

PUBLIC

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UA 159/03 Fear for safety/possible "disappearance"

MYANMAR Aung San Suu Kyi (f), leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD)
Aung Kyaw Kyaw Oo (m), aged 32, NLD Youth member
Min Lwin (m), NLD Youth member
Myint Kyaw (m), NLD Youth member
Myo Naing (m), NLD member
Myo Zaw Aung (m), aged 23, NLD Youth member
Nyunt Wai (m), NLD Central Executive Committee member
Pho Thaw (m), aged 32, NLD Youth member
Than Tun (m), aged 57, NLD Youth member
Thet Tun (m), aged 30, NLD Youth member
Thi Ha (m), aged 29, NLD Youth member
Toe Lwin (m), aged 32, NLD Youth member
Tun Myint (m), aged 36, NLD secretary
Tun Zaw Zaw (m), NLD Youth member
U Aung Shwe (m), NLD member
U Lwin (m), NLD member
U Tin U (m), NLD member
Win Mya Mya (f), NLD member
At least 83 others, including students and monks

Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the opposition party the National League for Democracy (NLD), is among over 100 political activists, including monks and students who have not been seen since a reported violent incident on 30 May. It is thought they are being held in detention, and there are fears for their safety.

Authorities claim that the NLD had incited the incident on 30 May, but this is disputed by other sources. According to opposition group reports, a group of 250 NLD members who were travelling in Upper Myanmar with party leader Aung San Suu Kyi were attacked by police, military and prisoners from a nearby prison. The NLD members were reportedly beaten and shot at with catapults and guns. Authorities have confirmed that four people were killed and 50 wounded in the incident. Unconfirmed opposition group reports have stated that the number of deaths is higher than official figures, and estimate that as many as 70 people died.

Following the incident, authorities stated that they had taken Aung San Suu Kyi and 18 NLD officials into "protective custody". Their whereabouts are unknown. Aung San Suu Kyi is believed to be held in a military "guest house" (authorities have in the past detained NLD members of parliament-elect in official "guest houses"). Other senior members of the NLD have been placed under house arrest. The whereabouts of over 100 NLD and NLD Youth members are reportedly currently unknown.

On 31 May, a monk and two students were reportedly killed during clashes after a demonstration protesting at the previous day's incident.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The NLD won over 80% of the parliamentary seats in the May 1990 elections, but have not been allowed to form a government. Many NLD members are among the estimated 1,300 political prisoners in the country, the majority of whom have been sentenced on account of their peaceful political activities. Since the release of party leader Aung San Suu Kyi from *de facto* house arrest in May 2002, she has been able to travel on party business outside the capital. Government sponsored groups have allegedly incited demonstrations

against the National League for Democracy during these journeys. In recent weeks, officials of the NLD in areas she has visited have been arrested, accused of inciting unrest and sentenced to terms of imprisonment.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of over 100 National League for Democracy (NLD) members and students, including NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who have not been seen since 30 May;
- urging that the authorities make public their identities and whereabouts immediately;
- if they are in detention, calling on the authorities to reveal details of the charges against them, and to immediately and unconditionally release those detained solely on account of their peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of assembly, association and expression;
- calling for guarantees that no detainees will be tortured or ill-treated;
- calling on the authorities to give all detainees immediate access to lawyers, relatives and any medical treatment they may need;
- expressing concern at the reported killings of NLD members and others on 30 and 31 May 2003, and urging authorities to institute a thorough and independent investigation into the incidents, to make the results public and to bring those responsible to justice;
- urging authorities to guarantee the right of freedom of expression, assembly and association in Myanmar.

APPEALS TO:

Senior General Than Shwe
State Peace and Development Council
Ministry of Defence,
Dagon Post Office
Yangon
Union of Myanmar

Telegram: General Than Shwe, Yangon, Myanmar

Telex: 21316

Fax: + 95 1 652 624

Salutation: Dear General

Khin Nyunt, Secretary 1
State Peace and Development Council
c/o Director of Defense Services Intelligence (DDSI)
Ministry of Defense,
Signal Pagoda Road
Dagon Post Office
Yangon
Union of Myanmar

Telegram: General Khin Nyunt, Yangon, Myanmar

Telex: 21316

Fax: + 95 1 652 624

Salutation: Dear General

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of Myanmar accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 July 2003.