

មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) MAPPING THE KILLING FIELDS OF CAMBODIA, 1997: khet TAKEO [U-21-takeo/a-cb-tk]

Location	Site Name/ date	# of graves	Est. of victim	Witness	File #/ ID Code	Latitude	Longitude
srok Tram Kok	Krang Tachan/ 1 April 1997	50-60 pits	10043	Meu Chren ម៉ើ ជ្រិន	R 040109A/ 210901	N10 ⁰ 57'591 9"	E104 ⁰ 35'342 6"
srok Tram Kok	Krang Tachan/ 1 April 1997	11 pits		Meu Chren ម៉ើ ជ្រិន	R 040110A/ 210902	N10 ⁰ 57'572 5"	E104 ⁰ 35'280 9"
srok Prey Kabas	Tuol Kampong Chork/ 2 April 1997			Thoang Kang ថោង កាង	R 040203A/ 210601	N11 ⁰ 09'299 4"	E104 ⁰ 59'229 5"
srok Prey Kabas	Toul Trapeang Tnaot/ 2 April 1997				R 040203B/ 210602	N11 ⁰ 09'213 0"	E104 ⁰ 59'252 6"
srok Prey Kabas	Phum Rosey/ 2 April 1997			Choum Chem ជឹម ថែម	R 040204A/ 210603	N11 ⁰ 08'538 0"	E104 ⁰ 56'064 7"
srok Prey Kabas	Phum Rosey/ 2 April 1997	87 pits	4136	Choum Chem ជឹម ថែម	R 040205A/ 210604	N11 ⁰ 09'018 4"	E104 ⁰ 55'576 4"
srok Prey Kabas	wat Por Meas/ 2 April 1997			Yeum Heng ញឹម ហេង	R 040206A/ 210605	N11 ⁰ 08'237 1"	E104 ⁰ 56'033 9"
srok Samrong	wat Srah Krang Bontey/ 2 April 1997	70-80 pits	800	Tes Ban ទេស ហ្សុន	R 040209A/ 210701	N11 ⁰ 07'129 7"	E104 ⁰ 44'235 5"
srok Samrong	Pech Entrea/ 2 April 1997	40-50 pits	900	Kam Phun	R 040209B/ 210702	N11 ⁰ 07'118 3"	E104 ⁰ 44'155 7"

Documentation Center of Cambodia

Searching for the Truth

ស្វែងរកការពិត ដើម្បី ការបង្ហាញនិង យុត្តិធម៌

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There are 84 sites in srok Prey Kabbas alone of khet Takeo , according to the genocidal report conducted by the office of srok Prey Kabbas in 1983.

On 1 March 1997, DC-CAM assigned a team led by Mr. Sin Khin, Mr. Hak Sophal and Mr. Poa Tip to go in search of documents related to genocide crime of Pol Pot's clique in Takeo province. We traveled down national road 2 bound for Takeo, which is 77 kilometers from Phnom Penh. The same trip along national road 3 is 87 kilometers.

General Location of khet Takeo

Takeo province shares borders with Kandal province on the east, with Kampot and Kampong Speu provinces on the west, with Kampong Speu on the north, and with Vietnam on the south.

Takeo is a province in the southern part of the Kingdom of Cambodia covering a total natural area of 35, 627 square kilometers. It has a productive area of 274,000 hectares, of which:

- Rainy season rice area is 188, 000 hectares
- Dry season rice area is 56, 000 hectares
- Farming area is 30, 000 hectares
- Dwelling and vacant area is 68, 270 hectares
- Water area (lake, pond, canal, including forest, road...)is 14, 000 hectares.

Takeo's population is 749,300 people, of whom 380,200 are female. There are officially 8,223 civil servants. This figure is equal to 1.96 per cent of the whole population in the province.

Statistics of victims in Takeo

- Peasants : 121, 069 people
- Civil servants : 4, 580 people.
- Monks : 5, 673 people

- Ethnic minorities : 1, 575 people
- Disabled people : 5, 687 people

Total death toll : 150, 249 people

72, 244 people filed petitions against Pol Pot's clique.

