Japanese Emperor's Birthday

Japanese Emperor and Empress
(Photo Courtesy of Imperial Household Agency)

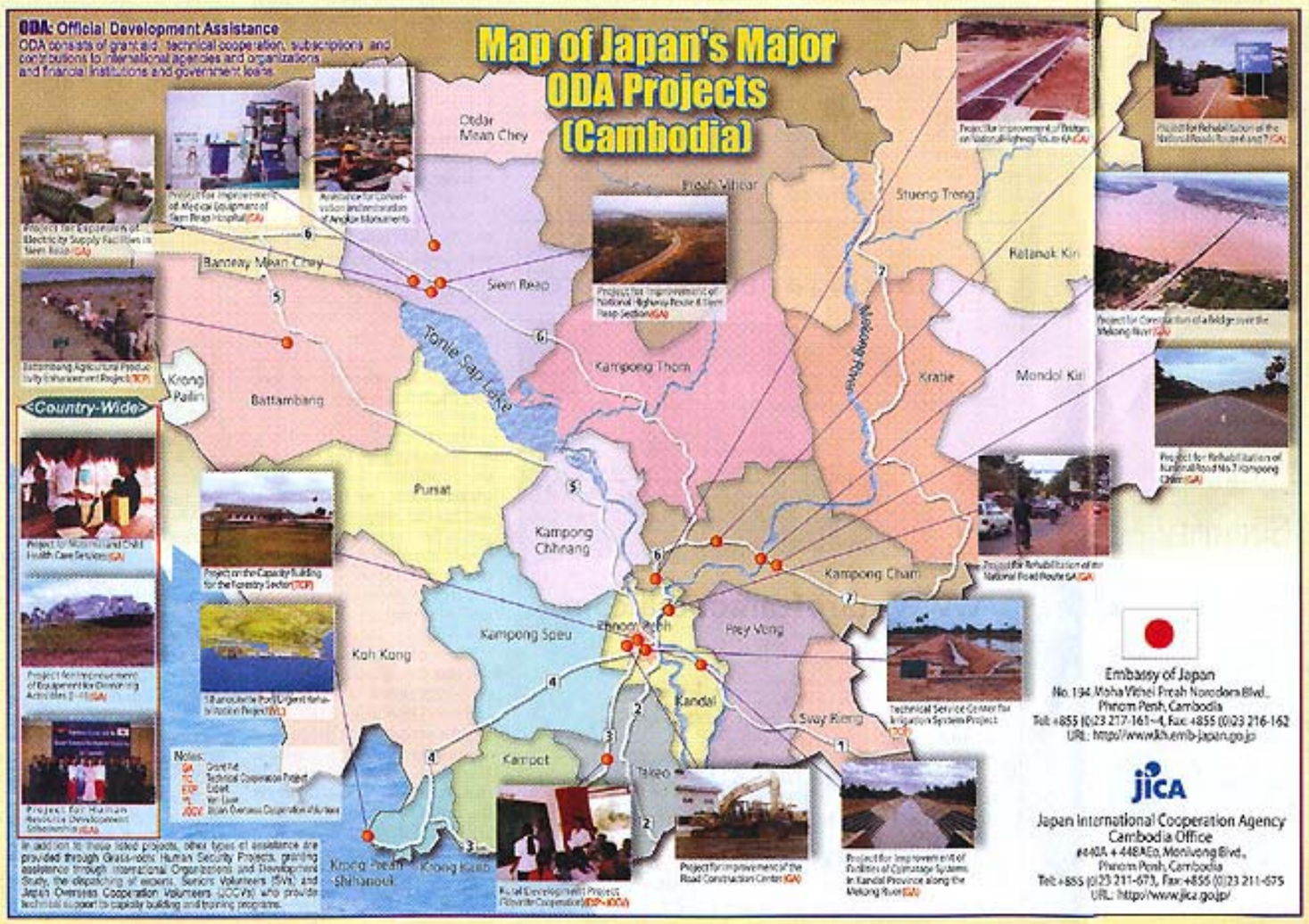
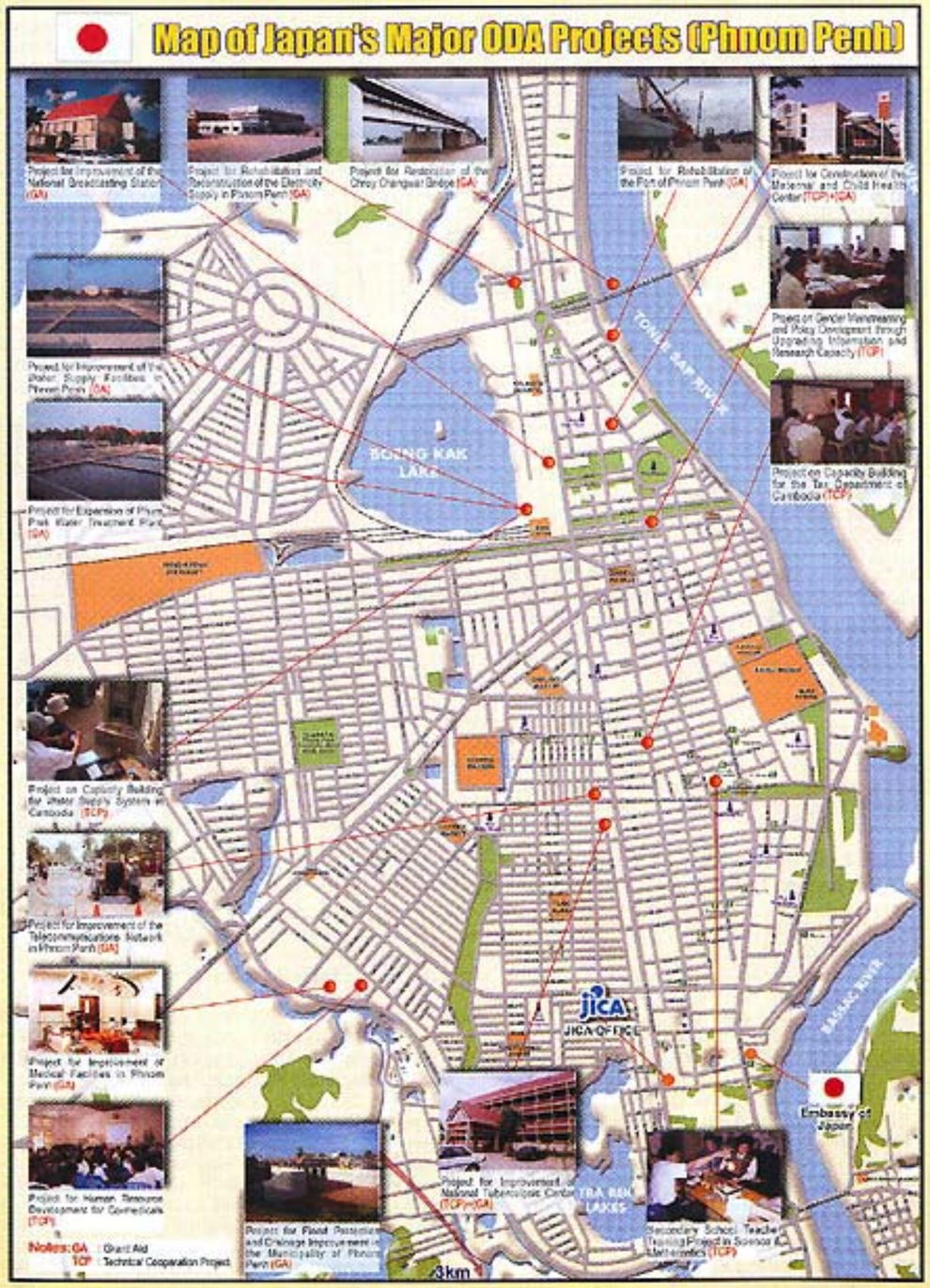
Message from H.E. Mr. TAKAHASHI Fumiaki, Ambassador of Japan to Cambodia

