

Democratic Voice Of Burma

Political Prisoners News

November 2005

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Ye-U NLD supporter arrested by Burmese authorities

Nov 01, 2005 - A supporter of National League for Democracy (NLD) of Ye-U Township, Sagaing Division in central Burma, was arrested by the local authorities with criminal charges because he is a supporter of the party.

45-year old Kyaw Hlaing was arrested on 29 October at his home and detained at the local police station. On 31 October, he was taken to court and charged with gambling laws. But his son Aung Zaw Zaw insisted that the authorities arrested his father because not that he committed the crime, but because he has been an active supporter of the NLD.

Kyaw Hlaing was actively involved in organising the rallying trip for democracy Aung San Suu Kyi when she visited the town in May 2003. When the notorious Dipeyin incident occurred, he was arrested and sent to the prison for a year because some old playing cards were found at his home.

After he was released from prison, Kyaw Hlaing was constantly followed and harassed by the authority agents and police officers.



Another NLD member to be arrested and imprisoned by Burmese authorities

Nov 02, 2005 - The authority chairman of a ward in Rangoon Thanlyin (Syriam) Township, U Nyein and team are preparing to arrest and imprison another National League for Democracy (NLD) youth member following the imprisonment of another party member Su Su Nway from nearby Kawmoo Township.

Moe Wa, a daughter of detained Thanlyin Township NLD joint-secretary Tin Hlaing was beaten up by seven family members of U Nyein on 7 March while they came to borrow chairs from her house, according to lawyer Myint Thaug who is defending Moe Wa. The attackers then reported to a court two months later that the girl used abusive language against them, but it was dismissed. Three months later, township authority chairperson Tin Aye asked the court to reopen the case and charge Moe Wa, her older sister and a sister-in-law with using 'abusive' language against authorities.

Moe Wa's father Tin Hlaing has been languishing in the notorious Rangoon Insein Jail since 2004 for his political activities, and the local authorities are taking advantage of a 'fatherless', vulnerable girl and bullying her, some lawyers told DVB.

A spokesman of the NLD and a legal expert Nyan Win told DVB that according to the existing laws, the local authorities have no rights to force the case reopen thus as it should be dealt with by the police and lawyers. "The case was reopened because it is connected to the NLD," Nyan Win said.

The authorities are taking no notice of the protestation of the NLD so far and the defendants have been notified to attend the court willy-nilly on 3 November for the trial.



NLD Dr. Win Aung's appeal rejected by Burmese court

Nov 02, 2005 - The appeal lodged on behalf of the detained Khin U Township, Sagaing Division National League for Democracy (NLD) chairman Dr. Win Aung, was summarily rejected by the divisional court at Monywa in central Burma on 20 October.

His lawyers are preparing to continue to lodge the appeal at upper Burma High Court. Win Aung was arrested on 6 July and sentenced to 10 years in prison on 8 July for videotaping and recording the rallying trips of democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi to Monywa and Mogok in 2003 and distributing a book written by an exiled Burmese author Kyemon U Thaug on the unsavoury activities of the late dictator of Burma Gen Ne Win.

Along with Win Aung, a school teacher Soe Win Aung was sentenced to 3 years in prison and Khin Maung Win was given a ten year sentence. There are more than 1000 political prisoners who have been detained unlawfully and unfairly, and languishing inside prisons throughout Burma.



Su Su Nway not allowed to receive medications

Nov 02, 2005 - Prison authorities at the notorious Rangoon Insein Jail, have been barring human rights activist Su Su Nway from receiving proper medicines and medical treatments for her heart condition. Su Su Nway from Htan Manaing Village in Rangoon Kawmoo Township, was sentenced to a total of 20 months in prison on 13 October for allegedly hurling abuses at the local authorities, against whom she successfully sued over the imposition of forced labour practices on villagers earlier on.

Su Su Nway had been taking medicines for her heart condition before she was sent to the prison and her condition is said to be bad because the medicines she needs have not been allowed to be taken into the prison, according sources close the National League for Democracy (NLD).

The NLD reported her situation to Rangoon-based International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) office, but there has been no response from the organisation, the party members told DVB. Moreover, the prison doctor has been reluctant to treat Su Su Nway and give her medicines, causing serious concerns over her health condition.



Su Su Nway's first appeal lodged by NLD lawyers

Nov 03, 2005 - Burma's National League for Democracy (NLD) legal representatives, on 3 November, lodged an appeal at Southern Rangoon District court, on behalf of detained Htan Manaing Villager Su Su Nway who was recently sentenced to a year and a half for successfully suing her local authorities over forced labour practices.

Su Su Nway's lawyers Kyi Win and Myint Thauung argued that their client was wrongfully arrested and imprisoned causing damages to her and the appeal was heard by a woman judge Nang Sandar San and she will notify them at 3pm on the following day whether the appeal will be accepted or not.

Meanwhile, NLD members and supporters around Burma and outside the country are continuing to donate money for the care of Su Su Nway who is a sufferer of heart diseases, in recognition of her selflessness and courage. But prison authorities at Rangoon Insein jail where she is being detained, have been stopping her from receiving vital medicines and medical treatments.



Shan leaders sentenced in Rangoon Insein Jail

Nov 04, 2005 - According to a news report received from Rangoon, Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) has sentenced heavy jail terms to detained Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) chairperson Khun Htun Oo and 10 Shan leaders.

