

**Democratic Voice of Burma**  
**Political Prisoners News**  
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## **Mending Aung San Suu Kyi's fence alone doesn't guarantee her safety - NLD**

*Feb,1,2006* - Burmese military authorities, on 31 January, again mended the dilapidating fence around detained democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi's Rangoon home in University Avenue where she is being detained.

According to the National League for Democracy (NLD) spokesperson Myint Thein, the authorities also mended the fence in front of the house in 2005, but he still expressed his concern over her general safety despite the mending of the fence.

“In fact, it's only a normal mending of the fence. She is not protected with a brick wall or the like. How ever much you say it is safe, in this day and age, there are so many kinds of crimes and criminals that there is no safe patch for her if you think about it carefully,” Myint Thein insisted. “There are only three women there. If I have to say the truth, we are very concerned for the safety of our leader. We are in a position that at best we could do is listen for it carefully.”

At the same time, when asked about the condition of her deputy Tin Oo who was detained the same time as her, Myint Thein said:

“As far as we could investigate, his health condition is good – mentally and physically. As all of us members of the executive committee are old, whatever you say, we are weak physically. But if we are free, we are in a position to treat, cure ourselves. However you are well mentally, I think that there are bound to be some measures of unhappiness.”

Aung San Suu Kyi and Tin Oo have been detained since 30 May 2003 when they were attacked in an ambush by thugs sponsored by the ruling military junta, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) at Dipeyin in upper Burma.



## **Political Prisoner Tun Lin Kyaw is seriously ill**

*Jan 06, 2006* - Burmese political prisoner Tun Lin Kyaw who is serving a seven year sentence at the notorious Rangoon Insein Jail, is being hospitalised at an 'outside' hospital because his health condition deteriorated badly.

Tun Lin Kyaw, who has been suffering from chronic tuberculosis, started to vomit blood on 2 February and he was hospitalised in emergency at Insein Township General Hospital.

As soon as he was settled in the hospital, Tun Lin Kyaw's feet were chained to the posts of the hospital bed, some National League for Democracy (NLD) said. Now, he is taking anti-TB medicines and he is due to be discharged from the hospital on 8 February. According to sources close to his family members, Tun Lin Kyaw is extremely thin and weak.

Tun Lin Kyaw is a youth member of Rangoon Dagon NLD and was responsible for the personal safety of democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi. On 14 December 2004, he was arrested for staging a solo protest in front of a church on Rangoon Barr Street in protest of the continued detention of her. He was sentenced to 7 years in prison with the infamous Act – 5J in February 2005.



## **Burmese political prisoner May Win Myint given extended sentence**

*Feb 08, 2006* - The elected representative (Member of Parliament) of Rangoon Mayanggone Township, May Win Myint who is being detained at nearby Insein Jail, was given one year extended sentence under the Act – 10A, on 3 February, according to her husband Win Myint who went to see her at the prison on 5 February.

It is the fifth time May Win Myint has been given an extended sentence beyond her original release date. Win Myint said that he was expecting that his wife would be released this time and expressed his despair at her continued detention. May Win Myint, a medical doctor, has been suffering from heart condition, high blood pressure and eye diseases and her condition is not help by the almost non-existent

and poor medical care within the prison.

“From the beginning, we are all worried for her because health was not good. Then, we are unable to control her health and she is not given food suitable for her health,” Win Myint.

Dr. May Win Myint was arrested in 1997 and sentenced to seven years in connection with the formation of the youth branch of the National League for Democracy (NLD). She has been continued to be detained under the notorious Act – 10A for two and half years.



### **Two Shwegu NLD members sent to prison in upper Burma**

*Feb 09, 2006* - Two National League for Democracy (NLD) members from Shwegu Township in Burma's northern Kachin State, Ko Ko Myint and Thein Zaw who were arrested in November, had been each sentenced to seven years in prison on 7 February by the local township court.

They were arrested on 20 November 2005 after packets of opium resin were allegedly found in the compound of their house and they have been on trial ever since.

Ko Ko Myint and Thein Zaw were said to be actively in political activities for the NLD and deeply religious, according to local residents of Shwegu.

“In my opinion, while the situation is rather quite like now, it is the detention of those who are quite active,” another NLD member Zaw Thin told DVB. “They will appeal at the district court. It has started today. Myo Swe himself who is authorised from the central is doing that. As it is Shwegu Township he will lodge appeals at Bhamo District court.”

