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Workers walk out, protest unpaid benefits

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Reporter : Long Kimmarita

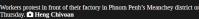
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Workers at two factories - one in Pursat province and the other in Phnom Penh staged protests on January 12 and 14 respectively to demand seniority

In Phnom Penh, more than 1,000 workers of Ying Hy Garment Co, Ltd, in Stung Meanchey commune's Trea village protested after the factory delays issuing their seniority payments again, allegedly breaking a promise made earlier this month.

Bronh Chanty, one of the protesting workers, said: "We demand the seniority payments for 2019 and 2020. The company had promised to give us the payments this year, citing the Covid-19 crisis as reason [for the delay].

"But now the factory has announced that it decided to delay the payments to workers indefinitely," she said.

eparately in Pursat province's Krakor district, nearly 5,000 factory workers of Taieasy International Co, Ltd, in Anlong Tnort commune's Tonsay Koul village protested on January 12 to demand seniority pay and annual leave

The workers blocked off a section of National Road 5 where the factory stands, but later called off the protest after the company agreed to meet some of their

Anlong Tnort commune chief Pon Lay told The Post on January 13: "I do not know why the workers protested for this money [seniority pay and annual leave compensation], but they stopped protesting after an intervention by Pursat provincial governor Mao Thornin," he said.

Kol Bunthoeun, acting director of the provincial Department of Labour and Vocational Training, told The Post on January 13 that the workers' claim for seniority payment was invalid because the labour ministry had already

As for the claim for annual leave compensation, he said that in general, the law does not require factories to pay in cash for workers' remaining annual leave. A factory must allow workers to carry forward their balance of the 18 days annual

However, he said that due to the practice of some factories not setting a specific period or deadline for workers to clear carried-forward annual leave, these factories have been compensating workers for their annual leave balance.

"According to the ministry's policy, [factories are] not required to pay [workers] in cash, but the factory must arrange one and a half days off per month for

"Some factories did not make this arrangement to ensure workers meet their [expected] productivity. Thus, it became a habit [for these] factories to pay the workers instead. When the factory could not provide the compensation, workers walked out in protest," he said.

 $According \ to \ Bunthoeun, \ Taieasy \ International \ offered \ to \ pay \ compensation \ for \ the \ annual \ leave \ balance \ of \ the \ workers \ on \ January \ 15, \ to \ which \ the \ workers$ agreed and decided to stop the protest



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