



DOCUMENTATION CENTER OF CAMBODIA
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

MAPPING PROJECT 1999:

SIEM REAP PROVINCE

On August 12, 1999, the Documentation Center of Cambodia dispatched a mass grave mapping team to Siem Reap Province. The team was made up of Mr. Sin Khin, Team Leader responsible for interviewing witnesses, Mr. Ros Sampoeu, responsible for drawing maps of the genocide sites, Mr. Ouch Samoeun, responsible for utilizing the GPS unit to fix the location of the genocide sites, and Mr. Pheng Pong Rasy, responsible for report-writing. The team aimed to search for individuals who had witnessed the security prisons, mass grave sites and killings in the Pol Pot time (1975-1979).

The team traveled from Phnom Penh to Siem Reap on a 35-minute airline flight. After landing at Siem Reap airport, the team rented a car and went to look for the Provincial Governor, in order to make the necessary official contacts and seek cooperation from the provincial authorities. There is mass grave mapping research remaining to be done in seven districts of this province.

The team finally met with Second Deputy Provincial Governor Suy San. He informed the team that of the seven unmapped districts, two -- Samraong and Chong Kal -- had recently split from Siem Reap Province, and moved under the administrative authority of Banteay Meanchey Province.

Thus, the team discovered that there are only five districts remaining to be mapped in Siem Reap Province -- Banteay Srei, Varin, Angkor Chum, Srei Snam, and Svay Leu. Due to time limitations, the remoteness of certain districts from the provincial town (eighty to more than one hundred kilometers), and poor road conditions, the team decided to cancel planned visits to two of the five districts, Srei Snam and Svay Leu. The team proceeded to set up a travel schedule for the three remaining districts: Banteay Srei, Varin, and Angkor Chum. Three days were available to visit the three districts.

After obtaining good information on the situation in these three districts, the team decided to go first to Banteay Srei, then to Varin, and finally to Angkor Chey district.

I. Banteay Srei District

At 7:25 am on August 13, 1999, the team departed from Siem Reap and headed to Banteay Srei District, thirty-five kilometers distant by a car along the route towards Angkor Wat. They took a route off the right-hand side of the road, turning towards the Banteay Srei temple. The road was in a fairly good condition. It is approximately eight kilometers from the provincial town to Prasat Pre Roup, but the route from Prasat Pre Roup to Banteay Srei District Office was not so good; it is small and was flooded in random places. It required one hour and thirty-five minutes to reach the Banteay Srei District Office.

Documentation Center of Cambodia

Searching for the Truth

ស្វែងរកការពិត ដើម្បីការបង្ហាញនិងយុត្តិធម៌

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At 9:00 am, the team reached Banteay Srei District Office, where they met the Governor Ung Vong, Deputy Governor Kong Min and several sub-district chiefs. It was a fortunate coincidence that they had all come for a meeting on August 13, 1999, aimed at promulgating certain tasks for the seven sub-districts. The district governor informed us that Banteay Srei District is bordered on the east by Svay Leu district, on the west by Varin District, on the north by Srei Snam District and on the south by Siem Reap District.

With the permission of the district governor, the team met with the gathering of sub-district chiefs and the two district governors. The team aimed to acquire knowledge of certain execution sites in the seven sub-districts of Banteay Srei District. Six of the sub-district chiefs reported to the team on execution sites from the Pol Pot time.

1. Preah Dak “Killing Pits”

Preah Dak Sub-district is the closest of the seven sub-districts to the district office. Mr. Tauch Chhun, 67, is Chief of the sub-district, and has lived all his life there. He told the team that in his sub-district, there was an execution site with two pits located on the northern edge of Preah Dak village.

The sub-district chief went on to say that most of the people killed here were those known as April 17 People [“New People”] who had been evacuated from Siem Reap provincial town. When asked about how many families and people he estimated had been killed, Mr. Tuach Chhun replied that there were more than fifteen families. The team was unable to visit this site because the sub-district chiefs and village chiefs were busy with their meetings in the provincial town.

