

# Chronology of Political Prisoners in Burma for January 2009

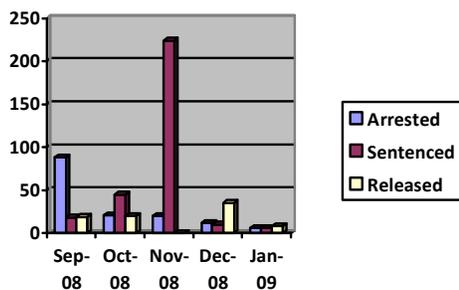
## Summary of current situation

There are a total of 2,137 political prisoners in Burma.<sup>1</sup> These include:

CATEGORY	NUMBER
Monks	224
Members of Parliament	16
Students	272 <sup>2</sup>
Women	189
NLD members	462
Members of the Human Rights Defenders and Promoters network	42
Ethnic nationalities	203
Cyclone Nargis volunteers	21
Teachers	26
Media activists	43
Lawyers	15
In poor health	115

Since the protests in August 2007 leading to last September's Saffron Revolution, a total of 1,052 activists have been arrested and are still in detention.

## Monthly trend analysis



In the month of January 2009, 6 activists were arrested, 6 were sentenced and 8 were released. The regime's courts handed down their harshest sentence yet in this recent crackdown, which began in October last year. **Bo Min Yu Ko**, a member of the All Burma Federation of Students Unions, was sentenced to 104 years in prison.

The authorities also transferred two political prisoners to labour camps. 23 year-old **Kay Thi Aung**, arrested for her Cyclone Nargis relief efforts and sentenced to 26 years in jail, suffered a miscarriage in prison due to lack of medical care. Monk **U Arnanda** became the 139<sup>th</sup> political prisoner to die in prison.

<sup>1</sup> Around 30 political prisoners were released in December. Some had come to the end of their prison term and others were released without charge.

<sup>2</sup> This figure includes 46 88 Generation Students Group members.

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### Unfair trials

Reports continue to emerge of political activists being denied the right to legal representation during their trials. Defence lawyers have also been denied the right to attend court hearings. Lawyers themselves continue to be targeted. This month one lawyer faced charges, another was arrested and a third had his appeal rejected.

### Treatment of prisoners and their families

The treatment of political prisoners and their families has further deteriorated this month. Amidst reports that an increasing number of political prisoners are in poor health, prison authorities continue to systematically deny proper medical treatment for political prisoners. As a result of inadequate medical treatment, 23 year-old **Kay Thi Aung** suffered a miscarriage in prison. She has yet to receive the medical treatment she urgently requires. Monk **U Arnanda** is the 139<sup>th</sup> political prisoner to die in prison. His cause of death is unknown. There are also concerns for the health of **U Gambira**, leader of the All Burma Monk's Association, who has been on hunger strike. He has recently been transferred to the remote Hkamti prison, in Sagaing Division.

Prison authorities have also denied political prisoners their right to visits from their family. In many cases the authorities denied family members the right to see their loved ones, even after they had travelled hundreds of miles to remote jails to visit them, at great expense. This has had a particular impact on high profile activists who are held in the most remote prisons, and their families. Ma Nyein, the sister-in-law of the comedian and activist **Zarganar** who is being held in Myitkyina prison in Kachin State (over 900 miles from Rangoon), said in a media interview, "Prison officials there just rejected our request to visit Ko Thura without giving any reason," Ma Nyein said. "It made us feel sad to see the prison walls, knowing he was on the other side of them," she said. "We just wasted our time, money and energy." According to the regime's own jail manual, political prisoners are entitled to family visits once a fortnight.

A relative of **88 Generation Students Group** member **Than Tin** said, "We waited in Sittwe [in Arakan State in the far west of the country] for two days for approval from the authorities to see him but it didn't work out in the end as they told us family visits will only be allowed once every two months," the relative said. "They told us Ko **Than Tin** was well but we are still worried and frustrated as we spent a lot of time and money to get there to see him."

Two political prisoners were transferred to labour camps, an extremely harsh punishment which often results in death.

### 88 Generation Students Group

A total of 46 members of the **88 Generation Students Group** are currently detained. The ban on family visits for political prisoners has been particularly harsh for members of the **88 Generation Students Group** and their families, as leading members of the group are held in some of Burma's most remote prisons. Even after travelling hundreds of miles to those

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prisons, family members were denied permission to see their loved ones. Several members of the group are in poor health, including **Nilar Thein**.

### **22 January 2009**

#### **Nilar Thein's health deteriorates**

Family members of **Nilar Thein**, serving a 65-year prison term, are anxious about her health on hearing that she has a peptic ulcer. The famous woman leader belonging to the 88 Generation Students is suffering from peptic ulcer and vomiting almost daily in prison, some prisoners, who have just been released from Thayet prison, told her family members. She has not been allowed to meet her family members for over a month. "We could not meet her for nearly two months and don't know about her health condition. Now we are worried about her health after hearing she is vomiting almost daily. She is said to have peptic ulcer and is being kept in solitary confinement. We heard about her health through some who have just been released from prison," her mother-in-law told Mizzima. It is learnt that her family members will ask the prison authorities for a meeting with her. "She has been kept in a cell since her arrival in prison. The prison doctor saw her but did not treat her. He just advised her to go in for meditation and tell her beads," said Zaw Lin, who has just been released from Thayet prison. Moreover two prisoners were punished and put in fetters for 15 days for giving her religious books, he said. ([Mizzima.20012009](#))

### **17 January 2009**

#### **Win Maw to face additional charges**

"**Win Maw** was transferred back to Insein prison from Taungoo prison in Pegu Division because the authorities will charge him under the Electronic Transactions Law," said **Win Maw's** wife Tha Zin who recently visited him. **Win Maw** was already given 7 years imprisonment in November 2007. He was also a political prisoner from 1996 to 2002. ([dvb.18012009](#))

### **14 January 2009**

#### **Pyone Cho's family denied the right to visit him**

"88 Generation Students leader **Pyone Cho's** wife Ma War and his father Win Maung were denied the right to see him in Kawthaung prison in Tenasserim Division on 14 January 2009," said Daw Nwe, wife of Chit Khin who is also being held in Kawthaung prison. She went to Kawthaung prison along with Ma War and Win Maung. ([rfa.23012009](#))

#### **Mie Mie's family denied the right to visit her**

88 Generation Students Group member **Thin Thin Aye aka Mie Mie's** husband Hla Moe wasn't allowed to see her. The prison authority just allowed him to leave food and other things for her. "I didn't get a chance to see her. I went to Myaungmya Prison in Irrawaddy Division with my daughter to see her. We waited there for an hour and the jailer said they couldn't allow me to see her. They can allow us to leave parcels. I wanted to see her and ask her about her health situation face to face. The prison authorities said she is in good health. But I'm really worried because she has been suffering from gout. Anyway I will keep coming back to visit her with my daughter, even if they say they won't allow visits," said Hla Moe. ([dvb.18012009](#))

### **9 January 2009**

#### **Political prisoners denied family visits**

Please Note: All information contained in this report is correct to the best of AAPP's knowledge at the time of going to press. The situation inside Burma is changing very rapidly, and this should be considered a 'live' document. If you reproduce this report or sections of it, please retain all original links and attribute it to AAPP. Thanks.

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Families of political inmates in various remote prisons across Burma said they were refused permission to see their detained relatives after travelling miles across the country to visit them. A family member of 88 generation student member **Than Tin**, who is serving 65-year jail term in Sittwe prison, said authorities should have told the family in advance that **Than Tin** would only be allowed visitors every two months. "We waited in Sittwe for two days for approval from the authorities to see him but it didn't work out in the end as they told us family visits will only be allowed once every two months," the relative said. "They told us Ko **Than Tin** was well but we are still worried and frustrated as we spent a lot of time and money to get there to see him." ([dvb.12012009](#))

### 5 January 2009

#### **Myo Yan Naung Thein in poor health**

88 Generation Students Group member **Myo Yan Naung Thein** has been suffering from paralysis because of torture he endured in the interrogation centre. He is currently in Thandwe prison in Arakan State. "There are no neural medical specialists in Thandwe Prison," said his elder sister Myo Pa Pa Thein, after visiting him in prison. ([rfa.05012009](#))

### 2 January 2009

#### **Min Zaya in poor health**

Leader of the 88 Generation Students' Group **Min Zaya** has a recurring back injury. He asked the prison authorities to allow him to take exercise by walking around in the prison compound, said Ma Cho Cho Win, Min Zayar's wife, following a recent prison visit. ([dvb.02012009](#))

#### **Visitation rights denied to families of political prisoners**

Family members of political prisoners have had to return from journeys to remote prisons without ever having a chance to meet with those detained, a result of the latest hardship brought against political prisoners by Burma's ruling military. Family members of Sports Journal editor **Zaw Thet Htwe** and 88 Generation Students Group female leader **Nilar Thein**, who are serving their prison terms in Taunggyi in Shan State and Thayet prison in Pegu Division, respectively, have had to return home without meeting their loved ones. Thai-based Assistance Association for Political Prisoners – Burma (AAPP-B) Joint-Secretary Bo Kyi said that such a ban on visits by family members of political prisoners is but the latest punishment leveled against those already wrongfully imprisoned. "This is giving extra punishment to these political prisoners without reason. They didn't commit any crime in the prisons. It seems personal grudges against these political prisoners is behind the ban on allowing meetings with their family members during prison visits," Bo Kyi said. ([Mizzima.09012009](#))

## National League for Democracy members

A total of 462 **National League for Democracy** (NLD) members are currently detained. The crackdown on NLD members continued, with several appearing in court on serious charges, including sedition and explosives charges. NLD member **Aung Kyaw Oo** was badly beaten in prison. Political prisoners from the NLD and their families were also affected by the ban on family visits for political prisoners. Meanwhile, former political prisoner **U Win Tin** - who has been outspoken in numerous media interviews since his release in September - has been harassed by the authorities.

