

Royal ploughing ceremony

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The Royal Plowing Ceremony The Royal Plowing Ceremony is one of the most important annual royal traditional ceremonies, which is held at the open square of Veal Preah Merhu in front of the National Museum in Phnom Penh every year. This ceremony is deemed one of the marvelous blessings of the Cambodian people. Each king has led this celebration since ancient times. According to the tradition, the Royal Plowing ceremony is celebrated to predict the upcoming orn, bean, grass, sesame, water, wine.

It is also celebrated to give a blessing to farming and to pray to God for sufficient seasonal rainfall, which is essential to encouraging all of the Cambodian farmers to produce a high crop yield. This year's Royal Plowing Day was celebrated on May 21st, presided over by His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Baromneath Norodom Sihamoni, King of the Kingdom of Cambodia. It was held in the Meru field (Viel Men), north of the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh. For this year, Keo Chanmony, a CPP Member of Parliament from Kampong Chhnang province, was appointed as Mehour, while Cambodian lawmaker, Say Chhum, acted as Sdech Meak.

After finishing the symbolic plowing and throwing seeds of a portion of the field, a pair of sacred oxen were led to eat rice, corn, beans, sesame, grass, water and alcohol, which had been prepared on trays. It was seen that the sacred oxen ate corn, beans, and grass but shunned rice grain. The oxen's choice of corn, beans, and grass led the Royal Palace's chief astrologer Kang Keng to declare that this year's corn and beans harvests will be bountiful.

However, he warned that the eating of grass signaled that Cambodia's livestock will suffer from some pandemic diseases. Any way, the astrologer

did not spell out to the crowd what it meant for the rice yield, sparking concern among superstitious farmers. “ I am very worried that we will not have a good paddy harvest,” farmer Ros Makara, 52, told AFP after the ceremony, “ but I will try my best to grow rice. I don’t totally rely on the prediction. ” Ok Men, 46, from Prey Veng province, said she was worried about her cows. I have to be careful in taking care of and preventing my cows from contracting diseases,” she said. Another corn and bean farmer from Kandal province, Chhit Sorphea, said the prediction made him confident of a good harvest, and he would expand his planting. After the rite, the participants could enjoy the exhibition of agricultural products, agro-industrial products, forest products and by products, domestic animal products, rubber output, tourism potential, and agro-tourism which was held for three days, from 21-23 May 2011, in Viel Men.

In that occasion, there have been many media coverage of the Royal Plowing Ceremony this year. In country’s broadcasting such as national TV which transferred to all Cambodia’s TV and radio, Koh Samtepheap newspaper, DAP news, many website on the internet like: [www. rfa. org/khmer](http://www.rfa.org/khmer), [www. cambodia. org/news](http://www.cambodia.org/news) , [www. everyday. com. kh](http://www.everyday.com.kh) , [www. news. bbc. co. uk](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk) , [www. chanbokeo. com](http://www.chanbokeo.com), and so on, all of the them have been broadcast this royal ceremony through same source by different style of each.