

# The Phnom Penh Post

**Former KR cadre speaks out**  
**Cheang Sokha**  
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For former Khmer Rouge cadre Yem Sam-on, it is clear that his former superior is a criminal who should be prosecuted by the Khmer Rouge tribunal.

Speaking in the large, open-air cafeteria of the tribunal yesterday on the first day of evidence hearings in Case 002, the 61-year-old former naval mechanic described how working life under former Khmer Rouge Navy Commander Meas Muth was one filled with constant fear.

“I worked directly under Meas Muth who was my supervisor at the time,” Yem Sam-on, who resides in Kampot province’s Chumkiri district, said. “Me, the cadres – we were all afraid of him and the power he had in the regime.

“I do believe that Meas Muth has a large share of the responsibility for the crimes committed during the [Khmer Rouge regime],” he said.

Meas Muth is widely believed to be one of two suspects investigated in the tribunal’s controversial third case.

Despite the closure of investigations in April, Meas Muth has not been arrested and an indictment has not yet been issued. He continues to live in Battambang province’s Samlot district near the Thai-Cambodian border.

Yem Sam-on joined the resistance movement in 1973 and worked as a mechanic in the Navy Division, particularly on warship maintenance. He became a Khmer Rouge soldier in 1975 in Kampot province and was later selected to travel with former Khmer Rouge Foreign Affairs Minister Ieng Sary to China for a study tour in Shanghai.

Upon his return, he continued to serve as a cadre in the regime’s Central Military Division 502.

Investigating judges in Case 002 found that Division 502 was “notably in charge of the [Cambodian] air force and responsible for all airports in Cambodia” and “actively participated” in the purge of military “bad elements”, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of soldiers accused of being traitors to the regime.

“Of course I do feel some personal guilt, and I don’t think one person can be responsible for killing the huge number of people,” Yem Sam-on said. “But [Meas Muth’s] role [as navy commander] at that time is huge and he should be included in the next case after 002.”

Meas Muth could not be contacted yesterday. Along with Meas Muth, Air Force Commander Sou Met is widely believed to be included in the investigations into Case 003.

The government opposes any cases after the current trial against former Khmer Rouge senior leaders Nuon Chea, Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan.