[Template:For](/wiki/Template:For" \o "Template:For) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:EngvarB](/wiki/Template:EngvarB) [Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [Template:Coord](/wiki/Template:Coord) [Template:Infobox country](/wiki/Template:Infobox_country) [Template:Contains Khmer text](/wiki/Template:Contains_Khmer_text) **Cambodia** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en);[[1]](#cite_note-1) [Template:Lang-km](/wiki/Template:Lang-km), *Kampuchea*, [Template:IPA-km](/wiki/Template:IPA-km)), officially known as the **Kingdom of Cambodia** ([Template:Lang-km](/wiki/Template:Lang-km), Preăh Réachéanachâk Kâmpŭchéa, [Template:IPA-km](/wiki/Template:IPA-km)) and once known as the [Khmer Empire](/wiki/Khmer_Empire), is a country located in the southern portion of the [Indochina](/wiki/Indochina) Peninsula in [Southeast Asia](/wiki/Southeast_Asia). It is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) in area, bordered by [Thailand](/wiki/Thailand) to the northwest, [Laos](/wiki/Laos) to the northeast, [Vietnam](/wiki/Vietnam) to the east, and the [Gulf of Thailand](/wiki/Gulf_of_Thailand) to the southwest.

Cambodia has a population of over 15 million. The official religion is [Theravada](/wiki/Theravada) [Buddhism](/wiki/Buddhism), practised by approximately 95 percent of the population. The country's minority groups include [Vietnamese](/wiki/Vietnamese_people), [Chinese](/wiki/Han_Chinese), [Chams](/wiki/Chams), and 30 [hill tribes](/wiki/Khmer_Loeu).[[2]](#cite_note-2) The capital and largest city is [Phnom Penh](/wiki/Phnom_Penh), the political, economic, and cultural centre of Cambodia. The kingdom is a [constitutional monarchy](/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy) with [Norodom Sihamoni](/wiki/Norodom_Sihamoni), a [monarch](/wiki/Elective_monarchy) chosen by the [Royal Throne Council](/wiki/Politics_of_Cambodia), as head of state. The head of government is [Hun Sen](/wiki/Hun_Sen), who is currently the [longest serving non-royal leader](/wiki/List_of_current_longest_ruling_non-royal_leaders) in South East Asia and has ruled Cambodia for over 25 years.

In 802 AD, [Jayavarman II](/wiki/Jayavarman_II) declared himself king, uniting the warring Khmer princes of [Chenla](/wiki/Chenla_Kingdom) under the name "Kambuja".[[3]](#cite_note-3) This marked the beginning of the [Khmer Empire](/wiki/Khmer_Empire) which flourished for over 600 years, allowing successive kings to control and exert influence over much of Southeast Asia and accumulate immense power and wealth. The [Indianized kingdom](/wiki/Indianized_kingdom) built monumental temples including [Angkor Wat](/wiki/Angkor_Wat), now a [World Heritage Site](/wiki/World_Heritage_Site), and facilitated the spread of first [Hinduism](/wiki/Hinduism), then Buddhism to much of Southeast Asia. After the fall of [Angkor](/wiki/Angkor) to [Ayutthaya](/wiki/Ayutthaya_Kingdom) in the 15th century, a reduced and weakened Cambodia was then ruled as a [vassal state](/wiki/Vassal_state) by its neighbours. In 1863 Cambodia became a protectorate of [France](/wiki/France) which doubled the size of the country by reclaiming the north and west from Thailand.

Cambodia gained independence in 1953. The [Vietnam War](/wiki/Vietnam_War) extended into the country with the US bombing of Cambodia from [1969](/wiki/Operation_Menu) until [1973](/wiki/Operation_Freedom_Deal). Following the [Cambodian coup of 1970](/wiki/Cambodian_coup_of_1970), the deposed king gave his support to his former enemies, the [Khmer Rouge](/wiki/Khmer_Rouge). The Khmer Rouge emerged as a major power, taking Phnom Penh in 1975 and later carrying out the [Cambodian Genocide](/wiki/Cambodian_Genocide) from 1975 until 1979, when they were ousted by Vietnam and the Vietnamese backed [People's Republic of Kampuchea](/wiki/People's_Republic_of_Kampuchea) in the [Cambodian–Vietnamese War](/wiki/Cambodian–Vietnamese_War) (1979–91). Following the [1991 Paris Peace Accords](/wiki/1991_Paris_Peace_Accords) Cambodia was governed briefly by a [United Nations mission](/wiki/United_Nations_Transitional_Authority_in_Cambodia) (1992–93). The UN withdrew after holding elections in which around 90 percent of the registered voters cast ballots. The [1997 coup](/wiki/1997_clashes_in_Cambodia) placed power solely in the hands of Prime Minister [Hun Sen](/wiki/Hun_Sen) and the [Cambodian People's Party](/wiki/Cambodian_People's_Party), who remain in power [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of).

The country faces numerous challenges and sociopolitical issues, including widespread poverty,[[4]](#cite_note-4) pervasive corruption,[[5]](#cite_note-5) lack of political freedoms,[[6]](#cite_note-6) low human development,[[7]](#cite_note-7) and a high rate of hunger.[[8]](#cite_note-8)[[9]](#cite_note-9)[[10]](#cite_note-10) Cambodia has been described by Human Rights Watch's Southeast Asian Director, David Roberts, as a "vaguely communist free-market state with a relatively authoritarian coalition ruling over a superficial democracy."[[11]](#cite_note-11) While per capita income remains low compared to most neighbouring countries, Cambodia has one of the fastest growing economies in Asia with growth averaging 6 percent over the last decade. Agriculture remains the dominant economic sector, with strong growth in textiles, construction, garments, and tourism leading to increased foreign investment and international trade.[[12]](#cite_note-12) Cambodia scored dismally in an annual index (2015) ranking the rule of law in 102 countries, placing 99th overall and the worst in the region.[[13]](#cite_note-13)

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The "Kingdom of Cambodia" is the official English name of the country. The English "Cambodia" is an anglicization of the French "Cambodge", which in turn is the French transliteration of the Khmer *Kampuchea*. *Kampuchea* is the shortened alternative to the country's official name in Khmer, *Preah Reacheanachak Kampuchea* (Khmer: ព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា). The Khmer [endonym](/wiki/Endonym) *Kampuchea* derives from the Sanskrit name *Kambujadeśa* (कम्बोजदेश), composed of देश, *desa* ("land of" or "country of") and कम्बोज, [*Kambujas*](/wiki/Kambojas), which alludes to the foundation myths of the first ancient Khmer kingdom.[[14]](#cite_note-14) Colloquially, Cambodians refer to their country as either *Srok Khmer* ([Template:IPA-km](/wiki/Template:IPA-km)), meaning "Khmer's Land", or the slightly more formal *Prateh Kampuchea* ([Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)), literally "Country of Kampuchea". The name "Cambodia" is used most often in the Western world while "Kampuchea" is more widely used in the East.[[15]](#cite_note-15)[[16]](#cite_note-16)[[17]](#cite_note-17)

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### Pre-history[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) There exists sparse evidence for a [Pleistocene](/wiki/Pleistocene) human occupation of present-day Cambodia, which includes [quartz](/wiki/Quartz) and [quartzite](/wiki/Quartzite) pebble tools found in terraces along the Mekong River, in [Stung Treng](/wiki/Stung_Treng_Province) and [Kratié](/wiki/Kratié_Province) provinces, and in [Kampot Province](/wiki/Kampot_Province), although their dating is unreliable.<ref name=stark2004>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> Some slight archaeological evidence shows communities of [hunter-gatherers](/wiki/Hunter-gatherer) inhabited the region during [Holocene](/wiki/Holocene): the most ancient archaeological discovery site in Cambodia is considered to be the cave of *L'aang Spean*, in [Battambang Province](/wiki/Battambang_Province), which belongs to the [Hoabinhian](/wiki/Hoabinhian) period. Excavations in its lower layers produced a series of [radiocarbon](/wiki/Radiocarbon) dates as of 6000 BC.[[18]](#cite_note-18)[[19]](#cite_note-19) Upper layers in the same site gave evidence of transition to [Neolithic](/wiki/Neolithic), containing the earliest dated earthenware ceramics in Cambodia[[20]](#cite_note-20) [thumb|Glazed stoneware dating back to the 12th century](/wiki/File:Ewer_from_Cambodia,_Angkorian_era,_12th_century,_glazed_stoneware,_HAA.JPG) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Bayon_Angkor_Relief1.jpg)[Khmer](/wiki/Khmer_Empire) army going to war against the [Cham](/wiki/Champa), from a relief on the [Bayon](/wiki/Bayon)

Archaeological records for the period between Holocene and [Iron Age](/wiki/Iron_Age) remain equally limited. A pivotal event in Cambodian prehistory was the slow penetration of the first rice farmers from the north, which began in the late 3rd millennium BC.<ref name=higham2001pre>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book), pp.13–22</ref> The most curious prehistoric evidence in Cambodia are the various "circular [earthworks](/wiki/Earthworks_(archaeology))" discovered in the [red soils](/wiki/Red_soil) near [Memot](/wiki/Memot) and in the adjacent region of Vietnam in the latter 1950s. Their function and age are still debated, but some of them possibly date from 2nd millennium BC.[[21]](#cite_note-21)[[22]](#cite_note-22) Other prehistoric sites of somewhat uncertain date are *Samrong Sen* (not far from the ancient capital of [Oudong](/wiki/Oudong)), where the first investigations began in 1875,<ref name=higham1989>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book), p.120</ref> and *Phum Snay*, in the northern province of [Banteay Meanchey](/wiki/Banteay_Meanchey_Province).[[23]](#cite_note-23) An excavation at Phum Snay revealed 21 graves with iron weapons and cranial trauma which could point to conflicts in the past, possible with larger cities in Angkor.[[24]](#cite_note-24)[[25]](#cite_note-25)[[26]](#cite_note-26) Prehistoric artefacts are often found during mining activities in [Ratanakiri](/wiki/Ratanakiri).[[18]](#cite_note-18) Iron was worked by about 500 BC, with supporting evidence coming from the [Khorat Plateau](/wiki/Khorat_Plateau), in modern-day Thailand. In Cambodia, some Iron Age settlements were found beneath [Baksei Chamkrong](/wiki/Baksei_Chamkrong) and other Angkorian temples while circular earthworks, were found beneath *Lovea* a few kilometres north-west of Angkor. Burials, much richer than other types of finds, testify to improvement of food availability and trade (even on long distances: in the 4th century BC trade relations with India were already opened) and the existence of a social structure and labour organisation. Also, among the artefacts from the Iron Age, glass beads are important evidence. Different kinds of glass beads recovered from several sites across Cambodia, such as the Phum Snay site in northwest and the Prohear site in southeast, show that there were two main trading networks at the time. The two networks were separated by time and space, which indicate that there was a shift from one network to the other at about 2nd-4th century AD, probably with changes in socio-political powers.[[27]](#cite_note-27)

### Pre-Angkorian and Angkorian era[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image) During the 3rd, 4th, and 5th centuries, the [Indianised states](/wiki/Indianised_kingdom) of [Funan](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Funan) and its successor, [Chenla](/wiki/Chenla), coalesced in present-day Cambodia and southwestern Vietnam. For more than 2,000 years, what was to become Cambodia absorbed influences from [India](/wiki/India), passing them on to other Southeast Asian civilisations that are now Thailand and Laos.[[28]](#cite_note-28) Little else is known for certain of these polities, however Chinese chronicles and tribute records do make mention of them. It is believed that the territory of Funan may have held the port known to Alexandrian geographer [Claudius Ptolemy](/wiki/Claudius_Ptolemy) as "[Kattigara](/wiki/Kattigara)". The Chinese chronicles suggest that after Jayavarman I of Chenla died around 690, turmoil ensued which resulted in division of the kingdom into Land Chenla and Water Chenla which was loosely ruled by weak princes under the dominion of [Java](/wiki/Java).

