

**Khmer Rouge Suspect Faces Month-Long Hospital Stay
via AFP
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Cambodia's Khmer Rouge war crimes court heard Friday that the oldest of three former regime leaders on trial will stay in hospital, where he is in intensive care, for at least another month.

Ieng Sary, 86, who was admitted to hospital on September 7, is experiencing dizziness and mobility problems due to a lack of blood flow to the brain, renewing fears over the prospects of justice being done for his alleged role in the murderous 1975-1979 regime. His wife, Ieng Thirith, 80, was freed last Sunday after the court ruled she was mentally unfit to stand trial on genocide charges.

Doctor Lim Sivutha told the court that Ieng Sary, who already suffers from a myriad of ailments including heart and back problems, is now experiencing new medical problems. "The main cause for his dizziness and the numbness in his limbs is based on the limited blood flow due to the pressure on the blood veins at the neck bone," he said.

"It may take some time, probably one month or so more," before he can leave hospital, he added, ruling out surgery given the frailty of the regime's former foreign minister.

Ieng Sary is the most frail of the trio in the dock for their roles in the deaths of up to two million people in the late 1970s.

Health fears have long hung over the court with the octogenarian defendants all suffering from varying ailments, but this marks the first time their trial has been hit by significant illness-related delays since it opened in November.

But the trial of the other two suspects will continue in Ieng Sary's absence after he waived his right to be present for witness statements relating to their cases.

Ieng Sary and his co-defendants - "Brother Number Two" Nuon Chea and former head of state Khieu Samphan - deny charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

Known as one of the few international faces of the secretive Khmer Rouge regime, Ieng Sary has exercised his right to remain silent during the trial.

The regime oversaw one of the worst horrors of the 20th century, wiping out nearly a quarter of the population through starvation, overwork and execution in a bid to forge a communist utopia.