At 9:00 a.m., we reached the governor's office in Takeo provincial town. We met Sam San, the first director of the provincial cabinet, and showed him our mission order. We then forwarded this mission order to the second provincial governor for authorization to collaborate with the office of culture, the office of religious affairs and the commissariat of the police of the province. Next, we contacted the governors of srok Tram Kok, srok Prey Kabbas and srok Samrong.

We met the director of the administrative office to ask for any remaining documents relating to Pol Pot's genocide program during the Khmer Rouge occupation of 3 years, 8 months and 20 days. We copied a set of documents from the book. These documents were initially copied in 1995 by Mr. Chhang Youk and his team Mr. Chhang Ly, Mrs. Helen and Mrs. Nin Sophon in collaboration with Mr. Ting Sokhai. These documents contained biographies, interrogations, investigations and reports of people being transported to be killed by Pol Pot's clique.

At 2:00 p.m., we traveled 27 kilometers from the provincial governor office to the site of killing Kring Tachann, khum Kos, srok Tram Kok, khet Takeo. Kring Tachann is located 7 kilometers west of national road 3, traveling 7 kilometers from srok Tram Kok and turning right 8 kilometers to the site. There, we contacted the office of culture and theatre of srok Tram Kok, and acquired a set of documents dated on 5 March 1996. We made copies of both the original and another copy.

Also, we officially gained approval from the governor of srok Tram Kok (reports enclosed). The history of the security office, the prison, the site of killing, the pits, the victims, the chief of the prison and his men, and the kinds of people killed here, were all clearly specified in these documents.

In addition to gathering documents, we also examined the killing site. We used GPS mapping equipment, photographed the pits, the remains and the killing site, and found 3 witnesses for more detailed clarification of the documents we had received.

The first witness

Poeung Domsiev is 50 years old, male, 1.55 meters tall, black hair, black teeth, wearing a long-sleeved and checked shirt. In Pol Pot's time, he lived in phum Prey Kaki, khum Samroang, srok Tram Kok, khet Takeo. Now, he lives in phum Kring Tachann, khum Kos, srok Tram Kok, khet Takeo at his birthplace, which is 500 meters from the prison.

He reported that before 1975, the sites were dwellings. In 1975, people were forced to move out. These people were then forced to carry soil, ostensibly in order to build hospital. However, Pol Pot's men built a security office, a prison and an education office instead.

He saw 6 wooden buildings with tile roofs. They measured 5 meters wide and 6 meters long, and were used as a prison for petty-fault prisoners and as a place for education. Prisoners accused of serious crimes were killed gradually. He added that victims were partly people evacuated from the city. Many others taken from small and big units throughout srok Tromkok, while the rest came from the remainder of the whole province. The prisoners detained here were all killed.

Prisoners were shackled and arranged to sleep in 2 rows with the feet of the first row touching the feet of the second row. Each row consisted of 60 prisoners. The prisoners were not allowed to relieve themselves outside the prison. They had to do so with their legs shackled in the prison. While taking prisoners to be killed, bass speakers were turned on at high volume throughout the place so that no one would notice the killing. He heard people screaming for help and crying terribly.

The second witness

Meu Chren is 63 years old, male, 1.69 meters tall,, good teeth, and white skin. He lives in phum Prey Takhab, khum Kos, srok Tram Kok, khet Takeo, where he lived during Pol Pot's time. His house is about 100 to 150 meters from Kring Tachann prison. He has been the chief of his phum since 1979.

Like the first witness, he said that while hiding under a palm tree, he witnessed lines of victims with their hands tied being marched to be killed. Shouts of pain and suffering as the victims were being beaten to death coincided with the increased volume of the killers' bass speakers.

He said that the victims were a mixture of soldiers, military police, spies, and custom officers. Later, families of the soldiers and young girls were taken to be imprisoned and killed here during 1975-76. He knows young people were killed here because he participated in excavating remains during 1981-82. The remains were placed in a memorial.

The memorial is 8 meters wide and 10 meters long, with plywood walls and a tile roof. It is properly locked and tended to avoid harassment by animals.

