

Not number one, but one to trust

CEO Talk

INTERNET usage in Cambodia isn't cheap, and the government has reportedly censored certain websites.

But that hasn't stopped the number of internet users from surging, spelling hot business for internet service providers (ISPs).

MekongNet chief executive Sok Chamnda spoke to the Post's Sarah Thust and Low Wei Xiang about what sets her company apart.

How was MekongNet started?

MekongNet, a registered trademark of the Angkor Data Communication Group, was founded in 2006 and is owned by Anana Computer.

Anana opened in 1993 as a family business selling IT products. I then began to wonder if we could provide internet services as well, so MekongNet started focusing on end users.

But the internet was expensive back then — 1MB of data cost more than US\$2000 — because the infrastructure wasn't good.

Later, we began investing in fibre-optic infrastructure and



MekongNet's Sok Chamnda is confident about her strengths and weaknesses. She prefers to leave travelling for the job to her male colleagues, as she needs to take care of her family. LOW WEI XIANG

focused on wholesale and corporate customers so we could negotiate lower prices.

What has MekongNet excelled in?

We are among the leading ISPs in Cambodia investing in fibre-optic infrastructure, whereas the majority are still investing in ADSL services.

We are the first ISP [in Cambodia] to connect directly to the Google server in Hong

work environment?

The leadership styles of men and women are different, but I don't see myself in a deprived position. Men tend to guide their staff in a cold, but effective in the short term, manner, whereas women good on teamwork and a good work environment. That takes more time, though.

About 60 per cent of our employees are female. I've noticed that women tend to pay more attention to details, so those on our staff mostly work in customer service, administration, human resources, accounting and finance.

Many of them don't like to move around often, as they need to take care of their families as well. In contrast, men tend to work in IT or other positions where they can move around.

Where do you see MekongNet in five years?

We can't say we'll be number one, but we want to be a company that provides good service to customers who trust us and are loyal to us.

We want to be in a place in the market where we can take care of our own business and customers. ■

Mesco, Angkor to mine gold

Daniel de Carteret

MESCO Gold, an associated company of India-based Mesco Steel, will sign an agreement with Angkor Gold to mine the Phum Syrang prospect on one of its economic land concessions in Ratanakiri province.

A statement released by Angkor Gold said the agreement was about putting the company in a position of potential gold production.

"Mesco Gold has complementary skills sets and ambitions, and I am confident they are the right company to take Phum Syrang into production," Angkor Gold chief executive Mike Weeks said.

Mesco will pay \$1.2 million for the rights to mine. A feasibility study has yet to be completed, meaning there is no certainty it will be viable.

Cambodian Association of Mining and Exploration Companies president Richard Stanger is confident the mine will be viable.

"We've been exploring the area since 2006. We've been drilling holes and there's plenty of gold there," Stanger said. ■

Government signs