
ASEAN MPS DENOUNCE CAMBODIA ELECTION AS 'DIRTY'

27.07.2018

Voice of America (27 July 2018)

A group of liberal Asean parliamentarians has said Cambodias election process is dirty following the exclusion of the countrys only viable opposition party from Sundays vote and a widespread crackdown on dissent.

Cambodians will vote on Sunday in an election that has been criticized as a one-horse race with the ruling Cambodian Peoples Party of Prime Minister Hun Sen, who has been in power for more than 33 years, expected to win comfortably.

In November, the CPP-controlled Supreme Court dissolved the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party. Its president, Kem Sokha, was charged in September with conspiring to overthrow the government, while numerous other CNRP politicians and supporters have faced criminal charges, intimidation, and violence from the CPP since the last election in 2013 saw the CNRP threaten the ruling partys dominance of the countrys parliamentary system.

We can see already two years ago that Hun Sen was preparing infrastructure, where there is no dissent, where he will win the election, and where all forms of free speech including the media are completely muzzled and [opposition] politicians chased out of the country, and therefore, you will have a shame of an election, said Charles Santiago, chairperson of Asean Parliamentarians for Human Rights.

Speaking to reporters at the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand in Bangkok on Tuesday, Santiago said there was absolutely no chance at all of a free and fair election taking place.

The CNRP won about 44 percent of the popular vote in local elections in 2017.

Its very shameful that Asean hasnt stood up and even other international bodies havent stood up and called [the election] off. This is very shameful, he said.

I think basically what we need to do is that we need to move forward. We need to remain vigilant of the human rights violations in Cambodia, and also what I think is important is Asean countries do not congratulate Cambodia for a successful election, he said. This election must be delegitimized. The leadership of Hun Sen and the CPP has to be delegitimized, and the international community should not give any form of legitimacy to an ashamed election.

<https://www.voacambodia.com/a/asean-mps-denounce-cambodia-election-as-dirty/4499527.html>

Kaynak/Source: