Following the mass lay-offs of mainly union members and leaders, pregnant women, and new mothers by the NagaWorld casino in April 2021, terminated and active workers started a peaceful strike in mid-December 2021 to demand a fair resolution to the labor dispute and an end to violations of labor rights, freedom of association, and women’s rights by the casino. Nearly a year later, the strike is still ongoing, with multiple rights violations and no solution in sight for the strikers.

The timeline below is the continuation of two previous timelines – the first covering December 2021 to March 2022, and the second covering March and April 2022. It provides an overview of the main events pertaining to the ongoing NagaWorld strike from May to November 2022. It highlights the various rights abuses that the strikers, many of whom are women, continued to experience at the hands of the authorities and their unwavering determination and efforts to advocate for their rights.

**MAY 2022**

Throughout May 2022, the NagaWorld strikers gathered regularly and were met with state-sponsored violence when attempting to approach the casino. Police officers kicked and brutally forced them onto city buses, which drove them to the city’s outskirts to keep them away from the NagaWorld building.

While peacefully gathering, one female striker was reportedly slapped by the authorities as they violently pushed her and other strikers into waiting buses. She further said that the responsible police officer ran away after slapping her and other police officers prevented other strikers from running after him.

One female striker reported she was slapped, while another was punched in the stomach while taking part in the strike. Other strikers were dragged and pushed into the waiting buses. The strikers present that day reported that at least three female strikers got injured by police.

**JUNE 2022**

Approximately 100 NagaWorld strikers gathered to deliver a petition to the Prime Minister (PM) and the National Assembly (NA). The gathering was monitored by the police. The petition, thumbprinted by 674 current and former NagaWorld workers, sought the PM’s and the NA’s intervention to solve the strikers’ labor dispute with NagaWorld. The strikers were able to deliver the petition to the PM’s cabinet but were then blocked from walking to the NA by the police who said it would affect public order. After half an hour of discussions, the group was allowed to go to the NA to deliver their petition.

A pregnant female striker reported that she was pushed and shoved into a bus by police while attempting to strike that day. Worried for her unborn child, she went to see a doctor a few days later, who told her that her baby only had a 50% chance of surviving. She had a miscarriage on 28 May 2022 and claimed that she almost lost her life due to constant bleeding.

The NagaWorld strike continued throughout June 2022, with multiple instances of violence by police to shove the strikers into city buses to prevent them from gathering in front of the casino. On various occasions, police also ordered human rights monitors and journalists to stay away from the strike site and threatened they would confiscate their equipment if they did not delete the photos and videos they had taken.

At least ten NagaWorld strikers were injured after the authorities violently dispersed their gathering as they attempted to reach the casino. One female striker said that she was insulted and hit on the head with a walkie-talkie and male strikers were grabbed by the hair and had their heads smashed against the side of a police car. The governmental Cambodian Human Rights Committee defended the authorities’ response as “an educational measure.”
During July 2022, the strikers continued to gather on several occasions. They were met with barricades and security forces, who sometimes resorted to violence to keep them away from the casino.

Representatives of ten unions and labor groups joined the strike, including Cambodian Alliance of Trade Union (CATU) President Yang Sophorn, and spoke to the 100 strikers gathered that day to encourage them. They also called members of other unions to join the strike in support of the NagaWorld workers. On the same day, 37 unions and CSOs issued a joint statement supporting the peaceful strike and urging the Government, especially the PM, to resolve the ongoing labor dispute. They also called on the authorities to stop violating the strikers’ rights and using violence and harassment against them.

CATU President Yang Sophorn received a letter from the Labor Ministry warning her to stop working beyond the scope of her profession and forcing NagaWorld workers to continue their strike, and threatening her with “punishment” if she continued her “illegal activities.”

The barricades that had previously kept the strikers from approaching the casino were open, allowing them to strike in front of the NagaWorld building for the first time in months. No interference from authorities was reported. Professor Vitt Muntarbhorn, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia (“UN SR”) - who was on an 11-day visit to Cambodia - was present at the strike site and monitored the gathering along with employees of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Cambodia. Labor rights activists believed the authorities’ lack of interference was an attempt by the Government to trick the UN SR into believing that rights and freedoms are upheld in the Kingdom. The strikers also expressed their concerns over the resumption of police violence after the departure of the UN human rights expert.

