

# មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

## Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) MAPPING THE KILLING FIELDS OF CAMBODIA, 1997: khet KANDAL [H-8-kandal/a-cb-kd]

Location	Site Name/Date	# of graves	Est. Victim	Witness	File # / ID Code	Latitude	Longitude
srok Lvea Em	Wat Svay Andet/ 24 April 1997			Pon Kragh ប៉ុន ក្រាញ់	R 042403 A/ 8001	N 11°33'0305"	E 105°01'0915"
srok Lvea Em	Wat Svay Andet/ 24 April 1997			Pon Kragh ប៉ុន ក្រាញ់	R 042403 A/ 8002	N 11°33'0305"	E 105°01'0915"
srok Lvea Em	Kbal Kon/ 24 April 1997	1 pit	60-70	Doung Dy ឌួង ឌី	R 042404 A/ 80603	N 11°33'0799"	E 105°00'3052"
srok Lvea Em	Phum Plou Trey/ 24 April 1997			Mao Chhaya Yuth ម៉ៅ ឆាយា យុត	R 042407 A / 80604	N 11°30'5177"	E 105°06'4048"
srok Lvea Em	Wat Sampoang/ 24 April 1997	1 pit	60-70	Van Phon វ៉ាន់ ផន	R 042407 B/ 80605	N 11°30'3706"	E 105°07'4296"

On 24 April 1997, DC-Cam assigned a research team-Mr. Sin Khin and Mr. Hak Sophal-to conduct field study in search of documents related to the genocidal crime of Pol Pot's clique in srok Lvea Em, khet Kandal.

At 8:00 a.m., our research team set off from Phnom Penh to the governor's office of khet Kandal, where we met with Mr. Khin Chankiri, chief cabinet of khet , for the implementation of our work in accordance with the provincial administrative procedure. Next, we asked for the approval from the provincial governor in order to work in collaboration with the Office of Culture, the Office of Cults and Religions, and the Commissariat of Police of khet Kadal. With the approval given, we started conducting research on the geographical location, demographics, and areas of the province.

Documentation Center of Cambodia

Searching for the Truth

ស្វែងរកការពិត ដើម្បីការបង្ហាញនិងយុត្តិធម៌

DC-Cam • 66 Preah Sihanouk Blvd. • P.O.Box 1110 • Phnom Penh • Cambodia  
Tel: (855-23) 211-875 • Fax: (855-23) 210-358 • dccam@online.com.kh • www.dccam.org

Khet Kandal is bordered by khet Kampong Chhnang, khet Kampong Thom and khet Kampong Cham on the north, by khet Kampong Speu on the west, by khet Takeo on the southwest, by Vietnam on the south, and by khet Prey Veng on the east. The capital city Phnom Penh is located in the northern part of, and is completely surrounded by, Kandal. This khet is 13 kilometers from the city. In Pol Pot's time, it was in Region....., .....zone.

-Farming area : 123,094 hectares  
-Dwelling area: 96,596 hectares  
-Forest area : 29,311 hectares  
-other area : 106,568 hectares

Total area : 335,542 hectares

In the khet, there are 180,795 families with 977,453 people, of whom 465,170 are men and 512,283 are women. Of the 180,795 families, there are 174,046 Khmer families with 935,335 people; 203 Islamic families with 11,852 people; and 4,602 Vietnamese families with 29,693 people.

### **Statistics of Death toll**

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We departed from the governor's office to srok Lvea Em, traveling down National Road 1, then turning to the left hand side to the ferry where we paid 5000 Riels for a boat to ferry our car across the river. At 9:50 a.m., we arrived at srok Lvea Em.

Srok Lvea Em is bordered by .....on the east, by Phnom Penh city and srok Khsach Kandal on the west, by srok Peareang on the north, and by srok Kien Svay on the south. In Pol Pot's time, srok Lvea Em was in Region 22, Eastern zone.

Upon arrival, we met Mr. Oun Sam Un, district chief, and Mr. Moak Pim, district deputy commissioner. After the discussion with srok chief and officers of srok Lvea Em, we requested information about killing fields, and found out the locations of several criminal centers:

1- In phum Khnol Tati, khum Parong, is a prison, a security office and a killing site on an island.

- 2- In Wat Svay Andet in phum Tasor, khum Sarikakeo, is located a prison, a security office and a killing site Chay Sin in the compound of the religious temple, and another big killing site in region Sar II, 100 meters away. The location Sar Iilies is on the edge of Mekong river. The pits and the remains at this site are missing because the river bank had eroded by the river stream. The killing site is 100m in front of Wat Mot Kra Sa.
- 3- In wat Sampoang is located a killing site. A prison, a security office and another killing site are located in phum Phlov Trey.

At munti srok, we interviewed the chief of srok Lvea Em, who had been imprisoned there by the Khmer Rouge. We recorded the interview on audio cassette. He told us that at the time he lived alone. He always managed to deal very carefully with the tricky questions he was asked despite the torture imposed on him. He further described that there were 2 stages to the killing process.

First, victims were detained for some time before being walked to work.

Second, the victims were imprisoned; once that happened, there was no hope for them to survive.

At 10:35 a.m., we set off from munti srok to Wat Svay Andet criminal center in Phnom Tasor, khum Sarikakeo, where we met with the committee of old laymen whom we took as our witnesses. The location consists of a prison, a security office, and a small site of killing. The big killing field, Sor II, is located around 500 to 1000 meters from the temple Wat Svay Andet. The religious Buddhist building, the eating hall for monks and the school building in the temple compound were turned into prisons. The Khmer Rouge used the other 6 resting houses for monks as their dwellings.

