

AND ALSO

Man Hanging Up Bunny Suit

REUTERS

SALMON, Idaho - Police in Idaho Falls have told a man to stop wearing a bunny suit in public after people complained he has been frightening children.

Residents in the city of 54,000 people also reported William Falkingham, 34, occasionally wears a tutu with the bunny suit, police said Tuesday.

Police warned Falkingham after

a woman said she saw him dressed in the costume, peeking at her young son from behind a tree.

While a police report said other residents were "greatly disturbed" by his activities, one neighbor defended Falkingham as harmless.

"He's got the bunny outfit, a cowboy suit and a ballerina dress, but you don't see him except when he's tripping through his backyard," Deborah Colson said.

Banong...

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they see it as the old ways and they see the way forward to become fully integrated in Khmer society."

At the same time, foreign businesses have destroyed spirit forests—sacred groves of trees that the Banong worship and are prohibited from harming—and forced people from their land in economic concession zones, Mr Herod said.

Government policies have also not let Banong people learn in their own language, he said.

"This meets the [cultural] definition of genocide," he added, noting that the term could apply to depriving people of their ethnic identities or dispossessing them of their land.

Sam Vanny, chief of O'Reang district's Dak Dam commune, where 95 percent of the 1,400-strong population is Banong, disagreed with such dire predictions for the future.

Residents still practice traditions such as killing buffaloes as sacrifices to the spirits who bring rain or to appease the forest spirits who bring sickness.

Less than 10 percent of the houses in Dak Dam are built in a traditional Banong style, and those

that are, are mostly inhabited by elderly people, Mr Vanny said.

Traditional homes are less popular now for a very practical reason, he said: The thatch needs to be replaced every three years.

"But other traditions and cultural practices still exist," he added.

"It's not [cultural] genocide. I am also Banong. People have just changed their way of life."

Myay Tob, a 17-year-old Banong from Pouchrey commune in Pech Chreada district, said that she had never seen a traditional Banong house made from thatch and bamboo, and all the homes in her birthplace, Pouchrey Chang village, were made of wood.

"I used to hear people talk about the traditional houses and [Banong] jewelry, but they complain that it is difficult to find materials such as bamboo and thatch," she said.

Ms Tob said that she mostly spoke in the Khmer language, which she learned from her siblings, who studied at school, and from television.

"I can speak Banong, but not very well," she admitted.

Her neighbor Sary Ven, 27, said that over the past five years, only a few people have built traditional-style homes, which have a fire in the middle. The traditional houses

blame to both sides for the violence in the uprising against Assad. Syria says it faces opposition by armed extremists.

Statements are meant to be unanimous, meaning Lebanon could have blocked it, but by simply disassociating itself, Beirut allowed the statement to pass.

The statement was adopted as the White House hardened its stance against Assad. Spokesman Jay Carney said the Syrian leader was "the cause of instability" in the country.

"The Assad regime has been counting on the fact that the Security Council would be unable to speak...and that they would have

are hard to construct now because of a lack of materials, she explained.

"Bamboo and plants for thatch still exist in the forest, but it is too far from village now, because forested areas have been cleared for rubber and cassava plantations," she said.

Traditional garments and jewelry have also gone the way of the Banong's houses, Ms Ven said.

"I don't know how to weave and make baskets worn on the back. But I think other older Banong people can do it."

Aisi Sokuntheary, Mondolkiri deputy governor, said that indigenous people have never been forced to abandon their way of life. The changes evident amongst the Banong in the province are a natural development, she said.

"Indigenous villagers love to adapt to modern life, to Cambodian civilization. Especially, they now wear jeans, shirts, and T-shirts," she said, noting that traditional clothes are expensive and take a long time to make by hand.

The Mondolkiri Resource and Documentation Center opened its doors in December in an attempt to preserve a record of Banong heritage and traditional knowledge. Banong language and customs, including playing a guitar-like instrument called the guitoen, would likely not last much

NEWSMAKERS

■ LOS ANGELES - JERRY LEWIS will not appear in the annual muscular dystrophy telethon that he has hosted since 1966, despite earlier plans for him to sing a swan song, the organization behind the event said Wednesday. The announcement by the Muscular Dystrophy Association came just days after Lewis brushed aside questions about his role in this year's telethon, which is held over Labor Day holiday weekend. Lewis, 85, said in May that he was retiring as host of the telethon and that he would make a final appearance this year and sing his signature song "You'll Never Walk Alone." But those plans have been called off, and the MDA also said Lewis will no longer serve as its national chairman. A spokesman for Lewis could not be reached for comment, but last week at a gathering of critics in Los Angeles, when asked to clarify his role on this year's telethon, Lewis responded: "It is none of your business." (Reuters)

longer, said the center's manager Bunthy Chey.

"But if we try to promote places like this, we can help to preserve some of their culture," said Ms Chey, who is Banong and Khmer herself. The resource is a project of NGO Nomad RSI and supported by the UN Spain Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund.

The center has about 500 books, reports, sound recordings and videos on issues important to the area, such as gold mining and local ethnic groups, she said.

The center held traditional Banong storytelling sessions in June and will open an exhibition on food collected from the forest in November, she added.

Broeve Narong, 16, who visited the center yesterday to set up a Facebook account using one of the center's computers, is indicative of the changing face of the province's Banong youth.

"I have never even seen traditional [Banong] clothes," said Narong, who moved from Pouraing village, in O'Reang district's Sen Monorom commune, to live at a residential center in town in order to study at high school.

Reflecting on being Banong, Narong said simply, "The culture, language and traditions have changed."

Russia and its supporters eventually agreed to Security Council action but insisted that it be just a statement, which carries less clout than a resolution, diplomats said.

In a report out of Hama yesterday, an activist who managed to leave the besieged city, said that 40 people were killed by heavy machinegun fire and shelling by tanks in the al-Hader district north of the Orontes river.

The activist, who gave his name as Thaeer, said five more people, including two children, were killed as they were trying to leave Hama by car on the al-Dhahiryah highway.

protectors and defenders that would make it impossible for...condemnation to emerge," said US Ambassador Susan Rice. "And surely they must be quite surprised and disappointed by the outcome."

A resolution drafted by Western European countries had been languishing in the Security Council for two months, blocked by opposition from Syrian allies Russia and China.

The Europeans resurrected it this week, galvanized by the violence in the Syrian city of Hama, where rights campaigners say the death toll now stands at more than 90 since Assad launched a military assault on the city on Sunday.

Syrian...

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refrain from reprisals, including attacks against state institutions."

That phrase was a gesture to Russia and other countries that had called for a balanced statement that would apportion to

CORRECTION: Yesterday's article "Cambodian Football Body Rejects Match-Fixing Rumors" (page 21) incorrectly identified Khhek Ravy as the vice president of the Football Federation of Cambodia. The current vice president is Khiev Sameth.