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Interview with SÂ Sarin (ស សារិន), Former Driver at K-12 Centre, Currently Living in

Phum Pram Village, Veal Vong Commune, Kampong Cham City,

Kampong Cham Province

Date of interview: 5-6 May 2009

Interviewers: Chi Terith (ជី ទេរិទ្ធ) and Pheng Pong Rasy (ផេងពង្ស រ៉ាស៊ី)

Cassette#, Side A

Terith: My name is Chy Terith and my colleague is Pheng Pong Rasy. We are from Documentation Center of Cambodia. We come to meet you today because we want to know your particular experiences during the Khmer Rouge regime and we will use the experiences by submitting it to a court afterwards. What do you think about that?

Sarin: Yes, no problem. I am happy and would also like to testify before a court of law for the prosecutions of those senior leaders. I am extremely happy that both of you come to interview me.

Terith: Okay. Thank you very much. Could I put your experiences and accounts in a magazine or wait until you have completed your writing about yourself first?

Sarin: Well. My draft is to recall the past experiences long time ago so I am very happy that you come to meet me here. But if you use my accounts now, it will not be detailed because it took place 10-20 years, almost 30 years ago. We look backwards so we have to spend some time recalling it. Therefore, I am very happy. I will try to write my accounts for you so that you can publish it in our Cambodian "Searching for Truth" magazine.

Terith: Yes. Thank you very much. This interview is being conducted on 5 May 2009 at your home address. What village do you live in?

Sarin: Phum Pram village.

Terith: Phum Pram village, Vel Vong commune?

Sarin: Yes. Kampong Cham city, Kampong Cham province.

Terith: So, first I would like to ask you from the time when you started to join the revolution onwards. My colleague will begin.

Sarin: Okay.

Rasy: Hello, Uncle. How are you?

Sarin: I am fine. Buddha blesses you!

Rasy: I would like to ask you about the period before you joined the revolution. I want to ask you about the period shortly before Khmer Rouge regime began. When did you join revolution?

Sarin: I joined the revolution in 1973 after I was away from my parents. It was said that joining revolution completely directly meant we had to be away from our parents and stayed with Angkar. I still remember that U.S. aerial war ended at the time when I joined the revolution. It was in late 1973 but it was probably during harvesting period in November or December. I still remember I often put in my record of my participation in the revolution on 1 November. But I was part of the revolution even before 1973. Generally, it was since 1971, 1972 because there were Angkar, United Front of Kampuchea, Marquis Movement at the time. The movement tried to launch propaganda to persuade rural people and they had one performance arts team who was asked to perform in villages. We did not have televisions and films at the time because it was very strict within the liberated zone. We were not allowed to use even kerosene lamps as they were afraid of aerial attacks. Therefore, they formed small performance arts teams in order to convince popular mass movement to come and see our performance. I was learning to perform to be an actor at the time but I was still under my parents' supervision. When I finished, I asked them to stay at home with my parents because it was not strict yet during a Front organization phase at the time. Whenever I went to join the Revolutionary Front, I memorized scripts among all performers very well as if monks were preaching. I would like to talk about that briefly. It was stated that democratic front organization.... I would like to drink water as my throat is dry now.

Terith: May I interrupt you briefly. I forgot to ask you about your name. It is necessary to have your name recorded in the cassette at least?

Sarin: Okay. My original name is SÂ Sarin but I changed it to Ngiev Sarin (ងឿវ សារិន) when I joined revolution because SÂ is my great grandfather's name while Ngiev is my grandfather's name. Therefore, I changed my name to Ngiev Sarin.

Rasy: How old are you?

Sarin: I am 52 years old. I would like to give some details related to my life before I joined the revolution. When I was young, I studied at Veal Kandieng Primary School in Chub commune, Tboung Khmum district, Kampong Cham province. It was called Sangkum Reasr Niyum regime at the time. My study ended when I was seven or eight years old. During each school vacation, my grandfather, *Ta Miev* (តាម៉ឺវ), sent me to gain additional learning at a pagoda. It meant vacation was over and school started. At the pagoda, my grandfather asked me to study Dharma. When free, I was a pagoda boy helping carry food containers and went out with monks while they were collecting alms. I stayed at Ta Dong (តាដូង) pagoda in a remote and quiet place where old people could practice Buddhist precepts such as the tenfold precepts. It was called Ta Dong pagoda. When the vacation was over, I went back to school. Umm! I went to the pagoda to be a pagoda boy, studying with monks, serving both my grandfather and monks and elderly people at Ta Dong pagoda.

Rasy: When was it at the time?

Sarin: Since 1967-1968-1969. I was at the pagoda every year. My grandfather went there to practice Dharma during the beginning of the period when monks observed the traditional practice of Lent. I was there to be a pagoda boy with another older man named CHAN An (ចាន់ អាន) living in Khnar village, Sralab commune, Tboung Khmum district, Kampong Cham province. I was there with that older man only. But I am not sure whether now he lives in K'am Samnar next to Vietnamese border or Kaoh Thom. He stayed with His Excellency Kun Kim and he has been a friend of His Excellency Kun Kim since they were young. After the coup on 18 March, our country was plunged into war. My district became a liberated zone of a liberation army. Therefore, there was no study as we were afraid of aerial attacks.

Rasy: Where is your birthplace?

Sarin: I was born in Trapeang Krapeu village, Moug Riev commune, Tboung Khmum district, Kampong Cham province. It was only called Tboung Khmum district in Sector 21, East Zone, during the revolution period. It was not called Kampong Cham province at the time. They did not talk about province, but zone.

Rasy: Excuse me. May I interrupt you. How many siblings did you have at the time? Where did you come in your family?

Sarin: I had nine siblings. One of my older brothers was a military medic in Sector 21 at the time. He also joined the army but he was a medic. He was executed afterwards by Central and Southwest soldiers because he was injured during a fighting against Vietnamese army in 1977. He was sent to a hospital as he was injured. He was hospitalized for a quite a long time because he was seriously injured. There was a coup in the East Zone and the eastern people were considered traitors. He was arrested and no one knew where he was executed. But, I knew that he was a military medic at Kor-6 (គី-៦) of Sector 21 and based at Dar commune at the time.

It was Dar commune, Memot district, Kampong Cham province. I was informed about that. Dar Memot was a fierce battlefield between Vietnamese army and our revolutionary army during the period of Democratic Kampuchea.

Rasy: Where did you come in your family at the time?

Sarin: I came second in the family.

Rasy: Oh! You were the second child.

Sarin: Yes. My father was SÂ Sên (សំ សែន) while my mother was SAN Saroeun (សាន សារឿន) and then my older brother—SÂ Sarēt (សំ សារ៉េត); I myself—SÂ Sarin (សំ សារិន); my younger sister—SÂ Saroeung (សំ សារឿង); and my younger brother—SÂ Chānthân (សំ ចាន់ថន) who lives in Khrouch Chhmar now.

Rasy: How many of them are still living?

Sarin: All of them are still living, except my older brother. They were so young at the time that they could not know anything. Actually, I was the only child old enough to know. You will get to know about my life soon and then you will see how and why I knew matters related to many leaders.

Rasy: Okay. Please go on.

Sarin: I would like to go on now. I just said a moment ago that my study was ended following the coup on 18 March. Then, a revolution was coming and it was called National United Front of Kampuchea, Marquis Movement, which was widespread throughout the liberated zone. There was one communal performance arts team established to launch propaganda movement to persuade people to support the National United Front of Kampuchea. They had a small performance unit to go around and launch propaganda in all villages. I went around launching

propaganda in other communes and my commune. During the propaganda, they did not ask people to come and listen to their propaganda but that people had better come to enjoy the performance. While people were enjoying the play, they started to introduce political theories. During the National United Front of Kampuchea period, performers were required to memorize scripts so well as I said earlier that they could dictate it in the same way as monks preach. I still remember the words precisely because I was the one who memorized and dictated it very well. They said at the time that the National United Front of Kampuchea gathered all organizations, religions, king, royal families, monks, youths, people from all walks of life, without distinction as to race or color. Therefore, we all had to resist, join Marquis Movement, and follow the paths set by Samdech Norodom Sihanouk who was our sacred leader. Elderly people truly believed the King at the time. Thus, we just said so before we started our performance. During the play, I acted as a young boy who was poisoned by U.S. aircrafts. Umm! We had to sing revolutionary songs during the drama.

Rasy: What type of drama?

Sarin: ... We acted as a builder of aircrafts. We waved something and there were three of us staying on each other. We acted just like a circus group in which some people were carrying plows, some were transplanting rice, and there were aerial attacks. In short, we acted to show brutal acts of U.S. imperialists and its Prey Nokor lackey. The Thieu-Ky lackeys were brutally active in my district. They seized young female adults, chickens, ducks, pigs, cows, buffaloes, televisions, radios, cassettes players and all other valuable items in general as if they had kept it all here before.

Rasy: What meaning did the play, in which you performed, convey? Did you play to convey certain meaning or just to entertain people?

Sarin: No. It was a play carried political message. First, we wanted people to understand revolutionary lines clearly. They sang that the revolution was pure and good; the light was cool and bright. I forgot some. It was to show a line, just like a path, for us to follow.

Rasy: How did you perform? Did you have your own programmes and schedules to play in this village today and that village tomorrow or you just followed whatever scenes were set by Angkar?

Sarin: Angkar had their programmes. The team leader had his programmes. I was talented. I was not shy and afraid. I could perform so they allowed me to perform. I could make noise and do as they instructed me to do. We just performed based on what we were told.

- Rasy: Concerning your theatrical play, did you play only one story or more?
- Sarin: I just played two or three short stories. Apart from that play, I sang. It was just like a comedy show. It was not a long play from dusk till dawn.
- Rasy: Who was the performance arts team leader at the time?
- Sarin: There was one Sangkat chief named *Ta* (grandfather) MÂK Chi (ម៉ក់ ជី) and *Ta* Salad (សាឡាដ), who was a Sangkat chief at the time. They called him commune chief. Oh! They did not call him commune chief. They just called him Sangkat, *Louk* (Mister) Sangkat. They just called him Sangkat, not commune chief as it was a feudalism word. It was all about the time when I learnt to play performance arts and launch propaganda. Afterwards, my village was severely devastated. There was fighting which set around 12 tanks on fire in this Trapeang Krapeu village. The liberation army in cooperation with Viet Cong army set 12 tanks and one aircraft on fire. One day after that, the fighting took place from 9 a.m to 5 p.m until Thieu-Ky soldiers were defeated and left tanks throughout the fields at the time.
- Rasy: When was it at the time?
- Sarin: 1972. It was in the dry season in 1972.
- Terith: Excuse me. May I go back to when you started to play performance arts to launch political propaganda in order to persuade people to...?
- Sarin: To join the revolution; to join the liberation army. It was called the “liberation people” at the time.
- Terith: When did you start to join performance arts at the time?
- Sarin: I started since early 1971 during a harvesting period. It was almost in late 1970 at the time. There was a coup on 18 March. Immediately after 18 March, around 25 March, aircrafts were coming. Afterwards, many Thieu-Ky aircrafts were coming, which darkened the sky, but it did not land. There were between 50 and 100 aircrafts coming each time in order to send soldiers. I was young at the time. I went to tend my cows and I counted the aircrafts. There were classified groups of tanks, assault rifles and artillery. They bombarded indiscriminately, landed their soldiers and sent tanks where they could not advance such as in Toul Trea area. The fighting broke out in Kampong Cham. They flew across this area. I saw aircrafts scattering in the sky. I now talk about the fighting in my village. Afterwards, during a dry season, in late 1972 around October or November, B-52

aircrafts were coming to bombard the areas again. I was young at the time. My house was gone when I woke up. My father was hugging me tightly. My family, including my parents, my younger siblings and grandmother, fled to another location in Ta Mel, Ou Reang Ov district towards Chak commune, Chruol and Trapeang Tea villages in order to stay far away from national roads because when the Thieu-Ky army arrived, U.S aircrafts would drop letters. They did not allow us to stay near the national road. My village was near the national road, around one kilometre away. I saw they dropped the letters but it was so long that we went to harvest rice such as short-term rice. Around four or five of my cousins were killed when there were B-52 attacks while my siblings endured no harm because they stayed with my father in another district. Around 40 villagers, not Viet Cong and liberation soldiers, were killed throughout the village including the deaths of cows and buffaloes, and rice damage. Some B-52 bombs stayed underground.

Rasy: I would like to ask how old you were when you joined the performance art team.

Sarin: I was around 12-13 years old.

Rasy: 12-13 years old?

Sarin: Yes. It was around that.

Rasy: Did you still stay with your parents?

Sarin: Yes, I did.

Rasy: Did your parents allow you to join the performance arts team at the time?

Sarin: They did because my father was a village chief.

Rasy: Chief of this Trapeang Krapeu village?

Sarin: Yes, this Trapeang Krapeu village.

Rasy : So, he was happy that you joined it?

Sarin: Of course, because my older relatives were talented in launching the propaganda as well. One of my cousins, POL Chhean (ប៉ុល ឈាន), was a performance art team leader but he passed away already.

Rasy: When you joined the performance arts team, how many people were there in your team as a whole?

Sarin: There were around 15 members.

- Rasy: How many girls and boys were there?
- Sarin: There were around five or six girls.
- Rasy: Were all of them young kids?
- Sarin: Yes. My wife was also in the performance arts team.
- Rasy: Apart from your performance in villages, did your performance arts team have to do anything else assigned by Angkar?
- Sarin: Nothing else because the performance arts team was just a simple low-profile team of the commune. It was not the same as a district team who was able to launch propaganda in the commune. However, my team went to perform in a few neighboring villages at the time, as far as I remember.
- Rasy: Concerning the impact of your performance, did you notice, following your performance, that our villagers in this village volunteered to flee into the forests or join the resistance movement?
- Sarin: So many people joined. There were no less than 100 people in my village who volunteered to join the army. If I counted the whole number, there were between 100 and 200 people, following each phase, month and year because people were recruited to join the army every month, every year. Some of the volunteers were not even allowed to join at the time.
- Rasy: There were too many?
- Sarin: Absolutely. It surpassed their plans because the ones with no good backgrounds would not be allowed to be soldiers at the time. The propaganda at the time was well saturated among the lower-class people, which resulted in an overthrow of Lon Nol regime.
- Rasy: Did you argue with your parents when they asked you to join the performance arts team at the time?
- Sarin: No, I did not because I was happy to go around singing and dancing while everyone was watching me (Laughing).
- Rasy: What did you just dictate a moment ago? Who wrote it?
- Sarin: It was written by the commune chief and other propagandists but they all passed away. The propagandists were from this commune but some were from the sector such as *Krou* (trainer) Seng Vuth (សេង វុធ ស៊ីវ), from the district or sector. There

were a few rich individuals who came to launch propaganda as well. However, they had performers speak first as it would be too much prominent if they spoke so they just made a summary. As a result, audiences who came to enjoy the performance were interested in the protagonist. It was just like Samdech Hun Sen who brought along with him some comedians such as Krem (ក្រែម), Prom Manh (ព្រហ្មម៉ាញ), Koy (កុយ) when he visited different places every day. People who loved Samdech Hun Sen came to see him but the ones affiliated with opposition parties may not love him. However, they still came because they wanted to see comedians such as Koy and Krem performing. They called it performance arts at the time. In fact, they manipulated the people and convinced them to come and see the performance while we were launching propaganda.

- Rasy: So, did they themselves initiate whatever they performed including revolutionary songs?
- Sarin: Revolutionary songs were written already at the time such as *Absolutely Red Blood* and *Courageous Couriers*.
- Rasy: What was the origin of the songs?
- Sarin: It was from Khmer liberation radio at the time.
- Rasy: Didn't you know its origins?
- Sarin: Umm! It was from the upper echelons, from the Centre. The songs were written from the center and we had to learn to sing.
- Rasy: Was it mandatory or we ourselves were willing to learn?
- Sarin: They required us to act and learn. They did not allow us to sing Lon Nol songs or the ones in Sihanouk regime so we ourselves, as youths, had to sing such as: *a courageous courier fears nothing*. I acted as a courier in that song at the time—“A new Cambodia youth”.
- Rasy: What was the name of your performance arts team?
- Sarin: It was Mouny Riev commune.
- Rasy: Oh! Mouny Riev Commune Performance Arts Team?
- Sarin: Yes. But it was not a simple performance arts team as there was no district performance arts team yet at the time. Only afterwards did district performance arts team come into existence and they performed very well as they had support

from the upper echelons, Angkar. There was no such support during my generation but we could raise funds from people. In short, we lacked even clothes to wear.

Rasy: Did each commune have a performance arts team or only your commune?

Sarin: It depended upon the leader who organized such a team. It did not mean that each commune had to have one team. For example, the team leader in the commune was talented so he/she just organized a performance arts team. And he found that there were talented people in my commune who could sing and speak eloquently. In short, it depended on the author. My older cousin was an author. Talking about this, I felt saddened. He was well educated; he was in secondary school in the past and he was considered a well-educated person in rural areas of our country at the time. He was a very good author.

Rasy: When district performance arts teams were established, did you also perform in the district teams?

Sarin: No. Let's listen to me. I had already joined the revolution and stayed away from my parents when the district performance arts teams were created. After there were B-52 attacks and aerial wars, and storm attacks separate from Phnom Penh, they started to appeal to voluntary youths to join the army. There were around 120 volunteers including me throughout my commune going to get military trainings and strategies along with KUNG Yim (គង់ យឹម), the chief of militia unit of Moug Riev commune. The training in military strategies involved learning of infantry tactics, ambushes, site attacks and shooting of the marines of five types. I forget all of its names at the time. The shooting of the marines included such combat ships as Kantheay CA (កង្ហាយសេអា), BângKâng CA (បង្កង់សេអា), chasing ships ...etc. I remember that there were five types. I also learnt to shoot down aircrafts. We shot parts of the body of aircrafts.

Rasy: Military tactics?

Sarin: Yes, military tactics.

Terith: Who trained you at the time?

Sarin: The trainer was Vorng Vuthy (វង់ វុទ្ធី) from sector 21 and *Bang* (Elder brother/sister) Yim, chief of the commune militia unit. We learnt to shoot down different types of jets such as jet planes, simple propeller-powered planes and so-called Dakota aircrafts. We learnt to shoot the latter's body such as half of its

body or the whole body. As for MiG fighter planes, we shot three parts of its body.

Rasy: I would like to ask you backwards. How long did your play in the commune performance arts team last? Did you stop to join the revolution?

Sarin: Since late 1971, 1972, and 1973. Three years in total.

Rasy: Three years, okay. So, you joined the revolution in 1973?

Sarin: Yes. I joined when I stayed away from my parents. They recruited people to be sector soldiers in this Moug Riev commune. I will talk about that later. I spent three months learning military tactics. After my three-month training, they took me to a fighting at Khmuong (ក្រុង) pagoda in Tonle Bet. The battlefield was in Kampong Cham province to the east, at Rokar Thom (រកាតំ). The army was cut off to the district army and sector army. I failed to join the formation process. My group rank was within the sixth group. I tried to stay in the middle with four of my friends because I was worried that they might not allow me to go to the battles.

Rasy: You really wanted to fight?

Sarin: Yes. I wanted to go with them as they said that going to the battlefields was exciting. I was not afraid of death. I was moved by the propaganda and I myself was a propagandist during the Revolutionary Front establishment. As a result, the view of my village being destroyed and set on fire by the bombardments of Lon Nol, U.S. and Thieu-Ky soldiers came to my mind and made me hold profound hatred in line with the education and propaganda launched by upper echelons, Angkar. We felt extremely suffered as in that age; we were just like a blank paper or white piece of cloth. I was chief of children unit since I was in the village. Angkar demanded that I did it.