The sentences were passed during a hearing held at the Special Court inside Insein Jail on 3 November. Although the exact judgments were not immediately known, lawyers Aung Myint and Aung Khaing, government-appointed legal representatives for the defence, told ethnic leaders in Rangoon that the sentences had already been handed down.

An ethnic leader, who wished to remain anonymous, said Htun Oo was given a jail term of 90 years while Shan State Peace Council Chairman (SSPC) Gen Hso Ten was sentenced to 106 years imprisonment. The other six Shan leaders were all given 70-year sentences each.

DVB had been unable to confirm the news as family members of Htun Oo and the authorities were unavailable for confirmation.



Su Su Nway's appeal rejected by Rangoon district court

Nov 04, 2005 - The appeal lodged on behalf of Rangoon Htan Manaing villager Su Su Nway who was sentenced to a year and a half for allegedly hurling abuses at the local authorities, was rejected by southern Rangoon district court on 4 November.

The appeal was lodged on 3 November and it was ‘summarily’ rejected on the following day by a woman judge Nang Sandar San, according to the National League for Democracy (NLD) lawyer Nyan Win.

“No reason was given. We were not even at the stage where we could lodge the appeal in full. It was rejected at the stage where decide whether to accept it or not. We will continue to appeal at the divisional level.”

33-year old Su Su Nway was counter sued by her village authority members after she successfully sued them over forced labour practices imposed on villagers in 2004. She was sentenced and sent to prison on 13 October by Kawmoo Township court.



Detained Burmese lawyer Aye Myint not allowed to see family

Nov 05, 2005 - Burmese lawyer Aye Myint from Pegu in central Burma, who was sentenced to 7 years in prison on 31 October for helping farmers report land seizures to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), was not allowed to see his family at Pegu Prison where he is being detained.

According to his lawyer San Maung, Aye Myint’s wife attempted to see her husband on 1 November, but she was turned back and told by the prison authorities to return on 5 November. But when she eventually turned up at the prison, at the appointed time, with San Maung, she was again told that she could neither see her husband nor give him anything.

Nevertheless, San Maung was allowed to see his client and they discussed all the things need to be done including the lodging of appeal on his behalf at Pegu district court within thirty days.

Aye Myint was accused of sending ‘wrong’ information to the ILO by nearby Daik-U police commander and charged with the hated Emergency Provision Act – 5E. Eyewitnesses including the farmers whose lands were grabbed by army organisations and local authority members who usually stand up for the junta, testified at the court that Aye Myint was innocent.

Previously, Aye Myint was given death sentence with similar charges, but released later due to pressures from the international community.



Exiled Burmese groups denounce junta over Shan sentence

Nov 06, 2005 - Exiled Burmese political groups denounced the sentencing of 8 Shan leaders including Shan National League for Democracy chairman Khun Htun Oo and Shan State National Council patron Gen Hso Ten to lengthy prison terms by Burma’s military junta, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC).

In a statement issued on 5 November, the Burma Communist Party (BCP) said that the SPDC is a group Burman racist counter-revolutionaries and that Hso Ten was sentenced thus because he is a Shan national who dared to start an armed revolution against the junta.

Chairperson of the exiled branch of the United Nationalities League for Democracy (UNLD), Khoo Marko Ban said in a statement that the junta has been oppressing and cowing the ethnic national leaders but they will continue to contrive for the emergence of a true federal union with other Burmese pro-democracy groups.



To hell and back: Golden ‘khamauk’ Shwe Maung released from Mandalay Prison

Nov 07, 2005 - A member of Burma’s main opposition party, the National League for Democracy (NLD) from Mandalay, Shwe Maung, who was sentenced to three years in prison for moulding a gilded statue of a ‘khamauk’ hat, the symbol of the party, was released from the local prison on 7 November.

authorities and he staged a hunger strike to protest against the inhumane treatments he received.

“They came to ‘pick me up’ and put me in a cell for a night. On the night of the 8th (of November 2002), they sent me to Ohpho (Mandalay) Prison. On the 11th, they put me on the dock and a judge and a prosecuting lawyer told me that I was sentenced to prison for this and that charges,” Shwe Maung told DVB. “Then, I realized how people have been sent to prison. It’s so unfair, I said and realized that I had been imprisoned. As soon as I was in the prison, I was chained, manacled, slapped and hit in the face and ears. My left ear went bad from that day on.”

In July 2005, Shwe Maung was taken out of his cell with the excuse of seeing his wife and forced to take off his slippers but he refused to do so. He was hooded and beaten up for six days and sent to a ‘special’ war hound kennel. The authorities deprived him of sleep by waking him up every half an hour. During the solitary confinement, Shwe Maung survived on boiled rice soaked in cold water while he was regularly beaten up by thugs hired by the prison governor. Blood spurted out of his right eye. His livers and heart were damaged and he is suffering the consequences to this day. He was hooded, beaten up and kicked for three consecutive days by eight men.

Then, Shwe Maung staged a hunger strike demanding the authorities to allow him to wear slipper, read newspaper and treat him like a human being.

“I only asked them these. If they could not do that, I told them to release me,” he explained. “They also cut off the water supply for staging the hunger strike. If you don’t eat rice, don’t also drink water, they said to me. Even if I died, I wanted people to know about my plight. Therefore, I collected my urine and drank it instead of water. I survived two days. Then, they sent me to a special cell and beat me up again with two people and I lost my consciousness. When I regained my consciousness, they poured rice gruel into my mouth.”

