

News

Land dispute Residents tell tycoon to back off

FAMILIES protesting encroachment onto their land by a tycoon who is expanding a road in Phnom Penh's Meanchey district filed a complaint to the Prime Minister's cabinet and the Municipal Court on Tuesday.

On Friday, employees working for tycoon Thong Sarath demolished fences on eight properties in Boeung Tompun commune's Tnout Chrum village.

The affected villagers then rejected an offer of compensation made by Thong Sarath during a press conference on Tuesday to compensate them 300,000 [about US\$73] riels each and build them new

fences, arguing the proposed fences fell inside their existing plots of land.

"Just 300,000 riels - please tycoon, keep it. I could not accept...I want him to rebuild the fence on the same location, not inside [our land]," resident Phang Hour Seng said on Tuesday.

Suos Sarin, chief of Boeung Tompun commune, said yesterday that Thong Sarath had been granted permission to expand a road leading to a development project by two metres on either side, which was encroaching into the village's property. CHHE

CHANNYDA



Angkor Beer promoters protest for overtime wages outside the Cambrew headquarters in Phnom Penh yesterday. MENG KIMLONG

Two dollar strike to continue

May Tikthara

ANGKOR Beer promoters yesterday rejected an offer from the municipality that would have required them to suspend their strike while officials negotiated a solution for them, telling Phnom Penh's deputy governor that their protest is legal and that their employer is breaking the law.

"Deputy governor Pa Socheatvong told us to suspend the pro-

test and let city officials resolve it for us, but we said that all we are asking is for the company to respect the decision of the Arbitration Council," said beer promoter Oum Phary. "What we are doing is not illegal."

She said that five of the women met with city officials yesterday. They were told they were being unreasonable, Oum Phary said.

More than 30 women have been striking for almost two working weeks to pressure the

company, Cambrew, to pay them US\$2-a-day overtime when they work on Sundays, following a July 7 decision by the Arbitration Council that said Cambrew was legally obligated to do so.

Yeong Sreymom, who was hospitalised on Tuesday night, said that she lost consciousness after a company van pushed through the protesters. The expectant mother, who remained in a hospital bed yesterday, said she felt weak but hoped to re-

join the protest soon. "I want to keep protesting. I don't want to give in this time," she said.

Ou Tep Phally, vice-president of the Cambodian Food and Service Workers' Federation, said the federation was preparing to sue the driver of the Angkor minivan.

Cambrew executive Chou Choung Kim said the company would resolve the dispute today. He said the same thing on Tuesday. Pa Socheatvong could not be reached.