Rasy: Oh, you already joined the revolution?

Sarin: Before that. I was still young but I was asked to be the chief of children unit in the village.

Rasy: When you joined the revolution, did many people join with you at the time?

Sarin: There were some. However, a few people still survive now. The people who were not allowed to the battlefields still survive. They cried when they were not allowed to go. One of the people who joined revolution with me at the time was

Oeun (អៀន) who is a teacher in Suong now. Another one was Moeun (ម៉ែន) who just stays at home. There were a few more who were allowed to go but asked to come back home after they arrived at the battlefields. We were not forced and we were allowed go back home if we had no will to go to the battles. A few people who had joined the revolution with me came back home.

Rasy: How many people were there with you at the time?

Sarin: Many people. There were two rounds of propaganda campaigns. The latter was my turn in 1973. In one round, we had to join completely and stayed at the commune hall where I was asked to write letters because my writing was somehow readable. And we had to have letters with us in order to go from one village to another because, let me talk about that briefly, structures within the liberated zones were very strict. There were guards from villages to villages and they had to have letters with them as well because they were afraid that Lon Nol soldiers infiltrated. The intelligence agents would come to arrest any strangers until there was none. As far as I know about history of the revolution, the U.S. decided to launch aerial B-52 attacks because the intelligence agents could not infiltrate. The intelligence agents could infiltrate only when there were S111. They called it S15 or S16 which were sent to bombard occasionally. Then, they could not infiltrate. Generally, I was the chief of children unit and could launch propaganda since I was young. Angkar said they had met tigers. The U.S. at the time dropped tigers made from paper inside which people disguised and we could shoot them. They composed a slogan stating that: "*We don't have to be afraid of Lon Nol and U.S. soldiers and its Phnom Penh-Bangkok-Prey Nokor lackeys as they are just paper tigers.*" Their slogan at the time encouraged us not to fear the paper tigers. We were not afraid of tanks why we were afraid of these three types of paper tigers. I spoke all these words while I was learning performance arts during my propaganda campaigns. We did not have to fear.

Rasy: I see. Did anyone induct you into the revolution such as bringing you for registration?

Sarin: There were only children. I just asked them to allow me to join.

Rasy: No one inducted you?

Sarin: There were people pushing me. My older cousins did that. Later, when my father was too old, my older cousin was asked to be a village chief. I kept asking my older cousin to allow me to join the revolution with others. He said I could not go anywhere as I had not learnt anything yet. He asked me to write something and to read something. He said he would have let me join if I could have read it. His

words in a few lines were tough. The way we studied was very painful at the time. We studied under banyan trees, temples, houses. There was nothing to use in order to write besides wood charcoal. There was no even cement paper and we just wrote on banana leaves. Only when we wrote on boards with wood charcoals, could we see our writing clearly enough. The chinks were made from white clay found in the forests and it was molded as big as a wrist, big toe, or finger and we could use it to write when it was dry. Apparently, we were not allowed to take the boards home. They said we would erase all if we brought it home. Book was very scarce.

Rasy: So, no one pushed you to join, you just did it yourself?

Sarin: I asked them to join but my cousin did not want me to. He said I was too young to carry guns.

Rasy: Did other people who joined the revolution with you volunteer to do so?

Sarin: They all were volunteers in general. There were few involuntary ones. It was very difficult for the involuntary ones at the time as they divided into different sections at the time and thus, we had to volunteer.

Rasy: Did they set up registration schedules for villagers in the villages who volunteered to join the revolution; for example, the volunteers had to register this day and then waited for several days before other volunteers could register again?

Sarin: There were schedules. The volunteers to join the revolution at the time were strongly encouraged. During my performance, I went around launching propaganda that the volunteers to the frontlines did not have to worry that their parents at home would endure suffering as there had no ones to help them plow the fields or transplant rice. We had many people at the supporting bases waiting to provide support and their parents would not be left alone, but would have everything needed in term of livelihoods, medicines and rice transplanting. In general, my team went around launching propaganda by singing songs, while women teams volunteered to marry disabled combatants at the frontline at the time. Really, there were groups of women who volunteered to marry the disabled combatants at the time.

Rasy: Were they encouraged that much?

Sarin: Yes. There was strong encouragement. Really, there were groups of women who volunteered to marry the disabled combatants at the time.

Rasy: Really?

Sarin: Sure. The disabled people at the time did not become beggars like the ones today. They could select their wives as they wished. They could love any women anywhere. They just proposed to them and their family would agree.

Rasy: What if the women's family disagreed?

Sarin: No one disagreed because there were voluntary female combatants waiting for them. There were many voluntary women, both beautiful and ugly.

Rasy: Concerning the recruitment sites, did they recruit people only at the commune hall or anywhere else? How many times did they recruit per month?

Sarin: An office at the sector. There was no office for the liberation army. At the villages, they had their own book. The commune hall was mobile. They did not want to have a specific site as they were afraid of aerial attacks. They had only one bag. There was no commune hall. Only after the aerial attacks were over did they have commune guest houses. There had been no such a thing in the past.

Rasy: After you joined revolution immediately and they gathered 10-20 people, where did they ask you to stay?

Sarin: We stayed here. It was just here and there, no designated places. For example, they sometimes asked us to stay in this Trapeang Krapeu village and there was nothing. Having one hammock was the best. A hammock was just like a hotel. There was no hammock at the time and even blanket was scarce. Clothes were very scarce.

Rasy: In the forests?

Sarin: I was asked to stay at the commune hall when I just first joined the revolution. I was asked to be a courier after I joined the revolution at the commune hall. Let me talk about that briefly. After I finished learning military tactics, older people had already left for the battlefields. Angkar at the sector sent me back and said I had to be a courier waiting to collect food from the bases. They called it resistance-supporting rice and asked whether I understood it.

Rasy: What was that?

Sarin: The army at the time had no salary. The rice to support the resistance movement meant that one family had to set aside a can of rice when they had ten cans of rice and allocated half a can of rice. Thus, each family had to have their rice set aside.

Terith: So, if one family had ten cans of rice, they had to set aside a can of rice?

Sarin: Yes, when they cooked it.

Terith: To support the army?

Sarin: Yes, to support the army at the front lines. When I was learning performance arts, we used that word [rice to support the army] widely. Hence, there had to be a movement at home where every family had to keep small plastic bags. The village chief was the person responsible for collecting it. When it was all done, we became couriers at the logistics for the army. However, I was assigned to be responsible for the army in the eastern battlefields of Kampong Cham which included Chorvou (ជ្រូង), Tonle Bet, Khmuong (ឃ្មុំ) pagoda, Preaek Chik (ព្រែកជីក), Tuol Khsach (ទួល ខ្សាច់), Chomkar Thom (ចំការធំ) and other areas around. The sector army could request for rice while the zone army could not. They had their own codes. The sector army just sent their couriers with letters for confirmation and they would get whatever they requested such as rice, chickens or vegetables—the most common ones. I got lots of packages of rice as the campaign was conducted here in the commune. There had to be 300 packages of rice in the whole commune but it was divided according to phases in the battlefields. I was the one who stayed here to manage it and they divided the rice into villages—one day for two villages. They were not allowed to take all rice. There was too much rice to eat. There were few communes in the area so we went to Khmuong pagoda as there were many communes there. They sometimes spent one day for only one village. If possible, they could collect rice in two villages per day. After they got rice, they came to my office. I had sufficient food to eat at the time as I was responsible for rice distribution. I could choose any package with lots of meat for myself. It was fine to do so at the time as it was not strict yet. It was not the time when we had to eat collectively. Afterwards, I was assigned to be a courier to distribute letters among the bases and army from the battlefields came to request for food. I just talked about the rice for resistance movement because you did not know it and you asked me so this is my explanation. When we cooked ten cans of rice, we had to keep a handful, half a can or one can of rice every day and they would come to collect it once a week or every ten days. One village might get up to a sack of rice and then it was taken to my office. The army from battlefields would then come to request for rice. In general, rice request was the easiest while other supplies could sometimes be offered late. There was no market so we had to wait one day until we could catch chickens. It was just like this at the time.

Rasy: So, after you joined the revolution, you were not allowed to come back home, right?

Sarin: They allowed me to come back home.

- Rasy: Oh! They allowed you to come back home as well?
- Sarin: Because I was a courier.
- Rasy: A courier could come back home?
- Sarin: In short, I had certain rights at the time and it was legitimate. I was given a bicycle to distribute letters to the bases among all of the 7-8 villages within the commune. Therefore, I could stop by at my house any time I wished as it was not strict.
- Rasy: So, you became a courier immediately after you joined the revolution?
- Sarin: Yes, they asked me to be a courier immediately.
- Rasy: How did they select you to be a courier?
- Sarin: They took into account our talents. They knew that I could write and have good communications with the frontlines and supporting bases, and older people who were in touch with me. I had to inspire them by all means. In short, I was just like a master of ceremony in television.
- Rasy: But, a courier was simply a distributor of letters and not authorized to check the letters so he/she did not have to be well-educated. He/she essentially had to be trustworthy but the couriers at the time could be different from those after 1975. I am not sure. However, as far as I know, the couriers after 1975 were just responsible for distributing the letters from one place to another and not entitled to check it. Did you have rights to check the letters at the time?
- Sarin: The letters were simple at the time. We had no rights to read the letters from the commune but we could read the ones from the battlefields because those letters were nothing else besides the requests for supplies. If we had not been allowed to read the letters from the battlefields, we would not have known how much rice, chicken and vegetables they had requested.
- Rasy: So, the couriers were serving both the army and the commune?
- Sarin: Let me explain. I was so young that they did not allow me to join the fighting. As a result, the sector army transferred me to the commune so I seemed to be separated from the army but involved in work at the commune. However, the sector army had to be in touch with the courier of the commune, not the commune chief. They could not find the commune chief and no one knew where he was.
- Rasy: So, they had to see the courier first?

- Sarin: Definitely. They built a cottage with around five or six metres square and a warehouse to store food supplies in the commune. No one could find the commune hall at the time as it was covertly hidden because they were afraid of aerial attacks. If there had been aerial attacks, only the dining hall and I were destroyed. It was their plans (Laughing).
- Rasy: So you did not become a soldier and they did not ask you to the battles but then they sent you back to the commune, not your responsibility to fight?
- Sarin: I was only trained with the sector army but at the same commune because food supplies were handled by the commune. And it was not difficult at the army training centre as we could stay with the liberation army and be trained anywhere. They sent us to be trained at difficult sites.
- Rasy: No specific locations?
- Sarin: No specific locations. Where there was a hill, they asked us to be in lines (formation). The whole army unit had to be in lines.
- Rasy: Did they carry assault rifles?
- Sarin: They used wooden rifles at the time and each of us had to make one wooden rifle. The assault rifles were very limited. The army going to fight in battlefields at the time had around 7-8 assault rifles among a squad of 10 or 12 soldiers. The other three soldiers did not have rifles. The squad chief and his deputy had A-K rifles while the rest had CKC rifles.
- Rasy: Which battalion and regiment were you in?
- Sarin: I still remember it vividly. It was called New Kor-6 (គី-៦ ថ្មី) of the sector army.
- Rasy: New Kor-6?
- Sarin: Of sector 21 army. They just said so.
- Rasy: You did not know which regiment?
- Sarin: No, I did not know which regiment. It was just called New Kor-6 of the sector army. They just announced so. But I used to see; I was aware of the past. Not everyone had rifles in hands because my village was a base for shelter of the army who asked us to stay here. When they went to the battlefields, I observed that they did not have enough rifles. Some had only grenades. I was not sure about politics at the time. They called it “people’s war”. We had to go and shoot enemy and get their weapons to arm ourselves. They did politics this way. Besides these, there

were CKC rifles, M Piel models, M-36 models, which was very slow in firing each bullet. Within a platoon, there were around 30 people going to the battles in which there was only one RPG launcher or none sometimes. Lon Nol soldiers were well-armed but they could not bear it for long. There were many people but we had few rifles. Some people were very excited when they had rifles in hands on their ways to the battlefields.

Rasy: How long did you involve in the work?

Sarin: I stayed here for two years—1973-1974-1975. I was a courier for two years.

Rasy: As a courier, your role in the commune was to get the letters from...?

Sarin: From the army and the commune chief.

Rasy: From the army, the commune chief to...?

Sarin: To distribute at the bases.

Rasy: To distribute at the bases?

Sarin: Yes. In short, I was called a courier for the commune because they did not allow me to go to the battles as I was too young.

Rasy: What were the letters from commune mostly about?

Sarin: The letters from the commune at the time were mostly to invite village chiefs to join meetings at a particular place and to request for food supplies as I said earlier.

Rasy: After the fall on 17 April 1975, did you do anything else or still the same thing?

Sarin: Let me talk about it briefly. After the liberation on 17 April, people were recruited at the time to the upper echelons. They did not mention where they asked us to go. They just said that upper echelons always meant a great deal. And I noticed that, let me be brief, I pitied former Lon Nol soldiers who, after their defeat, were taken from Tonle Bet, Khmuong pagoda, Pâm (ប៉ាម) and so forth. I was asked to guard around 200 arrested soldiers. I saw them at the time; I did not march them. I arrived there and they were sent to the commune to handle. The food supplies which had been collected to support the battles were no longer sent to the battles but channeled to feed prisoners of war who were taken to Khmuong pagoda. Afterwards, we could not enquire what the upper echelons did. They just said we had to be careful not to let the prisoners of war flee. They could not run away. I used to hear those soldiers saying that they were tied to only a piece of thread but they had to take care of it. They would tell if the thread was almost broken while

they were walking because they said they would be executed if the thread was broken. They virtually used only thread and no one could flee as the lower structures in the liberated zone were extremely tight.

Rasy: You said earlier that people were selected to the upper echelons, what did that mean? Where did they need the people to?

Sarin: From the bases.

Rasy: To the upper echelons, where specifically?

Sarin: To the upper echelons. They said the Centre needed forces, following the liberation. I knew that most people no longer went to the frontlines at the time. They mostly became factory workers and worked at ports or some were in the marines at the time when I was still at school. But they mostly took people step by step. They called it a phase of former monks (Antit/អង្គិត). After the liberation in 1975, all monks throughout the country were defrocked.

Rasy: Immediately after the liberation?

Sarin: Yes. Prior to the liberation in 1975, monks had not been defrocked yet. They were still allowed to preach when it was not strict. I still remember what my chief said. He educated me and said that those soldiers would not be taken anywhere because they were waiting for orders from the Centre.

Rasy: Those prisoners of war?

Sarin: Yes. I knew that those prisoners of war were all executed later. It was said that the Centre ordered to have all Lon Nol prisoners of war throughout the country executed. I was asked to join meetings in which they said we had to smash those prisoners of war because they were afraid that those people would be integrated when the former regime came back to power.

Rasy: When did they conduct the meetings?

Sarin: The meetings were among my commune militia unit consisting of around 30 people.

Rasy: In this Moung Riev commune?

Sarin: In this Moung Riev commune.

Rasy: Immediately after the fall?

- Sarin: Yes, after 17 April. However, they just let us as guards know about that and asked us to keep it as a secret.
- Rasy: Who said that at the time?
- Sarin: He died already. His name was *Bang* (brother) Ngim (ងឹម).
- Rasy: Ngim?
- Sarin: Yes. His name was Ngim. His wife is still living.
- Rasy: What role did he have in the past?
- Sarin: He was chief of the commune militia. He was called the chief of militia. It was not simple... The upper echelons said they were waiting for orders from the Centre and I was the one to bring food for those prisoners of war.

Cassette 1, Side B

- Rasy: I would like to go on a little more?
- Sarin: Okay. I would like to continue. A moment ago, we talked about the selection of former monks. Monks were longer defrocked by 1975, following 17 April. As a result, many people, most of whom former monks, were selected at the bases and sent to upper echelons, to the Centre. There were almost 100 former monks throughout my commune because there were two pagodas—Samraong Borei (សំរោង បុរី) and Muong (មួង). Some people were afraid of the battlefields at the time so their parents encouraged them to join monkhood. That was why there were many former monks. They sent all of the former monks during that phase.
- Rasy: Sent to where?
- Sarin: Sent to the Centre. I was not sure about the locations. However, I knew later when I was a driver. I met those former monks at the port in Kampong Som and at the kerosene refinery and some were at the factories in Phnom Penh. I met them when I became a driver later. In the next phase, my turn, I asked the commune chief, *Bang* Chenda (ចិន្ដា) alias Tēk (តែក), and he allowed me to go. He said I had worked there long enough so he agreed to send me to the upper echelons.

- Rasy: I would like to go back a little. I would like to ask about the prisoners of war, Lon Nol soldiers you guarded. You said they were taken from different communes in Tboung Khmum district, right?
- Sarin: From various communes.
- Rasy: Where did the prisoners of war you guarded come from?
- Sarin: They were from Tonle Bet, the battlefields in the eastern part of Kampong Cham. They were collected from here at this pagoda. But they were taken to be reeducated later?
- Rasy: Reeducated where?
- Sarin: I was not sure. We had no rights to enquire them. First, they sent the chiefs including captains or majors. The majors were the highest ranks to be sent at the time.
- Rasy: There were majors?
- Sarin: Yes, Lon Nol majors were the highest rank among the [prisoners of war].
- Rasy: From ordinary soldiers up to majors?
- Sarin: Yes, from ordinary soldiers up to majors.
- Rasy: Was our liberation army the one who arrested them at the time?
- Sarin: Our liberation army collected them.
- Rasy: The collectors?
- Sarin: Yes, the collectors after 17 April. A leader second to Lon Nol appealed to all army throughout the country to disarm, not to have further fighting, as our country gained independence. I was not sure about the person's name. Lon Nol delegated his power to that person and it was also broadcast on radio at the time.
- Rasy: Siri Matak (ស៊ីមតាក់)?
- Sarin: Not Siri Matak. His name was Khauy (ខ្មួយ)... I am not sure. I cannot recall his name. Consequently, the army throughout the country disarmed and stopped fighting. The central part of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, was already liberated let alone our small area here. All the soldiers were traumatized and surrendered.
- Rasy: They surrendered; they were not arrested?

- Sarin: Umm! It was just like an arrest as they could not go anywhere else. Everything was set.
- Rasy: So, they were collected to a particular site?
- Sarin: Yes. They were collected to my Moug Riev commune, and my role was only to bring food for them. I stayed among other similar militia who were guarding those soldiers but they usually had meetings. But I could sit there listening when I brought food there as I was one of the militia at the time. They would be punished and no one could run anywhere.
- Rasy: How many prisoners of war were there at the time?
- Sarin: Around 100, almost 200 prisoners at the time. I guessed there were many.
- Rasy: Did they seize all of their rifles?
- Sarin: No rifles. All were confiscated.
- Rasy: What about their uniforms?
- Sarin: They still wore their army uniforms.
- Rasy: Their Lon Nol army uniforms?
- Sarin: But those soldiers asked to have their uniforms changed to black and white clothes with the people who visited them and with the guarding militia but no one agreed to change. Thus, they were still in their army uniforms.
- Rasy: So they detained those soldiers in your commune and you were guarding them as well. How long were the soldiers kept before being sent out?
- Sarin: It was between one and two months because I stayed here during 17 April, May and June. They were sent to be reeducated around early or mid-June. They said it was reeducation at the time.
- Rasy: Before they sent those prisoners of war, did they hold a meeting to inform you?
- Sarin: They just said—I heard *Bang* Ngim said—that it was decided by the upper Angkar, the Centre.
- Rasy: It was Ngim who said that?
- Sarin: Yes. He said during a meeting and the statement was covertly made. I was close to him as a courier. He let me know all kinds of problems. He (Ngim) was open to me. He said the orders were from the Centre. All those soldiers would be

executed. They all would be smashed because it was afraid that they could later be reintegrated with their chiefs when our country was in chaos so they just smashed those soldiers.

