

URGENT ACTION

STUDENT LEADERS RECEIVE FURTHER CHARGES

Detained student union leaders in Myanmar at risk of longer prisoner sentences after receiving additional charges for protests they took part in over a year ago. They are prisoners of conscience who must be immediately and unconditionally released.

Secretary General of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU) **Phyoe Phyoe Aung** has received seven additional charges for protesting without authorization under Section 18 of the Myanmar's Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Act. All charges relate to demonstrations held between November 2014 and March 2015 against the National Education Law, which students say curtails academic freedom. Each charge carries an additional six months' imprisonment, and she now faces up to 13 years in prison.

Phyoe Phyoe Aung was arrested on 10 March 2015 in Letpadan in Bago Region, in the midst of a violent police crackdown on largely peaceful student protesters. Since then she has been detained in Tharawaddy prison, with at least 50 other student protesters, charged with a range of criminal offences in connection with the protest.

Her husband **Lin Htet Naing**, aka James aka Aung Thant Zin, also member of the Central Executive Committee of the ABFSU, has also received an additional six charges for protesting without authorization between November 2014 and March 2015. Lin Htet Naing was arrested on 3 November 2015 and already faced a range of politically-motivated charges for taking part in a peaceful protest on 10 March 2015 in Yangon. The protest was in response to the violent crackdown against student protesters in Letpadan. He is detained in Insein prison in Yangon, and now faces up to nine years and six months in prison.

Please write immediately in English, Burmese or your own language:

- Calling on the Myanmar authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Phyoe Phyoe Aung, Lin Htet Naing and all the other students detained simply for their peaceful protests;
- Urging them to ensure that pending their release, Phyoe Phyoe Aung and Lin Htet Naing are not tortured or otherwise ill-treated, nor transferred to remote prisons, have regular access to family members and a lawyer of their choice and are provided with any medical treatment that they may require; and
- Calling on them to repeal or else amend all laws which unlawfully restrict the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, to comply with international human rights law and standards.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 4 APRIL 2016 TO:

President

Thein Sein
President's Office
Office No.18
Nay Pyi Taw
Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Fax: +95 1 652 624
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Home Affairs

Lt Gen. Ko Ko
Ministry of Home Affairs
Office No. 10
Nay Pyi Taw
Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Fax: +95 67 412 439
Email: mohamyanmar@gmail.com
Salutation: Your Excellency

Chairman, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission

U Win Mra
27 Pyay Road, Hline Township
Yangon
Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Fax: + 95 1 659 668
Email: chmyanmarnhrc@gmail.com
Salutation: Dear Chairman

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 252/15. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa16/2813/2015/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Lin Htet Naing is facing additional charges in the Kamayut, Mayangon, Hlaing, Sanchaung and Kyimyindaing Township Courts in Yangon. Phyo Phyo Aung is facing additional charges in Kamayut, Mayangon, Kyauktada, Botataung and Tamwe Township Courts in Yangon.

Lin Htet Naing, Phyo Phyo Aung, Kyaw Ko Ko, and Nandar Sitt Aung, all members of the ABFSU, have been leading student protests since the end of 2014, after the National Education Law was adopted on 30 September that year. They claim the law curtails academic freedom and are calling for it to be amended. A nationwide student march was blocked in Letpadan, Bago Region and violently dispersed by Myanmar police on 10 March 2015. More than 100 students were arrested that day. Since then, some have been released on bail but around 50 remain in detention in Tharawaddy prison, Bago Region. In response, students in Yangon organized a peaceful protest the same day.

See UAs for Kyaw Ko Ko and Nandar Sitt Aung:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa16/2484/2015/en/>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa16/2784/2015/en/>

Phyo Phyo Aung and Lin Htet Naing were previously arrested in 2008 for their involvement in the “Saffron Revolution” – widespread anti-government protests across Myanmar in August and September 2007. They were released in a presidential prisoner amnesty in January 2012.

The Myanmar authorities continue to arrest and imprison activists and human rights defenders simply for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly which are enshrined in Articles 19 and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Amnesty International is concerned about a number of laws in Myanmar which restrict the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Amnesty International continues to receive reports about poor prison conditions in Myanmar, which do not comply with those set out in the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. These concerns include a lack of access to adequate medical treatment, clean drinking water, nutritious food and water for bathing.

Name: Phyo Phyo Aung (f), Lin Htet Naing (m)

Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 252/15 Index: ASA 16/3492/2016 Issue Date: 23 February 2016