



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)

နိုင်ငံရေးအကျဉ်းသားများကူညီစောင့်ရှောက်ရေးအသင်း (မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ)

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Monthly Chronology October, 2010

Summary of current situation

There are a total of **2203** political prisoners in Burma, an overall increase in comparison to last month's figure of **2193**. In October, **5** activists were arrested and **2** political prisoners were released. The AAPP also received information about activists who were arrested and released before October 2010, and this retrospective information explains why there is actually an overall increase of 10 this month.

Total number of political prisoners	2203
These prisoners include:	Number
Monks	256
Members of Parliament	12
Students	285
Women	176
NLD members	413
Members of the Human Rights Defenders and Promoters network	31
Ethnic nationalities	233
Cyclone Nargis volunteers	20
Teachers	26
Media activists	40
Lawyers	12
Labor activists	36
88 Generation Students	39
Doctors	11

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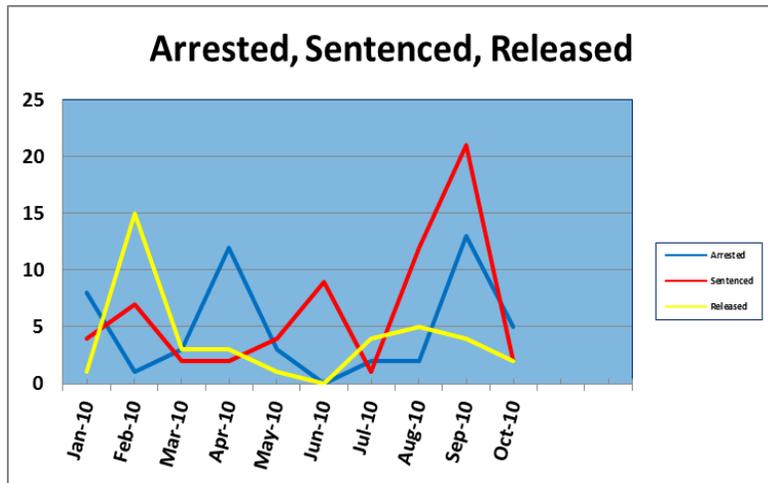
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Individual activists	607
In poor health	142

Since the protests in September 2007 leading to September's Saffron Revolution, a total of **1,170** activists have been arrested and are still in detention.

Monthly Trend Analysis

During the month of October 2010, at least **5** activists were arrested. **1** journalist and **1** activist were sentenced. **3** individuals were transferred, **2** NLD members were released.



Political prisoners continue to suffer the consequences of inhumane living conditions. At least **142** political prisoners are in poor health due to the harsh prison conditions, transfers to remote prisons where there are no doctors, and the denial of proper medical care. Monk U Yammarwadi Pyinnyarsara was transferred from Sittwe prison to an unnamed prison. Neither his family nor his lawyer knows his whereabouts.

Highlighting the month of October was the increase in campaigning on the elections campaigns, including public protests in ethnic regions, Karen State and Mon State where villagers have been barred from voting. Despite the regimes threats, activists across Burma continue to express their opposition to the election and campaign for a boycott. In October the NLD and prominent ethnic leaders united and campaigned for an election boycott across Kachin State.

October witnessed the NLD meet with 88 Generation Student Group, Ethnic leaders, and prominent politicians to sign the Zomi National Day declaration stating that they were willing to hold a second Palong Convention to reinstate the aims of the original conference, proposed by Aung San Suu Kyi's father, Aung San, in 1947. In addition, Burmese state media announced that five individuals had been arrested following a plot to detonate several bombs in Rangoon, Mandalay and Naypyidaw, being uncovered.

At the international level, of significance this month, was an announcement made by the regime, which stated that foreign journalists would not be granted access to Burma to cover the November 7 elections. A report by Tomas Quintana, the

UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Burma, was released and exposed the increasing repression faced by the people of Burma in the lead up to the elections and called for the unconditional release of all political prisoners, and for accountability and justice through a Commission of Inquiry (CoI). During the early part of October Ireland and Estonia publicly declared their support for a UN CoI into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burma. A total of 13 countries now support such an Inquiry.

