Talks

Self-Care and Mental Empowerment Talk at 14 Quarantine Centers

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

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

From July 1 to July 26, AAPP 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 nine quarantine centers in Pathein Township, Irrawaddy Division, and three quarantine centers in Bago Town and Waw Town, Bago Division and two quarantine centers in Hlaing Tharyar Township, Rangoon Division. A total of 1,089 quarantines of people were present and 154 volunteers attended the speech.

- 543 quarantined people and 120 health volunteers at nine quarantine centers in Pathein Township
- 228 quarantined people and 10 health volunteers at two quarantine centers in Bago Town
- 120 quarantined people and six health volunteers at one quarantine centers in Waw Town
- 198 quarantined people and 18 health volunteers at two quarantine centers in Hlaing Thar Yar Township

Training

Human Rights, Documentation of Human Rights Violations, Complaint Mechanism, Digital Security and Transitional Justice Basic Trainings Held in Shan State and Sagaing Division
The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) (AAPP) held two trainings of Human Rights, Documentation of Human Rights Violations, Complaint Mechanism, Digital Security and Transitional Justice Basic Training in Shan State and Sagaing Division in the month of July. A 12-day training from July 15-26 was organized in Kyaukme Township in Northern Shan State and a 13-day training from July 17-29 was organized in Monywa Town in Sagaing Division.

The 12-day training from July 15-26 was administered by AAPP’s Human Rights and Complaint Mechanism Trainer, Ko Saw Than Hlaing, and Documentation of Human Rights Violations and Transitional Justice Trainer, Ko Sai Myint Thu. In addition, Ko Khin Maung Win provided digital security. A total of 17 people (12 women and 5 men) participated in the training. Participants included members of Aye Chan Phyu Sin Women Group, Ta’ang Women Organization(TWO), Silver Future Women’s Action, Ethnic Women Group, Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD), Monastic Education Development Group (MEDG), Key of The World, Shan Literature and Culture Organization, Nyaung Koe Bin Women Group, Youth in Myanmar Community, Market Ward Charity Group and teachers of the monastic education and participants are from Shan, Ta’ang, Burmese and Kachin Ethnic backgrounds. Kyaukme Township faces arbitrary arrests and threats.

The 13-day training from July 17-29 was administered by AAPP’s Human Rights and Complaint Mechanism Trainer, Ko Wanna Nwel and Documentation of Human Rights Violations and Transitional Justice Trainer Ko Kyaw Oo. In addition, Ko Myo Tun provided digital security. A total of 25 people (13 women and 12 men) participated in the training. Participants are members of Monywa University Students’ Union, Kyal Sin Pyay Lan Charity (Monywa University), People’s Party, MUSU and student representative (Yadanabon), 88 Peace and Open Society (Bamauk), Students and reporter. They all are from Burmese, Shan, Burmese-Shan Ethnic backgrounds. Monywa Township faces land confiscation.

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

Support

Supporting Political prisoners and Former Political Prisoners

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) continued to provide support to political prisoners currently incarcerated and former political prisoners struggling with their daily lives. In July, AAPP supported (2) political prisoners from the prisons of Mandalay (1 prisoner), and Nyaung Shwe (1 prisoner). In addition to this, AAPP supported (9) former political prisoners suffering from a variety of ailments, such as prostatic hyperplasia, brain and neuropathy disease, stroke, hemorrhage, liver problems, tuberculosis, cancer, kidney disease. AAPP
also assisted with the funeral of a former political prisoner.

AAPP also assisted (89) people facing trial outside the prison, (2) people facing trial inside prison and (6) human rights lawyers.

Moreover, since 2015, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) has provided emergency support to former political prisoners who are in poor health due to the effects of torture in prisons and interrogation centers. In July, AAPP supported (3) former political prisoners who were tortured in prison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting former political prisoners with ailments</th>
<th>9 prisoners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helping at the funeral of two former political prisoners</td>
<td>1 prisoner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Former Political Prisoners who are not in good health due to torture suffered</td>
<td>3 prisoners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting prisoners</td>
<td>2 prisoners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting human rights lawyers</td>
<td>6 prisoners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting people facing trial outside of prisons</td>
<td>89 prisoners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting people facing trial inside of prisons</td>
<td>2 prisoners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>112 prisoners</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COVID-19 Support to Prison and Prison Advocacy**

**AAPP Donated COVID-19 Prevention Materials for COVID-19 Pandemic to Mote Pa Lin Labour Camps (Male and Female) and Taung Sun Labour Camp**

On July 13, a group led by AAPP Rangoon Office Head U Aung Myo Kyaw donated COVID-19 prevention materials to prisoners in 3 labour camps: Mote Pa Lin (male) labour camp (1200 carbolic soap, 10 boxes of Pesticide spray, 5 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 5 boxes of hand wash soap), Mote Pa Lin (female) labour camp (800 carbolic soap, 5 boxes of Pesticide spray, 3 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 5 boxes of hand wash soap), and Taung Sun labour camp (400 carbolic soap, 5 boxes of Pesticide spray, 3 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 5 boxes of hand wash soap). These were received by the responsible officers from the relevant labour camps.

