



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)

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TRAININGS

Human Rights, Documentation of Human Rights Violations, and Transitional Justice Training Held in Mon State and Arakan State

As a part of the series of regular Human Rights, Documentation of Human Rights Violations, and Transitional Justice Training, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) (AAPP) held two long trainings in the month of December. A 12-day training from December 5-16 was organized in Kyaikto Town, Mon State and in Taungup Town in Arakan State.

The 12-day training from December 5-16 in Kyaikto Town was administered by AAPP's Human Rights Trainer, Ko Saw Than Hlaing, and Human Rights Documentation, and Transitional Justice Trainer, Ko Kyaw Oo. A total of 18 people (4 women and 14 men) participated in the training. Participants included members of National League for Democracy (NLD), Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), National Unity Party (NUP), New Mon State Party (NSMP), Mon Literature and Culture Group, Karen-Mon Disability Group, Hindu Religious Organizations, Civil Society Organization (Kyaikto) and university students. Participants were from Mon, Burmese, Hindu and Muslim backgrounds. Mon State faces arbitrary detention and torture.

The 12-day training on December 5-16 in Taungup Town was administered by AAPP's Human Rights Trainer, Ma Zun Pun, Human Rights Documentation Trainer and Transitional Justice Trainer Ko Sai Myint Thu. A total of 28 people (12 women and 16 men) participated in the training. Participants are members of National League for Democracy (NLD), students and workers. They are from Arakanese, Burmese, Arakanese-Chin and Chin Ethnic backgrounds. Arakan State faces land disputes, discrimination and bribery.

These trainings served as capacity building measures, aiming to encourage and inform the participants about democratic principles and help them protect their human rights.



Figure 1 TJ training in Taungup Town in Arakan State

DISCUSSIONS

Human Rights Responsibility and Accountability Talk at Bago University

On December 10 at Bago University, a human rights responsibility and accountability talk was organized by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), Bago University Teachers Union, and 88 Peace and Society from Bago in honor of the 70th anniversary of Human Rights Day. Rector of Bago University, Doctor Daw Aye Aye, delivered an opening speech and AAPP's secretary U Tate Naing, U Aung Zaw Htwe from Equity Myanmar, and Parliament Representative Daw Kyi Pyar led the talk with Daw Thin Thin Aung as a moderator. Those leading the talk answered questions from students who attended the talk.



Figure 2 Human Rights Responsibility and Accountability Talk at Bago University

ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING

Meeting with Public Affairs Management Committee

On December 12, according to an invitation from the Public Affairs Management Committee of Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House), ten members, including the chairman of the committee and AAPP representatives U Aung Myo Kyaw, Ma Than Than Htay and Ko Wunna Nwe, met at the committee’s meeting hall in Parliament to discuss prison and law reform.



Figure 3 Public Affairs Management Committee

Meeting with Former Political Prisoners and Ambassadors of France and Czech Republic in Myanmar

The commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of breakfast with President Francois Mitterrand, in honor of the Czechoslovak dissidents, and the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was held by H.E. Ambassador Christian Lechervy (Ambassador of France to Myanmar) and H.E. Ambassador Jaroslav Doleček (Ambassador of Czech Republic to Myanmar) at Chatrium Hotel Yangon. Eight former political prisoners from Burma, who are working on human rights and democracy in different areas,

were invited and attended the event, including Ko Tate Naing (Secretary of AAPP) and Ko Zaw Moe (Deputy of Foreign Affair at AAPP). The Ambassadors and the attendees had a fruitful meeting and discussed the peace process in Burma, the challenges for peace process, the 2008 constitution, existing laws, the human rights situation of Burma, the challenges in improving such situations and the protection of human rights in Burma.



