



RESTRICTIONS ON THE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN CAMBODIA'S MEDIA

A LICADHO BRIEFING PAPER
May 2009



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PROMOTION AND DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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LICADHO

CAMBODIAN LEAGUE FOR THE PROMOTION
AND DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICADHO)

LICADHO is a national Cambodian human rights organization. Since its establishment in 1992, LICADHO has been at the forefront of efforts to protect civil and political and economic and social rights in Cambodia and to promote respect for them by the Cambodian government and institutions. Building on its past achievements, LICADHO continues to be an advocate for the Cambodian people and a monitor of the government through wide ranging human rights programs from its main office in Phnom Penh and 12 provincial offices.

LICADHO pursues its activities through two program departments:

Department of Monitoring and Protection:

- **Monitoring of State Violations and Women's and Children's Rights:** monitors collect and investigate human rights violations perpetrated by the State and violations made against women and children. Victims are provided assistance through interventions with local authorities and court officials.
- **Paralegal and Legal Representation:** victims are provided legal advice by a paralegal team and in key cases legal representation by human rights lawyers.
- **Prison Monitoring:** researchers monitor 18 prisons to assess prison conditions and ensure that pre-trial detainees have access to legal representation.
- **Medical Assistance:** a medical team provides medical assistance to prisoners and prison officials in 12 prisons and victims of human rights violations.

Department of Communication and Advocacy:

- **Training and Education:** advocates raise awareness to specific target groups, support protection networks at the grassroots level and advocate for social and legal changes with women and youths.
- **Public Advocacy and Outreach:** human rights cases are compiled into a central electronic database, so that accurate information can be easily accessed and analyzed, and produced into periodic public reports (written, audio and visual).

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1. Introduction

Cambodia does not have a free media in the true sense of the word. Freedom of expression in law requires freedom of expression in practice. And maintaining freedom of expression requires the proper investigation of abuses when they occur.

But as this briefing paper shows, intimidation by the powerful and well-connected continued during the 15-month period under review (January 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009), as did a lack of investigation of cases in which journalists were attacked or threatened in the course of doing their jobs.

The most chilling case of the period review was the murder of Phnom Penh-based newspaper journalist Khim Sambo.

His killing brings to at least ten the number of journalists murdered since the country's new Constitution was promulgated in 1993. It remains the case that none of their killers has been brought to justice, reinforcing the message of impunity enjoyed by those who threaten or perpetrate violence against journalists.

Khim Sambo worked for the opposition-affiliated newspaper Moneakseka Khmer, and was shot dead by two men on a motorbike on July 11, 2008. His 21-year-old son, Khath Sarin, was also killed in the attack. Police have not identified any suspects or a motive for the killings. If past performance is a guide, his killers will not be brought to justice.

Khim Sambo wrote articles criticizing high ranking members of the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP). His murder came just two weeks before the 2008 national election and creating an atmosphere of fear amongst journalists.

Most of Cambodia's media are aligned to one party or another, with by far the majority favoring the ruling CPP. But that mix of alignments varies with different media outlets. For instance, every television station is aligned to the CPP or to the government (which amounts to the same thing). That holds true for many of the radio stations as well.

The situation is more fluid in the print media, where a wider range of viewpoints are found. However given the country's relatively low literacy rates, problems with distribution of print media and cost of print media for the average Cambodian, broadcast media are the way most people get their news – and broadcast media is generally strictly controlled.

One bright spot is the continued emergence of the internet as a forum for news and views about Cambodia in Khmer and in other languages, with almost two dozen websites listed in our report. However their impact is limited since only a very small number of mainly urban Cambodians have access to the internet.

Khim Sambo's newspaper was not the only non-CPP aligned outlet to be targeted. A Cambodian journalist for Radio Free Asia fled the country with his family after receiving death threats, and has received asylum in Norway. Other journalists were threatened, or reported being harassed, contributing to a climate of fear. And another journalist was stabbed to death in circumstances that police described as a robbery gone wrong.

Other opposition-aligned media suffered during the period under review – two provincial radio stations were shut, and several journalists were attacked or threatened (usually by armed state officials). There were no credible reported cases of intimidation against CPP-aligned media.

At least two court cases for defamation were filed against journalists under the UNTAC Criminal Code¹ (rather than the 1995 civil Press Law) by senior ministers in the CPP-controlled government. The Press Law states that people who feel they have been defamed by the press can seek redress using civil law (as opposed to the criminal law) through the courts – redress includes retractions and compensation by the outlet concerned. Use of UNTAC Criminal Code contradicts the Press Law's stipulation that "no person shall be arrested or subject to criminal charges as a result of expression of opinion".

To sum up, the media environment in Cambodia may be better than that in some countries in the region – and it is certainly an improvement on the dark days of the Khmer Rouge and post-Khmer Rouge eras – but should not be considered a free press.

It remains the case that the ruling CPP retains a virtual stranglehold on key broadcast media in Cambodia and much of the print media. The existence of a free press unfettered by political constraints and intimidation is a vital part of a democratic and vibrant society. Cambodia, no less than any other nation, deserves that. As this briefing paper shows, it has a long way to go.

Methodology and Scope of Briefing Paper

This briefing paper updates the LICADHO report published in May 2008, *Reading Between the Lines: How Politics, Money & Fear Control Cambodia's Media*² and aims to highlight the ongoing restrictions to Cambodia's media that exist. It provides an updated listing of Cambodia's news media covering newspapers, radio, television and internet sites, and also has a table highlighting reported attacks and threats made against the media during the period 1 January 2008 to 31 March 2009.

The material used in this briefing paper was sourced from LICADHO's monitors and other staff (working in Phnom Penh and 12 provinces) and a review of newspaper reports from *The Cambodia Daily*, *Phnom Penh Post*, *Rasmei Kampuchea Daily*, *Koh Santephea* and *Kampuchea Thmei Daily*. Cases involving clear restrictions to freedom of expression were selected as representative case studies.

This report is not intended to be a comprehensive reflection of the situation of freedom of expression in Cambodia during this period – limited resources, numerous cases with motives that are not clear and limited access to information make this impossible. Rather, it is an attempt to document some of the clearest cases of restrictions to freedom of expression in Cambodia's media, and to provide an overview of the environment in which the media operates.

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¹ The law was written by the UN during the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia mission. It was intended as a temporary penal code, but it has remained in force. A new penal code is in the process of being drafted but has yet to come into force.

² <http://licadho-cambodia.org/reports.php?perm=119>



2. Cambodia's Media







Television Stations


All of Cambodia's eight television stations are aligned with the ruling party-the CPP- and all news bulletins are politically biased. A typical news report consists of a narrated account of a government official or group of officials (always a member of the CPP) traveling to the countryside to inspect a road or bridge, or to donate food and other goods to local villagers.

Speeches of Prime Minister Hun Sen are always replayed by all television stations except MyTV which does not broadcast a news bulletin and is focused on youth entertainment programs. CTN is widely considered the most popular TV station. It provides a variety of news and information programs including broadcasts of live events.

Cambodian Television Network (CTN) International broadcasts local news to countries around the world such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA. Apsara, Bayon and TVK also broadcast internationally via satellite.

NO.	STATION	OWNERS/MANAGERS	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
1	Apsara TV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by the Apsara Media Group. Although its director won't reveal is the specific names of individuals in the group, it has long been reportedly owned by the CPP. The Deneral Director is Sok Eysan, a CPP central committee member, who considers it his "duty to the people" to promote the government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2006, Apsara partnered with French company Solaris International to improve technology, program content and coverage. Apsara has a radio as well as television station. Format: Apsara TV broadcasts local and international news, Indian and Indonesian movies, political discussions and other entertainment programs.
2	Bayon TV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widely reported to be owned by the Prime Minister's family. Currently run by one of the Prime Minister's daughter Hun Mana, who in September 2008 was also appointed as an assistant to the Prime Minister. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established in 1998. For many years, Bayon's transmission tower was located inside the Prime Minister's guarded compound just outside Phnom Penh. Prime Minister and his wife, Bun Rany, cut the ribbon to open Bayon's new facilities in March 2007. Like Apsara, Bayon also has a radio station. Format: Cambodian, Korean, Chinese and American movies, educational programs, concerts, news analysis, boxing, comedy and CPP activities.

