



**POLICY  
PULSE**

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Policy Pulse is an initiative of The Asia Foundation, founded in 2015 and formerly known as the Reform Inventory Initiative. It aims to improve the public's understanding of important policy reforms in Cambodia through high-quality research. Policy Pulse promotes thoughtful and inclusive policy dialogue and analysis in order to establish a resource for evidence-based policy recommendations. It is a platform through which researchers and stakeholders can gather to organize policy forums at the national and provincial levels to disseminate research and facilitate broad policy discussions.

The Policy Pulse Newsletter is a new medium to share updates with the public regarding recent policy developments in Cambodia.

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## Government Ministry Updates



A worker shows black pepper harvested from a local farm. Photo: The Asia Foundation

### Ministry of Commerce

The Cambodian government approved the Laws on E-Commerce and Consumer Protection, awaiting adoption by the National Assembly and review by the Senate before sending to the King for official approval.

The Law on E-commerce addresses online purchases of goods and services and will facilitate and regulate online business operations. According to the latest figures from the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, about 14.1 million people (86.7% of the population) have access to the Internet through smartphones and online sales have increased significantly.

The Law on Consumer Protection outlines how the government will promote honest competition and set standards that will benefit the consumer. This law addresses what information must be provided to consumers and sets standards for merchant compliance. The law aims to increase consumer confidence in entering into commercial transactions with merchants. ([Xin Hua, July 12, 2019](#))



## Ministry of Economy and Finance

The Ministry of Economy and Finance launched the National Single Window that allows parties involved in trade and transport to lodge standardized information and documents with a single-entry point. This system will fulfill all import, export, and transit-related regulatory requirements. The goal of the National Single Window is to strengthen relationships between government and businesses as well as bolster relationships within the government and amongst businesses. The General Department of Customs and Excise (GDCE) will be in charge of the planning, development, and implementation of the National Single Window. The National Single Window will also support implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community 2015 and the ASEAN Single Window. ([Khmer Times, July 1, 2019](#))

## Ministry of Environment

The Ministry of Environment has launched the Phnom Penh Sustainable City Plan. The Plan outlines how the government will transition Phnom Penh into an environmentally-friendly city. There are 48 projects in the plan and these will serve as the guideline for the future development of Phnom Penh. The Plan addresses climate change, city infrastructure, and green urban growth, among other topics. ([Khmer Times, July 1, 2019](#))

## Ministry of Interior

The Ministry of Interior has issued a 10-point police professionalism guidance to all police officials. The guidance was issued to all units and officials. It outlines how to manage and use weapons; offers guidance to ensure that official police units do not work at private companies, factories, or other establishments without permission from senior leadership; and issues official guidance to ensure that police units, especially convoys of motorbikes or cars with sirens, do not escort private individuals without permission; among others. ([Phnom Penh Post, July 8, 2019](#))

The Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, and line ministries resumed work on a draft law on cybercrime by looking into the implementation of similar laws in other countries. The draft law contains seven chapters and 48 articles aiming to address online crimes such as robberies, fraud and kidnappings, social media scams, and outlines possible punishment. ([Phnom Penh Post, July 12, 2019](#))

The National Police is drafting a sub-decree on the use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), more commonly referred to as drones, to regulate their use. The sub-decree was issued in the name of protecting national security. ([Phnom Penh Post, July 16, 2019](#))



## Ministry of Justice

The Ministry of Justice briefed the National Assembly on judicial reforms that have been put in place. Some of the highlights of this update include that by 2018, about 2,753 cases have been solved and 455 cases have been provided with consultative legal assistance. The Minister noted that this mechanism has helped to reduce the filing of complaints and has worked to streamline cases that make it to court. He also noted that the ministry plans to expand the Justice Center Service throughout the country in addition to the existing 69 Justice Center Service branches in Phnom Penh and some provinces. The government provided about \$50,000 in 2018 and \$295,000 in 2019. The ministry has also worked with international partners to train and build the capacity of judges and prosecutors to address various judicial priorities, including human trafficking, law dissemination, and law implementation. ([Khmer Times, July 5, 2019](#))

## Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training

The Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training has issued a directive to ban foreign nationals from self-employment in 10 categories of work, including being taxi, tuk-tuk and rickshaw drivers; and acting as barbers and beauticians; street vendors; massage therapists in public places; shoe sewers and polishers; tailors; car repairmen; Khmer souvenir producers; Khmer musical instrument and Buddha statue makers; and goldsmiths and gem cutters. The directive also forbids foreigners from serving as managers of human resources or administration in private companies.

According to Cambodian law, foreigners who live and work in Cambodia will have to contribute \$360 annually, including \$180 per year for a long-term visa, \$130 per year for an employment book or card, and \$50 per year for a foreign employee quota application. The law seeks to ensure that Cambodian local hires are prioritized. According to a report by the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, there are currently 160,077 foreigners from 93 countries working in Cambodia. ([Khmer Times, July 17, 2019](#); [Phnom Penh Post, July 17, 2019](#); [Xin Hua, August 28, 2019](#))

## Ministry of Land Management, Urbanization and Construction

The highly anticipated Law on Construction Law was approved by the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers stated that the law that will help develop the construction and real estate industry, strengthen management in the construction sector, enhance safety standards, enhance investor confidence in the construction sector, and promote efficiency in the real estate market.

According to the Ministry of Land Management, Urbanization and Construction, investment in the construction sector expanded by about 57% over last year. The



ministry has approved 2,047 construction projects, worth a combined \$3.3 billion US dollars. ([Khmer Times, September 2, 2019](#))

## Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation

The Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation announced plans to build a \$10 million National Centre for Cambodia Disability to support the livelihoods of people with disabilities by offering an opportunity to people with disabilities to open cafes, salons, souvenir shops, and guesthouses. The Centre will be open by 2023. ([Khmer Times, July 16, 2019](#))

The Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation is collaborating with other line ministries and child protection NGOs to establish a committee on the Implementation of an Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Violence Against Children. This committee will focus on the prevention and mitigation of abuse, violence, and discrimination against children in all forms to meet international standards, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The committee's three teams will focus on raising awareness and containing violence against children, providing services and implementing relevant laws, and studying legal standards and monitoring and reviewing the committee's work. ([Phnom Penh Post, July 18, 2019](#))

The Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation has opened a \$1.75 million center to treat mental illness, comprising a mental rehabilitation center, a center for sentenced minors, and a hospital for orphans – but the hospital will also be open to the general public. The establishment aims to support people with a variety of mental illnesses and will partner with centers in Phnom Penh and the provinces. ([Phnom Penh Post, September 4, 2019](#))

## Ministry of Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism has launched the “Kingdom of Wonder” mobile application that provides tourists with quick access to information about Cambodia, including information about history, language, climate, religion and population. The app also gives tourists information about domestic events and festivals, accommodation options, restaurants, transportation options, money exchange, embassies, and flights. Cambodia was visited by 6.2 million tourists in 2018, with the highest number of visitors coming from China, the United States, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam. ([Khmer Times, July 18, 2019](#))

To see the mobile application, please follow the following links

Android operating system:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.cambodiakingdomofwonder.app>

ISO operating system:

<https://apps.apple.com/kh/app/kingdom-of-wonder/id1465204712>



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