Two police-controlled witnesses for the prosecution claimed that the two accused neither drug-abusers nor drug-traffickers as claimed by the authorities, and that they are leaders who led a life of righteousness.

“This is a deliberate act to punish the NLD members. The reason is this kind of person is free from this kind of action,” NLD spokesman Nyan Win insisted. “We learnt that their prosecuting witnesses themselves also said that they are of good character. In this situation, it is not good to punish them.”

Ko Ko Myint was arrested in early 2000 and sentenced to seven years in prison after he returned from a meeting at the NLD HQs and released in early 2005.



### **Two more NLD members arrested in Burma's Sagaing Division**

*Feb 09, 2006* - The local authorities at Indaw Township, Sagaing Division in upper Burma, arrested two National League for Democracy (NLD) members for allegedly opposing the military government's nationwide forced plantation of castor oil plants.

Than Win and Pe Win (a.k.a) Puti from Bawdit Village were arrested on 23 January and taken to court on the following day, according to a local NLD member. The authorities wanted to try them secretly and pressurised their family members to shut up - threatening to charge their loved ones under the notorious Act – 505 or Act – 5J, if they didn't.

Both of them are reportedly being detained at Indaw police station but the police refused to confirm it when DVB contacted them.

“Their original main target seems to be Than Win who has some power behind the social affairs in his village,” another NLD member from Indaw said. “The villagers have high respect for him, especially as he is a NLD leader, a political leader. As they were very annoyed that they were unable to do as they like on the administrative level at the village, they arrested him in connection with the castor oil plant issue.”

Recently, Burma's military junta, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) decided to force Burmese farmers throughout the country to grow castor oil in an effort to solve the acute fuel shortage, while selling off millions of barrels of natural gas from the country to foreign companies.



### **Breaking News: Shan leader Shwe Ohn released from house arrest in Burma**

*Feb 10, 2006* - A prominent Shan leader, Shwe Ohn who was arrested around the same time as Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairman Khun Htun Oo and other renowned Shan leaders in February 2005, was released from house arrest almost a year later.

84-year old Shwe Ohn told DVB that he had been put under house arrest at his brother's house in Shan State capital Taunggyi since 9 February 2005 and released on the 8th of February.

He said that the authorities told him he was detained under the notorious political Act – 10, but he insisted that he didn't commit any crime and neither did nine other Shan leaders including Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairman who were given lengthy jail terms.



### **Interview with Prominent Shan leader Shwe Ohn**

*10 February 2006*

Shwe Ohn: Yes, I am Shwe Ohn.

DVB: Yes, grandpa. I am Htet Aung Kyaw from DVB. We heard that they released you today.

SO: It is true. Not today but on the 8th (of February).

DVB: So the house arrest ended on the 8th?

SO: Yes, it's over.

DVB: How long were you there? A year?

SO: ... One year minus one day. I was arrested on the 9th. So it was the 8th – only a day needed.

DVB: We first heard that it was once in every six months. What is the situation now?

SO: Not true. They gave me one year. After one year, they could extend it every six months.

DVB: Now, they have released you scotch-free?

SO: You can say so. They remove the restrictions. Nothing new.

DVB: Now that you are released, are there restrictions on you – saying you must not do this and that and the like?

SO: No. None...

DVB: As it was the 8th and it is now the 10th, are you returning to Rangoon after this?

SO: Today is the 10th. Tomorrow, I am returning to Rangoon... Tomorrow, I will be in Rangoon.

DVB: It is good news! How did you live during the whole month as it is house arrest?

SO: As I was inside the house, nothing happened. I lived freely inside the house. Of course, I could not go outside the house.

DVB: Could you explain to us why you were put under house arrest and the like?

SO: As for why, there was no reason. They were afraid that their security might be damaged. That's it. There was no other reason. They gave us no reason.

DVB: You once said that you were detained under Act – 10...

SO: The act is... the act to protect the nation from being harassed or something like that.

DVB: Act 10B?

SO: Yes, it is true.

DVB: As you are now released, could you tell us as much as you know? You were arrested on the 8th after Shan State Day? How was it?

SO: Yes. We were arrested the day after the Shan State Day dinner party. The dinner party was on the 7th. They arrested other people on the 8th and I was arrested on the 9th. They didn't arrest me but restricted me.

DVB: Other people are in prison...

