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## Political Prisoners News

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## **23 political prisoners released from various prisons in Burma**

*3 January 2005*

Almost two dozens of political prisoners have been released from various prisons this morning on 3 January 2005, according several political sources in Rangoon. Among them were well-known poet Pyapon Ni Lone Oo and Zaw Thet Htway (First eleven journal Editor).

The military regime made the announcement yesterday that they were to free over 5000 prisoners to celebrate independent day anniversary on Jan 4. During the last two months, the regime had freed more than 10,000 prisoners but most of them were petty criminals.

A little more than 50 political prisoners have been freed so far. DVB received some of the names of political prisoners released by the junta this morning.

### **Thayat Prison**

1. U Kyaw Khin ( NLD MP, Taunggyi)
2. U Thein Dan (NLD-Mandalay)
3. Ko Mya Soe ( NLD-youth)
4. U Tin Soe ( KNU)

### **Insein Prison**

5. Ko Mya Soe (a) Shwe Joe (NLD, Rangoon)
6. Pyapon Ni Lone Oo (U Aung Myint)
7. Ko Zaw Thet Htwe
8. Naing Min Kyi
9. U Aye Myint

### **Myingyan Prison**

10. Ko Soe Aung
11. Ko Aung Myat
12. Ko Maung Maung

### **Shwe Bo Prison**

13. U Maung Myint
14. U Khin Maung Latt

### **Pyi Prison**

15. Phoe Par (a) Than Tun Oo
16. Maung Maung (a) Hein Latt Aung
17. Bala (a) Ye Kyaw Lwin

### **Myitkyina Prison**

18. Ko Myo Nyunt
19. Ko Tun Lwin
20. Ko Than Naing

### **Myaung Mya Prison**

21. U Thar Lin Tin
22. Phone Thet Paing
23. Aung Khaing Zaw

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## **Update list of political prisoners who were released on 3 January**

*4 January 2004*

A little more than 50 political prisoners have been released from various prisons on 3 January 2005.

Here is the update list of freed political prisoners that DVB received so far.

### **Thayat Prison**

1. U Kyaw Khin ( NLD MP, Taunggyi)
2. U Thein Dan (NLD-Mandalay)
3. Ko Mya Soe ( NLD-youth)
4. U Tin Soe ( KNU)

### **Insein Prison**

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9. U Aye Myint

### **Myingyan Prison**

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11. Ko Aung Myat
12. Ko Maung Maung

**Shwe Bo Prison**

- 13. U Maung Myint
- 14. U Khin Maung Latt

**Pyi Prison**

- 15. Phoe Par (a) Than Tun Oo
- 16. Maung Maung (a) Hein Latt Aung
- 17. Bala (a) Ye Kyaw Lwin

**Myitkyina Prison**

- 18. Ko Myo Nyunt
- 19. Ko Tun Lwin
- 20. Ko Than Naing

**Myaung Mya Prison**

- 21. U Thar Lin Tin
- 22. Phone Thet Paing
- 23. Aung Khaing Zaw

**Taungoo Prison**

- 24. U Ohn Kyaing aka Aumg Wint (MP)
- 25. U Aye Win (PATHEIN NLD)
- 26. Zaw Min Latt
- 27. U Than Hlaing (Taungoo NLD)

**Kathar Prison**

- 28. U Than Aung (Indaw NLD)

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## **Political prisoners' comments on prison life**

*3 January 2004*

U Thein Dan, released from Thayet Prison: "My health is good and bad in turn. I have no teeth left. I have hypertension, high blood pressures and I am feeling dizzy".

Ko Mya Soe, released from Thayet Prison: "My condition is not good. I recently went to a hospital after I was released...the condition of my left eye is quite bad. What was I to do? They gave me an ECG check. They checked my diabetes. But my left eye is very bad. I will have to check it when I am in Rangoon. I am to have a health check".

