

មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

**GENOCIDE EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA**

**The Teaching of “A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)”  
A Public Education Forum between teachers, students and parents**

**A REPORT FROM SANDAN COMMUNE  
Sandan District, Kampong Thom Province**

February 20, 2011 – Written by Sayana Ser

Since its commencement in August 2010, the public education forum is conducted in the most remote areas in Cambodia. The forum brings together teachers, students and villagers to learn and discuss Khmer Rouge history and link it to their communal histories which have been taken for granted and almost entirely ignored.



On February 20, 2011, the Documentation Center of Cambodia’s (DC-Cam) Genocide Education Project conducted a public education forum in Sandan Commune, Sandan District, Kampong Thom Province. This was the 8th forum held in a remote area where access to current information and development are limited. In most cases, TV and FM radio channels cannot reach the people in Sandan. The DC-Cam staff travelled 100 km through a dusty and bumpy road from the provincial town to get to the forum site.

The forum was conducted in the Tik Mleang pagoda's dining hall, 500 meters from the Sandan Bridge. The participants who attended the forum included 30 villagers, 80 students and 5 teachers. Out of the five teachers, one teacher was a provincial teacher, two were commune teachers who have already received DC-Cam’s teacher training workshop on the teaching of Democratic Kampuchea History, and one teacher was a former volunteer for the DC-Cam’s Student Outreach Project during

the summer in 2006, newly graduated in October 2010, he is now teaching history in his hometown, Sandan High School.

## **GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE FORUM LOCATION**

Kampong Thom is located in the geographical center of Cambodia. It borders Preah Vihear province to the North, Kratie to the East, Kampong Cham and Kampong Chhnang to the South and the Tonle Sap lake and Pursat province to the West. The area of the province is 15,060 square kilometers (MAFF [www.maff.gov.kh](http://www.maff.gov.kh)). The topography of the province is variable, from the Tonle Sap floodplains in the Southwest and the lowland paddy fields, to lowland/ upland mosaic and upland forested areas in the Northeast. Kampong Thom is classified as a rural province.

Sandan is one of the eight districts of Kampong Thorn which contains 9 communes and 71 villages and a population of 37,098 persons, 19,023 of whom are female. Nearly 75% of the population is engaged in farming and forestry for their livelihood. In 1970, there was a Khmer liberation movement that took place in Sandan. Hang was the leader of the movement. He managed to gather 50% of people in Sandan to support the revolution. In 1971, the people who did not follow the ideology of the movement were arrested and sent to an education center at Prey Kanleng, where large numbers of prisoners were killed during the period of 1976 to 1979. Those who agreed to follow the orders of the movement were returned home. After a victory on April 17, 1975, many Lon Nol soldiers were transported to the Sre Chang village of Sandan commune to be killed. From 1976 to 1979, the Khmer Rouge changed the education center to a security office at Prey Kanleng, and many prisoners were imprisoned there. Most of the prisoners were new people. According to the Mapping report of 1997, about 5,000 families were evacuated to Sandan district, and most of them died of starvation, overwork, disease or killed.



Sandan Bridge, 168m, across over Stung Sen River.



Market at the end of the Sandan Bridge.

## GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE FORUM

The forum began with a brief introduction by Mr. Pong-Rasy Pheng. He stated the purposes of the program and the importance of studying KR history and introduced the textbook *A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)*. Afterwards, he gave a historical background of the area and its situation during the Khmer Rouge's liberation movement.



Mr. Pheng pointed out several mass grave sites and prison location in the commune. He then connected the background of the Khmer Rouge regime to the area itself. After this introduction, DC-Cam staff, the Second Deputy of the Commune, Mrs. Sao Yoeun, and teachers distributed the textbooks to the participants.

After the team distributed the books, Mr. Pheng requested several volunteers (villagers and students) to answer some questions in the pre-forum survey form to gauge the participants' understanding and interest in studying the history of the KR. Following the completion of the survey, Mr. Pheng gave his presentation of Chapter 9, "Office S-21 (Tuol Sleng Prison)". The participants were divided into six big groups to discuss six main themes from the chapter. Each group selected their representative to present a summary of their respective theme. At the end, the DC-Cam team began a question and answer session which allowed participants to interact by presenting a broader and wider range of comments and questions related to the Khmer Rouge and the Tribunal. Mr. Vanthan Peou Dara provided explanations and answered questions about the KRT and the whole ECCC process as well as the Khmer Rouge regime in general. The post-forum survey was distributed to participants to assess the impact of the forum experience on the local villagers.

