



Praying together



Picture of community's spirit house, destroyed in eviction



Former Dey Krahom villagers and friends fill the street next to land that they claim legal right to.

www.licadhocanada.com

www.deykrahom.blip.tv

January 24, 2010

IN MEMORY AND IN HONOUR OF DEY KRAHORM COMMUNITY

For former Dey Krahom villagers and their many national and international friends/supporters, January 24th represents violent injustice and highlights both human cruelty and a government unwilling to give Cambodia's poor equal access to human and legal rights.

Chan Vichet, Dey Krahom spokesperson wanted January 24, 2010 to be about the 're-birth' of hope for Dey Krahom and other threatened or displaced communities across the nation.

And thus, approximately 140 former Dey Krahom villagers and more than 50 media, union reps, and NGO worker friends gathered at a pagoda close to their former land to give offerings to the monks and receive blessings. Afterwards, the group walked to the former Dey Krahom village, hung an enlarged photo of their former community spirit house and Boddhi tree and prayed for justice/karma.

In a powerful media statement read to the crowd, Vichet declared,

"We consider the event [eviction] the second killing field of the remaining Khmer Rouge regime. We, the residents of Dey Krahom, are hopeful that one day justice will come and the perpetrators, the order-givers, the accomplices and the people behind the eviction will all be brought to court[...]"

Dey Krahom people's strength, sweat, tears, and screaming will punish those bad people for the rest of their lives. Preah Ang Mrah Prao, [the name of] the Dey Krahom spirit from the sacred world, will destroy those who like to destroy the shelters of honest and poor people.

We wish all former Dey Krahom residents and other communities who are victims of land grabbing and the human rights defenders good luck and success [...] especially may the five Buddhist precepts be with you at all time."

After lighting incense, the villagers ate food across from the spirit house photo and chatted together, with friends, or with the media. Many Dey Krahom villagers expressed that the gathering made their "hearts happy" but for some, there was a strong emotional response from the memories. But as a whole I believe the gathering was successful because it met people's need to be heard, need to be acknowledged; their need for truth, need for unity/community...and having access to these human needs IS a form of justice; an unbending voice alongside unbending solidarity .

A Google search of 'Dey Krahom, Phnom Penh' reveals more than 24,400 web pages highlighting Dey Krahom's story. Isn't that also a form of justice? And isn't it also justice that a Google search of '7NG, Cambodia' shows 7NG illegal activities pertaining to Dey Krahom community by the third listing??