

✓ Two People Charged for Facilitating Prostitution

The Phnom Penh Municipal Court yesterday heard the case of two Vietnamese nationals charged with facilitating prostitution. Vieng Thi Yong, 31, and her brother, Vieng Yang Diek, 30, were arrested in September for housing eight girls from Kampong Chhnang province, aged between 16 and 18 years, in their Boeng Keng Kang III commune home between 2011 and 2012 and selling them to men at nearby guesthouses and hotels, officials said. But Ms. Yong told the court yesterday that she and her brother had only used the girls as masseuses because they owed her money for rent and loans. “I would take \$2 from them when they came back from giving massages. I do not know about them going to have sex with guests at hotels,” she said, adding that she charged the eight girls \$60 a month in rent and had loaned some of them between \$300 and \$500. One of the girls, Thi Pha, 18, told the court she had to have sex with clients in order to pay back a \$500 loan. “Sometimes Vieng Thi Yong and her brother told us to go massage and then have sex,” she said. A verdict will be announced March 6. (*Phok Dorn*)