



BURMA REPORT

September 2008
မြန်မာ - မှတ်တမ်း

Issue N° 64

Free all political prisoners, free Aung San Suu Kyi, free Burma.

<http://sanooaung.wordpress.com/2008/09/12/irrawaddysuu-kyi-wins-concessions-from-the-regime/>

The Irrawaddy: Suu Kyi Wins Concessions from the Regime

By SAW YAN NAING Posted on September 12, 2008 by sanooaung Friday, September 12, 2008

Burmese pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi has won some concessions from the military regime, including future deliveries of international magazines and personal mail, according to her lawyer, Kyi Win.

Kyi Win visited Suu Kyi on Thursday, and on Friday he told *The Irrawaddy* that in return for the government concessions she agreed to accept deliveries again of food and household supplies.

Suu Kyi's refusal of outside supplies since August 15 fuelled rumors that she was on a hunger strike.

"She was aware that people are worried about her health," said Kyi Win "But she said that she knows well how to take care of herself."

Suu Kyi's doctor, Tin Myo Win, would visit her on Sunday and then report on her health and on the reports that she had been on a hunger strike, Kyi Win said.

Suu Kyi would again accept outside supplies after the Sunday meeting with her doctor, who would bring her letters from her two sons, who live abroad.

Kyi Win said she would also be allowed to receive international magazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek* and local newspapers.

He told *The Irrawaddy*: "She is very happy. I'm very happy too. It is positive for both the authorities and her."

Suu Kyi had been demanding better conditions of her house arrest, including access to information, deliveries of private mail and monthly visits by her physician.

Her party spokesman, Nyan Win, said she had also asked for Internet access, but it wasn't known whether that request would be granted.

Kyi Win said Suu Kyi had also pressed for greater freedom of movement for the two women who help her in the household.

One of the women was admitted to hospital this week, suffering from an undisclosed illness, and the authorities denied visitors access to her ward.

The other housekeeper, Khin Khin Win, a member of Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, was now allowed to move freely in and out of Suu Kyi's compound on University Avenue, Kyi Win said.

The lawyer said that during their two-hour meeting on Thursday he and Suu Kyi had discussed a legal appeal against her current term of house arrest.

Suu Kyi was now prepared also to meet the regime's liaison minister, Aung Kyi, and a meeting had been scheduled for September 15, Kyi Win said.

Suu Kyi has spent more than 13 of the past 19 years under house arrest. Her current term of detention began in May, 2003, after her convoy was attacked by thugs backed by the regime.

AFP - 13 September 2008 - http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20080913/wl_asia_afp/myanmarpoliticssuuky_i_080913150655

Suu Kyi to appeal to Myanmar junta for her release: lawyer

Burma News - 14 September 2008 - "Burma_news" <burma_news@verizon.net> (EBO)Euro-Burma Office - www.euro-burma.eu

YANGON - Detained democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi will soon submit her first-ever personal appeal for release to Myanmar's ruling junta, her lawyer told AFP Saturday.

FOR PEACE, FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN BURMA

Kyi Win said the Nobel Prize laureate had approved the final draft of a legal appeal to the country's ruling junta for her release during a meeting Saturday afternoon at the lakeside Yangon house.

"This is in fact one of the first appeals of this kind as far as I know," the lawyer said.

"From my point of view we are hoping for her immediate release," he said, adding the appeal would be submitted Monday or Tuesday.

Burma News - 21 September 2008 - "euro_burma" <euro_burma@verizon.net> (EBO) Euro-Burma Office, [Square Gutenberg 11/2](#), 1000 Bruxelles, Belgium

One year after Myanmar protests, Suu Kyi faces junta alone

Agence France-Presse - 21 September 2008

BANGKOK - One year after Myanmar's brutal crackdown on protests led by Buddhist monks, the world remains divided on how to handle the regime, leaving democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi alone against the generals.



With the United Nations powerless to extract reforms from the military regime, the 63-year-old Nobel Peace Prize winner has used sometimes desperate measures to make her own silent protests heard.

UN efforts to launch a dialogue with her National League for Democracy as well as ethnic leaders are now at a stalemate, while Myanmar currently holds more political prisoners -- over 2,000, according to Amnesty International -- than it did before the "Saffron Revolution."

The international community remains divided on Myanmar, with Western nations tightening sanctions and issuing statements to express their outrage.

But China, Russia, India and other Asian countries refuse to confront the regime, in the name of "non-interference."

"You have to wonder if the events in Tibet didn't force China to reconsider," one Western diplomat said, noting that Beijing is "much less inclined to exert pressure today on Myanmar."

India has taken a "pragmatic" approach, the diplomat said, since it has "everything to gain from good cooperation" -- not just access to Myanmar's increasingly important natural gas fields, but also help in combating insurgents on their common border.