Rasy: Ngim said so during a meeting with you and others. He referred to all those soldiers, prisoners of war?

Sarin: Yes. He added that the army throughout the country would face the same fates because he went to join a meeting with the upper echelons. I was not sure whom he met as I did not ask him much further.

Rasy: Did you know who ordered him to say so?

Sarin: He just said the upper echelons. We were not expected to be that inquisitive at the time because he was our chief. We could not ask him who ordered to have those soldiers executed or we could be executed too.

Rasy: How many days after he said so in the meeting did they send those prisoners of war out?

Sarin: Just only three days after the meetings did they start to send the chiefs including lieutenants, captains and majors first by two horse carts.

Rasy: Who asked to have them sent?

Sarin: I was not sure as I went for food. I just knew that the chiefs were sent to be reeducated first and followed by all the ordinary soldiers. I was later transferred to a courier site. They were usually sent out at night. I was not sure where they were sent to but I knew that it was ordered by the upper echelons and that the army throughout the country was just smashed similarly.

Rasy: He said so?

Sarin: Yes. Because, in term of obedience of disciplines, morality and assignments, the upper echelons were highly respected at the time. Whatever the upper echelons demanded, it had to be followed. We could not violate organizational disciplines. I just briefed it based on what I knew and saw. After the liberation, it was my turn. I left my commune and I went to study at S-200 school around July. They sent me from the commune to district, from district to sector and then to the upper echelons. They said they sent me to upper echelons but when I arrived at the district, I saw one office in Suong. I joined around 50 other people and we all were sent to the sector. When I was at the sector, the area was located north of Kandaol Chrum (កណ្តាលជ្រំ). It was called Ândaot (អណ្តាត). The sector

headquarters was located in the forests. Upon my arrival at the sector, there were many people, approximately 3-C (៣-គ), around 1000 people throughout the Sector 21. At least 500 people went to study at the zone at the time.

Terith: Three “C”? I would like to know about the 3-C you just said. What does each C mean?

Sarin: I wanted to say that the army was divided into A (ក), B (ខ), C (គ), D (ឃ) and E (ង) at the time. “A” meant a squad, while “B” meant a platoon consisting of 30 members. “C” meant a company consisting of 120 members and it was just full with 120 members. It was not called a “C” if there were only 30, 70 or 80 members. “D” meant a “*Vorak*” while “E” meant a brigade. Three made up one consecutively. Three “A” made up one “B”; three “B” made up one “C”; three “C” combined together was called a *Vorak* in the army at the time and they just used the shortcuts. They did not use regiment, battalion like we do today. It was the revolutionary words used at the time, which were different from our words now.

Terith: I see. Could you talk more about the time when you were at the sector?

Sarin: Okay. We did not learn anything upon our arrival at the sector. We spent two nights there. It was long until people could arrive from different districts around the Sector 21 including Chhloung, Memot, Ta Moung, Krouch Chhmar, Peam Chileang, Tboung Khmum, Dambae and many other districts within the sector. We then walked backwards from there. They wasted time asking the army to walk backwards across our national road No. 7 to Prey Veng province towards the zone in order to study at the zone training school called S-200. It was located in Svay Romiet pagoda in Sithor Kandal district, Prey Veng province within the East Zone as well. It was in sector 22. I was only 20 years old at the time so I was not exactly sure about that. I just knew it was located in Svay Romiet. My study there was around 15 days.

Rasy: In what month and year?

Sarin: It was in July.

Rasy: July 1975?

Sarin: Yes, 15 days. There was so much demand at the battles and upper echelons that they did not tell us that we were going to the battles or factories. They always kept it covertly and just said we were sent to the upper echelons, the Centre. Some

people said they sent us to the marines and that they selected the ones good at swimming for the marines. Some said I would be in Phnom Penh while some others said I would be a worker. We had no idea and just knew we were sent to the Centre. When I was studying at the S-200 training school, my life was very tough. We did not have sufficient food and had only six cans of rice for 12 of us. We lacked all kinds of supplies, even fire woods, there. The fire woods were at the top of palm trees. There was almost nothing to eat at the time. We had only salt and fermented fish paste and we had to find fish, crabs and snails in the fields. We struggled to study and we were not sure whether they wanted us to endure such a situation or just starved us.

Rasy: What kind of school was that training school 200?

Sarin: S-200 training school was a school for militia of the East Zone where soldiers were trained. In the past, ones had to learn military tactics until their knees hurt before they were allowed to the battles. However, the schools at the time had only names whereas their locations could be changed from one place to another.

Rasy: But, it was still at the same S-200 training school?

Sarin: Yes. The name remained S-200 training school.

Rasy: What did S-200 stand for?

Sarin: I was not sure as it had been named in the past. I just knew that the S-200 training school was a school for the militia of the East Zone.

Rasy: Did you know what 200 stood for?

Sarin: I am not sure. As far as I know, it had its own past.

Rasy: Who established the school?

Sarin: It belonged to the zone. It was established by the zone. The structures were set by the Centre, from the bottom to the top. We did not know and we did not ask about that. We just knew it was the name and they called it so we just followed them.

Rasy: Did they just establish such a school after 1975?

Sarin: As I knew from older people who were within the performance arts team with me, the S-200 training school was established since Lon Nol regime because they used to study there as well. Soldiers were asked to be trained there before they went to the battles. The S-200 training school, and their whole structures, were divided into many locations and sections.

- Rasy: So, the school was established for the militia and to train soldiers in military tactics?
- Sarin: Yes.
- Rasy: I would like to interrupt you briefly. Who was the school master at the time?
- Sarin: Umm! I still clearly remember. His name was VUNG Tèm (វង់ តែម) and he wore glasses. During the training, trainers did not introduce their names but I knew it from older people who were chiefs of my “C”. They discussed among themselves and I could hear it. His name was Tèm and another one was Tay (តាយ) at the sector.
- Rasy: What was his position?
- Sarin: His position was very high. He was a chief of division and he used a Jeep. They had their ranks at the time. Only very high-ranking persons could drive a Jeep. He was with another old person, whose name cannot be recalled, from the sector. The training was around 15 days. They later sent all of us to the Centre and we had to walk at night. They did not allow us to walk in the day time, only at night. We walked from Svay Romiet to sleep in a pagoda called ROUNG DOMREI (រោងដំរី) within Prey Veng provincial town. Many people, between 3,000 and 4,000, in my generation were trained at the school at the time. They were from all the five sectors within the East Zone including sector 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24. However, they asked us to walk part by part. There were so many people while we were being trained that the whole pagoda compound was full. We could hardly find places to sit. When being trained at the S-200 training school, we were sitting under mango trees, not schools equipped with air-conditioners. The school was under mango trees.
- Terith: Was your study at the time only related to politics, not military tactics as in the past?
- Sarin: Yes, we studied only politics. Talking about politics, I would like to go back a little. When I was being trained in military tactics at the sector army [headquarters], the study sessions were related to politics as well. They talked about dialectical materialism at the time. Have you ever heard that?
- Terith: What does it mean?

Sarin: Dialectical materialism meant everything was interconnected. Things kept evolving. They meant that the development was non-stop. That was what they referred to when they mentioned dialectical materialism. Concerning the documents, we had to divide it into phases when we developed the Revolutionary Front. They also used the words when we were trained at the S-200 training school at the sector. The trainers in political sessions at our sector training school also talked about the establishment of Revolutionary Front and National Revolution. The Revolutionary Front was established since a political resistance period. We did not talk about the period before 1970. In late 1972, early 1973 and after 1973, they called the period a National Revolution. The National Revolution was established as lower-class cooperatives. That was what they meant. The lower-class cooperatives had yet to have food collectively but we worked and helped each other in order to strengthen the frontlines. That was why they established the lower-class cooperatives. When I stayed at the commune and sector army base, they called the sector army base a training school, a political school but it was located within the commune.

Terith: When you arrived at the S-200 centre, your training base, what did they discuss concerning politics?

Sarin: Politics. I could remember some. The National Revolution establishment was not different from the theories. Let me go back a little bit. The establishment of the National Revolution was to make the frontlines afraid. As the national revolution was established, there were solidarity groups. They called it solidarity groups later. But at the time, it was called pool workers who helped solve problems each other—from the rich to the poor; from the poor to those with no cows and buffaloes and from those whose children went to the frontlines. We had to help each other in order that they did not face difficulty transplanting their rice. They set up pool workers as lower-class cooperatives. As I remember it was established in different stages of years.

Now I talk about my ways towards the Centre. I just talked about the time when I was in Prey Veng province. Upon our arrival in Prey Veng province, we slept there. They asked us to continue our journey at night and we spent two nights sleeping at Peam Anam (ព្រៃម្រាម). We then left Peam Anam and slept at Dei Edth and then at locations around a plywood factory. We just slept everywhere at nightfall and could not go anywhere as base villages were around. It was quite hard to walk as there were many people and they only allowed us to walk at night, not in day time. I did not know their reasons. They were perhaps, on one hand, afraid we ran back and they might, on the other hand, want to train us to endure such a tough situation at the time. They sometimes asked us to walk in the rain

and to rest when the rain stopped. As we were walking, there were lightings and lightning strikes. It was slippery. We were wet and had no blankets to cover. There was no raincoat as we were extremely poor at the time. They did that because they probably wanted to temper us. Upon our arrival at Dei Edth, we slept at Chbar Ampov. As we arrived at Chbar Ampov, they asked us to walk in two lines as they were many of us. Leaving Chbar Ampov, I felt happy somehow as I never saw the city. I wondered even when I saw at Independence Monument. We heard the persons leading us ahead said it was the Independence Monument so we just spread the words among ourselves. I just wondered that the Independence Monument was much smaller than the picture I saw in the book (Laughing). I walked past by the Royal Palace but I did not know it was the Royal Palace. That location was later called K-7 courier centre but I did not know what it was called at the time. The location where forces were assigned was located in front of the Royal Palace and it was called K-7 courier centre of Office 870. Afterwards, I knew that place which was located on the left hand side of the Royal Palace. The compound stretched up to front of Unalaom (ឧណ្ណាលោម) pagoda. Apart from these, another queue was full of business centres along the zone at the time. Upon our arrival there, our army was divided into two queues and there were people waiting to select us. I saw *Ta Phum* (តាភូម) who had been my teacher at K-15 school and two other comrades named *Ta Prum* (តាព្រូម) and *Ta Ky* (តាកី) whom I knew afterwards. They were standing and waiting to select us. Once in a while, they pulled someone's hands and beckoned another. My life and lives of all those combatants who went from the zone at the time was just like water hyacinth floating in the middle of the river. The ones with good fortunes could be sent to good places, while those with bad fortunes were sent to bad places. Then, it was my turn. Someone pulled my hands and asked me if I could drive. I said I could not drive and then he, *Ta Phum*, asked me if I could ride a cow cart. I said I could so he kept me at a particular place. Only around 300 people were selected from the lines of thousands of people. The rest would just keep walking without knowing where they were heading to. They were just like the water hyacinth floating in the river as I said. I recalled the high-tide seasons each year when I could see water hyacinth floating in the river and it was just like my life at the time. I was allowed to stay there for two days but they did not give us rice to eat and we ate bread instead. Just having bread to eat, I felt very happy because I had almost nothing to eat long time ago (Laughing). They had us eat bread and they said that we were connected with cooperatives because there was a great deal of flour in the city. We kept rice to support rural people so we just ate

bread. There was no curry, bread with pâté, *prâhe* soup (សម្លប្រហើរ) or other kinds of soup. We just made something we could eat. Angkar there gave us one certificate, one blanket and one machete. We did not go anywhere yet as they did not ask us to. Angkar asked us to travel across the river in front of the Royal Palace to Kbal Chrouy (ក្បាលច្រូយ) where we had to cut reeds and grow vegetables such as eggplants, tomatoes ...etc. We were given the seeds of eggplants, tomatoes, pumpkins ...etc. However, I cut a lot of reeds. People working there came from different zones. Some people were from the West Zone, while some were from the North Zone. Our arrival there was just like our arrival at the Centre. Some people were from Preah Vihea sector. We just asked each other as we were mixed up. No one volunteered. We could go wherever we wanted; these comrades were in this group, while those comrades were in that group. When we met, we just asked each other. We just got to know each other. Some people were from Siem Reap and could not speak with common accent. I never heard the accents of those from Siem Reap so I felt somehow surprised when they spoke. I tried very hard to clear the forests and till the soil. There was no tractor and cattle to plough the fields and we just used hoes and machetes. Some people had hoes and some had machetes. We were given only blades and we had to look for something to make its handles. We slept under a rose apple tree. Concerning our food, we were no longer allowed to eat as much as we wished. Each of us was given only half bread. It was very arduous. They made us endure and struggle the tough situation there. Luckily, the rose apple tree under which we slept grew quite fast and bore fruits so after hard work; we could pick up some rose apples to eat in addition to the bread given. We made water spinach soup, using the water spinach we picked up along the river bank near the marines' base as we were not allowed to go far. We went around picking up some fruits nearby such as milk fruits.

Rasy: On your way from Prey Veng province to Phnom Penh, what did you see along the roads? When you arrived in Phnom Penh after you crossed Chbar Ampov Bridge, what did you see in Phnom Penh? Did you see people living there? Another question: What did you see Khmer Rouge soldiers were doing in Phnom Penh? Umm! In short, what was Phnom Penh like at the time? Whether it was quiet, crowded or people had been transferred or ministries and offices were closed. Could you describe what you saw in order? Another question concerns the time when you were selected by Angkar to work in Phnom Penh including the time when you travelled across the river in front of the Royal Palace in order to work there.

Sarin: Well, I ...

- Rasy: When you were working there, what centre were you in? Who was the person in charge? What role did he/she have? And I would like to know the roles of *Ta Phum*, *Ta Prum*, and *Ta Ky*.
- Sarin: Okay. I knew that *Ta Ky* worked at K-7 at the time. In fact, I knew that it was K-7 afterwards. He worked at that K-7 courier centre. It was called courier centre responsible for the management of general divisions of forces around the Centre. Everyone coming from any zones had to stay at that courier center where they would be assigned. Afterwards, the core part of Office 870 was that courier office in front of the Royal Palace where assignments were designated.
- Rasy: So, Office K-7 was courier office?
- Sarin: Yes, it was. I later worked there and knew that courier office because I often drove there.
- Rasy: So, when you were there initially, you were not at Office K-7?
- Sarin: It was under that K-7 management but we were divided. There were up to 300 people who had been selected out of a few thousands. Furthermore, there were people coming from various zones. It was very crowded as there were thousands of people from the North Zone, 103, Preah Vihear ...etc.
- Rasy: All directions came to Phnom Penh?
- Sarin: Yes. They came to Phnom Penh to work.
- Rasy: Did you think it was planned? Umm! Did other people want to come to Phnom Penh themselves?
- Sarin: No. It was planned by the upper echelons who asked people from lower echelons to come to work. They did not just select former monks randomly. They targeted specific groups of people. They considered former monks a pretty bourgeoisie of monks. As a result, they were not brought to work with my groups. In my generation, combatants and comrades or combatants around the Centre and within sector, district and commune structures were well selected and had no weak people. In brief, while they were selecting people, they tried to look for the ones who joined the revolution before 17 April to be brought to the place where they selected me and pulled my hand. They wanted to get only people who joined the revolution before 17 April, not the ones after 17 April, according to what my chief, *Ta Phum*, said. It was what they announced through microphones and they asked people who joined the revolution before 17 April to raise their hands. However, all of thousands of people who went there with me had joined the revolution before 17 April, including the ones from the zones.

You wanted to ask me about the views I saw on my way to Phnom Penh. It was very quiet along the roads. There were no people living there from national road No. 1, Neak Loung (អ្នកល្បឿង), and coconut trees, palm trees and mango trees were burnt down by wars. Houses were burnt down but I saw a few flats left in Korki (គីគីវ). The plywood factory was also burnt down. I could still see that it was set on fire lately. I saw it in the early morning when I woke up as they asked us to walk at night. It was very quiet when I arrived at Chbar Ampov. They asked us to stay at houses and there were soldiers around. They did not allow us to stay at houses in good conditions but they had us stay at wooden houses along Boeung Snor (បឹងស្មៅ). We were divided into separate groups but it was very quiet as there were no people living there. In early morning, they asked us to march into Phnom Penh through Chbar Ampov, Monivong Bridge, and turned right towards Chamkar Mon. I did not know Chamkar Mon at the time and I only knew it later. It was also quiet at Kbal Thnal (ក្បាលថ្នល់) and there were no people going around. There were only several soldiers staying at various houses. It seemed like they had their compounds and blocs. From Chbar Ampov downwards, there were soldiers sitting in the houses and watching us march. They saw many of us marching. However, I later knew that the soldiers who stayed at the houses from Chbar Ampov to the Royal Palace were eastern soldiers because I was working very hard to grow crops there for around half a month. I tried very hard because the ones who were sent to select us looked for only industrious people. The ones who came by machined boats went around selecting people and they asked who were working industriously. I was growing eggplant seedlings at the time. They did not choose the ones who were chatting and they chose only the ones who were working hard. Someone touched me and asked when I had joined the revolution, before or after 17 April. I said I had joined it before 17 April. Then, they just asked me to prepare my clothes and went to a jetty where the machined boats were docked. I was the only person chosen within my group, though, and the recruiters went to different places. I kept wondering that we just arrived a few days ago and they separated us again. We just knew each other and I was not sure where I was going to. However, I did not say the word “*Anh*” (អញ) (A Khmer word means “I” but is commonly used in spoken language with younger persons and it sounds impolite.) and just used “*Khnhum*” (ខ្ញុំ) (A Khmer word means “I” and it sounds polite.) at the time, saying I was not sure where Angkar asked me to go. In total, around 40 people from different zones mixing up together went to a jetty of the machined boats. After I arrived at the jetty of the machined boats, they

had me do nothing else besides growing crops in front of Chamkar Mon in order to support K-12 centre. I stayed at the K-12 centre since I left Kbal Chroy. However, they did not announce that they allowed us to stay there. I knew it later on my own. They kept it as a secret. After I stayed there growing crops for around half a month and the crops did not grow well yet, they started to select only around six industrious and active people among the 40. They asked the selected ones to gather cars which had been left behind by people in Phnom Penh along the roads towards Kaoh Thum district, Kien Svay district and along the roads to Neak Loung. The cars had been left there because it ran out of gasoline, and some were used as toilets by villagers. Car wheels were put in the cars in good conditions so that it could be pulled forwards. The car collection lasted around three months in Koah Thum and Kien Svay districts. We later went to collect it in Kampong Speu and along roads to Preaek Kdam. Most of the cars in good conditions such as the ones used by sector or Kampong Speu authorities were collected and set aside. We could handle it efficiently because some car engines still worked so we could just drive it and did not have to pull it. The cars in good conditions, some of which still worked, were set aside in one phase while in another phase; we had to walk around dismantling parts of the car engines and the parts underneath it. We divided tasks among ourselves. There were many people, around 50 or 60, in this phase who were divided into smaller groups. They said we had to collect the spare parts and stored it in a warehouse at Kbal Thnal, a former Lon Nol army training school which was located around 100-200 metres down from Kbal Thnal to the left if we walked from the Independence Monument. The warehouse was full of cars. There was one more warehouse behind Chamkar Mon and another one, Lon Nol bodyguard barracks, next to Chamkar Mon on the left, behind Ministry of Agriculture was also full. Warehouse No. 4 and warehouse No. 5 were next to the American Embassy. The warehouse No. 5 was full of cars. I was there collecting cars for around three months. Afterwards, there was a political lesson taught at K-15 school, a former Soviet technical school located in Tuol Kouk railway station on the way to Pochentong and I was sent to study there as well. However, I studied with a senior teacher. I later saw him in a photograph with Samdech Ta [Sihanouk] at the Documentation Center. I could still recognize his face very well. I knew him at the time because he showed that photo to students and intellectuals from abroad such as France and Soviet, who later came to study with me. He showed them the photo and said it was his photo in the resistance movement with Samdech [Sihanouk] and requested that those people be loyal to our Party, saying our Party did not do anything and would delegate tasks to those people based on their respective roles and positions. It was my turn at the time and I was sent to learn politics. They said I did not have any important role yet as I was just a team

leader. I was then sent to study there where I met with those students from abroad. The Soviet technical school was full of students. I was not sure what it was called but before it was called Soviet technical school.

