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**Former Khmer Rouge FM Hospitalized
Samean Yun and Leng Maly
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The former foreign minister of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge regime was taken to hospital Thursday with breathing problems, underscoring the health concerns for the elderly ex-leaders of the brutal regime currently standing trial at a U.N.-backed war tribunal in Phnom Penh.

Ieng Sary, 86, is one of three former top-level officials facing charges related to the deaths of up to two million Cambodians during the Khmer Rouge rule from 1975-1979. He is the eldest and least healthy of the three men, and is the first to be admitted to hospital during the trial proceedings.

Dim Sovannarom, spokesman of the Extraordinary Chambers of the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), as the tribunal is officially known, told RFA's Khmer service that Ieng Sary's condition is not critical, but that doctors will require him to stay in the hospital overnight.

He said that Ieng Sary had experienced trouble breathing Thursday morning and was taken to a Russian hospital where the ECCC maintains physicians assigned to the treatment of the former Khmer Rouge leaders.

Ieng Sary also suffers from a number of other conditions, including heart and back problems, and had recently taken to attending courtroom sessions in the morning before retiring to his cell, where he would view afternoon proceedings on a closed circuit television.

"This morning he experienced health issues and a medical team took him to the hospital. His condition is not critical," Dim Sovannarom said.

"The doctors are taking care of his health. He is suffering from influenza and the disease may have caused him to experience breathing problems."

He refused to comment on whether Ieng Sary's health issues might impede the trial.

"Our mission is to find truth and justice, so the court will try to go forward. We want to provide justice in an appropriate amount of time," Dim Sovannarom said.

"If we take too long, it cannot be considered justice. The court has already prepared for unexpected circumstances such as these," he said.

Dim Sovannarom said the court would avoid delays as much as possible, noting that after halting questioning of the witness in Thursday's session in order to assist Ieng Sary, the hearing had proceeded to completion.

Agence France Presse quoted Ieng Sary's international lawyer, Michael Karnavas, as saying that the former Khmer Rouge leader had been suffering from a cough for the past two to three weeks and on Thursday experienced additional problems with phlegm and swallowing.

"We remain guarded as to his health, particularly in light of his age," he said.

Another resignation

Ieng Sary and his co-defendants—Khmer Rouge second-in-command Nuon Chea and former head of state Khieu Samphan—deny charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

His wife Ieng Thirith, a former social affairs minister, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease last year and declared unfit for trial. She faces the same charges and remains in detention receiving medical treatment.

Theirs is the second case undertaken by the ECCC after successfully trying an earlier one against former prison chief Duch in February, jailing him for life on appeal for overseeing the deaths of some 15,000 people.

But despite spending nearly U.S. \$150 million since it was established six years ago, the ECCC has handed down only one sentence and has been mired in allegations of corruption and interference.

On Wednesday, Japanese Judge Motoo Noguchi, an international judge of the Supreme Court Chamber of the ECCC, told U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon that he was quitting. His resignation will take effect on July 15.

After leaving the ECCC, Noguchi, who had served the ECCC from its inception in 2006, will return to serving Japan's Ministry of Justice.

"I hope that the Cambodian people will keep telling their stories beyond generations, enhance dialogue in their society, and reflect these on the education for pupils and students," Noguchi said in a statement, adding that it had been an "honor and privilege" to serve the ECCC.

His action follows the resignations of International co-prosecuting judges Laurent Kasper-Ansermet, of Switzerland, in March, and Siegfried Blunk, of Germany, in October. Both judges cited government interference to trial progress as their reason for leaving the court.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, himself a former Khmer Rouge cadre, and other Cambodian officials have often expressed opposition to any further prosecutions in the Tribunal beyond the second trial.