

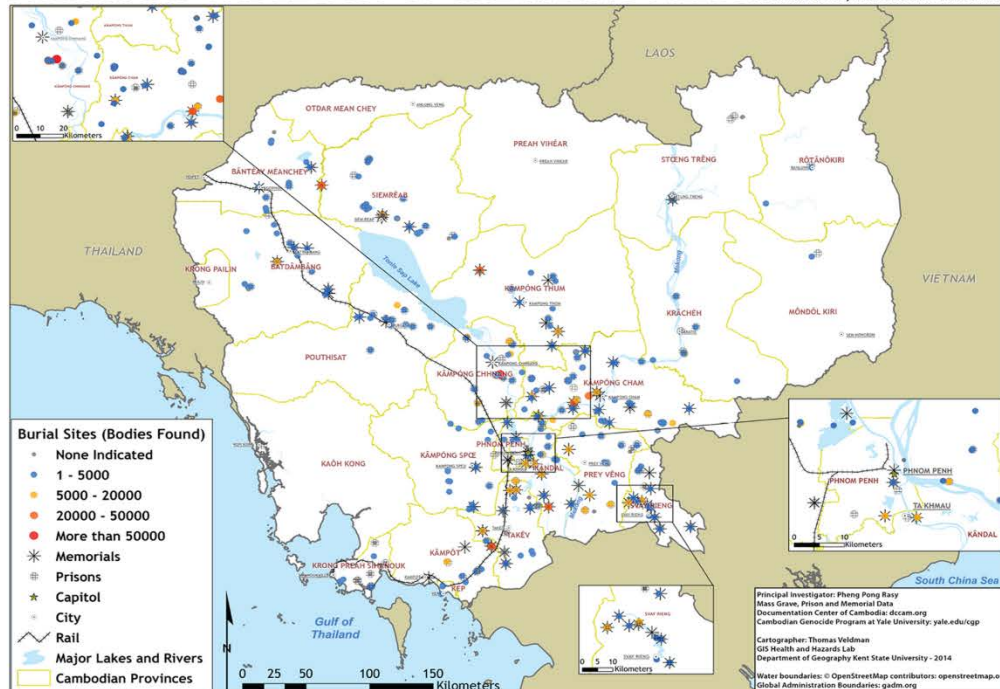
KHMER ROUGE RAILWAYS

Genocide & Democracy Study Tour for the Youth
The Forced Transfer, the Evacuation of People
During the Khmer Rouge Regime (1975-1979)

Report

Date: March 23-28, 2024

PRESERVING THE LEGACY OF THE KILLING FIELDS: MAPPING KHMER ROUGE ERA ATROCITIES



DESTINATIONS:

PHNOM PENH, PURSAT, SEREI SAOPHOAN (BANTEAY MEANCHHEY)

The railways accross Pursat river in Pursat province
Photo by Ouch Makara
July 15, 2014

Organized and Supported by:



KHMER ROUGE RAILWAYS

Genocide & Democracy Study Tour for the Youth The Forced Transfer, the Evacuation of People During the Khmer Rouge Regime (1975-1979)

23-28 March 2024

Participants: 62



OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES:

On September 21, 2023, the United States Government (USG) marked the 30th anniversary of U.S. AmeriCorps, the U.S. federal agency for national service and volunteerism. Created by U.S. President Bill Clinton in 1993, the agency provides career pathways for Americans across the United States as they serve their communities. Their involvement may consist of addressing climate change, mentoring students, preserving native languages, supporting veterans as they transition from military to civilian life, or helping justice-involved adults re-integrate society.¹

¹ DC-Cam, “CamboCorps-Forum Report, 15th-19th September 2023” at <https://www.dccam.org/rights-and-welfare-of-khmer-rouge-survivor/>.

Inspired by the vision, ideas, and impact of the USG's AmeriCorps, the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) launched CamboCorps in 2021 with the aim of generating the same spirit of national service and volunteerism among the young people in Cambodia. As part of this initiative, DC-Cam launched several projects in order to connect young Cambodians with survivors of the Khmer Rouge regime of 1975-1979 so they can learn from these survivors, help them access healthcare and other services, and build an intergenerational dialogue to contribute to the preservation of Cambodia's history.² One of these projects has recently involved the train in Cambodia.

