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Pol pot dismantled Buddhism: Duch Cheang Sokha June 11, 2009

Former Khmer Rouge jailer Kaing Guek Eav told the UN-backed war crimes court Wednesday that the regime's party line forced Buddhist monks to disrobe or otherwise be killed as part of a plan to slowly dismantle the national religion.

"Pol Pot opposed all religions as a general principle ... [But] they never sent anyone to [my] office because of their belief in religion," the former leader, known as Duch, said.

The accused former leader also told judges that hundreds of Vietnamese war prisoners were killed because of suspicions that they were spies.

"No one could escape, all of them were ordered to be smashed," Duch said. "Vietnamese who came from Vietnam in any form - civilians or combatants - they were arrested and sent to S-21 accused of being a spy."

Duch commanded the notorious Tuol Sleng prison in which 16,000 men, women and children were tortured and killed. Two surviving staff members of the prison were expected to testify this week; however, judges said Wednesday that their appearance in court had been delayed due to repetitive or off-topic questioning by the parties.