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CAMBODIAN LEAGUE FOR THE
PROMOTION AND DEFENSE OF
HUMAN RIGHTS



ATTACKS AND THREATS AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS 2013-2014

A briefing paper issued in
December 2015

CAMBODIAN LEAGUE FOR THE PROMOTION AND DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS (LICADHO)

LICADHO is a national Cambodian human rights organization. Since its establishment in 1992, LICADHO has been at the forefront of efforts to protect civil, political, economic and social rights in Cambodia and to promote respect for them by the Cambodian government and institutions. Building on its past achievements, LICADHO continues to be an advocate for the Cambodian people and a monitor of the government through wide ranging human rights programs from its main office in Phnom Penh and 13 provincial offices.

MONITORING & PROTECTION



PROMOTION & ADVOCACY

Monitoring of State Violations & Women's and Children's Rights:

Monitors investigate human rights violations perpetrated by the State and violations made against women and children. Victims are provided assistance through interventions with local authorities and court officials.

Medical Assistance & Social Work:

A medical team provides assistance to prisoners and prison officials in 14 prisons, victims of human rights violations and families in resettlement sites. Social workers conduct needs assessments of victims and their families and provide short-term material and food.

Prison Monitoring:

Researchers monitor 18 prisons to assess prison conditions and ensure that pre-trial detainees have access to legal representation.

Paralegal & Legal Representation:

Victims are provided legal advice by a paralegal team and, in key cases, legal representation by human rights lawyers.

Supporting Unions & Grassroots Groups and Networks:

Assistance to unions, grassroots groups and affected communities to provide protection and legal services, and to enhance their capacity to campaign and advocate for human rights.

Training & Information:

Advocates raise awareness to specific target groups, support protection networks at the grassroots level and advocate for social and legal changes with women, youths and children.

Public Advocacy & Outreach:

Human rights cases are compiled into a central electronic database, so that accurate information can be easily accessed and analyzed, and produced into periodic public reports (written, audio and visual) or used for other advocacy.

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ATTACKS AND THREATS

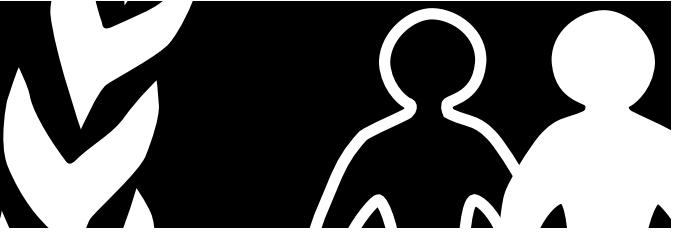
Against Human Rights Defenders 2013–2014

A briefing paper issued in December 2015

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LICADHO

CAMBODIAN LEAGUE FOR THE PROMOTION
AND DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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Monks and community members celebrate IHRD, 2014

Human Rights Defenders: Definition



Human rights defenders are social actors who, individually or part of a group, work to uphold and protect fundamental human rights through peaceful means.

Human rights defender can be:

- Students
- NGO staff members
- Teachers
- Lawyers
- Grassroots activists
- Union leaders
- Monks
- Community representatives
- Journalists
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) activists
- Medical professionals.

In this briefing paper, human rights defenders are defined with regards to the rights set out in the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). In determining whether a case constitutes an attack or threat against human rights defender, LICADHO considers whether the victim has undertaken activities that genuinely seek to protect or promote the human rights outlined in these international covenants, and if such activities have been undertaken on behalf of others.

* Politicians can also act as human rights defenders. However, the Cambodian government has a track record of associating critics with the political opposition, trying to dismiss legitimate criticism and grievances as playing “politics”. In order to avoid accusations of partiality, LICADHO has not included attacks and threats to political actors in this briefing paper.

Victims	2013	2014	Grand Total
Grassroots leader	3	6	9
Grassroots Members	10	15	25
Media	3	3	6
Monks	1	4	5
Multiple Groups	2	4	6
NGO Leader		2	2
NGO Staff	2	6	8
Union Leaders		7	7
Unionists	3	6	9
Grand Total	24	53	77



Defending human rights: January 2013 to December 2014



As human rights defenders continue to play crucial roles in challenging state abuses, Cambodian authorities have continued to use violence, intimidation and Cambodia's corrupt criminal justice system to halt their activities and silence their voices. 2013 and 2014 in Cambodia were dominated by the preparation for, and repercussions of, the highly contested 2013 National Elections. Hundreds of thousands of Cambodians took to the streets to demand change, but as 2013 drew to a close, authorities increasingly met protests with violence – a pattern that would continue into 2014.

A few days into 2014, Cambodian authorities launched an attack on freedom of assembly itself, including a blanket ban on public gatherings for the first half of 2014. State-perpetrated violence against human rights defenders during protests, strikes and other public demonstrations continued throughout the year. A number of cases saw mixed forces of military police,

riot police, and para-police – district security guards wearing motorbike helmets, frequently armed with batons, often used to violently break up demonstrations alongside police, targeting human rights activists, union supporters, journalists, and rights observers.

In addition, throughout the two years, human rights defenders were consistently subject to rampant abuse of the criminal justice system, including arbitrary detention, legal threats, and bogus charges.

However, despite the widespread abuse of human rights defenders throughout the two years, another pattern emerged – that of growing resilience by Cambodians in the face of oppression. Time and time again, people returned to the streets, defied death threats, and repeatedly risked – or endured – prison sentences to demand their rights and stand up for their communities and unions.

Union leaders and garment factory workers imprisoned after protests

Over 2 and 3 January, 2014, Cambodian authorities, including Special Command Unit 911, mobilized to violently disperse striking garment factory workers after days of widespread strikes over the minimum wage. During the brutal crackdown, mixed security forces shot and killed at least four people; at least 38 others were hospitalized, most with bullet wounds. To this date, there has been no credible investigation into the violence and no one has been held accountable for the deaths and injuries.

However, on January 2, authorities arrested at least four human rights defenders – Vorn Pao, President of IDEA, Theng Soveoun, President of CCFC, Chan Putisak, Boueng Kak Lake community representative, and Sokun Sombath Piseth, staff member at CLaRi-Cambodia – who had been trying to negotiate with security forces to stop the violence and release detained workers. Six striking workers and activists were arrested at the same time. Thirteen more men were arrested during the next day's violence.

All 23 were taken to court the day after their arrest and charged with intentional violence and intentional damage, both with aggravating circumstances. Three men were also charged with insulting public officials and blocking public traffic.

After the hearing, the whereabouts of all 23 people remained hidden from their families and lawyers – contrary to Cambodian law – until January 8. Government officials said that the 23 were being held in CC3 prison in Kampong Cham province, far from Phnom Penh, which is used near-exclusively to incarcerate convicts with heavy sentences. Each had sustained injuries during arrest and some were in urgent need of medical attention.

In February, two of the 23, one of whom a minor who had suffered a broken hand through beatings sustained during his arrest, were freed on bail.

After months of sustained protests calling for their release, the 23 were tried over five non-consecutive days starting on April 25 and ending on May 22. At the same time, the trials of two other detainees, who were arrested during garment worker protests in November 2013, also took place.

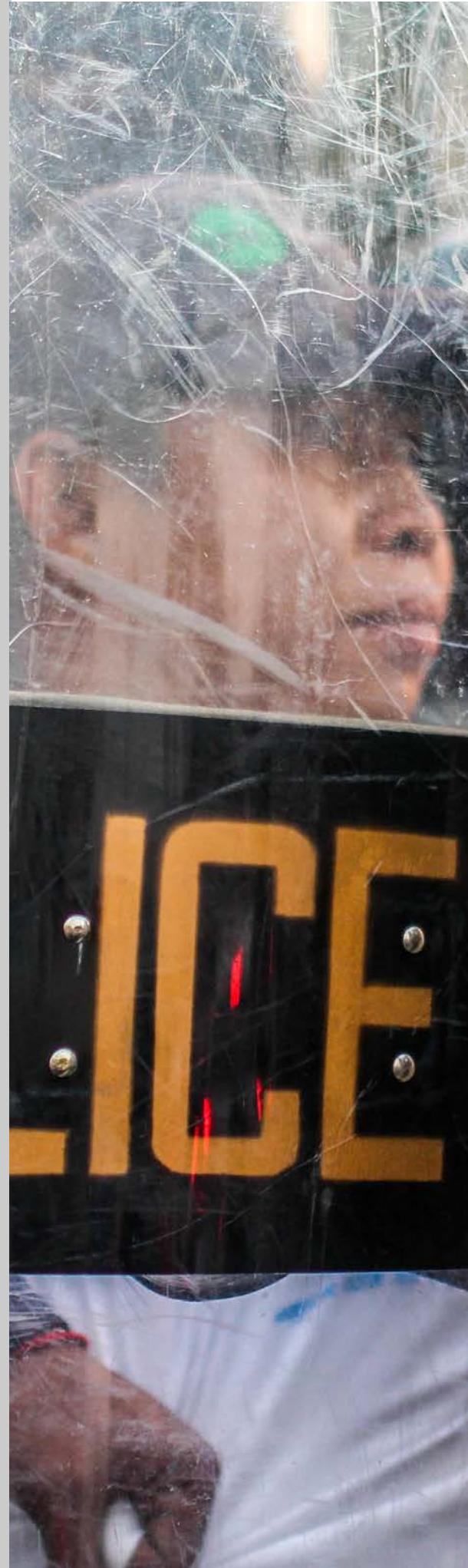
On May 30, judges returned their verdict. All had been found guilty and handed suspended prison sentences of up to four years, as well as hefty fines. The 23 were finally released, but the threat of imprisonment still looms over their heads. Vorn Pao, Theng Savoeun, Chan Puthisak Sokun and Sambath Piseth received particularly heavy sentences of between four and four and a half years; they are at risk of having to serve the remainder of those sentences at a later date if found guilty of other charges and the conviction may also disbar them from their union management roles.