Elections

On 18 October it was announced that foreign journalists would not be granted access to Burma during this years controversial elections. The junta-appointed Election Commissioner Thein Soe stated that Burma had a lot of experience with elections and would therefore need no election watchdog from outside the country. In reality, this is Burma' first election in more than 20 years, the last one was held in 1990 and the military regime refused to recognize the result.

Saturday 23 October marked the end of the Buddhist lent and a tightening in security within Rangoon following rumors that activists intended to congregate at Shwedagon Pagoda to protest the upcoming elections. Witnesses reported that two monks were taken away by military personnel for handing out pamphlets rejecting the elections and the new flag recently introduced by the government. The current whereabouts of these monks is unconfirmed. Just a few days later the Burmese state media announced that "insurgents" had plotted to detonate bombs at Rangoon airport and a number of government owned factories and workshops in Rangoon, Mandalay and Naypyidaw, with the intension of disrupting the elections. The announcement said: "Insurgents and minions of alien countries are committing terrorist attacks in the country with the intention of undermining state's peace and stability and disrupting the elections." Five individuals have been arrested in connection to the incident, which the regime is linking to the Karen National Union and the All Burma Students Democratic Front.

Over a thousand villagers from Mon State and Karen State gathered in protest calling for a boycott of the November elections. They demanded that the regime honor the results of the 1990 election. Last month many of these villagers were told that voting would not take place in their community.

During October there has been a noticeable increase in election related rights violations. Reports reveal that USDP members have been going from door to door in areas of Rangoon, Irrawaddy Division and Arakan State, asking people for advanced votes in exchange for money and other desirable items such as free National Registration Cards. However, there are many who oppose the elections and support a boycott. In Insein and Mingalardon Townships in Rangoon Division towards the latter part of October young members of the National

League for Democracy handed out leaflets declaring everyone's right not to vote if they so chose. Authorities took photographs of them but no one was arrested.

New Mon State Party, a ceasefire group, released a statement urging the people of Burma including ethnic Mon to refrain from voting. The NMSP statement said, 'All people in Burma need to oppose this election so that we can have a free and fair election in the future.'

In Arakan state several young activists posted notices on fences and lamp posts in fifteen villages across the state during the early hours of 6 October urging people to boycott the election and oppose the constitution. The posters were swiftly removed by local authorities and police resulting in some villagers being oblivious to their existence.

Cyclone Giri devastated parts of western Burma this month leaving 100 people dead and an estimated 70,795 homeless. An early warning managed to keep the death toll down. Dr. Aye Maung, Chairman of the Rakhine National Development Party, has since requested that the election be postponed in Myebon, Kyaukphyu and Munanung Townships in Arakan State stressing that a fair election was not possible after such a crisis.

UN Special Rapporteur, Tomas Ojea Quintana, described the election process as 'deeply flawed' and in an appeal urged the Government to send a strong signal to the international community proving its commitment to holding free and fair elections by unconditionally releasing all political prisoners immediately. Several other appeals for such a release have come from the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and the leaders of 48 Asian and European countries, but to no avail. With less than two weeks until the elections, Quintana went on to say that the international community should now look beyond the elections and towards options such as the Commission of Inquiry.

Economist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Amartya Sen pleaded with the international community to examine Burma's upcoming elections more thoroughly, advising that the vote could immensely hamper efforts for a democratic transition in the future. With reference to his native country India he said; "It breaks my heart to see the prime minister of my democratic country – and one of the most humane and sympathetic political leaders in the world – engage in welcoming the butchers from Burma" Sen called for a UN investigation into alleged crimes against humanity to be implemented with immediate effect.

As part of Amnesty International's 'Myanmar Freedom Campaign', Aung Khaing Min, a former political prisoner and member of AAPP, spent two weeks touring New Zealand to tell his story and to inform New Zealanders of Burma's struggle for freedom. Speaking at a Foreign Affairs Select Committee he asked the New Zealand government to denounce Burma's elections and not recognise the result. He drew attention to the regime's endeavor to convince the international

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community that they were holding free and fair elections. Aung Khaing Min also asked the New Zealand Government to convince ASEAN countries to recognise human rights violations and denounce the unfair elections. The New Zealand Government has shown willingness to press for a commission of inquiry into crimes against humanity and war crimes against the people of Burma. NZ Parliament passed a motion calling on the regime to guarantee the three freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and to immediately and unconditionally release all political prisoners.