Rasy: University?

Sarin: Yes, university at the time.

Rasy: University of Phnom Penh?

Sarin: Yes, Phnom Penh. The University of Phnom Penh was full of students from abroad who were asked to study there. However, the study at the time was only for our groups, while in their groups, they selected only leaders. He showed the photo to several students only at the time and only group leaders were called to join the meetings and they said that we, all friends, had to be loyal. The ones from abroad had to present their backgrounds, their expertise and knowledge, and whether or not, some of their relatives stayed within the enemy zones and areas under Lon Nol controls. They demanded that all of those people be loyal. He said that the Party allowed him to teach all of the students and delegate tasks to them because he was loyal. The students just responded by saying "Yes". I could recall after I saw this photo and I still remember until now. The photo in this magazine had no name of the person in the center.

Rasy: Could not recognize?

Sarin: No, I could not recognize. He could be named *Um* (uncle) later. I did not know his original name and was not sure who he was. After the study about political sessions was completed, we learnt about the phases of socialist revolution.

Terith: We already discussed extensively yesterday so I want to continue my interview with you further today. Today is 6 May 2009 and this interview is being done by me, Chy Terith, and Mr. Pheng Pong Rasy. I want to continue by asking you to continue from your description yesterday that you worked in a unit....

Sarin: At a political school.

Terith: The place where you collected cars?

Sarin: Center.

Terith: So, it was K-12 center?

Sarin: Yes. It was around January or February that I went to join political sessions at K-15 school.

- Terith: Okay. Prior to that political sessions, I want to ask you about the time when you were collecting cars, after you finished the collection, when was it at the time? Which center was it in and where was it located?
- Sarin: Well, I came to stay at K-12 center with a unit called Party Center's Foreign Unit, 870. It had direct controls, with its headquarters located at the current Ministry of Tourism. It was the headquarters of that K-12 center where there were modern big and small cars for senior party leaders and leaders of sectors and zones throughout the country and leaders of ministries around the party center and all foreign delegations and embassies in Democratic Kampuchea at the time. I tried very hard to drive carefully and handle car technical stuffs attentively in order to avoid all sorts of blunders. After car collection came to an end, there were additional car-driving lessons by teachers from Germany, whose name was Han (ហាន) at the time. He was a car engineer from Germany who came to train in both mechanical technical stuffs and driving techniques at the foreign unit. Afterwards in May, Mr. Miel (មឿល), chief of K-12 center, assigned me to be a resident driver at the Embassy of Korea, to work within a technical section of a hydro power plant at Kirirom, Stung Chral. I would like to clarify that Kimmel Fan (កុំមឺលហ្វាន) was the head of diplomatic mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to Democratic Kampuchea since 1975. The Cambodian counterpart with whom I stayed was *Bang Ting Sien* (ឌីង តឿន) who was a chief of all technical sections of DPRK based in Cambodia. He was in charge of technical sections whose headquarters was under the auspices of B-1 Center of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The DPRK's technical sections were located within the current Rubber Plantations Department, next to Ang Duong Hospital to the north. *Bang Ting Sien* was an elder brother of His Excellency Ting Kar (ឌីង កា) who was a former Phnom Penh governor and is currently a senator of the Kingdom of Cambodia. I worked there until October 1976 and then Mr. Miel assigned me to be a resident based at K-12 center due to high demands of many local and foreign guests who came to visit our Democratic Kampuchea. On 1 November, I hosted guests from all of the six zones, two autonomous sectors and ministries and offices around the Center, who just finished their political studies at Borei Keila K-6 school, a political school of the Party Centre. There were hundreds of trainees with the ranks not lower than commune chief invited to visit and learn from each other, from one zone to another. *Ta Phum* who was a delegations leader stated that we had to follow the examples set by three districts in our country namely: First: Prasoutr district located within the East Zone and currently within Svay

Rieng province; Second: Kampong Tralach Leu district located within the West Zone; and Third: Tram Kak district located within the Southwest Zone and currently within Takeo province, which was initially a poor district but our people were currently able to produce rice sufficiently as planned as well as other sectors. The visit lasted 15 days and was concluded on 18 November 1976. I would like to make it clear concerning the comrades who came to join study sessions at K-6 center in November 1976. I noticed that *Um* (uncle) Pol Pot was one of the trainers at the time. However, I just saw *Bang* Chan, who was a driver for Pol Pot, parking his car outside and I met him there while I was transporting school materials and therefore I concluded that *Um* Pol Pot came to teach there as well. But, I did not ask many questions at the time because it was their political sessions. We were not supposed to be inquisitive and were expected to know only what we were handling. That is what I want to make clear. And it was a special session in which senior comrades from all communes throughout the country joined. After they completed the sessions, they visited all of the zones including the East Zone, as I mentioned earlier.

Cassette 2

Sarin: From the East Zone, the Central Zone and the North Zone. It was called North Zone at the time. Yes! They visited rubber plantations in the East Zone, from Svay up to Chub and then crossed Tonle Bet towards the North Zone. I was the person who accompanied our Cambodian delegations at the time during their visits. We then went to visit Chamkar Andoung and left there for Six January Dam, Stung Chinit and rice fields in Kampong Thom province. Afterwards, we spent one night sleeping in Kampong Thom and continued our visit the next day to a dam, whose name I was not sure about, behind Stoung district. We later arrived at Siem Reap Angkor compounds, which were called Siem Reap-Ourdor Meanchey Sector at the time. Upon our arrival at the Siem Reap-Ourdor Meanchey Sector, we visited all temples including Bayon, Banteay Srei, Angkor, Baray Tek Thla, and a dam on Angkor. We also visited afforestation at Angkor Wat areas at the time. Afterwards, we left Siem Reap for the Northwest Zone within sector 5 in Thma Puok district in order to visit a tremendous Thma Puok Dam where rice production was very good with great landscape. It was very advanced in that Northwest Zone. We also visited silk weaving handicrafts in the sector. We later left there for Sisophon where we spent a night. Afterwards, we visited Me Chbar (មេច្រវែង) Rice Center, a Chinese technical center, where rice breeding was carried out and scientific rice-growing methods were taught. We left there for Thma Koul district and destined for Bavel district in order to visit Bavel Dam. We later went back to Battambang city towards Yeay Chab (យាយចាប)

Mountain, which was a resistance area during a political resistance regime, in order to visit Yeay Chab Mountain. It was named Yeay Chab Mountain and there was red gravel with attractive landscape and coffee plantations. We later went to visit Trapeang Thma Dam, which had been just established at the time by the people. They dug and carried soil and built embankments from one side of the mountain foot to the other. As far as I still remember, *Ta Ros Nhim* was the representative of the Northwest Zone who led and accompanied our delegations. He and I had food together. He (Chief of the Northwest Zone) was a popular and simple person. I am sorry it was not called Trapeang Thma Dam. It was actually a Kamping Poy (កំពង់ព្រៃ) Dam. I am sorry that I said Trapeang Thma earlier. It was actually called Kamping Poy Dam. Trapeang Thma was the first one located in Thma Puok district. It was called Kamping Poy Dam. It was covered with forests at the time. There was no dam yet. I guess there were tens of thousands of people, all of whom in mobile units, coming here to carry soil and the place was darkened by people. The dam was built by the people directly and there was no any machine. It did not become a dam yet and it was full of forests. They just designed it and pointed out that people had to build the embankments from this mountain to that mountain and reserved the central part for the reservoir constructions in order to irrigate rice fields in the downwards areas of Battambang. After visiting this dam, we went to visit another dam along Sangkae stream. The dam had been built since Sangkum Reastr Niyum regime. We then visited one more dam located to the east of Battambang. I was not sure whether it was located in sector 4 or sector 3, just east of Battambang. It was also as large as Kamping Poy Dam and Trapeang Thma Dam in Thma Puok district. We later visited rice fields full of ripe rice plants everywhere during November. The landscape of our country was great in that month. It was great everywhere. Afterwards, we went to Pursat province. Upon our arrival at Boeng Khnar, we turned right. The guide told us that we would arrive at the 17 April canal. They built the embankments to connect Moung (ម្លូង) stream with Pursat stream. I was a driver for the visitors. I still remember that it was near Ta Lou (តាលូ) village through Rumlech (រូមឡេច) village and Damnak Run (ដំណាក់រុន) village and then to the canal. It was a big water dam at the time. They built embankments to store water in the stream in order to irrigate the rice fields. It was called the 17 April canal. After visiting the canal, we went back to Pursat provincial town. The delegations travelled by trains after they left Pursat provincial town. Though they boarded the trains, the convoys had to go to pick them up at Romeas Station. It was called Romeas Station located in Kampong Chhnang. The convoys were

waiting to pick them up to visit Phnum Kroam (ភ្នំក្រោម), in Kampong Chhnang sector. After we left Phnum Kroam, we went backwards to Phnom Penh, crossing some parts of the West Zone at Odongk, and saw dry season rice fields in sector 32. We past but did not stop in Phnom Penh and went to Takeo in the Southwest Zone in order to continue our visits. There were fewer dams in the Southwest Zone than in Northwest Zone. We visited rice fields in rural areas within districts and sectors close to Vietnamese borders. I still remember that I went to have food in Kampong Ampil and we continued our journey in Chhuk district up to Krong Kep. All of the delegations enjoyed and relaxed at sea there. After we left Kep, we went to Srae Ambel to observe the progress of salt fields and how they were made. Some members of the delegations had never known salt fields. We stayed far away from the sea. The ones living at the sea came to seethose living in the forests, while the ones staying in the forests came to meet those living at the sea, which was just an incentive for them to work hard. Next, we went to Kampot. After leaving Kampot, we did not stop at many places at the time because there were a few rice fields but many mountains. We went to Veal Renh (វាលរេង) and then to visit the Port of Kampong Som. After seeing the progress of Kampong Som Port, we went to visit a kerosene refinery and an army port in Ream. We also went to see ship reparations and warships in order to know the number of ships our country had. There were many ships left since Lon Nol regime and some were given by People's Republic of China. The delegations then went to visit our Cambodian beach and an island located far from shore to the west of Kampong Som. It was called Koh Puos Island.

Rasy: Was Koh Puos Island close?

Sarin: No, it was far away.

Rasy: Poulowai (ប៉ូឡូវ៉ៃ)?

Sarin: It was not that far. I forgot the name of that island. We went to visit there. We just travelled around enjoying the sea. Afterwards, the delegations were seasick and vomited badly. Next, we went to visit the kerosene refinery and returned to the West Zone quickly through national road No. 4. Upon our arrival in the West Zone, we went to visit Roleang Chrey Dam (ទំប៉ុនលាំងជ្រៃ) located within the West Zone through Chbar Mon (ច្រវាងមន) roads at the time. Afterwards, we returned to Phnom Penh and the visit among leaders, Sangkat chiefs—they were not called

commune chiefs at the time—and leaders of zones and offices around the Center was concluded.

Terith: You talked about political sessions a moment ago and comrades were accompanied for the visits. I would like to know the whole number of people. How many people were there travelling by trucks?

Sarin: I guess there were between 50 and 60 trucks. However, there were no tourist vans at the time, only GMC trucks, Chinese military trucks and Chinese A4 Jeeps.

Rasy: All of them were big trucks?

Sarin: All of them were trucks during the visits. My office chief *Bang Vuy* (វ៉ាង) —and *Bang Mielasked* all comrades to find mattresses to put on rear parts of the trucks and organized it neatly. Guests on the trucks could sit with their legs bent or crossed. One truck was for a group of 12 people and we had up to 50 trucks. Therefore, there were many people at the time. There were at least 500 people because I could still remember vividly that there were 50 trucks and we lacked around 10 more trucks. We requested for trucks from Land Transportation Unit. The Land Transportation Unit at the time offered us Chinese A4 Jeeps equipped with mattresses. However, they could not arrive on time so we just put hay under mats and tried to find some mattresses so that it would not be bumpy for the delegations as it was trucks.

Terith: How long were the visits and training as it seemed like a very long journey?

Sarin: Usually, the training was for 15 days. I heard older people said that I was not entitled to join that kind of political training due to my limited capacity because I had a low rank at the time. They said after the 15-day training, there would be another 15-day visit. The political sessions were completed on the 30th. It was around one month and three days because the visits were for 18 days. It was initially scheduled for half a month but the visits were very far away. The leader of delegations was *Ta Phum* and as I said earlier, all comrades had to follow the examples set by three districts including Prasoutr, Kampong Tralach Leu and Tram Kak districts. They were modeled districts. People could not grow rice in those districts in the past but it is possible now. Thus, the villagers who could grow rice well as usual were not admired. The districts would now be the leading ones who received great incentives from Communist Party of Kampuchea.

Terith: I would just like to clarify again. So, the trainings and visits lasted one month and a few days?

Sarin: Yes, it was around one month and three days.

Terith: During the whole visits, did you know any senior leaders of Democratic Kampuchea who were the trainers or joined the visits?

Sarin: As I mentioned earlier, I saw *Bang Chan* who was a driver for Pol Pot during the training. I was transporting some facilities and food supplies to that training school upon its request. When it was completed, I did not see Pol Pot, Khieu Samphan or Nuon Chea there. I saw only *Ta Phum*. I recognized him as he used to train me at K-15 school. He was also a political trainer. He accompanied the delegations who would be welcomed by the delegations of each zone. When we arrived at the East Zone, the East Zone delegations came to welcome us. Upon our arrival at Chub, we met *Ta Sao Phim* who was greeting the delegations there and accompanied them to Chanh Chem (ច្រើន្រ្តីម) commune, cooperative in Sralab village and to observe progress in rubber plantations. Upon our arrival in the Central Zone, Ke Pot (កែ ពត) came to welcome the delegations and accompanied them to his zone. The delegations were welcomed by *Ta Ros Nhim* and *Ta Mok* when they arrived in Ourdor Meanchey within the Northwest and Southwest Zone, respectively. They were welcomed by *TaKren* (តាក្រែន), chief of the Kampong Som Port, when they arrived in Kampong Som. I want to make it clear.

Terith: Let me go back. You said you guessed that Pol Pot was also one of the trainers in the political sessions because you saw his driver but you did not see Pol Pot directly, right?

Sarin: No, I did not see him but I believed that *Um Pot* would be there as well because *Bang Chan* was there. There were few cars going around and *Um Pol Pot*, *Um Nuon Chea*, *Um Khieu Samphan* and *Um Ieng Sary* drove only blue Jeep and auto rickshaws whose roofs were made from fabrics. Some people knew those people while some did not. The ones who never knew them would not recognize who those people werethough they crashed into them. I would like to make it clear that they drove Mercedes which were kept at my unit only when they were welcoming important delegations.

Terith: Did you join the political sessions at the political school you mentioned earlier?

Sarin: I did not attend the sessions. However, I enrolled at the school one year later and it was trained by Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan.

Terith: Concerning the training sessions that you did not attend and it included many visits, when was it conducted?

Sarin: It was around 1 November.

- Terith: Started?
- Sarin: Yes, it was started in 1976.
- Terith: So, it was around early November 1976?
- Sarin: Yes.
- Terith: You were not allowed to attend the sessions, what was your rank at the time?
- Sarin: I was just a team leader at the time. A driver team leader was responsible for only 10 members and I was not yet part of the so-called Angkar. I was just one of the progressive masses and had no role to take part in such training. Only one year later after I joined a so-called core team, could I be able to join the training. I was sent to study with many comrades from districts throughout the country and offices and ministries around the Center. I want to make it clear.
- Terith: So, how was the political training conducted? Was it conducted every year?
- Sarin: As far as I still remember, the training was usually conducted in November every year. For example, the training sessions that I joined started around November, December, January or February. However, it was conducted at K-15 school at the time and *Ta Phum* was my trainer, who led delegations of older people from different communes. I could recognize him clearly. He was popular but I could not remember his original name. He was bilingual, based on my training experience with him, and could almost speak better than *Um Khieu Samphan*. However, *Um Nuon Chea* was the most eloquent.
- Terith: When you were accompanying hundreds of delegations by around 50 or 60 trucks in order to visit sectors and zones where it was considered developed areas, did you notice any remarkable things such as starvation or other interesting activities along the roads?
- Sarin: Well, they took us to developed areas at the time and we could not invade the bases in villages where starvation could take place as we wished because they had their plans to take us to visit the most developed areas in order that we could see and learn from it. However, I could know that there would definitely be shortages because when Angkar assigned me to go somewhere alone by car, I stopped along the roads and people frequently came to ask me for food. No rice was sold at the time so when going somewhere; we had our rice packaged in food containers or stacks of bowls. For example, when I had to take guests from Phnom Penh to Kampong Cham, the guest servers would had the rice packaged in the stacks of bowls based on the number of people. I sometimes drove fast and arrived at the destination at meal time so the packaged rice was left. On my way back, I stopped

along the roads at the junction to have food. The people came to ask for food and I gave them all of the food. They were very excited as they had food to eat.

Terith: So, you did not join the first training sessions in 1976 and you just accompanied them?

Sarin: Yes.

Terith: What was the 15-day political training about? Didn't you know what they trained?

Sarin: No, I did not know. However, I could understand it somehow because I was trained once at the K-15 school. The political training at the time, according to my analysis, was comparable and similar to each other. It was just about the phases of the socialist revolution establishment: what we had to do first, what came next and its phases.

Terith: So, I want to ask you backwards. When you accompanied comrades to visit sectors and zones, was it concluded in Phnom Penh?

Sarin: Yes.

Terith: What happened next?

Sarin: We returned to K-6. There, the cadres personally brought their equipments from their own bases such as guns, knives, water containers, trousers, shirts, etc. I also accompanied them back, but I never went to their bases. I just took them to the commercial offices in Phnom Penh and to the K-7 center near Wat Unalaom (វត្តឧណ្ណាលោម). At that time, the zone commercial offices included the East Zone, the North Zone, the Northwest Zone, the Southwest Zone, the Northeast Zone, Siem Reap Angkor Zone, Preah Vihear Zone, etc. And the cars were only used to serve and drive the guests from these commercial offices. The cadres in various zones used their personal transportations such as cars and boats. The guests were just driven back to the commercial offices.

