

Documentation Center of Cambodia

Museum of Memory

History endures:
the Opening Ceremony of an exhibition entitled
"The Forced Transfer: the Second Evacuation of People
during the Khmer Rouge Regime"
at
Kampong Thom Provincial Museum

August 19-23, 2014

Report¹ by Men Pechet, Seng Kunthy, Chhay Davin, and Pich Chhunhak

Photos by Ouch Maraka

*"History endures.
Everyone has to learn and remember
one's own history, whether glorious or bloody."*

*-- Ms. Sin Sinet, a civil party before the Khmer Rouge
Tribunal, who participated in the opening ceremony
of the Khmer Rouge exhibition at Kampong Thom
Provincial Museum on August 22, 2014*



*Opening Ceremony of Exhibition on Forced Transfer in
Kampong Thom Provincial Museum on August 22, 2014.*

¹ Edited by Elaine McKinnon

Introduction

Following the inauguration of exhibitions on “The Forced Transfer: the Second Evacuation of People during the Khmer Rouge Regime” at the provincial museums of Battambang and Banteay Meanchey, the Documentation Center of Cambodia’s Museum of Memory and the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts launched another opening ceremony at the Kampong Thom Provincial Museum on 22 August 2014. More than three hundred people attended the ceremony, including civil parties and complainants before the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, Khmer Rouge survivors, villagers, Cham Muslims, university students, students at the Kampong Thom Pedagogical School, and government officials from Kampong Thom provincial town. All of the attendees had an opportunity to learn about Khmer Rouge history and to engage in discussions about their life experiences during the regime in an effort to facilitate remembrance and reconciliation in Cambodia.

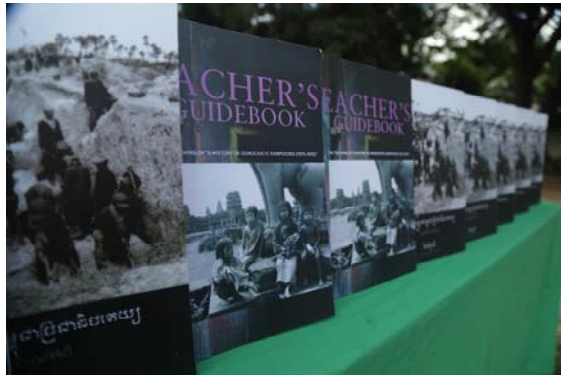


Preparation of the Opening Ceremony of exhibition on Forced Transfer which will be held at Kampong Thom Provincial Museum on August 22, 2014.

Background

As a collaborative project between the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam), the Museum of Memory is pleased to announce the opening ceremony of “Forced Transfer during the Khmer Rouge Regime” exhibition at the Kampong Thom Provincial Museum, which was held on August 22, 2014. Two similar exhibitions have previously been installed in the

provincial museums of Battambang and Banteay Meanchey. The first phase of this museum exhibition project includes the creation and management of exhibitions in five provincial museums located in Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Kampong Thom, Takeo and Sihanoukville.



Books that are distributed to the participants during the Opening Ceremony on August 22, 2014.

The Museum of Memory project chose to highlight “forced transfer” in their exhibitions to coincide with Case 002/01 of the ECCC and its focus on prosecuting crimes related to the forced transfer of the Cambodian population during the Khmer Rouge years. A common motif throughout each of the exhibits at the provincial museums is the use of a train to display information. The forced transfer of people by train, exacerbated by separation of families, starvation, execution and genocide, touched nearly every geographic region of Cambodia.

Along with Battambang Province, Kampong Thom is well-known for its rice production. In order to achieve high yields of rice production, the Khmer Rouge required extensive networks of water reservoirs such as dams, dikes and canals. Many people who were evacuated from different parts of the country, including new/city people, were assigned to build dams to reserve water for cultivating rice. A major dam which was constructed in Kampong Thom during the Khmer Rouge years was 1 January Dam--*Tumnup 1 Makara*. According to DC-Cam’s mapping report, Kampong Thom is dotted with seventeen crime sites throughout Baray, Kampong Svay, Stung Sen, Prasat Balang, Prasat Sambor, Sandan, Santuk, and Stong districts. A significant but unknown portion of the deaths at those crime sites was attributable to the construction of dams. Survivors recalled that people were forced to work as slaves to satisfy the production goals set by the CPK (Communist Party of Kampuchea) Central Committee, while their social welfare needs were totally ignored, leading to widespread death from disease, exhaustion, and execution. The people continued to suffer until January 1979, when the Khmer Rouge regime was toppled.