28 October, 2010

[Alleged Rangoon bomb plot foiled](#)
[Villagers defy with boycott call](#)

27 October, 2010

[Election Boycott Leaflets Distributed](#)
[Election Postponement Demanded in Cyclone-hit Region](#)
[Mon Cease-fire Group Urges Election Boycott](#)

25 October, 2010

[Security Tight in Rangoon Amid Rumors of Protests](#)

22 October, 2010

[UN Envoy Asks Burma for 'Signal' Before Election](#)
[UN rights expert calls Myanmar election process 'deeply flawed'](#)

21 October, 2010

[Nobel laureate Sen pleads for election scrutiny](#)

19 October, 2010

[Election to Offer Little Change: UN Rapporteur](#)

19 October, 2010

[Indonesia criticises junta decision to bar journalists](#)

18 October, 2010

[No foreign media or observers for Burma poll](#)

15 October, 2010

[The General Versus The Teenage Prisoner](#)

14 October, 2010

[Myanmar Election A Forgone Conclusion, Activists Tells MPs](#)

13 October, 2010

[Parliament Calls For Release of Burmese Detainees](#)
[USDP Vote Buying Begins](#)

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7 October, 2010

Release Political Prisoners before Election: Ban
EU-Asia Summit Urges Release of Burma Prisoners
World parliaments urge release of Burma MPs
Arakanese activists post notices urging poll boycott

5 October, 2010

Stop cyber attacks against independent Burmese media

Torture

Torture remains a widespread practice in Burma's prisons and has a serious impact on the health and well-being of political prisoners. Severe cases of violence are not isolated to individuals in prison. AAPP received reports that U Nay Win, aged 81, and his son U Myo Myint were taken by local authorities from East New Dagon Township to the office of Chairperson of Ward 1, Htay Win, following a dispute over land on 26 October. U Nay Win was verbally abused while his son U Myo Myint was severely beaten and has since been hospitalized.

AAPP has documented the torture of political prisoners in Burma in a report that was released on 15th October titled "*Torture, Political Prisoners and the Un-rule of Law: Challenges to Peace, Security and Human Rights in Burma.*" The paper explores the nature of torture in Burma's interrogation centres and prisons, revealing that torture is not limited to isolated cases but inflicted in a routine, if not, systematic manner. Evidence suggests that in Burma the practice of torture, serves the purpose of extracting confessions and information; extracting money; as a punishment; and perhaps, most dangerously, of silencing dissent. The victims are often activists with different agendas, and include members of the political opposition, ethnic groups, human rights defenders and aid workers. The release of this paper coincided with a presentation by AAPP Joint Secretary Ko Bo Kyi and Hannah Scott at the first international conference on human rights organized by South East Asia Network for Human Rights.

29 October, 2010

News editor tortured, given 13 years

15 October 2010

Torture, Political Prisoners and the Un-rule of Law: Challenges to Peace, Security and Human Rights in Burma

Treatment of prisoners and their families

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Nay Win Soe, who is currently serving a 15 years sentence, is reportedly suffering from a neurological disorder and has been denied adequate treatment. On 1 October he was transferred from Hkamti prison to Kale prison. It is estimated that Burma has a prison population of more than 200,000 spread across 43 prisons and about 109 labour camps. Research detailing the number of healthcare professionals on hand uncovered a shockingly low figure with just one doctor available for every 8000 inmates. In contrast, an official from the Prison Administration Department stated that 32 doctors and an additional 77 medical staff worked in Burma's prisons and camps. Adding that, a number of specialist doctors visited prisons on a twice-weekly basis. Rangoon journal Eleven Media Group recently released photographs of detained comedian Zarganar and activist Dee Nyein Lin receiving medical treatment. However, AAPP figures show that 142 political prisoners are currently suffering from poor health in prison. Also at least 12 prisons have no doctor and more than 144 political prisoners have died in detention since 1988. This indicates that the photos released by the regime of prisoners in good health are simply a public relations stunt in the lead up to the elections.

Prisoners in Thandwe prison in southern Arakan State are facing many problems primarily related to deprivation of their basic rights. The prison authority is selling bed space to prisoners at high prices, the most attractive sleeping spots being sold at 40,000 to 80,000 kyats per year. As many prisoners can not afford to pay, they have been relocated to dirty, unfavorable spots inside the prison. Following a family visit one woman said: "I went to the prison last week to meet with my husband. He told me that his place in the prison was moved to near the toilet because he could not pay the prison authority for his bed." It has also been highlighted that food supplied by the government is insufficient leaving family member's responsible for ensuring that their detained relatives receive adequate meals. The official capacity of Thandwe prison is 500, however, at present it is holding near to 800 inmates.