Figure 4 Meeting with Former Political Prisoners and Ambassadors of France and Czech Republic in Myanmar

Meeting with Chairman of Bago Division Parliament

On December 14, Chairman of Bago Division Parliament U Khin Maung Yin and AAPP’s Rangoon Office Chief U Aung Myo Kyaw, AAPP’s Mental Health Assistance Parogram (MHAP) Supervisor Ko Bo Bo Lynn and Counselor Ko Lwin Moe Myint met at the office of the Chairman of Bago Division Parliament to discuss treatments for mental health problems and the need for a better mental health policy. On December 28, we discussed these issues in further detail with parliament representatives in Bago Division Parliament.



Figure 5 Meeting with Chairman of Bago Division Parliament

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Attendance at the Ceremony of the 70th Anniversary of UDHR

On December 10, AAPP-MHAP Trainer Ko Htin Aung and Counselor U Moe Kyaw attended the ceremony of the 70th Anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which was organized by Myanmar Nationals Human Rights Commission (MNHRC).



Figure 6 70th Anniversary of UDHR.

Attendance at the Ceremony of the 70th Anniversary of Human Rights Days

On December 10, Daw Hnin Pan Eain and Daw Aye Thida from the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) attended the ceremony of the 70th Anniversary of Human Rights Days, which was organized by Human Rights Prevention and Promotion Group. Daw Hnin Pan Eain delivered a talk at this ceremony.



Figure 7 Daw Hnin Pan Eain delivering a talk in Human Rights Day

Donated Money Provided for Political Prisoners

On December 10, a group of former political prisoners from Insein Township went to Insein Prison to provide money donated for political prisoners Ko Moe Yan Naing and Ko Aung Ko Htwe on behalf of AAPP.

AAPP Launch of 'Prison Overcrowding and The Need for Urgent Reform' Report

On December 13, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) launched our report titled "Prison Overcrowding and The Need for Urgent Reform" at the Green Hill Hotel in Yangon. Rangoon Division's Parliament Representatives, former political prisoners, representatives from civil society organizations (CSOs), reporters from different media agencies and interested people attended the ceremony. AAPP Secretary U Tate Naing, Rangoon Office Chief U Aung Myo Kyaw and Officer In-Charge of the Documentation and Research Team/Deputy Foreign Affairs Ko Zaw Moe answered questions of attendees.



Figure 8 Prison Overcrowding and The Need for Urgent Reform Report Launch.

Observation of the Drawing of the UDHR

On December 14, AAPP Secretary U Tate Naing went to 32nd street of Rangoon with Rangoon Region Hluttaw MP for Pabedan Township U Naing Oo, to contribute to observe the drawing of of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).



Figure 9 Observation of anniversary of UDHR at 32nd street

Delivered a Talk at the Ceremony of the Human Rights Days in Moebyel

On December 10, trainer Wunna Nwe from the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), delivered a talk about human rights at the Ceremony of the Human Rights Days which was led by the Alin Thit Social Development Organization (ALT) in Moebyel Town, Kayah State



Figure 10 Human Rights Day in Kayah State

Interview with Sky Net Up to Date

On December 18, Sky Net Up to Date Program of Sky Net TV Channel came to the office of the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) in Rangoon and interviewed Officer In-Charge of the Documentation and Research Team of AAPP Ko Zaw Moe regarding the “Prison Overcrowding and The Need for Urgent Reform” report that was released by AAPP on December 13.



Figure 11 Sky Net Up to Date Interview Ko Zaw Moe

Interview with Channel B Media Group

On December 18, Channel B Media Group interviewed Secretary of the Office of the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) U Tate Naing and Central Executive Committee Member of People’s Party Ko Thar Gyi regarding the “Prison Overcrowding and The Need for Urgent Reform” report that was released by AAPP on December 13 .

International Visitors Visited AAPP’s Mae Sot Office

On December 9, 13 university students from Norway, December 12, two visitors from Germany and December 28, two visitors from Japan visited to AAPP’s Mae Sot Office, Thailand. Ma Moe Pan Phyu from AAPP explained AAPP activities, and the conditions endured by political prisoners and the human rights situation in Burma, our museum exhibits and answered questions.