For the generations who went through the Second World War in Europe or the Khmer Rouge Regime in Cambodia, the railways became part of the ways used for systematic crimes against humanity or genocides, which involved the forced transfer of a massive segment of the population.

Around six million lives in Europe, and two million lives in Cambodia were lost. Each train station defined the fate of people who ended up dying whether at the Nazi concentration camps, or in the Khmer Rouge "killing fields."

History shows us how railways were used to commit those crimes against humanity—historical events that the generations since then should know of and not forget.

In the course of the development of new infrastructure in Cambodia and as the next decades go by, some of the historical sites could disappear, making it more difficult for survivors to tell their story so it can be comprehended.

This moment might be the best opportunity for youths to visit the sites where the genocide took place. During the study tour "The Khmer Rouge Railways: Genocide & Study Tour for the Youth, the Forced Transfer, the Evacuation of People during the Khmer Rouge Regime (1975-1979)," the young participants have the opportunity to meet survivors of the regime and listen to the truth. This study tour project has involved three core objectives:

1- Seeking to understand Khmer Rouge Survivors' experience of forced transfers by train

Once the Khmer Rouge had taken control of the cities, atrocity crimes were committed by expelling people from their dwellings. It was found that these forced evacuations caused human beings to suffer both physically and mentally, and destroyed their core values. The Khmer Rouge's victims of forced evacuations were obliged to leave their homes for no legal justification in national and international laws.³ Because this crime that nearly every Khmer

² DC-Cam, "CamboCorps-Forum Report, 15th-19th September 2023"

³ ECCC's Doc D427, *Closing Order*, 16 September 2010, para. 1448. Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and DC-Cam, *Forced Transfer During the Khmer Rouge Regime*, Phnom Penh 2014, p. 10.

Rouge survivor witnessed or experienced was so obvious, it was easy for the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) to convict the two Khmer Rouge leaders Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan and sentence them to life imprisonment for the first and second phases of evacuation.

It was found that the Khmer Rouge committed the crime of forced transfer in three phases:

First Phase: took place as soon as they entered the cities on April 17, 1975, until early to late September 1975.⁴ Khmer Rouge soldiers always told people at gunpoint that they had to leave for only 3 days to escape the American B52 bombings.

Second Phase: was from after September 1975 to late 1977. The evacuees were from the Central, South-West, West and East Zones. They were sent to Siem Reap, Preah Vihear and the North-West Zone that included Battambang, Banteay Meanchey and Pursat provinces.⁵ People were told to move to the areas where there was more food and fertile land for cultivation.

Third Phase: was from late 1977 to late 1978.⁶ The movement involved people from the East Zone at the time of escalating war with Vietnam and purge of the East Zone cadres. The displaced persons were Khmer Rouge cadres and soldiers, some of them accused of being traitors' bad elements and with connection with the Vietnamese or zone secretary Sao Phim, and others considered new people having been moved from Phnom Penh and other towns. There was a considerable number of people from Prey Veng and Svay Rieng Provinces who were sent to Pursat or Battambang Province.⁷

There was a combination of means of transportation to the last stop via trucks, oxcarts, boats, trains, or walking, while the train seemed to be the Khmer Rouge's favored means used for the evacuees of the second and third forced transfers to Pursat, Battambang and Banteay Meanchey provinces. In a wagon, there were around 100 people standing tightly and, most importantly, there was not enough food and water. It was reported that, due to the poor travelling conditions, many people died during the displacement.⁸

2- Increase awareness of otherwise uncollected/unpublished oral history of Khmer Rouge survivors

⁴ ECCC's Doc D427, Closing Order, 16 September 2010, para. 1449.

⁵ Doc D427, *Closing Order*, para. 1448. Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and DC-Cam, *Forced Transfer During the Khmer Rouge Regime*, p. 10.

⁶ Doc D427, *Closing Order*, para. 1448.

⁷ Doc D427, *Closing Order*, para. 283-285.

⁸ Doc D427, *Closing Order*, para. 291. Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and DC-Cam, *Forced Transfer During the Khmer Rouge Regime*, p. 10.

