

## **The royal oxen ate corn, beans and grass during the Royal Plowing ceremony held on May 21 morning at the open square of Veal Preah Merhu in front of the National Museum in Phnom Penh.**

This is a good sign for corn and bean growing in the country this year, but the fact that they ate grass showed that cattle may getting sick, said a Royal Brahmin.

His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni presided over the ceremony, which marks the beginning of the crop planting season in Cambodia.

National Assembly President Samdech Akka Moha Ponhea Chakrei Heng Samrin and other high-ranking officials as well as foreign ambassadors to Cambodia were also present.

During the ceremony, National Assembly Second Vice President H.E. Say Chhum guided the royal oxen and ploughed around the Veal Preah Merhu open square, while lawmaker Mrs. Ke Chamony walked behind scattering seeds on the furrowed ground.

After the plowing, two royal oxen were driven to the seven trays containing paddy, beans, corn, sesame, water, wine and grass. The oxen only ate corn, beans, and grass leaving behind rice, sesame, water and wine. It is commonly believed that if the oxen drink the wine it may be a harbinger of conflict.

After giving a donation to farmers from provinces across the country, the Cambodian monarch visited agricultural and home-made products being displayed at an exhibition organized at the open square of Veal Preah Merhu until May 22.

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