2. Khnar Sanday Sub-district

Mr. Chum Vong, 46, is Chief of Khnar Sanday Sub-district, and lives in Banteay Srei village, Khnar Sanday Sub-district. He told the team that in 1975, the Khmer Rouge evacuated people from Siem Reap provincial town. Some of them were sent to Preah Dak Sub-district, while others were taken to Khnar Sanday Sub-district. The Khmer Rouge kept those evacuees for a only a short period of time, two or three days, and then killed them. At another execution site located in Daun Che village, there were three or four killing pits. The chief had no estimate of how many people might have been killed there. However, he did note that another security prison was situated at Wat Prey in Prey village, Khnar Sanday Sub-district. The mass grave pits there are no longer visible because villagers filled up the pits to do rice cultivation.

3. Rum Chek Sub-district

Mr. Plong Kay, 55, is the Chief of Rum Chek Sub-district. He informed us that he had witnessed Khmer Rouge forces killing eleven families. Members of four of these families were brought to be killed in Rum Chek Sub-district. The seven other families were taken away to be killed in Tbeng Sub-district.

4. Khun Ream Sub-district

Mr. Ham Vil, 58, is Chief of Khun Ream Sub-district. According to Mr. Vil, torture and executions in 1975 in his sub-district were committed on a similar scale as the ones in Preah Dak and Khnar Sanday Sub-districts. The Khmer Rouge evacuated people from Siem Reap provincial town to this sub-district, especially Ta Prum village. He has no idea of how many

people were evacuated, or where they were killed. However, he learned that in 1979, all members of twenty families were evacuated from Svay Leu District and killed in Pa Pum village. There is a security prison in Ta Prum School. No execution pits remain from these events.

5. Sre Nauy

Sre Nauy Sub-district Chief, Meas Sdaeng, 61, reported that in his sub-district, there was an execution site located in Pralay Sre A Kleng, where five families were killed and placed into one pit. He said that in addition, along the border between his sub-district and Khnar Sanday Sub-district, at Kan Thaok village, there were six killing pits. The victims in those pits had been taken from Kanthauk village, and were not people from Sre Nauy Sub-district. According to the sub-district chief, there was a Khmer Rouge security prison at Wat Sre Nauy.

Because the five sub-district chiefs appeared to have rather uncertain knowledge of these alleged execution sites, as well as because of the team's time limitations and poor road conditions in these sub-districts, the team could not visit all those locations on this trip. They would have to settle for the information provided by the sub-district chiefs. Among these six sub-districts, only one sub-district, Tbeng, could be visited on this trip. The team didn't call at the Tbeng Sub-district office, but instead just headed for the execution site at Wat Tbeng.

The following report was obtained from Mr. Hiep Tha, 49 years old, who is Tbeng Sub-district chief, and testimony from certain witnesses at Wat Tbeng.

6. Tbeng Sub-district

Mr. Hiep Tha told the team that there were two main execution sites located on the premises of Wat Tbeng and at Skun village. At 9:25 am, the team left the Banteay Srei District Office for Wat Tbeng, traveling back over the same route they had taken earlier that morning. After driving twenty-eight kilometers, they took a sixteen kilometer-long route to the north, leading towards the Koulen Mountains.

Wat Tbeng is located in an area where security was a problem from 1970 to 1984. During that period of time, according to villagers living nearby Wat Tbeng, no one dared to celebrate any sacramental ceremony. Moreover, there were no Buddhist monks to assist in worship.

About 11 am, the team entered the premises of Wat Tbeng and began searching for witnesses who could relate what happened during the Pol Pot time. Inside the Wat, there were many juvenile monks having lunch in an eating hall, approximately one hundred fifty meters north of the temple. They then observed an elderly monk, who was also eating lunch in the same hall. Not wanting to interrupt him, the team waited until he finished his lunch. In the meantime, they saw another old man sitting at the far end of the eating hall behind the monks. They proceeded to interview him. His name is Teav Mo, and he is 110 years old this year. He lives in Tbeng village, Tbeng Sub-district, Banteay Srei District. He said that in the Pol Pot time, he was a cook for a cooperative in Tbeng village called Comrade Van's Cooperative. Even though at that time he had been a villager in this area, he was not then aware that the Khmer Rouge had killed many people at the temple. He went on to say that in the Pol Pot time, Wat Tbeng was used as a textile handicraft house, blacksmith workshop, work site, garment house, etc. After the liberation, Mr. Mo returned to his home village in 1984 and he then lived in Wat Tbeng. At that time, he saw many skulls and bones scattered about the temple premises, especially on the eastern side of the temple. Mr. Teav Mo, unfortunately, is

of such an advanced age and in such poor health that he could not remember all the events of the Khmer Rouge regime.