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### 30 January 2009

#### **Mandalay NLD members submit appeal to central court**

Lawyer Myint Thwin submitted an appeal to the central court yesterday on behalf of Mandalay National League for Democracy member **Win Mya Mya** and her five colleagues. NLD organising committee member **Win Mya Mya** and five other party members were sentenced to between two and 13 years' imprisonment at the end of October last year for sedition. Their previous appeals to local courts, most recently to Mandalay divisional court on 2 December, were summarily rejected on the same day they were submitted. "I have submitted all the necessary documents for the appeal to the central court," Myint Thwin said. "In the next three or four weeks, I will have to submit a proposal to the court to consider the appeal," he said. ([dvh.30012009](#))

### 29 January 2009

#### **NLD brass demands meeting with Aung San Suu Kyi**

The National League for Democracy despatched a letter yesterday to the Burmese military junta demanding that they be allowed to meet their leader **Aung San Suu Kyi** before she meets Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, the UN special envoy on Burma. The letter appealed to the regime to let them hold a plenary meeting of all party leaders to enable it to take new initiatives and programmes to be presented to the special envoy of the UN Secretary General, Mr. Gambari, during his ensuing seventh visit to Burma beginning on January 31. "Our Central Executive Committee (CEC) requested the junta to allow us to meet Daw **Aung San Suu Kyi** first before she meets Mr. Gambari if we have to have any discussion with him. There will be new programmes, new initiatives and new attitudes to be discussed with him only after we can meet our leader Daw **Aung San Suu Kyi**," party leader **Win Tin** told Mizzima. He further said that the CEC would meet Mr. Gambari to show its respect for the UN's role but will not have any discussions unless they are allowed to meet their leader. ([Mizzima.29012009](#))

### 26 January 2009

#### **NLD members appear in court**

**Tin Mya**, NLD chairman in Thingangyune Township, appeared at Eastern District Court in Tamwe Township in Rangoon along with **Aung Than Tun, Aung Tun, Zaw Win, Aung Kyaw, Ye Zaw Htike and Khin Soe**. They were arrested in April 2007 and were initially charged under section 17/1 of the Unlawful Association Act. But the authorities canceled those charges and they now face explosives charges. ([rfa.26012009](#))

#### **NLD member's relatives jailed after being assaulted**

The mother and uncle of a National League for Democracy member from Hlegu Township in Rangoon, who were beaten up by a local family, have been prosecuted and jailed by authorities. **Khin Thein**, 59, and her older brother **Tin Maung Win** were beaten up by relatives of Myint Lwin, the owner of an alcohol shop situated inside Darpein North police station compound, in September 2006. **Tin Maung Win** was sentenced to two months in prison on 8 October 2008 and **Khin Thein** was given a one-month jail term by Hlegu Township judge Thwin Thwin Soe on 21 January. The attack happened after a dispute between **Khin Thein's** daughter San San Thwin, a member of Hlegu township NLD, and Myint Lwin. Myint Lwin then reportedly rallied his family members and beat up San San

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Thwin's mother and uncle. "Ko Myint Lwin, Ma Khin Sein, Ma Khin Thida Lwin and Ma Bokeson beat up my mother twice in one day and my uncle once," San San Thwin said. "We reported the first incident, and then my mother was beaten up again as she had reported it. Mother had to go to hospital with a broken hand," she said. "My uncle was charged with the false accusation that he attacked Ko Myint Lwin's wife and while my mother was charged with biting Ma Bokeson's hand. Dr Khant Win had to write a false medical note for them." **Khin Thein** is due to be transferred to Insein prison today, while **Tin Maung Win** has now been released. **Khin Thein's** son Kyaw Zwa Win said the actions against the two were a blatant abuse of law and an attempt to oppress opposition members. Kyaw Zwa Win claimed that officials had told him that his mother and uncle were prosecuted and jailed on the orders of chief police Khin Yi and chief judge Aung Toe. ([dvv.27012009](#))

### **Win Tin rejects election talks with UN envoy**

Senior National League for Democracy member **Win Tin** has said the party will not discuss the 2010 elections with United Nations special envoy Ibrahim Gambari when he visits Burma this week. Gambari is due to visit Burma from 31 January to 3 February, his fifth visit to the country since the government's violent crackdown on public demonstrations in September 2007. During his last visit, he was not able to meet with junta leader senior general Than Shwe or detained NLD leader **Aung San Suu Kyi** and was criticised for the lack of tangible progress made. **Win Tin** said he did not have high expectations for the special envoy's upcoming visit. "[Gambari] has made a lot of visits to Burma in the past but they have barely made any impact," **Win Tin** said. "If the UN wants to give us their opinions and tell us their concerns about the 2008 constitution, we would at least like to listen to them," **Win Tin** said. "We would strongly encourage the UN if they will put in the effort for negotiations on this issue," he said. "But if they are only here to talk about the elections, then we won't listen to them." NLD members were disappointed that Gambari raised the issue of the 2010 election during his last visit, and said they could not support an election held on the basis of the 2008 constitution. **Win Tin** also criticised the UN officials who called out to **Aung San Suu Kyi** with a loudspeaker from in front of her house last year, saying that they violated diplomatic ethics. ([dvv.26012009](#))

### **22 January 2009**

#### **NLD member allowed treatment**

"**Kan Tun**, 67 years old and a NLD Organizer in Mandalay Division, was allowed treatment at home because his family appealed to General Than Shwe," said his defense lawyer Myint Twin. He was arrested on 26 October 2002 and was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment. "He has been paralyzed since December 2008." ([rfa.22012009](#))

### **21 January 2009**

#### **Dala NLD youth member jailed**

The mother of recently imprisoned Dala National League for Democracy youth coordinator **Htet Soe Lin** has accused local authorities of framing her son to put a stop to his political activities. **Htet Soe Lin** was imprisoned for two and a half years for disrupting a public official on duty, despite a request by the prosecutor to drop the case. Win Myint said **Htet Soe Lin** was first arrested in September 2008 and accused of being involved in a fight between his younger brother Thet Paing Linn and a special police officer. "On 23 September, Thet Paing Linn got into a quarrel with Special Police officer Kyaw Myo Win, but **Htet Soe Lin** wasn't involved in the fight as he was asleep at home at the time," said Win Myint. **Htet Soe Lin**

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was later released on bail pending his trial. Dala township NLD secretary Tun Lwin, who went to **Htet Soe Lin**'s court hearing on Wednesday, said the prosecutor had previously tried to drop the case against the youth member. "The prosecutor, who is named Yazar, had already agreed to drop the case but the court judges and the police would not accept it so the hearing continued," said Tun Lwin. ([dvb.23012009](#))

### 14 January 2009

#### NLD youth member arrested

Following the arrest of two NLD Youth members **Htet Soe Lin** and **Htet Paing Lin** on 12 January, NLD Youth member **Min Thike Htoo** from Dala Township in Rangoon was arrested by the authorities while he was at a tea-shop on 14 January 2009. His family has not been officially informed of the arrest. ([rfa.19012009](#) and [aapp.19012009](#))

#### NLD member denied prison visit from his wife

Kawthaung prison authorities in Temasserim Division didn't allow Daw Nwe to visit her husband **Chit Kin**, an NLD member from Tontay Township in Rangoon. He was given 2 years and 6 months imprisonment under sections 143 and 505(b) of the Penal Code. He was transferred to Kawthaung prison on 1 December 2008. ([rfa.23012009](#))

#### Six NLD members released

Six of the nine National League for Democracy members who were arrested on 30 December for staging a protest calling for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi have now been freed. The three who remain in detention in Insein prison have been identified as San Chaung NLD youth coordinator **Tun Tun Win**, Khayan township youth NLD member **Win Myint Maung** (also known as **Pae Pyote**) and Shwe Pyi Thar township NLD member **Htet Htet Oo Wei**. Tharkayta township NLD youth member **Min Thein** was one of those released yesterday. "We were released after signing some papers in a government office in Mayangon township and an army official who was there told us they were releasing us as a gesture of good will as we were only students," he said. "After that I was taken to my ward administration office in Tharkayta where they took my picture." After their arrest on 30 December, **Min Thein** said the nine were taken away for interrogation. "On 30 December, we were arrested by authorities in a white pickup truck after staging a protest in front of the people's parliament building. They took us to a nearby agricultural department office," **Min Thein** said. ([dvb.15012009](#))