History endures: opening ceremony of the exhibition entitled “The Forced Transfer: the Second Evacuation of People during the Khmer Rouge Regime” at Kampong Thom Provincial Museum

During the opening ceremony, mixed feelings of doubt, satisfaction, sorrow and regret filled the air throughout the compound of the Kampong Thom Provincial Museum as attendees recalled their experiences during the Khmer Rouge Regime.

It was apparent that young students had many doubts in their mind as to how such a brutal regime could have come to power in Cambodia. They wondered why so many people had been killed, subjected to hard labor and starved. This confusion led many young participants to stand up and ask questions of the Khmer Rouge survivors as well as the guest speakers.

Eng Voleak, a 20-year-old student from Krong Angkor Institute, commented that her participation in this event helped her understand more about the Khmer Rouge regime, especially about the evacuation of Cambodian people during that time. Voleak added that the stories terrified her.



Pedagogy School students participate the Opening Ceremony in Kampong Thom Provincial Museum on August 22, 2014.

Him Hongkry, a 20-year-old student from the Kampong Thom Pedagogical School, noted that based on the experiences of the Khmer Rouge survivors, the evacuation of people during the Khmer Rouge regime resulted in family separation, forced labor, disease, starvation, and death. The beautiful countryside of Cambodia became filled with pits where many bodies lay buried.

“History endures. Everyone has to learn and remember one’s own history,” said Ms. Sin Sinet, a civil party before the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, who participated in the opening ceremony. According to Ms. Sinet, this exhibition will educate younger generations about the hardships their parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and others experienced during the Khmer Rouge regime. She considers it the reparation she expected from the Khmer Rouge Tribunal. This effort represents an important opportunity for people to learn about the past. With a sorrowful face, Ms. Sinet recalled her experiences during the Khmer Rouge regime, when she was separated from her beloved grandfather and evacuated to Kampong Thom Province. Her grandfather was later arrested and killed at S-21 Prison. After the collapse of the Khmer Rouge regime, Ms. Sinet never returned to Phnom Penh because none of her relatives had survived.

Mr. Diep Toma, a 53-year-old teacher at Kamsot Secondary School, expressed his view that this exhibition would enrich young generations about the history of the Khmer Rouge. However, he requested that the museum provide more space to [the Documentation Center of Cambodia] so that more stories could be included. Mr. Toma suggested that similar exhibitions should be initiated in the meantime in order to provide more opportunities for people in the province, particularly the young

generations who were born after the Khmer Rouge regime, to learn about Khmer Rouge history.



Villagers participate the Opening Ceremony in Kampong Thom Provincial Museum on August 22, 2014.

Conclusion

The Khmer Rouge exhibition on “The Forced Transfer: the Second Evacuation of People during the Khmer Rouge Regime” in Kampong Thom Provincial Museum serves not only as reparation for civil parties in Case 002/01 before the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, but also as an additional resource for young generations to learn about Khmer Rouge history. This exhibition honors the Khmer Rouge survivors in their quest for justice. At the same time, it educates young people about what happened to their elders during those years.

History endures. Only human beings become old. People still discuss history which occurred centuries ago. Today, Cambodian people continue to talk about the glorious Angkor era as well as the bloody Khmer Rouge years. History is very important for every human being. Losing one’s own history is like losing one’s own identity. Therefore, Cambodia’s young generations should learn about their country’s history, particularly the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime, through the memories of their elders. Hopefully, by preserving the memory in this way, they can prevent the recurrence of such a brutal regime.

Media Coverage:

Radio France International (RFI): <http://www.khmer.rfi.fr/exhibition-on-the-forced-evacuation-as-part-of-the-compensation-culture-civil-22-08-2014>

On August 24-25, a news article about the Opening Ceremony of Khmer Rouge Exhibition on "Forced Transfer: the Second Evacuation of People during the Khmer Rouge Regime" was featured in Reaksmei Kampuchea Daily Newspaper. According to a reliable source, Reaksmei Kampuchea Daily Newspaper publishes about 20,000 copies daily that are distributed nationwide.

Reactions from the participants:

1. My name is Eng Voleak. I am a 20-year-old student at Krong Angkor Institute. Participating in this event helped me understand more about the evacuation of people during the Khmer Rouge regime and the loss of my parents' family members, as well as the hard labor that people endured. The story terrifies me. I would like to say thank you to the staff of the Documentation Center of Cambodia and request that more stories and photographs be put on display. I am excited to participate in this event, which has exceeded my expectations. I will share this information with my friends and relatives and encourage them to visit this exhibition in order to learn more about the life of Cambodian people during the Khmer Rouge regime.

