

## Phan Chhunreth



**Address:** # 6, Street 86, Village 22, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 54

**Family status:** Married with five children (one at university, four employed) and three grandchildren

**Nickname:** Yeay Let

**Occupation:** Housewife

**Land Title:** Arbitrarily excluded

**Charges:** One case. Charges: A. Abuse on state land; B. Obstruction against public officials

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment. Sentence not suspended

*“The house seems so quiet since we lost our mother...I am involved in the campaign now, because of her.”* Phan Chhunreth’s son, Oung Sothea

Phan Chhunreth has been living in Boeung Kak Lake with her family since 1997. At 54, she has five children and three grandchildren. Until her arrest she was the sole family member active in the campaign, but her resolve has now inspired her son to take action in her name.

For Oung Sothea, the biggest worry is his mother’s health. She has health problems and requires daily medication.

Oung Sothea learned of his mother’s arrest from a neighbor on the morning of 22 May. When he and his sister first visited her in prison she seemed very upset and was worried about her health. This first visit lasted only five minutes.

Unlike some of the other Boeung Kak Lake activists, Phan Chhunreth has never been arrested before. This makes it all the more difficult for her family to comprehend why she would be singled out. It is especially difficult for her grandchild to understand why she is no longer at home. Every day when they return from school, he asks, “Where is grandmother? I miss her so much.”

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## Cheng Leap



**Address:** # 182D, Street 80, Village 22, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 45

**Family status:** Married with five children (aged 18, 13, 12, 5 and 2); the three eldest children are still in school

**Nickname:** Yeay Jakechean (Grandma fried-banana)

**Occupation:** Housewife

**Land Title:** Yes

**Current & pending charges:** Two cases.

Charges: A. Abuse on state land; B. Obstruction against public officials; C. Insult; D. Threat to kill

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment. Sentence not suspended

*"I want my mother to come back home."* Cheng Leap's son Kol Pich, aged 12

45-year-old Cheng Leap is a key organizer of the Boeung Kak Lake community. The neighbor of Tep Vanny, the two families used to regularly meet to discuss events and discuss campaign strategies. Cheng Leap is a persuasive speaker and mobilized many others to join the campaign.

To support the community's protests, Cheng Leap and her husband Noun Tim, a driver, would use his Tuk Tuk to transport campaign materials and refreshments for their fellow protestors. Cheng Leap has been involved in the Boeung Kak campaign since 2007. Despite her high-profile activism she has previously managed to evade arrest.

On 22 May, the day of her arrest, Cheng Leap attended the protest with her brother and her 5-year-old daughter who had to witness her mother being dragged away by police. The family worries for her in prison as Cheng Leap suffers from health problems.

Cheng Leap has lived in Boeung Kak Lake with her husband, their five children and her brother since around 2003. Her youngest child is two years old.

## Heng Mom



**Address:** # 75, Street 86, Village 22, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 41

**Family status:** Married with one 12-year-old daughter. Her husband has six adult children from a previous marriage.

**Nickname:** Mom

**Occupation:** Housewife

**Land Title:** Arbitrarily excluded

**Current & pending charges:** Five cases. Charges: A. insult; B. threat to kill; C. defamation; D. abuse on state land; E. obstruction against public officials

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment. Sentence not suspended

*“There was no reason to arrest Mom. She only joined the protest to protect our land.”* Heng Mom’s husband, Sok Tong Heng

On 16 September 2011, 41-year-old Heng Mom and her family watched as their home of 18 years was destroyed. The family received no compensation. Over the next three months, her husband, a construction worker, rebuilt their home on its original site with money borrowed from relatives.

Even before the destruction of their home, Heng Mom and her husband had been active members of the Boeung Kak Lake community. She had been arrested once previously in fighting for her land, but not convicted.

Heng Mom’s husband is worried for her physical and psychological health in prison. On one of his visits he noted that “she seemed frightened, she was always looking behind her back as if she was afraid of something”. Heng Mom suffers from health problems and has previously needed counseling because of the Boeung Kak Lake situation.

Their 12-year-old daughter has been very shaken by the arrest and conviction, and is unable to concentrate on her schoolwork. Despite this, both she and her father are increasingly involved in the Boeung Kak Lake campaign. For them, it is important to continue campaigning in Heng Mom’s name.

