

2001 - U Win Tin, Myanmar



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Laureate of the UNESCO / Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize 2001

This year's laureate, U Win Tin - former editor of the daily Hanthawati newspaper in Myanmar, vice-chair of Myanmar's Writers' Association and a founder of the National League for Democracy - was arrested in July 1989.

Three months later, accused of being a member of the banned Communist Party of Myanmar, he was sentenced to 14 years in prison and transported to Insein jail in Rangoon. In 1996, U Win Tin was tried in prison and sentenced to an additional five years for breaking prison regulations prohibiting the possession of writing materials. Later that year he was moved to Myingyan jail north of Rangoon, where his family and friends could no longer visit him or send him food and medicine.

In early October 1997, he was transferred to Rangoon General Hospital, where he remains and is reported to be seriously ill. His prison sentence will only end in July 2008, unless he renounces all political activities, which he refuses to do.