U Tin Soe, a member of the Karen National Union (KNU): "I was arrested by the airport security staff at Tavoy Airport by Infantry battalion – 25. Then, I was flown to Moulmein by No. 5, Intelligence Force. I was tried in Moulmein Prison. I was given death sentence. I was there for four years and transferred to Insein Prison. All the appeals at the time were rejected. They told me to appeal. I didn't like the government. Therefore, I opposed them clearly. They said that I was wrong – please don't kill me etc– I could not plead like that. I was not sure what they were going to do with me after I refused to appeal whether they were going to kill me or not at Moulmein Prison. I didn't like the BSPP government in terms of "ism".

U Kyaw Khin: "In order to check us, they forced us to stand in midday sun on baked concrete, barefoot. The skin of the palm of our feet just peeled off. We suffered a lot. At the time, 11 people were transferred with me. Some of them were released from Thayet Prison. For example, U Naing Naing is my friend. We heard that he got 20 years. It is the same for. The skin of his foot palm peeled off. And I even don't want to talk about it. They also checked our arseholes and the like. We had to line up. What I was reminded of was – when I was Insein Prison a young boy told me that his rectum was checked with three probing ball pens. I said to myself, I was lucky not to be checked thus. That was my prison experience".

Ko Mya Soe: "... looking back, it's been tragic. If I have to talk about the prison in was in, it won't be that different from other prisons. There were two mad people there. At night, they screamed and shouted abuses very loudly...We could not sleep at night. In fact these people were not right in the head. If they were mad they should have been sent to an asylum for mad people or hospital for the insane. In 1996, they put someone called Ko Myint Swe with one of them in the same room and he was beaten to death by that person with a pole. I had to carry him to the hospital myself. Blood flowed from his head. His mouth was also wounded. He was unable to speak. He was clinging on to me hard. Blood was spurting out from his mouth. He died at the hospital.

U Thein Dan: "I was feeling sad from dawn to dusk with atrocities in view. I could not describe the swearing and beatings fully. Frightening! They never had regulation on what they should beat prisoners with. They beat you with whatever they found. Some were beaten with 1x2 wooden poles. Some were beaten with bamboo sticks. Some were beaten with truncheons. It was impossible to escape (the beatings). I myself had to pay with wounds on my back. Before we got to Thayet Prison at Aunglan (Allen), we were told to bow our heads with stick banging on our heads. When we got there, we were told not to lift our heads. They beat us up straight away. Then when we were inside the prison, they beat us up repeatedly with the comment, "This is Thayet Prison". There, what happened was – two prisoners were beaten into the cells with five prisoners in humiliating postures. After they put us inside the prison they didn't allow us to have shower for a week. When we did, we found out that

each of us had received 20 to 40 wounds on our backs. You could see marks of repeated slashes on our backs. I received 12 slashes”.

Pyapon Nilon Oo, poet: “I am still taking medicines. Once, in the morning and once, in the evening. My condition is not that good nor that bad. I have high blood pressure. I have to take 4-5 kinds of medicines. 4-5 in the morning, 4-5 in the evening. What shall I say? When I was in Insein Prison, they took ECG for me. I was allowed to see a specialist doctor. Only then did I know that I had that disease. I was in Insein Prison with 5J. They looked after me very well, providing me with all the medicines I needed. I also have eye diseases. People from Insein Prison also treated my eye disease by taking me to outside clinics. Naing Min Kyi, former judge from Pegu: “I am Naing Min Kyi from Pegu...Many political activists remain in Insein Prison. If you look at the people released today, only 5 or 6 people (political activists) were released. But all should be released. The reason is there are too many people who were given severe sentences in Burma. After facing prison experiences, it is so tragic for the poor people of Burma and the people as a whole. I also thank the government for releasing prisoners thus. [TOP](#)

## **U Thein Dan expresses his feeling on release**

*5 January 2005*

U Thein Dan, 69: Mandalay Division National League for Democracy (NLD) organising member expresses his feeling on release.

He was arrested in 1991 and sentenced to 17 years in prison. Initially, he was charged with Act 5J and sentenced to 7 years and once he was inside the prison he was again charged with Act 10A and given another 10 years.

