



KMD: Corruption-built Cambodia regime robs the Khmer people of their future

On this International Anti-Corruption Day, the Khmer Movement for Democracy condemns the systemic corruption that continues to strangle Cambodia. We remind that 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index published by Transparency International ranks Cambodia on the miserable 158th place out of 180 countries.

Based on international reports and corruption rankings, the true cost of corruption to Cambodia's GDP could range between 10% to 20% or even higher, siphoning off billions of dollars from the Cambodian economy each year. This staggering sum – potentially exceeding \$7 billion – represents a devastating blow to a nation striving for development.

Money that should be funding vital public services – healthcare, education, infrastructure – is instead lining the pockets of corrupt officials and businesses. Land grabs by powerful entities like Mitr Phol displace communities, while illegal logging decimates forests, enriching those involved in these illicit activities. The judiciary, riddled with corruption, fails to provide justice for the people, while elections are marred by vote-buying and intimidation, further entrenching the power of the ruling elite.

This pervasive corruption not only robs Cambodia of its economic potential but also undermines the very foundations of a just and equitable society. It perpetuates poverty, fuels inequality, and erodes public trust in government institutions.

This illegitimate regime, built on a foundation of corruption, robs the Khmer people of their future. While the ruling elite amass wealth and power, the vast majority of Cambodians are left to endure poverty and hardship. This regime, focused solely on enriching itself, cannot be trusted to lead Cambodia towards prosperity. As long as this regime remains in power, the nation will be trapped in a cycle of corruption, inequality, and underdevelopment, mirroring the tragic fate of Syria where a brutal regime prioritizes its own wealth while the people suffer.

The Khmer Movement for Democracy demands an end to this systemic corruption. Cambodia needs democratic authorities that will strengthen anti-corruption measures, enhance transparency and accountability, and empower independent institutions to investigate and prosecute corrupt officials without fear or favor.

The future of Cambodia depends on a decisive break from this cycle of corruption. The Khmer people deserve a democratic, accountable government that prioritizes their well-being and works towards a corruption-free Better Cambodia.

