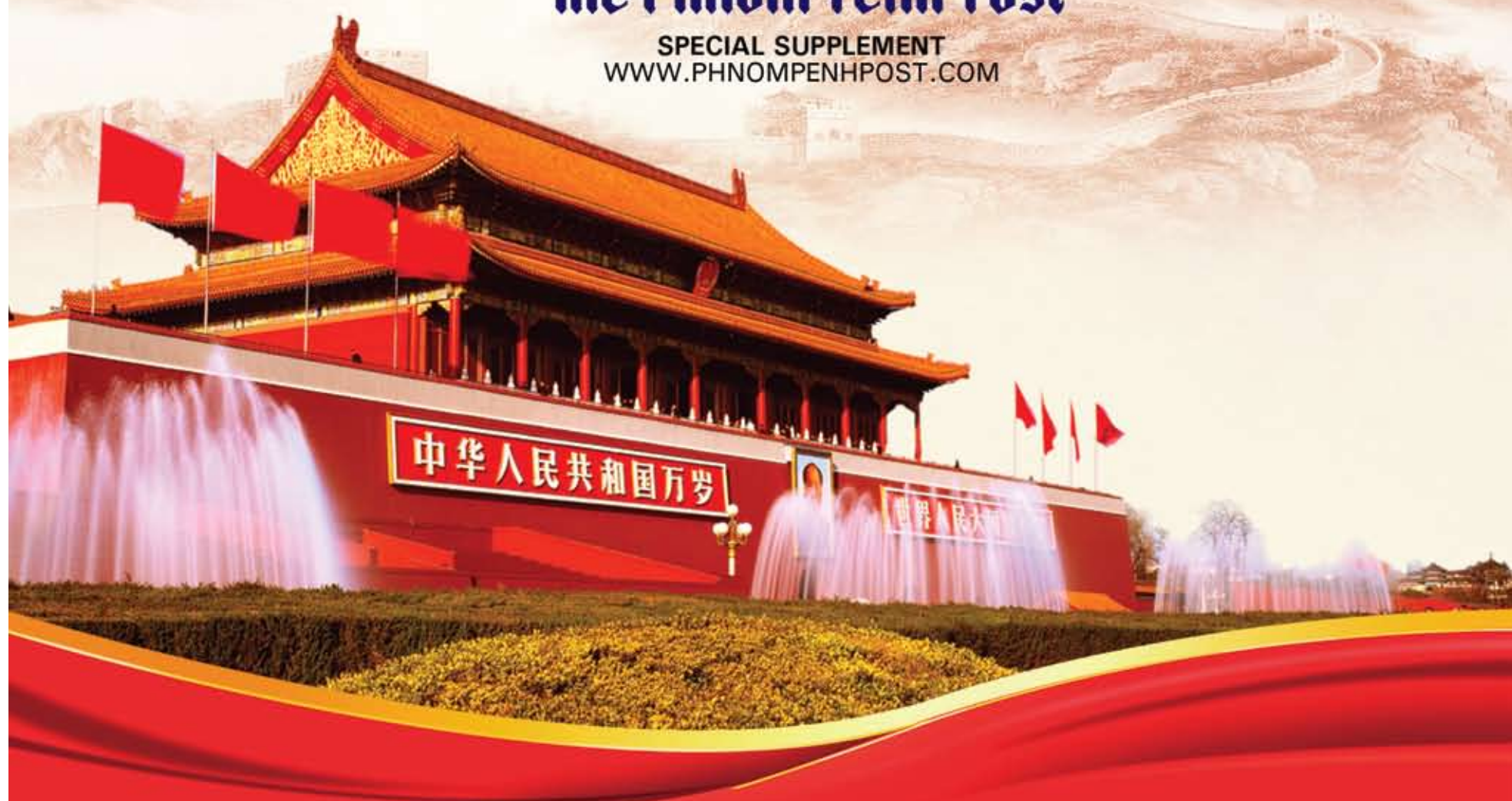
中华人民共和国成立71周年
2020年10月1日

71ST NATIONAL DAY
OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
CHINA

OCTOBER 1, 2020

The Phnom Penh Post

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Ambassador's message

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the Kingdom of Cambodia
HE Wang Wentian

MY DEAR compatriots and friends, today is the National Day of the People's Republic of China.

On this joyous occasion, on behalf of the Chinese Embassy in Cambodia, I would like to extend the most sincere greetings to all staff of Chinese-funded institutions, volunteer Chinese teachers, overseas students and local Chinese compatriots.

Taking this opportunity, I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our Cambodian friends from all walks of life who have cared about and supported China's development for a long time and are committed to enhancing the traditional China-Cambodia friendship.

Seventy-one years ago, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the Chinese people successfully overthrew the three mountains of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism after years of struggle and completed a new democratic revolution.

The founding of the new China marked the Chinese people standing up, with the Chinese nation embarking on a great path to achieve great rejuvenation.

