


Political Prisoner Profile

AAPP CASE NO.:	0038			
NAME OF POLITICAL PRISONER:	Honney Oo aka Honey			
GENDER:	Female	Ethnicity:	Burmese	
DATE OF BIRTH:	1987	Age:	21	
RELIGION:	Buddhist			
PARENTS NAME:	U Tun Oo			
EDUCATION:	Final year Law, Dagon University			
OCCUPATION:	Leader of All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU)			
LAST ADDRESS:	Tamwe Township, Rangoon			
ARREST DATE:	9 October 2007		PHOTO DATE:	
SECTION OF LAW:	Section 143, 145, 124/a, 6			
SENTENCING HISTORY:	9 years and 6 months			
COURT HEARING:	Rangoon Eastern District court in Tamwe Township			
NAME OF PRISON:	Lashio Prison			
RELEASE DATE:				
IMMEDIATE HEALTH CONCERNS:				
CURRENT STATUS SUMMARY:				
<p>On 24 November 2008 she was transferred from Insein prison to Lashio prison in Northern Shan state, which is 607 miles away from her family in Rangoon.</p> <p>On 16 January 2008, families of three students, including Honney Oo, wrote to the director of the prison administration department requesting that they be allowed to sit their exams in detention. The families said that the students should be given the opportunity to resit their exams as they have not yet been convicted of any offence. Copies of the letter were also sent to the minister of Home Affairs, major-general Maung Oo, and to the minister of Education, a professor at Rangoon Western University, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Insein prison administrator. (DVB 280108) Authorities denied permission for the students to sit their exams.</p>				
CAREER BACKGROUND:				
<p>In 2007 Honney Oo was a final year Law student at Dagon University in Rangoon. Her father, U Tun Oo was also a lawyer and is a former political prisoner who has been imprisoned twice. He was first arrested and imprisoned for participating in labour strikes in 1974, and was released in 1980 as part of an amnesty. He served a second prison term from 1989 to 1999, for his participation in the 1988 uprising, a series of marches and demonstrations in protest of the military dictatorship that were brutally suppressed by the regime resulting in thousands of civilians being killed. He now lives in Rangoon.</p> <p>In 2006, Honney Oo joined a book club with fellow students at the American Centre, where she had been taking English classes. The members would meet to discuss books they had read, with a focus on democracy and politics. They also met with members of the 88 Generation Student group. On 28 August 2007 they reformed the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABSFU) Honey Oo was one of twenty leaders chosen, along with Kyaw Ko Ko, De Nyein Lin, Lin Htet Naing aka Aung Thant Zin Oo and Sithu Maung.</p>				
ARREST DETAILS:				
<p>On 9 October 2007 at approximately 3pm, Honey Oo and Sithu Maung were arrested when the safe house they were hiding in was raided by security forces. It was initially reported that Kyaw Ko Ko was</p>				

also arrested but he later told how he managed to escape with the help of local residents. (DVB 161007)

DETAILS OF IMPRISONMENT:

She was taken into custody on 9 October 2007 but was not brought before a court until 20 December 2007. She was thus illegally held for two months without being charged of any crime. (Asian Human Rights Commission 280408)

She was finally charged under the following sections:

Section 143 of The Penal Code for being a member of an unlawful assembly

Section 145 of The Penal Code for joining or continuing unlawful assembly, knowing it has been commanded to disperse

Section 124 (A) of The Penal Code for sedition

Section 6 of the Law Relating to Forming of Organisations

The court hearing started on 19 March 2008 in Tamwe Township Court.

The case was heard by Vice District Judge (1) Daw Aye Aye Thein (Ta/1724) from Rangoon Eastern District Court. The prosecutor was police officer Soe Moe Aung (La-134172) from Tamwe Township Police. Inspector Hla Thein (Police No. La/155953) Tamwe Township Police Chief presented evidence to the court. Her defense lawyer was U Aung Thein.

She was accused of having been involved in a student union, having talked to foreign media by telephone and of having participated in protests at the Yuzana Plaza and on the road from Mingalar Market to Natmauk on 25 and 26 September 2007. (Asian Legal Resource Centre 200209) Honey Oo was sitting her final year law exams on those days at Dagon University. The University authorities refused to issue a written statement to prove that she was in the examination room at that time. The University authorities also refused to testify before the court. (US Campaign for Burma 131108)

Honey Oo was charged with sedition and also under the illegal association law. When the two cases came in to court the police had no tangible evidence against her except their oral assertions. They presented the statements that they had taken from her as evidence, which is not permitted. They made virtually identical statements regarding the two cases against her although the distinctive charges of sedition and illegal association should be framed on separate issues. The police denied that they had forced the testimonies or that they had arrested and detained her illegally but when challenged on these points they could not give further explanations. (AHRC 280408)

Police Officer Soe Moe Aung said they received information from a reliable source that Honey Oo was part of the group accused of having contact with overseas media, but he could not divulge the source to the court and the source was not included among the list of witnesses in the case. He had no evidence to present to the court other than the confession of the accused. There were no photographs or other evidence that Honey Oo was in the protests, only that eyewitnesses had seen her. The time that they reportedly saw her was when she was at Dagon University sitting her exam. One piece of evidence submitted against her was that she had gone for English lessons at the American Center library. Her defence lawyer stated that there was nothing in the case that could meet the element of the charge of sedition and at most she could only be charged with obstructing a public thoroughfare. When the defence lawyer asked Inspector Hla Thein if he knew if the accused had been interrogated "under duress" the police chief denied it, but when the lawyer challenged him, he admitted that he didn't actually know how she had been interrogated. (ALRC 200209)

On November 7 2008 her defense lawyer U Aung Thein was charged under Section 3 of the Contempt

of Court Act and sentenced to four months imprisonment; this was related to an incident in another case where he was defending other pro-democracy activists.