

Hun Sen's Talks and Cambodia's Tourism Development: the Discourse of Power

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Summary

This paper discusses the talks/speeches made by the Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen in respect of tourism development policies in Cambodia. Thirty eight speeches were identified and analyzed using textual analysis and the discourse of power. Nine factors to develop tourism were found discussed: security and safety for tourists; infrastructure and tourism facilities development; stakeholder collaboration; cultural heritage preservation; environmental protection; human resources development; tourism products marketing and promotion; simplification of travel procedures; and regional cooperation.

Introduction

Tourism is a highly political phenomenon, the implications of which have been only rarely perceived and almost nowhere fully understood. (Richter, 1989: 2)

Tourism studies have developed over the last few decades. Many approaches have been developed from different disciplines to examine and explain the tourism phenomenon. However, there is little literature on tourism from the political science perspective (Hall, 1994:1). The seminal studies of the politics of tourism include the works of Elliott (1997), Hall (1994), Hall and Jenkins (1995), Jeffries (2001), Matthews, 1975, 1978, and Richter (1989). These studies mainly focus on the state and the use of power in managing and mismanaging tourism.

The discourse of power is one of the starting points for looking at tourism from a political perspective. For instance, Xiao (2006) analyzes five talks made by Deng Xiaoping in respect to tourism development in China. In a similar vein, this paper attempts to analyze the speeches and talks made by the Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen which are pertinent to tourism development in Cambodia.

Besides the introduction, the paper discusses the role of the state in tourism development in the Southeast Asian context; analyzes the talks by Hun Sen relevant to tourism management in Cambodia textually; and concludes by summarizing the main points and raising the issues for further study.

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The State and the Politics of Tourism in Southeast Asia

Politics is the study of power, and five elements are attributed to it:

First, it is concerned with the activity of making decisions in and for a collection of people, whether it be a small group, a community, an organization or a nation. Secondly, it is about decisions and the various policies and ideologies. Thirdly, it is concerned with how representative they are. Fourthly, politics is interested in the processes by which they are made. Finally, politics is concerned with how decisions are implemented and applied to the community. (Jaensch, 1992, cited in Hall, 1994:2)

Tourism has been regarded as an engine for growth and poverty reduction. Both developed and developing countries design their policies to generate benefits from the tourism industry. Hall suggests “Many governments around the world have shown themselves to be entrepreneurs in tourism development” (Hall, 1994: 27). Tourism deserves encouragement and support from the government (Jeffries, 2001). “Although tourism is an activity sustained mainly by private initiative, governments have traditionally played a key role in its development” (WTO, 1996). In many developing countries, the state usually plays a central role in formulating and planning tourism development policy (Jenkins, 1998). The public sector has a significant and effective role in managing the environment and image of tourism (Wong, 2003). States in Southeast Asia play an important role in promoting tourism (Hitchcock, King, and Parnwell, 1993: 16-18). States are the planners of tourism development (Smith, 2000). Southeast Asian governments, regardless of political system and level of development, consider tourism as a significant foreign exchange earner and employment provider (Richter, 1993). All these observations and arguments demonstrate that the state is a main actor in tourism planning and development. It is, therefore, necessary to study the politics of tourism from a state actor perspective.

Tourism planning

There are many case studies of the role of government in tourism planning and management in Southeast Asia. These studies include: the Vietnamese state and tourism development in Vietnam in 1990s after Doi Moi (Cooper, 2000); the role of the state in providing education to develop sustainable tourism in Thailand (Chambers, 1997); state and tourism promotion in Malaysia (Cartier, 1998); the public sector and environmental management of tourism on Bintan Island, Indonesia (Wong, 2003; Ross & Wall, 2001); the role of the state in tourism development in the Philippines after the Marcos era (Rieder, 1998); the role of the Laotian government and the development of ecotourism and heritage tourism in Laos (Hall, 1997); and Singaporean government policy in promoting tourism in Singapore (Khan, Seng, and Cheong, 1990). The findings of these studies demonstrate that Southeast Asian States are “tourism developmental states.” They view tourism as a catalyst for economic growth, and they actively participate in the tourism industry for the sake of national political and economic interests.

Politics and ideology

Nation states in Southeast Asia have been promoting the tourism industry not only to drive economic development but also to support “ideologically driven definitions and symbols of national identity and ethnicity” (Sofield, 2000:52). In addition, states use tourism for their political interests, as Richter has suggested: “the commitment to develop tourism is a policy decision fraught with politics but almost always couched in economic and social rhetoric” (Richter, 2001: 283). In the Philippines, tourism was used as a political tool to “sell martial law” in September 1972 under the Marcos regime. Many development projects and programs were implemented to promote the tourism industry in the Philippines as a policy to improve the image of Marcos’ administration (Ritcher, 1996, 2001). In Myanmar, Hall (1997:163) observed that “Any discussion of tourism in Burma cannot ignore the political issues that surround it” (Henderson, 2003). They all infer that the state exploits tourism for its own political gain or objectives. Tourism is viewed as another tool to improve the political image and legitimacy of a state.

