

## ***Khet Stung Treng & Genocide***

***Original Text in Khmer : Youk Chhang (October 15-19, 1995)***

***Translated into English & Edited: Phat Kosal & Im Sothearith***

### **Note**

Before departing to Stung Treng Province, Dr. Helen Jarvis, Documentation Consultant to the Cambodian Genocide Program (CGP), suggested that I should ask professor Iv Chan, History Department, University of Phnom Penh, who used to go there once, for information in advance.

At 7.30pm, I met with professor Iv Chan at his house. He reported that he went to research there in 1994, but stayed there for only one night because the purpose of going to the Northeast Zone was to interview a former Khmer Rouge cadre in Rattanakiri Province. He reported that there is only 1 genocide grave in Stung Treng Province. The grave is in the center of the provincial town and also there was a KR prison, but a new construction has been built on this site.

### ***Stung Treng Province and its people***

Stung Treng Province is located along the Mekong River's bank, in the Northeastern part of Kingdom of Cambodia. According to Stung Treng's 1995 statistics, there were 12878 families constituting 71254 people who lived in 128 villages 34 Sub-Districts of 5 Districts, i.e. Stung Treng District, Thalabarivath District, Siem Bok District, Se San District, and Siem Pang District. Besides Vietnamese, Laotian, Cham, and Chinese, there are 8 groups of tribes. They are: Kring 210, Tumpoun 3, Prao 370, Phnorn 647, Charay 17, Lun 28, Karet 154, and Kuoy 278. Stung Treng Province was captured by the Khmer Rouge under the so-called National Reconciliation front after the *coup d'etat* of March 18, 1970.

According to the documents which were dated August 1983 and compiled by Kampuchea National Salvation Solidarity front of People's Republic of Kampuchea, 2198 people in Stung Treng were killed by the Khmer Rouge. Out of the total number of the victims, there were 486 farmers, 690 workers and public servants, 31 monks, and 460 tribe people. The same documents show that 26 persons have become disabled. ***The total statistics of genocide sites show that 59 graves in Reacheanukol Village, 5 prisons, 9 killing sites, and 1 genocide museum were recently found.***

On the plane to Stung Treng, I met H.E. Im Sothy, MP of Kampong Cham and who was also an active speaker during the International Conference "Striving for Justice" organized by Yale University, held on 21-22 August, 1995 as he also made a trip to Rattanakiri as well. He reported that there are many mass graves in Rattanakiri. It was raining heavily as the plane landed in Stung Treng. I met with some contact persons there and chose one to be my driver.

### ***Driver "photos attached"***

Thong Sarom, male, was born in 1965 in Svay Rieng Province and came to live in Stung Treng Province in 1984.

## ***Leaders of Stung Treng***

1. Mr. Li Sou (Funcinpec)	Governor	Tel : 58811
2. Mr. Nuon Pen (CPP)	1 <sup>st</sup> Deputy Governor	Tel : 58813
3. Ms. Heng Kim (Funcinpec)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Deputy Governor	Tel : 58810
4. Mr. Koy Sarim (CPP)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Deputy Governor	Tel : 58815

Mr. Nuon Pen is the former Vice Minister of Finance of the State of Cambodia. Because of the absence of the Governor and 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Governor, I decided to meet with Mr. Koy Sarim in order to carry out the survey of genocide sites and search for documents relating to genocide.

## ***Genocide Sites***

### ***1. Chaong Haong lake (killing site-photo attached)***

It is located in the village of Kilometer No. 4 (now known as Reacheanukol village) Stung Treng Sub-district, Stung Treng District.

#### ***First witness (Photo attached)***

Mr. Saom Sophea, 40, was born in Staong District, Kampong Thom Province. He came to live in Stung Treng Province in 1984. In Pol Pot regime, he lived in Trapeang Veng Village, Sra You Sub-district, Kampong Svay District, Kampong Thom Province. He reported that he had seen floating corpses in the lake. Then the Vietnamese soldiers and provincial authority collected those corpses and remains to be piled in the shed in front of his current house. Chaong Haong lake is located behind his house.