The afternoon following the forum, the team conducted five interviews total, and interviewed the deputy commune chief, three villagers, and one teacher.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FORUM'S ACTIVITIES

Mr. Pong-Rasy Pheng (the team leader) presented Chapter 9 from the textbook. He began his presentation by asking the villagers if they have ever visited Tuol Sleng Museum. He then asked two survivors (one at a time) to talk about their experiences during the Khmer Rouge period and then had a student summarize their stories to the group.

To provide a general understanding and to gain the attention of the participants, Mr. Pheng gave a brief summary of general information regarding the KR and what life was like during the regime. He then walked through the chapters in the textbook. He told the students to listen and take notes. After providing the overview of the chapters, he divided the participants into six large groups of about 25 persons (5 groups of students and one group of villagers). Each group was assigned the responsibility of reading and taking notes on the main point(s) in their reading.

- Group 1 focused on the building and the prisoners.
- Group 2 focused on the regulation and prison conditions.
- Group 3 focused on interrogation.
- Group 4 focused on organizational structure.
- Group 5 focused on the leaders and executions.
- Villagers who were not literate focused on Duch's and Sun Sen's biographies.



Each group had 15 minutes to read and take notes on important points they would like to share with the whole big group. After Mr. Pheng divided and explained the responsibilities to each group, Mr. Dara added that after this forum, the students will know a chapter from the textbook which has already approved by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to integrate into the school curriculum. While the participants were reading, the team members walked around to observe the activities and address any immediate questions. Participants appeared to read with great interest because they discussed the information before the reading. Almost all of them finished the reading at the same time.

Each group presented their knowledge and understanding on their respective sections. Mr. Pheng gave advice to the student presenter for Group 2 that the student should try not to read while presenting, but to speak briefly by giving a summary of the important points in the section. After receiving this advice, the following groups gave improved presentations and provided useful summaries. A female survivor named Chim Kunthea volunteered to present a brief summary on Sun Sen's biography.

## **OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS**

The DC-Cam team believed that by providing historical background and making connections between the material being taught and the local history can make a great impact and better draw the attention of the villagers and other participants.



### ***Gradually contributing to healing and the national reconciliation process***

The forum created a platform for a diverse group of people to discuss and share. The participants were attentive during the forum and paid attention to the reading and thoroughly discussed the history, especially the villager group that included both victims and former KR cadres sitting together. They were cooperating together in a similar manner to that of the students in their discussions.

### ***Opportunities to meet, express opinions, and learning from each other's experiences***

The students from the younger generations listened to the survivors of the older generations as they shared their real life experiences under the KR. They also discussed the importance role of formal education about the KR atrocities in the classroom setting.

The forum brought awareness of DK education to the villagers, and it provided a forum for them to share their experiences with their children as part of the school assignment. In the forum, the villagers seemed to engage well with each other and with the students. During the survey administration, team members provided assistance to villagers who were illiterate.

At the forum, we met a former student volunteer for the Center's Student Outreach Project during the summer of 2006. His name was Mey Chum Chandara. He was a recent graduate of the National Institute of Education in Phnom Penh who was hired to teach history at Hun Sen Sandan High School. Mr. Mey was one of the five teachers who came to participate in the forum. Sayana Ser, a DC-Cam team member interviewed him and his mother at their house.

During the trip, we received a request for family tracing from Mrs. Soeu Somaly, the mother of Mr. Mey, who asked DC-Cam to search for her sister and aunts. **(See appendix for the article on the family tracing).**

The team built a good relationship with the people in the commune. The Mrs. Sao Yoeun, Second Deputy of the Commune, was a key person with whom the team sought for assistance with logistics. She was very helpful during the entire forum. Mrs. Hiek, a villager, was also helpful in finding and making food for us (lunch and dinner) since there was no restaurant or market during the day.