And Russia's return to the global stage has allowed it to make clear that regarding Myanmar, "it's no longer the West that makes the law."

In May, junta leader Than Shwe, 75, didn't hesitate to push through a new constitution favorable to the military -- even as the nation was reeling from a cyclone that left more than 138,000 dead or missing and 2.4 million in need of aid.

"The military is firmly in charge (and) the NLD doesn't have many cards to play," said John Virgoe, of the International Crisis Group.

<http://www.news.newsmonster.org/world/one-year-after-myanmar-protests-suu-kyi-faces-junta-alone-afp/>

International Herald Tribune - Burma News - 22 September 2008 - "euro_burma" <euro_burma@verizon.net> - Euro-Burma Office Square Gutenberg 11/2, 1000 Bruxelles
THE BURMANET NEWS - September 20-22, 2008 Issue # 3561 - "Editor" <editor@burmanet.org> - www.burmanet.org

Myanmar opposition wants review of constitution

The Associated Press

Monday, September 22, 2008

YANGON, Myanmar: The party of detained pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi urged Myanmar's ruling junta on Monday to set up a committee to review the military-backed constitution, saying it was "approved by force" in a referendum earlier this year.

The terms of the charter perpetuate the military's influence over politics and bar Suu Kyi from public office.

"The majority of the people do not accept the constitution which was illegally approved by force," said a statement by Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, charging that the authorities used coercion, intimidation, deception and

misrepresentation to get voters' approval.

Myanmar's ruling military junta claimed the constitution received the approval of more than 92 percent of voters in May.

The party's statement said the government should set up a "Constitution Review Committee" of elected members of parliament from the 1990 general election, the military, ethnic representatives and constitutional experts.

It said the constitution was not written by elected representatives but "unilaterally drawn up by the delegates hand-picked by the authorities."

Myanmar's generals had billed the referendum that led to the adoption of the constitution as an important step in their "roadmap to democracy." It offered the first chance for voters to cast ballots since 1990. The country had been without a charter since the current junta seized power in 1988 and threw out the last constitution.

A general election was held in 1990, but the military refused to recognize the landslide victory of Suu Kyi's party. Suu Kyi, who won the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize, has spent more than 12 of the past 19 years in detention and is currently under house arrest in Yangon.

The Irrawaddy, September 18, 2008

Red alert in Rangoon – Min Lwin

THE BURMANET NEWS - September 18, 2008 Issue # 3559 - "Editor" <editor@burmanet.org> www.burmanet.org

Burmese security forces, including firefighters and members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) and Swan Arr Shin, have been deployed around Rangoon's main streets and landmarks, wearing red cravats around their necks as a sign of a heightened state of alert.

It is widely believed that security has been tightened to prevent a recurrence of the events of September 18 last year when an estimated 400 Buddhist monks marched from Shwedagon Pagoda to protest the military authorities' alleged use of violence against monks in Pakokku Township, which led to mass demonstrations across the country.

According to sources in Rangoon, the security forces, including members of the USDA and Swan Ah Shin, were posted around Shwedagon Pagoda and Rangoon City Hall, two of the focal points for last year's demonstrations.

"The USDA and Swan-Arh-Shin have set up road blocks in the outskirts of the city," a resident said. "They are stopping cars, buses, taxis and passers-by, and checking everyone."

She recalled that on this date last year, security forces had been wearing blue cravats, signifying a mid-level alert, whereas today they were sporting bright red cravats around the collars of their green uniforms.

Another resident said that riot police had been deployed around many of Rangoon's well-known monasteries.

He said that plainclothes police and members of the USDA encircled Ngwe Kyar Yan monastery in South Okkalapa Township three days ago.

Meanwhile, Internet users found that connection speeds had been reduced drastically as authorities stepped up monitoring of suspects.

"We cannot even sit in an Internet café in comfort," a senior monk in Rangoon said. "The authorities stare at us like we are terrorists."

[Reuters, Saturday, September 20, 2008](http://www.bt.com.bn/en/asia_news/2008/09/20/myanmar_launches_cyberspace_attacks) - http://www.bt.com.bn/en/asia_news/2008/09/20/myanmar_launches_cyberspace_attacks

Myanmar launches cyberspace attacks

Bangkok, [September 20, 2008](http://www.bt.com.bn/en/asia_news/2008/09/20/myanmar_launches_cyberspace_attacks) [Recent Burmese News -08-09-20](http://www.bt.com.bn/en/asia_news/2008/09/20/myanmar_launches_cyberspace_attacks) "Hla Kyaing" <hla.kyaing@gmail.com> (21-09-2008)

MYANMAR'S military junta has launched a series of crippling cyberspace attacks on dissident web sites on the first anniversary of major protest marches by Buddhist monks, the sites said yesterday.

