

ប្រជុំបណ្តុះបណ្តាលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

PRESENTATION OF THE CAMBODIA TRIBUNAL MONITOR TEAM ANGKOR KHEMARA UNIVERSITY, PURSAT PROVINCE



Angkor Khemara University Students with CTM's Team

Introduction

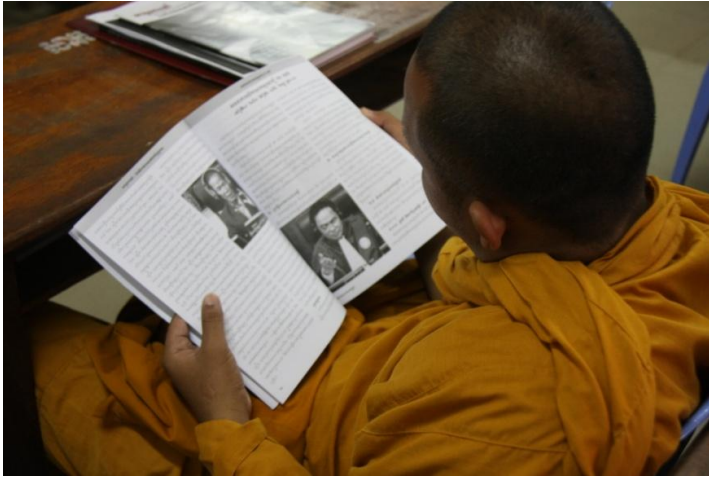
The Cambodia Tribunal Monitor of the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) provides public access to the tribunals and the atrocities under the Khmer Rouge regime. Through reports, video footage and expert commentary on the website the public are able to follow the daily proceedings and developments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

To engage with the public, the team conducts two presentations a month at two 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 and provide them with a cursory knowledge of the legal proceedings at the ECCC. With these, the team intends to: (1) to provide critical assessments to the ECCC as needed to contribute to a fair and effective process; (3) to disseminate up-to-date information to Cambodians explaining the Case 002 proceedings via a two-page Khmer-language bulletin on a monthly basis; and (4) to equip young Cambodian law students with the skills to monitor and analyze trial proceedings.

On March 22, 2013 a presentation was held at Angkor Khemara University in Pursat province. Divided into three main parts, the presentation provided students with information on Tuol Sleng and the history of the Khmer Rouge, the legal proceedings and developments

at the ECCC and the Cambodia Tribunal Monitor website. At the conclusion of each part students were allowed to pose questions and comments.

Part I: The History of the Khmer Rouge



Monk Student reads Trial Observation Booklet

Ms. Phalla Chea opened the presentation with an introduction of the presenters, and the origin and purpose of DC-Cam. She then provided a brief description and screening of the documentary “Tuol Sleng”. After the footage concluded, Phalla asked the audience how they felt after watching the gruesome images on the screen and what they knew about Tuol Sleng. Some answered that they had been to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum while others enquired about its location.

As a slideshow of recent pictures of Tuol Sleng were displayed on the screen, Ms. Phalla narrated the history of Tuol Sleng and its transition from high school to torture center to genocide museum. She spoke about the methods of torture used by the Khmer Rouge and explained the audience that Tuol Sleng was established to imprison high-ranking officials during Democratic Kampuchea. Before the conclusion of her presentation Ms. Phalla displayed pictures of Choeung Ek (Killing Fields) where the victims of Tuol Sleng were usually killed.

Part II: Cambodian Tribunal Monitor (CTM) Website

Ms. Phalla then turned the floor over to Mrs. Kim Sovannanny to speak about the CTM website. With the homepage displayed on the screen behind her, Mrs. Sovannanny outlined the origin and purpose of the website. She explained that the website had three main components—a blog, multimedia and news. The blog contains commentary from students attending Northwestern University, the DC-Cam team as well as documents in both English and Khmer. The videos on the website consists of footage of the trial (in English, Khmer and French) and the reactions of victims while the news section draws articles from various periodicals and journals that include the Cambodia Daily and New York Times. Mrs. Sovannanny also drew the audience’s attention to the expert commentary provided on the website, and emphasized that the team translates much of what is available on the website into Khmer.



Students watch Documentary Film

She concluded that the CTM website is a useful and incomparable tool through which students can research and learn more about the Khmer Rouge history and ongoing tribunals.

Part III: The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia



Chhay Chhunly Presents to the Students

The last part of the presentation was given by Ms. Chhunly Chhay who spoke about the ECCC and recent developments in Case 002, most specifically the death of Ieng Sary and the health of Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan. After introducing herself Ms. Chhunly described the history of the court and the process of its establishment. She stated that the jurisdiction of the court focused exclusively on the senior KR leaders, and those most responsible for the crimes committed during the Democratic Kampuchea period. All those put on trial were accused of committing crimes against humanity, genocide and the violation of the Geneva Conventions.

To more clearly explain the jurisdiction of the court she explained that Case 001 was the trial of the most responsible while Case 002 focused exclusively on providing justice through the prosecution of the senior leaders. Ms. Chhunly then displayed a slideshow of

pictures of the accused (Nuon Chea, Khieu Samphan, Ieng Sary and Ieng Tarith), and briefly narrated the history and background of each individual.

Moving onto the recent developments in Case 002, she talked about the financial issues facing the court, and the death of Ieng Sary and its impact. With his demise, Ms. Chhunly explained, all legal proceedings against him were dropped without the trial reaching any final conclusion. Therefore in the court of law Ieng Sary will never be held responsible for the crimes he committed. His death also robbed the people of Cambodia the opportunity to learn the truth about the Khmer Rouge period.

Ms. Chhunly told the audience that Case 002 would continue with the trial of the remaining accused—Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea. She emphasized that the conclusion of this trial would play an important role in the promotion of reconciliation and justice in Cambodia.

Part III of the presentation was particularly interactive with members of the audience answering her questions, and putting forward some of their own. The response to Ms. Chhunly's question about the definition of genocide was particularly interesting as a young girl stated that it was an "auto-genocide" since Khmers had killed other Khmers.

Questions and Comments

With only twenty participants there was a greater opportunity for interaction between the audience and presenters. The participants put a number of questions and comments forward and those considered particularly important are given below.

After the conclusion of Part II of the presentation a student commented that he had watched a video in which Khieu Samphan denied responsibility or knowledge of the mass killing. Ms. Phalla answered that the other leaders echoed this denial. Another student questioned why the UN had not intervened during the Khmer Rouge period and stopped the atrocities. Ms. Phalla answered that with the Cold War the Security Council was divided between China and Russia on one hand, and America on the other. Therefore through the power of veto no decision could be reached. Two students questioned why the Khmer Rouge had killed on such a large scale. Focusing on the extreme labor demanded during the regime, Ms. Phalla tried to explain why 1.7 million members of the Cambodian population had perished in less than four years. One student enquired what was the difference between the Pol Pot regime and Khmer Rouge.

Conclusion

Prior and during the initial course of the presentation questions by the audience revealed that many had a limited knowledge about the Khmer Rouge and the ECCC. At the conclusion of the presentation it was evident through comments that the goals of the presentation had been achieved. A monk stated that the presentation had taught him more about the Khmer Rouge. Another student commented that prior to the presentation she had no interest in the history of the Khmer Rouge but over the last two hours this had changed. Similarly, another student stated that before the presentation he learnt about the Khmer Rouge regime from his parents and believed only 50 percent in it, but now his belief moves up to 75 percent. Moving forward it would be beneficial to hold follow up sessions, as suggested by a participant, to provide more information on the Khmer Rouge and ECCC.