Letters from Prison: Volume 1

Arnon Nampa

Translated by

THE ARTICLE 112 PROJECT

Center for Southeast Asian Studies
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Justice in Translation is an open-access web publication series that publishes translations from Southeast Asian languages to English that is a project of the Justice in Southeast Asia Lab (JSEALab). The JSEALab is part of a five-year initiative on Social Justice in Southeast Asia at the University of Wisconsin-Madison generously funded by the Henry Luce Foundation and located in the Center for Southeast Asian Studies and the Human Rights Program. A combination of intensive exchange between faculty and graduate students and public-facing events aim to foster significant collaboration between academics and practitioners, reflecting both the recognition that a growing number of MAs and PhDs in Southeast Asian Studies are choosing to pursue professional careers outside the university and that there is a need for academic work to be directly responsive to ongoing social justice crises in the region.

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On 26 September 2023, Arnon Nampa was sentenced to four years in prison for alleged violation of Article 112, or lèse majesté, during a speech he made at a peaceful protest in Bangkok on 14 October 2020. He requested bail while appealing the decision, but the request was denied. Arnon was immediately sent to the Bangkok Remand Prison. This is the first to be decided out of a total of fourteen Article 112 cases in which he has been charged for peaceful expression of opinion to be decided.

This case, and all of Arnon’s cases, stem from the youth-led uprising for democracy and reform of the monarchy that began in mid-2020. The uprising began with protests in July 2020 calling for the prime minister, General Prayuth Chan-ocha, to resign and elections to be held; a new constitution to be drafted; and for the state to cease threatening activists. Then, on 3 August 2020, Arnon added another demand: to reform the institution of the monarchy. At a Hogwarts-themed protest, Arnon dressed up as Harry Potter and gave an eloquent speech in which he explained that without speaking openly about and reforming the monarchy, the other demands made by the movement would stall.¹ From that day forward, this demand became central to the movement.

The call to reform the monarchy both catalyzed a rapid expansion of the protests and seeded fear in the hearts of royals. Despite the significant role of the monarchy in Thai

political, economic, social and cultural life, even with the end of absolute monarchy on 24 June 1932, Article 112 has ensured that the institution remains unquestioned and unquestionable. The law stipulates that “whoever insults, defames, or threatens the king, queen, heir-apparent or regent shall be punished with imprisonment of three to fifteen years.” Rarely used until the 19 September 2006 coup, which coincided with the twilight years of the reign of Bhumipol Adulyadej (Rama 9), Article 112 has been used to stifle political discussion and dissent about the monarchy over the past fifteen years. Between the 2006 coup and the 22 May 2014 coup launched by the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO), a steady stream of cases targeted activists, editors, and netizens. The number of cases then surged upwards following the NCPO’s coup, but then sharply declined in the first years of the reign of Maha Vajiralongkorn (Rama 10), who became king when his father died in October 2016. But as the 2020 protests continued – and the number of activists grew and the clarity of their demands for reform of the monarchy sharpened – the use of the law again surged. At least 262 people have been charged with alleged violation of Article 112 in 285 cases between 24 November 2020 and 23 November 2023.²

Arnon Nampa, a 39-year-old from Roi Et province in northeastern Thailand, was one of the first to be charged in this latest wave of cases. Arnon’s speech on 3 August 2020 came after over fifteen years of work as a lawyer and human rights defender protecting the rights of the most vulnerable in Thailand. After the April-May 2010 crackdown on red shirt protesters, Arnon took on the cases of many defendants whom other lawyers did not want to represent. Alongside his legal work, Arnon bore witness to the lives of the oppressed in

his written and spoken poetry about the crackdown and the dispossession pervasive in Thailand. Following the NCPO’s coup, he was one of the co-founders of Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (TLHR), the primary documentation and advocacy organization established to defend those targeted by the junta. Arnon’s current imprisonment is part of a life lived in devotion to struggling for human rights, democracy, and justice.

Shortly after his remand in late September, Arnon began writing letters from prison. He sent them out to his family who then posted them to Facebook to be read by fellow activists and supporters. Initially, the Justice in Southeast Asia Lab (JSEALab) translated the letters into English one-by-one and posted them to our website and social media as soon as possible after the Thai letters were posted. As time passed, we decided to translate and collect the letters in a more permanent fashion: open-access PDF publications in volumes of twenty-five letters. We are doing so because they are a record of both the injustice of the judicial process and how one dissident is holding the line against this injustice. Arnon asks his readers to excuse his sentence construction, noting that he is writing “fresh,” without the opportunity to revise or rewrite (Letter No. 16). This record of his life and struggle is itself an essential history of Thailand, and Arnon is the historian who is writing its first draft.

Arnon’s occupation as a lawyer is ever-present in the letters as he talks about the unique experience of arguing cases while clad in a prisoner’s uniform and maneuvering with chains on his legs. His precise use of words reflects his poet’s sense of

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3 อานนท์ นำาภา, เหมือนบอดใบ้ไพร่ฟ้ามาสุดทาง (กรุงเทพฯ: สำานักพิมพ์อ่าน, 2554) [Arnon Nampa, The People are Blind and Mute No Longer (Bangkok: Aan Press, 2011)].

4 All letters are first posted here: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100000942179021.
language. Yet it is his identity as a father that most refracts and challenges the injustice he experiences. Arnon is the father of two children – Pran, his daughter, who is 8, and Issaranon, or Kan, his son, who just turned 1. In Letter No. 8, he realizes that his son is forgetting him and asks his readers for permission to write directly to his children. They are too young to read the letters now, and so he writes for their future selves, and his future self as well. He shifts the pronouns he uses, from “I” to “Daddy,” and writes an account of his life and struggle for Pran and Issaranon to read when they are grown up. Noting that he is facing decades in prison if convicted in all of the Article 112 cases against him, Arnon acknowledges that he may still be behind bars when his children do so.

In the last letter included in this collection, Letter No. 25, written on 15 November 2023, Arnon explains that he decided to revoke his requests for bail in all of his cases in recognition of and to expose the injustice he is experiencing. Following his conviction at the end of September, his lawyers repeatedly requested bail and it was denied each time. He is willing to take the punishment but will never accept guilt.

This is the first volume of Arnon’s prison letters; the letters were written between 3 October and 15 November 2023. With permission, we have included the images of the original Thai letters preceding each translation. While we hope that Arnon will be released and there will not be many more letters, we are prepared to continue their translation as long as he writes them.

Tyrell Haberkorn
Madison, Wisconsin
1 December 2023
The Letters
ใบสำคัญ

หมายเลขประจำตัว
ไม่มี

ใบสำคัญ

หมายเหตุ

รายการสินค้าต่างๆ

หมายเหตุ

ยอดรวม

หมายเหตุ
Letter No. 1  
3 October 2023

Rain falls. A light breeze carries cool air into the cell.

