



IN LOVING MEMORY OF

**KEM LEY**

**1970 - 2016**

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ACTIVIST - POLITICAL ANALYST - HUSBAND AND  
FATHER



# **REMEMBERING KEM LEY**

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**HIS LIFE'S WORK & LEGACY**

**Early Life**

**Grassroots Democratic Party**

**100 Days With Khmer Families Campaign**

**Activism and Political Commentary**

**Continuing The Work of Kem Ley**

# BECOMING KEM LEY

*A Look into Kem Ley's Early Years:  
Youth and Education*

Kem Ley was born in Takeo province, As a university student, he developed a passion for medicine and research. He earned his master's degree at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand and earned his PhD from Malaya University in Malaysia.

# The Grassroots Democracy Party (GDP)

*An Independent Political Party*

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In 2015, Dr. Kem Ley founded the Grassroots Democracy Party alongside Dr. Yang Saing Koma, Mr. Yeng Virak, and Dr. Sam Inn. The GDP was founded to enable Cambodian citizens to freely participate in politics without fear and discrimination and change the dialogue of politics in Cambodia. The party values solidarity, justice, non-violence, freedom, integrity, and aims to create a more fair and equitable political climate in the





Image Provided by Kem Ley Foundation Facebook

# 100 Days With Khmer Families Campaign

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In his "100 Days With Khmer Families" Campaign, Kem Ley spent his time traveling the rural border of Cambodia to be with Khmer families to truly understand their everyday life. In doing so, **uncovering the strife, inequality, and human rights abuses the people experience because of land grabs** in Cambodia. Because of this campaign, Kem Ley discovered one of the paramount issues Cambodians face today.

"I want **everyone** to show their braveness"

- Kem Ley

**UNDERSTANDING**

# **THE KEM LEY CASE**

**SEEKING JUSTICE TO BRING PEACE**

How the work and voice of one of Cambodia's  
greatest advocates for justice, human rights,  
truth, and integrity became silenced.



## **MURDER IN PLAINSIGHT**

On July 10, 2016, Kem Ley was assassinated by Oueth Ang in the Star Mart of a Caltex Gas Station. Ang claimed he murdered Kem Ley over a loan of \$3000, but the murder occurred days after Kem Ley was in the political spotlight for comments addressing PM Hun Sen. At the time of his death, Kem Ley was at the prime of his career and was a symbol of hope to the Cambodian people that they could live in a world that challenged injustice. Hundreds of thousands marched alongside Kem Ley in his funeral procession and the eyes of the world are now on Cambodia as the country fights corruption and human rights abuses.



## EDUCATION & CREDIBILITY

### The Exposition

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Kem Ley was university educated in research and made strategic commentary, choosing to tell the truth without bias - giving him credibility and momentum.



## PUTTING IN THE WORK

### The Rising Action

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Kem Ley's 100 days campaign, video series, political articles, and interviews gained the support of many Cambodians, making him a government target.

## HOSTILE TAKEOVER

The corporate empire of Cambodia's ruling family



## THE FINAL STRAW

### The Climax

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Global Witness is an international NGO that openly confronts corruption. In 2016, they wrote a report on Hun Sen and his family's empire in Cambodia - reporting businesses and earnings - to which Kem Ley made commentary urging for Hun Sen to be more transparent. Days later he was assassinated in broad daylight.

# KEM LEY: A CASE STUDY

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*SEEING THE WHOLE  
PICTURE*



**"KILLING A WELL-KNOWN INTELLECTUAL WAS  
LIKE SENDING A MESSAGE TO THE PUBLIC  
THAT TOO MUCH EDUCATION IS NOT A GOOD  
THING IN CAMBODIA"**

HANG VUTHIKA

MA PUBLIC POLICY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM IN ENGLAND

# KEM LEY: A CASE STUDY

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*CONTINUED*



## SUPPORT FOR KEM LEY IN THE PRESENT

### The Falling Action

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As pictured, activist Kung Raiya is just released from jail on bail for his production of Kem Ley T-Shirts. Raiya is an example of how actions to bring justice or support the Kem Ley case can not be achieved in Cambodia. Supporters are being silenced by the government, as they serve grave consequences for actions that don't pose any reasonable offense.



