

SUU KYI SENTENCED TO 4 YEARS IN PRISON

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A court in military-ruled Myanmar sentenced on Monday ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi to four years in jail on charges including possession of unlicensed walkie-talkies, a source familiar with the proceedings said.

The latest sentencing in legal proceedings that rights groups have criticised as a “farce and a courtroom circus” means she faces a six-year jail term after two convictions last month.

She is on trial in nearly a dozen cases that carry combined maximum sentences of more than 100 years in prison. She denies all charges.

Nobel laureate Suu Kyi, 76, appeared calm when the verdict was read out on Monday in a court in the capital, Naypyitaw, said another source with knowledge of the court proceedings.

Ms. Suu Kyi was detained on the day of the February 1 coup and days later, police said six illegally imported walkie-talkies were recovered during a search of her home.

The court handed her a two-year sentence for breaching an export-import law by possessing the handheld radios and one year for having a set of signal jammers. The two sentences will run concurrently, said the source.

She was also sentenced to two years on another charge of breaching a natural disaster management law related to coronavirus rules, the source said.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the coup against Ms. Suu Kyi's democratically elected government led to widespread protests and signalled the end of 10 years of tentative political reforms that followed decades of strict military rule.

On December 6, she received a four-year jail sentence for incitement and breaching coronavirus rules.

That sentence, which was later reduced to two years, was met by a chorus of international condemnation.

Rights group Amnesty International said on Twitter on Monday the new convictions were “the latest act in the farcical trial against the civilian leader”.

It called for her release along with thousands of others “unjustly detained” since the coup.

‘Secretive trial’

Ms. Suu Kyi's supporters say the cases against her are baseless and designed to end her political career and leave the military free to wield power untrammelled by any challenge.

The junta says Ms. Suu Kyi is being given due process by an independent court, led by a judge appointed by her own administration. A spokesman for the military council could not be immediately reached for comment. Her trial has been closed to the media and Ms. Suu Kyi's lawyers have been barred from communicating with the media and public.

The military has not disclosed where Ms. Suu Kyi, who spent years under house arrest under a previous military government, is being detained.

“The Myanmar junta’s courtroom circus of secret proceedings on bogus charges is all about steadily piling up more convictions ... so that she will remain in prison indefinitely,” Phil Robertson, deputy Asia director for Human Rights Watch, said.

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