Cultural identity and national image

Tourism has been promoted in order to strengthen ethnic and national identities. In Singapore, there are three main ethnic groups: Chinese, Indians, and Malays. The government has tried to reduce and abolish the discrimination and tension between the ethnic groups. For this purpose, ethnic tourism in Singapore has been used to create a multicultural national identity in Singapore and manage domestic politics (Chang, 1997: 552; Leong, 1989; Hall and Oehlers, 2000: 86-87). In Indonesia, the government has also attempted to calm down the frictions between ethnic groups by developing tourism to show the cultural diversity in harmony (Kipp, 1993). Sometimes there are, however, also adverse consequences for national harmony from developing ethnic tourism. Adams (1997) studied the effects of the Indonesian government’s tourism promotion policy on indigenous ethnic relations in South Sulawesi. The study argues that the history of ethnic and religious differences has derailed the promotion of national integration and development through tourism. Promoting tourism does not automatically lead to national unity, but instead it can exacerbate interethnic tensions, particularly between highland Torajans and lowland Buginese-Makassarese fighting for control of the tourism cash cow. Moreover, Dahles (2001) investigated tourism development in Yogyakarta under Indonesian national tourism policies and the politics of the New Order regime. Tourism was used by the New Order government to improve the international image of Indonesia, and to communicate images of Indonesia as a culturally sophisticated and economically advanced nation. Tourism introduces two types of development: “modernization” mainly for the benefit of domestic tourists and “ethnification,” for the benefit of foreign tourists. Whether they are successful in promoting cultural integration or diversity, states have plans to link national identity and their image with tourism development. In general, tourism and cultural identity are strongly correlated in the context of Southeast Asia, and this could be extended to the Asia Pacific region as a whole. As Wood observes, “Both ethnic and national identities will continue to be contested in Asian and Pacific societies, and tourism will continue to be an important arena in which this contestation is played out” (Wood, 1997: 24).

Regional cooperation

The state is the main actor in regional cooperation and integration. Regional integration in East Asia and the Pacific has a positive impact on tourism growth in the region, for instance, in the case of Indonesia (Wall, 1998). Cross-border regional cooperation in tourism planning and development has increased in Southeast Asia, although there are still some challenges and difficulties. Such regional tourism cooperation is important for sustainable tourism in the region (Timothy, 2000). Tourism is part of the regional integration process in Southeast Asia. Nation states in Southeast Asia are cooperating in regional tourism development and, in turn, tourism is pushing the countries to work together more closely, which can result in other fields of cooperation and integration (Teo et al., 2001). States play a role in promoting regional tourism through regional cooperation and regional stability. "Tourism is an important component of the new reality of a globalised world and an increasingly interconnected Southeast Asia." (Hall, 2001: 24).

Many attempts have been made to promote tourism in the region. Most the ASEAN countries have established so-called growth triangles with the financial and technical support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), namely the SIJORI (Singapore, Johor, and Riau) triangle between Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore; the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand growth triangle; the Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam growth triangle; and the Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand growth triangle. Tourism is considered as one of the main issues dealt with under the framework of the growth triangles. In addition, the Mekong sub-region is attempting joint economic development and creation of a single tourism destination with support from the international financial institutions (ADB) and the political will of the countries concerned. Although currently such triangles and sub-regional tourism development does not work very effectively, they are on the ways toward regional tourism integration.

The most important tools to promote regional tourism integration include infrastructure and a legal framework. Infrastructure plays an important role in regional tourism integration. Evidence has shown that infrastructure plays a critical role in the tourism industry in Singapore (Low & Heng, 1998), and in Southeast Asia as a whole (Page, 2000). Page observes that "the future prospects for further growth in tourism will be contingent upon regional cooperation to assist in the greater integration and development of transport modes upon which the region's tourism industry relies" (Page, 2000: 74). Several international airports in the region, in Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, have become gateways for tourists. Cheap air fares among the ASEAN members have been promoted to encourage intraregional tourism. In addition, a legal framework has been a main issue in developing tourism collectively and regionally. The ASEAN Tourism Agreement was adopted at the ASEAN Ministerial Summit in Phnom Penh in November 2002. The agreement emphasizes the need to strengthen, deepen, and broaden cooperation in tourism among ASEAN member states and among their private sectors in the light of the complementary nature of their tourism attractions and the need for ASEAN cooperation in making travel into and within ASEAN easier and more efficient. The agreement aims to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of ASEAN's tourism services.