The study tour is also meant to engage CamboCorps in the work's unique means of compiling, and disseminating, accurate oral Khmer Rouge history from the survivors. There were 2 million people who perished during the Khmer Rouge regime; however, there were 5 million who survived to tell what they had experienced. Among those 5 million people, amounting to 33.16 percent of the total population, many passed away, and among those who are still alive, some have their stories still unheard and unrevealed.

3- Provide an opportunity for youth to experience railways and travel by train in order to promote democratic participation

In today's view, the train is about daily commuting and contributing to the development of society through efficiency and environmental friendliness at a lower cost leading to sustainability.

In India, railways reflected Mahatma Gandhi's freedom of movement. The nonviolent principle of Gandhi led to India's independence from Great Britain and that country becoming the biggest democratic country on Earth with a population of 1.4 billion.

Two important perspectives have emerged from history related to railways: 1) railways of despair as they were used as part of committing genocide, and 2) railways of hope as they may reflect democracy through the advantages offered by this means of transportation.

Destinations visited as part of the project:



Serei Saophoan, Preah Net Preah, Thma Puok, Sisophon and Phnom Srok were in the Khmer Rouge Sector 5 of the North-West Zone that was managed by Ros Nhim as the secretary with Ta Keu and Ta Paet as deputy secretaries.

The set locations visited for the project were: (1) Sector 5 Office that was at the railway station of Sisophon⁹ and was led by Men Chun alias Hoeng and a deputy secretary named Chhnang alias Cheal who was Ros Nhim's son;¹⁰ (2) the Banteay Chhmar temple that was damaged

⁹ ECCC's Doc E319.1.27, Written Record of Interview of Toat Thoeun, A 55.

¹⁰ ECCC's Doc D118/102, Written Record of Interview of Toat Thoeun, A 28.

during the civil war of 1970 to 1975, was abandoned during the Khmer Rouge regime, and was still in the war zone after the Khmer Rouge's collapse; (3) Preah Net Preah where harsh working conditions were implemented, and was first led by Aun Maung who was executed in 1977, then by Im Chaem who was a suspect in the ECCC case 004 accused of being responsible for maltreatment at Trapaing Thma Dam. On the return trip, the young participants visited a pagoda in the North-West Zone's Sector 2, located in Bakan District in Pursat Province, which was one of the Khmer Rouge's execution sites—there were many Khmer Kraom killed at that site, and many people in the third phase of forced transfers from Svay Rieng and Prey Veng were also killed in this compound.¹¹

March 24, 2024

CamboCorps left the Phnom Penh Railway Station at 6:40 a.m. and arrived at Serei Saophoan Station in Banteay Meanchey Province at 3:35 p.m. A total of 68 Cambodian volunteers had registered for the study tour, but only 62 were able to attend, the other participants informing that they could not attend due to health issues or business commitments. This journey was long due to the train not being able to run fast and having to stop at many stations, stops that were short except at the stations of Pursat and Battambang where we stayed a long time and bought food. Then we stopped longer than planned at the Battambang station where we had to wait for nearly one hour because there was a problem with the locomotive engine that the technicians could not solve. The locomotive had to be replaced with another one, which could only be done when the train arrived at the last station in Serei Saophoan with only the DC-Cam volunteers on board, the other passengers having gotten off in Battambang. The weather was especially hot that day and, since the fans on the train were not working, this made the trip quite tiring for everyone, and even made the volunteers think of how horrible the trip had been for the people transported on Khmer Rouge order, this, without food and on ill-maintained trains.

At the Serei Saophoan Railway Station, after a short break at 5 p.m., several volunteers toured the Serei Saophoan Railway Station and took photos as this was the Office of Sector 5 and a detention center during the Khmer Rouge regime.

Serei Saophoan Railway Station **Khmer Rouge survivor Yem Mony**

By Phon Samphors, CamboCorp from Kep Province

Yem Mony, who is now 63 years old, lives in Serei Saophoan City, in Banteay Meanchey Province. At the end of 1974 and the beginning of 1975, he was in his 20s and lived in Toul Krous

¹¹ Doc D427, *Closing Order*, para. 292 and Tessa Bialek and Sayana Ser, DC-Cam's Report on Genocide Education in Cambodia: The Teaching of *A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)*, Democratic Kampuchea Textbook Distribution: A Public Education Forum between Teachers, Students and Parents, August 11, 2011. https://www.dccam.org/wp-content/uploads/01_Memory/Public_Genocide_Education_Forum/GENOCIDE_EDUCATION_IN_CAMBODIA-Public_Education_Forum_in_Pursat_August_11_2011.pdf

village in Battambang Province, he said. When the Khmer Rouge took control of the country, he was ordered to leave his family and join what was called the Big Units. He was sent to work on the construction of a dam in the Kamping Puoy Basin in Battambang Province.

