

Democratic Voice of Burma
Political Prisoners News
2004 August

- ◆ [Buddhist monks join the call for release of prisoners in Burma](#) 1 August 2004
- ◆ [Burmese artists join call for release of prisoners](#) 2 August 2004
- ◆ [Dr. Than Nyein and Dr. May Win Myint given extended sentences](#) 3 August 2004
- ◆ [Burmese political prisoner launch new legal challenge](#) 4 August 2004
- ◆ [U Htway Myint/ some political prisoners' conditions continue to deteriorate](#) 4 August 2004
- ◆ [Two more NLD members arrested in Burma](#) 9 August 2004
- ◆ [Burmese activists climb Mount Fuji](#) 14 August 2004
- ◆ [NLD MP urges people to sign petition](#) 14 August 2004
- ◆ [U Tin Aung health condition deteriorates](#) 16 August 2004
- ◆ [NLD MP U Than Htay arrested](#) 18 August 2004
- ◆ [NLD supporters arrested in northern Shan State](#) 19 August 2004
- ◆ [Thet Win Aung honoured by British students](#) 19 August 2004
- ◆ [2 NLD members imprisoned in Mandalay](#) August 2004
- ◆ [Thet Win Aung's health condition not improving in prison](#) 23 August 2004
- ◆ [U Soe Myint, a NLD leader released in Burma](#) 26 August 2004
- ◆ [NLD continues meeting, urges release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi](#) 26 August 2004
- ◆ [NLD members freed from jail in Burma](#) 26 August 2004
- ◆ [Ko Aung Kyaw Oo's health deteriorates in Burma's prison](#) 27 August 2004

Buddhist monks join the call for release of prisoners in Burma

1 August 2004

Buddhist monks and young people in Yenangyaung Township, Magwe Division in central Burma are joining the increasing number of people who are signing the nationwide petition campaign spearheaded by the National League for Democracy (NLD) calling for the release of all political prisoners Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her deputy U Tin Oo.

U Hla Myint, the vice-chairman of Yenangyaung Township NLD told DVB that monks including abbots and novices, and youths heard about the campaign from Burmese media based abroad and they are very keen to put their names on the petition.

Buddhist monks and youths from other townships throughout Burma are also said to be keen to take part in the campaign.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been put under house arrest since her supporters and members were attacked and killed in an ambush at Dipeyin in Upper Burma on 30 May 2003.

The NLD also demands the military junta of Burma, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) to reopen all NLD offices throughout Burma which have been forced to close down since the attack happened. [TOP](#)

Burmese artists join call for release of prisoners

2 August 2004

Some famous pop artists in Burma have joined the petition campaign spearheaded by National League for Democracy (NLD) calling for the release of political prisoners including democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the reopening of NLD offices throughout Burma, by committing their signatures to the petition. On 2 August, artists from people's favourite Mizzima pop band led by its bass guitarist Ko Ye Lwin came to the NLD HQs at Shwegondaing Road in Rangoon and signed the petition. According to a NLD member from Bahan Township in Rangoon who doesn't want to be named, other artists also came to sign the petition. Moreover, Buddhist monks, civil servants, students and pupils are said to be also joining the campaign by signing the petition in townships throughout Burma. [TOP](#)

Dr. Than Nyein and Dr. May Win Myint given extended sentences

3 August 2004

Two elected representatives of National league for Democracy (NLD) who have been imprisoned unfairly at the notorious Insein Jail in Rangoon are to be detained beyond their release dates with Act 10 (a). Dr. Than Nyein, the elected representative of Kyauk Tan Township, Rangoon and Dr. May Win Myint, the representative of Ma Yang Gone Township in Rangoon have been recently charged with the Act and to be detained indefinitely, just before they are due to be released after serving their previous sentences. Both of them had been detained since 1997 and they were sentenced to seven years in prison. NLD spokesman U Lwin told DVB that the authorities gave no reason why the two are continued to be detained and he pointed out that there are many NLD members who are still languishing in prisons with the same Act. Katherine Gerson of London-based Amnesty International said that Burma's junta is misusing Act 10 (a) and she expressed her concerns about the continuing detention of the two prisoners and demanded their immediate release. She also gave examples of the junta using the same Act to unlawfully detain political prisoners despite their rights for freedom. She added that there is an increase in the number of fatality of prisoners after they are released from prisons in Burma. Ko Bo Kyi of Thailand-based Assistance Association of Political Prisoners (AAPP) also demanded the immediate release of all prisoners including Dr. Than Nyein, Dr. May Win Myint, U Htway Myint and U Thu Wei whose health conditions are deteriorating day by day. [TOP](#)