After he was into the ninth day of the hunger strike, Shwe Maung was promised by a prison official that the authorities would oblige his demands if he called off the hunger strike.

“At the time, I was shitting blood. I was unable to speak even with my mind nor say prayer. I was very weak. Start to eat again. You will get what you want, he told me. All I wanted was to take action on the abuses inflicted on me. Nothing else. To prevent them from happening again. But they refused.”



Burmese veteran politicians demand release of Shan leaders

Nov 08, 2005 - Burmese veteran politicians in Rangoon are preparing to issue a statement demanding the release of Shan leaders including Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairman Khun Htun Oo and secretary Sai Nyunt Lwin who were given lengthy prison terms by the ruling junta.

The decision to issue the statement was taken at a meeting held on 8 November 2005 at the home of Thakhin Thein Pe to discuss the current political situation and to organize a ceremony for Burma’s National Day which falls on 25 November.

One of the politicians Thakhin Chan Tun told DVB that the sentencing of Shan leaders to up to a hundred years in prison is saddening and troubling, as they are not the sort of people to revolt and take up arms.

“U Khun Htun Oo and the like are not the sort of people who would revolt. He has been demanding democracy by democratic means,” Chan Tun said. He added that the junta is going the opposite direction to that of what it claims it is doing; towards a ‘disciplined’ democracy and that no previous Burmese governments including the hated Burma’s Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) led by the late Gen Ne Win, never meted out such harsh punishments on political leaders.

“Their action is over the top. I wonder if the military government is trying to record their name in history that they did such atrocious things.”



Burma CRPP denounces the sentencing of Shan leaders

Nov 08, 2005 - The sentencing of Shan leaders including Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairperson Khun Htun Oo and Secretary Sai Nyunt Lwin to lengthy prison terms, could jeopardise the national unity and reconciliation of Burma, the Committee for Representing People's Parliament (CRPP) said.

The statement of the denunciation of the imprisonments of Shan leaders by Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), was issued on 8 November at the end of a CRPP meeting held at the National League for Democracy (NLD) HQs in Rangoon.

Many other Burmese political organisations denounced the junta's action and demand the immediate release of the Shan leaders for the sake of the future of Burma. The leaders were secretly tried at the notorious Rangoon Insein Jail and given approximately one hundred year long sentences.

The defendants, who have been detained at the prison since February, were not allowed to hire lawyers of their choice and they are still not allowed to see their family members.



Another Burmese political prisoner dies in detention

Nov 09, 2005 - Aung Myint Thein from Rangoon Shwepaukkan New Town, who was arrested and imprisoned for allegedly having contacts with the exiled outlawed Federation of the Trade Unions of Burma (FTUB), died in the notorious Rangoon Insein Jail on 5 November.

Although the real reason of his death is not known, the prison authorities came to inform his family members on the same day that Aung Myint Thein died from dysentery/cholera, but they are still not allowed to see his remains or bury him.

37-year old Aung Myint Thein from Ward – 12 was said to be in a healthy condition before he was arrested on 2 July and charged with political act – 5J for having contacts with 'illegal' organizations and Act – 17/1. His family members are said to be suspicious of the circumstance of death, as he died suddenly while he was tried behind closed doors in the prison, just before he was about to be sentenced.

His relatives are planning to hold a commemorative religious ceremony for him on the coming Saturday, a week after his death and they are requesting the authorities to return his remains before the day.

Aung Myint Thein is the fourth Burmese prisoner to have died during detention in 2005. The other three are; Aung Hlaing Win from Rangoon Mayanggone Township, Min Tun Wai from Mon State Kyaikmayaw Township and Saw Stanford from Taguseik Village, Einme Township in Irrawaddy Division, who was killed during a heavy-handed session of interrogation by, soldiers.



Burmese prisoners' health conditions deteriorate

Nov 09, 2005 - The health conditions of Rangoon Hlaing Thayar Township National League for Democracy (NLD) vice-chairman Hla Aye and his son and joint-secretary Thant Zin Myo, are said to be deteriorating.

67-year old Hla Aye, who had been suffering from high blood pressure and strokes, was arrested and imprisoned while he was receiving medical treatments at the local hospital. His condition deteriorated thus because of the lack medical cares within the prison, according to his family members. His son is suffering from chronic physical pains.

Their family members are requesting the NLD to provide medical cares for them, according to the party spokesperson Myint Thein. He added that many prisoners have been receiving unsafe medical

treatments such as injections with unclean syringes from seasoned criminals although they know that it is very risky, as they could not afford to hire private doctors to look after them.

“Because of these reasons, my father U Hla Aye and younger brother Maung Thant Zin Myo have the desire to go to outside clinics. Therefore, I respectfully request the NLD to help them as much as it could, his brother Thant Zin Oo wrote to us,” Myint Thein told DVB.

Hla Aye and Thant Zin Myo were sentenced to two years each in prison in September for allegedly disrupting fire fighters while they were carrying out official duties, but observers said they were deliberately harassed, trapped and finally imprisoned for their active and effective roles in the NLD.



The trial of the NLD members in central Burma Aunglan

Nov 09, 2005 - The trial of three National League for Democracy (NLD) members from Magwe Aunglan (Allen) Township in central Burma, has been postponed to 21 November.

