



# Burma News International

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2010 election and the role of ethnicity in Burma (1)

## Ceasefire groups can not immediately respond to election laws

On March 8, 2010, the SPDC, which has ruled the country since a military coup over 20 years ago, issued election laws for governing the upcoming election in 2010.

At the same time, some leaders from ethnic parties, which won the 1990 election, said that if the 2008 constitution is not reviewed and revised, they will not contest the election.

A dialogue between armed ethnic groups and the SPDC on the issue of transformation of armed groups into an SPDC controlled border guard force (BGF) is deadlocked.

One week after the release of the election laws, decisions concerning the election have come out quickly in Arakan, Shan and Kachin political circles.

## 18 Townships, 4 Districts in Kachin State

One week after the release of election laws, representatives from the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and Major General Soe Win, the commander of the northern command, discussed the creation of the border guard force on March 13.

The KIO and the SPDC have already met 12 times about the transformation of armed groups into the border guard force, but, no agreement has come from these meetings.

Some KIO leaders, who quit the KIO, established the Kachin State Progressive Party (KSPP). The party said it will contest the election and accept the 2008 constitution.



KSPP went to Nay Pyi Daw on April 5 and has applied for approval to form a political party. Currently, the KSPP is actively organizing a campaign in Myitkyina and Chi Bwey townships.

Meanwhile, tension between the KIO and the SSPDC over the issue of formation of a BGF continues. And, also there was a series of bomb blasts at the construction site of the Myit Son dam project.

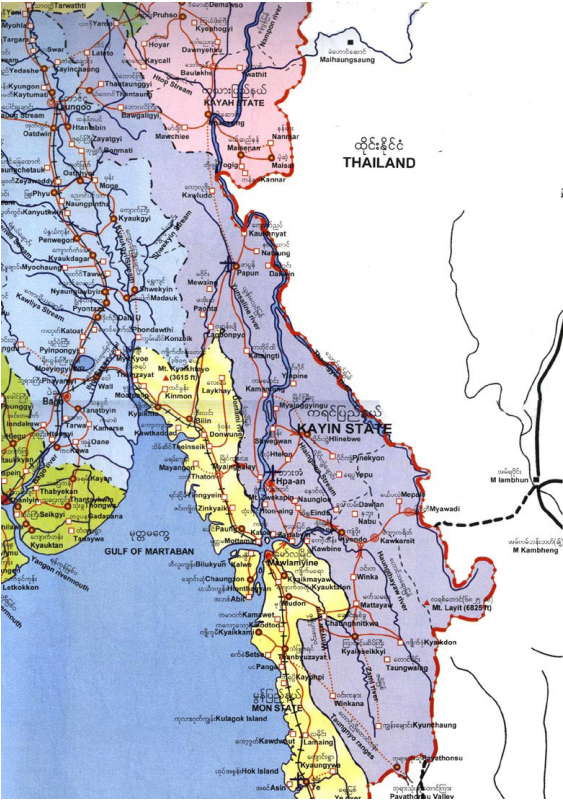
The KSPP was established by former KIO and NDA (K) leaders. The prominent leader in the KSPP is Dr. Tuu Ja, a former vice-chairman of the KIO.

# 7 Townships, 3 Districts in Karen State

The Karen People’s Party (KPP), which has 17 executives, registered on March 31 to contest the election.

On May 8, the Union of Karen League (UKL), a former Karen party in 1990, has re-registered with the election commission office as a political party.

Party chairman, Former Lt. Col. Saw Htun Aung Myint, along with 4 vice-chairmen and 17 executives established the KSPP.



# 17 Townships, 4 Districts in Arakan State

The Arakan Liberation Party, the strongest Arakanese armed group, has released a statement condemning the upcoming election.



The statement said the election will favor the military dictatorship; it won't allow for a woman president and it cannot produce a genuine federal union.

U Aye Thar Aung, secretary of the Arakan League for Democracy, said that if the 2008 constitution is not reviewed, the ALD won't register again and will not contest the election.

The military regime allowed the NLD to open branch offices, but, when NLD prepared to open its remaining branch offices in Sittwe city, those offices were destroyed on March 11.

