

## **More Japanese investors are interested in investing in Cambodia**

PHNOM PENH, Feb. 11, 2010 (PQRU) – Japanese delegation told Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Sok An on Thursday that there will be more Japanese investments to the Kingdom in the near future.

But Mr. Hideo Ohkubo, lead of the delegation and member of the executive committee of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and vice-committee chairman of Advancement of New Industry, said more meetings should be held between Japanese investors and Cambodian government.

“The organizing tours for Japanese investors to see with their own eyes the Cambodia’s real situation and investment potential, which is a very good idea,” Ohkubo said.

“I am encouraging more Japanese investors to invest in the Mekong sub-region countries including Cambodia,” Ohkubo told Dr. Sok An, who is also Minister in charge of the Office of the Council of Ministers, in a meeting this Thursday.

Ohkubo said it always takes times for Japanese investors before their investment flow could be made to foreign countries, but at the same he said Cambodia can be an investment radar for Japanese businessmen.

“So, we need to arrange visits first for Japanese investors to see Cambodia’s investment potential,” said Ohkubo said in the meeting.

He said soon there will be a Japanese firm’s office and working with the government to facilitate Japanese investments in this Southeast Asian nation, where investment potential is high. There are three main areas in Cambodia, which has been attractive to Japanese investors.

Those includes: Cambodian coastal province of Sihanouk could be a very good location for food processing and assembling plants, but we need to train the locals how to deal with the information technology (IT),” Mr. Ohkubo said.

“I will encourage Japanese investors to look into **Phnom Penh Special Economic Zone**.

At the same time, I will convince Japanese investors, who are currently investing in Vietnam, to look into the possibilities to operate their businesses near the Cambodia-Vietnam borders,” Re-added.

In response, Dr. Sok An said Cambodian government is soon to set up an information centre, where national and international investors could obtain accurate information about Cambodian investment potential.

Dr. Sok An also sought Japanese government to give green light for Cambodia Angkor Air for direct flight operation from Phnom Penh to Japanese cities such as Osaka and Narita airports, a move will contribute tourism sector.

“Japanese Airline (JAL) alone cannot carry all Japanese visitors who wanted to visit Cambodia. Soon, Cambodia Angkor Air will have more planes and we wish we could have direct fly to and from Japan if that possible,” the DPM told the delegation.

JAL had 20 flights to Cambodia in 2008 and it was only 10 flights last year, said Dr. Sok An. Tourist arrivals from Japan ranked fourth. There was 144,220 Japanese tourists visited Cambodia in 2008, and it dropped to 129,283 last year, according to tourism ministry.

Japan also pledged to train Cambodians how to improve rice productions. “I would like to see Japanese experts to technically help us how to improve Cambodian rice productions, especially in Takeo province, where the dry rice season has a lion share out of the country’s dry rice crops,” Mr. Ohkubo said.

Dr. Sok An also said that a polytechnic institute is being built in the southern province and hoped Japanese firm could join hands to develop the centre.

In response, Japanese delegation is interested in Dr. Sok An’s project of the institute and will send Japanese rice experts along with farming technology to help Cambodian experts and farmers on how to improve rice yield and hoped to increase the crop harvest up to three times a year.

Agriculture and tourism played vital factors in contributing Cambodian economic growth. Cambodia produced more than 7 million tonnes of rice for 2009/2010. The country received more than 2 million last year.

Total of Japan’s investment value in Cambodia between 1994- 2009 was US \$105.18 million, according the figures provided by the Office of the Council of Ministers.

Cambodia exported goods to Japan was about US \$32 million in 2008 and it was \$6.8 million for the first eight months of 2009.

Cambodia imported goods from Japan was \$69.6 million in 2008 and it was \$8.3 million for the first eight months of 2009. Japan provided Cambodia the duty free quota of 1,000 items exports to Japan.

**(Press and Quick Reaction Unit)**