### 12 January 2009

#### Two NLD youth members arrested

Two National League for Democracy youth members from Dala township in Rangoon were arrested at their homes in the early hours of yesterday morning, according to party spokesperson Nyan Win. Nyan Win said the Dala Township NLD youth wing coordinator **Htet Soe Lin** and youth organising wing leader **Htet Paing Min** were arrested by about 20 Special Branch police officials from their houses at around 2am on Monday morning. "We still don't know the reason for the arrests or any other details," Nyan Win said. ([dvb.13012009](#))

### 8 January 2009

#### Win Zaw(aka) Tut Pe transferred to Kale Prison

Thongwa NLD Youth Member **Win Maw (aka) Tut Pe** was transferred to Kale Prison in Sagaing Division. He was arrested with his other colleagues from NLD Youth in Thongwa

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Township, Rangoon. The authorities released all of his colleagues except him. He was given 2 years imprisonment on 27 December 2007. ([rfa.08012009](#))

### Relatives blocked from attending NLD member's funeral

Two sons and a daughter in law of the late National League for Democracy member **Hlaing Aye**, who are currently being detained in Insein prison, were refused permission to attend his funeral on Thursday. **Hlaing Aye**, a member of Hlaing Tharyar township NLD's organising wing, passed away on Tuesday in Rangoon at the age of 70. NLD information wing member Nyan Win said Hlaing Aye's two sons **Thant Zin Oo** and **Thant Zin Myo**, and daughter-in-law **Hla Hla Maw** were denied permission to attend the funeral by prison authorities. The funeral was organised by Hlaing Aye's youngest son and his relatives. It was attended by about 200 people, including NLD members from Rangoon and **Hlaing Aye's** colleagues. Nyan Win said the authorities had deployed heavy security near the cemetery while the funeral took place. ([dvb.09012009](#))

### 5 January 2009

#### NLD member U Win Tin harassed

NLD leader and former political prisoner **U Win Tin** visited the family of Human Rights and Defenders and Promoters founder **U Myint Aye**, and other political prisoners' families to offer them support and encouragement. "The authorities tailed me wherever I went. And after I left, the authorities investigated them," said **U Win Tin**. "When I went to Kemmendine and North Okkalapa Townships, nine motorcycles followed me, causing a lot of disruption there. People were watching what was happening on the street. Some street vendors closed up their stalls and left, because of all the disruption." ([rfa.07012009](#))

#### Detained MPs charged in Insein prison court

Elected members of parliament Dr **Tin Min Htut** and **Nyi Pu** appeared before Insein Prison Special Court charged with sedition and disrupting the national convention. **Nyi Pu** is the elected representative for Gwa Township and an Arakan National League for Democracy Organising Committee member, while Dr **Tin Min Htut** is an elected MP from Panatanaw township in Irrawaddy division. The two men, who were arrested in August 2007, were also charged under the electronics act. ([dvb.06012009](#))

### 3 January 2009

#### Commodity protestor beaten in Bago prison

Detained commodity protestor **Aung Kyaw Oo**, who has now been sent to the remote Puta-o prison, has told his wife he was badly beaten when he arrived in Bago prison on 24 December. **Aung Kyaw Oo** is the joint secretary of Taik Gyi Township National League for Democracy. He was sentenced to 13 and a half years' imprisonment in December 2008 and has now been sent to Puta-o prison on the northern edge of Burma in Kachin state. **Aung Kyaw Oo's** wife Aye Aye Maw said her husband had told her about his mistreatment during their last meeting. "When I met him the last time, he told me he had had a problem with [Bago] prison officials on the day he arrived as he didn't obey their order to sit in a stress position," Aye Aye Maw said. "All he did was tell them politely that there was no rule in the prison regulations and they started throwing his begs and belongings around," she said. "Then he told them they would have to pay if they damaged his belongings and they swore at him and beat him up." Aye Aye Maw said **Aung Kyaw Oo** was beaten by five wardens, the prison chief and the prison administrator. "When I went to the prison on 3 January, the prison

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authorities did not allow me to see him as he was in bad shape," she said. "His face was black and blue and he had some minor damage to his ribs. The prison officials told me to come back on 13[January]." Aye Aye Maw said she did not find out about her husband's transfer to Puta-o until she was told by a family member of a political inmate in Bago prison. "I called the prison today [Wednesday] and they said they had sent him to the northern edge of Burma," she said. **Aung Kyaw Oo** was arrested by authorities on 23 August 2008 and was sentenced to 13 and a half years' imprisonment on five different charges including sedition.

[\(dvb.08012009\)](#)

### 5 January 2009

#### **Detained NLD member denied family visits**

Insein Township National League for Democracy member **Tun Tun Naing** has been banned from receiving family visits in Meikhtila prison in Mandalay Division, where he has been detained since 24 November last year. **Tun Tun Naing** was sentenced to 19 years' imprisonment in connection with the September 2007 protests. Aye Aye Thet, **Tun Tun Naing's** wife, said he had been banned from receiving visitors for one month. "Apparently some senior officials came to the prison on Monday to check on sanitation systems and the personal hygiene of the inmates there," Aye Aye Thet said. "Most of the inmates did not talk directly to the senior officials but just communicated via the prison officials," she said. "But he talked to them directly and the prison officials were disappointed in him for doing that, so later in the day, they banned him from receiving prison visits for one month as a punishment for violating prison regulations." Aye Aye Thet was told she should come back on 5 February. **Tun Tun Naing** had previously told his wife he was having trouble maintaining his healthy lifestyle as he was only allowed a short time for walking, and was not given any blankets on cold nights or any kind of container to use for a toilet. When Aye Aye Thet tried to bring him food, prison officials told her the items she had brought were not allowed.

[\(dvb.08012009\)](#)

#### **Couple marries in court after sentencing**

Activist **Khin Maung Win** was able to marry his fiancée Pan Wah in court on Monday immediately after being sentenced, despite having had permission for the marriage refused by authorities. **Khin Maung Win**, a member of National League for Democracy (Liberated Area) in Malaysia, was arrested in Rangoon on 10 October last year. At that time, he was working in an underground movement with a group named Justice, which was formed after the September 2007 demonstrations. He was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment with hard labour by Southern Dagon township court on Monday under the Immigration Act for illegally entering the country and under the Unlawful Association Act. He made a request to the judges during last week's court hearing to allow him to marry his fiancée Pan Wah, 29, but it was turned down by the judges on the day he was sentenced, according to a lawyer who was in the court. "I saw them in court on Monday while I was there to attend the hearing of my client De Nyein Lin," the lawyer said. "During a court hearing last week, he requested to the court to allow him to marry his girlfriend but they rejected it on Monday," the lawyer said. "After he heard his sentence, he and the girl signed their marriage contract in front of the court in the presence of the parents from both sides," he said. Pan Wah said the couple's wedding plans had been disrupted by his arrest last year. "We had planned to get married in October 2008 but then he was arrested on the 10th of that month," Pan Wah said. "The judges refused to assist us with our marriage so we just signed the contract on our own," she said. "I am proud

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of both him and us. [**Khin Maung Win**] did what he did for the good of our country." ([dvv.07012009](#))

### 7 January 2009

#### Withholding of case files hampers ICRC applications

Families of political inmates are having difficulties getting copies of their relatives' case files, which they need to gain assistance from the International Committee of the Red Cross, from courts in Rangoon. A family member of one political prisoner said the judges had been banned from giving copies of the documents to relatives of the detainees. "I was told by a judge that they were given orders not to give us copies of the case file documents," he said. "We need them in order to get assistance from the ICRC." A relative of another inmate said Insein prison court had been withholding the case file of another political prisoner. "The mother of political prisoner Ko **Kyi Phyu**, who is youth coordinator of the National League for Democracy in North Dagon township, has been having trouble gaining a copy of her son's case file from Insein prison's special court," he said. "Now she is unable to get help from the ICRC as she doesn't have the necessary documents." The ICRC spokesperson was unavailable for comment. ([dvv.08012009](#))

### 2 January 2009

U **Min Aung**, a member of NLD organizing committee in Taungkok, Arakan State, received an additional sentence of 15 years imprisonment at Tamu Township Court in Sagaing Division on 17 December 2008. He had already been sentenced to 2 years and 28 days and was due to complete his sentence very soon. He served his first sentence in Thandwe Prison in Arakan State. He was then transferred to Insein Prison, to Mandalay Prison, and finally to Kale Prison in Sagaing Division where he is currently being held. ([dvv.02012009](#))

### 1 January 2009

The NLD Executive Committee held a meeting and released a special statement, calling for the release of **Aung San Su Kyi**, U **Tin Oo**, U **Khun Tun Oo**, monks, **Min Ko Naing** and all other political prisoners. It was signed by NLD Chairman U Aung Shwe, and other ethnic leaders. ([bp.01012009](#))

## Monks

There are a total of 224 monks currently in detention. U **Gambira**, leader of the All Burma Monks' Association, has been on hunger strike. He was transferred to the remote Hkamti Prison in Sagaing Division this month. Monk U **Arnanda** became the 139<sup>th</sup> political prisoner to die in prison.