#### ***Second witness (Photo attached)***

Mr. Min San, 70, was one of the Base People in the Pol Pot regime. He has 8 children who live with him nowadays in Reacheanukol Village, Stung Treng Sub-district, Stung Treng District.

- 1970-1973 served in Lon Nol Army with the rank of private.
- 1973-(74?) joined the resistance movement with the Khmer Rouge and lived in Nhoeun Region, Chhouk District, Kampot Province, West of Trapeang Andek Sub-district. He was a guard of prison 204. Prison 204 was under the control of the Central Party which was in Region 35 of Southwest Zone (405).
- 1975 Angkar sent him to Stung Treng Province. He lived in Srae Kor Village, Srae Kor Sub-district, Se San District. He reported that there were at least 1000 people who were taken to be killed in this Chaong Haong lake.

### ***2. Genocide Memorial (facing Chaong Haong lake-photo attached)***

Mr. Sân reported that behind the place for storing corpses which is also in Reacheanukol Village, there were about 9 graves found in 1979. This place can not be

closely accessed because of the dense forest surrounding it and because there may be snakes living near there. However it can be seen from the distance.

He reported that Ta Sela, Chief of Chlop (security police) of Stung Treng District, was a person who took prisoners to a prison located on the West of Chaong Haong lake. That prison was known as Region 105 prison. It is noticeable that Region 105 was Mondul Kiri Region which is in Mondul Kiri Province (see the map of Democratic Kampuchea of 1976.) It is still doubtful whether this prison was used for only prisoners from the Northeast Zone or for those from other zones as well. However it was clear that this prison was controlled by a Khmer Rouge leader from Mondul Kiri.

### **3. Prison (photo attached)**

**Witness:** Major Heng Saman, 40, was Chief of 2<sup>nd</sup> Investigation Bureau (2BI) of Khmer Royal Armed Forces. Nowadays he lives in Reacheanukol Village. In Pol Pot time, he lived at the border of Kratie and Kampong Cham (East zone). The person who lived in his current house used to be a Khmer Rouge security chief. He reported that the security chief named Kham Vieng was from a minority ethnic group from Mondul Kiri Zone and he was a cruel killer in Region 105. He thinks that Kham Vieng probably died during fighting between the State of Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge in 1989 in Mondul Kiri Province.

### **4. Mass Graves (photo attached)**

Behind Major Saman's house, there are about 50 graves. His soldiers noticed a great deal of skulls and bones when they were fishing. There were a number of graves not yet excavated. Now they all were flooded. He suggested we should come to visit there again in the dry season. He said there were villagers secretly excavating these graves in order to find gold and other treasures which were believed to be with the corpses. Major Saman has never heard of the word "*Sanibal*", but "*Santesok*" which probably means local defense activities.

### **Genocide Documents "Photo attached"**

I met with Mr. Som Sitha, 59, head of CPP Provincial HQ and former governor of Stung Treng Province from 1979 until 1992, with the purpose of searching for other documents relating to genocide in Stung Treng. A number of documents concerning people's complaints against Pol Pot genocide acts on people in Stung Treng, were found and copied as documents to be held at the Documentation Center.

### **Information "Photo attached"**

I met with Men Sarin (monk), 63, at Stung Treng Mountain Pagoda "built on 2/2/95", Stung Treng Sub-district, Stung Treng District. He was born in Prasat Village, Prasat Sub-district, Kampong Trabek District, Prey Veng Province.

- 1954-1957 served in French controlled army, Prey Veng Province.

- 1957-1964 transferred to Phnom Penh where he worked for Army Engineering Unit.
- 1969 transferred to Stung Treng Province and worked for the same unit.
- 1970 when the Khmer Rouge took over Stung Treng, he moved to O Svay Village, O Svay Sub-district (now known as Preah Rumkel Sub-district), Thalabarivath District.
- 1979-1987 served as Village Chief of O Svay.
- End of 1987 entered monkhood.

He stated that during the Pol Pot regime, Ta Yann was District Chief of Stung Treng and later was replaced by Ta Bor (a tribe member). He said that in 1970, Khmer Rouge had killed two Americans in O Svay Village. In 1971-72 and 73, only a small number of people in Stung Treng were killed for stealing food and for what they called immoral deeds. In 1975, new people (17 April people) about 3 or 4 families arrived in O Svay Village and later were killed by the Khmer Rouge. He added that in 1975, the Southwest people were sent to control Stung Treng province. He confirmed that the Khmer Rouge must be punished.

