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US remains Kingdom's major textile exports market

Sok Sithika / Khmer Times



Weaving Benefits: The Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia says exports of textile products scaled up 15.2 percent to \$11.3896 billion in 2021. KT/Chor Sokunthea

Despite the Covid-19 crisis, about 30 percent of textile-related exports from Cambodia went to the United States, according to the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training.

During a discussion on US-Cambodia bilateral relations, W. Patrick Murphy, US Ambassador to Cambodia, said that the increase in exports of textiles indicates the excellent cooperation between Cambodia and the United States, despite some other challenges.

At the same meeting, Ith Sam Heng, Minister of Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, appreciated Murphy for strengthening the cooperation between both countries.

The minister said that Cambodia continued to focus on combating human trafficking through labour trafficking, and the elimination of child labour has made significant progress, despite some challenges and issues.

“To achieve this goal, we have promoted these activities responsibly, ensuring the protection and promotion of the rights and benefits of migrant workers, protection from labour exploitation or discrimination in the workplace. We provide legal assistance and well-being, assisting workers in obtaining proper legal documents and helping undocumented migrant workers, facilitating access to social security and other benefits under the target country’s laws.

“On the issue of child labour, the Labor Inspectorate is working to continue the education campaign to inform the handicraft enterprises and guardians to understand the laws and regulations clearly. The laws will define children’s use in any work, while also applying the law to enterprises.”

Both the countries agreed to promote these activities further and work together to improve the relationship.

The ministry will continue to encourage factory owners, enterprises in the manufacturing of travel products and bags to become members of the Better Factories project in Cambodia in order to obtain certificates of origin.

In the case of labour disputes, the ministry invites the parties to meet and arrive at a peaceful settlement under legal procedures.

According to the latest data from the Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia, the exports of textile-related products went up 15.2 percent to \$11.3896 billion in 2021 compared to the exports in the previous year.

The garment exports accounted for \$8 billion, footwear \$1.390 billion, and travel goods were to the tune of \$1.490 billion, while other categories amounted to \$0.49 billion.

Kaing Monika, Deputy Secretary General, GMAC, told *Khmer Times* that the main export markets for Cambodia are still the US, EU, Canada and Japan. Moreover, the unstable political situation in some countries works in favour of Cambodia. Cambodia’s new investment law and how the Kingdom handled the Covid-19 situation have helped attract many investors.