MAY NEWSLETTER 2020

Talks
Self-Care and Mental Empowerment Talk at 20 Quarantine Centers

AAPP has provided numerous self-care and mental empowerment talks at quarantine centers (COVID-19 Infectious Disease Control Center) in Bago and Irrawaddy Division to help reduce the stress of residents, health workers & volunteers, in order to help them be more aware of COVID-19 prevention techniques.

The talks were led by AAPP’s counselor Hnin Pan Eain and AAPP Rangoon Office Head Aung Myo Kyaw, AAPP’s members Wana Nwel, Kyaw Oo, Lwin Moe Myint, Khin Maung Win, Maung Maung Naing, Moe Kyaw Oo, and Than Htike participated. Local parliamentary representatives, local officials, Township administrators, Township doctors, 88 Generation Peace and Open Society members, former political prisoners, volunteers, and COVID-19 Protection Committee Members cooperated.

From May 7 to May 12, AAPP’s counselors were able to deliver the motivational speeches on promoting mental health to; those in quarantine, health volunteers & workers, police officers, and other relevant department personnel in 15 quarantine centers, Kyonpyaw Township, Ingapu Township, Naungbin Township, A total of 1,447 quarantines of people were present and 176 volunteers attended the speech.

- 190 quarantines of people and 97 health volunteers at eight quarantine centers in Kyonpyaw Town
- 332 quarantines of people and 103 health volunteers at seven quarantine centers in Ingapu Town
- 111 quarantines of people and 20 health volunteers at four quarantine centers in Bago Town
- 772 quarantines of people and 40 health volunteers at two quarantine centers in Bayargyi Town
- 42 quarantines of people and 16 health volunteers at a quarantine center in Nyaunglebin Town

The following links are also available:
- https://www.facebook.com/hnin.eain.5
- https://www.facebook.com/pg/burmapoliticalprisoners/photos/?tab=album&album_id=3111371232255486
- https://www.facebook.com/aapp.burma/posts/1972532256214057
- https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.3109117885814154&type=3
- https://www.google.com/search?q=AAPP+Counseling+Program&oq=AAPP+Counseling+Program&aqs=chrome..69i57j69i60.1550493j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8
- https://www.facebook.com/hnin.eain.5
- https://www.facebook.com/pg/burmapoliticalprisoners/photos/?tab=album&album_id=3111371232255486
- https://www.facebook.com/aapp.burma/posts/1972532256214057
- https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.3109117885814154&type=3
- https://www.google.com/search?q=AAPP+Counseling+Program&oq=AAPP+Counseling+Program&aqs=chrome..69i57j69i60.1550493j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

Figure 1 Self-care and Mental Empowerment Talk
Training

Basic Human Rights Training online

During the month of May, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) conducted four basic human rights courses online. Online courses # 1 and 2 were held from May 6 to May 13; online courses # 3 and 4 were held in the morning and evening from 18 to 24 May.

A total of 11 people (10 females and 1 male) attended in Course # 1. The trainees were members of the female ethnic group, Key Of The World Mobile Library, Ta’ang Students and Youth Union (TSYU), Youth Diplomacy Plan, Myanmar Youth Association, including members of the women's team and other interested parties.

In Training Course 2, a total of 10 people (8 females and 2 males) attended. They were the Youth Organization of the Mongpan, Myanmar Youth Association, The Silver Future of Women, Golden future (PWDs), Local Resource Center (LRC), members of Community Peace Support-CPS, a middle school mistress from a.t.k. (1), Kyaukme, Christian pastor, and the middle school principal from a.l.k. (Humane) in Nansan Township.

The trainees from course 1 and 2 are Kachin, Shan, Burman, Taung ethnic and they are from Shan State, Kyaukme, Thibaw, Shwenyaung, Lashio, Muse Township and Rangoon Division.

In the training course 3, a total of 10 trainees (7 females and 3 males) attended. They were Research Implementation Group, Early Childhood Care and Development, Myanmar Youth Association, Shwe Pele, Eastern Naga Development Organization, Taung Women, (KaduYouth Development Association, and other interested parties.

