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# 2nd Chroy Changvar Bridge Opens, More to Come

31 December 2015 Local News 690 Views



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After being in use for a year, the Cambodia-China Friendship Bridge, the second Chroy Changvar Bridge, was officially inaugurated in late October 2015. More bridges are also expected to be built in the near future.

The bridge, built by the China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC) through a Chinese concessional loan, stretches 718 metres over the Tonle Sap River running parallel with the Cambodia-Japan Friendship Bridge (the first Chroy Changvar Bridge). After breaking ground in early November 2011, the \$27.5 million project took 38 months to complete.

This was the fourth Chinese-government-backed bridge inaugurated by Prime Minister Hun Sen this year. To date, over 10 bridges have been built across Cambodia's main bodies of water in particular the Mekong and Tonle Sap rivers. While three bridges – in Phnom Penh, Kompong Cham and Kandal-Prey Veng – have been built with aid from the Japanese government and its contractors, the rest have been financed by the Chinese government and built by Chinese construction firms.

“This second Chroy Changvar Bridge is the new artery serving transportation across the Mekong River and it also reduces a lot of traffic congestion between the city and the eastern provinces,” said Samdach Prime Minister Hun Sen at the bridge grand opening event on 22 October.

Infrastructure surrounding the bridge to ease its use include the Old Stadium roundabout located west of the bridge, and the iconic Prum Bayon roundabout located east of the bridge as well as public parks to beautify the city.

#### TWO MORE BRIDGES OVER THE MEKONG

Given many of Cambodia's large population centres are located close to rivers and the transport infrastructure required to cross them, the government plans two more bridges across the Mekong River to ease commuting and commercial logistics especially since regional integration will see more vehicles and cross-border transportation.

The China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC) is conducting a feasibility study for two more bridges. The first bridge will connect Svay Jrum Commune, to Chroy Changva Commune in Phnom Penh. Though proposed since April 2014, no date for the start of construction date has been announced. The second bridge project will connect Lovea Em District, Kandal Province to Kdey Takoy Village, Prek Eng Commune in Phnom Penh.

The government will have to prioritise which to build first due to limited finances, according to the Prime Minister. “I would urge our people residing on both sides of the rivers to keep up their hopes. The two bridges are in our vision for development,” he said.

“To pave the way for development, infrastructure connections are extremely crucial and only our Chinese partner is capable of helping us,” he said. “Connectivity is important for development. China is the one who has the ability to help us connect,” the PM stressed.

#### THIRD BRIDGE TO CONNECT CHROY CHANGVAR

Aside from these two bridge announcements, another bridge is planned to connect from the city to the booming Chroy Changvar peninsula. The area is home to large real estate developments such as the \$2 billion, 387-hectare Chroy

Changvar Satellite City developed by Overseas Cambodian Investment Corporation (OCIC), the 5-star Sokha Hotel, and many high-end service apartments, hotels, and residential development projects such as boreys, condominiums.

This third Chroy Changvar Bridge is slated to be built by the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC), the government’s investment body, under a build-transfer-operate (BTO) agreement after it was confirmed with the Phnom Penh municipality late last year.

The bridge is expected to provide better access to the Chroy Changvar peninsula, which many real estate experts believe will be the city’s new metropolitan area, home to commercial areas, malls, schools, banks, hotels and hospitals as well as residential projects.

Land stretching from the Chroy Changvar area to the Sokha Hotel is currently priced at between \$1,000 and \$1,500 per square metre, comparing to only around \$600 per square metre compared to two years ago.



TECHNO OVERPASS TO TEMPORARILY OPEN

To ease traffic during the upcoming national festival and holiday, the government will also put the Techno Overpass into temporary use starting from 21 November.

The overpass will initially welcome the state visit by the Russian Prime Minister to Cambodia on 23 and 24 November as well, said the Prime Minister. “The Russian Prime Minister will be our first foreign guest to travel on the Techno Overpass. It should be welcome news for our people of the achievement the state has provided to save them from traffic jams and loss of fuel.”

As at 23 October, construction on the Techno Overpass and Tunnel, the capital’s forth overpass system, was 85 percent complete, according to the City Hall website.

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