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HUMAN RIGHTS IN THAILAND REPORT
NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 1979



In This Issue

To Our Readers	1
The Human Rights Situation 1979	2
Report from Up-country Promkiri - Assassination of Innocent People Continue....	5
Arrests and Releases	10
Activities of CGRS	12
Activities of Other Human Rights Groups	16
Short Report of the Seminar " Relief Program for Refugees "	18

To Our Readers

At the outset we would like to thank you for the tremendous help and assistance as well as your continuous interest and solidarity with our work throughout 1979. Not only has your support helped create significant improvements in the human rights situation in Thailand over the past year, but it has also been essential for our continued existence and work.

For three years the Human Rights in Thailand Report has been published regularly, and during this time we have always attempted to respond to particular requests and suggestions from our readers for improvements and changes. We would thus welcome any suggestions you might have for the forthcoming issues in 1980.

For 1980, because of considerable improvements in the human rights situation in Thailand, we have decided that the regularity of the report could be reduced to 4 issues per year (i.e. published every three months). However, if the situation changes, and we see it important that our readers receive urgent information, we are well-prepared to adjust the regularity of our publication to the situation. We also hope that with the less regularity we will be able to give better informations indepth stories and analysis to our readers.

We would appreciate that any of you who can afford to contribute towards the cost of the (re) production and distribution do so. It costs us and our friends who kindly take distribution for us about \$US30 per person per year. Thus any help you can provide to us or to the groups you receive your copy of the report from would be most welcome. Though we obviously will not cut anyone off the distribution list because they lack the funds, we would at the very least appreciate if those who no longer want to receive the report would drop us a line, so that our friends and we can avoid unnecessary expenditures.

We hope that 1980 will for you be a year of new faith, new hope, and commitment. We wish that your work, as ours, will contribute to the well-being of the poor and the peaceful world. We also thank you in anticipation for your continued participation in and solidarity with our non-violent struggle for a more just and peaceful society.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION 1979

Looking back at 1979 we can see that despite some setbacks, it was a year where considerable progress has been made in the Human Rights field. During the period, thirty political prisoners in four cases namely CGRS, Omnoi, Mini-bus Treason and Udom Pka-krong cases were released. Unjust NARC Decree 22 and Article 200 were abolished. Labour unions got stronger and more workers dared to challenge Martial Law. Students have accelerated their actions and established new unity and network among student unions in every university. New groups concerned with social justice and human rights have been formed, and many of them working actively. These progresses have been very important, especially when considering the great loss and discouragement of the people after the brutal October 6th Coup and the repressive governments that followed.

However, the victories are much smaller than the challenges ahead, since Martial Law, Anti Communist Activities Act and many of the NARC decrees still remain in force, government officials and paramilitary forces in sensitive areas continue to assault, arrest and kill people at will, and a large segment of the population still remain poor and exploited.

" Year of the Farmers "

There were some hopes that farmers' lives and income would be better when Prime Minister Kriengsak Chomanan announced 1979 as the " Year of Farmers " on January 1. A draft scheme was disclosed and a budget of 20,000 million baht (US\$1,000) was earmarked for agricultural development projects including small scale irrigation projects, price supporting schemes as well as a project to supply farmers with fertilizer at low prices.

The efforts of the government during 1979 to help the farmers have however not yet proved to be a satisfactory success. The farmers remain one of the most exploited groups of people, living lives of hard work in debts. The serious drought which has continued for more than 9 months in large areas of the country damaged the crops severely, and consequently pushed more and more farmers into the cities.

No real attempts have yet been made by the government to seek a short/long term solutions to the difficult problems borne by the farmers such as land, poverty and debt problems. In addition, the government has both directly and indirectly tried to stop the farmers' effort to get together and organized. Examples were the harassments and assaults in the countryside, in particular the assassination of the most prominent farmer's leader Chamras Muang-yam in July 1979.

The Labour Movement

The year 1979 was a challenging period for Thailand's labour

movement which saw a continuous struggle to overcome various limitations on both the amount of minimum wage and the attempts to attain legal rights for them to pursue their objective in safeguarding the interests of the labourers.

During 1979 many new labour unions have been established and during the second half of the year more and more workers have challenged Martial Law by staging strikes and gatherings. The labour unions have tried to seek legal rights in holding strikes, the strongest bargaining power of the workers, which was prohibited and taken as illegal by five orders of the NARC. The labour unions, spearheaded by the Labour Congress of Thailand, have demanded for the abrogation of NARC decrees. This move was supported by separate calls of The Lawyers Association of Thailand, the Union for Civil Liberty and the Coordinating Group for Religion in Society. But all the attempts were fruitless.

In addition to the workers' attempt to attain the legal rights to strike, the workers have also demanded for higher minimum wage. This latter attempt was successful, and the amount of 35 Baht per day minimum wage has been raised to 45 Baht since October 1, 1979, eventhough the unions have been pressing for 60 Baht per day. The workers' attempt to attain the 60 Baht minimum wage was unsuccessful due to lack of cohesion and unity among groupings of labour unions. While those under the Labour Congress of Thailand had demanded 60 Baht, they had to face counter-move by other unions who demanded only 45 Baht per day.