Over the past 71 years, under the leadership of the CPC, the Chinese people, through self-reliance and painstaking efforts, have overcome one difficulty and another, and created many great achievements which have attracted world attention.

The Chinese nation has not only stood up, but also become richer and stronger.

This year China will achieve its first centenary goal by completing the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. Today's China is closer than ever before to realising the great goal of national rejuvenation.

Since the beginning of this year, Covid-19 has spread all over the world. Faced with this aggressive pandemic, we, under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as its core, have given top priority to people's lives and health, waging a people's war against the pandemic.

Within a short time, China has achieved major strategic outcomes in the fight and effectively safeguarded the lives and health of the Chinese people.

While maintaining prevention and control efforts at home, China has been actively advocating a community of common health for mankind, while fully supporting and engaging in international cooperation in pandemic control. This demonstrates our respon-



Chinese Ambassador to Cambodia HE Wang Wentian.

sibilities as a major country.

China has cumulatively provided more than \$2 billion in international aid for pandemic control. The Chinese government will actively carry out the solemn commitment of making China's vaccine an international public product as proposed by President Xi Jinping, and help make the vaccine accessible and affordable for developing countries.

Faced with the pandemic and the complicated and evol-

ving international environment, China has coordinated the promotion of epidemic prevention and control, and economic and social development.

By vigorously advancing the "dual circulation" development pattern in which the domestic economic cycle plays a leading role while the international economic cycle remains its extension and supplement, we have steadily and effectively restored the normal order of economic and social development.

According to statistics, China's second-quarter GDP has realised year-on-year growth of 3.2 per cent.

The International Monetary Fund predicts that China will become the only major economy that can maintain positive growth throughout 2020.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the comprehensive strategic partnership of cooperation between China and Cambodia, while it is also the first anniversary of the signing of the action plan for building a China-Cambodia community of shared futures.

Faced with the Covid-19 pandemic, the two countries, the two governments and the two peoples have stood together to overcome difficulties, setting an example for international cooperation in pandemic control.

We have jointly created many firsts during the pandemic.

Prime Minister Hun Sen was the first foreign head of government to visit China, while the first batch of foreign aid to Wuhan came from Cambodia.

The Chinese government and military have respectively sent groups of medical experts to Cambodia, the first initiative of its kind in the region or the world.

The China-Cambodia Free Trade Agreement was the Kingdom's first FTA concluded through video negotiations,

while the 2020 Golden Dragon joint military exercise was China's first and only joint military exercise with a foreign army.

The fifth meeting of the China-Cambodia Intergovernmental Coordination Committee was the first high-level bilateral cooperation meeting to be held by China and a neighbouring country.

These and countless other facts prove that the traditional China-Cambodia friendship has been further refined during the pandemic.

Undergoing profound changes unseen in a century, the world is at a new historical starting point, and the destiny of mankind has never been so closely connected.

China will stay firmly committed to opening our door wider to the world, and working jointly with Cambodia as well as other countries to achieve more win-win results.

China will always practise multilateralism and continue to promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, in order to realise greater solidarity and progress for human society.

May China and Cambodia enjoy ever growing prosperity and their peoples living in peace.

May the brotherly China-Cambodia friendship be passed on from generation to generation and last forever. ■

Yi Sang has been bringing the flavours of Guangdong province to the Kingdom of Cambodia since 2008; celebrating its 12th anniversary recently. Brainchild of Cambodian Master Chef, Luu Meng, Yi Sang restaurants are well known today amongst the locals and Chinese community as a restaurant to enjoy delectable Cantonese cuisine for lunch and dinner whilst as the preferred dim sum and noodle place for breakfast. It serves highest quality Cantonese dishes and adapting old cuisine customs to modern palates, with innovative food pairings.

Lunch and dinner menu highlights include its signature Crispy Roast Duck made with forest honey from Cambodia, organic Kulen black pig sourced from the sacred Kulen mountain and seasonal favourites like 'Bang Kang', Mekong River lobsters.

Thousands of years ago, Chinese has founded the healing power of healthy soup and used soup as medicine for centuries till today, this is why soups and broths hold a special place in both Chinese cuisine and traditional medicine. In today's fast pace world, including Cambodia, a young growing nation, where both parents are working, there is hardly time for family meals together let alone time to make slow-cook soup. This is where Yi Sang restaurants come in to fill the gap.

Yi Sang's unbeatable and popular 12-hour slow cooked soups with rare ingredients like lingzhi, cordyceps, special Chinese herbs are believed to detoxify, reduce blood pressure or nourish the organs. Drinking the right Chinese soup is also thought to restore the balance of yin and yang in the body.

Spread strategically across Phnom Penh, Yi Sang outlets are located at Sothearos Boulevard (flagship), Sisowath Quay and Toul Kork.