Overall, states in Southeast Asia are active in promoting and developing tourism policies. They design policies and implement them at different levels, with ideologies and

complex power negotiations operating behind the scenes. Tourism is not only a catalyst for socio-economic development but also a tool for national and regional integration and reconciliation, and the creation of cultural identities and images.

The Cambodian Government and Tourism: The discourse of power

Tourism development in Cambodia

The above discussion has illustrated the diverse ways in which government is involved in tourism planning and development, and the ideology behinds it. We now turn to the case of Cambodia.

Tourism has developed in Cambodia since the 1960s. However, the civil war seriously damaged tourism industry in the 1970s and 1980s. Tourism statistics for the 1970s and 1980s are not available as records were not collected at the time. Tourist arrivals have increased dramatically from the 1993 to 2007, with an annual average increase of about 30 percent. East Asian tourists contribute the largest number to the tourist arrivals to Cambodia. Korea is the top and Japan second, accounting for about 25 percent of the total tourist arrivals to Cambodia.

Tourism has become one of the most important industries contributing to economic development in Cambodia. Tourism is the second largest contributor to the Cambodian economy after the garment industry. In 2005, income from tourism accounted for US\$832 million, or about 13 per cent of the Cambodian Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and it provided annually about 200,000 jobs for the Cambodian people. In 2006, tourism generated revenue of US\$1,594 million, about 16% of Cambodian GDP, and provided about 250,000 jobs (Ministry of Tourism, 2007). It is safe to say that tourism is one of the main contributors to Cambodian economic development and the government really takes it seriously in respect to planning and management.

Besides the economic effects of tourism, the Cambodian government also views tourism as an effective tool to promote Cambodian cultural values and identity, which had been lost due to French colonialism, political upheavals, the prolonged civil war, and external intervention. While Cambodians had been aware of Angkor at the time of its discovery by the international explorers, they did not see the ruins as “evidence of a Cambodian Kingdom” (Edwards, 1999:155). Before the French Protectorate, people living near the Angkor Monument regarded the monuments as a religious site. They did not think of Angkor as a symbol of national pride (Edwards, 1999:156).

“The perception among Khmer that their culture has been lost, or being lost, is pervasive. The destruction from years of warfare, the horrendous losses during the years of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979), [were] followed by the presence of their traditional enemies, the Vietnamese...” (Ledgerwood et al, 1994:1)

Angkor has become the symbol of Cambodian identity and nationalism since Cambodia got independence from France in 1953. “Nationalism has been based on collective memories and oblivions. Since Angkor was appropriated by Cambodian nationalism, the ‘glorious’ age of Angkor has been memorized as the ‘true’ past of the nation” (Sasagawa, 2005: 439). After centuries of socio-cultural transformations and changes, particularly after the colonial period, the Khmer traditions have been reconstructed through what

Hobsbawn and Ranger call the “invention of tradition” (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1983). Cambodian culture and traditions are products of an intellectual construct together with the international and external forces (Ledgerwood et al, 1994:6). Tourism, a global phenomenon, is one of the exogenous factors influencing the reconstruction of Cambodian culture. Tourism provides incentives for the national and local government to rediscover things which are believed to be related to Cambodian culture and identity in order to attract tourists. Tourism can also help to improve the image of the Cambodian state. Yoshiaki Ishizawa noted “Tourism is an important industry that brings in much needed foreign currency to Cambodia. Welcoming North Americans, Europeans and Japanese also gives the Cambodian government a good chance to demonstrate its political stability. In other words, the ruins are Cambodia's international showcase” (*The Asahi Shimbun*, February 23, 2005). It can be argued that the Cambodian state considers tourism as the main contributor to socio-economic development, and to improvement of Cambodia’s image and identity.

Hun Sen’s Speeches on Tourism: The Discourse of Power

To further understand the politics and public policy of tourism development and planning in Cambodia, textual analysis of the speeches and talks by Prime Minister Hun Sen is necessary, since the speeches influence the agencies issuing and implementing tourism policies. In Cambodia, the prime ministers’ talks are very influential since Cambodia is strongly embedded in a patronage system and a top-down decision making process (Chan & Chheang, 2008). The ministers and other national and local authorities are willing to design their policies and implement them in accordance with the speeches made by the prime minister. It is, therefore, necessary to decode and analyze the speeches of the prime minister in order to understand tourism planning and management policies in Cambodia.

Speech is a verbal record of a communicative act and a text which “permits communication over time and space, and permits words and sentences to be examined both within and out of their original contexts” (Goody, 1977:78, cited in Xiao, 2006:807). Textual analysis of the power discourse in Cambodia’s tourism is made possible by reviewing all the speeches by Hun Sen from 1998 until April 2008 which are available in English language versions at Cambodia New Vision homepage (<http://www.cnv.org.kh/>). Only important speeches pertinent to tourism development and planning were selected and analyzed. Consequently, 38 speeches were found and their content coded. Using the contents of the speeches, an analysis of the power discourse could be made, in which tourism and economic development are at the center, with other variables supporting the center (Figure 1).