Before all else, I have to thank my seniors and friends who came to see me off the other day. Thank you for all of the encouragement and support. It is a comfort and an honor to be together with all of you in struggle, suffering and joy.

After hearing the judgment, I secretly, truly and deep down, hoped that if it was my bad luck to be sentenced to imprisonment, I would be granted bail. I always reported myself to the court [when summoned] and came to the court to try cases as part of my job as a lawyer. But I pessimistically prepared as well. If I was not granted bail, then I wanted to get together to eat and drink with my seniors, juniors and friends before I went into prison.

But that’s just it. In a country that remains undemocratic, it is normal for political prisoners to be locked up.

Please pass my thoughts on to the seniors and friends in Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai: P’Porn, P’Phak, P’Ped, and everyone else. I hope everyone is well. I heard the news that Sudsanan has moved and is being renovated. If I get lucky and am granted bail, we will once again be able to eat and drink happily. Pass my care to Ae Sienwaen. If we have the chance, we will go and spend the night in Phu Chi Fa [National Park].

My love told me that I have support from seniors and friends inside and outside the country. I send my thanks and thoughts to you.

To the Sanam Luang Team: I hope that P’Neng, P’Khwaen, Fund, P’Ja, P’Aek, P’Yot, and everyone is doing well. I am happy for you, P’Khwaen, that Liverpool beat Tottenham last
time :)

P.S., For Kretto, Beer, Jet, and all of the juniors at the [Thai Lawyers for Human Rights] office who are helping to look after Issaranon: Tell Issaranon that Daddy is well and waits for the day he will meet him again.

Arnon Nampa
ขออนุญาตนำผลิตภัณฑ์ของ ซีอีโอ ไทยแลนด์ จำกัดไปใช้ในช่วงเวลาที่มีโอกาสว่างว่าง ทั้งนี้เพื่อประโยชน์ของกิจการของผู้ขออนุญาต โดยที่ผู้ขออนุญาตได้รับการอนุญาตจาก ผู้มีอำนาจ ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่าว ตามที่ได้รับการอนุญาตไว้ในเอกสารที่แนบมา ในการส่งมอบผลิตภัณฑ์ดังกล่า
Letter No. 2  
5 October 2023

Today I was taken out [of prison] to the court to try a case as a lawyer. Perhaps it looked a bit odd, a bit unfamiliar, for people to see me performing my duty as a lawyer while wearing a prisoner’s uniform. Thank you to P’Neng and P’Maem who came to the courtroom to offer encouragement and to all of my juniors from Thai Lawyers for Human Rights who served as assistants.

In truth, the excitement has never stopped since I became a lawyer. It all began when I was an intern on a case about the dispersal of demonstrations against the Thai-Malay gas pipeline in Chana district of Songkhla province. Then, I really got into trial work with the protest case of villagers from Bang Saphan district of Prachuab Khiri Khan province. Next, between 2007 and 2010, I tried a case for villagers in Nong Dang district of Saraburi province who were fighting against an electricity-producing plant. That was a rough case. In 2010, I provided assistance to the red shirt brothers and sisters, especially those in the northern and northeastern provinces.

Throughout my life as a lawyer, I have felt proud and greatly honored to use my knowledge in the service of society. Once, I was nearly locked up for arguing with the judges in a red shirt case in Chiang Rai province. But I managed to avoid it.

My lawyer’s robe is caked with dust and wrinkled from travel. There are tearstains born of hopes being dashed and tearstains born of hopes being fulfilled all mixed up together. This robe does not serve capitalists or oppressors: it serves villagers and the oppressed.

I am happy and proud that I performed my duty today. Thank you for the ongoing encouragement from my seniors, juniors and friends in legal circles. As long as there is still injustice
in society, we face the tough job of transforming society to be better, the tough job of transforming our society into one that is civilized.

I love and miss everyone --

Arnon Nampha
หมายเหตุเพิ่มเติม ไม่มี

รายการสินค้าหลัก

รายการสินค้าเสริม
Letter No. 3
Undated letter

On Friday afternoon, Lawyer Bom seemed to be in a rush to visit me at the prison. I thought that he must have come bearing good news. The first words out of his mouth when he picked up the phone in the consultation room were, “Older brother, Issaranon is refusing to eat. How do you make soup for him? We tried to make it with carrots and other things. But when we were all done, Issaranon wouldn’t eat it.”

I didn’t know whether to be sad or amused. Actually, when I was still outside [the prison], I often made food for Issaranon at the office. It was no big deal. All I did was buy pork bones, pork ribs and vegetables, and brought along a blender. Once it was all done, I put it in a thermos. When he was ready to eat, I microwaved it. The junior lawyers and Issaranon’s Mommy probably misunderstood. I didn’t just boil the ribs and vegetables and then blend the soup with rice, but I boiled the soup until the pork bones turned the soup sweet.

The way to make it is as follows. Buy 1 kilo of pork bones and 1 kilo of pork ribs. Boil water. Once it boils, add salt. Add the pork ribs and bones and boil them until they are fully cooked. Turn down the heat and simmer with garlic for another 2 hours. Once the soup becomes sweet, take out the bones and add the vegetables. Then blend it with rice. Put it in a thermos and store it in the freezer. This makes enough for many days. The leftover pork ribs then become snacks for the aunty and uncle lawyers at the office.

Talking about food makes me think of Aunty Yong. She is another one who makes delicious food, and likes to make it for other people. She has been planning to make tom leng and bring it to us for a while now. Talking about food also makes it impossible not to think of the laab-koi collective [at the office]. I don’t know when I will get out and get to eat soi ju, laab, and
sharp koi. I miss Laab Krung Restaurant. I miss all of my friends.

Please look after Issaranon and Pran. I heard that he had a fever last week. Please look after his health and wrap him in blankets before he sleeps. I’ll look after my health, too.

Love and thinking of you --

Arnon Nampa
ขอแสดงความนับถือ ขอขอบคุณที่ส่งแบบพิมพ์สีเขียว ที่มีเลขที่ 001

ขอให้เข้ามาซื้อสินค้าในร้านค้าของคุณ

ขอขอบคุณ

ผู้ที่มีท่านส่งแบบพิมพ์สีเขียว
Letter No. 4
9 October 2023

It’s a shame that today the Bangkok Military Court did not take me out [of prison] to perform my duty as a lawyer due to the documents not being ready. But I know from the lawyer who came to visit me that on 16 October, the Bangkok Military Court is going to take me out to serve as a lawyer. It’s probably going to look odd that I will have to argue a case in a prisoner’s uniform yet again, but it’s necessary and I will do my duty to the utmost.

