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## A CLOSE PARTNERSHIP COMES OF AGE

Last year, Cambodia and Japan elevated their decades-long relationship through a comprehensive strategic partnership, which expanded Japan's role in supporting the Cambodian government's development objectives.

**Japanese Ambassador to Cambodia Atsushi Ueno** said he will sustain that fresh impetus by enhancing bilateral political, economic and cultural ties.

While some challenges remain, Cambodia passed the Law on Investment in 2021, which provided incentives to certain sectors, guaranteed intellectual property protection and allowed for the free movement of foreign currency, as well as other protections.

"This law is designed to turn challenges into opportunities for foreign investors by allowing them to build an economic base tailored to their needs," said **Marisa Haruta, chief representative of the Japan External Trade Organization in Phnom Penh.**

In the wake of those changes, the Japanese business community remains very optimistic.

"The current government is proactive in enhancing the experience of foreign investors and addressing the challenges they may encounter," said **Japanese Business Association of Cambodia Chairman Koji Fukuhara.**

In the meantime, law firms have come forward to help investors from Japan and the rest of the world navigate the unfamiliar legal landscape.

"The legal framework here poses unique challenges for international businesses. As market competition intensifies, companies need a thorough understanding of local regulations, particularly regarding incorporation and taxation, to make sound strategic decisions," said **Nobuaki Murakami, a lawyer at the Cambodia office of One Asia Lawyers Group.**

With the opening of the Cambodian economy, Japanese investment has moved beyond manufacturing and into the services sector.

"We chose Cambodia because of the rising demand for quality health care among the locals, who now have more disposable income thanks to the fast-growing economy," said **Sunrise Healthcare Service Chairman Hironori Matsushita.**

Operated by Sunrise Healthcare Service Co. Ltd., Sunrise Japan Hospital provides affordable, high-quality medical services and serves as the first point of contact for Japanese pharmaceutical companies and medical device manufacturers wanting to access the Cambodian market.

One of the country's largest and most diversified companies, Overseas Cambodian International Corp. recognizes Japan's pivotal role in advancing Cambodia's economy.

"As a diversified local investor, we focus on Cambodia's holistic development across key sectors like technology, finance, real estate, infrastructure and education. Japan's strategic vision and expertise

in these areas are invaluable assets for our progress," said **OCIC Vice President Thierry Tea.**

Japanese participation has also flourished in Cambodia's education sector, as seen by the growing number of partnerships.

"They have been invaluable for NUM's academic growth. Our partner universities facilitate student exchange programs that foster deeper friendships, while companies like Sumitomo Corporation and AEON 1% Club Foundation, offer scholarships, which align with our vision for academic excellence," said **National University of Management Rector Hor Peng.**

Among those schools determined to prepare Cambodian students for the globalized workplace is Mengly J. Quach Education. It offers general education at the American Intercon School, foreign language courses at 24 Aii Language Centers across the country, and Sogo, which organizes study tours and skills training abroad.

For Mengly J. Quach Education, one of Cambodia's largest education providers, Japan represents a valuable partner in strengthening the education system.

"A nation's human capital development is grounded in a robust education system. However, Cambodia's system has yet to reach its potential. There is still much to be done, and we believe private Japanese investors can help bridge the gaps," said **founder, Chairman and CEO Dr. Mengly J. Quach.**

Japan's increased involvement also has the potential to transform Cambodia's agriculture sector.

"Japanese technology can boost agri-processing efficiency, which can lead to higher yields and lower costs," said **Angkor Green Investments CEO Sopheak Chan.**

Alongside these developments, some homegrown brands have started building a global reputation, among them is Sela Pepper, a grower and distributor of world-famous Cambodian black pepper. It supplies Ajinomoto and views Japanese quality as its benchmark.

"We are inspired by the Japanese commitment to excellence. Cambodian pepper is among the best in the world, and we ensure that our processes align with the Japanese philosophy of quality," said **Director Anna Cai, one of the company's founders.**

In Siem Reap, Jaya House River Park has made a huge impact, locally and globally, because of its choice to promote Khmer culture in the property and service, lead community service programs, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, and commit to sustainable tourism.

