

Members of Ex-KR Families Become Monks

The Cambodia Daily

April 3, 2006

By Van Roeun

More than 300 young men and women and older people, most of them members of former Khmer Rouge families, were ordained into the monkhood on Friday in Pailin municipality, officials said on Sunday. Venerable Nhim Sothun, director of the Cambodian Students Association, said the novices are taking part in an 11-day novitiate during which they are taught Buddhist ethics and morality, domestic violence and drug abuse prevention. "We want youths to be good bamboo shoots," Nhim Sothun said. Tom Song, deputy director of Pailin's Information Department, said the program also aims to teach the young respect for their parents. His 18-year-old son is among the 177 young men who participated in the ceremony, which was sponsored by the Cambodian Students Association, he said. Sam Savoeun, deputy director of Pailin's department of cults and religion, said that at least three-quarters of the 306 novices were members of former Khmer Rouge families. The female novices are not required to shave their heads, but they must wear white dresses as nuns do, official said. Novitiates take place when students are on holiday from school for Khmer New Year. "Education related to Buddhism here remains limited," Sam Savoeun added.