“In fact, according to the regulations of the prison, I was supposed to be in prison only 11 years and six months. I have been in prison for 14 years and four months. I feel that I was given an extra 2 years and eight months sentence. When we arrived at Thayet Prison, in 95-96, the prison governor told us who were charged with 5J to line up...They told us that (the sentences) over 7 years are to be reduced by one thirds. Be content, he told us. As my sentence was to be reduced by a third, I was very happy. There, we had to work. Then, when that prisoner governor was transferred, another one turned up a couple of days later. He came to question us...and then told us that our sentences were to be reduced by one fourths, not one thirds...I was hoping that I would be released that way. By 99, we were told that nothing would be given to us and we were all crammed into one cell. I didn't know what to hope for. We were like mad men caught in the whirlwind. I didn't know who to listen to and who to believe. In February 2004, I was supposed to be released. As I was the oldest among the prisoners, I was hoping that I would be released. As time goes by, I was not among the people to be released in the first time, in the second time. Then, I stopped hoping. I was released this morning (3 January 2005). Only then, could I say that I was released. Only when I arrived home, I could breathe the sigh of relief.”

U Thein Dan, a literary man by profession was feeling very dejected in prison as he was not even allowed to read religious literatures.

“I was feeling sad from dawn to dusk with atrocities in view. I could not describe the swearing and beatings fully. Frightening! They never had regulations on what they should beat prisoners with. They beat you with whatever they found. Some were beaten with 1"x2" wooden poles. Some were beaten with bamboo sticks. Some were beaten with truncheons. (It was impossible to escape (the beatings). I myself had to pay with wounds on my back. Before we got to Thayet Prison at Aunglan (Allen), we were told to bow our heads with the stick banging on our heads. When we got there, we were told not to lift our heads. They beat us up straight away. Then when we were inside the prison, they beat us up repeatedly with the comment, “This is Thayet Prison”. There, what happened was – two prisoners were beaten into the cells with five prisoners in humiliating postures. After they put us inside the prison they didn't allow us to have shower or go to the toilet for a week. When we did have a shower, we found out that each of us had received 20 to 40 wounds on our backs. You could see marks of repeated slashes on our backs. I received 12 slashes”.

When I saw these things, I was not able to control my emotion. I was unable to do anything. We were just let loose between iron grilles. I am still not feeling good about it. I wanted to read very much at the time. There were five of us in a cell then. I don't know how to smoke like other people. I puffed the stubs of other people's cheroots and then, soak them in water, and stuck the paper wrappers on the wall and read the words on them.

As for books, not a single sign or shadow of them should be seen with us. If we read the newspapers used as wrapping paper given to us by people from home when they came to see us, it was regarded as a crime. As for the punishment, we were not allowed to go to the toilet or have a shower. It was dire. They cut off everything connected to literature.

U Thein Dan also demanded the ruling junta to immediately release all political prisoners without exception as many of them are still languishing in prison throughout Burma despite the release of tens of thousands of criminals.

“I suffered a lot. If they release them now, they must not only release NLD members but also other political party members, those who have been detained for their political and religious beliefs, students and many old

people remaining imprisoned. It is necessary to release them too. The situation now is – if other party members are released, the remaining people will feel something. Therefore, what I want to say to the people concerned is – in order to be fair – some people are only 19 years old and they are sentenced to 29 years – I have seen many young people like that with my own eyes. Therefore, I am feeling a lot about that in my heart. Therefore, when people are released, I want to give a suggestion; not to release people on the party line, but those people with religious convictions, students, those who were arrested because catapaults were seen in their pockets. And there are many people arrested without having connection with anything. I want them all to be released. [TOP](#)

## **Burmese political prisoners transferred to new prisons**

*7 Jan 2005*

The National League for Democracy (NLD) elected representative of Kyauktan Township, Rangoon Division, Dr. Than Nyein was again transferred from Paungte Prison to Prome (Pyay) Prison.

He was taken away in a prison van from his old prison at 5pm local time on 6 January but it is not known why he was taken away thus, according to his wife Daw Khin Aye.

He was supposed to meet his medical specialists on 7 January and his family is seriously concerned by the fact that he was not allowed to see to the doctors.

Daw Khin Aye told DVB that she is still trying to find out when she would be allowed to see her husband and find out about his health condition. She added that as her husband is innocent and he should be released immediately.