This case not only demonstrates the use of the court system against human rights defenders, but also rampant impunity in the face of mistreatment and physical abuse perpetrated by authorities. There has been no investigation into their unlawful incommunicado detention, nor into the injuries sustained during their arrest at the hands of security forces.

Their release also showed the power of repeated and sustained protests. Despite the repeated instances of harassment, physical violence and arrest, communities and unions did not cease their calls to release the human rights defenders and workers. For example:

- On 19 January, a group who had gathered in front of the Royal Palace to protest the arrests was intimidated and physically harassed by about 50 para-police and civilians wearing black motorbike helmets. Sokchhun Oeung, the deputy of IDEA, was arrested in the early evening and detained overnight in Phnom Penh municipal police station.

- On 21 January, 11 human rights activists were arrested and detained by 40 Daun Penh para-police while leading a march to the US Embassy. Among the 11 arrested were Rong Chun, President of the Cambodian Independent Teachers Association (CITA), Tep Vanny and Yorm Bopha along with seven other Boeung Kak Lake activists, a staff member of Housing Rights Task Force (HRTF) and an activist from the Cambodian Alliance of Trade Unions (CATU). All 11 were released later in the afternoon after they agreed to sign a letter promising that they would not incite or take part in further illegal activities or demonstrations.



Clash in front of Royal Palace, where a union leader was arrested.



Violations (state and private perpetrators)	2013	2014	Grand Total
Abuse of Authority	2	24	26
Criminal Conviction		2	2
Detention & Arrest	1	19	20
Other	1	3	4
Interference with Freedom of Assembly	11	9	20
Non-violent	1		
Violence & Arrest	10	9	19
Intimidation	8	11	19
Death Threats	2	2	4
Legal	6	7	13
Violence		2	2
Loss of Livelihood		2	2
Demotion		2	2
Violence	3	7	10
Assault	3	6	9
Killing		1	1
Grand Total	24	53	77



Key trends



AN ESCALATION IN STATE-SPONSORED VIOLENCE

2013 saw a groundswell of Cambodians taking to the streets to demand their rights, particularly following the announcement of the contested National Election results. Their protests were repeatedly met with violence as authorities sought to silence human rights defenders by force.

On a number of occasions, human rights defenders at the forefront of calling for change risked their lives to do so. Four human rights defenders were arrested on Veng Sreng in the midst of two days of state violence that left four people shot dead. All four HRDs, along with 19 workers arrested alongside them, were badly beaten by state forces during their arrest.

Altogether over the two years, there were at least 19 cases of state forces violently dispersing protests, and deliberately targeting union or grassroots leaders, NGO workers and journalists.

One bleak feature of violence against human rights defenders in 2013 and 2014 was the increasing use of 'para-police', or security guards, working with police and in some cases with private companies to intimidate and control protests, as well as the re-emergence of groups of organized thugs in civilian clothing armed with slingshots and rocks. Armed para-police were increasingly used to violently disperse protests, specifically targeting union

or grassroots group leaders. It remains unclear whether there is any legal basis for the use of para-police in forcibly breaking up peaceful demonstrations.

The specific targeting of protest monitors and journalists by para-police and armed thugs proved another new trend that reached a peak on September 22, 2013, when a peaceful hunger strike by Boeung Kak Lake and Borei Keila activists at Wat Phnom was attacked with vastly disproportionate force as it was breaking up for the night. 30-50 military police officers, para-police and civilian thugs stormed the dwindling protest with batons, stun guns and slingshots, injuring ten community representatives. As human rights monitors and journalists rushed to the scene, the security forces and thugs turned their weapons to them: one monitor sustained a chest injury, several journalists received electric shocks from the batons, and a photographer's camera was deliberately smashed.

Crimes were also committed against human rights defenders with impunity. In at least 13 cases, human rights defenders were subject to physical assault and intimidation perpetrated by private individuals. In at least two of these cases, union representatives were beaten unconscious by members of a pro-government union. The perpetrators often remained unidentified, and as such were never prosecuted.

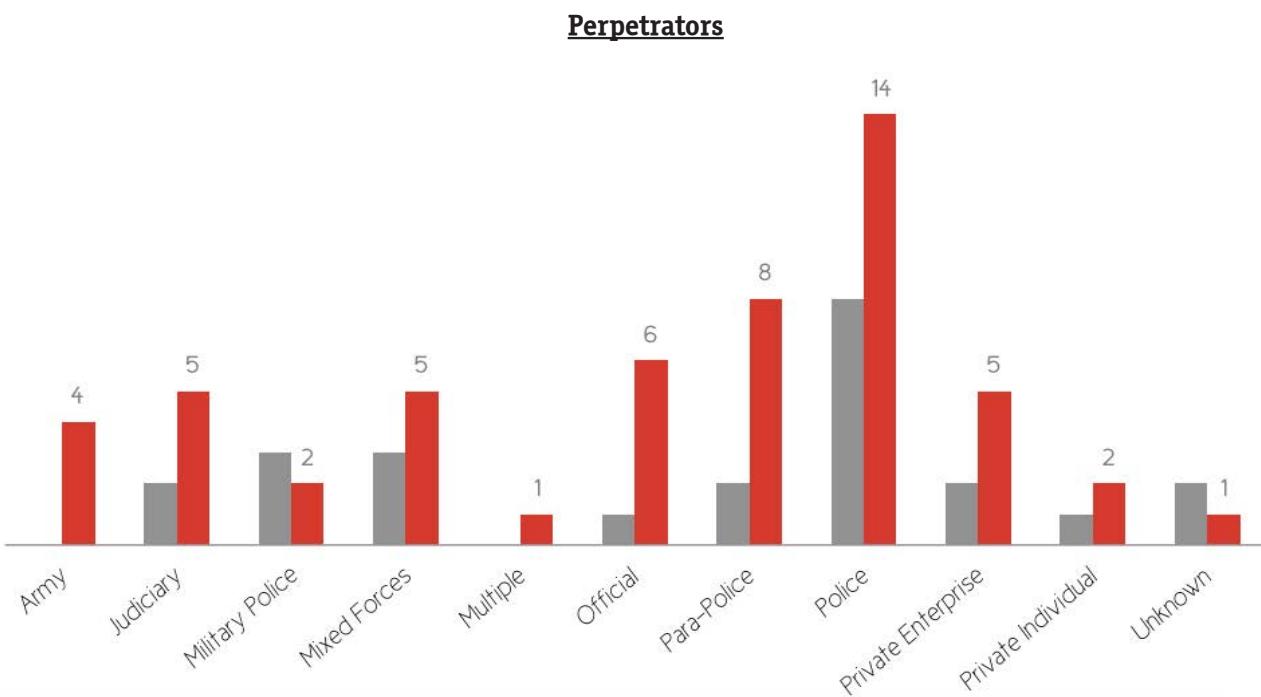
Protestors beaten

In October 2014, para-police in Phnom Penh violently dispersed 80 villagers and supporters from Preah Vihear province, who had come to Phnom Penh to ask for government assistance in resolving their land dispute, as police and police officers stood by near the Prime Minister's private residence.

The violence left a total of 18 people injured, several of whom suffered head injuries. Among those injured was Ouk Pich Samnang, who was also arrested and charged in relation to the protest.



Union leaders and communities clash with para-police at Freedom Park.



The absence of accountability for excessive use of force further indicates the total impunity in Cambodia enjoyed by those in positions of power. It also demonstrates the close collusion between the state and private interests; in a number of cases violence was perpetrated by security guards on behalf of private companies.

SILENCED BY THE COURTS

2013 saw a groundswell of Cambodians taking to the streets. In distinct contrast to the immunity enjoyed by security forces for their violent conduct, the judicial system remains a weapon to further attack and silence human rights defenders through groundless arrests

and convictions. In 2014, the number of human rights defenders arrested and detained shot up from 1 to 21, demonstrating once again the politicized nature of the Cambodian justice system at every level.

In some cases, HRDs were groundlessly detained for questioning, unable to leave until they had surrendered their materials and signed statements promising not to participate in any more protests; in others, HRDs were held without even knowing the charges against them. In cases that went to court, substantive and procedural laws were routinely ignored, and often the complete lack of inculpatory evidence to support accusations of wrongdoing proved no barrier to a guilty verdict.

The Legislative, Executive, and the Judicial powers shall be separated

ARTICLE 51

The Judicial power shall be an independent power. The Judiciary shall guarantee and uphold impartiality and protect the rights and freedoms of the citizens.

ARTICLE 128 Constitution of Cambodia

Charges used against human rights defenders vary, but a common theme is the use of charges which are particularly ripe for abuse given their vagueness, inadequate limitations and harsh penalties. Similarly

to previous years, charges relating to defamation, incitement, and interference in the discharge of public function proved particularly popular in use against human rights defenders.¹

¹ The Delusion of progress: Cambodia's Legislative Assault on Freedom of Expression, LICADHO, October 2011, available at: <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/reports.php?perm=162>

Attacks and Threats by Province (state and private perpetrators)	2013	2014	Grand Total
Banteay Meanchey province		2	2
Battambang province		2	2
Kampong Cham province	2	25	27
Kampong Chhnang province		4	4
Kampong Thom province		5	5
Kandal province	1	1	2
Koh Kong province		2	2
Kompong Speu province	1	2	3
Kratie province		5	5
Mondulkiri province		6	6
Oddar Meanchey province	14	20	34
Pailin province		1	1
Phnom Penh	10	15	25
Preah Vihear province	2	2	4
Prey Veng province		1	1
Pursat province	2	1	3
Ratanakiri province	1		1
Svay Rieng province	1		1
Takeo Province	6	10	16
Grand Total	24	53	77



Arrest of land activists

In March 2014, four representatives of land grabbing victims – Oam Somath, Oam Som UI, Pech Sothea and Tuon Mak – were arrested and accused of illegally encroaching on state land, and were detained at the Pailin provincial prison.

The arrests came after the four representatives had organized four different villages – Tom Nob, Ou Kantheang Vea, Anlong Reaksa and Phnom Krenh Pas Porl – to write a letter to the Prime Minister complaining about the destruction of their houses in an attempted land-grabbing. This did not bring about a resolution, and the District Governor pursued the charges against the four representatives of illegal encroachment. They were released on bail on July 10, 2014. A trial date has not yet been set.

Chi Kor Leu community protest against land grabbing, Sre Ampel, Koh Kong.

Type of Violation by Civil Society Sector	2013	2014	Grand Total
Grassroots Leader	3	6	9
Abuse of Authority - Detention & Arrest		3	3
Interference with Freedom of Assembly - Violence & Arrests		1	1
Intimidation - Death Threats	2	1	3
Intimidation - Legal	1	1	2
Grassroots Members	10	15	25
Abuse of Authority - Criminal Conviction		2	2
Abuse of Authority - Detention & Arrest		3	3
Interference with Freedom of Assembly - Violence & Arrests	7	6	13
Intimidation - Death Threats		1	1
Intimidation - Legal	2	1	3
Violence - Assault	1	1	1
Violence - Killing		1	1
Media	3	3	6
Intimidation - Legal	2	1	3
Violence - Assault	1	2	3
Monks	1	4	5
Abuse of Authority - Other	1	1	2
Intimidation - Legal		1	1
Loss of Livelihood - Demotion		2	2
Multiple Groups	2	4	6
Abuse of Authority - Detention & Arrest		2	2
Abuse of Authority - Other		1	1
Interference with Freedom of Assembly - Violence & Arrests	2	1	3
NGO Leader		2	2
Abuse of Authority - Other		1	1
Intimidation - Violence		1	1
NGO Staff	2	6	8
Abuse of Authority - Detention & Arrest	1	2	3
Intimidation - Legal	1	1	2
Violence - Assault		3	3
Union Leaders		7	7
Abuse of Authority - Detention & Arrest		4	4
Interference with Freedom of Assembly - Violence & Arrests		1	1
Intimidation - Legal		1	1
Intimidation - Violence		1	1
Unionists	3	6	9
Abuse of Authority - Detention & Arrest		5	5
Interference with Freedom of Assembly - Non-violent	1		1
Interference with Freedom of Assembly - Violence & Arrests	1		1
Intimidation - Legal		1	1
Violence - Assault	1		1



Garment factory workers protest for a living wage, December 2013.

RESISTANCE

Despite lethal crackdowns on demonstrations, physical assault, and the ever-present threat of the criminal justice system, human rights defenders continued and even intensified their calls for a fairer Cambodia over 2013 and 2014.

Land and environmental activists across Cambodia continued to fight to save their villages against developers who seek to clear the land and evict the people, often in conjunction with other groups and networks. The widespread garment factory strikes in 2013 and 2014 brought to the forefront another group of human rights defenders targeted by state agents: union leaders. At least 16 unionists were subject to violence, detention or arrest over the two years in attempts to stop them from organizing to call for better conditions and better pay. Many union federation leaders still have open pending criminal charges hanging over their heads following the events of Veng Sreng.

However, unions remain committed to their struggle and continue to demand fair treatment for Cambodia's workers. After the arrest of 23 human rights defenders and workers during the violent suppression of a January 2014 garment workers strike, human rights defenders from their communities and unions joined together in calling for their release time and time again, resisting repeated violent suppression as well as arbitrary detention of protestors.



RECOMMENDATIONS

LICADHO urges the RGC to take the following steps to improve the situation of human rights defenders:

- Conduct prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into threats and attacks against human rights defenders, and allow for prosecuting perpetrators to the fullest extent of the law.
- Stop unwarranted crackdowns on people peacefully exercising their right to freedom of assembly and expression. Stop the use of force by security forces, including para-police, against peaceful demonstrations and strikes.
- Ensure proper protection for journalistic work. Ensure the Press Law is used in court cases involving journalists in order to uphold the Cambodian Constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
- Revise the Penal Code to ensure that it respects the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the obligations vis-à-vis the international human rights treaties Cambodia has ratified. In particular, broad and vague provisions, especially incitement, and all provisions that impact freedom of speech, such as defamation and insult, should be revised to ensure that they do not impede freedom of speech nor allow for the arbitrary arrest of human rights defenders.
- Revise the Law on Peaceful Demonstration to ensure its articles uphold Cambodia's Constitution in terms of freedom of assembly, in particular the articles requiring that almost every public gathering receive advance permission from the government. Provide clear, coherent guidelines that allow for freedom association and expression.
- Implement the recommendations made by successive UN Special Rapporteurs on Human Rights in Cambodia with regard to strengthening the rule of law and the judiciary. This should include taking effective action to improve the independence and impartiality of the judiciary. Call for the judiciary to uphold its independence in all cases, but in particular for those involving human rights defenders.

Annex 1: Threats Against HRDs 2013 - 2014

4 January 2013

Case 1

(SEE ALSO CASE 2)

JOURNALIST THREATENED FOR REPORTING ON CORRUPTION¹

O Bei Choan commune, O Chrov district, Banteay Meanchey province

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- Sim Hiem, a journalist for Meatophoum Newspaper, received death threats over the phone and was threatened with a defamation lawsuit by Banteay Meanchey provincial deputy police chief Uk Keo Rathanak. The threat came after he published an article on allegations that a provincial court had demanded a \$2,000 USD bribe from O Bei Choan villagers in order to survey their land.

15 January 2013

Case 2

(SEE ALSO CASE 1)

VILLAGER THREATENED FOR INFORMING JOURNALIST OF JUDICIAL CORRUPTION²

O Bei Choan commune, O Chrov district, Banteay Meanchey province

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- Nhoek Sothea, the villager who informed Meatophoum Newspaper of the \$2,000 bribes being demanded by the Banteay Meanchey Provincial Court was also threatened with a defamation lawsuit by provincial deputy police chief Uk Keo Rathana.

21 February 2013

Case 3

(SEE ALSO CASES 6, 8)

UNION MEMBERS ASSAULTED³

Sa'ang district, Kandal province

VIOLENCE – ASSAULT

- Seven CCAWDU workers were beaten with sticks, pipes and stones by 20 people hired by the E Garment Factory. The workers had been on their way home from a protest demanding the re-instatement of 41 workers fired in a 2007 attempt to unionize.

22 February 2013

Case 4

JOURNALIST THREATENED FOR ARTICLE ON STRIKE⁴

Psar Chas commune, Daun Penh district, Phnom Penh

VIOLENCE – ASSAULT

- Voice of Democracy radio journalist Tat Oudom was assaulted by two unidentified persons when they intentionally crashed into his motorbike. The attack was related to a recent article he had posted about a strike at Kingsland Factory.

28 February 2013

Case 5

JOURNALIST SUMMONED TO COURT⁵

Kampong Preah Kokir commune, Baribour district, Kampong Chhnang province

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- Nou Chan, a journalist for Khmer Staphana Sophaan, was summoned to Kampong Chhang Court of First Instance to respond to allegations of defamation made by Kampong Preah Korkir commune police chief Pang Pum Sen after Nou Chan reported on Pum Sen's involvement in land grabbing.

¹ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: BM006THI13.

² Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: BM007THI13.

³ Mom Kunthear, "Union says members beaten for second time", 25 February 2013, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/union-says-members-beaten-second-time>

⁴ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: PP023THI13.

⁵ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: KN008THI13. See Also LICADHO, "Attacks & Threats Against Human Rights Defenders in Cambodia: 2010-2012", December 2012, case 73.

5 March 2013

Case 6

(SEE ALSO CASES 3, 8)

LABOUR RIGHTS ACTIVISTS DETAINED⁶

Kandal province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Five international activists from labour-rights group Clean Clothes Campaign were arrested outside the E Garment factory after they had addressed striking workers.
- Police claimed that the activists had been detained for failing to present a passport, a common justification for detaining foreign activists. They were released after six hours of detention.

11 March 2013

Case 7

VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVE RECEIVES DEATH THREAT⁷

Tasanh commune, Samlot district, Battambang province

INTIMIDATION – DEATH THREATS

- Heng Samaly, representative of O Snguot village, received a death threat from Chhorn Pheng, the district police chief, and Hem Sarum, the commune police chief, and two other individuals. The incident occurred after Samaly spoke on RFA Radio about how local authorities had asked villagers to pay for land surveys conducted by student volunteers.

11 March 2013

Case 8

(SEE ALSO CASES 3, 6)

FOUR CCAWDAU UNION MEMBERS SEVERELY BEATEN⁸

Svay Rolum commune, S'ang district, Kandal province

VIOLENCE – ASSAULT

- Four Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers' Democratic Union (CCAWDAU) representatives were beaten unconscious with wooden sticks after they left a protest held by 200 E Garment Factory workers.
- The four union members had been monitoring the protest and providing workers information on their rights under Cambodian labour law. The assailants were 10 members of another, pro-government union, and were led by an E Garment assistant manager.

13 March 2013

Case 9

PREY LANG FOREST ACTIVISTS SUMMONED TO COURT⁹

Au SleokKrey village, Sandan district, Kampong Thom province

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- Nine forest activists, Chheang Vuthy, Prom Suy, Hein Hai, Sao Korn, Meas Vorn, Meas Koeung, Moa Thea, Noun Ken and Doung Chay, were summoned to Kampong Thom Provincial Court for questioning. The summons related to a complaint made against them by Ul Rotha, a well-connected land-owner, after they attempted to prevent her from clearing a forested area in 2011.

⁶ Shane Worrell & Cheang Sokha, "Foreign activists detained", Phnom Penh Post, 6 March 2013, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/foreign-activists-detained>

⁷ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: BB020DT13.

⁸ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: PP031AK13.

⁹ CCHR Alerts, "Kampong Thom Provincial Court summons nine Prey Lang community activists from Sandan district for questioning on 14 March 2013", 13 March 2013, http://www.cchrcambodia.org/index_old.php?url=media/media.php&p=alert_detail.php&alid=35&id=5

13 March 2013

Case 10

BOEUNG KAK ACTIVISTS BEATEN BY MILITARY POLICE¹⁰

Chakto Mukh commune, Daun Penh district, Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- On 13 March 2013 a group of peaceful protesters from the Boeung Kak community were violently dispersed by a group of mixed security forces, just 100 meters from the Prime Minister's house in central Phnom Penh. As a result of the crackdown, six protesters were seriously injured, including Lous Sakhorn, husband of imprisoned Boeung Kak activist Yorm Bopha, who had several of his teeth knocked out when he was set upon by approximately ten security guards. One woman, Nhok Sophat, had her arm broken while another, Nget Khun, aged 70, was knocked unconscious.