The Irrawaddy, a Thailand-based weekly journal and web site www.irrawaddy.org covering the former Burma, described the online assault as persistent and "very sophisticated".



<http://www.thefirstpost.co.uk/burma..pro-democracy-websites-under-attack-from-hackers.45578>

Pro-democracy websites under attack on anniversary of protests

been under "distributed denial-of-service" assault.

In "denial-of-service" attacks a web site is bombarded with so much traffic it grinds to a halt.

DVB's Thailand bureau chief, Toe Zaw Latt, said the agency's web site was only a small part of its reporting operations, and its radio and satellite television stations, both major sources of news inside Myanmar, remained up and running.

"They can't block our short-wave radio and satellite signals," he told Reuters.

The DVB attacks, which also started on Wednesday, appeared to come from sites in Russia and China, Toe Zaw Latt said, corroborating reports of the junta getting Internet training from Beijing and Moscow, its main diplomatic backers.

The Internet inside Myanmar had also been running even slower than its normal snail's pace this week and Internet cafes had come under unusually tight surveillance, the Irrawaddy said, suggesting junta unease at the protest anniversary.

Security was also tight on the streets of Yangon, with some vehicle checkpoints, one diplomat said.

The protests started in August 2007 with small demonstrations against declining living standards, but soon sucked in the revered Buddhist monkhood and snowballed into the biggest challenge to military rule since a 1988 uprising.

Most the organisers of the initial marches, members of the "88 Generation Students" who survived the brutally crushed 1988 revolt, were arrested a year ago and have been behind bars ever since.

As such, any repeat outbreak of dissent looks extremely unlikely. Other underground democracy activists were keeping their powder dry for a general election slated for 2010 and could not afford to get arrested, Toe Zaw Latt said. Reuters

THE IRRAWADDY
Covering Burma and Southeast Asia

http://www.irrawaddy.org/print_article.php?art_id=14247

No Political Progress in Burma: UN

By WAI MOE

Friday, September 12, 2008

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed frustration over Burma's political deadlock, calling for a genuine political process in the country after his special envoy, Ibrahim Gambari, briefed the UN Security Council on his recent mission to the Southeast Asian nation on Thursday.

Ban Ki-moon told reporters at the UN headquarters in New York that Burma hasn't experienced as much political progress as he anticipated. He added that the country's military regime should take real measures towards setting up a more inclusive political process that promotes human rights.

"I share the frustration many feel with the situation in Myanmar [Burma]. We have not seen the political progress I had

hoped for," he said.

"We want to see the parties, in particular the Government of Myanmar [Burma], take tangible steps toward establishing a credible and inclusive political process in the country, which of course must include progress on human rights."

But he added that he would like not to characterize Gambari's Burma visit in August as a failure.

"If you talk about failure, then if we stop making progress through all possible diplomatic means, that should be viewed as a failure. I continue to make progress in this, as mandated by the General Assembly," he said.

He also said he was planning to convene an ambassador-level meeting of the "Group of Friends on Myanmar" on Friday. "I'll try to continue to do whatever I can, in close coordination with Member States, particularly those countries which may have some influence on Myanmar," he noted.

Analysts said that Ban's comments yesterday indicated that the UN secretary-general is under pressure because of the ineffectiveness of diplomatic efforts to break Burma's political deadlock.

"Ban Ki-moon's recent comment reflected criticism of the UN's efforts, particularly Gambari's work. Gambari is facing criticism because his work for Burma has yet to achieve success," said Aung Naing Oo, a Burmese political commentator based in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

"In Burmese issues, everyone takes a simple approach, calling on the regime to free Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and political prisoners," he added. "No one has come up with a strategic policy. To get a breakthrough, we need a coherent and comprehensive policy."

Gambari said yesterday (11.09.2008) at the UN that it was time for Burma's military regime to release political prisoners and resume dialogue with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

"The tangible results of my last visit fell below expectations," he said. "It is imperative for the government of Myanmar at this point to deliver substantive results ... particularly with regard to the release of political prisoners and the resumption of dialogue between the government and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi."

Thein Oo of the Democratically Elected Representatives of the People of Burma said Suu Kyi's refusal to meet with Gambari had a significant impact on the UN. That, he said, explained why Ban and Gambari showed their frustration on Thursday (11.09.2008).

Meanwhile, there is continuing controversy surrounding the UN's position on the regime's seven-step "road map" to a "disciplined democracy"—a process seen as an attempt to avoid a meaningful dialogue with the country's legitimately elected leaders.

At a press conference on Thursday, Gambari was asked about the UN's offer of technical assistance for an election scheduled to take place in 2010. The election will be held under a constitution that was passed in a referendum in May that many critics have dismissed as a sham.