#### ***Security "Photo attached"***

I met with Mr. Kouy Sarim, Deputy Governor, in order to ask him for security escorts and also for documents of all pits in the province.

#### ***Escort:***

1. Hem Vibol, 27, born in Svay Rieng. Escaped from the army conscript, border-forest clearing work known as "K 5 Plan" and ended up in Stung Treng in 1982.
2. Thang Mony, 27, born in Kratie and moved to Stung Treng in 1982.

#### ***Criminal Sites "Photo attached "***

##### ***1. Killing Site: O Romeath Village, O Romeath Sub-district, Siem Pang District.***

***Witness:*** Ms. Si Savy, 52, is now working for CPP HQ in Stung Treng Provincial Town. She has 7 children. In 1973, her brother-in-law was taken away and put in prison in Stung Treng and 9 members of her family were killed by the Khmer Rouge.

**Note** : The prison is now the building of Bank of Stung Treng Province.

##### ***2. Prison "Photo attached"***

***Witness:*** Mr. Chap Chan Chivornn, 49, is now living at O Cha Long Village, Sre Kra Sang Sub-district, Stung Treng District. He stated that there were three prisons in the province:

- a. Is now the Provincial Bank building (was a prison).

- b. Is now the office of Veterinarians (was an interrogation center between 1972-1973)
- c. Was the interrogation center between 1970-75 and also the salt warehouse. Now is the Hotel of Kolap Stung Treng.

### ***3. Killing Site in O Pong Moarn***

O Pong Moarn is the intersection point of three provinces; they are Stung Treng, Kratie, and Ratanak Kiri. Mr. Chap reported that in 1978, Kham Lorn, 43, was head of O Pong Moarn District. In 1970-73-75, Stung Treng was called Stung Treng Region. He added that in 1971, 20 people were caught and interrogated by the Khmer Rouge at the interrogation center and later were killed in O Pong Moarn.

### ***Documents***

Testimonials were obtained from the Provincial Office of Information, Culture and Arts.

- 1. Mr. Sam Sa-Em, Director (since 1985)
- 2. Mr. Sovannara, Archive Office
- 3. Mr. Ly Soeun, Deputy Director

The complaint documents on the family members killed in the Pol Pot regime have been found and officially photocopied and held in the Documentation Center.

### ***Information "Photo attached"***

Interviewed Major Koh Moun who is now office Chief of First military Training School in Stung Treng. He lives in Mondul 4 Village, Stung Treng Sub-district, Stung Treng District. He is a former Chief of FUNCINPEC HQ.

- ─ 1962-1970 served in Sihanouk Army and later Lon Nol Army.
  - ─ 1970-72 was a peasant in Siem Bok Village, Siem Bok Sub-district, Siem Bok District.
  - ─ 1972 served as Chalop of Khmer Rouge in Siem Bok Village.
  - ─ 1973 served in the Khmer Rouge Army and was posted in Trapeang Kul Village, Trapeang Kul Sub-district, Donn Tum District, Preah Vihea province (hold CKC rifle).
  - ─ 1973-75 was a Khmer Rouge soldier for 6 months and later was transferred to what they called "Fishing Unit" of Siem Bok District because he knows how to dive well. This Unit was a producing unit of Munti "S 27".
- \*\* "S" does not mean "Security" or "Security Guard" either. S 27 was in Region 10, Preah Vihear Province. Region Chief was Ta Mann who was later killed by the Khmer Rouge.
- ─ 1976 returned to Tonle Sap Unit Region 103 "Champion of swimming competition " at Stung Senn Tonle Phok "Geographical feature".

