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# Kampong Speu could get cement plant

Hin Pisei | Publication date 18 March 2021 | 21:37 ICT

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As the construction sector regains its footing after a year of Covid-19, demand for cement is expected to see a noticeable rise. 📷 Hean Rangsey

Conch KT Cement (Phnom Penh) Co Ltd plans to build a \$263 million cement factory in Kampong Speu province with a two-million-tonne-a-year capacity, according to provincial governor Vei Samnang on March 18.

Conch KT Cement is a joint venture between China's Conch International Holding (HK) Ltd and local firm Battambang KT Cement Co Ltd.

The joint venture currently manages another cement factory in Battambang province's Ratanak Mondol district that started up on May 31, 2018. The plant has pumped out nearly two million tonnes of cement each year, adding credence to the scale of the proposed project.

Samnang told The Post that with Conch KT Cement's detailed feasibility study on the project nearly complete, the company is preparing the necessary documents to apply for the relevant permits and formal government approval to build Kampong Speu's first cement factory.

The project is tentatively planned to be located in Horng Samnan commune in the southeastern corner of Oral, which is the province's northwesternmost district, he said, adding that the area is ripe with potential for cement production.

"I expect the plant to fire up soon. It'll turn Kampong Speu into a new cement production site for Cambodia," Samnang said.

The project will give a boost to economic growth in the southwestern province and curtail cement imports, he said, estimating that the factory would provide 400-500 jobs for locals.

The plant will be a considerable asset to keep pace with the ever-growing demand for cement in Cambodia, which is anticipated to pick up momentum once the Covid-19 pandemic ends, he said.

Political stability and a favourable geographical location have steadily driven up investment to Kampong Speu even as the health crisis wreaks havoc across the world, he added.

Cambodia Constructors Association general manager Chiv Sivpheng said the construction sector - still struggling to regain its footing after a year of Covid-19 - welcomes the project.

The factory would not only bring down the prices of domestic products, but also, inter alia, create new jobs, raise the tax revenue collection of the economy, provide an advantage for Cambodian products and reduce imports, he said.

"As builders, needless to say, we want there to be more cement available, especially if its produced locally, which can be more affordable than imports and have the quality that builders want," Sivpheng said.

Cambodia Cement Manufacturing Association of Cambodia secretary-general Puth Chandarith

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told The Post last month that the Kingdom's five cement factories produced 7.9 million tonnes of finished product last year, marking a seven per cent gain from 2019 even with myriad construction projects put on hold by Covid-19 throughout the year.

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He claimed that 10 million tonnes could be churned out each year if all five plants were at full capacity.

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Cambodia's cement factories are expected to produce even more this year, making a large contribution to national economic development, he said.

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Cambodia's five cement factories are operated by Chip Mong Insee Cement Corp, Kampot

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