



# មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលអប់រំច្បាប់សម្រាប់សហគមន៍ COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION CENTER

ទីស្នាក់ការលេខ ២៣៧ ផ្លូវលំ ក្រុងភ្នំពេញ ភ្នំពេញ កម្ពុជា ទូរស័ព្ទ: ០២៣ ២១៥ ៥៩០ ទូរស័ព្ទ/ទូរសារ ០២៣ ២១១ ៧២៣ ប្រអប់ប្រៃសណីយ៍ ១១២០ ភ្នំពេញ  
#237, Plov Lom, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Tel: (855)23 215 590, Tel/Fax: (855)23 211 723, P.O. Box 1120; e-mail: admin@clec.org.kh; www.clec.org.kh

## Call for Urgent Action to Avoid another Potential Death in Malaysia

Phnom Penh – 29 October 2013

Upon returning to Cambodia, the Community Legal Education Center (CLEC) expresses its grave concern for the health of Cambodian garment worker Ms. Sry Ratha, who is currently detained in Kluang prison, Johor, Malaysia. After failing an annual health test Ratha's visa was cancelled and she was subsequently arrested and detained on 9 September, 2013.

Last week CLEC traveled to Malaysia to conduct further investigation into the arrest of the Nike supply chain worker. However, upon arriving at Kluang prison on 19 October, 2013 CLEC's program officer was denied entry to visit Ratha.

Despite the claims of the Cambodian embassy and the factory management, all independent reports indicate that Ratha's health is quickly deteriorating. Reports confirm that there is blood in her urine, she is experiencing abdominal pain and swelling, itchy genitals, as well as fever and intense coughing. Further, the symptoms are so severe that she has not been able to sleep for the past five nights.

This is completely contradictory to all reports from the embassy as well as the factory management who claim she has improved and her health is now fine.

Brief reports from doctors suggest a urinary tract infection that has now spread to her kidneys and/or bladder. What is most concerning is that by all independent reports it is increasing in severity. Ratha says she is only provided basic medication and is showing no signs of improvement.

Further concerning is the conduct of the embassy and the factory management. Reports indicate that embassy staff, following repeated requests for intervention, have consistently failed to ensure Ratha's health and safety or deliver accurate information on her case or health.

In addition, Malaysian partners confirm this is not the first such incident involving the Nike supplier, Honsin Apparel Sdn Bhd. Rather than helping Ratha to get the treatment she needed following her failed health test, for two months she was subjected to a further five health tests at the behest of the factory management. Factory management also encouraged Ratha to travel back to Cambodia by road without a visa. In addition she was delivered to Immigration Police as opposed to the Cambodian embassy. Further, the details of her arrest were not passed onto other Cambodian workers or the family of the victim. Alternatively, the factory purported to workers that Ratha was fine and was being hidden from police. Only three days later was Ratha able to contact workers to inform them of her arrest and detention.

The seriousness of Ratha's sickness requires immediate action. If this is in fact a kidney infection there is the possibility of long term damage or even death before her scheduled release on 30 November, 2013.

Based on the severity of her illness and the conduct of the parties involved we strongly urge the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' immediate and effective engagement with the Malaysian Immigration Department to secure Ratha's transfer from the prison facility to a hospital. The transfer should take place no later than 30 October, 2013 following the scheduled rehearing of the case.

As a prominent investor in the Malaysian garment industry we strongly urge Nike to engage with the Malaysian government to secure this transfer. Nike must make it clear that their business is conditional upon the health and safety of their Malaysian supply chain workers, regardless of their nationality.

The factory implicated, Honsin Apparel Sdn. Bhd., is a subsidiary of Prolexus Berhad who claim that "besides Malaysia and China, management is seriously thinking of Cambodia as the next destination for its latest plant because of its lower wage structure." We demand that Proxlexus and its buyers respect the health, safety and rights of Cambodian workers before considering any such investment. This can begin by ensuring immediate and effective treatment for Ratha.

Since 2011 CLEC has provided services to the families of five deceased Cambodian workers in Malaysia. We stress the absolute urgency with which all parties must act to avoid yet another tragedy.

*For more information please contact Mr. Huy Pichsovann, Program Officer, +855 66 777 026*