### 23 January 2009

#### Monk leader suffering from tuberculosis

Monk leader of Saffron Revolution in Sittwe town U **Eithariya aka Aung Soe** has been suffering from tuberculosis. He is being currently held in Buthidaung Prison in Arakan State. He was arrested on 29 September 2007 and was given 7 years and 6 months. ([dvv.23012009](#))

### 22 January 2009

#### Monk dies in prison

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Monk **U Arnanda**, 61, of North Okkalapa township's Thitsa Tharaphu monastery has died in detention in Insein prison, according to a relative of another political prisoner. The relative said **U Arnanda's** nephew had told him the monk had died on 22 January of unknown causes. ([dvb.30012009](#))

### 21 January 2009

#### Monk given 14-year jail term

A monk who was arrested following public demonstrations in September 2007 has been sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment by Mayangon Township Court for stealing a jade Buddha statue. **U Khay Mar Sara** from Bahan Township in Rangoon was found guilty of stealing the statue and possession of a fake identity card, according to source close to the case. "He hadn't been using fake ID card but he carried it while he was hiding from the authorities after the September 2007 uprising," the source said. "After he came back from hiding, he stayed at Shan Kyaung monastery in Mayangon Township and there was a broken Buddha statue made of jade he sent to a shop in Shwe Dagon pagoda to get fixed," he said. "He was also accused of stealing that statue after authorities arrested him." Mayagon township judge Khin Thant Zin sentenced him to seven years for stealing the statue and another seven years for using a fake identity card. **U Khay Mar Sara** was originally also charged with defaming the Sasana, but another source said these charges had been dropped. "The charge of defaming the Sasana is considered somewhat political," the source said. "We think the court dropped these charges so they could just send him to prison as a common criminal, so that he could be sent off to a prison labour camp somewhere." ([dvb.21012009](#))

### 17 January 2009

#### U Gambira transferred to Hkamti prison

Imprisoned monk leader **U Gambira** has been transferred to the remote Hkamti prison in Sagaing division, according to his sister Khin Thu Htay. The All Burmese Monks' Alliance leader was reported to have been staging a hunger strike in Mandalay prison last week. Mandalay prison officials told the monk's mother Daw Yay, who was in Mandalay for a prison visit, that he had been transferred to Hkamti on 17 January. Khin Thu Htay said their mother was closely watched by government officials in civilian clothing throughout her time in Mandalay. "[Prison authorities] told our mother that **U Gambira** was transferred to Hkamti prison on Saturday but they refused to say why," said Khin Thu Htay. "They also said they only did it after a medical checkup to make sure he was fit for a transfer." Hkamti prison is located 1200 miles north of Rangoon. Bo Kyi, joint secretary of the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, condemned the practice of transferring prisoners without informing their families. "If the government wants to transfer a prisoner from one place of detention to another, they need to inform the prisoner concerned and either his or her family," Bo Kyi said. ([dvb.22012009](#))

### 14 January 2009

#### Monk denied family visit

Kengtung Prison authorities didn't allow Daw Thein Kyi to visit her son, **U Thuta Nyarna** from Shwe Taung monastery in Mangalar Taung Nyunt Township, Rangoon. They were also verbally abusive towards her. **U Thuta Nyarna** was arrested during the 2007 Saffron Revolution and was given 5 years imprisonment on 4 September 2008. And he was transferred Kengtung Prison in Shan State. ([rfa.14012009](#))

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### 13 January 2009

#### **U Gambira reportedly on hunger strike**

The family of high-profile monk activist **U Gambira**, who is being detained in Mandalay prison, said they had heard reports the monk had been staging a hunger strike since 13 January. Khin Phyu Htway, the monk's sister, said the family had been told about the hunger strike on Saturday by a friend in Mandalay. "He said **U Gambira** had been refusing food and water since last Tuesday and that he could only lie on his bed as he was getting so weak," Khin Phyu Htway said. "Our mother is travelling to Mandalay on Monday and will try to visit him," she said. "We are very worried that he will harm himself with what he's doing as we know he is the kind of person who does not hesitate to do whatever he thinks is right." Mandalay prison was unavailable for comment. ([dvb.19012009](#))

## Cyclone Nargis volunteers

High-profile activists **Zarganar** and **Zaw Htet Htway** and their families have been hard-hit by the ban on prison visits for political prisoners. Family members of both prisoners were denied the right to see their loved ones, even though they had travelled hundreds of miles to see them.

### 11 January 2009

#### **Prisoners in Insein Prison killed after Cyclone Nargis**

Burmese guards beat prisoners and deprived them of food after a riot following last year's cyclone. A group of survivors was sentenced on January 11 to additional terms of 2-12 years. Guards at Burma's Insein Prison beat scores of inmates following a disturbance nine months ago, according to sources who asked not to be named. Nine of the prisoners later died from their injuries, the sources said. Prisoners who were beaten included **Wai Moe**, **Khin Kyaw**, **Soe Kyaw Kyaw**, **Tun Lin Aung**, and **Aye Min Oo**, according to friends of the men's families. Interrogations continued for several weeks and ended with 103 prisoners identified as rioters, with 41 identified as key leaders. On January 11, a special court inside Insein handed down sentences of two years each to 28 participants in the riot. **Wai Moe** and six others were given 12 years each for arson, damaging public property, and leading the riot, according to sources close to the trial and the prisoners. But Thailand-based Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) spokesman Bo Kyi said that it is the prison authorities themselves who should have been charged with crimes. "Under international conventions, beatings and other forms of torture should not be used as punishments in prison procedure," he said. "The perpetrators of such beatings should be convicted for their actions. If they are not, we must assume that torturing prisoners is state policy." ([rfa.30012009](#))

### 8 January 2009

#### **Cyclone Nargis volunteers denied family visits in prison**

Ma Nyein, the sister-in-law of the comedian and activist **Zarganar** who is being held in Myitkyina prison in Kachin State, was denied permission to see her brother-in-law. "Prison officials there just rejected our request to visit Ko Thura without giving any reason," Ma Nyein said. "It made us feel sad to see the prison walls, knowing he was on the other side of them," she said. "We just wasted our time, money and energy. The prison accepted the items we brought for him." Sports writer **Zaw Thet Htway's** wife May Zaw said her journey to

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Taunggyi in Shan State had also been in vain as prison officials refused her permission to visit her husband. ([dvb.12012009](#))

### 6 January 2009

#### Prison visit difficulties

Nargis volunteer **Nyan Tun**'s wife Saw Mon Thein said, "I spent 12,000 kyats (\$10) on traveling costs to reach Tharawaddy Prison in Pegu Division where **Nyan Tun** is being held. I want to visit to him twice a month but I can't afford it. So I can only visit once a month." He was arrested on 27 June 2008 because he was trying to appeal to the headquarters of the State Peace and Development Council in Nay Pyi Taw about the forcible removal of Nargis victims from 3 Miles survivors' camp in Labutta Township by local authorities. He was given 14 years imprisonment at Myaungmya Township Court in Irrawaddy Division on 28 September 2008 ([dvb.6012009](#)).

### 2 January 2009

#### Visitation rights denied to families of political prisoners

Family members of political prisoners have had to return from journeys to remote prisons without ever having a chance to meet with those detained, a result of the latest hardship brought against political prisoners by Burma's ruling military. In one example, the Myitkyinar prison authority in Kachin State only informed visiting family members of noted comedian and film director **Zargana** on the 2nd of this month about a ban on prison visits by family members during the current month. "They said that the ban is for all political prisoners, but only for this month. Apart from that, they said nothing. The higher authorities ordered them to do so, they said," Tayza, elder brother of **Zargana**, told Mizzima. The decision greatly inconvenienced family members in Rangoon, who instead of spending at least 120,000 kyat (approximately US\$ 100) for return airfare, opted to take a train to the northern city, a journey of some three days. The popular comedian is serving a 59 year prison term for multiple charges, including committing disaffection towards the state and government by using the Internet. Family members of Sports Journal editor **Zaw Thet Htway**, who is serving his prison term in Taunggyi Prison in Shan State, have had to return home without meeting him. Thai-based Assistance Association for Political Prisoners – Burma (AAPP-B) Joint-Secretary Bo Kyi said that such a ban on visits by family members of political prisoners is but the latest punishment leveled against those already wrongfully imprisoned. "This is giving extra punishment to these political prisoners without reason. They didn't commit any crime in the prisons. It seems personal grudges against these political prisoners is behind the ban on allowing meetings with their family members during prison visits," Bo Kyi said. ([Mizzima.09012009](#))

## Women

189 women are currently in detention. There are concerns for the health of a number of female political prisoners, including high-profile **88 Generation Group** members **Nilar Thein** and **Thin Thin Aye aka Mie Mie**, who were both sentenced to 65 years in prison in November 2008. 23 year-old **Kay Thi Aung** suffered a miscarriage in prison, due to lack of proper medical care. She has yet to receive the urgent medical attention she requires.