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Congratulations to people of China for 'building a great, modern country'



China Hong Kong & Macau Expatriate & Business Association of Cambodia chairman Yum Sui Sang.

ON THE occasion of the perfect bliss of Mid-Autumn Festival, we celebrate the 71st birthday of our great motherland.

On this special and beautiful day, all members of the China Hong Kong & Macau Expatriate & Business Association of Cambodia and myself sincerely wish for the wind and rain to come at their time, and that our motherland flourishes and people live in peace.

Best wishes to our Hong Kong and Macau compatriots and overseas Chinese in Cambodia for a happy Mid-Autumn Festival.

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the great changes over the 71 years have allowed the world to witness the impressive pace of China's progress – from closed and backward to open and progressive, with unprecedented entry into the centre of the international arena.

From rags to the riches of being the world's second-largest economy, China has taken mere decades to complete the industrialisation process that developed countries have gone through for hundreds of years.



The China Hong Kong & Macau Expatriate & Business Association of Cambodia provides medical aid in the Kingdom.

With their indomitable spirit and unyielding will, the Chinese people have built China into a great, modern and powerful country, with the Chinese nation standing tall among the nations of the world.

This year is destined to be an extraordinary one for China and the world. The sudden outbreak of Covid-19 has caused a great deal of suffering for all of humanity.

After more than two months of arduous struggles and

great sacrifices, China finally achieved a decisive victory in the control of the epidemic and provided valuable references and assistance for epidemic prevention and control in countries around the world.

Looking back at the past, we walk with great momentum, and each step is full of suffering and hardship.

Facing the future, we may still encounter some risks and challenges, but we always believe that, no matter what,

the wind and rain cannot stop the Chinese people from moving towards a better life and realising the "Chinese Dream" and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Happy birthday to the great motherland, and may the friendship between China and Cambodia be everlasting and unchanging. ■

Yum Sui Sang, chairman of the China Hong Kong & Macau Expatriate & Business Association of Cambodia.

New era for China-Cambodia trade ties

CHINA-Cambodia economic ties are entering a new paradigm with the signing of the Kingdom's first free trade agreement (FTA) this year with the Asian economic powerhouse.

Economic compatibility, a cordial friendship and common ideals have contributed to a healthy trading environment, with China's mega investments driving vital infrastructure projects in Cambodia over the decades.

Two-way trade hit \$9.43 billion last year compared to \$7.4 billion in 2018 – a 27.7 per cent jump.

"Cambodia should take advantage of the FTA with China

in areas that could be complementary to China. Eventually Cambodia's agricultural produce can be exported directly to China, not through third countries," said HE Nguon Mengtech, director-general of the Cambodia Chamber of Commerce.

Chinese companies – both state-owned and private – have contributed immensely to the Kingdom's infrastructure, and to the energy, real estate and agriculture sectors.

The FTA could be a game changer. While tariffs will fall, the trade pact will also allow Cambodian exporters to enjoy more market access for their products – which is crucial at this juncture after Covid-19 clipped trade flows.

Once the FTA kicks in, around 340 commodities from Cambodia will be exempt from tariffs, including pepper, garlic, dried chilis, cashew nuts, honey and seafood products.

This will inject a big boost into the rural economy, where 80 per cent of the population rely on farming.

The deal covers goods and services, investment cooperation, e-commerce, economic and technical cooperation, and also includes the Belt and Road Initiative.

The two parties completed their FTA negotiations on July 20.

"Cambodia remains attractive to Chinese investors and

entrepreneurs. Economic relations between both countries have been promoted and improved, and the FTA agreement would attract even more Chinese business activities.

"Bilateral trade has been progressing well. This year both countries have entered into the FTA, and this can boost two-way business and investment. Total bilateral trade reached \$9.4 billion last year.

"Both state-owned and private-owned enterprises have contributed to the domestic economy, in terms of the transfer of technology, upgrading the skills of Cambodian workers and job creation," Mengtech said. ■



Cambodia Chamber of Commerce director-general HE Nguon Mengtech.

The Phnom Penh Post ភ្នំពេញ ប៉េស្ត

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Hong Kong-Cambodia: A story of unbroken decades-old trade ties

CAMBODIA has remained a fertile ground for investors from Hong Kong for the past 20 years.

With its close proximity, ease of doing business, investment opportunities, dollarised economy, ready availability of manpower and resources, the Kingdom has the right combination to entice investors.

"One reason Hong Kong investors want to come to Cambodia is because it is a US dollar-based economy with investor friendly foreign exchange control. This is very important because a lot of business in Hong Kong is done in US dollars as well.

"Secondly, the government is very welcoming towards foreigners coming to do business in Cambodia.

"Even though certain costs are not the lowest, it is easy to do business," Hong Kong Business Association of Cambodia (HKBAC) executive director Larry Shuen Fai Ng told *The Post*.

