



**KRouge jail chief confronts tearful deputy
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Former Khmer Rouge prison chief Duch implored his deputy to tell the truth Wednesday at Cambodia's UN-backed war crimes court, but the weeping witness refused to admit to crimes.

Mam Nai, 76, was giving evidence at the UN-backed trial of his former boss Duch, who has admitted responsibility for overseeing the torture and execution of around 15,000 people held at Tuol Sleng prison, also known as S-21.

After two days of testimony in which Mam Nai said he knew nothing of torture at the prison, Duch stood in court and begged him to use the opportunity "to put together the pieces of the puzzle on this matter".

"You cannot really use a basket to cover the dead elephant. So that's it, don't even attempt to do that. And I think since I am ready to accept being accountable of all the crimes, I would want you to do the same," Duch said.

"So here, emotionally, we have to be accountable for the crimes committed," he added.

Mam Nai, wearing purple fingerless gloves, began to use the traditional checkered Khmer scarf around his neck to wipe tears as he spoke of using Buddhism to cope with his remorse about the late 1970s regime.

"I think it was a chaotic situation, and we have nothing other than being regretful. We could not do anything else," Mam Nai said.

"I am now trying to relieve myself by considering karma and religious relief, and of course I have regrets."

However Mam Nai refused to alter his previous testimony, in which he repeatedly fended off questions about conditions at Tuol Sleng, saying he could not remember or wished to remain silent.

Confronted by prosecutors Wednesday with his own prison log book, which contained numerous references to torture, the witness -- who was also a senior interrogator at the jail -- denied any knowledge that inmates were abused.

"Personally, I was never instructed on how torture was used," said Mam Nai, whose Khmer Rouge nom de guerre was Chan. "And I have no idea what other kinds of practices were applied by other interrogators."

When prosecutor William Smith asked whether he was seeking to block from his mind the "horrible criminality" of his past actions, Mam Nai answered: "I have never had such (an) idea. I am testifying based on the activities I have done."

The prosecution told Mam Nai that he would not be charged for past crimes he may have committed under the Khmer Rouge, but defence lawyer Francois Roux told him Wednesday not to believe their assurances.

Mam Nai told the court that Duch removed him from the interrogation detail and he became afraid he would be arrested after a prisoner alleged he was an enemy of the hardline communist regime.

"After he (Duch) told me that an enemy implicated me in his confession, he stopped me from being an interrogator and I was scared," Mam Nai said.

The 66-year-old Duch, whose real name is Kaing Guek Eav, has accepted responsibility for his role governing the jail and begged forgiveness near the start of his trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

But he has consistently rejected claims by prosecutors that he held a central leadership role in the Khmer Rouge, and maintains he never personally killed anyone.

Led by Pol Pot, who died in 1998, the Khmer Rouge emptied Cambodia's cities in a bid to forge a communist utopia. Up to two million people died of starvation, overwork, torture and execution during the 1975-79 regime.

Four other former Khmer Rouge leaders are currently in detention and are expected to face trial next year at the court, which was formed in 2006 after nearly a decade of wrangling between the UN and the Cambodian government.