



Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Government

No. 377/Gov
Vientiane, 24 November 2015

Decree
on the Press Activities of Foreign Media Agencies, Diplomatic Missions,
and International Organizations in the Lao PDR

- Pursuant to the amended Law on Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic No. 02/NA, dated 6 May 2003;
- Pursuant to the Law on Media No. 01/NA of 27 July 2008,
- Pursuant to the Resolution of the Government's Monthly Ordinary Meeting of July 2015 No. 07/Gov, dated 10 August 2015,
- Referring to the proposal by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs No. 1440/MoFA.PD.3, dated 7 October 2015.

The Government issues the following decree:

CHAPTER I
General Provisions

Article 1. Objective

This Decree defines principles, rules and regulations on the management and monitoring of the press activities carried out by foreign media, diplomatic missions and international organizations in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in order to facilitate that their activities to be carried out in an effective manner and in consistence with laws and regulations of the Lao PDR, thus contributing to the socio-economic development and further promoting cooperation with foreign countries.

Article 2: Press activities carried out by foreign media, diplomatic missions and international organizations in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

Press activities of foreign media, diplomatic missions and international organizations refer to media-related activities carried out by foreign media in the forms of printed media, electronic media and media products, as well as the dissemination and media-related activities in the Lao PDR.

Article 3: Scope of Application

The Decree is applicable to foreign media agencies, diplomatic missions and international organizations, including their staff members who are engaging in news coverage and reporting activities in the Lao PDR.

Article 4: International Cooperation

The Government promotes bilateral, regional and international cooperation on media, on the basis of respect for independence, sovereignty and mutual interests and in compliance with the relevant international treaties and agreements to which the Lao PDR is a party.

CHAPTER II

Press Activities of Foreign Media Agencies

Article 5: Press Activities

Foreign media agencies may carry out their activities by dispatching their personnel to engage in news coverage and reporting or setting up their offices in the Lao PDR.

Article 6: Foreign Media Personnel Accompanying Delegation(s)

Foreign media personnel who wishes to accompany a delegation to engage in press coverage and reporting in the Lao PDR shall inform the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, three working days in advance, of their names, equipment and additional programme of activities (if any) for consideration and appropriate facilitation.

Article 7: Foreign Media Personnel Coming to the Lao PDR for Press Activities

Foreign media personnel working for a non-resident foreign media agency wishing to engage in press coverage and reporting in the Lao PDR shall apply for a permit from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs fifteen working days in advance.

Documents required for permission are as follows:

1. Application letter
2. Curriculum vitae
3. Copy of media ID Card
4. Programme of activities
5. Previous articles, press releases or publications about the Lao PDR (if any)
6. List of equipment
7. Copy of valid passport
8. Two 3x4 photos

Article 8: The Establishment of Offices of Foreign Media Agencies

Any Foreign Media Agency wishing to establish an office in the Lao PDR shall submit the necessary documents to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which will further submit them for consideration and permission by the Government.

The establishment of an Office of a Foreign Media Agency should meet the following criteria:

1. A Foreign Media Agency must be properly registered in any one country;
2. Have permission letter from its related Media Agency;
3. Have a premise for office, property and land use permit provided by an individual or legal entity, which is certified by the concerned local authority;

4. Have all facilities and technical equipment required for carrying out media activities.

Article 9: Required Documents for the Request to Establish an Office of a Foreign Media Agency

The documents required for the request for the establishment of an office of the Foreign Media Agency are as follows:

1. A letter of request from the Foreign Media Agency;
2. A document stating clear objectives and reasons for establishing an office of the Foreign Media Agency in the Lao PDR;
3. A copy of company registration certificate or license for the establishment of the Foreign Media Agency. The copy shall be certified by the Embassy or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the concerned country;
4. Financial Statement of the Foreign Media Agency.

Article 10: Opening of an Office

After being granted a permission to establish an office in the Lao PDR by the Government, the Foreign Media Agency shall send its representative(s) to introduce themselves to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR within two months prior to the official opening of the office.

The Office of the Foreign Media Agency established in the Lao PDR shall not be conferred a separate legal status from the Foreign Media Agency of origin.

Article 11: The Appointment of Personnel to the Office of the Foreign Media Agency

The Appointment of Personnel to the Office of the Foreign Media Agency shall proceed as follows:

1. Head of the Office shall be appointed by the respective Foreign Media Agency and approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR;
2. All editors, media personnel and technical staff shall be appointed by Head of the Office in the Lao PDR and approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR.

Article 12: Visa Application

The foreign media personnel who will carry out activities or be stationed in the office of the Foreign Media Agency in the Lao PDR shall complete the M-B2 Journalists' Visa Application Form provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs along with the following documents:

1. Letter of request and duly filled visa application form,
2. Copy of passport,
3. Copy of media Identification Card,
4. 2 passport size photos (3x4).