Burmese political prisoner launch new legal challenge

4 August 2004

Eight Burmese political prisoners who successfully appealed against death sentences for high treason against Burma's military junta are to launch a new court challenge against their jail terms, said their lawyer Naing Ngwe Ya on 4 August. The men are currently serving terms from three years to life for their alleged role in plans to overthrow the junta, State peace and Development Council (SPDC) which illegally seized power in a military coup. One of the men, Zaw Thet Htway, the editor of a sports magazine, was arrested in July last year after publishing a story alleging misuse of a four million dollar international grant to promote football in Burma. The others included three men charged over contacts with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and were all convicted in November last year before having their sentences commuted to jail terms six months later. The death sentences of three prisoners including Zaw Thet Htway were commuted to three years and the other five were commuted to life imprisonment. The ILO said the sentences for the "ILO three" cast doubt on the credibility of the regime's cooperation with the organisation, which is trying to stamp out forced labour in Burma now known as Myanmar. Decisions to overturn

sentences for political crimes are rare in Burma, but after the ILO's criticism, the junta admitted the court's original decision was flawed and agreed to review it. [TOP](#)

U Htway Myint and some political prisoners' conditions continue to deteriorate

4 August 2004

The health conditions of U Htway Myint, the vice-chairman of Democracy Party who has been detained unlawfully with Act 10 (a) at the clinic of Insein Jail in Rangoon is said to be deteriorating further. From the previous week, he has been unable to eat and the ICRC had to visit him for treatments, according to his family members. When they went to see him, his situation was so bad that he was not even in the condition to speak. Despite his serious condition, the military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) neither shows the signs nor in the mood to release him. Katherine Gerson of London-based Amnesty International said that U Htway Myint should be released on humanitarian ground as he is too ill and old to survive the imprisonment. Meanwhile, the junta recently decided to continue to detain two more prisoners and elected representatives - Dr. Than Nyein and Dr. May Win Myint with Act 10 (a) and the relatives and friends of other political prisoners are worried that their loved ones could be subjected to similar action when they are about to finish serving their old sentences. [TOP](#)

Two more NLD members arrested in Burma

9 August 2004

The authorities of Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) at Singu Township in central Burma arrested two National League for Democracy (NLD) members on 5 August.

The two are U Phoe Tint and U Than Lone from Kokekosu Village and they have been evading the arrest since the occurrence of Dipeyin massacre in May 2003. They were attacked by thugs hired by the local authorities with stones and metal pellets while Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited Singu last year. The attackers were never charged but four NLD members including the township organising committee members U Sein Tun and U San Maung were given long-term imprisonments.

U Phoe Tint and U Than Lone returned to their village early this year thinking that they are no longer wanted by the authorities. They were transferred to Mandalay Jail on 6 August for a trial on 13 August. [TOP](#)

Burmese activists climb Mount Fuji

14 August 2004

Burmese pro-democracy activists in Japan on 14 August climbed the famous Mount Fuji to highlight the plights of Burmese political prisoners. The activists marched from Tokyo and planning to hold a prayer meeting with the wish for the release of all prisoners, on top of the mountain on the morn of 15 August. According to one of the organisers, Ko Phone Myint Tun, the event was supported by Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) and all the 45 participants have been wearing T-shirts with the photographs of political prisoners. The participants are also planning to issue statements and hold a commemorative ceremony in honour of prisoners and those who gave up their lives for the freedom of Burma. [TOP](#)

NLD MP urges people to sign petition

14 August 2004

Despite intimidation by the ruling Burmese military authorities, the National League for Democracy (NLD) members have continued the signature campaign with increased momentum calling for the release of all political prisoners including NLD leaders Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo. U Thein Nyunt, NLD elected representative from Thingangyun Township Constituency-1, said his township has forwarded the list of signatures collected since 8 August to NLD HQs without any objection from the authorities. He told DVB that in 1990, the junta sponsored Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) members collected signatures from the public calling for deregistration of the NLD party and the lack of trust in the respective elected representatives and the Multiparty Democracy Election Sub-Commission chairmen accepted the signatures at various regions. He argued that the NLD, a legally standing political party, sought signatures without affecting anybody calling for the release of its leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is a Nobel Peace Prize winner and have huge public support, and its vice chairman U Tin Oo, the release of all political prisoners, and the reopening of the NLD offices. 'From a legal point of view and in accord with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Multiparty Democracy Election Sub-Commissions' action prohibiting the NLD signature campaign is unfair, bias, and ugly,' he added. He urged all the people of Burma to accept and practice Article 19 of the UN's Declaration of Human Rights in which everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression and to courageously stand for their right. At the same time, NLD members have continued the signature campaign with increased momentum in the various states and divisions including Pegu, Magwe, and Mandalay Divisions. [TOP](#)

U Tin Aung health condition deteriorates

16 August 2004

The health condition of U Tin Aung who has been detained unfairly at Kale Prison, Sagaing Division in northwest Burma is said to be deteriorating. U Tin Aung has been intensely suffering from high blood pressure and diabetes that he was hospitalised last week, but only after he asked permission from the prison authorities for three days. He is extremely thin and even unable to walk, according to his wife Daw Thuang Yi. U Tin Aung was arrested, charged with sedition and sentenced to 10 years in prison by military intelligence in 1989. Nevertheless, he has been continued to be detained beyond his release date with the infamous Act 10A. [TOP](#)

NLD MP U Than Htay arrested

18 August 2004

U Than Htay, the elected representative of Lashio Township in northeast Burma was arrested by the local authority on Monday, 16th August. According to his family member, U Than Htay was accused of selling illegal items at his electronic shop. The authority also arrested his son. The news was confirmed by another local resident in Lashio. The local resident told DVB over the phone that U Than Htay was actually arrested for his political activities. U Than Htay has been pressured by the authority to resign from the NLD since the beginning of this year. When he refused, his private business activities were harassed and now, he is arrested, the local resident said. Less than a week before he was arrested, DVB had interviewed with U Than Htay over the phone. At that time, he told DVB that they are the victims of the junta's systematic persecutions on the NLD. He is one of the leading members in the campaign spearheaded by the National League for Democracy (NLD) to collect signatures seeking the unconditional release of all Burmese political prisoners including NLD leaders Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo. [TOP](#)

NLD supporters arrested in northern Shan State

19 August 2004

Military intelligence (MI) agents of Burma's junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) arrested at least 9 National League for Democracy (NLD) members including two elected representatives. The elected representative of Northern Shan State, Lashio Township, Constituency – 2, U Than Htay and his son Ko Than Tun Oo was arrested on 11 August and their business car was also confiscated, according to the local NLD supporters. Meanwhile, Irrawaddy Division, the elected representative of Myaungmya Township, Constituency – 1, U Aung Kyin and six other youth were arrested by the MI agents in lower Burma. The extraordinary thing about the arrests is said to be the timing and they all have been accused of possessing illegal videos. NLD members maintain that the accusation is only the pretext to arrest the NLD members by hook or by crook. They are being detained at local police stations and their family members are still not allowed to see them. The party's Legal Support team is preparing to defend them. [TOP](#)

Thet Win Aung honoured by British students

19 August 2004

The Student Union of Reading University, UK has honoured Ko Thet Win Aung, who has been unfairly imprisoned with a long-term sentence by Burma's military junta, as its honorary vice-chairman. The move was spearheaded by London-based Burma Campaign – UK (Student Network). According to the group's spokeswoman Anna Roberts, Ko Thet Win Aung was honoured thus in recognition of his non-violent resistance to the junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). She also urged students throughout the world not to forget the plights of Burmese students and to support them. She added that by appointing Thet Win Aung as the honorary vice-chairman, more students in the UK would become aware of the struggles of Burmese students for the freedom of Burma. There are plans to honour more Burmese students who sacrifice their lives for their fellow countrymen and women, she said. Ko Thet Win Aung's parents told DVB that they are very proud of their son for his actions. [TOP](#)

2 NLD members imprisoned in Mandalay

August 2004

Two National League for Democracy (NLD) members from Singu Township, Mandalay Division in central Burma were sentenced to seven years imprisonment each by a court inside Mandalay Prison on 20 August. The two, U Phoe Thee and U Than Lone were NLD members of Singu Township, Kokkosu Vilalge and Ywathitgale Village and they were unjustly arrested and charged with throwing stones. When Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited Singu in 2003, thugs hired by the military junta threw stones at the motorcade. Instead of arresting the thugs, the authorities illegally arrested NLD members from Singu Township accused of allegedly throwing stones during the Dipeyin incident and handed down the prison terms. Four NLD members including township organizing committee members U Sein Tun and U San Oo Maung were sentenced to long prison terms while U Phoe Thee and U Than Lone absconded. Earlier this year, when the country's junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) freed those who were arrested, U Phoe Thee and U Than Lone thought they would not be arrested and returned home. However, the authorities unlawfully detained them on 5 August and sentenced them to long prison terms. [TOP](#)

