

# Beer girls brew Angkor strike

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About 60 Angkor beer promoters plan to strike today outside the company's head office on Norodom Boulevard to draw attention to what they say are violations of labour law, as well as discrimination against them.

Cham Rong, a representative of the women, promised the strike, planned to begin at 8am, would be loud and colourful. The women will raise banners and beat drums to draw attention from passers-by, including tourists, she said.

The decision to strike was made after the company rejected a decision by the Arbitration Council to double the wages they receive on Sundays to US\$4, she said.

Cham Rong also said that the company threatened to fire the women if they tried to join a union.

Neub Sros, 36, said she had worked as a beer promoter for the company for more than 10 years but was paid only \$50 a month.

"I can't survive on this because my expenses are even higher, so I work overtime on Sunday night but that only adds up to [an extra] \$8 a month," she said.

She had requested proper overtime pay for women who sell the beer brand in restaurants and nightspots, as well as an increase for Sundays, she added.

She also accused their direct manager, Soy Yary, of using insulting language when speaking to the women and said they had asked her to stop.

Soy Yary had likened the beer sellers to street prostitutes, Neub Sros said.

Soy Yary, manager of Angkor's beer promotion women, said reporters should visit the strike for themselves to determine whether those present actually worked for the company or came from outside.

She admitted that she sometimes used "improper words" when talking to her staff, adding she had worked as a sex health educator and sometimes sexual words spilled out, she explained.