In the training course 4, a total of 8 trainees (7 females and 1 male) attended. They were National League of Democracy, Taung Student and Youth Union (TSYU), Chin University Student in Rakhine State-Ann (CUSR), New Myanmar Foundation, Taung Women Organization and other interested parties.

The attendants from course 3 and 4 were Kachin, Shan, Burman, Taung and Naga ethnic and they were from Shan State (North), Kyaukme, Thibaw, Lashio, Theindi, Kutkai, Sagaing Region, Indaw Township, Pansau Township, Arakan State, Ann Township and Rangoon region.

The lectures were provided by AAPP representatives, Ko Wanna Nwe. The main topics discussed were definition of Human Rights, responsibility and accountability, Human Rights history and basic ideas, Geneva Conventions, history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and humanitarian law.

Advocacy and Lobbying

End of Torture Day Working Group Meeting Online

The End of Torture Day Working Group online meeting was held on May 8 and May 12. Kyaw Oo from the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), Lway Poe Nge, Phoe Dar and Candal from Women's League (Burma) Candal, Lway Nway Naung From AJAR, Su Su Nge from ND-Burma, Khin Mi Mi Khaing from Vimoteti attended the meeting.

Support

Supporting political prisoners and former political prisoners

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) continues to provide support to political prisoners who are incarcerated in prisons and former unemployed political prisoners. In May, AAPP supported 24 political inmates from the prisons of Sittwe, Thandwe, Pathein, Mawlamyine, Mandalay Myitkyina, Lashio Prison.

In addition, AAPP supported nine former political prisoners who were suffering from ailments such as Kidney, Gastroenteritis, TB, High blood pressure, Heart disease, stroke, and leg injuries in Taungoo, Twantay, Mandalay, Shwe Pyi Thar, Kyaukkyi, Myawaddy, Labutta, and Thaketa Town.

AAPP also helped at the funeral of two former political prisoners.
Additionally, since 2015, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) has provided support to former political prisoners who have suffered torture in prisons and interrogation centers. In May, AAPP supported seven former political prisoners who were sentenced to 3 years to over 10 years imprisonment.

**ACTIVITIES IN COVID-19 OUTBREAK**

**AAPP collaborated in supporting Tsang Yih (shoe factory) workers**

On May 2, Aung Myo Kyaw, Head of Rangoon office from the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), and Lwin Moe Myint, and member of Cooperative Committee of Trade Unions (CCTU) met with Tsang Yih (shoe factory) workers who were self quarantined in their homes and donated rice, cooking oil, coffee, fried fishes, and masks for them. Myint Lwin a.k.a Soe Oad, Twantay Township Representative and Khin Maung Myint, Taman Village Administrator also helped.

**AAPP Donated COVID-19 Prevention Materials for COVID-19 Pandemic in Prisons**

On May 25, a group led by AAPP Secretary U Tate Naing donated a total of 10600 carbolic soap, 30 boxes of Pesticide spray and 15 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol to the prisoners of Insein Prison to prevent COVID-19 pandemic. Prison Officer U Aye Min and Deputy Prison Officer U Htay Win received the donation and U Myo Myint from Insein Former Prisoners Group assisted.

On May 26, along with Electricity, Energy, Industry and Transportation Minister of Ayeyarwady Region, U Win Htay, a group led by AAPP Joint Secretary U Bo Kyi donated a total of 3600 carbolic soap, 10 boxes of Pesticide spray and 5 boxes of 10-liter of Germitol to the prisoners of Pathein Prison to prevent COVID-19 pandemic. Superintendent of Pathein Prison U Sinn Aung received the donation.

On May 27, a group led by AAPP Rangoon Office Head U Aung Myo Kyaw donated a total of 5000 carbolic soap, 20 boxes of Pesticide spray and 5 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol to the prisoners of Thayarwaddy Prison to prevent COVID-19 pandemic. Prison Officers of Thayarwaddy Prison U Chan Aye Kyaw and Doctor Moe Hein received the donation and former political prisoner Daw Thin Myo Aye from Tharyarwaddy assisted.
On May 28, a group led by AAPP-MHAP Head U Kyaw Soe Win donated 7 boxes of carbolic soap, 5 boxes of Pesticide spray and 2 boxes of 20-liter of Germitol to the Hgnet Aw Sann Youth Training Center in Kawhmu Township in Rangoon Division to prevent COVID-19 pandemic. Headmaster of the Hgnet Aw Sann Youth Training Center U Aung Soe Kyaw received the donation.