The [Khmer Empire](/wiki/Khmer_Empire) grew out of these remnants of Chenla becoming firmly established in 802 when [Jayavarman II](/wiki/Jayavarman_II) (reigned c790-850) declared independence from [Java](/wiki/Java) and proclaimed himself a [Devaraja](/wiki/Devaraja). He and his followers instituted the cult of the [God-king](/wiki/God-king) and began a series of conquests that formed an empire which flourished in the area from the 9th to the 15th centuries.[[29]](#cite_note-29) During the rule of [Jayavarman VIII](/wiki/Jayavarman_VIII) the Angkor empire was attacked by the [Mongol](/wiki/Mongol) army of [Kublai Khan](/wiki/Kublai_Khan), however the king was able to buy peace.[[30]](#cite_note-30) Around the 13th century, monks from [Sri Lanka](/wiki/Sri_Lanka) introduced [Theravada Buddhism](/wiki/Theravada_Buddhism) to Southeast Asia.[[31]](#cite_note-31) The religion spread and eventually displaced Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism as the popular religion of Angkor; however it was not the official state religion until 1295; when [Indravarman III](/wiki/Indravarman_III) took power.[[32]](#cite_note-32) The Khmer Empire was Southeast Asia's largest empire during the 12th century. The empire's centre of power was [Angkor](/wiki/Angkor), where a series of capitals were constructed during the empire's zenith. In 2007 an international team of researchers using satellite photographs and other modern techniques concluded that Angkor had been the largest pre-industrial city in the world with an urban sprawl of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[33]](#cite_note-33) The city, which could have supported a population of up to one million people[[34]](#cite_note-34) and [Angkor Wat](/wiki/Angkor_Wat), the best known and best-preserved religious temple at the site, still serve as reminders of Cambodia's past as a major regional power. The empire, though in decline, remained a significant force in the region until its fall in the 15th century.

### Dark ages of Cambodia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) After a long series of wars with neighbouring kingdoms, Angkor was sacked by the [Ayutthaya Kingdom](/wiki/Ayutthaya_Kingdom) and abandoned in 1432 because of ecological failure and infrastructure breakdown.[[35]](#cite_note-35)[[36]](#cite_note-36) This led to a period of economic, social, and cultural stagnation when the kingdom's internal affairs came increasingly under the control of its neighbours. By this time, the Khmer penchant for monument building had ceased. Older faiths such as [Mahayana Buddhism](/wiki/Mahayana_Buddhism) and the [Hindu](/wiki/Hindu) cult of the god-king had been supplanted by Theravada Buddhism.

[thumb||200px|Map of Indochina in 1760.](/wiki/File:Vietnam_1760.jpg) The court moved the capital to [Longvek](/wiki/Longvek) where the kingdom sought to regain its glory through maritime trade. The first mention of Cambodia in European documents was in 1511 by the [Portuguese](/wiki/Portugal). Portuguese travellers described the city as a place of flourishing wealth and [foreign trade](/wiki/Foreign_trade). The attempt was short-lived however, as continued wars with Ayutthaya and the Vietnamese resulted in the loss of more territory and [Longvek being conquered and destroyed](/wiki/Siamese–Cambodian_War_(1591–1594)) by King [Naresuan the Great](/wiki/Naresuan) of Ayutthaya in 1594. A new Khmer capital was established at [Oudong](/wiki/Oudong) south of Longvek in 1618, but its monarchs could survive only by entering into what amounted to alternating [vassal](/wiki/Vassal) relationships with the Siamese and Vietnamese for the next three centuries with only a few short-lived periods of relative independence.

The [hill tribe](/wiki/Khmer_Leu) people in Cambodia were "hunted incessantly and carried off as [slaves](/wiki/Slavery_in_Asia) by the Siamese (Thai), the Anamites (Vietnamese), and the Cambodians."[[37]](#cite_note-37) In the nineteenth century a renewed struggle between Siam and [Vietnam](/wiki/Vietnam) for control of Cambodia resulted in a period when Vietnamese officials attempted to force the [Khmers](/wiki/Khmers) to adopt Vietnamese customs. This led to several rebellions against the Vietnamese and appeals to Thailand for assistance. The [Siamese–Vietnamese War (1841–1845)](/wiki/Siamese–Vietnamese_War_(1841–1845)) ended with an agreement to place the country under [joint suzerainty](/wiki/Suzerainty). This later led to the signing of a treaty for [French Protection of Cambodia](/wiki/French_protectorate_of_Cambodia) by King [Norodom Prohmborirak](/wiki/Norodom_of_Cambodia).

### French colonisation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[thumb|upright|King](/wiki/File:Preah_Bat_Sisowath_Monivong.jpg) [Sisowath Monivong](/wiki/Sisowath_Monivong). In 1863, [King Norodom](/wiki/Norodom_of_Cambodia), who had been installed by [Thailand](/wiki/Thailand),[[3]](#cite_note-3) sought the protection of France from the Thai rule. In 1867, the Thai king signed a treaty with France, renouncing [suzerainty](/wiki/Suzerainty) over Cambodia in exchange for the control of [Battambang](/wiki/Battambang_Province) and [Siem Reap](/wiki/Siem_Reap_Province) provinces which officially became part of Thailand. The provinces were ceded back to Cambodia by a border treaty between France and Thailand in 1906.

Cambodia continued as a [protectorate of France](/wiki/French_protectorate_of_Cambodia) from 1867 to 1953, administered as part of the colony of [French Indochina](/wiki/French_Indochina), though [occupied by the Japanese empire](/wiki/Japanese_occupation_of_Cambodia) from 1941 to 1945.[[38]](#cite_note-38) Between 1874 and 1962, the total population increased from about 946,000 to 5.7 million.[[39]](#cite_note-39) After King Norodom's death in 1904, France manipulated the choice of king, and Sisowath, Norodom's brother, was placed on the throne. The throne became vacant in 1941 with the death of Monivong, Sisowath's son, and France passed over Monivong's son, Monireth, feeling he was too independently minded. Instead, [Norodom Sihanouk](/wiki/Norodom_Sihanouk), a maternal grandson of King Sisowath was enthroned. The French thought young Sihanouk would be easy to control.[[38]](#cite_note-38) They were wrong, however, and under the reign of King Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia gained independence from France on 9 November 1953.[[38]](#cite_note-38)

### Independence and Vietnam War[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb||](/wiki/File:Mao_Sihanouk.jpg)[Norodom Sihanouk](/wiki/Norodom_Sihanouk) and [Mao Zedong](/wiki/Mao_Zedong) in 1956. Cambodia became a constitutional monarchy under King [Norodom Sihanouk](/wiki/Norodom_Sihanouk). When [French Indochina](/wiki/French_Indochina) was given independence, Cambodia lost hope of regaining control over the [Mekong Delta](/wiki/Mekong_Delta) as it was awarded to [Vietnam](/wiki/Vietnam). Formerly part of the Khmer Empire, the area had been controlled by the Vietnamese since 1698, with King [Chey Chettha II](/wiki/Chey_Chettha_II) granting Vietnamese permission to settle in the area decades before.<ref name=autogenerated1>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> This remains a diplomatic sticking point with over one million ethnic Khmers (the [Khmer Krom](/wiki/Khmer_Krom)) still living in this region. The Khmer Rouge attempted invasions to recover the territory which, in part, led to Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia and deposition of the Khmer Rouge.

In 1955, Sihanouk abdicated in favour of his father to participate in politics and was elected prime minister. Upon his father's death in 1960, Sihanouk again became head of state, taking the title of prince. As the [Vietnam War](/wiki/Vietnam_War) progressed, Sihanouk adopted an official policy of [neutrality](/wiki/Neutral_country) in the [Cold War](/wiki/Cold_War). Sihanouk allowed the Vietnamese communists to use Cambodia as a sanctuary and a supply route for their arms and other aid to their armed forces fighting in South Vietnam. This policy was perceived as humiliating by many Cambodians. In December 1967 Washington Post journalist Stanley Karnow was told by Sihanouk that if the US wanted to bomb the Vietnamese communist sanctuaries, he would not object, unless Cambodians were killed.[[40]](#cite_note-40) The same message was conveyed to US President Johnson's emissary Chester Bowles in January 1968.[[41]](#cite_note-41) However, in public Sihanouk refuted the US' right to use air strikes in Cambodia and on 26 March Prince Sihanouk said "these criminal attacks must immediately and definitively stop..." and on 28 March a press conference was held and Sihanouk appealed to the international media "I appeal to you to publicise abroad this very clear stand of Cambodia--that is, I will in any case oppose all bombings on Cambodian territory under whatever pretext." Nevertheless, the public pleas of Sihanouk were ignored and the bombing continued.[[42]](#cite_note-42) Members of the government and army became resentful of Sihanouk's ruling style as well as his tilt away from the United States.

### Khmer Republic (1970–75)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) While visiting Beijing in 1970 Sihanouk was [ousted by a military coup](/wiki/Cambodian_coup_of_1970) led by Prime Minister General [Lon Nol](/wiki/Lon_Nol) and Prince Sisowath [Sirik Matak](/wiki/Sirik_Matak). US support for the coup remains unproven.[[43]](#cite_note-43) However, once the coup was completed, the new regime, which immediately demanded that the Vietnamese communists leave Cambodia, gained the political support of the United States. The North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces, desperate to retain their sanctuaries and supply lines from North Vietnam, immediately launched armed attacks on the new government. The king urged his followers to help in overthrowing this government, hastening the onset of [civil war](/wiki/Cambodian_Civil_War).[[44]](#cite_note-44) Soon [Khmer Rouge](/wiki/Khmer_Rouge) rebels began using him to gain support. However, from 1970 until early 1972, the Cambodian conflict was largely one between the government and army of Cambodia, and the armed forces of North Vietnam. As they gained control of Cambodian territory, the Vietnamese communists imposed a new political infrastructure, which was eventually dominated by the Cambodian communists we now refer to as the Khmer Rouge.[[45]](#cite_note-45) Between 1969 and 1973, [Republic of Vietnam](/wiki/South_Vietnam) and US forces [bombed](/wiki/Operation_Menu) Cambodia in an effort to disrupt the [Viet Cong](/wiki/Viet_Cong) and Khmer Rouge.

Documents uncovered from the Soviet archives after 1991 reveal that the North Vietnamese attempt to overrun Cambodia in 1970 was launched at the explicit request of the Khmer Rouge and negotiated by [Pol Pot's](/wiki/Pol_Pot) then second in command, [Nuon Chea](/wiki/Nuon_Chea).[[46]](#cite_note-46) NVA units overran many Cambodian army positions while the [Communist Party of Kampuchea](/wiki/Communist_Party_of_Kampuchea) (CPK) expanded their small-scale attacks on lines of communication. In response to the North Vietnamese invasion, US President [Richard Nixon](/wiki/Richard_Nixon) announced that US and South Vietnamese ground forces had entered Cambodia in a campaign aimed at destroying NVA base areas in Cambodia (see [Cambodian Incursion](/wiki/Cambodian_Incursion)).[[47]](#cite_note-47) Although a considerable quantity of equipment was seized or destroyed by US and South Vietnamese forces, containment of North Vietnamese forces proved elusive. [thumb|Lon Nol with US Vice-President](/wiki/File:Spiro_Agnew_in_Cambodia_1970.jpg) [Spiro Agnew](/wiki/Spiro_Agnew) in Phnom Penh, 1970.

The Khmer Republic's leadership was plagued by disunity among its three principal figures: Lon Nol, Sihanouk's cousin [Sirik Matak](/wiki/Sirik_Matak), and National Assembly leader [In Tam](/wiki/In_Tam). Lon Nol remained in power in part because neither of the others was prepared to take his place. In 1972, a constitution was adopted, a parliament elected, and Lon Nol became president. But disunity, the problems of transforming a 30,000-man army into a national combat force of more than 200,000 men, and spreading corruption weakened the civilian administration and army.

The Communist insurgency inside Cambodia continued to grow, aided by supplies and military support from North Vietnam. Pol Pot and [Ieng Sary](/wiki/Ieng_Sary) asserted their dominance over the Vietnamese-trained communists, many of whom were purged. At the same time, the [CPK](/wiki/Communist_Party_of_Kampuchea) forces became stronger and more independent of their Vietnamese patrons. By 1973, the [CPK](/wiki/Communist_Party_of_Kampuchea) were fighting battles against government forces with little or no North Vietnamese troop support, and they controlled nearly 60% of Cambodia's territory and 25% of its population. The government made three unsuccessful attempts to enter into negotiations with the insurgents, but by 1974, the [CPK](/wiki/Communist_Party_of_Kampuchea) were operating openly as divisions, and some of the NVA combat forces had moved into South Vietnam. Lon Nol's control was reduced to small enclaves around the cities and main transportation routes. More than 2 million refugees from the war lived in [Phnom Penh](/wiki/Phnom_Penh) and other cities.