3	<p>CTN</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by the Royal Group, run by Cambodian-Australian tycoon Kith Meng, current National Chamber of Commerce president. He is an adviser to the Prime Minister and considered to be close to the government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The newest and arguably the most modern of the stations. Originally launched in March 2003 as a joint venture between local conglomerates the Royal Group of Companies and Stockholm-based Modern Time Group. Format: Morning news, local and international news, live concerts, comedy, foreign TV shows, sports, educational programs, Cambodian and Korean movies, and other entertainment programs.
	<p>CTN International</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by the Royal Group, run by Cambodian-Australian tycoon Kith Meng. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broadcasts Cambodian national news and other programs internationally. Its programs are consistent with those of CTN.
4	<p>My TV</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by the Royal Group, run by Cambodian-Australian tycoon Kith Meng. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part CTN and Mobitel. The latest station and all the programs are locally produced to appeal to young people. Format: Entertainment, local and international music, and educational programs.
5	<p>TV3</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-owned by Phnom Penh Municipality's Information Service and Thai company KCS Cambodia. Its Director-General, Kham Poeun Keomony, is an advisor to Senate President Chea Sim (CPP) and the current CPP president. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Format: Morning news, Cambodian, Korean and US movies, comedy shows, local and international news, music and live concerts.
6	<p>TV5</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-owned by the Cambodian military and MICA Media. The Director-General is Kem Kunvoth, a central committee member of the CPP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Format: local and international news, Cambodian, Korean and western movies, educational and entertainment programs.
7	<p>TV9</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claims to be "licensed as a 100% private sector company". It is believed to be owned by the family of Khun Haing, FUNCINPEC's former Minister of Cult and Religions and managed by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established by the National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC) party in the early 1990s. Until 1997, it was politically non-controversial, supportive of

		his relatives. Khun Haing, who defected to the CPP ahead of the 2008 general election.	<p>FUNCINPEC and its coalition government partner the CPP. In the run-up to the July 1997 coup, the station openly promoted FUNCINPEC and railed against the CPP. TV9 (along with FUNCINPEC's radio station) was attacked during the fighting and was afterwards controlled by the CPP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was subsequently returned and today it is, in the hands of Khun Haing,. ▪ Format: American and Chinese movies, local and international news and other educational and entertainment programs.
8	<p>TVK</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State broadcaster managed by the Ministry of Information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strict pre-broadcast censorship of sensitive issues. ▪ Format: Local and international news, Cambodian and Chinese movies, educational programs and other entertainment programs.

All of the television stations are free-to-air, but they are not available across the entire country so in some provinces cable TV providers are necessary to access all the stations.

TV stations that have provincial relay stations include:

- Bayon TV (relayed in Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Preah Sihanouk, Siem Reap and Stung Treng provinces);
- CTN (relayed in Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Pursat, Preah Sihanouk, Siem Reap and Svay Rieng provinces);
- TV5 (Kratie, Preah Sihanouk and Siem Reap provinces);
- TV3 (relayed in Battambang, Kampong Cham, Preah Sihanouk and Siem Reap provinces);
- TVK (relayed in Battambang, Koh Kong, Mondulikiri, Pursat, Ratanakiri, Siem Reap, and Preah Sihanouk provinces); and
- TV9 (relayed in Battambang and Siem Reap provinces)

Radio Stations



Phnom Penh

The majority of radio stations in Phnom Penh are affiliated to the ruling party due to the fact that most are owned by powerful people who associate with and/or have a close relationship with CPP party members. The content of these stations strongly supports a pro-government and pro-CPP bias by broadcasting the government's achievements and positive activities of the CPP and its elite supporters (without critical and opposition commentaries). Negative stories about the government or dissenting views are absent. Bayon FM (95 FM), believed to be operated by the Prime Minister's daughter Hun Mana, broadcasts a Morning Show which openly criticizes opposition parties.






Two radio stations are distinctly neutral in content: Beehive Radio (105 FM) and Women's Media Center of Cambodia (102 FM). 102 FM is operated by an NGO of the same name and focuses on women's rights issues; it normally avoids broadcasting views critical of the government. Beehive Radio however does not shy away from controversy, and is seen by the public as a popular station that is fiercely independent. It frequently airs views critical of the government.





Radio stations linked to opposition parties include: Sovan Phum Radio (104 FM) and 93.5 FM are affiliated to the SRP; Ta Prohm (90.5 FM) and 90 FM are affiliated to FUNCINPEC the CPP's political coalition partner.





Beehive radio, Sovan Phum Radio, Women's Media Centre and 93.5 FM are the only four radio stations brave enough to lease airtime to US government-funded international broadcasters Radio Free Asia (RFA) and Voice of America (VOA), local NGO radio station Voice of Democracy (VOD), and other rights groups which focus on presenting independent news pieces that are often critical of the government.

NO.	NAME	FREQUENCY	OWNER/MANAGER AND PERCEIVED POLITICAL AFFILIATION	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
AM Frequency				
1	National Radio of Kampuchea 	918 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State-owned national broadcaster. CPP 	<p>Language: Khmer and English news.</p> <p>Format: News</p> <p>Studio Location: Building 6, Street 19 corner Street 102, Daun Penh, Phnom Penh</p> <p>Tel: +855 23 722 869</p> <p>Fax: +855 23 427 319</p>
FM Frequency				
2	Sweet FM	88.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eng Setha Mouly (a relative of former Information Minister Ieng Mouly) or the Prime Minister. CPP 	<p>Language: Khmer and Chinese.</p> <p>Format: Music, educational programs.</p> <p>Location: No 2, Russian Blvd, Phnom Penh.</p> <p>Tel: +85523 982265 or +855 12 805 459</p> <p>Fax: +855 23 360 800</p>
3	FM 90 MHz 	90.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FUNCINPEC FUNCINPEC 	<p>Language: Khmer.</p> <p>Format: News, music and educational programs.</p> <p>Location: Chamkadong, Phnom Penh.</p> <p>Tel: +855 16 709 090</p>
4	Ta Phrom Radio	90.5 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Originally reported licensed to FUNCINPEC MP Eam Limsour. 	<p>Language: Khmer and English news.</p> <p>Format: News and other entertainment programs.</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FUNCINPEC 	<p>Location: No. 27B, Street 472 Phnom Penh. Tel: +855 23 993 206</p>
5	FM 93.5	93.5 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Former Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party BLDP-aligned station, ownership currently uncertain. ▪ Believed to be partisan to the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP). 	<p>One of the radio stations that agree to lease airtime to RFA, VOA and VOD. Language: Khmer. Format: news and entertainment programs. Location: No 29Eo Street 210, Phnom Penh. Tel: +855 23 359350</p>
6	Bayon FM 	95.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reportedly owned (along with Bayon TV) by the Prime Minister's family. Its Director-General is his daughter, Hun Mana. ▪ CPP 	<p>Language: Khmer. Format: News analysis, music and other entertainment programs. Location: 22 Street 106, Toul Krasang, Kandal. Tel: +855 23 880874 Fax: +855 23 983895</p>
7	National FM 	96.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State-owned national broadcaster. ▪ CPP 	<p>Language: Khmer and English news. Format: News and entertainment programs. Location: Chamkadong, Phnom Penh.</p>
8	China-Cambodian Friendship Radio	96.5 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A joint FM radio service between China Radio International (CRI) and Radio National of Kampuchea (RNK). ▪ CPP 	<p>Language: Khmer and Chinese. Format: News on China and the world; also Chinese and Khmer music.</p>
9	Apsara FM 	97.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refuses to reveal ownership; widely believed to be CPP-owned. Run by Sok Eysan, a CPP central committee member. ▪ CPP 	<p>Language: Khmer. Format: News, educational and entertainment programs. Location: Apsara TV Station (Channel 11), No 69, Street No 57 (Corner Street No 370), Phnom Penh. Tel/Fax: +855 23 314302</p>

10	<p>Love FM</p> 	97.5 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-owned by Phnom Penh Municipality and KCS Cambodia Co. Ltd. Apolitical (does not discuss politics) 	<p>Language: Mostly English, some Khmer.</p> <p>Format: Pop music station. Relays English-language news from Radio Australia at times.</p> <p>Location: at TV3 station, No 2 Russian Boulevard, Phnom Penh.</p>
11	<p>Military FM</p> 	98.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by TV 5 and operated as joint venture with Ministry of Defense and MICA Media Co. Ltd. CPP 	<p>Language: Khmer.</p> <p>Format: Mostly entertainment programs.</p> <p>Location: in TV5, Street 164, Phnom Penh. Tel: +855 23 303 925</p>
12	<p>FM 99</p> 	99.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General-Director is Kim Boeurn. CPP 	<p>Language: Khmer.</p> <p>Format: News, music and entertainment programs.</p> <p>Location: Located at Apsara TV Station (Channel 11), No 69 Street No 57 (Corner Street No 370), Phnom Penh. Tel: +855 23 212 376</p>
13	<p>Family FM (Christian Station)</p> 	99.5 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Far East Broadcasting Company Cambodia. Apolitical 	<p>Format: Khmer.</p> <p>Format: Mostly broadcasts shows on Christian philosophy.</p> <p>Location: No 8D, Street 355, Phnom Penh. Tel: +855 23 982199 Fax: +855 23 982045</p>
14	<p>WMC's FM</p> 	102.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operated by Women's Media Centre of Cambodia (WMC). Neutral 	<p>Languages: Khmer, some English.</p> <p>Location: Women's Media Center, #30 Street 488, Sangkat Phsar Demthkov, Khan Chamcar Morn, Phnom Penh. Tel: +855 23 212264 Fax: +855 23 364 882</p>
15	<p>Phnom Penh FM</p> 	103.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-owned by the Phnom Penh Municipal Information Service and KSC Cambodia Co. Ltd. CPP 	<p>Language: Khmer, English and Cham</p> <p>Located with Municipality TV Station (Channel 3), No 2 Bvd Confédération de la Russie (Street 112), Phnom Penh.</p>