Investors from Hong Kong have ploughed their capital into the vibrant sectors – such as garment and shoe production, medicine and pharmaceuticals, real estate, retail and restaurants – that are fuelling the domestic economy, as can



Cambodia has been attracting investors from Hong Kong for the past 20 years.

be seen in the membership of HKBAC.

"We can see the increase in businesses coming to Cambodia from Hong Kong to open restaurants to serve Hong Kong-style cuisine and open retail stores as well," said Ng.

Cambodia, which is rapidly shaping its young economy, can obtain benefits from Hong Kong as a super-connector, particularly in connecting experts in the services sector, in areas such as architectural design, technical know-how,

real estate planning and corporate funding.

Ng said the major international financial hub is continuously looking at further ways to encourage trade between Hong Kong, China and Cambodia.

"The Hong Kong Trade Development Council has been organising government delegations and business seminars to bring investors from Hong Kong to Cambodia.

One of the services that can help boost the international

trade is the use of the arbitration service in Hong Kong. Hong Kong has a very established arbitration system and a strong legal system, similar to Singapore's.

The flourishing ties hit a snag with the Covid-19 pandemic, which has slowed trade and the cross-border movement of people, Ng noted.

"Before Covid-19, we could see a lot of investment coming in from China and Hong Kong. Hong Kong is a bit special because of its ties with China. Since returning to China, we can see that an increasing amount of Hong Kong companies that have invested in Cambodia also have close business relationships with China.

"Covid-19 did not actually deter people from investing in Cambodia, but it made it difficult for people to come to the Kingdom. Cathay Dragon had been operating 14 direct flights weekly between Cambodia and Hong Kong before the outbreak.

"Usually when investors decide to invest here, they want to visit the country to better understand the people and culture.

"But due to travel restrictions they are not able to come, so foreign direct investment has slowed," he said. ■

Jie Wei overcomes challenges with unexpected demand for pyjamas

WHEN Jie Wei Cambodia Garment Factory Ltd commenced operations in 2011, it was in response to the government's call for foreign investors to help drive the Kingdom's garment sector.

The company's executive director, Raymond Tam, told *The Post*: "Fifteen years ago when we chose Cambodia as our manufacturing base, costs in the production of garments, such as wages, renting factory premises and logistics, were relatively low.

"And to make it more attractive for us to invest here, the government was also offering attractive tax incentives, while the country enjoyed export concessions

to many established markets around the world."

Having been involved in garment manufacturing in Cambodia for more than a decade, Tam – who is also the director of the Hong Kong Business Association of Cambodia (HKBAC) and an executive member of the Garment Manufacturing Association in Cambodia – has truly seen the industry evolve, particularly in recent times.

"When we started manufacturing in 2011 in Cambodia, we were operating from a small factory and had a small workforce. Today, we have a main factory on Veng Sreng Road in Phnom Penh and a smaller subsidiary located

nearby, and close to 1,200 employees including management staff," he said.

Jie Wei had for many years been producing and exporting an estimated 10 million garment items to the EU.

However, with the Covid-19 outbreak at the beginning of this year and the partial withdrawal of the preferential treatment enjoyed by Cambodia under "Everything But Arms" (EBA) in August, the company may look at alternative markets and new approaches to doing business.

Fortunately for Jie Wei, its diversification approach into the US and Canadian markets has paid handsome dividends – thanks in part, surprisingly, to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Who would have thought that the Covid-19 pandemic would present our company with a much needed boost in business, especially in these times of economic uncertainty?"

"Believe it or not, producing pyjamas extended a lifeline to our business. During the lockdowns due to the Covid-19 outbreak, people were staying at home and the demand for pyjamas increased.

"And as a result, two of our direct buyers – Target and Walmart – requested us to produce and export significant



HKBAC director Raymond Tam (right) and vice chairman So Man Kit during an interview with *The Post*.

quantities of pyjamas for the US, and to a lesser degree the Canadian market," Tam said.

As for the challenges posed by the EU's partial withdrawal of EBA for Cambodia, Tam is confident that with ongoing efforts and plans to diversify business into other markets, it is likely that Jie Wei's dependency on garment orders from the EU market may decrease in time.

"The major concern for us with the EU market is that effective from August this year, import tax will be applied to 40 garment categories – 25 for garments, nine for shoes and six for bags.

"With taxes placed on our export orders, we will be less competitive.

"Reducing the cost of operations may be one alternative to consider if we plan to refo-

cus on the EU market. But for the time being, we will also look for other solutions and opportunities that are able to mitigate any potential loss of the EU market," he said.

