

## Democratic Voice of Burma Political Prisoners News

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## **Solo protester mad says Burma junta**

*1 June 2004*

The schoolgirl who staged a peaceful solo protest in front of Rangoon City Hall calling for the release of Burmese democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is said to be from a police family living at the police quarter on Kyaikkasan Ground, Tamwe Townsgip in Rangoon.

Ma Hla Suu is the daughter of a police officer and she was arrested by the military intelligence agents and sent to Tadarlay Psychiatric Asylum in Rangoon claiming that she is mad, according to those close to the National League for Democracy (NLD) in Rangoon.

When Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) arrested a former agricultural professor Dr. Salaing Tun Than as he was staging a peaceful protest in front of the City Hall two years ago, it also accused him of being mad. [TOP](#)

## **Journalists call for the release of Burmese colleagues**

*2 June 2004*

An international media organisation, on 2 June, has called for SPDC to release all Burmese journalists and political prisoners who have been unfairly detained in prisons in the country.

The call was made at an international conference of journalists being held in Istanbul, Turkey, attended by more than 1300 journalists and editors from all over the world.

They also urged the junta to provide a safeguard for freedom of expression in Burma.

Burma is one of the worst violators of freedom of speech and expression in the world and the SPDC government has been controlling the country's media with draconian censorship laws. [TOP](#)

## **Mon political leaders release**

*4 June 2004*

The Burmese authorities have released three prominent Mon political leaders who were at Moulmein Prison.

The three leaders are: Nai Ngwe Thein, vice-chairman of Mon National Democratic Front, Elected Representative Dr Min Kyi Win of Mudon Township Constituency-2, and Elected Representative Min Soe Lin of Mudon Township Constituency-1.

U Cin Shin Thang, spokesperson for the United Nationalities Alliance, an umbrella grouping of ethnic political parties, including the MNDF, confirmed the news:

"Nai Ngwe Thein of the MNDF, who had been sentenced to serve seven years in prison has now been released. He is the vice chairman of MNDF. The second person is Dr Min Soe Lin. The two are in Moulmein and were freed from Moulmein Prison. Nai Ngwe Thein lives in Yankin, Rangoon, and we understand he was flown back home."

All three of them were arrested by the Military Intelligence in 1997 and were charged for holding a Mon National Day ceremony.

All of them are suffering from ill health and their releases were demanded by international human rights organization. [TOP](#)

## **7 Dipeyin victims released**

*6 June 2004*

The authorities of Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) released another 7 people from Monywa who were arrested after 30 May Dipeyin Massacre.

5 were released from Monywa Prison and 2 from Mandalay Prison in central Burma, and they were each given up to ten year prison terms.

They were arrested during a riot at Ahlone, north of Monywa which occurred in response to the assaults on National League for Democracy (NLD) supporters and leaders by the junta-sponsored thugs at nearby Dipeyin.

Those who were released from Monywa Prison are :

U Pauk Too  
U Tun Zaw  
U Myo Thant  
Htet Aung  
Han Moe Win

The ones released from Mandalay Prison are :

Ko Min Naing

Ko Yut Lwin

There are six more people to be released and they are being detained at Monywa Prison. They are :

Chan Myeit Aung

Chan Mya Aung

Kade

Nyein Zaw Oo

Nyan Win Tun

Ye Htut

During the 'riot', 17 people were arrested that one Rangoon University student Win Min Tun was shot dead by soldiers. [TOP](#)

### **NLD member and son arrested**

*7 June 2004*

Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) have released nine youth members of the National League for Democracy (NLD) who distributed leaflets about human rights on the first anniversary of the 30 May Dipeyin incident in which NLD supporters and leaders were brutally attacked in an ambush by the junta-affiliated thugs in upper Burma last year.

But on 7 June, the junta arrested Daw Than Than Htay, a member of the Magwe Division NLD's women group.

Local authorities arrested Daw Than Than Htay and her son Ko Thiha Soe from their residence in South Dagonmyothit, Rangoon.

Nobody can inquire about their whereabouts and why Ko Thiha Soe, who is not an NLD member, was arrested.

Daw Than Than Htay, a member of the Magwe Division NLD Organizing Committee and the secretary for the Magwe Division NLD's women group, was in charge of the Magwe Division NLD's women group during Daw Aung San Suu Kyi organizing trips.

Earlier, she had been detained for four months after being arrested at the Mandalay Rail Station during one of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's organizing trips. [TOP](#)

### **NLD members arrested in Burma**

*8 June 2004*

U Tin Myint, the secretary of the organising committee of Rangoon Thingangyun Township National League for Democracy (NLD) was arrested by military intelligent (MI) agents of Burma's junta on 8 June.

NLD spokesman U Lwin confirmed the report and added that a NLD divisional organising member from Magwe Division in central Burma, Daw Than Than Htay and her son were also arrested by MI agents on 7 June in Rangoon.

The junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) has been making more arrests of political activists while releasing some of them.

U Lwin also that there is a connection between the two arrests as the detainees are on friendly terms. [TOP](#)

### **Burma junta prepares to sentence NLD members**

*10 June 2004*

The military intelligence (MI) of Burma's junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) is preparing to give long-term imprisonment to 2 National League for Democracy (NLD) members who were arrested recently.

Magwe Division NLD Women's secretary Daw Than Than Htay along with her son Ko Thiha Soe and the Secretary of Rangoon Thingangyun Township NLD U Tin Myint were arrested on 5 and 6 June respectively. 23 year-old Ko Thiha Soe was released on 9 June.

According to NLD spokesman U Lwin a MI personnel came to tell him at the NLD HQs that the two were arrested for having contacts with 'underground' organisations and will be charged accordingly.

U Lwin added that the authorities tend to be unforgiving when people are involved with 'underground' organisations and they try to arrest them by every possible means.

There was a similar case in the past in which 12 NLD members from Mandalay including Daw Hnin Pa Pa were given prison terms ranging from 7 years to 22 years.

At the same time, there has been an increase in the harassments and monitoring of NLD members through the country. The situation is particularly bad in Sagaing Division in central Burma where the notorious Dipeyin massacre occurred. [TOP](#)

### **Burmese Political prisoners to be awarded**

*13 June 2004*

Burmese pro-democracy activists in US are planning to award medals to around 1300 detained political prisoners in recognition of the sacrifices they made for the country.

Each medal is worth around US\$300 and made of platinum.

According to Ko Aung Kyaw Myint, a working committee member of Burmese activists in the US, the medals are to be awarded by the exiled Burmese communities for those prisoners who are facing a long drawn out fight for the emergence of democracy in Burma.

Medals would be prioritised for prisoners who are facing the dire situation inside the prisons in Burma and they will be sponsored by individuals or organisations.

The decision was taken at the meeting held on 27 May in Fort Wayne. [TOP](#)

### **U Min Thu, a Burmese prisoner died in detention**

*14 June 2004*

U Min Thu, a lawyer and a political prisoner died at Insein General Hospital in Rangoon on 13 June 2004.

50-year-old U Min Thu was arrested on 28 April 1994 by military intelligence (MI) agents for allegedly participating in writing a history of the political activities of Burmese students, and was sentenced to seven years in prison.

He was suffering from heart condition and high blood pressures when he was arrested and he had been receiving regular treatments at a clinic in Insein Prison.

According to someone close to the prison authorities, U Min Thu's condition deteriorated very badly during recent days and he was belatedly transferred from the prison clinic to the hospital where he died unnecessarily.

Ko Ye Mon Htoo, an ex-prisoner who was imprisoned at Insein Prison with U Min Thu until the end of last year told DVB that the deceased man's diseases were curable had he had been allowed to receive proper medical treatments and nourishments.

According to the statistics provided by exiled Assistance Association for Political Prisoner (AAPP), more than 80 political prisoners had died due to tortures and inhumane treatments they endured in Burmese prisons since 1988.

Moreover, there are around 50 prisoners currently in critical condition among 1300 political prisoners in Burma. [TOP](#)

### **6 more NLD supporters released**

*18 June 2004*

Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) on 18 June released six members National League for Democracy (NLD) jailed after the deadly clashes at Dipeyin in upper Burma last year.

The authorities claimed that all of those arrested in connection with the incident have been released as the last remaining six detainees were freed but NLD spokesperson U Lwin told DVB that although the list of those arrested in connection with the Dipeyin incident has not been compiled fully, it is definite that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo remain incarcerated.

Dissidents who escaped the attack by the junta-backed thugs said as many as 100 people were killed but the junta claims only four were killed and 50 injured.

The incident triggered a crackdown on the NLD and the detention of dozens of opposition party members.

A total of 18 people including the six NLD members were detained in connection with the unrest which occurred at Ahlone and Okpo in Monywa on 30 May 2003 after the attack at nearby Dipeyin.

They were the last group to be released after the authorities freed 12 of the detainees earlier in the year.

The six freed were listed as

Nyan Win Tun  
Ye Htut  
Chan Nyein Aung  
Kaday Soe  
Chan Mye Aung

Nyein Zaw Oo.

The first five had been serving prison terms of 10 years each for involvement in the bloody clashes, while Nyein Zaw Oo had been jailed for seven years.

The release came a day before the 59th birthday of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who remains under house arrest. [TOP](#)

### **NLD honour Burmese women and pray for prisoners**

*20 June 2004*

On 19 June: the 59th birthday of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Burmese Women's Day, National League for Democracy (NLD) members around Burma celebrated the occasion by paying respect to renowned elderly women and performing religious rites.

At Mandalay in central Burma, 13 elderly women were given presents and paid respect to and they, in turn, prayed for the release and wellbeing of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and 60 sparrows were released as the symbol of their desire for freedom.