16	SovanPhumFM 	104.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown SRP 	<p>Language: Khmer. Format: News, entertainment and music. Location: Cheung Ek, Sangkat Cheung Ek, Khan Meanchey, Phnom Penh. Tel: +855 11 444 104 or +855 12 787 505</p>
17	HMRadio	104.5 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by a leading music industry company, Hang Meas. Unknown 	<p>Language: Khmer. Format: News, music and other entertainment programs.</p>
18	Beehive FM 	105.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mam Sonando Neutral 	<p>The first radio station that agreed to sell airtime to RFA, VOA and VOD. Language: Khmer. Format: Neutral local news. Location: No 44G, Street 360, Sangkat Boeung Keng Kang III, Khan Chamkarmorn, Phnom Penh. Tel: +855 23 210 401 Fax: +855 23 210 439</p>
19	South East Asia Radio	106.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kao Kim Hourn, CPP Secretary of State. CPP 	<p>Language: Khmer. Format: Entertainment and music. Location: Sleng Roleung, Khan Sen Sok, Phnom Penh. Tel: +855 23 995 106 Fax: +855 23 995 107</p>
20	Sarika FM 	106.5 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown Unknown 	<p>Language: Khmer. Format: Information and entertainment programs. Location: #14 A, Street 392, Sangkat Boeng Keng Kang I, Khan Chamkarmorn, Phnom Penh. Tel: +855 92 500 080</p>
21	Khmer Radio 	107.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Khun Haing, FUNCINPEC member. Operated by Khun Elena. CPP/FUNCINPEC 	<p>Language: Khmer. Format: Pop music and news. Location: Operated by Cambodian TV Channel 9, 18 Street 562, Phnom Penh. Tel: +855 23 880 874</p>

22	ABC Radio 	107.5 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown Unknown 	<p>Language: Khmer. Format: Education on traffic issues. Location: 50A, Russian Blvd, Sangkat Tektla, Khan Russey Keo, Phnom Penh. Tel:+855 23 882 309 or +855 12 644 426</p>
Foreign Stations				
23	RFI relay station 	92.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radio France Internationale. Neutral 	<p>Language: French and Khmer. Format: News, music and other entertainment programs. Location: French Cultural Centre, No 218, Keo Chea Street (Street 184), Phnom Penh.</p>
24	BBC FM 100 	100.0 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service. Neutral 	<p>Language: English. Format: Relaying news and talkback shows from the UK.</p>
25	ABC FM 101.5 	101.5 MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radio Australia (Australian Broadcasting Corporation-ABC). Neutral. 	<p>Language: English. Format: Relaying news and talkback shows from Australia. Transmitter location: Chamkadong, Phnom Penh.</p>

The Provinces

In the provinces the majority of radio stations are relayed from Phnom Penh and are affiliated to the ruling party. However, some radio stations are neutral in content such as: Radio Khlaing Moeung and RFI in Battambang; Radio Angkor Rath (FM 95.5), Love FM (FM97.5) (apolitical) and BBC (FM99.25) in Siem Reap; and Women's Media Center (FM93.5) in Svay Rieng.

Foreign radio stations which are relayed from Phnom Penh that are neutral such as ABC radio, BBC radio, RFA, RFI and VOA are popular in the provinces. However most cannot reach remote areas.

NO	LOCATION	FREQUENCY	NAME/SLOGAN	NOTES
1	Battambang	90.25 MHz	Radio Khlaing Moeung.	Language: French/Khmer.
2		91.0 MHz	Radio Khmera.	Location: Opposite North side of Hotel 7 Makara.
3		94.5 MHz	Radio France Internationale.	Language: French/Khmer.

4		96.1 MHz	Battambang Provincial Radio Station.	Location: Phum Andong Chen, Khum Ochar, Battambang.
5		103.25 MHz	Sweet FM.	Affiliated to 103.0 FM and TV3, Phnom Penh.
6	Kampot	103.5 MHz	Kampot Provincial Radio Station (Sweet FM).	Affiliated to 103.0 FM and TV3, Phnom Penh. Relays Kampot 93.25 MHz.
7		93.25 MHz	Kampot Provincial Radio Station (Sweet FM).	Affiliated to 103.0 FM and TV3, Phnom Penh. Location: Phum Sovansko, Kampong Kandal, Kampot.
8	Kampong Cham	91.5 MHz	Bayon FM.	Relays Phnom Penh 95.0 MHz.
9		92.5 MHz	Kampong Cham Provincial Radio Station.	Location: Phum 3, Veal Vong, Kampong Cham.
10		94.5 MHz	RFI.	Language: French/Khmer.
11		100.5 MHz	FM 100.5 (Sweet FM).	Location: Cambodian People's Party compound, opposite Mittapheap Hotel, Rue Kossomak Neary. Affiliated to 103.0 FM and TV3, Phnom Penh.
12	Kampong Thom	88.5 MHz	FUNCINPEC Radio.	Location: Prey Tahou, Stun Sen, Kampong Thom.
13		91.5 MHz	Bayon FM.	Relays Phnom Penh 95.0 MHz
14		95.0 MHz	Bayon FM.	Affiliated to FM 95.0 MHz and relays Phnom Penh 95.0 MHz. Location: Stung Sen, Kampong Thom.
15		98.3 MHz	National Radio.	Location: Stung Sen, Kampong Thom. Owned by the Ministry of Information.
16		102.2 MHz	Women's Media Center of Cambodia (WMC).	Carries own program from Mon-Fri and relays of FM 102.0 MHz Phnom Penh.
17		107.3 MHz	Kampong Thom Provincial Radio Station.	
18	Pailin	90.5 MHz	Pailin Provincial Radio Station.	Location: Phum Chamka Kafe, Toul Lavea, Pailin.
19	Preah Vihear	99.0 MHz	Preah Vihear Provincial Radio Station (Sweet FM).	Affiliated to 103.0 FM and TV3, Phnom Penh. Location: Phum Sra Em, Kantout, Chamksan.
20	Pursat	98.5 MHz	Pursat Provincial Radio Station.	
21	Siem Reap	92.0 MHz	RFI.	Language: French.
22		93.0 MHz	Radio Bayon FM 93.	Location: Kasekam village, Sro Nge, Siem Reap.

23		95.5 MHz	Radio Angkor Ratha.	
24		97.5 MHz	Love FM.	Language: Khmer & English. Relays English news from Radio Australia at times.
25		98.0 MHz	Hot Wave FM.	Affiliated to 98.0 FM and TV5, Phnom Penh. Location: Module 3, Slorkram Village, Siem Reap. Tel: +855 63 380 455
26		99.25 MHz	BBC World Service (BBC 100 FM).	Language: English.
27		100.5 MHz	Siem Reap Provincial Radio Station (Sweet FM).	Affiliated to 103.0 FM and TV3, Phnom Penh. Location: Phum Mondol 2, Svay Dangkhum, Siem Reap.
28		101.5 MHz	Radio Australia (ABC).	Language: English.
29		102.5 MHz	Siem Reap City Radio Station.	Behind old stadium.
30		92.00 MHz	Bayon FM.	Relays Phnom Penh 95.0 MHz, possibly with occasional local announcements.
31	Preah Sihanouk	94.5 MHz	RFI.	Language: French/ Khmer.
32		100.5 MHz	Preah Sihanouk Provincial Radio Station (Sweet FM).	Affiliated to 103.0 FM and TV3, Phnom Penh. Location: No 169, Ekareach Street, Sihanoukville.
33		90.25 MHz	FM 90.25.	Relays Phnom Penh 90.0 MHz.
34	Banteay Meanchey	96.5 MHz	Banteay Meanchey Provincial Radio Station (FM 96.5 MHz).	Location: Phum Svay Hill, Kou Than Village, O Ampil Commune, Sisophon, Banteay Meanchey province.
35		93.5 MHz	Women's Media Center of Cambodia (WMC)	Affiliated to Women's Media Center of Cambodia and relays Phnom Penh FM 102.0 MHz.
36	Svay Rieng	98.75 MHz	Bayon FM Radio	Relays Phnom Penh 95.0 MHz.
37		103.75 MHz	Svay Rieng Provincial Radio Station (Sweet FM).	Location: Phum Mepleang, Svay Rieng.
38	Stung Treng	92.0 MHz	Bayon FM Radio.	Relays Phnom Penh 95.0 MHz.
39	Takeo	92.5 MHz	Kok Thlok Radio.	
40	Kratie	91.0 MHz	Radio Bayon FM.	Relays Phnom Penh 95.0 MHz.