"A key aspect of Japanese culture is the close attention to details, which fosters an atmosphere of genuine care. We draw upon these principles, grounding our services in empathy and foresight, enabling us to offer award-winning experiences," said **Jaya House River Park Managing Director Christian de Boer.**

## CANADIA GROUP: THE ENTREPRENEURIAL JOURNEY OF PUNG KHEAV SE

Cambodian entrepreneur **Pung Kheav Se** began his career as a young businessman in the 1980s in Canada, where he successfully developed several ventures before returning to his homeland in 1990.

In Cambodia, Pung set up more than 100 businesses, which have invested over \$15 billion locally and contributed significantly to the country's economic development.

Launched in 1993, **Canadia Bank** has become the largest locally owned bank in Cambodia. Pung's strategy of serving niche markets helped the bank thrive throughout the 1990s, survive two global financial crises and overcome the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through its nonfinancial subsidiary **OCIC**, Canadia Group expanded into real estate, education, health care, infrastructure and logistics. His



Canadia Group Chairman Pung Kheav Se

notable projects include the Koh Pich neighborhood, industrial parks and Phnom Penh's new Techo International Airport, due for completion in 2025.

A key factor in Pung's success has been partnerships with international firms. The Canadia Group collaborates with various firms from Japan, the United States, France, Singapore and other parts of the world, acquiring global expertise that will benefit Cambodia and nurture its next generation of leaders.

"Our group is investing for the coming decades and pushing for Cambodia to unlock its full potential by building international partnerships, growing young talent and investing in tech ecosystems to complement our infrastructure development," said **OCIC Vice President Thierry Tea.** <https://www.ocic.com.kh>

## JAPANESE HEALTH CARE REACHES CAMBODIA

Recognizing that many Cambodians choose to seek medical treatment abroad, the government has committed to making top-quality health care more accessible in the country.

As part of that promise, the Ministry of Health signed a memorandum of cooperation with its counterpart in Japan.

The agreement involves the transfer of technology and skills to Cambodia's health care sector.

"Access to excellent medical care is our priority. We are here for Cambodian patients, personnel and health professionals. People don't need to travel out of the country since Japanese and Cambodian medical experts are in their backyard," said **Hironori Matsushita, chairman of Sunrise Japan Hospital in Phnom Penh.**

The establishment of Sunrise Japan Hospital represents a genuine commitment of the two nations to improve health care for the 16.7 million citizens of Cambodia. Furthermore, it benefits the hospital's Japanese employees who are expanding their language and communication skills while helping to raise local standards of care to international levels.

Sunrise Japan Hospital currently has seven



From left: Sunrise Medical Center Sen Sok Clinic Director Dr. Hong Chhay, Sunrise Healthcare Service Chairman Hironori Matsushita, Sunrise Healthcare Service Clinical Director Dr. Manabu Okawada, and Sunrise Japan Hospital Director Dr. Sok Khemvitou

centers: emergency; stroke and neurosurgery; gastrointestinal medicine and surgery; pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology; general internal medicine; health screening; and cardiology.

Sunrise Healthcare Service Co. Ltd. is a member of JGC Holdings Corp. and operates with the cooperation of the Kitahara Group. <https://www.sunrise-hs.com>

## ONE ASIA LAWYERS: EMPOWERING JAPANESE INVESTORS IN ASEAN AND BEYOND

Trusted by entities like the Japanese Embassy and the Japan External Trade Organization, **One Asia Lawyers Group** has guided many reputable Japanese organizations operating in Cambodia.

Founded in 2016 to help Japanese investors in Asia, the group has built an extensive network of legal experts across the region, allowing it to provide seamless service in virtually all areas of law wherever its clients are.

As a growing number of Japanese investors look to Cambodia, One Asia Lawyers Group is confident in its ability to simplify entry into Cambodia and facilitate expansion for existing Japanese businesses in the country.

"Cambodia's government is more attuned to Japanese

investor interest than ever before. This is an opportune time for new Japanese businesses to explore greenfield investment opportunities in the kingdom. We have highly experienced Japanese legal experts specializing in foreign investment services across diverse industries, from banking and finance to renewable energy," said **Nobuaki Murakami, a lawyer at One Asia Lawyers Group's Cambodia office.**

With the increase in investment opportunities, companies from around the world have also begun looking at their prospects in Cambodia, making the market more competitive.

"We provide our clients with comprehensive feasibility studies and advise them at all stages of their investment, so they are



Nobuaki Murakami, a lawyer at One Asia Lawyers Group's Cambodia office

prepared to navigate the competition," said Murakami, who stressed that the group has found the balance between cost and quality for its services.