SO: There were 10 people. 9 people were sent to prison. One person was released and the remaining 8 people were given not very much, only 40-50 years or 100 years. Not very much! (Being sarcastic?)

DVB: As you were arrested after Shan State Day, what did you do there?

SO: We were not arrested for attending Shan State Day. The people who 'entered the light' (ceasefire/peace groups) said that they were going to attend the National Convention. They only understood fighting with arms. They didn't understand politics. As they were attending the National Convention, we formed an advisory group to advise them. On the day of the formation of the group and Shan State Day, we all had a dinner party together. We held a dinner party marking Shan State Day.

DVB: Yes. And the arrested you for that?

SO: That's it. Not only did they arrest us, I heard that U Khun Htun Oo was given more than a hundred years. I don't know what it is all about.

DVB: I am not very clear about it. You held a dinner party. You held an advisory group. That's all you did.

SO: That's all we did. All we knew was this.

DVB: They charged you with acts related to attempt to rebellion and the like...

SO: There were so many acts. I have no clue what they were. Especially the big acts include death sentence. Normally, you are allowed to hire lawyers of your choice. Now, they were not allowed to hire lawyers of their choice. You have to take the lawyer they give. Although they are defending lawyers, they are on the side of the prosecuting. There is not sense of justice.

DVB: What is sure that day is you held a Shan State Day ceremony and formed an advisory group, that's all?

SO: Yes. In fact, there is no act that could arrest you for forming an advisory group. I don't know under which act they arrested us. There are so many acts.

DVB: What is the connection with your arrests in Taunggyi and the arrest of Khun Htun Oo in Rangoon?

SO: That's it. Khun Htun Oo's group decided not attend the National Convention. Those who 'entered the light' are a group decided to attend the National Convention. They arrested both groups.

DVB: What you mean by 'those entered the light' are the SSA (Shan State Army) and SSNA (Shan State National Army)?

SO: They are all included; Kayan, Palaung and the like. Wa is also included. Pa-O is also included.

DVB: They only arrested Gen Hso Ten among peace groups?

SO: Among peace groups, he was the only one.

DVB: Yes. Now you are released after a year. The remaining people are getting 93 years, 100 and the like, what do you have to say about them?

SO: They are lodging appeals. Even now, one person was released and eight people still remaining. They are lodging appeals for the eight people. I will only know about that when I am in Rangoon. I know nothing clearly.

DVB: Tomorrow, I mean the day after tomorrow is the Union Day. It is good that they released you before the Union Day?

SO: In time for the Union Day. I will also attend the Union Day ceremony at the NLD (HQs), whether they invite me or not.

DVB: While we are talking about the Union Day, are you the only surviving person who was involved in the Pang Long treaty?

SO: If I have to say about it, I am the only surviving one among those who know the matter from the inside.

DVB: As they released you just before the Union Day and you are someone who knew Pang Long Treaty, what do you have to say about the Union Day?

SO: If possible, (try to build) a peaceful and prosperous country with unity. What we want is democracy. We want the true Union...



The house arrest of Burma's main opposition party, National League for Democracy (NLD) vice-chairman Tin Oo, had been extended to another year by the ruling military junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) on 13 February.

The SPDC authorities came to 79-year old Tin Oo's house in Rangoon and notified him of the extension of the detention under an anti-subversion law.

"I have no direct contact with him. Through the word of mouth, I heard that he was given an extension of one year," NLD spokesperson Myint Thein told DVB. "Vice-chairman Tin Oo is someone who is being detained under house arrest despite having no fault. Moreover, he is by age quite an old person whatever you say. Especially, Uncle Tin Oo has urinary stone disease. Similarly, he has other diseases with his age. Therefore, whatever you say about his health condition, as he is unable to receive treatment freely, we are especially worried about his health condition."

Tin Oo was originally arrested on 30 May 2003 after the occurrence of the notorious Dipeyin massacre, in which thugs hired by the junta attacked National League for Democracy (NLD) supporters and leaders in an ambush killing scores and wounding hundreds.

He was initially detained at the remote Kalemyo Prison in Northwest Burma for a couple of months and later put under house arrest in Rangoon.



### **Gulag-bound: Relatives don't know where detained NLD youth Aye Thein is**

*Feb 15, 2006* - Relatives of Mandalay Division, Thabeikkyin Township National League for Democracy (NLD) youth leader Aye Thein who has been imprisoned for alleged human-trafficking, are reported to be very concerned for him as they don't know where he is being detained currently.