The newly purchased sound equipment that we carried with us from Phnom Penh allowed us to conduct the large forum smoothly.

There were about 120 participants who attended the forum. The DC-Cam team members distributed more than 100 copies of the textbook "A History of Democratic

*Kampuchea (1975-1979)", Searching for the Truth magazine, and other materials including surveys and pens to the participants.*

In the afternoon, the DC-Cam team members divided up and were assigned to different villages to conduct interviews with the appointed persons. Mr. Vanthan interviewed and filmed Mrs. Sao Yoeun in Tik Mleang village, Sayana Ser interviewed Chey Chumchandara and his mother Soeu Somaly in Kampong Trabek village, and Ly Sokchamroeun interviewed Mrs. Uk Natt. **(See appendix for the interview transcripts).**

### **CHALLENGES AND LESSON LEARNED**

Given the long distance and the remote area of the forum, it was difficult for the DC-Cam staff to get access to technology and supplies.

The program had to be delayed for an hour because the villagers and students did not arrive to the forum until 9:00am.

Because there was only one high school in Sandan district, some students had to ride their bicycle for more than 20 kilometers from other communes to attend the forum. Some students board in the pagoda or stay with villagers and help with their household chores. Some students have had to quit school because they were unable to afford transportation and the long hours of commute.



*Sao Yoeun, a commune deputy chief*

Electricity was scarce, but the pagoda had access to it. However, there was some confusion among the monks in the temple which led to some obstacles. The group leader who had the power supply was not in the house because he had gone to a praying ceremony in another commune. As a result of his absence, we had some difficulty finding an electricity supply. Luckily, thanks to the modern technology of the sound system equipment, we were able to use a battery to run it. Mrs. Sao rented a battery for us that afternoon for the forum.

## APPENDIX 1

### Where Are You? When Will I See You Again? Looking For Soeu Nary



Mrs. Soeu Somaly, 64 years old, lives in Kampong Trabek village, Sandan sub-district, Sandan district, Kampong Thom province and has asked the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam), through its Public Education Forum team to assist in searching for her younger sister and aunts who have been separated from her for more than 40 years. Mrs. Somaly has never heard from or received any information about them since they were separated in early 1970.

During the interview, Mrs. Somaly had a sad expression on her face when recalling her suffering, her experiences during the regime, and the loss of relatives and family members during the Khmer Rouge, especially her aunts and sister who were separated from her for a very long time. Mrs. Somaly described in despair the KR executions of her older cousin named Suntary after she had a baby, and an uncle named Yiep Khun who was a former district governor in Stung Treng province. Mrs. Somaly recalled with tears her only younger sister who has been separated from her since she was teenager.

Mrs. Somaly's mother was Yiep Chanthep and her father was Tann Chheng-I, alias Soeu I who worked as goldsmith and dentist. Mrs. Somaly was the oldest amongst two siblings in the family. She was born in Thalabarivat of Stung Treng province. Since there was a gold mine found at Chi Mountain in Kampong Thom province, the family moved to Sandan when Mrs. Somaly was five years old.

Mrs. Somaly began kindergarten in 1956 and dropped out of school in 1961. Right after this, she went to the Kampong Cham province to learn hairdressing and she opened a hairdressing shop there.

In 1968, her sister, Soeu Nary, was 12 years old. She went to study at Iep Khut Neth Yang during the 6<sup>th</sup> grade in the Battambang province. There, Nary stayed with her aunt named Yiep Mao, alias Hun, and her aunt's husband, Nuon Seng who was a manager of Public Work in Battambang. Her aunt and uncle had one daughter named Nuon Sitha. Mrs. Soeu Somaly and her father visited Nary in Battambang when the country was in turmoil. When Mrs. Somaly and her father asked Nary to

come back with them to Sandan, Nary hesitated and decided to stay until she finished her diploma exam.