"With One Asia, expertise doesn't mean expensive," he said. <https://oneasia.legal/en>

## JAYA HOUSE RIVER PARK: LUXURY WITH A CONSCIENCE

Situated along the Siem Reap River and surrounded by lush forests near Angkor Wat, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, **Jaya House River Park** in Cambodia offers luxury and serenity in one of the world's most visited places.

Established in 2016 with a vision rooted in Khmer hospitality, the boutique hotel is just six minutes away from the city center. In TripAdvisor's 2024 rankings, it was named the best hotel in Cambodia for seven years running and one of the top 25 worldwide for five consecutive years.

Yet, Jaya House River Park is more than its accolades, modernist '60s-inspired interiors and premium amenities. It embodies sustainable hospitality, allowing guests to contribute to eco-friendly practices simply by staying.

"Social impact and ecology are at the heart of Jaya House. We began as the only single-use plastic-free hotel here and I'm proud to say that we remain unique in Siem Reap," said **Managing Director Christian de Boer.**

De Boer, a passionate advocate for social responsibility, oversees Jaya House River Park's pioneering ecological initiatives, like eliminating single-use plastic in the hotel, participating in extensive tree-planting programs and forming partnerships with local nongovernmental organizations using



Jaya House River Park is always at your service. guest-generated revenue.

"Jaya House is a hotel with a purpose. We believe in collective responsibility for the environment. By adopting sustainable practices in our operations, we hope to set an example for larger chains worldwide. If we can go green without sacrificing service quality in a developing country, then those with more resources can achieve remarkable impacts," he said.

As a signatory of the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative under the U.N. Environment Program and World Tourism Organization, Jaya House River Park is committed to prohibiting single-use plastic around the world and to shaping sustainable tourism in Cambodia.

"When guests choose Jaya House, they support the local community and join a global movement to address environmental challenges threatening our planet," Boer said. <https://www.jayahouseriverparksiemreap.com>

## MENGLY J. QUACH LEADS THE WAY IN EDUCATION

Over the past two decades, **Mengly J. Quach Education** has grown from a modest school with five staff members and four students to one of Cambodia's leading education providers with nearly 24,000 students scattered across 24 campuses nationwide.

In 2023, MJQE became the country's first educational services company to get listed on the Cambodia Securities Exchange, raising more than \$5 million in its initial public offering. That same year, the group reported a 45% increase in gross profit and opened five more campuses.

**MJQE founder, Chairman and**

**CEO Mengly J. Quach** attributes his company's success to a single-minded mission to develop the country's human resources through either its American Intercon Schools (general education), Aii Language Centers (English-, Chinese- and Thai-language instruction), and Sogo centers (overseas studies and student exchange programs).

"For us, education is not merely business. It is a profound opportunity to shape the nation's youth by providing them with a comprehensive and well-rounded education," Quach said.

By transforming Cambodia's education business, the group has earned the trust of key sectors in society.

"We are the preferred choice not only of students and their parents, but also of the top educators in Cambodia, many of whom have been with us since the start of our journey. I am also grateful for the support extended to us by the Ministry of Education and proud to be one of their key advisors," said Quach, who is also a physician and philanthropist.

In the past four years, MJQE has seen enrollment surge nearly six-fold, exceeding the group's current capacity. Quach views this development as an opportunity to partner with like-minded organizations that share his drive to make education accessible to every student in Cambodia.

"I believe the Japanese are our ideal partners in expanding educational access. Our group has long drawn inspiration from the Japanese value system, which emphasizes responsibility, accountability and respect for all. We warmly welcome Japanese companies and institutions to join us in empowering young minds and transforming lives," he said. <https://www.mjqeducation.edu.kh>



MJQE founder, Chairman and CEO Mengly J. Quach



## Invest in Excellence: Mengly J. Quach Education Cambodia's Premier Educational Institution

Discover the power of education with Mengly J. Quach Education, Cambodia's leader in empowering students. Our commitment to excellence is reflected in our innovative programs, cutting-edge facilities and a proven track record of success. Whether it's top-tier education, language proficiency, or international study opportunities, Mengly J. Quach Education is at the forefront of shaping the future. Join us in our mission to transform lives through education and be a part of Cambodia's educational revolution.

Scan here for more information



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