

URGENT ACTION

KACHIN PASTORS RELEASED IN PRISONER AMNESTY

Kachin pastors Dumdaw Nawng Lat and Langjaw Gam Seng have been released from prison following a Presidential amnesty on 17 April 2018. The two men had been detained since December 2016 in connection with their role organizing a visit by journalists to Monekoe town, northern Shan State, to show the destruction allegedly caused by Myanmar Army airstrikes.

Kachin pastors **Dumdaw Nawng Lat** and **Langjaw Gam Seng** were released from Lashio prison in Myanmar's Shan State on 17 April 2018. They were unconditionally released as part of a Presidential amnesty of 8,490 prisoners, including prisoners of conscience and arbitrarily detained individuals.

The two men were detained in December 2016 and held for a month in military custody without any charge and no access to their lawyers and family. They were detained shortly after they helped organize a visit by journalists to the site of an alleged military airstrike in late November 2016. They were charged under Article 17(1) of Myanmar's 1908 Unlawful Association Act and 2012 Import and Export Law. Amnesty International believes that these charges were politically motivated and linked to their role in reporting alleged human rights abuses by the Myanmar military.

On 27 October 2017, they were each found guilty and sentenced to two years and three months in prison. Dumdaw Nawng Lat was sentenced to an additional two years in prison for "defamation" under Section 500 of Myanmar's Penal Code in connection with a newspaper interview where he discussed the alleged airstrikes.

While Amnesty International welcomes the release of Dumdaw Nawng Lat and Langjaw Gam Seng, the fact remains that they should never have been arrested and imprisoned in the first place.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the fourth update of UA 13/17. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa16/7554/2017/en/>

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