



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)

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27th October 2014 *The death of freelance journalist Aung Kyaw Naing, aka Par Gyi.*

The death of well known freelance journalist Aung Kyaw Naing, aka Par Gyi, while in military custody in Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State, comes as a shocking reminder of how extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention and torture are still being used against citizens in Burma.

Par Gyi worked as a security guard for Aung San Suu Kyi during the 1988 Democratic Movement and was a member of the Tri Color Students Group. He has since been working as a freelance journalist in and around the Thai-Burma border. Par Gyi disappeared after he completed photo documentation work in Kyaikmayaw Township, reporting on the ongoing violent clashes between the government forces and the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA).

It has since been reported he was arrested on September 30th by Light Infantry Battalion No-204 and died in custody on October 4th. The government position on the death of Par Gyi is that his alleged actions in trying to steal a gun during his detention caused his own death. So far we have seen no basis for this allegation, with his body not even being returned to his family. The fact is he was killed whilst in custody, an unacceptable violation of basic civil rights.

Par Gyi's death is a reprehensible demonstration of how the rights of the citizen in Burma are not respected and how intimidation and violence are used against them. Extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention and torture are abhorrent violations of basic human rights and the death of Par Gyi serves to highlight how these practices are systematically being used to oppress people and deny basic civil liberties. The government must be open about what really happened to Par Gyi and we demand an investigation into not only his death but into all accounts of extrajudicial killings.

We strongly decry the actions of the government in this case and in all cases of extrajudicial killing, arbitrary detention and of torture. We are calling for an investigation into both Par Gyi's case and all other cases that violate basic human rights and ignore the rule of law. If this government wishes to see a free democratic Burma then they must be strong in this issue and end these systematic and inhumane practices.

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma)

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