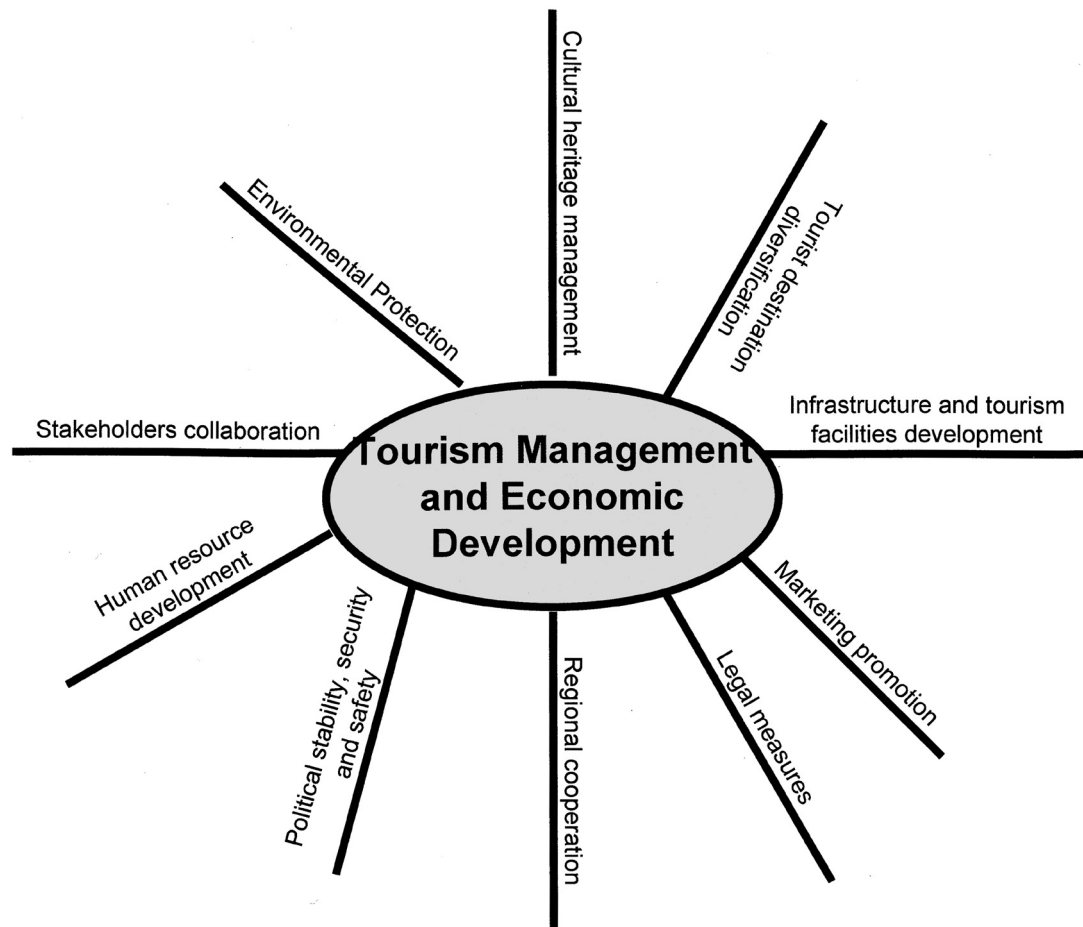


Figure 1. Constructs of the power discourse

Discussion

The tourism issue has figured quite remarkably in these speeches. From them, a discursive diagram can be drawn in which tourism and economic development forms the hub, while other issues are arranged as spokes. These represent security, infrastructure, stakeholder collaboration, natural and cultural heritage preservation, tourism products development and marketing, travel facilitation, human resource development and training, and regional cooperation and integration.

The Hub: Tourism and economic development

The speeches focus more on the economic benefits of tourism. The government views tourism as one of the most effective tools in poverty reduction in Cambodia through employment, tax revenues, and other spillover effects in other sectors, particularly agriculture, handcrafts and souvenirs production, and construction. Tourism is one of the top five national development priorities of Cambodia. In addition, tourism plays a vital role in realizing the Cambodian national development strategy called the “Rectangular Strategy” focusing on promoting economic growth, employment, equity, and efficiency

in the public sector.

The speeches mention the role of tourism in socio-economic development in Cambodia many times. This demonstrates the attention paid by the Cambodian government in respect of the perceived and real benefits deriving from tourism industry.

