

# Unit 1

## **The Greater Mekong Sub-region: A New Era for Cambodia**



### ► **Warm Up**

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1. With which countries does Cambodia share land borders?  
 Vietnam     Malaysia     Thailand     Laos     the Philippines
2. Which World Cultural Heritage Sites can be found in Cambodia?  
 Angkor     Luang Prabang     Preah Vihear Temple  
 Vigan     Phnom Penh
3. When you think of Cambodian products, what comes to mind? List two or three examples.

## ▶ Reading



**A** The Mekong River runs through the Indochinese Peninsula. It is one of the longest rivers in South-East Asia and for centuries has been the main transportation route between far-flung areas. However, soon river commerce will not be the only way to transport goods between neighboring countries. Nations in the region are about to be connected by a network of highways intended to boost trade, and are preparing for the 2015 establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), which aims to promote free trade and investment in the region. The exchange of goods and labor continues to increase daily as each nation in the region enjoys annual economic growth of more than 5%.

Cheap labor, untapped natural resources, and investments by companies hoping to cash in on the development are driving the economic growth. The Greater Mekong Sub-region and the lives of people who live here are rapidly changing.



**far-flung** 広範囲にわたる **cash in on** ~から利益を得る

### Questions

1. What is the goal of the AEC?
  - (a) to promote the exchange of goods between countries
  - (b) to construct a network of highways
  - (c) to take advantage of cheap labor
2. Which factor does NOT contribute to the economic development of the Greater Mekong Sub-region?
  - (a) the low wages of local workers
  - (b) private investments
  - (c) corporate investments



**B** Cambodia has a population of 14 million. Roughly 80% still live in poor farming villages. The nation's per-capita GDP is a mere 900 dollars. That's only 60% that of neighboring Vietnam and one-sixth of Thailand's. The country's economic development has been significantly delayed due to 20 years of internal conflict and bloodshed. This all changed with the signing of the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement.

Economic development is gathering momentum. Roads are being constructed and repaired at a brisk pace. Highway No.1 is the central highway connecting the capital of Phnom Penh with the Vietnamese border. The highway has undergone major restoration thanks to funding from the Asian Development Bank and aid from Japan. Bridges spanning the Mekong River are also being built. Prek Tamek Bridge was completed with assistance from China. Some 90km downstream is what will be one of the longest bridges crossing the Mekong River. It will measure two kilometers and is being constructed with Japanese aid.



per-capita 一人あたりの momentum 勢い

### Questions

- How much is Thailand's per-capita GDP?
  - nine hundred dollars
  - one thousand and five hundred dollars
  - five thousand and four hundred dollars
- Why has Cambodia's economic development been delayed?
  - because road construction was not a priority
  - because of civil wars
  - because the majority of people still live in poor farming villages
- Which country helped build Prek Tamek Bridge?



## ► Pre-viewing

Choose the correct definition for each word below.

1. corridor [       ]      2. sewerage [       ]      3. quarantine [       ]  
4. cramped [       ]      5. cargo [       ]      6. unload [       ]

- (a) a belt of land linking two areas or following a road or river  
(b) uncomfortably small or restricted  
(c) waste carried away by water  
(d) goods carried on a ship, aircraft, or a truck  
(e) a state, period, or place of isolation in which people or animals that have been exposed to infectious or contagious disease are placed  
(f) to remove the goods from a truck, a ship or a plane

## ► First Viewing



Watch the DVD and choose the appropriate answer.

1. How many workers ride on each company truck?

- about 30       about 40       about 50



2. Which of the following is the Cambodian government NOT doing?

- creating special economic zones  
 constructing a railroad network  
 implementing a system to simplify the cross-border trading process



3. What can be seen in the video clip?

- airplanes       transmission towers  
 pedestrian bridges



## ▶ Second Viewing



### I . Watch the DVD again and choose the appropriate answer.

1. How many special economic zones has the Cambodian government established so far?  
(a) 3      (b) 18      (c) 21
2. How do young workers commute to work in the capital?  
(a) by train      (b) by bus      (c) by truck
3. How many foreign firms are based in the economic zone?  
(a) 25      (b) 35      (c) 45
4. What kind of infrastructure do foreign companies demand in the special economic zones?  
(a) water-power plants  
(b) modern water supply and sewerage systems  
(c) water storage tanks



### II. Listen to the following statements and decide whether they are true or false.



1.  True       False
2.  True       False
3.  True       False

## ▶ Dictation



### Listen and fill in the blanks.

Cross-border transportation of <sup>1</sup>[ ] was recently made much easier. It used to be that trucks <sup>2</sup>[ ] Cambodian license plates were not allowed to cross <sup>3</sup>[ ] neighboring Thailand and Vietnam. Drivers had to unload and reload cargo <sup>4</sup>[ ] trucks with license plates registered in the country they were <sup>5</sup>[ ]. It also often took several days to get <sup>6</sup>[ ] and quarantine <sup>7</sup>[ ] from both sides of the border. Cambodia extended its cross-border agreement with Thailand in June, 2012 and with Vietnam in 2010. <sup>8</sup>[ ] these measures freight-laden trucks and their drivers can now cross borders more freely.

## ▶ Writing

### Read the questions below and write your opinion about one of them in three sentences or more.

1. Do you agree that Japan should support the economic development of Cambodia? Why or why not?
2. Cambodia has many social and economic problems: poor infrastructure, an inadequate medical system, lack of investment in education. Should construction of highways be a priority for the government? Why or why not?
3. What are some of the drawbacks of rapid economic development for the people in a developing country?

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## ▶ Discussion

Choose one of the topics above and exchange opinions with a classmate. Does he or she agree with you and for the same reasons? Try to state your opinion without looking at your text. After listening to your friend's point of view, ask him or her at least one question.