- 1977 The Khmer Rouge from the Southwest Region caught Ta Hang, Region Chief, 47, to be killed on accusation of having associated with Vietnam. Shortly after that, Ta Hang's administration structure was demolished and all the cadres were told to go back to their home villages. He then returned to his village, Kang Chap "spelled Kang Cham on the map", Kang Chap Sub-district, Thalabarivath District, where later he got married to his wife.
- 1979 when the Vietnamese troop arrived in Cambodia, his wife died of a disease. He then moved to O Marash Sub-district, Siem Bok District.
- 1979 joined the Cambodia People's Army.
- 1981-86 lived at Basei Chamkrong Camp where he worked as a body guard of Mr. Penn Thal (Penn Thal is the second eldest son of Samdach Penn Nout, former Prime Minister of Sihanouk Ville from 1945-1970 and also a younger brother of H.E. Penn Thol, MP of Kampong Speu Province who belonged to Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party known as BLDP of Son Sann.
- 1986-89 moved to a refugee camp called "Site B" because of Keo Chounn aka Keo Savuth, Chief of Nam Yeunn camp attempted to kill Mr. Penn Thal and himself. Keo Chounn now is working for Thamakar Office in Preah Vihea Province.
- 1993 served as Provincial Chief of FUNCINPEC in Stung Treng.

Major Koh Moun reported that in 1973-74 there was no mass killing but the killing was carried out by the selection and classification of people into different types. Major Koh believed that the Khmer Rouge changed its name from the National Reconciliation front to Democratic Kampuchea in 1975.

### ***Genocide Sites (1975-76)***

General Moun reported that:

1. Bach Village, Dong Sub-district, Thalabarivath District; Khmer Rouge killed at least 3,000 people.
2. Kambor Village, O Sub-district, Thalabarivath District; Khmer Rouge killed at least 2,000 people.

Bach and Kambor Villages are situated about 20 kilometers from Stung Treng Provincial Town where presently is a crossing road of Khmer Rouge. Chief of Bach Village: "Men". Security Chief of Bach Village: "Sok". Does not know about village chief of Kambor.

\*\* The word Security "*Santesok*" probably refers to security levels of villages and sub-districts. Never heard of the word "*Sanibal*".

The two people who were involved in sending people to be killed at Bach and Kambor's villages are now living together as husband and wife. They are : 1). Ngem Sokhan Aka "Meng"; former Khmer Rouge's District Chief of Siem Bok District, Stung Treng Province, 2). Sing Nichan Aka "Pha"; former Woman District Chief.

Both of them are now living in Krom Village, Preah Rumkel Sub-district, Thalabarivath District, Stung Treng Province. Krom Village is located about 3 kilometers from Khon mountain of Lao; West of O Svay Village where the two Americans were killed by the Khmer Rouge in 1970. Normally it takes almost 4 hours by boat from Stung Treng Provincial Town to Krom Village.

### ***Information about the two Americans killed in 1970***

The person who was involved in this killing was Mao Thany who is now living at O Svay Village. He is a former "**Para**" soldier and defected to State of Cambodia in 1989. Reported that the two Americans were a man and a woman. When the American man saw the Khmer Rouge's soldiers raping his friend, he then committed suicide by running to hit his head on a tree near by. In 1994, there was an American team called MIA, who came by airplane with the support of Stung Treng's Governor Office to O Svay to investigate the above matter. There was no positive result from the investigation. He reported that the MIA team had no detailed information and spend only 2 hours on the investigation.

### ***Thalabarivath District Office***

Mr. Pheng Samith, 47, District Chief, who used to live in Sre Thnot Village, Sre Thnot Sub-district, reported that there are two locations of genocide in his district. They are :

1. Killing Site : San Ang Village, Sam Ang Sub-district, Thalabarivath District.
2. Prison : Koh Salay Village, Koh Salay Sub-district, Siem Bok District.

He also reported that Mr. Im, Village Chief, who is now living at Anlong Kramoun Village, Sre Reusei Sub-district, Thalabarivath District, had known of the above location of genocide.

### ***Preah Rumkel Sub-District Office***

In 1970, the majority of people who live in Preah Rumkel Sub-district fled to Lao. The rest were evacuated by the Khmer Rouge to O Ray Village, O Ray Sub-district and Koh Salay Village, Krang Chap Sub-district, Thalabarivath District. The people of Preah Rumkel were replaced by tribe people from Ratanakiri Province. In 1979, people of Preah Rumkel returned to their home village.

