

ELECTION MONITOR NO. 42

CITIZENSHIP CRITERIA TRIPS UP ELECTION CANDIDATES

The rejection of prospective Hluttaw candidates by the Union Election Commission (UEC) has dealt a blow to the election strength of several Rangoon-based political parties. Most of the candidates are believed to have been rejected because of their failure to comply with Article 8 (b) of the Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law, which stipulates that a candidate must have been born of parents who are both Burmese citizens. The candidates who have been rejected include:

1. U Abdullah – National Democratic Party for Development (Yangon Region Amyotha Hluttaw Constituency No.4)
2. U Kyaw Hla – National Democratic Party for Development (Yangon Region Amyotha Hluttaw)
3. U Phone Myint – National Democratic Force (Dagon Seikkan, Pyithu Hluttaw)
4. U Kyaw Myint – National Democratic Force (Taungdwingyi, Magway Region Hluttaw)
5. U Win Naing – Independent candidate aligned with the Democratic Party
6. U Hla Myint – Democratic Party (Myanmar), was rejected on taxation grounds

U Hla Thein, a spokesperson for the National Democratic Party for Development (NDPD), said the party would make an appeal on behalf of their two candidates who had been rejected. Furthermore, one of its candidates for Dagon Myothit (South) has withdrawn voluntarily due to financial difficulties.

Dr. Than Nyein of the National Democratic Force (NDF) said, “We realised this would be a problem for us only after they had registered. The point is that we didn’t have time to prepare our candidate lists properly and check whether all of them met the criteria to stand as Hluttaw candidates. Still, we don’t think it will affect our party strength too much.”

Two other Democratic Party (Myanmar) candidates in Shwepyithar, Yangon Division have also withdrawn citing personal grounds.¹

UNION ELECTION COMMISSION ISSUES DIRECTIVE NO. 3/2010

The UEC issued Directive No. 3/2010 on 16 September 2010, which states that Hluttaw candidates will have to systematically compile an account of their campaign expenditure in accord with Chapter XIII of the respective election rules and submit it to the sub-commission concerned within 60 days that the Region or State sub-commission announces the names of the elected Hluttaw representatives. Application forms have already been issued for the candidates of the political parties and independent candidates to submit their accounts.²

UEC CHAIRMAN MEETS DISTRICT/TOWNSHIP/WARD/VILLAGE-TRACT SUB-COMMISSIONS IN MAGWAY REGION

UEC Chairman U Thein Soe, accompanied by UEC members U Win Kyi and U Myint Naing, met members of district/township/ward/village-tract sub-commissions in Pakokku and Gangaw Districts of Magway Region and polling station officers at Pyithaya Hall in Pakokku on 19 September and Chairman U Maung Maung Win of Magway Region sub-commission and members, district/township/ward/village-tract sub-commissions in Magway, Minbu and Thayet districts and polling stations officers at Town Hall in Magway on 20 September. The UEC chairman elaborated work process of the commission at the meetings.³

¹ Citizen criteria trips up election candidates - <http://www.mmtimes.com/2010/news/541/news001.html> (Myanmar Times) 20 September 2010

² Union election commission issues Directive No.3/2010 - <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/NLM2010-09-18.pdf> (NLM) 18 September 2010

³ UEC chairman meets district/township/ward/village-tract sub-commissions in Magway Region - <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/NLM2010-09-24.pdf> (NLM) 24 September 2010

ELECTORAL PROCESS COURSE OPENS IN BAWLAKE TOWNSHIP

An electoral process course for polling station officers and deputy polling station officers jointly organized by Bawlake District Sub-commission of Kayah State and Township Sub-commission was held at the office of the General Administration Department in Ywathit, Bawlake Township on 18 September. Staff officer U Khin Saw of Bawlake District Information and Public Relations Department explained the aim of conducting the course, and the responsible persons gave talks on tasks to be carried out by polling station officers, deputy polling station officers, as well as ward and village sub-commission members.⁴

ANALYSIS

Several parties have seen their candidates removed on the grounds of not meeting citizenship laws and also due to financial difficulties. The UEC from the outset has laid down rules and regulations that hinder rather than facilitate would-be candidates at every stage of the electoral process. Directive No. 3/2010 announced on 18 September will most probably become another tool used against opposition party candidates. Tight deadlines and biased/unfair practices have characterized the operations of the UEC. Those planning to take part in the elections, as well as in the future political process, will need to pay close attention to these conditions.

⁴ Electoral process course opens in Bawlake Tsp - <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs09/NLM2010-09-24.pdf> (NLM) 24 September 2010