Nevertheless, for Jie Wei, the accidental foray into the pyjama-making garment category is sure to be a hit in light of the uncertainty engulfing the garment manufacturing industry globally. ■





China Aid building up Kingdom



Infrastructure projects

The China Aid-funded Cambodia Rural Road Project-Phase II-Lot 2 is being carried out by the Yunan Construction and Investment Holding Group Co Ltd (YCIH). The objective of Phase II is to improve road infrastructure in rural parts of Cambodia, which will help in alleviating poverty, as well as boost the rural economy and improve the socio-economic status of people in remote areas. Some of the provinces that have benefited from the project are Tbong Khmum, Prey Veng and Svay Rieng. China plans to provide financial assistance to fund Cambodia's rural road projects, repairing and upgrading existing roads.



China-Aid Cambodia Rural Water Supply Project-Phase II

With a Chinese government grant, the China Aid-funded Cambodia Rural Water Supply Project-Phase II commenced in November last year. Scheduled for completion within two years, a total of 964 boreholes and 54 community ponds are to be constructed across 10 provinces. Prey Veng, Svay Rieng, Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu, Battambang, Pursat, Kampong Chhnang, Banteay Meanchey, Siem Reap and Kampot provinces are to benefit. The infrastructure will provide clean and hygienic water for daily human consumption, agricultural irrigation and livestock breeding for thousands of rural residents.



China Railway Construction Group builds Tbong Khmum hospital

China's second largest medical aid infrastructure contribution is a hospital in Tbong Khmum province that commenced construction on last year. It is expected to be completed by October next year. The hospital has been designed by China IPPR International Engineering Co Ltd and is being built by the China Railway Construction Group. Its facilities include a medical consultation hall, a 300-bed general ward, a 10-bed intensive care unit, operating rooms, an emergency room, a pharmacy, a fluid distribution centre and a kitchen. In addition, the hospital's radiology and radiotherapy department will be equipped with the latest state-of-the-art MRI, CT, DR and gastrointestinal contrast imaging machines.





Future still bright for Ming Fai Group

HONG Kong-listed Ming Fai Group, an international manufacturer specialising in hotel and travel amenities, has chosen Cambodia as its key production hub in the region due to the Kingdom's friendly business policies.

The group's subsidiary Ming Fai Enterprise (Cambodia) Co Ltd, which commenced operations in the Kingdom in 2018, and currently operates a 17-block factory. It employed more than 2,000 workers during the peak of operations. Most of the company's

exports are targeted at the US and European markets.

It manufactures products such as hotel slippers, eye masks, socks and shower caps, as well as travel kits, airline bags and fashion bags.

Its products are intended for the hotel, travel and aviation industries.

The supplier was not spared during the Covid-19 outbreak – with a dramatic drop in sales and production lines functioning under capacity.

However, Ming Fai Group's founder and chairman Ching Chi Fai is confident that business will bounce back as the Kingdom's manufacturing sector recovers from the slowdown triggered by the Covid-19 outbreak.

"Our business operations were highly affected by the coronavirus pandemic. There was a period when our workforce was reduced to 700, due to a sharp fall in orders from our clients. But as of last month, the number of our active workers is around 1,200.

"Demand for our products mainly comes from the travel industry, which in recent years had seen steady growth in the Southeast Asia region before the coronavirus pandemic. I believe that in five years' time Southeast Asia's travel industry will have recovered and again enjoy vibrant growth.

"We are also working hard to expand our business in Cambodia and Southeast Asia,



Ming Fai Enterprise (Cambodia) Co Ltd currently operates a 17-block factory.

hoping to make further use of the advantages of running manufacturing operations in the Kingdom," he said.

The operations hub of Ming Fai is located in Shenzhen, China, while it owns five production bases, including in Cambodia.

Ching said that since the pandemic, orders from the US and European markets have witnessed the biggest decline,

while demand from China has begun to pick up slowly.

"With orders gradually climbing back to pre-pandemic levels, the number of active workers will rebound to the previous number of 2,000 by the end of this year," he said.

Despite declining revenue, Ming Fai offered a special allowance to workers who were temporarily suspended as required by the Cambodian

government's Covid measures.

While noting that the unprecedented pandemic threatening the global market could pose a mid-term impact on Ming Fai Group's manufacturing operations, Ching remains optimistic.

"I believe companies will make adjustments according to their own circumstances to gain better development in the future," he said. ■



Ming Fai Group founder and chairman Ching Chi Fai.



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WMC upbeat as Chinese cars on rise

AS WORLDWIDE Motors Company Ltd (WMC) celebrates National Day of the People's Republic of China, the Kingdom's No1 seller of the Asian giant's leading car marques has a positive message.

WMC is upbeat as it continues to win in its mission to convince Cambodians of the quality of Chinese automotive manufacturing and the undoubted benefits of owning a new car.

"The continued success of WMC and the growing popularity of Chinese cars are in no small part down to the Cambodian-Chinese partnership.

"Whenever people come to us and see the build quality of the Chinese cars we sell, they are never failed to be impressed. The quality of Chinese automotive manufacturing is now undoubtedly on a par with that of Japan, Europe and the

US," said senior sales manager Alex Cheong.