Three including local elected representative (MP) Thein Zan have been sued for helping the family of Ngapyin villager Win Lwin who was killed during a forced labour session, to Rangoon-based the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in December 2004. He was crushed by an avalanche of stones while quarrying stones for building a public road.

The local authorities pressured Win Lwin's family members not to report the case by various means of intimidation.

The prosecutions of the NLD members came after high ranking officials from the ruling military junta's Ministry of Labour summoned them to Rangoon and assured them that if they do not make anymore noises about the death of their loved one, no one involved in the case would be prosecuted.



Prisoner's remains forced to be buried in haste by Burmese authorities

Nov 10, 2005 - Authorities at the notorious Rangoon Insein Jail pressurized the family members of Aung Myint Thein, claimed to have died from diarrhea, to bury his remains as soon as possible.

Family members were notified on 6 November of Aung Myint Thein's death and when they went to the prison to retrieve his remains on the following morning, only three of them were allow to see the corpse and they were pressurized to bury it within two days of his death. As a result, he was cremated and buried at Ye-Way Cemetery with the arrangement of the authorities.

“They (family members) told them (prison authorities) that they are not strangers but real brothers and sisters, but they were not all allowed in,” a friend of the dead man told DVB. “The family said that they don't mind spending 90,000 kyat for the funeral, they will keep his remains for three days (before the burial) according to the Buddhist tradition. But the authorities didn't allow him to do so. If you bury him on Monday (7 November) we will give you the permission they said and the family decided not to take his remains home and cremated him at 11 am.”

When asked if the family members asked the authorities whether he really died from diarrhea, the family friend said that they did not, as the authorities never handed the corpse over to them despite their suspicion.

38-year old Aung Myint Thein was a civil servant of No.1 Industry Ministry and he got involved in political activities with his father and joined Democracy and Peace Party after the 1988 nationwide pro-democracy uprising. He was arrested on 2 July with his father for allegedly having contacts with exiled 'illegal' organizations. He died just before he was to be given sentences and some people believe that he was tortured to death during the interrogations. His father, 70-year old Thein Lwin Oo is still languishing in the prison and his health condition is said to be poor. His family is requesting the authorities to let him take

part in the memorial service for his son on the seventh day of his death.



Detained wedding guests released from Burmese jail

Nov 11, 2005 - 15 National League for Democracy (NLD) members from Rangoon Twante Township who were jailed 15 days each for attending a friend's wedding, were released from the notorious Insein Jail on 11 November.

They were helping the wedding feast of Ohn Tun and Cho Mar Win from Tanlyar Village on 26 October when they were arrested. The local authority members, around 30 police forces and 40 soldiers surrounded the home of the groom and arrested the wedding guests with the excuse that they didn't register their presences properly.

But observers told DVB that they were arrested because they are members and supporters of the NLD and it was a deliberate attempt by the authorities to ruin the wedding festivity.

One of the released said that prison authorities behaved decently to prisoners when the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) officials came to inspect the prison and when they were not there, the situation returned to the 'usual' bad, old way.

"As the situation is like that, prisoners are suffering from malnutrition. Their health condition is not good. They have stomach ache. They have to queue for medicines when they are available, but they are never sufficient. They never provide enough medicines to the prisoners. Ill prisoners were hidden and only who were not ill were shown (to the ICRC officials). The situation is like that. There are more cases of stomachache. The reason is the unclean water as they all use toilet water."



Shan NLD demand Burma junta to release its leaders

Nov 11, 2005 - Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) insisted, the sentencing of its chairperson Khun Htun Oo and eight other Shan leaders to lengthy prison terms, could severely damage national unity and demanded the military junta of Burma, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) to release them immediately.

The demand was made in a statement issued on 9 November and the SNLD also urged the junta to solve the problems of Burma by political means as soon as possible. It added that the SNLD has been contriving for the emergence of democracy and the full rights of ethnic nationals by political means within the legal boundary since it was founded.

"When (the SNLD) attended the National Convention from 1993 to 1996, we put forward and discussed matters relating to the rights of ethnic nationals logically and properly," the statement continues. "As Burma is made up of many ethnic nationals, when it comes to the union and equality, we can only reach our destination of true democracy hoped by us all, only when all political parties and organisations inevitably participate with a sense of historical duty."

The SNLD also said that it finds the action of the junta very hard to understand as it is time to work very hard for the national unity, and not carry out actions and expressing the opinions detrimental to the unity.

The issuance of the statement is the first political activity of the SNLD since its leaders were arrested in February and more are expected in the near future. At the same time, family members of Htun Oo and other Shan leaders are attempting to lodge appeals on their behalf, according to legal circles in Rangoon.



Donations for detained Su Su Nway continue to flow in despite harassments

Nov 12, 2005 - The people of Burma are continuing to donate money for detained human rights and political activist Su Su Nway from Htan Maning Village, Kawmoo Township in Rangoon Division, despite various forms of harassment subjected to them by their local authorities.

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Kawmoo Township elected representative (MP) Myaungmya Ba Shwe told DVB that the authority members have been finding out donors and intimidating them. He added that Su Su Nway, who is suffering from heart diseases, is still not allowed to receive proper medications and medicines. Nevertheless, Htan Manaing villagers acknowledged, recorded and announced the total amount of donations they have received for Su Su Nway from all over Burma, especially from the people of Chauk in central Burma, and expressed their thanks and gratitude.