## REOPENING THE CASE & CONTINUING A LEGACY

### The Resolution

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Kem Ley still has not received justice. There are many gaps in the investigation of his murder, the Cambodian government is still not being held accountable for illegal activity, and activist are still at risk when exercising their freedom of expression. There is **no resolution yet**.

# STAKEHOLDERS AND MEMBERS OF INTEREST

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*WHO CAN HELP TIE  
TOGETHER THE TRUTH*



**CALTEX**

## **CALTEX OIL**

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Caltex is a petroleum brand of the US company Chevron and the location where the murder occurred.

## **HUN SEN AND THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT**

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The role of PM Hun Sen and the Cambodian government need to be considered in Kem Ley's death, as evidence points to their involvement when the time of death and insider testimonies are considered.



## **OUETH ANG**

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At the time, Ang was 43 and a resident in rural Angkor Chum in the Siem Riep province of Northern Cambodia. To murder Kem Ley he would have had to travel 6.5 hours to Phnom Penh.

1

Oppose the government, speak truth on government negligence and injustice, or challenge Hun Sen.

2

Gain political momentum and pose as a challenge to the Cambodian government.

3

Murder occurs within a time frame where the victim experiences government tension and questions are raised as to why the murder happened

4

Evidence to investigate the case is minimal, insufficient, or dismissed - so as to not tie back to the Cambodian government.

# TRACKING PATTERNS

## Evidence Hidden in Plainsight

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In order to understand the implications of the Kem Ley case, it is imperative that we understand those before him. In doing so, the severe actions that the government takes to protect itself become revealed.

# TYING IT ALL TOGETHER



## THUN BUN LY (1996)

Thun Bun Ly was an editor for Odom K'tek Khmer (Khmer Ideal) and used his platform to speak out against the government. Prior to being assassinated, Bun Ly was charged for defamation/disinformation for criticizing the government in articles and cartoons and was forced to close his newspaper.



## OM RADSADY (2003)

Om Radsady was a senior member of FUNCINPEC and had close relations with Prince Norodom Sirivudh and Princess Norodom Vacheara. Around the time of his death, Radsady was helping FUNCINPEC navigate a lawsuit between Princess Vacheara and Hun Sen. It is thought that Radsady was assassinated for his involvement with the opposition.



## SAM BUNTHOEUN (2003)

Sam Bunthoeun was the founder and leader of the Buddhist Meditation Center of Odong. He was influential in the community and best known for speaking his truth. He was an opponent of the government's ban on voting by monks. Bunthoeun was assassinated outside of Wat Langka and his death was thought to deter monks from registering in the election.

# TYING IT ALL TOGETHER



## CHEA VICHEA (2004)

Chea Vichea was the president of the Free Trade Union of Workers of the Kingdom of Cambodia (FTUWKC). Vichea established the first free trade union in Cambodia and gained significant momentum in his advocacy of worker unions before he was assassinated at a newspaper stall in Phnom Penh.



## CHUT WUTTY (2012)

Chut Wutty was a prominent environmental activist in Cambodia who bravely spoke out against the government for illegal logging and land grabbing. Wutty was murdered in an altercation with the Cambodian military as he was escorting two journalists to the Koh Kong province - a location he worked to bring justice to.



## KEM LEY (2016)

Dr. Kem Ley was a political analyst of the Cambodian government. He advocated for all Cambodians to engage in politics so they can live in a world that upheld justice and peace through non-violence. He often spoke on the illegal activity and corruption of the government. Kem Ley was assassinated days after his commentary on Hun Sen in a Global Witness Report.

# THE GAPS & EVIDENCE TO CONSIDER IN THE KEM LEY CASE

## WITNESSES

The testimony of key witnesses states that the suspect met with senior military and local officials a week before committing the murder, indicating this was murder premeditated by the government.

## CCTV EVIDENCE

The footage from the Star Mart/Caltex Gas Station provided to the public does not show both parties clearly. CCTV footage also showed police officers speaking with the murderer minutes before it took place.

