


Political Prisoner Profile

AAPP CASE NO.:	0138			
NAME OF POLITICAL PRISONER:	Kyaw Zaw Lwin aka Nyi Nyi Aung			
GENDER:	Male	Ethnicity:	Burmese	
DATE OF BIRTH:	28 October 1969	Age:	39	
RELIGION:	Buddhist	Status in US:	U.S Citizen	
PARENTS NAME:	U Aung Din, Daw San San Tin			
EDUCATION:	Diploma in Computer Science from Montgomery College, Maryland State. Student of Computer Science at Indiana Perdue University			
OCCUPATION:	Individual pro-democracy activist			
LAST ADDRESS:	18118 Royal Bonnet Circle, Montgomery Village, MD20886, Maryland USA			
ARREST DATE:	3 September 2009		PHOTO DATE:	
SECTION OF LAW:				
SENTENCING HISTORY:				
COURT HEARING:	He is due to appear in court on 1 October 2009.			
NAME OF PRISON:	Insein			
RELEASE DATE:				
IMMEDIATE HEALTH CONCERNS:				
<p>Kyaw Zaw Lin aka Nyi Nyi Aung has been badly tortured under interrogation following his arrest, and has since been denied medical treatment. The torture and ill-treatment that Nyi Nyi Aung suffered in detention included beating and kicking. He was deprived of food for seven days and moved between different interrogation centres. He was not allowed to sleep at night and was kept awake during interrogation by the authorities. There are grave concerns about his health.</p>				
CURRENT STATUS SUMMARY:				
<p>On 24 September 2009 the U.S. Embassy submitted an official letter of complaint to the military government of Burma, protesting at the alleged mistreatment and torture of imprisoned American citizen, Nyi Nyi Aung. (Mizzima 240909 and RFA 250909). The same day the state-run newspaper <i>The New Light of Myanmar</i> reported that Nyi Nyi Aung had been arrested on 3 September and accused him of instigating unrest and sabotage and alleged he was planning to launch terrorist attacks.</p> <p>This allegation is completely unfounded. It is well-known that Nyi Nyi Aung had no links with terrorist groups, or plans to commit terror attacks in Burma. (AAPP 250909)</p> <p>Nyi Nyi Aung has also been denied family visits. On 24 September 2009, Nyi Nyi Aung's aunt Su Su Kyi told <i>Democratic Voice of Burma</i> that she had visited Rangoon's Insein prison where he is being held, on Monday 21 September, but was denied access. "Officials at the prison told me that [Nyi Nyi Aung] was only a concern for the US embassy as he was an American citizen," she said. (DVB 240909)</p> <p>On 22 September 2009 the United States embassy in Burma said that it was allowed a visit to Kyaw Zaw Lwin aka Nyi Nyi Aung. A spokesman for the embassy told news agency AFP that Kyaw Zaw Lwin aka Nyi Nyi Aung was detained in Rangoon on September 3 and the consular visit was granted on Sunday 20 September. They could not give details as to why he was held, but that they had passed on information of his circumstances to his family. (AFP 220909)</p> <p>On 3 September 2009 Nyi Nyi Aung was arrested by authorities at Rangoon's international airport shortly after arriving on a flight from Bangkok. For three weeks his family did not hear from him or the authorities and did not know where he was being held. (AP 230909)</p>				

CAREER BACKGROUND:

Nyi Nyi Aung has been involved in the pro-democracy movement for over 20 years. He was an active participant in the demonstrations against the military government during the 1988 uprising. He was a member of All Burma Students Democratic Movement Organization (Makada) and played a crucial role in organizing high school student groups and later served as one of the organizers of the country-wide demonstrations against the military junta. These protests were brutally suppressed and thousands of people were killed and imprisoned by the military, which took power and established the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) now known as the State Protection and Development Council (SPDC).

Nyi Nyi Aung was arrested in March 1988 and briefly detained in Insein prison. He was badly tortured during his detention.

