

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 441/90 (ASA 16/30/90, 1 November 1990) - Fear of Torture/Legal Concern

MYANMAR (BURMA): U Laba alias U Wayama + other Buddhist monks
and
(new names) Arrests of Lay Supporters of Buddhist Monks:
Ma Khin Mar Swe aged 26 (f)
Daw Nan aged 57 (f)
Maung Aye alias Khin Maung Aye
U Soe Myint aged 37

According to official announcements by the military State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), security forces have continued raids on monasteries in the central town of Mandalay, and unofficial reports indicate there may also have been further sweeps of monasteries in Yangon (Rangoon), the capital. Myanmar military authorities have also announced a widening of their arrest net in Mandalay to include lay people apparently accused of supporting the peaceful anti-SLORC protest movement launched there by Buddhist monks. On 26 October security forces arrested a 26-year-old woman named Ma Khin Mar Swe. On 30 October, in what the SLORC described as a further "action against anti-government political movements", security forces arrested another woman, 57-year-old Daw Nan, and two lay men: Maung Aye alias Khin Maung Aye and 37-year-old U Soe Myint. All are accused of having stored valuable items, apparently for use by protesting monks. The SLORC alleges the items were illegally stored, but Amnesty International is concerned that those arrested have been selected out for detention because of their involvement with non-violent Buddhist political activity.

Meanwhile, on 29 October, the SLORC announced that regulations requiring all monks to carry identification cards would be strictly enforced. On 31 October it promulgated a new law, No 20/90, which provides for imprisonment of monks who are members of unofficial monastic organisations or who "organise, incite or speak or write" critically about official ones. According to unofficial reports, the SLORC has begun "hastily filing criminal charges against political detainees" previously held without charge, but it is unclear whether this includes monks or their alleged supporters arrested in Mandalay.

Despite the continued raids and arrests and other suppressive measures, some monks reportedly continue their protest by refusing to have religious dealings with military personnel or their families.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern that Ma Khin Mar Swe, Daw Nan, Maung Aye alias Khin Maung Aye, and U Soe Myint, all arrested in Mandalay between 26 and 30 October, may be detained as a result of their involvement with non-violent Buddhist political activities there;

- urging that if this is the reason for their detention, they should be released immediately and unconditionally;

- urging that their treatment in detention conform to international standards and that they be given access to their families and lawyers of their own choice.

APPEALS TO:

General Saw Maung
 Commander-in-Chief of the Army
 Chairman of the State Law and Order Restoration Council
 Yangon
 Union of Myanmar

Telegrams: General Saw Maung, Yangon, Myanmar
 Telexes: 21313 MOFARN BM (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
 Faxes: +95 1 2 2950 (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Brig Gen Khin Nyunt
 1st Secretary
 State Law and Order Restoration Council
 c/o Ministry of Defence
 Yangon,
 Union of Myanmar

Telegrams: Brig.-Gen. Khin Nyunt, SLORC, Yangon, Myanmar
 Telexes: 21316 MILPRO BM
 Faxes: +95 1 2 2950 (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

COPIES TO:

No 310 Kyaunggyi Street
 Delwin
 Mandalay West Ward

No 42
 Marlakar Chan Ward
 Thanmyintmaw East
 Mandalay Southwest Township

No 91 Block 512
 between 83rd and 84th Streets
 Maha Aungmye Anauk Ward
 Mandalay Southeast Township

and to diplomatic representatives of Myanmar (Burma) to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 19 December 1990.