When asked how she feels about detention of her husband, Daw Khin Aye said that it is not right for her husband to be continued to be detained 60 days each time while he is innocent from the start and has been suffering from incurable diseases. "As other people have been released, I also want my husband to be free too," she said.

Similarly, the elected representative of Taungoo, U Aung Soe Myint was transferred from Thayet Prison to Rangoon Prison on 1 January by the authorities, without informing his family members. Again, it is not known why he was transferred and his family members expressed their concerns for his health condition. [TOP](#)

## **US citizen arrested for staging solo protest in Burma**

*8 Jan 2004*

A US citizen staged a solo protest in front of Rangoon city hall at about noon, local time, on 8 December and Burmese security officers arrested him immediately, according the several eyewitnesses.

Eyewitnesses told AP news agency that the protester was not a Burmese but a US citizen, and the Burmese authorities became more than busy by the incident. Although the protester was holding a placard containing political slogans, it was not known what was written on it as the police took it away.

The location is known to be the focal point for protesters highlighting human rights abuses of Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) and the protester could have demanded the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the cessation of human rights abuses in Burma.

Although, officials from the US embassy in Rangoon refused to comment on the latest protest, a staff who doesn't wanted to be identified, told AP correspondent that the protester had departed from Burma in the evening of the same day. [TOP](#)

## **NLD youth to be sentenced for distributing UN human rights leaflets in Burma**

*8 Jan 2005*

A youth member of National League for Democracy (NLD) from Bogale Township, Irrawaddy Division in the delta region of Burma, Saw Pan Koo is to be sentenced by a prison court in the coming days for distributing leaflets containing the universal declaration of human rights, published by the UN.

30-year old Saw Pan Koo from Myinkakkone Village in Bogale Township was arrested on 6 December with 13 other NLD members. Initially, they were charged with attempting to celebrate Burmese National Day, and Saw Pan Koo was singled out by the authorities and charged with distributing the leaflets.

They have been detained at nearby Pyapon Prison, and the initial trial of Saw Pan Koo was ended on 6 January inside the prison and he was charged accordingly, according to a NLD legal representative U Tin Win who has been defending Saw Pan Koo.

At the court, Saw Pan Koo bravely admitted that he distributed the leaflets and asked the judge if it was a crime to do so. He said that he distributed the leaflets because he believes that the people (of Burma) should know

that they are entitled to human rights, and that the leaflets contain nothing offensive to the military government nor words encouraging the people to revolt, and that there is nothing "poisonous" in the leaflets.

The prosecuting witnesses, the local police officers, however, told the court that they arrested the defender who was distributing leaflets which bear no name of the publishers, but they admitted that they did not know and need not know what was written inside the leaflets as they could not read English.

Although Saw Pan Koo was able to prove that he was innocent, the court decided to charge him with the draconian 1962 publication act 17. Moreover, the trial is to be finished by the coming week and U Tin Win urged all those who cherish human rights, including UN officials to act in time for the freedom of Saw Pan Koo. [TOP](#)

## **Burmese authority arrested a man for keeping HIV/AIDS prevention leaflet**

*9 Jan 2005*

An old man from Khayan Township, Rangoon Division was arrested and detained by local Burmese authorities for possessing and reading an educational leaflet on the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

U Khin Maung, who is over 70-year old was arrested by the district control police officer Maung Maung Naing at 6am, local time. Although it could be assumed that the leaflet is one of those officially and legally published and distributed by the National League for Democracy (NLD) for health education purposes, but the old didn't know that that was the case.

In any case, the old man was arrested for possessing an "illegal" leaflet and detained for six hours and he was told not to leave his home for two days before he was released, according to a local resident. "I don't know what is wrong with the police. They don't seem to know anything," he added. [TOP](#)

## **Family members express concern over their loved ones in prisons**

*11 Jan 2005*

The health condition of political prisoner U Aung Soe Myint, elected NLD MP from Taungoo Township, is said to be deteriorating.

U Aung Soe Myint has been suffering from diabetes and high blood pressures even before he was arrested and imprisoned in 2003. His condition became worse when he was incarcerated in Taungoo Prison.

Despite his bad health, the junta first transferred him to Thayet Prison which was far away from his family home. Then, when his condition deteriorated, he was again transferred to Insein Jail in Rangoon last week.