The country currently has comparative advantages within some sectors of its economy, in particular the agricultural sector, the agro-industrial businesses, labor-intensive manufacturing and tourism. These sectors should form the foundation for the take-off of the Cambodian economy. (Hun Sen 21 December 1999)

Build up potential of tourism sector to become an important engine for economic growth and poverty reduction through job creation, increased income, and improving standard of living. (Hun Sen 7 February 2001)

The key sources of our economic growth continue to be tourism and the garments industry. (Hun Sen 7 August 2002)

Tourism opens up borders and economies, yet enables opportunities to develop internal markets for a wide variety of high value-added production activities, employment and services. (Hun Sen 3 November 2002)

Tourism will offer us jobs and will also absorb some of our people's products. (Hun Sen 25 January 2003)

In the intensive promotion of tourism: Cambodia and the rest of ASEAN has placed great store on the long-term economic benefit arising from tourism. (Hun Sen 16 June 2003)

Tourism continues to be at the forefront of Cambodia's economy. (Hun Sen 4 September 2003)

The outcomes and other achievements obtained from the effort of developing the tourism sector are the real evidence of success in contributing to the implementation of the Royal Government's Rectangular Strategy which focuses on promoting Economic Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency in public sector. (Hun Sen 5 March 2008)

Tourism is seen as an engine of growth with magnetic power attracting other sectors to develop and connect to it. Tourism in Siem Reap has attracted many Cambodians from other regions to come to find jobs. In other words, tourism stimulates the international movement of people to and from Cambodia.

The tourism sector over here not only provides jobs for the locals but it also attract citizens from all over the country to come here, from nearby or far away, to work in tourism-related services and businesses. (Hun Sen 8 December, 2005)

In order to reduce poverty effectively through tourism, the government pays special

attention to employment and income creation for the local people. The government recognizes the leakage of tourist revenues through the importation of materials and agricultural products from the neighboring countries to supply the needs of hotels and restaurants. To deal with this issue, the government encourages and supports local farmers and producers, particularly the farmers living in Siem Reap province, home of Angkor Wat, to produce these goods instead. “Once village once product” is considered an effective tool in reducing leakages and promoting local community development.

30% of revenue from tourism was leaked out of country through imported foreign goods to serve the tourism sector in Cambodia. Therefore, to patch the leakages we need to develop some kinds of local production programs by conducting comprehensive study to find out the potential products that can be used to promote the local economy. (Hun Sen 5 June 2005)

The strengthening of tourism infrastructure and the guarantee of the connection between tourism and agricultural field is a crucial factor for enhancing the living standard of the people. (Hun Sen 20 November 2006)

The Spokes: Tourism management and development

Security and safety for tourists

Political stability and security are among the most important elements in tourism development in Cambodia. After experiencing prolonged civil war and armed conflict, international tourists and travelers had an image of Cambodia as a dangerous place, famous for land mines and killings. Tourists started visiting Cambodia only from the mid-1990s when the armed conflict was over and security was restored.

The Cambodian government always emphasizes stability and security as the cornerstones of economic development and tourism promotion in Cambodia. Security at the tourist destinations is stronger than elsewhere in the country. Tourist polices were created for preserving security and safety for the tourists.

[we] need to provide is safety, security for the Japanese investors as well as tourists. (Hun Sen, 17 August 1999)

[political] stability and security in the country, which is vital for tourism development. (Hun Sen 27 February 2002)

[with] the security, political stability and social orders ensured the development of transport infrastructure, such as highways, rural roads and bridges, is a key to development of tourism. (Hun Sen 8 May 2003)

[the] Royal Government has drafted a law on tourism management and implemented measures to strengthen the capacity of tourist police to provide security for tourists. (Hun Sen 14 March 2005)

Infrastructure and tourism facilities development

Tourism infrastructure and facilities are the main priority in planning and development. The Cambodian government has tried to invest in building basic infrastructure such as highways, roads, electric power plants, water supplies, and international airports. With the support of the international financial institutions and donor countries, some basic physical infrastructure has been constructed but this is still at a very low level.

Tourism development requires the development of infrastructure and other tourism-related facilities. (Hun Sen 28 February 2002)

[The] market is built is serving the need for tourist development in Siemreap as well. We have to take into consideration the need for building and strengthening the infrastructures. (Hun Sen 18 March 2002)

A more comprehensive road network will open up and link Cambodia's economic and tourism opportunities. (Hun Sen 20 June 2002)

[An] appropriate physical infrastructure in response to the basic need of development in tourism. (Hun Sen 1 July 2002)

[O]pen-skies policy is the key policy innovation that has enabled the rapid growth of our tourist industry. (Hun Sen 6 December 2002)

The Royal Government has been developing some main infrastructure such as road, water and electricity supply, telecommunication network etc. toward key tourism attraction places...Moreover, the improvement in tourism supplies and services such as hotels, guest houses, restaurants, transports, tour agencies, tourism resorts and other places have shown the improvement in the quality of tourism services and products in line with Cambodia tourism policy to induce longer stay, more spending and return visit. (Hun Sen 5 March 2008)

[Bridges] and roads are still our hope and necessary mean to promote economic growth and contribute to social development, especially tourism sector, which its revenue was about 17% of GDP in 2007 and about 1 million tourists visited different temples in Siem Reap provinces. (Hun Sen 5 April 2008)

Stakeholders collaboration: private, NGOs, and government

Collaboration between the public, private sectors and civil society is considered to be a factor propelling tourism development in Cambodia. The private sector plays an important role in providing tourism services while the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) support sustainable tourism and poverty reduction in Cambodia.

