

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/burma-five-journalists-get-ten-year-jail-10-07-2014,46618.html>

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Asia - Burma

Dark day

## Five journalists get ten-year jail terms for "violating state secrets"

10 July 2014

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Harsh sentences seen as grave setback for press freedom in Burma

In the latest in a series of reverses for media freedom in Burma, a court in the central region of Magway today sentenced five newspaper journalists to ten years in prison with hard labour on charges of violating state secrets for reporting the existence of a chemical weapons factory.

After considerable progress since 2012, the harsh sentences confirmed that Burma has done a U-turn on freedom of information.

*"This decision by the Magway court is a grave setback for press freedom,"* said Benjamin Ismaïl, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Asia-Pacific Desk. *"Progress had been made but this case marks a return to a dark time when journalists and bloggers who did their job were jailed on national security charges or for allegedly trying to overthrow the government."*

The five journalists are Tint San, the CEO of *Unity Weekly*, and four of his reporters – **Lu Maw Naing, Yarzar Oo, Paing Thet Kyaw (Aung Thura)** and **Sithu Soe**. [They were arrested in February](#) over an article reporting that a factory had been turned into a chemical weapons plant and was getting frequent visits from top generals.

Their conviction comes at a tense time for journalists, with police investigations and threatening statements by politicians [being used in an attempt to intimidate them](#).

Burma is ranked 145th out of 180 countries in the Reporters Without Borders [press freedom index](#).

Photo: DVB

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### Other images



JPEG - 33.4 kb  
633 x 222 pixels

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