

**Embassy of India
Phnom Penh**

Brief on India-Cambodia Bilateral Relations

Historically, India-Cambodia relations are a product of Hindu and Buddhist religious and cultural influences emanated out of India to various parts of South-East Asia from 1st century onwards. Cambodians are predominantly Buddhist but they retain a strong influence of Hindu rituals, idolatry and mythology. The Angkor Wat temple, built between 12th to 14th centuries, is a glorious testimony of our cultural and historical linkages. Indian influences are also seen on the earlier temples of Shiva such as Preah Vihear built from late 9th century onwards.

Political Relations

2. In the 1950s, India was associated with the International Control Commission on Indo-China. India's contribution as Co-Chairman of this Commission came in for widespread appreciation in Cambodia. After the collapse of the Khmer Rouge regime, India was the first country to recognize the new government and re-opened its Embassy in 1981. In response to an appeal by the Cambodian Government, the Government of India deputed a team of experts from the Archaeological Survey of India in 1986 for restoration and conservation of Angkor Wat temple.

3. India's association with the Paris Peace Accord and the intense interaction at high levels for its finalization in 1991 is fondly remembered with gratitude by the Cambodian leadership. India contributed military and non-military contingent for the conduct of the UNTAC sponsored elections in 1993. Their non-partisan and fair role, which brought the 1993 elections to a successful conclusion, was also highly appreciated. There exists abundance of goodwill for India in Cambodia, which has been sustained by regular interactions at political and official levels, exchange of bilateral visits, aid and assistance, capacity building, cultural exchanges, concessional loans for developmental projects and restoration of temples.

4. India and Cambodia cooperate in a number of regional and multilateral fora. PM Hun Sen formally declared his country's open support in favour of India for permanent membership of the UNSC at the South Summit Conference in Havana, Cuba in April 2000. Cambodia has, time and again, reiterated this support at various international fora and during bilateral interactions. In the context of our 'Act East' policy and the ASEAN, Cambodia is an important interlocutor and a good partner.

Exchange of High Level Visits

5. There have been regular high-level visits from both sides including regular bilateral exchanges at Ministerial level. Strong friendly ties were developed between the two countries with the visits of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Prince Norodom Sihanouk during the period 1954-1960. The following high level visits have taken place since 2000:

- Prime Minister Hun Sen paid an Official Visit to India in February 2000. An Agreement for setting up a Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific

&Technological Co-operation and an MOU on Tourism and a Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) were signed during this visit. (Mr. Hun Sen had earlier visited India in 1981 as Foreign Minister and as Prime Minister in 1988, 1990 and 1991).

- Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee paid an Official Visit to Cambodia in April 2002. Bilaterally, various agreements were signed and many initiatives announced during the visit, which included setting up of the Asian Traditional Textiles Museum in Siem Reap under Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Initiative. PM Vajpayee visited Cambodia again in November 2002 to attend the 1st ASEAN-India Summit. [PM Hun Sen has stated that he had himself proposed and lobbied with ASEAN to make the Summit happen].
- Prime Minister Hun Sen led a high level delegation to India in December 2007. During the visit, seven Agreements/MOUs relating to Transfer of Sentenced Persons, Credit Line, Defence Cooperation, Water Resource Management, Oil and Gas sector and Foreign Office Consultations were signed. A Line of Credit of US\$ 35.2 million on concessional terms was offered to Cambodia for Construction of Electric Transmission Line between Kratie and Stung Treng, Phase I of the Stung Tasal Water Resource Development Project and supply of 180 pump sets/allied equipment.
- President Pratibha Devi Singh Patil paid a State Visit to Cambodia in September 2010. During the visit, President laid the foundation stone for the MGC Asian Traditional Textiles Museum in Siem Reap.
- Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led a high level delegation to Cambodia in November 2012 to participate in the 10th ASEAN– India Summit and the 7th East Asia Summit held in Phnom Penh.
- Prime Minister Hun Sen led a high level delegation to India to participate in the 20th Anniversary of ASEAN–India dialogue partnership in December 2012.
- Vice President Mohammad Hamid Ansari led a high level delegation to Cambodia in September 2015. During the visit, a MOU on Tourism Cooperation and an Agreement for implementation of Quick Impact Projects (QIP) under Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Initiative were signed.
- Prime Minister Hun Sen paid a State Visit to India on 27th January, 2018. He also participated in the 25th ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit and attended the Republic Day Parade 2018 as Guest of Honour along with other ASEAN Leaders. During the bilateral component of the visit, both sides concluded a MoU on Prevention of Human Trafficking, Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters and renewed the Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP). A Dollar Credit Line agreement for US \$36.92 million for the Stung Sva Hab Water Resource Development Project was also signed.

- Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation visited India from 15-17 June, 2022 to participate in the Special ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Delhi to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations.

High Level Visits from India since 2018

- Shri Suresh Prabhu, Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Civil Aviation visited Cambodia to attend 5th India-CLMV Business Conclave from 21-22 May 2018. On the sidelines of the event, CIM called on PM Hun Sen and met Commerce Minister Pan Sorasak. The Hon'ble Minister again visited Cambodia to attend the RCEP Ministerial meeting on 2nd March, 2019.
- Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Hon'ble Raksha Mantri visited Cambodia from 11-12 June, 2018 along with a high level delegation. During the visit, Hon'ble RM announced extension of \$ 50 million defence LoC for purchase of defence equipment and Grant of \$ 1.5 million for supply of de-mining equipment to Cambodia. An Action Plan on bilateral defence cooperation was also released.
- Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Hon'ble External Affairs Minister visited Cambodia from 28-30 August, 2018. During the visit, two MoUs were signed on part-renovation & restoration of Preah Vihear temple by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and Cooperation between Foreign Service Institute of India (FSI) and National Institute of Diplomacy and International Relations of Cambodia (NIDIR).
- Shri Om Birla, Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha accompanied by 5 Members of Parliament visited Cambodia from 21-24 April, 2022 at the invitation of his Cambodian counterpart. During the visit, the Parliamentary delegation had a Royal Audience with His Majesty the King of Cambodia and held discussions with the Presidents of the National Assembly and Senate of the Kingdom of Cambodia respectively. Both sides discussed issues relating to further enhancing Parliamentary cooperation between the two countries and also establishing a Joint India-Cambodia Parliamentary Friendship Group. On 23rd April, 2022, the Parliamentary delegation also visited Siem Reap to see the restoration and preservation work executed by ASI from 1986-93 at Angkor Wat Temple and the restoration work that is being executed by ASI at Ta Prohm Temple in Siem Reap.
- Shri Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Cambodia from 20-22 June, 2022 as part of high level visits during the 70th Anniversary of Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between India and Cambodia. On 21st June, 2022, he attended the 8th International Day of Yoga celebrations held in Siem Reap and also reviewed the progress in restoration and conservation work that is currently being undertaken by ASI at Ta Prohm and Preah Vihear temples. During the visit, he also inaugurated 2 school buildings constructed with the grant assistance provided by GoI under its Quick Impact Project (QIP) Scheme under the Mekong Ganga Cooperation Initiative. On 21st June, 2022, he, along with DPM and Foreign Minister

of Cambodia, inaugurated the joint logo to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between India and Cambodia.

- External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar undertook a visit to Cambodia from 03-05 August 2022 to attend the annual ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AIFMM). The meeting was co-chaired by EAM and H.E. Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Foreign Minister of Singapore and was attended by Foreign Ministers/representatives from other ASEAN member states. During the visit EAM also called on Cambodian Prime Minister H.E. Mr Hun Sen and discussed bilateral and global issues of mutual interest. EAM also visited the heritage sites of Ta Prohm Temple and Angkor Wat Temple in Siem Reap and examined the restoration and conservation work at these cultural heritage sites, by the Archaeological Survey of India. He also visited the Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Asian Traditional Textile Museum in Siem Reap which was setup by India along with Cambodia and other MGC partner countries and assured India's continued support to the project.
- Hon'ble Vice President of India Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar visited Cambodia from 11-13 November 2022 to attend the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit & 17th East Asia Summit. The ASEAN-India Summit was historic as it elevated the ASEAN-India relations to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. During the visit, the Hon'ble Vice President also had meetings with the Cambodian King, Prime Minister, President of Senate. In all meetings the Cambodian Leadership appreciated India's support for the country including in their times of difficulty. In the presence of Hon'ble VP and Prime Minister Hunsen three MOUs and one Financing arrangement were exchanged related to cooperation in the areas of Culture, Biodiversity & Health. Hon'ble Vice President announced an assistance of USD 426,000 for demining of three districts and one commune in Cambodia, and increased the ITEC slots for the country from from 200 to 250 and ICCR scholarship from 30 to 50. Hon'ble Vice President visited the heritage sites of Ta Prohm Temple and Angkor Wat Temple in Siem Reap and examined the restoration and conservation work at these cultural heritage sites, carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India and also inaugurated the Hall of Dancers at the Ta Prohm Temple.
- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh visited Siem Reap, Cambodia from November 22-23, 2022 to attend 9th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Plus and maiden India-ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting. Raksha Mantri also held a bilateral meeting with General TEA Banh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence of Cambodia. Both leaders reviewed the entire gamut of defence cooperation and discussed mutually beneficial avenues for furthering the bilateral ties between both countries. Raksha Mantri also called on the Prime Minister of Cambodia along with ADMM-Plus Defence Ministers. On the sidelines of ADMM-Plus, Lt. Gen Hun Manet, Deputy Commander in Chief, Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and Commander, Royal Cambodian Army called on Raksha Mantri and apprised Raksha Mantri on Military to military ties between both countries. Raksha Mantri concluded the visit by visiting Angkor Wat and Ta Prohm temple.