The Student Movement

The students' role and activities during 1979 have increasingly shown their responsibility for the Thai society, and have been more accepted and welcome by the Thai people. Having attained the rights to set up student unions through direct election since the beginning of 1979, the students movement became stronger and were able to tackle the social problems outside the university.

The students seemed to have carefully chosen to campaign on the issues which effect the lives of majority of the people. The 18 student unions have unitedly campaigned against the Vietnamese invasion upon Kampuchea, the increase of oil price by 60%, the government's attempt to increase electricity and pipe-water prices, and the high cost of living.

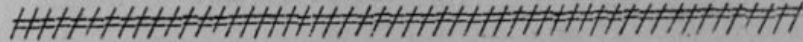
The students' activities have not been without problems. Their activities were seriously attacked by the Government radio broadcasts. A student music band was attacked by some gangsters during the show in Mahasarakarm province, without anybody being arrested. Noone can guarantee that these attacks will not increase in the near future.

Conclusion

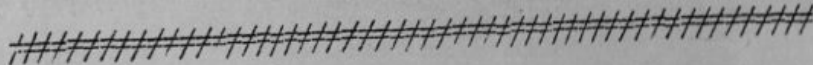
During the last year the overall direction has been positive. Eventhough most of the unjust laws still exist, the large segment of population still remain poor and exploited, and government officials continue

to be corrupted and misuse their power whenever the chance comes, we are still hopeful, As time has proved that inspite of all repressions, the people are still courageous and prepared to struggle for their justified rights and freedom, and to voice their protest against oppressive systems in society, however hard the struggle might be.

The coming year and decade will witness the intensification of the Thai people's struggle for social justice and equality.



Let our faith be as the stars
Glowing with great energy
Lets stoke up the flames of struggle in our hearts
Play the tune of victory
And head for a free Thailand



REPORT FROM UP-COUNTRY

Promkiri - Assassinations of Innocent People Continue

We have reported in HRTR March - April 1979 on the assassinations of two men from Promkiri sub-district in Nakornsrihammarat. Pew Sapsaichol and Chanai Chuthai were shot dead by soldiers on February 28th as they were suspected to be communists. Three months after that we reported on the disappearance of Somchit Morasilp a village headman in Promkiri who disappeared after having been "invited" by six navy officers for investigation.

Unfortunately in November the case of two men from the same sub-district being shot by Village Defence Volunteers (VDV) was reported to us. One of them was dead, and the other seriously injured. In December three men living in the same sub-district were reported to be shot dead and in January another three men. These seven persons were killed by a group of influential Village Defence Volunteers who got strong support and protection from a new sub-district chief of Promkiri, Chaiyot Suwanarit.

The Assassination of Pralom Kaewsuan

Amongst the seven killed was Pralom Kaewsuan, the 12th defendant in the well-known Udom Pka-krong Case.

On January 15th at about 5 pm. Pralom went to his friend's house. While he was talking with his friend a VDV named Viroj (last name unknown) came to see him and said that the village headman wanted to see him. Therefore Pralom went with VDV Viroj to see the village headman. When they came nearer to the house, Pralom saw a VDV carrying a carbin standing in front of the house. Out of fear Pralom turned backward and ran to the market. VDV. Viroj then shot at Pralom's back. Pralom fall onto the ground. The VDV. then shot at his head until he was certain that Pralom was dead. The VDV. searched Pralom's body, found 600 Baht cash (\$US30). He took the money and went away.

Pralom's relatives went to the sub-district office to inform the officials about the murder. However no officials came to carry out an investigation until late of the next morning. Pralom's wife had to stay out on the road the whole night, looking after her husband's dead body.

When Pralom was killed he was allowed out of the prison on bail, after he had been detained for almost three years on charges of attacking and robbing military camp, killing and trying to kill government officials and committing arson. Pralom was arrested when he came out of the jungle and surrendered to the Marines at Ban Donka in November 1977. He had fled to the jungle when there was a big arrest at his and many nearby villages.

The arrest followed the communist guerrillas' attack on the VDV. training camp in Tambon Huatapan at Tasala district which resulted in the death of six soldiers and their family members and the injury of further seven. In order not to lose their face the soldiers and the police soon afterwards arrested 11 persons, and accused them of being the guerrillas who attacked the camp. These eleven persons were forced to confess by

severe torture. (The eleven were later known under Udom Pka-krong Case. They were detained for more than 3 years in prison and were finally acquitted from all charges by the Criminal Court of Bangkok - See HRTR, September - October 1979)

At that time many men living in those areas had to hide themselves for fear of the arrest, including Pralom. " I saw nowhere to flee, so I finally contacted the communist guerrillas and went to stay with them for my safety, " said Pralom in his letter to CGRS.

Not long after the guerrillas' attack on the VDV's camp, the communist suppression marines established a unit at Ban Wang Lung School and three cannon bases in Noppitam and other nearby villages. They forced all villagers out of their homes and land, announcing the areas to be free-fire zones. At the end of 1977 the marines held a village meeting and declared that Pralom was the cause of people's sufferings and troubles, that if Pralom surrendered, they would allow the villagers to come back to their homes and land. They also promised that Pralom would not be harmed or arrested if he surrendered.