**AAPP Donated COVID-19 Prevention Materials for COVID-19 Pandemic to Thaton Prison and Kyaikmaraw Prison**

On July 14, a group led by AAPP Rangoon Office Head U Aung Myo Kyaw donated COVID-19 prevention materials to prisoners in Thaton prison (1200 carbolic soap, 5 boxes of Pesticide spray, 3 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 5 boxes of hand wash soap) and Kyaikmaraw prison (3000 carbolic soap, 15 boxes of Pesticide spray, 6 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 8 boxes of hand wash soap). These were received by the responsible officers from the relevant prisons.

**AAPP Donated COVID-19 Prevention Materials for COVID-19 Pandemic to Hpa-An prison and Marlar Phu labour camp**

On July 15, a group led by AAPP Rangoon Office Head U Aung Myo Kyaw donated COVID-19 prevention materials to prisoners in Hpa-An prison (4200
carbolic soap, 7 boxes of Pesticide spray, 3 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 4 boxes of hand wash soap) and Marlar Phu labour camp (600 carbolic soap, 5 boxes of Pesticide spray, 2 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 4 boxes of hand wash soap). These were received by the responsible officers from the relevant prison and labour camp.

**AAPP Donated COVID-19 Prevention Materials for COVID-19 Pandemic to Inn Byaung and Yin Nyein labour camps**

On July 16, a group led by AAPP Rangoon Office Head U Aung Myo Kyaw donated COVID-19 prevention materials to prisoners in Inn Byaung labour camp (800 carbolic soap, 7 boxes of Pesticide spray, 3 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 4 boxes of hand wash soap) and Yin Nyein labour camp (800 carbolic soap, 7 boxes of Pesticide spray, 3 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 4 boxes of hand wash soap). These were received by the responsible officers from the relevant labour camps.

**AAPP Donated COVID-19 Prevention Materials for COVID-19 Pandemic to Maubin and Pyapon Prisons**

On July 28, a group led by AAPP Rangoon Office Head U Aung Myo Kyaw donated COVID-19 prevention materials to prisoners in Maubin prison (1200 carbolic soap, 5 boxes of Pesticide spray, 3 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 5 boxes of hand wash soap) and Pyapon prison (1200 carbolic soap, 7 boxes of Pesticide spray, 4 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 5 boxes of hand wash soap). These were received by the responsible officers from the relevant prisons.

**AAPP Donated COVID-19 Prevention Materials for COVID-19 Pandemic to Myaungmya Prison**

On July 29, a group led by AAPP Rangoon Office Head U Aung Myo Kyaw donated COVID-19 Prevention Materials to prisoners in Myaungmya prison (2000 carbolic soap, 8 boxes of Pesticide spray, 6 boxes of 10-liter of Dettol and 8 boxes of hand wash soap).

**Documentation and Research**

**Publish Monthly Chronology, Lists of Political Prisoners and AAPP Newsletter**

With the aim of documenting the human rights conditions and how many sentences, arrests and charges of political activists, farmers, workers and civilians have been made in Burma, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) publishes a monthly chronology and lists of political prisoners. On July 6, AAPP published its chronology and political prisoners list for June.

In addition to this, the monthly newsletter of AAPP has detailed meetings with parliamentary members, officers of the government agencies, ambassadors from international embassies and representatives of NGOs and CBOs, delivering the human rights discussions and talks and providing the training. On July 6, AAPP published our June newsletter.

**Compiling COVID-19 Newsletter**

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) is compiling cases related to COVID-19 Pandemic. Our COVID-19 Newsletter was published on July 6 and has documented cases during June in relation to COVID-19 Pandemic with lists of arrests, charges and sentences documenting the violation of the rules related to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**Interviewing and Documenting Victims of Torture**

Since 2015, AAPP has been conducting interviews and documenting the experiences of former political prisoners who have been subjected to torture in prisons and interrogation camps. In July, interviews
were conducted on the experiences of three former political prisoners who were sentenced to four years, ten years and 12 years in prison and tortured, both in and out of prison.

A total of 180 political prisoners, who were tortured from 2015 to the end of July 2020, were interviewed and documented.

**Collection of Data on Former Political Prisoners**

In 2014, a program to collect information on political prisoners was launched with the aim of systematically collecting information on the incarceration of former political prisoners. In July, profiles of 12 former political prisoners were collected. From 2014 to the end of July 2020, AAPP has collected data on 3,600 former political prisoners. Information on the remaining former political prisoners is still being collected on our AAPP social media site. Please feel free to contact us at info@aappb.org.

