



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)

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ABFSU member sentenced to 104 years in jail

A member of the Upper Burma (Mandalay) branch of the All Burma Federation of Students Unions has been sentenced to a total of 104 years in jail, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) can confirm. Bo Min Yu Ko aka Phyo Gyi, in his early 20s, was arrested on 18 September 2008. He was handed his final sentence on 3 January by Obo Prison Court in Mandalay Division. He was charged under many different sections of law, including 6 counts under Section 13/1 of the Immigration Act alone. Bo Min Yu Ko was not allowed to have a defense lawyer and his family were not allowed to attend his court hearing.

“This is yet another harsh and cruel sentence handed down by the regime’s kangaroo courts. The courts are not independent and simply follow orders from the regime. Criminals sentenced on drug charges are often given relatively light sentences, but political activists are given very long terms of imprisonment,” said Bo Kyi, Joint-Secretary of AAPP.

Since the recent spate of sentencing began in October 2008, at least 280 political activists have been sentenced. Bo Min Yu Ko’s 104-year sentence is the harshest punishment handed out so far.

“Political activists are systematically denied their legal and human rights. Bo Min Yu Ko had no chance to prepare a defence. Until now, he has not been allowed to meet with his family,” said Bo Kyi. “ASEAN leaders mustn’t bury their heads in the sand. The forthcoming ASEAN summit is the perfect opportunity for them to discuss this issue frankly with the military leaders. They must call on them to immediately release all political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and start an open dialogue for national reconciliation.”

-ENDS-

AAPP

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