In October 1988 in the aftermath of the uprising Nyi Nyi Aung, fled to Thailand due to oppression and persecution by the authorities and the constant threat of arrest. There he worked to seek aid to sustain the movement inside Burma. In December 1988 he joined the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) on the Thai-Burma border for a short period. Shortly after he left the ABSDF he co-founded the Burmese Students Social Affairs Committee, which was funded by the Jesuit Refugee Service to provide humanitarian and medical assistance to Burmese students and illegal immigrants in Thailand. While he was in exile in Thailand, Nyi Nyi Aung was arrested by the Thai authorities and held in the immigration jail for his role in protesting the Thai government's deals with Burma's military junta. In May 1992 after his release, he assisted in a public health project sponsored by the Harvard School of Public Health. This public health survey was an investigation into the state of health of exile Burmese students living in Thailand. In 1992 he was also elected general-secretary of the Overseas National Students Organization of Burma (ONSOB), a group working for human rights and democracy in Burma from exile.

In October 1993 he resettled in the United States as a political refugee, and in time was granted US citizenship.

In 1994 he worked as a Research Assistant for the international refugee advocacy organization, Refugees International and Burma Debate magazine. Between 1998 and 2004 he worked with various Burmese democracy groups in the United States to support the democracy movement inside Burma.

Nyi Nyi Aung has remained a tireless supporter and promoter for human rights and democracy in Burma, although he is not known to be a member of any political group. He identifies himself as an individual activist. In 2005 he returned to Thailand to continue his work.

Nyi Nyi Aung's mother Daw San San Tin and two cousins are currently imprisoned for their roles in the 2007 pro-democracy movement, known as the Saffron Revolution. All three women were arrested during an early morning raid by security forces on Daw San San Tin's house on 19 October 2007.

Nyi Nyi Aung's mother Daw San San Tin is an individual activist. She was sentenced to nine years imprisonment, which was reduced on appeal to five years in March 2009. (Mizzima 110309) She is 60 years old and is currently in Meiktila prison, which is 338 miles from her family in Rangoon. According to family members she has a tumor on her neck, stomach problems and hypertension. (DVB 290108) She has not received any medical check-up or treatment for her health problems since her arrest.

Nyi Nyi Aung's cousin Thet Thet Aung is a member of the 88 Generation Students group, a pro-democracy group lead by Min Ko Naing, a prominent student leader during the 1988 uprising. She was sentenced to 65 years imprisonment in November 2008 for her role in protests in August 2007. She is currently in Myingyan prison, which is 396 miles from Rangoon. Her husband, Chit Ko Lin was also arrested for his involvement in the 2007 protests. He was sentenced to 11 years in prison in November 2008, later reduced on appeal to 7 years. He is in Pakokku prison, 440 miles from Rangoon. Thet Thet Aung and Chit Ko Lin have three sons, two of primary school age, and a toddler. Thet Thet Aung is suffering from heart disease, hypertension and gout. Her health condition has been rapidly deteriorating since May 2009.(180609 RFA)

Another cousin Noe Noe aka Nwe Hnin Yi is a 21 year-old member of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU). She was sentenced to eleven years imprisonment in November 2008, her sentence was reduced on appeal to seven years in March 2009. (Mizzima 110309). She is in Maubin prison, nearly 60 miles from Rangoon.

In June 2009 Nyi Nyi Aung traveled to the United Nations in New York as part of the Free Burma's Political Prisoners Now! campaign delegation, as a family member of political prisoners. The delegation delivered a petition to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, demanding he make it his personal priority to secure the release of all Burma's political prisoners. Almost 680,000 signatures were collected in just ten weeks in a massive global coordinated action for Burma. At the time, Nyi Nyi Aung said, "My message to Mr. Ban Ki-moon is simple. Your words show you take this issue seriously. But now I want to see what action you will take to secure the release of my family and all Burma's political prisoners."

ARREST DETAILS:

On 3 September 2009 Nyi Nyi Aung flew to Rangoon from Bangkok. He has a US passport and had been issued a visa at the Myanmar embassy in Bangkok prior to his departure. His reasons for travelling to Rangoon are unknown. He was immediately arrested by authorities on arrival at Rangoon's international airport. (AP 230909)

DETAILS OF IMPRISONMENT:

Nyi Nyi Aung has been badly tortured under interrogation following his arrest, and has since been denied medical treatment. The torture and ill-treatment that Nyi Nyi Aung suffered in detention included beating and kicking. He was deprived of food for seven days and moved between different interrogation centers. He was not allowed to sleep at night and was kept awake during interrogation by the authorities. Details of the charges against him are not known. He is due to appear in court on 1 October 2009. (Amnesty International 240909)

This profile was prepared by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) on 25 September 2009