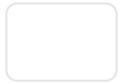


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Myanmar junta sentences teacher to 20 years in prison

By RFA Burmese

A prison court in Myanmar's central Mandalay region has sentenced a school principal to 20 years in prison, National Unity Government officials told RFA Thursday.

Obo Prison Court prosecuted Ei Shwe Sin Myint, the teacher in charge of the Federal School Of Aung Myay Thar Zan, under anti-terrorism laws.

"We are sure about the 20-year prison sentence," said an NUG official who didn't want to be named for security reasons, speaking of Monday's court decision. "We are still trying to confirm which section [of the Counter Terrorism Law] she is being punished for."

The school was established by Myanmar's shadow government for teachers and pupils boycotting the junta-run education system, as part of the civil disobedience movement.

On March 22, four female teachers, including Ei Shwe Sin Myint, were arrested at their respective houses in Mandalay. Later, 15 teachers from the school were detained in a string of arrests.

Locals claim that only Ei Shwe Sin Myin has been given a lengthy prison sentence; although they said the other 14 detainees' situations are still unclear.

They were arrested because they were involved in unlawful teaching at the direction of the National Unity Government, a shadow government formed by members of the civilian administration ousted in the coup, according to a report published in the junta-backed New Light of Myanmar newspaper on April 5.

The report states that teachers, parents, and students who attend NUG schools, as well as those who provide financial support, face serious action.

The Federal School of Aung Myay Thar Zan has been providing multi-grade online education since the beginning of 2022 but has been forced to close following the arrests.

More than 19,500 civilians, including pro-democracy activists, have been arrested since the February 2021 coup, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, a Thailand-based monitoring group.

Translated by RFA Burmese. Edited by Mike Firn.

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