2 April 2013

Case 11

LAND ACTIVIST RECEIVES DEATH THREATS¹¹

Thma Da commune, Veal Veng district, Pursat province

INTIMIDATION – DEATH THREATS

- Chhoem Srey, a land activist, received death threats from two unidentified armed individuals. Chhoem had been returning from an ADHOC workshop on landgrabbing when the individuals approached him, fired shots into the air and told him that he and his family would be killed if he joined any protests.
- Chhoem's village chief denied any knowledge of the case but district police agreed to investigate further.

14 April 2013

Case 12

ADHOC STAFF SUBJECT TO FALSE INVESTIGATION¹²

O'Yadav district, Ratanakiri province

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- ADHOC provincial co-ordinator for Ratanakkiri province, Chhay Thy, was investigated by provincial authorities for instigating an anti-government movement after he suggested to ethnic Jarai villagers that they could use non-violent protests as a means to end government inaction in their land dispute.
- The investigation was opened despite the fact that non-violent protest is guaranteed by article 41 of the Cambodian Constitution. Authorities closed the investigation a week later.

22 April 2013

Case 13

LAND ACTIVISTS PROTEST BLOCKED¹³

Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- Land activists were blocked and harassed by 200 police officers as they demonstrated in front of a Cambodian People's Party office. When police attempted to command the protesters to disperse one officer pretended to grope Bo Chhorvy, a Boeung Kak activist.

¹⁰ LICADHO Press Release, "Continued Violence Intensifies the Need for Resolution to Ongoing Land Conflicts in Phnom Penh" 13 July 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=316>

¹¹ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: PS016THI13.

¹² Phak Seangly, "Case against NGO worker dropped" Phnom Penh Post, 14 April 2014, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/case-against-ngo-worker-dropped>

¹³ Khouth Sophak Chakrya, "Women, cops clash at land protest", Phnom Penh Post, 23 April 2013, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/women-cops-clash-land-protest>

¹⁴ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: PP049THI13.

25 April 2013

Case 14

MILITARY POLICE FORCE ACTIVIST MONK FROM PAGODA¹⁴

Lvea Sor commune, Lvea Aem district, Kandal province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – OTHER

- **Venerable Sorn Mon**, a Buddhist monk who is known for his engagement with social issues, was forced to leave Lvea Sor pagoda by approximately 50 armed military police. The district head monk banned him from returning to his pagoda.

25 April 2013

Case 15

LAND ACTIVIST MARCH FORCIBLY BLOCKED¹⁵

Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- **Borei Keila** community representative Em Lieng Seng and approximately 100 Borei Keila and Boeung Kak Lake residents were forcefully prevented from submitting a petition to CPP headquarters by a group of 200 police and military police officers armed with batons and riot shields.

26 May 2013

Case 16

MILITARY GENERAL THREATENS VILLAGE CHIEF¹⁶

Ta Nuon commune, Botum Sakor district, Koh Kong province

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- Phann Eng, a former Ta Nun village chief, was threatened with arrest and imprisonment when he prevented a land survey from being conducted by Union Development Group (UDG) employees. The threat was made by a UDG foreman who was accompanied by a one star general and six individuals carrying firearms.

14 June 2013

Case 17

FOUR BOEUNG KAK ACTIVISTS BEATEN UNCONSCIOUS¹⁷

Srah Chak commune, Daun Penh district, Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- A group of 60 peaceful protesters from the Boeung Kak community were attacked by a group of mixed security forces as they gathered in a public park outside the Prime Minister's house. The demonstrators had gathered to demand the release of Yorm Borpha, a leader in the community's fight against a massive land grab, who had been sentenced to three years in prison in December 2012.
- About 60-80 military police, intervention police, and district security used riot shields and physical force to push the protesters back to the Hong Kong Center, about 500 meters away.
- As a result of the crackdown, six protesters were seriously injured, including Lous Sakhorn, Yorm Bopha's husband who had several of his teeth knocked out when he was set upon by approximately ten security guards. One woman, Nhok Sophat, had her arm broken while another, Nget Khun, aged 70, was knocked unconscious.
- At least three people were temporarily detained by authorities.

¹⁵ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: PP0480FEA13.

¹⁶ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: KK019THI13.

¹⁷ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: PP075PA13.

¹⁸ Shane Worrell & Khouth Sophak Chakrya, "NagaWorld strike ends with force" Phnom Penh Post, 19 June 2013.

¹⁹ Khouth Sophak Chakrya, "Activists, cops clash at palace", Phnom Penh Post, 19 June 2013, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/activists-cops-clash-palace>

19 June 2013

Case 18

PRIVATE SECURITY GUARDS DETAIN STRIKERS¹⁸

Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- Private security guards, backed by military and riot police, forcibly broke up a peaceful protest by striking workers from the luxury Casino NagaWorld.
- Security guards detained 19 individuals including union leaders and workers who did not acquiesce to their order to disperse. The workers were striking to demanding an increase in the minimum wage to \$150 a month.

19 July 2013

Case 19

BOEUNG KAK LAKE PROTEST HARASSED BY POLICE¹⁹

Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- 30 Boeung Kak residents were harassed by police as they protested in front of the Royal Palace in an attempt to petition the Queen Mother to intervene in Yorm Bopha's legal case.
- When protesters arrived at the palace, the 60 police and riot police attempted to grab posters of Yorm Bopha that the protesters were holding, prompting some to use their sarongs to strike at the police in an attempt to push them back.
- Earlier, police had prevented 100 protesters from leaving their community to join the protest.
- At least two protesters fainted and a third was injured.

31 August 2013

Case 20

SECURITY GUARDS ATTACK PEACEFUL PROTESTORS²⁰

Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- Police and para-police attacked a peaceful protest held by land-rights activists in front of city hall. The protesters were demanding that Phnom Penh Governor Pa Socheatvong honour his promise to resolve their land disputes.
- Three protesters, including a 14-year-old girl, were injured in the attack.

22 September 2013

Case 21

PEACEFUL HUNGER STRIKERS ATTACKED AT WAT PHNOM²¹

Srah Chak commune, Daun Penh district, Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- A group of Boeung Kak and Borei Keila activists were attacked after holding a peaceful hunger strike to protest the opening of the National Assembly despite the absence of opposition parliamentarians.
- The attack occurred in the evening as the protest had dwindled to only about 20 hunger strikers. Approximately 30-50 military police officer and plainscloth para-police descended on the protest with batons, stun guns and slingshots.
- At least 10 community representatives were injured, including one 72-year-old woman who, along with three others, was hospitalized as a result. In addition, one human rights monitor sustained a chest injury and several journalists received electric shocks, with one having his camera smashed.

²⁰ Shane Worrell, "Protesters beaten by guards", Phnom Penh Post, 31 October 2013, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/protesters-beaten-guards>

²¹ CCHR Alert, "Harsh Crackdown on Peaceful Assembly at Wat Phnom Results in Five Injured" 18 October 2013, http://www.cchr cambodia.org/index_old.php?url=media/media.php&p=alert_detail.php&alid=44&id=5 September 23rd, 2014; Simon Marks & Kevin Doyle, "Violent Mob, Police Attack Peaceful Protestors", The Cambodia Daily, September 23rd, 2014.

²² Tep Nimol, "Teachers' rally thwarted" Phnom Penh Post, 6 October 2010, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/teachers%20%99-rally-thwarted>

13 October 2013

Case 22

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY MARCH BLOCKED BY MILITARY POLICE²²

Srah Chak commune, Daun Penh district, Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – NON-VIOLENT

- A rally by the Cambodia Independent Teachers Association (CITA), attended by 200 members and president Rong Chhun, was blocked by 30 police officers. The teachers had planned a rally on World Teachers' day to present a petition calling for monthly salaries to be raised to 1 million riels (USD\$237).

18 October 2013

Case 23

POLICE ATTACK LAND ACTIVISTS²³

Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- Police punched protesters and hit them with batons as they violently dispersed 250 land activists calling for the Phnom Penh Governor, Pa Socheatvong, to honour promises to resolve long-running land disputes. Three women were knocked unconscious in the violence.

24 December 2013

Case 24

SECURITY GUARDS BEAT MONK, PROTESTORS²⁴

Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- Daun Penh security guards beat a monk and two protesters in an attempt to violently disperse a protest by Boeung Kak residents and supporters.
- The violence occurred when security guards began carrying away a group of women blocking Monivong boulevard, prompting Venerable Dem Chhorn to chastise the guards to which the guards responded with violence.
- One protester was injured when he attempted to come to Venerable Dem Chhorn's aid, while another was struck in the jaw when he attempted to film the violence.

2 January 2014

Case 25

MONKS AND CLEC STAFF MEMBERS ILLEGALLY ARRESTED.²⁵

Tbeng Meanchey, Preah Vihear province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Two monks, Venerable But Buntenh and Venerable Bun Theng, along with three staff from the NGO Community Legal Education Center (CLEC), Bo Pov, Em Sarom, and Chin Sambou, were arrested while returning from a peaceful protest by ethnic Kuoy villagers about the loss of their land.
- The arrests occurred when approximately 20 military police officers surrounded the group and marched them to police headquarters at gunpoint without explanation. District governor Pang Yat claimed that they had not been arrested but "invited" for questioning.
- Venerable But Buntenh reported that police threatened him and forced him to urinate in front of them rather than allow him to use a restroom. He also reported being told that the police had received orders to defrock him and Venerable Bun Theng, but they failed to do so because 100 villagers had surrounded the pagoda they were being held in.

