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Cambodia sticks to plan on power price cuts

Cambodian officials appeared to walk back a promise to issue larger than average electricity price reductions ahead of July's elections, instead following a previously announced plan to make small reductions in costs.

Ty Norin, chairman of the Electricity Authority of Cambodia (EAC), released a statement earlier this month announcing a modest cut in electricity prices, dropping prices by up to 20 riel, or less than \$0.01, per kilowatt hour (kWh) for some residential users. The cuts are set to take effect in April.

Norin's announcement comes on the heels of a statement he made last month promising a price cut greater than previous years, after he was urged by Mines and Energy Minister Suy Sem to consider a deeper reduction.

Sem suggested a price cut could garner support for the ruling Cambodian People's Party ahead of July's national elections.

But the recently announced cuts, which were first detailed in the EAC's five-year plan in 2015, are the same cuts referred to by the minister, according to Victor Jona, a spokesman at the Ministry of Mines and Energy. Jona said he was unaware of any additional planned cuts.

"This [plan for price reduction] is what we have considered since 2015," he said yesterday, adding that electricity costs had been declining slightly for the past three years. "The decrease in electricity prices this year has been made in accordance with our clearcut annual plan." — The Phnom Penh Post