Newspapers

Daily newspapers Koh Santepheap, Rasmei Kampuchea and Kampuchea Thmei are believed to be the three top-selling papers, with probable circulations of 20,000-25,000 copies each. Most of the smaller papers have a print run of a few thousand copies, but numbers fluctuate with the day's news and circulations can soar at key times such as during elections or political controversies.

Most daily and weekly newspapers feature general news and politics, as well as sport, business and extracts from books. The top-selling publications compete for readers with their front pages, using sensational headlines and gory photographs of crime victims or traffic accidents to attract attention. This is important because few newspapers have formal subscription systems, so most sales occur at the roadside or market newsstands. A reader's choice may depend on their political sympathies (i.e. whether they want a pro-government or opposition newspaper) but editors say there is little brand loyalty. Often, prospective readers browse a newsstand and choose the paper with the most interesting front page, encouraging a 'race to the bottom' in editorial standards as newspapers compete to attract readers.³

None of the major Khmer-language newspapers is considered politically-neutral. In fact, nearly all newspapers, big or small, are owned or backed by powerful politicians or businessmen and reflect their patrons' political biases in their editorial content. For smaller publications, their patrons - and editorial lines - can and frequently do change. In 2000 it cost as little as \$400 a month to buy the loyalty of a newspaper which published several times a week, but it's unclear what the 'going rate' is these days.⁴

Cambodian journalists usually divide the press into three categories: the pro-government papers, the opposition papers and the international papers. By international newspapers, they usually mean The Cambodia Daily, the Phnom Penh Post, and Cambodge Soir, but there is also a healthy sub-genre of Chinese-language newspapers which focus mainly on business news. The international media is generally considered independent - though some recent events have challenged that belief. Many Cambodian journalists envy the freedom and relative protection (and better salaries) enjoyed by staff working for these international newspapers.

The pro-government and opposition papers use their pages to promote their respective political parties and launch attacks against their foes. The pro-government newspapers often simply ignore major news events, if they are deemed embarrassing or discomfiting to the powers-that-be, or else present only the carefully-worded government line on them. The opposition newspapers, meanwhile, frequently make accusations - often with few if any facts to support them - against government officials and their associates

NO	PUBLICATION	OWNER	PERCEIVED POLITICAL BIAS	FREQUENCY OF PUBLICATION
1	Akrei Yeakthor	▪ Sgoun Nimol ⁵	CPP	
2	Black and White	▪ Chin Chanmony	Neutral / CPP ⁶	1 per week

³ This analysis of buying habits is based on interviews with media monitors and journalists.

⁴ Britt-Loise Edman, *Trapped in the Past, Seeking out a Future; A Study on the Cambodian Media Sector*, commissioned by Sida and Forum Syd, 12 May 2000, pg 18.

⁵ Sgoun Nimol is the name on the Ministry of Information list, but two senior journalists suggested the paper is actually controlled by Prum Say.

3	Chakroaval Daily	▪ Keo Sophoan, businessman	CPP	3 per week
4	Chhouy Khmer	▪ Vong Sopheap	SRP	5 per week
5	Deum Ampil	▪ Soy Sopheap, also works for CTN	CPP	6 per week
6	Deum Tnaot	▪ Hok Ren	SRP	2 per week
7	Kampuchea Thmei	▪ Ly Hour	CPP	6 per week
8	Khmer Amatak	▪ Bun Tha, advisor to Norodom Ranariddh	Norodom Ranariddh Party (NRP)	1 per week
9	Khmer Aphivath Sethakech	▪ Houm Reach Chamroeun	CPP	6 per week
10	Khmer Machah Srok	▪ Slonh Luy	Sam Rainsy Party	2 per week
11	Khmer Sataphana	▪ Vong Samay	CPP	6 per week
12	Koh Santepheap	▪ Pol Saroeun ▪ Thong Sovan Reangsi	CPP	6 per week
13	Mate Neak	▪ Taing Chhun Lam	CPP	1 per week
14	Mato Phoum	▪ Unknown		2 per week
15	Mekong Cambodia	▪ Kong Youthear	FUNCINPEC	
16	Moneakseka Khmer	▪ Dam Sith, Deputy Secretary General of the SRP	SRP	6 per week
17	Rasmei Angkor	▪ In Chan Syvutha	CPP	
18	Rasmei Kampuchea	▪ Phlong Chhum ▪ Pen Pheng	CPP	6 per week
19	Samleng Youvachoun Khmer	▪ Keo Sothear	NRP	6 per week
20	Samleng Youveak Vey	▪ Ly Bunna	CPP	3 per week
21	Samrek Koun Khmer	▪ Pak Sarith		2 per week
22	Sna Day Khmeng Wat	▪ Samphan Narith	CPP	
23	Sochivathor	▪ Chey Yano		1 per week
24	Wat Phnom	▪ Unknown	FUNCINPEC	6 per week
25	The Cambodia Daily	▪ Foreign	Neutral	6 per week
26	Phnom Penh Post	▪ Foreign	Neutral	6 per week
27	Cambodge Soir	▪ Foreign	Neutral	1 per week

Internet

The informal arena of the internet in Cambodia has emerged in recent years as a medium that enjoys far less regulation than tradition media forms, which allows it to be broader and more independent. There are several websites and blogs that are able to publish independent news and commentary of the political and social environment in Cambodia. The lack of interest by the government in the internet is likely due to the fact that most Cambodians do not have access to the internet. There are only an estimated 44,000 internet users in Cambodia or just 0.3% of the population.⁷ As high costs, poor infrastructure and limited computer literacy keep the internet from reaching the broad public, such independent media is only able to reach a fraction of the population.

⁶ There were conflicting opinions amongst senior journalists about the political bias of this newspaper.

⁷ This statistic is widely cited, and sourced to the UN's International Telecommunication Union, but it's unclear how it was calculated.

No	Name and Website	Extra Information
Foreign Languages		
1	Khmer Intelligence http://www.ki-media.blogspot.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Popular anonymous blog reportedly operated by a group of foreign Khmers collating daily news articles from various local and international media organizations with translation into English.
2	Khmerization http://www.khmerization.blogspot.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Khmerization (operated by a Khmer in Australia) collates news articles with translation into English with daily updates.
3	The Cambodia Daily http://www.cambodiadaily.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website of English-language daily newspaper, not updated regularly.
4	Phnom Penh Post http://www.phnompenhpost.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website of English-language daily newspaper, updated daily.
5	Voice of America (VOA) Khmer http://www.voanews.com/khmer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website of Khmer radio service of VOA. It contains written and audio files of Cambodian and international news, updated daily. Website is also available in Khmer. ▪ Radio shows are originally broadcast in Khmer on Beehive 105 FM.
6	Ka-Set http://cambodia.ka-set.info	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independent news website, updated daily with general information about Cambodia and Cambodians abroad. ▪ It is available in three languages: Khmer, English and French. ▪ Established by some of the former Cambodge Soir staff.
7	Cambodge Soir http://www.cambodgesoir.info	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website of the French-language weekly newspaper of the same name, updated daily.
8	The Cambodian Mirror http://cambodiamirror.wordpress.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weekly overview of Khmer language media with commentary by a foreign journalist
9	Radio Free Asia (RFA) http://www.rfa.org/english/news/cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website of Khmer radio service of RFA, website contains written and audio files of Cambodian and international news, updated daily. Website is also available in Khmer. ▪ Radio shows are originally broadcast in Khmer on Beehive 105 FM.
Khmer Language		
10	Koh Santepheap Daily http://www.kohsantepheapdaily.com.kh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website of popular daily Khmer-language newspaper, updated daily. ▪ Features general news and politics, as well as sport, business and extracts from books.
11	Everyday http://www.everyday.com.kh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commercial website for an internet provider. ▪ Collating national and international news from various sources (also in English).