The team then proceeded to interview the head of the temple, a man named Aum Soeun, 72. This witness had clear knowledge of the events during those years. Mr. Aum Soeun is the head of Wat Tbeng in Tbeng village, Tbeng Sub-district, Banteay Srei District. He told the team that he was a deputy chief of a cooperative known as Aum's Cooperative between 1970-1973 (most of Siem Reap had been captured by the Khmer Rouge early in the civil war). Mr. Soeun was in charge of building embankments. Under his leadership, manslaughter did not occur. In 1973, the Khmer Rouge removed him from his position of authority, and evacuated him to Sdam Sav village, Khnar Sub-district, Svay Leu District. There he lived life as an ordinary person. He was then accused of involvement with the Lon Nol regime, when he had served as an acting district chief, in place of a Mr. Ping. In 1975, the Khmer Rouge allowed him to move back to his home village, Tbeng village. He said that he worked according to Khmer Rouge orders, doing such things as planting banana trees, sugarcane, and other varieties of plants. In 1976, he recalled, unusual things began to happen. For instance, some people were tied up and tortured. Before executions, people were always called to attend meetings, and the attendees would all be detained on the premises of the temple, which the Khmer Rouge had transformed into a detention center. Entry to the temple premises was forbidden without special permission. Mr. Aum Soeun said that from 1976 up until the liberation day (early 1980), some thirty to forty families with five to six members each were brought to be killed at Wat Tbeng. Consequently, the number of victims killed there would have been between 150 and 240.

Concerning killing pits, he said there had been a huge grave, eight meters square and two meters deep, located in the southern part of the temple complex. Now it is no longer visible because the head of the temple had it filled in, laying the foundation to construct a new building. Mr. Soeun told the team that when he was working to fill in the grave, he saw some bones and bits of clothing still there. Most of the bones in this grave were excavated in 1985, to celebrate the annual Day of Hatred (May 20th). The remaining bits of bone and clothing were covered up with soil.

However, the head of the temple thinks that in reality, the excavation was carried out to search for pieces of gold and precious stones, rather than to celebrate any commemoration ceremony. He feels that the excavation team intended to deceive him. He maintains that those people only pretended to take care of the bones, but instead, out of his sight, threw them away in ponds or canals.

Other than this large pit, there are some five or six smaller ones, two meters by three meters, and two meters deep. They are located along the edge of a pond, south of the temple and about fifteen meters south of the location of the large pit. In those mass graves were the bodies of April-17 People, as well as those who were accused by the Khmer Rouge of some involvement with the previous regime. According to the head of the temple, the Khmer Rouge came after the liberation day and dug up those pits, searching for valuables. Due to time limitations, at that point the team was forced to conclude their interview with the head of Wat Tbeng. A second witness, named Lay Kay, was waiting.

Mr. Lay Kay, 69, lives in Tbeng village, Tbeng Sub-district. He told the team that between 1973 and 1976 he was the chief of a cooperative, in charge of leading people to do rice farming. At the end of 1976, he was relieved of this responsibility and resumed life as an ordinary person. He, too, was accused of involvement with the previous regime. Mr. Kay confirmed that during the Lon Nol regime, he had been a militiaman in an Ambush Cell. He

maintained that during his three years as chief of the cooperative, there were no executions. After he was removed from his position, the Khmer Rouge appointed a new cooperative chief named Chea Chhuon, along with his deputy, Yim.

It was during this time (1977-1979) that people from all cooperatives accused of having connections with the previous regime were screened and taken to Wat Tbeng to be executed. They were deluded into attending work meetings about raising chickens, ducks, and so on. But instead, after the gathering, the people would be detained and denied all freedom of movement.

