



## **KRouge prison head has no mental problems: experts**

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Mental health experts told Cambodia's UN-backed war crimes court Monday that the Khmer Rouge's main prison chief has no mental disorders despite having overseen the killing of thousands of people.

French psychologist Francoise Sironi-Guilbaud and Cambodian psychiatrist Kar Sunbaunat were testifying at the trial of Duch, who is accused of overseeing the torture and execution of some 15,000 people at Tuol Sleng prison.

"Is Duch suffering from a mental disorder? No, we have detected no mental disorder in the accused," Sironi-Guilbaud told the tribunal.

The expert went on to say that Duch, who worked as a maths teacher before the late 1970s Khmer Rouge regime, lived with disappointment but lacked sympathy for others.

"Duch (was) a man with one single idea, with one single thought at that time," she said.

Kar Sunbaunat added that the assessment, which stretched back to Duch's childhood and family life, revealed no signs that Duch had suffered from psychological problems.

Monday's hearing was boycotted by 28 of the 93 civil parties in the case, who are angry with judges after a ruling last week banning them from questioning Duch about his personality.

Chum Mey, 79, a survivor of Tuol Sleng prison, said the group would no longer attend the trial unless they were granted the right to ask the defendant questions.

Duch, whose real name is Kaing Guek Eav, has repeatedly accepted responsibility for his role governing the jail under the regime and begged for forgiveness from the families of the victims.

Led by Pol Pot, who died in 1998, the Khmer Rouge emptied Cambodia's cities in a bid to forge a communist utopia, resulting in the deaths of up to two million people from starvation, overwork and torture.