15 October, 2010

Burma has 'one doctor for every 8000 prisoners'

14 October, 2010

Zarganar in Good Health, Says Rangoon Journal

10 October, 2010

Prison Authority Sells Bed Space in Thandwe Prison

Prisoners Released

October brought the release of two political prisoners. On 20 October, following the completion of a one year and six months prison term Chit Phay, NLD Vice

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President, and Aung Soe Wai, NLD Twante Township organizer, were released. In April 2009 they had been charged under section 295 for insulting religion.

According to an official in the regimes Corrections Department there are plans to release several thousand prisoners prior to the November elections, who upon release will be entitled to vote. It is, however, unlikely that prominent opposition leaders such as Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will be included in this amnesty.

11 October, 2010

Burma To Free Thousands

National League for Democracy

There are at least 413 members of the National League for Democracy party currently in prison. The NLD continues to criticize the elections and mobilised people across the country to stage a boycott. Members have been touring the country for several months to inform the population about its right not to vote, as well as to forward Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's message for unity amongst the ethnic groups. October has seen NLD leaders campaigning for a boycott of the upcoming elections in Kachin state alongside a prominent ethnic leader.

Aung San Suu Kyi has filed a lawsuit against the regime challenging their decision to dissolve the National League for democracy claiming the junta illegally disbanded her party. The appeal was accepted by the Rangoon Central Supreme Court on 5 October.

29 October, 2010

Win Tin slates UN head's rights report omissions

16 October, 2010

NLD and Ethnic Leaders Tour Kachin State

7 October, 2010

Rangoon top court accepts Suu Kyi lawsuit over NLD

6 October, 2010

Suu Kyi files lawsuit against Burmese junta

88 Generation Students

There are at least 39 members of the 88 Generation Student group currently detained. It was Min Ko Naing's 48th birthday on 18 October. This was the 19th year that he spent a day, meant for celebration, in incarceration. Celebrations

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were held at AAPP. Following a recent visit to Kengtung prison where he is currently detained his sister revealed that his health condition deteriorating, though not critical. She highlighted that the weather in Shan State was getting cold and affecting the severity of his arthritis.

18 October, 2010

Support Min Ko Naing and his fellow democracy activists

Min Ko Naing Celebrates Birthday in Prison

Ethnic Nationalities

There are at least 233 ethnic nationalities held in prison. It has been reported that ethnic leaders who formally contested the 1990 general election have united with the National League for Democracy to campaign for a boycott of the November elections. The NLD party was joined by the leader of the Arakan League for Democracy party and Aye Thar Aung, the secretary of the Committee Representing the People's Parliament on a week long roadshow in Kachin State. On their journey they also briefed NLD township and village committee members from 11 townships in Mandalay Division.

NLD Vice Chairman, U Tin Oo, and Executive member, U Win Tin, met with 88 Generation Student Group, Ethnic leaders, and prominent politicians to sign the Zomi National Day declaration. The Declaration stating that they were willing to hold a second Palong Convention to reinstate the aims of the original conference, proposed by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's father, General Aung San, in 1947.

25 October, 2010

NLD Signs Zomi National Day declaration

13 October, 2010

Ethnic leaders join NLD vote-boycott roadshow

Monks

There are at least 256 monks currently held in prison. U Yammarwadi Pyinnyarsara, who is currently serving an eight year and three month sentence accused of possessing obscene reading material and insulting religion, has been transferred from Sittwe prison to an unnamed prison. This information was obtained following a visit by friends who were turned away on their arrival and denied the right to see him. Neither his family or defense lawyer were informed of his transfer. His new location will inevitably cause problems for both his family and lawyer.

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On 13 October, monk U Okkantha, convicted in September for anti-election activities was transferred from Insein to Patheingyi prison in Irrawaddy Division. Prior to his arrest, he was suffering from a mild stomach ailment but it has been reported that during interrogation he was brutally tortured which has worsened the pain; it is also believed that he is suffering from kidney problems and has a high fever. His sister is very concerned that his new location will prevent family visits due to the great distance and the high cost of travel.