Su Su Nway was sentenced to a year and a half in prison on 13 October by Kawmoo Township court for allegedly hurling abuses at her local authority members whom she successfully sued over forced labour practices a year ago.

She is languishing in the notorious Rangoon Insein Jail at the moment.

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Su Su Nway honoured by Burmese activists in Finland

Nov 14, 2005 - Burmese activists in Finland have renamed a Burmese community school from Aryon-U (Early Dawn) to Su Su Nway, in honour of the imprisoned Burmese human rights activist from Htan Manaing Village, Kawmoo Township in Rangoon Division.

Moreover, they wrote a letter to the Amnesty International urging the international community to taken care of Su Su Nway's welfare who is suffering from heart diseases and contrive for her immediate release.

A Burmese activist Thar Swe told DVB that their action is part of the efforts to highlight the plight of Su Su Nway who is still not allowed to receive proper medical cares and medicines, and the dire condition of Rangoon Insein Jail she is being detained in.

The school was set up recently by Burmese exiles in Finland with the help of local Finish friends, to teach the children of Burmese refugees their mother tongue and culture. The children will also be taught to copy the brave and selfless behaviours of Su Su Nway who sacrificed her life for the benefit of her fellow villagers. She was sentenced to a year and an half in prison on 13 October for allegedly hurling abuses at her local authority members, whom she successfully sued over forced labour practices a year earlier.

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Asian rights commission condemns Burma junta over sentences

Nov 15, 2005 - Hong Kong-based Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), on 14 November, condemned the South Rangoon District Court's summary rejections of recent appeals against the jailing of human rights defender Su Su Nway and a private tuition teacher Aung Pe from Twante Township.

34-year old Su Su Nway was sentenced to 20 months in prison on October 13 for spurious charges of abusing and intimidating local government officials, despite her chronic heart condition. In another case, an appeal lodged on behalf of Aung Pe was thrown out on October 24, with the judge writing the dismissal as the defending lawyer was arguing the case.

"The cursory manner in which the judges disposed of the cases suggests that the petitioners were not given the right to a fair hearing in accordance with international standards, and that the judges were acting under instructions to dismiss the appeals," the AHRC said.

The project manager of AHRC, Bijo Francis told DVB that his organization has written an official letter of protest to Burma's military junta, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) on the matter and also he urged the international community to put more pressures on the junta.

Su Su Nway obtained the first successful conviction for forced labour in Burma in January against the local officials of her village Htan Manaing, Kawmoo Township, Rangoon Division with the help of the [International Labor Organization \(ILO\)](#).

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Shan leaders transferred to a remote prison

Nov 17, 2005 - Three Shan leaders, Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairman Khun Htun Oo, general secretary Sai Nyunt Lwin and Shan State Peace Council (SSPC) patron Gen Hso Ten who were given lengthy jail terms, were transferred to a prison in the remote part of Burma on 16 November.

It is still not known exactly why they were transferred, but they have not been allowed to see their family members since they were detained in February at the notorious Rangoon Insein Jail and the families were notified about neither the sentences nor the transfers, the spokesperson of SNLD Sai Leik told DVB.

“When we enquired at the gate of the prison, we were only told that they were transferred to Mandalay. But when we asked people with the experiences, they told us that that even if they (the authorities) said that they (the prisoners) are to be sent to Mandalay, they tend to send them to Myikyina or another place,” said Nyunt Lwin. “Therefore, we are still unable to say exactly where they are being transferred to. We are still trying to find out.”

He added that it is still very difficult for the SNLD lawyers to obtain the so-called power files with which the defendants allow lawyers to handle their cases, as they can't locate where the defendants are being detained.

The sentences on nine Shan leaders were passed during a hearing held at the ‘Special Court’ inside Insein Jail on 3 November. Aung Myint and Aung Khaing, government-appointed legal representatives for the defence, told ethnic leaders in Rangoon that the sentences had already been handed down.

Sai Leik said Htun Oo was given a jail term of 93 years while Hso Ten was sentenced to 106 years imprisonment, Nyunt Lwin, 85 years and the rest, 79 years except Sa Tha Oo who received a 12 year sentence.

List of nine Shan leaders and sentences on them

1. U Khun Htun Oo 93 years (confirmed) 2. Gen Hso Ten 106 years (confirmed) 3. U Sai Nyunt Lwin 85 years (confirmed) 4. U Sai Hla Aung 79 years (confirmed) 5. U Myint Than 79 years (confirmed) 6. U Tun Nyo 79 years (confirmed) 7. Sai Myo Win Tun 79 years (confirmed) 8. Ko Nyi Nyi Moe 79 years (confirmed) 9. Sa Tha Oo 12 years (unconfirmed)

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No surprise: Political prisoners’ appeals rejected by Burmese courts

Nov 18, 2005 - The appeals lodged on behalf of five National League for Democracy (NLD) members including Ba Tint who were sentenced to life, were thrown out by the Supreme Court in Rangoon.

The court only considered one of the charges against Thet Naing Aung in connection with immigration laws with which he was given a five-year jail term, and refused to reconsider all the life sentences passed down on them, according to NLD legal representatives.

Similarly, on 17 November, the court also refused to accept and turned down the appeal for the reinvestigation of the death of Mayanggone Township NLD member Aung Hlaing Win who was killed in custody. But lawyers are preparing to lodge a special appeal.

