

Da Torpedo's 18 year sentence for Lese Majeste: Thailand back to the Dark Ages

Please consider writing letters to support her case

Saturday 5 September 2009, by [UNGPAKORN Giles Ji](#) (Date first published: 28 August 2009).

Last month Daranee Charnchoengsilpakul (known in Thailand by her nick name "Da Torpedo") was sentenced to 18 years in prison for "lese majeste" after a secret trial in Bangkok. The press were excluded from the trial and we have no way of knowing how the case was conducted.

Da Torpedo never committed an act of violence. She never killed anyone or destroyed anyone's property. She is a pro-democracy activist who made speeches in public. She has been jailed for 18 years for making these speeches. In Thailand, army officers and state officials who commit violent crimes against the people are free to enjoy power and privileges. The worst crime in the eyes of the Thai ruling elites, is to think for oneself and to express those thoughts. This is why Da is in prison. This is why Suwicha Takor and others are also in prison on lese majeste charges.

What is also shocking is the way that there has been complete silence from so-called "human rights activists" or NGOs and academics in Thailand about what has been going on. This can only be described as shameful. Amnesty International's long term policy of turning its back on Thai prisoners of conscience, jailed over lese majeste, is also appalling. It throws into question the role of this organisation.

What you can do

In my view, there is little point in writing letters to the Thai authorities about this.

However, what would be more useful is to write to Amnesty International and demand that they start taking up and campaigning for lese majeste prisoners in Thailand.

You can also send Daranee Charnchoengsilpakul ("Da Torpedo") a post card:

Daranee Charnchoengsilpaku
The Central Women's Prison, Klong Prem,
Ngarm Wong Wan Road,
Lat Yaow, Chatuchak
Bangkok 10900

** For further details please go to: <http://thaipoliticalprisoners.wordpress.com/>*