Cyclone Nargis Volunteers

There are at least 20 Cyclone Nargis volunteers held in prison. State media reported that comedian Zarganar, currently detained for his efforts to distribute aid following Cyclone Nargis and criticizing the government's slow response to foreign media, had received an eye test at Myitkyina Prison in Kachin State and is in good health. However, it is likely that this is an attempt to appease the international community in the lead up to the elections. In June earlier this year prison authorities issued a new regulation permitting only immediate family members to visit Zarganar, this only includes his wife and children who currently live in the USA, consequently Zarganar's has had no family visits for over five months now.

14 October, 2010

[Zarganar in Good Health, Says Rangoon Journal](#)

Journalists, Bloggers and Writers

There are currently at least 40 journalists held in prison. On October 13, Seikkan Township court in Insein prison sentenced Kandarawaddy news journal editor Nyi Nyi Tun and businessman Soe Tun Oo to 13 and 8 years imprisonment. Both men were initially arrested in October 2009 following suspicions that they had connections to a series of bomb blasts that went off in Rangoon earlier in the month; these allegations were apparently discarded but both were arbitrarily sentenced. Nyi Nyi Tun was charged under section 17(1) of the Unlawful Associations Act, section 13(1) of the Immigration Emergency Provisions Act, section 505(b) of the Penal Code and section 6(1) of the Wireless Act. Soe Moe Tun was sentenced for violating the association and immigration acts. AAPP has received information detailing the severe torture Nyi Nyi Tun was subjected to during interrogation.

During the early part of October *The Favourite Journal*, a Rangoon based publication, was suspended by Burma's censorship board following the publication of a cartoon which in the eyes of the regime served to mock the junta-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party. This was merely based on the fact that the cartoon's outfit resembled that of the regimes.

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Reporters Without Borders has continued to appeal to the military for the release of Nay Phone Latt since his arrest in November 2008. Nay Phone Latt, was detained for writing about the struggle for free expression amongst the young people of Burma, primarily in the aftermath of the Saffron revolution. Despite his incarceration he continues to write and often sends extracts of his work to Reporters Without Borders.

Following the announcement that foreign journalists would be denied access to Burma to cover the upcoming controversial elections Reporters Sans Frontieres ranked the country's media environment at 174 out of 178; the fifth most repressive in the world, just ahead of Iran and North Korea. With reference to Burma, Reporters Sans Frontieres said 'freedom is not allowed any space in Burma, where a parliamentary election is due to be held next month, and the rare attempts to provide news or information are met with imprisonment and forced labour'. The results of the 2010 Corruption Index from Transparency International unsurprisingly revealed Burma the second most corrupt state in the world, sharing its position with Afghanistan. Somalia came in at the bottom.

During October, it was revealed that Democratic Voice of Burma was one of the top favorites for the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize. Prior to the results being announced *DVB's* executive director, Aye Chan Naing, said: "Just being considered for this most prestigious award makes us very proud of all our journalists, especially those who are in prisons, and all the brave people of Burma." The Nobel Peace Prize results revealed the winner to be political prisoner Liu Xiaobo, for his work to promote democracy, human rights and defend freedom of expression in China. There are currently seventeen *DVB* journalists detained inside Burma.

22 October, 2010

Jailed blogger manages to send poems written in his cell

15 October, 2010

Editor faces 13 years behind bars

7 October, 2010

DVB 'top three' for Nobel Peace Prize

4 October, 2010

Journal Suspended For Cartoon

Women

There are at least 177 women currently detained. There is no news to announce in October.

Human Rights Defenders & Promoters Network

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There are at least 31 Human Rights Defenders and Promoters Network currently detained. There is no news to announce in October.

Labour Activists

There are at least 36 labour activists currently detained. There is no news to announce in October.

Students

There are at least 285 students held in prison. In September 11 university students, were arrested in Rangoon for distributing leaflets calling for a boycott of the upcoming elections. These students include technology students Tha Htoo Aung and Zarni Lin; Zin Min Htet, an extra-mural student; Kyaw Thiha and Kyaw Thu Soe, who are studying geography; and economics student Ye Lin Phyo. AAPP has since discovered that Ye Lin Phyo and Cham Myae Aung were released on 21st September, however, the others remain in detention and have not yet been charged.

