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AAPP Statement on the 25th of July Extrajudicial Executions

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners is devastated by news today from the military-controlled Global New Light of Myanmar¹, that Ko Jimmy (aka Kyaw Min Yu), Phyo Zayar Thaw, Hla Myo Aung and Aung Thura Zaw were executed over the weekend.

These four political prisoners were detained by an illegal and murderous junta. The trial was a kangaroo court. Any forced confessions the outcome of mental and physical abuse. Relatives and friends are in agony because of the actions of the Prison Department and junta leaders who have imposed an information blackout from inside the walls of Insein.

According to Chapter VIII Section XIV of the Burma Jail Manual, paragraph 660 the body of executed prisoners “shall be carried outside the main gate and there delivered over to them [relatives or friends]. In addition to this, per paragraph 661 when the sentence has been executed the Superintendent shall “return the warrant to the court from which it issued... certifying the manner in which the sentence has been carried out”. Even if the dead bodies have not been returned, paragraph 1027 stipulates that graves shall be marked with “the name of the deceased, his residence and the date of his death”.

And yet, the military junta is refusing to disclose their location and condition, with only vague wording and unclear messages following news the execution was carried out. Junta officials must verify the exact date and time the executions were carried out. As well as where the dead body is now.

AAPP Joint-Secretary U Bo Kyi said “If they executed the four it is a crime, Min Aung Hlaing committed murder. The junta is illegal, unelected by the people, they have no right to execute”. This appalling event must be a wake-up call for diplomats. Promises were supposedly made these executions - which could constitute a war crime and crime against humanity² - would not take place.

The last execution of political prisoners was between 1986 and 1987, when three Karen resistance fighters were condemned by the previous murderous junta. Junta leaders are again telling the world they refuse dialogue. As Tom Andrews, UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar put it, “the status quo of international inaction must be firmly rejected”.

Since the coup 76 political prisoners have been sentenced to death under detention, while 41 others are evading a death sentence warrant. In total, 117 sentenced to death political prisoners.

Assistance Association for Political Prisoners.

¹ GNLM (2022) July 25, 2022, edition. Available at:

https://www.moi.gov.mm/nlm/sites/default/files/newspaper-pdf/2022-07/newlightmyanmar_25_07_2022.pdf

² IIMM (2022) Death sentences announced by Myanmar military may constitute a serious international crime – Statement by Nicholas Koumjian, Head of Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar. Available at: <https://iimm.un.org/death-sentences-announced-by-myanmar-military-may-constitute-a-serious-international-crime/>