

# មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

## A PRESENTATION: THE CAMBODIA TRIBUNAL MONITOR ANGKOR KHEMARA UNIVERSITY, KAMPONG SPEU PROVINCE

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Angkor Khemara University Students with the CTM Team

### Introduction

The Cambodia Tribunal Monitor (CTM) of the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) provides public access to the tribunals and the atrocities under the Khmer Rouge regime. Through reports, video footage and expert commentary on the website the public are able to follow the daily proceedings and developments at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC).

To engage with the public, the team conducts presentations in different universities in Cambodia. The primary goals of these presentations are to educate the next generation about the atrocities committed during the Khmer Rouge period, provide them with a cursory knowledge of the legal proceedings at the ECCC, and introduce the CTM website for a research tool.

### Presentation

One day prior to the presentation, CTM team arrived at Angkor Khemara University and met with director and deputy director of the university for a quick introduction and to assess the

facility and equipment. The team tried to gauge the deputy director to assess his students' knowledge on the Khmer Rouge history. The deputy director told the team that his students' knowledge is very basic because the university only requires basic knowledge on Cambodian history in its curriculum. This allowed CTM team to make a quick assessment as to how to approach the students and conduct their presentations.

On November 15, 2013 CTM team gave a three-hour-long presentation to ninety Angkor Khemara University students, all of who were in their first and second year of their undergraduate studies. Majority of the students majors in banking management, finance, or literature studies. DC-Cam published documents were distributed to the students that included issue number twenty-one of the Trial Observation booklet, Case 002 booklet that profiles the ex-Khmer Rouge leaders and their crimes, and the Democratic Kampuchea history textbook. The presentation was divided in three parts: history of the Democratic Kampuchea, Cambodian Tribunal Monitor (CTM) website, and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC). DC-Cam's Ms. Chea Phalla, Mrs. Kim Sovannandy, and Ms. Dy Socheata presented each part respectively. A representative from USAID, a donor of the project, was also present at the presentation.

The deputy director of Angkor Khemara University officially opened the event. He talked to his students about the importance of the Khmer Rouge history and its effects and legacies. Ms. Chea Phalla also added to the deputy director's talk and briefly introduced DC-Cam and CTM project to the students to give them a general idea of the work that DC-Cam does. Before beginning her presentation, Ms. Chea Phalla asked the students to make a further quick assessment on students' knowledge on the Khmer Rouge history. All said that they did not study the subject in high school; however, they have heard stories from their parents and relatives. This begs several questions on the Cambodian school curriculum in which a chapter in the government-issued textbook is dedicated to the history of the Democratic Kampuchea that students should learn before students can complete high school. However, when asked if they have heard about the ECCC, students said that they were aware. An explanation of the students' awareness could have been attributed to the university's close proximity to the ECCC.

Before giving a presentation on the history of the Democratic Kampuchea, a short footage of Toul Sleng or S-21 prison that was filmed right after the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime was

shown. Students watched with attention and reacted with confusion, sadness, and some anger. Ms. Chea Phalla gave an overview of the Democratic Kampuchea, especially focusing on the profiles of the accused ex-Khmer Rouge leaders in Case 002 of the ECCC. When pictures of the accused leaders in Case 002 were shown, students failed to identify them, which further shows their lack of knowledge on the history of the Khmer Rouge and the trials.

A second presentation on the Cambodian Tribunal Monitor (CTM) website was presented by Mrs. Kim Sovannandy. With the website projected on the big screen, Mrs. Kim Sovannandy went through how to use the website with the students. She showed them where to find specific information if the students choose to conduct independent research on the topic or want to learn and be updated on the trial proceedings. She also mentioned to students that, unlike facebook, the CTM website is intended for academic use and not for commercial activities. This comment was made because suggestions by students from previous presentations around the country had asked the team to link CTM with facebook, because of the frequency that Cambodians use on this social-networking site. Mrs. Kim Sovannandy also showed a short video clip of some military officials' reactions to the trials at the ECCC. However, the content of the video could not be heard due to technical difficulty. Even with the lack of sound, what was important that students should have taken from the video was that there are available resources such as videos of different people's reactions that DC-Cam have documented over the years in which students can use for research.

Ms. Dy Socheata gave a final presentation on the ECCC. She talked to the students about Case 002/01 and talked about why the case was divided. Given that all of the students have no legal background, their understanding of how the trial proceedings operate is minimal and legal vocabulary is limited. Ms. Dy Socheata explained to the students about ECCC and Case 002 in layman's term to explain to the students. However, even with simple language, some students appeared to be confused about Case 002 and about the accused. During the Q&A session, a female student emotionally expressed her opinion on what she have heard from the presentation and showed her confusion when she said that both Ieng Sary and Ieng Therith passed away before judgment that reflected her fear that former high-ranking Khmer Rouge leaders might die before judgment can be passed.

Some notable questions that were asked during the Q&A session were as follow:

- How can justice be served to victims of the Khmer Rouge regime if the accused dies before judgment is given?
- Were there any foreign involvement in the setting up and establishment of the Democratic Kampuchea regime?
- What sort of prisoners was sent to S-21 and for what crime?
- Can the accused be given capital punishment?
- Why was there no foreign intervention, given the mass killing that was happening in the Democratic Kampuchea?

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