This change in perceptions is reflected in WMC this year doubling the number of showrooms in the capital to four, with the realistic prediction of tripling the number of vehicles it sells each month.

"We opened two new showrooms earlier this year as we are finding that Cambodians are increasingly realising that Chinese cars are as high quality as anything else available on the market but represent far more value for money.

"This coupled with our focus on customer care and customer satisfaction, and our drive to offer customers the best possible service, makes WMC a must-visit destination for all those looking to buy a new car.

"We pride ourselves on offering the personal touch. We have a team available 24 hours a day to fix any problems, for example, while I call customers



WMC has four showrooms in Phnom Penh.

every week to make sure they are happy.

"Consequently people are more and more choosing to buy new Chinese cars from us, with projections showing that we can realistically expect to soon double or triple our sales," Cheong said.

The Malaysian – who has 30-plus years of experience in the automotive industry – said that having worked in Japan

for Toyota and Germany for Mercedes, he can attest to the quality of Chinese cars now being at a level with anything else available. Indeed, cooperation with manufacturers from the giant automotive nations has helped lead to the current high standards of Chinese build quality, he added.

WMC sells major Chinese marques including Haval, Bestune, Huanghai, ZX Auto,

BAW, Changhe, along with the FAW Bestune T77 and Zotye T800, and has models to cater for all segments of society, with prices ranging from \$25,000 to \$75,000.

"We have a range of SUVs and pick-up trucks for all needs and budgets, with FAW the luxury marque. The Great Wall Haval H6 and H9, along with Bestune and Huanghai, are among our bestsellers," Cheong said.

With the lowest down payments available in the Kingdom, at 15 to 20 per cent, WMC is committed to helping Cambodians own new cars.

This is combined with generous after-care, with free yearly servicing for the duration of the financing and five- to seven-year warranties, and five- to 10-year parts guarantees.

"We never tire of highlighting to Cambodians the undoubted benefits of owning a new car, and offer trade-ins on second-

hand cars to facilitate this.

"Buying a new car represents an investment, while the massive benefits of owning one in terms of increased safety for your family and better reliability as you drive to the province brings peace of mind. The latest technology in new cars also means they are far more environmentally friendly," Cheong said.

With WMC offering such a complete package, Cheong says Chinese cars will increasingly become an ever more common sight on the Kingdom's roads.

"Our message is that with the high quality of Chinese cars and our peerless after-sales and customer care, as well as our financing options and trade-ins that make new-car ownership so accessible, WMC is the obvious choice for the Kingdom's car-buyers.

"Just visit one of our four showrooms and see for yourself – you too will be won over," Cheong said. ■

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Cavendish bananas: the crop that beat the Covid-19 heat

WHILE Covid-19 has bruised economies and crippled trade in some parts of the globe, Cambodian banana growers are enjoying brisk business despite choppy times.

One pioneer local industry player, Tropicam Irrigation Solutions Co Ltd – along with its Chinese partner Longmate Agriculture Co Ltd – has been busy exporting Cavendish bananas to China.

The demand for Cambodian Cavendish bananas has risen beyond expectations since mid-2018, said Tropicam CEO Lor Ngy.

“The company’s operations have been unaffected by the Covid-19

pandemic. We can even say that, with banana consumption in China having increased during the Covid-19 outbreak, business was even better because we are involved in fruit exports.

“We were exporting 250 tonnes of bananas per week, but during the coronavirus outbreak we exported 300 tonnes per week.

“I observed that the Chinese market was good in 2018. There were only five companies from Cambodia that exported bananas to China, but now there are around 20 registered companies with the cooperation of Chinese investors to cultivate the crop in the Kingdom and export it to China,” Ngy said.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia exported 72,182 tonnes of fresh Cavendish bananas during the first quarter of this year, while 157,812 tonnes were exported in 2019. The fruit was mostly exported to China, Vietnam and Japan.

Cambodia’s tropical climate and substantial rainfall makes it perfect for year-round banana cultivation. In 2018, Longmate announced that it was to invest \$32 million to grow the crop in some 1,000ha in Kampot province’s Chhouk district.

“The reason for choosing Kam-pot province for planting bananas is because of the location – the soil is fertile, there is an abundance of



There are now around 20 registered companies that grow bananas in Cambodia for export to China.

water and the weather is not too hot. We import Cavendish banana seeds from Australia and plant them in Cambodia where they grow well.

“It is difficult to grow bananas in China because some areas are too cold and some are too hot, so many foreign investors invest in banana plantations in Cambodia for export to foreign markets,” Ngy said.

As well as bananas, Ngy said Tropicam also plans to increase its mango exports to China by the end of this year.

“We have some mango plantations and have cooperated with the local community to collect mangoes to export to the Chinese market by this month, but we export through the Vietnamese border,” he said, adding

that they expect to export 100 tonnes of mangoes a day.

