



Network for Democracy and Development Documentation and Research Department

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Weekly Political Events Regarding the SPDC's Election (026/2010)

July 18 – July 24, 2010

STATE PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (SPDC) AND ITS STOOGES ORGANIZATIONS

-The military regime has strategically planned to relocate about 100,000 Burmese individuals from Nargis-struck Irrawaddy Division to Hukaung Valley in Kachin State so that the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) in Kachin State wins a total victory in the upcoming elections. The Regional Operations Command 1 based in Tanai, Kachin State has been implementing the project and about 10,000 Burmese people have already been relocated. **(RFA 190710)**

-According to a resident from Kunheng, during USDP campaign trips to rural areas in Kunheng Township, the USDP campaigned by denouncing and criticizing other political parties. **(S.H.A.N 190710)**

-A resident from Latha Township, Rangoon stated that even though Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) members persuaded residents that if they vote for the USDP in the elections, streets would be repaired for free, in reality there have been cases where the local population was still required to pay for the repairs. **(Irrawaddy 200710)**

-At the 43rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Hanoi, Vietnam from 19 to 23 July, Burmese Foreign Minister U Nyan Win stated that he had no idea when the elections would be held. **(Irrawaddy 210710)**

-A township level USDP secretary revealed that the USDP has been recording campaign songs with famous singers and that the songs would be aired on the military regime's radio and TV stations. Furthermore, albums of the campaign songs would be distributed to the population and played during campaigns and voting. **(Irrawaddy 210710)**

-The military regime's Press Scrutiny Board banned The Voice Weekly journal for two weeks after it published an analysis article criticizing the 2010 elections and the 2008 constitution. **(Irrawaddy 210710)**

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-At the University of Foreign Languages, Rangoon on 20 July, the Deputy Ministry of Education, Brig. Gen. Aung Myo Min urged students and instructors to vote for political parties close to the military in the elections. **(Mizzima 210710)**

-A person close to the Rangoon Divisional Command stated that relatives and extended families living with families of army, navy and air force troops under the Rangoon Divisional Command have been pressured to join the USDP as party members. **(DVB 220710)**

-A person close to the State Election Commission in Karenni State stated that the State Election Commission has been training election commission chairpersons elected from villages and townships in Karenni State. **(KT 220710)**

-News sources from Vietnam revealed that U Nyan Win, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, announced that the military government will allow Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to contest in the elections. U Nyan Win also reaffirmed that the 2008 constitution places no restrictions on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to participate in the elections. **(DVB 220710)**

-After the abrupt disbanding of the USDA by the military regime without organizing any conference, and the transferring of its assets to the USDP, another social association should be soon established. According to sources close to the USDA, the new association will be named 'Sasana Nuggaha' meaning 'Association for the Propagation of Sasana,' and former USDA members, students and government employees will be its core members. **(DVB 220710)**

-The Women Affairs' Association of Myanmar, another civilian wing of the military regime, was disbanded together with the USDA, but is recognized as a wing of the USDP. **(BBC 220710)**

-An individual, who is to contest in the elections as an individual representative, unveiled that the USDP has been persuading politicians in the Pegu Division planning to contest as individual representatives in the elections, to join the USDP for the elections by giving them various incentives such as offering help if those individual representatives face difficulties in campaigning. **(NEJ 230710)**

-The USDP has been reportedly conducting its own census and collecting eligible voters' lists in townships in Rangoon Division and in other States and Divisions, in an apparent effort to influence the result of the general election. The lists have been compiled without any prior notice or explanation to the population. **(Irrawaddy 230710)**

-At the time it was recruiting, the USDP did not explain the party policy to members-to-be as it did before, but targeted people in need of financial support and engaged them by offering them loans. **(NEJ 230710)**

-A member of the USDP Rangoon Division Organizing Committee stated that the USDP would follow the USDA's 5 objectives in the Educational, Health, Economic, Social and Political sectors. **(Mizzima 230710)**

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-Even though after the USDA was disbanded and merged in the USDP, the USDP did not accept former USDA members, either government employees, students or senior citizens, in its ranks,, the party still counts over 8 million core members. **(Irrawaddy 240710)**

-The Tiddim Township Peace and Development Council in Chin State has been collecting money from residents to buy stationeries and items necessary for the ballot stations in the upcoming elections. **(Khonumthung 240710)**

OPPOSITION FORCES

A. FORCES INSIDE BURMA

-The National League for Democracy (NLD) held an event to raise financial resources to assist families of political prisoners in Hlinetharyar Township. The event culminated on July 19 in the leading to 63rd Martyr Day commemoration ceremony. **(DVB 180710)**

-The 63rd Martyr Day commemoration ceremony was held at the residence of U Tin Oo, the Vice-Chairperson of the NLD, on 19 July. **(NEJ 190710)**