On 14 October, details of Dee Nyein Lin, a leading member of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions, appeared on the website of Rangoon journal Eleven Media Group stating that he had received an eye test on July 22 in Monywa Prison in Sagaing Division. However, it is very possible that such treatment is simply a ploy by the authorities.

Thiha Yazar, a former student leader and political prisoner, has written a book, together with journalist Paul Pickrem, which tells the story of his experience as a political activist and prisoner after he was sentenced to death for High Treason at the aged of just 25. His sentence was later reduced to 18 years, 6 of which were spent in solidarity confinement. The book, "*No Easy Road: A Burmese Political Prisoner's Story*," will be officially released in conjunction with the 7 November elections.

27 October, 2010

[Student-youth alliance back second Panglong declaration](#)

21 October, 2010

[Former Political Prisoners Fear Repatriation](#)

14 October, 2010

[Dee Nyein gets eye test, Says Rangoon Journal](#)

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Lawyers

There are at least 12 lawyers detained in prison. There is no news to announce in October.

Individual Activists

There are at least 613 activists detained in prison. There is no news to announce in October.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's current sentence ends on 13 November, just days after the scheduled 7 November election, which analysts say, is hardly coincidental. If Daw Suu is granted freedom it is quite possible that the regime will try to use her release to appease the international community and distract attention from the mock elections designed to prolong military rule. As highlighted by Joseph Crowley, a US congressman; "We've seen this 'catch and release' game by the Burmese junta before—they release Aung San Suu Kyi to create a facade of change and then turn around and unfairly arrest her again." Supposing Daw Suu is released early next month it is very likely that the regime will place movement restrictions on her. However, Win Tin, one of the leaders of the NLD, has spoken of their plans to carry out mass activities through peaceful means across the country with the aim of pressuring for a dialogue with the regime.

In response to a recent announcement, that Daw Suu can vote in the upcoming elections, her lawyer relayed a message to the public stating that as the NLD would not be competing in the elections Daw Suu had no party to vote for, and would therefore not vote. It should be noted that the decision to put her on the electoral roll went against Burmese law, which states that convicted individuals include those serving prison terms and those who are undergoing an appeal process are not eligible to vote. When domestic media attempted to communicate the news of Daw Suu's name appearing on the electoral role press censors rejected such publications not wanting Daw Suu's name to appear in the media. Daw Suu has suggested that the people of Burma express their discontent with the elections but has avoided asking voters to take precise action, not wanting to give the government any base for further prosecution. Daw Suu's lawyer, Nyan Win, made an inspiring statement in support of the boycott: 'Daw Suu did not say what the people should do. As for myself, since the government did not honor my ballot in the 1990 election, I will also not honor their election.'

Burma's highest court agreed to hear a third and final appeal against the house arrest of Daw Suu relating to her latest sentence of 18 months charged for breaching the terms of her house arrest following an uninvited visit by US citizen,

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John Yettaw, who swam across Inya Lake to her home in 2009. The hearing went ahead on 29 October and the judgment is expected in early November.

30 October, 2010

Lawyer optimistic over Suu Kyi' appeal

29 October, 2010

Suu Kyi legal team expects her release before election

Burma court hears Suu Kyi appeal

21 October, 2010

Top court to hear Suu Kyi's final appeal

18 October, 2010

Aung San Suu Kyi plans to join Twitter

15 October 2010

Suu Kyi: Reject 'Unfair' Elections

12 October, 2010

Suu Kyi refuses to vote in elections

1 October 2010

Release Suu Kyi Now: US Congressman

Burma Abuzz Over Possible Release of Suu Kyi

Censors Bar Reporting of Suu Kyi's Voting Right

Suu Kyi Won't Care Another Depayin After Her Release

Key International Developments

In the lead up to the elections there has been significant international media attention and commentary from the international community. Tomas Quintana, the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Burma released a report exposing the increasing repression faced by the people of Burma in the lead up to the elections and called for the unconditional release of all political prisoners, and for accountability and justice through a commission of inquiry, which was warmly welcomed by AAPP. During the early part of October Ireland and Estonia declared their support for a UN Commission of Inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burma. They join France, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, the USA, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Lithuania. Yet the European Union, a vital element for the success of such an inquiry, remains very quiet. In the lead up to the October ASEAN meeting in Hanoi there were strong hopes that Indonesia, being the largest member, would show support for a commission of inquiry,

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however, the ASEAN's policy of non-interference appears to have prevented such backing.

