

# មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលឯកសារកម្ពុជា

## KAMPOT PROVINCE

District	Site Name/Visit Date	# of graves	Est. Victim	Witness	File #/ID Code	Latitude	Longitude
Banteay Meas	Tvear Khieu Prison/ 29 June 1998	Prison	N/A	Nget Mao ង៉ែត ម៉ៅ	R 062908A/ 070201	N 10 <sup>0</sup> 39'5793"	E 104 <sup>0</sup> 33'3897"
Banteay Meas	Prey Chek/ 29 June 1998	1,200-1,500 pits	3,000- 4,500	Nget Mao ង៉ែត ម៉ៅ	R 062908B/ 070202	N 10 <sup>0</sup> 39'4725"	E 104 <sup>0</sup> 33'3725"
Banteay Meas	Prey Svay Sa/ 4 July 1998	10-20 pits	800-1000	Uy Ken ឡីយ៉េន	R 070403A/ 070203	N 10 <sup>0</sup> 40'2380"	E 104 <sup>0</sup> 35'0487"
Banteay Meas	Kien Chum/ 4 July 1998	700-800	900-1000	Nget Mao ង៉ែត ម៉ៅ	R 070403B/ 070204	N 10 <sup>0</sup> 39'0913"	E 104 <sup>0</sup> 32'4331"

On June 29, 1998, the Documentation Center of Cambodia assigned a mapping team to Kampot province in order to do a research on execution sites, documents and interviews with witnesses. At 10:30 a.m., our team arrived at Kampot provincial office where we met Mr. Touch Marim, Provincial Governor and Mr. En Chhoeun, Deputy Governor. At the Kampot provincial office, we informed Mr. Marim and Mr. Chhoeun about our mission objectives in Banteay Meas district and gave them an official letter from the DC-Cam Director.

### **Geographical Features of Kampot province**

Kampot province is 148 kilometers from Phnom Penh City via National Road #3, southwestward. But Banteay Meas district is 56 kilometers southwest of Kampot provincial town. Kampot province is bordered on:

- the north by Kampong Speu province,
- the east by Takeo province,
- the south by Vietnam,
- the west by Sihanoukville.

According to the district report, the province consists of 8 districts, 90 sub-districts and 460 villages with 5,651 collective groups. There are 98,637 families in the district with a population of 506,060 people out of 262,393 are female, and 273,203 are over the age

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of 15(195,917 female). People in Kampot province earn their livings by growing rice, fishing in the sea, producing salt from salt fields, prawns farming, growing durian trees and rambutant trees. Total areas of the province are categorized as follows:

- Rice field area : 12,452,778 hectares.
- Planting areas : 299,633 hectares.
- Rainy rice field area : 10,295,115 hectares
- Dry rice field area : 3,071 hectares
- Water chasing rice field area : 100 hectares

### **On June 29, 1998**

#### **Banteay Meas District**

At 12:30 p.m., we departed from the provincial office to Banteay Meas district via National Road #3. We had to travel backward! To reach Banteay Meas district, we had to go back 56 kilometers from Kampot provincial town. Banteay Meas district office is located on the right hand side of Tramkak Market (still in Kampot province).

At 2:00 p.m., we met Mr. Chhal Sorn, District Chief. We informed him about our mission objectives and requested him to cooperate with us. He told us detailed information about his district. The district office, surrounded by forests, is located on a high land area in the southeast of Kampot province. Banteay Meas district is bordered on:

- the north by Angkor Chey and Chhouk district,
- the south by Kampong Trach district,
- the west by Dang Tong district,
- the east by Kiri Vong district, Takeo province.

According to the district officials, the district is comprised of 15 sub-districts and 88 villages. There are 15,881 families living in this district. The population in the district is 813,26 people, out of which 42,123 are female. There are 41,908 people over the age of 18 in the district.