**General Activities**

**Human Rights, Documentation of Human Rights Violations, Complaint Mechanism, Digital Security and Transitional Justice Course Upgrading Workshop**

A three-day workshop on Human Rights, Documentation of Human Rights Violations, Complaint Mechanism, Digital Security and Transitional Justice Course Upgrading Workshop was held at the Office of AAPP from 7 July to 9 July. The workshop was facilitated by Ko Saw Than Hlaing and Ko Sai Myint Thu. AAPP Secretary U Tate Naing; AAPP Rangoon Office Head U Aung Myo Kyaw, in charge of documentation and research and deputy in charge of foreign affairs Ko Zaw Moe; Members of the training department and documentation department; Some Training of Trainer (ToT) graduates of AAPP courses participated.

**“Freedom of assembly” Discussion**

![Ko Zaw Moe in discussion for the US Embassy First Amendment series on “Freedom of Assembly”](https://www.facebook.com/americancenter.rangoon/n/videos/797115827488758/)

On July 15, the U.S. Embassy First Amendment series continued with a virtual session on “Freedom of Assembly”. Chargé d’Affaires George Sibley provided opening speech followed by a discussion with a distinguished group of Myanmar panelists: Ko Sai Kyaw Nyunt (Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee), Ko Zaw Moe (Assistance Association for Political Prisoners), Ma Phyo Phyoe Aung (Wings Institute), and moderator Ma Thinzar Shunlei Yi (Action Committee for Democracy Development).

During the discussion, Ko Zaw Moe said, “The 2011 Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law refers to the right to peaceful assembly. The current law, which has been suspended in the parliamentary, refers to peaceful assembly. The right to peaceful assembly does not require permission. The amended law provides for notification only, if they notify, allows the assembly. There is no need to seek permission for peaceful assembly and peaceful protest, as Local orders and local restrictions must be negotiated.”

The following link is available: [https://www.facebook.com/americancenter.rangoon/n/videos/797115827488758/](https://www.facebook.com/americancenter.rangoon/n/videos/797115827488758/)
AAPP Participates in Discussion on the Role of Civil Society in Promoting Human Rights in Burma

On July 16, U Bo Kyi, AAPP’s Joint Secretary participated in a panel discussion on the role of civil society in promoting human rights in Burma, hosted by USAID. Daw Lae Lae Soe (Media Development Center - Burma), Daw Khin Myo Aye, freelance human rights expert, U Khin Maung Zaw (Independent Lawyers Association-Burma) and U Thwin Lin Aung (True People’s Servants Group) joined the discussion as panelists. U Naing Aye San (Rights Manager) from the Rule of law program-Burma served as a moderator.

Release of Nelson Mandela International Day Statement

On July 18, Nelson Mandela International Day, AAPP Published a statement in Burmese and English. The statement called on the government to release a total of 454 political prisoners and those facing trial, both inside and outside the prison and to repeal anti-democratic laws restricting freedom of speech and expression and to establish the Ministry of Justice.

The following link is available:

AAPP Participates in "From Now to Beyond" Human Rights Education Webinar

On July 18, U Aung Myo Kyaw, head of the Rangoon office of the AAPP participated in the "From Now to Beyond" human rights education streaming Webinar from MCN TV NEWS to mark the 20th anniversary of the establishment of Equality Myanmar. U Aung Myo Min, Executive Director of Equality Myanmar and Daw Wah Wah Pyone, Human Rights Training Instructor; U Thein Naing, education adviser on curriculum development and ethnic education promotion; Dr Khaing Khaing Win, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Human Rights Promotion and Education of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC); and Daw Aye Nyein Thu, Human Rights Training Instructor for the Disabled, also participated in the discussion.

In the discussion, U Aung Myo Kyaw said, “the leading government in the country; Organizations responsible for the rule of law; all armed groups; If the leaders themselves do not respect human rights, it will not be a fully educated country with full human rights. If citizens are being punished for exercising the freedom of expression, no matter how many training sessions are conducted, the country’s human rights record is uncertain. Therefore, to achieve human rights in the future, parties running in the election to ensure that human rights are not violated and candidates should be asked as many questions as possible about human rights through the media.”

The following link is available:
Mental Health Assistance Program (MHAP)

Online Mental Health Consultation Program during COVID-19 pandemic

AAPP’s Mental Health Assistance Program (MHAP) is continuing its Online Mental Health Consultation Program during COVID-19 pandemic in July 2020. They received calls on Facebook messenger and Viber from several locations such as Yangon, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Ayeyarwaddy Region, and Thailand (Yangon Region – 21%, Bago Region – 26%, Thailand – 13%, Mandalay Region – 9%, Ayeyarwaddy 25%, Mon – 1% and other areas 3%. We received 43 calls from different quarantine centers this month.