The first witness was Moul Horn, male, age 57, 1.67 m tall, black skin, gray hair. In Pol Pot's time, he lived in phum Skor, khum Sarikakeo, and worked in the plowing unit. Now, he is a member of the committee of laymen in Wat Andet. He said the security office and the prison in Wat Andet were built from 1976 until early 1977. It was a big prison where victims were gathered from every part of the entire srok Lvea Em and were placed in the religious Buddhist building, the eating hall for monks and the school building. Every day, the prisoners were interrogated and taken to be killed at Sar II, about 500 to 1000 meters from wat.

He added that the site in the temple compound was used as the temporary detention center for holding victims. If any victim died or was killed once already interrogated, the body of the victim was to be buried around the fence of the temple. At the Sar II killing site, once victims were taken to be killed, loud music was played to cover the cries of the victims.

The second witness was Leuk Salon, male, age 41, 1.60 m tall, black hair, good teeth. In Pol Pot's time, he worked in a mobile work brigade and lived in phum Skor, khum Sarikakeo.

These two witnesses testified to the existence of a prison and a security office in the Wat Svay Andet. They saw victims being taken to be killed every day, mostly in evenings. In the time of killing, Pol Pot's men played loud music to cover the cries of the victims.

The second witness told us that victims were killed in a very vicious way. Their dresses were given right away for use by people working in plowing unit. Before being killed, said the witness, the victims were told that they were to be removed to another region where they actually were taken to be imprisoned and starved until they were so weak and skinny that tying the prisoners while transporting them was unnecessary. The skinny prisoners were then ordered to walk while holding a length of thread that strung from the first to the last prisoner. If any one dropped or broke the string, he were beaten like an animal.

At 1:00 p.m., we visited the Sar II killing site, 1 kilometer away. According to the witness, there were both 10-cubic-meter pits and 5-cubic-meter pits. If there were 10 victims carried by oxen-cart, a small pit was dug. But if there were 100 victims carried by ferry boat, they were buried in a big pit. Old and young people of both sexes were transported by trucks and oxen-carts to be killed here.

The Sar II big killing field contains victims from various cultures, including Vietnamese, Chinese, Islamic, and Khmer. From late 1977 until early 1979, a layman living in the Wat Svay Andet led people to fight back against Pol Pot's men. At that time, some prisoners were liberated, and some of the Pol Pot's security militiamen were killed by the rebellion led by the layman.

At 12:30 p.m., after lunch we went to examine 3 other criminal centers: Wat Sampoang, Phum Phlov Trey and Tuol Leap. While we were traveling on a very bad and slippery road past the people's farms, our car hit a tree and broke its headlight. It was already 2:00 p.m. by the time we arrived at the security office and the prison in Phum Phlov Trey. The place is.....Km from srok Lvea Em.

We found 3 **witnesses**:

The first witness was Mao Chhayavuth, male, age 42, 1.71 m tall, big, black skin. In Pol Pot's time, he was imprisoned with his brother, after being accused of speaking English. He clarified that in 1975 at the Tuol Leap killing site, people who were evacuated from the city, including soldiers, military police, customs officers, spies, and civil servants, were brought to be killed here.

The victims were selected according to their backgrounds in order to be taken to be killed. They were formerly high-ranking officers and political activists. In 1978, cadres from the Southwestern zone killed members of Eastern zone cadres, whether in main or small units, militiamen, or srok-level youths. In Phum Tery, from 1975 to 1977, about 100 monks were held in the prison. Only two- Mr. Mao Chhayavuth and his brother- survived.

At 3:30 p.m., we reached Wat Sampoang. We examined and photographed the pond situated in front of the wat Sampoang where the killing took place. No remains were identified.

The second witness was Vann Dan, male, who used to live in the same phum and khum as the first witness, but somewhere near Wat Sampoang which is located near phum Phlov Trey and Tuol Leap. Now, he is a member of the committee of khum Khmar Kor, srok Lvea Em. His testimony verified the first witness'. He said that there is another big criminal center with a security office and a prison at Prey Tasar, near the boundary of srok Peareang, khet Prey Veng. Because the journey to that site would have been very difficult, we declined to visit there.

As for the criminal center in khum Parong, a killing site is located on an island far from khum. We also failed to reach this site because of the time it would take to travel the distance by boat.

#### **Death Tool in Each Criminal Center:**

- |  |   |                                       |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1- Sar II and wat Svay Andet in phum Tasar | : | approximately 15,000 to 30,000 people |
| 2- Phum Phlov Trey                         | : | 100 people                            |
| 3- Wat Sampoang                            | : | 50 people                             |
| 4- Tuol Leap                               | : | 400 to 500 people                     |

In fact, our excursion was our second visit to srok Lvea Em. We only visited 5 locations because we were under time constraints to return.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Our research in this khet was warmly welcomed by the authorities and the people in phum, khum, srok and khet, who collaborated with us.

However, we spent much time waiting for approval from the commissariat of police of khet Kandal. Getting a ferry across the river required some time that might have been put to better use. Each criminal center is located far away from any another. As our time was short, we could not afford to get to all of the criminal centers throughout each srok in order to get the amount of information that was expected.

We tried our best to complete our work without taking any rest at all. Shortly after having lunch, we got to work right away. Thus, a one-day itinerary to visit 2 or 3 sroks was not sufficient to complete the research in this srok. The task requires more time.

One more important thing is that the passage of nearly 20 years has diminished the availability of evidence. For example, many of the pits have been completely covered and have not been found. The houses, the prisons, and the security offices have broken down, while the remains in some places are missing. And, given such a short time, we really cannot find witnesses who could give factual testimony. If we could locate the perpetrators or killers themselves, they would be our best witnesses. In the srok Lvea Em, we met with 2 main chiefs of the security office. They are Tuy living in srok Chantrea and Rorn in srok Kampong Roar; each is in hiding.