12	Khmer Nation http://www.kn-news.blogspot.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website of Khmer Nation Newspaper which is believed to be affiliated to SRP. ▪ Provides up-to-date views of the opposition party.
13	Cambodia Politic http://www.cambodiapolitic.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website created by an anonymous team to publish news about Cambodian politics. ▪ Contains links to other news websites and political parties in Cambodia.
14	The Preynokor News http://www.preynokornews.blogspot.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website relating to Khmer Krom issues. ▪ Updated weekly.
15	The Voice of Kampuchea Krom Radio http://vokk.net	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website of Voice of Kampuchea Krom Radio airing news and information about Khmer Khrom and its people.
16	Deum Apil News http://www.dap-news.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website of daily Khmer newspaper of the same name. Updated daily.
17	Khmer Vipheak (Khmer Analyst) http://khmervipheak.wordpress.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website which uploads up-to-date news from various sources about Cambodia.
18	Khmer Staphana http://www.ksn-news.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website of daily Khmer-language newspaper of the same name, updated daily.

□□□

3. Threats to the Media

Killings

Thou Char Mongkol; *Died 11 June 1994.*

Thou Char Mongkol, editor-in-chief of the biweekly *Antarakum*, died a day after being found unconscious with a head injury on a road in Phnom Penh. Police initially claimed he was the victim of a traffic accident but his body bore no other injuries and his motorcycle was unscathed. Prior to Mongkol's death, *Antarakum* published a number of articles charging government and military officials with corruption, and its offices had been the target of a grenade attack in March.

Non Chan; *Shot dead on 7 Sept 1994.*

Non Chan, the editor of *Samleng Youvachoun Khmer* (Voice of Khmer Youth), was shot dead in a Phnom Penh. He and other newspaper staff had reported receiving death threats prior to the killing. His paper had been critical of the CPP and FUNCINPEC, and had received written warnings from the Ministry of Information.



Khieu Kanharith, then Secretary of State of the Ministry of Information, said the day after Chan's murder: "If he hadn't been killed, we would have sued him."

Two suspects were arrested for the killing and reportedly confessed, but the charges were dropped. No information about who may have ordered the killing was revealed.

Chan Dara; *Shot dead on 8 December, 1994.*

Chan was a correspondent with the newspaper *Koh Santepheap* (Island of Peace) and also contributed to other publications. He had published exposés of corrupt timber and rubber deals by government and military figures, among them a notorious army colonel named Sat Soeun, in the paper *Preap Noam Sar* (The Carrier Pigeon). Chan was shot just after he was seen leaving a restaurant in Kampong Cham province with Sat Soeun. Ministry of Interior police arrested Sat Soeun, who still continued to send threats to the two papers and to Chan Dara's wife. The colonel, however, was acquitted at trial and released.



Over the years, Sat Soeun has been linked to numerous crimes, including several murders and involvement in illegal logging. He is currently in prison after finally being convicted in 2005 for an attempted murder.

Thun Bunly; *Shot dead on 18 May 1996.*

Thun Bunly was a writer and publisher of the opposition newspaper *Odom K'tek Khmer* and a steering committee member of the Khmer Nation Party (the predecessor to the Sam Rainsy Party). He was fatally shot while riding



a motorcycle in central Phnom Penh. The journalist was appealing two convictions for defamation and disinformation after criticizing the government in articles and cartoons. Bunly, as well as two other newspaper editors, had received warnings that his life was in danger. On the morning of his death he published a article saying that an unidentified major in the security forces was out to “get him”. The article may have provoked his assassination because it mocked the major as being drunk and incompetent.

Chet Duong Daravuth; *Killed in grenade attack, March 30, 1997.*

Daravuth was a reporter for the newspaper *Neak Prayuth* (The Fighter) who had recently obtained permission to publish a new paper. He was also a member of the steering committee member of the KNP (the predecessor to the SRP). He was killed in a grenade attack outside the National Assembly in Phnom Penh while covering a KNP rally where opposition leader Sam Rainsy was speaking. At least 16 people were killed in the attack and at least 22 journalists were injured, some seriously. Reportedly, the FBI later found links between the attack and bodyguards of the Prime Minister.



Pich Em; *Shot on 4 May 1997, died 5 May 1997.*

Pich Em was a technician (and also an announcer according to some reports) at state-owned TVK’s provincial affiliate station in Sihanoukville. Days earlier, the station had been asked by a senior provincial policeman to broadcast a political speech by a FUNCINPEC leader. The station refused. On 4 May, seven men attacked the station with AK47s and at least two B-40 rockets. Pich Em was shot twice in the stomach and died the following day in hospital. Two other people were injured in the attack and most of the station’s equipment was destroyed.

Michael Sokhon (also known as Michael Senior); *Shot dead on July 7, 1997.*

Sokhon was a Canadian-Cambodian citizen who returned to Cambodia and worked as a television newsreader and English teacher. He was shot dead while photographing looting by soldiers in a public market during the 1997 coup. He was accosted by the soldiers, allegedly CPP loyalists, who shot him first in the knee. As he reportedly lay in the street pleading for mercy, he was shot again, in front of his wife and brother-in-law.

Ou Saroeun; *Shot dead on 14 October, 1997.*

Ou Saroeun was a reporter for *Samleng Reas Khmer* (Voice of the Khmer People), and son of the newspaper’s publisher. He was dragged into the street by security guards at a Phnom Penh marketplace and shot dead. His father said his son had been investigating extortion of market vendors by market security guards. The official report of Ou's death said he was drunk and had been killed in a dispute over a card game, but the Khmer Journalists Association maintained that he was killed because of the newspaper's reporting. Police arrested the guard who shot Saroeun, but he was later released and no charges were filed against him.

Chour Chetharith; Shot dead on 18 October 2003.

Chetharith was deputy editor of the FUNCINPEC-aligned Ta Prohm radio station. He was shot dead by two men on a motorcycle in front of his office in broad daylight. Four days earlier, the Prime Minister had accused Ta Prohm of insulting his leadership and warned the station that it should "control its programs" better.



Chetharith's murder came ahead of scheduled three-way talks between the CPP, FUNCINPEC and the opposition SRP to end a political stalemate after the CPP failed to achieve a two-thirds majority of votes in the 2003 national election. The talks were canceled after the journalist's killing. Months later, FUNCINPEC agreed to re-enter into a coalition government with CPP.

After the murder, then Phnom Penh police chief Heng Pov said police had identified possible suspects but there was insufficient evidence to arrest anyone.

Khim Sambo: Shot dead on July 11, 2008

Khim Sambo a journalist with the opposition-aligned Khmer-language daily newspaper *Moneakseka Khmer*, was killed by two gunmen on a motorcycle after being shot three times at point-blank range. Also killed in the attack was Sambo's 21 year old son, Khath Sarin, who was with his father at the time of the shooting.



Sambo had frequently written reports, often under the pen name "Srey Ka" or "Den Sorin", that were critical of the ruling CPP government and high ranking officials. His murder came just two weeks before the national election. Cambodian police officials have yet to identify a motive or suspects in the murders.

Table of Threats and Attacks Against the Media: January 2008 - March 2009

DATE	CASE DETAIL
<i>January 18</i>	<p>Journalists in Hiding After Warrant Issued⁸</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Journalists from three little-known Khmer language newspapers fled Pursat province after a warrant was issued for their arrest for allegedly causing a traffic accident.</i> • <i>Deputy provincial military police chief Sum Sap said on January 15 that the men set up a checkpoint on January 8, causing a truckload of fish to overturn and injuring its driver.</i> • <i>However one of the reporters, Prak Sokhon, 32, said by telephone that they had merely parked their cars near a bridge so they could take photographs for an investigation into fish smuggling.</i>

⁸ Saing Soenthrith, *The Cambodia Daily, Journalists in Hiding After Warrant Issued*, January 18, 2008.

January 18

Court Questions Publisher Over 'Defamatory' Articles⁹

- On January 16, 2008, the publisher of a pro-opposition newspaper said he had been questioned by the Phnom Penh municipal court in connection with a defamation lawsuit filed by Commerce Minister Cham Prasidh.
- Hang Chakra of the little-known twice-weekly newspaper *Khmer Machas Srok* said he was questioned on January 15 over allegations about Cham Prasidh and his wife which were printed in his newspaper in September and October 2007.
- The newspaper is currently inactive.

January 20

Military Policeman Lodges Complaint Against RFA Reporter and Rights Group Monitor¹⁰.

- RFA reporter Ratha Visal and ADHOC human rights monitor Chhay Rath were charged over an allegation of disinformation and unfair investigation in Stung Treng province.
- The arrests follow a report that a district military policeman had forced a young girl to marry him and had beaten the girl's father.
- Siem Bok district military police officer Chea Samnang sued the RFA reporter and demanded 10 million riel in damages (USD\$2,500) for defamation. He also suggested that the court charge Chhay Rath with conducting an unlawful investigation.
- The court has yet to take any action against the two, and the case is still pending.