I urge the Ministry of Tourism to work closely with the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Land Management, Urbanization and Construction, as well as with relevant ministries, provincial and municipal authorities to develop the entertainment

sector and to improve services to cater for tourists. (Hun Sen 27 February 2002)

The most crucial issue is to work in partnership with the private sector to implement all action plan related to tourism sector development. (Hun Sen 27 February 2002)

[We] shall work closely with the private sector to develop tourist destinations. (Hun Sen 16 November 2002)

The Royal Government has cooperated with private sector to establish a professional association in order to strengthen the quality of services, encourage the attraction of direct international flights to Seam Reap, and continue expanding and improving infrastructure, sanitation and healthcare for tourists. (Hun Sen 14 March 2005)

I would like to appeal to all people, officials in all ministries and institutions, related authorities, private sector, development partners, national and international non-government organizations to continue providing your support and contribute to the development of Cambodia's "*Cultural and Natural Tourism*" sector to develop a successful and sustainable tourism sector. (Hun Sen 12 November 2007)

The Ministry of Tourism must act as the core agency in terms of policies, techniques, and expertise. At the same time, the Ministry of Tourism must cooperate closely with private sector to continue improving the quality of tourism services. (Hun Sen 22 December 2007)

Cultural heritage preservation

The Cambodian government considers cultural heritage preservation as the cornerstone of tourism development in the country. Cambodia is attractive to international tourists due to its unique culture and history.

Culture has contributed and is contributing to the country's development through its promotion of cultural tourists... The conservation and promotion of advancement of the national cultural heritage and civilization is an absolute will and determination of the Royal Government. (Hun Sen 1 July 2002)

Cambodia will seek to promote the sustainable management of our heritage and natural resources through specific policies and measures, so that these contribute to continuing national growth while remaining intact as national patrimony. (Hun Sen 6 December 2002)

[In] order to prevent child trafficking and sex in tourism and with support from World Vision and other organizations, we have established Council for safety in tourism, which is in the process of active implementation. (Hun Sen 16 November 2004)

Environmental protection

Environmental issues are quite new for Cambodia, especially within the framework of tourism development. The incorporation of environmental protection and tourism development started from the end of the 1990s when environmental issues surfaced in Angkor Park and other tourist destinations. The main environmental concerns are the increasing problems of solid waste and river pollution.

Attention should be given to developing measures to promote the protection of the environment and our cultural heritage according to the concept of “sustainable tourism development”. (Hun Sen 27 February 2002)

We are also encouraging ecology-friendly tourism management, to ensure the sustainability and permanent beauty of the monuments and Siem Reap. (Hun Sen 16 November 2002)

Historical, cultural and natural tourist sites have been managed and reorganized with good protection of natural and cultural environment. (Hun Sen 8 May 2003)

The growth of cities and expansion of tourism sector in the future will inevitably have an affect on the provision of water and unpredictable environmental changes that could lead to ecological imbalance in the coastal, marine and wetland areas, and will have an impact on other vulnerable elements (Hun Sen 1 April 2004)

Human resource development

Tourism studies have been developed in Cambodia since the early 2000s. Training human resources in tourism planning and development are the big challenge for the country. Therefore, training and education in tourism is given special attention by the government.

The important work is the training of human resources to a level of high knowledge and with sufficient capability in both national and international standards. (Hun Sen 1 July 2002)

Tourism vocational training schools were established; technical staff and employees have been trained both at home and abroad. (Hun Sen 8 May 2003)

Tourism products marketing and promotion

There are many tourism products in Cambodia but the problem is that marketing and promotion of the products are still very poor. Currently, most of the tourists come to visit Cambodia to see Angkor and not other places. It is necessary to promote other cultural and natural attractions for tourists in order to keep them to stay longer in Cambodia.