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Two Shwegu NLD leaders arrested by Burmese authorities

Nov 21, 2005 - Two National League for Democracy (NLD) leaders from Shwegu Township, Kachin State in northern Burma, had been arrested by local authorities on 20 November 2005.

Joint secretary Ko Ko Myint and organizing member Thein Zaw were arrested at their homes by the authorities with the excuse of checking the guest lists. Then, their compounds were searched and the authorities ‘conveniently’ found some opium resins and instruments for smoking opium, and arrested and charged them accordingly.

Kachin State NLD vice-chairman Ne Win said that the authorities also confiscated papers and documents relating to the NLD from their homes and detaining them on remand for a week.

“U Ko Ko Myint and U Thein Zaw are not opium consumers. They are good people. They are neither drug consumers nor traffickers,” Ne Win told DVB. “I was told that someone must have deliberately planted them there. It is quite extraordinary that (opium) was found simultaneously at the homes of the two. Moreover, U Ko Ko Gyi and U Thein Zaw are actively involved in the activities for their local branch.”

TOP

Burmese Heroine Su Su Nway Still Not Allowed To Take Vital Medicines

Nov 21 2005 - Detained human rights activist Su Su Nway from Manaing Village, Kawmoo Township, Rangoon who was sentenced to 20 months in prison, is still not allowed to take vital medicines needed for her chronic heart condition.

As a result, her health condition is starting to deteriorate in the notorious Rangoon Insein Jail., a Htan Manaing Villeger told DVB.

“They would allow us to give her medicines from outside only when there is a prescription from prison. But the prison is not still giving her a prescription. at the moment, she herself said that her health condition is not good. She is only feeling dizzy now. It is worrying in the long run.

Burmese medical experts said that if a heart disease sufferer like her is not allowed to take medicines, the longer is goes on, the more the disease take hold of her heart and she could even lose her life.

The villager adds that local authorities have been making the lives of witness hwo testified for Su Su Nway impossible and driving them out of the village by underhanded means.

At the same time, people are continuing to donate money for her and her lawyer are preparing to lodge an appeal on her behalf at a higher court.

Su Su Nway was countersue by her village authorities for successfully suing them over force labor practice in 2004 with the help of the International Labuor Orgazation (ILO).

Recently, the ruling military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) ‘promised’ to cooperate with ILO to put an and to force labor pratices in Burma, after having threatened to withdraw the country from the organization. Letters of death threat were also sent to the ILO liasion officer in Rangoon.

At the same time, the authorities are continuing to prosecute and imprison those who report the practice to the ILO and those who are helping to do so.

TOP

The Junta Put Pressure Not To Demand to Release Shan Leaders

Nov 22, 2005 - The armed ethnic ‘peace’ group, Shan State Army – North (SSA-N), has been ‘advised’ by the Burma Army’s regional commander last week that the best way to help its imprisoned leaders is to keep quiet about the whole thing, according to a report by Shan Herald Agency for News (S.H.A.N).

According to the editor of S.H.A.N Khun Seng, Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing, Commander of Lashio-based Northern Region Command, was quoted as telling the SSA-N commanders Maj-Gen Loi Mao and colonels Gaifah and Yabay that making an issue out of the recent jailed sentences passed on their detained leaders “either in the capacity as an organization or National Convention delegates” would only complicate matters and merely serve to harden the determination of his bosses in Rangoon.

“He told them not to do anything about Khun Htun Oo and the like. Listen to me, he (Myint Hlaing) told them,” Khun Seng said. “If you do not do that, the attitude of our leaders will soften and things will turn for

the better.” He added that the ‘advice’ of Myint Hlaing is effective because there has been no official statement from SSA-N so far.

Nine Shan leaders including Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairman Khun Htun Oo and Shan State Peace Council (SSPC) Gen Hso Ten had received 79-106 year jail sentences on 3 November. Charges included defamation of the state, association with illegal parties and conspiracy against the state. The defendants also were not allowed to choose their own legal counsels, according to S.H.A.N.

Due to the pressure from Myint Hlaing, SSA-N is sending a five member delegation to the so-called National Convention sponsored by the ruling military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) which is due to resume in December, but Gaifah who attended the previous sessions of the convention is not among them. Brigade – 11 of Shan State National Army (SSNA) which surrendered its weapons to the junta, is also sending some representatives to the convention.

Many SSNA members decided to ‘go into the jungles’ and take up arms again to fight the junta after the junta arrested their leader Hso Ten.



Shan leaders Htun Oo and Nyunt Lwin sent to prisons away from home

Nov 22, 2005 - Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairperson Khun Htun Oo was transferred to Mandalay Prison in central Burma and SNLD Secretary Sai Nyunt Lwin to Kalemio Prison in northwest Burma, near the border with India, according to sources close to their families.

Both of them were transferred from the notorious Insein Jail where they had been detained since February to Mandalay Prison, and Nyunt Lwin was flown to Kalemio Prison on 15 November.

Because of the transfers, defending lawyers are finding it hard to lodge appeals on their behalves, an ethnic national leader Pu Cin Sian Thang of Zomi National Congress (ZNC).

It is not known whether Gen Hso Ten, the patron of Shan State Peace Council (SSPC) chairman was among those who were transferred recently and it is not known exactly where he is being detained either.

