

**Part 321 for Cathy's blog**

**Thursday January 1st to Sunday January 4th, 2026  
Temple Day : Kravan**



**We stopped at the Peace mural on the way this morning.**

**This ogre is in the gardens.**



**Large display boards show the “journey” of the building and painting of this mural.**

**Below: The mural itself is finished. A poignant reminder of the border conflict.**



The border conflict is not over.

Thailand has moved containers onto Cambodian soil, blocking roads. They have stretched barbed wire across roads and alongside houses and paddocks. Their soldiers have recorded themselves entering the Cambodian villagers' houses, looting their goods (clothes, kitchenware, motorbikes that have been left behind). These videos are now on Facebook for all to see.

And the world is quiet.

The weather is cool, even cold, as we ride out to the temples and the forests. It is also smoky, due to the burning off of paddocks (and sometimes refuse is burned too).

We rode along the Siem Reap River and along Street 60, out to the ticket office corner. Then we went around the “Rong Wong Moul” ... the roundabout and along Apsara Road, meeting up with the temple circuit roads a little to the east of Angkor Wat.

This is a local road, well sealed, but people travelling to work ride /drive along here and school children ride their bikes on the road. (I think, with a sudden tightening of my tummy! about a daughter I know and I worry about people like her riding on this road!)

There are also buses of tourists, VIP tourist cars and sometimes Tuktuk convoys. It is good to see people travelling out to visit the temples!

## **Prasat Kravan**

Kravan has five brick towers on one raised platform. Another raised platform lies east of the towers.



**This is David going up the steps to look inside the towers.**



**This is one of the temple dogs, just resting and enjoying the sunshine.**

While David took more photos, I chatted with Sopeap, one of the Apsara staff. She had been walking briskly around the grounds. We talked about exercise (“hat bran”) and losing weight (“Sroh kilo”). We talked about speaking Khmer (“ni-yeay Km-eye”) and about vowels, consonants, and the special signs. We spoke in Khmer and although I had to ask her to speak more slowly, I could follow her and add information about the alphabet and grammar. She told me she had to relearn the alphabet to be able to help her daughter learn at school.

Twenty minutes later, we prepared to leave, when our friend the Tuktuk driver pulled up with his family to wish us a Happy New Year. They were driving out to their house. It is one built in the new estate, set up by the government to house people forcibly moved from their homes near Angkor Wat.

There is no work at the “new city”, so our driver and his family rent rooms in town and go back to their house for visits on weekends and holidays.

The language school is closed this week (funny, it was open for Christmas Day!) for normal classes. Some teachers were available for lessons (my teacher went to visit his family in a neighbouring province).

**Friday 2nd January, 2026.**

## **Temple Day : East Mebon**

Further along the road past Kravan, Banteay K'Dei, and Pre Rup, lies the East Mebon Temple.

This is another tall temple, like a step pyramid, with steep steps to each level and then towers at the top.

The corners have elephant statues. The stairways have lion guardians.



**East Mebon Temple from across the road.**

The five towers (you can see three) represent Mount Meru (and the surrounding levels and the moat represent the land and the oceans).



