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National February 6, 2018

## Coalition condemns land grabbing

May Titthara / Khmer Times /



Villagers display photos during a protest over a land dispute. KT/Chor Sokunthea

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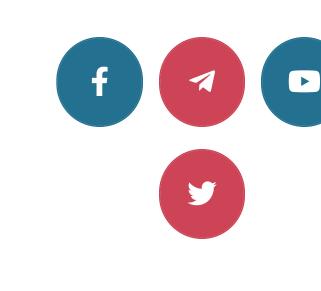
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environment.

The Asian Peasant Coalition has strongly condemned the intensifying repression and land grabbing by the Chinese company Hengfu Group Sugar Industry Co Ltd against the indigenous Kuy people in Preah Vihear province.



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**ABA** 

APC chairperson P. Chennaiah alleged the Cambodian government promises that economic land concessions will bring about development, but sometimes they destroy the livelihood and culture of the indigenous Kuy people.

Biodiversity and natural ecosystems have been destroyed, he claimed, noting the project would only bring more profit to the sugar company. "We call on the APC members across Asia to urge the Cambodian

government to heed the Kuy peoples' demand to stop Hengfu's land

grabbing," said Mr Chennaiah. "The Kuy people only learned about the ELCs when the company started clearing their ancestral lands and forest in 2012. The Kuy people were never consulted on the project. When they confronted Hengfu,

local authorities accused them of illegal settlement on state land." Hengfu is based in Guangdong, China, and mainly produces diversified sugar products.

In 2011, it was granted ELCs on more than 42,000 hectares of land in

Preah Vihear province by the Cambodian government. ELCs are part of

Cambodia's efforts to transform small-scale farmer landscapes into agro-industrial ones. According to research conducted in 2016 by an international NGO, the

five companies granted ELCs – Heng Nong, Heng Rui, Lan Feng, Heng

You, and Rui Feng – appear to be subsidiaries of Hengfu. The Chinese company opened its \$360 million mill and refinery in 2016 with the aim of supplying sugar to markets in the European Union, India, and China. The new sugar mill will be among the biggest in Asia.

Rui Feng administration director Kor Yang could not be reached for comment. Tep Tim, a villager affected by the Chinese project, said the company has never stopped taking villagers' farmland and was now in the

process of planting sugarcane on ancestral areas. "We try to protect our community land but the authorities have not protected us and accuse us of opposing the development project. We try

our best to protect our community farmland," she said. Poek Sophon, chief of advocacy for local NGO Ponlok Khmer, said the Kuy people continued to lose their land and did not dare to gather as before to protest against the company because of the political

Un Chanda, governor of Preah Vihear province, could not be reached for comment.

China accounts for about a fifth of ELCs in Cambodia. Chinese firms hold ELCs for sugar, rubber and palm oil plantations covering about 400,000 hectares out of Cambodia's recorded 2.1 million hectares of ELCs.



Vihear province, The Asian Peasant Coalition

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Tags: biodiversity, Hengfu Group Sugar Industry, indigenous, Kuy, P. Chennaiah, Preah

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zero-case policy while we should... I have read the notice about the quarantine of pet dogs in Shangrao, East China's Jiangxi Province. Killing a pet dog with no evidence of being infected by COVID-19 and displaying the video clip of the process clearly lack of the basis of rules.



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## **Features**



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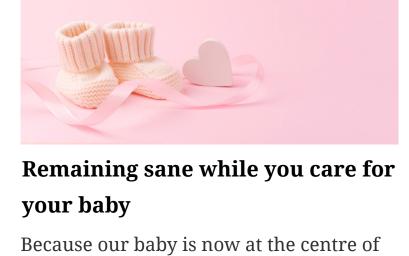
Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts has

invited her and her association Il Nodo ("Il Nodo" is Italian for "the knot") to hold an exhibition to display their exclusive handcrafted collection of jewellery.

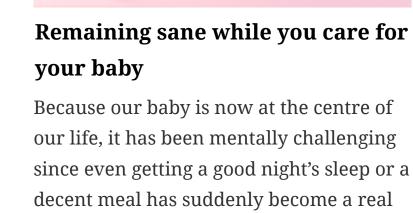
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