Total farming area is 29,302 hectares. The total area is divided up into:

- Planting area : 500 hectares
- Rice field area : 26,981 hectares
- Dry rice-field area : 1,721 hectares



office and prison was about 500 kilometers west of Banteay Meas sub-district. He said that Cultural Department Office; District Offices and Transportation Departments of the village today were formerly part of the security office in the Khmer Rouge regime. A Chinese businessman owned this place before the Khmer Rouge regime. The execution site is about 100 meters from the police station. It was once called Prey Chek (banana field), but today it is used as a rice-field. Mr. Nget Mao said, "There were about 200-300 militiamen in his mobile work brigade." One day when the militiamen were being ordered to dig the wild bamboo and to plow the land for using the place as a rice-field instead. Mr. Nget Mao saw the human's bones, clothes, chains, linen cradles, palm strings tied up to corpses' wrists and ankles, scattering in the area.

### **Number of pits and victims**

The execution sites were spotted here and there along the forest. The site has about 1,200-1,500 pits. Each contained 2-5 corpses. The number of victims is estimated at about 3,000-4,000. We took pictures of Prey Chek Prison and execution sites as evidence. Mr. Mao claimed that the victims were evacuees and all types of people from various cooperatives in different sub-districts and districts. In the Khmer Rouge regime, the security office was controlled by Banteay Meas district office, which was called District 75.

### **2. Kien Chum Mountain, Security Office and Prison 070204 B/P**

At 4:40 p.m., we accompanied by our witness, Mr. Nget Mao, departed to security office and execution sites of Kien Chum Mountain. The security office was situated in Prey Ta Prich village, Sdech Kung Khang Lech sub-district, about 3 kilometers from district office. Mr. Mao further said that Security Office was at Kien Chum mountain, but in 1977 was moved to Banteay Meas Market Security Office. We took photographs of the security office and the execution sites, not far from Kien Chum Mountain. The execution sites were in the west of Kien Chum Mountain, about 100-150 meters from the security office.

- There were 700-800 small pits.
- The estimated total number of victims is 900-1,000.

We do not know the actual number of pits and death toll because our witness couldn't give us any pertinent information.

### **3. Banteay Meas High School (no GPS data)**

At 5:45 p.m., we reached Banteay Meas High School, where we met Deputy Chief, Mr. Ngi Ben, of Sdech Kung Khang Lech sub-district and then we continued our trip to the foot of Touk Meas Mountain and Banteay Meas High School. The three sites are situated along National Railway. 6 palm trees and 1 coconut tree can identify the place. It is about 700 meters away from the road on the right hand side, near the cornfields. The execution site is 70 meters long and 100 meters wide. The villagers, on-lookers standing around, said that there were approximately 700-800 pits around the area. Those pits are neither big, nor deep. Each pit contained from 1 to 4 corpses only. In 1979, some villagers dug the pits to look for their relatives to prepare traditional funeral ceremonies for them. From

1981-82, some pits were dug up to look for gold. The victims were taken from the hospital (former KR hospital) to bury here. Most of the victims were over the age of 10. They died of starvation, unskillful doctors, and the lack of medicine. Mr. Nget Mao also used to stay in that hospital. Mr. Mao and deputy chief, Mr. Ngi Ben, of Sdeach Kung Khang Lich sub-district, living next to the high school, provided the information above. There were approximately 1,500-2,000 bodies in the killing site. We took pictures of execution sites for evidence and especially interviewed Mr. Ngi Ben. At 8:00 a.m. of June 30, 1998, we went to visit the execution site.

**a. French well (pond)**

Hang Li, 43, lives near the French pond. He indicated that, in 1972, when the Khmer Rouge successfully attacked the Lon Nol military base in Banteay Meas, the Khmer Rouge soldiers gathered up all district soldiers to the French pond to be executed. “The Khmer Rouge not only killed those Lon Nol soldiers of the district, but also executed their relatives,” said Hong Li. Mr. Li was a monk at that time, and he saw with his own eyes many victims’ bodies floating in the pond. Mr. Mao, the first witness, also knew that this was happening at the time. The French pond is 40 meters long and 60 meters wide and 2 meters deep, which approximately consisted of 100-200 victims’ bodies. The villagers commonly and literally call the French Pond “*well*” because there is no well in this district at all. The French dug this pond to supply water to the villagers during the French colonial time.