On New Year's Day 1975, Communist troops launched an offensive which, in 117 days of the hardest fighting of the war, collapsed the Khmer Republic. Simultaneous attacks around the perimeter of Phnom Penh pinned down Republican forces, while other [CPK](/wiki/Communist_Party_of_Kampuchea) units overran fire bases controlling the vital lower Mekong resupply route. A US-funded airlift of ammunition and rice ended when Congress refused additional aid for Cambodia. The Lon Nol government in Phnom Penh surrendered on 17 April 1975, just five (5) days after the US mission evacuated Cambodia.[[48]](#cite_note-48)

### Khmer Rouge regime[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Rooms of the](/wiki/File:TuolSlang3.jpg) [Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum](/wiki/Tuol_Sleng_Genocide_Museum) contain thousands of photos taken by the Khmer Rouge of their victims. [thumb|](/wiki/File:Buddhist_Stupa_at_Choeung_Ek_killing_fields,_Cambodia.JPG)[Choeung Ek](/wiki/Choeung_Ek)

The Khmer Rouge reached [Phnom Penh](/wiki/Phnom_Penh) and took power in 1975. Led by Pol Pot, they changed the official name of the country to [Democratic Kampuchea](/wiki/Democratic_Kampuchea). The new regime modelled itself on Maoist China during the [Great Leap Forward](/wiki/Great_Leap_Forward), immediately evacuated the cities, and sent the entire population on forced marches to rural work projects. They attempted to rebuild the country's agriculture on the model of the 11th century, discarded Western medicine and destroyed temples, libraries, and anything considered Western.

Estimates as to how many people were killed by the Khmer Rouge regime range from approximately one to three million; the most commonly cited figure is two million (about a quarter of the population).[[49]](#cite_note-49)[[50]](#cite_note-50)[[51]](#cite_note-51) This era gave rise to the term [Killing Fields](/wiki/Killing_Fields), and the prison [Tuol Sleng](/wiki/Tuol_Sleng) became notorious for its history of mass killing. Hundreds of thousands fled across the border into neighbouring Thailand. The regime disproportionately targeted [ethnic minority](/wiki/Ethnic_groups_in_Cambodia) groups. The [Cham](/wiki/Cham_(Asia)) Muslims suffered serious purges with as much as half of their population exterminated.[[52]](#cite_note-52) Pol Pot was determined to keep his power and disenfranchise any enemies or potential threats, and thus increased his violent and aggressive actions against his people.[[53]](#cite_note-53) Forced repatriation in 1970 and deaths during the Khmer Rouge era reduced the [Vietnamese](/wiki/Vietnamese_Cambodian) population in Cambodia from between 250,000 and 300,000 in 1969 to a reported 56,000 in 1984.[[39]](#cite_note-39) However, most of the victims of the Khmer Rouge regime were not ethnic minorities but ethnic Khmer. Professionals, such as doctors, lawyers and teachers, were also targeted. According to [Robert D. Kaplan](/wiki/Robert_D._Kaplan), "eyeglasses were as deadly as the [yellow star](/wiki/Yellow_badge)" as they were seen as a sign of intellectualism.[[54]](#cite_note-54)

### Vietnamese occupation and transition[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) In November 1978, Vietnamese troops [invaded Cambodia](/wiki/Cambodian–Vietnamese_War) in response to border raids by the Khmer Rouge.[[55]](#cite_note-55) The [People's Republic of Kampuchea](/wiki/People's_Republic_of_Kampuchea) (PRK), a [pro-Soviet](/wiki/Eastern_Bloc) state led by the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party, a party created by the Vietnamese in 1951, and led by a group of Khmer Rouge who had fled Cambodia to avoid being purged by Pol Pot and Ta Mok, was established.[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify)[[56]](#cite_note-56) It was fully beholden to the occupying Vietnamese army and under direction of the Vietnamese ambassador to Phnom Penh. Its arms came from Vietnam and the Soviet Union.[[57]](#cite_note-57) In opposition to the newly created state, a government-in-exile referred to as the [Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea](/wiki/Coalition_Government_of_Democratic_Kampuchea) (CGDK) was formed in 1981 from three factions.[[57]](#cite_note-57) This consisted of the Khmer Rouge, a royalist faction led by Sihanouk, and the [Khmer People's National Liberation Front](/wiki/Khmer_People's_National_Liberation_Front). Its credentials were recognised by the United Nations. The Khmer Rouge representative to the UN, Thiounn Prasith, was retained, but he had to work in consultation with representatives of the noncommunist Cambodian parties.[[58]](#cite_note-58)[[59]](#cite_note-59) The refusal of Vietnam to withdraw from Cambodia led to [economic sanctions](/wiki/Economic_sanctions)[[60]](#cite_note-60) by the US and its allies.[Template:Specify](/wiki/Template:Specify)

[thumb|King-Father](/wiki/File:King_Norodom_Sihanouk's_funeral_procession_01.jpg) [Norodom Sihanouk's](/wiki/Norodom_Sihanouk) funeral procession

[Peace efforts](/wiki/Modern_Cambodia#Peace_efforts_and_the_free_elections) began in Paris in 1989 under the [State of Cambodia](/wiki/People's_Republic_of_Kampuchea#Transition:_State_of_Cambodia_(1989_-_1993)), culminating two years later in October 1991 in a [Paris Comprehensive Peace Settlement](/wiki/1991_Paris_Peace_Accords). The UN was given a mandate to enforce a ceasefire and deal with refugees and disarmament known as the [United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia](/wiki/United_Nations_Transitional_Authority_in_Cambodia) (UNTAC).[[61]](#cite_note-61)

### Restoration of the monarchy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

In 1993, [Norodom Sihanouk](/wiki/Norodom_Sihanouk) was restored as [King of Cambodia](/wiki/King_of_Cambodia), but all power was in the hands of the government established after the UNTAC sponsored elections. The stability established following the conflict was shaken in 1997 by a [coup d'état](/wiki/Coup_d'état) led by the co-Prime Minister Hun Sen against the non-communist parties in the government.[[62]](#cite_note-62) In recent years, reconstruction efforts have progressed and led to some political stability through a [multiparty](/wiki/Multi-party_system) democracy under a [constitutional monarchy](/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy).[[63]](#cite_note-63) In July 2010 [Kang Kek Iew](/wiki/Kang_Kek_Iew) was the first Khmer Rouge member found guilty of [war crimes](/wiki/War_crime) and [crimes against humanity](/wiki/Crimes_against_humanity) in his role as the former commandant of the S21 extermination camp and he was sentenced to life in prison.[[64]](#cite_note-64)[[65]](#cite_note-65) However, Hun Sen has opposed extensive trials of former Khmer Rouge mass murderers.[[66]](#cite_note-66) In August 2014, a U.N.-backed war crimes tribunal, the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (also known as the [Khmer Rouge Tribunal](/wiki/Khmer_Rouge_Tribunal)), sentenced Khieu Samphan, the regime's 83-year-old former head of state, and Nuon Chea, its 88-year-old chief ideologue to life in prison on war crimes charges for their role in the country's terror period in the 1970s. The trial began in November 2011. Former Foreign Minister Ieng Sary died in 2013, while his wife, Social Affairs Minister Ieng Thirith, was deemed unfit to stand trial due to dementia in 2012. The group's top leader, [Pol Pot](/wiki/Pol_Pot), died in 1998.

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|450px|A map of Cambodia.](/wiki/File:Un-cambodia.png)

Cambodia has an area of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and lies entirely within the tropics, between latitudes [10°](/wiki/10th_parallel_north) and [15°N](/wiki/15th_parallel_north), and longitudes [102°](/wiki/102nd_meridian_east) and [108°E](/wiki/108th_meridian_east). It borders Thailand to the north and west, Laos to the northeast, and [Vietnam](/wiki/Vietnam) to the east and southeast. It has a [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) coastline along the [Gulf of Thailand](/wiki/Gulf_of_Thailand).

Cambodia's landscape is characterised by a low-lying central plain that is surrounded by uplands and low mountains and includes the [Tonle Sap](/wiki/Tonle_Sap) (Great Lake) and the upper reaches of the [Mekong River](/wiki/Mekong_River) delta. Extending outward from this central region are transitional plains, thinly forested and rising to elevations of about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) [above sea level](/wiki/Above_sea_level).

To the north the Cambodian plain abuts a sandstone escarpment, which forms a southward-facing cliff stretching more than [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from west to east and rising abruptly above the plain to heights of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). This cliff marks the southern limit of the [Dângrêk Mountains](/wiki/Dângrêk_Mountains).

Flowing south through the country's eastern regions is the Mekong River. East of the Mekong the transitional plains gradually merge with the eastern highlands, a region of forested mountains and high plateaus that extend into Laos and Vietnam. In southwestern Cambodia two distinct upland blocks, the [Krâvanh Mountains](/wiki/Cardamom_Mountains) and the [Dâmrei Mountains](/wiki/Dâmrei_Mountains), form another highland region that covers much of the land area between the Tonle Sap and the [Gulf of Thailand](/wiki/Gulf_of_Thailand).

In this remote and largely uninhabited area, [Phnom Aural](/wiki/Phnom_Aural), Cambodia's highest peak rises to an elevation of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). The southern coastal region adjoining the Gulf of Thailand is a narrow lowland strip, heavily wooded and sparsely populated, which is isolated from the central plain by the southwestern highlands.

The most distinctive geographical feature is the inundations of the Tonle Sap (Great Lake), measuring about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) during the dry season and expanding to about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) during the rainy season. This densely populated plain, which is devoted to wet rice cultivation, is the heartland of Cambodia. Much of this area has been designated as a [biosphere reserve](/wiki/Man_and_the_Biosphere_Programme).

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|300px|A](/wiki/File:Cambodia_map_of_Köppen_climate_classification.svg) [Köppen climate classification](/wiki/Köppen_climate_classification) map of Cambodia. [thumb|A](/wiki/File:Malaysian_Sun_Bear.jpg) [Sun bear](/wiki/Sun_bear). Cambodia's climate, like that of the rest of Southeast Asia, is dominated by [monsoons](/wiki/Monsoons), which are known as tropical wet and dry because of the distinctly marked seasonal differences.

Cambodia has a temperature range from [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and experiences tropical monsoons. Southwest monsoons blow inland bringing moisture-laden winds from the [Gulf of Thailand](/wiki/Gulf_of_Thailand) and Indian Ocean from May to October. The northeast monsoon ushers in the dry season, which lasts from November to April. The country experiences the heaviest precipitation from September to October with the driest period occurring from January to February.

Cambodia has two distinct seasons. The rainy season, which runs from May to October, can see temperatures drop to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and is generally accompanied with high humidity. The dry season lasts from November to April when temperatures can rise up to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) around April. Disastrous flooding occurred in 2001 and again in 2002, with some degree of flooding almost every year.[[67]](#cite_note-67)

### Ecology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

Cambodia has a wide variety of plants and animals. There are 212 [mammal](/wiki/Mammal) species, 536 bird species, 240 [reptile](/wiki/Reptile) species, 850 freshwater fish species (Tonle Sap Lake area), and 435 marine fish species. Much of this biodiversity is contained around the Tonle Sap Lake and the surrounding biosphere.[[68]](#cite_note-68) The [Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve](/wiki/Tonle_Sap_Biosphere_Reserve) is a reserve surrounding the [Tonle Sap](/wiki/Tonle_Sap) lake. It encompasses the lake and nine provinces: [Kampong Thom](/wiki/Kampong_Thom_Province), [Siem Reap](/wiki/Siem_Reap_Province), [Battambang](/wiki/Battambang_Province), [Pursat](/wiki/Pursat_Province), [Kampong Chhnang](/wiki/Kampong_Chhnang_Province), [Banteay Meanchey](/wiki/Banteay_Meanchey_Province), [Pailin](/wiki/Pailin), [Oddar Meanchey](/wiki/Oddar_Meanchey_Province) and [Preah Vihear](/wiki/Preah_Vihear_Province). In 1997, it was successfully nominated as a [UNESCO](/wiki/UNESCO) [Biosphere Reserve](/wiki/Biosphere_Reserve).[[69]](#cite_note-69) Other key habitats include the dry forest of [Mondolkiri](/wiki/Mondolkiri) and [Ratanakiri](/wiki/Ratanakiri) provinces and the [Cardamom Mountains](/wiki/Cardamom_Mountains) ecosystem, including Bokor National Park, [Botum-Sakor National Park](/wiki/Botum-Sakor_National_Park), and the Phnom Aural and Phnom Samkos wildlife sanctuaries.