²³ Khouth Sophak Chakrya, "Police beat Borei Keila activists blocking road", Phnom Penh Post, 18 October 2013, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/police-beat-borei-keila-activists-blocking-road>

²⁴ Khouth Sophak Chakrya, "Protesters beaten at City Hall" Phnom Penh Post, December 25 2013, <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/protesters-beaten-city-hall>

²⁵ Julia Wallace & Khy Sovuthy, "Activist Monks, NGO Workers Held After Preah Vihear Protest", The Cambodia Daily, January 3, 2014; "Police Free Detained Monks, Rights Workers" The Cambodia Daily, 4-5 January 2014.

²⁶ LICADHO Statement, "Civilians killed and injured by security forces amid civil unrest in Phnom Penh" 3 January 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=334>

- The NGO workers and monks were released the following morning.

2 January 2014

Case 26

THREE HRDS ARRESTED IN VIOLENT CRACKDOWN²⁶

Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- On January 2nd to 3rd, security forces arrested 23 people, including garment workers and human rights defenders, during a brutal crackdown on striking garment workers at two separate locations in Phnom Penh. At least four people were killed and more than 20 suffered bullet wounds in the January 3 crackdown.
- Four of those arrested in the crackdown were human rights defenders: Vorn Pao, the President of Idea, Chan Puthisak, a human rights defender from Boeung Kak Lake community, Theng Savoeun, Coordinator of the Coalition of Cambodian Farmer Community (CCFC), and Sokun Sombath Piseth, staff member at CLaRi-Cambodia (Center for Labor Rights of Cambodia).
- The whereabouts of the 23 detainees were kept hidden for five days until officials confirmed they had transported them to CC3, a remote prison in Kampong Cham province.
- The four HRDs were convicted along with the 20 other defendants, and given suspended sentences after a trial characterized by a total absence of fair trial rights. They were given heavy sentences of 4 and 4.5 years and \$2000 USD fines, which while suspended, may be carried out if they are convicted of other offences.

6 January 2014

Case 27

UNION LEADER AND SECRETARY INTIMIDATED²⁷

Ampil commune, Kampong Siem district, Kampong Cham province

INTIMIDATION – VIOLENCE

- Chorn Theang, head of the Cambodian Alliance of Trade Unions, and Khoem Sreyoun, the union secretary, were intimidated by a group of unidentified police after they had organized workers to conduct a protest demanding a salary increase.

6 January 2014

Case 28

FIVE BKL ACTIVISTS ARRESTED AND DETAINED FOR LEADING PEACEFUL MARCH²⁸

Phnom Penh

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Five land rights activists from Boeung Kak Lake, Tep Vanny, Yorm Bopha, Bo Chhorvy, Phan Chhunreth and Song Srey Leap, were arrested and detained by police after leading a march to the French Embassy to demand the release of the nine demonstrators arrested on January 2nd, 2014.
- They were released eight hours later after they agreed to sign a letter that they would temporarily refrain from further protests.

²⁷ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: KC002THI14.

²⁸ LICADHO Statement, "Cambodia: Harassment, Arrest, and Detention of Human Rights Defenders Continue" 22 January 2014, <http://www.lcadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=339>. See also CCHR Alert, "Temporary Arrest of Land Activists and Ban on Demonstrations", 6 January 2014, http://www.cchrcambodia.org/index_old.php?url=media/media.php&p=alert_detail.php&alid=47&id=5

²⁹ Simon Henderson, "Group Condems Threats Against Leader of NGO", The Cambodia Daily, 10 January 10 2014.

³⁰ Eang Mengleng "Adhoc Workers Say They Were Targeted by Driver" The Cambodia Daily, 10 January 10 2014.

10 January 2014

Case 29

CCHR PRESIDENT AND STAFF THREATENED FOR CRITICIZING OPPOSITION PARTY²⁹

Phnom Penh

INTIMIDATION – VIOLENCE

- CCHR staff and leadership were subjected to numerous threats of violence and death after CCHR president, Ou Virak, criticized the CNRP leadership's use of anti-Vietnamese rhetoric. Many of the threats were sent through social media, Facebook in particular.

10 January 2014

Case 30

ADHOC WORKERS ATTACKED WHILE INVESTIGATING DEVELOPMENT COMPANY³⁰

Sokhom commune, Sen Monorom district, Mondulkiri province

VIOLENCE – ASSAULT

- Sok Ratha, a provincial coordinator for human rights NGO ADHOC, claimed that a representative of a company he was investigating attempted to drive him and two of his colleagues off the road.
- The incident occurred as Sok Ratha and two of his colleagues, Bun Chantha and Lea Kao, were investigating a complaint against Villa Development company for clearing villager's land. As they approached the site, a car travelling at high speed came toward them and attempted to hit them.
- Community leaders from the commune identified the driver of the vehicle as a worker for Villa Development.

13 January 2014

Case 31

TEACHERS' UNION LEADER INTIMIDATED BY POLICE³¹

Kampong Chhnang commune, Kampong Chhnang district, Kampong Chhnang province

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- After organizing a strike demanding higher wages, Chhuon Cham, leader of the Kampong Chhnang provincial teachers' union, was summoned for questioning by the departmental chief of the criminal police and the provincial chief of the anti-terrorism police.

19 January 2014

Case 32

IDEA LEADER ARRESTED DURING PRAYER³²

Phnom Penh

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- A gathering calling for the release of the 20 workers and three human rights defenders arrested earlier in January, and for an increase in the minimum wage, ended with the arrest of Sokchhun Oeung, Vice President of the Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA). The President of IDEA, Vorn Pao, was among the 23 arrested earlier in the month.
- At 4:00 pm, before the gathering began, media and human rights observers waiting at Wat Ounalom for the main group to arrive were forced out of the grounds by about 50 security guards and civilians wearing black motorcycle helmets. The group moved to Preah Ang Dan Kar spirit house in front of the Royal Palace, closely followed by the guards and civilians.

³¹ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: KN004THI14.

³² LICADHO Flash News, "One more association leader arrested during prayer calling for release of 23 detained leaders & workers" 19 January 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/flashnews.php?perm=26>

³³ LICADHO Statement, "Cambodia: Harassment, Arrest, and Detention of Human Rights Defenders Continue" 22 January 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=339>

- At about 5:00 pm, there were multiple standoffs which involved the guards intimidating and pushing demonstrators for over an hour. Organisers and rights observers responded by linking arms, singing the Cambodian national anthem and songs of peaceful resistance. During this period, at least two trucks of riot police arrived at the palace.
- At 5:30 pm, police arrested Sokchhun Oeung, who was standing towards the back of the gathering. He was taken to the Phnom Penh municipal police station.
- Sokchhun Oeung was released the following day.

21 January 2014

Case 33

11 DETAINED DURING FREE THE 23 PROTESTS³³

Srah Chak commune, Daun Penh district, Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- 11 human rights activists were arrested and detained by approximately 40 Daun Penh para-police while they led a march to the US Embassy to call for the release of 23 workers and activists jailed during the garment workers demonstrations.
- Among the 11 arrested were Rong Chun, President of the Cambodian Independent Teachers Association (CITA), Tep Vanny and Yorm Bopha along with seven other Boeung Kak Lake activists, a staff member of Housing Rights Task Force (HRTF) and an activist from the Cambodian Alliance of Trade Unions (CATU).
- All 11 were released later in the afternoon after they agreed to sign a letter promising that they would not incite or take part in further illegal activities or demonstrations.

24 January 2014

Case 34

FILM SCREENING ORGANIZERS THREATENED WITH JAIL, DEPORTATION³⁴

Phnom Penh

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- After CCHR planned to show the film “Who Killed Chea Vichea?”, a 2007 documentary on the assassination of union activist Chea Vichea, a Council of Ministers spokesman threatened that anyone who participated in the screening would face jail or deportation. The screening was subsequently cancelled.

2 February 2014

Case 35

UNION REPRESENTATIVES DETAINED FOR LEAFLETTING³⁵

Russei Keo commune, Russei Keo district, Phnom Penh

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Two union representatives were detained by police for distributing strike leaflets outside the Evergreen garment factory. They were held for two hours and threatened with seizure of their personal belongings if they did not comply.
- The two were released after they thumbprinted declarations stating that they would not hand out any more leaflets.

³⁴ Denise Hruby, “Deportation, Jail Threatened if Film Screened” The Cambodia Daily, 24 January 2014; Denise Hruby, “Film Screening Canceled After Government Threatens Jail” The Cambodia Daily, 25-26 January 2014.

³⁵ Meach Dara, “Union Reps Detained for Distributing Strike Leaflets”, The Cambodia Daily, 28 February 2014.

³⁶ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: PP035IAD14.

³⁷ Khoun Narim, “Daun Penh Guards Seize Protest Drum, Scuffle with Activists” The Cambodia Daily, 4 March 2014;

27 February 2014

Case 36

UNION MEMBERS ILLEGALLY DETAINED FOR DISTRIBUTING LEAFLETS³⁶

Russei Keo commune, Russei Keo, Phnom Penh

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Two union members, Yin Saroeun and Chuob Nit, were illegally detained by Russei Keo commune police chief, Khlaing Huot, after they had distributed leaflets calling on workers to go on an overtime strike.
- They were detained for an hour before they were allowed leave. When they subsequently attempted to leaflet, they were surveilled by plains-clothes police officers.

3 March 2014

Case 37

'FREE THE 23' PROTESTERS ATTACKED³⁷

Psar Chas commune, Daun Penh district, Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- Approximately 100 Boeung Kak Lake, Borei Keila and Thmor Koul community activists were attacked by Daun Penh para-police in a protest to free the 23 imprisoned during the January garment workers strike.
- The violence occurred when the protesters attempted to have a drum returned that security guards had previously seized.
- Two activists reported injuries: Phuong Sopheap, a 40 year old housing rights activist, was struck in the nose with walkie-talkie, and Thlang Yan, 50, was kicked in her right thigh.

3 March 2014

Case 38

PHNOM PENH FACTORY WORKERS LOCKED INSIDE FACTORY³⁸

Russey Keo district, Phnom Penh

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Factory workers and union representatives at Dai Yi Fashion were falsely imprisoned inside their factories and threatened with arrest by local police when they attempted to refuse to work overtime.