Terith: After taking them to the commercial offices, where did you go? What were you assigned to do?

Sarin: After that I went back to the garage. It was located in my K-12 office.

Rasy: I would like to ask you some questions. You have mentioned that you drove the delegation to visit Chamkar Andaung (ចំការអណ្តូង), the 1 January Dam (ទំនប់ ១

មករា), the Trapaing Thmar Dam (ទំនប់ត្រពាំងធ្ម) and the Kamping Pouy Dam (ទំនប់កំពឹងព្យយ). Did you see anything when visiting Chamkar Andaung?

Sarin: When we went to Chamkar Andaung, we visited rubber plantations to see the progress of the rubber industry and visited the rubber plant nurseries.

Rasy: You did not know what happening there?

Sarin: No, I did not. We were guided to see the rubber factory and visited the marian-plum plantation. It was called *Ta Prok* (តាប្រុក). Before, we had also visited the rubber factory in Speu (ស្តើ), which was situated in the east of Chamkar Leu (ចំការលើ). At that time, the factory had nearly completely been built.

Rasy: But, did many people die?

Sarin: We were ordered to drive along the top of the dam. We drove from Baray (បារាយណ៍) along the top of the dam until we reached Kampong Thmar (កំពង់ធ្ម). We could drive along it quite fast. Yes. At Taing Krasaing (តាំងក្រសាំង), the water flew quickly for the irrigation.

Rasy: Was it the same at Trapeang Thmar? Did tens of thousands of people die of hard work and starvation when building the dikes?

Sarin: Many people died at Me Chbar Farm (មេច្បារ) where rice seeds were selected and experimented. It was the same at Phnom Kraom (ភ្នំក្រោម) and Tomnub Romlech (ទំនប់រំលេច).

Rasy: That is why I am asking you whether you drove the guests to all the places or not.

Sarin: Honestly speaking, I did not visit the execution sites since both the local and foreign guests were not allowed to go there. We just visited the happy and developed places. We did not know much about the security. This is what I can inform you.

- Terith: After the training course, you drove the guests to the zone commercial offices and then you returned to work in your office. At that time, what did they have you do? What did you do and what was your occupation?
- Sarin: There were many works at the driving office. We could only have two days off the longest; various ministries of the Centre contacted us to drive the guests. Normally, there were light and heavy transports. However, I am talking about the important visits only. For the foreign delegations, they formally visited us nearly every Saturday and Sunday. Many friendship countries came to visit us, but I could remember only some. After the visit performed by our local delegation, I went back to K-12 office. At that time, I drove many guests from various countries as most of them came to visit the Democratic Kampuchea for short period of time. Most of them visited Angkor Wat temples, Vihear Preah Keo Morokat Temple, Kompong Som Port (at that time, it was not called Sihanoukville Port), and some various developed countrysides. Most of the guests visiting the countryside were Chinese, Korean, and North Korean. The embassy officers were allowed to visit some places only; they were guarded and could only go to buy things at the market, and go to the airport to welcome diplomatic delegations.
- Terith: Was there a market?
- Sarin: Yes, there was a market for the foreigners. Before talking about the market, I just want to tell you that all of the guests were not allowed to freely visit any places including Angkor Wat. I will tell you later about the market. I just want to talk more about my work. At that time, there was a hotel called House No. 1 which was used to serve the guests. The Government Palace opposite Wat Phnom was also called House No. 1.
- Terith: At where?
- Sarin: The Government Palace opposite Wat Phnom was surrounded by walls and had a tall and large tree.
- Rasy: In which direction? Was it in the east or north?
- Sarin: It was located in the east corner.
- Rasy: The east of CDC.
- Sarin: CDC. Before, the UNTAC was also situated there. It was a place where [Yasushi] Akashi lived and was called House No 1.
- Terith: What was it for?

- Sarin: It was called the Government Palace. The guests from various countries with the rank of presidents stayed there. I used to wait for them at the building.
- Terith: When you entered into the building, what did you see?
- Sarin: It was very clean and was for the foreign guests. There were big spaces around the building. It was called House No 1. It was in front of the Government Palace. The House No 2 was situated opposite the economic school. It was located in the west of Wat Phnom. That hotel was called HOTEL LE ROYAL.
- Terith: Is it called LE ROYAL now?
- Sarin: Yes, it is. LE ROYAL Hotel was No 2. It was for the foreign guests with the rank of Prime Ministers, Deputy Prime Ministers or Ministers to attend the banquets. It was called House No 2. You should remember that it was named LE ROYAL Hotel. And the House No 3 was located opposite Wat Phnom. That building was for the foreigners. Nowadays, it is called the Council for Rural Development. It was a hotel in the southeast of Wat Phnom.
- Rasy: The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications is situated in the west of Wat Phnom.
- Sarin: No. It is further than the place where the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications is situated. It was called House No 3.
- Rasy: Is it the post office?
- Sarin: No, it is not. It is behind the post office. It is opposite the play ground.
- Rasy: Is it straight from the Ministry of Rural Development?
- Sarin: No. That building was the most beautiful. It was a 3-to-4-storey building and was called House No 3.
- Terith: What was it for?
- Sarin: It was for the foreign guests too. Most of them were Chinese guests. The guests from the western countries were staying in the House No 2. They were the guests from moderate socialist countries such as Cuba, Romania, Albania, Yugoslavia, etc. When the delegations from these countries arrived, I took them to stay there. It was called House No 2. The House No 3 and No 4 were for the Chinese experts. They were in the east blocks of Vimean Tip Cinema (រោងកុនវីមានទិព្វ). They were from the twin roads until the Chinese Hospital. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was also situated there. They were for the Chinese guests. The

Chinese experts and technicians were living in the whole village. The House No 5 was further than this. There were a hotel and the US embassy and there was a building called the Drug Authority or something like that. I did not remember its name.

Rasy: Was it near Wat Phnom?

Sarin: It was not in the US embassy. It was not a place where the US embassy now is situated.

Terith: Oh! Was it the US embassy?

Sarin: Yes. But it was not the US Embassy during the Lon Nol regime.

Terith: Was it in 1990 something?

Sarin: Yes, it was inside that block.

Terith: Was it in Pasteur block?

Sarin: Yes, it was. I will write about this later. When we are in Phnom Penh, I will go to visit these areas and write their names clearly in order to attract the people's interests. You should take me to visit these places. At that time, the Chinese embassy was not situated in the place where it is now located. It was in the north of its present location. It was near the villa of Krom Preah (Prince Ranariddh).

Terith: Is it near the present Pencil Market?

Sarin: I do not know now. I can recognize it only after I visit there.

Terith: Is it near the US embassy?

Sarin: It is near the current location of the US Embassy. There are three to four villas. The old Chinese embassy was repaired. I will clarify its location in more detail later and the House No 6 was for the Korean technicians as I have already mentioned. The villas in Borey Chamkar Morn (ប៊ូរីចំការមន) were used to organize banquets for the guests with the positions of Presidents.

Terith: Where is it now located?

Sarin: It is the building of the Senate.

Terith: Is it?

- Sarin: Yes. In the past, it was called Damnak Chamkar Morn Residence (ដំណាក់កម្មការមន) where Lon Nol and Samdech Norodom Sihanouk were living. The houses at Angkor Wat were for the diplomats to the Democratic Kampuchea which were located near the twin roads and in the east of Khieu Samphan's villa. Now, it is the German embassy, but in the past, it was the North-Korean embassy. It was near Vimean Tip Cinema with the twin roads and near the diplomats' buildings.
- Terith: Was it near the place where the Chinese technicians were living?
- Sarin: Yes. In short, these blocks were for the guests starting from the twin roads until the east of the Independent Monument. The diplomats were living in these blocks and were surrounded by walls. The guards always accompanied them all the time. They were not allowed to go anywhere at will and were able to visit other diplomats living in the same block only. I still remember that in these blocks, there were North-Korean, Laotian, Roman, Romanian, Albanian, Yougoslavian, Cuban, and Vietnamese embassy and many more. I could not remember all their names. There were about 16 or 17 embassies. However, the Vietnamese embassy was located far from the others. It was located behind Damnak Chamkar Morn Residence.
- Terith: Is the Vietnamese embassy now situated where it was at that time?
- Sarin: I do not know. At that time, it was located behind Damnak Chamkar Morn, but I do not know its location now.
- Terith: Is there any markets?
- Sarin: Yes. But I will talk about the market later. The Chinese embassy was also situated far from the others. At that time, there was a market to sell things for foreigners. It was near the corner of the White Hotel. Now the location is called Phsar Thmey.
- Rasy: Was it near the Charles de Gaulle of the present location?
- Sarin: Yes. During the State of Cambodia, it was called the White Hotel.
- Terith: Is it Pailin Hotel now?
- Sarin: Yes, it is. The blocks down there were for the foreign guests.
- Terith: What were sold at the market? Did you ever enter into it?
- Sarin: There were most of things including souvenirs and food.

- Terith: What was used to exchange for goods if the currency was not used?
- Sarin: I did not know. The check of each country was probably used. Generally speaking, people had strict morals and organizational disciplines; if it was not our task, we the ordinary people would not be curious about it. My task was to drive the guests to the market only and waited for them outside the markets. I did not know whether they used dollar currency, their country's currency or check. I only saw them take something out or put something in their purses and wallets. People had their own skills based on their jobs. The people working in the market with foreigners went to study languages such as English, French, etc. I was a driver, so I just learned how to repair cars in order to perform my work smoothly. Driver should have some techniques. And there was a market where foreign delegations and diplomats came to buy things every day and people were selling things there.
- Rasy: I am wondering if there were many people selling things at the market. Were they all women or men or mixed?
- Sarin: There were both women and men. They did not wearing black clothes, but silk skirts, and shirts with different colors such as yellowish white, light pink, etc. Most of them wore white shirts. Moreover, I wish to tell you about the houses for the guests. In addition to the houses and buildings I mentioned earlier, the 7-storey hotel in Kampong Som, the bank and the royal palace on the top of the mountain were under the control of B-1, the office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed by Comrade Hong (ហុង) and Comrade Chean (ចៀន). These places were under the control of B-1, the office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Yeay Sin (យាយស៊ីន) was a special chef for all guests whose positions were Presidents since she managed the staffs working to serve these guests. She was the head of the guest-serving section and her office was in the House No 2. She and her group members who were working in the guest-serving group always went everywhere with the guests. I always met them. At the end of 1977, our friendly countries such as Burma, Laos and China, which were our neighbors and had similar traditions and civilizations, were invited by the Communist Party of Kampuchea to build the relationship of non-alignment. The senior leaders and Presidents of these countries were invited to pay official and state visits to the Democratic Kampuchea at the invitation of the Party leadership. Before the visits of the Presidents of these countries, Comrade Hong, the office chief of B-1 invited the cadres in the three sections to attend the training course in order to strengthen their knowledge to better serve and welcome the guests. My office chief also told me that he was invited to attend the training on these issues since the Party would invite and meet the high-ranking delegations later. The cadres

were invited to study in B-1, the office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is now the office of the Council of Ministers. The cadres were from the three sections such as the guest-serving and the protocol sections. I also saw Comrade Cheam, and Comrade Hong, the office chiefs of B-1 and Comrade Sin who was called *Yeay Sin* and other cadres in the guest-serving section. I was told that Comrade Hong was a cousin of Pol Pot. Comrade Hong worked at B-1. The second section was the guard, which is now called the bodyguard unit represented by *Bang Kham Mi Chhan* (ខាំមី ឆាន) and other cadres. However, I forget their names; I could remember few high-ranking cadres only. The second section was the driving unit. There were many drivers. At that time, the training was attended by Comrade Miel (មឿល), the office chief; Comrade Vuy (វុយ), the deputy chief; Comrade Soth (សុទ្ធី), the deputy chief; Comrade Latt (ឡាត់), the platoon chief; Comrade Then (ថេន), the platoon chief; Comrade Ran (រ៉ាន់), the highest-ranking leader of the drivers who always drove the foreign presidents and Pol Pot; *Bang Saroeun* (សារឿន) drove *Um Ieng Sary*; *Bang Soeurn* (សឿន) drove *Um Khieu Samphan* alias *Um Hem* (ហែម); Sam (សាំ); *Bang Sith* (បងសិទ្ធី); Comrade Chhit (ឈិត); me, *Sâ Sarin* (ស សារិន) and other comrades.

Terith: What did you study?

Sarin: I would like to clarify that the teaching was conducted by *Um Ieng Sary* alias *Um Van* who was Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. I still remember some of its concepts which were taught by *Um Ieng Sary* at that time. First, he mentioned that our country just emerged from the devastating war, so we were short of everything including food, rice and medicines. People in the rural areas lived under starvation. We therefore had to connect ourselves with the rural people. This was his significant point. Next, he said that our country did not have abundant food as it was announced on the radio. He spoke briefly and unclearly. He spoke honestly that this was our international politic to show foreign countries that our country was not poor.

Terith: So, it meant that he knew that our country was poor, didn't he?

Sarin: Yes, he did. These were the training contents.

Cassette 2, Side B:

Sarin: I just want to tell you more about the significant points of his teaching. He said, “All comrades must fuse your body and soul to the people who live in the rural areas and experience shortages. Fusing your body and soul to the people means you must endeavor to carry out the work assigned by the Party with no mistakes.” Secondly, he clearly mentioned that, “In the immediate future, our Party has no plans to import the tourist buses. We have to use our current cars. Our Party plans to import these types of buses in the next 15 or 20 years.” Yes. I just remembered his speech that the Party would import buses in the 15 or 20 years later. Thirdly, he added that, “In the near future, our Party plans to invite Presidents from various countries to pay official visits in our country. The President of Burma will be the first senior leader to formally visit our country, the Democratic Kampuchea. Therefore, all comrades in the three sections must remain vigilant in attempts to fulfill their tasks with no mistakes.” I still remember his speech to the bodyguard section that, “Nowadays, our country has brought about peace, so the bodyguard’s task is not difficult.” “However, all comrades must continue to strengthen the vigilant stance”, he suggested. Secondly, he told the guest-serving section, which is composed of the guest-serving servants, protocols, cooks, people working in the market, and accountants to have high spirits of revolutionary vigilance to carry out their tasks. Thirdly, *Um Ieng Sary* alias *Um Van* paid particular attention to the driving section by telling Miel (មឿល), Vuy (វ្យ), Then (ថែន), and Saroeun (សារ៉េន), the office chiefs of K-12 to select Mercedes cars with white and black colors and Peugeot 404 to drive the guests in accordance with their positions. A2-Jeeps were used to protect the front and the back parts and to lead the delegation. He also told the drivers to drive with high spirit of vigilance when transporting the President of Burma to avoid danger of the cars and the guests’ lives. After that, *Um Ieng Sary* alias *Van* said all drivers, bodyguards, and servants must not wear black clothes. They had to wear the light blue clothes, and the Chinese military uniforms when welcoming the guests. Yes. He told that when we greeted the delegation, these clothes were not allowed. This was really an interesting point. We did not have to wear rubber-soled sandals any longer. After that, we had our shoes and clothes cut at O’ Russey (អូរុស្សេ) market which was the state’s market. All drivers and guards had to wear uniform. *Um Ieng Sary* told us not to wear black clothes. We had to wear the dark yellowish-white clothes. Our shoes were made of leather. The female guest-serving servants had to wear silk skirts and white blouses. The male guest-serving servants had to wear black trousers and white shirt. Each of us received two pairs of clothes –one

long-sleeved and one short-sleeved for changing. The teaching conducted by *Um Ieng Sary* alias *Um Van* lasted one morning. After that, all drivers, bodyguards, and servants no longer wore black clothes when serving the guest. We only wore them in our working places and offices and after we return back from work. When we were serving the guests, we did not wear black clothes. About one week later, His Excellency O Ne Win (អូ នីវីន), the President of Burma, paid his official visit to our country. Present on the Cambodian side were *Um Khieu Samphan* alias *Um Hem*, *Um Ieng Sary*, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, *Um Son Sen* alias *Um Khieu*, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense, *Um Nuon Chea* alias *Um Nuon*, Chairman of People Representative Assembly and many other cadres. I can only remember these names. I want to clarify that at that time, *Um Son Sen* was Commander-in-chief of the National Armed Forces. *Um Nuon* was the Chairman of People's Representative Assembly; *Um Vorn Vet* was Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy; *Um Mei Prang*, Minister of Transportation and Railway; *Um Cheng An*, Minister of Industry; *Thioun Thioeun*, Minister of Health; *Um Ieng Thirith* alias *Um Phea* (អ៊ី ភា), Minister of Social Affairs; *Um Yun Yat*, Minister in charge of the Women Association of Kampuchea, and many cadres of various offices, departments and ministries. The visit lasted three days. The Burmese delegation went to visit Preah Vihear Preah Keo Morokat (a royal temple) only and some guests went to buy things at the market. In the evening, a banquet was arranged for the guests. They went to see art performance at Tonle Basac (ទន្លេបាសាក់). Two days later, they went to visit Angkor Wat in Siem Reap.

Terith: Okay. Just a moment, you have mentioned about the training at the office of B-1. During the training, the participants did not have to wear black clothes. Why and when was the training conducted?

Sarin: Thanks for the question. The Party probably had plans for the people to stop wearing black clothes. Both senior leaders and subordinates had to change their clothes. In the past, the leaders wore three-pocket trousers only, but after that they wore suits as foreigners did. People were standing in lines along the both sides of the road to welcome the guests starting from Pochentong up to Phnom Penh. There were tens of thousands of people standing along the road to welcome the President. They wore clothes with different colors. Women wore silk skirts and white blouses. The guest-serving servants, drivers and guards wore their uniforms, but the guest-serving servants wore white shirts and blouses. I did not curiously ask them because I also felt happy when we were allowed to wear uniforms. We were motivated to work hard.

- Terith: When was that?
- Sarin: I did not remember the day and month, but I just remember that it was the end of 1977. It was about in September or October and delegations from various nations successively came to visit our country. After the Burmese President, there was Laotian President and then there were Presidents from other countries.
- Terith: During the meeting, did Ieng Sary tell the guest-serving servants, drivers, and guards to have their clothes cut at the state's market?
- Sarin: At O' Russey market. The clothes were cut there. It was not the state's market, but the clothes were cut by the state.
- Rasy: Oh! The clothes were cut by the state. Was Phsar Thmey the state's market?
- Sarin: Yes, Phsar Thmey was the state's market. Many coconut trees were grown there. Nothing was sold there. It was named the state's market, but there were no selling activities.
- Rasy: Did the state pay for your clothes or how were they paid?
- Sarin: At that time, no currency was used, so the state paid for us. We just had our body measured and got our clothes cut.
- Rasy: Please go ahead.
- Sarin: And 15 days later, but I did not remember the date,# His Excellency Sopheaneavong (សុផាណាវង់ហ្សូ), the Laotian President paid his official visit to Democratic Kampuchea at the invitation of the Communist Party of Kampuchea to strengthen friendship and solidarity between the two neighboring countries whose traditions and civilizations were similar. During the three-day visit, they visited Phnom Penh and Siem Reap. Present on the Cambodian side were *Um* Khieu Samphan alias *Um* Hem, President of the State Presidium, *Um* Nuon Chea, Chairman of People's Representative Assembly, *Um* Ieng Sary, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, *Um* Son Sen alias *Um* Khieu, Deputy Prime Minister and Commander-in-chief of the National Armed Forces of Democratic Kampuchea, *Um* Vorn Vet, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy, *Um* Ieng Thirith, Minister of Social Affairs, *Um* Yun Yat, Minister in charge of the Women Association of Kampuchea, *Um* Thioun Thioeun, Minister of Health, *Um* Cheng An, Minister of Industry, *Um* Mei Prang, Minister of Transportation and Railway and many cadres from various offices and departments around the Centre. At the end of their visit, I heard that the

Communist Party of Kampuchea granted many tonnes of salt to the Laos People's Democratic Republic as the country was far from the sea.

