



Source: Reuters

## PRO-DEMOCRACY LEADERS FACE NEW THREATS IN THAILAND

This statement can be attributed to a spokesperson for the Clooney Foundation for Justice. For further inquiries, please contact [media@cfj.org](mailto:media@cfj.org)

### CHARGES

Insulting Royalty;  
Sedition

### CONDUCT CHARGED

Speeches during pro-reform protests in September 2019, including remark that ‘the monarchy should be under the constitution’

### MAXIMUM SENTENCE

15 years in prison

### STATUS

Detained pending trial

### March 23, 2021

This weekend, Thailand further escalated its crackdown on pro-democracy protesters, with [new charges](#) of insulting royalty leveled against children and adults. These arrests took place while activist leaders raised fears of being harmed while in detention. In a [letter](#) to the court, the human rights lawyer Arnon Nampa, who has been detained since February 9, said authorities had attempted to move some of the defendants in the middle of the night, including Parit Chiwarak who has been on hunger strike since March 15, and raised concerns they could be harmed or disappeared pending trial.

The Clooney Foundation for Justice’s TrialWatch initiative, which [monitors](#) criminal proceedings around the world, grades their fairness, and [advocates](#) for individuals who are unfairly detained, has been closely following the [multiple proceedings against lawyer Arnon Nampa and others](#) facing charges of sedition and insulting royalty. The first case originally included four defendants but was expanded to 22 last week, and the proceedings have already been marred by irregular [detention procedures](#). Several of the protest leaders have been repeatedly [denied bail](#) on the basis of the “gravity” of their offense—namely, giving speeches that “bring disgrace to the monarchy” and “hurt feelings of Thai people without fear of law, and incite people to violate the laws of the country.”

“With more than 70 activists charged in recent months simply for criticizing their leaders, Thailand’s crackdown grows more egregious by the day,” said Amal Clooney, co-President of the Clooney Foundation for Justice. “The continued detention of protesters for exercising their right to free speech is an unjustifiable attempt to silence and punish them, even before their trial.”

The latest allegations that protest leaders are being moved around in the middle of the night are particularly alarming given the reports of [violent attacks](#) on and [disappearances](#) of those who have criticized the monarchy in recent years, and the increasingly aggressive [police tactics against protestors](#). In the face of mounting numbers of arrests and another [mass trial](#) on insult to royalty charges starting March 25, 2021, **CFJ calls on Thailand to release all those facing charges of insulting royalty and ensure protestors are not mistreated, subject to arbitrary detention, or denied a fair trial.**

### ABOUT THE CLOONEY FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE’S TRIALWATCH INITIATIVE