He dug many pits between 1979 and 1982, and saw 50 to 60 pits, each of which is 20 meters wide and 30 meters long. There were also a great number of small pits. He said that there were mass killings in 1978 before the liberation in 1979. All people young and old were killed that way in 1978. The perpetrators named Vann, Dim, Moeun, and Cheng are now missing.

The third witness

Sieng Soeun is 52 years old, female, 1.62 meters tall, fairly black skin, wavy hair, and small black teeth. During 1970-75, she lived in phum Kring Tachann, khum Kok, in the same srok and Khet. Her house was just 56 meters from the prison. In June 1975, she was evacuated to phum Kring Tachann, khum Beng, srok Kirivong, khet Takeo.

She secretly saw people being beaten and killed by beating them against the stump of a tree. Children ran about crying while their mothers were killed. When caught, the children were repeatedly beaten against the stump until they were dead. Shouts and cries of pain and suffering were heard throughout the killing site. During 1970-75, families of soldiers and captured soldiers were taken here not for reeducation, but for being killed. Prisoners were allowed to eat thin rice soup mixed with water, hyacinth, or banana tree without salt. The prisoners had no dishes; broken pieces of coconut shells were used instead.

About 110 meters west of this prison, there are 11 pits measuring 3 meters wide, 4 meters long, and 1.5 meters deep. We examined these pits and measured their location with the computer.

All three witness live near the prison and witnessed what happened here. We photographed the pits and the witnesses, and recorded detailed information from the witness on cassettes for keeping as documents.

On 2 April 1977, we continued our trip to srok Prey Kabbas, 42 kilometers away.

srok Prey Kabas

Geographical location of srok Prey Kabbas

Srok Prey Kabbas shares borders with srok Bati and srok Saang in khet Kandal on the north, with srok Angkor Borey on the south, with srok Samrong on the west, and with srok Koh Thom in khet Kandal on the East.

Srok Prey Kabbas contains 13 khum (clearly detailed in the enclosed document), 110 phum, 1,127 krom (groups), and 15,611 families. This srok has a population of 83,246 people, of whom 43,023 are female.

- Rainy-season-rice area	:	1,387	hectares
- Dry-season-rice area	:	3,668	hectares
- Sowing area	:	3,700	hectares
- Subsidiary-crops area	:	695	hectares
- New restored area	:	1,100	hectares
- Water area(Lake, pond, Canal..)	:	219	hectares
- Irrigation area	:	281	hectares
- Family-economy area	:	2,571	hectares
- Dike and canal area	:	2,101	hectares
- Road area	:	307.38	hectares
Total area	:	27,680	hectares

Criminal Center in srok Prey Kabbas

During a two hour discussion with the district governor to obtain documents from the district office of culture, we also quoted some information from Mr. Mey Sun, deputy governor of srok Prey Kabbas. There are many criminal centers and killing sites of varying size and composition in 13 khum throughout srok Prey Kabbas. All figures and events happening from 1975 to 1978 are recorded in the documents researched by the district office of culture, which are officially recognized by the district governor (we also enclosed these documents).

These documents were compiled by Mr. San Sok, the chief of the district office of culture and information , and were signed and sealed by Mey Sun, the district governor, indicating his official approval. These documents also showed

the number of big, medium and small pits, and dead of bodies in the 13 khum of srok Prey Kabbas. Considering the existing documentation and our time constraints, we could not go to the killing sites and criminal centers in all 13 khum of srok Prey Kabbas. So, we decided to examine 2 big criminal centers.

- 1- Kampong Chak criminal center in khum Prey Lvea, is situated between phun Prey Lvea and phum Kra Gril.
- 2- Tuol Kring criminal centers are in phum Reussey, khum Ban Kam.

These two criminal centers are in khum Prey Lvea and khum Ban Kan. The specifications of the sites the number of pits and bodies – are clearly delineated in the documentation (look at the documents enclosed). Our team found witnesses for further clarifying information, and photographed the pits and the sites for keeping as documents.