" I thought about this a lot. I believed that this promise was only government's deception but still I wish that the people would find peace and happiness if I surrendered. Finally I decided to surrendered, " said Pralom.

In spite of all promises, Pralom was sent to the " Democratic School " at Ban Cha-ien after he had surrendered. Eighteen days later he was sent to Tasala police station and was charged with attacking the VDV camp. On the next morning he was sent to the Central Prison of Nakorn-sriathammarat. About three years later he was released on bail. During this time he was killed, as he was suspected to be a spy for the communist guerrillas. The VDV's were also afraid that Pralom would tell the guerrillas to get rid of them. (It always happens that the guerrillas kill government officials, policemen, soldiers, VDV, etc. who cause much trouble to the villagers, especially when it is the demand of the villagers).

The Assassination of Plien Saeng-ya

In the following morning after Pralom was shot dead, Plien Saeng-ya, aged 48, who was Pralom's friend came to see Pralom's dead body which was still on the street. On the way back to his home by a motorcycle, two VDV's ordered the driver to stop the motorcycle. One VDV carried a carbin, the other named Dam carried a shotgun. When the three men get off the motorcycle, the two VDV's shot at Plien until he died. The driver and the other man (named Jek) fled away unharmed.

Plien had been suspected by the VDV's to be a spy for the communist guerrillas, and for this reason was killed.

The Assassination of Paew Sapsaichol



Paew Sapsaichol

In HRTR March-April 1979 we reported on the assassination of Paew Sapsaichol who was shot dead by the marines in February last year. Paew was the brother of Paew, who was shot dead by VDV's in December. The cause of Paew's death was even more absurd.

Paew Sapsaichol was killed by the marines shortly after a teacher told the marines that Paew was a spy for the guerrillas. Not long after that the teacher was shot dead by the guerrillas who took a revenge for Paew. The teacher's beautiful wife was left a widow, but not long after Chaiyot Suwanarit was transferred to Promkiri as a new sub-district chief, she became his mistress. In order to take revenge for her husband's death, the teacher's wife asked Chaiyot and the VDV's to kill Paew, who was Paew's brother and had been looking after Paew's family for almost a year. Paew was shot dead by VDV's on 17 December 1979.

Names of Persons Killed by VDV's during November 1979 - 16 January 1980 in Promkiri Sub-district

Mr. Semchai Intame	shot dead	4 November 1979
Mr. Kajern Rup-e	shot and injured	November 1979
Mr. Paew Sapsaichol	shot dead	17 December 1979
Mr. Yoi (last name unknown)	shot dead	December 1979
Mr. Supap (last name unknown)	shot dead	December 1979
Mr. Somwong Kengpet	shot dead	3 January 1980
Mr. Pralom Kaewsuan	shot dead	15 January 1980
Mr. Plien Saeng-ya	shot dead	16 January 1980

According to an informed source, there are still about 60 names of villagers at Promkiri sub-district on the black list of the VDV, which means that these people might be killed. Amongst those names were Udom Pka-krong and many of his co-defendants.

The Assassins

The VDV's at Promkiri Sub-district have acted more impudently than ever, since a new sub-district chief Chaiyot Suwanarit was transferred to Promkiri. Before Chaiyot came to Promkiri, there was only about 20 VDV's in the whole district. But now almost 200 men have been trained to be VDV's. Most of these VDV's had been gangsters or even thieves before, even though there are also people who were unwillingly forced to be VDV's.

Everytime the VDV's kill a person, Chaiyot will call for a village meeting. During the meeting the sub-district chief will denounce the dead person, and sometimes denounce the whole family of the person who was murdered. He has also said that if the VDV's were killed, every member of the house at which the VDV's were killed would be killed.

At present, after many men had been killed by VDV's, a considerable number of men from Promkiri sub-district left their homes. Some tried to settle down elsewhere, whilst the others chose to join the communist guerrillas with a strong will to take revenge on the VDV's.

Before Chaiyot came to Promkiri he used to work at Pipoon and Ronpiboon districts. Here he worked closely with Captain Sompong Sriyapan (whose picture taken with the heads of two murder men appeared as a cover of HRTR January-February 1979). When Chaiyot and Sompong were working at Pipoon district, they were involved in the famous case of 3 monks who were murdered in March 1977. Later, there was a scandle about VDV's killing villagers and the two were implicated directly in the killings. After the scandle the two were transferred to Ronpiboon district. Again at Ronpiboon, about 60 villagers were killed by VDV's who were directly under the command of district-chief Sompong and his colleague Chaiyot.

