

Thailand: Three leading protest figures re-arrested right after walking out of prison

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Panusaya Sithijirawattanakul, Parit Chiwarak, and Panupong Jadnok faced a long night after the court denied a police request to extend their temporary detention in Bangkok Remand Prison. Re-arrest was waiting for them outside amidst allegations of illegal arrest by the police, where violence was involved.



Panusaya and Parit talking to a lawyer in front of Prachachuen Police Station early in the morning of 31 October. (Photo by Sirachai Arunrugstichai).

On 31 October at 04.20, Parit and Panusaya were taken to hospital to be treated after being investigated at Prachachuen Police Station, a designated place of detention, awaiting charges from Ayutthaya Province.

According to a volunteer medic, Panusaya was suffering fatigue and exhaustion while Parit was injured during the re-arrest process.

According to iLaw, Panupong, who was hospitalized late at night on 30 October due to a commotion in a police truck, was met by Ayutthaya police at 06.45 who wanted to arrest him. He refused to be arrested in hospital as the arrest had in fact already been effected at Bangkok Remand Prison.

2 protests were held regarding the re-arrest, one at the front of Prachachuen Police Station and another at Ayutthaya Police Station.

Parit and Panusaya spent their time before the investigation speaking to the protesters at Prachachuen Police Station with some music and speeches. Protesters from time to time chanted "Free our friends". The Prachachuen protesters dispersed at around 04.45 after the investigation finished and the 2 were taken to hospital.

Thossaporn Serirak, a doctor and former MP, and Piyabutr Saengkanokkul, a former MP of the dissolved Future Forward Party, were seen travelling in the hospital van with them.

Long night after being released



The crowd in front of the Prachachuen Police Station during the night of 30 October.

On 30 October, the court denied a police request to extend their temporary detention. The three, with mo lam singer Patiwat Saraiyam who was detained with them, were released from Bangkok Remand Prison at around 20.00. People were waiting outside to welcome them.

However, police said Parit, Panupong, and Panusaya were re-arrested because they held 3 protests in Nonthaburi, Ayutthaya, and Ubon Ratchathani.

Noraseth Nanongtoom, their lawyer from Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (TLHR), argued that the 3 arrest warrants had expired. According to the Section 68 of the Criminal Code, they had already been arrested to be informed of those cases. Thus, the arrests could not be made with these warrants. The lawyer showed the documentary evidence as proof.

Plainclothes officers used a neck-lock against Parit and Panupong as they were re-arrested. They were injured, and Panupong reportedly became unconscious. Panupong was taken to hospital a while later.

According to eyewitnesses at Phong Phet intersection where the truck was waiting for a traffic light, Parit and Panupong opened the police truck windows, shouting that they were injured. Some people at the scene smashed the truck window and tried to help them. Many mirror shards were found embedded over Parit's body.

Another motorcycle was hit by the truck there. A rider said he was on his way home but was hit by the truck as he was trying to pass it. His motorcycle was dragged along, stuck under the truck and was heavily damaged. He said he would sue for legal compensation.

Panupong, Panusaya and Parit are prominent figures in the current pro-democracy protests in Thailand. Panupong was widely known from his activities in his hometown after the news of Covid 19-positive Egyptian military personnel strolling around Rayong Province.

Parit and Panussaya have spoken in support of monarchy reform and were among the first to publicly break the taboo and address the issue of the Thai monarchy.

Parit and Panusaya were arrested on 15 October after the severe state of emergency was announced, resulting in the protest crackdown in front of the Government house. Panupong was arrested later on 17 October at Hua Mak when plainclothes police smashed the window of the car he was sitting at. Patiwat was arrested at his residence in Khon Kaen on 19 October.

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P.S.

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