Missing his parents, he tried to leave to visit them but was captured by the Khmer Rouge and sent to be killed along with 30 other co-workers of the cooperative. The killing was carried out by ordering the workers to step into a blazing fire alive. Mony managed to escape from the blazing flames and tried to flee. He was stabbed with a machete by a Khmer Rouge. Injured, he hid in a bush. The Khmer Rouge soldiers continued to fire their guns but did not hit him. So he eventually left.

After escaping, he met his father and, in 1979, they both fled Battambang on foot for Banteay Meanchey. When they arrived, there was still a great deal of shooting and bombing in the Banteay Meanchey area.

Mony remembers seeing people being transported from the east (Eastern Zone) and dropped off at the Serei Saophoan train station, which stood on the ground in the middle of the field next to the railway. He saw people during the day and, the following day, they had disappeared without a trace. He also saw Khmer Rouge soldiers taking four or five people into custody under a small staircase at the Serei Saophoan train station.

Today, Yem Mony can no longer use his right hand due to the injuries caused by that fire and the knife wound in his back inflicted by a Khmer Rouge soldier.



Phon Samphors with Yem Mony

March 25, 2024

Preah Net Preah District

Khmer Rouge survivor Hong Huy

By Him Srey Leung, Lao Mala, Nob Siek Yi, Oeung Sok, Phan Lina and Sreng Jingseng

Hong Huy was born on Sept. 15, 1956, in Bosbov village, Srah Chik Commune in Battambang Province—today, his village is part of Banteay Meanchey Province.

On April 17, 1975, the Democratic Kampuchea regime evacuated people, including his family that consisted of four people, in three phases. During the first phase, he and his family were sent to Phnom Koun Damrei for one month during which the Khmer Rouge guerrillas who, he was told, had killed a friend's family, killed a man with a cane as well as a girl. The most tragic things were these killings and a 7-year-old boy who was killed by being thrown against a palm tree by the Khmer Rouge, Huy said.



CamboCorps with Hong Huy

During the second phase, they were sent to Phnom Sres for three months and, in the third phase, to Trapaing Veng Commune. Those evacuations were done by ox cart and on foot. Around 1977, people were evacuated from those regions to the Northwest. As far as Huy knew, people were taken by train to the Serei Saophoan Station in Banteay Meanchey Province, and then transported by tractor and other means to the Trapaing Veng Commune. The evacuees forcibly taken by train from Pursat and Battambang Provinces to Banteay Meanchey Province

had to feed themselves, which resulted in many deaths due to starvation in addition to forced labor. After a long journey, the evacuees, or newcomers, would end up living in the same areas as the “old people”—as the Khmer Rouge called farmers and people from the countryside to differentiate them from city people labelled “new people”—and worked as the Khmer Rouge dictated, with the children ordered to cut trees and pick up cow dung in the fields to use as fertilizer for farmland. New people and old people worked nonstop with little to eat. Many died of exhaustion and starvation.

Khmer Rouge survivor Song Pharat

By Chhom Srey Pov, Lim Khanna, Rithy Lika



CamboCorps with Song Pharat

Song Pharat is 60 years old and currently lives in Kandal Village, which is located in Preah Net Preah District’s Preah Net Preah Commune in Banteay Meanchey Province. During the Democratic Kampuchea government of the Khmer Rouge, she was a teenager and was put on hard-labor work by the Khmer Rouge such as building dams, shoveling earth while not getting enough to eat, and living apart from his family.

On April 17, 1975, the Khmer Rouge evacuated Pharat’s aunt to Phnom Kon Damrey in Banteay Meanchey Province. She was then meant to go to Ang Trapeang Thmor but found a way not to, knowing that most people sent to Ang Trapeang Thmor died, she said.

