



Part (D)
BLC Activities

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**BURMA LAWYERS' COUNCIL PROGRESS REPORT
ON
PEACE LAW ACADEMY**

Reporting Period: February 2009 to May 2009

The Advanced Internship Program in Human Rights and Law of Peace Law Academy was officially opened on 12 February 2009. The Program is a two year diploma course; after completion of the course, the successful interns will be awarded a “Diploma in Law” certificate.

The opening ceremony of the Peace Law Academy was attended by 25 interns of different ethnic nationalities who passed the written and the oral examinations conducted by the Executive Board members of BLC.

Guardians of the selected interns and their organization’s heads participated in the opening ceremony. Invited guests included the representatives of the Ministry of Education, Tak Area II, school heads of migrant schools and heads of different organizations. The Vice Chairperson, General Secretary of NCUB

and associates of NCUB, elected Members of Parliament Union and the Executive Board members of BLC formed the panel during the opening ceremony. The Chairperson, General Secretary and two members of Executive Board of BLC gave an account of the Peace Law Academy.



Two interns from the previous internship program who are serving as chamber interns at BLC shared their experiences of the previous two year internship program.



The interns were selected based on the following principles:

- (1) Candidates must be ethnic nationals from Burma;
- (2) At a minimum, they must have passed the high school final examination (higher education is desirable);
- (3) They must have completed BLC's three-month intensive training course or the one-year intensive English language course provided by the Open Society Institute in Chiang Mai or the one-year Foreign Affairs Training Course provided by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the NCUB;
- (4) Out of total number of candidates, at least one third should be females;
- (5) Out of total number of candidates, at least three-fourths should be non-Burman ethnic nationalities; and
- (6) Priority will be given to the intern candidates who contributed to the democratic movement of Burma for over three years.



There are a men's hostel for eleven male interns and a women's hostel for fourteen female interns. There is a warden in each hostel.

The regular teaching time is from 09:15 am to 16:15 pm from Monday to Friday with recess of 15 minutes in the morning and in the evening.

During the reporting period, the topics taught in the Peace Law Academy were:

1. Rule of Law and Jurisprudent by Mr. Thein Oo, Chairperson of BLC
2. International Criminal Law by Mr. Stewart Manley, staff attorney of BLC
3. Criminal Procedure of Burma by Mr. Chit Tin, a lawyer, a Member of Parliament-elect and a member of BLC
4. Special Laws of Burma by Mr. Myint Thein, an Executive Board member of BLC
5. Introduction on Working Research by Mr. Nai Lawe Aung, warden of the men's hostel and a graduate of Peace Law Academy
6. Constitution and Federalism by Mr. Hkun Okker, an Executive Board member of BLC

Lectures of Visiting Professors

From 1 May 2009 to 6 May 2009, Associate Professor and Director of the LL.M program in Human Rights from Hong Kong University, Ms. Suzannah Linton, taught:



- Introduction to International Law and
- System of the United Nations.

With respect to the rules of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and combined with a mutual and open discussion with the interns, the President of Global Justice Center (GJC), Professor Janet Benshoof, taught about:

- rapes during armed conflict
- sexual violations
- torture

Other lectures

In the first and second weeks of May, U Tun and Ma Maythazin from Federation Trade Union of Burma (FTUB) and Ma Win Win from National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB) taught Database Systems.

To promote the English skills of the interns, Mr. Nicholas Altstadt., a volunteer at BLC, taught Advanced, Middle and Basic levels of English in the morning and evening apart from the regular teaching periods.

Socio-Political Workshops

Dr. Kyaw Nyunt, Secretary of Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB), was invited to the Peace Law Academy on 27 February 2009 to explain the political background of Burma and the democratic movement of opposition organiza-

tions. He conducted discussions on the opposition's aims and objectives for future Burma with the interns.



The interest of the interns in the political situation of Burma was very heartening when, on 2 March 2009, Mr. Aung Din, Director from US Campaign for Burma, discussed the attitude of US foreign policy on Burma, particularly President Obama's foreign policy and

potential changes. Mr. Aung Din responded to the questions raised by the interns, which included topics such as US sanctions against Burma and their effectiveness.

On 6 March 2009, Mr. Moe Chan, who works on UN affairs for the Burmese



opposition alliance NCUB, discussed the connection between the System of the United Nations and the role of the UN Security with the current political situation of Burma. A very hot debate was held on the Credentials Challenge submitted by Members of Parliament Union (MPU) to the United Nations in September 2008.



Mr. Tun Aung Kyaw, former Chairperson of All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF), was invited to Peace Law Academy on 10 March 2009 to explain the students' popular movements of 8888, students' revolutionary history, the existing Burmese political situation around the world and the status of revolutionary organizations, particularly in connection with the topic of "Unity and Capacity of Leaders". A discussion with the interns was held after the presentation.

A forum on Law and Politics was held at Peace Law Academy on 20 March 2009, led by Mr. Kyaw Htwee of All Arakan Student Youth Congress (AASYC) on behalf of Nationalities Youth-Forum (NY-Forum). The discussion at the forum included:

- Consideration on the 2008 Constitution of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)
- Main principles of the SPDC constitution
- Political attitude on the upcoming 2010 election

The forum was conducted in a workshop format of four discussion groups.

Mr Kyaw Htwee was the main questioner, while the Chairperson of BLC and two wardens of Peace Law Academy presided over the forum. The students held serious discussions on the future political matters of Burma.

Mr. Myo Win, a Joint Secretary of NCUB, gave a lecture at the Peace Law Academy on 9 April 2009 in which he explained:

- the political background of Burma
- the background of the formation of NCUB
- the aims and objectives of NCUB
- the structure and activities of NCUB
- the differences between Constituent Assembly and Parliament
- the common opposition strategy for the upcoming 2010 elections in Burma.



Visitors

Ms. Htusan Maran and Mr. Zaw Zaw from Open Society Institute (OSI) visited the Peace Law Academy on 21 February 2009 to explain about OSI and its activities. They had a frank discussion with the interns on various issues. The BLC Executive Board Members, Financial Committee Members and Administration members explained the establishment, objectives and teaching subjects of Peace Law Academy.

Dr. Alicia, a coordinator of the Thai Ministry of Education, and her assistant visited Peace Law Academy on 27 February 2009. She explained her deep interest in Peace Law Academy and promised to help in coordinating the cooperation between the Peace Law Academy and Thai authorities. She also encouraged the interns to try their best on the lessons taught by experienced lawyers for a better future Burma.

Activities

(1) In March, the interns were divided into groups to give presentations on ICTY Trial, ICTR Trial, Nuremburg Trial and IMTFE (Tokyo Trial).

(2) On 20 March, a SKYPE meeting/discussion was held between the AIP students and Human Rights Now (an NGO based in Japan). During the presentation the interns had an opportunity to introduce themselves and their ideas.

One of the Executive Board Member, Mr. Myint Thein, divided the interns into nine groups and instructed them to collect information, news and data on the topics are Land Issues in Burma, Judiciary Issues in Burma, Rule of Law in Burma, Ethnic Issues in Burma, The Role of the Army in Civilian Administration, Migrant Workers and Refugee Issues, Issues on Burma Elections and Political Parties, Media Issues and media law and Economic Issues, and economic law.



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