Terith: How did you know that?

Sarin: I listened to the news on the radio and I still remembered it. I drove the delegation during the whole visit. I took them to visit Siem Reap. They attended the banquet and after that in the evening, I drive one of the guests to Siem Reap as his boss told him to go to Siem Reap, so I drove him there. His boss waited to take him at Siem Reap. During their official visit, many delegations who could speak Khmer language asked me a lot of questions. They wondered where Cambodian people went to and why Phnom Penh was quiet. In the meeting, I was told to answer that people volunteered to work in the agricultural production in the countryside if I was asked these questions.

Terith: Who taught you to answer like this?

Sarin: The office chief told us to answer like this when we were asked. But at that time, I used my own talent to answer their questions so that it would not affect our national politics. We had to tell them good things although the truth was not. The guests wished to get a lot of information from me, but I could not tell them much as I was driving. All of the guests, including the Burmese guests, gave us the money when they got out of the car, but we were not allowed to accept anything from them. Sometimes, they, especially the Chinese, gave us some cigarettes, but we did not accept, so they just left them in the car since they understood our discipline. Normally, we were not allowed to accept anything from the guests. Then, on November 1977, the Communist Party of Kampuchea invited the delegation of the People's Republic of China headed by His Excellency Chhong Yong Kuy (អ៊ុង យ៉ុងគួយ) alias Hoeung Yon Kuy (ហ៊ីង យ៉ុងគួយ) alias *Ta Chav* (តាចាវ) to visit the Democratic Kampuchea. I still remember that in November, the great comrade China paid the official visit to Democratic Kampuchea. At that time, the delegation was welcomed by Pol Pot, not *Um Khieu Samphan*. All of the senior leaders previously mentioned- except *Um Khieu Samphan*, *Um Nuon Chea* and *Um Son Sen*- and many other cadres from offices, departments, and ministries around the Centre. The visit lasted 15 days. It was like a long training course attended by participants from various sectors, districts, and villages. First, the Chinese delegation was welcomed and greeted by *Um Pol Pot* at the airport and then went to stay at the State Guest House. In the evening, the banquet was arranged at Damnak Chamkar Morn (ដំណាក់ចំការមន). It was greatly organized for the Chinese delegation to repay for the excellent reception prepared by the

Chinese government when *Um* Pol Pot had paid his official visit to China. The banquet was specially arranged to express our good relationship between the two countries. At that time, 40 or 50 cars were used to take the delegation. After the banquet at Damnak Chamkar Morn, they went to see art performance at Chak Tomukh Theatre (មហោស្រព្ទចតុមុខ). All previous delegations also did these. They always went to see the art performance whenever they made official visits to our country. In the next day, they first went to visit the East Zone by travelling through Prek Kdam (ព្រែកក្តាម) and the Central Zone. During their visit to the East Zone, the delegation was welcomed by *Um* So Phim, the Secretary of the East Zone. They visited the rubber plantations and rice fields in the east of Suong (ស្វង) in Chenh Choeum (ចិនឃើម) and Sonlop (សន្លប់) commune to see the development of these places. In the afternoon, he was interview by journalists. I wish to clarify that I drove *Um* Cheng An from Phnom Penh. But when we arrived at Suong, *Um* Miel (អ៊ី ម៉ឺល), the program coordinating director assigned me to drive the car for documentary film production. In Suong, I drove the film producers and journalists. They stayed in the houses near the district office of the East Zone. There were beautiful house in the district center, but then they all were caught in fire. Pol Pot also stayed there. The Chinese delegation headed by His Excellency Chhong Yong Kuy (ឆុង យ៉ុង គូយ) visited the hospital there. Outside, I was near Pol Pot, so I heard he told the Chinese delegation that the East Zone was the most destroyed place by the war since it was situated in the middle of Prey Nokor (ព្រៃនគរ) and Kampong Cham province. I remember he told the journalists that this area was controlled by Lon Nol, so it was heavily destroyed in the fighting. Many houses were devastated. After that, they visited the Central Zone. Before, it was called the North Zone, but later it was called the Central Zone. At the end of 1977, Koy Thuon (កុយ ធ្មន), Soth (សុទ្ធ) and Srè (ស្រែ) in the Central Zone were arrested. But I will talk about them later. After that they went to visit Chamkar Andaung (ចំការអណ្តូង), the 6-January (៦-មករា), Siem Reap Angkor (សៀមរាបអង្គរ), Trapeang Thmar (ត្រពាំងថ្ម), Kamping Pouy Dam (ទំនប់កំពឹងព្នួល), Trapeang Thmar Dam (ទំនប់ត្រពាំងថ្ម), Romlech Reservoir (អាងទឹក រំលេច).

Rasy: Were they in Pursat?

Sarin: Yes. They visited the 17 April Canal, Romeas (រមាស), Phnom Kraom (ភ្នំក្រាម) as the local cadres did previously. Then, they came to stay in Phnom Penh for one night. After that, they went to visit the Southwest Zone.

Rasy: As previously?

Sarin: Yes. After the Southwest Zone, they went to Sihanoukville to visit a port in Ou Chheu Teal (អូរឈើទាល). It was the military port. At that time, all of the delegation went to visit the seaside. They boarded the warships and went far up to Koh Tang (កោះតាង). The ships were as fast as a plane. On the both sides there were missiles which were as big as the missiles on the plane. The delegation boarded about 10 warships to visit the seaside. The drivers did not go with them in the sea as we had to protect the cars. After that, they returned back to Phnom Penh. The 15-day-official visit headed by Comrade Chhong Yong Kuy (ឆុង យ៉ុង គួយ) to Democratic Kampuchea came to an end. Then one month later, after the rice harvest in 1978, another visit was paid by the Chinese delegation. However, it was not formally announced in the radio of the Democratic Kampuchea. Present on the Cambodian side was *Um Ieng Sary* alias Van. The delegation went to visit the Southwest Zone. I did not know the position of the Chinese delegation as it was not announced on the radio and I did not ask them either. Yes. They went to visit Kiringvong (គិរីវង់) near the Vietnamese border where the Vietnamese soldiers were fighting to take control and we slept at Kampong Ampil (កំពង់អំពិល) district. When returning back, we stayed at *Ta Mok*'s house which was built on water in Takeo province. It was opposite the market. *Ta Mok*, his family, and relatives were living together as the poor farmers did. At that time, I slept in a hammock in the front yard of his house. In the next morning, *Ta Mok* talked with and then gave the Chinese delegation a baby elephant named Chamroeun (ចំរើន) as a gift.

Terith: A real baby elephant?

Sarin: Yes. He can pay homage to and dance in front of the guests. I witnessed this during that regime. Then, the elephant named Chamroeun was transported by plane to China. It was brought to a zoo in China. It was *Ta Mok*'s gift for the People's Republic of China. Before that time, I had heard *Ta Mok* speaking with

Um Ieng Sary. I was in a car with *Yeay Sin* (យាយស៊ីន) and her four to five children. Two cars were used to transport the cooked rice and the other two were used to drive *Um Ieng Sary* and *Ta Mok*. *Ta Mok* asked whether *Um Ieng Sary* wanted to bring gold to Phnom Penh, but *Um Ieng Sary* replied that he would take it next time. Then *Ta Mok* told *Um Ieng Sary* that he would transport gold to Phnom Penh next time. According to my observation, Pol Pot trusted *Ta Mok* more than any other senior leaders because I often worked with him. He lived the simplest life. He was not ambitious. His wife and his relatives lived in small cottages. They did not live in the floating house, which was built for the guests to stay in Takeo province. He told me like this when I stayed and ate rice at his house. In my opinion, Pol Pot completely trusted him since he gave plenty of gold and diamonds to Angkar. I myself heard him talking with *Um Ieng Sary* alias Van. And later, he gave a baby elephant to the People's Republic of China as a gift. I want to tell you a little more about the political training which was conducted by *Um Nuon Chea* and *Um Khieu Samphan*. Their words contributed to the killings and participants were taught how to kill people. At that time, the political training was named the New Great Victory (មហាជ័យជម្នះថ្មី) of the Communist Party of Kampuchea. *Um Nuon Chea* said that this victory was even greater than the great victory of 17 April and the great victory of constructing dams, digging canals, building small dikes around rice fields and digging reservoirs of the Democratic Kampuchea and greater than the great victory during the Angkor period. At first, *Um Nuon Chea* said that this was the voice and speech of the Democratic Kampuchea. At that time, he also mentioned the struggled history of the Communist Party of Kampuchea which was officially announced at the end of 1950s and the beginning of 1960s in which it struggled for independence and to be disassociated with the Indochina Communist Party. In addition, he talked about the struggle of the Communist Party of Kampuchea in the forest with bare hands. At the beginning, there were only 7 people who attended the meeting at the railway station in Phnom Penh. Later, the Party mobilized great forces until the whole country was liberated. Furthermore, during the air warfare, the enemies closely followed to fight us in the forest and dropped B52 bombs to make our Party become unconscious. The Party was unconscious three times per day, seven times per day; sometimes from once in three days until 7 times per day. Up to that time, our Party said that the new great victory was much greater than the great victory of 17 April because we had arrested the enemies gnawing at our society from inside who was going to smash our Communist Party of Kampuchea. They were the enemies who were living with us. It was like the shadow following our body. At that time, he counted his fingers to show the enemies and said that, "First, regarding CIA, we must smash the CIA

of America. It is easy to smash the CIA outside, but it is difficult to small those living with us. All comrades in various units around the Centre and zones must remember to be determined to annihilate these enemies absolutely. First, they are CIA as I have already mentioned. They are included the 7 major traitors such as Lon Nol (លន់ នល់), Sirik Matak (សេរីមតៈ), In Tam (អ៊ិន តាំ), Cheng Heng (ចេង ហេង), Long Boret (ឡុង ប្រូរ៉េត), Sok Sen (សុខ សែន), etc. and their lackeys who are living in our liberated areas. However, most of them have been smashed. They used to work as soldiers, police, military police, and civil servants living among the 17 April People who were evacuated to live in rural areas. They were strings of America's CIA. The second enemies are KGB. We refer to the people who used to study in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and in the Northern Vietnam. The third was the Vietnamese annexationist enemies. After Vietnam negotiated with the United State of America in 1973, our Party was utterly wise and clear-sighted. We sent the Vietnamese soldiers and people living in our territory to their home villages. We did not allow them to live in our country anymore. We said that your country has established peace, so you are not allowed to live here any longer. Therefore, all Vietnamese people already went to their home villages. We must absolutely purge all their strings in our country. The three policies are: when digging up grass, we must dig up the roots. All comrades must remember this. Fourthly, they are the enemies gnawing at our society from inside, feudalists, capitalists, land owners, and reactionary classes. They must be completely purged and abolished from the Democratic Kampuchean territory. The enemies gnawing at our society from inside are infiltrating within the ranks of revolutionary army, cadres, and within the rank of workers and farmers, who infiltrate and burrow from within the rank of our revolution. Therefore, in order to find them, we must stand on the principle of criticism, and self-criticism again and again, continue to wage the revolutionary society in the Democratic Kampuchean territory, and must adhere to the stance of proletarian to be equipped with each individual in the bases. Standing on the stance of proletarian is to follow the fundamental model of worker and peasant class. I wish to reaffirm that the enemies gnawing at our society from inside are the most poisonous like the shadow following our body. Recently, our Party has found out the traitor in the Party's rank. I would like to publicly announce that his name is Comrade Thuch (សមមិត្តធុច), the former Secretary of the North Zone.”

Rasy: What was his full name?

Sarin: His name was Koy Thuon alias Thuch (កុយ ធ្មួន ហៅ ធ្មួច). *Um Nuon Chea* said that he was arrested by the Party. I want to tell you more about this. Before, he was the Secretary of the North Zone. Then, he was assigned to work in the Committee of Commerce in Phnom Penh. Koy Thuon had love affairs with a woman until she was pregnant. He then wanted to marry the woman to a messenger who was his subordinate named Long (ឡុង) as I still remember his name. Therefore, Long was forced to marry the woman and break up his love relationship with a woman named Comrade Kheng (ខេង). That woman named Mai Mai (ម៉ៃម៉ៃ) and was beautiful, and had fairly black skin and sweet voice. She could sing beautifully and was attractive. He wanted her to marry Comrade Long, but Comrade Long did not agree and complained until it was heard by the Communist Party of Kampuchea. He did not agree to marry the artist woman. After that Comrade Long disappeared. When the Party asked Comrade Thuch about Comrade Long, he said that Comrade Long asked for permission to visit his home. The Party kept on asking him about Comrade Long and he finally told that Comrade Long was taken for execution. Later, he loved Comrade Kheng, who was an office chief of art. At that time, the office was named K-31 (ក-៣១). No, it was K-33 (ក-៣៣) opposite Chamkar Morn. It was on the other side of the river in Chbar Ampov (ច្បារអំពៅ). I also knew her. She had fair skin and was beautiful. She was as beautiful as the present film actor. After the Party knew that Comrade Long was killed, Koy Thuon was arrested. Next, Comrade Kheng and Comrade Mai were brought and questioned. With their answers, the Party found out that Koy Thuon was traitorous. He planned to kill the senior leaders of the Communist Party of Kampuchea and he himself took the office. He wished to be the Secretary of the Party; the subordinates would hold the same positions and diplomatic relationship with Comrade China would be kept. These were *Um Nuon Chea's* speech.

Terith: So, what you just mentioned earlier was Nuon Chea's speech during the political training. They were not your own words, weren't they?

Sarin: Yes, of course. I just mentioned what I have remembered from his teaching.

Terith: I just want to ask you backwards. I wonder if you could tell us about the enemies that *Um Nuon Chea* taught you. Just moment, you have mentioned four types of enemies. How many in total?

- Sarin: There were five types: CIA, KGB, the Vietnamese annexationist enemies, the enemies gnawing at our society from inside, and the fifth was...
- Terith: Who were the enemies gnawing at our society from inside?
- Sarin: It referred to the people in the rank of cadres, revolutionary army, people, workers, and peasants. Yes, I will tell you more about *Um Khieu Samphan's* words.
- Terith: Okay, you will tell us later. You just mentioned four categories of enemies, what was the fifth?
- Sarin: The fifth was Koy Thuon. He often had sexual misconducts with artist women. He had traitorous plots and wanted to kill the Party for power since he was in the forest. But, I will tell you more about the forest. Let's talk about the sixth, the sexual misconduct.
- Terith: Fifth or sixth?
- Sarin: The enemy was the fifth, but the sexual misconduct was the sixth. Our Party stated that anyone who committed sexual misconduct violating the "sixth moral code" was considered to be the enemy in the fifth category.

Cassette 3, Side "A".

- Sarin: So, *Um Nuon Chea* said that there were five categories of enemies. Anyone who committed sexual misconduct which is the sixth principle [of the Moral Code] was considered traitorous with the Party. The participants in the meeting clapped their hands then.
- Rasy: When *Um Nuon Chea* was teaching, how many people had been arrested? Just a moment, you only mentioned a man named Koy Thuon. Besides him, were any other people arrested?
- Sarin: Besides Koy Thuon, many names were also mentioned at that time. At the East Zone, there was Ney Saran alias Ya (នៃ សារ៉ាន់ ហោយ៉ា). He was the Secretary of the Northeast Zone. At that time, he was called the Representative of the Secretary for the Northeast Zone. It was called Zone 108. Then it was named Zone 109 in the Northeast. He was the traitorous string of Koy Thuon and Chan Chakrei (ចាន់ ច្រកី) who was a Commander-in-Chief of Division 170 in the East Zone and Chhouk (ឈុក) was the Secretary of Zone 24. Based on my memory,

there was also Doeun (ធឿន). In Phnom Penh, he was the chief of office 870 and Sreng (ស្រែង) was the deputy chief of the North Zone with Koy Thuon. In Siem Reap Angkor, and the Zone in Siem Reap Order Meanchey (សៀមរាបខត្តរមានជ័យ), there was a representative named Soth (សុទ្ធ). It was called Sector 106. His original name was Men Thol alias Soth (ម៉ែន ថុល ហៅសុទ្ធ). At that time, after Koy Thuon was arrested, the news was heard by his string, so there was an air bombing on 25 February 1976. It was bombed by the American plane S111. The whole city of Siem Reap was panic on February 1976. Soth was arrested and interrogated by the Communist Party of Kampuchea. He accused Soeun (សៀន), a commander of a military company in the Siem Reap Angkor Zone who had escaped to Thailand of dropping the bombs. The words were taught by *Um Nuon Chea* in the training. But then, the Party found it out through the confession of Comrade Soth that he planned to smash the Communist Party of Kampuchea since they were in the forest. At that time, B52 bombs were dropped right on all of the Party's spots. The Party wondered why they dropped right on the every new location wherever the Party had just moved in. They dropped the bombs until the Party was in danger and became unconscious from six to seven times per day. If the dropping had continued for the next three days, the Party would have negotiated. At that time, the Party, however, still ordered its arm forces throughout the country to keep on fighting against Lon Nol's government. The more they dropped the bombs, the more we kept on fighting. Next, after the Party had sent Comrade Soth to Siem Reap Angkor Zone, there was no dropping. These were *Um Nuon Chea's* words as I still remember them. Yes. He also mentioned that Comrade Soth went to meet the American CIA at the border gate in Order Meanchey province. He and other four messengers travelled by Jeep A2 to meet the American CIA there. For the first time, they did not meet the CIA, but then when they went there for the second time, the CIA saw his guards and came to meet them. They pledged to meet again for the third time. During the third meeting, the American CIA took three small chairs for Comrade Soth, an interpreter and one of the CIA. His soldiers were standing beside them. The bread was arranged for them. I still remember this part because I was very hungry when I heard they eat bread. Comrade Soth gave a map to the CIA to drop bombs in Siem Reap. That was Comrade Soth's confession.

Terith: Besides Soth, were there any other people?

Sarin: I will describe them later. At that time, *Um Nuon Chea* said that the CIA asked Comrade Soth whether he knew the places where senior leaders such as Pol Pot and others were living. He replied that he did not know since he was not allowed to attend the meeting in Phnom Penh. He only knew the place outside. It was called K-1 or office of K-1. After Comrade Soth gave the map to the American CIA, the bombs were dropped in on 25 February 1976 and the Party found out that the enemies were living with us. Therefore, the Party considered that this great victory was much greater than the victory of the 17 April. Furthermore, during the Party's conference in 1975, Comrade Thuch had also planned to kill our Party who were addressing remarks. It was in 1975, but I do not remember the exact date. Yes. At that time, Koy Thuon had selected a combatant who was good at gun firing through the military exercises. The youth combatant hid three bullets in his gun. When the guards asked him, he said that he did not check his gun. At that time, he was not punished as the Party did not suspect him. Later, there were confessions to kill the Party, so the Party was panic. These were the key concepts taught by *Um Nuon Chea* as I still remember them.