## Kong Chantha



**Address:** # 43, Street 70, Village 24, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 41

**Family status:** Married with four children (ages 12, 14, 17 and 19), all still in school

**Nickname:** No nickname

**Occupation:** Housewife

**Land Title:** Yes

**Current & pending charges:** Three cases. Charges: A. insult; B. obstruction against public officials; C. insult and threat to kill; D. abuse on state land

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment. Sentence not suspended

*"I want all the foreign embassies here to lobby our government to release the 15." Kong Chantha's husband, Seak Heng*

Kong Chantha and her family are no strangers to land disputes. In addition to their home in Boeung Kak Lake, they own a plot of land in Preah Vihear province which has been the subject of a land dispute with the Cambodian military since 2004.

The family has lived at Boeung Kak Lake since 2000. When the land dispute began in 2007, they were afraid that they would lose their land again. They knew they had to take immediate action. Kong Chantha has been very active in the Boeung Kak campaign ever since.

Kong Chantha's husband and their four children were not initially worried when they heard of her arrest on 22 May; she had been arrested four times previously during peaceful demonstrations and the family had become used to police observation and regular intimidation. The news of the conviction two days later was a shock to them all.

Kong Chantha is said to suffer from health problems and she has previously required counseling because of the Boeung Kak Lake situation.

## Chan Navy



**Address:** # 111, Street 70, Village 24, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 57

**Family status:** Lives with partner and their six children (twins aged 2, others aged 10, 16, 18 and 20)

**Nickname:** No nickname

**Occupation:** Housewife

**Land Title:** Yes

**Charges:** One case. Charges: A. abuse on state land; B. obstruction against public officials

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment (6 months suspended)

*"They [the twins] know she is in prison, but I always tell them that she will come home soon... During the night they always wake up and ask for her."* Chan Navy's partner, Choun Madina

Chan Navy has lived at Boeung Kak Lake with her partner, Choun Madina, since 1990. She has been active in the Boeung Kak Lake campaign since 2007 but has never been arrested before.

Chan Navy and Choun Madina are the carers of six children, including two-year-old twins, Chan Navy's grandchildren. Chan Navy would often take the twins, who have been in the care of the two women since they were two months old, to the Boeung Kak Lake protests with her. They were also with her on 22 May, the day of her arrest.

On that day a neighbor bought the twins home and later called Choun Madina, a full-time teacher, to tell her about the arrest. Choun Madina is now struggling to juggle her full-time work with caring for the children. Despite this she has also now become more active in the campaign herself and continues to take the twins along.

The family are concerned for Chan Navy's health in prison – she suffers from health problems and since her imprisonment her symptoms are reportedly getting worse.

## Bov Sophea



**Address:** # 163, Street 80, Village 21, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 36

**Family Status:** Married with three children (aged, 8, 14 and 17)

**Nickname:** Srey Neang

**Occupation:** Housewife

**Land Title:** Yes

**Charges:** One case. Charges: A. abuse on state land; B. obstruction against public officials

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment. Sentence not suspended

*“When my mum was arrested, I was so worried about her. I cannot sleep. I cannot eat. I am so afraid that the police will beat her.”* Bov Sophea’s daughter, Ly Heng Leap, aged 14

On 22 May 2012, the day of her arrest, Bov Sophea was the only member of her family to join the Boeung Kak Lake protest. When her sister Bov Sophoan heard about the heavy police presence at the protest site, she became worried for Bov Sophea’s safety and called her.

Even though it was clear from the call that something was wrong – Bov Sophea had just been arrested - she sounded calm and told her sister not to worry, that everything was fine. Shortly afterwards a neighbor arrived to tell her sister about the arrest.

Bov Sophea has lived at Boeung Kak Lake with her family since 1994 and has been active in the campaign since 2007. Bov Sophea is particularly vigorous in supporting those families who have not been granted land titles. Since her arrest, her children and her sister have themselves become more active in the campaign.

The family has visited her in prison several times. The first visited lasted just 10 minutes. They are particularly concerned about her health problems, for which she requires daily medication.

