

## Gov't Signs \$70M Deal For Submarine Internet Cable

BY KANG SOTHEAR  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

The government signed a \$70 million investment agreement with a Chinese-owned telecommunication infrastructure provider yesterday to connect Cambodia to a 25,000-km underwater fiber-optic network spanning three continents.

The new infrastructure, expected to be operational by 2017, will bring faster and cheaper Internet to the country, according to company and government officials.

The Cambodia Fiber Optic Communication Network (CFOCN), a wholly owned subsidiary of the HyalRoute Group, signed the 25-year, \$69.7 million build-operate-transfer deal with the ministry in an afternoon ceremony.

The firm will link Cambodia to the Asia-Africa-Europe-1 (AAE-1)—a submarine network with 100-gigabit-per-second technology and capacity for more than 40 terabits—via a connection point in the Gulf of Thailand off the coast of Sihanoukville.

"The AAE-1 ventures are to be the largest, newest cable constructed, to link all major Asian, African, Middle Eastern and European nations," read a press release from HyalRoute. "It is expected to significantly bridge the digital divide between Cambodia and developed areas in the world."

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Reuters

Ground personnel help US astronaut Scott Kelly to get out of a Soyuz capsule shortly after landing near the town of Dzhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, yesterday.

## Historic Space Journey Ends; Twin Test Begins

BY AMINA KHAN  
LOS ANGELES TIMES

After nearly a year on the International Space Station, NASA astronaut Scott Kelly returned to Earth on Tuesday night, completing, along with Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko, the longest continuous stay in space.

Kelly, Kornienko and his fellow cosmonaut Sergey Volkov touched down in Kazakhstan at 10:26 a.m. yesterday. The Soyuz TMA-18M

spacecraft that ferried them back from the space station landed southeast of the remote town of Dzhezkazgan, NASA said.

Kelly will fly to NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, where, after a brief rest, he'll be examined by a bevy of scientists itching to examine him and gather samples.

But Kelly won't be alone. He'll be joined by his identical twin, retired NASA astronaut Mark Kelly. The pair have been participating in

what might be the most far-out twin study ever conducted.

This unique study "is absolutely essential if we're ever going to send people to Mars," said John Holdren, director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and President Obama's senior science advisor. Holdren said he planned to meet Kelly on the tarmac upon his return to Houston on yesterday.

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## 105 Chinese Arrested at Senator's Poipet Casino

BY SAING SOENTHRITH  
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

More than 100 Chinese nationals believed to be wanted for crimes in their home country were arrested yesterday at a CPP senator's casino in Poipet City, which had to be shut down during the operation, police said.

Sen Makara, deputy immigration police chief at the Poipet International Checkpoint, said Chinese and Cambodian police raided the Golden Crown Casino—owned by senator

and tycoon Kok An—and arrested 105 Chinese people, all of whom were staying at the casino's hotel.

Mr. Makara declined to elaborate on what crimes the Chinese were suspected of having committed, saying only, "We need to check their backgrounds one by one."

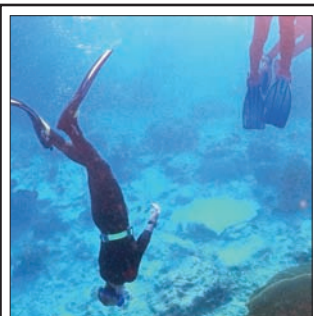
The raid was led by Sieng Sen, director of the Interior Ministry's internal security department, who said the operation followed a joint investigation between Chinese and Cambodian police into the 105 sus-

pects, but was also circumspect about their alleged crimes.

Lieutenant General Sen said the casino had to be shut down entirely during the raid because there were so many Chinese gamblers there that police had trouble determining which people they were looking for.

He said that all of the Chinese guests had initially been rounded up and brought to a large hall in the casino, where police identified

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El Nino Destroying Parts of Great Barrier Reef

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## AND ALSO

# US Couple Wins 'Baby Lottery'

EUTERS

A southeast Michigan couple was twice lucky after the birth of their daughter on February 29, the second time the mother has given birth to a baby girl on that day in a leap year.

Chad and Melissa Croff, from Columbus Michigan, welcomed Evelyn Joy into the world at 3:06 a.m., the Henry Ford Health System said in a statement. She arrived 10 days after her due date.

Weighing in at 6 pounds, 9 ounces, the girl shares a birthday with older sister Eliana Adaya, who was born February 29, 2012, the last time there was a leap year, the hospital said.

"It's a little surreal," Melissa Croff said. "It's kind of winning the lottery; the baby lottery."

The girls will pick a celebration day during future, non-leap years.

