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Workers return, hope for salaries

NATIONAL

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Reporter : Long Kimmarita

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More than 600 factory workers returned to work after the owners agreed to pay their salaries. Central

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More than 600 factory workers in the capital's Chaom Chao commune in Por Sen Chey district returned to work after the factory's owner promised to pay their salaries in instalments until the middle of next month.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, more than 600 workers gathered in front of the factory to protest after they failed to receive their salary for the past two months. Instead, they received a \$30 payment.

One worker, who gave her name as Srey Da, told The Post on Thursday that following a series of protests, Ministry of Labour officials intervened, resulting in the company agreeing to pay the salaries owed.

Workers employed by the factory for nearly 10 years said it promised to make an initial payment of \$25 to all workers.

The remainder of their April salaries would be paid in early June and their May salary in mid-June said the workers.

Da said: "We've only been paid \$100 to \$200 per person depending on our salary and actual work.

"During this time, there has been no overtime because there is nothing to do. The factory previously had more workers, but 60 per cent of them were suspended, and the protesters represent the remaining 40 per cent."

Collective Union of Movement of Workers president Pav Sina said the factory has repeatedly gone against its promises to pay workers.

He said the government would monitor the case to prevent the factory from continuing to cheat workers, but he wasn't convinced that alone would force the company to cooperate.

"The company has been dishonest and set a very bad example. The workers need to be paid for their livelihood with regular salaries. If these promises aren't fulfilled, people will lose confidence in the authorities' remedies," he said.

Sina is also concerned about recent incidents caused by the outbreak of Covid-19. He said several factories have employed various methods of terminating workers, including cancelling short and long-term employment contracts, and contracts with pregnant workers.

Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training spokesman Heng Sour told The Post on Thursday that the ministry acknowledged difficulties in the private sector.

It had tried to compromise with the factory and would continue to monitor the situation.

Sour said: "We also request the understanding of the workers on this. But the ministry will continue to urge employers to keep to their promises.

"Our workers have a hard time because they need money to support themselves. We are not giving up on them and will continue to monitor this case."

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Post Media Co Ltd
 The Elements Condominium, Level 7
 Hun Sen Boulevard
 Phum Tuol Roka III
 Sangkat Chak Angre Krom, Khan Meanchey
 12353 Phnom Penh
 Cambodia

Tel: Celcard: 078 555 166/ 078 555 133
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