



U Dhamma Tharmi, a 42-year-old monk from the Yaykha monastery in Mandalay's Maddaya township was arrested by police at about 8:30am on Sunday after he travelled to three different Mandalay locations carrying placards calling for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's release.

Eyewitnesses told *DVB* that U Dhamma Tharmi waved the placards and shouted slogans at passersby, attracting a considerable amount of attention. He reportedly also called the military's constitution-drafting National Convention a sham and said that it should not be supported by opposition groups.

"The placards said 'We won't accept the false National Convention' and 'Daw Suu's freedom is a matter for the people'," one eyewitness said. [Top](#)

"We have heard that he has been sent to Ohbo, the new Mandalay prison."

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## **AIDS activist Phyu Phyu Thin released**

*July 03, 2007*

High-profile AIDS activist and National League for Democracy member Phyu Phyu Thin was released from detention last night by the Burmese authorities.

In an interview with *DVB* this morning, Phyu Phyu Thin confirmed for the first time that the special police were behind her detention on May 21 and that she had staged a seven-day hunger strike at the Kyaikkasan detention centre in Rangoon.

"They demanded to know what [the NLD] had planned for the anniversary of the 1990 elections on May 27. I told them I didn't know and they questioned me thoroughly about my HIV and AIDS activities," Phyu Phyu Thin said.

Before her detention, Phyu Phyu Thin had run a small clinic for people with HIV and AIDS in Rangoon, administering antiretroviral medication and providing symptomatic treatment and care.

She said the Burmese authorities had not charged her with a crime during her detention but had, at one stage, transferred her to the Aungthabyay interrogation centre and demanded that she sign an agreement not to discuss her arrest with the media.

"I told them I wouldn't sign it as I was going to tell everyone outside what had happened. I offered instead to sign an acknowledgement of my release instead and they agreed," Phyu Phyu Thin told *DVB*.

She said that for more than a month she and other activists also detained at the Kyaikkasan centre were not told why they were being held or when they would be released. [Top](#)

"So on June 19, when I had been held for about one month, I

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## **More activists released in Burma**

*July 04, 2007*

The Burmese government released five more activists on Monday, including Ko Thant Zaw Myint who was arrested on April 22 after he was involved in a protest against high commodity prices.

Ko Thant Zaw Myint, and prayer campaigners Ko Kyaw Soe Win, Ko San Win, Ko Yan Naing Htun and Ko Mee Thwe were reportedly released on July 2 at the same time as AIDS activist Phyu Phyu Thin.

The men were being held at the barracks of police brigade three in Hmawbi township where activists Ko Htin Kyaw and Ko Than Aung Myint remain in detention. A colleague of Ko Thant Zaw Myint told *DVB* yesterday that it was likely Ko Htin Kyaw and Ko Than Aung Myint would also be released soon.

“I asked Ko Thant Zaw Myint about them and he said he believed that they would be freed soon too. He said there are still about 10 activists in detention at the brigade three barracks,” Ko Myint Shwe said.

Also remaining in detention are four people—Ko Thurein Aung, Ko Kyaw Kyaw, Ko Wai Linn and Ko Nyi Nyi Soe—who attended a Mayday celebration at the American centre on May 1.

*Reporting by Khin Hnin Htet*

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## **U Win Tin marks 18 years in prison**

*July 04, 2007*

Veteran journalist and member of the National League for Democracy U Win Tin marked 18 years in prison today as press freedom groups renewed calls for his release. Reporters Without Borders and the Burma Media Association said on Monday that they were appalled by the military’s continued incarceration of the ailing reporter.

“We are outraged that the Burmese authorities continue to detain a journalist this old, especially as he is ill and he has served almost all of his sentence,” the two groups said in a statement.

“Their refusal to free him, although this is allowed under Burmese law, is a sad example of the military regime’s cynicism.”

U Win Tin was arrested in 1989 and was sentenced to three, ten and seven years in prison successively by secret tribunals held inside Insein prison in Rangoon. His health has deteriorated and he has suffered two heart attacks in recent years, causing concern among activists and increased calls for his freedom.

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## **Former teacher jailed for discussing human rights**

July 12, 2007

Ko Min Min, a former tutor from Prome, Bago Division, was arrested on Tuesday after conducting a human rights workshop in a classroom the day before, his friends and family told *DVB*.

“We held a human rights workshop—not for his students, just in his classroom—on July 9, where he discussed the articles of the human rights conventions,” a friend of Ko Min Min said on condition of anonymity.

“He was arrested the next day from a tuition school where his friend worked. He was sent to Prome prison on remand for two weeks on Wednesday,” he said.

