



"He is not here, come see."

This was a proclamation made by an angel at the resurrection of the Lord Jesus written those many years ago in the Gospel of Matthew - the reason millions of Christians around the world gather to celebrate. This year's celebrations have been marred by a deadly virus that is ravishing our world, with Christians around the world subjected to a limited or online service.

But, despite the restrictions, this is still the season to celebrate and echo what the angel said, *'He is not here, but seated at the right hand of the father in Heaven'*.



Update on Covid and Cambodia:

The government of Cambodia has imposed travel restrictions between the different provinces, allowing only essential travel such as the transportation of goods to take place. This is all to try and stop the spread of Covid which has increased since an outbreak on 20 February. Currently there are 2,293 reported cases of Covid with 1,276 recoveries. Sadly 22 people have died as a result of contracting Covid. One factor concerning the government is the up-coming Khmer New Year celebrations which start on 14 April until 16 April and often beyond. This is a much-looked-forward time for which family groups traditionally travel out of cities to the provinces to visit friends and extended family. It is a very important social holiday which may need to be cancelled this year.

A spoke-person for the Ministry of Health says that although certain provinces have no, or very few, Covid Cases, this could all change with people leaving affected cities and causing a super-spread of the virus. Furthermore, the government is also cracking down on travel within city boundaries, with a two-week night time curfew from 8pm to 5am. Again, only essential travel will be permitted during the curfew. The curfew is intended to end the day before the New Year Celebrations start, but if people break the curfew and don't comply, it could be extended. All of these efforts are seen as crucial to stop the further spread of the virus, something Cambodia was doing so well before 20 February.



The roll-out of the vaccines.

Prime Minister Hun Sen has instructed all provincial authorities to get ready for a large-scale vaccination campaign, with at least one million doses to be administered per month. Cambodia has been able to secure and purchase 1.5 million doses of the Sinovac vaccine from China. China also has donated 1 million doses of the Sinopharm jabs to the Kingdom.

In a recent radio broadcast, the Prime Minister said that everything possible needed to be done to stop the spread of Covid, with the vaccine program being key. Although vaccination is on a voluntary basis in Cambodia, this could all change if there is a surge of infection: vaccinations may then become mandatory. In his broadcast, the Prime Minister outlined the next immediate steps in working hard at suppressing the spread both in Phnom Penh and in Kandal province. The plan is to ensure all vaccines obtained by Cambodia for the foreseeable future will be targeted in these two areas first, as the greatest concentration of infections falls within this region.

Prayer

- Cambodia does not have facilities to cope with a huge number of Covid patients. Please pray that this third localised transmission, which started on 20 February, will be curbed and brought under control.
- Cambodia has over 16.5 million people. The government plans to vaccinate 1 million people per month, so this will take many carefully planned months to cover the whole population. Please pray for wisdom for government, co-operation from the public and generosity from donor countries.
- Many of our team members, partners and project co-ordinators are living in the capital city, Phnom Penh. Please remember them in your prayers as they continue to work among the most vulnerable, negotiating difficult times and travels.