3 March 2014

Case 39

KAMPONG SPEU FACTORY WORKERS LOCKED INSIDE FACTORY³⁹

Kompong Speu province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Factory workers and union representatives at Complete Honour Footwear were falsely imprisoned inside their factories and threatened with arrest by local police when they refused to work overtime.

³⁸ Mom Kunthear & Sean Teehan, "Workers 'locked inside' during overtime strike", Phnom Penh Post, 4 March 2014.

³⁹ Mom Kunthear & Sean Teehan, "Workers 'locked inside' during overtime strike", Phnom Penh Post, 4 March 2014.

⁴⁰ Khouth Sophak Chakrya, "B Kak protestor trio detained, realeased", Phnom Penh Post, 6 March 2014.

⁴¹ Kuch Naren, "Journalists Questioned Over Soldier's Complaint", The Cambodia Daily, February 18, 2014.

⁴² Vong Sokheng, "Police 'fired on reporters'", Phnom Penh Post, 10 March 2014.

5 March 2014

Case 40

BOEUNG KAK ACTIVISTS ILLEGALLY DETAINED⁴⁰

Phnom Penh

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Three Boeung Kak Lake protesters, Em Srey Touch, Sia Nareth, and Sath Pah, were detained by Daun Penh security guards as they gathered with 10 other Boeung Kak villagers to demand more compensation for their evictions. Em Srey Touch was arrested as she was getting off a tuk-tuk (moto-rickshaw).
- The three were detained without charge until they each agreed to fingerprint a document containing details of their interviews.

6 March 2014

Case 41

JOURNALISTS THREATENED FOR INVESTIGATING LAND GRABBING⁴¹

Poipet commune, Poipet district, Banteay Meanchey province

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- Two journalists from separate media outlets, Phou Bunthorn and Pech Sovannara, were accused of defamation by Hoang Mao, a soldier in the elite 70th brigade, after reporting on his involvement in land grabbing.
- They were questioned before an investigating judge in Banteay Meanchey Provincial Court on February 17th, 2014.

10 March 2014

Case 42

JOURNALISTS INVESTIGATING ILLEGAL LOGGING FIRED UPON⁴²

Pi Thnou commune, Snuol district, Kratie province

VIOLENCE – ASSAULT

- Three journalists from Kratie province, Sit Reaksmey, Ly Chamreoun, and Kong Dong, reported being fired upon by military police after they photographed them transporting luxury timber.
- They stated that only five minutes after taking the photos a man armed with a handgun and an AK-47 arrived at the scene and began firing on them.
- Police confirmed shell casings at the location and said they would investigate.

12 March 2014

Case 43

DEATH THREATS AGAINST LAND ACTIVIST⁴³

Trapeang Pring commune, Dambe district, Kampong Cham province

INTIMIDATION – DEATH THREATS

- Chambak village chief, Hak Soeung, received death threats from an unknown individual in an attempt to intimidate him into stopping his work helping villagers submit complaints regarding land disputes.

5 April 2014

Case 44

AUTHORITIES & ILLEGAL LOGGERS THREATEN FOREST ACTIVISTS⁴⁴

Kratie Province

INTIMIDATION – DEATH THREATS

- Community activists Sorn Siyan and Mom Sakin received death threats from illegal loggers and officials after they led a series of community patrols to confiscate chainsaws used for illegal logging in protected forest areas.

⁴³ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: KC012THI14.

⁴⁴ CCHR Alert, "Two forest activists from Kratie province receive death threats from the authorities", 5 April 2013.

⁴⁵ CCHR Alert, "Ponlok Khmer NGO threatened of closure in Preah Vihear Province" 8 April 2014, http://www.cchrcambodia.org/index_old.php?url=media/media.php&p=alert_detail.php&alid=50&id=5

- The series of threats culminated on April 5th, 2013 when Sorn Syian, a former high-ranking police officer from Snuol District and current head of police in Chet Borei district, warned that while the confiscated property could be replaced, the activists' lives could not be.
- Later that day, both Mom Sakin and Sorn Siyan received further death threats from illegal loggers.

8 April 2014

Case 45

LOCAL PREEAH VIHEAR NGO THREATENED WITH CLOSURE⁴⁵

Pro Me Commune, Tbeng Mearchey District, Preah Vihear province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – OTHER

- Ponlok Khmer, a small land rights NGO that supports ethnic minorities, was threatened with closure when the provincial governor of Preah Vihear province wrote a letter to the Minister of the Interior declaring his intention to do so. The governor claimed that the closure was warranted because sugar cane plants had been uprooted during a protest against a Chinese sugar company that Ponlok Khmer had monitored.
- Lut Sang, a staff member of Ponlok Khmer, and two community leaders, Noun Mon and Roeung Khann, were subsequently summoned to appear at the provincial police station. On May 23, 2014, they were summoned to Preah Vihear Provincial Court for further questioning.

28 April 2014

Case 46

AUTHORITIES BLOCK JOURNALISTS AND NGO WORKERS⁴⁶

Sre Preah commune, Keo Seima, Mondulkiri province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – OTHER

- A group of 16 rights workers and journalists were prevented from traveling to a disputed plot of land in Mondolokiri province by the local commune chief, who was accompanied by 6 armed commune police officers. The journalists and NGO workers had planned to document illegal logging of forest on disputed economic land concessions.

1 May 2014

Case 47

PEACEFUL LABOUR PROTESTERS ATTACKED⁴⁷

Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- Daun Penh para-police attacked peaceful protesters, journalists and bystanders when they violently dispersed a rally for International Workers Day. The guards indiscriminately chased down and beat people in the vicinity of the protest with batons.
- Five people were seriously injured, and several others, including journalists, were slightly injured. The head of Daun Penh Security called the beatings "a small thing".

⁴⁵ Ben Sokhean, "Authorities Block Journalists From Site of Logging", The Cambodia Daily, 28 April 2014.

⁴⁷ Mech Dara, "May 1 Rallies Marred by Police Violence", The Cambodia Daily, 2 May 2014.

⁴⁸ Mom Kunthear, "Bus Company Sues Strikers", Phnom Penh Post, 7 May 2014.

⁴⁹ CCHR Alert, "Threats Against CCHR Land Reform Project Coordinator" 10 May 2014, http://www.cchr cambodia.org/index_old.php?url=media/media.php&p=alert_detail.php&alid=52&id=5

⁵⁰ Mech Dara, "Another Three Textile Union Reps Arrested", The Cambodia Daily, 12 May 2014.

6 May 2014

Case 48

BUS UNION ACTIVIST SUED⁴⁸

Phnom Penh

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- The Phnom Penh Sorya Transportation bus company sued 20 former employees who were fired for continuing a strike. The suit alleged incitement, making threats and the unauthorized use of their uniforms; however, only the vice president of the bus union and labour activist Thun Visal were summoned to appear in court.

10 May 2014

Case 49

CCHR WORKER THREATENED WHILE INVESTIGATING LAND DISPUTE⁴⁹

Sangkat Boeung Kak I commune, Khan Tuol Kork district, Phnom Penh

VIOLENCE – ASSAULT

- Vann Sophath, the Project Coordinator of the Land Reform Project at the Cambodian Center for Human Right (CCHR) was pushed and verbally threatened by civilians who were known security guards while visiting a site subject to a land dispute between three families and the Khun Sear Company.
- Upon attempting to return to the site later, he was confronted by Khun Sear Company security guards armed with knives, axes, and hammers who threatened to cut him and yelled insults.

11 May 2014

Case 50

THREE UNION REPRESENTATIVES ARRESTED FOR INCITEMENT⁵⁰

Kandal province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Three union representatives of the Free Union Federation of Khmer Labour, Mok Manh, Beav Mannorin, and Sok Vichara, were summoned to the Ministry of Interior and arrested for allegedly inciting workers to protest and strike.
- The arrests were the result of a complaint from Quint Major Industrial Factory where workers had been protesting for the reinstatement of 25 recently terminated employees.

25 May 2014

Case 51

EIGHT UNION ACTIVISTS ARRESTED AND CHARGED⁵¹

Bati District, Takeo Province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Eight union activists comprising of CCAWDU staff and union members were arrested on May 23rd, 2014 during a strike at the JSD Textile Co Ltd Factory in which workers were asking for improved working conditions.
- After being detained for 48 hours they were charged with instigating a felony (article 28 of the Criminal Code), incitement (article 495 of the Criminal Code); threats to cause damage (article 423 of the Criminal Code), and discrediting a judicial decision (article 523 of the Criminal Code).
- The eight charged were: Seang Yot, Sot Seam, Phin Sot, Keo Bouen, No Sak, Ol Sam Oeun, Chhem Sreypov, and Seng Soeun.

⁵¹ CCHR Human Rights Defender Alert, "Threats Against CCHR Land Reform Project Coordinator", October 5th 2014, <http://www.cchrcambodia.org/index_old.php?url=media/media.php&p=alert_detail.php&alid=52&id=5>

⁵² May Titthara, "Activist 'threatened with Knife'", Phnom Penh Post, 26 May 2014.

⁵³ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: BB038LG14.

⁵⁴ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: KN023LG14.

⁵⁵ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: BM037DAP14.

25 May 2014

Case 52

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST ATTACKED⁵²

Mean Rith commune, Sandan district, Kampong Thom province

VIOLENCE – ASSAULT

- Chheang Vuthy, an activist with the Prey Lang Community Network, was attacked by a soldier in the Kampong Thom military research unit, Pen Bunkear.
- The soldier encountered Cheng Vuthy at a restaurant and attempted to stab him 13 times before being restrained by onlookers. The year before, Vuthy had named the soldier in a complaint to the Ministry of Interior that military officers had been involved in illegal logging.

