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Takeo plant hit with another mass fainting

NATIONAL

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Reporter : Khouth
Sophak Chakrya

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VONAMMY (Cambodia) Garment workers lost consciousness and had to be taken for medical care on Wednesday. Supplied

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VONAMMY (Cambodia) Garment Co Ltd, a factory in Takeo province, was the site of yet another case of mass fainting. On Wednesday, 53 more workers lost consciousness and had to be taken for medical care, with authorities blaming the incident on hot and stuffy conditions at the plant.

Wednesday's incident brings the tally of fainted workers this week at the Bati district factory to 97 after 44 others suffered the same fate on Tuesday.

Takeo provincial Department of Labour director Moeung Virya, who was part of the team dispatched to conduct the inspections this week said: "Our committee told the factory owners to improve the workplace by installing more fans and removing materials to make the space less cramped."

Virya said the department ordered the factory owners to allow the 97 victims to take a three-day paid leave to "take care of themselves".

The faintings began on Tuesday when two pregnant workers were taken to the factory's clinic after they reported feeling nauseous due to the heat. The nurses, concluding that their condition was severe, sent them to the district's referral hospital.

When the ambulance arrived at the factory to pick up the heat-stricken women, another 44 workers fainted. The authorities believe the mass fainting was due to a combination of factors, particularly the shock of hearing the ambulance's siren and high temperatures at the factory.

Bati district governor Phuon Chhim told The Post on Tuesday that the affected workers were sent for treatment at a nearby health centre and clinic.

Collective Union of Movement of Workers president Pav Sina blamed the employer's lack of attention to the wellbeing of workers for the events.

He said the mass fainting started with one worker who felt ill and quickly spread to others that were "not mentally strong".

Sina said factors like poor-quality food and an insalubrious working environment make workers more susceptible to fainting.

"I appeal to the ministries of Environment; Industry and Handicraft; and Labour and Vocational Training to inspect all factories and take action if they do not follow industry standards.

"The government must pay closer attention to this issue and schedule regular health checks for workers. They work from Monday to Saturday, so they don't have time to go to the doctor for a check-up," Sina said.



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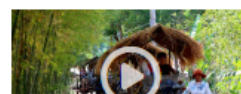
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