



# CAMBODIA SNAPSHOT



## HISTORY

Most Cambodians consider themselves to be Khmers, descendants of the Angkor Empire that extended over much of Southeast Asia and reached its zenith between the 10th and 13th centuries. Attacks by the Thai and Cham (from what is now present-day Vietnam) weakened the empire, ushering in a long period of decline. The king placed the country under French protection in 1863, and it became part of French Indochina in 1887.

Following Japanese occupation in World War II, Cambodia gained full independence from France in 1953. In April 1975, after a seven-year struggle, communist Khmer Rouge forces captured Phnom Penh and evacuated all cities. At least 1.5 million Cambodians died from execution, forced hardships, or starvation during the Khmer Rouge regime under Pol Pot. A December 1978 Vietnamese invasion drove the Khmer Rouge into the countryside, began a 10-year Vietnamese occupation, and touched off almost 13 years of civil war. UN-sponsored elections in 1993 helped restore some semblance of normalcy under a coalition government. The remaining elements of the Khmer Rouge surrendered in early 1999.

## GEOGRAPHY

**Location:** Southeastern Asia, bordering the Gulf of Thailand, between Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos

**Climate:** Tropical; rainy, monsoon season (May to November); dry season (December to April); little seasonal temperature variation

**Terrain:** Mostly low, flat plains; mountains in the southwest and north



## PEOPLE & SOCIETY

**Population of Cambodia:** 16.5 million

**Population of Phnom Penh:** 1.95 million

**Official Language:** Khmer

**Religions:** Buddhist (official) 96.9%, Muslim 1.9%, Christian 0.4%, other 0.8%

**Median Age:** 25.7 years



## GOVERNMENT

**Capital City:** Phnom Penh

**Country Name (English):** Kingdom of Cambodia

**Country Name (Khmer):** Preahreacheanachakr Kampuchea

**Government Type:** Parliamentary constitutional monarchy

**Independence Day:** 9 November (1953)

**Chief of State:** King Norodom Sihamoni

**Head of Government:** Prime Minister Hun Sen

## TIME

**Cambodia Time:** Abbreviated as ICT (Indochina Time), Cambodia is GMT/UTC + 7h during Standard Time

## ECONOMY

Cambodia has experienced strong economic growth over the last decade; GDP grew at an average annual rate of over 8% between 2000 and 2010 and about 7% since 2011. The tourism, garment, construction and real estate, and agriculture sectors accounted for the bulk of growth.

**Agriculture:** Rice, rubber, corn, vegetables, cashews, cassava (manioc, tapioca), silk.

**Industries:** Tourism, garments, construction, rice milling, fishing, wood and wood products, rubber, cement, gem mining, textiles

**Currency:** Riel / KHR (official), United States Dollar / USD (unofficial)

**Exchange rate:** USD1 = KHR4000, GBP1 = KHR5300



## DID YOU KNOW?

Cambodia has the only national flag that features an actual building in its design



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