In response to suggestions that the UN appeared to be endorsing the road map by offering technical assistance, Gambari said that Suu Kyi's party, the National League for Democracy, "took part in the referendum."

Asked why Suu Kyi didn't meet with him, Gambari replied, "I don't know."

But the United States ambassador to the UN, Zalmay Khalilzad, said, "We do not know directly from her. Her party has said some things, which is that her dissatisfaction that this process—including the good offices and including the visits of Mr. Gambari—have not produced concrete results."

He also said that the United States and several other countries are of the view that there hasn't been any concrete progress with regard to the two main objectives that the UN Security Council has repeatedly stressed—namely, a time-bound political negotiation leading to democratization and the release of all political prisoners, including Suu Kyi.

 QUOTE OF THE DAY

I share the frustration many feel with the situation in Myanmar „We have not seen the political progress I had hoped for“ .
 - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

The Irrawaddy - http://www.irrawaddy.org/article3.php?art_id=14191

NLD Calls Junta to Ensure Well-being of Suu Kyi

THE BURMANET NEWS...- .September 5, 2008 Issue # 3550..- "Editor" <editor@burmanet.org> www.burmanet.org

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Friday, September 5, 2008

RANGOON - The political party of detained opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi urged Burma's military government Friday to ensure her well-being as she continued to refuse food deliveries to protest her detention.

The National League for Democracy "expressed concern" that Suu Kyi has not accepted food delivered to her home for almost three weeks, the party said in a statement.

It did not say whether she was on a hunger strike, a question that has remained unanswered since the first mention of her refusal to accept food over a week ago.

The 63-year-old Nobel Peace Prize laureate has been held in detention by the ruling military junta for 13 of the past 19 years, mostly under house arrest, and relies on food delivered by her party for sustenance.

Friday's statement called Suu Kyi's action a protest, which had only been alluded to until now. "She is refusing food supplies in protest against ... her unlawful detention under the security law," the party said.

Suu Kyi also wants greater freedom of movement for two female companions who live with her and help take care of the house, it said. They are currently not allowed to leave the compound.

She is also protesting that authorities have not allowed her to receive a monthly medical checkup by her physician as they earlier promised, it said. A doctor visited Suu Kyi on August 17, but her previous checkup was in January, the party said.

"Her safety and well-being are the soul responsibility of the authorities who have unlawfully detained her," it said.

Suu Kyi's lawyer, Kyi Win, was allowed to meet with her for 30 minutes on Monday, and said she told him that "I am well but I have lost some weight."

Rumors of a possible hunger strike have circulated widely in Rangoon, where Suu Kyi's isolation has only increased the mystique that surrounds her.

Similar hunger strike rumors spread in 2003 and in 1989, but proved untrue.

Supporters have speculated that Suu Kyi is frustrated over the United Nations' failure to bring about democratic reform in the country, which has been ruled by the military since 1962.

Suu Kyi canceled meetings with UN special envoy Ibrahim Gambari during his six-day visit to Burma last month, and he left without seeing her.

UN envoys and other senior officials have visited the country nearly 40 times since 1990, and the UN General Assembly has passed numerous resolutions calling for change.

QUOTE OF THE DAY : “ [Suu Kyi] is refusing food supplies in protest against ... her unlawful detention under the security law. ” — *The National League for Democracy*

Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) - <http://www.dvb.no/> - <http://english.dvb.no/news.php?id=1711>

Directive orders monks to avoid political activity

THE BURMANET NEWS...- .September 5, 2008 Issue # 3550..- "Editor" <editor@burmanet.org> www.burmanet.org

Sep 5, 2008 (DVB)—A directive has been sent by the state Sangha Maha Nayaka committee to monasteries and lecturing colleges in Chauk, Magwe division, ordering monks not to take part in political activities.

The directive was issued as new monks scholars arrived at the monasteries around the time of the one-year anniversary of the Saffron Revolution.

A Chauk monk said that the rules stated that monks could not get involved in party politics or join or participate in the activities of any organisations that are not sponsored by the Sangha Maha Nayaka.

The directive also urged monks to concentrate on their religious duties and not to act in a way that could tarnish the reputation of the Sangha.

The rules stated that swift action would be taken against any monks found to be breaking the law.

The monk said the directive had come from Magwe Division Sangha Maha Nayaka.

Security has been tightened around monasteries in Chauk and monks are being closely watched, the monk said.

"Last year the Sangha Maha Nayaka issued directives as instructed [by the authorities]. It is the same this year but security in both Pakokku and Chauk is quite tight," he said.

"These Swan Arr Shin and USDA are shaving their heads. I don't know whether they are going to beat up monks or not if we protest, but they are looking at us as if they are going to swallow us alive when we go out to collect alms."

