

**Former Doctor Recounts Khmer Rouge Paranoia**

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**August 28, 2012**

When soldiers yanked people out of the rooms of the Phnom Penh hospital where Khmer Rouge-era physician Em Oeun trained in the late 1970s, there were few explanations and the movement was swift.

The Khmer Rouge “actually arrested people in the hospital”, said Oeun, a civil party in Case 002 who retook the stand yesterday. “They put those people who were arrested in the trucks, which were already prepared outside the hospital premises. I don’t know where they took them to.”

The general atmosphere, as a result of all the inexplicable arrests, was one of constant paranoia and mistrust.

“Normally, people did not talk about the truth, they never chit-chatted, the reason being, we could not find time to converse because they were all afraid,” he said. “At the time, the party paid greater attention to obeying the discipline rather than paying attention to human beings or their lives.”

Subordinating all matters to the higher organisation was something he learned early on. Joining the revolution in 1969, Oeun entered the youth league in 1973, when the regime called itself the Communist Party of Kampuchea. He can still remember the indoctrination pertaining to Buddhism, which the Khmer Rouge scorned.

“Leaders would say in the session that we should never treat pagoda affairs as the core task. They would even say that monks were a waste, because if we dressed the monks with robes, then we had to spend money ... unwisely,” he said.

Oeun received medical training and was assigned to a base in Prey Veng, where he lived in 1977 and 1978. He told the court last week that the base was a site for macabre medical experimentation on purged party members.

Before that assignment, Oeun went to Phnom Penh to train at a hospital there and to attend political study sessions.

He described listening to presentations by Brother No 1 Pol Pot in the late 1970s. Co-accused Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea also spoke.

The central theme of being attacked from all sides and enemies “burrowing from within” pervaded the lectures and “terrified” Oeun.

The questioning of a civil party at the Khmer Rouge tribunal yesterday ended early to leave time for a closed-door trial management meeting, which lawyers from several parties who attended said covered mostly administrative matters.