The Royal Government has also devoted more attention to the development of the tourism potentials of areas other than Siem Reap. We should promote attractions that

enable greater tourist traffic in under-served areas, as well as longer stay and increased spending by tourists. Thus, the Royal Government encourages the development of access to eco-tourism destinations such as Mondulkiri and Ratanakiri, beach tourism in our sea access areas to the South, the upgrading of Kang Keng airport in Sihanoukville and the promotion of initiatives such as the night markets. (Hun Sen 7 August 2002)

The Royal Government is preparing a master plan for tourism development and diversifying tourist destinations into other cities such as Sihanoukville. (Hun Sen 14 March 2005)

We need to transform from “Natural Tourism” to “Man-made Tourism” which depends mainly on processing and services. (Hun Sen 8 December, 2005)

In the future, there will be a systematic connection of the four priority regions and it will transform Cambodia into a key destination country in the region...tradition and culture, and people’s friendliness is also a major tourist attraction. (Hun Sen 5 March 2008)

Legal measures (Visas)

Cambodia was the first country in Southeast Asia to introduce an e-visa. This provides convenience for the tourists. The visa procedure is very simple. The tourists can get visas at border checkpoints and at international airports.

The Royal Government continues to support and encourage the development of the tourism sector through facilitating travelling procedures and transportation for tourists within the regional framework. Cambodia has adopted the implementation of a “Single Visa” between Cambodia and Thailand on 17 December 2007. This is the key in travel facilitation and a regional role model to facilitate the entry of tourists. It means that they can apply for a visa at a single place only in order to visit Cambodia and Thailand. Single Visa Agreement will also be applied to Cambodia-Vietnam, Cambodia-Malaysia, and Cambodia-Singapore in the future.

To encourage tourists to spend more time and money in Cambodia, the Royal Government has implemented actions to ease travel and entry: streamlined issuance of visas, especially for ASEAN citizens, strengthened security for tourists, and new services and recreation areas. Cambodia has also prioritized eco-tourism programs. (Hun Sen 4 September 2003).

To attract more tourists, Cambodia and Thailand are prepared to introduce the ACMECS Single Visa by adopting the ACMECS minus X formula. We will set up an IT system to facilitate this visa scheme. (Hun Sen 3 November 2005)

The Open Sky policy and other active policies to ease and facilitate transportation, policy on offering Visa on Arrival, Visa K and E-Visa are showing off their attractiveness to tourists. (Hun Sen 5 March 2008)

Regional cooperation

Cambodia considers regional integration as its top foreign policy priority. In terms of tourism development, Cambodia needs the support from regional groupings such ASEAN and the Greater Mekong Subregion to create a joint policy to attract more tourists to come to the region. Bangkok and Hochiminh International Airports are the main gateways for tourists coming to visit Cambodia.

Apart from making efforts to expand the domestic market for tourism products, we are conscious of the great potentials of ASEAN and the Greater Mekong Subregion. (Hun Sen 27 February 2002)

ASEAN should be pro-active in enhancing intra-ASEAN cooperation in other areas by utilizing all ASEAN internal growth potentials, such as cooperation in tourism. This can be implemented by transforming ASEAN into a single tourism destination. (T-ASEAN) (Hun Sen 11 March 2002)

Apart from the efforts deployed to open up domestic tourist markets, we are conscious that there is a great potential to link up the ASEAN and GMS tourist markets. (Hun Sen 15 May 2002)

ASEAN as a Single Tourism Destination. (Hun Sen 4 November 2002)

In addition to trade and human resource development, areas of cooperation include tourism, advanced informational technology and health care. (Hun Sen 05 November 2002)

The people living in the sub-region need the development of safe transportation and traffics, they need peace and safety free from natural calamities, they need food security as well as tourist sites, entertainments and enjoyment with the nature and cultural wealth along the banks of the river. (Hun Sen 29 November 2003)

[The] development of the areas surrounding Angkor, particularly linked to the tourism, cultural and natural destinations of neighbouring countries such as Thailand and Lao PDR. (Hun Sen 8 June 2004)

[The] true partnership between Asia and Europe will help strengthen economic, tourism and trade relations and promote investments. (Hun Sen 7 October 2004)

I urge ASEAN and China to accelerate the development of tourism in the region, through linking key tourist destinations in ASEAN and China, implementing “open sky policy” and facilitating tourist visa, in order to increase the flow of tourists into our region. (Hun Sen 19 October 2005)

Conclusion

The state plays an important role in tourism planning and development in Southeast

Asia in general and Cambodia in particular. In a political system in which the power of the prime minister is relatively absolute, his words can be interpreted as equivalent to national policy. To understand the main priorities tourism development and planning in Cambodia, it is therefore useful to analyze the speeches of the head of the government. Through analyzing the speeches made by the Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen and the discourse of power implied in them, the study has shown that there are nine main measures necessary for developing the tourism industry in Cambodia:

- Security and safety for tourists
- Infrastructure and tourism facilities development
- Collaboration between stakeholders, including private sector, NGOs, and government
- Cultural heritage preservation
- Environmental protection
- Human resources development
- Tourism products marketing and promotion
- Legal measures such as availability of visas
- Regional cooperation

Analyzing the discourses of the powerful in a developing country like Cambodia is therefore a fruitful way of looking at tourism planning and development.

