

CAMBODIA TRIBUNAL MONITOR'S OUTREACH TO DEWEY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, BATTAMBANG PROVINCE

On December 12, 2013, the Cambodia Tribunal Monitor (CTM) team traveled to Dewey International University in Battambang province and gave a presentation to 112 high school and university students, 60 of who were female students. The focus of the presentation was to discuss about the Khmer Rouge history with students, explain to the students on how to use the website www.cambodiatribunal.org for their studies or research, and to update them on the Khmer Rouge tribunal process.

First to present was Ms. Chea Phalla. She introduced the team to the students and showed them a short documentary film on S-21 prison in 1979 that DC-Cam received from the Vietnamese government. After the film, she briefed them on the Khmer Rouge history and how the Khmer Rouge came to power until its fall in 1979.

Ms. Phalla raised this question before she started her presentation, "Did you ever asked your parents about the Khmer Rouge regime?" Some student answered, "Yes, I did but because of my parents were very young at that time so they could not tell us about the regime as much then they know."



Students posted questions to the presenters

Socheata, 19, grade 12, requested the government to improve on the education system that looks good in the image but in the practice is very weak and poor. The topic of Khmer Rouge regime should have been taught openly to young students in all levels and let all of them discuss and research on the topic.

Meas Srey Kouch, 18, grade 12, also urged to the young generation or students to study more about the Khmer Rouge regime that could build their capacity to help Cambodia to move forward without any cruel regime from happening in the country again. It is like what some people have said, "Stupid make wars happen."

In addition, Ken Thorn, 20, also wanted to urge the government to remain peaceful in the country and she does not want to see any conflict in Cambodia.

Ms. Kim Sovannandy then introduced the website www.cambodiartibunal.org to the students that focused on three main importation tabs (Trial observer, Multimedia and Commentary).

After a 10 minutes break, Mr. Lim Cheytoath explained to the student about the ECCC trial hearings progress and noted some key words that were used in the court. The end of the presentations, many questions relating to the KR trial process and about the KR regime were posed by the students.

Here were some of interesting questions from the students:



1. Would the Khmer Rouge leaders' family be arrested or judged for the same crime?
2. Is the delay of the trial proceeding due to money problems?
3. What is case 001 and case 002?
4. Why are the trial delayed until today?
5. Why are there less funding now?
6. Why did the judges sentence Duch for 35years and then when the prosecutors requested to add more years the judges agreed?
7. Khmer Rouge regime was an agricultures country, why were there starvation?
8. Khmer Rouge leaders were well educated, why did they kill the people who were fully educated?

Student's reaction to the presentation:

Khen Thorn, 20 years old, grade 12

Studying the Khmer Rouge history shed more light on my knowledge on the regime, and it made me feel sympathy towards victims of the Khmer Rouge. The tribunal allows chance for victims to see and listen to account of the KR leaders. I would like to pray for peace to my country.

Meas Srey Khouch, 18 years old, grade 12

The Khmer Rouge deprived food and freedom from the people. Compared to present life, it is hurtful for older people who endured that regime.

My grandfather who worked for Lon Nol government died during the Khmer Rouge. My grandmother believed that he was taken to be killed. She was told that the Khmer Rouge wanted my grandfather to plant the vegetables for three or four day. He never comes back since then. I really hate Pol Pot regime.

Seng Socheata, 19 years old, grade 12

This workshop is very important for me. It taught me the importance of learning my own history. I am Cambodian and my family is also victim in the Khmer Rouge regime. Previously I learned only about Hitler's regime that killed many people. But when I saw the film screened by the team, I realized that my country also experienced the mass killings.

The Khmer Rouge tribunal is very important for the country. This can inform future leaders of the country that they have to be responsible for they do.



Rapporteur: Kim Sovanndany

Editor: Sreyneath Poole

Presenter: Chea Phalla, Lim Cheytoath, and Kim Sovanndany

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