



## KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

Nation - Religion - King

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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### ONLY CRIMINALS PROTECT CRIMINALS

The article below published in The Washington Post three months after the March 30, 1997 deadly grenade attack in Phnom Penh shows the climate of fear and intimidation prevailing in Cambodia. According to the US ambassador in Phnom Penh, even investigators from the FBI were threatened and could not properly do their work. "Investigation" conducted by the Cambodian authorities has produced no result whatsoever. The cynicism of the Hun Sen-controlled police and judiciary is an insult to the victims and leads to despair for the families of the dead. The same can be said about the hundreds of other people assassinated during the July 1997 coup d'etat and the September 1998 popular protests against election irregularities. This confirms the impunity enjoyed by those responsible for the worst political violence in Cambodia. The refusal by Hun Sen to allow the establishment of an international tribunal to prosecute the main Khmer Rouge leaders also confirms that only criminals protect criminals, and that the most dangerous criminals are those who are in power. In the light of such a revolting situation, how can some democratic governments be so lenient or even complacent towards the Hun Sen regime? Do the leaders of some of the world's greatest nations really have a conscience and attach any importance to principles? Do they realize that impunity is an encouragement to further crimes and is at the root of a never-ending cycle of violence? We all should know that there can be no peace without justice.

Sam Rainsy, MP  
Leader of the Opposition

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THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE - 30 JUNE 1997

### Hun Sen's Guards Tied to 20 Killings

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By R. Jeffrey Smith  
Washington Post Service  
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PHNOM PENH - In a classified report that could pose problems for U.S. policymakers, the FBI tentatively found bodyguards employed by Hun Sen, one of Cambodia's two prime ministers, responsible for a deadly grenade attack here, according to U.S. government sources.

At least 20 people were killed and 150 wounded in the attack March 30 during an opposition protest. The preliminary report, described by four U.S. government sources, was based on a two-month investigation conducted under a U.S. law giving the FBI jurisdiction whenever an American is wounded in a terrorist attack.

The agents were forced to leave last month before they could complete their inquiry. The U.S. ambassador, Kenneth Quinn, said they had been targeted for assassination and could not be protected adequately, the sources said.

Mr. Hun Sen, 46, is the most powerful man in Cambodia, and diplomats in Phnom Penh say that even if the charges were proven, he would not leave office without a fight. The chance of obtaining a fair trial for those involved in the bombing is considered slim, because his party controls the Interior Ministry and the judiciary.

"If Hun Sen ordered that act and the murder of more than 15 people, we want to know," a senior U.S. State Department official said. "As a practical matter of how you proceed if it is proven, I don't know."

The protest organizer, Sam Rainsy, 48, leader of the Khmer Nation Party, has called for an international commission to investigate. But Interior Minister Sar Kheng asserted that was not needed. He said the local investigation was "going smoothly" and pledged to pursue the allegations by arranging for his investigators to interview officers of Mr. Hun Sen's bodyguard. Mr. Sar Kheng, a high-ranking official in Mr. Hun Sen's party, said on behalf of the party, "We did not commit this crime."