

# The Phnom Penh Post

**Tuol Sleng survivors prepare to be questioned at ECCC**  
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Judges at the Khmer Rouge tribunal are expected to turn the court's attention towards S-21 this week, as the trial against the prison's chief continues

As the trial of former Khmer Rouge jailor Kaing Guek Eav enters its third week, the regime's notorious Toul Sleng prison will, at last, become the subject of the judges' questions, and former S-21 staff and survivors say they are bracing themselves to take the stand.

"During the Khmer Rouge regime, if I did not obey orders, I would be executed by Duch," Him Huy, a former guard at the prison, told the Post, referring to the accused by his revolutionary name.

"I did ... kill five prisoners at Choeng Ek," he said when asked what he was preparing to tell the war crimes court.

"Before execution, [Duch and S-21 deputy chief 'Hor'] asked me 'absolutely or not?' In respect of Angkar ... I answered, 'absolutely'. If I didn't answer with this, they would kill me," he said, referring to Duch's alleged revolutionary commitment to executions.

He added that during a reenactment at Choeng Ek in 2008, Duch denied in front of judges that he ordered Him Huy to kill people.

Over the course of Duch's trial thus far, judges have only heard questions relating to the operation of a previous secret detention camp, M-13, which Duch also headed. Although M-13 falls outside the court's limited temporal jurisdiction, it was believed to be important in establishing his role in the regime.

Judges are now expected to call on witnesses to describe how S-21 was established and how it functioned, including how prisoners were taken to the Choeng Ek killing fields for execution, a central policy of the ultra-Maoist regime.

Those expected to be called on include three living survivors of the prison, who are likely to be pivotal in determining the validity of Duch's defence, which positions him as a scapegoat who was only following orders. Another, Nhem En, was responsible for taking photos of the detainees shortly before they were killed.

"To survive, we had to respect the orders of Angkar. My life and my destiny belonged to Angkar. Angkar could smash [kill] me any time that he needed to," Nhem En told the Post.

According to a Radio France Internationale broadcast Saturday, Australia has released over US\$400,000 worth of donations to the Cambodian side of the court, which has suffered a budget shortfall since donor funding was frozen last July following graft allegations. Embassy officials were unavailable for comment Sunday, but court spokesperson Reach Sambath said, "If it is true, we appreciate their commitment."