The Case of 3 Monks Murdered at Pipoon in 1977

At the end of January 1977 three men from Pipoon district came to Muang (Central) district of Nakornsrithammarat to be ordained as Buddhist monks. One was a respected deputy village headman of Ban Pakkiew and the two others were ordinary villagers who were suspected by the VDV's to be communist sympathizers. The ordination was welcome by the Sangha (the community of monks) without any objection. However three days after the ordination the three monks were arrested by the deputy district chief Sompong Sriyapan. They were detained at the VDV's camp 10 meters from the district office, inspite of serious objections from the monks at Chantraram Temple. The three monks were detained for almost one month. At the end of February Pra Klom (ex-deputy village headman) wrote a letter to a senior monk at Chantraram Temple saying that he should not be worried, as the investigation was nearly over.

On March 3, 1977 at about 21:00 o'clock, the three monks were brought to the investigation room inturn. During the investigation, two VDV's came from behind and wound a rope around the monk's neck. The two VDV's then pulled (at each end) of the rope until the monk died. The other two monks were killed in the same way, and all three were burried in the VDV's camp.

In the morning their families came to the camp as usual, bringing along with them some food for the three monks. The VDV's told them that the monks had escaped from the camp. Noone believed them, but could not do anything. (See more details in HRTR April 1977)

The Case of 60 People Murdered by VDV's at Ronpiboon

The case was disclosed to the public when a villager from

Tambon Santambon in Ronpiboon district - Saksit Suwanpakdi (26) fled to Bangkok, apparently to save his life, and appealed to the Prime Minister through a daily newspaper on November 15, 1978. He stated that the people in the district were murdered almost everyday simply because they were suspected of being communists. Saksit also submitted a list of 15 persons killed by VDV's.

Two days after Saksit had petitioned to the PM, the VDV's at Ronpiboon arrested 4 villagers who came to town to buy rice, without telling them of charges. The VDV's finally killed 3 of them. One villager survived because his brother used to be a VDV.

On January 2, 1979 four villagers from Ronpiboon submitted to the Interior Ministry a list of 13 persons killed by the VDV's. The four villagers emphasized that actually more than 60 people in Ronpiboon had been killed by the VDV's but they could not gather a full list of them.

These wide-spread murders began in September 1978 after Captain Sompong Sriyapan was transferred to Ronpiboon from Pipoon district together with his colleague Chaiyot Suwanarit. After Captain Sompong Sriyapan had been appointed a district chief of Ronpiboon, he grouped together the VDV's from all tambons in the district and ordered this group of about 100 VDV's to suppress the communists by "shooting every suspect to death". (See more details in HRTR November - December 1978 and January - February 1979)

It seems to be a common practise that whenever there is a big scandle about government officials misusing their power, these officials will be transferred to work at another province, town or village. To the government's point of view, this seems to be an enough punishment and the solution to the problems. But in fact the government is giving a protection for these bad officials, instead of punishing them. And the transfer usually causes even more problems than solve them. After these officials have been transferred to a new place, they will start repeating (if not increasing) every bad practise. Captain Sompong Sriyapan and Chaiyot Suwanarit are not at all an exception. Both had been working together in Pipoon and Ronpiboon, and had been involved in the killings of many villagers. When Chaiyot was transferred from Ronpiboon to Promkiri alone, he had learnt every bad tactic from his superior and know how to work by himself.

We are pleased when heard Gen. Prem Tinasulanonda say that there might be a revision of the policy towards the Village Defence Volunteers and the VDV might be abolished. We hope that the revision of policy will help reduce the large number of acts of vandalism and gangsterism carried out daily by the para-military forces, particulary the VDV. We also see that it is essential for the government to increase the control over its local government officials to act justly and treat the people with kindness and consideration, and punish the bad officials instead of giving them a protection. Now large areas in the South are on fire of war and fighting. More and more people join the communists and take up arms against the government. Very often the question of whether the people in the South support the guerrillas or not is much more related to the behavior of the government forces, rather than ideological considerations. At present the government suppression tactics have the effect of reinforcing communist propaganda and of pushing the people into the jungle.

ARRESTS AND RELEASES
(Nov - Dec 1979)

Arrest

4/11/79

Nine guerrillas of the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) stationed in Laos fled across the border and gave themselves up to Thai authorities. The nine men, who said they had gone into the jungle after the October 6th event, were quoted as saying that they had to flee to Thailand because of the heavy attacks by Vietnamese soldiers in Laos. They were identified as Framong Manipakorn (25), Supat Ritti (23), both former students of Udon Thani Technical School, Samruay Singnont (27), Baisi Pokaew (22), Supoj Chanachaisong (23), Chad Cheudkhampeng (18), Nupan Siltong (23), Si Tanglek (30) and Tiang Bunyeun (19). (Nation, Matichon, Thairat 5/11/79)

9/11/79

Five Vietnamese soldiers were arrested as they fled into Thailand from Kampuchea. They said to the Thai authorities that they fled the war to Thailand with the hope to go to third countries. (Banmuang 11/11/79)

/11/79

A CPT guerrilla, Miss Sopanin Kongsanti (18), gave herself up at a police station at Ao-Luk district in Nakornsrithammarat province. (Siengpuangchon 15/11/79)

1-15/11/79

Twenty-one CPT guerrillas surrendered to the Forth Army Region in the first half of November. The spokesman of the regional army said that eleven of the CPT members gave themselves up in Surathani province, three each in Pattalung and Songkla provinces and four in Nakornsrithammarat. (Bangkok Post 16/11/79)

