

PUBLIC

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12 October 2007

Further Information on UA 219/07 (ASA 16/005/2007, 22 August 2007) – Health concern/Fear of torture or ill-treatment

MYANMAR **Min Ze Ya (m), aged 46**
Paw U Tun (alias Min Ko Naing) (m)
Ko Ko Gyi (m)
Pyone Cho (alias Htay Win Aung) (m)
And at least 14 other activists and university students

Former student leader Min Ze Ya, arrested at the start of the protests in Myanmar in August, is suffering from acute high blood pressure problems in detention. To Amnesty International's knowledge, he has not been provided with proper medical treatment. Min Ze Ya has a history of mild stroke and with his current acute high blood pressure problems, his health is of grave concern.

In addition, Min Ze Ya also has serious back problems and other medical conditions which are linked to the torture he suffered during an earlier term of imprisonment.

Min Ze Ya was one of the leaders of the nationwide protests against military rule in 1988. He was the chairman of the All Burma Students' Union Reconstruction Committee, which was founded after the 1988 protests. He was arrested in 1989 after being accused of leading a pro-democracy movement, and was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment.

Min Ze Ya was arrested in the evening of 21 August following his involvement in the first large protest march against the fuel price rises on 19 August in the city of Yangon. Twelve other former student activists belonging to the 1988 Generation Students group were arrested in the same late night raid.

Min Ze Ya is reportedly detained in Insein prison in Yangon. However, the whereabouts of numerous other members of the 1988 Generation Students group arrested since August 2007, including those named above, are not known. They are all at risk of torture and ill-treatment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Peaceful demonstrations began in August, sparked by sharp increases in fuel prices. Small seemingly impromptu protest marches emerged, subsequently growing in size and number, and with demonstrators calling not only for a reduction in commodity prices, but also the release of political prisoners and a process of national reconciliation to resolve deep political divisions.

Amnesty International has long-standing concerns at the deprivation of basic rights in detention in Myanmar. People are frequently arrested without warrant and held incommunicado. Torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment are common in pre-trial detention.

The Myanmar authorities have a duty under rules of customary international law binding on all states to treat detainees and prisoners humanely; to provide prisoners with food of nutritional value adequate for health and strength; to provide the services of qualified medical officers within facilities; and to transfer prisoners and detainees who require specialist treatment to specialized institutions or to civil hospitals. Amnesty International is deeply concerned that authorities are failing, at times through neglect, and at times deliberately, to respect their international obligations in this regard.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- expressing concern that detained activist Min Ze Ya is suffering from acute high blood pressure problems and other serious health problems;
- urging the authorities immediately to provide Min Ze Ya with the necessary medical treatment for his acute health problems;
- calling on the authorities to release Min Ze Ya immediately and unconditionally as soon as he has received the urgent medical treatment he needs for his acute health problems;
- calling for the authorities to take immediate action to ensure that while he is in detention, he is granted access to appropriate medical treatment, as well as to a lawyer and his family;
- calling on the authorities to treat Min Ze Ya and all detainees humanely, and not subject them to torture or ill-treatment;
- calling for the release of all detainees arrested for taking part in the peaceful demonstrations.

APPEALS TO:

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman
State Peace and Development Council
c/o Ministry of Defence, Naypyitaw, Union of Myanmar

Salutation: Dear General

Nyan Win
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Naypyitaw, Union of Myanmar

Salutation: Dear Minister

Dr Kyaw Myint
Minister of Health
Ministry of Health
Naypyitaw, Union of Myanmar

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Myanmar accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 November 2007.