The [Worldwide Fund for Nature](/wiki/Worldwide_Fund_for_Nature) recognises six distinct [terrestrial ecoregions](/wiki/Terrestrial_ecoregions) in Cambodia – the [Cardamom Mountains rain forests](/wiki/Cardamom_Mountains_rain_forests), [Central Indochina dry forest](/wiki/Central_Indochina_dry_forest), Southeast Indochina dry evergreen forest, Southern [Annamite Range](/wiki/Annamite_Range) rain forest, Tonle Sap freshwater swamp forest, and Tonle Sap-Mekong peat swamp forest.[[70]](#cite_note-70)

### Environmental issues[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

The rate of [deforestation in Cambodia](/wiki/Deforestation_in_Cambodia) is one of the highest in the world. Cambodia's primary forest cover fell from over 70% in 1969 to just 3.1% in 2007. In total, Cambodia lost [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of forest between 1990 and 2005—[Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of which was primary forest. Since 2007, less than [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of primary forest remain with the result that the future [sustainability](/wiki/Sustainability) of the forest reserves of Cambodia is under severe threat, with illegal loggers looking to generate revenue.[[71]](#cite_note-71) Plans for [hydroelectric](/wiki/Hydroelectric) development in the region, by [Laos](/wiki/Laos) in particular, pose a "real danger to the food supply of [Vietnam](/wiki/Vietnam) and Cambodia. Upstream dams will imperil the fish stocks that provide the vast majority of Cambodia's protein and could also denude the Mekong River of the silt Vietnam needs for its rice basket." The rich fisheries of [Tonle Sap](/wiki/Tonle_Sap), the largest freshwater lake in [Southeast Asia](/wiki/Southeast_Asia), largely supply the impoverished country's protein. The lake is unusual: It all but disappears in the dry season and then "expands massively as water flow from the Mekong backs up when the rains come. "Those fish are so important for their livelihoods, both economically and nutritionally," said Gordon Holtgrieve, a professor at the [University of Washington](/wiki/University_of_Washington) who researches Cambodia's freshwater fish and he points out that none of the dams that are either built or being built on the Mekong river "are pointing at good outcomes for the fisheries."[[72]](#cite_note-72)

## Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

### Government[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[thumb||King](/wiki/File:Cambodge_-_Roi_et_mère.JPG) [Norodom Sihamoni](/wiki/Norodom_Sihamoni) along with [Queen-mother](/wiki/Queen_mother) [Norodom Monineath](/wiki/Norodom_Monineath). [thumb|upright|Prime Minister](/wiki/File:Hun_Sen2.jpg) [Hun Sen](/wiki/Hun_Sen). Officially a multiparty democracy, in reality "the country remains a one-party state dominated by the [Cambodian People's Party](/wiki/Cambodian_People's_Party) and Prime Minister Hun Sen, a recast [Khmer Rouge](/wiki/Khmer_Rouge) official in power since 1985. The open doors to new investment during his reign have yielded the most access to a coterie of cronies of his and his wife, [Bun Rany](/wiki/Bun_Rany)."[[73]](#cite_note-73) Cambodia's government has been described by Human Rights Watch's Southeast Asian Director, David Roberts, as a "vaguely communist free-market state with a relatively authoritarian coalition ruling over a superficial democracy."[[11]](#cite_note-11) Prime Minister Hun Sen has vowed to rule until he is 74.[[74]](#cite_note-74)[[75]](#cite_note-75) He is a former Khmer Rouge member who defected. His government is regularly accused of ignoring human rights and suppressing political dissent. The 2013 election results were disputed by Hun Sen's opposition, leading to demonstrations in the capital. Demonstrators were injured and killed in Phnom Penh where a reported 20,000 protesters gathered, with some clashing with riot police.[[76]](#cite_note-76) From a humble farming background, Hun Sen was just 33 when he took power in 1985, and is now in the company of other long ruling [dictators](/wiki/Dictator) such as Zimbabwe's [Robert Mugabe](/wiki/Robert_Mugabe) and Kazakhstan's [Nursultan Nazarbayev'](/wiki/Nursultan_Nazarbayev).[[77]](#cite_note-77) National politics in Cambodia take place within the framework of the nation's constitution of 1993. The government is a [constitutional monarchy](/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy) operated as a [parliamentary](/wiki/Parliamentary_democracy) [representative democracy](/wiki/Representative_democracy). The [Prime Minister of Cambodia](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Cambodia), an office held by [Hun Sen](/wiki/Hun_Sen) since 1985, is the [head of government](/wiki/Head_of_government), while the [King of Cambodia](/wiki/King_of_Cambodia) (currently [Norodom Sihamoni](/wiki/Norodom_Sihamoni)) is the [head of state](/wiki/Head_of_state). The prime minister is appointed by the king, on the advice and with the approval of the [National Assembly](/wiki/National_Assembly_of_Cambodia). The prime minister and the ministerial appointees exercise [executive power](/wiki/Executive_power).

[Legislative powers](/wiki/Legislative_power) are shared by the executive and the [bicameral](/wiki/Bicameral) [Parliament of Cambodia](/wiki/Parliament_of_Cambodia), which consists of a lower house, the National Assembly ([Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang), *rotsaphea*) and an upper house, the Senate ([Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang), *preutsaphea*). Members of the 123-seat Assembly are elected through a system of [proportional representation](/wiki/Proportional_representation) and serve for a maximum term of five years. The Senate has 61 seats, two of which are appointed by the king and two others by the National Assembly, and the rest elected by the [commune councillors](/wiki/Commune_council) from 24 [provinces of Cambodia](/wiki/Provinces_of_Cambodia). Senators serve six-year terms.[[78]](#cite_note-78) On 14 October 2004, King [Norodom Sihamoni](/wiki/Norodom_Sihamoni) was selected by a special nine-member throne council, part of a selection process that was quickly put in place after the abdication of King [Norodom Sihanouk](/wiki/Norodom_Sihanouk) a week prior. Sihamoni's selection was endorsed by Prime Minister Hun Sen and National Assembly Speaker Prince [Norodom Ranariddh](/wiki/Norodom_Ranariddh) (the king's half brother and current chief advisor), both members of the throne council. He was enthroned in Phnom Penh on 29 October 2004.

### Political culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

The [Cambodian People's Party](/wiki/Cambodian_People's_Party) (CPP) is the major ruling party in Cambodia. The CPP controls the lower and upper chambers of parliament, with 68 seats in the National Assembly and 46 seats in the Senate. The opposition [Cambodia National Rescue Party](/wiki/Cambodia_National_Rescue_Party) (CNRP) is the [second largest party](/wiki/Opposition_(Cambodia)) in Cambodia with 55 seats in the National Assembly but has yet to compete in any Senate elections. The [Sam Rainsy Party](/wiki/Sam_Rainsy_Party) (SRP) has 11 seats in the Senate.

Hun Sen and his government have seen much controversy. Hun Sen was a former Khmer Rouge commander who was originally installed by the Vietnamese and, after the Vietnamese left the country, maintains his [strong man](/wiki/Strongman_(politics)) position by violence and oppression when deemed necessary.<ref name=HRWAdams>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> In 1997, fearing the growing power of his co-Prime Minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, Hun launched a [coup](/wiki/1997_Cambodian_Coup), using the army to purge Ranariddh and his supporters. Ranariddh was ousted and fled to Paris while other opponents of Hun Sen were arrested, tortured and some summarily executed.<ref name=HRWAdams/>[[79]](#cite_note-79) In addition to [political oppression](/wiki/Human_rights_in_Cambodia), the Cambodian government has been accused of corruption in the sale of vast areas of land to foreign investors resulting in the eviction of thousands of villagers[[80]](#cite_note-80) as well as taking bribes in exchange for grants to exploit Cambodia's oil wealth and mineral resources.[[81]](#cite_note-81) Cambodia is consistently listed as one of the most corrupt governments in the world.[[82]](#cite_note-82)[[83]](#cite_note-83)[[84]](#cite_note-84) [Amnesty International](/wiki/Amnesty_International) currently recognises one [prisoner of conscience](/wiki/Prisoner_of_conscience) in the country: 33-year-old land rights activist [Yorm Bopha](/wiki/Yorm_Bopha).<ref name=yorm>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

Journalists covering a protest over disputed election results in Phnom Penh on 22 September 2013 say they were deliberately attacked by police and men in plain clothes, with slingshots and stun guns. The attack against the President of the Overseas Press Club of Cambodia, Rick Valenzuela, was captured on video. The violence came amid political tensions as the opposition boycotted the opening of [Parliament](/wiki/Parliament) due to concerns about electoral fraud. Seven reporters sustained minor injuries while at least two Cambodian protesters were hit by slingshot projectiles and hospitalised.[[85]](#cite_note-85)

### Corruption[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) The level of [corruption](/wiki/Corruption) in Cambodia exceeds most countries in the world. Despite adopting an 'Anti-Corruption Law' in 2010, corruption prevails throughout the country. Corruption affects the judiciary, the police and other state institutions. Favouritism by government officials and impunity is commonplace. Lack of a clear distinction between the courts and the executive branch of government also makes for a deep politicisation of the judicial system.[[86]](#cite_note-86) Examples of areas where Cambodians encounter corrupt practices in their everyday lives include obtaining medical services, dealing with alleged traffic violations, and pursuing fair court verdicts. Companies deal with extensive red tape when obtaining licenses and permits, especially construction related permits, and that the demand for and supply of bribes are commonplace in this process. The 2010 Anti-Corruption Law provided no protection to whistle-blowers, and whistle-blowers can be jailed for up to 6 months if they report corruption that cannot be proven.[[86]](#cite_note-86)

### Foreign relations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Prime Minister Hun Sen shakes hands with](/wiki/File:John_Kerry_meets_with_Cambodian_Prime_Minister_Hun_Sen.jpg) [U.S. Secretary of State](/wiki/United_States_Secretary_of_State) [John Kerry](/wiki/John_Kerry) during his state visit to Cambodia on 25 January 2016.

The foreign relations of Cambodia are handled by the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](/wiki/Ministry_of_Foreign_Affairs_and_International_Cooperation_(Cambodia)) under H.E. [Hor Namhong](/wiki/Hor_Namhong). Cambodia is a member of the United Nations, the [World Bank](/wiki/World_Bank), and the [International Monetary Fund](/wiki/International_Monetary_Fund). It is a member of the [Asian Development Bank](/wiki/Asian_Development_Bank) (ADB), [ASEAN](/wiki/ASEAN), and joined the [WTO](/wiki/WTO) in 2004. In 2005 Cambodia attended the inaugural [East Asia Summit](/wiki/East_Asia_Summit) in Malaysia.

Cambodia has established [diplomatic relations](/wiki/Diplomatic_relations) with numerous countries; the government reports twenty embassies in the country[[87]](#cite_note-87) including many of its Asian neighbours and those of important players during the Paris peace negotiations, including the US, Australia, Canada, China, the European Union (EU), Japan, and Russia.[[88]](#cite_note-88) As a result of its international relations, various charitable organisations have assisted with social, economic, and [civil](/wiki/Civil_engineering) infrastructure needs.

While the violent ruptures of the 1970s and 1980s have passed, several [border disputes](/wiki/Border_dispute) between Cambodia and its neighbours persist. There are disagreements over some offshore islands and sections of the boundary with Vietnam and undefined [maritime boundaries](/wiki/Maritime_boundary) and border areas with Thailand. Cambodian and Thai troops have [clashed over land](/wiki/Cambodian-Thai_border_dispute) immediately adjacent to the [Preah Vihear](/wiki/Preah_Vihear_Temple) temple, leading to a deterioration in relations.[[89]](#cite_note-89)[[90]](#cite_note-90)

### Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Royal Cambodian Navy officers observe flight quarters during the](/wiki/File:US_Navy_110227-N-9950J-210_Royal_Cambodian_Navy_officers_observe_flight_quarters_during_a_ship_tour_aboard_the_forward-deployed_amphibious_assault.jpg) [Cambodia-US Maritime Exercise 2011](/wiki/Military_exercise).

