

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 16/018/2003

15 July 2003

Further Information on UA 207/03 (ASA 16/17/2003, 11 July 2003) Fear for safety/incommunicado detention/fear of torture or ill-treatment

MYANMAR 10 human rights defenders, including NLD organizers and other political activists

Released: Daw Mae Hnin Kyi (f), aged 55, National League for Democracy (NLD) Member of Parliament elect, Mogauk 1, Mandalay Division
2 other human rights defenders (f)

Daw Mae Hnin Kyi and two female organizers of the National League for Democracy (NLD) Women's division have been released from custody. They were reportedly detained incommunicado and interrogated for 24 hours, along with at least four other women from the NLD Women's Division.

Concerns remain for the safety of ten men, U Khin Win, U Maung Maung, Ko Than Aung, Ko Aung Thein Myint, Than Tun, Kyaw Kyaw Lwin, Aung Than, Kyaw Kyaw, U Hnout Khan Hmwe, and Win Naing, who are reportedly being held in incommunicado detention, following their call for the release of persons held after the violent attack on the National League for Democracy (NLD) on 30 May, and for an investigation into the attack.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 30 May 2003 members of the NLD travelling on party business in Upper Myanmar were violently attacked in what is believed to be a premeditated attack. Authorities confirmed that four people had been killed; according to other sources the true figure could be significantly higher.

Six weeks after the attack, at least 130 people who were among those attacked remain missing or in detention, including party secretary Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Many reportedly suffered head injuries and have had no access to relatives or lawyers. While the International Committee of the Red Cross has publicly stated that in late June 2003 it was granted permission to visit at least 30 of the detainees, it has not been given access to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Following the attack, Amnesty International is aware that at least 55 further people were reportedly taken into incommunicado detention. NLD offices have been closed down, members and supporters of the NLD as well as other political organizations are reportedly under intensive surveillance. The press is strictly controlled by authorities in Myanmar, and there is no free access to information, including news about the events on 30 May 2003.

For further information on these concerns, see UA 159/03 (ASA 16/009/2003, 02 June 2003), and follow-ups (ASA 16/010/2003, 6 June 2003 and ASA 16/11/2003, 4 July 2003). An updated list of those reportedly missing or detained on or after 30 May 2003 is available on Amnesty International's web-site at <http://web.amnesty.org/pages/mmr-040603-action-eng>. You may also wish to sign Amnesty International's petition for their release and an investigation into the attack on <http://web.amnesty.org/pages/mmr-040603-petition-eng>.

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

- welcoming the release of Daw Mae Hnin Kyi and two other members of the NLD Women's Division

- expressing concern at the arrest of four NLD township organizers in Yenanchaung, Magway Division, and six persons in Kawthaung, Tanintharyi Division, following their call for the release of persons detained after a violent attack on the NLD on 30 May 2003 and for an investigation into the incident;
- urging authorities to either charge those arrested with a recognizably criminal offence or immediately and unconditionally release them;
- calling on authorities not to penalize people for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression, association and assembly;
- calling for an end to arrests of on this basis;
- calling for guarantees that no detainees will be tortured or ill-treated, and that they be granted immediate access to lawyers, doctors, and relatives.

APPEALS TO:

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

Telegram: General Than Shwe, Yangon, Myanmar

Telex: 21316

Fax: + 95 1 652 624

Salutation: Dear General

General Khin Nyunt, Secretary 1
State Peace and Development Council
C/o Director of Defense Services Intelligence (DDSI)
Ministry of Defence, 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 26 August 2003.