First, we went to examine Tuol Kampon Chak criminal center, where we arrived at 10:00 a.m. and found a witness named Thoang Khang, male, age 60, 1.65 meters tall, black hair, black skin. During 1970 to 1975, he was a soldier. He later escaped to live at Koh Thom. In 1978, he came back to live in phum Ang Kra Ping, khum Prey Lvea, srok Prey Kabbas as an ordinary person. He has lived in his house just 100 meters from Toul Kampong Chak since 1979. He raises livestock, chickens, and ducks and grows rice.

He told us that a deep hole in the ground covered with a roof was used as a prison. Prisoners slept on the ground in two rows placed foot to foot with their ankles shackled together. The prisoners had to relieve themselves into small boxes or tubes. During the daytime, prisoners were forced to dig 2 ponds. Prisoners were also ordered to plant rice. Afterwards, they were killed one by one.

In the compound of the prison, there were many pits of dead bodies, which are still visible. To the south, 200 meters from the prison, we saw the killing site Tuol Trapaeng Tnoat. While taking people to be killed, bass speakers were turned on at high volume, and the people were told that they were all being taken to learn.

He said that between 100 to 300 people were killed. Occasional killings occurred until 1978 or early 1979. The prison was built in 1973. Most of the prisoners in 1979 were captured soldiers, whereas the victims during 1975-76 were people evacuated from Phnom Penh, Takeo, and other provinces. Even base people who had committed something wrong were imprisoned and killed in this prison. The amount of killing at this site peaked in 1978, when its victims included young and old alike. After 1979, he found iron bars, and shackles scattered 50 meters around the compound of the prison.

At the killing site, there is a hillock called Tuol Lor Ed located by a farm near the prison. There are also 2 big ponds: Chhouk Pheuk Teuk pond and Ampil Teuk pond, which is always dry during dry season and is surrounded by a stand of tamarind trees.

We recorded the interview on cassette and photographed the witness. At 11:30 a.m., we went to Tuol Kring criminal center in phum Reussey, khum Ban Kan. We traveled along the border of khum Lvea leading to Angkar Borey. Turning right after 500 meters, we reached the security office and the prison. The site of killing is about 200 meters south of the prison and about 600 to 700 meters west of the prison. Victims were killed in phum Takhon. The site is covered with pits which are still visible, marked by mango trees and elephant apple trees.

According to the documents, 4,136 people were killed in this criminal center, more than in other communes. Pol Pot's cadre lived near the center in a tile building, 8 meters wide and 12 meters long. About 10 meters north of this house, there was an underground prison. This tile house is still standing and the owner of the house returned to live there in 1979. A pond with lotuses is near the house.

We also found 2 witness who both were base people and who worked in an economic and transporting unit for collectives during Pol Pot's time.

The first witness

Gnim Heng (Yeun Heag) is 46 years old, male, 1.70 meters tall. In Pol Pot's time, he lived in phum Reussey, khum Ban Kan and his duty was to transport economic supplies and to wash the cooking house in collectives. Since 1979, he has lived in phum Daung Tom, Khum Ban Kam.

While he was walking near the security office, he was arrested and promptly taken to be killed by Pol Pot's men. But fortunately, he was released due to help and intervention from the big unit (Kang Thom) of the commune authority. He was arrested by mistake because he entered the no-entry area. He took us to the killing site.

We saw many pits scattered on the area of 500 square meters, many of which were 2 or 4 square meters, and some others that were 5 square meters. He unearthed remains in search of gold in 1979, and was advised to deposit the remains of victims in the memorial for a wishing ritual every year, especially the Hatred Day against Pol Pot and his men on May 20. The victims were a mixture of young and old people of both sexes. When taken to be killed, some

victims tried in vain to escape; they were all caught and killed. Victims here were people evacuated from the city during 1975-76. Lines of people at that time were marched here; most of them were killed.

The second witness

The second witness largely confirmed what the first witness had said. We recorded his interview on cassette. We had already photographed the remains deposited at Wat Por Meas. At 1:30 p.m., we had our lunch at market in srok Prey Kabbas with a group of security policemen. At 2:00 p.m., we left to get documents at the district governor office, and then moved on to srok Samrong.

srok Samrong

Our team reached srok Samrong at 3:30p.m. The district governor office were already closed and no one was working. We tried to contact the commissariat of the provincial police.