Monks in Chauk are continuing their boycott of government officials by refusing alms from them and they have told the abbots of the Sangha Maha Nayaka to speak out against the SPDC for forcibly disrobing, imprisoning and torturing monks.

"The abbots must know one way or another that the authorities are torturing, killing and imprisoning their own monks," the monk said.

"If they don't admonish wicked rulers, or if the other party doesn't accept it or take it seriously, the abbots themselves have a duty to carry out a religious boycott," he said.

"The Sangha Maha Nayaka must be held accountable."

Reporting by Aye Nai

Gulf News - September 12, 2008

Prominent Myanmar activist arrested after year on run

Burma News - 14 September 2008 - "Burma_news" <burma_news@verizon.net> (EBO)Euro-Burma Office - www.euro-burma.eu

Yangon: Myanmar's junta has arrested a prominent democracy activist who abandoned her four-month-old baby and went into hiding a year ago at the start of major anti-regime protests, a family friend said on Friday.

Nilar Thein, also known as Ma Nilar, was picked up on Wednesday night as she visited the mother of another detained activist in a northeast suburb of Yangon.

Along with her husband, Ko Jimmy, she was a central member of the so-called "88 Generation Students" who spearheaded a nationwide democracy uprising in 1988.

Nilar Thein, who is in her late 30s, managed to evade capture but was forced to leave her infant child with her mother-in-law, a sacrifice that drew significant international attention to the plight of the former Burma's clandestine democracy campaign.

>From hiding, Nilar Thein and two other dissidents wrote a letter to the

United Nations Security Council in October calling for a blanket arms embargo against the junta, which received diplomatic cover last year from Moscow and Beijing.

For the same reason, the junta's spies have kept a close eye on Nilar Thein's daughter, now a 17-month toddler.

Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) News - <http://english.dvb.no/news.php?id=1739>

Htin Kyaw refuses to attend court hearing

THE BURMANET NEWS - September 11, 2008 Issue # 3554 - "Editor" <editor@burmanet.org> - www.burmanet.org

Sep 11, 2008 (DVB)—Detained protest leader Ko Htin Kyaw clashed with prison officials yesterday when he refused to appear in court, according to sources close to his family.

Htin Kyaw, who is being detained in Rangoon's Insein prison for leading protests last year, refused to appear in court in protest at the poor timekeeping of witnesses and judges and their failure on some occasions to come to court at all. Htin Kyaw was told by the authorities to come out of his cell to appear at the township court but he told them he could not do so.

When the prison authorities tried to drag him out of the cell, a scuffle broke out.

As a result, Htin Kyaw was taken to a court at the entrance to the prison instead of the court outside the jail, the sources said.

Htin Kyaw was arrested on 25 August last year for his role in instigating protests against fuel price hikes, and has been charged with causing public alarm under section 505(b) of the penal code.

He has been arrested and imprisoned at least three times for staging peaceful protests.

Monk leader U Gambira and 11 others also appeared at the court yesterday as their trial continued. 88 Generation Student leaders appeared at a special court inside Insein prison on the previous day.

Reporting by Aye Nai

DVB - <http://www.dvb.no/> - <http://english.dvb.no/news.php?id=1709>

Abbot detained in monastery raid — Democratic Voice of Burma

THE BURMANET NEWS...- .September 5, 2008 Issue # 3550..- "Editor" <editor@burmanet.org>

www.burmanet.org

Sep 5, 2008 (DVB)—The abbot of Marlayon monastery in Than Lyin township's Bogyoke village is being held after a raid on the monastery earlier today, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners.

In a statement released today, the AAPP said a group of around 23 people, assumed to be government officials in civilian clothing, arrived at the monastery at 2am in three trucks owned by the township Peace and Development Council.

They ordered the monks to lie on the ground and keep their faces down while they spent around 40 minutes searching the monastery.

The group then left, taking with them monastery abbot U Thila Wuntha, 58, who is in charge of the 17 monks who live in the monastery, and warned the remaining monks not to leave the monastery compound.

Police stations in Bogyoke village and Than Lyin denied involvement in the raid and arrest.

Local residents said that the monastery had been close watch by unidentified people who they believed to be government spies.

The Irrawaddy - Newsletter for Saturday, September 13, 2008 - news@irrawaddy.org www.irrawaddy.org

Min Ko Naing Defiant at Hearing: Lawyer

By Min Lwin

Friday, September 12, 2008

A lawyer for Min Ko Naing, a leading figure from Burma's nationwide pro-democracy uprising in 1988, said that the detained activist was defiant when he appeared in court at Rangoon's Insein Prison on Tuesday (09-09-2008).

„You can sentence us to a thousand years in prison for our political activities, but we will continue to defend ourselves in accordance with the law. Nobody can hide from justice,“ the lawyer quoted Min Ko Naing as saying to the presiding judge.

