

DCCAM'S PROMOTING ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT:

Field trip's note in Oddar Meanchey, Banteay Meanchey, Pailin and Battambang Provinces

June 21st through 24th, 2016

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From June 21st through 24th, 2016, PA team (Long Dany, Sok Vannak; and Seang Chenda) visited Oddar Meanchey, Banteay Meanchey, Pailin and Battambang provinces. PA team's mission to those provinces is to investigate and interview Khmer Rouge cadres during the DK regime. As a result, we managed to interview 2 cadres serving and working in Region 41 of the Central Zone. Below is a brief summary of the interviews:

The first interview was conducted with a fifty-five-year-old Him Huy, a farmer, currently living in Santepheap village, Trapeang Prey commune, Anlong Veng district, Oddar Meanchey province. Huy is married to Him Ly, and has 5 children the eldest among 3 siblings to a farming family in Kampong Thom province, Huy was able to study until grade 8 (in the old system). Once the coup in 1970 erupted, Huy decided to quit school and stay with his parents. When the Khmer Rouge came to power in 1975, Huy was assigned to a child unit to perform labor like carrying cowdung and so on. In actuality, Huy worked in Region 42 located near Kampong Thom province. When the Vietnamese soldiers arrived in Cambodia in 1979, Huy along with a group of children began to escape to Chamkar Leu district. Huy fled until encountering [Ta] An in [Mountain] Phnom 1001; after seeing a group of children, [Ta] An brought them with him. Huy was assigned as a medical staff. Later, he was sent to attend a medical training course for a while. After completing his course, Huy resumed responsibility as [Ta] An's personal medical staff. At that time, [Ta] An suffered from phthisis and a urinary problem. Having lived in [Mountain] Phnom 1001, Huy moved to Phnom 1003 in the vicinity of O Trav Camp. After the arrival of the United Nations, [Ta] An became a normal citizen. Two years later when Anlong Veng was liberated, Huy moved to live in his current village and worked in Anlong Veng hospital. During that time, the hospital's services provided medical treatment to both ordinary citizens and injured military. Until 1998 integration, Huy continued serving as a medical staff. Three years later, he was transferred to Oddar Meanchey

provincial hospital, where he worked until June, 2016; he has now retired from his hospital work.

Observation: Initially seeing PA team's presence at his home made Huy feel a bit strange, but ultimately he felt confident and did not hesitate to be interviewed. It is obvious Huy is open and approachable as he recounted his life beginning after 1979. However, reiterating that he deliberately did not want to share what he had done during the Khmer Rouge regime. Undeniably, Huy was unwilling to tell us about that.

The second interview was conducted with seventy-year-old Yuk Ngov alias Chum Vong, a retired teacher, currently living in O-Run village, Thlat commune, Anlong Veng district, Oddar Meanchey province. Ngov has been married to Chhouk Van, with whom he had 2 children. Standing 5th amongst 8 siblings in a farmer family in Chhouk district, Kampot province, Ngov received an education up until grade 2 (in the old system) at Chhouk High School, enabling him to learn and speak both Khmer and French. By the time a coup to depose King Sihanouk in 1970 ignited, Ngov quit school and was assigned to teach children, since his village had already become a liberated area. In late 1970, Ngov voluntarily joined the revolution, serving as a district soldier under [Ta] Chen's supervision. In 1972, he was transferred as a Region 35 soldier. By that time, Roen was a chief of regional soldier and [Ta] Kang Chab was regional chief. Later, Ngov was sent to battle against the North Vietnamese soldiers (Vietcong) with the goal of arresting Tu Cam, a Vietnamese regional chief. Until Phnom Penh was liberated, Ngov's unit was sent to protect Kampot provincial town. Later, Ngov was dispatched to Region 35 again and at the same time, [Ta] Am became a chief of regional office. In 1978, Ngov was transferred to Kampong Cham province after [Ta] Am had been sent there for a while. Meanwhile, [Ta] Kang had been dispatched to Siem Reap province. Arriving in Kampong Cham, Ngov was able to depict the central zone:

- Region 41 was located in Prey Tortoeng and [Ta] An was a regional chief.
- Region 42 was located in Stung Trang; regional chief was unknown.

- Region 43 was situated somewhere near Kampong Thom province; regional chief was also unknown.

Under [Ta] An's management, Region 41 was separated into 6 districts:

- [Ta] Sy became a chief of Kampong Siem district after [Yeay] Yut had been transferred.
- [Ta] Kan was a chief of Kang Meas district, and Ngov's wife became a chef for [Ta] Kan.
- [Ta] Sim became a chief of Prey Chhor district.
- [Ta] Mon was a chief of Cheung Prey district.
- [Ta] Phim alias Phal was a chief of Batheay district.

Later [Ta] Am, a chief of regional office, was transferred off and [Ta] Aun was put in charge instead, resulting in Ngov was spied on by [Ta] An's regional guards. At that time, Ngov learnt that Sokh was a chief of the regional soldiers as Hoeun was transferred to the zone, but was later accused of treason. Ongoing arrests still occurred, for instance, Sop, a chief of Krauch-Kor security office was captured and sent to Kampong Cham provincial town. Ngov later assumed that the arrest was held based on confessions. Therefore after arresting one another, Ngov was suspected by the leaders. As a result, he was assigned to take control of Krauch-Kor prison for a while after Sop was taken away. Ngov affirmed that he felt very scared after his transfer to the prison because if he made a mistake, he would have been executed. Arriving in Krauch-Kor prison, Ngov saw 20 prisoners, one of whom was Lay, [Ta] An's former driver. According to Ngov, before an arrest, a report was always sent to regional chief [Ta] An. In another report, it was stated that these prisoners were to be released, but instead, they had disappeared until now. Three months later, the Vietnamese soldiers arrived. At the same time, many regional cadres had escaped just as Ngov and his messenger fled from Kang Meas to Skun by moto. Ngov continued on his fleeing journey to Staung and finally returned to Taing Krasaing. In 1982, Ngov moved to [Mountain] Phnom Dang Rek where he met [Ta] An, but did not stay with him. Ngov made a decision to live in a village in the deeper forest where living conditions were better. It was not until 1987 that Ngov encountered his wife along a Thai-border

camp. Once the Khmer Rouge captured Anlong Veng in 1990, Ngov and his family moved to live there. A year after the 1998 integration, Ngov became a teacher in Thlat School and in 2000 was transferred to Anlong Veng Primary School. Then, he became a principal of Anlong Veng High School. In 2006, he was transferred to the district educational office where he worked until 2013, when he retired from his work.

Observation: Ngov provided fruitful information relating to Region 41. As a retired officer of Anlong Veng District Education Office, Ngov was approachable and open for this interview. Everything went well during the interview however; Ngov deliberately did not want to tell us anything about his time in charge of the Krauch Kor Security Office, where many lives were put to death. Perhaps he was afraid of sharing any involvement while the office was under his control.