2. My name is Kanh Thida. I am an 18-year-old student at the Kampong Thom Pedagogical School. Though the space is relatively small, it is acceptable. This Khmer Rouge exhibition is very important for young generations and Cambodian people as a whole to learn about their parents' and grandparents' experiences during the Khmer Rouge regime. I will visit this exhibition again with my friends.

3. My name is Hean Tha. I am a 23-year-old student at Krong Angkor Institute. I think that this exhibition helps us understand what occurred during the Khmer Rouge regime, from the evacuation of people to the starvation at the cooperatives. I would like to encourage more students to come visit this exhibition because it is very important for Cambodian people to understand what happened in the country during the Khmer Rouge regime. I am pleased to have a Khmer Rouge exhibition on display at the provincial museum. I will inform my relatives and friends about this exhibition when I return home.

4. My name is Diep Toma. I am a 53-year-old teacher at Kamsot Secondary School. After participating in the opening ceremony of the Khmer Rouge exhibition, I believe that the exhibition will enrich young generations about Khmer Rouge history. I would like to request the museum to provide more space to [the Documentation Center of Cambodia] so that more stories may be included. I would also request that similar exhibitions be initiated in order to provide more opportunities for people in the

province, particularly the young generations born after the Khmer Rouge regime, to learn about the history of the Khmer Rouge.

5. My name is Him Hongkry. I am a 20-year-old student at Kampong Thom Pedagogical School. I believe that this exhibition serves as an important supplemental resource for learning about the Khmer Rouge regime. As I learned from the experiences of the Khmer Rouge survivors, the evacuation of people during the Khmer Rouge regime resulted in family separation, forced labor, disease, starvation, and death. Many beautiful landscapes of Cambodia became mass graves where many bodies were buried.

6. My name is Sin Sinet. I am a civil party before the Khmer Rouge Tribunal. I believe that history endures. Everyone has to learn and remember one's own history, whether glorious or bloody. I think that this exhibition will educate the young generations about the hardships their parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and others experienced during the Khmer Rouge regime. It is important to continue this effort throughout the country in order to give more people a chance to learn about the past. It is the kind of reparation that I expected to receive from the Khmer Rouge Tribunal. During the Khmer Rouge regime, I was separated from my beloved grandfather and evacuated to Kampong Thom Province. He was later arrested and killed at S-21 Prison. After the Khmer Rouge regime collapsed, I decided to settle in Kampong Thom Province because I had no relatives left in the city.

7. My name is Jilli. I am from Australia. I think it is really beneficial for a small province to have this exhibition. It provides an opportunity to share history with a larger segment of the population. It is a very good idea to have the exhibition installed in a small town because those who live in remote areas with economic difficulty may not be able to travel to the capital or to a larger city to visit the museum or art gallery.

Team:

Seng Kunthy, Chhay Davin, Ouch Makara, Sorn Leak, and Men Pechet from Documentation Center of Cambodia

Tes Chhoeun and Hor Kosal from Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts

Pich Chhunhak, architectural student from Royal University of Fine Arts

Funding for this project has been provided by the Victims Support Section/ECCC, which receives its support from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH; and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which offers core support to DC-Cam.

Appendix A
Announcement of the Opening Ceremony of the Exhibition on Forced Transfer



A collaborative project between the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam), the Museum of Memory is pleased to announce the opening ceremony of "Forced Transfer during the Khmer Rouge Regime" exhibition at Kampong Thom provincial museum from August 22, 2014 onward which the first two exhibitions had been already installed in Battambang and Banteay Meanchey provincial museums. The first phase of the museum exhibition project includes the creation and management of five provincial museum exhibitions in Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Kampong Thom, Takeo and Sihanouk Ville.

The Museum of Memory Project chose to highlight "Forced Transfer" in their exhibitions due to Case 002/01 of the ECCC and its focus on prosecuting crimes related to the forced transfer of the Cambodian population during the Khmer Rouge. A common motif throughout each of the provincial museums will be the exhibitions use of a train to display information. The forced transfer of people by train, along with separation, starvation, execution and genocide, touched nearly every geographic region of Cambodia.