Terith: You mentioned that *Um Khieu Samphan* also taught you in the political training. What did he talk about in the training?

Sarin: I want to clarify that they taught us for three days. *Um Nuon Chea* taught us in the morning while *Um Khieu Samphan* taught us in the afternoon. When teaching us, *Um Khieu Samphan* wore rubber-soled sandals which were badly worn out with the threads appearing, and torn clothes with many patches as a model of the stance of the proletarian class, and had a scarf around his neck. He got in an auto rickshaw (Lambretta). I remember that *Um Nuon Chea* also wore the same clothes, but his rubber-soled sandals were thicker. *Um Khieu Samphan's* rubber-soled sandals were badly worn out with the threads appearing. *Um Nuon Chea's* shirt was newer than *Um Khieu Samphan's*. They did not have any servants. He carried a container of water and drank water from it when he was thirsty. I just want to tell you how senior leaders lived at that time.

Terith: What did *Khieu Samphan* teach you at that time?

Sarin: I would like to tell the story to you the reporters in brief. We learned a lot during the three-day training, but I could remember some key concepts only. I have already told you about *Um Nuon Chea's* speech. Next, I will tell you about the key concepts of *Um Khieu Samphan* since I still remember some of them. He said, "In order to keep on waging the socialist revolution in the territory of the Democratic Kampuchea toward the great leap forward and the prodigious great leap forward, advanced agriculture in the next 10 or 15 years, and advanced industry in the next 15 or 20 years, all individuals must stand on the revolutionary

lines of proletarian, and fundamentally follow the model of worker class, poor peasant class, and the lower-middle peasant class. In addition, low-level collectives and high-level collectives were established. The low-level collectives were implemented from 1973 to 1975. It was called the National Revolution (បដិវត្តប្រជាជាតិ). The high-level collectives have been carried out since 1975.

You all learned it in 1977 and it was called the Socialist Revolution. It was a fundamental historical movement toward the great leap forward and the prodigious great leap forward in the Socialist Revolution. First, we must totally eliminate stances of private property in the territory of Democratic Kampuchea and completely smash and uproot capitalists, feudalists, land owners and other exploiting classes in the territory of Democratic Kampuchea.” In a more important context, he added that we had to strengthen the revolutionary vigilant stance of all actions the enemies carried out from outside in the three borders: land, water and air borders. In addition, all individuals had to continue to keep secrets in our minds all the time through the deep and blazing-like-fire stances of criticism, self-criticism and resistance class. I vividly remember this point. For the oversea events, he mentioned that the Vietnamese annexationist enemies had extremely been envious of us with everything since we could defeat the American imperialists earlier, and they were absolutely furious with us.

Terith: Did Khieu Samphan say these?

Sarin: Yes, he did. Vietnam was extremely furious with us when we just defeated the American imperialist faster than they did. It was the nature of the Yuon enemy. During the meeting of non-aligned countries in Sri Lanka, Madame Antarakunthy (អន្តារកុន្ទី), the President of Sri Lanka just requested Kampuchea to be the chairman, yet Vietnam got furious. *Um* Khieu Samphan said, “The Vietnamese annexationist enemies were the cruelest. Therefore, we totally expelled its people and soldiers from our country as soon as it had negotiated with America. Nodaway, the remaining Yuons have been completely purged.

Terith: What did the term *purge* mean?

Sarin: The three terms: *purge*, *smash*, and *kill* are the same. None of the Vietnamese were allowed live in our territory at that time. As I have already mentioned, after the air warfare completed, Vietnam negotiated [with America]. Therefore, we expelled all Vietnamese from our country in 1973. He said that in 1973 and at that time, Vietnam was cheated by America. Soon after the negotiation, B52 were bombed in the center of Hanoi. Vietnam was cheated by America while we had kept fighting against America. The Vietnamese annexationist enemies did not

devour our territory by killing us, but it was good at cheating through breeding. This was the speech of *Um Khieu Samphan*. I still remember his speech. They got married with us to become a wife/husband, and for a long time later, we would have children and they would be our relatives, so we would not care about our territory. In the Vietnamese society, the North and the South were fighting against each other to occupy things such as fans, houses, etc. He spoke by pointing his fingers to these things. The liberated soldiers were fighting against the soldiers in the Thieu Ky's (ធាវតី) regime in Prey Nokor (វៀតណាម) territory. *Um Khieu Samphan* told all Comrades that the fighting was serious. They did not live in peace as we did at that time. Next, he also mentioned the enemies gnawing at our society from inside who were living in the rank our revolution. They interrupted our movement of building the socialist revolution in Kampuchea. All comrades must repeatedly and closely follow all targets. For example, some drivers who often made the cars broken, had accidents or made the car collapsed, were considered as the enemies gnawing at our society from inside. In countryside, when performing their work, they often broke the ploughs, or rakes and those who often broke hoes or reaping hooks. These people were our enemies gnawing at our society from inside since they interrupted our historical movement of building the nation toward development. All comrades had to remember these points and when you returned to you working places, you had to remember that the historical cycle had to move forward. If the enemies put their hands or feet in, they would be cut off. You all had to pay attention to these. The enemies coming from outside was easy to destroy although they moved their soldiers near our borders. These enemies were easily eliminated. It was difficult to destroy all the enemies living with us. Therefore, all individuals had to stand on self-criticism stance which was a significant factor to completely eliminate all the enemies gnawing at our society from inside in our revolutionary rank. Then, we had to be based on the stance of political line of saving in the revolutionary stage in order to move toward the socialist revolution. We had to equip ourselves with highest saving principle of all water, electricity, and equipments since they all came from the sweat and blood of our combatants and cadres who had devoted their lives in the war. You all came to study in the city, so you had to honor our ancestors who had devoted their lives, and their fresh flesh and blood to protect our motherland. It was the same for comrades working in the kitchens. You all should carefully remove Prahok (ប្រហុក) and salt from big jars by putting them in the smaller ones and using them in a saving manner. When walking, if you found a small nail, you should pick it up and put it in your pocket. If we could not use them now, we might keep it a side. A long time later, we might be able to collect many more and melt them down to produce things. All comrades had to be aware of and find out more about

the saving lines in the process of establishing the socialist revolution in the Democratic Kampuchea. Yes. You can think of the problems I have just mentioned. It was very dangerous to consider the people who broke things such as ploughs, rakes, and hoe handles as enemies. When we used such things for a long time, they would be broken. In fact, most of us did not want to break these things, but they were broken accidentally, so many people were considered as the enemies. Not many people who broke these things while working. However, due to the hatred or past rancor, plenty of people were sent from place to place after being accused of breaking things. There was no information whether they were killed or not. Sometimes, they were sent to be educated, but in fact, they were taken for execution; education was not needed since the fundamental structure already existed. Security centers were built in every commune to eliminate the enemies gnawing at the society from inside. At that time, there were security, education, health care, social affairs, social structure, etc. as there are now. There were traditional medicines and Vitamin C. They were boiled and steamed for consumption. The structures were established in every village and communes to serve the revolutionary movement toward advancement. However, they were of low quality as they were domestically produced. Therefore, plenty of people died and many more were executed since Khmer Rouge soldiers could easily killed ordinary people by the accusation of being their enemies. Even now, there is no death sentence, yet many people were killed. The Khmer Rouge regime was even worst. People were easily killed with baseless accusations. Some people were accused of being betrayal and killed, but in fact, the Khmer Rouge soldiers want to confiscate their watches.

Terith: How many days did the study take? Have you told me yet?

Sarin: The study?

Terith: Yes.

Sarin: Not yet.

Terith: How many days did the study take? Did it take place at K-6 too?

Sarin: The study took place at the political school for senior cadres called K-6. Nobody knew it was called K-6, but I was a driver and assigned to transport the learning materials and food for the participants. My chief told me to transport the goods to the office of K-6. Therefore, I knew it was called K-6. There was no name board at that place and the cadres did not know its name. We just named it *School for Senior Cadres* (សាលាកម្មាភិបាលជាន់ខ្ពស់) by ourselves since many high-ranking

cadres from various zones, offices, and ministries around the Centre came to study there. It was in Borei Keila (បុរីកីឡា).

Terith: How many people went to study there?

Sarin: A lot. People were all over the building.

Terith: Was it big?

Sarin: Yes. There were around 500 people, not less than 500 people.

Terith: Where were they from?

Sarin: The previous training was conducted on November 1976 in which participants were from various communes throughout the country. This training was different from the previous one and the participants were from various ministries around the Centre while most of them were from the Southwest Zone, Sre Ambil (ស្រែអំបិល) and the Ministry of Energy and land transportation; some were from the Northwest Zone and a few were from the Northwest Zone. It was different from the previous training since there were 9 traitors, not only 7, including Koy Thuon alias Thuch, Doeun (ខឿន), the chief of 870, Soth (សុទ្ធ), the representative of Zone 106 in Siem Reap Angkor, Sreng (ស្រែង), the deputy chief of the North Zone, Chan Chakrei (ចាន់ ចក្រី), the division chief in the East Zone, Chhouk (ឈុក), the Secretary of Sector 24 of the East Zone, and Ya (យ៉ា), Vy (វី), Lao (ឡៅ) in the Northeast Zone. Normally, we just knew that there were 7 traitors. Since then, there was a spread of elimination of the enemies gnawing at the society from inside in the East Zone. As I witness and was aware of the theory of *when digging up grass, one must dig up the roots* as suggested by Um Nuon Chea and Um Khieu Samphan. This theory was used in the implementation of the five policies. As a result, millions of people were killed due to the five policies. The killing was not limited. Talking about the disciplines, the upper echelons were the most powerful than those in any other regimes. Any tasks were implemented only after there was an approval from them. However, the people who broke the ploughs or rakes when working in the mobile unit in the bases were killed with no approval from the upper echelons as the extreme policies of how to kill victims were indoctrinated among the soldiers in the bases. Only the important prisoners were taken photographs with their names and some photos have been kept so that we

are able to use them for the current Khmer Rouge tribunal. Those victims were high-ranking cadres or important CIA who had been abroad.

Terith: Do you talk about the prisoners in Tuol Sleng (ទួលស្លែង)?

Sarin: Yes, I do. They were sent there. The less important prisoners in the bases were executed on site. Before 1976 during the Lon Nol regime, there were not many prisoners. But later, during the Pol Pot regime, many people became prisoners. I adore the regime very much because it made people united and our country was developed. Nobody was free and everybody had to work. Although some people stuffed themselves with food while plenty of them had very little, I still like the regime.

Terith: I would like you to clarify more about the political training as you said it was taught by Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan. When was it conducted?

Sarin: Yes, I clearly remember it. It was nearly the Khmer New Year day on 17 April. The training started on 10 April. *Um* Nuon Chea and *Um* Khieu Samphan took turns to teach us for three days. *Um* Nuon Chea taught in the morning while *Um* Kheiu Samphan taught in the afternoon for three days. After the three-day training, all comrades had to attend the self-criticism meeting and made their own biography and commitments to work in the bases. They had to resolve to follow the orders and implement the work in accordance with the teaching under the leadership of the Party.

Terith: What did they do in the self-criticism meeting?

Sarin: You did not understand the self-criticism meeting, did you?

Terith: No, I did not.

Sarin: In the self-criticism meeting, the participants were made to criticize and write their criticism of one another. At that time, most of the participants were low-educated since high-educated people could not become cadres and were executed. Participants were mixed up and were not allowed to study in groups. They were randomly selected to do self-criticism and conduct criticism of one another. During the training, two or three people were selected by *Um* Nuon Chea and *Um* Khieu Samphan to do self-criticism as models. At that time, a comrade from the office land transportation was asked to do the self-criticism as a model. First, he was asked, "During the air warfare, America dropped a lot of bombs on the Kampuchean territory in the national democratic revolution. What was your stance?"

Terith: Then they wrote it?

Sarin: Yes. In our assessment, we said that the enemies were weak. We wrote about our criticism. There were seven points, but I could remember only some. First, it was about the American bombing on the liberated areas and we asked about our stances. Secondly, we were asked, “After the political trainings, if there are enemies gnawing at the society from inside in your bases, what will be your stances? When you are back to your working places, what will be your stances in fighting the enemy’s tricks? In your offices or departments, if you think that your leaders are enemies, you should tell us.” At that time, that comrade used to drive the Yugoslavian ambassador and he said that the enemies told him to do something bad. I can remember some points only. However, the most important concept of the training was to demonstrate strong commitment in searching for the enemies gnawing at the society from inside when we returned to our offices or working bases. We had to resolve and build ourselves to be the revolutionary people based on the stance of revolutionary proletarian with no thought of personal benefit. In proletarian, private property was completely eliminated. We needed nothing except our two pairs of clothes.

Terith: After the training, all participants were separated to work in their places. Did you transport them back?

Sarin: When the training was completed, we took the cars from the office of K-12 to transport them out of the office of K-6 back to their working bases. After the training, we were made to have strong commitments as I mentioned earlier. *Um Nuon Chea* and *Um Khieu Samphan* alias Hem told us to remember the slogan: Wherever there is oppression, there is resistance (ទីណាមានការងឹះជាង់ ទីនោះមានការរើបម្រាស់). This slogan was used since the political resistance regime. I just thought in my mind that there will be resistance one day.

Terith: Yes. After the political training, did you work in the same office in Phnom Penh or were you sent to work anywhere else?

Sarin: Let me tell you. After the political training, many delegations from various countries visited us in 1977. There were Presidents from three to four countries every week as I mentioned previously. After I drove *Um Van* and the Chinese ambassador to their offices and at that time, *Ta Mok* gave a baby elephant called Chamroeun as a gift to China, I returned to the garage in my office. My work was quite busy since many foreign guests came to visit our country. Then when it was about the middle of January in 2008,...

Terith: 1978?

Sarin: Sorry, in 1978. Comrade Pang (ប៉ង) was the chief of office 870 whose original name was Sam Sam-oak (សម សំអោក) as I saw it in the magazine. He was the chief of Office 870 and high-ranking cadre. He was the powerful person after Pol Pot. Everyone was afraid of him and he often had a smiling face.

Terith: Was his position as high as Nuon Chea's and Khieu Samphan's?

Sarin: No, it was lower, but he was the chief of Office 870. After *Ta Doeun* (តាឡឺន) was arrested, *Bang* Pang was promoted. He was not the member in the Standing Committee such as Pol Pot, *Um* Nuon Chea. He was just the office chief similar to the Cabinet Chief of the Prime Minister in the present time, but everyone was afraid of and respected him. In the mid of 1978, the war against Vietnam became serious. Therefore, he told *Bang* Moeul (ម៉ឺន) to select comrades with good personal history to be in charge of the arsenal. At that time, there were two arsenals, one was in Kampong Speu (កំពង់ស្ពឺ) province while the other one was in Kampong Cham town (ក្រុងកំពង់ចាម), used to fight against the Vietnamese annexationist enemy. When I returned to the office, *Bang* Pang organized a meeting in the mid of the month. It was called the group meeting and organized at office of K-12. In the next morning, *Bang* Moeul, the office chief told me to arrange 20 trucks to Kampong Cham to transport the bullets to keep in the arsenal. At first, he did not told me to be responsible for the arsenal and just told 12 drivers to drive new modern cars made in China. We drove them to the port in Kampong Cham to transport bullets which were loaded in an old ferry which has been used until now. I just go backwards a little. In 1978, after the training course, all the cars and trucks were separately divided into two offices: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the office of K-12 under the arrangement of Comrade Cheam (ឡឺម). All the cars and some modern trucks in the office of K-12 were transferred to the B-1, the office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The number plate of the car was changed to BP (ប៊ីប៊ី) which meant the Foreign Affairs. Since then, the drivers were also divided into offices: the office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the B-2 of the office 770. Comrade Miel (មឺល), the office chief assigned me to transport the bullets from Kompong Cham. At that

time, the big ships named 1st Mekong and 2nd Mekong, of the commercial office in the Central Zone were used to load the bullets. There were about 15 ships and 10 trucks were used to transport the bullets. Then, a comrade from the Southwest Zone backed the truck and it got stuck in the mud. He could not make the truck move forward, but I could. Therefore, *Bang Chhan* (ឆាន់), the chief of the arsenal told me to work with him. At that time, I was not happy since I usually wore nice clothes and beautiful shoes to drive the guests to Pochentong (ពោធិ៍ចិនតុង) and the foreign markets. Before, I used to drive car, but then they had me drive truck to transport the bullets. I did not feel good, but I did not speak it out since I was afraid that they might accuse me of challenging the order, so I just worked there with comrade Vet (វ៉េត). He has survived and is probably living in Pailin (ប៉ៃលិន). During the regime, he did not suffer much since he was from the Southwest Zone. I worked in the arsenal in Kompong Cham. It covered from Dei Dos Primary School (សាលាបឋមសិក្សាដីដុះ) until the roundabout of the junction (រង្វង់មូលច្រមុះជ្រក) and the campus behind Veal Vong (វាលវង់) street. It was very big and a prohibited place and the bullets were transported during the nights. All kind of bullets were kept there. *Bang Chhang* (ឃង់ឆាង) said that it was called *the Arsenal of Office 78* in Kampong Cham. There were Office 78 in Kampong Cham and Office 78 in Kampong Speu. At that time, there were only these two big arsenals in Kampuchea. They were under the control of the Centre. The bullets were loaded from China and kept in the arsenals in Kampong Speu and in Kampong Cham. The arsenal in Kampong Cham provided the bullets to three zones: the East Zone, the Central Zone and the Northeast Zone and the soldiers in the divisions and brigades fighting against Vietnam. However, I did not know much about the internal affairs as I was just a driver. I just knew that four soldiers came to request for bullets, but they were not allowed to enter the arsenal. Then I was ordered to transport the bullets out of it.

Rasy: How long did you work at the arsenal before you were moved to other places?

Sarin: I worked there from mid-January until mid-July. I was working there for five months when I suffered a hemorrhage. I was sent to the 17 April Hospital for a month. While staying there, I met a lot of injured combatants from the East Zone. They told me that many people in the East Zone were arrested.

Cassette 3, Side B

Sarin: They said the people in the East Zone were arrested. I replied that, "I have no ideas if the Party arrests me since I work very hard and never make mistakes." The brothers who were injured whispered that the East Zone's people were arrested and executed since they were accused of being Vietnamese head with Cambodian body. I told them that I was not afraid of being killed since I never made mistakes. After I returned to work for a half month, I was arrested. I was not tied, but was told that I had to work in other place. However, I had already known it since I had been told by the injured soldiers at the 17 April Hospital. Do you know it?

Rasy: Is it in Phnom Penh?

Sarin: The Russian Hospital was called the 17 April Hospital at that time. I was sent to a prison called Prey Sar (ប្រៃស) which was near Kampong Kantuot (កំពង់កន្ទួត), Wat Sleng (វត្តស្លែង), Wat Chey Utdam (វត្តជ័យឧត្តម). The prison was the second or third rank of prison. The prisoners were not executed right away, but were seriously tortured. We were forced to work from 4 a.m. to 11 p.m. We could only break to have lunch and had a short sleep during the night. A whistle was blown to wake us up. Prisoners who spoke bitter words were taken on a horse cart for execution.

Rasy: Did you stay there until the regime collapsed?

