

Communist Genocide In Cambodia

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"My mother was one of the million victims who were killed by the Khmer Rouge genocide politics. They took my mother out of our house. She was kicked, dragged and beaten. Before she was executed she was cuffed in chains. She was hit with a metal rod five times at the back of the head. My mother was not a woman of politics. She was a caring mother," says Halen, a women's activist from Cambodia and a political analyst in the US during the last five years.

Radical Maoist movements have failed to take power in Peru, but Khmer Rouge seized power in Cambodia and Pol Pot's tactic was to terrorize the countryside by setting up ambushes and seeding minefields. The Khmer Rouge regime traumatized millions of Cambodians and it created a permanent scare in every Cambodian citizen.

In addition to the Cambodian genocide, a lot of individuals also died because Pol Pot was too incompetent to deal with economic and social development in the country. During the 1975-79 Communist rule at least 1.7 million Cambodians died due to disease, starvation, overwork and execution. There was no banking and finance, no private ownership of property, and no religion. Adam Field finds, in his article in The Times published on July 29, Pol Pot guilty of genocide. Pol Pot gave the orders for the killings. He was overthrown by a Vietnamese invasion in 1979.

Born in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and having lived in the US for the last 15 years Dr. Nansi Kreth said. "There was no peaceful movement to support and respect about our life." His voice trailed off as tears ran down his cheeks. "I can't understand why people do this to each other. I've seen much horrible dead, swelled, naked body floating down the river. Many people simply felt that it was better to end their lives sooner than to suffer in such a way," he said.

After the most horrifying and disastrous war, Pol Pot became prime minister and the next day the entire population in the country became farmers. They were forced to evacuate the cities, move to the countryside. Youk Chhang, director of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, said, "Cambodians and foreigners should be educated about the tragic past.

Monash University's Professor David Chandler, who is an international expert on Pol Pot regime in Cambodia said, "Nearly two million people died of exhaustion, malnutrition or

by execution between 1976 and 1979. Thousands of party members were also put to death".

"I am among those people who suffered from outlawed and brainless Maoists. I was born in Kompong Speue Province. When the Khmer Rouge Maoists guerrillas took over our place, they make all my family works for them every single day and night without giving us a chance to rest. I never get to eat a full meal. Sometimes, when I refused to work, they would torture me by wiping me and making me worked overtime," Naridhoma from Cambodia said. She is now in the US for higher education.

She said she can remember how she had wished every time she woke up that her sufferings were dreams, but it was real." She said to pray to Lord Buddha that her nightmare would end soon. "There were no shoes given by the Khmer Rouge. I was robbed by the Maoists. They left us with nothing. We slept on the ground and were without food for a month".

Michael Vickerey estimated that 50,000 - 300,000 were executed and the deaths in the four years rule of Pol Pot were over 750,000 due to excesses. David Chandler estimates up to 100,000 executions (Newsweek, June 30, 1997). A July 1997 piece on Cambodia by Philip S. Robertson Jr., in the Foreign Policy gives a death toll of the Khmer Rouge period as 1.5 - 2 million, without mentioning any earlier events that might have contributed to the toll.

The Finnish study estimated the total deaths during the Pol Pot years at a million. According to many studies, many people decided to leave the town fearing that the Khmer Rouge will capture them and execute them or will force them to go along with them into the jungle and would use them as human shields.

A Cambodian journalist, who was also a New York Times news photographer Dith Pran, barely survived the mass killings by the Pol Pot regime said, "Any Cambodian man, woman or child who was seen as a threat, or who refused to obey orders was killed".

In the mid-1990s, the Khmer Rouge suffered reverses due to internal factionalism, and in 1992, U.N. mission registered 4.6 million people of the eligible voters. In the same year Prince Sihanouk denounced the Khmer Rouge but in 1993, the Khmer Rouge withdrew from the peace talks, boycott national elections and return with impunity to terrorism. The King won the election, a new constitution reestablished the monarchy, and Norodom Sihanouk became king again. Halen said, "UN should detect, arrest, extradite or bring to trial those who have been responsible for genocide crimes against humanity in Cambodia."

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