January 29

Police Question Reporter over December Detainment¹¹

- On January 28, 2008, VOD radio reporter So Visal was questioned by the Ministry of Interior over an incident in December in which he was detained by police while reporting on the demolition of a large statue of Buddha.
- So Visal claimed police officers detained him for almost one hour on December 24 and erased the pictures on his digital camera when he tried to cover the statue's destruction at the Niraud Rainsey pagoda in Phnom Penh's Meanchey district.
- The Buddha statue was reportedly demolished because it was encroaching on the road.
- So Visal had received information that a worker had died at the site, and went there to investigate. No death was subsequently confirmed.
- A police official from the Ministry of Interior later apologized to So Visal.

⁹ Prak Chan Thul, *The Cambodia Daily*, *Court Questions Publisher Over Defamatory Articles*, January 18, 2008.

¹⁰ Rasmei Kampuchea Daily newspaper, *Military Policeman Lodges Complaint Against RFA Reporter and Rights Group Activist*, January 20, 2008.

¹¹ *The Cambodia Daily*, *Police Question Reporter Over December Detainment*, January 29, 2008.

January 30

Government Sets Up “Quick Response Team”¹²

- *The Cambodian government set up a special group dubbed the “quick response team” to counter opposition news media and foreign radio stations that publish information attacking the government.*
- *On 25 December 2007, the Ministry of Information issued a six-point directive, including a number of points such as preventing newspaper and magazine editors from writing articles criticizing the King, security or social order. They may also not use bad language, or use mocking terms or images of animals when describing religions or institutions such as the Senate, the National Assembly or the government.*
- *The team reportedly still exists but remains largely inactive.*

February 1

Ministry Orders Reform at FUNCINPEC FM Station¹³

- *The Ministry of Information ordered FUNCINPEC-affiliated radio station Ta Phrom FM 90.5 to instruct its announcers to desist from making on-air comments while reading from Khmer language newspapers.*
- *Vann Chai, a producer at Ta Phrom, subsequently said the station had told its announcers on the program to stop making comments, and laid the blame on the individual announcers.*
- *To date the radio station complies with the ministry's order. The program in question is still running but announcers no longer comment on the items read out.*

March 1

Municipality Bans Songs It Says Threaten Morality¹⁴

- *Phnom Penh municipality imposed a ban on several pop songs claiming the romantic lyrics were a threat to marital morality.*
- *Mom Soth, director of the municipality's department of culture, said the ban on the outlawed songs included “their sale and playing in public”. Mom Soth said the ban was put in place after the Prime Minister's wife criticized the racy lyrics in several pop songs in January 2008.*

¹² Sok Serey, Radio Free Asia, *Hun Sen's Government Sets Up the “Quick Response Team”, January 30, 2008*; see also: <http://ki-media.blogspot.com/2008/01/hun-sens-govt-set-up-quick-response.html> .

¹³ Prak Chan Thul, The Cambodia Daily, *Ministry Orders Reform at F'pec FM Station*, February 1, 2008.

¹⁴ The Cambodia Daily, *Municipality Bans Songs It Says Threaten Morality*, March 1, 2008

March 18

Sralanh Khmer Newspaper Changes Direction¹⁵

- On March 13, the editor of daily opposition paper Sralanh Khmer, 53 year-old, Thach Khet, who was also an SRP board member, reportedly submitted a resignation letter to the SRP saying he had defected to the CPP.
- The following day the newspaper's editor-in-chief, Bouy Roey, said the Angkor printing house would no longer print the newspaper, claiming it had been instructed to do so by an individual at the Ministry of Information.
- Rasmei Kampuchea newspaper reported that Thach Kethhad defected to the CPP, as did the Cambodian Television Network, a CPP-aligned broadcaster. Thach Khet was in Vietnam at the time and phoned his colleagues denying the story. The SRP also denied he had quit.
- Thach Keth later said he had changed the newspaper's policy of criticizing the government and also changed its political affiliation.
- Thach Khet had previously been subjected to threats and intimidation. On the night of December 12, 2007 unidentified people tried to run him off the road after he had left work. The previous year he reportedly received a death threat from the Prime Minister's nephew, Hun To, after printing an article about a land dispute and corruption in Rattanakiri.
- On June 17, 2008, Sralanh Khmer News stopped publishing due to budget constraints and a fall in readership.

April 10

RFA Reporter Receives Death Threat¹⁶

- On April 10th, 2008 a death threat was reportedly made against Radio Free Asia reporter Lim Piseth. He said six AK-47 bullets had been left outside his house in Battambang province.
- Three days later in Phnom Penh at 6pm a group of eight men on motorcycles followed Lem Piseth on his motorcycle along a relatively quiet street.
- Lim Piseth had previously received death threats in relation to sensitive topics about which he investigated and reported.
- On February 15, 2008, an unidentified person sent a text message to invite him to meet at Chhaya restaurant. Lem Piseth rang the number but no one answered the phone.
- Lem Piseth has actively investigated massive illegal logging in Tumring and Prey Long in Kampong Thom.
- In May 2008, Lim Piseth and his family sought asylum in Thailand with the support of the UN refugee agency.
- In January 2009, Lim Piseth and his family received asylum in Norway.

¹⁵ Yun Samean, The Cambodia Daily, *Sralanh Khmer Newspaper Publisher Confirms Defection to CPP*, March 18, 2008; see also: Rasmei Kampuchea Daily newspaper, *Sralanh Khmer Newspaper Changes Direction*, March 18, 2008. Unpublished LICADHO monitoring report.

¹⁶ Unpublished LICADHO monitoring report; see also <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/articles/20080508/74/index.html>; http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=22609; see also: <http://www.fidh.org/KHM-003-0607-OBS-068-Death-threats>; see also: http://www.freemedia.at/cms/ipi/freedom_detail.html?country=/KW0001/KW0005/KW0113/&year=2007

May 22

PM: Media Influence Gives CPP an Advantage¹⁷

- The Prime Minister criticized opposition programming on Beehive Radio FM 105, saying he would use his superior media resources to drown out their criticism. He said: "You have one channel; we have 39 channels", adding that "those who have previously cursed me have already disappeared from the world".
- The SRP, the NRP and the Human Rights Party each broadcast an hour-long program on Beehive between 11 am and 1 pm daily. None of the three parties has its own dedicated radio or television station.
- SRP lawyer Yim Sovann said Hun Sen's remarks were meant to intimidate voters and threaten freedom of expression.

May 28

Kratie Radio Station Shut Over Allegedly Violating its Contract¹⁸

- The Angkor Ratha FM 105.25 radio station was shut down by Minister of Information Khieu Kanharith reportedly for violating its broadcasting contract.
- The station was shut just 13 days after its first transmission. It received its license in January. It had sold airtime to several political parties and organizations such as the SRP, NRP, FUNCINPEC, the Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR) and VOD radio program
- Two cars with police and district military police arrived at the radio station and read out the order of closure. The order contained no explanations or reasons for the closure.
- At 3.00 pm that day, Kratie's information department director Nai Thida called the deputy director of the radio station, Khim Somaly, and asked whether it had sold airtime to political parties.
- Keo Chanratha, the director-general of Angkor Ratha, said the closure was done without any notice being given. He tried to negotiate with the ministry, and later said the station would be allowed to reopen under a new name.
- Although the Ministry of Information allows similar party political broadcasts by stations such as Beehive Radio in Phnom Penh and Angkor Ratha in Siem Reap, it quickly withdrew the licence of the remote Kratie station.
- The radio station remains closed.

¹⁷ The Cambodia Daily, *PM: Media Influence Gives CPP an Advantage*, May 22, 2008.

¹⁸ LICADHO unpublished monitoring report, <http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/94379>

June 9

Editor-in-Chief Detained for Defamation¹⁹

- On June 8, the editor-in-chief of the SRP-affiliated Moneakseka Khmer newspaper, Dam Sith, was arrested and held in detention by the Phnom Penh municipal court on the charges of defamation, insult and disinformation.
- His arrest followed an article published on April 18 that contained a quote by opposition leader Sam Rainsy alleging Minister of Foreign Affairs Hor Namhong had links to the Khmer Rouge.
- Dam Sith was taken to a closed-door municipal court session at 3pm and sent to Prey Sar Prison at around 5.30 pm. [The municipal court is typically closed on Sundays, which June 8 was.]
- On 15 June, Dam Sith was released on bail from pre-trial detention by order of the municipal court ²⁰ following an order by the prime minister.
- Investigating Judge Chhay Kong confirmed he had ordered Dam Sith's release, adding that he would continue to investigate the case.

