

# The Phnom Penh Post



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## Capital governor claims politics behind trash strike

### NATIONAL

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Phnom Penh municipal governor Khuong Sreng alleged recently ended strikes by rubbish collectors were politically motivated. Photo supplied

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Phnom Penh municipal governor Khuong Sreng has alleged that the recently ended strikes by rubbish collectors in the capital were politically motivated.

The work shutdown at Cintri (Cambodia) Ltd, the rubbish company that operates collection in Phnom Penh, took place in early October and lasted 13 days after employees made contract demands. The situation was resolved on October 14.

Sreng made the remarks while leading Phnom Penh Municipal Hall officials on a visit to Prek Pnov and Russey Keo districts on November 19.

“The problem of rubbish congestion is, it is a political issue. It is not a problem with the workers because of seniority pay, but a political issue with politicians behind it,” he said, without elaborating or identify any politicians or parties.

He claimed there was an order from Thailand that incited workers to reject the terms put forward by the Phnom Penh Municipal Hall and make Phnom Penh a city of rubbish.

“Some asked why the Phnom Penh governor did not follow the workers’ demands, the so-called five points. It was unlawful, so if I agreed, it would be illegal. It was against the government’s policies, so I would not let it happen,” he said.

Sreng praised the people who stepped in to collect rubbish and maintain order and safety for residents during the strikes.

Cambodia Tourism Workers’ Union Federation (CTWUF) president Touch Kosal, who helped negotiate the settlement between Cintri and the municipal hall, told The Post on November 23 that his union is an independent organisation and properly registered with the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training. He said he was not involved with any politicians.

“Our union federation is not under the political influence of the opposition or the ruling party, but we have always been painted as ‘opposition’. We have never been involved in political issue,” he said.

Kosal urged political parties not to link rubbish collectors to politics because they are simply worried about their jobs and the loss of their benefits. When Cintri workers heard Phnom Penh Municipal Hall would put up a bid for rubbish collection services, they protected themselves, he said.

“I think it has nothing to do with politics. There is no one behind it. The municipal hall should not link their story to politics or the ruling party or opposition,” he said.

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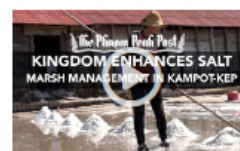
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