

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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EXTRA 05/94      Death Penalty/Legal Concern

25 January 1994

**MYANMAR (BURMA): Khin Maung Oo, alias Let Kut and three other persons**

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Amnesty International is concerned at reports that Khin Maung Oo and three other persons were sentenced to death on 10 January 1994 in Yangon (Rangoon).

According to an official Myanmar radio broadcast on 12 January, the four were given death sentences by a special court for the murder of a student, Maung Naing Win, on 8 January. Amnesty International fears that the four are in imminent danger of execution, and has heard unofficial reports that students in Yangon have met the First Secretary of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt, to demand a public hanging.

Amnesty International is also concerned that the four may not have received a fair trial.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty without reservation on the grounds that it constitutes a violation of the right to life, and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

According to the radio broadcast, on the evening of 8 January, three people, including student Maung Naing Win were travelling on a commuter bus when they were robbed by pickpockets. The three reportedly followed the pickpockets from the station road bus stop in Hlaing Township and demanded the return of the wallet. They were then reportedly attacked by the alleged pickpockets, and Maung Naing Win died from stab wounds. A special court tried Khin Maung Oo and the three other accused persons and sentenced them to death only two days after the crime allegedly took place. No details were given about the exact charges brought against the four accused persons, the laws under which they were charged, or whether they had a lawyer to defend them.

Large-scale public unrest and pro-democracy demonstrations led by students, Buddhist monks and others occurred in Myanmar in 1988, following the stabbing of a student in a tea-shop. The SLORC took power and thousands died as the uprising was violently suppressed. Over a hundred death sentences were handed down in the aftermath of the uprising, although Amnesty International has not received reports of any executions being carried out.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes and airmail letters either in English or in your own language:**

- expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty, which constitutes a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- expressing concern that Khin Maung Oo and three others have been sentenced

to death and may not have received a fair trial, in contravention of international human rights standards;

- urging that the four not be executed, and that they be given the right to a judicial appeal against their conviction and sentence.

**APPEALS TO**

General Than Shwe  
Chairman  
State Law and Order Restoration Council  
c/o Ministry of Defence  
Signal Pagoda Road  
Yangon, Union of Myanmar  
**Telegrams: General Than Shwe, Yangon, Myanmar**  
**Telexes: 21313 MOFARN BM**  
**Salutation: Dear General**

Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt  
Secretary 1  
State Law and Order Restoration Council  
c/o Ministry of Defence  
Signal Pagoda Road  
Yangon, Union of Myanmar  
**Telegrams: Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt, Yangon, Myanmar**  
**Salutation: Dear Lieutenant General**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

diplomatic representatives of Myanmar (Burma) accredited to your country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 February 1994.