

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST TAKEN FROM HOSPITAL IN THAILAND

Authorities in Thailand removed student activist Thanet Anantawong from hospital on 13 December where he was admitted for treatment. He is currently held in a military detention facility without adequate access to medical treatment, or to his family or lawyers. He may face up to 27 years' imprisonment for a post he made on Facebook.

Plain-clothed security officers detained **Thanet Anantawong**, 25, at a hospital ward at Sirindhorn Hospital, Bangkok, at around 12.10pm on 13 December. He was admitted to the hospital for treatment of a number of conditions, including inflammatory bowel disease. He is now being held in the recently opened Nakhorn Chaisri security detention centre in the 11th Army Circle military base in Bangkok, without adequate medical treatment, access to lawyers or his family. Authorities informed his family that his condition had worsened and asked that they bring him medicine, but denied them access to him. There are concerns about the treatment of detainees at the facility following two deaths in custody in October and November.

Thanet Anantawong faces up to 27 years' imprisonment on charges of treason and offence to the monarchy for sharing an infographic on Facebook, which alleged corruption on the part of government officials in relation to the construction of a park dedicated to the monarchy. He had previously been detained for several hours on 7 December after authorities removed 37 activists from a train who were seeking to visit the park in question – Rajabhakti Park, to highlight the allegations of corruption. The removal of Thanet Anantawong from hospital and any subsequent denial or delay to his medical care may constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

The Thai authorities continue to prosecute and detain people for perceived public criticism of the government or the monarchy, including online. They are also increasingly holding those facing charges in incommunicado military detention, where there is a clear risk of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

Please write immediately in Thai or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Thanet Anantawong;
- Urge them to grant him and all other detainees full and unimpeded access to their families, legal counsel, an independent, civilian court and independent doctors of their choice, and put in place and apply in practice all legal safeguards for those in detention.
- Reminding them of their obligation not to detain, harass or penalize anyone solely for peacefully exercising his or her rights to freedom of expression or association.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS 27 JANUARY 2016 TO:

General Prayut Chan-ocha

Government House

Pitsanulok Road, Dusit

Bangkok 10300, Thailand

Fax: +66 2282 5131

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Don Pramudwinai

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Sri Ayudhya Road

Bangkok 10400, Thailand

Fax: +66 2643 5320 / +66 2643 5314

Email: minister@mfa.go.th

Salutation: Dear Minister

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

Individuals held incommunicado in unofficial places of detention and military detention centres are at risk of torture. Amnesty International has received reports of the use of torture and ill-treatment in this context, including since the military coup in May 2014. There is also concern that detainees do not have access to adequate medical treatment.

Authorities in Thailand are increasingly charging and prosecuting individuals using Article 112 of the Penal Code relating to lèse majesté and security laws, such as Article 116 of the Penal Code relating to sedition, to quash peaceful criticism of their rule and activities. This includes activities such as sharing allegations about official corruption on Facebook, pressing “like” on Facebook images satirising the monarchy, and protests expressing peaceful opposition to military rule.

Authorities, who have already prosecuted significant numbers of people for their peaceful comments about the monarchy on Facebook, have signalled that they will further extend their crackdown. Thanet Anantawong’s detention follows the detention and temporary disappearance in custody on 8 December of factory worker Thanakorn Siripaiboon, a 27-year-old factory male worker who may face up to 32 years’ imprisonment for sharing the same infographic on Facebook, for pressing “like” on an image of the King’s dog, and a picture satirising the King.

As the military expands its involvement in the administration of justice, authorities are failing to observe international standards on detention. The military are using their extensive powers to arrest and arbitrarily detain civilian suspects. They are often held without charge and without access to lawyers and relatives. They are holding suspects in unofficial places of detention in military installations and in the recently created Nakhorn Chaisri security detention centre in the 11th Army Circle military base in Bangkok. In addition to concerns about civilians being held in military facilities, there are serious concerns for the safety of individuals held in the facility following the death there in late October and early November of two lèse majesté suspects.

Persons in detention have the right to the highest attainable standard of health care. A failure to provide adequate medical treatment is a violation of the right to health as well as the prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment.

Amnesty International is also concerned that authorities, in violation of the right to fair trial, are using military courts to try civilians for offences against national security and the security of the monarchy, and infringements of National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) Orders. Bangkok’s Military Court has summarily dismissed a number of legal petitions which have questioned its jurisdiction over civilians and which sought a ruling on the incompatibility of the use of military courts with Thailand’s international human rights obligations. Authorities are also systematically denying bail to lèse majesté suspects.

For more information, see *Martial Law Detainees at risk of torture*, (Index: ASA 39/1266/2015; <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA39/1266/2015/en/>), *Thailand, Attitude Adjustment* (Index number: ASA 39/011/2014 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA39/011/2014/en/>) and *Thailand, Torture in the Southern Counter-insurgency* (Index number: ASA 39/001/2009, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA39/001/2009/en/>).

Name: Thanet Anantawong

Gender m/f: m

UA: 290/15 Index: ASA 39/3086/2015 Issue Date: 16 December 2015