## Chronology of Political Prisoners in Burma for January 2009

### Lawyers

15 lawyers are currently in detention. The crackdown on lawyers continued this month. Defence lawyer **Pho Phyu**, who has defended high-profile activists, spoke out to the media at the beginning of the month about the harassment he was experiencing during the course of his work. Two weeks later he was arrested. Lawyer **San Maung** has been charged with obstructing an official, and **Nyi Nyi Htwe**, sentenced to six months at the end of October on charges of contempt of court, had his appeal rejected.

#### 30 January 2009

##### **Amnesty International raises concerns for lawyer**

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety and well-being of **Robert San Aung**, a pro-democracy activist and prisoner of conscience. Robert is suffering from dysentery, is generally in poor health and in need of urgent medical attention. **Robert San Aung** was arrested along with at least six others on 19 June 2008 for his part in a demonstration outside the home of detained pro-democracy leader Daw **Aung San Suu Kyi**, in Yangon, Myanmar's largest city. He was charged under Sections 505(b) and 143 of the Penal Code, two vaguely worded security provisions which are frequently used to criminalise acts of peaceful political dissent. He was denied access to legal counsel throughout his trial and was subsequently sentenced to two and a half years in prison for his participation in the peaceful demonstration. On 24 November 2008 **Robert San Aung** was transferred from Insein Prison, Yangon to Kale Prison, Sagaing Division. ([AI.30012009](#))

#### 27 January 2009

##### **Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's lawyer summoned to Naypyidaw**

The lawyer for detained democracy leader **Aung San Suu Kyi** has been summoned to the attorney-general's office in Naypyidaw, but refused the invitation on the instructions of his client. Kyi Win was informed by the police special branch commander's office on 24 January that he had been summoned to the new capital for a meeting on 27 January to discuss **Aung San Suu Kyi**'s appeal against her house arrest. Having made a prior agreement with **Aung San Suu Kyi** not to go to Naypyidaw without her consent, Kyi Win sent his assistant lawyer Hla Myo Myint in his place. "Our decision was for Ko Hla Myo to go and so he made all the arrangements for the trip," Kyi Win said. "I also wrote a letter to the SB and the attorney-general's office setting out the problems Ko Hla Myo could face when he gets there and I even made some notes for him," he said. "Just as he was about to catch the train [on 26 January] he was told by some people – I can't remember who they are exactly but they are SB agents – not to proceed and he had to cancel the trip." Kyi Win was summoned by special branch at around noon that day and informed that Hla Myo Myint had been barred from going to Naypyidaw because he was not accompanied by Kyi Win. Kyi Win has now demanded that the authorities allow him to see **Aung San Suu Kyi** before he goes to Naypyidaw. This is the first time Kyi Win has been summoned to the new capital since **Aung San Suu Kyi**'s appeal was lodged on 9 October last year. **Aung San Suu Kyi** has been under house arrest under the 1975 State Protection Act since the Depayin attack in May 2003. Despite the five-year limit set out by the law for holding people without charge or trial, her detention was extended by another year in May 2008. ([dvb.28012009](#))

#### 22 January 2009

##### **Lawyer Nyi Nyi Htwe's appeal rejected**

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Rangoon Division Court rejected the appeal letter for the lawyer **Nyi Nyi Htwe**, who defended political activists. On 30 October 2008 he was sentenced to 6 months imprisonment under Section 228 of the Penal Code on charges of contempt of court.

([dvh.22012009](#))

### **Lawyer Robert San Aung suffering from stomach pain**

Robert San Aung has been suffering from severe stomach pain. He is currently in Kale Prison in Sagaing Division. He is also a former political prisoner. ([rfa.23012009](#))

### **16 January 2009**

#### **Lawyer charged with obstructing an official**

**San Maung**, a lawyer who formerly worked for the Guiding Star legal aid group, has been charged with using criminal force to deter a public official from his duties, according to members of the group. **San Maung** was summoned to a Bago police station on the morning of 16 January and notified of the charge. The incident occurred when **San Maung** went to the immigration office to get a monk registration form for Abbot U Thumala from Thukhakami monastery, but township chief immigration official Khin Maung Soe refused to issue the form. Khin Maung Soe reportedly charges applicants at least 5000 kyat for the forms, and only gave one to **San Maung** when he threatened to report him to his superiors. No.1 Bago police station chief Loon Kyi filed charges against **San Maung** on 15 January, in accordance with instructions from deputy immigration official Thein Zaw. **San Maung** has been released on bail until his trial. **San Maung** has represented various human rights activists in the past, including fellow Guiding Star lawyer Aye Myint. ([dvh.19012009](#))

### **15 January 2009**

#### **Lawyer Pho Phyu arrested**

Lawyer **Pho Phyu**, who is well known for representing political activists in various trials across Burma, has been arrested by Magwe division authorities in Aung Lan township, according to his friends. **Pho Phyu** was recently dismissed by Magwe township court as defence lawyer for labour activists who were arrested after reporting a case of forced labour by local authorities in Aung Lan to the International Labour Organisation. One of his colleagues in Magwe told *DVB* that **Pho Phyu** had gone to Aung Lan again last week to deliver the necessary documents and evidence relating the case for a court hearing on 15 January. "He was also accompanied by a computer expert who was assisting his former clients in presenting data evidence stored on a computer," said the colleague. "He was arrested by Aung Lan's Special Police Information Branch on the evening of 15 January while waiting for the computer expert at a bus station to make the journey back to Rangoon." Sources close to the case in Aung Lan said **Pho Phyu** was immediately sent to a holding cell in Magwe police station where he was likely to be interrogated. **Pho Phyu** was briefly apprehended by authorities and had his belongings searched on 1 January in Nat Mauk Township in Magwe when he was preparing for an earlier hearing. He had spoken out to the media about this harassment. ([dvh.19012009](#))

### **14 January 2009**

#### **Daw Suu's lawyer frustrated by appeal delays**

**Kyi Win**, lawyer for detained democracy leader **Aung San Suu Kyi**, has expressed his frustration with the authorities' slow response to her appeal against her house arrest. **Kyi Win**'s recent requests to meet his clients have also been rejected by the authorities. "There has

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been no update yet apart from some government officials tell us it was being processed," Kyi Win said. "The order to extend Daw Suu's house arrest, which we are appealing against, will expire on 29 May. So we are worried that we might run out of time." Kyi Win said he was planning to write another official letter to authorities complaining about the delays in the process. He submitted a similar complaint letter at the end of December 2008 but has not yet received any response. ([dvv.15012009](#))

### 12 January 2009

#### **Elected MPs' lawyers denied access to court**

Lawyers defending two 1990 people's parliament representatives, **Nyi Pu** and **Dr Tin Min Htut**, were denied entry to the courtroom at Insein prison special court yesterday. **Nyi Pu** and **Dr Tin Min Htut** are facing four different charges including sedition and disrupting the national convention. Central court lawyer **Kyaw Ho** said he had arrived in court at around 9am yesterday morning with fellow lawyers Maung Maung Latt and Sithu Maung to attend the hearing. "We already have obtained all the necessary documents to act as defending lawyers for the two on 6 January," Kyaw Ho said. "We filled out and submitted forms to gain entry to the courtroom but then we were told by the deputy prison chief and another official we were not allowed in," he said. "I asked them whether it was the prison's decision to not let us in, and they said the prison had nothing to do with it and that it was an order from the special police's prosecution department." Kyaw Ho said the lawyers had asked secondary provincial judge Tin Htut of western Rangoon provincial court, who was hearing the case, to help them negotiate with government authorities to gain access to the courtroom. "It's the judge's responsibility to enable us to come to the court hearing; otherwise it disadvantages defendants whose lawyers are not present," he said. Relatives of **Nyi Pu** and **Tin Min Htut** who went to the prison to visit them yesterday were not allowed to see them due to the court hearing. ([dvv.13012009](#))

### 1 January 2009

#### **Lawyer in ILO case harassed by authorities**

Lawyer **Pho Phyu**, who is well known for representing political activists, has complained of being harassed by local authorities when he went to Nat Mauk township to attend a court hearing. The case involved farmers who were arrested after reporting land confiscation by the military to the International Labour Organisation. **Pho Phyu** said he was denied guest registration on arrival in the Magwe town on 1 January and was pressured by authorities when he tried to check into a guest house. Later that evening, while he was waiting for a bus to go back to Rangoon, a group of local government officials led by Magwe police station 1 chief Kyu Aye apprehended **Pho Phyu**. They took him to the local Ward Peace and Development Council office and questioned him while they went through his belongings and case files. "I was waiting for a bus and at around 11.30pm, Kyu Aye and some police officers arrived on motorbikes. They said they had suspicions about me and took me to the WPDC office," **Pho Phyu** said. "When we got to the office, they started looking in my bags claiming I might be carrying explosives," he said. "I told Kyu Aye that they needed proper paperwork to search my belongings and also that they didn't have the authority to look at my case files as they contain information that is between me and my clients. He said he didn't care and told me he could sue me for disturbing a government official on duty." He said Kyu Aye had also taken a report he was preparing entitled 'The struggle for human rights in [Burmese] courts', a compilation of testimonials from his clients. "The report included information about cases relating to the ILO, mainly cases of land confiscation and forced labour," **Pho Phyu** said.