15/11/79

A Kampuchean lieutenant was arrested from a Laotian refugee camp in Nongkai province after having residing there for over 2 years. He was accused of being a spy and having sneaked out of the camp for many times into Laos. He was sent to Nongkai police station awaiting deportation. (Thairat 16/11/79)

/11/79

Forty-six Vietnamese soldiers have surrendered to the Thai authorities because they were tired of fighting, said a Thai military official stationed at the Thai-Kampuchean border, Major Supong Srithamavudh. (Nation 17/11/79)

21/11/79

Five CPT guerrillas crossed the Mekhong River from Laos into Thailand and gave themselves up to policemen at Ban Mor checkpoint in Sichiengmai district in Nong Khai province. The five are identified as Suriya Chaolao (20), Phinit Wisasarn (21), Wanchai Ruechapand (20), Banjong Promraksa (20) and Somyot Cherdkotha (20). (Bangkok Post, Nation 22/11/79)

25/11/79

Seven guerrillas belonging to two secessionist groups gave themselves up to local authorities. Police quoted the guerrillas as saying that they could not tolerate the harsh life in the jungle. The two secessionist groups are the PULO and the BRN, both operating in the four southernmost provinces. (Nation 26/11/79)

1/12/79

A group of 204 northern hilltribesmen gave themselves up to Thai authorities in Tak province. Officials said that 80 of them were active fighters of CPT, while the rest were supporters. It is the biggest single group of CPT guerrillas to have surrendered to authorities in recent years. They were quoted as saying that they had decided to surrender because of hunger and hardship in the jungle. (Bangkok Post 2/12/79)

13/12/79

Panya Promchana, an ex-urban activist who joined the CPT forces in the southern jungle after the October 6th event formally gave himself up to the authorities, even though he had escaped from the jungle early August 1978. Panya, a father of four children, reportedly told the investigators that he decided to leave the jungle because of opinion conflicts with upper-level cadres, hardship, and bad health. (Nation 21/12/79)

15/12/79

Naren Hemsuk, a graduate in education from Srinakharinwirot (Prasanmitr) University who fled to join the CPT in the jungle after the October 6th event was arrested while he was carrying out his mission of mass mobilization in the area straddling the provinces of Krabi and Nakornsrihammarat. (Nation 21/12/79)

Release

20/11/79

Eleven people in " Udom Pkakrong Case " were acquitted of charges of attacking and robbing military camp, killing and trying to kill government officials and committing arson. However, only 9 of them were set free, because two prisoners were rearrested on charges of robbery and narcotic drugs respectively. These 11 people were imprisoned for more than 3 years before they were finally acquitted of all charges. (See details in HRTR September-October 1979)

ACTIVITIES OF CGRS

The Coordinating Group for Religion in Society (CGRS) is composed of priests, laymen and young activists from the Buddhists, the Catholic and the Protestant Religions, who share a common belief in non-violence, and feel that religion and spiritual value have a central role to play in development of Thai society. CGRS was founded early in 1976 but has become actively involved in Human Rights since the October 6th, 1976 Coup d'etat. For almost three years CGRS has carried out its activities openly, inspite of repressive governments and Martial Law. During this period the activities of CGRS have expanded considerably from merely helping political prisoners and their families and others suffering from conflicts in the society, to exposing misuse of government power and campaigning for its victims, for the release of all political prisoners and for abolishment of unjust laws; helping form other groups prepared to struggle for justice and human rights; supporting indigenous rural development groups and coordinating religious organizations.

All the efforts of CGRS are directed at tackling the injustices and oppression that exist in society using religious principles and non-violence as the basic method. In all these activities CGRS hopes to play a catalytic and coordination function, rather than doing everything directly itself.

Activities of CGRS

Visiting, Helping Prisoners and their Families

During November-December CGRS continued with its regular work of visiting and helping political prisoners and prisoners facing injustices, and their families both in Bangkok and up-country. On its visits CGRS provided prisoners with necessary assistance such as clothes, sandals, soap, toothpasts, medicine, books, etc. and also with moral support and encouragement. It also gave regular assistance to poor families of some prisoners, and from time to time arranged for the families to visit the prisoners or attend the trial hearings in Bangkok.

Providing Legal Aid

CGRS has been trying to ensure justice to political prisoners and prisoners facing injustices, that at least they should have legal protection, legal representatives and fair trial in just courts. CGRS has not only given direct assistance such as finding experienced defence lawyers for the prisoners, helping raise and arrange bail, etc, but also has given assistance to lawyers defending political cases, help organize lawyer groups, organize campaigns for the release of prisoners and against unjust laws, and so on.