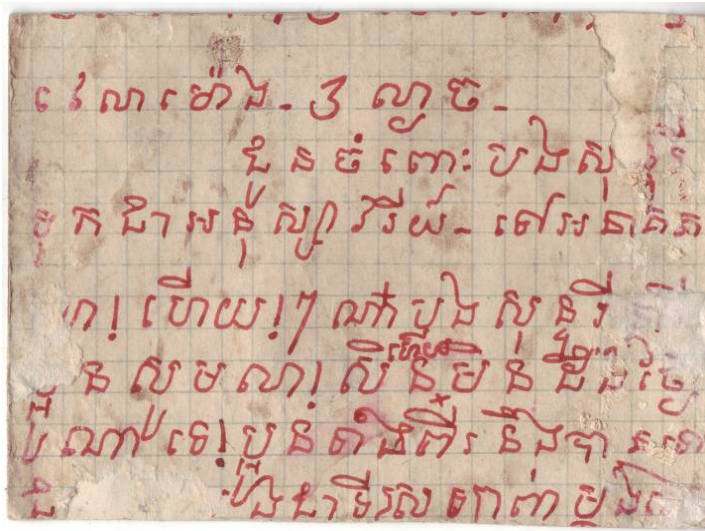
March 18, 1970 was a historic day - the Lon Nol coup d'état overthrew King Norodom Sihanouk from his position. Everything was briefly shut down including the education system. Nary asked her father to take her back home to Sandan but her father could not make it because all roads and streets were blocked - cutting off all means of transportation - and the streets were all filled with demonstration parades against Sihanouk government. There were many demonstrators belonging to different groups including white scarf Khmer, red scarf Khmer, and silk scarf Khmer, among others. From then on, even during the Khmer Rouge, Mrs. Somaly and her parents never heard or received any news from Nary.

After the fall of the Khmer Rouge in 1979, Mrs. Somaly continued to live in the village of Kampong Trabek in Sandan sub-district and occasionally visiting her relatives' hometown in Thalabarivath, Kampong Cham, and Phnom Penh searching for signs of Nary and aunts Yiep Mao and Yiep Lai. The endless searches had yielded no result. However, Mrs. Somaly still has hope of receiving information about her sister and aunts one day.

The aforementioned background serves to provide information as well as function as an announcement to relatives, friends, and readers of *Searching for the Truth* magazine for any information about Somaly's sister and aunts: Soeu Nary, Yiep Lai, alias Hun, and Yiep Mao. If anyone knows or has information about them, please contact Mrs. Soeu Somaly at the address in Kampong Trabek village, Sandan sub-district, Sandan district, Kampong Thom province or Somaly's son named Mey Chumchandara, a history teacher at Hun Sen Sandan High School, via mobile phone number 092 761 796 or the Documentation Center of Cambodia.



Soeu Somaly and Soeu Nary



Back of the photo



*The photo meant to be sent to cousin Sun Tary in Thala Barivath but it has remained unsend since the chaos.*

Items for daily use made during the KR by Mrs. Soeu Somaly's father Mr. Tann Chheng-I



Lighter made of a bullet shell. Bottle lantern made from a bullet. Comb and water buckets made from aircraft oil tanks.

## APPENDIX 2

### INTERVIEW:

#### INTERVIEW WITH UK NATT, 60, KAMPONG TRABEK VILLAGE, SANDAN COMMUNE

Chamroeun: The interview is at Kunthea's house, and the interview date is on February 20, 2011. First, I would like to know your name. What is your name?

Uk Natt: My name is Uk Natt, 60.

Chamroeun: Where is your birthplace?

Uk Natt: My birthplace is in here at Kampong Trabek village, Sandan commune, Sandan district, Kampong Thom province.

Chamroeun: What is your husband's name?

Uk Natt: My previous husband died long time ago. But my current husband is Im Yang.

Chamroeun: When did you get married?

Uk Natt: 1979. My daughter is now 17 and my son is 18.

Chamroeun: Did you get married after 1979?

Uk Natt: Yes.

Chamroeun: How was the previous husband?

Uk Natt: He died.

Chamroeun: Died during Khmer Rouge time?

Uk Natt: Died after 1979.

Chamroeun: How old did you get married your first husband?

Uk Natt: 14

Chamroeun: Did you have children?

Uk Natt: Yes 10 children with Ta Khoem, my previous husband. I have 2 more with my current husband. So I have 12 children.