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## Ngoun Kimlang



**Address:** # 83, Street 70, Village 21, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 54

**Family status:** Divorced, one child aged 16

**Nickname:** No nickname

**Occupation:** Street vendor

**Land Title:** Yes

**Charges:** One case. Charges: A. abuse on state land; B. obstruction against public officials

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment (6 months suspended)

*"I miss her. She always tells me it is OK, but I noticed that she has lost weight and she has skin problems."* Ngoun Kimlang's son, Khiev Pich Sangva, 16

Ngoun Kimlang and her family have been resident at Boeung Kak Lake since 1979. There are seven people in her household: Ngoun Kimlang and her son, her niece, her niece's husband and their three children. Ngoun Kimlang is divorced from her husband.

Ngoun Kimlang has been attending Boeung Kak Lake protests since 2007 but it was not until recently that she began to get more involved, attending every event. As she suffers from high blood pressure and has some difficulty walking, she would generally keep a low profile. She has never been arrested before.

When her niece, Sok Chanthorn, heard of the heavy police presence on 22 May, she called her aunt to check that she was safe. Ngoun Kimlang told her that everything was fine, that she was at the back of the protest and there was no need to worry, and hung up. At around 12pm that day she called her niece to tell her that she had been arrested.

The family has noted during their prison visits that Ngoun Kimlang seems strong, but they worry about her health – she requires daily medication. She has asked her family not to visit her too regularly as the visits are too expensive.

## Soung Samai



**Address:** #26, Street 86, Village 22, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 53

**Family status:** Widow with two sons, aged 18 and 26

**Nickname:** No nickname

**Occupation:** Housewife

**Land Title:** Arbitrarily excluded

**Charges:** One case. Charges: A. abuse on state land; B. obstruction against public officials

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment (6 months suspended)

*"If we don't join the protests we will never get our land back."* Soung Samai's son, Yin Soeun Sophat, aged 26

53-year-old Soung Samai moved to Boeung Kak Lake with her husband and two sons in 1993. She has been attending the protests since 2007. She has been arrested on two previous occasions but never convicted.

Soung Samai's husband was never able to join her at the protests because he was ill at home. He died in 2011; even in the weeks and months following his death Soung Samai continued to join the protests, determined to get their land back and to help others.

The eldest son, Yin Soeun Sophat, is the main breadwinner in the family, usually working 6 days a week as a waiter. Since his mother's arrest, however, he has had to care for his younger brother, cook and do the housework, and is only able to work two or three days a week. When possible he also tries to join the protests to support the campaign in his mother's absence.

On the day of her arrest, a friend called Yin Soeun Sophat to tell him about his mother's arrest. When he and his brother first went to visit her in prison, he said that she looked weak and was clearly not getting enough food. Soung Samai suffers from health problems.



## Tol Srey Pov



**Address:** # 49, Road 70, Village 24, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 35

**Family status:** Married with three children, aged 5, 9 and 11

**Nickname:** Pov

**Occupation:** Housewife

**Land Title:** Yes

**Current & pending charges:** Three cases. Charges: A. insult; B. threat to kill; C. abuse on state land; D. obstruction against public officials

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment. Sentence not suspended

*“I told myself that I have to be strong and courageous. I have to struggle because if I don’t my mother will not have a chance to be free.”* Tol Srey Pov’s daughter, Por Sokun Kanha, aged 11

When Tol Srey Pov’s oldest daughter first learned of her mother’s arrest from a neighbor, she was not worried – Tol Srey Pov was a prominent activist for the Boeung Kak Lake community and had been arrested twice before, but had never away for more than a day.

After two days had passed, she knew that this time was going to be different. Her father also knew that things were serious this time but he was reluctant to tell his children.

On the third day Por Sokun Kanha learned from a neighbor that her mother had been sentenced to two and half years in prison – “I cried and cried, then I walked home and told by brother and sister. We all cried, but then we stopped crying because we didn’t want to upset our father.”

Since her mother’s arrest, Por Sokun Kanha has been very active in the Boeung Kak Lake campaign and tries to attend and speak out at every event. Describing her mother’s absence, she says, “living without a mother is like living in a house without a roof.”

