

Laos Marks 40 Years of National Pride



Photo: KPL (Lao News Agency)

All Lao hearts were beating with national pride following the spectacular celebrations in the capital on December 2, 2015 to mark the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Lao PDR.

The sound of music rang out around That Luang esplanade, motivating the spectators to concentrate their eyes on 48 inspiring parades featuring over 15,000 marchers from all sections of Lao society.

A large crowd of spectators lined the esplanade from early morning to witness the eagerly-awaited parades which highlighted the nation's achievements over the last 40 years. As Laos trumpeted its success to the world, the parades reflected national growth, notably the accomplishments in the two strategic tasks of national protection and development over the past 40 years. Meanwhile, Lao people living in the provinces and overseas watched live television coverage of the celebrations on National Day.

Secretary General of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party and President of the Lao PDR Choummaly Sayasone delivered his remarks at the official ceremony of the 40th anniversary, highlighting the significance of the national day and how the country has developed over the past 40 years.

The president reiterated that December 2, 1975 was the date when all Lao people were extremely proud to free the nation from foreign imperialists, abolishing obsolete feudalism and establishing the new regime – the regime of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

“Since then our country has enjoyed full independence, sovereignty and full territorial integrity and the multi-ethnic people have become the real self-masters of the nation,” he said.

President Choummaly said the status of Laos as an independent country has created favourable conditions for the multi-ethnic Lao people to improve their livelihoods, contributing to national protection and development.

The president said he was very proud of the victory of national liberation in 1975, saying that the establishment of the Lao PDR was the great outcome of the national revolution, which was carried out for decades under the great and capable leadership of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party.

The foundation of the Lao PDR was also a victory of a massive solidarity force of the entire Lao people and army who fought bravely against the imperialists.

Mr Choummaly described the development changes which have been made over the past 40 years, resulting in the continued growth of the Lao economy and declining rate of poor families. The road network has been expanded. In addition, hydropower development and other mega projects have been realised.

Moreover, the 40th anniversary saw the launch of Laos' first telecommunications satellite (Lao Sat-1) into orbit and the ground breaking ceremony of the railway project, linking Vientiane to the Laos-China border. Attending the official ceremony of the 40th anniversary were senior leaders from the Party and government as well as high-level delegates from China, Vietnam and Cambodia. In addition, foreign diplomats and people of Lao origin living abroad were also present at the event. The parades began with the procession of senior revolutionary forces, comprising 400 people and followed by parades carrying the sign of the 40th anniversary, the national symbol and the parade carrying national flags and Party flags respectively. Next were the parades of national defence and security before the processions of different government sectors, State enterprises and the capital followed them.

The marchers included soldiers, police, government officials, the private sector, youth, children, women and local authorities, with their collective presence reflecting their solidarity and patriotism in creating a driving force for national defence and development. Those who marched in the parades were dressed in colourful costumes symbolic of their sectors. Some marchers also beat drums and played other musical instruments while waving both national and Party flags.

Other marchers also carried photos of revolutionary leaders including President Kaysone Phomvihane, President Souphanouvong, former President Khamtay Siphandone and President Choummaly Sayasone.

Some sectors demonstrated their roles in serving the nation such as doctors demonstrated how they cured patients and Lao television demonstrated how they broadcast the news live.

The slogan 'Long live December 2' was repeatedly read out to the crowd, which the marchers repeated in chorus instilling patriotism and love of our homeland.

Marchers also carried photos of Vientiane's symbols including That Luang stupa and Patouxay monument.

Many people could be seen wearing pins or emblems bearing the national flag, which was also on show outside houses and residences throughout the capital. The events were broadcast live on Lao National Television so those who were unable to be there in person could watch the spectacle at home.

Meanwhile the highlight of the evening was the five performing programmes comprising 4,000 performers which took place at the National Sports Complex in Vientiane.

The programmes mainly reflected the national pride of the Lao people in safeguarding and developing their country over the past 40 years and the unity of the multi-ethnic people in developing their beloved homeland. The evening programme was also highlighted with a dramatic fireworks display, allowing members of the public to watch the fireworks by themselves from their homes and nearby areas. Other special activities organised to mark the occasion included trade fairs and other cultural performances.

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