CHAPTER III

Rights, Duties and Obligations of the Media Offices and Foreign Media Personnel

Article 13: Rights and Duties of the Offices of Foreign Media Agencies and their Personnel

The Office of the Foreign Media Agency and their staff have the rights and duties to carry out media-related activities in the Lao PDR as follows:

1. Carry out the media-related activities in accordance with the plans and category permitted.
2. Request to import media-related equipment and vehicles to facilitate their media-related activities in accordance with laws and regulations of the Lao PDR.
3. Apply for multiple-entry visa(s) in accordance with laws and regulations of the Lao PDR.
4. Employ local or foreign personnel and staff in accordance with the consent of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR.
5. Hold media Identification Card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR when in duties.

Article 14: Obligations of the Offices of Foreign Media Agencies and Foreign Journalists

The Offices of the Foreign Media Agencies and their staff have the following obligations:

1. Respect and abide by the constitution, laws, regulations, fine traditions and culture of the Lao PDR.
2. Submit media products to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for consideration and approval, in collaboration with the concerned agencies, prior to the publication.
3. Foreign media personnel working in the Lao PDR and the local staff are obliged to pay income tax in accordance with the relevant laws.
4. Contribute constructively to the promotion of bilateral and multilateral cooperation.
5. Return their media Identification Cards to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs upon completion of their duties in the Lao PDR.

CHAPTER IV

Change of Status and Dissolution of the Offices of Foreign Media Agencies

Article 15: Change of Status of the Offices of Foreign Media Agencies

The Office of a Foreign Media Agency desiring to change their status and media activities shall submit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR a letter of request along with the proposal on their new activities and other related documents, for consideration and approval.

Article 16 Termination of the Office of a Foreign Media Agency

The office of a foreign media agency shall be terminated in one of the following ways:

1. Where the Office of a Foreign Media Agency intends to terminate, on a voluntary basis, its operation in the Lao PDR, it shall notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR of its intention in order to obtain approval from the Government;
2. If the Office of a Foreign Media Agency cannot be established within three months after permission has been granted;
3. If evidence of violation of the laws and regulations is found.

CHAPTER V

Press and Information Activities of Diplomatic Missions and International Organizations in the Lao PDR

Article 17 Developing Media Products

Diplomatic missions and international organizations in Lao PDR wishing to develop media products must notify and present the content to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and comply with the Law on Media and other relevant laws of the Lao PDR.

Article 18 Publishing and Disseminating Media Products

Diplomatic missions and international organizations in the Lao PDR wishing to publish and disseminate their media products through the Lao media must send a written notification to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for consideration in consultation with the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism within the following timeframes:

1. Thirty (30) days prior to film broadcast;
2. Ten (10) days prior to exhibitions, sale, and radio broadcast;
3. Five (5) days prior to organizing a press conference and publication in print media.

Article 19 Foreign Electronic Media

Electronic media activities of diplomatic missions and international organizations in the Lao PDR must be carried out in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations of the Lao PDR.

CHAPTER VI

Responsibilities in Respect of Foreign Media

Article 20 Responsibilities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs holds the following responsibilities in respect of foreign media:

1. Study and submit to the Government a request for establishment of an Office of a Foreign Media Agency, for consideration and approval;
2. Study, consider and grant permission to Foreign Media Agencies to carry out press and media activities;

3. Approve the content of media products produced by Foreign Media Agencies;
4. Provide advice and consultation on the rules and regulations related to press activities to Foreign Media Agencies, diplomatic missions and international organizations in the Lao PDR;
5. Coordinate with the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, as well as other Ministries and local authorities concerned in monitoring and facilitating activities to be carried out by Foreign Media Agencies, diplomatic missions and international organizations in the Lao PDR;
6. Take stock of and report to the Government on the activities implemented by Foreign Media Agencies on a regular basis.

Article 21 Responsibilities of the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism (MICT)

MICT is responsible for studying and considering the activities carried out by Foreign Media Agencies as proposed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within its given mandate as described in the Law on Media, other related laws and regulations.

Article 22 Responsibilities of Respective Sectors and Local Authorities

According to their respective mandates, concerned sectors and local authorities are responsible for coordination and cooperation with Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism on the management and monitoring of all activities carried out by Foreign Media Agencies, diplomatic missions and international organizations in the Lao PDR.

CHAPTER VII

Final Provision

Article 23 Implementation

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is assigned to coordinate with the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism and other concerned sectors and authorities in the implementation of this Decree in a strict and effective manner;

The line-Ministries, equivalent organizations, provincial and local authorities, individuals and entities shall acknowledge and strictly implement this Decree.

Article 24 Effectiveness

This Decree is effective from the date of its signature and after fifteen days of publication in the Gazette.

Any regulations and provisions inconsistent with this Decree are superseded.

The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic

Prime Minister

(Signed)

Thongsing Thammavong