Today I received a letter from Issaranon’s Mommy and a letter from Aunty B. For Issaranon’s Mommy: if it’s not absolutely necessary, you don’t have to include a picture of Issaranon. It makes me miss my son even more.

Thank you to everyone who is helping to look after Issaranon, Pran, and my family. I will be even happier if you look after the families of other political prisoners and help them get through this terrible time, too.

I hope that Issaranon will get better soon. He’s a good kid. May that which is sacred offer him protection as he grows up. It’s a shame that on his first birthday, 14 November, his daddy won’t be able to be there. For his first birthday, I hope that he will grow strong.

The day that Issaranon was born is the day that his daddy gained his freedom. So I gave him the name “Issaranon.” This means Arnon who is free. And, I included his father’s name in his name to remind him that he was born from the love of his father and mother, and he was born in a time when his country was still not a democracy.

This week, I will perform my role as both a defendant and a lawyer for many juniors charged in the same case. I will do as
much as I can and the best that I can, including replying to letters and greetings that have arrived.

Thank you for all of your help. I hope that we will meet together in freedom before too long.

I love and miss everyone --

Until we meet again.

Arnon Nampa
Today I was taken out [of prison] to go to court. I received two good pieces of news. The first is that my daughter, my oldest, received a 3.80 grade on her exams. Just excellent! The other is that Issaranon, my son, has recovered from his fever.

I feel particularly delighted because friends came to visit and listen to the examination of an important case. I discussed with senior lawyers and the junior lawyer team. I witnessed the determination in their eyes to use the law in a just way to aid the people. This reminded me of when I first became a lawyer over ten years ago. In those days, being a lawyer necessitated more hardship. I once took a bus to argue a case in the Lang Suan Provincial Court in Chumphon. The bus arrived in the province at 4 am. I sat around and waited until dawn to take another bus to the court, and then bathed at the court.

In those days, provincial courts had a shower room for lawyers to bathe. I finished arguing the case at noon. Then I got on a bus to go to Nakhon Sri Thammarat, to then get on a songthaew to go to Siriwong. I remember that it was beautiful and the weather was great. Then I got on another bus to go argue the Thai-Malay gas pipeline case in Songkhla.

In terms of the north, I did an internship at the Mae Sariang Court in Mae Hong Son province. And later I got seriously into the region with my work in Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai. Between 2014-2016, there was an order for civilian cases to be tried in the military court system. I argued cases at the Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai provincial courts. Each time I went to the north, I was filled with happiness. In addition to traveling to do the work I loved, I got to meet up with friends to blissfully eat and drink.
The life path of a human rights lawyer who becomes a political prisoner, and the upside-down flip of my life, has made me realize the value of life and which goals carry beauty.

Every time I think of good things, of happiness, of hope, my thoughts become clearer both while awake and while asleep.

Arnon Nampa
16 ศุภมงคล ณ 187 ถนนสุทธิสาร ซอยสุทธิสาร 14 แขวงสุทธิสาร เขตบางกอกน้อย กรุงเทพมหานคร 10110

หมายเหตุ:

รายการเบิกเบี้ยชื่อ

☐ จำนวน

☐ รายละเอียด

☐ รวมแล้ว

หมายเหตุ:

หมายเบิกเบี้ยขั้นต่ำ 10 โดยมีข้อแนะนำว่าต้องมีการแจ้งการเบิกเบี้ยให้ผู้ส่งภาครัฐ
Letter No. 6  
16 October 2023

Today I was taken out [of prison] to argue a case as a lawyer at the Bangkok Military Court, which has moved from Sanam Luang to Sri Sanam Road. Being a lawyer clad in a prisoner’s uniform is wonderfully bizarre and not a problem in any way. It’s a bit inconvenient because I have shackles and walking is somewhat awkward. But I can argue my cases.

Many people likely do not know that the first case I argued in my professional life as a lawyer was a military court case in 2008. The case involved a conscript (he picked the red card). After training was over, the base let the new soldiers go home. My friend went and got into trouble and was hit with an attempted murder case. He didn’t have a lawyer, and so I had to become his lawyer. It was in the Roi Et Military Court. This was the first case of “Lawyer Arnon,” a lawyer all caught up with a conscript. That case took a long time to wind through the court before it was dismissed in the end. My life as a lawyer was off to a flying start.

Then in 2014, there was the coup and the order for civilians to be tried in the military courts. I had the opportunity to once again argue cases in the military courts. There were a lot of cases in the Bangkok Military Court, then Pai Dao Din’s case in the Khon Kaen Military Court, Sienwaen’s case in the Chiang Rai Military Court, the case of the anti-coup flyers in the Chonburi Military Court, and the case of the villagers living in the forest preserve in the Chiang Mai Military Court.

I feel that it is an honor to practice my profession as a lawyer. The majority of my cases have been those of villagers whose rights are violated. Even though now I myself am a political prisoner, I still do my duty as a lawyer. I still practice the profession I adore. Thank you to the Courts of Justice and the Military Courts that continue to see the importance of allow-
ing me to perform my noble duty.

It’s late. My fellow prisoners are starting to fall asleep. Tonight I will close my eyes and go to sleep content. I will dream of the atmosphere of the constant journey that makes up this life of being a lawyer.

Arnon Nampa
Zone 2
ขออนุญาตนำเรื่องที่คุณติดต่อมาลงในเอกสารนี้

วันที่ 25 ตุลาคม พ.ศ. 2566 มีความซับซ้อนเกี่ยวกับเรื่องที่คุณติดต่อมา ที่ต้องการให้ได้รับข้อมูลเพิ่มเติม ซึ่งก่อนหน้านี้คุณได้ติดต่อมาด้วยซ้ำ ขอให้คุณทราบว่าเราได้รับการติดต่อจากคุณแล้ว

ขอขอบคุณที่ให้ความรับผิดชอบในการติดต่อเรื่องนี้

ผู้จัดทำ

รายงานผลการติดต่อ
Letter No. 7
17 October 2023

Going to prison this time is full of honor because it is part of the struggle for rights, freedom and democracy.

I was taken out [of prison] and brought to the Southern Bangkok Criminal Court for the second Harry Potter case trial. Today, for the first time in many days, I held Issaranon and hugged Pran. The two children were bright and cheerful. Pran, the older sister, is 8. She has lost a few more teeth. Bumps are starting to appear on Issaranon’s gums, probably teeth that are pushing through.

In addition to my family’s presence at the court, friends also sat with me and offered encouragement during the trial. One older sister -- whom I didn’t know personally -- travelled from Lamphun to provide support after seeing the news on Facebook.