Nine Shan leaders including Hso Ten, Htun Oo and Nyunt Lwin were given lengthy jail terms, up to 106 years, by a secret court.

Meanwhile, Burmese military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) threatened not release Shan leaders if Shan political groups make too much noise about their leaders’ imprisonments.



More Shan leaders sent to prisons in remote Burma

Nov 23, 2005 - Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairperson Khun Htun Oo and SNLD secretary Sai Nyunt Lwin and Shan State Peace Council (SSPC) patron Gen Hso Ten, were transferred to Puta-O, Khamti and Kalemio Prisons in northern Burma.

National League for Democracy (NLD) lawyer Aung Thein and the prisoners’ family members went to Mandalay Prison in central Burma where they were reportedly transferred from, but they didn’t have a chance to see them.

Prison authorities at Mandalay told Aung Thein that Gen Hso Ten was sent to Khamti Prison, S a i Nyunt Lwin to Kalemio Prison near India and Htun Oo was sent to Puta-O Prison.

Aung Thein told DVB that he and two other NLD lawyers Kyi Win and Nyan Win are planning to lodge appeals on behalf of the defendants who were given lengthy jail terms, up to 106 years including several life sentences.

Moreover, the physical and mental conditions of the three leaders are not known as they have not been allowed to see their family members since they were arrested in February. It is neither known where the other six Shan leaders – Sai Hla Aung, Sa Tha Oo, Myint Than, Tun Nyo, Sai Myo Min Tun and Ba

Thin, who were detained and tried with them, are being detained currently.



Urine samples taken from detained Burma's Shwegu NLD members

Nov 23, 2005 - The police at Shwegu, Kachin State in northern Burma, had taken urine samples from two local National League for Democracy (NLD) leaders who were arrested on 20 November, so that they could be indicted with drug related charges.

Shwegu NLD joint-secretary Ko Ko Myint and township organising member Thein Zaw have been detained on a two week remand because opium resins and some smoking instruments were 'found' simultaneously at the compounds of their homes by the local authorities and police during raids.

Ko Ko Myint's wife Khin Thè told DVB that nothing is known about what the two are going to be charged with, and that her husband protested his innocence and insisted that he was wrongfully arrested.

"My husband doesn't smoke or chew betel nuts. He did not even use them as medicines. I believe that he didn't do that kind of thing even when he was young. They won't find anything (discriminating) in his urine. But at the moment, the whole town knows that he was arrested because opium was planted at our house. Monks and civilians know it. The whole country knows that the situation is not as it seems. Whatever they could not find in his urine, they will try to find fault with it one way or another," she said.

In 2000, Ko Ko Myint was arrested and sentenced to seven years in prison after attending a meeting at the NLD HQs in Rangoon, and he was released in 2005. Khin Thè told DVB that her husband vows to fight on for 'the second independence' of Burma, even with his life, so that people could be free from oppression and live freely.



Su Su Nway's appeal rejected by Rangoon Division court

Nov 24, 2005 - A panel of judges at Rangoon Division court, on 24 November, rejected an appeal lodged on behalf of Burmese human rights activist Su Su Nway who is being detained at the notorious Rangoon Insein Jail.

The rejection came after National League for Democracy (NLD) lawyers submitted a revised appeal which argued that 34-year old Su Su Nway was wrongfully imprisoned to her detriment. The lawyers are planning to lodge an appeal at the High Court.

Su Su Nway was sentenced to a total of 20 months in prison on 13 October by Rangoon Kawmoo Township court, having successfully sued her local authorities at Htan Manaing over forced labors practices in 2004.



NLD & Veteran Politicians repeat call for release of Burmese prisoners

Nov 25, 2005 - Burma's main opposition party, the National League for Democracy (NLD) and Veteran Politicians of Burma, on 25 November, repeated the call for the release of all political prisoners including democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairman Khun Htun Oo.

In the statements issued during ceremonies marking the 85th anniversary of the Burmese National Day in Rangoon, the NLD leaders and Veteran Politicians who fought for the independence of Burma, also urged the ruling military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) to find an urgent solution to the problems of Burma for the sake of national unity.

They also warned that the failure to do so in time will increase discontentment of the people which could lead to violent uprisings. They also pointed out that there had been no worse situation in the history of Burma for the national unity like it is now, and urged the junta to arrange urgent political dialogues, which include all national groups in order to solve the ongoing problems of the country.

However, in the National Day message of the SPDC chairman Gen Than Shwe, printed in the

state-controlled newspapers, the issue of national unity was never mentioned once. The general only urged readers to ‘smash’ all neo- colonialists and ‘axe handles’ of foreign powers, meaning all those who want democracy and freedom from oppression.

The historic event was marked by the NLD leaders, members and supporters at their HQs in Rangoon Shwegondaing Road, by the Veteran Politicians at the factory of Thakhin Thein Pe in Rangoon and other NLD branches throughout the country wherever they were allowed to mark the event.



Khin Maung Lwin seriously ill in Puta-O Jail and no treatment given to him

Nov 26, 2005 - Burmese political prisoner Khin Maung Lwin, alias Nay Min Aung, who was jailed 10 years for writing to the senior monks of the Sangha Maha Nayaka (Top Buddhist Abbots) Council to help because the people of Burma were facing hardships, is undergoing deteriorating health.

Although the health situation of Khin Maung Lwin requires that he be treated in a hospital, the authorities until now have not given the approval for his treatment.