## Tep Vanny



**Address:** # 181 B, Road 86, Street 22, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 31

**Family status:** Married with two children (one boy, 7 one girl, 9)

**Nickname:** Srey Mao

**Profession:** Housewife

**Land Title:** Yes

**Current & pending charges:** Five cases.

Charges: A. insult; B. threat to kill; C. defamation; D. abuse on state land; E. obstruction against public officials

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment. Sentence not suspended

*"We want to show the world what is happening."* Tep Vanny's husband, Ou Kong Chea

Tep Vanny is one of the main forces behind the Boueng Kak Lake campaign. She has been arrested several times before, but not previously convicted. The family moved to Boeung Kak Lake in 2004.

A few days before her arrest, 18 displaced families from Village 1 contacted her and asked for her support during their planned protest on 22 May. Tep Vanny mobilized others to join the action in solidarity and to monitor the protest for any violations or threats against the participants. Tep Vanny's husband also attended the protest to take video footage of events.

At around 10am, Tep Vanny's husband left the protest to go to work. Tep Vanny called him about an hour later to tell him of her arrest. He didn't tell their children about the arrest until 24 May, the day of her conviction.

This is not the first time Tep Vanny and her husband have been involved in a land dispute with authorities. They have also lost land in Amlong commune, Kampong Speu province, in a dispute with a sugar cane company belonging to Senator Ly Yong Phat.

Since his wife's arrest, Ou Kong Chea has taken a leading role in the campaign.

## Tho Davy



**Address:** #139B, Street 86, Village 22, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 25

**Family Status:** Married with two children (aged 4 and 6)

**Nickname:** Mom

**Occupation:** Waitress

**Land Title:** Yes

**Charges:** One case. Charges: A. abuse on state land; B. obstruction against public officials

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment (6 months suspended)

*“Before we were granted a land title, others supported us. Now we want to help others.”* Tho Davy’s mother, Khin Thouch

25-year-old Tho Davy and her family have been active in the Boeung Kak Lake campaign for three years. She would regularly attend protests with her mother, brother and husband.

However, on the day of her arrest, Tho Davy was the only family member present. Her family learned of her arrest only when their neighbors returned home and told them what had happened. At first, Tho Davy’s mother was reluctant to tell her two grandchildren about the arrest, pretending their mother was busy at work. The children eventually heard about their mother’s arrest from neighbors.

Tho Davy lives with her mother, husband, and their two children. They have lived in Boeung Kak Lake since 1994. As a waitress, Tho Davy is the main breadwinner and since her arrest the family is struggling to make ends meet.

During her first prison visit, her mother noted that Tho Davy looked pale. Tho Davy told her that she is not eating properly and has problems sleeping but asked her mother not to worry and to concentrate on taking care of herself and the children.

## Song Srey Leap



**Address:** #215, Street 86, Village 22, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 24

**Family status:** Single, she has five siblings

**Nickname:** No nickname

**Occupation:** Housemaid/cleaner but at the time of her arrest she was in between jobs

**Land Title:** Yes

**Charges:** One case. Charges: A. abuse on state land; B. obstruction against public officials

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment (6 months suspended)

*"I feel strong. I have to continue my work with the campaign."* Song Srey Leap's mother, Ieng Bunnary.

Song Srey Leap is the youngest and perhaps least well known of the 15 imprisoned Boeung Kak Lake representatives. She had been to protests before, but generally kept a low profile. It is her mother, Ieng Bunnary, who is usually the most active and outspoken one of the family. Neither of the two women has been arrested before.

On 22 May, Ieng Bunnary was not feeling well so Song Srey Leap attended the protest alone. She was not arrested during the protest itself, but at the end of the event while she walked across the sand dunes to go home. Fellow protestors believe she was singled out after a struggle with police as they tried to confiscate a loud speaker from the protestors.

Ieng Bunnary received a phone call from her daughter at around 12pm that day telling her about the arrest. When she visited her daughter in prison, she found her daughter frightened. Song Srey Leap complained that the most difficult thing was the lack of places to sleep in the prison cell.

Song Srey Leap is usually responsible for paying the university fees for her younger brother, aged 22. Since her arrest these fees are not being paid.

