

# AAPP 2010 Annual Report: Political Prisoners in Burma

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The Thailand-based Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) today released a report, highlighting the ongoing systematic violations of human rights and the denial of fundamental freedoms faced by the country's pro-democracy activists during 2010 and the devastating consequences of engaging in political activism.

Throughout the past year, AAPP has documented the ongoing imprisonment of political activists, individuals associated with activists, as well as ordinary civilians peacefully expressing their basic civil and political rights. According to the report, in 2010, 53 activists were arrested.

The report details the impact of systematic torture, long-term imprisonment, transfers to remote prisons, incommunicado detention and the denial of adequate medical care on Burma's political activists. The cases of torture and denial of medical care, documented, were particularly alarming in their severity during 2010.

The total number of political prisoners in poor health reached its peak in December with at least 142 in need of medical care. These include; comedian Zarganar, 88 Generation Students leader Min Ko Naing, and Buddhist Monk U Gambira. Dire prison conditions coupled with the denial of medical treatment led to the death of human rights activist, Ko Kyaw Soe, in May and Buddhist monk, U Naymeinda, in December.

The harsh sentences handed down and the torture and punishments inflicted on political activists threatens the wider population, sending a clear message: refrain from opposition activities or risk the consequences. The consequences are well known. These practices ensure populations live in fear, thereby preventing any politically critical activities. This fear stifles dissent, prevents a vibrant civil society and halts any criticism of the regime; key components of a genuine democratic transition.