

had been removed. He had witnessed the removal of the bones of approx. 40 victims, men, women and children, from this open pit in 1979, and had been told that they were victims of a massacre of boat people who had been caught by the KR attempting the escape in a boat from Kep beach some time prior to 1979.

Friday 3 November

The next morning we headed for Ankor Chey District in the North East of Kampot Province, first driving back along Hwy 3 towards Phnom Penh. We were accompanied by Mr. Koy Chun, and two police armed with automatic weapons, as we had been advised that there were still remnants of the KR forces in the Phnom Voar area. We visited one site about 25 kilometers along the road, turning off towards Phnom Voar, and also stopped at the District Office at Chhuk on the main highway to request of any relevant documents.

Phnom Leang	Dang Tong (Prev. Chhuk)	070501
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Phnom Leang Prison is a very interesting site in a series of limestone caves in Phnom Leang, just to the West of Phnom Voar. The main entrance to the cave is now flooded, but there are steps leading down into the water above the entrance with an inscription dated 1979. It is now possible to access the back of the cave system, which is now being progressively destroyed by limeburners operating nearby, and the series of large caverns which were used as the prison have now been exposed.

This prison had been used as a Khmer Rouge base prior to 1975, and according to witnesses, was then used as Central Prison and was a high security area controlled by high level KR (Santebal?). The prisoners were New People, Lon Nol Military and Police. The Chief of the commune, Mr. Sorn Horn said that the name of the Prison Chief was Horn, and that he was killed by the people at their liberation in 1979.

Phum Leang	Dang Tong (Prev. Chhuk)	070502
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The execution site and burial pits for Phnom Leang prison are about 1.5 kilometers back along the road towards the highway. The pits are now flooded under rice fields, but we were informed by the chief of the commune, that there were more than 100 mass graves at this site.

Munti Ta Mon	Ankor Chey (Prev. Chhuk)	070101
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This was a very large prison complex in Region 13 which was under the control of Ta Mok, and which exhibits some unique characteristics. This information was given to us by Pol Phan, District Director of Culture and Information, who also informed us that he had seen Ta Mok being driven in a jeep along the road from Tani (sala srok) towards the prison, and remembers that the drivers of the jeep was very young, perhaps only 14-15 years old.

There were three prison buildings, a women's prison in a large house near the road (still standing), a purpose built men's prison, and an underground prison for those condemned to be executed. Execution was carried out at a pit next to the underground prison, with the victims being held over the pit while their throats were cut, and their

blood was collected in the pit which contained some water to be used as fertilizer on the gardens nearby.

There is a large wooden memorial nearby, containing thousands of skulls, bones and clothing, and 136 mass graves were excavated at this site in 1982. There are another 46 mass graves at another site a few kilometers away for the bodies of victims from the same prison. The victims were New People from Phnom Penh, and the women were wives of Lon Nol Officials and soldiers. Witness Ing Saphoeun was a prisoner in the Women's prison from 1977-79, and is now living in Tani. She was the wife of a minor government official in Phnom Penh in 1975, and returned to her birth place in Tani in April of that year. She kindly made a long recorded interview:

" I was arrested at 4.00am in July 1977 with some men and women, and taken to Muntty Ta Mon Prison. I was three months pregnant at the time. The men were tied and were put in a separate house to the women. The men had shackles put on at night, but not the women. All prisoners were forced to work digging irrigation canals until 11.00p.m. each night, and we were only given water plants (convolvulus) to eat."

" One time I saw the KR kill a victim when I was sent to the third prison near the killing place. KR held the hair in one hand and held the knife in the other hand. They cut the throat of the victim and stabbed him once in the abdomen. 300 people from the middle prison were killed over three days by the KR. All the female prisoners were New People, involved in some way with Lon Nol officials. When I gave birth in the prison on 17/1/78 the KR gave me a pot of water and a knife to cut the cord. In 1979 the KR forced the 125 female prisoners to walk to Kampong Speu, where they killed 85, leaving 40, who they forced to walk to Phum Prah in Pursat Province. There were then 14 remaining, and I ran into the hills. My baby is still alive, and he is now 17 years old. His name is Seng Monou."

Wat Stung

Chhuk

070301

One the way back to Kampot we visited the memorial at Wat Stung in Chhuk District, which contains 325 skulls taken from the excavated pits at Phnom Leang.

Documents:

The District Office at Chhuk was able to lend us all the Commune petitions from the people about the Genocide, and we were able to make photocopies before returning the original documents the next day on our way back to Phnom Penh. The Provincial Office were able to supply us with copies of the letter sent out to all Districts in 1982 asking them to collect Genocide information, but unfortunately they were not able to find a copy of the final report that was sent to Phnom Penh that year.

Conclusion:

The visit of the mapping team to Kampot can be regarded as successful in that we were able to visit the two most important prisons and killing fields in that Province, namely Phnom Leang and Muntty Tamon. The importance of security was brought home to us when it was announced on local radio that a group of KR crossed the

highway near Phnom Lenag on Saturday evening, just the day after we were in the area.

Charles Bowers
9 November 1995