The people who called our Online Mental Health Consultation Program were also of different ages and occupations such as government office staff, women led households, NGO staff, company staff, quarantined people, volunteers from quarantine centers, PLHIV.

In July 2020, MHAP provided coping with stress skills during COVID-19 pandemic to 231 people (111 male (age range of 18 – 70) and 120 female (age range of 18 – 65). Among them, we can provide coping with stress skills to 120 quarantine people from Ayeyarwaddy and Bago Regions in July.

The clients had the 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 angered more easily
- Worrying too much about easy infection especially people living with HIV
- Feelings of sadness and depression
- A loss of interest in things you are normally interested in.
- Feeling lonely

Stress Management and Self-care Training to Former Political Prisoners in Tharyarwaddy

On 16 – 17 July, MHAP trainer Ko Htin Aung and counselor Ko Moe Kyaw Aung travelled to Tharyarwaddy, Bago Region to provide stress management and self-care training to 19 former political prisoners and six civil war victims in that area. The participants gain knowledge on mental health and they learnt the skills to manage their daily stress and to cope with their emotions.

Special Talk at Sandhi Governance Institute

MHAP trainer Ko Htin Aung gave a special talk for coping with stress during COVID-19 pandemic to the participants of the Batch 6, Political Leadership
training on the 14th of July. 20 participants participated in that special talk.

**Participated in Talk Show on Counseling for Mental Health Problems during COVID-19**

On 4 July, U Kyaw Soe Win, in-charge of the AAPP’s MHAP, participated in "counseling for mental health problems during COVID-19" talk show on MNTV. Dr. Htay Aung (Retd.), a consultant psychiatrist, Ma Su Myat Htet, Project Manager of Myanmar YMCA Consolation Center participated in the discussion.

In the discussion, U Kyaw Soe Win said, "As AAPP provides empowerment talk not only to people in quarantine but also to the volunteers at the quarantine centers, they have learned to take care of themselves without first realizing it. They also learned how to relax in a confined space at a quarantine center. AAPP received feedback that it is very beneficial. In addition, if there is not only just facility, and hospital-based counseling but also there is more community-based counseling services, there is more awareness of where to report mental health issues if the issues have occurred, I believe it will reduce the number of suicides by more than half."

The following link is available: https://www.facebook.com/mntvnewsofficial/videos/211931643296818/

**Publish Videos About Coping with Stress During COVID-19 Pandemic**

AAPP's trainer, Ko Htin Aung, has posted a video about coping with stress during COVID-19 pandemic online. The following links are available:

https://www.facebook.com/100009675341030/videos/1183106472021853/?id=100009675341030
https://www.facebook.com/100009675341030/videos/1197947713871062/UzpfSTEwMDAwOTY3NTM0MTAzMDoxMTk3OTQ5NjIzODcwODcx/

**Interviews**

**Interview about AAPP’s COVID-19 Newsletter (June)**

On July 6, Ko Zaw Moe, in charge of documentation and research and deputy in charge of foreign affairs, was interviewed by 7 Day News about AAPP’s COVID-19 Newsletter (June). In the interview, Ko Zaw Moe said, "In the past, the quarantine centers were overcrowded and there were difficulties in dealing with management. At that time, violations of the rules and sanctions were found. Later, the management became better and the discipline of quarantined people has reduced the number of lawsuits."

The following link is available:
Interview with 7 Days News about Prison Visits

On July 8, U Bo Kyi, joint secretary of the AAPP, gave an interview to 7 Days News about prison visits. In the interview, U Bo Kyi said, “prison supply visits were restricted due to the discovery of drugs in Insein Prison. In the case of drugs, drug traffickers should be prosecuted and restricted from entering the country. Prison restrictions should not be imposed like this. Those restrictions of prison visits can be emotionally disturbing for the inmates and can be very stressful. The food provided by the prison is more than ever before, but there is still a real need, and prisoners still need more support from their families.

The following link is available:
https://youtu.be/_ZI33WPuspg

Interview with Voice of Myanmar (VOM) on Promoting Rule of Law in Burma

On 28 July, U Bo Kyi, joint secretary of the AAPP, gave an interview to Voice of Myanmar (VOM) about promoting the rule of law in Burma. In the interview, U Bo Kyi said, "The prison system must be reformed. Laws are outdated and need to be amended. In
addition to this, rules and regulations; Systems also need to be reformed. Orders issued within the department; Instructions need to be carefully reviewed. The civil war and land disputes have led to an increase in the number of political prisoners. Therefore, the civil war must be stopped. The farmland issue needs to be resolved as soon as possible."

The following link is available:

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