Chamroeun: Where were you before the Khmer Rouge took power?

Uk Natt: I was here until the Pol Pot time. I was a Khmer Rouge prisoner who was detained 1 year and 2 months more. I was released after Vietnamese troop pulled the Khmer Rouge out in 1979. I became a prisoner in late 1977.

Chamroeun: When the Khmer Rouge took control this village, what was their event at that time?

Uk Natt: They ordered to cook porridge in a cooperative hall.

Chamroeun: Were villagers separated at the time?

Uk Natt: Yes. There were a lot of evacuators in Sandan.

Chamroeun: How did they live?

Uk Natt: They lived with local villagers' family in many houses. Some new people were Lon Nol's soldier's wives. They were rich. They had gold and

diamond. They were brought to be killed by Ta (grandfather) Van. Ta Van, who you interviewed this morning, was a former Khmer Rouge cadre. Van brought the new people to be killed by telling that they would go to do farm at the other places. At the end, I knew that those people were killed because I saw only their cloths were brought back to the village.

Chamroeun: Who brought the people to be killed?

Uk Natt: A village chief.

Chamroeun: What was his/her name?

Uk Natt: Ta Mom, Rai and Van. Mom and Rai were disappeared.

Chamroeun: He (Van) told this morning that he did not bring anyone to be killed.

Uk Natt: Please don't believe him.

Chamroeun: He only said that he starved the people of food.

Uk Natt: He killed people and stole gold from them.

Chamroeun: Really?

Uk Natt: Yes.

Chamroeun: Did you know the reason why they brought many people to be killed?

Uk Natt: They were accused of former government's officials. All were killed.

Chamroeun: All were new people?

Uk Natt: Yes.

Chamroeun: Did you remember name of those people?

Uk Natt: Yes, some. They are Rin, Phan, Proeun, Hor, Phoeun's husband and Nat.

Chamroeun: How many new people's families that KR cadres brought to be killed?

Uk Natt: About 10 families.

Chamroeun: Did they kill all members of the family?

Uk Natt: Yes. Some of king's members were also killed after they were detained in Prey Kanleng Prison for a short period of time.

Chamroeun: Why did you know they are King's members?

Uk Natt: They told me. They could not do any kind of works in Prey Kanleng Prison.

Chamroeun: What is the name of this prison?

Uk Natt: Prey Kanleng.

Chamroeun: Where was it?

Uk Natt: It was in Prey Kanleng village. It was a district prison.

Chamroeun: Commune?

Uk Natt: Chheu Teal commune.

Chamroeun: District?

Uk Natt: Sandan district. I wonder about the killing people at that time. For example, if you were a KR cadre who was responsible for controlling this prison, you would bring a lot of prisoners to be killed. But the cadre would be killed next after someone came to replace the position of the cadres of responding to the prison. So they killed not only ordinary people but also their cadres.

Chamroeun: Yes sure. Like Tuol Sleng prison, many KR lower and upper cadres were killed under the order of Angkar.

Uk Natt: I was a chief of cooperative eating hall. One day when I served people with porridge, I broke a handle of ladle. KR cadre accused me of traitorous, and I was sent to re-educated center. I was there for two days. I was asked to work harder and harder. After two days, I was released and went to work at the same position in eating hall. Later I was arrested again and sent to Prey Kanleng Prison. My child was not with me in prison. My god-mother raised my child. She is now 100 years old.

Chamroeun: How old were you at that time?

Uk Natt: I was 30.

Chamroeun: When you were in prison, what did the cadre educate you?

Uk Natt: No any educated advice, but they hit me instead.

Chamroeun: You told me that you were educated twice times before you were sent to Prey Kanleng Prison. First time you caused a handle of ladle to be broken, and where did you imprison?

Uk Natt: I was imprisoned in Ta Sok's house or Munty (Office) 75.

Chamroeun: Where?

Uk Natt: Here in this district but not in this village. It was in the district town.

Chamroeun: When you were in reeducated center, how did you receive the order from the cadres? And what did they tell you to do?