At dawn, Mr. Kay said, those people were taken away to be killed in the southern part of the temple. He stressed that one perpetrator of these killings had been a Comrade Nhel, who was under the command of Mon, the Chief of Banteay Srei District between 1976 and 1978. [During the team's interview with Lay Kay, two other people -- Mr. Phin Em, 65, and Tit Ying, 66 -- helped clarify and add information to Lay Kay's accounts.]

In conclusion, Wat Tbeng is an execution site at which there is one large mass grave and five or six smaller pits located in southern part of the temple. Presently the execution sites are no longer visible to the naked eye. Approximately thirty to forty families were killed there, totaling 150 to 200 people.

After the interview with the second witness in Tbeng village, Tbeng Sub-district, the team prepared to proceed to Skun village, Tbeng Sub-district. However, because Skun village is quite distant from Wat Tbeng, and because the road conditions were unfavorable, the team elected not to visit that village at this time. Even though the visit to this village had to be canceled, the team gained some information on killings committed in Skun village from the Tbeng Sub-district chief. He had told the team, "In Skun village, there is an execution site located on a small hill near Spean Sre Praing, in the western part of the village." During the reign of the Khmer Rouge there (1973-1979), some people were evacuated from Siem Reap provincial town to this village and killed at this location. The number of families executed in Skun village is estimated at ten to fifteen, totaling some 80 to 150 people.

II. Varin District:

On August 16, 1999, the team left Siem Reap provincial town at 6 am. They took National Road #6 west past Puork District, in the direction of Banteay Meanchey Province. After thirty-two kilometers, they turned right onto a road toward Angkor Chum and Varin Districts. They then traveled over a fifty kilometer stretch of road in bad condition, with large flooded potholes. At 9:48 am, they arrived at the Varin District Office, located in Svay Sar village, Svay Sar Sub-district. There, they tried but failed to meet with the district governor. Instead, they met with Mr. Doeun Chhat, district office member in charge of summary reports, Mr. Lat Leang, chief of the district information office, Mr. Lai You, deputy district commissioner, and a few other lower level officers.

During the meeting with these officials, the team explained the aims of the Documentation Center's research. Mr. Lat Leang provided a good deal of information to the team.

According to Mr. Leang, between 1968 and 1970, Varin District Office was located in Kok Kea Yea village, Svay Sar Sub-district. Between 1970 and 1977, it was located in Kok Phneou village, Kok Daung Sub-district. In 1979, it was relocated to Ko Ta Beng village, Kok Daung Sub-district. In June 1987, it was again moved, now to Varin village, Varin Sub-district. Since 1990, the district office has been located in Svay Sar village, Svay Sar Sub-

district. The district is bordered on the east by Banteay Srei District, on the west by Srei Snam and Kralanh Districts, on the north by Chong Kal and Anlong Veng Districts, and on the south by Angkor Chum and Angkor Thom Districts.

Mr. Leat Leang went on to say that in 1979, the district was made up of seven sub-districts: Prek Sneng, Kok Daung, Svay Sar, Daun Peng, Prasat, Varin, and Kraing Lvea. Since the 1993 elections, however, there have been only four sub-districts: Svay Sar, Prasat, Varin, and Kraing Lvea. Ninety-eight percent of the population is composed of farmers. The remaining two percent are merchants and civil servants.

Regarding security in the district, Mr. Lai You said before the 1998 elections, there were certain places where security was not guaranteed. This insecurity was exacerbated by problems such as collapsed bridges and robberies committed by Khmer Rouge soldiers. However, since the elections, the problems had abated because those Khmer Rouge soldiers split with the rebels and returned to the national community.

After being briefed on the internal situation in Varin District, the team asked the officials about killings during the Khmer Rouge regime, the number of victims and mass grave pits, remaining bones or other physical evidence, the locations of security prisons, and possible witnesses -- either perpetrators or victims -- who could relate first-hand knowledge of events during the Khmer Rouge regime.