Actually, a lot of people agree with and support this struggle of young people. We are spread out all over the country and all over the world. The 2020 youth uprising changed the country tremendously. We inspired people to work and changed how they think. This is clear from the latest election results – 70% do not want the old society.

Being imprisoned this time is an honor, and it is my great honor to have a small part in the struggle.

It’s late. Tomorrow I have to go to court. Pass my encouragement on to everyone.

Arnon Nampa
Zone 2
19 สิงหาคม 2566

ให้สมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัว ทรงพระกรุณาโปรดเกล้า ฯ พระราชทานพระบรมราชานุญาตให้สมเด็จพระเจ้าพี่นางเธอ เจ้าฟ้ากรมพระยานครินทร์ กรมพระยาดำรงราชานุภาพ ทรงเป็นอธิบดีกรมการพระราชพิธีการเลขาธิการฯ ที่ได้รับความประทับใจ จึงทรงพระกรุณาโปรดเกล้าฯ พระราชทานพระบรมราชานุญาตให้

ราบรื่นสำหรับ

รายการ

☐ ชื่อ
☐ ตัว
☐ นาม

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หมายเหตุ: รายการ Order Number นี้จะต้องได้ 10 ในที่ทำนองและโปรดทราบว่าได้ทำการบันทึกค่ารายการตามที่ถูกจัดให้

นายประดิษฐ์ คุณภัย
เจ้าฟักนางสาวทิพอาปุนกิจ

24
Letter No. 8
19 October 2023

To My Family and Everyone:

Today I was classified from Zone 2 to Zone 4. Everything went well. What remains unchanged is that I am taken out [of prison] to go to court everyday. Today was no different. Going out to go to court means I get to see my family and friends who come to visit, which sustains my spirit of struggle.

Issaranon can no longer remember me.

Aware of the hardship and many, many conditions placed on us by the struggle for democracy, I want to thank everyone who raises their hand to help. What is very, very difficult is to know what to do, and then do what can be done, to make it possible for my children to remember me and have a relationship with me.

From now on, I ask your permission to write letters to my two children. So that one day, once they have grown up enough, they will be able to learn about their father. They will read letters that their father wrote to them while he was in prison. They will learn of my love and longing, and understand why we cannot be together.

My intention is not to be dramatic in any way. But writing letters to my children for the future is one thing that I can do. And I want my friends, the aunties and uncles who love me and my family, to offer their encouragement to us.

In another 4-5 years, once Issaranon can read, I hope that he will love and be proud of his Daddy. My love and thoughts to everyone --

Arnon Nampa
26
Letter No. 9  
20 October 2023

To my darling children, Pran and Issaranon, and hello to all of the aunties and uncles reading this letter:

By the time you can read this letter, Issaranon, you are likely to be 5 years old, and Pran, you are likely to be 13. Daddy wrote this letter while he was locked up in prison, the Bangkok Remand Prison. And the day that Issaranon is reading this letter is likely to be after five years have passed since Daddy lost his freedom.

I want both of my children to always remember that they are growing up with the love of their Daddy and Mommy, and the people, the brothers and sisters. In a time when their family faces difficulty, Daddy is locked up in prison on a political case, the brothers and sisters still lend a hand and help. In addition to Mommy having to work harder, she is now also making t-shirts to sell to earn money to look after you both, and Daddy who is in prison, too. In addition, we have also established a small fund to look after other political prisoners who are part of the struggle and their families.

Issaranon, this is so that you will remember that you have been able to grow up, in addition to the two hands of Mommy who holds you, also due to all of the aunties and uncles at Thai Lawyers for Human Rights who look after, hold, and feed you while Daddy is not there.

Pran, you have to help look after your younger brother in my place. And I believe that you can do it, child.

My love and thoughts to my two children --

Arnon Nampa  
Zone 4, Bangkok Remand Prison
ผู้รับผิดชอบ: ไม่ได้


รายการสินค้า

☐ รายการ
☐ รายการ
☐ รายการ

รายละเอียด

明确提出 ผลิตภัณฑ์ดินสอ จำนวน 200 ตัว ผู้ส่งมอบ ผู้รับผิดชอบ ได้รับสินค้าพร้อมที่จะส่งมอบให้แก่ลูกค้า ภายในเวลารับของที่กำหนดไว้

ผู้รับผิดชอบ

(ชื่อ ต.ท.) ผู้รับผิดชอบ รับรอง

รับรอง

[ลายเซ็น]

No 10
Letter No. 10
23 October 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

Daddy moved from the Initial Entry Zone to Zone 4. In Zone 4, Daddy has met up with old friends in on ordinary cases whom he was locked up with before. Many have not yet been released. And Daddy has met up with old-timer wardens whom he knows well. Of course, before this, Daddy was imprisoned for 7 months in 2021. So there’s nothing to adjust to.

In the Initial Entry Zone, before Daddy moved, in the morning after bathing and getting ready to go to court, Daddy often watched a flock of birds who flew down to look for food in the field in the Zone. Around 200 birds would hover down and land at the same time and walk around looking for food. Daddy noticed one bird in that flock who did not walk, but jumped and flew for short periods to search for food. Daddy sat and watched him for a beat. And then noticed that he was missing one of his legs. So he uses the method of jumping and flying while his friends walk. After a time the whole flock flies away and not a single bird is left.

Sometimes the things we do not have are not as important as those that we have. What birds have that other animals do not are wings that let them fly. Wings are the key thing that makes this bird still a complete bird, even though he has a disabled leg. He is still able to live his life with what he has. He is not despondent with what he does not have. Daddy is like that bird. Even though right now Daddy does not have his freedom, Daddy’s beautiful thoughts and dreams are flying far and wide now, like the free wings of that bird are now flying in people’s hearts.
If you see a flock of birds flying in the sky, Daddy wants you to think of his words that, “Some of the things you do not have are not as important as those that you have.” And so you should live your life like that bird, live like a bird of freedom.

My love and thoughts to my two children --

Arnon Nampa
Zone 4
Bangkok Remand Prison
25 ธ.ค. 66 สรุปการดำเนินการขอซื้อ ดังนี้

ขอสรุปขั้นตอนที่ผ่านมา สรุปขั้นตอนที่ผ่านมา ทำการบันทึกการซื้อและจัดเก็บสินค้า

พนักงานรายชื่อ

(อัตราเงินเดือน)

ให้ยื่น 2 ชุด คัดลอก สำเนา 1 ชุด

รายการสินค้าที่สั่งซื้อ

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นายประพันธ์ คำพัน

เจ้าหน้าที่งานเริ่มต้นปฏิบัติงาน

31
Letter No. 11  
25 October 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

Due to the obstacles that keep us from being together, Daddy is an unlucky father who is separated from you and might not be able to be able to present in your dreams. But as for Daddy, I dream of my two children every night.

