

Young people arrested for protesting graduation activity in Korat

written by หทัยรัตน์ พหลทัฬห | March 5, 2022



More than 20 Korat police swarmed in to arrest five student activists campaigning against a university graduation ceremony. Two juveniles were among those detained for more than seven hours before each being fined 2,000 baht.

Story by Hathairat Phaholtap

NAKHON RATCHASIMA - The [Korat Movement](#) Facebook page yesterday showed a short video clip of police attempting to take protesters' phones and dragging them away before showing the activists being held by undercover officers in vans and detainee control vehicles

Waranyu Kongsathittham, one of the five activists of the Korat Movement group detained, revealed that the arrests took place around 11 a.m. yesterday. Five group members held were two university students and three high school students under the age of 18. The group was campaigning against the graduation ceremony at the Northeastern University of Technology Nong Rawang Education Center. Undercover police were closely following them before moving in to detain them in front of the university.

"Twenty undercover police officers came in to detain us, shouting, "Take them away! Take them

away!” Waranyu told The Isaan Record. “They were dragging a girl in our group away and shoved her down. Her ankle got hurt but they did not stop. After that, they brought us in for interrogations at Chaloe Phrakiat Police Station, which is 20 km from the scene of the incident.”



Waranyu added that the officers spent about seven hours interrogating those detained before charging the activists for disobeying an order of the police and fining them each 2,000 baht. Throughout the process, a lawyer from the network of Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (TLHR) closely monitored the process.

“We prepared ourselves, thinking maybe something would happen but we cannot accept the behavior of the police, such as pressing on the head, shoving people down, breaking the screen of a phone,” the activist said. “They overreacted in confronting us, just five kids. The police tried to explain that if anything happened during the ceremony, they would be in trouble. The police were scared, too.”

There is information that three days before the graduation ceremony, some undercover police patrolled the residences and schools of student activists as well as instructing their parents and relatives not to let their children do anything during the graduation ceremony.

The graduation ceremony was held yesterday at Rajamangala University of Technology in Nakhon Ratchasima Province for the 2021 academic year. There were 3,231 slated for graduation. The university’s website has not said how many people actually attended the ceremony.

On December 13 last year, [the Ratsadon Khon Kaen group](#) organized an activity in protest against the graduation ceremony in front of the Faculty of Law of Khon Kaen University. The protest

included the symbolic burning of a graduation gown. Of the 7,894 people scheduled to receive their diplomas in the royal-sponsored activity, more than 30% chose not to attend.

After that, campaigns against graduation ceremonies became widespread, with similar non-attendance protests at universities in Ubon Ratchathani and Maha Sarakham. Of 4,059 graduates at Chiang Mai University in January this year, [one source](#) said that 42% chose not to attend the graduation ceremony.

Photo Credits: Korat Movement Facebook page

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