Pharat vividly remembers a public massacre of people that she witnessed during the regime. The Khmer Rouge tied people's [hands tightly behind their back] and then, accusing them of immorality, threw stones at them as they walked on a pole over a pit, one at the time, until they fell. These executions would take place during public meetings attended by adults and children, she said. She personally knew one person by the name of Soeun who was killed that way, she said.

During the regime, Pharat lost two family members, her grandmother and her aunt. Her grandmother died of illness, refusing to eat or take medicine when she got sick as she could not bear to live under that dictatorship, she said.

Regarding the killing site at the Preah Net Preah Cooperative, it was at Ta Krak's house that the people were detained and killed.

In the area where Pharat lived, there were people from Phnom Penh who had been evacuated by the Khmer Rouge by train and were living and eating with the “old people” as the Khmer Rouge described people from the countryside, she said. But most “new people,” who were the city people, were dying due, among other factors, to the hard physical work they had not done before, Pharat said. As for food, during the harvest season, people ate rice, but in the other seasons, they would only get one spoonful of rice porridge, she said. When sick, people were given rabbit medicine, and those who could not be cured would die on the spot, she said. As for marriages during the regime, it could be arranged by a man who was interested in a woman and would ask the chairman of the cooperative, Pharat said. They would arrange a marriage session for 100 couples at a time, eating together and singing songs about the Khmer Rouge regime. Pharat remained at that location until the Vietnamese army with a Cambodian division put an end to the Khmer Rouge regime in January 1979. Since that time, Song Pharat has been suffering from chest pains, which she believes are due to the hard work she had to do during the Khmer Rouge regime.

March 26, 2024

-Wat Rumlech, Bakan District, Pursat Province

Khmer Rouge survivor Chan Samuth

By Him Srey Leung, Lao Mala, Oeung Sok, Phan Lina and Sreng Jingseng

Chan Samuth, who is 75 years old today, lives in Prolay Romdeng village, which is located in Bakan District's Rumlech Commune in Pursat Province. Before 1975, he served in the Lon Nol government. After the Khmer Rouge victory on April 17, 1975, he was evacuated from Pursat to Battambang city. He met a friend at the Battambang market who worked for the Khmer Rouge and asked him to work with him. The Khmer Rouge sent him to work as a guard on the train.

In 1975, he spent more than a month inspecting and repairing the train with Chinese technicians, he said. In 1976, people were evacuated by train from Phnom Penh and Svay Rieng

to Kampong Chhnang, Pursat and Battambang provinces. Each wagon had a capacity of 50 to 100 people, and the people had to feed themselves, but since they had no food, they were emaciated and some of them sick. But, Samuth pointed out, no one died on the train.

The train was also used to transport rice to Phnom Penh and take agricultural and construction materials to the provinces, he said. According to Samuth, the Khmer Rouge killed most of the displaced people in front of Wat Rumlech pagoda, especially those from Svay Rieng Province. In mid-1976, Samuth was assigned to repair the train. The people who were evacuated from Svay Rieng to Battambang would replace the people who had been there before, he said. And this included his bosses at the train station who would be removed and replaced with new ones. During the 1979 evacuation, Samuth returned to Pursat Province where he and his wife saw the bodies of evacuees at the waterfront. In 1979, when the Khmer Rouge were defeated in Phnom Penh, he joined the Vietnamese soldiers to fight against the Khmer Rouge, Samuth said.



CamboCorps with Chan Samuth

Khmer Rouge survivor Prak Sarin

By Rim Searmey

Venerable Prak Sarin, a native of Kampong Trach District in Kampot Province who is now 90 years old, lives at the Rumlech pagoda in Bakan District in Pursat Province where, he said, he

was a teacher during the Sangkum Reastr Niyum era of the 1960s, having studied and graduated in Phnom Penh. During the Khmer Rouge regime, he was arrested and detained in 1977 because he was known to be an intellectual and was also accused of having links with the sector committee.