**b. Well in front of the former Khmer Rouge hospital**

At present, the hospital has again become Banteay Meas Market after being used by the Khmer Rouge as their security office and prison. For this well, the villagers built their houses on it so it is hard for us to identify how big it is. However, Mr. Mao said the well was about the same size as the French well. In 1972, many people were killed by the Khmer Rouge, and then thrown into the well. Victims were mostly Lon Nol soldiers and the rest were civilians. Mr. Mao said that the total death toll was about 100-200. At 8:30 a.m., we arrived at Wat Prey Krala, former district office of District 75 in the Khmer Rouge regime. The district leaders in the Khmer Rouge regime were Comrade San, Comrade Chan and Comrade Vy (no information about these three Khmer Rouge cadres).

When we arrived at Wat Prey Krala, we met Mr. Kim Socheat, aged 33, who was a Chief of monks. Mr. Kim told us that the Wat Dinning Hall was a former district office during the Khmer Rouge regime. He remembered one clergyman telling him that the bloodstain on the Wat floor, which can not be erased, was the blood of the Khmer Rouge cadre who was killed by his own subordinates. Another two Khmer Rouge cadres were killed under a tamarind tree. The monk told us about this event because she used to work as a dressmaker in the Khmer Rouge district office during the Khmer Rouge regime. She also told the monk that the district officer namely Comrade San, Comrade Chan and Comrade Vy, were also killed around here on accusation of traitorous activities. Wat Prey Krala was not a former execution site, nor a prison in the Khmer Rouge regime, but it was a district office. From 1982-1983, the Khmer Rouge soldiers secretly came to the Wat to dig for gold under the Buddha throne. We can see a big hole in the broken floor around the Buddha throne where they hid the gold during the revolution day; so we took photographs as evidence.

#### **4. Prey Svay Sa                      070203                      B**

The site was formerly an old village, covered with wild bamboo about 3 kilometers from the district office and next to Chrak Siem Mountain. Prey Svay Sa execution site lied on Prey Krala village, Touk Meas Khang Lech sub-district. Prey Svay Sa execution site is situated on the left-hand side of Chea Sim Road (this name recently came after Samdech Chea Sim, President of the National Assembly who sponsored this road). Killing process was done in 1971 and most of the victims were evacuees cheated by the Khmer Rouge cadres to move to an unknown new village. The Khmer Rouge told the victims that the new village had plenty of food. But instead, the Khmer Rouge cadres brought them to kill. They were shot to death at Prey Svay SA while they were walking on their way to the so-called *New Village*. According to Mr. Mao, the Khmer Rouge cadres planned to dig these pits as an execution site before they started to kill people. Each pit was 10 meters long and 20 meters wide. Mr. Uy Ken, second witness lives in Prey Krala village, claimed that he saw about 30-50 bodies lying in the pits when he was looking after cows. Many people were killed because many whole families were bought to death there. The total death was about 800-1,000. We had recorded the witnesses' accounts for our document. We planned to visit Hong Souy village, but we missed it because of time constraint and specially our GPS going wrong. We hope to visit the site in the future.

#### **Conclusion**

Although, our time was short, we could manage to visit many sites because the sites are located not very far from each other and the security was good as well. We would not able to reach many sites, if our witness did not voluntarily accompany us. In fact, our mission mainly focussed on Banteay Meas district, but we could gather other information from Dang Tong district as well because it was part of Banteay Meas district in the Khmer Rouge regime. However, we couldn't take all the data of killing sits because GPS unit was not working properly<sup>1</sup>. But those sites have already been re-visited and GPS reading has been taken. On this mission, we met a big problem with accommodation; we stay in at a local grocery shop, where we went without bed one night, sleeping on the floor, in a car and cradle. It was somewhat a very adventurous trip.

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<sup>1</sup> Youk Chhang led a another team to re-visited the sites and collect GPS data.