Mr. Lat Leang told the team that the Khmer Rouge took control of Varin District in 1970. He noted that there were two phases to this "control." Between 1970 and 1977, Khmer Rouge cadres from the Northern Zone, known as ("Liberation Khmer"), had controlled the district. They set up their district headquarters in Kok Phneou village, Daung Sub-district, and established a prison at Kok Kanh Cham Sa Nang, Prasat Trav village, Daung Sub-district. In April 1977, Varin District came under the control of Khmer Rouge cadres from the Southwest Zone. The Southwestern cadres captured all the Northern Zone cadres, and took them away. They kept the district headquarters at the same place, but the security office and prison were moved to Trapeang Boss Ka La in Kok Phneou village, Kok Daung Sub-district.

Mr. Lat Leang explained that during the tenure of the Northern Zone Khmer Rouge (1970-1977), execution of people accused of wrongdoing did not happen immediately. People accused of improper behavior would be required to carry out self-criticism four or five times. If they didn't change their habits or correct their wrong-doing after these attempts at re-education, then would they be killed. Mr. Leang maintained that there was no mass killing between 1975 and 1977, when the district was under the control of Northern Zone forces.

In 1977, however, when the district came under the control of the Khmer Rouge from the Southwest Zone, the killing began in earnest. They killed people who had any connection to previous regimes, including Lon Nol soldiers, 17-April People and teachers. Between 1977 and 1979, the Khmer Rouge organized executions in sub-district security offices and prisons. After the liberation in 1979, people in the district collected bones from different sub-districts and stored them at Wat Lvea in Lvea village, Sre Nauy Sub-district, Banteay Srei District. Most of the bones were excavated from a large pit in Trapeang Kraing, Lvea village, Sre Nauy Sub-district. (Note that in the Pol Pot time, Sre Nauy Sub-district was known as Varin Sub-district, and was under the authority of Varin District.) According to Mr. Lat Leang, Kok Kandal and Kok Khmaoch villages of Lvea Kraing Sub-district are locations where there are many big killing pits. Some of those pits still exist. These villages are about seventeen kilometers from the district office. In the same sub-district, there is a village called U Tey,

where there is another execution site located south of a pond. That village has fewer pits than Kok Kandal and Kok Khmaoch villages.

Beside Lvea Sub-district, there are other points of interest to the team. In Varin Sub-district, a genocide memorial was built at Wat Sovan Botum. There is an execution site south of the Wat, which is located in Rumduol village, Varin Sub-district. Mr. Lat Leang also noted that in Svay Sar Sub-district, there were three or four execution sites, but they were relatively small.

After obtaining this information from the Chief of the District Information Office, the team realized that visits to all of these locations would eventually be required. However, because of the time limitations for the current mapping mission, with so many target locations and such sad road conditions, it was apparent that the team could not cover all the sites in this district, and would have to concentrate on the main ones. The remaining sites would have to be covered on future trips.

Because of the need to locate witnesses, the team decided to visit the execution sites in Svay Sar Sub-district. According to Mr. Lat Leang, there had been some execution sites and a security prison in this sub-district. For this reason, the team left Varin District and sought out the Svay Sar Sub-district chief for confirmation of the information.

Uon Sort, 55, is chief of Svay Sar Sub-district and lives in Svay Sar village, Varin District. During the Pol Pot time, he lived in Russei village, Svay Sar Sub-district. He informed the team that he knew of five execution sites, as well as a security office and a prison.

First Execution Site

The first site is located in Beng Thmei village, Svay Sar Sub-district, and is situated about one kilometer from the district office. Accompanied by the sub-district chief and deputy commissioner Mr. Lai You, the team left the district office and headed for this destination. There the team observed a very large pit. According to the chief, in fact it was not a pit at all, but rather a well ten meters deep. The well is located next to a Kralanh Tree in Prey Kok Cham Bak. The Chief estimated that some twenty families had been killed there.

