

Majesty
Samdechs
Excellencies
Ladies and gentlemen

First let me thank to the Royal Palace and the Royal Government under the guidance of Samdech Kong Som Ol for organizing the inauguration ceremony of Kantha Bopha V.

Two years ago, on December 29th 2005, we inaugurated Kantha Bopha IV. Soon the hospital was overcrowded. In 2006 the amount of hospitalized patients in Kantha Bopha in Phnom Penh had increased by 50%.

That's why we decided to build the Kantha Bopha V. 2007 there was the Dengue Epidemic (24 000 severe Dengue cases in shock and pre shock were hospitalized in all the 4 Kantha Bopha Hospitals). Most beds were occupied by two or three patients. So this decision, to build the Kantha Bopha V, was right. It is a need.

Today we are happy to inaugurate this new Kantha Bopha V Hospital with its new and modern installations.

The conference room, finished already a year ago on the land given by H.E. Mr. Kith Meng. There we will show today the new medical library. The new Kantha Bopha V with a prevention station, x Ray, Fluoroscopy, Ultrasound, Laboratories and 9 units with 34 beds (About 300 beds).

The costs were 9 Million USD.

All treatment in the Kantha Bopha Hospitals is free. There is justice for all. There is no corruption. We give correct salaries to all the 2000 Cambodian staff. There are facilities and medicines and drugs of the same standard being used in Europe or US. That's why the hospitals are a huge success. It is recognized by international evaluations as **Centers of Excellence**. Its quality is known to all Cambodian people from all corners of the country. The last 15 years we treated 7,5 Million outpatients, 650 000 Inpatients. 500 000 children would not survive without this hospitalization. Hundreds would be handicapped. Hundreds would be infected by HIV (Maternity in Angkor built for breaking the transmission of HIV from the mother to the child). There were 90 000 surgical operations! (Day by day 60 operations!)

The annual budget of the running costs is now 24 Million USD. Kantha Bopha's relation costs/ healing rate is the best worldwide proved by international evaluations.

Who is now paying for these infrastructures of justice with the best relation cost/healing rate covering 85% of all Cambodian children? That is the great question for the future.

Up to now we get 2 Million USD by the Cambodian government, 2.5 Million USD by the Swiss Government and 18 Million USD per year. All the money for the constructions and installations are private donations I have to beg for day by day (since 16 years). The last 15 years our foundation has spent totally 250 Million USD.

This year more donations were given by Cambodians, recently the greatest one by a father who realized that his child in Kantha Bopha was better treated than being transferred for 16 000 USD to an other country. H.E. Mr. Sy Hou Huy has given this month 20 000 USD. I hope this will encourage more and more Cambodian to help to get a financial sustainability of the Kantha Bopha Hospitals by Cambodia itself.

Kantha Bopha is a model that could be applied in whole the poor world. As soon I am released from the burden having to beg for this money I would like to apply the same model in Burma or in the Congo, to show the world that it could be done elsewhere, if there is an interest and a political willingness in a high healing rate of children. This model means the lowest costs for highest healing rates.

I hope we find a way for a sustainable financing. What is clear, the Cambodian people, all these victims, cannot pay for, they are poor.

The Kantha Bopha Hospitals are working on its own, Only 2 permanent foreigners and 2000 Cambodians are working here. The 2000 Cambodian staff which doing an excellent and often very hard job, day by day, the nights, Saturday and Sunday as well, never taking money from the patients. Never! These are the heroes. The Kantha Bopha Hospitals as Cambodian infrastructures are sustainable. And the lives of thousands of children being saved year by year are sustainable.

At the moment we are starting a further construction in Siem Reap Angkor for 300 beds more. There we will install a brand new modern MRI in order to go on the research for TB in children. The MRI is important too for better diagnosis and controlling of all the bone and brain infections caused by TB, still so frequent in the north of the country.

Today we are happy to inaugurate this new Kantha Bopha V by this ceremony presided over by His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni and in participation of Samdech Hun Sen and the high ranking members of the royal government of Cambodia.

Dr. Beat Richner