Daddy often dreams the same dream over and over again. Daddy dreams of us living our lives together before Daddy had to enter the prison. Daddy wants to go back to being able to take Pran to school in the morning and turn on the songs of BLACKPINK that you like to listen to in the car on the way to school, even though it is jarring to my ears.

On the way back after taking Pran to school in the morning, Daddy wants to listen to Sorayut’s morning news show. Once Daddy arrives home, he wants to make milk for Issaranon and then bathe him before going to court. Daddy wants to take everyone to stroll here and there. Go walking in the shopping mall and in the Railway Park. Daddy wants to sleep with both children every night. While Daddy is in prison, his dreams cause him to be so happy that he does not want to open his eyes. Daddy wants to remain in a dream state because he knows that he does not have the opportunity to be the father that he is in his dreams.

Tonight will be the same: let us join in our dreams, Pran and Issaranon.

My love and thoughts to my two children --

Arnon Nampa  
Zone 4, Bangkok Remand Prison
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*หมายเหตุ: ราคาตาม Order Number มีผลตั้งแต่ 10 ในที่นี้และจะปรับราคาระหว่างรายการได้อีกตามความเหมาะสม*
Letter No. 12
26 October 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

“Yesterday while eating, I thought I was sitting and eating in a tilapia pond.” This is how the conversation this morning between your Uncle Get and Daddy started. After Daddy had to go to prison, Mommy, assisted by uncles and aunties outside [the prison], created a small fund to buy food and essentials for political prisoners. There’s more than 30 now.

She buys the same food and the same amount of food for everyone, both rice and dishes to eat with rice. In Zone 4, there are eight of us. When we eat, we tend to sit and eat together. Yesterday, Mommy ordered a whole fried tilapia fish for each person. You can probably imagine the tilapia pond that your Uncle Get was envisioning, right?

This made Daddy think of when he was struggling outside and there were a number of people who did not understand the issue of equality and tried to say that there is no way that people can be equal. There is high and low, there is black and white. If the fingers on one’s hand are not equal, how are people to be equal? In truth, when Daddy and his friends call for equality, what it means is that everyone must receive equal protection under the law. They must have rights and freedom. They must receive the same social services. There must be respect for human dignity. There must be respect for difference. This will lead to the greatest peace. If not, the equality of the old society will leave us to be like the fish in a tilapia pond, like Uncle Get said.

Daddy wants Pran and Issaranon to respect this principle. Daddy hopes that when Issaranon reads this letter, our society will have equality. This alone and the struggle of Daddy and his friends will have not been in vain.
My love and thoughts to my two children --

Arnon Nampa
Bangkok Remand Prison
Zone 4
36
Letter No. 13
27 October 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

Today, Daddy received a postcard from Ajarn [Professor] Nam, who offered her encouragement. This was the first postcard aside from those of Mommy that have reached me. I send my thanks to her and hope that you two have received the book of fables that Ajarn Nam sent you. Ajarn Nam said that it was in English. Pran can probably read it. Now, Daddy is practicing English with his fellow prisoners who are foreign. And Daddy is trying to exercise with his friends.

In Zone 4, there are a decent number of exercise machines. There is an uncle who is a fitness teacher. Daddy began to exercise once he moved into Zone 4. His body was sore for 2-3 days. Now, Daddy’s health is much improved. Good physical health and getting sweaty makes his mental health sparkling and clear, too.

Ajarn Nam hopes Daddy will get out for Issaranon’s first birthday on 14 November. Daddy does not think there is any chance of getting out to blow out the candles on Issaranon’s first birthday cake. Daddy will have to leave it to all of the aunties and uncles outside to blow out the candles in his place.

Pran’s term has started already. Don’t forget the issues that Daddy is strict about. Every time you get in the car, you have to put on a seatbelt and you must not let Mommy hold Issaranon while driving. Issaranon must ride in the car seat every time. About Pran wanting to study art after school, Daddy agrees. Even though Pran already has a talent for drawing, Daddy thinks your drawing will improve swiftly if you are given the chance to develop your skills.
Finally, Daddy asks Pran to look after Mommy in my place. Provide support and encouragement to Mommy and remind her that Daddy loves and misses the three of you every day.

I love and miss you --

Arnon Nampa
Zone 4
Bangkok Remand Prison
Letter No. 14
30 October 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

One question that lingers in my mind since being in prison is what of Daddy does Issaranon understand and remember? What will Issaranon tell his teacher and friends about Daddy when he starts kindergarten in 3 years? Who is his Daddy? What job does he do? Will he dare to tell them that his Daddy is imprisoned under Article 112?

His friends in the same grade will have fathers who are teachers or police or soldiers or prosecutors or judges. Kids tend to chat and playfully boast about their fathers. How is Issaranon going to survive that part? Are his friends going to tease him because his Daddy is locked up? These worries circle around in Daddy’s head every night.

Pran is probably grown up enough to understand. Daddy wants Pran to tell Issaranon about what happened to me. Tell your younger brother the reason why his Daddy has to be locked up. Tell your younger brother what our family has to encounter and what Daddy and Daddy’s friends are fighting for. Tell your younger brother that this is important for our society. Daddy is proud to be punished with imprisonment in the name of the struggle. People in Daddy’s generation hope that our struggle will help us leave a beautiful society for your generation. The sufferings and difficulties of this period will not destroy those dreams.

Daddy wants Pran to show Issaranon a photograph of the speech on 3 August 2020 and tell him that, “Your father is Harry Potter, he is Lawyer Arnon Nampa.” Just this alone brings a contented smile to Daddy’s face while he is locked in a cell writing this letter, happy to watch my children grow up in a society that will be better.
My love and thoughts to my two children --

Arnon Nampa
Bangkok Remand Prison
Zone 4
วันที่ 13 พฤศจิกายน 2566 ผู้รับผิดชอบ:

อ่าน บทบาท: ผู้รับผิดชอบ

ขอขอบคุณที่ติดต่อเรา

ผู้รับผิดชอบ:

Date: 03/10/2023

เรียน: จัดทำสินค้า

หมายเหตุ: ขออภัย ไม่สามารถอ่านเนื้อหาได้ชัดเจน

ข้อมูลสินค้า:

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Letter No. 15
31 October

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

“Issaranon has red bumps that have cropped up. One is on his cheek and there are two on his left forehead.” Daddy suspects that it is from a mosquito bite. Today Daddy got to spend a long time with Issaranon. Daddy held him for a bit and my hand felt more cramped than usual. Daddy was able to kiss him a few times. Issaranon grinned and was in a good mood.

