



Directorate of Intelligence
Royal Thai Army

Email inteldiv@rta.mi.th

Press Release



Royal Thai Army

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Thai Army Chief receives courtesy call from Cambodian Chief of Army 2nd April 2019

The relationship between Thailand and Cambodia has been strengthening recently. Leaders of both countries emphasize economic development in the border areas and attempt to solve border disputes by peaceful means. Meanwhile, at the grassroots level, the people who live around borders of both countries always have strong ties due to their similar lifestyles. Additionally, citizens of both countries have been trading (agricultural and commodity goods) in large volume.

The leaders of both countries have together created peaceful and secure borders through their Armed Forces' mechanisms. These exiting mechanisms such as the General Border Committee (GBC), the Regional Border Committee (RBC), and the Joint Working Group (JWG) - help strengthening relationship and solving problems between the two parties. Also, Thailand and Cambodia have development several projects in which Strong Villages Project are developed across borders. This will help strengthening border security and building friendship between people and government officials.

During the official visit of Cambodian Chief of Army from 1 to 3 April 2019, the Cambodian Royal Army, Lieutenant General Hun Manet paid Courtesy call on Thai Minister of Defense at the Ministry of Defense. He also visited the Army Training Command, Command and General Staff College and the Special Forces Command. Both parties gained mutual benefits from the exchange of ideas in order to develop Professional Military Education of the two armed forces' personnel. In particular, the RTA Special Forces Command has strong military cooperation with the Cambodian counterpart. For instance, the Cambodian Army sent its personnel to train in the Thai Airborne Course and also participated in the LAND EX THACAM in 2017 at Arawan Camp, Mueang District, Lopburi. This exercise focused on Special Forces and counter terrorism missions. Additionally, there was a friendship parachute jumps between Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam and Cambodia during the Flash Thunder exercise between Thailand and Singapore in 2018 in Lopburi. Regarding Professional Military Education, the Royal Thai Army has been supporting military courses such

as the Command and General Staff Course which, from 2013 onward, Cambodian army has sent its officers to participate yearly.

There have been several military cooperation relating trans-border affairs. In the past, these cooperation have helped creating peaceful and secured borders. The exiting collaboration include joint patrol, joint demarcation, the prevention and suppression of trans border crimes to stop criminal activities such as drug and human trafficking, deforestation, and labor trafficking. In addition, based on the policies of both countries, there have been several projects to promote peaceful atmosphere around border zones. These projects include the economic development in the border areas which might be discussed during the visit. The new cooperation may include the temporary trading points which may be raised the status to be permanent border crossing areas. The aim is to facilitate cross-border trade which will develop local economies of both countries. In addition, the meeting between the Army leaders is a channel to clarify and explain the previous problems and build mutual trust. It will also create a new mechanism to solve conflicts which may emerge in the future. Furthermore, the two parties may discuss the hot issues in global security such as counter global terrorism which require every country to cooperate and exchange intelligences. The effort is to prevent and deter the unwanted situations which will have impacts not only on individual country but also the region as a whole. In addition, there may be some discussions about UN peacekeeping operations in which both Thai and Cambodian Armies have been participating in the UN missions in Africa.

The Thai and Cambodian Army Chiefs have already met twice in the past. The first meeting occurred during the 19th ASEAN Chiefs of Army Multilateral Meeting (ACAMM) in Malacca, Malaysia from 25 to 27 November 2018. Additionally, from 29 to 31 January 2019, the Thai Army Chief also visited Cambodia. These previous two official meeting between the two counterparts have strengthened their relationship. The current official visit of the Cambodian Royal Army is the first official visit in 10 years in which the Commander of Cambodian Royal Army is an official guest of the Royal Thai Army. This shows the close tie between the two Armies and their leaders which has been continuously staying strong.

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