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UN Council Decries Syrian Use of Force

REUTERS

UNITED NATIONS - In its first substantive action on Syria's five-month-old uprising, the UN Security Council on Wednesday overcame deep divisions and condemned Damascus' bloody crack-down on civilian protesters.

The move came a day ahead of a fresh tank assault in embattled Hama as the forces of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad pushed to occupy the city center, a sharp escalation that claimed the lives of at least 45 civilians, according to one activist.

The only dissenter to Wednesday's Security Council statement was Lebanon, where Syrian influence is strong. Beirut disassociated itself from a formal statement, agreed to by the other 14 members, that backers said helped to isolate the Syrian leadership.

The statement, read out to a council meeting by Indian Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, this month's president of the body, "condemns widespread violations of human rights and the use of force against civilians by the Syrian authorities."

The document, agreed to after three days of hard bargaining instead of a full council resolution that the West would have preferred, urged Damascus to fully respect human rights and comply with its obligations under international law.

It called for "an immediate end to all violence and urges all sides to act with utmost restraint, and to

Continued on page 2



Philip Heijmans / The Cambodia Daily

Ros Sok Sambo, an owner of two apartments in danger of collapsing along Phnom Penh's Sisowath Quay, yesterday helps other owners put up warning signs and cordon off a safety perimeter around the pavement in front of buildings 377 and 375.

Plans Name Developer of Sisowath Quay Site

BY PHANN ANA
AND SIMON MARKS
THE CAMBODIA DAILY

Architectural plans of a property development that is blamed for causing structural damage to French colonial-era buildings on Phnom Penh's Sisowath Quay show drawings of a five-story residential building, complete with underground car parking.

According to the plans, dated July 11, the mysterious company behind the development is called

Sam Ang Vattanac Company.

According to the plans, Sam Ang Vattanac Co will build a 14-meter tall building that includes a basement level garage going down 3.2 meters, with enough space to fit 18 cars. Cars will be able to drive into the property from the street and will be sent underground via a car lift.

The ground floor includes an interior garden, waterfall and a restaurant. The first floor has four "dining rooms" as well as an of-

fice and a storage room. The next three floors each show plans for bedrooms complete with en suite bathrooms. The top of the building has a terrace.

The plans, thumbprinted by a Mr Sam Ang Vattanac, state that the project agrees to follow laws on safety and design. It also states that the company agrees to draw up "detailed plans of construction materials" and will "ask for permission to start construction from the

Continued on page 29

Mondolkiri's Banong Culture on the Precipice

BY KUCH NAREN
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THE CAMBODIA DAILY

SEN MONOROM CITY, Mondolkiri province - Bamboo houses with arched thatch roofs once marked the hilltribe villages that dotted the green valleys and grassy hills of this northeastern province.

Now, Khmer-style wooden houses on stilts are all the rage. And though they have their own language, young members of the Banong minority in Mondolkiri often only speak the Khmer language now, while traditional Banong dress

is reserved only for special occasions—a sign, some believe, that their traditions and culture is fading fast as Mondolkiri connects more with Cambodia's lowlands.

"The future of the [Banong] people as an ethnic group is limited," said Bill Herod, a longtime development worker in Cambodia who moved to Sen Monorom City several years ago.

"I am deeply concerned that we might be in the last decade," Mr Herod said.

The Banong, who once practiced rotational farming in the pro-

vince's forests and have animist beliefs, are still the dominant ethnic group in Mondolkiri province. But their language, culture and religion are being rapidly lost.

Their traditional skills are dying along with the elderly Banong people, who once knew how to capture wild elephants in the forests, spin wool for their clothes and make the dyes that gave the bright colors to their garments, Mr Herod said.

The young "have some pride in their [Banong] background, but

Continued on page 2

About Cambodia

- Case 003 Investigation Requests Rejected
- Five Men Jailed for Anti-Government Leaflets
- Latest Draft of NGO Law Met With Complaints Page 27
- B'bang Protesters Seek Help in Land Dispute
- Economic Plan for Mekong Region Gets Finalized
- Newly Paved Road Expected to Up M'kiri Trade Page 28
- Orphanage Director Denies Allegations of Mistreatment
- SRP Will Convene Its Fifth Party Congress in September Page 30
- Business Registrations Up 34% This Year Page 31