Sarin: No, I stayed there until September when Pol Pot's speech on the tolerant political line of the Communist Party of Kampuchea was announced on the radio. They said that only the traitors were executed based on the political slogan of *mind your own business* (ក្បាលអ្នកណា សក់អ្នកនឹង) in line with Pol Pot's speech on the tolerant political line of the Communist Party of Kampuchea announced on radio. Due to this political line, the people from the East Zone in the civil section were sent to build the railway from Pochentong called Ra Samraong (រ៉ាសំរោង) to Pech Nil (ពេជ្រ និល) through Stoeng Chral (ស្ទឹងច្រាល) and Stoeng Hav (ស្ទឹងហាវ) toward Kampong Som. Tens of thousands of people from the East Zone, the North Zone and the Siem Reap Sector who used to be influenced by [the traitors] in which most of them were ordinary people were sent to work there. The soldiers were sent to build the airport in Kampong Chhnang (កំពង់ឆ្នាំង). My cousin who was a soldier in the East Zone was sent to build the airport there and was executed. Only his wife returned to her home village. Many soldiers were killed

there. Therefore, Pol Pot lost the war due to the elimination of the enemies gnawing at the society from inside and the soldiers who had devoted their flesh and blood for the Party and revolution were killed. As a result, Pol Pot himself lost and fell from his power. I want to tell you more so that it will end soon. I worked to build the railway there for months. We were made to dig and destroy one side of the mountain at Pech Nil in Kirirum (គីរីរម្យ). I was made to lay the concrete foundations of the road to Kirirum. The railway was built below the car road. Human labors were used to build it and the machines were used to drive the piles only. At that time, I knew how to operate machines, so *Bang Nin* (បង និន) had me use a machine to drive the piles. It was not as difficult as carrying the dirt and stones. The machine could automatically drill into the stone for 15 minutes at once. My supervisor asked me why the work was quite slow. I just told him that we needed to do this work carefully as the railway would be used for life. I just told him about this principle and he understood me. I said that, "If it is not properly done, you, not I, will be blamed since you are the supervisor." The work was much easier as there were 15 people in the pile-driving group. It was easier than carrying dirt. And in August or September, there was a revolt since People who used to live with the Party in Phnom Penh complained that they were underfed.

Terith: Where were they from?

Sarin: The people from the East Zone.

Terith: But which worksite did the protesters want to complain to the Party?

Sarin: The people who were working to build the railway. They were from the East Zone, but most of them were from the offices of K of the Unit 870. Some were from K-12, K-4, K-5, K-6 and some others were from K-1. The latter was Pol Pot's working place. The arsenal was protected by the people from K-1. Its chief was Chhang (ឆាង) who were later arrested. After that, I was also arrested. After *Bang Pang* (បង) 's arrest, *Bang Chhang* was also arrested. Then, the chief named *Miel* (មឿល), *So Phim* (សោ ភឹម), *Vorn Vet* (វ៉ែន វេត), *Ma Serei* (ម៉ា សេរី), *Mei Prang* (មឿ ប្រាង), were arrested. Those who used to work with Pol Pot were considered as traitors. Only *Um Khieu Samphan* alias Hem was survived as he knew how to adjust themselves to the situation.

Terith: How about the protesters who complained to the Party?

Sarin: I did not know as I had already been sent to the hospital. I suffered a hemorrhage. While working in the arsenal, I was made to carry 122-milimetre bullets. They were extremely heavy. A case of bullets weighed about 200 Kilograms. If I did not help carry them, I would be criticized, so I had to work hard. Then, I suffered a hemorrhage, so I was sent to a hospital. In the hospital, I met the patients who were from the worksite called Doh Kanhchor (ដោះកញ្ជាវ). They said that all the protestors were arrested. The dirt-carrying trucks were robbed and transported the protestors to Phnom Penh in order to complain to the Party so that they had full freedom and were well fed. The patients in the hospital told me that the Party did not want to starve the people, but the base cadres in the worksite did that. When they arrived at Pochentong (ពោធិ៍ចិនតុង), they were told to turn back with the pledge that the resolution on the problem would be given. After their arrival at the worksite, about 300 protestors were arrested, tied and sent to Phnom Penh for execution. Most of them were the people from the East Zone. If I was there, I would probably be killed.

Terith: What was the worksite called, uncle?

Sarin: It was called Doh Kanhchor (ដោះកញ្ជាវ).

Terith: Where was it situated?

Sarin: It was in Trapeang Kraloeng (ត្រពាំងក្រឡឹង) where there were a barrack called Doh Kanhchor and a market.

Terith: Oh! You mentioned the railway...?

Sarin: Yes. The worksite was situated in the north of Treng Trayoeng (ត្រែងត្រាយ៉ែង) on the road to Kirirum (គិរីរម្យ).

Rasy: Phnom Sruoch (ភ្នំស្រួច).

Sarin: Yes. It was in Phnom Sruoch (ភ្នំស្រួច) district. But at that time, it was covered by thick forests. It was not plain as it is now.

Terith: Do you know *Ta Chin* (តា ជិន).

- Sarin: Yes, I do.
- Terith: What did he do at that time?
- Sarin: *Ta Chin* was the same as you.
- Terith: What did he do? *Ta Chin* whom you knew. What did he do at that time?
- Sarin: *Ta Chin*?
- Terith: Yes.
- Sarin: *Ta Chin* could speak Chinese. He carried dirt in the worksite.
- Terith: No, it was not him then.
- Sarin: So, it was not him. I did not know *Ta Chin* who had two jobs. There was Comrade Chinese who asked for about 50 girls in marriage. Every time he saw beautiful girls, he always sent the request to the Party for marriage. However, he could not marry anyone of them since they were prisoners.
- Terith: So, please continue to talk about your life until the end of the regime.
- Sarin: Yes. Then we were told that Mei Prang was a traitor. *Ta Dam* (តាដាំ) who was a new chief of the railway locating in Pech Nil (ពេជ្រនិល) was also considered as a traitor. Before, I was considered as a traitor and my chief in the next worksite was also a traitor, so I was in the double traitorous (ក្បួតពីរជាន់) groups. If I knew the place to escape, I would do. However, we could not escape from the Prison with no wall. I would finally die of hunger if I ran away, so I just endured the difficulties. In short, I was grateful to the 7 January day. We were guarded every day and I thought we would be killed in the short future. There were about 300 people working in the worksite, yet there were about 10 guards. We were guarded every night until the 7 January day. The people in Phnom Penh were panic and said that the Vietnamese soldiers were entering Phnom Penh. It was quite unusual. There was a loud speaker at the worksite. Every morning at 7 a.m., the national song was always played on the radio of the Democratic Kampuchea for us to respect the national anthem. We were told to take the baskets to carry dirt. On that day, I thought the wrong program was played on the radio as the song was played in the late morning. Then two hours later, the people in Phnom Penh arrived and told us that the Vietnamese soldiers had already entered Phnom Penh, so we had to seek for places to hide; we had to escape. I was reluctant, but I remembered the words of some brothers that it was just a political lie in which we were told that

the Vietnamese soldiers would kill us. In fact, they did not kill us. *Bong Hon* (បងហង់) told me like this and he knew the society much better than me as he used to be my chief in Prey Veng (ព្រៃវែង). He always told me that we had to escape to the areas controlled by Vietnam. However, we did not have to be impulsive since at that time, the Khmer Rouge soldiers was scattered in Phnom Penh like the broken dam. We did not have to be restless. Since then, there was neither leader nor subordinate. I want to tell you in brief that when I was re-educated at Wat Chey Utdam (វត្តជ័យឧត្តម), I met a top leader who have survived. His name is Chum Haol (ជំ ហោល) and he was the chief of Samdech Hun Sen, the current Prime Minister. He was detained in the prison at the railway station. At that time, he was quite old, so they did not have him do anything. When running into the mountain, I also went with him. We went through Kirirum's mountain toward Oral Mountain (ភ្នំឱរ៉ាល់). However, we got stuck at Krang Dei Vay's dam (ក្រាំងដីវ៉ាយ). At that time, it was easier. It was difficult to search for food, yet we did not have to dig canal and carry dirt. We heard the explosions in the fighting when the Vietnamese soldiers entered. It was an adventurous expedition up the mountain through Kantuot (កន្ទួត), Amleang (អមលាំង), Roleak Kang Cheung (រលាក់កងជើង), Oral Mountain (ភ្នំឱរ៉ាល់), Pursat (ពោធិ៍សាត់), and Koh Kralar (កោះក្រឡូ). The Vietnamese soldiers fought chasing the Khmer Rouge soldiers, so we were mobilized to go up the mountain. When we ran down the mountain, the Khmer Rouge soldiers pointed the guns at us, so we return to the mountain. When we were on the mountain, the situation was changed. We were not forced to do hard work. We were in the mobile unit and there were a lot of people on the mountain. We stayed there from January to July. We then went down the mountain. We did not eat rice for about two months and ate only tree roots and bulbs. We then saw the Khmer Rouge arsenal and were given some guns although we were the people from the East Zone. We carried the guns, but there was no bullet. After that, we found some bullets in another place. After we got some bullets, we ran into the Vietnamese territory. At that time, there were six people. I clearly knew the geographical location there. We went through *Ta Lo* (តាឡូ), and Phnom Krang Chaot (ភ្នំក្រាំងចោទ), and along the 17 April Canal. I used to drive through this areas and it took only a half day to reach the

Vietnamese territory. When we arrived at the canal, we threw the guns away: two RPG rockets, 4 CKC and AK guns. When I entered the Vietnamese territory, I met some people going to transplant their rice seedlings. I shook my hand like this at them as a sign. They came to surround and asked us, "Where are you from?" I told them that I was from the mobile unit in the East Zone in Svay Rieng (ស្វាយរៀង). They carried two guns, and held slingshots and machetes. They kept them for self protection. They asked us where we were going to. I told them that we went to our homeland. I politely greeted them. We were heartily welcomed. They did not want us to come back to our homeland and wanted us to stay and help them transplant the rice seedlings. We asked them to let us return home. The chief of Kak (កក់) village named *Um Vun* (អ៊ុំវុន). The village was next to *Ta Lo*. He did not issue a letter for us to return home, so I wrote it by myself after I had seen him issue the letter. I asked for permission from him again, but he still refused to issue me a letter. Therefore, I decided to return home the next day. He told me not to run when I saw the Vietnamese soldiers. On the way home, when I saw the Vietnamese soldiers, I did not run.

Rasy: Did he tell you this?

Sarin: Yes. When I arrived at the northern part of *Ta Lo*, about 30 Vietnamese soldiers were patrolling. I just went out of their way and they only asked me where I was going to in Vietnamese language. I told them that I went to Svay Rieng. Hearing this, they allowed me to go very quickly. They asked me whether I was Pol Pot, but I said I was not. They looked at my shoulders to find out if I used to carry guns, yet I told them that I was made to carry dirt (laugh). I walked for about one month to reach home. It was the end of my life story. This is my whole story in the regime. After I arrived home for one year, I got married. In 1985 during the State of Cambodia, I got a job as a driver. I worked for the Deputy Governor of Kampong Cham province in which I drove some high-ranking leaders such as His Excellency Kun Kim (គុំន គីម), His Excellency Em Samnang (អែម សំណាង), and other civil servants working in the provincial offices when they attended the important ceremony. I also used to drive *Ta Un Tam* (អ៊ុំន តាំ) from the Republic Party who joined the national reconstruction. This is my brief story and nowadays there is a tribunal to prosecute the senior Khmer Rouge leaders. I feel regretful about my past and always remember it. I just want to clarify what is good and bad with no feelings of hatred and revenge. I just want to tell you the true story of my life in the past. As the regime was over, it was neither good nor bad. I just want to tell the true about the regime. I have never wished to tell anyone about my past

life. However, due to my conscience as a human being, I should tell you what I have heard and seen, but it does not mean I hate *Um Khieu Samphan* and *Um Nuon Chea*, so I said badly about them. I would like to swear that all my words are true. I am a Buddhist adherent, so I am not exaggerated. These were their speeches. I only wish to tell the truth to the Khmer Rouge tribunal whether they made mistakes or not, but I do not exaggerate. I just describe what I experienced in the regime.

- Terith: Yes, thank you very much, uncle.
- Rasy: Yes, thank you so much, uncle.
- Sarin: Yes, thank you. I wish both of you good luck.
- Rasy: Yes, thank you.
- Sarin: Yes, goodbye.

Cassette 4, Side A

- Sarin: I just want to tell you more about some information I have not talked. After that, *Ta Chi* (តាជី), and *Ta Salad* (តាសាលាដ) who was the chief of Muong Rav (មួងរាវ) Commune were arrested and executed as they were accused of being Khmer Sar (ខ្មែរសរ). *Ta Chi* was connected with the feudalists in the Sihanouk's regime. He was executed with the commune chief who used to lead the revolutionary front. During the national revolution, he was taken for execution. Then Chinda alias Tek (ចិន្តា ហៅ តេក) was assigned to be the commune chief. I wish to tell you that after the Lon Nol's soldiers were executed, Chinda alias Tek, the chief of Muong Rav commune and Ngim (ងឹម), the chief of village security and militants, called me to join the meeting about the situations in our country and in the foreign countries and the current situations of the Lon Nol soldiers who were taken for execution. Thirdly, I was in grade 9 when I left school on 18 March 1970 since our country fell into the war. Then I want to tell you about the photos in this book. That is Pol Pot on the right and then Nuon chea, Ieng Sary, and Son Sen. They were senior leaders of the Khmer Rouge regime. The photo was from the Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam). I want to add that the man who is standing between Nuon Chea and Son Sen was Comrade Ran (រ៉ាន់). He worked at K-12. At that time, he drove high-ranking leaders such as

Khieu Samphan, and *Um* Pol Pot. He also drove high-ranking delegations when they visited our country. In another photo, that is Nuon Chea, and then it is Pol Pot who is standing and hiding one part of Ieng Sary. These three people were the most powerful in Democratic Kampuchea. Behind them, that is Pol Pot's wife, Khieu Vannary (ខៀវ វណ្ណារី), and then Yun Yat (យុន យ៉ាត), and next is Son Sen's wife and on the other side is Ieng Sary's wife, Ieng Thirith (អៀង ធីរិទ្ធិ). The photo was from DC-Cam. I want to tell you that this is Vorn Vet (វ៉ន វ៉ែត) as I still recognize his figure. And this photo was taken in 1977. At that time, there was a change in the management structure to receive foreign guests. They stopped wearing black clothes. Since then, *Um* Ieng Sary alias Van and other high-ranking leaders stopped wearing black clothes when they attended the meetings. In the previous photo, there was Pol Pot, Nuon Chea, and Comrade Ran who was the driver. It was taken in Pochentong airport. All photos were taken at Pochentong in 1976. In 1976, we normally wear black clothes although we went to welcome the guests. It was in late 1976 and early 1977. They wore black clothes with a scarf around their neck although they went to greet the foreign guests. Thirdly, the photo in which people are shaking hands with no subtitle below was the Chinese economic delegation visiting Kampuchea. They were greeted by Comrade Vorn Vet, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy of Democratic Kampuchea and the man wearing the white shirt was *Ta* Mok who is next Vorn Vet. The one who is standing next to Vorn Vet was an interpreter. As I knew, her name was Chanthou (ច័ន្ទ). She interpreted into Chinese and always travelled everywhere with the delegation. Her voice was quite sweet. The last photo is the King Father and the Queen Mother and His Excellency Hou Nim (ហ៊ូ នីម). He is between the King Father and the Queen Mother and not wearing a hat. At that time he was called teacher Phum (ភ្នំ). I was told that his name was teacher Phum. He also showed us this photo when he was teaching us at the political school of K-15 which was the former Soviet Technical School in Tuol Kork (តួលកក). The training was conducted there for new recruits with junior positions. I went to study there in late 1975 and early 1976 in Phnom Penh. I also want to tell you about the state visit of the Chinese Prime Minister, Chhoeung Yoeung Kuy (ឆ្នើង យ៉ុង គួយ) on November 1977 who was accompany by *Um* Pol Pot. They left Phnom Penh, travelled through the Central Zone and crossed the river to the

provincial town, Suong (ស្នួង). I saw many of my relatives greeting the delegation there. Until then, I had left my homeland for three years. I did not get any information from my parents, and siblings. They also did not know my well-being. At that moment, I was really excited. When nearly reaching the guest houses called the office of the East Zone, the delegation got out of the cars and walked to greet my relatives: *Bang Kim* (បង គីម), *Chè Krim* (ចៃគីម), the wife of the present commune chief named *Bang Hai* (បងហៃ). I asked them about my parents' well-being and told them to inform my parents that I was fine and to tell them not to worry about me. All of my relatives praised me since I worked with high-ranking leaders. They said I had good fortune. At that time, I did not speak much. I just asked them about my parents' well-being. Since I had left my homeland for three years, I felt extremely excited. I had never visited home as I strongly respect Angkar's disciplines and the tasks assigned by the Party. I dared not visit home. Five months later, *Bang Pang*, the chief of Office 870 and *Bang Miel* assigned me to work at the arsenal in Kampong Cham, so I could visit home, and my father told me that since they knew that I worked with Pol Pot, my mother, brothers, sisters and he were not forced to dig canals any more. They had my family worked in the collective kitchen. My position really helped my relatives at that time. In addition, when I was assigned to work at the arsenal in Kampong Cham, my name was changed by the leaders there. I did not name Niv Sarin (នីវ សារិន), but I was called Roth (រ៉ត្ត). At that time, I was assigned to guard the arsenal in Kampong Cham. I work in the transport section. They had me transport the war materials. Then in mid-1978, there was a crackle of gunshots in the East Zone. I heard that *So Phim* (សៃហ៊ីម) committed suicide. I did not know what happened since it was the internal affairs of the leaders. However, at that time, *Bang Pang*, the office chief of 870 and *Bang Miel*, the chief of transport office of K-12, were arrested. At that time, many high-ranking leaders such as *Ta Ros Nhim* (តា រស់ ញឹម), the Secretary of the Northwest Zone, *Ta Vorn Vet*, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy, *Ta Mei Prang*, Minister of Transportation and Railway and *Ta Cheng An*, the Ministry of Industry were arrested. Then in 1977, *Koy Thuon* was arrested. Therefore, due the policy of *when digging up grass, one must dig up the roots* and the strategy of killing the colleagues and soldiers, and policy of eliminating the enemies gnawing at the society from inside in the rank of cadres, many people were arrested. Since then, I was arrested and re-educated in the prison with no wall at Wat Chey Utdam as I mentioned earlier. Finally, I just want to add some more information. Now I do

not know the current location of the houses for the guest at B-1 and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the Pol Pot regime. House No. 1 is now the Council for Development of Cambodia and was the State Guest House to greet the guests with the positions of Presidents or Prime Ministers. House No. 2 now becomes Le Royal Hotel. House No. 3 now becomes the Radio Station of Cambodia. And the market for the foreigners during Democratic Kampuchea was now the White Hotel. Now it is called the China Town Lucky and the further part is the Asia Palace Hotel. At that time, this was the market for foreigners, delegations and diplomats from various countries. Plenty of things were sold there. House No. 5 that I mentioned earlier for the Chinese technical experts was the biggest building during Democratic Kampuchea. It is now called the National Service Authority (អាជ្ញាធរសេវាកម្មជាតិ) and the National Audit Authority (អាជ្ញាធរសវនកម្មជាតិ). The houses of the diplomats permanently working in Democratic Kampuchea at that time is the current German Embassy. At that time, it was the Korean Embassy in the east of the Independent Monument. I would like to say goodbye to both of you and wish you good luck all the time and good health in order to successfully work for our nation. Goodbye.

The End