His daughter who saw him at the prison on 7 January told DVB that his heart condition also is not good and he has to take medicines constantly.

Similarly, family members of student leader Ko Aye Aung who have been sentenced to 59 years and detained in Kale Prison in northwest Burma, are also concerned for his health condition due to the severe cold weather, according to his father U Thaug Myint who saw him at the prison on 11 January.

He added that it has been very cold there and that he is very concerned for his son as even the local people have to use warm fires to keep warm.

Similarly the wife of a National League for Democracy (NLD) Ko Ne Oo, Ma Thanda told DVB that she is very concerned for the health condition of her husband who has been detained at Kale Prison. She said that the severe cold weather combined with poor diet would affect the prisoners more than people living outside the prison.

Five political prisoners with long-term sentences have been detained at Kale Prison. They are Ko Aye Aung, Panday Tun, Ko Kyaw Zaw, Ko Soe Win (aka) Ko Khin Zaw Oo and U Sandar Thiri. [TOP](#)

## **NLD leaders express concern over their detained members**

*11 Jan 2005*

Rangoon NLD leader Dr Win Naing expressed concern over the fate of four NLD members who were detained during the middle of last month. "Nineteen days have passed and we still don't know where they are and why they were arrested," he said.

No lawyers or no family members have been allowed to see them since they were arrested on 19 December. "We are really worried about them," said Dr Win Naing, secretary of the Rangoon Division NLD.

However, on 7 Jan, the authority released Ma Theingi who was arrested together with the four NLD members. It is not clear why she was released but during her interrogation, the authority repeatedly asked her about

"the paper", according to Dr Win Naing, who met her recently. "She has no idea about what they were asking and she kept saying that she did not know about "the paper" and then, they let her free on Jan 7," Dr Win Naing said.

The other four, who are still being detained, are U Ba Myint and U Ba Tint from Ahlone Township, and Ko Aung Myo San and Ko Khin Kyaw from Kamayut Township, Rangoon Division. [TOP](#)

## **Trials of Bogale NLD members continue**

*14 Jan 2005*

The trials of 11 NLD members from Bogale Township, Irrawaddy Division in the delta region of Burma, charged with attempting to celebrate the Burmese National Day, continued inside nearby Pyapon Prison on 13 January.

The defendants are, Bogale Township NLD chairman U Aung Khin Bo, members U Aung Htay, U Khin Maung Chit, U Tet tun, U Tin Oo, U Aung Myint, U Win Naing, U Hla Myint, Daw Myint Myint Sein, Daw Hnin Si and Daw Khin Khin Lay.

The defending lawyer U Tin Win told DVB that the court cross-examined the defendants including Saw Pan Koo who was also charged with distributing leaflets containing the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

As the trials were held within a prison no one including family members of the defendants, was not allowed to attend trials.

The defendants were arrested on 6 December 2004 and U Win Tin said that they still appeared to be in a positive mood as they are convinced that none of them are guilty as charged.

## **Burmese political prisoner condition deteriorates**

*15 Jan 2005*

The health condition of Ko Ne Lin Soe who has been detained unfairly at Mandalay Prison, has deteriorated further, according to his father U San Win who visit him at the prison on 13 January. Ko Ne Lin Soe, a student activist who is serving a 59 year prison sentence for his political activities, is suffering from eye diseases and arthritic pains.

U San Win told DVB the condition of his son as follows:

“As for his physical appearance, it seems to be improving considerably. But it comes to his mental situation, it has not improved. His memory is not that good. He told me he doesn't remember three of four names of his maternal relatives. When I told him about the names of his old friends, he said that he doesn't remember them. He remembered only one and two of them. I told him four and he remembered only one. He has no power to remember the rest. I hope that he will get better if the medicines are sufficient... I am concerned that he might suffer worse mental illness if he is to be “washed” more and things went wrong.”

Similarly, the health condition of Ko Than Zaw who has been unfairly detained at Thayet Prison in central Burma, is deteriorating. Ko Than Zaw was a youth member of Tanyin Township National League for Democracy (NLD), Rangoon Division and he was arrested in 1989 and charged with attempt to plant bombs and given life sentence.