27 May 2014

Case 53

REPRESENTATIVES OF LAND GRABBING VICTIMS ARRESTED⁵³

Stoeng Trang commune, Sala Krao district, Pailin province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Four representatives of land grabbing victims, Oam Somath, Oam Som Ul, Pech Sothea and Tuon Mak, were arrested and accused of illegally encroaching on state land, and were detained at the Pailin provincial prison.
- The arrests came after the four representatives had organized four different villages, Tom Nob, Ou Kantheang Vea, Anlong Reaksa and Phnom Krenh Pas Porl, to write a letter to the Prime Minister complaining about the destruction of their houses in an attempted land-grabbing. Despite the Prime Minister checking up on the situation, there was no resolution, and shortly afterwards the District Governor pursued charges against the four representatives.

10 June 2014

Case 54

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE INTIMIDATED⁵⁴

Krang Skear commune, Teuk Phos district, Kampong Chhnang province

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- Sum Khorn, a community representative in Krang Skear commune, received an intimidating phone call from a military commander after he organized a petition asking for the district governor's intervention in a land conflict between villagers and soldiers who had been granted their land by royal decree.

15 June 2014

Case 55

VENERABLE LOUN SOVATH HAS SMARTPHONE SEIZED⁵⁵

Poipet commune, Poipet district, Banteay Meanchey province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – OTHER

- Venerable Loun Sovath, an activist also known as the "multi-media monk", had his smartphone seized by an unknown individual on orders of Poipet district governor, Nhor Mengchor, and district police chief, Um Sopha, who were accompanied by 30 Poipet district police officers. His phone was seized after he took photos of Cambodian workers returning from Thailand.

⁵⁶ Ben Sokhean, "Villager Charged After Blocking Land Clearance in Ratanakkiri" The Cambodia Daily, 20 June 2014.

⁵⁷ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: PP062PA14.

⁵⁸ Ben Sokhean, "Protest Outside Kandal Court as Questioning Starts in Land Case", The Cambodia Daily, 22 July 2014.

19 June 2014

Case 56

REPRESENTATIVE CHARGED FOR BLOCKING ILLEGAL LAND CLEARING⁵⁶

Kak commune, Banteay Meanchey district, Ratanakiri Province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Khoem Sok, a villager representative, was arrested after he and 20 others confronted a Swift Rubber bulldozer that was about to clear a portion of disputed land. Villagers had filed an official complaint against Swift Rubber and had informed officials that the bulldozer was about to unlawfully clear their land. Khoem Sok was charged with "unlawful interference in the discharge of public function" (Article 609 of the Criminal Code).

24 June 2014

Case 57

JOURNALIST SEVERLY BEATEN AT CNRP DEMONSTRATION⁵⁷

Srah Chak commune, Daun Penh district, Phnom Penh

VIOLENCE – ASSAULT

- Voice of Democracy journalist Lay Saman was kicked and hit with batons by 10 para-police, causing serious injuries and broken bones, after he took photos of the dispersal of a CNRP demonstration.

21 July 2014

Case 58

LAND ACTIVISTS SUMMONED FOR QUESTIONING⁵⁸

Kandal Province

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- 12 villagers were summoned to Kandal provincial court for their involvement in protests against Phanimex Development company where they had called upon authorities to intervene in Phanimex's land-grabbing of 63 ha of land belonging to 180 families.

28 July 2014

Case 59

SECURITY GUARDS BEAT ACTIVISTS UNCONSCIOUS⁵⁹

Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- Daun Penh para-police armed with stun guns and batons attacked a peaceful protest by Boeung Kak and Borei Keila activists.
- The protesters were at City Hall to demand that it maintain its earlier promises to help resolve the two community's land disputes.
- The violence occurred when security guards attempted to detain Chan Puthisak, who had been one of the 23 arrested and tried in January 2014. Two women, Prak Sipha and Khem Srey, were knocked unconscious during the attack.
- The security guards were accompanied by police, who stood by while the violence occurred.

28 July 2014

Case 60

TEEN KILLED PROTECTING NEIGHBOUR'S LAND⁶⁰

Kulen district, Preah Vihear province

VIOLENCE – KILLING

- Try Chamroeun, a 19-year-old farmer, was shot dead by an RCAF soldier when he attempted to help a neighbour stop soldiers from cutting down a tree on their land.

⁵⁹ Khouth Sophak Chakrya, "District guards back on beat", Phnom Penh Post, 29 July 2014.

⁶⁰ Phak Seangly, "Land fight leads to death" Phnom Penh Post, 29 July 2014.

⁶¹ Meach Dara, "Monk Claims Demotion Over Support for Land Protest" The Cambodia Daily, 4 August 2014.

- Prior to the shooting, soldiers had announced that the villagers were no longer permitted to farm in the area because it belonged to their superior officer, Major Sun Horm.
- The soldier, Pœun Tash, was charged with murder and possession of a weapon without permission.

3 August 2014

Case 61

CHIEF MONK DEMOTED FOR ASSITING VILLAGERS⁶¹

Svay Rieng province

LOSS OF LIVELIHOOD – DEMOTION

- En Puthy, chief monk of a pagoda in Svey Rieng province, was reportedly demoted for his assistance to villagers who were protesting against a canal being built through their land. The head of Rumduol district department of religion, Toek San, said the removal was due to the fact that Puthy spent too much time away from the pagoda.

5 August 2014

Case 62

(SEE ALSO CASE 64)

LOR PEANG LEADERS ARRESTED DURING MARCH⁶²

Ta Ches commune, Tralach district, Kampong Chhnang province

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- 50 villagers from Lor Peang community had begun a 60 km march to Phnom Penh to call for a resolution to their long-standing land dispute with KDC when, at Kampong Tralach district town, approximately 100 police and military police officers violently dispersed the march, leaving a total of eight villagers injured.
- Three marchers were also arrested, Sngoeun Nhoeurn (husband of prominent Lor Peang community leader Um Sophy), Srung Tha, and Kuch Hok (a 67-year-old elderly villager). On August 29th they were provisionally released on bail.

5 August 2014

Case 63

LAND ACTIVISTS GIVEN SUSPENDED SENTENCES AND FINES.⁶³

Kampong Thom province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – CRIMINAL CONVICTION

- Nine activists received one-year suspended prison sentences and were ordered to pay \$1,250 to businesswoman Ol Ratha for cassava plants they were accused of uprooting. The activists were arrested and charged in relation to monitoring illegal logging in Prey Lang. The names of the activists are: Mao Thea, Meas Khoeun, Meas Vann, Prom Suy, Hem Hay, Nuon Kin, Duong Chhay, Sao Korn, Chheang Vuthy.

12 August 2014

Case 64

(SEE ALSO CASES 62)

POLICE ATTACK PEACFUL MARCH BY LAND ACTIVISTS⁶⁴

Kampong Tralach district, Kampong Chhnang province

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- Police and military police attacked peaceful marchers from Lor Peang village who were on a 60 km march to Phnom Penh to seek Prime Minister Hun Sen's intervention in their long-standing dispute with KDC.

⁶² LICADHO Statement, "LICADHO Condemns the Violent Crackdown of a Peaceful March by Lor Peang Villagers" 12 August 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=352>

⁶³ Chhay Channyda, "Activists Sentenced", Phnom Penh Post, 6 August 2014.

⁶⁴ LICADHO Statement, "LICADHO Condemns the Violent Crackdown of a Peaceful March by Lor Peang Villagers", 12 August 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=352>; May Titthara, "Peaceful marchers beaten", Phnom Penh Post, 13 August 2014.

- 5 km into their march, 100 police and military police blocked the road and attacked the marchers despite the presence of children and elderly community members. Police also destroyed carts filled with rice and cooking pots that the marchers had brought with them.
- Three women fainted after having their hands tied behind their back and one man received serious injuries to his left hand. Three of the marchers were arrested: Srun Tha, Kuch Hok, and Snuon Nhoeun.
- Hul Veasna, district police chief of Kampong Tralach, denied any violence despite reporters photographing the attacks and the presence of blood on the ground.
- The following day the march proceeded to reach Phnom Penh, though it was temporarily blocked from proceeding past the Russei Keo district.

18 August 2014

Case 65

PEACEFUL PROTEST VIOLENTLY DISPERSED⁶⁵

Boeung Trabek commune, Chamkar Mon district, Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- Mixed security forces violently dispersed villagers from Kratie province who had been marching to Prime Minister Hun Sen's house to deliver a petition seeking intervention in ongoing land grabbing issues.
- Despite being a peaceful protest, security forces attacked the crowd with batons, shields and electric prods. 12 villagers were injured, including a four-year-old child and a six-month-old baby.

18 August 2014

Case 66

UNION LEADER DETAINED⁶⁶

Chrork Mates commune, Bavit district, Svay Rieng province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Tuon Saren, a representative for the Collective Union of Movement of Workers at You Li garment factory, was arrested for allegedly inciting workers to block National Road 1.
- Tuon Saren had been leading 800 workers in an industrial action calling for on-site medical care, more fans for cooling, improved toilets and a \$10 a month subsidy for women who had given birth. After being "educated" by local police and made to promise he would cease future protests he was released without charge.

26 August 2014

Case 67

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES SENTENCED TO 3 YEARS IN PRISON⁶⁷

Kampong Krasang commune, Bourei district, Takeo province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – CRIMINAL CONVICTION

- Three community representatives, Vy Chan, Vy May, and Sun Rom, were arrested and charged with illegally clearing forest. The three had been involved in their community's land grabbing dispute with the Department Chief of the Agriculture and Forestry Department, who had grabbed 200 ha of land occupied by 72 families. They were convicted of the offence and given 3 year suspended sentences and fined 3 million riel (\$750 USD).

⁶⁵ Pech Sotheary, "Capital clash sees 10 injured", Phnom Penh Post, 19 August 2014.

⁶⁶ Sek Odom, "Union Official Arrested for 'Inciting' Striking Workers", The Cambodia Daily, 19 August 2014.

⁶⁷ Unpublished LICADHO Monitoring Report: PP115LG14.