**One level up, a worn lion.**



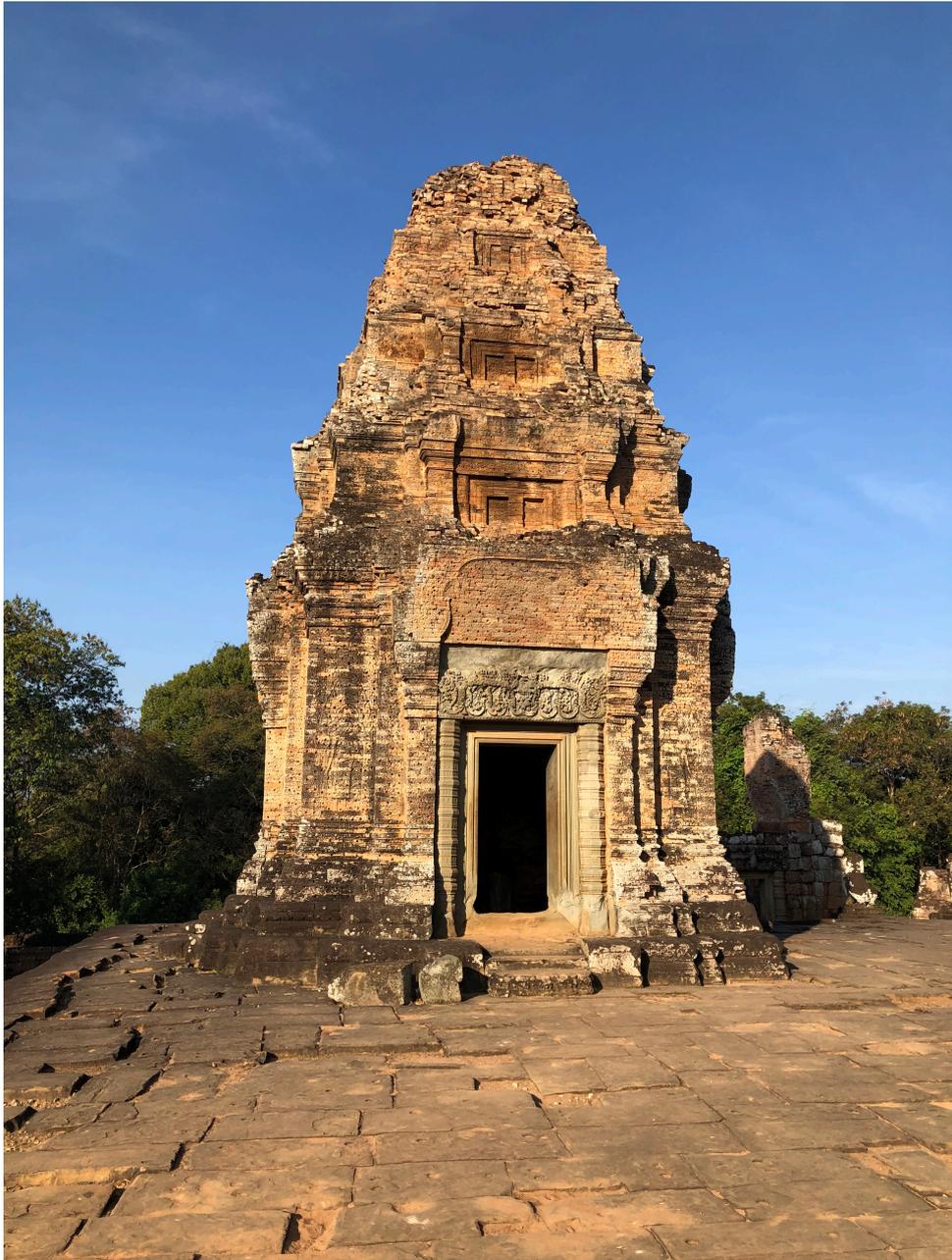
**Second level, looking up at the central tower.**



**The remains of buildings such as libraries (situated on the first level, looking down at them from the second level).**



**Elephant at the corner wearing David's hat, and a safety sign.**



**Front corner tower... no safety signs here!**



**The central tower, raised a few more steps.**



**I found some wildlife.**

David kept up his language lesson in the afternoon. He knows twice as many cooking terms as I do!



**After tea we went to find some “dehumidifiers” and I found more Christmas decorations.**

**Saturday 3rd January, 2026.**

It is pleasantly cool for our walk to the Angkor Supermarket.



**You can buy nearly anything in Siem Reap.**

**Sunday 4th January, 2026.**

We spent a quiet day at home. The pool water is “shockingly” cold... I am not sure how long I will continue to “brave” it for my swim.