His mother Daw Sein Sein who went to see him on 14 January told DVB as follows:

“...The beatings he received before are causing his body to ache and swell. The military intelligence wrongly arrested, charged and imprisoned him. The pains of those beatings are rising up again and again. His health is not good. His eyes are not good. I gave him glasses but he is still unable to use them well...”

Daw Sein Sein, who is over 70 year old, is very worried that she will die before her son is released:

“It won't be long, he said. He is concentrating on spiritual matters with the help of God. He told me to also do just spiritual things. God will help us. I will be release soon, mom. I will be released soon, he said. But, I feel that I am not very strong. I am still hoping. Although I am hoping thus, I am always worried that I might die first or he might die in prison. Although I am concentrating on spiritual matter, I am worried for my son. I am not afraid to die. I am worried for my son; for his health and for immediate his release. I am always praying to God.”

Political prisoners have been wrongly arrested and detained by the military intelligence and they should be released as soon as possible, said the father of Ko Ne Lin Soe:

“In fact, I heard that when they released more than 20,000 prisoners, there were only 80 (political prisoners) among them. My son, Ko Thet Win Aung and other people are still remaining inside the prisons...These are the people that should be released. There are those with ill health and those who are still being detained even after they had spent years of their prison sentence. I don't want to demand individually that they should release my son. They should release all those who have been wrongfully prosecuted.” [TOP](#)

## **UN office in Burma refuses to protect a human rights advocator in court**

*18 Jan 2005*

The trial of Saw Pan Koo, a youth member of National League for Democracy (NLD) from Bogale Township, Irrawaddy Division in the delta region of Burma, who has been detained for distributing leaflets containing the UN Universal Human Rights Declaration, is to be postponed to the coming week.

The decision was made at the hearing in nearby Pyapon court on 13 January and the trial is to be finished by 20 January, according to the defending lawyer U Tin Win.

30-year old Saw Pan Koo from Myinkakone Village was arrested by the local authorities on 6 December along with 13 other NLD members. Initially, they were charged with attempting to celebrate Burmese National Day and Saw Pan Koo was later singled out and tried with distributing the leaflets.

The leaflets were published and distributed legally by UNDP office in Rangoon and the defending lawyers requested one of the officials from the UNDP to appear as witness in court, but they none of the officials have shown up yet. DVB contacted the UNDP office in Rangoon for comment but only been told that all the officials are on various trips.

The defendant lawyer U Tin Win told DVB that Burmese military junta includes the Human Rights declarations in the school curriculum but arrests those who distribute the leaflets containing the declarations. [TOP](#)

## **Burmese political prisoners' health conditions**

*19 Jan 2005*

The health condition of Ko Thet Naung Soe, a law student who has been detained in Insein Prison since August 2002 for staging a solo protest in front of Rangoon City Hall, is deteriorating badly.

He is suffering from severe skin complaints and acute psychological problems but prison authorities are doing nothing to help him, according to an ex-political prisoner who was released from the prison recently.

U Aye Myint, a lawyer from Pegu who was released from the prison on 3 January told DVB that scabies-infected Ko Thet Naung Soe even didn't know who he was and who he was talking to. "He even didn't allow his mother to see him and he doesn't know who his relatives are," said U Aye Myint.

He added that Thet Naung Soe didn't recognise his inmate friends either such as Nanda Sit Aung, Lwin Ko Latt, Nang Shin Mon who came to look after him. "Lwin Ko Latt was in tears. Their friend is unable to speak or recognise them. He just stares at them. They (prison authorities) are torturing him without beating him up. I think that his situation could improve if he is allowed to go home," added U Aye Myint.

He also added that there are at least 10 political prisoners who are suffering from severe psychological problems inside Insein Prison.

Meanwhile, Dr. Zaw Myint Maung, the elected representative of Amarapura Township, who has been detained at Myikyina Prison, Kachin State in northern Burma is suffering from low blood pressure and losing weight fast, according to his wife Dr. Yu Yu May who went to see him recently at the prison.