High-profile rights activists Ko Maung Maung Lay and Ko Aung Kyaw Soe reportedly attended the workshop, which may have attracted the local authorities’ attention to the event.

Ko Min Min’s mother said that he had officially been arrested for operating as a private tutor without a license. But his friends said that he had not tutored for some time, alleging that his arrest was politically motivated.

“When they arrested him on the evening of July 10, they said he would be released on a bail by the afternoon of the 11. But on the next day, he was given two weeks’ remand instead,” Ko Min Min’s friend said.

Officers at the Prome police station and Prome prison were unavailable for comment today.

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## **Families of jailed activists repeat calls for their release**

July 13, 2007

The families of prayer campaigners still under detention in Burma again called for their release today, saying that it was time that they were informed about the reasons behind their loved ones’ detentions.

Ko Aye Naing, Ko Thant Zin Myo, Ko Saw Kyaw Kyaw Min, Ko Phyo Wai Lynn remain in detention after being arrested by the Burmese authorities on May 15 for taking part in a prayer campaign calling for the release of all political prisoners in the country.

Father of Ko Aye Naing, U Khin Nyo, said that if prayer was a crime in Burma, then everyone in the country would be liable for prosecution.

“We want him to be given a punishment under the law if he is guilty of a crime. Put him on court and sentence him. But if you cannot prove that he is guilty of anything, I want him to be released immediately,” U Khin Nyo.

The men are reportedly being held at the police brigade three in Rangoon’s Hmawbi township. Family members of the detained men also said that they were preparing to send letters of complaint to senior general and junta leader Than Shwe.

Ma Hla Hla Maw, Ko Thant Zin Myo's wife and a member of the opposition National League for Democracy said that while she was detained at the same time as her husband, she was released after 45 days.

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### **Activist's wife sacked over political activities**

*July 17, 2007*

A woman sacked from her job at the Myanmar Textile Industries after her husband was arrested for causing community unrest, has sent a letter to senior general Than Shwe asking for reinstatement.

Daw Htay Htay Win, who had worked at the Insein garment factory for 10 years said her employers told her she was being dismissed for not reporting her husband U Zaw Zaw Min and her son Maung De Lyein Linn's political activities to her superiors.

"We are a peaceful family who live according to the law and have never violated it . . . They laid me off from work by saying that I was responsible for hiding my husband and my son's offence of unrest," Daw Htay Htay Win said.

Her letter to Than Shwe reportedly questioned the charges of unrest since the area she lived in was completely stable politically and that there was no other reason for her dismissal from her government position.

Her husband was charged for aiding anti-government activists after her son was involved in organising protests last month. U Naing Min Htut, chief of the Insein garment factory refused to comment on the matter today.

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### **Detained May Day activists finally face court**

*July 24, 2007*

The six men who were detained in on May 1 after attending a May Day celebration at the American Centre in Rangoon were finally brought before a court today to face a number of politically motivated charges.

After more than two months of legal limbo and detention in Insein prison, Ko Thurein Aung, Ko Way Lin, Ko Nyi Nyi Zaw, Ko Kyaw Kyaw, Ko Kyaw Min, and Ko Myo Min, face four charges each, some of which carry potential life sentences.

The men's lawyer U Aung Thein told *DVB* yesterday that they had all been charged with discrediting the government, violating the immigration act and engaging with unlawful associations.

"Among the charges filed against them are violations under section 124 (A) of the legal code, which carry sentences of up to life imprisonment, section 6, which relates to

associations, section 13 (1) on the emergency provisions in the immigration act and section 17 (1),” U Aung Thein.

He also said all the men were in good health and that they had been given the chance to see their families in court. The case will reportedly be heard every Monday and Thursday in Rangoon’s Supreme Court until its completion.

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## **Irrawaddy activists sentenced**

*July 25, 2007*

A Henzada township court yesterday sentenced six members of the Human Rights Defenders and Promoters activist group to jail terms ranging from four to eight years.

Ko Myint Naing, Ko Kyaw Lwin, U Hla Shein, U Myint, Ko Myint Sein and an unidentified activist from Oak Pon were charged under section 505(b) of the legal code for causing unrest.

Ko Myint Naing was sentenced to eight years in prison, while the other men were given four years in prison each, according to HRDP member Ko Aung Zaw Oo.

“The were charged under lawsuits filed by two different prosecuting parties—the Oka and Engapu Pon village leaders. Ko Myint Naing got an eight year sentence because he was involved in both lawsuits,” Ko Aung Zaw Oo said.

The six men were arrested in April after Ko Myint Naing and activist Ko Maung Maung Lay were savagely beaten by a mob of villagers, Union Solidarity and Development Association members and local officials from Henzada.