## NEWSMAKERS

■ New Jersey Governor **CHRIS CHRISTIE**'s face trended on social media site Twitter yesterday, as users drew attention to the governor's diverse range of facial expressions during a Super Tuesday speech made by U.S. Republican presidential candidate **DONALD TRUMP**, whom Christie endorsed after dropping out of the race himself last month. Twitter users chimed in saying the governor looked "motionless and expressionless" while standing behind the front-runner for the Republican nomination. Others said Christie looked like he was "appearing in a hostage video" or as if he was "about to vomit." Fellow Republicans, including Hewlett-Packard CEO **MEG WHITMAN**, former financial co-chair for the Christie campaign, have criticized his endorsement of Trump, whose controversial statements have raised eyebrows throughout the Republican campaign. (WP)

## Chinese...

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those suspected of having open arrest warrants in China. The 105 Chinese suspects were transferred from the casino to the Poipet City police station yesterday evening, he added.

Police are now double-checking the names of those arrested in Poi-

pet against the Chinese arrest warrants and have already determined that 38 of them are wanted in China, Lt. Gen. Sen said.

"We will continue processing the cases tomorrow of those who are involved with committing crimes in their own country, as we are checking them against the Chinese court warrants and cooperating with Chinese police," he said.

Yesterday's mass arrest comes

on the heels of a similar operation in Sihanoukville in November, when immigration police—with the assistance of Chinese police and embassy officials—arrested a group of 168 Chinese nationals.

Police said at the time that the group had used Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) calling to extort money from wealthy Chinese families. Those arrested in the raid were deported and put on a blacklist barring

them from returning to Cambodia.

Lt. Gen. Sen said that those who were arrested in the Poipet raid and had pending arrest warrants would face a similar fate.

"We allowed them to stay at the Poipet police station tonight and tomorrow they will be sent to Phnom Penh for them to be deported to China," he said.

The Chinese Embassy could not be reached for comment.

## Internet...

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A consortium of 19 global telecommunications firms signed an agreement to develop the network in January 2014. It currently links to 19 countries, with the Cambodia branch expected to be operational by the end of 2017, according to the press release.

"HyalRoute Group has constructed 10,248-km of terrestrial fiber optic cable that covers 25 provinces in Cambodia," it added. "And the number of customer access network coverage reaches 300,000 households."

Khov Makara, a spokesman for the Ministry of Posts and Tele-

communications, said the project would bring cheaper Internet to Cambodia by reducing its reliance on neighboring countries.

"After the submarine cable is configured, the Internet will no longer need to pass through Vietnam or Thailand," Mr. Makara said. "When we want to connect to Internet from Hong Kong or France, for example, we can connect directly, so the cost of connection will be cheaper."

The cable connection would also give Cambodia access to the Internet at a much higher bandwidth, explained Joseph Man Chuen Chan, chairman of the AAE-1 management committee.

"The system would support all forms of communications and applications including broadband In-

*"The prime minister uses Facebook every day...and so he wants fast-running Internet."*

—KAN CHANNMETA,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY

ternet, video, voice, data...at a faster speed," he said.

As of December, Cambodia had 6.7 million Internet users, representing slightly more than 40 percent of the population, according to the Telecommunications Ministry, up from just over 1 percent of the population in 2010.

Kan Channmeta, a secretary of state of the Telecommunications Ministry, said the submarine cable would help meet future demand from both retailers and consumers

—including Prime Minister Hun Sen.

"We should be able to respond to increasing annual demand for the Internet from consumers," Mr. Channmeta said.

"But if we don't develop better connections, the people would be unable to use data up to their capacity and the speed would falter," he added.

"The prime minister uses Facebook every day...and so he wants fast-running Internet."

## — National Brief —

### Farmer Hacked to Death by Girlfriend's Lover: Police

A rice farmer was hacked to death on Tuesday night in Preah Sihanouk province after getting into an argument with his long-time girlfriend's other lover, whom police said they were still searching for as of yesterday evening. The victim, 47-year-old Chhuon Vichet, had just arrived at the house of his girlfriend, Chy Kheang, 53, at about 11 p.m. in Kompong Seila district when he encountered her lover, 56-year-old Khon Van, leaving the house, district police chief Hout Chanthay said. "The [woman] asked the two men not to shout at each other," he said. They did not heed her request, and Mr. Van subsequently hacked Chhuon Vichet six times in the head, face and shoulder with an ax he had been carrying, the police chief said. "We arrived about 30 minutes after being alerted, but the suspect had fled into the forest," he said, adding that police believed he was still hiding there. The victim and his girlfriend had been seeing each other for about six years, Mr. Chanthay said, but Tuesday was the first time the two men met. (Buth Kimsay)



Siv Channa/The Cambodia Daily

Prak Sokhon, left, minister of posts and telecommunications, and Huang Xinglong, chairman of HyalRoute Group, sign an agreement to connect Cambodia to a 25,000-km underwater fiber-optic network.