Appendix: Prime Minister Hun Sen's Speeches/Talks

Date	Titles
Hun Sen 17 August 1999	Hun Sen's Exclusive Interview to the Kyodo News Agency:
Hun Sen 21 December 1999	Speech to the Government-Private Sector Forum
Hun Sen 07 February 2001	Address to the Launching Ceremony of the National Route 6 from Roluos to Siem Reap Town Funded by the Japanese Government Grant Program
Hun Sen 27 February 2002	Address to the Inauguration of the Pansea Angkor Hotel
Hun Sen 28 February 2002	Address to the Third Government-Private Sector Forum
Hun Sen 11 March 2002	Address on The ASEAN Lecture on “Challenges and Promises of ASEAN Integration: A Cambodian Perspective”
Hun Sen 18 March 2002	Comments during the Inauguration of Phsar Loeu Thom Thmey in the City of Siemreap Province
Hun Sen 15 May 2002	Address to Investors and Business People on “My Vision for Cambodia”
Hun Sen 20 June 2002	Opening Address at the Cambodia Consultative Group Meeting
Hun Sen 01 July 2002	Address to the Inauguration of the UNESCO/JSA (Japanese Government Team for Safeguarding Angkor) Project Office Built by the UNESCO/Japan Trust Fund in Siemreap Town, Siemreap Province
Hun Sen 07 August 2002	Address at the Sixth Government-Private Sector Forum at the Council for Development of Cambodia

Hun Sen 03 November 2002	Keynote Address by Samdech HUN SEN Prime Minister, Royal Government of Cambodia and Chairperson, 1st Greater Mekong Sub-Region Program Summit, Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia
Hun Sen 04 November 2002	Press Statement at the 8 th ASEAN Summit, the 6 th ASEAN + 3 Summit, and the ASEAN + China Summit
Hun Sen 05 November 2002	Press Statement at the ASEAN-Japan, ASEAN-Republic of Korea, the First ASEAN-India Summit and the South African President's Briefing
Hun Sen 16 November 2002	Keynote Address at the 8 th Asia – Kyushu Regional Exchange Summit
Hun Sen 06 December 2002	Remarks at the Charity Concert -- Angkor Complex, Siem Reap Province
Hun Sen 25 January 2003	Selected Ad-lib Address during the Inauguration of a Zoo in Koh Kong Province
Hun Sen 08 May 2003	Closing Remarks at the Conference of the Ministry of Tourism: “Taking Stock of the Performance 1998-2002 and Directions for 2003”
Hun Sen 16 June 2003	Keynote Address 36 th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting Cambodia: Fully Engaged in the ASEAN Community
Hun Sen 4 September 2003	Keynote Address at the Conference on Investment in Cambodia: “Investment in Cambodia - The Diamond of Mekong”
Hun Sen 16 October 2003	Address at the Second East Asia and Pacific Regional Conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategies”
Hun Sen 29 November 2003	Address at the Opening of the 10th Council Meeting of the Mekong River Commission
Hun Sen 01 April 2004	Address at the Launching of the Coastal Zone Resource Center in the Independent Beach

Hun Sen 08 June 2004	Keynote Address at the Opening Ceremony of the Technical Seminar on Cultural Tourism and Poverty Alleviation
Hun Sen 16 November 2004	Address at the Conference on Human Trafficking
Hun Sen 07 October 2004	Statement on behalf of Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar at the Admission Ceremony for New ASEM Members
Hun Sen 14 March 2005	Remarks at the 8th Government-Private Sector Forum
Hun Sen 05 June 2005	Address at the Opening of the National Conference on “One Village, One Product” (OVOP)
Hun Sen 19 October 2005	Keynote Address at the Second China-ASEAN Business and Investment Summit
Hun Sen 3 November 2005	Address at the Opening Ceremony of the Second Summit of the Heads of Government of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam on Economic Cooperation Strategy
Hun Sen 08 December 2005	Remarks at the Opening Ceremony of Sokha Angkor Hotel
Hun Sen 20 November 2006	Speech at the Cambodia-Korea Business Luncheon
Hun Sen 12 November 2007	Keynote Address at the Inauguration Ceremony of the Angkor National Museum
Hun Sen 29 November 2007	Address at the Opening of “Johnny Walker Cambodian Golf Open 2007”
Hun Sen 22 December 2007	Keynote Address at the Inauguration of Angkor Golf Resort

Hun Sen 13 February 2008	Keynote Address at the Opening Conference on South-East Asia Cooperation
Hun Sen 5 March 2008	Keynote Address at the Closing of 2007 Tourism Stocktaking Conference and Direction Setting for 2008
Hun Sen 5 April 2008	Keynote Address at the Ceremony to Launch the Construction of the National Road 62 from Tbeng Meanchey to Preah Vihear Temple, and Road Segment from the Intersection of National Road 62 to Srayorng-Koh Ke

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