



**For immediate release on 20 August 2018**

**Urgent**

**Myanmar migrant workers pleading Pattani Provincial Court  
To conduct emergency hearing on unlawful arrest and detention**

Today (20 August 2018), a legal counsel with a power of attorney have pleaded to the Pattani Provincial Court to conduct an emergency hearing invoking the Penal Procedure Code's Section 90 in pursuance to the raid and arrest of two Myanmar migrant workers by officers from the Pattani Immigration Office, the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC), the Tourist Police and the Employment Office. The two individuals were apprehended at the Laem Nok Monastery, Tambon Bana, Muang District, Pattani while working as teaching volunteers for more than 80 children of migrant workers. The two migrant workers were accused of taking on jobs prohibited by law and were fined. They were also ordered to sign a document written in a language not understood by them. Invoking the Immigration Act 1979, the authorities also have the two of them deported to their home country and they are barred from reentering Thailand for work for two years. Another Myanmar national with tourist visa who was visiting the Monastery and observing their teaching was also arrested and fined for the same charges.

The acts of the officers have been carried out without any prior investigation as to the nature of both individuals' work. The school has been opened informally to offer the children educational opportunity and fellow migrant worker volunteer to take turn to teach them and instill in them with cultural knowledge without getting remunerated or getting any payment. The school has been started as the migrant workers' community realizes the importance of offering educational opportunity as a solution to prevent the risks and to combat child labor.

Apart from being unlawful, the arrest and detention of both workers has inflicted mental anguish among the young children who had to bear witness the arrest of their teaching volunteers. It has extensively terrified parents and other fellow migrant workers who offer to help as volunteers. It may likely create widespread adverse ramification on the teaching of migrant children in other similar educational settings in Thailand. If access to education of hundreds of thousands of these migrant children is impeded, the effort by the Thai authorities to combat trafficking in person and child labor shall be thwarted; and this has stemmed from a sub-standard performance of just a group of officers.

**Note:** Of late, the Court has agreed to conduct an emergency hearing to review the case on 23 August 2018 at 09.00 am at the Pattani Provincial Court.

**For more information, please contact:**

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