### ***Genocide Sites***

1. Chep Village, Preah Rumkel, Chep (now known as Thalabarivath) District.

**Witness:** Chum Phang, female, 42, who is now living at Krom Village, Preah Rumkel Sub-district reported that in 1970, Khmer Rouge had killed her husband in that village where there was also a prison. In 1978, her father was killed at the same village by the Khmer Rouge's soldier.

### ***Interview with Ngem Sokhan Aka Meng, former Khmer Rouge District Chief, Region 103. (his biography and photo are attached herewith)***

Meng was a personal secretary of comrade Chan Sareth, member of the Permanent Central Committee of Communist Kampuchea. Chan Sareth, used to work as Sub-

district secretary in Svay Rieng Province. He also used to be Governor of Svay Rieng Province. In 1955, Chan Sareth was a MP candidate for Koh Kong Province. Meng reported that in the Permanent Central Committee of Communist Kampuchea comprised probably 15 members. They are:

1. Pol Pot Aka Pouk
2. Chou Chet (former editor of Khmer Nationalist "*Neak Chet Niyum*" newspaper).
3. Sor Phim
4. Koy Thoun Aka Thouch
5. My Sann Aka Ya (from zone 108)
6. Chan Sareth Aka Mann
7. Chhith Chhoeun aka Mok
8. Kang Chap aka Se
9. Ieng Sary aka Van
10. Khiev Samphan
11. Ros Ngim
12. Noun Chea
13. Soeung Ngoc Minh aka Achar Mean
14. Keo Meas
15. Vorn Veth

Meng reported that there were maybe more than ten members of the Central Committee of Communist Kampuchea. Each Region where a member of Central Committee resided was called a ***Special Region***. A special Region was the ***support base*** of the fully liberated region where they said they constructed people to be perfect. Meng remembered that on 8/30/1970/ a group of Khmer Rouge led by comrade Chan Sareth aka Mann, comrade Bo Phan aka Hang, former editor of ***Damneoung Thmei*** newspaper; and Phan aka Pao who was his neighbor came that night to look for his father who used to serve for ***Issarak***, to join them in fighting American Imperialism. Unfortunately, his father was ill and decided to send him instead. His father name is Ngem Nark who relate to H.E. In Tam who chaired the Democratic Party in 1993.

### ***Administration***

Secretary of the Central Committee supervised District work and Vice Secretary of Central Committee supervises Sub-district work. All members collected from Sub-districts are members of district party.

### ***Security***

Teams who were involved in killing people are:

- ***Chalop Phum (Security Village)***
- ***Yorthea Khum (Security Sub-district)***
- ***Yorthea Srok (Military District)***



***Yourthea Dambann*** (Military Region) & ***Yorthea Zone*** (Military Zone) were not involved in killing people because they were guards at the Laotian, Vietnamese and Thai borders.

- Siem Bok District was called S 11
  - Preah Rumkel District was called S 12
  - Chep District was called S 28
- \*\* **S (*Sar*)** existed only in special regions or fully liberated regions.

Region Chief of Region 103 is Comrade Douch aka "Khean", former teacher of Chemistry at Kampong Cham High School who was very closed to H.E. Kiet Chhon, Minister of Finance and Economy.

### ***How to send a message in liberated region***

Write on cement paper with a special ink from China which you could not see it on that paper. Then insert it into a bamboo pipe for messenger "***Nirasa***" to be delivered. In order to read that letter you have to wet it with a special ink and let it dry in the sun. Meng was the one who wrote reports on District activities which related to security matter, politics and people mentality; then sent such report to central committee where Pol Pot and Noun Chea were the only two to receive. ***Pol Pot never sent an order in writing to kill Cambodian people(!)*** but he did for Vietnamese, specially those 2,500 who went to study in North Viet Nam with Achar Mean. Pol Pot declared this order in public in 1975. Meng reported that Noun Chea personally issued orders to kill people. He never made an order in writing. Meng said that ***Chief of Region had the right to kill people*** without approval from the Central Committee. In general, District Chief, Sub-district Chief, and Village Chief sent a report to Region Chief on suspected persons who would betray Angkar. Then, Region Chief replied that they should be destroyed meaning "***must be killed.***" Member of Central Committee met every 6 months. ***Order to kill of Pol Pot*** was sent only to Region Chief attached with a monthly magazine called ***Tung Padevath***. Meng said that he was afraid to read such letters. He used to see Pol Pot in 1974 during the visit of Sihanouk at Thmer Village, Thmer Sub-district, Chey Sen District, Preah Vihea Province. Thmer was the biggest base among the three liberated regions during that time. The three liberated regions are :

