

ELECTION MONITOR NO. 34

NEW APPLICATIONS TO FORM A POLITICAL PARTY

The following groups have applied and/or have been approved by the Union Election Commission (UEC) to form political parties:

1. All National Races Unity and Development Party (Kayah State) - (27-7-2010) Date Applied¹
2. National Development and Peace Party - (29-7-2010) Date Approved²

NEW APPLICATIONS TO REGISTER AS A POLITICAL PARTY

The following group has submitted its application the Union Election Commission (UEC) to register as a political party:

1. The Unity and Democracy Party of Kachin State (UDPKS) (23 July 2010) Date Applied³

RECENT SUBMISSIONS OF POLITICAL PARTIES' MEMBER LISTS TO UEC

As prescribed under Article 13 (a) of the Political Parties Registration Law, the following parties have submitted their member lists to the Union Election Commission (UEC):

1. Kokang Democracy and Unity Party - submitted on 27 July
2. Democratic Party (Myanmar) - submitted on 28 July

Thirty-nine parties have been granted permission to register. Among them, 10 parties have submitted their party membership lists.⁴

DEPUTY HOME MINISTER TO RUN IN MAUNGDAW FOR PYIDAUNGSU HLUTTAW

The Union Solidarity Development Party (USDP) is currently preparing a list of candidates to run in the upcoming election, including some candidates in Rakhine (Arakan) State according to an official from Maungdaw. In Maungdaw Township, Deputy Home Minister U Phone Swe was reportedly selected as the USDP candidate for the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament), while two other candidates have been selected for the Amyotha Hluttaw (National Parliament). "There is information spreading in Maungdaw that U Phone Swe will contest in the Maungdaw constituency for the Union Parliament and U Mra Aung and San Swe will contest in Maungdaw for the National Parliament," the official said on condition of anonymity. U Mra Aung is Chief In-Charge of the Cooperatives Department in Rakhine (Arakan) State and U San Swe is a former teacher from Maungdaw. To date there has been no word of any Muslim candidates running in the election in Maungdaw. In addition, some Muslim leaders in Buthidaung and Maungdaw have visited Naypyidaw on the invitation of Phone Swe to discuss election issues.⁵

CHIN NATIONAL PARTY KICK STARTS CAMPAIGN, OPENS SUB-TOWNSHIP OFFICES

The Chin National Party (CNP) has kicked started its election campaign and formed sub-township level committees and opened sub-offices in southern Chin State since the second week of July. President Pu Zozam and General-Secretary Ceubikthawng of the CNP spearheaded the campaign in southern Chin state in Mintat, Kanpalet and Matupi townships for 2010 general election, as the party represents all Chin people. The party

¹ Application for formation of political party submitted - <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/NLM2010-07-28.pdf> (NLM) 28 July 2010

² Applications for formation, registration scrutinized, passed - <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/NLM2010-07-30.pdf> (NLM) 30 July 2010

³ Applications for formation, registration scrutinized, passed - <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/NLM2010-07-24.pdf> (NLM) 24 July 2010

⁴ Political parties submit lists of party members - <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/NLM2010-07-29.pdf> (NLM) 29 July 2010

⁵ Deputy home minister to run in Maungdaw for Pyidaungsu hluttaw - <http://www.narinjara.com/details.asp?id=2674> (Narinjara) 25 July 2010

has also formed township level committees and opened sub-offices in Mintat and Kanpalet with plans to open a sub-office in Matupi in the near future. The CNP was established on 27 March 2010 and the party will contest in Matupi, Thantlang and Paletwa constituencies in Chin State.⁶

SHAN PARTY'S CAMPAIGN BLOCKED BY EC

A Shan party registered for the upcoming elections in Burma has been blocked from campaigning for votes in the country's eastern Karenni state. The Chairman of the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party (SNDP), Sai Ai Pao, said that on 28 July Central Executive Committee members were denied entry to Loikaw, capital of Karenni State near the border with Shan state. The group was blocked by the Regional Election Commission (EC) secretary. "We actually had informed the EC about our campaign before we went there," said Sai Ai Pao. The group, which is looking to contest in three towns in Karenni State, 40 in Shan State and six in Kachin state, was forced to return to Shan state, with no reason for the denied entry apparently given.⁷

ELECTION CAMPAIGNING BANNED IN CEASEFIRE AREAS BY UWSA AND NDAA

The United Wa State Army (UWSA) and the National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA) – two of Burma's ethnic ceasefire groups - have stated that election campaigning will not be allowed in areas under their control. A senior Wa officer from Panghsang said the ban includes ethnic Wa parties, referring to the Wa Democratic Party (WDP) and Wa National Unity Party (WNUP). "We cannot play favourites with any party," he said. "If we allow one, then we have to allow other parties including USDP (Union Solidarity and Development Party)." The WDP will contest in 4 townships, Hopang, Tangyan, Markmang (Metman) and Kunlong, none of which are under Wa control. The WNUP, formerly the Wa National Development Party (WNDP), one of the ten parties that were recognized by the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) after the 1990 elections, said it will not contest in Wa Self Administered Region as most areas are still not "stable". Therefore, they will only focus in Lashio, Kengtung, Tangyan and Hopang townships, where there are significant numbers of Wa nationals.⁸

