

Democratic Voice of Burma
Political Prisoners News
2004 February

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Burmese political prisoner dies in detention

1 Feb 04

A Burmese political prisoner who had been detained beyond his release date by Burma's military junta State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) died on 28 January at Taungoo prison in central Burma.

56 year old U Shwe Tin from Thingangyun Township, Rangoon was given a 10 year sentence along with his son in law Ko Yan Linn in March 1994.

They were accused of having 'illegal' contacts with members of the then already defunct Burma Communist Party (BCP). They were executive committee members of People's Progressive Party which was forced to abolish by the military authority.

U Shwe Tin had been suffering from cancer but the military authorities made no attempt to treat him, and prison doctors still have to inform his family members of his death. He is the 85th political prisoner who died in detention since 1988.

Critics claim that the SPDC is systematically forcing political prisoners to rot in prisons in an effort to eliminate all the oppositions against the army without much expense.

Meanwhile, the Karen National Union (KNU) which recently agreed a provisional ceasefire with the junta is demanding the release of all its prisoners for a reunion with their family members. [TOP](#)

More NLD leaders arrested in Rangoon

1 Feb 04

While the international community is demanding the release of all political prisoners including democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her deputy U Tin Oo, Burma's military junta State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) had arrested more National League for Democracy (NLD) township leaders in Rangoon.

U Myint Aye, the chairman of Kyimyintaing (Kemendine) Township and township organiser U Tin Maung Kyi, and U Maung Maung Kyaw Aye, the secretary of Dawpon Township NLD and U Mya, the chairman of Htantapin Township NLD were arrested by local military intelligence agents on 30 & 31 January.

U Soe Myint, a member of NLD Central Executive Committee told DVB that it is time that SPDC stop arresting NLD members while people are trying to be self-restrained in an effort to reduce political tension in Burma.

Observers claim that more NLD members had been arrested than released since the notorious Dipeyin incident occurred in upper Burma. More than 1300 political prisoners are currently being detained in Burma, according to London-based Amnesty International. [TOP](#)

Another NLD MP, Dr Myint Naing released

2 Feb 04

Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) released another elected representative of National League for Democracy (NLD) from prison.

Dr. Myint Naing, the Member of Parliament (MP) of No.1 Constituency, Kantbalu Township, Sagaing Division in central Burma was released on 30 January.

He was arrested by military intelligence agents and charged with 'rebellion against the state' and sentenced to 25 years in prison since November 1990.

In 1995, he was given an extra 5 year sentence for writing to UN human rights investigator Yuzo Yokota from inside the prison on the conditions of Insein Prison, Rangoon and transferred to Thayet Prison in central Burma.

Dr. Myint Naing spent nearly 14 years in prisons and he told DVB that he is physically and mentally well. He is now travelling to Rangoon to meet senior NLD leaders and to discuss future plans with them, and to have a medical check-up.

He also vowed to follow the instructions of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD until Burma achieves a democratic system. [TOP](#)

Burmese nuns' appeal rejected by SPDC

3 Feb 04

The appeal of two Buddhist nuns who were arrested in front of Rangoon City Hall was rejected by a local district court of Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) on 19 January.

The two nuns, Daw Tezawati and Daw Marlaryi staged a surprise protest in front of the Rangoon city hall on 16 January 2003 demanding the commodity price drop for the benefit of the country.

A team of National League for Democracy (NLD) legal support group has been trying lodging an appeal since their arrests.

A NLD lawyer U Nyan Win who is working on behalf of them said he is planning to lodge the appeal at higher divisional and central courts.

He added that the two nuns are said to be well but their relatives have not contacted them for fear of arrests and harassments by the authority. [TOP](#)

U Saw Nandi's health deteriorating in Shan State

4 Feb 04

The health condition of U Saw Nandi, the chairman of Kengtung Township National League for Democracy (NLD) is deteriorating. He is suffering from high blood pressures, diabetics and other ailments in his old age.

U Saw Nandi is currently being detained at Kengtung Prison in eastern Shan State near Thailand. His health condition was so bad that medicines had to be sent into the prison from the outside in emergency.

U Saw Nandi was arrested with Shan State organising vice-chairman U Sai Phat in September 2002 and each given a seven year sentence by Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). U Sai Phat died in Kengtung Prison on 9 October 2003.

U Saw Nandi was charged with the political act 5J but he was, in fact, arrested because he stood for farmers who demanded the liberalisation of paddy/rice market, according to U Thein Nyunt who defended him at the court and he insisted U Saw Nandi should be released before 12 February now that the paddy/rice market has been 'liberalised' by the SPDC.

