



# Sixth Chinese Dam in Koh Kong Begins Test Phase

By **George Styllis** and **Kang Sothear** - August 15, 2014

The sixth Chinese-built dam to be constructed in Koh Kong province launched one of three generators in a test operation on Wednesday, a Ministry of Mines and Energy official said Thursday.

Ith Praing, secretary of state at the Ministry of Mines and Energy, said the Electricity Authority of Cambodia would conduct an assessment of the plant during the test phase. If all goes to plan, he said, the plant is expected to fill gaps in the country's spasmodic energy supply and drive down electricity prices.

"The hydropower plant in Tatay is being tested. If there is no problem it will be very good for the supply of electricity in Cambodia because we lack electricity due to demand increasing every day for construction and household activities," Mr. Praing said.

"When the dam is in full operation we will have a bigger power supply and the price will be better."

China National Heavy Machinery Corporation began building the 246-megawatt dam in 2010 at an estimated cost of \$540 million. Three generators, each capable of producing 82MW, will eventually power the plant, according to Xinhua, China's state media agency.

China is the largest investor in hydroelectric dams in Cambodia having spent \$1.6 billion to produce a combined capacity of 828MW, according to data from Xinhua and the Ministry of Mines and Energy.

Chinese-built dams in Cambodia have come repeatedly under fire for displacing people and damaging the environment.

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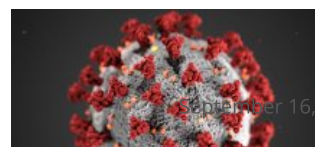
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However, Alex Gonzalez-Davidson, founder of Mother Nature, an NGO that is battling against the construction of a controversial dam in Koh Kong, said the latest addition, on the Tatay River, has had almost no negative impact on the environment.

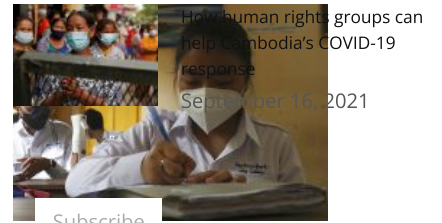
"The environmental impact has not been that bad as the reservoir is not that big... The cleared land was also a degraded part of the river," he said.

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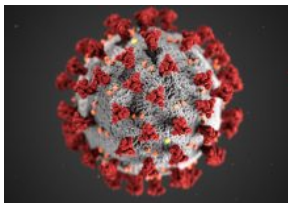
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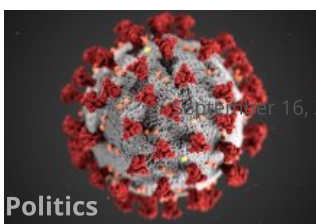


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