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After a short respite in police violence due to the presence of the UN SR in the country in August 2022, police violence against the NagaWorld strikers resumed in September.
The strikers were brutalized by the authorities while petitioning government institutions with other unionists and civil society organization (“CSO”) representatives to ask for their intervention in union-busting cases, causing two strikers to faint and leaving others with injuries. The Phnom Penh police denied the use of violence against the strikers and said that they were only present to maintain public order.

Seven union and CSO representatives held a press conference to discuss the ongoing NagaWorld labor dispute and find a solution. The conference also aimed to call on the company to reinstate the laid-off workers, pay seniority benefits and comply with the labor law.

**OCTOBER 2022**

Four female strikers asked the Phnom Penh Municipal Court to postpone their court appearance after being summoned to appear on that day to answer questions related to the lawsuit filed against them by NagaCorp. They said that they had received the summons only shortly before the summons date. One of the summoned strikers claimed that she and the three other strikers were targeted by the company for being active strikers and posting on social media or talking to the press about the strike. They believed the complaint is just NagaCorp’s latest move to scare the strikers and make them end their gatherings. Two other female strikers were summoned on the same grounds shortly after but were not able to appear on the set date for the same reasons and asked the court for a delay.

On 16 September 2022, the strikers were again subjected to violence by security forces while attempting to peacefully gather in front of NagaWorld. One female striker reported being violently hit and pushed against the barricades, injuring and knocking her down. Another striker reported seeing the authorities hitting and dragging strikers, leaving many with minor injuries. Security forces and barricades continued to be deployed on 18 September as the strikers continued their peaceful strike. They held banners and loudspeakers to sing advocacy songs, and called for the casino owners to come out to resolve the labor dispute.

The NagaWorld strikers gathered to cook in front of the building as a gesture of peaceful advocacy after they claimed the state authorities had failed to perform their duty to call on the company owners to come forward and resolve the labor dispute. A striker reported that the son of one of the company’s owners came out of the building, grabbed the striker’s phone, and smashed it to the floor. Later that day, NagaCorp — which operates NagaWorld — filed a complaint against four current and former NagaWorld employees, accusing them of breaking and entering, property damage and unlawful confinement.

A seventh striker presented herself to the Phnom Penh Municipal Court after being summoned for questioning on 22 October 2022. She submitted a request for a delay because she did not have a lawyer to represent her.

**NOVEMBER 2022**

The NagaWorld strikers continued to gather peacefully in the capital despite the Phnom Penh City Hall’s ban on all protests from 6 to 13 November due to the 2022 ASEAN Summit and warnings of legal action. The undeterred strikers stated they would continue to strike until a solution was found. On 11 November 2022, the strikers walked to the casino wearing traditional clothes and holding banners with various messages, including signs calling for an end to violence against women strikers, in the hope of seeing their longstanding labor dispute addressed at the ASEAN Summit.

Two NagaWorld strikers were questioned by the Phnom Penh Municipal Court on 14 November 2022, while another was questioned the next day over the unclear allegations made by NagaCorp in October. Around 40 strikers gathered outside of the court to show their support to the summoned strikers. The strikers said they could not obtain clarification from the court about what they were accused of. One of the questioned strikers reported that the court asked when she intended to stop striking.

On 16 November 2022, an eighth female striker was summoned by the court, which also asked her whether she and the other strikers planned to continue their strike. She responded that the strikers were merely seeking a solution to their labor dispute and that any arrest or conviction of strikers would be unfair. She also requested the court to drop all the charges against the NagaWorld union leaders and strikers.

The 2022 International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women marks almost a year since the NagaWorld strikers started to peacefully strike to demand better respect for their rights. Throughout this year, the many women who joined the strike were subjected to regular rights abuses and to state-sponsored violence, reflecting the country’s failure to respect, protect, and fulfill women’s rights.