On May 29, a group led by AAPP Rangoon Office Head U Aung Myo Kyaw donated 2200 carbolic soap, 10 boxes of Pesticide spray and 4 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol to the prisoners of Taungoo Prison in Bago Division and 600 carbolic soap, 5 boxes of Pesticide spray and 2 boxes of 10-liter of Germitol to the prisoners of Four Miles Labour Camp to prevent COVID-19 pandemic. In Charge of Taungoo Prison U Mya Thaung and In charge of Four Miles Labour Camp U Than Kyaw Thint received the donation.

### Counseling

#### Online Mental Health Consultation Program

AAPP’s Mental Health Assistance Program (MHAP) is continuing its Online Mental Health Consultation Program during COVID-19 pandemic in May, 2020. They received calls from several locations including facebook messenger and viber such as Yangon, Mandalay, Bhamo, Taunggyi, Bago, Thailand, and Malaysia ...etc. (Yangon Region – 54%, Mandalay Region – 23%, Magway Region – 7%, Thailand – 7%, Bago Region 5% and rest of places were 1% each.

The people who called to our Online Mental Health Consultation Program were also different ages and occupations such as government office staffs, women led household, NGO staffs, Company staffs, HIV positive people...etc.

In May 2020, MHAP provided coping with stress skills during COVID-19 pandemic to 33 male (age range_ 17 – 66) and 37 females (age range_ 18 – 76).

They have following symptoms_

- Constantly being fearful and worrying about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Feeling emotionally upset most of the time
- Feeling nervous or shakiness inside
- Changes in sleeping or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Being short-tempered or angry more easily
- Worrying too much about easy infection especially people living with HIV
- Worrying about to get ART consistently due to COVID-19 pandemic
Feeling tense by staying at home for hours
Feelings of sadness and depression
A loss of interest in things you are normally interested in.

Publish Videos about Self-Care

Htin Aung, a trainer of the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), published videos on the internet about "How can you empower yourself in the days of Covid19?" "Having a daily schedule is important for mental and physical health" and "Positive Thinking". In addition, intending for volunteers throughout the region, he also shared what everyone in the Basic Counseling skills learned and benefited. The following video files are available:

- https://www.facebook.com/634323476905777/videos/276676670649297/

Activities of the Documentation and Research

Publish Monthly Chronology, Lists of Political Prisoners and AAPP Newsletter

With the aim of documenting the human rights conditions and of how many sentences, arrests and charges of political activists, farmers, workers and civilians in Burma, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) publishes monthly chronology and lists of political prisoners. In May, AAPP published chronology and list of political prisoners for April.

In addition, the monthly newsletter of AAPP has shown the meetings with parliamentary members, officers of the government agencies, embassors of the international embassies and representatives of NGOs and CBOs, delivering the human rights discussions and talks and providing the training. In May, AAPP published AAPP Newsletter for April.

Compiling COVID-19 Newsletter

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) is compiling the cases related to COVID-19 Pandemic. COVID-19 Newsletter, which had been documented the cases occurred in relation to COVID-19 Pandemic and lists of arrests, charges and sentences, which had been documented the violations of the rules related to the COVID-19 Pandemic, were published in May for March and April.


Torture Victims Interviews and Documentation

Since 2015, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) has interviewed and documented the experiences of the former political prisoners who suffered the tortures in prison and interrogation centers. In May, we interviewed and documented the life in prison and life after release of seven former political prisoners who were imprisoned for 3 years, 5 years, 6 years, 7 years, 10 years and 10.5 years.

From 2015 to May 2020, AAPP has interviewed and documented a total of 176 former political prisoners.

Data Collection of Former Political Prisoners

The purpose of the data collection is to systematically keep and collect the cases of former political prisoners who were sentenced under the unjust laws. The program started since 2014. In May, we collected the profiles of the four former political prisoners. From 2014 to May 2020, we have already documented the datas of 3587 former political prisoners.

As we continue collecting the datas of the former political prisoners, we invite you to contact us via AAPP Facebook Page and AAPP email (info@aappb.org).

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