Public order draft law in danger of worsening blame culture, say CCHR

Sok Srey Lux / Khmer Times

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Chak Sopheap, executive director of CCHR, talks with journalists outside the municipal court in June 2018. Khmer Times

The Executive Director of the Cambodian Center for Human Rights Chak Sopheap has said that victim-blame culture encourages violence against women and the public order new draft law is in danger of exacerbating this issue.

The comments came during a live stream by the Youth Resource Development Programme on Facebook yesterday.

During the live video, Sopheap said that even though the law is only currently at its first stage of drafting, the proposed articles already threaten people’s freedom of expression, resulting in the public, CSO and NGO backlash calling to scrap the draft law”.

“The mindset which suggests that the way women dress and their behaviour are the reason that they get raped, as though they are wearing a sign which allows it, is completely wrong,” she said.

“The sign people read should be, ‘I may be wearing shorts but I don’t ask you to rape me’. For men it should read ‘I am a man and I won’t rape anyone, or think it’s acceptable because of the way they dress’, as that is the correct message,” she said.
Gender and Development for Cambodia programme manager Eng Chandy also featured on the live stream and said: “If society recognises and takes action on sexual harassment, it will be taken seriously as an issue and sexual harassment cases will decrease. However, this currently doesn’t happen and therefore it has become common place. This law just perpetuates a victim-blaming culture,” she said.

“Also, some of the laws – such as indecent exposure – are already covered in the Criminal Code,” she added.

Article 249 of the Criminal Code covers “Indecent exposure” and that anyone found guilty of the act in a public place faces between six days and three months in prison and a fine between $25 and $125.

Details:https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50760102/public-order-draft-law-in-danger-of-worsening-blame-culture-say-cchr/?fbclid=IwAR2wQsNv_rjyGP5IqcxrTnr081tvAZCTwXrW5VbrSd7OBZQom1aou5SRAko