“We are proud to be able to export agricultural crops and contribute to the national economy. The government earns income through tax collection, and we also provide employment to more than 800 farmers, which reduces migration to neighbouring countries,” Ngy said. ■



Tropicam CEO Lor Ngy.



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FROM MANAGEMENT AND STAFF OF











Urban Village to fly flag for Kingdom as Asia's 'Best Condo Development' award nominee

AWARD-WINNING developer Urban Hub Cambodia Co Ltd – which is embarking on its third condo project in Phnom Penh – is bent on building quality, comfortable homes, and vowing to strengthen its reputation as a top-class builder. Founder and chairman of Urban Village Ben Li shares his company's vision.

Q At the 5th Annual PropertyGuru Cambodia Property Awards last month, Urban Hub won several awards. Tell us more about this achievement.

Urban Village has won the most awards at the Property-Guru Property Awards. We have won 13 awards in total over the course of two years.

This year we won seven awards, and once again we won the country's "Best Condo Development in Cambodia" and "Best Condo Development in Phnom Penh" awards.

Other awards

include "Best Breakthrough Developer", "Best Co-Working Space", "Best Office Development", "Best Office Architectural Design" and "Best Lifestyle Developer".

We want to tell the world that Cambodia is an investment hotspot given the country's open policies, the use of the US dollar as a functional currency and there being no restrictions on money transfers to other countries such as Singapore.

Q Urban Hub has previously won awards. What is driving the company to remain competitive?

Urban Village is more than just concrete buildings – what we are building here can't be found anywhere else in Cambodia. Urban Village is adjacent to the Factory Phnom Penh, the biggest creative arts hub in Southeast Asia.

Urban Village is not after profits, instead we have a mission to provide a community for the second generation of young Cambodians.

We are focusing on building a community that puts the interests and experiences of the residents first. Every design in our project is to make sure our residents have the best international standard living experience, and I think that has made us stand out in the real estate industry in Cambodia.

Q Can you brief us about your ongoing project?

Urban Village Phase 2 is our third project in Cambodia. The first one is Urban Loft, which has been completed and handed over, with owners and tenants currently living there happily. Our second project is Urban Village Phase 1, which has been completed and is being handed over to owners. As a committed developer, we have delivered projects on time even during the Covid-19 period.



Phase 1 of the Urban Village project in Phnom Penh.

We are now moving on to our third project – Urban Village Phase 2. Piling is in progress at the moment, and more than 450 of the 540 piles have been put in place.

The handover of Phase 2 is set to be in June 2023.

We are focusing on the living of a new generation of Cambodians, with more than 70 per cent of our residents Cambodian.

Q How are your projects progressing, and how did

you overcome the challenges of the Covid-19 outbreak?

We managed to hand over our units on time. We worked really hard to meet the completion schedule despite the troubles caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our team at all levels quickly adapted to this new normal and that allowed us to stay on track with our plans.

Q As a developer, how has Urban Hub contributed to the local property market?

Urban Village is so different from other developments because all of our projects are managed by third party international consultants from Japan, Singapore and the UK.

Some other projects are not managed by independent consultants, which can lead to some building quality problems, for example with fire safety standards and water leaking. This is why third party independent consultants are so important. ■

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'Garment sector ready to produce high-end goods for global market'

THE garment industry in Cambodia should diversify its offerings, including gradually switching to producing garments of mid-range prices, and venturing into retail, said Q-Port Investments (Cambodia) Co Ltd director Lin Zhi Qiang.

A subsidiary of Hong Kong-based E-Port Enterprise (HK) Co Ltd, Q-Port Investments owns and manufactures the E-Port garments brand.

Setting its production base in Cambodia through Q-Port Investments, E-Port Enterprise has been mainly producing and exporting denim series products to Europe, the US, Japan and Canada.

Q-Port Investments operates two garment factories and one pattern washing facility, which serves denim production factories in Cambodia. The monthly garment production capacity of Q-Port Investments is approximately 350,000 pieces.

Lin established the company's first factory

in Cambodia back in 2002. Since then, Q-Port Investments has created many job opportunities for locals, once hiring around 2,800 workers. It currently employs 1,300 workers.

He stressed that the garment industry has made a significant contribution to the Kingdom's economic growth and has been a pillar of the

country's economy in the post-war era.

However, increasing labour costs and competition from other emerging garment exporting countries have pushed Q-Port Investments to transfer some of its production lines to other countries such as Bangladesh.

"Labour costs in Cambodia have increased gradually over the years, rising from \$45 to \$190 this year. The EU's decision to partially remove the Kingdom's Everything But Arms (EBA) trade preference status has also affected garment manufacturers.

"Adding to the huge impacts stirred up by the coronavirus pandemic, our total orders from clients had dropped 40 per cent.

"Looking at market demand by country or region, our orders from the US, Europe and Canada had dropped 50 per cent, 30 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively," Lin said.



