



มูลนิธิเพื่อสิทธิมนุษยชนและการพัฒนา (มสพ.) Human Rights and Development Foundation

เลขที่ 109 ซอยสิทธิชน ถนนสุทธิสารวินิจฉัย แขวงสามเสนนอก เขตห้วยขวาง กรุงเทพฯ 10310
109 Soi Sitthichon, Suthisarnwinichai Road, Samsennok, Huaykwang, Bangkok 10310
Tel: (+662)277 6882/277 6887 Fax: (+662)277 6882 ext 108 E-mail: info@hrdfoundation.org

For immediate release on 9 May 2016

Press Release

Trang Provincial Court Set First Court Hearing for Human Trafficking Case of Migrant Fishing Boat Workers from Myanmar on 13 May 2016

On 29 January 2016 Trang Provincial Court's accepted the case, with Trang public prosecutor as the plaintiff and Ms. Somchit also known as Mae Sor Srisawang and additional 10 accomplices as the accused, to proceed to trial.

In sum, the defendants no. 1 to 9, and the Boon Lap Fishing LP with Mr. Somphon or Ko Nang Jirotemontree, as a managing partner, were accused of conspiring to commit the crime since 2000 until 19 October 2015 including for procuring, harboring, receiving any person, by means of the threat or use of force, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power against victims of trafficking in persons who are 15 migrant workers from Myanmar including those younger than 15 years but not older than 18 years. The act was committed as an exploitation, forced labour, causing the victims to fear for their life, body and freedom and have to agree to stay in the custody of the ten defendants while being deprived of liberty and agree to work on board the fishing boats. The alleged offence also includes slavery or coercing other persons to work as slaves. Most of the victims have not received the wages in full, and some have not even paid any.

The defendant no. 2 was also indicted on offence concerning possessing an unknown size and type of firearm with unknown size and type of ammunitions which are firearms and ammunitions according to the law and can be used to fatally harm other persons and objects without permission and licenses from local registrar. The crime took place in Tambon Kantang, Kantang District, Trang and the public prosecutor pleaded to the Court to convict the ten defendants on the violation of the 2008 Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act, the 1947 Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, Fireworks, and the Equivalent of Firearms Act, the Penal Code and the Act for the Amendment of the Penal Code no. 6 B.E. 2526's Article 4. The case was accepted by the Provincial Court of Trang as the Black Case no. KM 1/2559. Meanwhile, the attorney of the victims has asked to be co-plaintiff in this case, yet the permission was only granted only on matters concerning the Penal Code; request to be a co-plaintiff on the offences against the 2008 Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act was dismissed on the ground that they are deemed to be crimes against the state. The Court fixed 42 hearings (30 for the plaintiff and co-plaintiff and 12 for the defendants) and the first witness examination shall take place on **13 May 2016 at 09.00-16.00 hrs.**

Background

On 21 October 2015, officers from the Anti-Human Trafficking Center, Department of Special Investigation (DSI) and local police officers plus civil society organizations have raided and rescued 11 Myanmar migrant workers who had sought help through the civil society organizations. According to initial inquiry, it was found they had been detained, confined, subjected to physical abuse, and had their wages deducted. From the investigation of the officers, the local police, DSI and officers from the Anti-Money Laundering Office have managed to arrest Mr. Somphon or Ko Nang Jirotemontree, owner of the Boon Lap Fishing LP and Chairperson of the Trang Fishing Association with others on 7 November 2015 for conspiring to conduct trafficking in persons and with at least three individuals conspiring to commit the offence against the 2008 Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act. Prior to the indictment, the Trang public prosecutor has asked for permission from the Court to have witness examination carried out in advance during which five of the victims of trafficking in persons had given their evidence.

For more information, please contact Mr. Papob Siamhan, Coordinator of the Anti Labour Trafficking Project (ALT), the Human Rights and Development Foundation (HRDF), phone 094-5485306, E-mail: mthaim420@gmail.com