

JSAC NEWS



Discovery of Large Weapons Cache

A large weapons cache was discovered in Battambang Province at the end of March 2006. One of the attendants of JSAC's awareness raising workshops had informed the police about this site which he had always found suspicious. Under a joint operation of the local police, authorities, de-mining organization (CMAC) and JSAC, this led to the discovery of 2,482 weapons hidden underground. These weapons were transported and stored safely under the authority of the police, and will be destroyed afterwards.

In addition to being a hot battlefield during the civil war, each fraction had bases and supply routes in Battambang Province, making it an area still likely to have many weapons left from decades of fighting. Even for the children, who curiously observe the workshops from outside the windows, small weapons are common items in their daily lives.



Weapons found at the cache

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Workshops in Kampong Thom Province

JSAC has been organizing various workshops in this Battambang Province and Kampong Thom Province from October 2005. The workshops are held from provincial levels targeting local media, authorities, police and military personnel, to the grassroot level, targeting local residents, in order to raise awareness widely in society. In addition to the danger and the uselessness of small arms, the workshops explain the Arms Law legislated in 2005 stating that the possession of small arms is illegal. In the workshops JSAC team appeal that all weapons should be handed over to the police, and that if anyone has information on hidden weapons, they should inform authorities. Police personnel are also invited to these workshops, where dialogues are held to facilitate the building of trust between the police and residents.



Weapons Destruction Ceremony

On March 4, 2006, the first weapons destruction ceremony "Flame of Peace" for Phase II of JSAC's programme was held in Battambang Province. 1,853 weapons that have been collected through JSAC's activities and surplus police weapons were destroyed.

H.E. Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, H.E. Takahashi, Ambassador of Japan, officials from the Ministry of Interior, the Provincial Government, Police, Military, NGOs, local media and many residents attended the meeting and witnessed the burning of the small arms.



About JSAC (Japan Assistance Team for Small Arms Management in Cambodia)

Founded by Japan International Cooperation Systems (JICS) for the implementation of the "Comprehensive Peace Building and Comprehensive Small Arms Management Program in Cambodia, a grant aid provided by the Government of Japan to the Government of Cambodia. JSAC is contributing to reduction of small arms and peace building comprehensively through 5 projects (1. Weapons Reduction and Development for Peace Project, 2. Safe Storage and Registration Project, 3. Weapons Destruction Project, 4. Public Awareness Project, 5. National Commission Support Project). Please see JSAC's website for details. URL: <http://www.online.com.kh/users/adm.jsac/>