



A·P·O news

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Cambodia joins the APO

On 17 May 2004, Cambodia was admitted as the 20th and newest member of the APO after two-thirds of the current membership approved its application to join the organization. As stated by its Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister Hor Namhong, Cambodia's decision to join the APO was in recognition of the importance of increasing productivity for development. It is also seen as taking a further step in its endeavor to integrate into the regional and world economy.

The APO Director for Cambodia is Undersecretary of State Hul Lim, Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy (MIME). The Alternate Director is Mr. Yea Bunna, Deputy Director, Department of Industrial Affairs, MIME, and Liaison Officer is Ms. Tey Dany, also from the Department of Industrial Affairs. MIME has established the National Productivity Unit to serve as the country's NPO. Mr. Hul Lim and Mr. Yea Bunna will attend the APO Governing Body Meeting in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 8–10 June 2004, where Cambodia will be formally inducted as a member.



Cambodia is located in Southeast Asia and Phnom Penh is the capital. It shares borders with Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos, and has a 443-km coastline facing the Gulf of Thailand. The total land area is 181,040 km². The population totals just over 13 million, and the gender ratio is 0.94 male/female. The literacy rate is about 70%. The economy is dominated by agriculture, which contributed 28.4% to GDP in 2001 and employs 80% of the working population. In recent years, there has been a gradual shift from the agricultural economy to one that emphasizes the textile, tourism, and service industries.

Cambodia achieved independence from France on 9 November 1953. After two decades of internal armed conflict, a new constitution was adopted in 1993 which restored the constitutional monarchy. Since then, Cambodia has embarked on a process of political and economic reforms. The government has developed a “triangle strategy,” which aims at restoring peace, ensuring sustainable development, and integrating Cambodia into the world community. A major economic goal is attracting foreign direct investment. However, two obstacles are standing in the way: low productivity and a shortage of skilled manpower. The government sees membership in the APO as providing a golden opportunity to gain insights into ways to adapt to globalization and the rapidly changing economic environment. 

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“There are two kinds of people, those who do the work and those who take the credit. Try to be in the first group—there is less competition.”

Indira Gandhi

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Asian Productivity Organization
Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F
1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku
Tokyo 102-0093, Japan
Tel: (81-3) 5226-3920
Fax: (81-3) 5226-3950
e-Mail: apo@apo-tokyo.org
Web site: www.apo-tokyo.org



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