## Nget Khun



**Address:** # 47, Street 86, Village 22, Sangkat Sras Chork, Khan Daun Penh

**Age:** 72

**Family status:** Seven children, all working, three grandchildren (two aged 6, one aged 10)

**Nickname:** Chin or Yeay Mommy

**Occupation:** Housewife

**Land Title:** Arbitrarily excluded

**Charges:** One case. Charges: A. abuse on state land; B. obstruction against public officials

**Date of arrest:** 22 May 2012

**Date of conviction:** 24 May 2012

**Sentence:** 2.5 years imprisonment (18 months suspended)

*"We haven't done anything wrong. Why did they come to arrest us? Why arrest innocent people?"* Nget Khun's daughter Eng Huoy.

At 72, Nget Khun is the oldest of the 15 Boeung Kak Lake protesters to have been arrested. She has lived at Boeung Kak Lake since 2005 and has been active in the campaign since 2007.

There are ten people in her household: Nget Khun, her husband, five of their seven children and their three grandchildren. Nget Khun's husband is approximately 85 years old – because of his age and ill health he rarely leaves the family home. Every day he follows the news, looking for any sign of hope that his wife will be freed.

On 22 May Nget Khun called her daughter to tell her about the arrest. At 8pm that evening, the daughter was allowed to visit her for just two minutes. On subsequent visits the family noted that Nget Khun seemed weak and visibly upset. The family is particularly worried for her health – Nget Khun has medical problems and requires daily medication.

Before her arrest Nget Khun was the main carer for her husband and their three grandchildren. The children in particular miss their grandmother, always asking when she will be coming home and why she is in prison.

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## Ly Channary



**Address:** # 7, Street 271, Village 1, Sangkat Tek La'ar 3, Khan Toul Kork  
**Age:** 40  
**Family status:** Married with three children (boys aged 7, 12 and 15)  
**Nickname:** Pov  
**Occupation:** Housewife  
**Land Title:** Arbitrarily excluded  
**Date of arrest:** 24 May 2012  
**Date of pre-trial release:** 15 June 2012  
(defendant must be available if called by the investigation judge; must visit their local police station on a regular basis and must not move residence)

*"Everyone joined the protest. I have no idea why they arrested her. Maybe they knew we were from the Boeung Kak Lake community."* Ly Channary's sister, Sok Seang.

Ly Channary was arrested on 24 May 2012 outside the Phnom Penh Municipal Court, where she had been called to testify as a witness for the 13 arrested Boeung Kak Lake representatives. She had been present at the 22 May protest but as an observer rather than an active participant.

Ly Channary and her family no longer live at Boeung Kak Lake. Their home, along with most of its contents, was destroyed in 2010 and the family received no compensation. They were able to retrieve only those belongings they could carry by hand before their house was completely covered with sand. The family owned more property at Boeung Kak Lake, which was also destroyed.

There are seven people in Ly Channary's household: herself and her husband, their three sons, her elderly mother and her sister. The family has never been active in the Boeung Kak Lake protests and cannot understand why she was arrested. It is particularly difficult for her three sons who repeatedly ask when their mother is coming home.

## Sao Saroeun



**Village:** Village 1

**Age:** 72

**Family status:** Married with three children, all working, and seven grandchildren

**Nickname:** No nickname

**Occupation:** Retired

**Land Title:** Arbitrarily excluded

**Arrest:** 24 May 2012

**Date of pre-trial release:** 15 June 2012 (defendant must be available if called by the investigation judge; must visit their local police station on a regular basis and must not move residence)

*"My husband is in prison but he hasn't done anything wrong"* Sao Saroeun's wife.

72-year-old Sao Saroeun was arrested on 24 May 2012 as he sat drinking coffee in a café near the Phnom Penh Municipal Court. He was preparing to testify as a witness that morning for the 13 arrested Boeung Kak Lake representatives.

Sao Saroeun himself owns a plot of land at Boeung Kak Lake and the police had been watching his activities closely.

On the day of his arrest, Sao Saroeun's wife received a call from a neighbor who told her about the arrest. Despite frequent requests, his wife was not permitted to visit him until three days later. She found him to be frightened and she is concerned for his health - Sao Saroeun suffers from health problem and needs daily medication.

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