Here the team spoke with another witness, Mr. Khann Phy. He is 29 years old and is a farmer living in O village, Svay Sar Sub-district. He recalled that in 1979, while tending cattle in this forest, he saw this pit and noticed lots of bones scattered on its upper and lower levels. He said he believes the reason bones were scattered was that someone had excavated this pit, pulling out bones while in search of jewels. He confirmed that it is about twenty-one meters long, twenty-one meters wide and approximately six to ten meters deep.

Second Execution Site

A second site is about one kilometer south of Beng Thmei village, Svay Sar Sub-district. According to the two witnesses (Uon Sort and Khann Phy), this execution site is similar to the first one. It is a well with an opening which is two meters by two meters, approximately seven meters deep. It is about two hundred meters north of the barracks housing Battalion 31. In 1980, Mr. Khan Phy saw people excavate this well in search of jewels. Afterwards, they filled it in with soil. This well is situated between two prominent trees, a Leap tree and a Tra Ying tree. According to Mr. Khan Phy, the number of victims killed here was between thirty-five and fifty.

Third Execution Site

This site is located in Svay Sar village, Svay Sar Sub-district. It is known as O Kam Bott, and consists of one pit, four meters long, four meters wide and two meters deep. The total number of victims killed here is estimated to be more than fifty. It had been excavated to collect bones for a commemoration ceremony, and then filled in to permit rice cultivation. It is about two hundred meters west of Wat Svay Sar. Mr. Uon Sort told the team that in the Pol Pot time, the Khmer Rouge used the Wat as a detention center for those who had connections to previous regimes, and that it also functioned as a hospital.

Security Prison

This site is located in Prey Kok Ta Yea, Svay Sar village, and is about three kilometers west of the district office. The Khmer Rouge used this site for many different purposes, including a hospital, a security prison, offices for the district committee, a work site, a handicraft workshop, a food supply house and two rice mills serving two sub-districts. After 1979, those various functions were no longer carried out here.

Fourth Execution Site

Captain Huot Sokhom, 42, Police Commissioner of Varin District, was born in Prek Toal village, Koh Chivaing Sub-district, Ek Phnom District, Battambang Province. According to Captain Huot Sokhom, in the vicinity of Phnom Bay Dos in Prasat Sub-district, Varin District, there are three execution sites. The perpetrator was Comrade Chhang Chuoy -- Deputy Chief of Varin District between 1975 and 1979. The commissioner explained that the number of people killed in these three pits was approximately 2,000. Each of the pits is one hundred meters long, one hundred meters wide and four and a half meters deep. The executions were committed in 1977. The victims were April-17 People as well as "Old People." They killed whole families who were related to accused people, regardless of whether they were children or adults.

The three killing pits are separated from each other. One is to the north of Bay Dos Mountain, where approximately eight hundred people were killed. The second one is on the western flank of Bay Dos Mountain, where more than six hundred people were killed. The third pit is on the eastern slope of the mountain. This information was provided to the district police by Mr. Smann Yang, a former professor of Natural Sciences, who is since deceased. His wife is Mrs. Chhim Kim Phly, and she is now working at the Ministry of Interior.

These three pits constitute the largest site in Varin District. Unfortunately, the team was able only to obtain statements from informants, and could not visit the actual locations, due to rainy season difficulties. They were unable to linger in the vicinity of Bay Dos Mountain, because drinking water was not available and Bay Dos Mountain is a malaria-prone area. Research in this area will have to be continued during the dry season.

Mr. Huot Sokhom also informed the team of another location, situated in Prasat Sub-district and known as Tum Nup Krapeu Pram (Five Crocodiles Embankment), adjacent to Varin Sub-district. He said at least forty families had been killed there. The Khmer Rouge slaughtered the victims and then disposed of their bodies in the lake, subsequently building a dam on the site. This site should also be visited, but that proved impossible on this mission, due to bad roads and time limitations.

Fifth Execution Site

Yet another Khmer Rouge execution site in Varin District is located in Russei Thom village, Svay Sar Sub-district, about two kilometers east of the Varin District office. It is in the Prey Kok Cham Bakk forest area. There, the team observed a pit, four meters long, four meters wide and five meters deep, with a variety of human bones scattered about, including skulls, fibulas, tibias, and so on. Most of the people killed at this site were workers in local village cooperatives. The killings took place in 1977, and the estimated number of victims is approximately sixty to ninety. Mr. Lat Leang said that in 1980, this pit was excavated by people searching for jewels.

