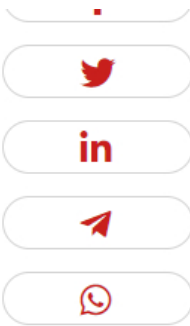


# Six face trial in Sihanoukville building collap

27 June 2020 2:45 PM | Khy Sovuthy



Chap Pros, who survived a deadly building collapse in Sihanoukville last year, prays at a ceremony to mark one year since the tragedy, in Phnom Penh on June 22. Panha Chhorpoan



and Cambodian who were involved in a building collapse in Preah Sihanouk Province that killed 28 and injured 26 on June 22 last year.

Preah Sihanouk Provincial Court spokesman Lim Bun Heng said the trial lasted one and a half days, and a verdict is due in July.

“The court finished the hearing and will announce the verdict on July 22,” Bun Heng said, declining to comment further.

Six people were charged in the days after the deadly incident, among them four Chinese nationals, who have been awaiting trial in provincial prison, and one Cambodian and one Vietnamese national, who are on the run and will be tried in absentia.

Two of the Chinese nationals, the building owner Cheng Kun and the construction supervisor Deng Xing Gui, have been charged with manslaughter and causing unintentional injury and damage, and the other four men were charged with similar offenses.

Puth Theavy, a lawyer for Deng Xing Gui, 49, said the court had charged his client with two counts, unintentional killing and unintentional injury by the court.

“My client accepts his mistakes related with the unintentional killing and unintentional injury charges,” Theavy said, adding that according to the law, the charges carry a term of one to two years in jail.

“I request the court sentence my client to time served since he was arrested because my client has been imprisoned for more than one year already,” Theavy said.

“My client does not have the ability to pay the compensation for all the victims because my client does not have money,” Theavy said, adding that the victims had received a large amount of monetary support from the government.

Last year, the victims received more than \$10,000 each in support from the government and according to their lawyers are now asking for \$20,000 to \$30,000 each in compensation from the defendants.

Nhor Nhen, a lawyer for the other two Chinese nationals, Cheng Kun, 40, and Xe Ya Ping, 44, said that he had provided exculpatory evidence to the court during the hearing, but he would not comment further as a verdict has yet to be announced.

“My client is also a victim of this case,” Nhen said.

Saing Vannak, a lawyer for the 54 who were injured or died in the building collapse, said that there were six lawyers on the defense team, but none of the victims were present.

When a reporter asked him why none of the victims had joined the hearings Vannak said only: “The victims had lawyers as their representatives”. He added that he and his team had followed procedures, which did not include bringing the victims into the courtroom.

Vannak declined to comment in more detail and referred further questions to Ky Tecch, chief of prime minister Hun Sen’s team of lawyers. Tech could not be reached for comment.

Chap Pros, 40, a construction worker who was injured in the building collapse, said he now lives in Kampot province and did not know about the hearing, as he had not received a summons from the court.

“I am unaware about the hearing of this case because I did not receive the summons from the court and I did not receive information from our lawyers,” Pros said.

He noted that one month after the building collapsed, a judge had called him to question him, but since then he has not heard anything from the court.



**Six fa**

27 June 2020 2:4

"I think that it is not justice for me because I am a victim but I did not receive any information from the court or my lawyer," Pros said. "Still, I plead with the court to provide justice for all victims."

Phuon Phanith, 29, who is representing his two family members who died in the incident, a brother Phuon Phanna and brother-in-law Chheng Chantha, said that he had joined in the event to mark the anniversary of the disaster in Preah Sihanouk province on June 22, but was not informed of the hearing.

"I did not know about the hearing because the lawyers did not tell me about it and I did not receive a summons from the court," Phanith said.

He noted that he had filed a complaint against those responsible for the collapse to demand they pay \$30,000 to each victim or the victim's family.

Sreng Vanly, a coordinator for human right group Licadho in Preah Sihanouk province who attended the hearing, said that although none of the victims were present, their lawyers and the court had proceeded according to the law.

"We do not know how much justice the court will find for the victims," he said. "We will wait for the result from the court on July 22."

Sok Kin, president of the Building and Wood Workers Trade Union Federation of Cambodia, said that he did not know specifically the procedures between the victims and their lawyers, or whether or not those affected by the building collapse had signed over their rights to their attorneys.

"From my perspective, the court or lawyers should be providing information on the hearing to the victims," he said.

Kin added he hoped the court's decision would be just, and that a weak punishment by the court could set a bad example, which could lead to foreign investors making similar mistakes in the future.

"If the court decides the suspects are guilty they absolutely must implement a punishment. If they do not carry out punishment, it is a bad example in Cambodia because we know about their crimes but did not take the correct measures based on the law," Kin said.

354 views

Sihanoukville

## LATEST NEWS

Investment Fraud And Online Scams Lead To Financial Losses For Cambodian Victims

25 Apr 2024



Senior Opposition Leader Chea Poch Says Sorry To Government, Wants To Come Home

24 Apr 2024



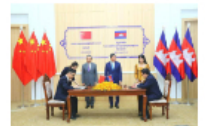
Funds Raised to Help Koet Saray, UN Calls For End To Prosecution of Human Rights Activists

24 Apr 2024



China To Aid Development of Rural Water Supply, Among Three Agreements Signed During Wang Yi's Visit

23 Apr 2024



Opposition Senators Discuss With Hun Sen, Call to Restore Democracy

22 Apr 2024



## MOST VIEWED

MOST VIEWED

1 An Overview of New Ministry Leaders and Their Family...

3 Crackdown on Natural Resource Crimes in Pursat Ends...

4 IFC Requests Review of Watchdog's Decision to...

5 Burning Homes in the Name of Conservation: NGO...

Cambodian Journalists Alliance Association

About

Tonics

+ (855) 23 88 23 11

editor@cambojanews.com

#19, St. 388, Sangkat Tuol Svay Prey I, Khan Boeng  
Keng Kang, Phnom Penh.

About Us

Contact Us

Jobs

ខេមបូឌា ព័ត៌មាន

National

Journalists

Politics

Social

Environment

Human Rights

Business

Opinion