called *Angkor Thom* which has a few temples including the spectacular Bayon temple with giant human faces looking at four different directions. There are 39 towers of different sizes in that temple. As Hindu God Brahma has four faces, the general belief is that this temple was built as a temple for worshipping Brahma. But this apparently was constructed as a Buddhist temple.



Sunset at Pre-Rup.



A floating village.

Ta Prohm

We began the third day with a visit to a temple called *Ta Prohm* which is located in a sprawling compound (only 15 minutes drive from SR city) where trunks and roots of huge trees (looking like centuries old) cohabit with temple walls and roofs . This temple complex is a good example of nature's and human marvels combined in one. It is very difficult to understand whether the temple was built first and the tree grew on that or the other way round.

We also visited a silk producing complex, an artisan's workplace cum sales centre, and the so-called "Pub Street" in SR city. At the silk producing centre, one can see the entire process of producing silk fabrics starting from the raising of cocoons in mulberry trees through the production of silk threads to various products. The Pub Street is an interesting place where an entire stretch of road is closed to traffic in the evening and where a large number of restaurants are located. For those who are interested in a lively environment and in having a traditional Khmer meal in the evening, Pub Street is the place.

In addition to visiting temples, we allocated a part of our time for visiting other interesting sites including what is called "floating villages". There are a number of such floating villages in Cambodia where entire communities live and carry out their daily life on water. They are located in various parts of Tonle Sap lake which has been formed by water brought in by tributaries of the Mekhong river. People belonging to the fishing community have built their houses on floating platforms, and some in boats which are kept parked at the edge of the lake near the mouth of the tributaries. Since the level of water in the lake varies considerably over the year (depending on the flow of water in Mekhong), the locations of the floating houses also have to change. The communities that live in these floating houses don't have to go to the land at all because schools, churches/temples, markets, etc. are all organised on water. We even saw a basketball court (completely covered by net on all sides) on a floating platform. Small children rowing their own boats towards their school (picture below p5) is the aquatic equivalent of children riding their bikes to schools! These communities provide perfect examples of how human beings can live in harmony with nature. There is perhaps a lesson for flood prone Bangladesh where global warming is predicted to lead to the drowning of a large part of the land mass under sea! ■