

មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

**GENOCIDE EDUCATION IS GENOCIDE PREVENTION**

**21<sup>st</sup> Inauguration of  
Genocide Education Memorial and History of Democratic  
Kampuchea (1975-1979) Textbook Distribution**

At Trapeang Prasat high school

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Photo link:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/U5YG9INDgSDNN7311>

Support by



Documentation Center of Cambodia  
Searching for the Truth: Memory & Justice

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## **Introduction**

On 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017, Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) in collaborated with Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS) with the supported of United Nation Agency for International Development (USAID), Ziviler Friedendienst e.V. (zfd), and Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GiZ) conducted inauguration ceremony of Genocide Education Memorial and History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) textbook distribution at Trapeang Prasat high school, Trapeang Prasat commune, Oddar Meanchey Province.

This is the 21<sup>st</sup> inauguration of genocide education memorial in schools across Cambodia in effort to increase the awareness and educate high school students and local residents about the important of Khmer Rouge history as well as to build the understanding of peace, reconciliation, tolerance, forgiveness, and genocide prevention. These two slogans that engraved on iron plates cost \$500 and another \$500 was cost of installation with different constructor in each location. The memorial was possible because of the contribution from zfd and GiZ. This is a newly design model of genocide memorial in 2017 by Mr. Boreyrak, a volunteer of genocide education team of DC-Cam.

This ceremony was presided over by Her Excellency Ton Sa-Im, Undersecretary of Ministry of Education Youth and Sports, who addressed the important of genocide memorial and personally distribute DK textbooks to participants. Mr. Choum Chhea, Head of Oddar Meanchey Provincial Education office, also participated as guest honor and addressed about the education and school facilities in province. Mr. Morm Sokha, Principle of Tapeang Prasat high school who presented about the school situation and general background. Next, speeches of Mr, Pheng Pong-Rasy, Team Leader of Genocide Education Project of DC-Cam explained: the important of genocide memorial, and studying Khmer Rouge history; partnership of DC-Cam and MoEYS; and future project of DC-Cam. Lastly, it was the distribution of the history of Democratic Kampuchea textbook by H.E and DC-Cam.

The event was held the opening right after the arrival of H.E at 8:30 in the morning. Everyone stood up and welcome her. There were approximately 100 participants (included students, teachers, local residents, guests of honors, national trainers, and DC-Cam team) attended this event.

## Significance

This Genocide Education Memorial is the important aspect of Genocide Education Project that funded by USAID and GIZ. This memorial aimed to remind, increase awareness of students as well as local residents not to forget our own history, and build the understanding of peace, empathy, forgiveness, and reconciliation by teaching them the history. The History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) textbooks approximately 150 were given to each participant, especially grade 9 and grade 12 students. Some was given to school library for additional reading material.



Following the arrival of H.E and other guests of honors, all students started to sing the national anthem. The speeches started with Mr. Morm Sokha who address about general background of high school and students situation followed by Mr. Chorm Chea who stated about the lack of facilities in province and requested the attention from MoEYS.

Mr. Pheng Pong-Rasy, team leader of Genocide Education Project greeted to H.E, guests of honors, and participants. He addressed about the initiative of this genocide memorial with MoEYS and the agreement (MOU) in 2007 to place memorial in high school across Cambodia. He also stated the important of these two slogans that engraved on the steel plates for people and students to see, in other to remember the darkest time in our country and to prevent it. He also talked about the important of studying Khmer Rouge history that play significance role in healing, reconciliation, and forgiveness. Lastly, he addressed the newly projects of genocide education.

H.E Ton Sa-Im, Undersecretary of Ministry of Education Youth and Sport greeted to all participants and shared her opinions in this event. She gave her thank to students who participated in this event, even school still in the vocation time. H.E also addressed about the important of the memorial and



the studying of DK history. She encouraged students to study hard in other to get good grade not only just study to pass. She also encouraged them to pay attention on DK history because DK history appealed in national exam many time already, even this year. H.E stated teachers play the important role on guiding students to the education way. H.E also addressed about Sleuk Rith institute, a living documentation and research center

that will create in the future. She also shared her experiences under Khmer Rouge and said “I was the only one who survived KR out of family of ten. Fortunately, I was able to reunion with my husband after KR regime”. He shared her hard time with participants and reminded them the event must not occur again in Cambodia. Finally, she finished her speech, thanked everyone that give her this opportunity, and continued to the textbooks distribution.

### **The Memorial**

The memorial installed in the center of school ground in front of new build that is the place everyone can see. The memorial represent the legacy of past event for young generation as well as local residents to remember, to think critically about what happened in the past in other to prevent it in the future. The memorial has two back to back slogans that was newly designed model in 2017 which read:



1. *Taking about the experiences during the Khmer Rouge regime to promote reconciliation and to educate children about forgiveness and tolerance.*
2. *Learning about the history of Democratic Kampuchea is to prevent genocide.*

Like many other school, Trapeang Prasat high school serves as wider community than its immediate surroundings, serving many students. High school is next to secondary school without wall. This is the possibility that many students from secondary school will across and see the memorial.

## **Conclusion**

As a part of the Genocide Education Project, the commemoration is created for the purpose of promoting forgiveness, tolerance, education and reconciliation especially in this region which was one of the last strongholds of Khmer Rouge. The commemoration also helps to remind the teachers and students after their learning about the KR history in the classroom.

At the end of the program, DC-Cam staffs and teachers distributed of DC-Cam's publications, the KR history textbook, and basic study materials (notebook and pens) to mark conclusion.

The memorial is being constructed with financial support from DC-Cam and the contribution from Ziviler Friedendienst e.V. (zfd), and Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

**Team: Pheng Pong-Rasy, Min Sanas, Phat Sela**

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