Nyi Nyi Hlaing, a lawyer for Min Ko Naing and 34 other members of the 88 Generation Students' Group, said that the defendants were facing a variety of charges related to their involvement in last year's protests against a drastic fuel price hike by the ruling junta.



Min Ko Naing

The charges include violations of Electronics Act 33A, the Illegal Organizations Act 17/1 and Section 4 of SPDC Law No 5/96, which prohibits actions that „danger the national convention.“

The accused were also charged with violating Article 130B of the Penal Code, which prohibits libel against friendly foreign powers. The charge stems from the group's alleged criticism of China and Russia for their role in vetoing a draft UN Security Council resolution on Burma in January 2007.

Nyi Nyi Hlaing told *The Irrawaddy* that the prosecution also accused Min Ko Naing and his colleagues of speaking with the exiled media. Recorded interviews and other items uploaded to Web sites operated by Burmese exiles were exhibited as evidence.

On Tuesday, the 35 detained former student leaders appeared in the Rangoon East District Court, located in Insein Prison, with their lawyers and family members to hear the charges against them.

According to relatives of the defendants, the 88 Generation Students' Group requested on August 27 to be permitted to appear in court without handcuffs. They also requested the presence of witnesses during the court hearing, in accordance with international laws. However, only family members were allowed to enter the courtroom.

„The family members could be present and listen to the court proceedings, but [the defendants] were still in handcuffs,“ said Aung Thein, another lawyer for the group.

Most of the accused have been in detention since August 21, 2007, when they were arrested for leading a march against sharp increases in the price of fuel and other commodities on August 19.

Many are veterans of Burma's pro-democracy movement who have spent more than a decade in prison for their political activities.

Besides Min Ko Naing and Ko Ko Gyi, other prominent members of the 88 Generation Students' Group who are now in detention include Htay Win Aung, Min Zeya, Mya Aye and Kyaw Min Yu (also known as Jimmy).

Lawyers for the group expressed doubt that they would receive a fair trial, saying that the authorities had already decided that they were guilty.

„Nobody should predict the outcome of a trial before a verdict has been reached,“ said Aung Thein, referring to a press conference given by police chief Brig-Gen Khin Ye, who repeatedly declared that the defendants were guilty of a variety of crimes.

Nine other political activists who were not present at Tuesday's hearing were also among the accused. They include Tun Myint Aung and Soe Tun, who are still in hiding, and Nilar Thein, who was arrested on Wednesday, and Mar Mar Oo, who was apprehended two weeks ago.

Related article: [Empowering Peaceful Dissent](#)

[NLDmembersnSupportersofCRPPnNLDnDASSK] NLD special statement 16/09/08 in English version - Nyo Myint <nyomyint@hotmail.com> - <http://burmadd.blogspot.com>

Sunday, September 7, 2008

NLD special statement 16-09/08 in English Version

National League for Democracy
No. 97 (b), West Shwegondine Road
Bahan, Rangoon

Date: 05 September 2008

Special Statement 16/09/08 (Unofficial Translation)

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the General Secretary of the National League for Democracy, is the daughter of Major General Aung San. Major General Aung San was the founder of the Tatmadaw (the Burma Army), the architect of independence for Burma, a national leader in Burma, and a martyr who sacrificed his life and personal interest for his country.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is a leader of the National League for Democracy, the party legally elected by the majority of the people of Burma during the free and fair General Election in 1990 and trusted by the democratic movement, including ethnic nationalities. Since 1989, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has attempted to achieve national reconciliation for her country and its people through politically meaningful and substantive dialogue negotiations. People, including members of the National League for Democracy, firmly believe that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi must participate in Burma's political and development process.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presently remains unlawfully detained under the State Protection Law (the Law to Safeguard the State Against the Dangers of Those Desiring to Cause Subversive Acts). The Junta must terminate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's detention immediately, as her detention violates the Junta's own law as follows;

As described in clause 9(b) of the State Protection Law :

FOR PEACE, FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN BURMA

(b) Only necessary restriction of fundamental rights shall be decided;

And in the clause 9(c) :

(c) The duration of such restriction shall be kept to a minimum;

And in the clause 9(f) :

(f) The person against whom action is taken shall enjoy the fundamental rights as provided in the Constitution, in so far as these rights have not been restricted;

It has been reported that for the past three (3) weeks, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has not accepted the daily food supply delivered to her. People and the National League for Democracy are deeply concerned by this.

It has been reported that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will not accept the daily food supply for the following reasons:

1. Her detention is unlawful according to Section 10(b) of the unjust law. Extension of her detention defies the law's own provisions.
2. Daw Khin Khin Win and her daughter, who have not violated any laws, are treated without reason like those restricted under Section 10(b).
3. Although the Junta promised to permit her doctor to make monthly medical visits, the doctor was not permitted to visit Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from January through August of 2008.

