

Cambodian-American Socioeconomic Profile

By Mark E. Pfeifer, PhD

The U.S. Census Bureau released nationwide Cambodian-American data from the 2005 American Community Survey (ACS) in late 2006. It must be noted that the 2005 American Community Survey data set involves estimates based on surveys distributed to only a subset of the U.S. population and is thus problematic in some respects.

The 2005 American Community Survey profile for Cambodian-Americans represents the first detailed "official" demographic profile of Cambodians in the United States since the release of the 2000 U.S. census enumerations. This article provides a short summary of some of the key data points that emerge from the 2005 American Community Survey of Cambodians across the United States. The data included in this article are from the 2005 ACS profile of the "Cambodian alone or in any combination" population in the United States.

The 2005 American Community Survey estimated there were 241,025 persons in the U.S. who reported that they were solely Cambodian or a combination of Cambodian and some other ethnic group(s). This figure is up from the 206,052 Cambodian-Americans reported in the 2000 U.S. Census. The 2005 ACS estimated that the U.S. Cambodian population was 48.3% Male and 51.7% Female. The estimated Median Age of the Cambodian population across the

2005 Summary for Cambodian-Americans (Cambodian alone or in any combination)

- 241,025 (Estimated Cambodian Population)
- Percent Male: 48.3
- Percent Female: 51.7
- Divorce Rate: 4.0% (Compared to 10.2% all Americans over 15)
- Years Median Age: 25.3 (Compared to 36.4 all Americans)
- Adults 25 years and Over with
 - Bachelor's Degree: 11.1% (Compared to 17.2% all Americans)
 - Graduate or Professional Degree: 3.0% (Compared to 10.0% all Americans)
- Employed in Manufacturing: 33.5% (Compared to 11.9% all employed Americans over 16)
- Speak English "Less than Very Well" (44.2%) compared to 8.6% all Americans
- Median Family Income: \$44,883 (Compared to \$55,832 U.S.)
- Poverty Rate: 19.3% (Compared to 10.2% all U.S. Families)
- Homeownership Rate: 52.1% (Compared to 67% all U.S. Households)

United States in the 2005 data was 25.3 years old which was about 11 years more youthful compared to 36.4 for the overall population of the United States. The 2005 ACS estimated that 4.0% of Cambodian-Americans aged 15 and over had been divorced compared to 10.2% of all Americans.

Looking at educational attainment, the 2005 ACS estimated that 11.1% of Cambodian-Americans aged 25 or older had earned a Bachelor's degree compared to 17.2% of the American population as a whole and that 3.0% of Cambodians 25 and older in the U.S. had earned a graduate or professional degree in contrast to about 10% of all Americans. The 2005 ACS survey

estimates that 12.5% of Cambodian-Americans had a disability compared to 14.9% of all Americans aged 5 and over. However, according to the 2005 ACS estimates, 49.1% of Cambodian Americans over 65 had a disability compared to 40.5% of all Americans over 65.

In terms of year of entry in the U.S., the 2005 ACS profile estimates that 77.1% of Cambodians entered the U.S. before 1990, 13.1% between 1990 and 1999 and 9.8% after the year 2000. According to the 2005 ACS data, an estimated 44.2% of Cambodians in the U.S. reported speaking English less than very well.

In terms of industrial distribution, the 2005 ACS estimated that

33.5% of employed Cambodians over 16 worked in manufacturing compared to 11.9% of all employed Americans, the next highest Cambodians distributions were Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services, 14.8% compared to 8.5% among all Americans and Retail Trade, 13.1% compared to 11.6% among all Americans. The Median Cambodian Family income in the 2005 ACS was \$44,883 compared to \$55,832 for the U.S. as a whole. The U.S. Cambodian poverty rate in the 2005 ACS data profile was 19.3%, the overall U.S. poverty rate in the 2005 ACS was 10.2%. In the 2005 ACS figures, 52.1% of Cambodian households owned their homes while 47.9% lived in renter-occupied units. In the 2005 ACS data, about 67% of all U.S. households lived in owner-occupied units.

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Paul Ishii, general manager of the Mayflower Park Hotel in Seattle, was named one of 21 new Advisory Board members of the National Trust Historic Hotels of America, a collection of 207 historically significant hotels. (Mayflower Hotel photo)

Paul Ishii named to Historic Hotels Advisory Board

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 30, 2007) – Paul Ishii, general manager of the Mayflower Park Hotel in Seattle, was named one of 21 new Advisory Board members of the National Trust Historic Hotels of America, a collection of 207 historically significant hotels.

In addition to advising the National Trust Historic Hotels of America staff on key issues and mapping the future goals of the organization, the role of the advisory board is to foster communication among the organization's diverse membership.

Jim Bradbury, general manager of La Fonda in Santa Fe, N.M., was named chair of the advisory board. He previously served as the board's chairman from 1999-2000. La Fonda has been a member

of Historic Hotels of America since 1992. Tina Harlow, regional director of operations for Grand Heritage Hotels International, was named vice chairwoman. Chuck Paton of Morrissey Hospitality in St. Paul was also named to the board.

