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Myanmar junta sentences LGBTQ activist to 10 years in prison

By RFA Burmese

Mynamar's military junta this week sentenced a male LGBTQ activist to 10 years in prison on Wednesday on charges of terrorism, activists and students told Radio free Asia.

Justin Min Hein, president of the LGBTQ Union in the country's central Mandalay region, was a leader of several anti-junta activities including a strike, flash protests, and other organized campaigns in Mandalay prior to his arrest. He was convicted of violating the Anti-Terrorism Act, said activist Saw Han Nway Oo.

She said Justin Min Hein was in poor health.

"I'm worried about him as he often gets stomach aches," the source said. "I am sure he must have a stomach ache from time to time. I know that he cannot be in good health inside prison as the food provided is very bad. He won't be comfortable inside, either."

Justin Min Hein was arrested by the junta on September 24, 2022 and had been detained in Yay Kyi Ai Interrogation Center for almost a year awaiting his trial, she said.

On Tuesday, a military court sentenced Wuttyi Aung, a student at Dagon University in Myanmar's former capital Yangon to a total of seven years. She was arrested with five other activists during a night raid. RFA was not able determine which crime she was accused of, but she was sentenced to three years in prison for violating section 505 (A) of the penal code and four years for violating section 52 (a) of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

The Dagon University Student Union announced Wednesday that she was in a critical health condition while detained at Yangon's Insein prison and not allowed to receive medical treatment for the pain she incurred in the torture during her interrogation.

According to the Thailand-based Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, since the 2021 coup a total of 19,279 pro-democracy activists and citizens are in detention of which 6,599 have been sentenced to prison terms as of Wednesday.

Translated by Myo Min Aung. Edited by Eugene Whong and Malcolm Foster.

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