Uk Natt: Ta Nat helped me to answer instead of me to the cadres that I had no intend to break the handle of ladle. Later I was released again. The Angkar sent me to work in farm. Some people still said that I was traitor.

Chamroeun: Those people still reminded your mistakes?

Uk Natt: Yes. I promised that if I treated wrong to the Angkar again as third times, I agreed with the all kinds of tortures from the Angkar.

Chamroeun: Where did the Angkar send you to imprison?

Uk Natt: At the same place.

Chamroeun: What did the cadres talk to you?

Uk Natt: They told me that next time I will be sent to Prey Kanleng Prison if I did wrong with the same mistake.

Chamroeun: What year was it?

Uk Natt: Maybe in 1977.

Chamroeun: Who brought you to the reeducated center?

Uk Natt: Ta Van, who you met this morning. When I saw him, I was so angry with him. Ta Van reported to the Angkar about me. And later the Angkar ordered to arrest me.

Chamroeun: How was his attitude?

Uk Natt: His attitude was very cruel.

Chamroeun: But this morning he seemed to be gentle.



Uk Natt: eh! He is now different from before.

Chamroeun: Can you describe his attitude at that time? Why did you think he was cruel?

Uk Natt: Because he was very strict. Whenever he spoke, he did it.

Chamroeun: He said nothing this morning about his brutal activities. But it is different from what you told me. Had you ever seen someone was brought to be killed by him (Ta Van)?

Uk Natt: I saw. After that he was named into the prisoner list. But he was freely from the arresting because his brother-in-law, who was a prison chief at that time, tore a piece of paper which was noted name of Ta Van.

Chamroeun: How old was he?

Uk Natt: He is younger than me.

Chamroeun: How about On Savan? How long had he been staying in the village before he arrested you?

Uk Natt: About 5 months.

Chamroeun: Where did he come from?

Uk Natt: Sampor Chhouk village.

Chamroeun: Which commune?

Uk Natt: Sandan commune.

Chamroeun: Why he was transferred to work in this village?

Uk Natt: Not only him that was transferred, but any cadre who dared to do such as cruel activities.

Chamroeun: When he was working at your village during 5 months, what did he do?

Uk Natt: He worked so hard. But Ta Van was so harder. I was arrested by him. He sent me to the prison. I was in prison for 1 year and 2 months

Chamroeun: From what year?

Uk Natt: Until 1979, when Vietnamese's troop came to liberate us from Pol Pot.

Chamroeun: So, It means that you were in prison from late 1977!

Uk Natt: Yes.

Chamroeun: How many prisoners?

Uk Natt: About 500. Four or five days after I was sent to prison, I saw some prisoners were escorted to a place where KR cadres tortured and killed prisoners. All KR security cadres were not allowed to use guns during torturing prisoners. But they used cart axle instead. Prisoners were ordered to dig grave next to the torture place. In every evening, 10 to 20 prisoners were killed. After that new coming prisoners were sent to prison.

Chamroeun: Were there new prisoners appearing in prison after that?

Uk Natt: Yes.

Chamroeun: The new prisoners were 17 April people?

Uk Natt: Villagers.

Chamroeun: What were their mistakes?

Uk Natt: I don't know.