29 August 2014

Case 68

FOUR BOEUNG KAK LAKE ACTIVISTS ARRESTED⁶⁸

Chroy Chang Va district, Phnom Penh

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Four community activists from Boeung Kak Lake Community were arrested at Wat Chas in Chroy Chang Va district. The activists had arrived to support rural land communities from Pailin, Banteay Meanchey, Battambang and Svay Rieng, who were preparing a march to petition the National Assembly and Prime Minister Hun Sen this morning.
- The four activists arrested were Song Sreyleap, Tep Vanny, Khek Chanrasmey and Kong Chantha. They were detained at Chroy Chang Va district office prior to being released before noon, with one of the arrested requiring medical attention at Calmette Hospital. Following the arrests of the four activists, authorities locked the community members inside the grounds of Wat Chas.

8 September 2014

Case 69

BASELESS CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST VENERABLE SOVATH⁶⁹

Phnom Penh

INTIMIDATION – LEGAL

- Criminal proceedings against renowned human rights defender Venerable Luon Sovath were renewed after a two year delay. The charge of incitement to commit a felony (article 495 of the Criminal Code), originated from leading demonstrations by land dispute victims in 2012 against government authorities. If convicted, Venerable Sovath faces up to two years in prison and a fine of US\$1,000, equivalent to over 4,000,000 Cambodian Riels.
- The case against Venerable Sovath was combined with two other cases from incidents in 2013 that bear no relation to him, including against Serey Ratha, a controversial political dissident based in the US. The original court summons named Venerable Sovath as also being charged with sedition, however subsequent summons only charged him with the original incitement charge.
- After appearing in Court along with his co-defendants, the president of the judges' panel then stated that a separate case file for Venerable Sovath had, unbeknownst to all the parties involved, actually been issued over two years ago on November 5, 2012. The status of the case file and the nature of the charges against Venerable Sovath remain unclear as the defense lawyers have not yet been granted access to the new case file.

10 September 2014

Case 70

LAND GRABBING RESEARCHERS DETAINED OVERNIGHT⁷⁰

Samraong City, Samraong district, Oddar Meanchey province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Two researchers with the NGO Equitable Cambodia, Sok Lida and Meg Fukuzawa, were detained overnight by immigration police in Oddar Meanchey province after they visited families evicted by Thai sugar company Mitr Phol, a main supplier of Coca-Cola. In 2008, the rice fields of approximately 100 families in Bos village were seized to make way for sugarcane plantations.

⁶⁸ LICADHO Flash News: "Four activists from Boeung Kak Lake Community arrested" 29 August 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/flashnews.php?perm=78>

⁶⁹ LICADHO Livestream, "Trial of Cambodian "Multimedia Monk" Venerable Sovath" 24 November 2014, http://stream.licadho-cambodia.org/monk_venerable_sovath_trial/; LICADHO Statement, "Groundless Charges against Venerable Loun Sovath Need to be Dropped" 23 November 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=362>

- While the two were conducting their visit, they were approached by four police vehicles, and officers requested that they accompany them to Oddar Meancheay provincial police station. They refused due to safety concerns about traveling by motorcycle at night. Shortly afterwards, the Deputy Police Chief arrived to request Ms. Fukuzawa present her passport, which she did not have in her immediate possession.
- At 8:30 pm the two were arrested without warrant and provided no reason for their detention. They were then interrogated about their research activities for over three hours. At this point Mr Sok was released, but he chose to remain with Ms. Fukuzawa. Ms. Fukuzawa presented scanned copies of her passports but was told it was not necessary to present these documents. The following morning the two were transported to the Department of Immigration in Phnom Penh and were released in the afternoon after Ms. Fukuzawa signed a document agreeing not to file a complaint over her detention.
- Equitable Cambodia had helped families in Oddar Meancheay province file a complaint with the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand in 2013, which had a month prior to the incident declared that Mitr Phol had illegally taken the land.

16 September 2014

Case 71

UNION ACTIVISTS ARRESTED AND DETAINED WITHOUT WARRANT⁷¹

Komchay Mear district, Prey Veng province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Two CCAWDU representatives, Sok Siem and Khun Sokhom, were arrested and detained as they led a protest in front of the Komchay Mear Trading factory. The protests were part of a week long strike demanding better working conditions and bonuses. They were arrested without warrant and taken to the Komchay Mear district office for questioning by authorities. They were released later in the afternoon after thousands demonstrated in front of the district office.

8 October 2014

Case 72

EQUITABLE CAMBODIA STAFF DETAINED⁷²

Samraong commune, Samraong district, Oddar Meancheay province

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Police broke up a meeting at a private home between four staff for the NGO Equitable Cambodia (EC) and 20 families that had been evicted by a sugarcane economic land concession.
- EC staff were in the middle of interviewing the 20 families when local police and military police arrived and forced the EC staff to leave. At the time police said EC needed permission from the provincial government to conduct interviews in the areas. However, provincial police chief Men Maly subsequently admitted that there was no law requiring permission, but argued that it was needed anyway because the "area is under the control of [his] local authorities".

⁷⁰ LICADHO Press Release, "Civil Society Groups Condemn the Groundless Detention of Equitable Cambodia Staff" 12 September 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/press-release.php?perm=358> ; Zsombor Peter & Mech Dara, "Researchers Detained After Visit to Resettlement Community", The Cambodia Daily, September 11th, 2014.

⁷¹ Ben Sokhean, "Police Release Unionists After Workers Surround District Office" The Cambodia Daily, 17 September 2014.

⁷² LICADHO Statement, "Oddar Meancheay Authorities' Continued Illegal Conduct Towards Equitable Cambodia's Staff" 16 October 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/press-release.php?perm=360>; Aun Pheap, "Oddar Meancheay Police Break Up Meeting Between NGO, Evictees" The Cambodia Daily, 10 October 2014.

11 October 2014

Case 73

POLICE BEAT EQUITABLE CAMBODIA STAFF⁷³

Samraong commune, Samraong district, Oddar Meanchey province

VIOLENCE – ASSAULT

- Police in Oddar Meanchey assaulted an EC staff member, punching them in the stomach, after they refused to allow officers to search their car without a warrant and gain access to a camera.
- Police stopped the car as it was transporting villagers back to their community, following interviews with Equitable Cambodia staff at an office belonging to ADHOC. Following the illegal search and beating, police confiscated the car and deleted a number of photos from the camera.

20 October 2014

Case 74

LAND PROTESTERS VIOLENTLY DISPERSED⁷⁴

Chakto Muk commune, Daun Penh district, Phnom Penh

INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY – VIOLENCE & ARRESTS

- Security guards in Phnom Penh violently dispersed 80 villagers from Preah Vihear province, who had come to Phnom Penh to ask for government assistance in resolving their land dispute, as police and police officers stood by near the Prime Minister's private residence.
- The violence left a total of 18 people injured, several of whom suffered head injuries. Among those injured was Ouk Pich Samnang, who was also arrested and charged in relation to the protest.

22 October 2014

Case 75

ACTIVIST MONK REMOVED AS HEAD OF PAGODA⁷⁵

Banan district, Battambang province

LOSS OF LIVELIHOOD – DEMOTION

- The chief monk of Phnom Kbos temple, Venerable Kim Sam Oeun, was reportedly removed from his position for his involvement in land rights protests, specifically for allowing 11 members of The Independent Monk Network for Social Justice stay at the pagoda.

10 November 2014

Case 76

(SEE ALSO CASE 77)

10 BOEUNG KAK LAKE ACTIVISTS JAILED⁷⁶

Srah Chak commune, Daun Penh district, Phnom Penh

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- 10 human rights defenders from Boeung Kak Lake, along with one monk, were arrested and sentenced to one year in jail in a deeply flawed judicial process after two related protests.
- In the first incident, seven long-term Boeung Kak Lake activists (Nget Khun, Tep Vanny, Song Sreyleap, Kong Chantha, Phan Chhunreth, Po Chorvy, and Nong Sreng) were arrested while protesting the lack of government action on the extreme flooding that was occurring in their community as a result of filling in the Boeung Kak Lake by a CPP linked developer. The following day they were convicted of obstructing public traffic (Traffic Law Article 78) and received the maximum sentence of one year in prison and a \$500 fine.

⁷³ LICADHO Flash News, "Rights worker beaten by Oddar Meanchey police while documenting land dispute" 11 October 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/flashnews.php?perm=84>

⁷⁴ LICADHO Video, "Yet Another Violent Dispersal of Land Protesters near the Prime Minister's Home" 21 October 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/video.php?perm=50>

⁷⁵ Mech Dara, "Activist Monk Removed as Head of Pagoda", The Cambodia Daily, Wednesday, 22 October 2014.

⁷⁶ LICADHO Statement, "Civil Society Groups Condemn the Ongoing Detention of 11 Activists" 26 January 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=370>

- In the second incident, three other Boeung Kak Lake activists (Heng Pich, Im Srey Touch, and Phoung Sopheap), and Budhist monk Venerable Seung Hai, were arrested later the same day while calling for the release of the seven human rights defenders on trial from the first protest. A mere 24 hours after their arrest they were convicted of aggravated obstruction of public officials (Criminal Code article 504) and received the maximum sentence of one year in prison and a \$500 fine.
- The trials were rushed and focused on establishing the defendants' mere presence at the protests rather than whether the prosecution had proved beyond a reasonable doubt that their actions had amounted to the alleged offence. The Court of Appeal upheld their wrongful convictions though they slightly reduced their sentences and fines. After five months in jail, all were released when they received a royal pardon.

28 November 2014

Case 77

(SEE ALSO CASE 76)

PROTESTERS ARBITRARILY DETAINED⁷⁷

Phnom Penh

ABUSE OF AUTHORITY – DETENTION & ARREST

- Over 250 land activists and monks were met by over 100 security forces and threatened with violence when they marched to the National peacefully calling for the release of the 10 Boeung Kak Lake activists and 3 monks arrested in the previous weeks.
- Two attendees, a volunteer from local NGO Sahmakum Teang Tnaut (STT) and a tuk tuk driver, were arrested while the protest was near the National Assembly and detained for part of the morning by Chamkarmon district authorities at Wat Toul Tompong. Authorities also confiscated one loudspeaker.

⁷⁷ LICADHO Statement, "Civil Society Groups Condemn the Ongoing Detention of 11 Activists" 28 November 2014, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/flashnews.php?perm=101>