Ko Myint Naing and Ko Maung Maung Lay had been involved in a human rights workshop in Oak Pon village prior to being bashed and detained.

“Ko Myint Naing didn’t cause any public unrest. At the workshop, the villagers told us about the abuses they were facing and we advised them on what they could do,” Ko Aung Zaw Oo said.

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## **Activists condemn sentencing of human rights promoters**

*July 26, 2007*

The Human Rights Defenders and Promoters yesterday condemned the sentencing of six Irrawaddy activists to between four and eight years in prison after they were accused of inciting unrest.

Members of HRDP Ko Myint Naing, Ko Kyaw Lwin, U Hla Shein, U Myint, Ko Myint Sein and an unidentified activist from Oak Pon were sentenced on Tuesday by a Henzada court after an incident in April that saw Ko Myint Naing and another member of

the group Ko Maung Maung Lay savagely beaten by local officials and Union Solidarity and Development Association members.

U Myint Aye, the leader of HRDP said today that none of the jailed men were guilty of a crime and that their persecution at the hands of the military was completely unacceptable.

“Ko Myint Naing worked on human rights issues and he didn’t break any laws . . . Our members have committed no crimes,” U Myint Aye said. “But they were given harsh and unfair punishments such as the eight-year jail term. This is unacceptable.”

Aung Myo Min, director of the Human Rights Education Institute of Burma, said that the incident showed that human rights abuses were worsening in the country and that the six men had been trying to help people when they were targeted for prosecution.

He said that not only did the military refuse to respect the rights of its citizens, but that they also harassed people who tried to spread rights awareness.

“The imprisonment of the HRDP members is a violation of international human rights laws. We strongly condemn this act,” Aung Myo Min said.

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## **Burma cracks down on visits to political prisoners**

July 27, 2007

The Burmese authorities have reportedly cracked down on visits to political prisoners, increasing restrictions on food and medicine parcels, the families of several detainees told *DVB*.

Ma Thandar, the wife of political prisoner Ko Khin Kyaw detained in Insein, said that when she visited him yesterday she was ‘thoroughly’ searched by prison officials.

“They checked every piece of food brought in. They wouldn’t allow cooked food to be brought in. Some officials said they were expecting some superiors,” Ma Thandar said.

The mother of Mandalay political prisoner Ko Bo Bo said he appeared extremely thin when she visited him on Wednesday and that prison officials had imposed heavy restrictions on the amount of food allowed into the prison.

Ko Bo Bo’s mother Daw Myint Myint Kyi said that only small packets of instant coffee mix were allowed to be brought in for political inmates.

“They won’t let us bring food in but they can’t afford to feed the inmates themselves . . . the government has said in the newspapers that they are giving them bottled water but reality of the situation is the completely opposite,” Daw Myint Myint said.

Political prisoners Ko Aung Htun, U Kyaw Min and U Win Htein were also transferred to the Tharawaddy, Myingyan and Katha prisons respectively this month.

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## Burmese authorities release five more activists

July 30, 2007

The Burmese military released five political activists on Friday night, including high-profile protestor Htin Kyaw, after holding them without charge for more than two months.

Htin Kyaw was arrested on April 22 after staging his third protest against high commodity prices in front of Thingangyun township' San Pya market. The other four activists, all members of the National League for Democracy, were arrested in May for praying for the release of party leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Htin Kyaw told *DVB* on the weekend that he had been held at a number of different locations during his three-month detention.

“The last place I was held was the police brigade six headquarters in Shwe Pyithar before they took me to the Aung Thabyay interrogation centre and then dropped me home,” Htin Kyaw said.

He said that the day he was arrested, security officials had dragged him off the street into a rice shop where several men beat him while another held him by the throat. He said he was then taken to the Kyaikkasan interrogation centre where he was detained for one night.

“The next day, I was sent to Aung Thabyay where I was kept in solitary confinement for 67 days. I staged a three-day hunger strike . . .” Htin Kyaw said.

He then gave his guards a list of four demands saying that he would not cooperate until they were granted. He reportedly asked for a personal audience with senior general Than Shwe, vice-senior general Maung Aye and general Thein Shwe.

Htin Kyaw also demanded that his original calls for commodity price decreases be met and that he and the other detained activists be charged immediately or released. But he told *DVB* on the weekend that none of his demands were met.

“The officials said that Burma’s leaders agreed with our demands [for commodity price drops] but that we shouldn’t expect fresh water to come out of a newly dug well,” Htin Kyaw said.

“I told them they would only find water if they started digging in the right spot and stopped wasting time digging at the wrong location.

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