He spent two years and seven months imprisoned at two different places, but he was not tortured by the Khmer Rouge as he was a monk and also because he had helped them during the Lon Nol regime. However, his confession was obtained through torture, he said. When the Khmer Rouge evacuated the country in 1979, they killed most of the people in the Northwest Zone, he said. In 1979, the bones left in Wat Rumlech were prepared for burial, the bones being cleaned of any flesh left. The manager of that village was named Ta Vanh [secretary of sector 2] with Ta Sam Oeun [his deputy].

Venerable Prak Sarin added that the life of people of that generation had been harsh and unforgettable and had affected their mental health.



CamboCorps with Venerable Prak Sarin

Thma Puok District, Banteay Chhmar Temple

The program included a visit to the Banteay Chhmar temple built in the late 12th, early 13th century, which was damaged during the Khmer Rouge regime, the civil war of the 1980s, and looted in the 1990s.

-- By Lao Mala, CamboCorp member from Stung Treng



Visiting the Banteay Chhmar temple, I got a unique feeling and experience. When I arrived, I saw that the temple was dilapidated. Not only that, during the Khmer Rouge regime, this old temple was also damaged. Then, the threats caused by the civil war continued in the 1980s. The pictures or inscriptions on the temple are damaged. I am very sad because our Khmer ancestors left many works of culture and civilization to be passed on to the next generations. Some sculpted scenes show us the livelihoods and occupations...of the people at that time such as fishing, farming, growing rice, corn, soybeans and Romduol [flowers] as well as Khmer games, boat races and so on.

Finally, I would like to thank the Documentation Center of Cambodia for making this visit possible for me and other volunteers to help us understand so we can help care for and promote the temple to attract Cambodian and foreign visitors. As a young volunteer of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, I will strive to strengthen my capacity and further knowledge of history to protect and preserve other national heritage temples that our Khmer ancestors left for the next generations.

-- By Him Srey Loeng, CamboCorp member from Prey Veng

At the Banteay Chhmar temple...the walls around the temple are in ruins but the temple is standing firmly. Although the temple looks a bit broken down, the ancestral heritage as well as our national identity are still reflected in the temple that has stood for many centuries. And the temple is always there for all Cambodians who live in peace. The Banteay Chhmar temple has an inscription confirming that our ancestors of that generation worked hard to build it.

Therefore, as young Cambodians as well as Cambodian volunteers, we must take part in preserving our remaining cultural heritage. We need to widely disseminate it to other countries to make Cambodia known.



While visiting Banteay Chhmar, I really felt happy because I had not seen it before. While enjoying the visit, I also felt very sad because this temple is completely broken-down, barely

standing as a temple. The war destroyed the wealth, the heritage left by our Khmer ancestors who had built those temples... I am deeply saddened by the devastation caused by the war, so as a young Cambodian, I must learn about the country's history and take part in preserving the remaining temples.

I really admire our ancestors who built temples such as Banteay Chhmar... On the walls of the temple there are many ... sculptures, which clearly shows that these works are incomparable... Therefore, as young Cambodian volunteers, we should study to better understand Khmer history and [preserve those [temples] to attract national and international visitors.

March 27, 2024

Phnom Penh

Upon their return to Phnom Penh, CamboCorps members met with Chhang Youk, director of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, to discuss their train trip and the information they had collected at the sites they had visited and from the Khmer Rouge survivors they had



Chhang Youk with CamboCorps

interviewed. The meeting, which took place at the Himawari Hotel in Phnom Penh, ended up lasting more than three hours.

Youk shared his story of being separated from family members during the Khmer Rouge regime and going through a forced transfer by train from Phnom Penh to Banteay Meanchey. The separation of family members began during the evacuation of Phnom Penh, he said. This would take place as they were boarding trains as a wagon could only carry 100 people. So, if a wagon was full, the other people would have to board another wagon even if it meant being separated from one's family, he said. Then when they arrived at the destination, people had to board trucks to be taken to the various cooperatives set up by the Khmer Rouge. There could only be 25 people per truck, which meant that members of a family might be separated if they could not all get on the same one. As Youk explained, the Khmer Rouge treated people based on numbers, not as human beings. During the meeting, he also talked of the work that DC-Cam has done in the past and the work being done today such as working with Stanford University in the United States to find a treatment for Khmer Rouge survivors through psychotherapy to help them cope with the trauma left by those years under the Khmer Rouge regime. However, Youk said, one challenge faced is the fact that Cambodians would rather turn to drugs—which does not address the root cause—than to counseling.

