

Thailand: Chula students to mark birthday of author, martyr 'Chit Phumisak'

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BANGKOK — Student groups at Chulalongkorn University will hold activities to mark the birthday of the late writer, thinker, Communist fighter, and alumnus Chit Phumisak, who died fighting the security forces in the 60s.

"90 Years of Life and Work of Chit Phumisak" is being organized by students from the university's Arts and Political Science faculties. Programs planned for Friday include an academic seminar, music performance, an exhibition, and a "birthday cake" for Chit, who would have turned 90 that day if he were still alive.

There are also [a contest for T-shirt designs](#) celebrating Chit's birthday (submissions open till Sept. 30), and [essay and poem competitions](#) (running till Oct. 16).

The announcement was made by the organizers under the theme "Welcome P'Chit back to Chula."

Chit, born 1930, was a student at Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Arts in the early 1950s when he was drawn to Marxism and its promise to bring about equality for the poor and the downtrodden.

An accomplished student, Chit wrote a series of poems and articles in which he attacked the elite rulers, questioned [SOTUS cultures](#), and denounced religious figures who "fed off the poor." His comments upset a group of conservative students who mobbed and attacked him in 1953.

Chit was also given a suspension for his activism and put on sabbatical, during which he published more articles criticizing the status quo. He eventually graduated in 1957, only to be imprisoned the following year for his sympathy to socialist causes – a jailable offense at the time.

Throughout the six years behind bars, Chit authored numerous songs, poems, and writings advocating Communist struggles against military rule and U.S.-led "imperialism."

A 2003 performance of Chit Phumisak's "Revolutionary Martyrs," a marching song he wrote for the People's Liberation Army of Thailand.

Upon leaving jail in 1964, Chit joined the Communist Party of Thailand as a footsoldier in its all-out insurgency war against the Thai authorities, taking up the nomme de guerre "Comrade Preecha."

His brief time as a guerrilla fighter came to an end in May 1965 when he was shot and killed by security officers during an ambush in Sakon Nakhon. He was 35.

Chit's legacies have proven to outlast his life. His writings were made popular by the student movement following the student uprising in 1973, and a number of activists and scholars continue to organize events celebrating his life and work in the present time.

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