

Prince Ranariddh says past lessons and mistakes are his responsibility alone

Phnom Penh: FUNCINPEC President, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, in retrospect said that the lessons and mistakes of the past was his and his alone.

He said that he could not blame Samdech Hun Sen, the Prime Minister, those who had left the party before and after the July 1997 events and others who had committed various acts and degrees of betrayed against the party, the first mandate of the Royal Government, the monarchy and him.

“I cannot blame anybody except my self. That is why today, in the second legislature, I maintain extremely cordial and strong relationship with Prime Minister Hun Sen and we talk to each other by phone several times a day on various matters or sometimes just to say hello.”

“Yes, there were some elders who wanted to mediate but the rift and the pride was too great. I would not venture to say who was a fault and who was not but I accept the responsibility and have learned to become a wiser man as far as coalition politics, communications, consensus and decision making are concerned,” Prince Ranariddh told The Vision.

He said that he has often been asked by some young blood in the FUNCINPEC, then and now, to exert his decision as party president, powers that are vested in him under the FUNCINPEC Party’s constitution to make decision which were, he said, not conducive.

“Yet today, there are people, both young and senior members, who say I am not decisive. The time when I instruct my people, the Steering Committee, my advisors to carry out or execute some instructions or orders, they are not carried out.”

“On the contrary, the time when I do not tell them, instruct them or order them, they use my name and my position to initiate their own actions and place the responsibility on me. That is why I say that the FUNCINPEC lack discipline at some levels and has too much democracy at times,” he said candidly.

Prince Ranariddh said that he wanted to lean from the CPP’s style of operations, adopting their strong points such as party administration, structure, machinery and even organization and see how best these aspects could be used in FUNCINPEC.

“Of course there are those in my party who oppose it, but we have to strengthen our party and we have to do so by any means possible and open to us. I recall the time when I suggested all Steering Committee members relinquish their positions to concentrate on either their positions in the Executive, Senate or the National Assembly but there was widespread resentment, even open position.

“That is how democratic the party is and yet there are people who label the party as undemocratic and that I am a dictator,” Prince Ranariddh lamented.

He stressed that the lessons prior to July 1997 and that after the 1998 elections has been learned with blood and that he would never allow any FUNCINPEC member to use destructive means or be a destructive character or mechanism in any way.

“The current Royal Government is based on equal partnership and is also on the joint political platform adopted by both parties before the package was signed. It was not something done in a hurry and done in manner of fait accomplish.

“This Government must last and diplomats have told me that if I had been doing what I am doing now, during the last mandate, it would have been completed successfully without turmoil,” Prince Ranariddh, who is also the President of the National Assembly, said.