

November 13, 2015



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)

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Students on Hunger Strike Tortured at MyinGyan Prison

AAPP calls for immediate action and an investigation into acts of torture committed against students Si Thu Myant and SoeHlaing at MyinGyan Prison on November 6, 2015 and demands the students' immediate and unconditional release.

On November 6, Si Thu Myant and SoeHlaing were covered in blankets and brutally beaten by prison guards at MyinGyan prison. In addition to this the pair were deprived of water. According to the UN Convention Against Torture definition, this treatment amounts to torture.

The torture came after the pair decided to join a hunger strike on November 5, started by students in Tharrawaddy Prison to demand the release of all political prisoners.

On November 9- only one day after the election, the students were forced to end their hunger strike as a result of the brutal beatings and deprivation of water.

Si Thu Myant and SoeHlaing attended their court hearing on November 12, where they attempted to bring the case of torture to the court. The judge dismissed the case, stating that there was not enough time to open a new case. The two have since been moved to separate cellblocks.

Si Thu Myant was initially arrested on March 27 for his involvement in a demonstration in MyinGyan Township protesting the violent dispersal of students at a peaceful demonstration in Latpandan Township on March 10. He faces charges under Articles 143, 147, 145, 505 (b) of the Penal Code and Section 18 of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Act.

SoeHlaing, an executive committee member of All Burma Federation Students Union (ABFSU) in Myingyan township, was arrested on March 11 for allegedly removing a state flag and replacing it with a student flag in MyinGyan township on January 26, despite the fact that he says he was not there. He faces charges under Section 16 of the Union Flag Law and Section 18 of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Act.

AAPP calls for an independent investigation into the torture of Si Thu Myant and SoeHlaing and demands prompt legal action to be taken against those culpable. In addition, AAPP demands that special, adequate health care is provided to these students.

With the impending transition into a new government in Burma, AAPP urges the current Burma government to release all political prisoners. This would be seen a show of good faith towards the transition to a new government and would gain sympathy and recognition from the domestic and international community. It also presents an

opportunity for the current government to leave a positive legacy of commitment to address human rights issues.

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