13. Thirdly, the trend towards associating employers and workers with the making of policy decisions is not only reflected in the dispute settlement machinery, but has wider scope which includes the fixing of wages and the planning or the formulation of national plans. The former is clearly illustrated by such machinery as the National Wages Commission in the Philippines, the National Wage Survey Council in Indonesia, the Tripartite Wage Committee in Thailand and the National Wages Council in Singapore. The latter can be seen though inclusion of workers' and employers' representatives in the national development planning boards.

14. The tripartite machinery also operates on a permanent ad hoc structure and takes many forms. For instance, the organization of tripartite labour conferences organized in India, Pakistan, and the Philippines.

In Thailand the National Tripartite and Manpower Development Council, in addition to its other duties, advises the Government on labour and manpower policy questions.

15. Lastly, many countries are at present engaged in a re-examination of their labour relations systems. In Pakistan, the National Labour Commission is considering a series of recommendations suggested by the Tripartite Labour Conference which met in 1977. In India, the Tripartite Labour Conference met in 1977 and set up a commission to study the whole labour relations question; its report was issued in early 1978. As recommended by this commission, an industrial relations bill was submitted to Parliament in late 1979. In Nepal, the Government is preparing a Comprehensive Labour Code. In Bangladesh, the Government reconstituted the Tripartite Labour Consultative Committees with the task of formulating a new labour policy. In Sri Lanka steps are being taken to establish employees' councils in enterprises, and employees' representation on management boards. In Thailand, a new labour law to incorporate all the Ministry of Interior's Ordinances is being drafted.

The State of Human Rights in Thailand in 1985*

by Thongbai Thongpao

1. POLITICAL SITUATION
It may be said that democracy in Thailand during the past year had advanced a stage as the people had opportunities to exercise their voting rights in several localities such as the by-election for a vacant parliamentary seat in Nakhon Pathom Province and another in Yasothon Province in which Dr Phiraphan Palusuk of the Democrat Party was elected.

Of interest were two major by-elections of Members of Parliament in Bangkok, the first of which saw former Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Somboon Chaupiboon of the Democrat Party being elected and another Democrat, Dr. Pichit Rattakul, clinched victory in the other.

Also of interest were nationwide elections of members of
municipality and provincial councils, for which the people's rights to vote at the local level had long been restricted.

The elections which were most publicised and believed to be most meaningful to Thailand's politics and democracy were the ones for the Bangkok governor and city councillors. Elected Bangkok governor was former close aide of Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda, Maj-Gen Chamlong Srimuang, who was regarded as a new face in politics. Maj-Gen Chamlong is known to be a devout Buddhist and a vegetarian who eats only one meal a day. He is a new hope for Bangkokians who have been tired of the same old faces in politics. However, in the election of city councillors, it was the Democrats who swept the majority of the seats.

Amid this democratic atmosphere, there was a coup attempt on September 9, 1985 because of disagreement with the Government. As a result, former Prime Minister Gen Kriangsak Chomanan, former military Supreme Commander Gen Srinmak and Somsak Thai and three other former military men were arrested and faced legal charges together with low-ranking military officers and seven labour leaders. Altogether 49 persons were arrested and are undergoing court trial in connection with the failed coup.

Despite this snag, the trend for democracy seems to have been brightened, considering the fact that more military officers had shown that they are democracy-minded by applying to run in the elections. However, deep in their hearts, the Thai people were still concerned about more possible coups which can take place easily and frequently in this country. Since the change in the country's administrative system in 1932, there have been a number of coups and coup attempts simultaneously with charges of Constitutions. This happened so frequently that whenever tanks take over the streets during each coup the people will be out to watch them as if they are attending a big fair.

2. POLITICAL PRISONERS

As a result of the existing undemocratic situation and rights and freedom restriction in Thailand, there are still political prisoners and illegitimate detainees categorized by cases as below:

A) Lese-Majeste.

1. Convicted: Pul Maj Anant Senakhar, Thenwaran Sawan (surname not known), Saisat Pongthep (surname not known), Surin Kongsupol and Rat Usarapan.  

2. Cases on court trial: Chak Pancharapatachai (at Chiang Mai Court) and Prasit Buaswan (at Thanayaburi Court)

B) Communist and internal insurgency.

1. Convicted: Damrongsa Kriangsak and Mrs Winol Phanbhandee. Both were sentenced to over 10 years imprisonment.

2. Cases on court trial: (First case) Damri Ruangsut and Prakhon Thonghajang (arrested in April 1981); (Second case) Surachai Sae Dan, Mali Saktion and Pravit Paenshaoen (arrested in June 1981); (Third case) Phirun Chatvanichkul, Rangsri Sae See, Sawat Anarthapanyakul, Manoj Methangkoon, Prasong Arunsantiroj and Sangsan Thipxing (Altogether 22 were arrested in July 1984, eight of them were dismissed and eight were sent to attend a re-education programme).

3. Cases under investigation: One case involves Thangchail Suwannihok, Sa-ngot Sriphoka and Subin Pankiti. The other case involves Viroj Chongsit, Prapas Muaydee, Side or Sathit Kriangka and Jan Damtoon-in. There have also been reports of more arrests in the North and South Regions.

C) September 9 abortive coup:

40 persons were arrested including retired military officers, seven labour leaders and one university lecturer.

D) Persons detained on Prime Minister's Orders without undergoing judicial processes:

44 persons are being detained at Bang Khwang Central Prison in Nonthaburi on Prime Minister's Orders under the jurisdiction of Articles 21, 27 and 200. A number have been transferred to prisons in other provinces after inmates staged a riot to demand amnesty.

E) Political prisoners facing criminal charges:

They are members of the PULO and BRN in the South and of the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) who defected to the authorities or were arrested. They were later subject to only trial on criminal charges.

F) Alien detainees awaiting deportation:

They are long-time law-offending aliens subject to deportation but have not been accepted by any countries. About 34 of them are being detained at Bang Khun Prison. Some are being detained at the Immigration Division.

3. The PRESS

A new Printing Act which allows the establishment of a Press Council has been debated in Parliament. According to the new law, a newspaper whose editor's licence is revoked can continue its publication under the editorship of its deputy editor. In the past, if the editor's licence was with drawn the newspaper would also be closed. Moreover, the proposed Printing Act will allow a committee to control newspapers' ethics.

When communist suspects were rounded up in July 1984, Chatcharin Chaiwar and Dr. Preecha Phanpongsan, director and adviser of political weekly magazine Mauphum, were also arrested. They were, however, released after several months in detention.

During the past year two journalists died on duty. Manit Nakwannakij and his six-year-old son were shot dead and his wife seriously wounded while Manit was on the way to send a report to his Bangkok office. Amnuay Khirirong was shot dead while covering news on the election of provincial councillors in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.

Moreover, a journalist working in Iraq, Thitthai Charoentham, was hanged on a spy charge.

During the September 9 coup attempt, NBC's newsmen, Neil Davis, an Australian, and William Latch, an American, were killed when his truck was hijacked by an artillery shell fired from a tank of the coup makers.

Five newsmen were threatened and subject to bodily assaults. A Thai Rath newspaper reporter in Udon Thani received a warning shot at his office. Reporters of the Daily News, Thai Rath, Bangkok Post covering news on Mrs Chamoy Thipso's oil share operation...