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## Japanese detainees well-treated by Burma authorities

Mae Sot — Two Japanese freelance cameramen said here yesterday that they were well-treated after being detained by the Burmese military, on charges of illegally entering the country.

Naoki Mabuchi, 44, said that he and Shousuke Thaeuchi, 43, had crossed the border from Mae Sot in Thailand into eastern Burma on September 12.

They were picked up by the army on September 17 on charges of illegally entering the country while they were with a group of students and other anti-government protesters, Mabuchi said.

He said he believed that the group had been infiltrated by a military informer who had told the army of their presence.

The two were detained the day before the military seized power in Burma.

They were held in a police station compound at Pa-an in Burma's eastern Karen state until Saturday, when they were brought to Moei river bordering Thailand under military escort and sent across by boat, Mabuchi said.

"The Burmese police and soldiers treated us very well," Mabuchi said.

"We were never handcuffed or locked in a cell; just confined in the police station compound, and spent much of the time playing football with the policemen," he said. Their cameras were returned before they left, but the film had been removed.

Burma stopped issuing tourist visas to foreign nationals in August.

The two Japanese cameramen are now under arrest again for illegal entry, this time in Thailand.

— AFP

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