Virtual Meeting between both Prime Ministers

- At the request of Prime Minister Hun Sen, Prime Ministers had a virtual meeting on 18th May, 2022. Both leaders reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and multilateral issues of mutual concern, including Myanmar, Russia-Ukraine Conflict, Korean Peninsula, Indo-Pacific and South China Sea. Prime Ministers PM Hun Sen thanked India for providing 325,000 vaccines under the Quad Vaccine Initiative and also for supporting Cambodia in its economic and social development. He invited PM Modi for an Official Visit to Cambodia during the ASEAN and Related Summits in November 2022.

Cultural Relations

6. On an appeal by Cambodian Government in 1980, India was the first country to offer help in restoration and conservation of the world famous Angkor Wat temple in Siem Reap after the fall of the Khmer Rouge. After undertaking the feasibility and other related studies, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) undertook the work relating to restoration and conservation of the Angkor Wat temple from 1986-1993 at a total cost of about US\$ 4 million. India was the first country to offer such assistance and the fact is well appreciated even today by the Cambodian leadership and public alike. Further, on Cambodia's request, India also agreed to restore Ta Prohm temple in Angkor Archaeological Park in Siem Reap. ASI has been working on this project since 2003. This is the most visible project that we are undertaking in Cambodia currently and the work of ASI has been widely appreciated. The first two phases of restoration and conservation of Ta Prohm temple was completed in July 2015 at a total cost of Rs. 34.16 crore. ASI is currently undertaking the third phase of restoration and conservation work at Ta Prohm temple at an estimated expenditure of Rs. 27.40 crore. The third phase of restoration work started in November 2016 and expected to be completed in 2026.

7. In 2014, India was appointed Co-chair along with China for the International Coordinating Committee (ICC) on Preah Vihear, a world heritage site and one of the oldest temples of Lord Shiva. Indian side conveyed its willingness to carry out restoration and conservation work of some parts of Preah Vihear temple. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed during visit of Hon'ble EAM to Cambodia in August 2018 for part-restoration of Preah Vihear Temple. Pursuant to signing of the MoU, a 3-member ASI team, which arrived on 25th April, 2022, started the work on site

8. Since 2015, Mission with the support of Cambodian Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has been organizing yoga events to celebrate International Day of Yoga (IDY). The 5th IDY was successfully celebrated in four cities of Cambodia in June 2019, which was held in four major cities and attended by more than 2,500 participants. The yoga event in front of iconic Angkor Wat temple grabbed sizable attention on social media. Due to COVID-19 pandemic and the health protocols that are in place in Cambodia in June 2020, the 6th IDY, though initially proposed to celebrate on a large scale in 5 major cities in Cambodia, was celebrated on a small scale in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap only after following the social distancing norms and health protocol. In June 2021, due to grim

COVID-19 pandemic situation in Cambodia, the 7th IDY celebrations were held only in Phnom Penh with restricted participation following all the health protocols that are in place in Phnom Penh. **On 21st June, 2022, he attended the 8th International Day of Yoga celebrations held in Siem Reap during the visit of Shri Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs to Cambodia from 20-22 June, 2022**

9. Since 2016, ICCR has been deputing a Bharatnatyam teacher to conduct dance classes at the Royal University of Fine Arts and the Chancery. Besides, an Indian TIC was also deputed by ICCR to teach Hindi and Yoga. The TIC has since gone back to India.

Commercial Relations

10. Cambodia is one of the priority countries under our *Act East* Policy. The bilateral trade has been growing steadily in the last few years. The principal commodities exported from India are: bulk drugs and drug formulations, motor vehicles (autos, motor cycles and spare parts), bovine meat, various types of yarn, fabric, made ups and finished leather while the main exports from Cambodia are manmade fibres, cotton including accessories, footwear of leather, plywood, etc. The Trade figures for the last five years are as follows:

Trade with India (In USD millions)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Trade	168.02	227.23	250.41	182.20	269.61
Exports	120.27	178.77	203.81	144.09	193.86
Imports	48.02	48.46	46.60	38.11	75.75
Growth %	9.71	35.00	10.19	(27.24)	47.97%

Source:-Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIIS), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India

Aid and assistance

11. At the request of Cambodia, India gifted medicines and 10,000 tonnes of rice to Cambodia in 2002. Subsequently, indelible ink was supplied to Cambodia for the General Elections of July 2003 and for subsequent elections, the latest being in 2018. In 2008, medicines, equipment & ambulances worth Rs. 2.31 crore were gifted to Military Hospital in Siem Reap. A cash donation of US\$ 100,000 was also provided in 2011 to the Royal Government of Cambodia for the relief of flood victims.

