



Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP)

နိုင်ငံရေးအကျဉ်းသားများကူညီစောင့်ရှောက်ရေးအသင်း

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Statement on Prevention against COVID-19 virus in Prisons, Labor Camps and Custodies

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On 11 March 2020, WHO announced COVID-19 can be characterized as Pandemic and called on member states to urgently scale-up aggressive measures to combat COVID-19. In Burma (Myanmar), the government, especially Ministry of Health and Sports, is carrying out the necessary measures in preparation to prevent the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus.

AAPP has a particular concern that the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus could happen in the Prisons in Burma. Because Prisons are overcrowded in Burma and the lack of healthcare, inadequate nutrition and not enough space for the personal hygiene may make it harder to prevent the infection from one another if a prisoner is infected.

Therefore, AAPP believes that it is extremely important to take the precautionary measures to prevent the virus infection in Prisons, Labor Camps, Police Custodies and Court lock-up. In order to take such measures, AAPP strongly urge the government to carry out the followings as immediate action;

- To screen carefully and quarantine the recent arrived prisoners and detainees by separating them from others, as soon as they arrived at the prisons.
- To allow the prisoners or detainees with suspected coronavirus to admit the designated hospitals to have special care.
- To separate and monitor the prisoners or detainees who are back from the courts for the trial purpose.
- To do the necessary arrangement for the families and prisoners for the prison visit.
- To take special inspection in ensuring the parcels for the prisoners have no coronavirus.
- To keep a watchful eye on the prisoners' health more than ever.
- To provide the hand gel for the detainees at court lock-up and police custodies, have the daily inspection about the symptoms and provide the necessary equipment for the inspection.
- To have the medical test about the coronavirus symptoms upon their release.
- To have regular screening for the staffs whenever they visit to the prisons and custodies on their duties.
- To prepare the necessary arrangements for the emergency situation.

Moreover, we strongly recommend the government to reduce the prison population by granting the bail for the bailable cases and providing amnesty for the prisoners who are eligible under set criteria.

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