Recently, another political prisoner died in Taungoo Prison in central Burma. According to Amnesty International, there are more than 1300 political prisoners in Burma. [TOP](#)

Dipeyin incident's victims still languishing in Shwebo Prison

7 Feb 04

Victims of the notorious Dipeyin incident are still languishing in Shwebo Prison in central Burma, according to U Hla Myint, the chairman of Amarapura Township National League for Democracy (NLD), Mandalay Division.

He said only 10 people had been released from the prison out of the people who were attacked during the incident and NLD members from Shwebo and Katha Townships including Dipeyin elected representatives U Win Myint Aung who were arrested before 30 May are still detained in the prison.

Recently, Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) wrongly announced that 151 people arrested in connection with the incident were released from prisons. According to exiled National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB), 101 people were arrested during the incident and 197 after the incident, and only 106 have been released.

On 30 May 2003, NLD supporters and leaders including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her deputy U Tin Oo were brutally attacked in an ambush by SPDC-sponsored thugs. Scores of people were killed and hundreds were wounded and imprisoned. [TOP](#)

Two NLD leaders sent to Insein Prison

8 Feb 04

Two National League for Democracy (NLD) leaders of Kyimyintaing (Kemendine) Township, U Tin Maung Kyi and U Myint Aye who were arrested at the end of January had been sent to the notorious Insein Prison in the country's capital Rangoon.

On 5 January, military intelligence (MI) agents of State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) raided and searched the home of U Tin Maung Kyi and took away two computers, one printer and several documents and printed matters from his printing workshop.

U Myint Aye was forced to take off his NLD uniform, a Kachin longyi (sarong) and a white dog-collar shirt before he was sent to prison. They were sent back to his home and he was forced to wear the convict uniform in prison.

Moreover, the NLD youths Ko Maung Maung Lay, Ko Aung Thein and Ko Kyaw Naing Oo who were arrested and imprisoned for distributing leaflets on Dipeyin incident were also dragged out of their cells and interrogated by MI agents. [TOP](#)

NLD leaders arrested for trying to commemorate Union Day

12 Feb 04

While members of National League for Democracy (NLD) are celebrating 57th Union Day, NLD members from Bogale Township in Irrawaddy Division, lower Burma were arrested by the military intelligence (MI) agents of the military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC).

Six organising members of Bogale Township including chairman U Aung Khin Bo, U Aung Khin, U Aung Myint, Ko Win Naing, Daw Mi Mi Sein and Daw Khin Lay were arrested on 11 February.

Another member, U Khin Maung Chit who had just returned from Rangoon with documents was also arrested on 12 February. It is still not known where they had been taken to and detained.

According to the locals, the authorities are worried that people would support the NLD in its effort and the celebration plan was also forced to cancel. [TOP](#)

U Tin Oo transferred to house arrest

15 Feb 04

U Tin Oo (77), the vice chairman of National League for Democracy (NLD) who has been imprisoned at Kale prison in northwest Burma since the notorious 30 May Dipeyin incident has been shifted to house arrest.

He was 'delivered' to his home in Rangoon from Kale prison by military intelligence personnel on 14 February.

He is said to be a bit thin but in good health. His home is currently surrounded by security personnel and the phone connection to his house is being cut off, according to his son Ko Thant Zin Oo lives in Japan.

"I am glad that my father is now back with the family. I wish not only for my father but also for the others who are still detained or under house arrest to be released immediately ", Ko Thant Zin Oo added.

The move came after family members had expressed concern that poor conditions at Kale prison near the Indian border and severe winter weather would lead to a deterioration of U Tin Oo's health.

His release is an attempt by the country's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) which is seeking to launch a constitution drafting 'National Convention' as the first step in its "roadmap" to democracy announced last August to improve its image internationally.

On 30 May 2003, NLD supporters and leaders including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi were brutally attacked by SPDC-sponsored thugs at Dipeyin in upper Burma. Scores were killed and hundreds were wounded and imprisoned.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's NLD won a landslide election victory in 1990 that was ignored by the junta. [TOP](#)

NLD deputy chairman U Tin Oo has no contact with members

16 Feb 04

U Tin Oo, the vice chairman of National League for Democracy (NLD) who was recently shifted from Kale Prison in northwest Burma to house arrest is still not allowed to see anyone.

His home is being guarded by armed security personnel and his phone connection cut off.

According to U Thein Nyunt, elected representative of Thingangyun Township and a member of the NLD legal assistance group, U Tin Oo is still not charged with anything and he is being detained unfairly according to the law of the country.

