

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of "Disappearance"/Deaths in Custody

1 June 1992

THAILAND:

Than Soe  
Aung Kyaw  
Raphee  
Wa Toke

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Amnesty International is concerned that four Burmese nationals may have "disappeared" in the custody of the Thai police in Ranong. The bodies of two people, believed possibly to be Than Soe and Aung Kyaw, were found on rocks near a lighthouse some three kilometres from Ranong.

Than Soe and Aung Kyaw, together with five other Burmese nationals, were reportedly arrested in Ranong on 15 May 1992 by Thai immigration police on suspicion of being illegal immigrants from Myanmar (Burma). In the early morning of 17 May, they were taken from their cell at the police station with their hands tied behind their backs. They have not been seen since. Later, the bodies of two people, thought to be Than Soe and Aung Kyaw, were found on rocks close to the lighthouse and are said to bear marks of injury, including on their wrists where they may have been bound.

Raphee and Wa Toke were reportedly arrested by Thai police in Ranong on 22 May 1992 at about 12.30 p.m. They were on their way to the mosque when they were arrested at a bus stop near the town market, also apparently on suspicion of being illegal immigrants from Myanmar (Burma). They were taken to the police station.

On 23 and 24 May 1992, relatives attempted to send food to the police station for the two prisoners, but were unable to see them. They were told that they could see the prisoners in court on 25 May. They went to the court, and although prisoners accused of illegal immigration appeared, neither Raphee nor Wa Toke were among them. The relatives returned to Ranong police station to search for Raphee and Wa Toke, and were told by other prisoners that at about 12.30 a.m. on 23 May, police officers had taken them away from their cell and that they had not been seen since. No explanation of their fate has been given by the Thai police.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:**

- expressing concern for the physical safety of Than Soe and Aung Kyaw, and of Raphee and Wa Toke, who were arrested as illegal immigrants by police in Ranong on 15 and 22 May 1992 respectively and held at Ranong police station;
- explaining that there are fears that they may have been ill-treated or died in custody, as their whereabouts are now not known;
- urging that an independent inquiry be launched immediately to determine their whereabouts and that the findings are made public;

- urging that the inquiry also investigate the causes of death and the identities of the two bodies found on rocks near the lighthouse outside Ranong;
- urging that if the four prisoners named above are alive, the authorities ensure their safety;
- urging that any person responsible for their "disappearances" be brought immediately to justice.

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**APPEALS TO:**

1. Minister of the Interior

Asdang Road  
Bangkok 10200  
THAILAND

**Telegrams: Minister of Interior, Bangkok, Thailand**

**Telexes: 84791 IMFODEP TH (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

**Faxes: + 66 2 224 6191; + 66 2 223 2215**

**[Salutation: Dear Minister]**

2. The Governor

Suchart Thammongkol  
Sala Klang  
Ranong 85000  
THAILAND

**Telegrams: Governor Sala Klang, Ranong, Thailand**

**[Salutation: Dear Governor]**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:** to diplomatic representatives of Thailand in your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 July 1992.