



**JOINT PRESS RELEASE  
THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA, WORLD HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION (WHO) AND UNAIDS**



**Press Release 18 December 2014**

**HIV cases in Sangke district, Battambang**

The Ministry of Health (MOH) of the Kingdom of Cambodia, with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO), US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, UNAIDS, UNICEF and Pasteur Institute in Cambodia is investigating a number of HIV cases which have occurred among villagers from Roka village in Roka commune in Sangke district, Battambang province.

The cases were initially tested by Roka Health center and Battambang Referral Hospital laboratory between 9 to 16 December. Those samples were then send to NCHADS's laboratory and are subsequently sent to Pateur Institute in Cambodia for confirmatory testing on December 18<sup>th</sup> 2014.

In late November, a 74-year-old man from Roka village in Roka commune, tested positive for HIV at the Roka Health Centre. After receiving his result, the man said he sent his grand daughter and son-in-law for testing and they also tested positive. Then the man stated he informed the other villagers that he had been receiving medical services from a private village practitioner and persuaded other villagers who had also been visiting the same practitioner to test for HIV.

An investigation team from MOH's National Centre for HIV/AIDS, Dermatology and STD (NCHADS) and University of Health Sciences (UHS) that has been in Battambang's Sangke district since 16 December has now been joined by a team from Pasteur Institute in Cambodia, UNICEF, UNAIDS, WHO, US CDC and provincial health department field team to carry out a full epidemiological investigation to determine the source, extent and chain of transmission of HIV infection.

"The Royal government of Cambodia will provide access to voluntary and confidential counseling and treatment services for all those who need it," said HE Dr. Mam Bunheng, Minister of Health.

"A complete investigation into this outbreak will be carried out with full technical assistance given by Pasteur Institute in Cambodia, UNICEF, WHO, US CDC and UNAIDS. I urge everyone to stay calm and avoid listening to or spreading rumors. We should also all fully respect the privacy of the affected families and ensure they do not face stigma and discrimination," added Dr. Mam Bunheng.

*M. B.*



Voluntary and confidential HIV testing and counseling and HIV treatment services are free of charge for anyone who wishes to know his/her status and need treatment in Cambodia.

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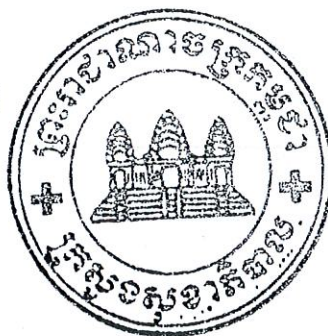
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