Eleven defendants in Udom Pka-krong case were acquitted from all charges on November 20th. Only nine out of eleven defendants were set free, because 2 defendants Chao Chainarong and Vinai Boonwan were

rearrested on charges of robbery and narcotic drugs respectively. (See HRTR Sep-Oct 1979) On January 15 the 12th person who was arrested from the same incident and on the same charges as the eleven defendants in Udom Pka-krong case, namely Pralom Kaewsuwan was killed by a village defence volunteer at his hometown in Nakornsri Thammarat Province. When he was killed, he was allowed out of the prison on bail. According to a reliable source, names of most of the defendants in Udom Pka-krong case are on the black list - to be murdered. (See Page 5)

The hearings of defence witnesses in Somboon and Vichai Banlusilp case lasted one day on December 27th. Two defence witnesses gave their statements at the Military Court of Bangkok. The sentence date will be on February 12th.

Since the case goes to Military Court, the decision of this court will be final, without the rights to appeal to the Appeal or Supreme Courts. We therefore would like our friends to kindly take immediate action on this case.

URGENT ACTION NEEDED

To ensure justice to be done to Somboon and Vichai Banlusilp, please send letters and/or telegrams expressing your concern and urging that the two brothers get all the justices to :

PM. Kriengsak Chomanan
Thai Ku Faa Building
Bangkok
Thailand

Gen. Prem Tinasulanonda
Minister of Defence
Sanamchai Road
Bangkok, Thailand

Judge Advocate General
Lt. Gen. Pratin Pattanatham
Ministry of Defence
Sanamachai Road
Bangkok, Thailand

Some Facts about Somboon/Vichai Banlusilp Case

The case of Somboon/Vichai Banlusilp is a good example of how conflict with local influential people can lead to the arrest of the innocent on political charges.

Somboon Banlusilp (38) is a farmer leader from Ubonrajthani province. In 1975 general election he stood for an election under the Free Social Democratic Party, to which he was a leader.

Vichai Banlusilp (32) was an employee of the Telephone Organization of Thailand and a law student of Ramkhamhaeng University in Bangkok.

In 1975 the Kukrit Pramoj government allocated the ' Tambon Development Fund ' to various tambons in poor rural areas, with the hope to solve the problem of poverty by this money. (The Tambons were encouraged to carry out some ' development project ', using the labour of the farmers who would be paid with the money from the fund). The Hua Ruer Tembon Council decided to build a road to a school with this money. Somboon was elected a leader of the workers (farmers). The Tambon Headman named Daeng wanted to pay the farmers only 15 Baht (20 Baht = \$US 1) a day, so as to spend the rest of the money to hire a tractor. Somboon was strongly against this idea. He thought that they should not use a tractor, so that more farmers could work with higher wages. His idea was supported by the villagers. But still Daeng insisted to do what he wanted. Finally the farmers demonstrated to a district office to petition to higher authorities. Daeng then went to the provincial office and accused Somboon of inciting people to rise up and to be communists.

Shortly after the coup in October 1976, Daeng led the officials to search Somboon's house. The officials found only some books and 14 letters written to him by his brother Vichai. The officials did not arrest him. On the following day (15 October 1976), Somboon came to see his brother in Bangkok, and was arrested by Bangkok policemen who waited for him at Vichai's house. The police had got a letter from Ubonrajthani province, telling them to arrest Somboon.

On the following day, Vichai went to visit Somboon at the prison and was also arrested. It was until three days later (19 October 1976) that a charge of Endangering Society was filed against them. On 23 September 1977 they were released from this charge but were suddenly rearrested on communist charges.

The case was prosecuted at the Bangkok Military Court on December 27, 1977. The hearings of the prosecution witnesses lasted more than two years because of frequent postponements, whilst the hearings of two defence witnesses lasted only one day. By February 12th (sentence day), Somboon and Vichai will have been detained for about 3 years and 4 months.

Petition Urging Government to Investigate 8 Cases of Disappearance and Assassination

On the occasion of the Thai Constitutional Day and the International Human Rights Day (December 10), CGRS submitted a petition to Prime Minister Kriengsak Chomanand urging the government to investigate the cases of eight prominent citizens who were either killed or have disappeared mysteriously during the past 2 years, and urging for justice for these people.

Attached to the petition letter were detailed stories of following cases:

1. Rod Thani (68), ex-president of the Farmers' Federation of Thailand, was shot dead on July 5, 1978. (See HRTR July-August 1978)

2. Abdulmani Abdulla (48), leader of the Muslim community in Pattalung province, was shot dead on July 11, 1978. (See HRTR July-August 1978)
3. Pew Sapsaichol (38) and Chanai Chutai were killed in Promkiri Sub-district in Nakornsrihammarat on February 28, 1979. (See page 7 and HRTR March-April 1979)
4. Chamnong Raksa, headmaster of Ban Klong Lamplung school in Trang, was killed on March 26, 1979. (See HRTR March-April 79)
5. Somchit Morasilp (28), village-headman of Ban Moo 9, Tambon Promloke, Promkiri Sub-district, was disappeared since June 1, 1979 after he had been taken away by a group of marines for interrogation. (See HRTR May-June 1979)
6. Chamras Muangyam (50), ex-president of the Farmers' Federation of Thailand, was killed on July 21, 1979 in his hometown in Ranong. (See HRTR July-August 1979)
7. Prayoon Kaewpraju (30), headman of Tambon Plien in Sichol district of Nakornsrihammarat, was killed on September 1, 1979. (See HRTR July-August 1979)

Deputy Prime Minister Tavee Chulasap accepted the petition letter from 2 CGRS representatives and 4 MPs of the Democrat Party at the Parliament House. CGRS representative urged that the government control its local officials to act justly, and punish the officials who abuse their power. The Deputy Prime Minister said that he would give CGRS petition to the Prime Minister. He praised the human rights activities of CGRS, but concluded "One thing I would like to say is that all disgusting creatures have to be get rid of, to maintain the order in the society, such as mad dogs. We have to get rid of them".