U Tin Oo was 'delivered' to his home in Rangoon by military intelligence personnel of the country's junta State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) on 14 February after his family members had expressed concern that poor conditions at Kale prison near the Indian border and severe winter weather would lead to a deterioration of his health.

On 30 May 2003, NLD supporters and leaders including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi were brutally attacked by SPDC-sponsored thugs at Dipeyin in upper Burma. Scores were killed and hundreds were wounded and imprisoned. [TOP](#)

U Thein Tin's death commemorated

18 Feb 04

The sixth anniversary of the death of U Thein Tin (aka) Author Tin Thein Maung and former organising member of Rangoon Division National League for Democracy (NLD) was commemorated on 18 February at his family home in South Okkalapa Township.

The memorial was attended by nearly 100 family friends, his colleagues, NLD elected members and other NLD members.

U Thein Tin was deeply hated by the military junta, State peace and Development Council (SPDC) for his active role in the NLD. He was first arrested in 1990 and imprisoned, and arrested for the second and last time in 1996 and charged with Act 10a and imprisoned in the notorious Insein Jail in Rangoon.

He died in prison on 18 February 1998 due to lack of medical care, the mental and physical tortures of military intelligence and liver cancer. [TOP](#)

Dr. Than Nyein in serious health condition

19 Feb 04

The health condition of Dr. Than Nyein, the elected representative of Kyauktan Township National League for Democracy (NLD) currently detained at Insein Jail in Rangoon is deteriorating.

He has been suffering from liver complaints, muscular diseases, high blood pressures and heart conditions. According to his wife Daw Khin Aye, Dr. Than Nyein has been receiving treatments for his ailments and he had never had those diseases before he was sent to the prison.

She also said that Rangoon-based International Committee for Red Cross (ICRC) is unable to help him properly. Dr. Than Nyein was charged with Act 10A by Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) and has been in prison nearly 6 years and four months.

Two NLD leaders, U Kyaw Minn and U Thein Tin both died in prison from liver complaints because of the lack of proper medical cares.

At the same time, the health conditions of U Thu Wei and U Htway Myint, elderly leaders of Democracy Party who are currently languishing in prison are also deteriorating, according to their family members. [TOP](#)

Political prisoners' health conditions deteriorate

21 Feb 04

The health conditions of the elected representative (Member of Parliament) of Mayanggone Township Daw May Win Myint and the township chief NLD organiser U Nyan Thaung who are currently incarcerated in Insein Prison in Rangoon are deteriorating considerably.

According to Moe Moe Suu Kyi, the daughter of U Nyan Thaung – her father suffered no illness prior to the arrest and imprisonment and he has been suffering from many kinds of illnesses since, and has been receiving medical treatments inside and outside the prison.

U Nyan Thaung is suffering from heart condition, diabetes and urinal diseases. Daw May Win Myint is also suffering from bone diseases, heart condition and eye diseases. Despite their illnesses, they are said to be looking physically and mentally well.

Both of them were arrested and imprisoned since 1997 and they were accused of trying to rally NLD youth of Mayanggone Township in Rangoon and each given seven years in prison by Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). [TOP](#)

ICRC won't be allowed to see disrobed Buddhist monks in prisons

21 Feb 04

A directive from the director of Tenneserim Division prison authorities in southern Burma says that Buddhist monks who were arrested, forcibly disrobed and sent to the frontline areas last month must not be allowed to meet representatives of the ICRC based in Rangoon.

The directive was sent during a visit to Tenneserim Division by a four person strong team of the ICRC. The team was at Tavoy on 21 February and expected to visit Taung Thonelone and Metta 'ye phet' police controlled labour camps.

There are many Buddhist monks who were forcibly disrobed and sent to the frontline areas which are to be visited by the team inside Myeik (Mergui) and Bokpyin townships along the Thai-Burma border.

More than 300 monks were arrested and disrobed by Burma's military authority, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) during the so-called religious riots last years in Mandalay and Rangoon. [TOP](#)

Six students given prison sentences for distributing leaflets

21 Feb 04

A court in Rangoon sentenced six Burmese students to long-term imprisonments for allegedly distributing leaflets denouncing the 'roadmap' plan of Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). The sentences were passed at a trial by Eastern District court of Rangoon Division on 20 February. [TOP](#)

Ko Nanda Sit Aung and Ko Zaw Linn Tun were each given 17 years, Ko Kyaw Soe Moe 12 years, Ko Lwin Ko Latt, Ko Kyaw Kyaw and Ko Han Win Aung were each given 7 years. They were charged with Acts 6, 5J, 17 (1), 13 (1) AND 13 (5).