June 29

Journalist in Kampong Thom Hurt by Slingshot in Illegal Logging Probe²¹

- On June 27 a journalist in Kampong Thom suffered a serious injury from a slingshot fired by men allegedly involved in illegal logging. The attack took place while he was riding his motorcycle from Rolea Tong village, Kro Year commune, Santouk district (about 100 meters from the base of the alleged illegal logging business).
- Another journalist said that he and Ry Neou, 40, a journalist with Meata Phoum newspaper were investigating the alleged illegal logging business. The group of men shot him with a slingshot, causing him a serious facial injury. As a result he crashed his motorcycle and briefly lost consciousness. The attackers fled after he called for help to nearby villagers.
- Ry Neou identified the attacker and filed a complaint with the local police, but they failed to act saying their supervisor was not present.

July 2

CPP Figure Threatens To Sue Khmer Machas Srok Newspaper Unless it Ceases Publishing Articles Affecting His Reputation.²²

- A former SRP representative, and now government advisor and deputy director of the CPP central committee, Sok Pheng, instructed the editor-in-chief of the Khmer Mchas Srok newspaper to stop running articles affecting his reputation or he would sue the paper. The articles discussed his alleged role in corrupt activities.
- The newspaper's editor-in-chief rejected the move, telling Kampuchea Thmei Daily newspaper that Sok Pheng was merely a citizen and not the King (whose reputation is protected under the Constitution).

¹⁹ Yun Samean & Katie Nelson, The Cambodia Daily, *Editor Arrested on Charges of Defamation, June 9, 2008*; see also: <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/press/files/184JointPRArrestDamSithNewspaperEditor08.pdf>; see also: Rasmei Kampuchea Daily newspaper, *Moneakseka Khmer newspaper Editor Was Detained for Defamation*, June 9, 2008. Yun Samean, The Cambodia Daily, *Group Calls for Release of Newspaper Editor*, June 10, 2008.

²⁰ Yun Samean, The Cambodia Daily, *Editor Dam Sith Freed from Pre-trial Detention*, June 16, 2008.

²¹ Kampuchea Thmei Daily, *Journalist in Kampong Thom Hurt by Slingshot from Alleged Illegal Logging Business*, June 29, 2008.

²² Kampuchea Thmei Daily newspaper, *Sok Pheng To Sue Khmer Machas Srok If It Continues Publishing Articles Affecting His Reputation*, July 2, 2008.

July 12

Pro-SRP Journalist Shot Dead in Phnom Penh²³

- At 7 pm on July 11 (two weeks before the national elections), Khim Sambo, a journalist with the opposition-aligned Khmer-language daily newspaper Moneakseka Khmer, was shot three times at point-blank range by two gunmen on a motorcycle. His son, 21-year-old Khath Sarin, was also killed in the attack.
- Sambo had frequently written reports, often under the pen name "Srey Ka" or "Den Sorin, that criticized the ruling CPP government and high ranking officials.
- Amongst his most recent reports was one alleging a high ranking official had ordered the kidnapping of a casino employee.

29 July

Koh Santepheap Daily Newspaper Journalist Struck by General²⁴

- Koh Santepheap Daily reporter Ros Sophyna, based in Stung Hav district, Preah Sihanouk province, was slapped by the district commander of the military police – three-star General Ngeth Vutha – after he named the general in a July 24 article as being involved in the transportation of illegally-felled trees.
- The incident happened in the district military police office on July 25 after the journalist had been called in for questioning. The general demanded the journalist issue a correction. Ros Sophyna said no correction was needed, and suggested the general write one as he would not. At that point the general hit him in the face and threatened him.
- On July 28, Ros Sophyna filed a complaint at the Provincial Military Police Commissariat, and on August 6 he lodged a complaint of assault at the Preah Sihanouk provincial court demanding US\$5,000 compensation.
- On August 11 the two men met and General Ngeth Vutha apologized. The journalist dropped his case. No correction was published in the newspaper.

July 29

Radio FM 93.50 Shut Down²⁵

- Mohanokor Radio FM 93.50 located in Cheung Ek commune, Dangkao district, was ordered by the Ministry of Information to cease broadcasting on the night of July 26.
- Radio station director, Kong Chentra, said on July 27 that the station had been forced to close by the authorities on the previous day.
- The closure of the station was reportedly due to it broadcasting programs on behalf of the Sam Rainsy Party after campaigning for the general election had ended.

²³ The Cambodia Daily, *Pro-SRP Newsmen Shot Dead in Phnom Penh*, July 12-13, 2008; see also: <http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2008/2929/> ; <http://idscambodia.blogspot.com/2009/03/cambodian-journalist-from-opposition.html> ; <http://www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/0/B2405F98C29BF6D2C125748800382C05?opendocument>

²⁴ Koh Santepheap Daily newspaper, *Journalist Beaten b Military Police*, July 29, 2009.

²⁵ Rasmei Kampuchea Daily newspaper, *Radio FM 93.5 Stopped to Broadcast*, July 29, 2009.

August 8

CCHR Condemns Attack on Journalists²⁶

- On July 14, 2008 the editor-in-chief of Chhbas Kar newspaper, Khut Khat Na, and a representative for Damneoung Khmer Piseh News, Te Lem Hak, were badly beaten by gasoline vendor Mr Him and two assistants in Siem Reap province.
- The event took place after they saw one of Mr Him's gasoline trucks had been involved in an accident in Dai Av village, Srae Noy commune, Varin district, Siem Reap.
- After reporting on the accident, the two men were reportedly beaten up by Mr Him and his assistants.

August 20

PM's Daughter Demands Magazine Retract Articles²⁷

- The Prime Minister's daughter, Hun Mana, filed a complaint with the Ministry of Information demanding that beauty magazine Saophorn retract an expose written about the television station, Bayon TV, which she runs. The article stated that staff were involved in love triangles, and said one network personality was "not smart", Bayon TV claimed in a press release.
- The press release stated that the article "defames and discourages" the station's staff, and said journalist Sann Bunthoeun's piece was defamatory. Bayon TV also claimed the journalist had tried to extort US\$3,000 from one of its presenters.

August 21

Opposition Journalists Fear Secret Police Are Watching Them²⁸

- Two reporters from the opposition-aligned newspaper Moneakseka Khmer fear that police are conducting a secret investigation of their activities.
- Vong Sopheak and his brother, Vong Sopheap, both journalists at the newspaper, said a group of men followed and photographed them during a demonstration on August 17 in front of the Free Trade Union office. The demonstration was to protest the presence of Thai soldiers at the Preah Vihear temple complex.
- "A journalist at the event told me the men asked about me and wanted to know what newspaper I worked for," Vong Sopheap said. "They already knew we worked for Moneakseka Khmer."
- The brothers claimed that they had been followed since July 12, when they took part in a celebration for slain Moneakseka Khmer journalist Khim Sambo, who had been shot dead along with his son the previous day. A group of plainclothes men had taken several photographs of them at that event, Vong Sopheap said.
- The same group of men followed the brothers during the trade union demonstration, Vong Sopheap said, adding that he and his brother argued with the men when they began taking pictures of them and demanded that the photos be deleted.

²⁶ Koh Santepheap Daily Newspaper, CCHR Condemns Beating of Journalist as an Abuse of Freedom of Expression, August 8, 2008.

²⁷ The Cambodia Daily, *PM's Daughter Demands Magazine Retract Articles*, August 20, 2008; see also: <http://ki-media.blogspot.com/2008/08/cpp-real-life-soap-opera-at-bayon-tv.html>; http://www.phnompenhpost.com/index.php/component/option.com_jcs/Itemid,52/crestrictid,21287/task,add/; <http://www.asiafinest.com/forum/lofiversion/index.php/t171469.html>

²⁸ Meas Sokchea: The Phnom Penh Post, *Opposition Journalists Fear Secret Police Are Watching*, August 20, 2008; see also: <http://ki-media.blogspot.com/2008/08/opposition-journalists-fear-secret.html>

August 27

Military Police Officer Threatens to Kill Journalist Over Gasoline Smuggling Allegations²⁹

- A military police officer, Ann Sorida, also known as Chrek, threatened the life of a Kandal-based journalist from Kampuchea Thmei newspaper who had written about goods-smuggling from Takhmau to Phnom Penh.
- Ann Sorida reportedly told the journalist that he could hire killers to do the job: "For the life of a journalist,[I] just pay 5,000 dollars for killers to shoot him dead if he wants to interfere other people's business."

September 30

Journalist Arrested after Photographing Military³⁰

- Pursat province journalist Him Mao, 34, who writes under the pen name Kao Dara was arrested on the morning of September 28 after a violent incident that broke out the previous day when he tried to photograph military police confiscating illegal timber, police said.
- Four military police officers had stopped an ox cart with two cubic meters of rosewood in Bakan District's Talou commune, said commune police chief Nhein Savoeun.
- Kao Dara, from the Khmer-language newspaper Rasmei Bayon, arrived and started taking photographs. At that point the military police confiscated his camera and press pass, which angered a crowd of local villagers. Twenty villagers then attacked the military police, injuring one.
- On October 29, the Pursat provincial court charged him with violence with the intent to cause injury.
- He currently remains in pre-trial detention in Pursat provincial prison.

