

Cambodia vaccinating its 6- to 11-year-old age group

By **Sopheng Cheang**
The Associated Press

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia — Cambodia began vaccinating 6- to 11-year-olds in mid-September so students could safely return to schools that have been closed for months due to the coronavirus.

Prime Minister Hun Sen inaugurated the campaign to vaccinate the children, speaking live on state television and his Facebook page as his grandchildren and young family members of other senior officials were shown being given their jabs.

“To protect children’s health and their lives is our duty because we want to make sure that once they go back to their schools, these children and their teachers are safe from COVID-19,” Hun Sen declared.

Cambodia already has been vaccinating older children, and Hun Sen said he ordered health officials to study if children ages 3 to 5 can also be vaccinated. No date



SCHOOL SAFETY. A young girl shows a thumbs up while receiving the Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine at a health center outside Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Cambodia began vaccinating 6- to 11-year-olds in mid-September so students could safely return to schools that have been closed for months due to the coronavirus. (AP Photo/Heng Sinith)

vaccinated and received a booster shot last month, said Cambodia’s priority in recovering from the pandemic is reopening the education sector, followed by allowing service industries, including domestic tourism, to resume activities.

He said Cambodia is considering reopening to fully vaccinated foreign tourists in the near future. The tourism sector is vitally important for the country’s economy, he said, and Chinese visitors are expected to be the biggest group of arrivals once Cambodia reopens.

Hun Sen said while Cambodia’s rate of coronavirus infections continues to be high, it appears to be slowing due to vaccination levels, which are higher than most other countries in Southeast Asia.

had been announced for schools to reopen.

More than 72% of Cambodia’s almost 17 million people have received at least one COVID-19 shot since vaccinations began

in February. China’s Sinovac and Sinopharm vaccines account for most inoculations.

Hun Sen, 69, who has been fully



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