Chamroeun: What was the prison look like?  
Uk Natt: Bad smell. Some prisoners ate grasses growing under their bamboo beds. Sometime prisoners ate small lizards.  
Chamroeun: How many meters square of the prison?  
Uk Natt: It was big.  
Chamroeun: Can this prison detain 500 prisoners?  
Uk Natt: Yes it can. In prison, there were many lines of wooden shackles.  
Chamroeun: How many lines?  
Uk Natt: About 10 lines.  
Chamroeun: How the cadres put prisoners into shackle?  
Uk Natt: In one line, KR cadres put 60 prisoners.  
Chamroeun: Can prisoners walk around or sit next to each other?  
Uk Natt: No one could sit or walk around because their legs were in shackle.  
Chamroeun: If it was time for prisoners to eat rice or to defecate, what did they do?  
Uk Natt: 40 Prisoners could eat porridge which consist of only 1 can of rice. And prisoners could defecate at a place they stayed. After one year in prison, I was released. But during I was in prison, Ta Nat ordered me to call for 4 people from mobile work Bridget in order to bury gold containing in 4 small bullet containers. Ta Nat also told me to take a hoc from somewhere. I thought that I would be killed by this hoc. But he yelled that the hoc was for burying gold. After 1979, all gold were dug and collected by prison chief.  
Chamroeun: So, I want to know that what did you see during you were in prison?  
Uk Natt: I saw cadres killed prisoners.  
Chamroeun: Did you know name of prison chief?  
Uk Natt: His name was Srass. After Srass, Sok was a prison chief, and than Chhat. Chhat lived in Veal Pring and Sok was in Pa-oak. But they were killed. Poat and Chhak were last two prison chief of Prey Kanleng. They were killed in Prey Kanleng prison. Exceptionally, Ta Van still alive because his brother, cadres of the prison, tore a piece of paper which his name was written in it. If Ta Van was killed at that time, I am so happy because Ta Van did such as cruel events during his position. You know! When I saw Ta Van, I am so hurt. But when I think deeper, I found that if Ta Van did not carry the order from the top ranking cadres, he would be killed like other people. At the first time, dead people in prison were buried in graves, but later the corpses were put in a large grave.  
Chamroeun: Were all prisoners accused of CIA and KGB?  
Uk Natt: Yes. When new prisoners arrived at the prison, they were first tortured and then put in shackle.  
Chamroeun: Did some prisoners were killed during the torture?  
Uk Natt: Yes, some died of torturing. Some prisoners like relatives of the King were cut open the belly and cut gallbladders and livers.

Chamroeun: I want to know more detail about what the relatives of King's family were tortured?

Uk Natt: The relatives were beautiful.

Chamroeun: Did you know her name?

Uk Natt: I don't know.

Chamroeun: How old was she?

Uk Natt: She was young. Her age was about 14-15. She was tied by the KR cadre. After 1 year imprisoned, I was released from the prison, but I was ordered to work in the prison compound.

Chamroeun: Did you know who cut open the belly of the woman?

Uk Natt: Ta Rin.

Chamroeun: Where was he come from?

Uk Natt: He was from Southwest zone.

Chamroeun: How old was he?

Uk Natt: Over 20. I saw Rin escorted the woman to the prison while I was working in the watermelons plantation. After that I saw Rin took his axe from his body to cut open that woman's belly. It was terrible.

Chamroeun: What year was it?

Uk Natt: At the end of 1978.

Chamroeun: Did you know why she was cut open the belly?

Uk Natt: Because she was King's relative.

Chamroeun: How about the other relatives of the King?

Uk Natt: They were also killed.

Chamroeun: Did the cadres rape her?

Uk Natt: No.

Chamroeun: What did they do next?

Uk Natt: After that he ordered me to take gallbladders to dry and to take livers to cook for them.

Chamroeun: Did you dare to cook for them?

Uk Natt: Yes, because I was afraid of killing.

Chamroeun: What did you feel when you cook the livers?

Uk Natt: I did not have any feeling. I would be accused of traitor if I did not do for them.

Chamroeun: Were their four cadres?

Uk Natt: No, many cadres such as Yon, Lai, Chhak, Song, Sokh, Chhong aka Srass..... I thought that if I were soldier, I would kill all of these cadres.

Chamroeun: You said that you saw cadres stabbed to death a child. So what year did you see this event?

Uk Natt: In the same year, but at the last time of KR regime.

Chamroeun: Can you describe how this event was happened?

Uk Natt: The cadre threw a child away to the air, then he killed the child by bayonet. Chhong did this after he killed mother of the child using cart's axle.

Chamroeun: How old was child?

Uk Natt: Nearly 1 year.

Chamroeun: How many children?

Uk Natt: About ten children at one time. After the liberation, I volunteered to join soldier with Vietnamese troops. At that time I promised to myself that I would go to kill all survived cadres in this commune. A moment after I was trained in military school by Nguon Nhel, my feeling was changed.

Chamroeun: How were your children?

Uk Natt: When I became a female soldier, I still did not know where were my children. Actually, my children were soldiers too. You know I had been left home for almost 10 years.