34-year old Aye Thein was accused of 'stealing people' and sentenced to five years in prison for eloping and marrying his long-term girlfriend, and he was initially detained at Mandalay Prison. On 26 January, he was transferred to a police-controlled hard labour camp but his relatives are still unable to locate where exactly he is now.

His older brother Soe Naing repeatedly visited Mandalay Jail for information on his brother but he is still unable to obtain news on where about his brother is, Mandalay Division NLD organising member Win Mya Mya told DVB.

She insisted that Aye Thein is not a common criminal but a political prisoner who was wrongfully and deliberately imprisoned for his political activities and she urged the authorities concerned to take actions for him.

The authorities charged Aye Thein under Act – 366, an anti human-trafficking law, for eloping and marrying his girlfriend – a local girl who had been in love with him for more than seven years – at a registrar and he was sentenced to five years in prison, and his friends who were accused of abetting him were charged under Act – 114 and they were each given three years.



### **Burmese authorities prepare to increase sentence on detained NLD leader**

*Feb 15, 2006* - Burmese military authorities have been trying Sagaing Division, Khin – U Township National League for Democracy (NLD) chairman Dr Win Aung who is serving a 10 years jail term at nearby Shwebo Prison and preparing to increase the sentence against him.

The authorities are said to be trying Win Aung under the notorious Emergency Provision Act – 5J, after seven months he was prosecuted under video and press acts and sentenced to 10 years in jail.

NLD legal advocate Nyan Win told DVB that he finds is puzzling how the authorities could charge a prisoner who is being detained inside a jail with charges of inciting people outside the prison.

Win Aung and schoolteacher Khin Maung Lwin were arrested on 6 July 2005 and sentenced to 10 years in jail for distributing video tapes of Aung San Suu Kyi's trip to Sagaing Division and a book

about the late dictator Ne Win written by exiled Burmese journalist Kyemon U Thaung.



### **Burmese political prisoner Zaw Myint Maung ill**

*Feb 17, 2006* - The elected representative of Mandalay Division, Amarapura Township, Dr. Zaw Myint Maung who has been serving a lengthy jail term at Myinkyina Prison, is said to be quite ill.

Zaw Myint Maung has been suffering from severe indigestion and unable to eat properly, according to his wife Dr. Yu Yu May who went to see him at the prison recently in remote northern Burma.

“It is true that he has not been well in the prison for 15-16 days,” Yu Yu May told DVB. “As he is over 50 years now, I am afraid that he might have an unknown/undiagnosed disease suddenly. Therefore, I am having a kind of invalidation (suspicion?) that he might have some diseases inside him. I want him to have ultrasound tests or microscopic tests.”

She added that she is afraid that her husband might face the same fate as that of another prisoner Khin Maung Lwin who recently died in nearby Puta-O Prison from similar complaints due to the lack medical cares in the prison.



### **French president Chirac urges Burma junta to release political prisoners**

*Feb 18, 2006* - French President Jacques Chirac, on 18 February, repeated the call on Burma’s military government, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) to free Aung San Suu Kyi, saying the regime’s continued detention of political prisoners was unacceptable in this day and age.

The call came during Chirac’s visit to the Thai capital where he met the Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and discussed matters relating to Burma.

“We are fighting for their freedom and for an evolution in the regime ... toward democracy,” said Chirac and urged the junta to release political prisoners including Aung San Suu Kyi and carry out democratic reforms, according to reports from Bangkok.



### **Shan leader Sa Oo Kya’s appeal rejected by Burmese High Court**

*Feb 18, 2006* - A high court at Mandalay, on 10 February, rejected the appeal lodged on behalf of Shan elder Sa Oo Kya who is serving a 13-years jail term in connection with the arrests of other Shan leaders including Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairman Khun Htun Oo, according to a Shan news source.

65-year old Sa Oo Kya, a member of Shan State advisory council, was arrested on 3 August 2005 and charged under Act – 124A for allegedly defaming the State and violating Hotel and Tourism Act 26 by receiving foreign guests without license. He was sentenced to 13 years in jail on 30 September by Kyaukme District court, Northern Shan State in northeast Burma near China.