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"They took away the documents under a search warrant and forced me to sign it," he said. "I explained to him that I had the right to freely consider my cases and legal procedures, but he just said it didn't matter as it was more important for them to be able to take me to court." **Pho Phyu** was in Nat Mauk to attend court hearing for his clients Hla Soe of Nat Mauk and Zaw Htay from Aung Lan. The two men were arrested by authorities on 29 October last year after they filed a report on the confiscation of land from local farmers by the army. "They did this to me intentionally to disrupt my clients' court hearing, making it impossible for me to be present or call witnesses," **Pho Phyu** said. ([dwb.08012009](#))

## Human Rights Defenders & Promoters network

A total of 42 members of the **Human Rights Defenders & Promoters** network are currently in detention.

## Other organisations

### 13 January 2009

#### Generation Wave members punished

Generation Wave members **Nyein Chan** and **Zaw Htut Aung** were moved to punishment cells (dog cells) in Insein Prison in Rangoon, because they arranged a prayer session for General Aung San and other martyrs who died. **Nyein Chan** was arrested on 9 October 2008. ([dwb.20012009](#))

### 6 January 2009

#### Generation Wave member Yan Yan Chan released

The Burmese military junta authorities on Tuesday released popular Hip Hop singer **Yan Yan Chan**, who was arrested in April 2008. The popular singer was released on Tuesday evening by the Western District Court in the notorious Insein prison in Rangoon after the judge during the court session ordered his release, a lawyer close to the singer's family said. "The judge ordered his release and so he was freed yesterday evening," the lawyer said. The lawyer, however, said he is not aware of the charges against the singer and the reasons for his release. "As far as I understand, he [**Yan Yan Chan**] was charged in a drug related crime but I am not sure what the charges exactly were. I have not been able to speak to him yet," the lawyer, who requested anonymity, told Mizzima. When contacted, **Yan Yan Chan's** family members confirmed his release but refused to elaborate. **Yan Yan Chan** was arrested in early April 2008, while staying at his friend's residence in Monywa town in upper Burma. **Yan Yan Chan** along with **Kyaw Kyaw (alias) Zayar Thaw**, was arrested in February 2008 for his political activities and for being a member of the 'Generation Wave (GW)'. He co-founded the first Burmese hip hop band the 'Acid'. ([Mizzima.07012008](#))

## Journalists, bloggers and writers

There are currently 43 media activists in detention.

### 29 January 2009

#### Appeal for Nay Phone Latt

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A media rights group has launched an appeal for the release of imprisoned Burmese dissident Nay Phone Latt on the one-year anniversary of the blogger's arrest. Paris-based Reporters Without Borders urged the international community not to forget about the 28-year-old online activist, who was sentenced to more than 20 years in prison for possessing a banned videotape. ([voa.29012009](http://voa.29012009))

### 16 January 2009

Famous blogger Nay Phone Latt's father wasn't allowed to visit to him in prison. Nay Phone Latt's mother Aye Aye Moe said, "There's no chance to see him. The prison authorities said that no family visits will be allowed for any political prisoners in January." Nay Phone Latt who was given 20 years and 6 months imprisonment, is currently held in Pa-an prison in Karen State. ([rfa.17012009](http://rfa.17012009))

### 6 January 2009

Security has been tightened at Pa-an Prison in Karen State. "There are more and more prison guards keeping watch when I visit and talk with my son, who is in Pa-an prison in Karen State," said the mother of famous blogger Nay Phone Latt following a prison visit. ([rfa.06012009](http://rfa.06012009))

## Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

### 19 January 2009

#### Suu Kyi Wins 'Trumpet of Conscience' Award

Burmese democratic leader, **Aung San Suu Kyi**, on Sunday was presented with the prestigious Trumpet of Conscience Award by Realizing the Dream, a non-profit organization set up in honor of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The award was presented by Queen Noor of Jordan and Martin Luther King III, the son of King, who heads the Realizing the Dream foundation. The award was accepted by Aung Din, the executive director of US Campaign for Burma, on behalf of **Aung San Suu Kyi**. "Daw **Aung San Suu Kyi** epitomizes the ideals of this award," Queen Noor said in her speech. "She is a freedom fighter and passionate advocate for the use of non-violent action against repression and military force." "A dedicated practitioner of Buddhism, a dedicated student of Gandhian principles and a follower of Dr. King's teachings, **Aung San Suu Kyi** has led her followers in Burma to engage the repressor with calm, passion and collective conviction," Queen Noor said. In his speech, Aung Din said he hopes President-elect Barack Obama will uphold existing economic sanctions and lead a strong diplomatic effort to organize the international community to put collective pressure on the regime. "As Dr. King did, and as you all do, **Aung San Suu Kyi** has a dream; her dream is simple and innocent: She wants to help people to have freedom from fear, freedom from oppression and freedom to exercise their fundamental rights," Aung said. "She encourages people to stand against injustice. She requests the military regime to start a meaningful political dialogue and to engage in national reconciliation amongst all stakeholders in Burma," he said. However, her quest for peace is being denied by the military regime, which wants to maintain their ruthless power by whatever means necessary, Aung said. ([Irrawaddy.19012009](http://Irrawaddy.19012009))

### 4 January 2009

#### Independence Day message from Aung San Suu Kyi

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To mark the 61st anniversary of Burma's independence from British colonial rule, detained democracy leader **Aung San Suu Kyi** displayed a quotation from her late father, Burmese national hero general Aung San, in front of her house yesterday. National League for Democracy spokesperson Nyan Win said the message was put up yesterday morning. "She placed a red banner with yellow lettering on the porch of her compound," Nyan Win said. "It said, 'Act decisively for the good of the nation and the people – General Aung San'. General Aung San was written in white," he said. "You can say that this is a message from Daw **Aung San Suu Kyi** to all the people of the country." ([DVB 05012009](#))

### 1 January 2009

#### **Aung San Suu Kyi allowed doctor's visit**

Burma's opposition leader **Aung San Suu Kyi** was allowed a New Year's Day visit Thursday by her personal doctor who declared her in good health, officials said. Doctor Tin Myo Win visited Suu Kyi at her lakeside home - where the Nobel laureate has been kept under detention in near complete isolation since mid-2003 - briefly on Thursday afternoon, a government official confirmed. 'This visit is just a regular visit for January. Her health is good,' said the official, who was briefed by Tin Myo Win. ([Earth Times 01012009](#))

## Labour activists

### 26 January 2009

#### **ILO concerned by jailing of labour activist**

A representative of the International Labour Organisation has said the ILO is concerned by the recent sentencing of labour activist **Zaw Htay** after he helped farmers in Magwe file a report to the organisation. **Zaw Htay** was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment by Magwe court on 23 January on charges of leaking sensitive information. He has worked with farmers in Nat Mauk Township to file a report to the ILO on the seizure of more than 5000 acres of land by the military. Steve Marshall, the ILO's liaison officer in Rangoon, said the organisation was doing what it could for **Zaw Htay**. "ILO is working on Ko **Zaw Htay**'s case with particular concern. Negotiations are ongoing with the Burmese government on this," Marshall said. "This is a very sensitive issue for us so it's hard to say anything now," he said. "ILO's priority in Burma is to end forced labour in the country and to stop the use of child soldiers. Other issues are outside our mandate, but we will do as much as we can to solve this."([dwb.27012009](#))

### 23 January 2009

#### **Labour activist jailed for 10 years**

Labour activist **Zaw Htay**, who helped farmers file a report to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on land seizure in Magwe's Nat Mauk Township, was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment by Magwe Township Court. A Magwe resident who attended **Zaw Htay**'s trial said judges had concluded he was guilty of leaking sensitive national information by taking photographs of the land seized by the army for the report to the ILO. His co-defendant Hla Soe, a resident of Nat Mauk, was acquitted after he agreed to testify as a government witness. About 50 farmers in Nat Mauk last year filed a report to the ILO on the confiscation of over 5000 acre of farmland in villages around the town by the army. ([dwb.26012009](#))

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### 19 January 2009

#### **Thein Soe sentenced to 2 years**

NLD Organizing member **Thein Soe** was given 2 years imprisonment by South Dagon Township Court. He was charged under section 189 of the Penal Code, regarding the threat of injury to a public servant. He always criticized the military and local authorities in South Dagon Township in Rangoon, because they recruited child soldiers. "The authority set him up for arrest because he was trying to complain to the International Labor Organization (ILO)," said Thein Soe's brother Shwe Joe. ([rfa.19012009](#))

### 15 January 2009

#### **Family denied the right to visit Wai Lin**

Putao prison authorities in Northern Kachin State didn't allow the family of **Wai Lin** to visit him there. He was arrested at a May Day ceremony in 2007 held at the American Center and was given 28 years imprisonment, charged with sections 17/1 of the Unlawful Association Act, 13/1 of the Immigration Act and 124(a) of the Penal Code. "We left Rangoon on 1 January 2009 for the trip to Putao prison, arriving there on 6 January 2009. We tried to visit him three separate times on 6, 9 and 10 January 2009. But the prison authorities refused us each time. We were just allowed to leave parcels," said **Wai Lin's** brother. ([rfa.15012009](#))

## Students

There are a total of 272 student activists currently in detention. All Burma Federation of Students' Unions member **Bo Min Yu Ko** was sentenced to 104 years in prison. Another ABFSU member 23 year-old **Kay Thi Aung**, sentenced to 26 years in prison, suffered a miscarriage in prison due to lack of adequate medical care. She still has not received the urgent medical attention she requires. 19 year-old **Kyaw Zaw** was transferred to a labour camp.