KAYAH STATE SUB-COMMISSION CHAIRMAN VISITS DIMAWHSO TOWNSHIP

Chairman U Cardio of Kayah State Election Sub-Commission accompanied by Secretary U Khin Maung Yi and members inspected electoral work at the offices of Naungpale Village-tract, Dimawhso Village-tract and Myoma Ward Sub-Commissions in Dimawhso Township, and unveiled the signboard of Myoma Ward sub-commission office together with the Chairman of Myoma Ward Sub-Commission. In the afternoon, the Kayah State Sub-Commission chairman met members of Township/Ward/Village-Tract sub-commissions at the meeting hall of Dimawhso Township General Administration Department. The secretary gave instructions on duties of returning officers and deputy returning officers and tasks to supervise electoral process and to follow Directive for Political Parties No (2/2010).⁹

UEC CHAIRMAN MEETS SHAN STATE, KENGTUNG DISTRICT/TOWNSHIP SUB-COMMISSIONS

A meeting between Union Election Commission (UEC) Chairman U Thein Soe and responsible persons of the Shan State Sub-Commission and District/Township/Ward/Village-Tract sub-commissions in Kengtung District was held at the Town Hall in Kengtung on 23 July with an address by the UEC Chairman. After hearing reports on electoral work presented by member of Shan State Sub-Commission U Soe Paing Myint, Chairman of Kengtung District Sub-Commission U Sai Yi and chairmen of township sub-commissions, the UEC chairman made concluding remarks. It was also attended by UEC members U Tha Htay and Dr Sai Kham Hlaing.¹⁰

⁶ Chin national party kick starts campaign, opens sub-township offices - <http://www.khonumthung.org/news.php?readmore=255> (Khonumthung) 27 July 2010

⁷ Shan party's campaign blocked by EC - <http://www.dvb.no/elections/shan-party%E2%80%99s-campaign-blocked-by-ec/11010> (DVB) 30 July 2010

⁸ Election campaign banned in ceasefire areas - http://www.shanland.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3124:election-campaign-banned-in-ceasefire-areas&catid=85:politics&Itemid=266 (Shan Herald) 30 July 2010

⁹ Kayah state subcommission chairman visits Dimawhso Township - <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/NLM2010-07-24.pdf> (NLM) 24 July 2010

¹⁰ UEC chairman meets Shan state, Kengtung district/township sub-commissions - <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/NLM2010-07-28.pdf> (NLM) 28 July 2010

UEC MEMBER MEETS MAGWAY DIVISION/DISTRICT/TOWNSHIP SUB-COMMISSIONS

A meeting between UEC member U Win Kyi (in-charge of Magway Division), who was accompanied by responsible persons of Magway Division Sub-Commission and district/township sub-commissions, was held at the office of Magway Division General Administration Department on 12 July. On 14 July, U Win Kyi and his entourage also met members of district/township sub-commissions and held discussions on chosen polling stations sites, constituencies and polling numbers. On 15 and 16 July, the group inspected polling station sites in Magway, Yenangyoung, Chauk, Natmauk, Myothit and Taungdwingyi Townships.¹¹

ELECTORAL WORK DISCUSSED IN MAGWAY DIVISION

Chairman of Magway Division Election Sub-commission U Maung Maung Win and other sub-commission members met members of the Thayet District and Aunglan Township and Ward/ Village Tract sub-commissions at the office of Aunglan Township General Administration Department (GAD) on 24 July. The chairman also met township/ward/village-tract sub-commissions at GAD Offices in Thayet and Sinbaungwe townships on 25 July. At the meeting, the chairman explained about electoral work and inspected chosen sites for polling stations, buildings and designation of constituencies.¹²

ANALYSIS

While many have expressed their deep concern over the entire election process as being undemocratic and unconstitutional, recent events have further cast doubts on whether the elections will be free and fair. The refusal of Regional Election Sub-commission officials to allow members of the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party (SNDP) to enter into Karenni state to campaign is not a good omen. The Election Commission has been unable to justify its actions and the SNDP party is unhappy with the action taken against them. To make matters worse, the recent announcement by the United Wa State Army (UWSA) and the National Democratic Alliance Army (NDAA) to ban parties from campaigning in areas under their control is another setback for the elections. Once again, the unresolved issue of the Border Guard Forces has taken centre stage and thus, if not dealt with care, could affect the electoral process within the Shan state. The junta will surely be monitoring the activities of the ethnic Wa parties and groups in the region. It will take necessary measures to ensure that its own party, the USDP, will not encounter problems. More acts of intimidation of opposition parties by the authorities can be expected in future, while the transformation of the cease-fire groups into Border Guard Forces will remain a high priority for the junta.

¹¹ UEC member meets Magway division/district/township sub-commissions - <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/NLM2010-07-30.pdf> (NLM) 30 July 2010

¹² Electoral work discussed in Magway division - <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/NLM2010-07-30.pdf> (NLM) 30 July 2010