12. Following the visit of PM Hun Sen to India in December 2007, three Lines of Credit worth US\$ 65.20 million were extended to Cambodia for Water Resource Development, Transmission Line and Supply of Water Pumps.

13. In December 2007, India offered a grant in aid of US\$ 8.5 million for supply and installation of 1500 Afridev hand-operated pumps to augment supply of drinking water in rural areas of Cambodia. The hand pump project, with a revised estimated cost of US\$ 12 million, was launched in April 2017 and completed in August 2020. Government of India has also provided grant-in-aid of approximately US \$ 3 million for two projects, namely, Siem Reap Basin: Development of Master Plan and Study of Ground Water Resources of Kampong Speu Province.

14. During the visit of President Pratibha Patil to Cambodia in 2010, a grant of US\$ 246,000 was announced for redevelopment of India-Cambodia Friendship School in Kampong Cham province. The project was completed and handed over to the Cambodian side in September 2015.

15. During the State Visit of PM Hun Sen to India in January 2018, a Line of Credit for US\$ 36.92 million was extended for Stung Sva Hab Water Resource Development Project.

16. During COVID-19 pandemic, an Indian Naval Ship “INS Kiltan” visited Sihanoukville from 28th December, 2020 to 1st January, 2021 to deliver 15 tons of flood relief material for the flood affected people of Cambodia.

Cooperation under MGC Initiative

17. Under the MGC initiative, an Asian Traditional Textiles Museum has been set up in Siem Reap with a financial grant of approx. US\$ 1.8 million from Government of India. Subsequently, an amount of USD 3,41,992/- has been provided to the Museum for its establishment related expenses.

18. Under QIP Scheme, a grant assistance of US\$ 50,000 per project was being provided for implementation of five socio-economic projects every year. During 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18, fifteen (15) Quick Impact Projects were approved and implemented in the fields of agriculture, health, women empowerment, capacity building, sanitation and environment. These projects have received overwhelming response and created a distinct and visible impact among the beneficiaries. During the State visit of PM Hun Sen to India in January 2018, PM Modi announced increase in the number of QIP projects from 5 to 10 to be undertaken annually in Cambodia. So far, 23 projects have been completed and 23 projects are at various stages of implementation.

Capacity Building

19. As a major initiative towards capacity building, Cambodia-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre was established in Phnom Penh in 2006. India has also established a Centre of Excellence for Software Development and Training (CESDT) in Cambodian Academy of Digital Technology at an approximate cost of Rs. 10 crore from ASEAN-India Cooperation Fund. Besides, training to Cambodian officials under the ITEC programme has been very successful and widely appreciated. Under the ITEC programme, nearly 2000 Cambodian nationals have been trained since 1981. Since 2019-20, ITEC slots have been

increased from 175 to 200 and we have also started offering customized training programmes for Cambodian officers separately.

20 Besides, 25 scholarships for under-graduate, post-graduate and higher studies in India are available for Cambodian students under the MGC, GCSS and CEP every year. India has also offered to receive 2 Buddhist monks/scholars under Distinguished Visitor's Programme. In addition, two scholarships are being offered by Nalanda University to Cambodian students under ASEAN-India fund. The beneficiaries of Indian scholarships and ITEC courses have formed a Cambodia India Alumni Association, which has been very useful in building networks among the alumni and the Mission. On September 16, 2019, India formally launched 1,000 Ph.D. integrated fellowships for students from ASEAN countries in the prestigious IITs as announced by PM during the 25th Anniversary Commemorative ASEAN Summit in January 2018.

21 During the State Visit of Prime Minister Hun Sen to India in January 2018, India has offered help in setting up a Centre of Excellence in IT and IT-enabled services in Cambodia. On the request of Cambodian Prime Minister, Government of India has also agreed to provide assistance in implementation of Soil Health Card Project in Cambodia. A 3-member delegation from MeitY and NIC visited Phnom Penh and Siem Reap in December 2019 for exploring the facilities available for implementing the project on a pilot basis.

Indian Community

22 There are over 1,700 Indian nationals scattered in various parts of Cambodia. Many of them are employed with international organizations and agencies, with some Indians working as advisers/consultants in some of the Cambodian Ministries. There is a group of small traders hailing from Uttar Pradesh, who sell clothes and mosquito nets in the countryside. Many of these small traders have relocated to India temporarily due to COVID-19 pandemic and resultant loss of opportunities/jobs in Cambodia. The Indians in Cambodia have formed an association called "Indian Association-Cambodia (IAC)", which has been collaborating with the Mission for organizing various cultural events.