Thet Win Aung's health condition not improving in prison

23 August 2004

The health condition of Burmese student leader Ko Thet Win Aung who has been unfairly imprisoned at Mandalay prison in central Burma has not improved, according to worried relatives who went to see him at the prison. His father U Win Maung told DVB that his son is weak and suffering from skin diseases all over his body. Moreover, his recovery rate is very slow and he is suffering from severe headache all the time. He was said to be unable to answer the inquiries of his father and he looked dejected and lost in his own thoughts. Ko Thet Win Aung was, in his absence, appointed the honorary vice-chairman of Reading University student union in England recently. [TOP](#)

U Soe Myint, a NLD leader released in Burma

26 August 2004

The authorities of Burma military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) released U Soe Myint, chairman of the Thaketa Township NLD in Rangoon Division. The SPDC arrested and imprisoned eight NLD members, including U Soe Myint, for rallying to organize Manyangon Township NLD youth group in 1997. Four out the eight, including U Soe Myint, have been released. Among the eight, U Khin Maung Myint died of torture in Kale jail. Dr Than Nyein and Dr Daw May Win Myint, elected representatives, and U Nyan Thaug, organizer of the Mayangon Township NLD, remain imprisoned in Insein jail.

Moreover, under Section 10 (a) (of the State Protection Law, an arbitrary law that gives the authorities sweeping power to detain anyone they consider a threat to national security), the SPDC has extended jail terms of Dr Than Nyein and Dr Daw May Win Myint.

Ma Moe Moe Suu Kyi, daughter of U Nyan Thaug, told the DVB that she is expecting the release of her father since U Soe Myint, who had been arrested on the same day as her father, has been released. [TOP](#)

NLD continues meeting, urges release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

26 August 2004

The meetings between the states and divisions National League for Democracy (NLD) organizing committee members and the Central Executive Committee members continued at the NLD headquarters office in Rangoon on 26 August.

Meetings with members of NLD organizing committees from Sagaing and Pegu Divisions were held in the morning and afternoon respectively.

A responsible person from the NLD headquarters said that free and frank meetings were held constructively.

The meetings with NLD organizing committees from Mandalay and Rangoon Divisions are to be continued on 27 August.

While the comprehensive meetings were taking place between the responsible NLD members from basic and central levels at the headquarters, the signature collecting campaign for the release of public leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and political prisoners was also taking place around the clock. [TOP](#)

NLD members freed from jail in Burma

26 August 2004

Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) on 25 August released two National League for Democracy (NLD) members from Singu Township, Mandalay Division in central Burma.

They were unjustly imprisoned and accused of allegedly throwing stones during the notorious Dipeyin incident. U Phoe Thee and U Than Lone, who were given seven-year jail terms each on 21 August, have been released from Mandalay jail. A Mandalay NLD member told DVB that the two were granted a respite to be released from jail, under section 401 [of the Criminal Procedure Code providing for the suspension of their sentence to the extent that they agree not to engage in political activities].

After they gave their signatures according to section 401, they were released from Okpho jail in Mandalay in the morning of 25 August. They took a bus and arrived at their villages in the same evening. They have been released while the Mandalay Division NLD's legal support group was working for their releases and preparing to appeal their case. One of the local NLD leaders, Daw Win Mya Mya also went and talked to the people from the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross). [TOP](#)

Ko Aung Kyaw Oo's health deteriorates in Burma's prison

27 August 2004

The health condition of a Burmese political prisoner Ko Aung Kyaw Oo alias Ko Kyaw Htet is said to be deteriorating badly. Ko Aung Kyaw Oo is suffering from kidney and liver diseases and on 17 August, he was transferred in emergency to the prisoner ward of Insein General Hospital in Rangoon. Ko Aung Kyaw Oo was arrested by the military intelligence in 1991 for allegedly having contacts with the armed student group, All Burma Students' Democratic Front (ABSDF). He was sentenced to 12 years in prison. In 1996, along with the famous journalist U Win Tin, Ko Aung Kyaw Oo was given an extra seven years sentence for sending secret reports on human rights abuses within the prison to the UN. Ko Aung Kyaw Oo has been suffering from bouts of malaria attack since he was imprisoned and he contracted liver and kidney diseases while he was in prison. His condition deteriorated because of the lack of proper medical cares in prison. [TOP](#)