Several CamboCorps members who had taken part in the study tour project shared their experience during the meeting.

Teh Rofikin, CamboCorps member from Stung Treng Province

Rofikin stressed that, unlike people during the Khmer Rouge regime, the CamboCorps group did not board the train at gunpoint. Today in Cambodia, people have complete freedom to live and travel, he said. Although it was hot on the train, the situation could in no way compare with the circumstances in which people put on the train by the Khmer Rouge travelled, Rofikin said. Today's young Cambodians are lucky to live in a country at peace, he said.

Regarding the temple of Banteay Chhmar, Rofikin expressed his regret that the whole building and compound were so damaged by the weather, war, and the use of the area to store weapons and artillery during the war. He asked CamboCorps members to help maintain Banteay Chhmar and other temples in Cambodia. Rofikin also appealed to all CamboCorps members to appreciate and preserve the environment by not littering or polluting waterways and by helping to prevent and reduce climate change. Finally, he suggested that, next time this trip takes place, to have a history guide to help participants better understand the historical context.

Following his comments, Chhang Youk pointed out that CamboCorps members should note what the persons they interview say but check the veracity of the facts mentioned as the persons may have been told rather than witnessed some of the things they said. The interviewer or researcher must be able to balance what he or she has heard and with existing history, he said. As for Rofikin's request for a history guide, Youk said that this would be looked into for the next visit.

Rithy Lika, CamboCorps member from Kratie Province

Traveling by train is quite different from traveling by car, Lika pointed out. On a train, there are unique conditions and environments such as hot weather, dust, and long travel times, she said. But the CamboCorps members on this trip were lucky to have proper seats unlike those forced to travel by train during the Khmer Rouge era who had to stand from departure to the arrival at their destination, Lika said.

As the Khmer Rouge survivor who had worked on the train had pointed out, passengers during that period had to stand among many others on the train, without enough food and water, and no toilets for passengers, she said.

The Banteay Chhmar temple is dilapidated, and many pieces don't seem to have been reassembled correctly, Lika said, adding that the temple needs to be restored.

Saro Zaly, CamboCorps member from Pursat Province

The Khmer Rouge regime might have been good if there had been no killings, enough food, and if people had been free to live in peace and happiness, Zaly said. Then, there would have been more educated people in the country, he said. But the Khmer regime did the opposite, he added. Zaly then appealed to the younger generation to remember the Khmer Rouge regime.

Lao Mala, CamboCorps member from Stung Treng Province

Mala asked the Documentation Center of Cambodia to provide opportunities for high school students as these opportunities would help students make the right decisions about their future careers. Mala said that she is currently studying psychology and that, after this train trip and experience, she understands that learning history can help prompt people to preserve temples.

In response, Chhang Youk said that students have the opportunity to switch fields in the course of their studies whether at the undergraduate or master's degree levels if they feel they must

change course. In Western countries, after completing a bachelor's degree, students can switch majors and pursue a master's degrees in a different field, he said.

DC-CAM Deputy Director So farina added that, if high school students would like to know more about Democratic Kampuchea, they can do so through other DC-Cam projects such as forums, classrooms, and other programs.

Phon Samphors, CamboCorps member from Kep Province

During the train visit, Samphors said he realized the importance of working together, of teamwork. He also appreciated the opportunity of meeting with volunteers from different provinces, he said. Samphors confirmed that the program was a bit busy, but he thought this provided lessons on time management. While traveling by train, Samphors said he saw many abandoned terminal buildings. This experience by train prompted him to conduct research and become more self-sufficient, he added.

Request from Sao Hong, CamboCorps member from Kep Province

During the meeting, Sao Hong asked the Documentation Center of Cambodia to help preserve the ruined sculptures near a train station where some people and passengers light incense and pray. Hong suggested that the sculptures be preserved for the younger generations to know the history of the sculptures.

Chhang Youk accepted the request and asked Hong to gather volunteers to work with the authorities and landowners to carry out this conservation work. He added that Hong had to ask permission from the authorities for the Documentation Center of Cambodia to start restoration work in cooperation with architecture students.

The meeting ended around 12:00 pm, and CamboCorps members prepared to return home.