The NLD Youth members there also offered dawn nourishment to 15 monks at Masoeyein Monastery and prayed for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and the NLD divisional chairman U Bo Zan released a chicken at the monastery so that it could roam freely without the danger of being killed or harmed.

The hated military intelligence (MI) agents, police and security personnel watched and recorded the event with photo and video cameras but they didn't harass any celebrant.

But 20 NLD members from Meikhtila who travelled to nearby Kyaukpadaung to celebrate the event were harassed by the local MI agents.

According to the Secretary of Meikhtila Township NLD Daw Myint Myint Aye, they were searched, harassed and threatened with violence at several checkpoints.

Their car was also confiscated and they had to walk to the venue in Kyaukpadaung.

Similarly 34 NLD members from Yenangaung were harassed by MI agents but they managed to attend the celebration at Thukhawaddy Monastery, and they also fed the monks and prayed for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. In similar manner, NLD members at Chauk held a commemorative ceremony and it was attended by nearly 50 celebrants.

At Haka in northwest Burma, Chin State NLD members held a Christian prayer meeting to mark the event and they prayed for the release of all political prisoners including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. [TOP](#)

### **Interview with the wife of late U Min Thu**

*22 June 2004*

The family members of 50-year old U Min Thu, a Burmese political prisoner who died in detention on 13 June were not informed of his death by the military authorities until he was about to be buried.

According to Daw Nyunt Nyunt Aye, the wife of the deceased, the authorities didn't even inform her that her husband was seriously ill and that he was hospitalised.

She only received a letter from the authorities notifying her that her husband was hospitalised at Insein Hospital in Rangoon on 8 June and died on Sunday 13 June at 12.30.

U Min Thu was arrested on 28 April 1994 by military intelligence agents and sentenced to seven years in prison for helping to write the history of Burmese students' political activities.

He was suffering from high blood pressure, heart condition and various diseases when he was arrested and had to receive medical treatments at the prison clinic regularly.

His wife told DVB that her husband was quite well when she last saw him at the prison and she was not allowed to notify the death of her husband in the local newspaper in time for the funeral.

According to someone close to the prison circle, U Min Thu died unnecessary as the authorities made no effort to treat him properly.

U Min Thu is survived by his wife and three children. [TOP](#)

### **Teachers imprisoned in Burma for leaking exam questions**

*23 June 2004*

The local authorities at Monywa, Sagaing Division are imprisoning some tuition teachers for allegedly leaking exam questions to pupils.

Private tuition teachers including Ko Soe Aung have been given seven to twelve year prison terms at the local prison but it is not clear how many teachers are being imprisoned.

According to a local resident, the teachers were found at a photocopy shop with exam papers along with their pupils.

The questions were said to be bought from another 'source' and sold to pupils by various means. He added that those imprisoned are still not allowed to meet members of their families.

The practise of buying and selling exam paper questions is widespread in Burma and it is unusual for pupils and students to buy questions well before the examinations start, and they are provided by under-funded teachers who use the money to feed their impoverished families.

Some students, mostly the children of powerful authorities, were even allowed to cheat in examination halls as long as they pay the money and if they failed the exams, they could pay the examiners to make them pass with flying colours.

Critics say that these teachers are made scapegoats by the authorities who neither care about the welfare of the students nor the teachers. [TOP](#)

### **Burma junta frees three more political prisoners**

*25 June 2004*

Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) has released three more political prisoners on 24 June.

They are U Tin Aye, a lawyer, from Toungoo Jail; Ko Wa Nay Soe from Moulmein Jail, and Ma Khin Cho Myint (aka) Zulu from Insein Jail.

Of those released Ko Wanay Soe's health condition seems to be the worst.

U Tin Aye was jailed for seven years for assisting Ko Aung Tun in writing a research paper on the history of student movements in Burma. Ma Khin Cho Myint was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment.

After sentencing Ma Khin Cho Myint, authorities transferred her to Moulmein Jail.

She was granted permission to attend her mother's funeral in Rangoon last year and continued to be kept at Insein jail in Rangoon instead. [TOP](#)

### **Asian boxing champion U Tin Tun released**

*25 June 2004*

The junta recently released former Asian boxing champion U Tin Tun from jail.

He was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment for reading Khit Pyaing (New Era) Journal, a banned news magazine published by exiled activists, in 1993.

U Tin Tun's son Ko Phone Myint Tun who is currently in Japan told DVB that his father is suffering from severe coronary arteriosclerosis and could not even walk properly.

U Tin Tun was not freed for completing his sentence but released on health grounds and on condition he serves the remainder of the sentence if he is jailed again for political offences or otherwise.

Ko Phone Myint Tun himself was jailed as a political prisoner from 1991 to 1995 and shared a cell with his father in jail. [TOP](#)

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