December 23

Prince Ranariddh's Lawyer Asks Moneakseka Khmer Newspaper Editor-in-Chief to Provide List³¹

- The legal office of Prince Norodom Ranariddh sent a letter to the editor-in-chief of Moneakseka Khmer newspaper demanding he release a list purporting to show the names of ministers that Prince Ranariddh suggested be appointed to the Royal Palace.
- The letter threatened legal action in the event the newspaper did not release the list.
- Editor-in-chief Dam Sith said the action by Prince Ranariddh's lawyer amounted to a threat against the newspaper.

²⁹ Kampuchea Thmei Daily newspaper, *Illegal Gasoline Smuggled from Takhmau to Phnom Penh, Military Police Threatened and Attempted to Kill Journalist*, August 27, 2008.

³⁰ The Cambodia Daily, *Journalist Arrested after Photographing Military*, September 30, 2008.

³¹ Kampuchea Thmei Daily newspaper, *Prince Ranariddh's Lawyer asks Moneakseka Khmer newspaper Editor-in-Chief to provide name list*, December 23, 2008.

December 30

Villagers, Reporter Jailed Over Siem Reap Dispute³²

- A reporter was among three people arrested on December 26 in a dispute involving 475 hectares of land in Chi Kreng district, Siem Reap province.
- Sin Samley, 28, a reporter for Sangkum Khmer newspaper, was ordered to be arrested along with two representatives of the villagers by provincial court deputy prosecutor Nuon Sann.
- Sin Samley had written about the dispute for the newspaper. There was no indication of the charge, and the three were released on bail on January 29, 2009.

January 16, 2009

Police Confirmed Journalist Stabbed, Died in Hospital³³

- A Phnom Penh journalist died after being stabbed 10 times by two men in Russei Keo district in what police said was a robbery that went wrong.
- Ban Song, a 44-year-old reporter for Meato Phum newspaper, was attacked by two men in the evening after stopping his motorbike on National Road 5. Police said Ban Song had tried to fight off his attackers.

January 2, 2009

Provincial Prison Deputy Director Becomes Prisoner with Pelprek Journalist³⁴

- A journalist was sent to pre-trial detention on December 29 along with the deputy director of Preah Vihear's prison after they were accused of selling state land.
- Journalist So Sophal, of Pelprek newspaper, is accused of violating the land law. The deputy director of the prison, Thach Sokunthy, is accused of deceitfulness.
- The arrests were on the order of provincial governor Preap Tan.

January 31, 2009

Journalist Alleges Officer Opened Fire on Him³⁵

- A Military Police officer is accused of firing three bullets from his pistol over the head of a journalist in Kampong Chhnang province on January 27, 2009.
- Reporter Lim Lyheang, 41, of the little-known Khmer-language publication Today News, was covering a story on the transportation by train of illegally-procured timber when the officer shot at him, Lyheang's colleague Khan Sokhom said.
- The incident happened at Romeas Station in Tek Poh district. Forestry wardens Kong Sophal, Hong Socheat, and Thy said the train was being protected by military police officer Svay Roatha who rushed at the journalist shouting at him. He fired three shots in the air and confiscated Lyheang's camera, refusing to return it.

³² The Cambodia Daily, *Villagers, Reporter Jailed Over Siem Reap Dispute*, December 30, 2008.

³³ The Cambodia Daily, *Police Confirmed Journalist Stabbed, Died in Hospital*, January 16, 2009.

³⁴ Koh Santepheap Daily newspaper, *Provincial Prison Deputy Director Becomes Prisoner with Pelprek Journalist*, January 2, 2009.

³⁵ The Cambodia Daily, *Journalist Alleges Officer Opened Fire on Him*, January 31- February 1, 2009.

February 19, 2009

Prey Nob District Police Officer Bites Journalist's Head and Grabs His Camera³⁶

- *A journalist for Koh Sovannaphum newspaper was injured by a police officer at a wedding party in Preah Sihanouk province on February 15 after he took photographs of the policeman sitting next to a red-haired woman.*
- *Sun Yart was beaten and suffered a head injury when police officer Hour Yai reportedly attacked him. His camera was also confiscated.*

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³⁶ Rasmei Kampuchea Daily newspaper, *Prey Nub District Officer Bites Journalist's Head and Grabs His Camera*, February 19, 2009.

4. Recommendations

*Recommendations to the Royal Cambodian Government & National Assembly, and to the international and national communities (to advocate that such measures be taken)*³⁷:

Legal Reforms

- Explicitly state that only the Press Law shall be used to seek redress for alleged defamation, publication of false information, and related acts.
- Abolish Art. 12 of the Press Law (relating to national security and political stability), which has been consistently misused. If the government and National Assembly is not prepared to do this, at the very least the Article should be substantially amended to ensure that:
 - The term “political stability” is removed, as it seriously limits Cambodians’ right to freedom of expression of opinions about the government and political parties.
 - “National security” is strictly defined, explicitly excluding matters pertaining to politics and debate over government policies or actions.
 - The Ministry of Information’s power to suspend newspapers and confiscate copies is abolished, as they constitute censorship.
- Ensure that the draft new Penal Code fully complies with international standards for the protection of freedom of expression, and in particular does not contain criminal defamation or disinformation or similar offenses.
- Ensure that any new Freedom of Information law meets international standards and does not legalize or worsen current restrictions on access to information in Cambodia.

Ownership & Licensing of Electronic Media

- Establish an equitable and liberal framework for the licensing of radio and television, in accordance with international standards for freedom of expression and the media.
- In order to do the above, commission a comprehensive independent study to examine best practices internationally in the licensing of electronic media, as well as the relevant technical issues (such as frequency availability) in Cambodia, and make recommendations for a Cambodian licensing system.
- Separate National Radio & Television (TVK, AM 918 & FM 96) from the Ministry of Information to become autonomous public service broadcasting entities, including with:
 - Autonomous funding of them approved by the National Assembly
 - The appointment by the National Assembly of directors for them who are independent (not currently government employees) and have the requisite skills.
 - Explicit prohibitions on any direct control of them by the Ministry of Information or other government institution.

Impunity, misuse of the law, and censorship

- Renewed police and judicial investigations into all murders of journalists in Cambodia which have occurred since 1993.
- Effective measures to promptly investigate and punish all reported cases of harassment, threats, violence or other interference with journalists.

³⁷ These recommendations are repeated from LICADHO’s previous May 2008 report, *Reading Between the Lines: How Politics, Money & Fear Control Cambodia’s Media*. So far these recommendations have not been taken up by the government.

- In particular, proper investigations and criminal prosecutions in all cases of violence against journalists.
- Officials and other public figures should demonstrate tolerance of criticism and respect the right to freedom of expression by journalists, and refrain from filing criminal complaints against them.
- (Until such time as the Press Law is amended,) Ministry of Interior should refrain from suspending newspaper licenses or ordering the confiscations of printed materials.
- An immediate end to censorship of TVK news broadcasts.

Recommendations to news media workers and owners, freedom of expression advocates, and NGOs:

- All media (including electronic media) should develop and abide by professional codes of ethics.
- Each media owner, manager or publisher should take measures to promote good journalistic standards, such as: pay a livable salary to their reporters and editors; ensure that staff (permanent or freelance) do not have to pay editors to have stories published; require and encourage staff to adhere to a code of ethics; guarantee the editorial independence of the media outlet from political other influences; establish complaint mechanisms for staff and for readers/viewers/listeners to report ethical violations.
- Journalists should take a leading role in advocating for media freedoms and protections, including through legal changes, reform of the electronic media licensing system, and by exposing and condemning individual cases of threats and abuses against media workers.
- Continue efforts to monitor the content of media (particularly State-owned TV and radio) and to highlight inequities and lack of balance in news coverage.
- Strengthen the reporting and documentation of cases of attacks and threats against journalists, and publicly highlight such cases where appropriate, in order to raise greater awareness of the extent of threats to media freedom.
- Strengthen links by Cambodian media associations and individual journalists to regional and international freedom of expression groups, to ensure greater response to specific cases of attacks and threats to journalists.
- Expand journalism training programs to include, for senior management, business skills including marketing, subscription and advertising sales skills.
- NGOs and other civil society groups (regardless of whether they work on freedom of expression issues) should actively promote a free, fair and responsible news media, including by: adopting a policy of not paying journalists in any way for news coverage (including not paying them to attend press conferences); avoid giving any other financial support (such as paid advertisements) to news media outlets which perpetuate propaganda; make it clear to news media outlets that decisions about NGO advertising, etc, will be made according to how responsible and ethical outlets are in their news and other content.

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