Daddy was taken out [of the prison] to perform my duty as a lawyer in Article 112 cases in both the morning and the afternoon. It was evening before Daddy was back in the prison. In the afternoon, Mommy brought Issaranon to visit Daddy in the courtroom. Daddy got to hold Issaranon a bit. You squirmed. You are probably ready to walk already. Daddy believes that in several months, you will probably begin to practice walking. Mommy took Issaranon to wait outside the courtroom.

Once Daddy looked over the evidence and the judges gave permission for Daddy to return [to prison], Daddy opened the door of the courtroom and asked the guard for permission to hold Issaranon. The guard granted permission. Daddy got to hold Issaranon for about another minute. Thank you to the sympathetic guard. Even though it was only one minute, it was one minute which held tremendous value for Daddy.

In truth, Mommy did not have to deal with the difficulty of coming today because it is someone else’s case. Daddy was simply the lawyer, but Mommy probably wanted Daddy to get to see Issaranon after the long holiday.

On the way back to prison, Daddy was quiet and did not...
speak with anyone. In my heart, Daddy simply wants to have the opportunity to do my duty as a father to teach Issaranon to walk, to potty train Issaranon, to tell Pran stories before going to sleep and take her to school in the morning. But now, all Daddy can do is write this letter to record the memory of when we were separated from one another. All Daddy can do is write this letter for my two children to find and read one day.

To Mommy: Daddy thanks you for everything. Mommy is the force that keeps Daddy struggling. Daddy survives because of your strength and waits for the day that the four of us will be together again.

My love and thoughts to my two children and your Mommy --

Arnon Nampa
Zone 4
Bangkok Remand Prison
Letter No. 16
2 November 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

“Today there was a surprise in the court. Issaranon is able to hold a pen as if he can write. It seemed like he was going to draw lines and letters many times when the court took a break in its proceedings.”

Daddy was taken out [of prison] to go to the court in the Lad Phrao Intersection Demonstration Case, from 2 December 2020. In this case, Daddy is Defendant No. 1 and is also performing the duty of being the lawyer for Uncle Mike, Defendant No. 4. Today, Mommy brought Issaranon to visit Daddy but Pran had to go to school and so could not come with Mommy. We likely won’t get to see each other until Pran’s school holidays.

Issaranon let Daddy hold him and played with Daddy and all of the aunty and uncle lawyers (Daddy has to apologize for using the word “and” a bit too often, it’s because Daddy is writing this letter in one go, instead of drafting it and then copying it). The red bump from the mosquito bite has disappeared already. Daddy held Issaranon for a bit and then he squirmed to get down to stand and hold on to the chair in the court. When the court took a break in the hearing, Uncle Beer carried Issaranon over to the lawyer table. Issaranon grabbed a pen as if to write. There’s nothing odd if a child picks up a pen. But what is odd is that that Issaranon, at the age of 11 months, picked up a pen even though he cannot write. And it was as though he knew that he had to write on a piece of paper, not on the table itself.

Daddy and all the aunties who came to observe the hearing let out a big cheer, what a smart one, little Kan!
Mommy told me that she ordered Issaranon’s first pair of shoes for him to practice walking. Hopefully it will not be too long before he shows off his walking when Daddy is taken out [of prison] to come to the court for hearings.

Daddy wants to see Pran and Issaranon drawing and writing at our house. Look after one another, my darling children, while Daddy is not there.

My love and thoughts to the three of you --

Arnon Nampa
Zone 4
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ขอแสดงความนับถือ

พนักงานเก็บรักษา

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Date 03/10/2023 Order No. 23-390223
Letter No. 17
3 November 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

“Today, Mommy did not bring Issaranon to the court. So Daddy had to go without seeing him. Today, Daddy was brought out [of the prison] to be Defendant No. 1 and to be the lawyer for Mike Rayong. But then one of the defendants confessed. So the court ordered the dismissal of the case and for the prosecutor to indict and bring a new case, with only Daddy, Uncle Penguin, Uncle Mike, Aunty Rung and Uncle Hugo who are fighting Article 112.”

Daddy received your Mommy’s letter in which she told me about how brave you both are. Mommy ended her letter by writing, “I miss Daddy.” Daddy got goosebumps when I read this. Usually, when we are together, your Mommy doesn’t speak this way. Your Mommy is not a sappy person. She is focused. She likes to do things by herself. Mommy is the one who painted the walls in our room. Daddy was simply her assistant.

When we moved in together, we didn’t have very much money. Mommy ordered a closet from Ikea. It was put together for 1-2 months before we had the money to buy the doors for it. Lucky for us, Ikea sells the pieces separately. Daddy and Mommy have been through joys and suffering together in the political struggle for many years. It began when Daddy went to argue the case in the We Want An Election demonstration at the Military Court [in 2015], all the way to when Daddy joined the youth protests in 2020. Your Mommy is strong, and is the strength behind Daddy.

Every time that Daddy is sent to the court, Daddy stands and look at a small cactus at the exit while waiting to get on the prison van. They have planted 5-6 pots of cacti. In this peri-
od, they are blooming and are strangely beautiful. It makes me think of your Mommy. Your Mommy likes to plant small cactuses on our balcony. There must be a plant or two that is blooming to welcome the cool winds. The other plants Mommy planted must have new green shoots. Are the two birds that like to rest on the balcony railing still there?

While in prison, Daddy can only recall these stories of our previous life together.

My love and thoughts to my two children, and to your Mommy --

Arnon Nampa
Zone 4
Bangkok Remand Prison
A ฤทธิ์ที่ ๑๕๔๒ ที่มานามสูงสุด ด้วย

เรายินดีที่จะให้คำแนะนำ

ที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการเดินทาง

ขอให้กับ

Be with you.

ขอให้กับ

Be with you.

ขอให้กับ

Be with you.
Letter No. 18
4 November 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

Today, the prison screened a film in the evening. “My Tomorrow, Your Yesterday.” It is a Japanese romance movie that Daddy likes a lot. Daddy and Mommy watched it, and then watched it again on Netflix before Daddy came into prison. There’s another Japanese movie that Daddy likes on Netflix, which is “Be With You.” There is a Korean version also. (Daddy likes the Japanese version more.)

Both movies play with time. The first one tells the story of two people for whom time moves in opposite directions. They meet up every 5 years. For “Be With You,” it’s better that Daddy does not spoil it by telling you about it. Daddy wants the two of you to watch it yourselves.

Time, or the movement of time, is beautiful and magical. Daddy is really into this stuff. Many years before Pran was born, Daddy had thought and felt like he had a little daughter. She would run and play in Daddy’s consciousness and dreams from time to time. It was clear and seemed real, to the degree that Daddy wrote on Facebook about it. The visions of her came in scenes, and Daddy often took her to the Criminal Court. She liked to run and play and go under the lawyer’s table like a little monkey. Then one day it became real. The vision and dreams seemed very real, and are like when Pran visits Daddy at the court. Pran goes under the table in the court, too. Pran is that child who was in Daddy’s thoughts and dreams, and we really met up in the actual world.

