



Singer Pov Panha Pich was shot twice while on her way to attend an English-language school in Phnom Penh in 2007. PHOTO-SUPPLIED

Five years later, singer warily looks to home

Sou Vuthy and Seth Kimsoeun

SINGER Pov Panha Pich, who fled the country in 2007 after being critically wounded in a brazen assassination attempt, will return to Cambodia soon, because her family has run out of money to pay for further treatment in Thailand, her sister said yesterday.

At the age of 23, the well-known singer and actress was gunned down in Phnom Penh while entering her English school. The masked gunman, riding on the back of a motorbike, shot her once in the neck and once in the abdomen, paralyzing her.

Her assailants were never found, and no suspects named. At the time, then-Municipal Police chief Touch Narothea said officials suspected it was a revenge attack. In a concurrent diplomatic cable published by WikiLeaks, then-US Ambassador Joseph M. M. M. wrote of the attack: "Rumors suggest that the entertainer was

romantically linked to a high-level government official, and National Police Commissioner Hok Lundy has been named as a possible love interest."

Pov Sotheary, Panha Pich's older sister, said yesterday the family had run out of money for the singer's treatment and rental home and likely she would be forced to return to Cambodia.

"The exact date is unsure and she is still frightened for her safety," added Sotheary, noting that no leads had been made in the case.

National Police spokesman Kirt Chantharith and Ministry of Interior spokesman Khieu Sopheak could not be reached for comment. National Military Police spokesman Kheng Tito said he had not looked into the case but would consider investigating.

The case of Panha Pich followed a number of headline-making assaults on popular singers and actresses who were widely believed to have been involved with high-ranking officials. ■