On 17 April 1975, the Khmer Rouge forces entered Phnom Penh and began the first phase of what they described as an 'evacuation.' This phase would later be classified as forced transfer. The Khmer Rouge classified Cambodians into groups. People from Phnom Penh were identified as "New People" or "17 April People," while people who were deemed to be loyal to the regime were identified as "Base People." "New People" were often discriminated against because of the notion that they were from an urban, Western, wealthy upbringing. During this phase, Phnom Penh was emptied of all its inhabitants. Men and women of all professions, the elderly, children and monks, as well as sick people from hospitals, pregnant women, and new mothers were forced to leave the city. While trains were a common vessel to transfer the people, many people were also forced to leave on foot, heading in all directions along the country's national roads. The people were told to return to their birthplace but many had no place to return. People slept on roads or under trees—wherever they could quickly rest their eyes. Rice alone fueled many of their long journeys. The people suffered serious health issues including swelling in their limbs, dehydration and exhaustion. In all, close to a million people were forced to leave the city and it is estimated that up to 3,000 people died along the way.

Besides Battambang province, Kampong Thom is well known for the rice production. To achieve high productivity, the Khmer Rouge demanded a lot of water reservoirs such as dams, dikes or canals. Many people evacuated from different places including new/city people were assigned to build the dams to reserve the water for cultivating rice. The big well-known one in Kampong Thom was 1 January Dam--*Tum Nup 1 Makara*. According to DC-Cam's mapping report, Kampong Thom is dotted with 17 crime sites where are situated in Baray, Kampong Svay, Stung Sen, Prasat Balang, Prasat Sambor, Sandan, Santuk, and Stong districts. A significant but unknown portion of these deaths is attributable to the construction of dams. As survivors recalled, people were forced to work as slaves to satisfy the production goals set by the CPK Center (Communist Party of

Kampuchea), while their social welfare needs were totally ignored, leading to widespread death from disease, exhaustion, and execution. The people suffered until January 1979 when the regime's ranks and files were toppled.

The opening ceremony of the exhibition at Kampong Thom provincial museum will be held on August 22, 2014 at 14:00 p.m. in Kampong Thom provincial museums. Civil Parties and complainants before the Khmer Rouge Tribunal and students who are residing at Kampong Thom provincial town are invited to attend the ceremony and to participate in discussion about their life story under the Khmer Rouge regime and the current reconciliation processes in Cambodia. Students will be able to reflect on the lives and experiences of the victims and survivors under the regime.

This project would not be possible without the generous support of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and the German Government. Funding for this project comes by way of the Victims Support Section/ECCC, which receives its support from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH; and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which offers core support to DC-Cam.

Note: No reception

For more information please contact:

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Mr. Be Tai Se	Tel: 077 608 270, Director of the Kampong Thom provincial museum
Ms. Seng Kunthy	Tel: 017 967 635, Museum of Memory coordinator, Documentation Center of Cambodia

www.dccam.org | www.cambodiatribunal.org | www.cambodiasri.org
Or DC-Cam's address: House # 66, Preah Sihanouk Blvd, Phnom Penh
Email: dccam@online.com.kh

Appendix B
Interview with Mr. Youk Chhang



ខេមរភាសា

ចុះផ្សាយក្នុង RFI (<http://www.khmer.rfi.fr>)

លោក ឆាំង យូ ៖ ពិពណ៌នាពីការជម្លៀសប្រជាជនដោយបង្ខំជាផ្នែកមួយនៃសំណងរដ្ឋប្បវេណី

Par ប៊ែន បូណា
Created 2014-08-22 04:00
Fri, 2014-08-22 02:00
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លោក ឆាំង យូ ប្រធានមជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា។
RFI

ភ្ញៀវប្រចាំថ្ងៃរបស់វិទ្យុយើងនៅថ្ងៃនេះ គឺលោក ឆាំង យូ នាយកមជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា។ មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលនេះបានសហការជាមួយក្រសួងវប្បធម៌និងវិចិត្រសិល្បៈដើម្បីប្រើការតាំងពិពណ៌នាពី «ការជម្លៀសប្រជាជនដោយបង្ខំ» ដោយពួកខ្មែរក្រហមកាលពីខែមេសា ឆ្នាំ១៩៧៥ ។ ពិពណ៌នាដែលបានចាប់ផ្តើមនៅថ្ងៃសុក្រទី ២២ សីហានេះ បើកធ្វើជាបឋមនៅក្នុងសារមន្ទីរនៃខេត្តចំនួន១។

លោក ឆាំង យូ អះអាងថា ក្នុងអំពើប្រល័យពូជសាសន៍គ្មានសំណងអ្វីអាចជួសជុលបានទេ យ៉ាងណាក៏ដោយ ការតាំងពិពណ៌នាផ្នែកមួយនៃសំណងរដ្ឋប្បវេណីដល់ជនរងគ្រោះក្នុងរបបខ្មែរក្រហមដែរ។