For Issaranon, Daddy’s little Kan: In another 5 or 10 years, Kan will read the letter Daddy wrote to you today and Daddy will still not be free. It is very magical that this letter will be
able to speak to you in 5 or 10 years, and you will get a sense of how much Daddy loves and misses you.

The letters that Daddy writes each day will grow from one letter to thousands of letters. They will help communicate the feelings Daddy has each day to Pran and Kan in the future. Daddy awaits the first letter that the two of you will send to me in prison.

My love and thoughts to my two children --

Arnon Nampa
Zone 4
Bangkok Remand Prison
Letter No. 19
6 November 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

“Today, while testifying in the case of who killed King Taksin, I took off my shirt, to demand that the court recognize the peculiarity of the judicial system.”

Uncle Get Sophon walked up to Daddy’s cell and took ahold of the bars after he returned from the court. He told me the story of taking off his shirt in the courtroom in an Article 112 case in the Thonburi Criminal Court. Daddy was shocked because I didn’t think Uncle Get would really do it.

Uncle Get, who is 25 years-old, is a polite young man. He’s skinny and wears glasses like a schoolkid. He did a degree in medical imaging and is now studying to be a doctor. He is a defendant in an Article 112 case from talking about history, about who killed King Taksin. He’s a fellow friend in Zone 4 with Daddy. Daddy calls him a friend because those of us in prison together are true friends. Uncle Get is a serious and knowledgeable person. We often chat while drinking coffee each morning and when we eat together. Uncle Get is one of the young people who came to consciousness in 2020 and was catalyzed to join political struggle.

12 November is Uncle Get’s birthday. We will celebrate it in the prison. Daddy will probably have funny stories to tell Pran and Issaranon about Uncle Get from time to time. As long as the country is not democratic, Daddy and Uncle Get will likely be right here.

P.S., You don’t need to worry that Daddy is going to take off his shirt in protest like Uncle Get. At the very least, it is because Daddy does not have a six-pack yet. Daddy is trying to exercise and lose weight. Hopefully, Uncle Get’s expression
will make some people, or many people, realize the peculiarity of the Thai judicial process. Daddy will tell you about the bravery of Uncle Get and others another time.

My love and thoughts to my two children --

Arnon Nampa
Zone 4
Letter No. 20
Daybreak on 8 November 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

Yesterday, Daddy was taken out [of the prison] to go to the Southern Bangkok Criminal Court for the case of the demonstration where paint was thrown on the sign at Police Headquarters. In this case, Daddy is Defendant No. 1 and is also serving as the lawyer for Uncle Pai Dao Din, who is Defendant No. 3. Witness testimony finished at 5 pm, but traffic and rain meant that we did not reach the prison until 9 pm. After bathing, Daddy fell asleep immediately. Then woke at 5 am to write this letter to the two of you.

Mommy brought Issaranon to see Daddy in the courtroom. Pran was at school and so could not come. During this period, Mommy faces a lot of hardship. She is up late because she has to wait until midnight to fill out the online forms to buy food and other things for all of the political prisoners. Then, when she wakes, she has to take Pran to school before stopping by the court to see Daddy. In the afternoon, she must go pick up Pran. Daddy feels for your Mommy so much. Today, the little one did not fuss when sitting and listening to the hearing with all of the aunties and uncles who came to encourage Daddy. Issaranon has two teeth now.

The case in which hearings were held is one from after we had protested at Parliament calling for a new constitution to be drafted. That day, the dispersal of protests was brutal. People were shot with rubber bullets, tear gassed, and sprayed with chemical-laced water. But we held our ground and walked forward until we reached Parliament. The front of the protest was led by giant rubber duckies that helped protect us against the chemical-laced water and rubber bullets. The next night, we went to engage in a symbolic protest in front of Police Headquarters. The day of the protest, around
20,000-30,000 people engaged in peaceful expression, meaning that we took action against the Police Headquarters sign, not against people.

The demonstration was impressive. And it is terrifying to those in the old society that youth have developed their thinking and refuse to bow down to injustice. That Daddy has to go to prison because he is a leader of those changing society is therefore something to be valued and proud of. I hope that today I will get to see Mommy and the two of you at the Southern Bangkok Court. I’ll go now to bathe and go to court.

Arnon Nampa
Zone 4
Letter No. 21
9 November 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

After the new year, Daddy will be moved to prison in Chiang Mai. The weather is going to be pretty cold then. It’s a shame that when Daddy goes to Chiang Mai this time, he won’t be able to stay at a hotel or resort, won’t be able to go to the Walking Street, won’t be able to eat laab and koi, won’t be able to go make merit at Wat Phra That Chom Thong, and won’t be able to go to Sudsanan. This time it will be to get on a prison van to go to prison in Mae Tang district.

Today, as she usually does, after Mommy took Pran to school, she brought Issaranon to visit Daddy in the courtroom at the Southern Bangkok Criminal Court. Issaranon seemed happy and let Daddy hold him. He grabbed a pen and seemed like he was going to write and draw on paper. Daddy suspects that he would like to write and draw, just like Pran. Or he may have spied Pran drawing and writing at home, and so he is trying to do it too. It was adorable.

The aunties and uncles also came to visit Daddy in the courtroom. They asked me when Daddy would go to Chiang Mai. They are going to buy train tickets to come and offer encouragement. They ought to just rent an entire carriage, since a lot of people are going. They are likely going to take the opportunity to tour around Chiang Mai, too. The support from these aunties and uncles helps keep the fire in Daddy’s heart blazing. Many have been Daddy’s friends for a long time. Like Aunty Nok. We used to do activism together, beginning with fighting back against the coup. Whenever Daddy was arrested, she would sleep overnight in front of the police station in case after case.

I send my thanks to everyone who offers encouragement.
The fire of struggle has not yet been extinguished. The seeds of freedom have been sown in people’s hearts already. We now wait for them to grow.

The cold winds have arrived, my children. Don’t forget to cover Mommy with a blanket. Daddy will look after his health, too.

My love and thoughts to everyone --

Arnon Nampa
Zone 4
กรุณาอ่านที่ผนวกลงมาด้านล่าง
Letter No. 22
10 November 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

In 4 days, it will be Issaranon’s first birthday. Daddy remembers this time last year. Mommy and Daddy were so excited to meet you. Mommy had everything prepared from the beginning of the month. Daddy stopped drinking and hanging out with friends in case there was an emergency and he had to take Mommy to the hospital.