### 30 January

#### **Appeal to be submitted on behalf of Kay Thi Aung**

Lawyer Myint Thwin said he was submitting an appeal on behalf of **Kay Thi Aung**, a political prisoner who recently suffered a miscarriage in New Mandalay prison. "I'm also submitting an appeal for **Kay Thi Aung** at the divisional court and they have agreed to hear it," he said. "The rest is up to the judges – they will decide according to the law if they will reduce her term or release her." **Kay Thi Aung** was arrested in September 2008 and sentenced to 26 years' imprisonment under the Immigration Act. ([dvh.30012009](#))

### 23 January 2009

#### **AAPP and BWU condemn inadequate healthcare in prisons**

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) and the Burmese Women's Union strongly condemned the inadequate healthcare for political prisoners in Burma's prisons.

23 year-old **Kay Thi Aung** has recently suffered a miscarriage in O Bo Prison, Mandalay Division, due to lack of adequate medical care in prison. Bo Kyi, Joint-Secretary of AAPP said, "Pregnant women in prisons must be given top priority for medical treatment. **Kay Thi Aung's** tragic case is a clear example of the regime's neglect of the health and well-being of

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all political prisoners, even those who need priority treatment. We strongly condemn the regime's systematic neglect of the healthcare needs of political prisoners. The International Committee of the Red Cross must be allowed to resume prison visits immediately. They should be allowed to fulfil their independent, impartial mandate, free of restrictions." ([aapp.23012009](#))

### 21 January 2009

#### Political prisoner miscarries in detention

Political prisoner **Kay Thi Aung**, who was recently sentenced to 26 years' imprisonment, has suffered a miscarriage in New Mandalay prison, according to her mother Thidar Aung. Thidar Aung, who visited her daughter yesterday, blamed the poor living conditions in prison for the miscarriage and said her daughter had also begun to suffer from heart problems. "She was visited by doctors a day earlier as she has been in poor health due to malnutrition and she also hasn't been able to take the medicine she needs for her pregnancy lately," said Thidar Aung. **Kay Thi Aung** was arrested in September 2008 and was charged under the Immigration Act. Her husband Tun Tun is currently on the run from the authorities. Thidar Aung was refused permission to visit her daughter in prison last week. ([dvv.22012009](#))

### 17 January 2009

#### Family of Nanda Sit Aung denied the right to visit

Daw Myint Myint Than was not allowed to visit her son **Nanda Sit Aung** who is being held in Pa-an prison in Karen State. **Nanda Sit Aung** was a leader of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU). He was given 20 years imprisonment because he delivered leaflets which were against the regime's 7 step sham road map for democracy in 2003. ([rfa.17012009](#))

### 15 January 2009

#### Mother of Myo Min Zaw hospitalized after difficult journey

"I travelled from the centre of Putao (in Northern Kachin State) to the prison on foot [about 12 miles], because the transportation cost is 20,000kyats (18\$), and I couldn't afford that. Afterwards I spent 3 days in hospital because I was so tired and cold," said the mother of Myo Min Zaw. Myo Min Zaw was given 52 years imprisonment for calling for a Supreme Legislative Body on 12 September 1998. ([khitpyaing.15012009](#))

### 12 January 2009

#### Lawyer plans to appeal sentences of 11 students

Mandalay central court lawyer **Myint Thwin** is hoping to appeal the lengthy prison sentences given to 11 university students from Mandalay in November last year before the 24 January deadline. The students, who were arrested in September 2008, had no legal representation during their trials. The 11 included the leader of the 2007 generation All-Burma Federation of Student Unions for Upper Burma, Bo Min Yu. "The ABFSU leader, Bo Min Yu, was sentenced to over 100 years in prison," **Myint Thwin** said. "They had no lawyer defending them in court and I saw in their case files that they had confessed to all the allegations," he said. "Maybe they didn't have enough time to hire lawyers or maybe they were not given enough time to do so. All the allegations they confessed to were very serious ones." **Myint Thwin** said he is now trying to get in touch with the families of the group to help them appeal the sentences before the two-month deadline for appeals expires on 24 January. **Myint Thwin** has already been officially appointed to represent two of the students, **Kay Thi Aung**

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and **Wei Phyo Lwin**. "Now I'm looking through their case files and verdicts to find loopholes to get them the legal protection they need," he said. "I'm also trying to get rest of the families to hand me legal power to assist their children free of charge." **Kay Thi Aung** was sentenced to 26 years' imprisonment in total on four different charges for taking part in an underground training session in Mae Sot. "Two monks and four other youths were also included in the case against her," Myint Thwin said. "She was sentenced to eight years in prison under two unlawful association acts along with Ko **Myo Myint Aung**," he said. "We have finished writing the appeal letters and will present them on Monday then we take the process forward."([dvh.12012009](#))

### 9 January 2009

#### Teenage Activist Transferred to Labor Camp

A teenage political activist, who was sentenced last month to three years imprisonment for taking part in the 2007 monk-led demonstrations, was transferred last week from Insein Prison to Shwe Tathay labor camp in Twante Township, according to a source close to his family. Prisoners in Burmese labor camps have to endure harsh conditions and brutal treatment, and are compelled to work long days in chain-gangs at highways, dams, irrigation canals, special agricultural projects and rock quarries. **Kyaw Zaw**, 19, a second year student at Yangon Eastern University, was arrested on 13 November 2008 by Burmese Special Forces at his residence in Bahan Township, Rangoon Division, for his involvement in the 2007 pro-democracy uprising. ([Irrawaddy.09012009](#))

### 5 January 2009

#### Sittwe students protest suspension of bus services

About 70 students from Sittwe university in Arakan state marched to the university on Monday in protest at the bus companies' decision to stop services. The buses stopped running after they were forced by local authorities to cut bus fares to one third of the original price, town residents said. "The protest took place around 8.30 on Monday. Students were waiting for the buses but they didn't arrive," a local resident said. "They stopped running after being told by local authorities to cut bus fares from 150 kyat down to 50 kyat per student," he said. "The bus companies said they would not make any profit if they only charged 50 kyat because of the high fuel prices." The students decided to march to the university in protest at the suspension of services. "There was a crowd of about 70 students who were disappointed after they learnt what happened and decided to walk down to the university as a protest," the local resident said. "Not long after that, the government's armed security troops showed up. They rounded up other buses running in the area and ordered them to take the students." ([dvh.07012009](#))

### 5 January 2009

#### ABFSU leader Sithu Maung in poor health

All Burma Federation of Student Union (ABFSU) leader **Sithu Maung** is in poor health. He was sentenced to 6 years and 6 months imprisonment, and is currently being held in Buthidaung Prison in Arakan State. "He was hospitalized as an emergency case, because he had a serious pain in his stomach," said his grandmother Daw Mar Mar Wai. The family received information from local people in the area. They have not received official notification from the authorities. ([rfa.05012009](#))

### 3 January 2009

## Chronology of Political Prisoners in Burma for January 2009

### ABFSU member given 104-year sentence

A Burmese court sentenced **Bo Min Yu Ko**, a member of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (Upper Burma, ABFSU), to a total of 104 years in prison on January 3, according to the Thailand-based Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) (AAPP). **Bo Min Yu Ko**, known as **Phyo Gyi**, in his early 20s, was sentenced by a special court in Obo Prison in Mandalay. He was arrested on September 18 and charged under different laws, including six charges under the Burmese immigration act, said the AAPP. **Bo Min Yu Ko**'s 104-year sentence is the harshest punishment for a political dissident since the recent series of dissident trials which started in October 2008. He was not allowed to be represented by a lawyer, and his family was prevented from attending the trial. "This is yet another harsh and cruel sentence handed down by the regime's kangaroo courts," said Bo Kyi, joint AAPP secretary. "The courts are not independent and simply follow orders from the regime." "Criminals sentenced on drug charges are often given relatively light sentences, but political activists are given very long terms of imprisonment," Bo Kyi said. Meanwhile, three other members of the ABFSU (Upper Burma) were sentenced by an Obo Prison court in late December. **Kay Thi Aung**, 23, who is pregnant, was sentenced to 26 years; **Ko Nyi** was sentenced to 50 years; and **Wai Myo Htoo** was sentenced to 26 years, according to **Tun Tun**, an ABFSU member. Since October 2008, Burmese military courts set up in prisons across the country have sentenced scores of political dissidents and their supporters on charges relating to involvement in peaceful demonstrations or freedom of expression. At least 280 political activists have been sentenced. ([AAPP.14012009](#) and [Irrawaddy.14012009](#))

