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National Road 5 workers paid in labour row

NATIONAL

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Reporter : Khouth
Sophak Chakrya

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The labour conflict between workers and the Sumitomo Mitsui Construction Company (SMCC), which is building a stretch of National Road 5, has ended after SMCC agreed to pay the wages of 55 workers under the guidance of the Kampong Chhnang provincial Department of Labour and Vocational Training.

Department director Prum Sitha told The Post on Monday that on Friday, a representative of the SMCC decided to pay the 55 workers after its contractor failed to do so.

“SMCC’s responsibility for paying wages to 55 workers instead of the company which is its partner, made the families of the 55 hopeful once again as the crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic continues to plague their livelihoods,” he said.

Having received the wages, the 55 workers expressed delight in the hope that the money will help ease their daily lives.

Kem Sarath, one of the 55 workers, said: “I’m really happy that the SMCC came forward to pay our wages. If they didn’t, our families’ livelihoods would deteriorate.”

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Since Covid-19 appeared, he said the families' livelihoods had experienced extreme difficulty because some family members had lost their jobs and incomes. Spending on daily food and medical materials to protect against Covid-19 infections also increased their expenditure.

He said he and other workers had decided to stop working for the contractor to the SMCC for fear that he might not pay their wages once again.

"I hope that the SMCC will offer me a job opportunity," he said.

Jules Ducalas, SMCC's chief surveyor told The Post on Monday that the company was happy to welcome workers who can work diligently.

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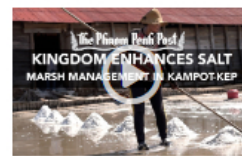
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