The [Royal Cambodian Army](/wiki/Royal_Cambodian_Army), [Royal Cambodian Navy](/wiki/Royal_Cambodian_Navy), [Royal Cambodian Air Force](/wiki/Royal_Cambodian_Air_Force) and [Royal Gendarmerie](/wiki/Royal_Gendarmerie_of_Cambodia) collectively form the [Royal Cambodian Armed Forces](/wiki/Military_of_Cambodia), under the command of the [Ministry of National Defense](/wiki/Ministry_of_National_Defence_(Cambodia)), presided over by the [Prime Minister of Cambodia](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Cambodia). His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni is the Supreme Commander of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF), and the country's Prime Minister Hun Sen effectively holds the position of [commander-in-chief](/wiki/Commander-in-chief).

The introduction of a revised command structure early in 2000 was a key prelude to the reorganisation of the Cambodian military. This saw the defence ministry form three subordinate general departments responsible for logistics and finance, materials and technical services, and defence services under the High Command Headquarters (HCHQ).

The minister of National Defense is General [Tea Banh](/wiki/Tea_Banh). Banh has served as defence minister since 1979. The Secretaries of State for Defense are [Chay Saing Yun](/wiki/Chay_Saing_Yun) and Por Bun Sreu.

In 2010, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces comprised about 102,000 active personnel (200,000 reserve). Total Cambodian military spending stands at 3% of national GDP. The Royal Gendarmerie of Cambodia total more than 7,000 personnel. Its civil duties include providing security and public peace, to investigate and prevent organised crime, terrorism and other violent groups; to protect state and private property; to help and assist civilians and other emergency forces in a case of emergency, natural disaster, civil unrest and armed conflicts.

Hun Sen has accumulated highly centralised power in Cambodia, including a *praetorian guard* that 'appears to rival the capabilities of the country's regular military units', and is allegedly used by Hun Sen to quell political opposition.'[[91]](#cite_note-91)

### Human rights[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) A [US State Department](/wiki/US_State_Department) report says "forces under Hun Sen and the [Cambodian People's Party](/wiki/Cambodian_People's_Party) have committed frequent and large-scale abuses, including extrajudicial killings and torture, with impunity". [Amnesty International](/wiki/Amnesty_International) and the [Cambodian Center for Human Rights](/wiki/Cambodian_Center_for_Human_Rights), located in Cambodia, also raised 'impunity' as a concern. "Impunity for perpetrators of human rights abuses and lack of an independent judiciary remained serious problems," Amnesty's 2012 Annual Report said. Since June, NGOs reported that authorities "abused at least 30 prisoners - 29 while in police custody and one in prison. Kicking, punching and pistol whipping were the most common methods of reported physical abuse, but electric shock, suffocation, caning and whipping with wires were also used." The US State Department report says "politicized and ineffective judiciary is one of the country's key human rights abuses." That report says "the government generally does not respect judicial independence, and that there has been widespread corruption among judges, prosecutors and court officials."[[92]](#cite_note-92) Forced land evictions by senior officials, security forces, and government-connected business leaders are commonplace in Cambodia. Land has been confiscated from hundreds of thousands of Cambodians over more than a decade for the purpose of self-enrichment and maintaining power of various groups of special interests. Credible non-governmental organisations estimate that "770,000 people have been adversely affected by land grabbing covering at least four million hectares (nearly 10 million acres) of land that have been confiscated," says Paris-based [International Federation for Human Rights](/wiki/International_Federation_for_Human_Rights) (FIDH).[[93]](#cite_note-93) Across Cambodia, authorities routinely detain alleged drug users, homeless people, "street" children, sex workers, and people perceived to have disabilities in a "haphazard system of detention centers around the country". Some of those detention centres are ostensibly for drug treatment, while others are ostensibly for "social rehabilitation". In addition to Prey Speu, the Ministry of Social Affairs also has authority for the Phnom Bak centre in [Sisophon](/wiki/Sisophon) town, [Banteay Meanchey](/wiki/Banteay_Meanchey) province, and manages a drug detention centre with the military on a military base in Koh Kong town, [Koh Kong province](/wiki/Koh_Kong_province). There are "a further six drug detention centers" in Cambodia "that each year hold at least 2,000 people without due process".[[94]](#cite_note-94) "[Human Rights Watch](/wiki/Human_Rights_Watch) documented how guards and staff at informal detention centers "whip detainees with rubber water hoses, beat them with bamboo sticks or palm fronds, shock them with electric batons, sexually abuse them, and punish them with physical exercises intended to cause intense physical pain." Informal detainees held in extra judicial centres have been forced to work on construction sites, including in at least one instance to help build a hotel.[[94]](#cite_note-94) There are documented cases in Cambodia of people committing murder and then paying state officials so as not to be prosecuted. "Impunity enjoyed by the rich and powerful helps explain a lack of public trust in Cambodia's judicial and law enforcement institutions."[[95]](#cite_note-95)

### Administrative divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The capital (*reach thani*) and provinces (*khaet*) of Cambodia are first-level administrative divisions. Cambodia is divided into 25 [provinces](/wiki/Provinces_of_Cambodia) including the capital.

Municipalities and districts are the second-level administrative divisions of Cambodia. The provinces are subdivided into 159 districts and 26 municipalities. The districts and municipalities in turn are further divided into communes (*khum*) and quarters (*sangkat*).

[550px|right](/wiki/File:Provincial_Boundaries_in_Cambodia.svg)

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| |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Number** | **Province** | **Capital** | **Area (km²)** | **Population** | | 1 | [Banteay Meanchey](/wiki/Banteay_Meanchey_Province) | [Sisophon](/wiki/Sisophon) | 6,679 | 678,033 | | 2 | [Battambang](/wiki/Battambang_Province) | [Battambang](/wiki/Battambang) | 11,702 | 1,036,523 | | 3 | [Kampong Cham](/wiki/Kampong_Cham_Province) | [Kampong Cham](/wiki/Kampong_Cham_(city)) | 4,549 | 1,010,098 | | 4 | [Kampong Chhnang](/wiki/Kampong_Chhnang_Province) | [Kampong Chhnang](/wiki/Kampong_Chhnang_(city)) | 5,521 | 472,616 | | 5 | [Kampong Speu](/wiki/Kampong_Speu_Province) | [Kampong Speu](/wiki/Kampong_Speu_(town)) | 7,017 | 718,008 | | 6 | [Kampong Thom](/wiki/Kampong_Thom_Province) | [Kampong Thom](/wiki/Kampong_Thom_(city)) | 13,814 | 908,398 | | 7 | [Kampot](/wiki/Kampot_Province) | [Kampot](/wiki/Kampot_(City)) | 4,873 | 585,110 | | 8 | [Kandal](/wiki/Kandal_Province) | [Ta Khmao](/wiki/Ta_Khmao_(city)) | 3,568 | 1,265,805 | | 9 | [Kep](/wiki/Kep_Province) | [Krong Kep](/wiki/Krong_Kep_(town)) | 336 | 80,208 | | 10 | [Koh Kong](/wiki/Koh_Kong_Province) | [Koh Kong](/wiki/Koh_Kong_(city)) | 11,160 | 139,722 | | 11 | [Kratié](/wiki/Kratié_Province) | [Kratié](/wiki/Kratié_(city)) | 11,094 | 318,523 | | 12 | [Mondulkiri](/wiki/Mondulkiri_Province) | [Senmonorom](/wiki/Senmonorom) | 14,288 | 60,811 | | 13 | [Oddar Meanchey](/wiki/Oddar_Meanchey_Province) | [Samraong](/wiki/Samraong_(town)) | 6,158 | 185,443 | | 14 | [Pailin](/wiki/Pailin_Province) | [Pailin](/wiki/Pailin) | 803 | 70,482 | | 15 | [Phnom Penh](/wiki/Phnom_Penh) | [Phnom Penh](/wiki/Phnom_Penh) | 758 | 2,234,566 | | 16 | [Preah Sihanouk](/wiki/Sihanoukville_(city)) | [Sihanoukville](/wiki/Sihanoukville_(city)) | 2,537 | 199,902 | | 17 | [Preah Vihear](/wiki/Preah_Vihear_Province) | [Tbeng Meanchey](/wiki/Tbeng_Meanchey) | 13,788 | 170,852 | | 18 | [Pursat](/wiki/Pursat_Province) | [Pursat](/wiki/Pursat) | 12,692 | 397,107 | | 19 | [Prey Veng](/wiki/Prey_Veng_Province) | [Prey Veng](/wiki/Prey_Veng_(city)) | 4,883 | 947,357 | | 20 | [Ratanakiri](/wiki/Ratanakiri_Province) | [Banlung](/wiki/Banlung) | 10,782 | 567,459 | | 21 | [Siem Reap](/wiki/Siem_Reap_Province) | [Siem Reap](/wiki/Siem_Reap) | 10,229 | 1,000,309 | | 22 | [Stung Treng](/wiki/Stung_Treng_Province) | [Stung Treng](/wiki/Stung_Treng) | 11,092 | 111,734 | | 23 | [Svay Rieng](/wiki/Svay_Rieng_Province) | [Svay Rieng](/wiki/Svay_Rieng_City) | 2,966 | 498,785 | | 24 | [Takéo](/wiki/Takéo_Province) | [Takéo](/wiki/Takéo) | 3,563 | 843,931 | | 25 | [Tboung Khmom](/wiki/Tbong_Khmum_Province) | [Suong](/wiki/Suong,_Cambodia) | 4,928 | 754,000 | |

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|350px|The Cambodian position on the](/wiki/File:Cambodia,_Trends_in_the_Human_Development_Index_1970-2010.png) [Human Development Index](/wiki/Human_Development_Index), 1970-2010. In 2011 Cambodia's per capita income in PPP is $2,470 and $1,040 in nominal per capita. Cambodia's per capita income is rapidly increasing but [is low](/wiki/Poverty_and_NGO_in_Cambodia) compared to other countries in the region. Most rural households depend on agriculture and its related sub-sectors. [Rice](/wiki/Rice), fish, timber, garments and rubber are Cambodia's major exports. The [International Rice Research Institute](/wiki/International_Rice_Research_Institute) (IRRI) reintroduced more than 750 traditional rice varieties to Cambodia from its rice seed bank in the [Philippines](/wiki/Philippines).[[96]](#cite_note-96) These varieties had been collected in the 1960s.

Based on the Economist, IMF: [Annual average GDP growth](/wiki/Annual_average_GDP_growth) for the period 2001–2010 was 7.7% making it one of the world's top ten countries with the highest annual average GDP growth. Tourism was Cambodia's fastest growing industry, with arrivals increasing from 219,000 in 1997 to over 2 million in 2007. In 2004, inflation was at 1.7% and exports at $1.6 billion US$.

In the Cambodia country assessment "Where Have All The Poor Gone? Cambodia Poverty Assessment 2013", the World Bank concludes: "Over the seven years from 2004 through 2011, Cambodian economic growth was tremendous, ranking amid the best in the world. Moreover, household consumption increased by nearly 40 percent. And this growth was pro-poor—not only reducing inequality, but also proportionally boosting poor people’s consumption further and faster than that of the non-poor. As a result, the poverty rate dropped from 52.2 to 20.5 percent, surpassing all expectations. However, the majority of these people escaped poverty only slightly: they remain highly vulnerable—even to small shocks—which could quickly bring them back into poverty.".[[97]](#cite_note-97) China is Cambodia's biggest source of [foreign direct investment](/wiki/Foreign_direct_investment). [China](/wiki/China) planned to spend $8 billion in 360 projects in the first seven months of 2011. It is also the largest source of foreign aid, providing about $600 million in 2007 and $260 million in 2008.

Oil and natural gas deposits found beneath Cambodia's territorial waters in 2005 yield great potential but remain mostly untapped, due in part to territorial disputes with [Thailand](/wiki/Thailand).[[98]](#cite_note-98)[[99]](#cite_note-99) [thumb|300px|The Mekong Bank headquarters in Phnom Penh.](/wiki/File:Phnom_Penh_Tower.jpg) The National Bank of Cambodia is the central bank of the kingdom and provides regulatory oversight to the country's banking sector and is responsible in part for increasing the foreign direct investment in the country. Between 2010 and 2012 the number of regulated banks and micro-finance institutions increased from 31 covered entities to over 70 individual institutions underlining the growth within the Cambodian banking and finance sector.

In 2012 Credit Bureau Cambodia was established with direct regulatory oversight by the National Bank of Cambodia.[[100]](#cite_note-100) The Credit Bureau further increases the transparency and stability within the Cambodian Banking Sector as all banks and microfinance companies are now required by law to report accurate facts and figures relating to loan performance in the country.

