

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST MISSING IN THAILAND

A prominent human rights activist has been missing in Thailand since 17 April 2014. It is feared that Pholachi Rakchongcharoen, also known as “Billy,” has been subjected to enforced disappearance in response to his activism.

Billy, 30, was last seen in the custody of park officials on 17 April in Kaengkrachan National Park in Thailand's central Phetchaburi province. According to park officials he was arrested for the possession of wild bee honeycomb and then released after questioning. But there are no official records of his detention and he has not been seen since. Billy is married and has five young children.

There are grave concerns that Billy may have been disappeared by officials angered at his involvement in a lawsuit against Kaengkrachan National Park officials and the Department of National Park, Wildlife, and Plant Conservation. At the time of his disappearance, he was travelling from his village to meet with ethnic Karen villagers and activists as part of preparations for the lawsuit, and was carrying documents related to the case. The villagers claim that in July 2011 the authorities were responsible for the burning and destruction of the houses of over 20 Karen families living in the National Park, and Billy was planning to submit a petition about the case to Thailand's king.

Human rights defenders in Thailand often face harassment, intimidation and attacks by officials and others opposing their work. In 2011, Karen activist Taskamon Oborm, who worked with Billy, was shot and killed by unidentified gunmen shortly after he helped villagers report on alleged abuses by Kaengkrachan National Park officials. No one has been brought to justice for his killing.

Please write immediately in Thai, English or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to take immediate steps to establish the fate and whereabouts of Pholachi Rakchongcharoen, also known as “Billy”, who was last seen in the custody of local authorities in Kaengkrachan National Park in Phetchaburi province;
- If he is in custody, demanding that he is released immediately, unless he is brought before an independent court, charged with an internationally recognizable offence, and if remanded have immediate access to his family, a lawyer and any medical treatment he may require.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 11 JUNE 2014 TO:

Caretaker Prime Minister
 Niwattumrong Boonsongpaisan
 Government House
 Pitsanulok Road
 Dusit
 Bangkok, Thailand
 10300
 Fax: +66 2 288 4016; +66 2 282 5131;
 +66 2 288 4256
Salutation: Dear Caretaker Prime Minister

Minister Vichet Kasemthongsri
 Ministry of National Resources and Environment
 Pollution Control Department Building
 92 Phohol Yothin soi 7
 Phohol Yothin Road
 Phayathai
 Bangkok, Thailand
 10400
 Email: rungtip.t@mnre.mail.go.th
Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:
Deputy Director General
 Nipon Chotibal
 Department of National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation
 61 Phaholyothin Road
 Lard Yao
 Chatuchak
 Bangkok, Thailand
 10900
 Fax: +66 2579 9504, +66 2298 5735,
 +66 2579 6886

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Human rights defenders in Thailand continue to face harassment, intimidation, enforced disappearance and attacks as a result of their work. According to a report by Global Witness (<http://www.globalwitness.org/deadlyenvironment/>), 16 environmental activists in Thailand were killed between 2002 and 2013. Those who suffer human rights violations, and their families, also often face intimidation if they attempt to seek redress.

Amnesty International calls on the authorities in Thailand to end impunity and ensure prompt, thorough, independent and impartial investigations into all reports of disappearance, for suspected perpetrators to be brought to justice and to provide effective protection to victims, complainants, witnesses and their families during the process. The organization also calls on the authorities to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, signed by Thailand on 9 January 2012, and to implement it into national law.

Name: Pholachi Rakchongcharoen, also known as "Billy"

Gender m/f: Male

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