A woman MP said to him that there need to be a proof that the dogs really had rabbies before killing them. "In many cases, they are assaulted by officials without any proof."

Campaign on Malnutrition Problem

A part of CGRS's rural development work is on the malnutrition problem. The Nutrition Research Institute affiliated to Mahidol University revealed some statistics from research findings that of all the 7 million Thai children from birth to the age of five, about 4 millions are under-nourished, and another 200,000 are critically malnourished and in great need of help. Statistics also shown that each year a total of 55,000 Thai children at this age died of malnutrition.

CGRS and the Foundation for Children is now assisting and supporting nutrition projects in 6 villages, mostly in the Northeast of Thailand. In order to conscientize the general public on this problem, its cause and solution both short and long term, CGRS together with the Nutrition Research Institute, Foundation for Children and the Buddhist Club at Mahidol University, held an exhibition "For Our Malnourished Children" on December 15-16, 1979 at the Ministry of Justice, Bangkok. During the exhibition there were two panel discussions, one of which the

speakers were villagers who ran the nutrition projects in their villages. There were also play, film and slide shows, puppet shows, poetry reading. There was a bazaar where handicrafts and many other rural products were sold. During the exhibition, there was a free charged service for health checking and a demonstration of how to cook cheap high-protein food.

The exhibition gained considerable interest from the public, especially the ordinary passer-bys (partly because the venue was near the biggest weekend market). About 15,000 Baht (\$US750) was donated in small donations from these people to support our projects.

Activities on the Death of Pralom Kaewsuan

Pralom Kaewsuan, the 12th defendant in Udom Pka-krong Case was shot dead by a Village Defence Volunteer in Promkiri sub-district on January 15, 1980. On the following day another villager from Promkiri, Flien Saeng-ya was shot dead by two VDV's. Before the death of the two men about five men had been killed by the VDV's, and there are still about 60 names of villagers in Promkiri on the VDV's' black list. (See page 5)

Regarding this wide-spread killings and misuse of power by VDV's, CGRS has arranged for the relatives of Pralom, who came to Bangkok to ask for justice, to appeal and give a statement to the Parliamentary Commission on Military Affairs and to appeal to the Lawyer Association of Thailand. CGRS also leak the news to the press. The Parliamentary Commission on Military Affairs has appointed a working team to investigate the case and to talk over the problem with various high authorities including the Minister of Defence and Minister of Interior.

Preparation on the Campaign for Prisoners Awaiting Deportation

CGRS has been extremely concerned with the 221 Chinese and Vietnamese detained at Bangkok Temporary Prison in Bangkok. These 221 persons are mostly old (aged 50-over 70) and have been detained for 5 - 16 years. They are illegal immigrants who after having committed a crime (however small it was) were sent to be detained in the prison, awaiting deportation. But because of the complication in the deportation of these people to the two socialist countries, they became forgotten prisoners.

CGRS is now trying to collect all necessary information and is in contact with two Chinese organizations which had earlier made a request to the Interior Ministry to allow these people to be released on bail. We are expecting to start the campaign for justice of these people in February 1980.

ACTIVITIES OF OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS

1. Foundation for Children held a street theatre at 4 public places in Bangkok to draw attention to the problems of working children, slum children and malnourished children. The street theatre, held on November 20th to commemorate to UN Declaration on the Rights of Children, won great interest from the passer-bys and the press.

2. Union for Civil Liberty, Lawyer Association of Thailand- Academic Affairs and Social Institute of Chulalongkorn University held a seminar on " Relief Program for Refugees " during December 8-10, 1979. About 90 persons participated in this seminar. (See a short report of the seminar on page 18)

3. During the recent past, a few new groups were established.

Mass Communications for Children Promotion Group Following the seminar on " Mass Media and Child Development " held during October 13-14, 1979 by the Journalist Association of Thailand, the Press Association of Thailand, the Reporter Association of Thailand and CGRS, the group was established, with the following objectives :

- a) to study the role of mass communications on children
- b) to support and campaign for good mass communications for children and
- c) to encourage more cooperation among the mass communications and between mass communications and the public

Thai Committee for Refugees During the seminar on " Relief Program for Refugees " held during December 8-10, 1979 (See No. 2) there was a realization that local organizations need to take greater parts in the relief works for refugees, and that there should be more collaboration among the organizations which work for the refugees, especially there should be a coordinating committee for these organizations.

Therefore various local organizations concerned with the problem formed up a " Thai Committee for Refugees ". The committee is now mapping out two projects which will be handled by local organizations and local volunteers.