The authorities who unlawfully detained Daw Aung San Suu Kyi are solely responsible for her „security of life and survival“.

As per the decision by the Central Executive Committee During the meeting on 04 September 2008

Central Executive Committee, National League for Democracy, Rangoon

Credit: NLD (Liberated Area) Information Department's Unofficial Translation

Posted by BURMA DEMOCRACY & DEVELOPMENT at [9/01/2008 11:15:00 PM](#)

The Irrawaddy - EDITORIAL - http://www.irrawaddy.com/print_article.php?art_id=14222

Taking the Pulse of Sick Dictators - Wednesday, September 10, 2008

It is always interesting to follow and watch news about dictators.

Now we're reading and studying reports that North Korean's leader, Kim Jong-il, is believed to be seriously ill, with US American officials even claiming that he has suffered a stroke.

Of course, North Korean officials have denied the reports. One senior North Korean diplomat was quoted by Japan's *Kyodo* news agency as saying:

“We see such reports as not only worthless, but rather as a conspiracy plot.”

The international community and concerned governments naturally keep a watch on the health of dictators, particularly leaders of nuclear states such as Kim Jong-il. If they fall, their departure is likely to create chaotic power struggles, uprisings and possibly change.

The current reports arose after Kim Jong-il failed to attend a parade marking the 60th anniversary of the founding of North Korea. There is no clear indication of who would succeed him if he did disappear from the scene.

In January 2007, Burma's paramount leader Snr-Gen Than Shwe failed to appear at an Independence Day dinner reception in January, leading to speculation that he was seriously ill and on the verge of death.

Than Shwe—whose age is put at 76—did, in fact, travel to Singapore for medical treatment, but he appears to be still in good shape. This year, he received several state visitors, including Thai Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who went to Burma to discuss the cyclone disaster and relief efforts.

Nevertheless, rumors about Than Shwe's health continue to circulate.

Although he and Kim Jong-il have never met, they share a striking number of characteristics.

They are both unpredictable. They keep their countries in isolation, their citizens in poverty and they are distrustful of foreigners and dismissive of international opinion. They both keep their countries' military strong and united. And the countries under their leadership are both “outposts of tyranny.”

Intelligence sources in Burma suggest that Than Shwe admires North Korea—as well as Cuba—recommending them to his subordinates as lessons in how to survive under pressure from the West.

Shunned by western governments, Than Shwe has no qualms about embracing North Korea. Under his regime, Burma has renewed diplomatic ties with Pyongyang.

In April 2007, the two countries signed an agreement to resume diplomatic ties during a visit by North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Yong Il.

Burma severed its diplomatic ties with North Korea in 1983 after a bomb attack in Rangoon by North Korean terrorists during a visit by a South Korean delegation headed by then-President Chun Doo-hwan.

However, clandestine contacts between the two countries were re-established several years ago as Burma stepped up its search for sources of conventional weapons.

North Korean agents were often spotted in Rangoon and Naypyidaw, and dissident sources claimed that Burma sought help from North Korea to build a tunnel under the new capital.

North Korea was also involved in some bizarre events in recent years.

Last year, a cargo freighter from North Korea docked in Burma in what was believed to be the first port call by a North Korean ship since the two countries agreed to resume diplomatic relations.

In April, 2007, the Kang Nam I docked at Thilawa port, 30 km south of Rangoon, seeking shelter from a storm— or so ran the official explanation for its presence.

It wasn't the first time a North Korean ship reported running into trouble in Burmese waters.

By a strange coincidence, a North Korean cargo ship in distress anchored at a Burmese port in November 2006, and the government reported that an on-board inspection had "found no suspicious material or military equipment." But journalists and embassies in Rangoon were skeptical.

In July 2006, a dissident source told *The Irrawaddy* that a North Korean ship carrying a senior Korean nuclear technology expert, Maj Hon Kil Dong, had arrived in Rangoon with a biological and nuclear package.

Western analysts and intelligence sources quickly dismissed this report but conceded it was possible that Burma would seek conventional arms and technology rather than high-tech long-range missiles from Pyongyang.

Than Shwe and his hardliners are still interested in developing a nuclear reactor bought from Russia. It is not known whether the reactor is for civilian or military purposes, and news about this development remains hidden behind a veil of secrecy.

Burmese officials have said the 10MW light-water reactor employs 20 percent enriched uranium-235 and involves an activation analysis laboratory, a medical isotope production laboratory, silicon doping system, nuclear waste treatment and burial facilities.

It is hard to gauge Burma's real nuclear ambition but its shady relationship with North Korea has fuelled speculation and growing skepticism.