One of the largest challenges facing Cambodia is still the fact that the older population often lacks education, particularly in the countryside, which suffers from a lack of basic infrastructure. Fear of renewed political instability and corruption within the government discourage foreign investment and delay foreign aid, although there has been significant aid from bilateral and multilateral donors. Donors pledged $504 million to the country in 2004,[[63]](#cite_note-63) while the [Asian Development Bank](/wiki/Asian_Development_Bank) alone has provided $850 million in loans, grants, and technical assistance.<ref name=ADB>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Bribes are often demanded from companies operating in Cambodia when obtaining licences and permits, such as construction-related permits.[[101]](#cite_note-101) Cambodia ranked among the worst places in the world for organised labour in the 2015 [International Trade Union Confederation](/wiki/International_Trade_Union_Confederation) (ITUC) Global Rights Index, landing in the category of countries with “no guarantee of rights”.'[[102]](#cite_note-102)

### Textiles[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

The garment industry represents the largest portion of Cambodia's manufacturing sector, accounting for 80% of the country's exports. In 2012, the exports grew to $4.61 billion up 8% over 2011. In the first half of 2013, the garment industry reported exports worth $1.56 billion.[[103]](#cite_note-103) The sector employs 335,400 workers, of which 91% are female.

### Tourism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Rice field in](/wiki/File:Cambodia's_rice_fields.jpg) [Siem Reap](/wiki/Siem_Reap_Province). [thumb|300px|Farmers harvesting rice in](/wiki/File:Battambang_Provinz_01.jpg) [Battambang Province](/wiki/Battambang_Province).

The tourism industry is the country's second-greatest source of [hard currency](/wiki/Hard_currency) after the textile industry.[[61]](#cite_note-61) Between January and December 2007, visitor arrivals were 2.0 million, an increase of 18.5% over the same period in 2006. Most visitors (51%) arrived through [Siem Reap](/wiki/Siem_Reap) with the remainder (49%) through Phnom Penh and other destinations.[[104]](#cite_note-104) Other tourist destinations include [Sihanoukville](/wiki/Sihanoukville_(city)) in the south west which has several popular beaches and the sleepy riverside town of [Battambang](/wiki/Battambang) in the north west, both of which are a popular stop for backpackers who make up a large of portion of visitors to Cambodia.[[105]](#cite_note-105) The area around [Kampot](/wiki/Kampot_(city)) and [Kep](/wiki/Kep,_Cambodia) including the [Bokor Hill Station](/wiki/Bokor_Hill_Station) are also of interest to visitors. Tourism has increased steadily each year in the relatively stable period since the 1993 [UNTAC](/wiki/UNTAC) elections; in 1993 there were 118,183 international tourists, and in 2009 there were 2,161,577 international tourists.[[106]](#cite_note-106) Most of the tourists were Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, Americans, South Koreans and French, said the report, adding that the industry earned some 1.4 billion US dollars in 2007, accounting for almost ten percent of the kingdom's gross national product. Chinese-language newspaper Jianhua Daily quoted industry officials as saying that Cambodia will have three million foreign tourist arrivals in 2010 and five million in 2015. Tourism has been one of Cambodia's triple pillar industries. The Angkor Wat historical park in [Siem Reap](/wiki/Siem_Reap) province, the beaches in Sihanoukville and the capital city Phnom Penh are the main attractions for foreign tourists.[[107]](#cite_note-107) Cambodia's tourist souvenir industry employs a lot of people around the main places of interest. Obviously, the quantity of souvenirs that are produced is not sufficient to face the increasing number of tourists and a majority of products sold to the tourists on the markets are imported from China, Thailand and Vietnam.[[108]](#cite_note-108) Some of the locally produced souvenirs include:

* Krama (traditional scarf)
* Ceramic works
* Soap, candle, spices[[109]](#cite_note-109)\* Wood carving, lacquerware, silverplating[[110]](#cite_note-110)\* Painted bottles containing infused rice wine

### Agriculture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) Agriculture is the traditional mainstay of the Cambodian economy. Agriculture accounted for 90 percent of [GDP](/wiki/GDP) in 1985 and employed approximately 80 percent of the work force. [Rice](/wiki/Rice) is the principal commodity.

Major secondary crops include [maize](/wiki/Maize), [cassava](/wiki/Cassava), [sweet potatoes](/wiki/Sweet_potatoes), [groundnuts](/wiki/Bambara_groundnut), [soybeans](/wiki/Soybean), [sesame seeds](/wiki/Sesame_seed), dry beans, and [rubber](/wiki/Rubber). The principal commercial crop is rubber. In the 1980s it was an important primary commodity, second only to rice, and one of the country's few sources of foreign exchange.

[Template:Wide image](/wiki/Template:Wide_image)

### Transport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|National Highway 4.](/wiki/File:Road_4_to_Sihanouk.JPG) [thumb|300px|](/wiki/File:Siem_reap_airport.JPG)[Siem Reap International Airport](/wiki/Angkor_International_Airport).

The civil war and neglect severely damaged Cambodia's transport system. With assistance from other countries Cambodia has been upgrading the main highways to international standards and most are vastly improved from 2006. Most main roads are now paved.

Cambodia has two rail lines, totalling about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of single, [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) gauge track.<ref name=CamRail>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> The lines run from the capital to Sihanoukville on the southern coast, and from Phnom Penh to [Sisophon](/wiki/Sisophon) (although trains often run only as far as [Battambang](/wiki/Battambang)). As of 1987, only one passenger train per week operated between Phnom Penh and Battambang but a $141 million project, funded mostly by the [Asian Development Bank](/wiki/Asian_Development_Bank), has been started to revitalise the languishing rail system that will "(interlink) Cambodia with major industrial and logistics centers in Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City".<ref name=CamRail/>

Besides the main interprovincial traffic artery connecting Phnom Penh with Sihanoukville, resurfacing a former dirt road with concrete / asphalt and implementation of 5 major river crossings by means of bridges have now permanently connected Phnom Penh with [Koh Kong](/wiki/Koh_Kong_(city)), and hence there is now uninterrupted road access to neighbouring Thailand and their vast road system.

Cambodia's road traffic accident rate is high by world standards. In 2004, the number of road fatalities per 10,000 vehicles was ten times higher in Cambodia than in the developed world, and the number of road deaths had doubled in the preceding three years.[[111]](#cite_note-111) Cambodia's extensive inland waterways were important historically in international trade. The [Mekong](/wiki/Mekong) and the [Tonle Sap](/wiki/Tonle_Sap) River, their numerous tributaries, and the Tonle Sap provided avenues of considerable length, including [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) navigable all year by craft drawing [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and another [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) navigable to craft drawing [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[112]](#cite_note-112) Cambodia has two major ports, Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville, and five minor ones. Phnom Penh, located at the junction of the [Bassac](/wiki/Bassac_River), the Mekong, and the Tonle Sap rivers, is the only [river port](/wiki/River_port) capable of receiving 8,000-[ton](/wiki/Ton) ships during the wet season and 5,000-ton ships during the dry season. With increasing economic activity has come an increase in automobile and motorcycle use, though bicycles still predominate.[[113]](#cite_note-113) "Cyclo" (as hand-me-down French) or [Cycle rickshaws](/wiki/Cycle_rickshaw) are an additional option often used by visitors. These kind of rickshaws are unique to Cambodia in that the cyclist is situated behind the passenger(s) seat,[[114]](#cite_note-114) as opposed to Cycle rickshaws in neighbouring countries where the cyclist is at the front and "pulls" the carriage.

Cambodia has three commercial airports. [Phnom Penh International Airport (Pochentong)](/wiki/Phnom_Penh_International_Airport) in Phnom Penh is the second largest in Cambodia. [Siem Reap-Angkor International Airport](/wiki/Angkor_International_Airport) is the largest and serves the most international flights in and out of Cambodia. The other airport is in [Sihanoukville](/wiki/Sihanoukville_(city)).

### Water supply and sanitation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The level of access to water supply in rural areas is low (66% in 2012) compared to relatively high access to an [Improved water source](/wiki/Improved_water_source) in urban areas (94%).[[115]](#cite_note-115)Within the government, urban water supply policy is the responsibility of the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy. Service provision in urban areas is the responsibility of two water utilities in the largest cities, the [Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority](/wiki/Phnom_Penh_Water_Supply_Authority) (PPWSA) and the [Siem Reap](/wiki/Siem_Reap) Water Supply Authority (SRWSA), 11 Provincial Water Supply Authorities (known as PWWKs) as well as 147 smaller utilities. The Department of Rural Water Supply (DRWS) and Department of Rural Health Care (DRHC) of the Ministry of Rural Development are responsible for rural water supply for the smaller towns and villages with less than 1,000 households.[[116]](#cite_note-116)

## Society[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

### Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), Cambodia has an estimated population of 15,205,539 people. Cambodia's birth rate is 25.4 per 1,000. Its [population growth](/wiki/Population_growth) rate is 1.7%.[[117]](#cite_note-117) 50% of the Cambodian population is younger than 22 years old. At a 1.04 female to male ratio, Cambodia has the most female-biased sex ratio in the Greater Mekong Subregion.[[118]](#cite_note-118) Amongst the Cambodian population aged over 65, the female to male ratio is 1.6:1.[[63]](#cite_note-63) The total fertility rate in Cambodia was 3.0 children per woman in 2010.[[119]](#cite_note-119) The fertility rate was 4.0 children in 2000.[[119]](#cite_note-119) Women in urban areas have 2.2 children on average, compared with 3.3 children per woman in rural areas.[[119]](#cite_note-119) Fertility is highest in [Mondol Kiri](/wiki/Mondulkiri_Province) and [Rattanak Kiri](/wiki/Ratanakiri_Province) Provinces, where women have an average of 4.5 children, and lowest in Phnom Penh where women have an average of 2.0 children.[[119]](#cite_note-119)

### Ethnic groups[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) [thumb|450px|An ethnic map of Cambodia.](/wiki/File:Cambodia_ethnic_map.svg)

Ninety percent of Cambodia's population is of [Khmer](/wiki/Khmer_people) origin and speak the [Khmer language](/wiki/Khmer_language), the country's official language. Cambodia's population is relatively homogeneous. Its minority groups include [Vietnamese](/wiki/Vietnamese_people) (5%) and [Chinese](/wiki/Chinese_Cambodian) (1%).[[63]](#cite_note-63) The largest ethnic group in Cambodia are the [Khmers](/wiki/Khmer_people), who comprise around 90% of the total population in Cambodia, and are indigenous to the lowland Mekong subregion in which they inhabit. The Khmers historically have lived near the [lower Mekong River](/wiki/Mekong_River) in a contiguous diagonal arc, from where modern-day Thailand, Laos and Cambodia meet in the northwest, all the way to the mouth of the [Mekong River](/wiki/Mekong_River) in southeastern Vietnam.

The Vietnamese are the largest (or second largest) ethnic minority in Cambodia, with an estimated 400,000 - 700,000 living in provinces concentrated in the southeast of the country adjacent to the [Mekong Delta](/wiki/Mekong_Delta). Although the Vietnamese language has been determined to be a [Mon–Khmer](/wiki/Mon–Khmer) language, there are very few cultural connections between the two peoples because the early Khmers were influenced by the [Indian cultural sphere](/wiki/Indian_cultural_sphere) while the Vietnamese are part of the [Chinese cultural sphere](/wiki/Adoption_of_Chinese_literary_culture).[[120]](#cite_note-120) Ethnic tensions between the Khmer and the Vietnamese can be traced to the [Dark Ages of Cambodia](/wiki/Dark_Ages_of_Cambodia) (from the 16th to 19th centuries), during which time a nascent [Vietnam](/wiki/Vietnam) and [Thailand](/wiki/Thailand) each attempted to vassalise a weakened post-Angkor Cambodia, and effectively dominate all of [Indochina](/wiki/Indochina).[[120]](#cite_note-120) [Chinese Cambodians](/wiki/Chinese_Cambodian) are approximately 1% of the population.[[117]](#cite_note-117)[[121]](#cite_note-121) Most Chinese are descended from 19th–20th century settlers who came in search of trade and commerce opportunities during the time of the [French protectorate](/wiki/French_Protectorate_of_Cambodia). Most are urban dwellers, engaged primarily in commerce.