The rejection of the latest appeal came after another appeal for him was rejected by a state-level court in northern Shan State capital Lashio at the end of 2005. Moreover, the authorities are planning to charge and try him for lending books without holding a library license. Oo Kya’s lawyer Sai Win Myint is planning to lodge a special appeal at the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, lawyers for nine other detained Shan leaders including Htun Oo are trying to put finishing touches to preparations to lodge the appeals by 21 February in Rangoon.



### **Rights envoy Pinheiro repeats call for release of Burmese political prisoners**

*Feb 19, 2006* - UN special human rights envoy to Burma, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro urged Burma’s military government to release elected representatives and start political dialogues immediately – saying that there could be no human rights improvement without political dialogues.

The call was made in his latest report on human rights condition of Burma which was issued on 19

February, and the details of the report will be discussed at the UN General Assembly.

The report is divided into seven sections chronicling developments during Pinheiro's six year-long tenure as the envoy to the military-ruled country often criticised for gross human rights abuses. He noted that the junta repeatedly promised to carry out democratic transition, but has never made any serious effort to carry out steps leading to the true path of democracy.

Pinheiro also described the continuing violations of human rights abuses, arrests of political prisoners, detentions of ethnic national leaders and the increasing detention periods for democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and her deputy Tin Oo by the ruling junta, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC).

Moreover, he pointed out that the situation in Burma has been deteriorating further because the junta's increasing restrictions on humanitarian activities by non-governmental organisations, especially affecting ethnic national regions and leaving the local people in danger of starvation.



### **NLD youth leader Nyunt Aung's sentence extended and transferred**

*Feb 20, 2006* - Nyunt Aung, a youth leader of Monywa Township National League for Democracy (NLD), Sagaing Division in central Burma, who has been serving a jail term for allegedly teaching pupils without license was given an extended sentence and transferred to another prison.

The transfer and extended sentence occurred not long after he was severely beaten up guards during a riot at Kalemmyo Prison in remote region of northwest Burma. Some prison guards said that Nyunt Aung was not even among those who took part in the riot. He was transferred to Pakokku Prison and his sentenced extended to another six years and nine months.

According to Monywa Township NLD organising committee member Khin Than, Nyunt Aung's right arm was broken as the result of the beatings he received in the hand of prison guards, and when his relatives went to see him at Kalemmyo Prison he was about to transferred to Shwebo Prison in central Burma and when they went to see him there, they were told that he was to be transferred to Pakokku Prison without having the chance to see him. They were told that they will only be allowed to see him only when an order from the authorities from the above is given.

Nyunt Aung was actively involved in the organising of democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi's visit to Monywa in 2003. He was arrested in 2004 for 'giving illegal private tuition classes' and he was summarily tried at a prison court, fined 30,000 kyat and at the same time, sentenced to three years in jail under an obscure education law.

Local people insisted that Nyunt Aung was, in reality, arrested and imprisoned for being an NLD member and being an active political activist, not for breaking the laws.



### **Appeals for Burmese Shan leaders submitted**

*Feb 21, 2006* - The National League for Democracy (NLD) lawyers, on 21 February, for the first time submitted appeals to Rangoon Divisional Court on behalf of detained 8 Shan leaders including Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) chairman Khun Htun Oo and secretary Sai Nyunt Lwin.

The lawyers lodged the appeals in four separate sections, mainly against the charge under Act 124-A for allegedly defamation of the State, NLD lawyer Aung Thein told DVB.

"There are dissimilar facts and basic causes in the charges against the eight of them, and based on these we put together similar facts and we appealed in group and we also appealed individually for separate causes," Aung Thein said.

He added that the main argument of the appeals is based on the fact that there is no discrepancy between the charges and facts produced at the court, and that the lawyers also dealt with other charges against the leaders.

The leaders included Htun Oo, Nyunt Lwin, SNLD member Hla Aung, president of the Shan State Peace Council (SSPC) Gen Hso Ten, New Generation Youth – Shan State members Myint Than, Tun Nyo, Nyi Nyi Moe and Myo Win Tun.

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A court in Rangoon handed down a verdict of 53 years and two life sentences for Htun Oo and currently serving his sentence in Putao prison in Kachin State in remote northern Burma. Nyunt Lwin received 25 years and two life sentences on charges of high treason and languishing in Kalemyo Prison in northwest Burma's Sagaing Division with Hso Ten who was given 46 years and three life sentences. Hla Aung received a sentence of 75 years.



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