The first project, financially supported by UNHCR, will be at Sa Kaeo Camp in Prachinburi province, and will include three programs namely the training program, the school program and the Buddhist temple program. The three programs will at first be handled by the Foundation for Children, the Foundation of Education for Life and Society (Harry Durance Foundation) and Mahachula Buddhist University respectively. However, more local organizations will be encouraged to join in this project.

The second project, financially supported by the Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO), will concentrate on one section (comprising of about 15,000 Kampuchians) in Khao I-Dang Camp, the biggest refugee camp in Thailand. At present five local organizations are involved in this project, namely the Community Based Emergency Relief Service (CBERS), the Coordinating Group for Religion in Society (CGRS), the Foundation of Education for Life and Society, the Foundation for Children and the Catholic Council of Thailand for Development (CCTD). At present the five organizations are making surveys, and hope to have a specific project within a month.

SHORT REPORT OF THE SEMINAR ON "RELIEF PROGRAM FOR REFUGEES"

Organized by Union for Civil Liberty
Lawyer Association of Thailand (Academic Affairs)
Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University
On December 8-10, 1979
At Chanthaburi Province

At present, there are a large number of refugees from Indochina in Thailand. About 160,000 refugees are living in 16 permanent camps and about 200,000 refugees are living in temporary camps at the Thai-Kampuchean border. This is an important problem to Thailand. Therefore 90 persons from various backgrounds (academics, lawyers, refugee officers, journalists, etc.) came to participate in this seminar which has the following objectives:

- a) to study the problem of relief program for refugees
- b) to propose any solutions to the problems, including long-term solutions
- c) to mobilize public opinion in favour of the refugees

The refugees in Thailand are faced with several problems :

1. General bad feelings exist between part of the Thai population and many of the refugees. This is due to distorted informations about the refugee situation, the cultural gap, the economic impact of immigration on local population etc.
2. Relief program for the refugees needs to be based on clearcut policies, to have a better coordination and a long-term planning in order to enhance the efficiency and to avoid the misuse of resources.
3. The way the refugees are chosen to resettle in third countries is rather selective and slow as compare to the number of the refugees and the capacity to accommodate the refugees in those countries.
4. The Thai participation to help the refugees for self-sufficiency is still inadequate.
5. The incompleteness of information or the confusing news about the refugees allow criminals and bad officers to take advantage from the refugees.

The participants to the seminar have the following recommendations

1. The mass media and the Thai Government should try to improve the presentation of the news and the opinions to the public in order to create more sympathy towards the refugees.
2. The Government ought to specify the long-term policy and to carry out the long-term planning to solve the refugee problems and also to improve the efficiency of the relief program. At present, Thailand receives help from several countries and organizations mainly through UNHCR. So, Thailand ought to seek a long-term assistance from UNHCR in order to acheive a certain integration between the Thai people and the refugees.
3. There should be more collaboration among the organizations which work for the refugees, especially there ought to be a coordinating committee for the Thai organizations as such.

4. In case of crimes against the refugees, the Government should see to it that its orders are being observed by local officers and that the laws are being reinforced. Besides, the Government should allow the mass media enough freedom to cover the news.
5. To solve the root causes of the refugee problems, a strong public opinion should be built up to urge for an immediate stop of the belligerent state, for a peaceful settlement of the Indochina conflicts and for an end to foreign interventions in the internal affairs of the countries in this region.
6. A campaign should be launched to urge all the nations to take part and more responsibility in solving the refugee problems. Especially, more long-term economic assistances should be given to the countries of first asylum.

The participants to the seminar nominated a follow-up committee to take care of sending the recommendations of this seminar to appropriate agencies and organizations. This committee will also try to seek ways and means to encourage more cooperation between Thai relief organizations, Government agencies and international organizations.

Resolution on the refugee problems

1. Cessation of belligerency

- a) To end the war in Kampuchea, there must be an immediate ceasefire declaration and a negotiation to solve any conflicts by peaceful means.
- b) The Vietnamese government must conform itself to the U.N. resolution by putting an end to the intervention in Kampuchea's internal affairs and by withdrawing its troop from the country.
- c) Government of all nations are requested to accept and take a firm action to assure that the Kampuchean are free to determine their own destiny without any kind of external interferences and coercions.
- d) Governments of all nations are implored to unitely appeal and take necessary steps in order to achieve the ceasefire agreement and the end of any political intervention in Kampuchea. The Thai government is requested to take a move for the negotiation in these matters with the Kampuchean and Vietnamese governments.

2. Remedies for the Refugee Problems

- a) Once peace negotiation is settled in Indochina, Thai government should feel obliged to send back the Indochinese refugees who voluntarily desire to return to their homeland.
- b) While the fundamental causes of the refugee problems have not been recognized and no action has yet been taken to solve the problems, all countries, particularly those involved in creating the turmoil in Indochina, are requested to be jointly responsible for the refugee problems and to accommodate more refugees. Also the Thai Government is requested to announce the policy inviting for more participation by the Thai population in the efforts to help the refugees to be more self-sufficient.