At a UN committee meeting Thant Kyaw, Burma's United Nations Ambassador, informed attendees that his country had no political prisoners, stressing that 'no individual had been incarcerated simply for his or her political beliefs.' He went further to say that the November elections would be free and fair and emphasized their significance in the road to a peaceful and developed democratic State. He later gave emphasis to Quintana's proposal stating that there were no grounds for an inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burma.

Even Though I'm Free I Am Not is a global documentary exhibition by James Mackay about Burma's political prisoners. Images from the project have been published in the Guardian this month, featuring figures such as UK MP, David Miliband, bearing the name of Khun Bedu on his hand, who is currently serving a 37 year sentence for campaigning against the Constitution. As well as Khin Cho Myint, a former political prisoner and member of AAPP, bearing the name of her friend, Myo Min Htike, currently suffering silently in prison.

30 October

[Philippines: Flawed Burma Vote Will Damage Asean](#)

29 October

[Clinton Calls on Myanmar to Change its Policies, Release Aung San Suu Kyi](#)

28 October

[Burma needs a war crimes inquiry](#)

27 October

[China halts Burma war crimes inquiry](#)

22 October, 2010

[Corruption Perceptions Index 2010 results](#)

22 October, 2010

[Junta Envoy Says Burma Has No Political Prisoners](#)

20 October, 2010

[AAPP Urges International Support for Commission of Inquiry](#)

20 October, 2010

[Press Freedom Index 2010](#)

20 October, 2010

[Rhetoric is not enough: Governments must act now and support a commission of inquiry on Burma.](#)

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15 October, 2010
Indonesia urged to back war crimes probe

11 October, 2010
EXILED

11 October, 2010
Tutu will not Stop Support for 'Free Burma'

October 3, 2010
Burma activists say hands up for democracy
Hands up for Burma

2 October, 2010
Burma Action Ireland welcomes Irish support for UN Commission of Inquiry

Opinion Section

Nick Clegg, Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, voiced his opinion about the upcoming elections with The New York Times stating that the result was a foregone conclusion. ‘The consequence for Burma is the return to power of a ruling elite that has presided over widespread human rights abuses, including arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, rape and torture.’ He went further to put emphasis on the inevitability of this if the international community stood by and accepted the sham elections designed to perpetrate military rule. ‘These failings are undeniable. Yet some are tempted to overlook the deep flaws in the approaching election. Clearly, it would be more convenient for the international community to quietly agree that any election is better than no election.’

Following a standing ovation at the Labour Party conference last month and a sponsored bungee jump on 16 October to raise awareness and financial support for over 2,100 political prisoners, including her father Mya Aye, detained inside Burma, Wai Hnin shared her opinion about the upcoming elections with the guardian. She strongly emphasized how the November elections would be nothing more than a masquerade simply designed to appease the world. She touched upon signs which suggest the presence of fear amongst the regime and how, as a child, she grew up with the constant fear of the military arriving at her home and taking her father away.

October 25, 2010
Burma's sham elections by Waihnin Pwint Thon

October 3, 2010
Myanmar's Sham Election by Nick Clegg

Conclusion

As the 2010 elections draw near the presence of demonstrations and campaigns for a boycott were increasingly visible throughout the country. Violations of civil and political rights in Burma are escalating and 2203 political prisoners remain detained inside Burma. Those targeted in the past for challenging the regime are being targeted once again. These individuals are primarily students, monks, and activists involved in the 1988 pro-democracy uprising and the 2007 Saffron Revolution.

In October, words reached the media that thousands of prisoners could be released prior to the November elections. It is possible that some political prisoners, who are near to completing their sentence, could be included in such an amnesty. Aung San suu Kyi's sentence is due to end on 13 November, a week after the elections and speculations suggest that she will be released then. It is, however, unlikely that Suu Kyi or other prominent opposition figures will be released prior to the elections, and such a gesture should be seen as a ploy to appease the international community.

While the regime continues to intimidate, and imprison political dissidents, isolating them from their potential audiences, the elections can be neither free nor fair, nor will there be room for national reconciliation so desperately needed if this country is to move forward to a genuine democratic transition.