Figure 12 Visitors visited Mae Sot Office

MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (MHAP)

Mental Health Awareness and Self Care Training Provided

In December 9 - 13, Kyaw Soe Win, In-charge of MHAP and Chit Ko Linn, supervisor of MHAP travelled to Taunggoke, Arakan State to provide mental health awareness and self-care training to 21 participants of AAPP’s Basic Human Rights, Human Rights Documentation and Transitional Justice training. The participants got more knowledge in mental health, to against stigma on common mental health problems.

In December 11-15, Htin Aung, MHAP Trainer travelled to Pyin Oo Lwin, Mandalay Region to give the Stress management and self-care training to management level staffs of Population Services International (PSI) by the organization’s invitation.

In December 16-18, Htin Aung, MHAP Trainer travelled to Myawaddy, Karen State to give the Stress management and self-care training to medical nurses of Myitta Mon Specialist Clinic in Myawaddy, Karen State by owner’s invitation. 10 nurses, three pharmacy staffs and one receptionist attended the training.



Figure 13 Stress Management and Self-Care Training

Ceremony of Presentation and Explanation the Report Compiled by MHAP

On December 28, AAPP-MHAP held a ceremony of presentation and explanation of “Report of Common Mental Health Disorders in Burma and the need for Comprehensive Mental Health Policies” to Bago Division Parliament Representatives in Bago Division Parliament. This report is written by AAPP. Ko Than Htike Win from AAPP was the master of ceremony and Vice Chairman of Bago Division Parliament U Kyi Zin delivered a opening speech and U Bo Bo Lynn from MHAP presented a brief history of AAPP. Then, MHAP Chief U Kyaw Soe Win presented and explained the first part of the report and MHAP Trainer Ko Htin Aung presented and explained the second part of report and U Kyaw Soe Win and Ko Htin Aung answered the questions of the parliament representatives.

(In December 28, Kyaw Soe Win, In-charge of MHAP, Htin Aung, trainer of MHAP and 7 other MHAP supervisor and counselors travelled to Bago, to make the presentation to the member of Bago Regional Hluttaw on the report of Common Mental Health Disorders in Burma and the need for Comprehensive Mental Health Policies that is written by AAPP. As a result, parliament members asked some questions and gave positive feedback regarding the report. They said that they will work with National Hluttaw regarding the creation of a mental health policy.)



Figure 14 Report introduced by MHAP (Bago Division Parliament)

Counseling

In December, a counselor visited the Women’s Development Center in Yangon on every Sunday. One client completed their counseling sessions and one client is continuing their treatment.

Two counselors visited the Women’s Vocational Training Center in Yangon on every Saturday and Sunday. One client completed their counseling sessions and five clients are continuing their treatment.

One supervisor and five counselors visited to Hgnet Aw Sann Youth Training Center (Juvenile prison) on every Monday. In December, 17 clients are receiving their treatment.

In December, three counselors and one supervisor are providing counseling services to seven clients from Training School for the Disabled Adult in Yangon which is under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

In December, AAPP-MHAP Yangon team counselors are also providing CETA mental health counseling services for former political prisoners and their family members, other vulnerable population in Yangon area.

A counselor from Magwe Region is providing CETA mental health counseling services for HIV patients in Nat Mauk and Taung Twin Gyi in Magwe Region.

A counselor from Bago Region is also providing CETA mental health counseling services for former political prisoners, their family members and other vulnerable populations in Bago area.

AAPP-MHAP Mandalay team counselors are also providing CETA mental health counseling services for former political prisoners and their family members, other vulnerable population in Mandalay area.

AAPP-MHAP Mae Sot team provided CETA mental health counseling services for migrant population, the victims of human trafficking, sex workers and victims of civil war in Myanmar. In December, 18 female and 15 male clients are receiving their treatment and three female and two male clients are completed their counseling sessions.