

Political Prisoner Profile

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| NAME: | Aung Ko Htwe | | |  |
| GENDER: | Male | ETHNICITY- RELIGION: | | |
| PARENTS NAME: | U Hla Win | | | |
| DATE OF BIRTH: | 27 years | | | |
| IDNTITY: | | | | |
| OCCUPATION: | | | | |
| EDUCATION: | He was recruited as child soldier when he was an 8th grade student | | | |
| LAST ADDRESS: | Dagon Seikkan Township in Rangoon Division | | | |
| ARREST DATE: | 18.8.2017 | PHOTO | RFA | |
| SECTION OF LAW: | 2018: Mar 28 Section 7 of the Union Seal Law 2017: Section 505(b) of the Penal Code | | | |
| PLAINTIFF | Lieutenant Colonel Myo Myint Aung. Judge Chit Ko Ko of the Dagon Seikkan Township Police Major Maung Maung from the Dagon Seikkan Township police station | | | |
| SENTENCING HISTORY: | He was sentenced to six months imprisonment under Section 228 of the Penal Code on February 14, 2018. He was sentenced to two years with hard labor under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code on March 28, 2018. | | | |
| COURT HEARING: | Botataung Township Court Dagon Seikkan Township Court | | | |
| NAME OF PRISON: | Insein Prison | | | |
| RELEASE DATE: | | | | |
| HEALTH CONCERNS: | | | | |
| CURRENT STATUS SUMMARY: | | | | |
| He is serving his prison sentence in Insein Prison. On September 5, Botataung Township Court in Rangoon Division decided to prosecute him under Section 7 of the Union Seal Law for standing on the 2008 constitution in protest at his previous prosecution. Police Major Maung Maung from the Dagon Seikkan Township police station filed the case against him. | | | | |
| CAREER BACKGROUND: | | | | |
| When Aung Ko Htwe was 14 years old, accompanied with his friend he went to Pyinmana in October 2005. On the way back, he was abducted by an army sergeant at the main railway station in the commercial capital | | | | |

Rangoon. The friend who was accompanying him managed to escape to the restroom, leaving Aung Ko Htwe to be forcibly taken to a recruitment center in Mingaladon township in the northernmost part of Rangoon. When he arrived at the center, the sergeant told a major that he had taken the boy by force. The officer told the sergeant to return Aung Ko Htwe to his home, but he failed to obey the order. Aung Ko Htwe told Radio Free Asia (RFA) Myanmar Service that “although this sergeant was asked by a major to take me back home, he took me instead to a military market in Mingaladon and sold me for 100,000 kyats (U.S. \$72) to another soldier”. From there, he was taken to a soldier recruitment center at a town in central Burma of Mandalay for two months, describing his stay there the worst days of his life. “We were treated like animals, trapped in an army hall... There were about 100 boys in a 50 square ft room with no bathroom. If we needed to leave the hall to use the bathroom, we’d have to go out without any clothes because they were worried that we’d run away.” The child soldiers were made to perform work such as unloading timber from trucks after midnight. After two months, Aung Ko Htwe was sent to another training camp in Monywa, capital of northwestern Burma’s Sagaing region, about 136 kilometers (85 miles) northwest of Mandalay. “The army camps are worse than jails,” said Aung Ko Htwe, now 26 years old. “I was entrapped and saw no one, including any family members.” After completing four months of training, he was assigned to the Military Infantry Unit 332 in 2012 in Laukkai, capital of the ethnic Kokang region in the northern part of Shan state near the Chinese border. He served as a security guard there for a year. Because Aung Ko Htwe dreamed of becoming a doctor, he asked military officials to let him return to school. The officer to whom he reported obliged, and he was sent to a school for soldiers in Lashio, the largest town in northern Shan state. He quickly discovered, however, that the “students” were required to work in the fields all day. “I was able to go to a school for soldiers, but we were not taught,” he said. “We couldn’t study. We had to work on corn and sugarcane farms. When we got back from the farms, there was no food left for us, so we ran away.” Aung Ko Htwe and two other child soldiers escaped from the unit and robbed the owner of a motorcycle. One of the other boys choked the man to death. All three were caught and sent to the Lashio military camp, where they were investigated for seven months. Authorities then sent him to Lashio prison where he learned that he had received a death sentence. He was 16 years old at the time. The conditions in the jail were better than those in the army’s prison cells, and he was allowed to contact his family. When his family reported to the authorities that he was recruited as child soldier, his death sentence was reduced to a life sentence and reduced again to a sentence of ten years imprisonment in 2015. On July 7, 2017, he was released from Mandalay Obo Prison due to time served.

DETAILS OF ARREST:

On August 18, 2017, he was arrested and charged for allegedly defaming the Military after telling the story of his abduction and forced conscription to RFA’s Myanmar Service.

DETAILS OF IMPRISONMENT:

On February 14, 2018, he was sentenced to six months imprisonment under Section 228 of the Penal Code by Dagon Seikkan Township Court’s Second Township Judge Htet Htet Aung . After his prosecution under 505(b) of the Penal Code was read by Judge Chit Ko Ko of the Dagon Seikkan Township he shouted and insulted the Judge.

On March 28, Aung Ko Htwe was sentenced to two years imprisonment with hard labor under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code for allegedly “inciting the public” after telling his story of forced conscription to RFA. Moreover, he was charged under Section 7 of the Union Seal Law for standing on the 2008 constitution in protest at his previous prosecution in January 17. On June 26, Moe Kyaw, Rangoon’s East Court Judge decided that Aung Ko Htwe’s next hearing would take place at Botahtaung Township Court on June 29. Aung Ko Htwe’s family applied to change the courts due to the previous problems between Aung Ko Htwe and Judge Chit Ko Ko. On September 5, Botahtaung Township Court decided to prosecute him under Section 7 of the Union Seal Law.

DETAILS OF TORTURE:

He was investigated for seven months at the Lashio military camp. Aung Ko Htay said he wasn't involved in the motorcycle owner's murder. "I told the investigator we didn't kill him, but we were not freed," he said. "We were in a prison cell for seven months with shackles on our hands and feet and fed rice mixed with sand." Unable to withstand these conditions any longer, he agreed to sign a document saying that he had been involved in the killing.

Profile prepared by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) on 15 October 2018.