Chamroeun: So where were you?

Uk Natt: I was at O Py in Kampong Cham.

Chamroeun: Were your children in your division?

Uk Natt: No, they were in company 19 at Tuol Kreul.

Chamroeun: Why did you know your children join the army?

Uk Natt: When I went back home, I asked my mother and she said they joined the army.

Chamroeun: You said that you committed a sexual misconduct during you were in cooperative. Did you?

Uk Natt: No. Actually, Ta Van secretly spied on me. One day he saw Ta Nat help me to carry my baby to go back home. Because of this event, Ta Van accused me of having sexual misconduct.

Chamroeun: At the time you were been arresting for accusing of sexual misconduct, How was Ta Nat?

Uk Natt: He was arrested and killed in Prey Kanleng prison.

Chamroeun: Did you see cadres killed him?

Uk Natt: Yes I saw. He was hit by axle of cart.

Chamroeun: Did you know a killer?

Uk Natt: Yes I know. His name was Sokh.

Chamroeun: Did your husband believe what they said?

Uk Natt: Yes, he believed.

Chamroeun: How was next?

Uk Natt: He walked out from my life, but after 1979 he came to ask me for living as husband and wife as last time. I rejected this request. I was so hurt when he was walking out of me.

Chamroeun: What was your husband's name?

Uk Natt: Khom.

Chamroeun: Was he a medical worker?

Uk Natt: Yes, he was not only a medical worker during the KR but also in Lon Nol regime. He was a half-blood Khmer and Laotian.

Chamroeun: Did you believe the mass atrocities occurred during the KR regime?



Uk Natt: Yes, I believe.

Chamroeun: Why?

Uk Natt: Because I saw those events in front of my eyes.

Chamroeun: Did you believe the DK regime was as horrible as the stories you've heard or read about?

Uk Natt: Yes, I believe because they caused families live in separate from each other.

Chamroeun: Have you ever told this experience to your children?

Uk Natt: I used to talk to them. Because of this, they volunteered to join the army after 1979.

Chamroeun: Are you comfortable answering questions about the DK period from children?

Uk Natt: Sometime I was difficult to answer some questions from my daughters because they don't believe what had happened during the KR. Sometime they asked why did they arrest you and send to prison? Did you do such bad things at that time...?

Chamroeun: Do you discriminate against him (Ta Van) when you know that he was a former Khmer Rouge cadre?

Uk Natt: No. Ta Van's house is near my house nowadays.

Chamroeun: Have you ever been receiving any bad thing from him?

Uk Natt: No never. This morning he asked me if village chief invite you to attend the meeting or not? I replied to him that "yes" I was invited to join the meeting like you.

Chamroeun: So how about his children? Do you discriminate against them?

Uk Natt: No. They talk to me everyday.

Chamroeun: If someone asked you, "Why did people commit horrible acts during the DK period?" What do you reply?

Uk Natt: I am an uneducated people. I don't know how to reply. I want to ask you a question: why KR killed a lot of people?

Chamroeun: Do you think the teaching of DK history should be taught in school or not?

Uk Natt: It should be taught in school.

Chamroeun: Why?

Uk Natt: Because I want younger generations know the regime. Some children still don't believe what had happened during the KR regime.

Chamroeun: So what topic in the KR period do you think must be taught in school?

Uk Natt: I think the topic about "the separation between parents and children" should be taught in schools.

Chamroeun: If someone asks you what do you gain from the forum this morning, what do you reply to them?

Uk Natt: I will tell that I share my experience in prison during the KR regime to the children.

Chamroeun: Do you think the teaching about DK history can make students become a good human?  
Uk Natt: Yes can.  
Chamroeun: Why?  
Uk Natt: Good teachers, good students.  
Chamroeun: How?  
Uk Natt: Teachers can provide more better advices than parents.  
Chamroeun: I don't have any question to ask you. But before coming to an end of our interviews, I would like you to sign in this form in order to clarify that I, Ly Sokhchamroeun, do interview with you, Uk Natt, at this time at Kunthea's house. All what you said are true and exactly happened in the Khmer Rouge Regime.  
Uk Natt: Yes, all are true from me.

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