Myro or Kha Me National Solidarity Party, another ethnic Arakanese party, registered with the election commission on April 9. The party will contest in Kyauk Taw, Paletwa, Myrauk U and Pauk Taw townships.

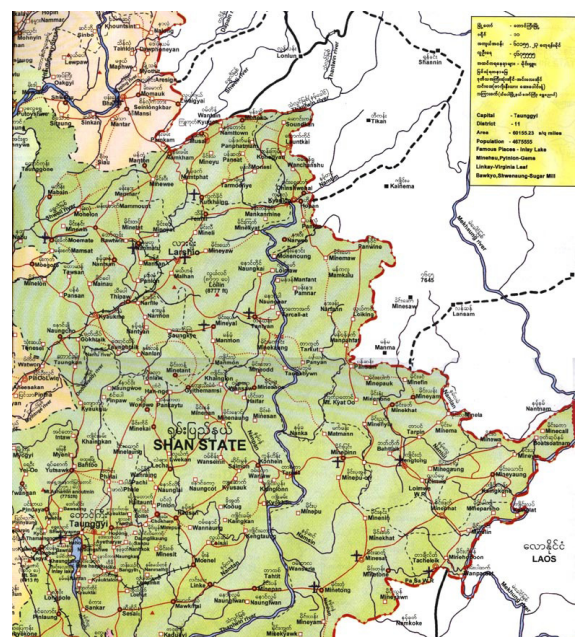
Myro or Kha Me National Solidarity Party used a 'water pump' as the party's symbol and contested the 1990 election. Currently, chairman U San Thar Aung, vice-chairman U Kyaw Htun Khaing, U Aye Houn and secretary U Lar Bway are leading the party.

# 55 townships, 12 Districts in Shan State

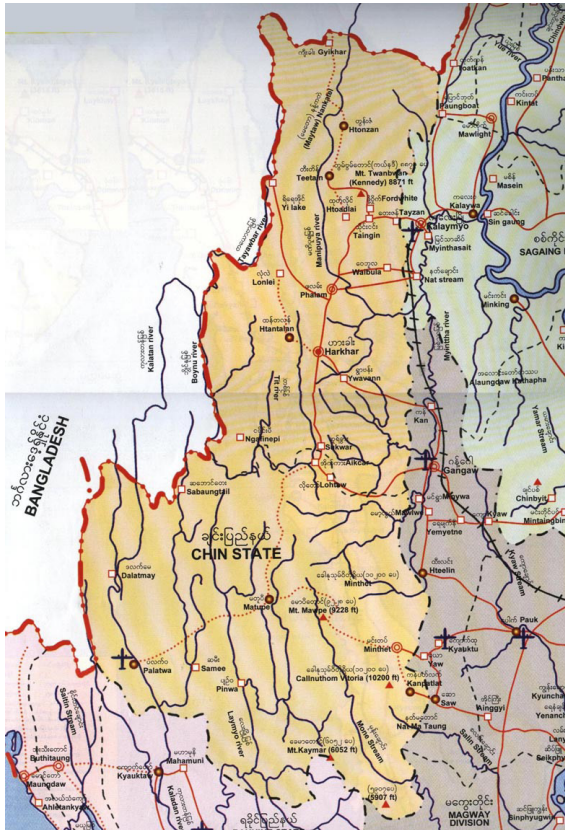
The Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD), which won in the 1990 election, has requested permission (from the military regime) to see party leader U Khun Htun Oo, who has been put in Prison, as well as other party leaders.

The military regime has ignored the SNLD's request. The party has already announced it won't register and will not consider contesting the election.

The SPDC has a problem with the United Wa State Army, a ceasefire group in Shan State, regarding the issue of transformation to BGF. It's a deadlock situation because the two sides cannot reach an agreement.



# 9 Townships, 2 Districts in Chin State



The Chin National Party registered as a political party on April 7, 2010.

There are 9 townships in 2 districts in Chin State.

According to the laws of the national parliament, there will be 12 representatives from each state.

Therefore, there are 6 representatives from each district in Chin State.

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