On the auspicious occasion of the 71st birthday of His Majesty Emperor AKIHITO of Japan, it is a great honour for me, on behalf of the people and the government of Japan, to express my delight for the ever-lasting friendship between Cambodia and Japan.

Last October His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk retired after long service to this country, and His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni ascended the throne. I felt that this event symbolized a new era in Cambodia of stability, peace and development.

There has been a long friendship between the Cambodian Royal Family and the Japanese Imperial Family starting before the independence of Cambodia. His Majesty Father-King Norodom Sihanouk met the then Japanese Emperor Showa when His Majesty visited Japan on several occasions. I expect that His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni will continue to deepen the friendship with the Japanese Imperial Family and will strengthen the tie between our two peoples.

Japan regards Cambodia as an important partner in the international community and has been extending cooperation for a long time. For instance, Japan is for the last several years the top donor to Cambodia and in financial terms annual cooperation amounts to about 100 million US dollars a year. Cambodia is as well among the top ten recipient countries of our economic assistance in the world. We are contributing also to the conservation and restoration of the Angkor Monuments, the symbol of the history and culture of the Kingdom of Cambodia, through the activities of the Japanese Government Team for Safeguarding Angkor (JSA) and in its role as the co-chair of the International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of Historic Site of Angkor (ICC). We the Japanese people would like to continue those contributions in the coming years.

Cambodia is making great strides forwards in its socio-economic development under the most difficult conditions that it inherited from the appalling past when human resources were lost. But still the nation – the government and the people – has to overcome many challenges such as poverty reduction, the fight against corruption and reforms in various fields including legal and judicial system. At the CG meeting held early this month, the Royal Government of Cambodia and its partner countries agreed how to tackle these challenges together. The Government of Japan will surely be among those partners who would be at the forefront. We expect that Cambodia will make every efforts to meet the challenges.

Finally, I would like to extend my best wishes to Their Majesties King Norodom Sihamoni, Father-King Norodom Sihanouk and Mother-Queen Monineath Sihanouk for their good health and longevity. I would like to express also my best wishes for the prosperity and happiness of the Kingdom of Cambodia and her people.