The team finished the visit at 3:45 pm. As the team departed, Mr. Lai You explained that no one dared to enter this jungle until mid-1997, because until then it had remained under Khmer Rouge control. A police officer accompanying the team hinted that as recently as the last three months, this jungle still had torn clothes hanging from trees, and that the Documentation Center team was the first to conduct a search in the area.

Half an hour later, accompanied by the police inspector as well as two other police officers, the team returned safely to Angkor Chum District.

Conclusion:

In Varin District, there are many execution sites. Even though the team was unable to visit all sub-districts, everything they saw in Svay Sar Sub-district clearly reflected the fact that the Khmer Rouge slaughtered people barbarously here. The witnesses located there all had precise knowledge of events during the Khmer Rouge period.

III. Angkor Chum District:

Mr. Khaury Ratt, Chief of Angkor Chum District Office, said this district was established in 1987, and was composed of sub-districts split off from Puork and Varin Districts. Previously this territory had been under the administration of Anlong Veng District. Due to the prolonged war, the district office was moved to Kbal Cham village, Char Chhouk Sub-district.

Early on August 17, 1999, in absence of the district governor, the team met with three officials: Mr. Yaury Se, 49, District Chief of Culture and Arts, Mr. Muy Noeuk, 59, District Chief of Cults and Religion, and Mr. Khaury Ratt. After the team reviewed the main aims of the research, Mr. Yaury Se described the geography of Angkor Chum District.

The district is bordered on the east by Varin and Angkor Thom Districts, on the west by Kralanh and Srei Snam Districts, on the north by Srei Snam and Varin Districts and on the south by Puork District. It is divided into seven sub-districts, including Char Chhouk, Daun Peng, Kok Daung, Norkor Pheas, Kol, Sre Khvav and Ta Saom. The district has a total population of 50,000, and 8,900 families. This figure includes 25,786 women. Ninety-five percent of the population is made up of farmers, with the remaining five percent being civil servants and merchants. It has an area of 474 square kilometers, including 18,981 hectares of farmland and 27,520 hectares of forests.

Mr. Muy Noeuk then recounted to the team the locations of security prisons, district headquarters and execution sites during the Khmer Rouge time. Until 1987, the district office was subsumed under Puork District, and known as a Khmer Rouge "Liberated Area." At that time it was governed by Bauch Chann, District Chief, Comrade Sao, District Deputy Chief,

and Comrade Louk Seng, Chief of Region 35. Mr. Noeuk told the team that the district office, known as Tuol Bos Preal, had been used as the security prison of Puork District. Between 1970 and 1975, this area was controlled by the Khmer Rouge, but that control was contested by the Lon Nol forces. During that civil war period, most people evacuated from various places were killed during their evacuation. The remaining people were temporarily kept in this prison for a short period, before being sent to Varin District. Between 1975 and 1979, the prison was located at the present-day Puork High School.

From 1975 to 1977, Puork District was governed by Lork Beng. In 1977, Tun and Vann took control of the District. These Southwestern Zone cadre governed the district until 1979. They killed Lork Beng, the former Puork District Chief. Teachers, those who had connections to previous regimes and “Old People” were all taken to be killed in Trapeang Lbaek Sangke, which is situated in between Trei Nhoar, Yeang and Kdei Run Sub-districts. This pond was dug by villagers to conserve irrigation water for their rice fields, and to raise fish.

Execution sites in the district

Mr. Muy Noeuk described several execution sites in the district.

- 1) Prey Chup Ta Put is situated in Kok Daung Sub-district, twelve kilometers from the district office.
- 2) Prey Sa-ak is located in Ta Saom village, Ta Saom Sub-district, eight kilometers from the district office.
- 3) Kok Peas is located in Kok Pek Sub-district.
- 4) Prey Boss Kuy is located in Ta Saom village, Ta Saom Sub-district, where there were four pits, including three well-shaped pits.
- 5) Trapeang Lbaek Sangke, which was already mentioned.