### Detained ABFSU leader in hospital with jaundice

Detained All-Burma Federation of Student Unions leader **Kyaw Ko Ko** was sent to prison hospital on 3 January suffering from jaundice, his father said yesterday. Kyaw Aye, father of **Kyaw Ko Ko**, said he had learnt his son was submitted to the prison hospital after he vomited after a court hearing in Mingalar Taung Nyunt Township court in Rangoon on 2 January. "He threw up after the court hearing on Friday but the prison's medical assistant was not there," Kyaw Aye said. "He came and checked up on him on Saturday and sent him to hospital as he was still throwing up and showing symptoms of jaundice." "He is resting in the hospital now. We are worried that he might be suffering from hepatitis B or C." Kyaw Aye said **Kyaw Ko Ko** had never suffered from hepatitis before. **Kyaw Ko Ko**, 27, is a Masters student from the Rangoon University of Economics and participated in public demonstrations in September 2007. He was arrested on 16 March 2008 along with another ABFSU leader **Nyan Lin Aung**, a final-year student from the same university. ([dvb.06012009](#))

### 1 January 2009

#### Family visitation rights denied

Kale prison authorities will not allow any families of political prisoners to visit their loved ones in January 2009, said the mother of **Ye Myat Hein** who recently visited her son in Kale prison. **Ye Myat Hein** a 17-year old first year student in Mathematics, was sentenced to 16 years imprisonment on 17 November 2008. ([rfa.01012009](#))

## Individual activists

### 15 January 2009

#### Political prisoner Zaw Naing Htwe in danger of losing his life

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Political prisoner **Zaw Naing Htwe** is in danger of losing his life at Four Mile Labor Camp near Taungoo Town in Pegu Division, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma). He is currently being held in iron shackles whilst being forced to perform hard labour by the authorities. He is not being given enough food and water. On December 15 2008 he was sentenced to 9 years in prison, charged under sections 41/b and 42 of the prisons procedural code, related to exchanging correspondence in prison. He received a letter from his elder brother, 88 Generation Students Group member **Kyaw Kyaw Htwe aka Marky**, on 2 February 2008 during a prison visit. Tate Naing, Secretary of the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma), said, "When the regime transfers political prisoners to labor camps, they are intentionally trying to kill them. There is little chance that political prisoners will return home after being in the labour camps." ([aapp.15012009](http://aapp.15012009))

### 6 January 2009

#### **Marki's brother transferred to labour camp**

**Zaw Naing Htwe**, the brother of detained 88 Generation Student leader **Kyaw Kyaw Htwe**, has been sent to a prison work camp in Taung-ngu, Bago division, according to a source close to imprisoned activists. **Zaw Naing Htwe** (also known as Kenneth), was sent to the camp earlier this week, the source said. "He was sent to a prison work camp near Taung-ngu as he was not a political prisoner," he said. "Political prisoners shouldn't be sent to prison work camps or punished with hard labour but **Zaw Naing Htwe** was sentenced to nine years' imprisonment on corruption charges," he explained. "His wife is worried that he might get sick or something like that due to the hard labour." He said the family was not informed about **Zaw Naing Htwe's** transfer to the work camp and had only found out about it later from an anonymous telephone call from a woman. Members of his family went to Insein prison yesterday and confirmed he was no longer there. **Zaw Naing Htwe** was sentenced to nine years' imprisonment for bribing three prison officials and smuggling documents out of Baik prison in Tenasserim division where his brother **Kyaw Kyaw Htwe** (also known as Marki) is serving a 65-year sentence. ([dvb.07012009](http://dvb.07012009))

### 4 January 2009

#### **Activist arrested for Independence Day salute**

Private tutor **Aung Phay** from Twante Township in Rangoon Division was arrested on Burmese Independence Day yesterday after he saluted a national monument with his hands tied. National League for Democracy spokesperson Nyan Win said **Aung Phay** had been arrested after making the gesture. "He tied his own hands up and saluted the Independence monument. He was arrested for doing that," he said. **Aung Phay's** political activities have previously brought him into conflict with the authorities. He was arrested on 14 February 2005 for saluting the independence monument in downtown Rangoon while holding a picture of general Aung San the day before, which is the birthday of Burma's national hero general Aung San. He was jailed for three years for violating regulations governing private tutors and was released from Insein prison on 14 February 2008. ([dvb.05012009](http://dvb.05012009))

## Ethnic nationalities

There are a total of 203 ethnic nationality activists currently in detention.

### 22 January 2009

#### **Chin activist's prison term reduced on appeal**

## Chronology of Political Prisoners in Burma for January 2009

Eastern Rangoon Provincial Court yesterday upheld an appeal by ethnic Chin activist **Kyaw Soe** and reduced his jail term by 13 years, according to his lawyer. **Kyaw Soe**, also known as **Kamlam Koup**, is the son of the Zomi National Congress chairman and 1990 people's parliament representative Pu Cint Sian Than. He was arrested in connection with the September 2007 demonstrations and was sentenced to 33 years' imprisonment by South Dagon township court in November last year. His lawyer Kyaw Ho said **Kyaw Soe** will now serve his two seven-year jail terms under the Press Law concurrently, followed by two other two-year sentences for sedition and causing public disorder, which will also be served concurrently. The court also decided to combine his three sentences under the Unlawful Assembly Act so he will serve the two terms of two years and one of three years concurrently, bringing his term down from seven to three years. His sentences under the Immigration Act remain unchanged. In total, the decision decreases **Kyaw Soe's** sentence by 13 years down to 20 years. Kyaw Ho said the appeal for Pu Cint Sian Than's nephew **Kat Hkat Kwal aka Anthony**, who was sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment, was rejected. ([dvh.23012009](#))

### 21 January 2009

#### Family of Kyaw Soe denied prison visit

Pu Cint Sian Than, leader of the Zomi National Congress, said his son **Kyaw Soe** (also known as **Kamlam Koup**) had been denied family visits, and parcels of food and other necessities from the family have also been refused. **Kyaw Soe** is serving 33 years in Myaung Mya prison in Irrawaddy. ([dvh.22012009](#))

## Key international developments

### 22 January 2009

#### UN envoy to visit Myanmar at month's end

The special U.N. envoy tasked with promoting political reconciliation in Myanmar will visit the military-ruled country at the end of this month, a diplomat said. The visit by Ibrahim Gambari is set for Jan. 31, the diplomat said Thursday. The diplomat spoke on condition of anonymity because the news has not yet been officially announced. The visit comes in the wake of a judicial crackdown during which government courts handed down harsh prison sentences to scores of pro-democracy activists. It will be Gambari's first visit in five months, and his seventh since he began his assignment in mid-2006. The country's pro-democracy movement, whose leader is detained Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, has been disappointed by Gambari's previous visits, which have failed to secure the release of Suu Kyi from more than 13 years under house arrest. During Gambari's last visit in August, Suu Kyi refused to meet him, and he also failed to be received by junta chief Senior Gen. Than Shwe. Nonetheless, the coming visit was welcomed by Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy. "I believe the special envoy's visit this time will be beneficial as the envoy and the NLD share the same principles on achieving political reform in the country," party spokesman Nyan Win said Friday. During Gambari's visit, Nyan Win said his party will discuss the arrests and sentencing of more than 300 NLD members and other political prisoners last year. The current junta came to power in 1988 after violently crushing a nationwide pro-democracy uprising. It called elections in 1990 but refused to honor the results after Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party won a landslide victory. ([Herald Tribune.23012009](#))

## **Chronology of Political Prisoners in Burma for January 2009**

### **14 January 2009**

#### **Human Rights Watch 2008 World Report**

The ruling junta systematically denies citizens basic freedoms, including freedom of expression, association, and assembly. It regularly imprisons political activists and human rights defenders; in 2008 the number of political prisoners nearly doubled to more than 2,150. The Burmese military continues to violate the rights of civilians in ethnic conflict areas and extrajudicial killings, forced labor, land confiscation without due process and other violations continued in 2008. On May 27, NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi had her house arrest order extended for another year, her sixth straight year of confinement. Reports indicate her health is deteriorating, and the SPDC denies her visitors or contact with the outside world. ([humanrightswatch.15012009](http://humanrightswatch.15012009))

### **2 December 2008**

**Sheikh Hasina**, Bangladesh's Prime Minister in waiting has sought the release of Burmese democracy leader **Aung San Suu Kyi** from prolonged house arrest and friendly relations with all neighborhood countries. Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina made the demand at the first press conference after her party and the Awami League-led grand alliance's resounding victory in Monday's Parliament elections. The press conference was held at the Bangladesh-China Conference Centre in Dhaka on Wednesday. "I have also been in prison for restoration of democracy in my country and she should not be in prison. We demand the release of Suu Kyi," Hasina said replying to a query. She said her government would maintain friendly relations with China, the present world's fastest-growing economic powerhouse, and seek Chinese investments in Bangladesh. ([Mizzima.02012009](http://Mizzima.02012009))