Historic Hotels of America is a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Historic Hotels has identified 207 hotels that have faithfully maintained their historic integrity, architecture and ambiance. To be selected for this prestigious program, a hotel must be at least 50 years old, listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or recognized as having historic significance. www.historichotels.org

UN looking at extrajudicial executions in Philippines

NEW YORK (February 12, 2007) – An independent United Nations human rights expert is on a 10-day visit to the Philippines to investigate the issue of extrajudicial executions.

Philip Alston will be visiting the Philippines at the invitation of the Government but his mission is designed to enable him to meet

with as broad a range of people and groups as possible.

As the UN Human Rights Council's independent expert for extrajudicial executions, Mr. Alston's role includes investigating individual cases and systemic causes of such killings in all UN Member States.

The visit will include meetings with representatives of all three branches of government, including members of the Cabinet, the parliamentary human rights commissions, the military, the police, the Supreme Court, and the Public Prosecutor's office. Mr. Alston will also hold

meetings with victims' groups, human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil society groups. Most of the visit will take place in the Greater Manila metropolitan area, but he will also travel to Baguio, north of Manila, and to Davao City on the Southern island of Mindanao.

Mr. Alston, an Australian national who is Professor of International Law at New York University, is an independent expert and he alone is responsible for determining with whom he will meet while in the Philippines.

He will submit a report to the Human Rights Council analyzing the Philippines' compliance with international law in the area of the right to life and making recommendations to more effectively prevent violations.

Thailand's Police Chief Fired

By Ron Corben
Voice of America

BANGKOK (February 5, 2007) – The dismissal of Thai Police Chief General Kowit Wattana follows heavy criticism of investigations into the bombings in Bangkok on New Year's Eve that left three people dead and dozens wounded. Last month, police arrested 19 people, but they were all later released without charge. A grenade attack then hit a newspaper office and a hotel, raising further doubts of the police's ability to secure the capital.

Kowit was police chief to former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted in a September coup.

Chulalongkorn University Economics Professor Somphob Manarangsarn believes the dismissal raises hopes of reform.

"The police department has been highly criticized by the public even before the coup d'etat. There is going to be some change in the better direction, it will be an opportunity for the restructuring and reform," he said.

A Thai government spokesman said Police General Seriphisut Temiyawej is the acting police chief. He has a clean reputation. As crime suppression chief in the 1990's, he faced several death threats due to his investigations of corruption. Somphob believes Seriphisut is a good choice.

"Police General Seriphisut is quite a liberal and progressive person when we learn from his past experience," he said. "I think

Chinese man killed in Iraq always wanted to be a soldier

LOS ANGELES (February 12, 2007) Radio Free Asia – A 20-year-old Chinese man who died in Iraq while serving in the U.S. Army had wanted to be a soldier all his life, his father told RFA's Mandarin service.

Sun Ming was killed on the outskirts of Baghdad before he had even received his permanent residency in the United States, or "green card," making him the first citizen of the People's Republic of China to die as a U.S. soldier in Iraq, his father said.

"We had been living in the United States, and my son wanted to become a soldier, to go and fight for his country," Sun Hongyuan said. "So we are not complaining."

Immigration problems

"We live in this country, and this is our contribution."

Sun Ming arrived in the United States at age eight, and the entire family had had problems in their application for permanent residency for many years, Sun said.

Sun Ming was accepted as a U.S.

infantryman after his application was approved.

"Young people all think they are indestructible, so off he went to be a soldier," Sun said. "This country has been insecure since the 9/11 terror attacks, and my son wanted to help."

Sun last heard from his son on Jan. 5, during a phone call in which Sun Ming said he was fine, just five days before the attack which killed him. He said he could hear from his son's voice that he genuinely enjoyed the life of a soldier.

"He really wanted to do it. He wanted to be a professional soldier. We felt as parents that we should try to change his mind, but we still respected his wishes," he said.

"If you are a soldier, you must follow orders. This sacrifice of our son has brought us great pain, but also a sense of pride," Sun said.

Original reporting in Mandarin by Xiao Rong. Mandarin service director: Jennifer Chou. Translated and written for the Web in English by Luisetta Mudie. Edited by Sarah Jackson-Han.

he will act to take some action to make some changes to this very important department."

Public opinion polls indicate the military government appears to be losing public support.

Monthly opinion surveys by Bangkok's Assumption University show that Prime Minister Surayud's popularity has fallen from 71 percent in November, to 48 percent in January. At the same time,

deposed prime minister Thaksin gained support, rising from 16 percent to 22 percent, although a majority of respondents believe he should stay out of politics.

The survey indicates Thais fear the current government is too busy grappling with abuses of power by the previous government, and not focusing enough on improving farmers' incomes, and ensuring public safety.



"[Racism] is not about how you look, it is about how people assign meaning to how you look."

—Robin D.G. Kelley, Historian

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