

Cambodian genocide trial hears from S21 interrogator

Robert Carmichael

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Cambodia's genocide trial has heard the testimony of the former chief interrogator at the Khmer Rouge's infamous S21 prison.

Mam Nai, 76, is believed to have worked as S21 chief interrogator, which would make him the second-most senior member of prison staff still alive.

But Mam Nai denied holding any position of responsibility at the prison, where more than 15,000 people were tortured and murdered between 1975 and 1979.

He told the court he was merely a low-level interrogator who questioned less important detainees.

He says he did not torture anyone and had not seen anyone tortured or killed.

Lack of candour

He answered dozens of questions with the same statement: "I had no knowledge of that".

Mam Nai's apparent lack of candour may stem from loyalty to the man on trial, former S21 warden Kaing Guek Eav, who is also known as Comrade Duch.

Duch is charged with crimes against humanity and faces life imprisonment if convicted.

But Mam Nai's reluctance to talk could also be a reaction to comments made Monday by Duch's lawyer.

The lawyer said Mam Nai's testimony could result in the witness himself being charged, an assertion the prosecution has dismissed.