Than Shwe and Kim Jong-il are birds of a feather, and it's hoped that once they leave the scene things will be better for Burma and North Korea. Certainly the people of both countries deserve better leadership.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I will keep fighting until the emergence of democracy in this country." —Win Tin, prominent Burmese journalist, released September 23 after 19 years in prison

PRESS RELEASE - **Amnesty International**, September 23, 2008 -
THE BURMANET NEWS - September 23, 2008 Issue # 3562 - "Editor" <editor@burmanet.org> www.burmanet.org

Myanmar: Freedom for U Win Tin but 2,100 political prisoners remain behind bars

Amnesty International welcomes the release of at least seven prisoners of conscience in Myanmar, including U Win Tin who had been imprisoned for 19 years and was one of the longest-serving prisoners of conscience in the country. The



Win Tin (Photo: Reuters)

fate of the other estimated 2,100 political prisoners who are still behind bars in Myanmar remains, however, a cause for concern, said Amnesty International today.

"While the release of U Win Tin and his fellow prisoners is certainly the best news to come out of Myanmar for a long time, unfortunately they don't even represent one percent of the political prisoners there," said Benjamin Zawacki, Amnesty International's Myanmar researcher. "These seven people should never have been imprisoned in the first place, and there are many, many more who should also be released."

Amnesty International notes unconfirmed reports that the government of Myanmar may grant "amnesty" to as many as 9,000 prisoners in the run-up to planned elections in 2010. However, it remains unclear whether this figure includes political prisoners.

U Win Tin refused to accept an amnesty by the government, as to do so would have implied that the reason for his imprisonment was legitimate. Reports indicate that there were no conditions on his release.

"Prisoners of conscience, like those released today, are exactly what the term says: people sent to prison simply because of what they believe, and the peaceful actions they take because of those beliefs," added Benjamin Zawacki. "They have done nothing wrong and we call for their immediate and unconditional release."

U Win Tin is a 78 year old journalist, prominent dissident and senior official in the main opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) party, led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

The other six prisoners of conscience released are also NLD members and four are MPs-elect from the 1990 elections in which the NLD was victorious.

*Dr. Daw May Win Myint (female), 58, an MP-elect, and Dr. Than Nyein (male), also an MP-elect, 71, were imprisoned in 1997 for organizing an NLD meeting. Their original sentences had been repeatedly extended since 2004 and they suffer from poor health.

* Win Htein (male), 66, a senior assistant to NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, was imprisoned in 1996 for, among other offences, organizing farmers and NLD members to collect agricultural statistics. He had been held in solitary confinement and suffers from numerous health problems, including hypertension and heart disease.

* Aung Soe Myint Oo (male), an NLD MP-elect, was sentenced in August 2003 to seven years, for 'having a motorcycle without a license' but was widely believed to have been targeted for his political activities.

* U Khin Maung Swe, (male) 66, an NLD MP-elect, was sentenced in August 1994 to seven years in prison.

* U Than Naing (male), a member of the NLD.

"The release of these seven political prisoners is most welcome. But this is not -- and cannot be seen as -- an end in itself, only the beginning," said Benjamin Zawacki.

Background

Amnesty International issued an Urgent Action to its supporters about U Win Tin in July this year. He had been in Yangon's Insein Prison, often in solitary confinement, for much of the past 19 years and had not received the medical treatment he needed.

U Win Tin was arrested on 4 July 1989, during a crackdown on opposition political party members. He was sentenced three times to a total of 21 years' imprisonment. U Win Tin was most recently sentenced in March 1996 to an additional seven years' imprisonment for writing to the United Nations about prison conditions and for writing and circulating anti-government pamphlets/leaflets in prison. The authorities characterized this as "secretly publishing propaganda to incite riots in jail."

U Win Tin had written a document for the UN which he called The testimonials of prisoners of conscience from Insein Prison who have been unjustly imprisoned; demands and requests regarding human rights violations in Burmain which he described torture and lack of medical treatment in prison. While the authorities were investigating the writing of this letter, U Win Tin was held in a cell designed for military dogs, without bedding. He was deprived of food and water, and family visits, for long periods.

Ten Years On

The Life and Views of a Burmese Student Political Prisoner

by **Moe Aye**

(Former Burmese Student Political Prisoner)

(170 pages) in German Euro 10.- + Postage

Burma Büro e.V., P.O. Box N° 27 03 66, D-50509 Köln, Germany.

Tel: 0221-9522450 Fax:0221-9522470

e-Mail: <burmabureaugermany@t-online.de>

Published by : Burma Buero e.V.,P.O.Box 27 03 66, DE-50509 Cologne Tel: + 49 (0) 221-9522450 Fax:+ 49(0) 221-9522470
e-Mail: <burmabureaugermany@t-online.de> -

<http://www.burmabureaugermany.com>

<http://www.burma-report.de>