Ko Kyaw Soe Moe's wife Ma Myint Aye said her husband was arrested on 26 September with the promise that he would be released within two or three days. She was six months pregnant when he was arrested and she is now struggling to survive with a child without the help of her husband.

Pro-democracy activists inside, outside Burma denounced the action of the junta insisting that all citizens should have the right to participate in political activities and express their opinions freely for national reconciliation to emerge. They also warned that there could be no peace and prosperity in Burma as long as there is military dictatorship in Burma.

It is the first time someone was given a 17 year sentence for denouncing the 'roadmap' plan of the junta in Burma which is designed to propagate military dictatorship in Burma. [TOP](#)

Ko Htay Kywe's health condition deteriorates

25 Feb 04

The health condition of a Burmese student leader Ko Htay Kywe who has been detained unfairly at Tharawaddy Prison in lower Burma is said to be deteriorating badly.

Ko Htay Kywe suffered severe stomach pains due to his twisted guts at about noon on 24 February and sent to the local Tharawaddy Hospital in emergency. His family members in Rangoon were informed of his hospitalisation in the evening by prison authorities.

He was operated on straight away but given too much anaesthetics and he only regained consciousness the next day. About 30 worms were extracted from his stomach.

He is also enduring the consequences of mistakes made during the operation due to lacks of medical instruments and electricity.

Therefore, his relatives asked the ICRC to transfer him to Rangoon where he could receive better medical treatments. Medical experts believe that the operation was unnecessary as the worms could be extracted by giving the patient medicines orally.

Ko Htay Kywe was arrested in June 1991 by the then State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) and sentenced to 15 years in prison. In 1995, his sentence was commuted to 10 years. He should have been released in 1999, but he is continued to be detained by the SPDC with Act 10A.

Ko Bo Kyi of AAPP (Assistance Association for Political Prisoners) said that political prisoners in Burma have to depend on their families for medicinal supplies to treat their illnesses and some of them often die from mistakes made by health officials in prisons. [TOP](#)

Ko Htay Kywe transferred Insein prison hospital

28 Feb 04

A Burmese student leader Ko Htay Kywe who has been detained unfairly at Tharawaddy Prison in lower Burma for nearly 13 years was transferred to Insein hospital in Rangoon as his health condition has deteriorated further.

Ko Htay Kywe suffered severe stomach pains due to his twisted guts on 24 February and sent to the local Tharawaddy Hospital in emergency. He was operated on but given too much anaesthetics and he only regained consciousness the next day. About 30 worms were extracted from his stomach.

He is also enduring the painful consequences of mistakes made during the operation due to lacks of medical instruments and electricity. His relatives asked the ICRC to transfer him to Rangoon where he could receive better medical treatments.

Medical experts believe that the operation was unnecessary as the worms could be extracted by giving the patient medicines orally.

His mother told DVB that despite his condition and her pleas, Ko Htay Kywe who is extremely thin has been chained and manacled in the hospital and she added that she had already lost one son last year.

Ko Htay Kywe was arrested in June 1991 by the then State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) and sentenced to 15 years in prison. In 1995, his sentence was commuted to 10 years.

He should have been released in 1999, but he is continued to be detained by the SPDC with Act 10A. [TOP](#)

Under-aged boy, Maung Chan Thar Kyaw released

28 Feb 04

16-year-old boy Maung Chan Thar Kyaw from Monywa in central Burma who was arrested in connection with 30 May Dipeyin assault was released on 26 February by the country's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) from Nget Awsan juvenile training camp near Rangoon.

Monywa Township Court sentenced Maung Chan Thar Kyaw to a juvenile training camp in violation of the provisions of the Child Law (1993, amended 2001). He was a 15-year-old high school student at the time of sentencing on 7 July 2003, and was ordered to go into the custody of the Nget Awsan Training School, Rangoon Division, until 4 October 2005, when he will become an adult.

His elated mother told DVB that his father went to pick him up from Rangoon and they haven't arrived home yet, and she thanked the international organisations for pressurising the junta for his release.

Maung Chan Thar Kyaw was arrested with 13 other people at Oakpho area of Monywa near a protest in which one student and one monk was killed in the aftermath of Dipeyin assault. The remaining 13 people were all given long-term prison sentences.

On 30 May 2003, supporters and leaders of NLD including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo were brutally attacked by SPDC-sponsored thugs in an ambush at Dipeyin in central Burma. Scores of people were killed and hundreds were wounded and arrested. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo are still under house arrest. [TOP](#)