

King, Queen-Mother Express Condolences over Dr. Beat Richner's Passing Away

AKP Phnom Penh, September 14, 2018 –

His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Boromneath Norodom Sihamoni, King of Cambodia, and Her Majesty the Queen-Mother Norodom Monineath Sihanouk have sent separate condolence messages to Dr. Iur René Schwartzbach, President of Kantha Bopha Foundation, over the loss of Dr. Beat Richner.

"The late Dr. Beat Richner was a great humanitarian of Cambodia. For twenty-six years, he had been providing valuable medical and surgical care to Cambodian children. He was surely one of the greatest pediatricians in Cambodia and, as such, he gained respect, admiration and consideration from the Cambodian people," His Majesty the King wrote in his royal message.

His immense humanitarian work was appreciated by all and his Kantha Bopha Hospitals in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap will remain for each an exceptional model, added the Cambodian monarch.

For her part, Her Majesty the Queen-Mother said Dr. Beat Richner has become a national Cambodian hero since 1992, when he founded Kantha Bopha Hospitals in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap where, for more than twenty years now, thousands of children have been born and millions others have been cared for with dedication and love.

"That 'Beatocello' will forever be engraved in the heart of the Cambodians for whom he was the Angel of Providence," she said. "His Majesty the King-Father Norodom Sihanouk and I had a lot of affection and admiration for Dr. Richner."

Dr. Med. Beat Richner was posthumously awarded Moha Kanthaphoan Ekareach Cheat of the Kingdom of Cambodia, a high decoration, by His Majesty the King of Cambodia.

Dr. Med. Beat Richner, the founder of Kantha Bopha Foundation, passed away at the age of 71 in his hometown Zurich, Switzerland on Sept. 9, 2018 at 2:45 am (local time in Zurich).

He resigned from his position as President of Kantha Bopha and Jayavarman VII Hospitals and returned to his country, Switzerland, in 2017 due to serious health problem.

Pediatrician, virtuoso cellist Beatocello, the late Dr. Med. Beat Richner left everything in 1992 to follow the call of the former King of Cambodia, Norodom Sihanouk, who asked him to rebuild the children's hospital in Phnom Penh, destroyed by the Khmer Rouge regime.

The first Kantha Bopha Children's Hospital was opened on Sept. 22, 1992, the second in October 1996, the third in May 1999, the fourth in December 2005 and the fifth in December 2007.

The four Kantha Bopha Children's Hospitals in Phnom Penh and the Jayavarman VII Children's Hospital in Siem Reap province have been being supported by the Cambodian and Swiss governments as well as many local and foreign charitable people.

By C. Nika