We met:

- 1- Pang Sarindy-first police inspector.
- 2- Chung Sarin-security police.
- 3- Son Vuthey-security police.

Together with these policemen, we went straight to the residence of the chief of the district office. Unfortunately, he was ill and was not at home. We could not go to do our work without him. We'd been told that there were some documents, but the officer in charge of the documents was not there either.

So we got nothing from the governor office of srok Samrong since we met no one. Nor did we get statistics of the population, the area or the geographical location of this srok. Though we did not meet any officers of this srok, we quoted some information from the district police saying there are criminal centers throughout srok Samrong, such as:

- 1- Svay Angkoal-big criminal centre.
- 2- Tuol Ang-site of killing.
- 3- Antung Sar-site of killing.
- 4- Wat Srah Kring Banteay-big criminal centre.

As time was short, we decided to go to the criminal center Wat Sreh Kring Banteay. We traveled along national road 2, turning right about 3 kilometers. We reached the center at 4:00 p.m. The center is located 11 kilometers west of the district governor office.

Wat Srah kring Banteay criminal centre

Old people told us that the religious temple was turned into a security office. The eating hall and sleeping room for monks were used as a prison, and the Buddhist religious building was used as an interrogating section. We were accompanied to the criminal center by 2 old people who were witnesses, and many other old people who gave us general information in detail. Then, we interviewed the 2 witnesses, took pictures of them and recorded their voices on cassettes.

The first witness's name was Som Phon, male, age 52, 1.65 meter tall, sparsely gray hair, and black skin. He is a layman in Wat Srah Kring Banteay in phum Pich, Intrea, khum Boeung Kragh Khang Cheung, where he lived during Pol Pot's time. His house is 200 meters opposite of the Buddhist religious building. The first witness' proximity to the prison makes him an important person for us.

The second witness's name is Tes Ban, male, age 61, 1.66 tall, sparsely gray hair, black skin, and good teeth. In Pol Pot's time, he lived in the same phum, khum. and srok as the first witness, but his house, located 50 meters from the prison, was used as collective cooking house.

In addition to what the two witness mentioned, we also examined the killing site. We saw around 100 small pits, which can hold 1 or 2 persons each, dotting the grounds around the Buddhist religious building and the prison, and 30 big pits behind the temple.

The witnesses said there were only one or two people who buried victims, and the emaciated and sick inmates were dragged out of the prison, and pushed directly into the pits. Victims under interrogation in the Buddhist religious building were killed and buried just outside the building. Lines of families of young and old people of both sexes evacuated from Phnom Penh and other provinces such as Takeo were taken to be killed and buried in big pits 4 meters wide, 5 meters long and 2 meters deep.

Apart from the evacuated people, the base people who committed crimes of immorality, spoke openly, moved freely, failed to achieve Angkar's plan, or argued with Angkar were imprisoned and killed in this prison as well.

Victims were interrogated in a very cruel way by being tied up, hung and swung against the wall and the pillars, spilling blood all over the religious Buddhist building. As the witnesses lived near the Buddhist building, they heard victims groan and cry out loud with pain all over the place. The witnesses added that the killers in this Wat Srah Kring Banteay prison included Moeun, Cheng, Yim, Porn, Vich, who are now missing.

According to the witnesses, an estimated 3,775 victims were buried here. The witnesses arrived at this figure after seeing the written documents of Pol Pot's men, who ran away in 1979. The documents are now missing.

We photographed the two witnesses and interviewed them to get more information in detail. We also took pictures of the Buddhist religious building used as an interrogation section by Pol Pot's men. The building has not yet been renovated; it has remained intact just as it was during Pol Pot's time.

We finished up all our work at 5:30 p.m., and saw the security forces off to srok Samrong. We then departed from the srok at 6:00 p.m. and arrived in Phnom Penh at 7:00 p.m.

Conclusion

According to our research in the provinces, coupled with documents we received from a number of srok and various other information from people in each srok and khum, we see there are a great deal of criminal centers-big and small, everywhere. The information we obtained is real evidence, based on the witness's proofs and the photographs we took of remains and pits.