The indigenous ethnic groups of the mountains are known collectively as Montagnards or [Khmer Loeu](/wiki/Khmer_Loeu), a term meaning "Highland Khmer". They are descended from neolithic migrations of Mon–Khmer speakers via southern China and [Austronesian](/wiki/Austronesian) speakers from insular Southeast Asia. Being isolated in the highlands, the various Khmer Loeu groups were not Indianized like their Khmer cousins and consequently are culturally distant from modern Khmers and often from each other, observing many pre-Indian-contact customs and beliefs.

The Cham are descended from the [Austronesian](/wiki/Austronesian) people of [Champa](/wiki/Champa), a former kingdom on the coast of central and southern present-day Vietnam and former rival to the Khmer Empire. The Cham in Cambodia number under a million and often maintain separate villages in the southeast of the country. Almost all Cham in Cambodia are Muslims.

### Population centres[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further)

[Template:Largest cities of Cambodia](/wiki/Template:Largest_cities_of_Cambodia)

### Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) The Khmer language is a member of the [Mon–Khmer](/wiki/Mon–Khmer) subfamily of the [Austroasiatic language](/wiki/Austroasiatic_language) group. [French](/wiki/French_language), once the language of government in [Indochina](/wiki/French_Indochina), is still spoken by many older Cambodians. French is also the language of instruction in some schools and universities that are funded by the government of France. [Cambodian French](/wiki/Cambodian_French_(linguistics)), a remnant of the country's colonial past, is a dialect found in Cambodia and is sometimes used in government, particularly in court. However, the increasing number of tourists from around the world has resulted in the shift from French to English.[[122]](#cite_note-122)

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=35)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [300px|thumb|A pie chart of religious groups in Cambodia (2008).](/wiki/File:Religions_of_Cambodia.png)

[Theravada](/wiki/Theravada) [Buddhism](/wiki/Buddhism) is the official religion of Cambodia, practised by more than 95 percent of the population with an estimated 4,392 monastery temples throughout the country.[[123]](#cite_note-123) Cambodian Buddhism is deeply pervaded by [Hinduism](/wiki/Hinduism), Tantrism, and native animism. Key concepts in Cambodian Buddhism include [reincarnation](/wiki/Rebirth_(Buddhism)), and religious activities are focused on acquiring *bonn* (Pali *punna*, merit), and erasing *kamm* (Pali *kamma*, [karma](/wiki/Karma)), which, for Khmers, means the negative results accrued from past actions.

Key concepts deriving from animism include the close interrelationship between spirits and the community, the efficacy of [apotropaic](/wiki/Apotropaic) and luck-attracting actions and charms, and the possibility of manipulating one's life through contact with spiritual entities such as the "baromey" spirits. Hinduism has left little trace beyond the magical practices of Tantricism and a host of Hindu gods now assimilated into the spirit world (for example, the important *neak ta* spirit called [Yeay Mao](/wiki/Yeay_Mao) is the modern avatar of the Hindu goddess Kali).

[Mahayana Buddhism](/wiki/Mahayana_Buddhism) is the religion of the majority of Chinese and Vietnamese in Cambodia. Elements of other religious practices, such as the veneration of [folk heroes](/wiki/Chinese_folk_religion) and ancestors, [Confucianism](/wiki/Confucianism), and [Taoism](/wiki/Taoism) mix with Chinese Buddhism are also practised.

Islam is followed by about 2% of the population and comes in three varieties, two practised by the [Cham people](/wiki/Cham_people) and a third by the descendants of Malays resident in the country for generations. Cambodia's Muslim population is reported to be 80% ethnic Cham.[[124]](#cite_note-124)

### Health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=36)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Cambodian medical students watching a surgery operation](/wiki/File:Defense.gov_photo_essay_120801-O-ZZ999-011.jpg) Cambodian [life expectancy](/wiki/Life_expectancy) was 72 years in 2014,[[125]](#cite_note-125) a major improvement since 1999 when the average life expectancy was 49.8 and 46.8[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify)[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed). Health care is offered by both public and private practitioners and research has found that trust in health providers is a key factor in improving the uptake of health care services in rural Cambodia.[[126]](#cite_note-126) The government plans to increase the quality of healthcare in the country by raising awareness of [HIV](/wiki/HIV)/[AIDS](/wiki/AIDS), [malaria](/wiki/Malaria), and other diseases.

Cambodia's [infant mortality rate](/wiki/Infant_mortality_rate) has decreased from 115 per 1,000 live births in 1993 to 54 in 2009. In the same period, the under-five mortality rate decreased from 181 to 115 per 1,000 live births.[[127]](#cite_note-127) In the province with worst health indicators, [Ratanakiri](/wiki/Health_in_Ratanakiri_Province), 22.9% of children die before age five.[[128]](#cite_note-128) Cambodia was once one of the most [landmined](/wiki/Land_mine) countries in the world. According to some estimates, unexploded [land mines](/wiki/Land_mine) have been responsible for over 60,000 civilian deaths and thousands more maimed or injured since 1970.[[129]](#cite_note-129) The number of reported landmine casualties has sharply decreased, from 800 in 2005 to 111 in 2013 (22 dead and 89 injured).[[130]](#cite_note-130) Adults that survive landmines often require [amputation](/wiki/Amputation) of one or more limbs and have to resort to begging for survival.[[129]](#cite_note-129) Cambodia is expected to be free of land mines by 2020[[131]](#cite_note-131) but the social and economic legacy, including orphans and one in 290 people being an amputee,[[132]](#cite_note-132) is expected to affect Cambodia for years to come.

"In Cambodia, landmines and exploded ordnance alone have caused 44,630 injuries between 1979 and 2013, according to the Cambodia Mine/UXO Victim Information System"[[133]](#cite_note-133)

### Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=37)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|The](/wiki/File:Royal_University_of_Phnom_Penh_Campus_2.JPG) [Royal University of Phnom Penh](/wiki/Royal_University_of_Phnom_Penh) (RUPP) is the national university of Cambodia.

The [Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports](/wiki/Ministry_of_Education,_Youth_and_Sport_(Cambodia)) is responsible for establishing national policies and guidelines for education in Cambodia. The Cambodian education system is heavily decentralised, with three levels of government, central, provincial and district – responsible for its management. The constitution of Cambodia promulgates free compulsory education for nine years, guaranteeing the universal right to basic quality education.

The 2008 Cambodian census estimated that 77.6% of the population was literate (85.1% of men and 70.9% of women).[[63]](#cite_note-63) Male youth age (15–24 years) have a literacy rate of 89% compared to 86% for females.[[134]](#cite_note-134) The education system in Cambodia continues to face many challenges, but during the past years there have been significant improvements, especially in terms of primary net enrolment gains, the introduction of program based-budgeting, and the development of a policy framework which helps disadvantaged children to gain access to education. The country has also significantly invested in [vocational education](/wiki/Vocational_education), especially in rural areas, to tackle poverty and unemployment. [[135]](#cite_note-135)[[136]](#cite_note-136) Two of Cambodia's most acclaimed universities are based in Phnom Penh.

Traditionally, education in Cambodia was offered by the wats (Buddhist temples), thus providing education exclusively for the male population.[[137]](#cite_note-137) During the [Khmer Rouge](/wiki/Khmer_Rouge) regime, education suffered significant setbacks.

With respects to academic performance among Cambodian primary school children, research showed that parental attitudes and beliefs played a significant role.[[138]](#cite_note-138) Specifically, the study found that poorer academic achievement among children were associated with parents holding stronger fatalistic beliefs (i.e., human strength cannot change destiny). The study further found that "length of residence" of parents in the community in which they stay predicted better academic achievement among their children. Overall, the study pointed out to the role of social capital in educational performance and access in the Cambodian society in which family attitudes and beliefs are central to the findings.

### Crime[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=38)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) In 2012, Cambodia had a murder rate of 6.5 per 100,000 population.<ref name=UNODC/> There were a total of 964 murders in Cambodia in 2012.<ref name=UNODC>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

[Prostitution is against the law in Cambodia](/wiki/Prostitution_in_Cambodia), yet is still prevalent. In a series of 1993 interviews of women about prostitution, three quarters of the interviewees found being a prostitute to be a [norm](/wiki/Norm_(social)) and a profession they felt was not shameful having.[[139]](#cite_note-139) That same year, it was estimated that there were one hundred thousand sex workers in Cambodia.[[139]](#cite_note-139)

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=39)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|The 19th-century illustration tale of](/wiki/File:Vorvong-Sorvong-tale-Pavie9.jpg) [Vorvong & Sorvong](/wiki/Cambodian_literature).

Various factors contribute to the Cambodian culture including [Theravada Buddhism](/wiki/Theravada_Buddhism), [Hinduism](/wiki/Hinduism), [French colonialism](/wiki/French_culture), [Angkorian culture](/wiki/Angkor), and [modern globalisation](/wiki/Modern_globalisation). The [Cambodian Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts](/wiki/Ministry_of_Culture_and_Fine_Arts,_Cambodia) is responsible for promoting and developing Cambodian culture. Cambodian culture not only includes the culture of the [lowland](/wiki/Khmer_Krom) ethnic majority, but also some 20 culturally distinct hill tribes colloquially known as the [Khmer Loeu](/wiki/Khmer_Loeu), a term coined by [Norodom Sihanouk](/wiki/Norodom_Sihanouk) to encourage unity between the highlanders and lowlanders.

Rural Cambodians wear a [krama](/wiki/Krama) scarf which is a unique aspect of [Cambodian clothing](/wiki/Cambodian_clothing). The [sampeah](/wiki/Sampeah) is a traditional Cambodian greeting or a way of showing respect to others. Khmer culture, as developed and spread by the [Khmer empire](/wiki/Khmer_empire), has distinctive styles of dance, architecture and sculpture, which have been exchanged with neighbouring [Laos](/wiki/Laos) and [Thailand](/wiki/Thailand) throughout history. [Angkor Wat](/wiki/Angkor_Wat) (*Angkor* means "city" and *Wat* "temple") is the best preserved example of Khmer architecture from the Angkorian era along with hundreds of other temples that have been discovered in and around the region.

Traditionally, the Khmer people have a recorded information on [*Tra* leaves](/wiki/Palm-leaf_manuscript). *Tra* leaf books record legends of the Khmer people, the Ramayana, the origin of Buddhism and other prayer books. They are taken care of by wrapping in cloth to protect from moisture and the climate.[[140]](#cite_note-140) [Bon Om Tuuk](/wiki/Bon_Om_Thook) (Festival of Boat Racing), the annual boat rowing contest, is the most attended Cambodian national festival. Held at the end of the rainy season when the Mekong river begins to sink back to its normal levels allowing the [Tonle Sap River](/wiki/Tonle_Sap_River) to reverse flow, approximately 10% of Cambodia's population attends this event each year to play games, give thanks to the moon, watch fireworks, dine, and attend the boat race in a carnival-type atmosphere.[[141]](#cite_note-141) Popular games include [cockfighting](/wiki/Cockfighting), soccer, and kicking a *sey,* which is similar to a [footbag](/wiki/Footbag). Based on the classical Indian solar calendar and Theravada Buddhism, the [Cambodian New Year](/wiki/Cambodian_New_Year) is a major holiday that takes place in April. Recent artistic figures include singers [Sinn Sisamouth](/wiki/Sinn_Sisamouth) and [Ros Serey Sothea](/wiki/Ros_Serey_Sothea) (and later [Meng Keo Pichenda](/wiki/Meng_Keo_Pichenda)), who introduced new musical styles to the country.

### Cuisine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=40)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Cambodian cuisine](/wiki/File:PubSt_KhmerFamily.JPG)

Rice is the staple grain, as in other Southeast Asian countries. Fish from the Mekong and Tonle Sap rivers is also an important part of the diet. The supply of fish and fish products for food and trade in 2000 was 20 kilograms per person or 2 [ounces](/wiki/Avoirdupois) per day per person.[[142]](#cite_note-142) Some of the fish can be made into [prahok](/wiki/Prahok) for longer storage.

