

Many of the 168 detained red shirts in the North-East denied basic rights

Saturday 21 August 2010, by [Correspondent\(s\)](#) (Date first published: 20 August 2010).

The People's Information Centre [[1](#)] is an "alliance of a dozen lawyers, academics and social activists formed a month ago to help red shirts who say they are innocent of any crime...". PIC has now accused the state of illegal acts against United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship protesters who were arrested following the government's 19 May crackdown.

PIC states that the suspects "should be entitled to fair and adequate medical treatment, and their bail should be based on their economic status...".

PIC has information on some 168 red shirts that have been arrested in the Northeast. Ubon Ratchathani has 60, Udon Thani 54, Mukdahan has 28, Maha Sarakham 12 and Khon Kaen has 10 in detention. However, they have no information on other provinces in the region.

PIC says that reports of "harassment and arrests were continuing to come out even though the emergency decree had been revoked in several provinces." Astoundingly, there are reports that "suspects in Mukdahan had been tortured to confess to arson. They were allegedly hit with hard sticks, kicked with combat boots and caned." One suspect, ill with the final stages of cancer has been prevented from receiving adequate medical treatment.

These are some of the serious issues facing these political prisoners:

1. Police evidence used for Warrants of arrest is unclear and lacking in legal standards. So people have been arrested and detained under conditions where there is a lack of clear evidence.
2. Those issued with arrest warrants are sometimes unaware of the warrants. This means that they could be facing further charges of "resisting or avoiding arrest".
3. Some of those who have been detained were assaulted by police while being arrested, despite not resisting arrest.
4. Police use threats and coercion to obtain "confessions". It is standard practice to tell defendants that their punishment will be less severe if they confess, whether this is true or not and whether they are guilty or not.
5. Many defendants are still denied proper legal representation.
6. Judges have decided to deny bail to Red Shirts, without using standard legal rules. The judges claim they will all try to escape court proceedings, despite having no evidence to prove this. The judges obviously see them as "political prisoners who are already guilty".
7. Prison conditions are brutal and over-crowded.
8. Defendant's families are suffering financial consequences. There is no welfare state in Thailand and the fabulously wealthy conservative elites are fiercely opposed to state welfare for citizens.

9. Those defendants who were shot or injured by security officers and those with long-term illnesses are denied proper medical treatment.

The government has repeatedly denied such claims claiming to abide by human rights principles.

PIC does not provide legal aid to suspects but is "calling on the authorities to respect their basic human rights..."

1. The Government must publish an up to date list of all those detained or facing arrest.
2. The Government must provide adequate medical assistance to those prisoners in need.
3. The Government must seriously review the procedures involved with issuing arrest warrants for these political prisoners, since in the past the authorities have just rounded up people without proper evidence. Many people are just detained for weeks and weeks while the police try to build a case against them.
4. Unconditional bail should be granted to prisoners. They should not be made to find huge sums of bail money.
5. Courts should uphold the basic standard which recognises the innocence of defendants until proven guilty in court.

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* From: <http://thaipoliticalprisoners.wordpress.com/> and Prachatai webpage newspaper

Updated: Detained red shirts allegedly tortured, denied rights

August 20, 2010

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According to the Bangkok Post [see article below] , PIC states that the suspects "should be entitled to fair and adequate medical treatment, and their bail should be based on their economic status..."

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Detained reds ‘denied rights’

Red shirt protesters arrested following the dispersal of their rally on May 19 are still being denied their basic human rights, the People’s Information Center says.

The centre, an alliance of a dozen lawyers, academics and social activists formed a month ago to help red shirts who say they are innocent of any crime, yesterday called on the government to release details of the measures it has taken against the anti-government United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship protesters in the wake of the crackdown.

The authorities should review the arrest warrants without basing their approach on the emergency decree that allows security officials to arrest suspects without charge, the group said.

The suspects should be entitled to fair and adequate medical treatment, and their bail should be based on their economic status, said Anusorn Unno, a Thammasat University sociology and anthropology lecturer.

The centre said that of the 164 red shirts arrested in the Northeast, at least 10 are women. Ubon Ratchathani recorded the most arrests with 60, followed by Udon Thani with 54, Mukdahan (28), Maha Sarakham (12) and Khon Kaen (10).

“What we have is only information about these five provinces but there are a number who were arrested elsewhere,” said Chaithawat Tulathon, the centre’s coordinator.

Others “are on the run for fear of not being treated fairly”.

Kwanravee Wang-udom, a human rights activist, said red shirts continued to distrust the authorities. Reports of harassment and arrests were continuing to come out even though the emergency decree had been revoked in several provinces.

Ms Kwanravee said suspects in Mukdahan had been tortured to confess to arson. They were allegedly hit with hard sticks, kicked with combat boots and caned.

Items such as passports, identification cards, mobile phones and religious amulets were taken during the interrogations, she said.

Suspects held in detention were only allowed to defecate outside their cells. They had to urinate into a plastic bag inside their quarters. They were not permitted to bathe for three days, she said.

The government has denied these claims several times, saying it abides by human rights principles strictly in the handling of red shirt suspects.

The group highlighted the case of Prayuth Moolsan, a 54-year-old former government officer and red shirt leader from Ubon Ratchathani who is in the final stages of cancer. Police continue to seek his arrest.

The centre was not defending these suspects against the charges made against them, but was calling on the authorities to respect their basic human rights, Ms Kwanravee said.

About the author

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* <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/politics/192047/detained-reds-denied-rights>

Footnotes

[1] The PIC website is: <http://www.peaceandjusticenetwork.org/> (in Thai).