-NLD township members in States and Divisions held the 63rd Martyr Day commemoration ceremonies at their residences on 19 July. **(DVB 190710)**

-U Nyan Win, a member of the NLD Central Executive Committee, met with 20 members of NLD Pegu Division at a residence in Sanchaung Township, Rangoon. They discussed about the NLD's current position and future activities. **(DVB 220710)**

B. FORCES OUTSIDE BURMA

-Burmese opposition activists in New Delhi announced that the Indian Government will remain silent and refrain from mentioning the 2010 elections in order to avoid harming Indian economic opportunities in Burma during Senior Gen. Than Shwe's visit to India. **(Mizzima 210710)**

CEASE-FIRE GROUPS

ORGANIZATIONS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN TRANSFORMED AS BORDER GUARD FORCE

-A clash between the United Wa State Army and a military unit under Light Infantry Division 99 based in Meiktila occurred in Namtit region in Hopan Township, Northern Shan State on 17 July after the regime's troop penetrated the Wa region. A person close to Wa troops revealed that one Wa soldier was killed during the confrontation. **(NEJ 190710)**

-A Lashio resident government employee let out that Maj. Gen. Aung Than Htut, Commander of the Northeastern Command, is frustrated and angry about the Shan State Army-North (SSA-N) because even though it agreed to transform in a militia unit, in reality the SSA-N does still not have the capacity to do so. **(S.H.A.N 200710)**

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-According to some commanders of the 5th Brigade, Col. Saw La Pwe (aka) Col. Moustache, Brigadier of the 5th Brigade of the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), rejected the offer of Gen. Ye Myint, Commander of the Military Security Affairs, to discuss issues regarding the DKBA's transformation into a border guard force. **(KIC 230710)**

PARTIES THAT WERE PERMITTED TO STAND AS POLITICAL PARTIES

-A leader from a political party stated that even though political parties were invited to attend the 63rd Martyr Day Ceremony held at the Martyr's Mausoleum, Bahan Township, Rangoon, these political parties were only allowed to attend a separate ceremony with restrictions. **(NEJ 190710)**

-U Khin Maung Swe, advisor of the National Democratic Force (NDF), said that the NDF has contacted representatives from 50 townships to contest in the elections. **(Myanmar Times, Vol. 24 No. 475)**

-U Thu Wai, Chairperson of the Democratic Party (Myanmar), revealed that the members of the Democratic Party include the daughters of the former Prime Minister of Burma, giving the party the upper hand compared to other political parties. **(Myanmar Times, Vol. 24 No. 475)**

-Nai Ngwe Thein, Chairperson of the All Mon Region Democracy Party (AMRDP), managed to rally thousands of supporters during canvassing trips in Mon State. **(IMNA 210710)**

-Two days after it was granted permission to contest in the elections, the Unity and Democracy Party of Kachin State (UDPDS) began to canvass for the elections. **(KNG 190710)**

-U Phyo Min Thein, Chairperson of the Union Democracy Party (UDP) which plans to contest in the elections, declared that "the military government should release political prisoners including members of parliament who were elected in the 1990 elections before the 2010 elections." **(DVB 220710)**

-U Phyo Min Thein also stated that representatives from political parties would face difficulties to contest against representatives from the USDP during the elections. **(DVB 220710)**

-A member of the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party (SNDP), also known as the White Tiger Party, declared that when the SNDP opened a branch office in Mongnai Township in Southern Shan State, local people joined and attended the opening ceremony of their own free will. **(S.H.A.N 220710)**

-A businessman from Lashio stated that the SNDP is popular among the population in Northern Shan State. **(Irrawaddy 230710)**

-The AMRDP held a meeting at its headquarters in Moulmein on 11 July and elected 21 Central Executive Committee members including Nai Ngwe Thein as the chairperson, Nai Hla Aung as the vice-chairperson 1, Nai Thike as the vice-chairperson 2, Min Nwe Soe as the general secretary, Nai San Tin as the secretary 1, Min Khin Aung as the secretary 2, and Nai Kyan Yit, Nai Chan Myae, Min Thein Han, Min Soe Thein, Nai Lawi Aung, Nai Aung Ba, Nai Banya Aung Moe, Nai Sein Tun, Min Sein Aung, Min Chit Oo, Nai Than Shwe, Min Thit Lwin, Nai Tun Ohn, Nai Aung Soe, and Nai Hein San as executive committee members. **(Kaowao 230710)**

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-According to individuals close to the party, the Unity and Democracy Party of Kachin State has been canvassing with financial support from the military regime. **(KNG 230710)**

-The Chin Progressive Party (CPP), which will contest in the elections, has opened offices and set up party signboards in 6 townships in Sagaing Division. **(Khonumthung 230710)**