1. Thmer, led by comrade Mann, Region Secretary. His wife, comrade Sun, in charge of Women's Affairs.
2. Traloap Village, Roveang Sub-district, Preah Vihear Province; led by comrade Hang, Region Vice Secretary.
3. Chep, Preah Rumkel Sub-district, Thalabarivath District, Stung Treng Province; led by comrade Phang, Region Member.

Meng reported that Chan Sareth decided to kill people based on three principles (slogan) of Angkar :

1. Those who resist.
2. Expatriate and local capitalists, rich farmers, intellectuals, juveniles, monks.
3. Reactionary groups such as "CIA,KGB" must be wiped out.

If any person in the report fell into the above principles, then he/she had to be killed! If they did not fall into the three above principles, comrade Chan Sareth always ordered Chalop Village or Sub-district to continue to do the investigation or ***Karsang***.

### ***Pol Pot's personal secretary***

Mr. Pok de Komar aka Pang (from France) was Pol Pot's personal secretary in 1970 who also was responsible for Khmer Rouge radio station at "B 20" which was a central office (munti) located at Prey Kaosou, Bos Khnor Sub-district, Kampong Cham Province.

- **B (*borr*) central office (*Munti*)**
- **S (*sarr*) does not know what it means**
- **A (*arr*) means Team (*Angkapheap*)**  
" Team (A 12) is a collective "

### ***Order to Kill***

***Order to Kill documents were located in Tung Padevath magazine of which Noun Chea and Pol Pot were the only two editors.*** Meng claimed that all words which Noun Chea and Pol Pot use, are the same with those in the text in the Tung Padevath. Meng stated that Khiev Samphan does not know much about these things because he joined the Central Committee in 1974. Khiev Samphan used to have a nickname "***Chief of garden***" who was carefully observed by Noun Chea.

### ***Angkar***

Meng stated that the word "request to Angkar" means "request to Region Chief".

### ***Slogans***

Angkar represents something right and good.

- We were a democratic party not a centralized democratic party.
- A centralized democratic party is a dictatorship.
- If you want to destroy a banana tree, you must pull out the roots, or (it will grow again). In 1971, Noun Chea issued an order to kill all the Cambodians having any relationship with Acha Mean such as Man, Hang, Sun, Bun Chan, District Chief in Mondul Kiri and himself.

### ***Cause of Revolution***

Meng believed that there were injustice and exploitation under the Feudal regime. There were ***rich*** and ***poor***. Khmer Rouge took advance of this matter to win over the villagers and to create an internal conflict among themselves. At the same time, a handful of people took the power in their hands and lived happily. Meng said that Khiev Samphan looked good only from the outside but truly was one of the closest to Pol Pot.

### ***Ta Mok***

Mok was a trusty person of Pol Pot and was very powerful. Mok also was very popular among villagers. Meng stated that ***Khmer Rouge's Revolution did not have prisons***, but may be some were created in 1977 after Mok took over most of the powers. Meng's wife who stayed in a Phnom Penh's hospital for an abortion matter in 1977 saw personally the killings and prisons.

### ***Conclusion***

- Stung Treng provides favorable conditions for revolutionaries to live and hide easily and launch fighting. However, the fighting on a large scale were impossible because of the many water ways running around the province. It was very difficult for logistic supply.
- The majority of people of Stung Treng was ***base people*** during the DK regime but they are somehow gentle and isolated.
- The killing in Stung Treng seems to be carried out by the people from other regions such as Mondul Kiri, Rattanakiri and people from Southwest Zone. To return to Stung Treng for a detailed research on mass graves and Khmer Rouge's administration ***is a must./..***

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