She said that all political prisoners including her husband should be released on humanitarian ground. She added that she still harbours a secret hope for her husband release despite the odds against her and her family members. [TOP](#)

## **My husband was badly tortured, says his wife**

*20 Jan 2005*

Ko Shwe Maung, the Burmese political prisoner who has been detained at Mandalay Prison has been badly tortured, his wife Ma Than Than Win told DVB. "I am certain that my husband has been tortured severely. Otherwise, why would they not let me see him," she questioned.

She was at the prison to meet him early this week but prison authority told her that she were not be allowed to meet him this time. "I was not allowed to give him essential things like to basic food stuff for him either," she told DVB.

According to his wife and other sources, Ko Shwe Maung has been beaten up severely and put in a pitch-dark isolation cell since 9 January for breaking a small prison rules like not sitting up in the humiliating position when ordered.

He is from Htun Tone village near Mandalay and has been detained since Nov 2002. He was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment for moulding a golden "khamauk" the Burmese bamboo hat, the symbol of the opposition party National League for Democracy (NLD).

"From my investigation, he has been beaten and wounded. I assume that I was not allowed to see him because of this. I heard that they have been depriving him from eating too. I asked them if my husband is still alive and they said he is. But they told me that he is in an isolation cell," the wife said DVB.

She had reported the incident to the local ICRC office in Mandalay and she was told by the staff that they will report it to their office in Rangoon before anything is being done. [TOP](#)

## **UNDP says it didn't refuse to defend a Burmese political prisoner**

*20 Jan 2005*

An official of the Rangoon branch of UNDP told DVB that his organisation didn't refuse to appear as witness at a court for a Burmese political prisoner who was charged with distributing leaflets containing UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights as reported.

The official said that no request was made from either the court or the lawyer of Saw Pan Koo, a youth member of National League for Democracy (NLD) from Bogale Township in Irrawaddy Division.

He also expressed his serious concern over the case, and he insisted that the charge was a mistake as it could not be a criminal proceeding to distribute the leaflets as the contents are included in the school curriculum with the agreement of the junta. He also said that the leaflets have been distributed legally at the information centre and anyone could come and pick them up.

Earlier, the lawyer of Saw Pan Koo, U Tin Win told DVB that the UNDP official in Rangoon did not show up at the court hearing but he said the authorities have now also dropped the charge of distributing leaflets against Saw Pan Koo.

But they are continuing to charge and detain him with the original charge of trying to celebrate the Burmese National Day, his lawyer said. [TOP](#)

## **NLD MP Dr. Than Nyein given extended sentence**

*Jan 23, 2005*

The National League for Democracy (NLD) elected representative of Kyauktan Township, Dr. Than Nyein has been given extend imprisonment with Act 10a for another year, according family sources.

Dr. Than Nyein who is also the vice-chairman of Rangoon Division NLD organising committee was arrested pn 17 February 1997 and was sentenced to seven years in prison. He was never given the rights for reduction of sentence enjoyed by other prisoners, and he had served his original sentence on 23 July 2004 but he was not released by the authorities.

From July 2004, Dr. Than Nyein has been continually given 2 month-long extension of detention three times with Act 10a. But this time, the authority extended his prison sentence to one year.

Dr. Than Nyein who is over 60 years old, has been suffering from liver and heart diseases, diabetes and muscular pains due to the dire situation in prison. Daw Khin Aye earlier told DVB that she was hoping that her husband would be released soon. [TOP](#)

## **Dr Than Nyein's health deteriorates in Burmese jail**

*Jan 30, 2005*

The health condition of Dr Than Nyein, the elected representative of Kyauktan Township, Rangoon Division, is becoming worse and worse, said his wife Daw Khin Aye who saw him at a prison recently.

Despite having served his original sentence, Dr Than Nyein is continued to be detained unfairly by Burma's military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) for another year "for fear of him causing unrest" in the country, according to an official excuse.

According to Daw Khin Aye, her aged husband is suffering from many kinds of ailments and diseases due to the missed opportunities for medical treatments and frequent transfers to various prisons.

She added that if the condition continues like this for her husband, he could die from mental and physical exhaustion. He is currently being detained at Pyay (Prome) Prison in central Burma. [TOP](#)

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