



សម្ព័ន្ធស្តុកសាលាវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រសិប្បកម្ម

Cambodian Journalists Alliance

មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលកម្ពុជាដើម្បីប្រព័ន្ធជំនួយស្តុកសាលាវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រសិប្បកម្ម



## Journalists continue to be persecuted while on duty

Phnom Penh, October 23, 2020 — The Cambodian Journalists Alliance (CamboJA) and the Cambodian Center for Independent Media (CCIM) are increasingly concerned after several journalists were harassed, intimidated and threatened on the morning of Friday, October 23, as they were reporting on protests in front of the Chinese Embassy for the 29-year anniversary of the Paris Peace Agreements.

Six journalists were intimidated and threatened by authorities in different ways. A reporter for VOD was chased by authorities as they stood near the Chinese embassy to monitor the questioning of a woman who joined the protest. Another VOD reporter said authorities asked them to hand over their phone when they tried to take a picture. Two other VOD journalists were ordered to stop filming the protests.

Other incidents on the day include authorities confiscating a camera worn one the neck of a journalist from the Khmer Times newspaper, and ordering him as well as a photographer working for the Reuters news agency to delete all their photos and leave the area.

Nop Vy, executive director at CamboJA, said: “This is a sign of unacceptable intimidation as journalists were fulfilling their professional work. Authorities likely consider journalists to be an important observer who make it difficult for them to crack down on protesters.”

Ith Sothoeuth, director of the media department at CCIM, said: “These threats will further pressure and restrict the freedom of journalists in Cambodia to practice their profession, which is guaranteed by both national and international law.”

In another case, around 11 p.m. on October 20, a journalist named Him Math, chief reporter at online television outlet UMA TV, was the victim of an attack while reporting on forestry crimes near the Sekong bridge in Stung Treng province. A group of five strangers in a Lexus and a Toyota Highlander intercepted Him Math’s car as he was filming illegal logging by timber traders at night. The perpetrators used a wooden stick to smash the windshield of Him Math’s car, causing the Honda CR-V’s windshield to shatter on the left side. The incident also injured Him Math in the mouth due to broken glass.

This is not the first time that journalists, who play an important role in reporting on forestry crimes and other offenses, have been threatened and beaten. In late September, four online journalists in Memot district, Tbong Khmum province, were also attacked, with one of the four journalists suffering serious injuries to his ribs, and another suffering minor injuries.

CamboJA, which has about 100 members, and CCIM call on the Royal Government to stop the persecution of journalists by authorities and ensure the safety and security of all journalists so they can exercise their rights and freedoms properly and professionally, to report stories and crimes happening in society without fear.

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