បទសម្ភាសន៍ដោយប៊ែន បូណា [1]
លោក ស៊ុន ប៊ិនសិក្ខៈ សៀវភៅស្តីពី កម្រងរឿងរ៉ាវរបស់ដើមបណ្តឹងរដ្ឋប្បវេណី ជាផ្នែកមួយនៃសំណងខ្មែរក្រហម [2]
លោក ហ៊ិន សែន ស្វាគមន៍ការកាត់ទោសអតីតមេដឹកនាំខ្មែរក្រហមឲ្យជាប់ពន្ធនាគារអស់មួយជីវិត

[3] សំណុំរឿង០០២ វគ្គ០១ បានប្រកាសក្រោមការមិនទទួលយកពីសហមេធាវីជនជាប់ចោទ [4]
អន្តរជាតិសាទរចំពោះសាលក្រមជំនួសទោស នួន ជា និង ខៀវ សំផន [5]
Cambodia Interview ភ្ញៀវប្រចាំថ្ងៃ Magazine ប៊ែន បូណា កម្ពុជា ខ្មែរក្រហម
តុលាការខ្មែរក្រហម

អាសយដ្ឋាន **URL:** <http://www.khmer.rfi.fr/exhibition-on-the-forced-evacuation-as-part-of-the-compensation-culture-civil-22-08-2014>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.khmer.rfi.fr/terview-chhang-yuk-22-08-014>
- [2] <http://www.khmer.rfi.fr/cambodia-interview-with-soun-bun-sak-14-08-2014>
- [3] <http://www.khmer.rfi.fr/cambodia-hun-sen-welcomed-khmer-rough-verdict-08-08-2014>
- [4] <http://www.khmer.rfi.fr/cambodia-court-pronounce-judgement-but-lawyer-not-accept-08-08-2014>
- [5] <http://www.khmer.rfi.fr/cambodia-international-congratulate-verdict-of-noun-chea-and-kheiv-samphan-07-08-2014>

Appendix C
 Featured News Article about the Opening Ceremony in Reaksmei Kampuchea
 Daily Newspaper

រាសីកម្ពុជា
រៀបរយ ប្រចាំថ្ងៃ
RASMEI KAMPUCHEA DAILY
 ឆ្នាំទី 22 លេខ 6505 ថ្ងៃ អាទិត្យ-ចន្ទ ទី 24-25 ខែ សីហា ឆ្នាំ 2014

**ពិធីរណ៍ស្តីពីការជម្លៀសដោយបង្ខំនៅ-
 សារមន្ទីរខេត្តកំពង់ធំត្រូវបានសម្ពោធន**

ភ្នំពេញ : ក្រោមកិច្ចសហប្រតិបត្តិការរវាងក្រសួងវប្បធម៌និងវិចិត្រសិល្បៈ ជាមួយនឹងសារមន្ទីរនៃការចងចាំនៃមជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា បានរៀបចំសម្ពោធពិធីរណ៍មួយស្តីពីការជម្លៀសដោយបង្ខំនៅសារមន្ទីរខេត្តកំពង់ធំក្នុងភូមិអាចារ្យលាក់ឃុំអាចារ្យលាក់ ស្រុកស្ទឹងសែន ខេត្តកំពង់ធំ កាលពីម៉ោង២ រសៀលថ្ងៃទី២២ ខែសីហា ឆ្នាំ២០១៤ ក្រោមអធិបតីភាពរបស់លោកស្រីឃួន ឃួនឌី អភិបាលរងខេត្តកំពង់ធំ និងមានការ-

(តទៅទំព័រ២៤)

ការជម្លៀសដោយបង្ខំនៅក្នុងរបបខ្មែរក្រហម
THE FORCED TRANSFER:
 The Second Evacuation of People During the Khmer Rouge Regime



Appendix D

Comment of a foreign visitor who visited the exhibition at Kampong Thom Provincial Museum on August 22, 2014

មតិយោបល់ សំណូមពរ និងសំណួរ	មតិយោ
Comment, Suggestion, and Question	Comm
<p>This is really good for small province it gives lots of people opportunity to learn + shares history with more of the population jilli Aus-</p>	
កាលបរិច្ឆេទ ឈ្មោះ និងប្រទេស	កាលបរិច្ឆេទ ឈ្មោះ
Date, Name, and Country	Date, Name, and C