“He sent a letter of appeal to the Sangha Maha Nayaka Council because people were suffering from poverty and great hardships,” Khin Maung Lwin’s sister Shu Shu Tin told DVB. “He sought the help because people were in trouble, and he appealed to the abbots to help. For that, he was sent to prison for 10 years, and that was in 1998.”

She added that her brother was in Kalemmyo Prison in NW Burma for about five years and from there, he was sent to Loikaw Prison in Karenni (Kayah State) for about three months, then to Puta-O Prison in remote northern Burma where he has spent almost three years now.

“He has been suffering from dysentery with blood in the feces. When we reported about him, he was given permission to receive treatment in a hospital and halfway through the treatment for his hemorrhoids, he was sent back to prison. He is crying aloud in pain now. He already had that disease even when our mother visited him in January this year; it is already 10 months now. He has not been given any treatment and even though the senior doctor has said he must be treated in the hospital, he has not been taken there.”

“I wish the family can be near him now while he is seriously suffering from the disease,” Shu Shu Tin tearfully added. “I am very concerned that he will lose his life in prison. He was quite chubby when he was in Kale but he has become very thin since he arrived at Puta-O”.

“If they (the ruling generals) are truly upholding the interests of the nation and the people like they claim to be doing, then it is about time to release my brother. Of course, he will die one day but we only want him to die when it is his time to go. For now, we want him to be given medical treatment and sent to the nearest (hospital) for treatment because there is a serious concern for his life. If he were to lose his life in prison, we will never blame him because he did it for the good of many others.”



Burmese lawyer allowed to appeal on behalf of detained Shan leader

Nov 27, 2005 - Burmese lawyer Aung Thein was allowed to lodge appeals on behalf of one of the nine Shan leaders who were given lengthy jail terms recently.

After meeting with authorities of remote Kalemmyo Prison in northwest Burma on 26 November, Aung Thein managed to obtain ‘power’ letters, which authorise him to represent, defend and lodge appeals on behalf of Sai Nyunt Lwin who was sentenced to 85 years in prison. None of the Shan leaders were allowed to be defended by lawyers of their choice when they were detained and tried secretly in Rangoon Insein Jail.

“It is true. He himself signed the letters,” Aung Thein told DVB. “There are five cases and so there were five letters. Sai Nyunt Lwin got three life sentences and 25 years. 60 years for three life sentences and it is true that he got 85 years with Act 122-1 and Act 123-A. He got 20 years for ‘disrupting’ the efforts for successfully convening the national convention”.

It is the first time someone was given life sentence for criticising the junta-sponsored constitution-drafting 'National Convention'.

As there are less than 30 days left for the appeals, lawyers are urgently trying to obtain 'power' letters from other detained Shan leaders such as Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairman Khun Htun Oo and Shan State Peace Council (SSPC) patron Gen Hso Ten who were sent to Puta-O and Khamtee Prisons in Kachin State.

All the nine leaders were arrested in February at Shan State capital Taunggyi, and detained and tried in Rangoon Insein Jail. They are still not allowed to see their families since their arrests.



Aung San Suu Kyi's detention extended one more year

Nov 27, 2005 - Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) extended the detention of democracy leader and Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi for another year under house arrest on 27 November.

But the junta made no official statement about the extension nor notified the leadership of her party, the National League for Democracy (NLD).

According to Rangoon-based AP correspondent, a police car entered the compound of Aung San Suu Kyi at 9.45am and left it just after 10am. The authorities also blocked off the University Avenue where her house is situated, from 8.30am to 10.30am, and around 20 plain-clothed agents were positioned around the area.

On the same day last year, a police car entered her compound and officers read out an edict stating the extension of house arrest for another year. According to a report by Reuters, an official from Interior Affairs Ministry, who does not want to be named, confirmed the report of the extension.

When DVB contacted the NLD leaders, they said that they have not heard about the details of the new extension, but they added that as she was still not released, it is almost certain that the report is true.

Aung San Suu Kyi has been detained since 30 May 2003 after the notorious Dipeyin massacre, but she was officially charged and put under house arrest from 27 November of that year. She has been allowed to see no one except her personal physician Tin Myo Win who is allowed to see her only once a month.



Burmese prisoner Thet Khaing released from prison

Nov 28, 2005 - Burmese political prisoner Thet Khaing who was given a lengthy jail term for having contacts with Burma Communist Party (BCP) in 1989, was released from Rangoon Insein Jail on 24 November.

Although he was released, Thet Khaing has been constantly followed and monitored closely by the agents of Burma's military junta, the State Peace and Development Council, and he is unable to move freely.

"During the 8888 uprising, Ko Thet Khaing was the main leader of the Communist Party's underground activities. Ko Thet Khaing was arrested in 1989," one of Thet Khaing's colleague and former political prisoner Dr. Ne Win told DVB. "Ko Thet Khaing and all of us were arrested and sentenced to 20 years in prison."

"The charges against us were (Acts) 5J, 17-1 and 17-2 and we were given 20 years at Insein Martial Court on 1 November 1989 at the end of Gen Khin Nyunt's news conference. And in 1991, when they convened the 'National Convention' in January 1991, they reduced the sentences of 20 year to 10 years, death sentences to life sentences, and Thet Khaing's sentence became 10 years. So he should be finish serving his sentence in November 1999. But they continued to detain him with Act - 10A in the 'special' cell.