After obtaining this information, the team left the district office and headed for Prey Boss Kuy, situated in Kok Thmei village, Ta Saom Sub-district. It is some four kilometers northeast of the district office. The team walked one kilometer, wading through water in some places, and through planted rice fields in others. They were accompanied by two witnesses who would be able to point out the actual locations, Mr. Makk Oeun, 42, Chief of Kok Thmei village, and Krauch Sun, Deputy Chief of Angkor Chum district.

At Prey Boss Key, aided by Mr. Makk, the team observed four locations with mass graves.

Killing Site 1

The first mass grave location is a well, which local people had dug for water and for rice irrigation. It is three meters wide, three meters long and five meters deep. The estimated number of victims killed here is two hundred to two hundred fifty.

Killing Site 2

The second location is also a well, with approximately the same dimensions as Site 1. The estimated number of victims killed here is one hundred eighty to two hundred twenty-five.

Killing Site 3

The third site is also a well, though somewhat smaller than Sites 1 and 2. It is three meters wide, two meters long and three meters deep. The estimated number of victims killed is here approximately sixty to seventy-five.

Killing Site 4

There are two pits at this site, one which is one and a half meters square and two meters deep, and the other two meters square and two meters deep. The estimated number of victims buried in these two pits is seventy-five to ninety.

The estimated number of victims killed at the four sites is approximately 515 to 640. Mr. Krauch Sun, the second witness, said that most of the people killed here were April-17 People, including teachers and those who had some connection to previous regimes. He believes were mostly killed at dawn. Before being executed, the victims were undressed and their hands were tied.

Conclusion

After visiting the sites and interviewing the witnesses, the team concluded that between 1970 and 1979, the districts in this area were controlled by the Khmer Rouge. However, this control was contested by Lon Nol's forces from 1970 to 1975. The serious killing by the Khmer Rouge occurred between 1975 and 1979, and was evidently worst between 1977 and 1979. In the three districts of Siem Reap province the team was able to visit, there were many execution sites. The team regretted that time did not allow them to visit all the sub-districts. The roads were also in bad condition, meaning travel in the rain was not a good idea, especially in the cases where the sites the team wished to visit were far from the provincial town.

10. SIEM REAP PROVINCE

District	Site Name/ Visited Date	Site Type	Est. Victim	Witness	File #/ID Code	Latitude	Longitude
Banteay Srey	Wat Tbeng/ 13 August 99	Burial and Prison. No pit	N/A	Um Soeun	R 081305C/ 170301	N 13°30'3447"	E 104°00'3703"
Varin	Wat Svay Sar/ 16 August 99	Prison No pit	N/A	Uon Sort	R 081606B/ 171405	N 13°47'5304"	E 103°45'0581"
Varin	Prey Kok Chambakk/ 16 August 99	Burial 1 pit	25 families (100 up)	Uon Sort	R 081608A/ 171406	N 13°47'1046"	E 103°45'0667"
Varin	Beng Thmei Choeumg/ 16 August 99	Burial No pit	40	Uon Sort	R 081604A/ 171401	N 13°48'4643"	E 103°45'5924"
Varin	Kauk Tayea/ 16 August 99	Prison No pit	N/A	Uon Sort	R 081605A/ 171402	N 13°48'4115"	E 103°45'3273"
Varin	Beng Thmei Tbaung/ 16 August 99	Burial 1 mass grave	20 Families (100 up)	Uon Sort	R 081605B/ 171403	N 13°48'3851"	E 103°45'5113"
Varin	Svay Sar School/ 16 August 99	Burial 1-3 pits	50 up	Uon Sort	R 081606A/ 171404	N 13°47'5429"	E 103°45'1050"
Angkor Chum	Toul Bos Preal/ 17 August 99	Prison No pit	N/A	Huoy Se	R 081700B/ 170101	N 13°41'0507"	E 103°38'5961"
Angkor Chum	Toul Bos Kuy/ 17 August 99	Burial 4 pits	Around 450	Makk Oeut	R 081702A/ 170102	N 13°40'3658"	E 103°41'0754"