

# The Phnom Penh Post

Successful people read The Post

## **Emotions Run Deep at Annual Day of Anger**

**Vong Sokheng**

**May 21, 2012**

The soldier, clad in the Khmer Rouge uniform of black pajamas and red-checked kroma, swung his wood chock high above his head before crashing it towards the base of the skull of the man kneeling in front of a deep pit at Choeng Ek yesterday.

This and other forms of execution as well as rape were re-enacted by actors at the annual Day of Anger ceremony held at the notorious killing fields in Phnom Penh.

Phnom Penh Municipal Governor Kep Chuktema, who did not give his usual speech at this year's ceremony, tearfully told reporters after the ceremony that many members of his family were executed during the regime that killed nearly one in every four Cambodians.

"I and many other Cambodian people have never forgotten May 20 as the Day of Anger, and after watching today's actors dressed as Khmer Rouge soldiers acting out executions and reminding us of the mass killings during the genocide regime, it also reminded me of the many members of my families who were killed in that time and those who are still suffering," Kep Chuktema said.

The Day of Anger was first established by the Vietnamese-backed Cambodian forces that overthrew the Khmer Rouge in 1979.

The day was chosen to correspond with May 20, 1976, the day the Khmer Rouge allegedly began its policy of mass killing.

Approximately 1,000 people and monks attended yesterday's ceremony.

Sixty-two-year-old Cheang Youk, who attended the ceremony yesterday, said she wanted the Khmer Rouge tribunal to speed up its work and bring justice to all victims.

"It is my suffering day. Therefore, the UN must speed up to find justice for me and others because currently it seems that the tribunal is in trouble," Cheang Youk said.