The [cuisine of Cambodia](/wiki/Cuisine_of_Cambodia) contains tropical fruits, soups and noodles. Key ingredients are [kaffir lime](/wiki/Kaffir_lime), [lemon grass](/wiki/Lemon_grass), garlic, [fish sauce](/wiki/Fish_sauce), [soy sauce](/wiki/Soy_sauce), [curry](/wiki/Curry), [tamarind](/wiki/Tamarind), [ginger](/wiki/Ginger), [oyster sauce](/wiki/Oyster_sauce), [coconut milk](/wiki/Coconut_milk) and [black pepper](/wiki/Black_pepper). Some delicacies are នំបញ្ចុក (Num Banh chok), អាម៉ុក (Amok), អាពីង (Ah Ping). The country also boasts various distinct local street foods, such as [fried spiders](/wiki/Fried_spider).

French influence on Cambodian cuisine includes the Cambodian red curry with toasted [baguette](/wiki/Baguette) bread. The toasted baguette pieces are dipped in the curry and eaten. Cambodian red curry is also eaten with rice and [rice vermicelli](/wiki/Rice_vermicelli) noodles. Probably the most popular dine out dish, [kuy teav](/wiki/Kuy_teav), is a *pork broth* [rice noodle](/wiki/Rice_noodle) [soup](/wiki/Noodle_soup) with fried garlic, [scallions](/wiki/Scallions), [green onions](/wiki/Scallion) that may also contain various toppings such as [beef balls](/wiki/Beef_balls), [shrimp](/wiki/Shrimp), pork liver or lettuce. The cuisine is relatively unknown to the world compared to that of its neighbours Thailand and Vietnam.

### Women[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=41)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) Khmer women are traditionally supposed to be modest, soft-spoken, "light" walkers, well-mannered,<ref name=Mekong/> industrious,<ref name=Status/> belong to the household, act as the family's caregivers and caretakers<ref name=Mekong/> and financial comptrollers,<ref name=Status/> perform as the "preserver of the home", maintain their virginity until marriage, become faithful wives,<ref name=Mekong>Chey, Elizabeth. [The Status of Khmer Women](http://www.mekong.net/cambodia/women.htm), Mekong.net</ref> and act as advisors and servants to their husbands.<ref name=Status>[The Status of Women in Society](http://www.seasite.niu.edu/khmer/ledgerwood/women.htm), seasite.niu.edu</ref> The "light" walking and refinement of Cambodian women is further described as being "quiet in […] movements that one cannot hear the sound of their [silk](/wiki/Silk) skirt rustling".<ref name=Status/> As financial controllers, the women of Cambodia can be identified as having real household authority at the familial level.<ref name=EC>[Gender Roles and Statuses](http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Cambodia.html), everyculture.com</ref>

### Sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=42)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) Football (soccer) is one of the most popular sports, although professional organised sports are not as prevalent in Cambodia as in western countries because of the economic conditions. Soccer was brought to Cambodia by the French and became popular with the locals.[[143]](#cite_note-143) The [Cambodia national football team](/wiki/Cambodia_national_football_team) managed fourth in the [1972 Asian Cup](/wiki/Asian_Cup_1972), but development has slowed since the civil war.

Western sports such as basketball, volleyball, bodybuilding, field hockey, rugby union, golf, and baseball are gaining popularity. Volleyball is by far the most popular sport in the country. Native sports include [traditional boat racing](/wiki/Dragon_boat), buffalo racing, [Pradal Serey](/wiki/Pradal_Serey), [Khmer traditional wrestling](/wiki/Khmer_traditional_wrestling) and [Bokator](/wiki/Bokator). Cambodia first participated in the Olympics during the [1956 Summer Olympic Games](/wiki/Cambodia_at_the_1956_Summer_Olympics) sending [equestrian](/wiki/Equestrian_at_the_Summer_Olympics) riders. Cambodia also hosted the [GANEFO](/wiki/GANEFO) Games, the alternative to the Olympics, in the 1960s.

### Dance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=43)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Khmer](/wiki/File:Danseuses_kmer_(2).JPG) [Apsara](/wiki/Robam_Tep_Apsara) dancers. Cambodian dance can be divided into three main categories: [Khmer classical dance](/wiki/Khmer_classical_dance), folk dance, and social dances. The exact origins of Khmer classical dance are disputed. Most native Khmer scholars trace modern dance forms back to the time of [Angkor](/wiki/Angkor), seeing similarities in the temple engravings of the period, while others hold that modern Khmer dance styles were learned (or re-learned) from Siamese court dancers in the 1800s.

Khmer classical dance is the form of stylised performance art established in the royal courts of Cambodia exhibited for both entertainment and ceremonial purposes.<ref name=UnescoDance>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The dances are performed by intricately costumed, highly trained men and women on public occasions for tribute, invocation or to enact traditional stories and epic poems such as [Reamker](/wiki/Reamker), the Khmer version of the [Ramayana](/wiki/Ramayana).<ref name=Cravath1968>Cravath, Paul (1968). [*The Ritual Origins of the Classical Dance Drama of Cambodia*](http://www.jstor.org/pss/1124400), Asian Theatre Journal, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Autumn, 1986), pp. 179–203</ref> Known formally as *Robam Preah Reach Trop* ([Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang) "theater of royal wealth") it is set to the music of a [pinpeat](/wiki/Pinpeat) ensemble accompanied by a vocal chorus.

Cambodian folk dance, often performed to [mahori](/wiki/Mahori) music, celebrates the various cultural and ethnic groups of Cambodia. Folk dances originated in the villages and are performed, for the most part, by the villagers for the villagers.<ref name=FolkDance>[Sam, Sam-ang](/wiki/Sam-Ang_Sam) & Sam, Chan Moly (Winter 2003) [Khmer Folk Dance](https://web.archive.org/web/20090915000000*/http://www.reninc.org/BOOKSHELF/Khmer_Folk_Dance_Sam.pdf), Khmer Studies Institute; Newington, CT; ISBN 0-941785-02-5</ref> The movements are less stylised and the clothing worn is that of the people the dancers are portraying, such as hill tribes, [Chams](/wiki/Cham_people_(Asia)) or farmers. Typically faster-paced than classical dance, folk dances display themes of the "common person" such as love, comedy or warding off evil spirits.<ref name=FolkDance/>

Social dances are those performed by guests at banquets, parties or other informal social gatherings. Khmer traditional social dances are analogous to those of other Southeast Asian nations. Examples include the [circle dances](/wiki/Circle_dance) [Romvong](/wiki/Romvong) and [Romkbach](/wiki/Romkbach) as well as *Saravan* and *Lam Leav*. Modern western popular dances including [Cha-cha](/wiki/Cha-cha-cha_(dance)), [Bolero](/wiki/Bolero), and the [Madison](/wiki/Madison_(dance)), have also influenced Cambodian social dance.

### Music[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=44)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:27523_117616998271166_8494_n.jpg)[Sinn Sisamouth](/wiki/Sinn_Sisamouth) Traditional Cambodian music dates back as far as the [Khmer Empire](/wiki/Khmer_empire).<ref name=umbc>[Cambodian music history](http://www.umbc.edu/eol/cambodia/histcmus.htm). umbc.edu</ref> Royal dances like the [Apsara](/wiki/Apsara) Dance are icons of the Cambodian culture as are the Mahori ensembles that accompany them. More rural forms of music include *Chapei* and *A Yai*. The former is popular among the older generation and is most often a solo performance of a man plucking a Cambodian guitar (*chapei*) in between [a cappella](/wiki/A_cappella) verses. The lyrics usually have moral or religious theme.

*A Yai* can be performed solo or by a man and woman and is often comedic in nature. It is a form of lyrical poetry, often full of double entendres, that can be either scripted or completely impromptu and [ad-libbed](/wiki/Ad_libitum). When sung by a duo, the man and women take turns, "answering" the other's verse or posing riddles for the other to solve, with short instrumental breaks in between verses. *Pleng kaah* (lit. "wedding music") is a set of traditional music and songs played both for entertainment and as accompaniment for the various ceremonial parts of a traditional, days-long Khmer wedding.

Cambodian popular music is performed with western style instruments or a mixture of traditional and western instruments. Dance music is composed in particular styles for social dances. The music of crooner [Sinn Sisamouth](/wiki/Sinn_Sisamouth) and [Ros Sereysothea](/wiki/Ros_Sereysothea) from the 1960s to the 1970s is considered to be the classic pop music of Cambodia. During the [Khmer Rouge Revolution](/wiki/Khmer_rouge), many classic and popular singers of the 1960s and 1970s were murdered, starved to death, or overwork to death by the Khmer Rouge.[[144]](#cite_note-144) and many original master tapes from the period were lost or destroyed.

In the 1980s, Keo Surath, (a refugee resettled in the United States) and others carried on the legacy of the classic singers, often remaking their popular songs. The 1980s and 1990s also saw the rise in popularity of [*kantrum*](/wiki/Kantrum), a music style of the [Khmer Surin](/wiki/Northern_Khmer_people) set to modern instrumentation.[[145]](#cite_note-145) The Australian [hip hop](/wiki/Hip_hop) group Astronomy Class has recorded with [Cambodian singer](/wiki/Music_of_Cambodia) Kak Channthy a native born Cambodian female singer.[[146]](#cite_note-146)[[147]](#cite_note-147) The [Dengue Fever](/wiki/Dengue_Fever_(band)) rock and roll band features a Cambodian female singer and back-up band from California. It is classified as "[world music](/wiki/World_music)" and combines Cambodian music with Western style rock.

### Internet[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=45)]

As Cambodia continues to grow, so does its connection to the world. In most cities, restaurants and hotels offer [WiFi](/wiki/WiFi) connections for guests, and there are numerous places where internet access is available for public use, such as coffee shops, bars, restaurants and petrol stations.

Recent advances in mobile phone connectivity have expanded internet access to about one-third of Cambodians.[[148]](#cite_note-148) Internet service in metropolitan areas is less expensive than in rural areas. Basic service with 3 Mbit/s speed costs $12 per month plus the price of modem rental. Installation and delivery fees in rural areas may add to the cost. Recent improvements to internet connection technology and competition have resulted in lower prices.[[149]](#cite_note-149) Improved internet access has created demand for more websites focused on Cambodia. Because of the literacy rate in Cambodia, the issue arises of whether Cambodia-focused sites need to be in English or Khmer. English is the predominant language of the internet, and the majority of internet users in Cambodia are able to understand English, but with the use of Khmer [Unicode](/wiki/Unicode) more sites have the capability to provide Khmer language versions.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=46)]

[Template:Portal](/wiki/Template:Portal)

* [Anvaya (organization)](/wiki/Anvaya_(organization))
* [Index of Cambodia-related articles](/wiki/Index_of_Cambodia-related_articles)
* [Outline of Cambodia](/wiki/Outline_of_Cambodia)
* [Template:Books-inline](/wiki/Template:Books-inline)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=47)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=48)]

[Template:Sister project links](/wiki/Template:Sister_project_links)

* [Template:CIA World Factbook link](/wiki/Template:CIA_World_Factbook_link)
* [Cambodia](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/cambodia.htm) from *UCB Libraries GovPubs*
* [Template:Dmoz](/wiki/Template:Dmoz)
* [Cambodia profile](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-13006539) from the [BBC News](/wiki/BBC_News)
* [Cambodia](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/90520/Cambodia) at [*Encyclopædia Britannica*](/wiki/Encyclopædia_Britannica)
* Cambodia - Traveling the [far east](http://www.tourismcambodia.com/)
* [Template:Wikiatlas](/wiki/Template:Wikiatlas)
* [Template:Osmrelation-inline](/wiki/Template:Osmrelation-inline)
* [Key Development Forecasts for Cambodia](http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=KH) from [International Futures](/wiki/International_Futures)

Government

* [King of Cambodia, Norodom Sihanouk](http://www.norodomsihanouk.info/) Official website of former King Norodom Sihanouk [Template:Fr icon](/wiki/Template:Fr_icon)
* [Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web) Official Royal Government of Cambodia Website (English Version)
* [Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation](http://www.mfaic.gov.kh/)
* [Ministry of Tourism](http://www.mot.gov.kh/)

**Civil Society**

* [Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)](http://ccc-cambodia.org/)
* [Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC)](http://adhoc-cambodia.org/)
* [Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR)](http://www.cchrcambodia.org/)
* [Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICADHO)](http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/)
* [Global Integrity Report: Cambodia](http://report.globalintegrity.org/Cambodia/2008) Cambodia Integrity Scorecard and Country Report
* [Action IEC Working For Cambodian Community Education Through Media and Culture](http://www.actioniec.org/)
* [Freedom in the World 2011: Cambodia](http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2011&country=8009)
* [Freedom of the Press 2011: Cambodia](http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=251&year=2011&country=8009)

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