PARTIES THAT HAVE REGISTERED TO STAND AS POLITICAL PARTIES

-Dr. Manan Tuja, Chairperson of the Kachin State Progressive Party (KSPP), stated that leaders of the KSPP visited Naypyitaw to inquire about why the KSPP has not been granted permission to contest in the elections. U Thein Soe, Chairperson of the Union Election Commission, replied that even though the KSPP has not received the permission, it can continue its political campaigns. **(Irrawaddy 190710)**

-A leader of the KSPP stated that during its meeting with the Union Election Commission in Naypyitaw on 16 July, the KSPP was promised it would get the permission to contest in the elections. **(KNG 200710)**

SOCIETY AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

-U Tin Shwe, the deputy in-charge of the National Trade Union stated that the Trade Union, established at the beginning of June 2010, was disbanded and transformed into the Workers and Farmers' Union Establishment Group. **(DVB 210710)**

-According to some political parties, the population in Burma does not want to vote for the USDP in the 2010 elections, and is looking forward to voting for other democratic parties. The population also wishes other political parties to campaign in rural areas, particularly as in some of them the USDP is the only campaigning political party. **(VOA 220710)**

-The population in Rangoon expressed its wish that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi participates in the elections, after foreign media aired the request, on 21 July, of Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada during the ASEAN Regional Forum and Asia Pacific Security Meeting held in Hanoi, Vietnam, to Burmese Foreign Minister U Nyan Win, to let Daw Aung San Suu Kyi participate in the elections. **(NEJ 230710)**

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

-The All Burma Monks' Association (ABMA) released a statement on 18 July urging the population in Burma to abstain from voting in the elections. The statement also urged soldiers, members of the USDA and of Swanahshin organizations, to stand on the side of the people. **(RFA 180710)**

OTHER FORCES

-Myanmar Egress Think Tank, while meeting with CBOs and diplomats from Europe in Bangkok, Thailand last week, stated that 77 percent of the eligible voters will vote in the 2010 elections. **(Irrawaddy 220710)**

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INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

A. THE UNITED NATIONS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

-During the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Hanoi, Vietnam, Vietnam Foreign Minister Phan Gia Khiem urged the Burmese military regime to organize free and fair elections. **(VOA 190710)**

-Surin Pitsuwan, Secretary General of ASEAN, warned U Nyan Win, the Foreign Minister of Burma, that the upcoming elections in Burma should be credible, during a dinner held on 19 July during the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam. **(VOA 200710)**

-Even though the ASEAN has been urging the Burmese military regime to organize free and fair elections, most of the Burmese opposition forces doubt that the upcoming elections will be free and fair. **(VOA 200710)**

B. GOVERNMENTS

-The City Council of Berkeley, California, USA, which has given unwavering support to democracy in Burma, passed two resolutions on Burma on 13 July and announced that it considers the 2010 elections in Burma illegitimate and rejects them as such, because of the exclusion of democratic forces. **(VOA 170710)**

-Jeremy Browne, a Junior Minister of State at the Foreign Office of Great Britain, stated that the UK would consider the 2010 elections in Burma illegitimate for it will not reflect the will of the Burmese people. **(VOA 180710)**

- Katsuya Okada, the Japanese Foreign Minister, announced that if the military regime in Burma does not reconsider and change its policies regarding the elections, Japan will not fully support economic aid to Burma. **(RFA 220710)**

-Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada urged Burmese Foreign Minister U Nyan Win to let Daw Aung San Suu Kyi participate in the elections, during the ASEAN Regional Forum and Asia Pacific Security Meeting held in Hanoi, Vietnam on 21 July. **(RFA 220710)**

-Senator Mitch McConnell, a Republican Senator from Kentucky, USA, stated on 22 July that the US Senate overwhelmingly approved, with a (99-1) vote, the law extending sanctions against the Burmese military regime which has systematically violated human rights. He added that the law was extended also because the upcoming elections will not be free, fair and legitimate. **(VOA 220710)**

-US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, at the 17th ASEAN Regional Summit held in Vietnam, stated that the US was concerned about human rights violations in Burma, and urged the military regime to release political prisoners and cease the attacks against ethnic nationalities. She also claimed that the elections would be neither free nor fair since the election laws furthered the oppression on the people in Burma. **(NEJ 230710)**

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C. NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

-Amnesty International (AI) released a statement on 18 July stating that the Burmese elections in 2010 would serve as a test of the international community's trust in the ASEAN. **(RFA 180710)**

-Human Rights Watch (HRW) released a statement on 18 July claiming that the disbanding of the USDA by Burma's military regime, and its merging in the USDP, which is led by military leaders, clearly proved that the military will totally influence the elections. **(VOA 190710)**

-The Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) declared that if the military regime of Burma does not allow international teams to observe the upcoming elections, the elections would not be free and fair. **(DVB 210710)**

End of report/ Saturday, July 24, 2010

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