## CCTV EVIDENCE CONT.

Furthermore, there is no more evidence of the murder as the CCTV at the Caltex was destroyed months following Kem Ley's death.

# THE GAPS & EVIDENCE TO CONSIDER IN THE KEM LEY CASE

**\$3000 OWED? \$3000  
NOT EVEN BORROWED**

The family of the murderer and victim have both denied that there was a monetary dispute over \$3000, claiming that the two have never even met.

**PUNISHMENT FOR  
SUPPORT OF KEM LEY**

Individuals, such as Thak Lany, Kim Sok, and Sam Rainsy, calling on the investigation of Kem Ley's murder have been charged with defamation and incitement by the Cambodian government.





# KEM LEY'S LEGACY

BRINGING JUSTICE TO THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE - ADVOCATING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS - INSPIRING MILLIONS AROUND THE WORLD





# HOW DO WE CONTINUE KEM LEY'S WORK?

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TAKING THE NEXT STEPS  
TO MAKE HUMAN RIGHTS A PRIORITY AND  
PROVIDE JUSTICE TO THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE

# THE STRATEGY FOR ACTION

*THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, MEMBER STATES, AND NGOs IN CONTINUING KEM LEY'S WORK*



CONTEXT

THE STATE OF  
CAMBODIA

UNDERSTAND  
KEM LEY

HOLDING THE  
CAMBODIAN  
GOVERNMENT  
ACCOUNTABLE

IMPLICATIONS



# CONTEXT

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*HOW CAMBODIAN  
POLITICS CAME TO BE*

Hun Sen has served as the PM in Cambodia since 1985. He is part of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), which has been the ruling party since 1979 following the end of the Khmer Rouge. The **CPP has been scrutinized for a record of strenuous action to maintain power.**



# THE STATE OF CAMBODIA

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*WHAT YOU NEED TO  
KNOW ABOUT  
CAMBODIA **TODAY***

Cambodia has passed the Emergency Powers Act allowing "the government under an emergency to monitor communications, **control media and social media, prohibit or restrict distribution of information** that could generate public fear or unrest, or that could damage national security."



# UNDERSTAND KEM LEY'S CASE

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*WHAT YOU NEED TO  
KNOW ABOUT KEM  
LEY AND HIS CAUSE*

Identify the discrepancies in the murder of Kem Ley and see that there is more to uncover about **why a high profile political analyst was murdered** days after he **called for governmental transparency** and revealed how land grabs in the rural border affected Cambodia.



# HOLDING THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABLE

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*EXERCISING THEIR ROLE AS UNITED  
STATES CONGRESS MEMBERS,  
MEMBER STATES, AND NGOS*

- 1) Lobby for opportunity to **raise issue** with the Cambodian government
- 2) Suggest that the US and EU use EU **sanctions** more effectively
- 3) **Cut off trade** for human rights abuses



# IMPLICATIONS

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*WHAT THE ACTIONS OF THE  
UNITED STATES CONGRESS,  
MEMBER STATES, AND NGOS  
MEAN*

The Cambodian government is forced to address corruption and human rights abuses - creating the needed transparency. Countries that have stakeholders in Cambodia do not risk becoming involved with illegal activity and also show that they uphold human rights and justice.



# FACTORS TO RECOGNIZE

THE INTERNATIONAL  
CAMBODIAN COMMUNITY IS  
REVIVING THE KEM LEY CASE

THE KEM LEY CASE WILL BE REVISITED  
MARCH 2021 AT THE UN SESSION ON THE  
INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL  
AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

KEM LEY IS A SYMBOL FOR  
CHANGE IN CAMBODIA

WORKING AGAINST THE  
EMERGENCY POWERS ACT

INCREASING AND KEEPING THE  
MOMENTUM FOR CHANGE IN  
CAMBODIA

REASON FOR INTERNATIONAL  
INTERVENTION



**WIPE YOUR TEARS; CONTINUE YOUR  
JOURNEY**

KEM LEY