At 3 am on 13 November 2022, Mommy woke Daddy up to tell him that her water broke. We drove to the hospital immediately. Daddy tried to hold it together and stay calm while driving. Once we reached the hospital, Daddy left Mommy in the hands of the doctors, Since it was during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, Daddy wasn’t allowed to be with her. Then, on the morning of 14 November, Issaranon opened his eyes to the world.

In the first period, Daddy did not dare to hold Issaranon. He seemed so ooh, Daddy was afraid he would drop him. All Daddy could do was sit and stare with delight. Issaranon did not cry at all at the beginning. He liked to sleep soundly. Pran clearly adored him and would not leave his side. Issaranon would drink Mommy’s milk and then poop. But his poop wasn’t smelly. Eat and then poop. Poop and then sleep.

Whether or not Daddy is granted bail in time for Issaranon’s birthday, Daddy wants you both to know that it is not only our family that has been impacted by the political struggle. We are simply little people, a little family, in the big picture of the struggle this time. Everyone is doing their duty in this era.

If Daddy does not get out for his son’s birthday, would the aunties and uncles outside please buy a small piece of cake
and sing Happy Birthday to him? Tell Issaranon to be patient, be good, and stay healthy and strong. Daddy will send his wishes, and heart, from here: Zone 4, Bangkok Remand Prison.

My love and thoughts to everyone --

Arnon Nampa
Zone 4
Bangkok Remand Prison
Letter No. 23  
13 November 2023

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

“Live your life to have value and meaning”

Last week Mommy told me that Pran wanted to come to see Daddy at the court when they bring Daddy out of prison, which would mean that Pran would miss school. Daddy asks Pran to be patient. It is not so necessary for us to see each other than you have to miss school. Daddy knows that you miss me. But studying is no less important. Daddy wants you to write me letters and include pictures that you draw. Daddy has heard that you have developed your drawing skills a great deal and wants to show your drawings off to my friends in here.

You may have to help Mommy look after your little brother because this is the time when he is learning many things. Your clothes and your little brother’s clothes can be washed together. You can switch the mode on the washing machine at home to the children’s clothing mode. Once the cycle finishes, don’t use the dryer, use hangers to hang it on the balcony. The clothes will shrink if you dry them in the dryer. Mommy has probably already shown you how to mix milk.

You shouldn’t eat bingsu often because it is expensive. But if the aunties at the office are treating, don’t turn them down. Mommy said that Pran is starting to keep a diary, which is excellent.

Daddy wants Pran to live with value and meaning, both for yourself and for the people around you. The lifetime of us humans is not long. Daddy wants Pran to learn to be an adult whose mind is open and generous. What is important is you must learn about and know yourself. You must be yourself.
Let’s wait for the school holidays and we can meet in the court. Be good, and don’t forget to put your seatbelt on every time you get in the car. No exceptions!

My love and thoughts to my two children --

Arnon
Zone 4
Bangkok Remand Prison
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หมายเหตุ: ขอแสดงความยินดีกับการสั่งซื้อสินค้าในครั้งนี้ สำหรับการดำเนินงานในอนาคต
Letter No. 24
14 November 2023

Today is Issaranon’s first birthday. He was born from the love of his Mommy and Daddy, and is growing up with the love of his older sister Pran, and that of his many aunties and uncles.

May Issaranon be healthy and strong, happy, and study different things at each age. The gift Daddy wishes to give him is what Daddy and my friends are fighting for. We awakened to knowledge, opened our eyes, and stood up to fight for freedom and equality. We dream of passing on a new society to the next generation, and to be able to live in this beautiful society.

Today, and in many subsequent years on this day, Daddy will probably only be able to send my wishes from here. When Issaranon is old enough to read these letters, you will likely understand what it is that our family is doing. Your Mommy sent me a picture of Issaranon grinning, and Daddy could see the tooth that has just emerged. It’s very funny. And Daddy got to see Issaranon’s new hairstyle, too.

Mommy and older sister Pran should buy a cake for Issaranon. Have the aunties and uncles come together to blow out the candles in Daddy’s place. Today Daddy will be taken out [of the prison] to go to the Southern Bangkok Court once again. Daddy hopes everything will go well.

Happy Birthday!

My love and thoughts to everyone --

Arnon Nampa
Bangkok Remand Prison
Zone 4
Letter No. 25
15 November 2023

“Accepting the punishment does not equal acceptance of guilt”

To Pran and Issaranon, my darling children:

Today, the Supreme Court held up the order to not release Daddy on bail. They did this even though Daddy’s lawyer submitted documentation of the many reasons, even though actually, there does not have to be any reason other than that the case is not final. Bail is a fundamental right. But the denial of bail is not beyond what is expected in political cases and those of prisoners of conscience like Daddy. Daddy had the lawyer withdraw the bail requests in my more than 20 cases in order to make clear the struggle at hand.

What Daddy is going through now is the process of being punished and accepting the punishment, but not accepting guilt. In the struggle of Daddy and my friends, there is no confession to the crimes or acceptance [of the actions] as crimes. The struggle of youth that arose in 2020 came from the awakening and political consciousness of an entire generation. We saw the problems in our country and came out to fight for change. Freedom and equality are not crimes. There is no necessity to accept guilt and Daddy will not accept guilt even if punished.

In Daddy’s more than 20 cases, the punishment might be imprisonment of more than 80 years. But there will not be even a single day that Daddy will accept guilt. Daddy’s imprisonment shows both that our country has problems and that there are people who are struggling [to fix these problems]. We are not fighting alone. There are now more than 40 political prisoners. There are exiles and the brother and sister people who continue to support this struggle.
By the time my two children are able to understand Daddy's words that acceptance of the punishment is not the acceptance of guilt, and by the time that your father is granted his freedom from punishment for a crime for which he was not guilty, my two children will have likely grown up. The country will have changed and will no longer be the same as before.

My love and thoughts to my two children --

Arnon Nampa
Zone 4
About the Article 112 Project

Over the past twenty years, the use and abuse of Article 112 to suppress peaceful expression and silence discussion of crucial social and political questions in the Thai polity has risen at an alarming rate. Despite the urgency of this rise, and the analytic questions it necessarily raises, scholarship has remained relatively sparse and restriction of freedom of expression in Thailand remains unknown outside the country. The Article 112 Project responds to this lacuna by expanding scholarship and public engagement through translation, research-led undergraduate and graduate teaching and collaboration with relevant U.S., Thai, and international scholars and nongovernmental organizations. The Article 112 Project is an initiative of the Justice in Southeast Asia Lab in the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, with generous support from the Anonymous Fund. For more information, contact Tyrell Haberkorn [tyrell.haberkorn@wisc.edu].