An artist's impression of the E-Port Center.

However, he said Q-Port Investments is seeing orders returning to 80 per cent of last year's volume and remains confident of his company's business volume recovery.

He also noted that Cambodia's garment industry has been producing lower to mid-range garments for a long time.

"It is time the industry focused on mid-range garments or even higher

range products. The reason being that higher quality products reward manufacturers with a higher profit margin.

"In my opinion, workers in Cambodia are ready to take on the challenge of producing higher-end products," Lin said.

Lin has also initiated plans for Q-Port Investments to venture into retail, by renovating and transforming part of the company's factory space into

a shopping destination called the E-Port Center.

The retail centre's main attraction will be its international branded garment offerings. Other spaces will be rented out to co-working space operators, food and beverage outlets and retailers of cultural item.

With a young population and growing middle class community, the retail industry in Cambodia has much untapped potential to tap, Lin said. ■



Q-Port Investments (Cambodia) Co Ltd director Lin Zhi Qiang.

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Hong Kong is 'the gateway into China' for Cambodian enterprises

BANGKOK-BASED Hong Kong Economic Trade Office (HKETO) executive director Lee Shueng Yuen outlines how the major international financial hub has contributed to the Cambodian economy.

Q Please share with us how successful has HKETO been in accelerating trade and investments to Cambodia over the years.

Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (HKETO) in Bangkok was established in February 2019. It is the newest and 13th overseas office representing the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Our mission is to facilitate the development of bilateral relationship between Hong Kong and Cambodia, and also three nearby countries, namely Thailand, Myanmar, and Bangladesh, with a view to taking Hong Kong's cooperation with these countries to new heights and in fresh directions.

In 2019, the bilateral trade between Hong Kong and Cambodia reached \$1.2 billion. Comparing with 2016, the bilateral trade recorded an overall modest increase of 4.3



per cent. In this context, we are working closely with the Cambodian Ministry of Commerce for the ratification of the Asean-Hong Kong Free Trade Agreement by Cambodia.

The agreement would bring increased and better market access to both sides, create new business opportunities and further enhance trade and investment flows.

Separately, Hong Kong and Cambodia signed a comprehensive avoidance of double taxation agreement in June last year, promoting further bilateral investment and trade between both sides.

The agreement sets out the allocation of taxing rights be-

tween the two jurisdictions and helps investors better assess their potential tax liabilities from cross-border economic activities.

Q How do Hong Kong entrepreneurs view Cambodia's economy?

According to the Council for the Development of Cambodia, Hong Kong is one of the major foreign investors in Cambodia. In 2019, Hong Kong was the second largest foreign investor with an investment of \$913 million.

Hong Kong entrepreneurs have invested in different business sectors in Cambodia, including textiles and clothing,

hotels, construction, retail and logistics.

With a young and energetic labour force, relatively low production costs, and a stable and open business environment, many Hong Kong investors consider Cambodia an ideal location for expansion and the relocation of production capacity.

Q How can Cambodia rely on Hong Kong- a global business and financial centre - as a gateway for trade and investment?

Hong Kong offers a unique advantage for Cambodian companies as it is the most accessible, safe and secure gateway

into China. There is one single and simple advantage - the "One Country, Two Systems" principle in Hong Kong.

We are part of China and enjoy the natural advantages of having common language and culture. Through our free trade agreement with China, companies in Hong Kong, including Cambodian firms if they are established in Hong Kong, enjoy greater market access and easier inroads into the world's biggest and fastest-growing market.

With established international trade networks, world-class infrastructure, well-connected communication and transport networks, Hong Kong is well placed to act as the Belt and Road platform for finance and professional services.

Q The Covid-19 pandemic continues to rattle global economies and trade. Did the outbreak have any serious bearing on trade relations between Hong Kong and Cambodia?

While the Covid-19 pandemic has inevitably caused practical difficulties for face-to-face interactions, there is no barrier for continued cooperation between Hong Kong and Cambodia on the trade front.

For example, the economic

ministers of 10 Asean member states and Hong Kong, China - HKC - met virtually on August 28 this year for the Fourth Asean Economic Ministers-HKC Consultations.

They agreed to enhance economic relations between HKC and Asean, including Cambodia, through, among others, utilisation of the Asean-HKC Free Trade Agreement and the Asean-HKC Investment Agreement.

Q In what areas can Hong Kong contribute to Cambodia's development, for instance in urban planning and infrastructure?

Hong Kong enterprises and professionals contribute to Cambodia's development through the Belt and Road Initiative, which offers ample opportunities for mutual co-operation and collaboration.

Riding on the various unique advantages as an international financial centre and the rich pool of professionals operating under international standards and practices, Hong Kong is best placed to be the platform for providing the whole spectrum of professional services, as well as in facilitating capital flows and project financing. ■

Happy

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Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Bangkok
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region



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FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS



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