

## THAILAND

30 October- 17 November 2015

### MEDIA MONITORING REPORT #137

#### PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

##### Public participation in ceasefire monitoring imperative

The New Light of Myanmar, 30 October 2015

The public will be encouraged to take part in ceasefire monitoring activities, according to a press conference after a Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) meeting at the Myanmar Peace Centre in Yangon yesterday. The joint ceasefire monitoring process is not only for signatories — the



government and eight ethnic armed organizations—but also for the people, said U Khun Sai, the managing director of the Pyidaungsu Institute for Peace and Dialogue.

The managing director, who was also one of attendees of the meeting, highlighted the importance of mass participation in the process. He said possible recurrences of conflict between the parties could be prevented. Trust-building through successful implementation of monitoring activities will act as a good example for putting an end to recent fighting, he added. Salai Yaw Aung of the All Burma Student's Democratic Front, who also attended the meeting, said Union, state and regional joint monitoring committees will be formed with representatives from the signatories as well as other groups. The code of conduct instructs troops from both sides on how to abide by the truce, so it will be written in Myanmar and ethnic languages, using words and illustrations that are understandable to ordinary people. According to the agreement signed on 15 October, these tasks are to be completed within the first 30 days of the signing.

Link: [http://www.myanmargeneva.org/Newspaper/2015%20October/30\\_Oct%2015\\_gnlm.pdf](http://www.myanmargeneva.org/Newspaper/2015%20October/30_Oct%2015_gnlm.pdf)

##### Myanmar to draft framework for holding political dialogue

Business Standard, 17 November 2015

Myanmar is planning to form a Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) to start drafting a framework for holding political dialogue as part of the country's peace process, authorities said on Tuesday.

The UPDJC, involving 16 representatives each from the government, ethnic armed groups and political parties, was set to meet on November 24, U Aung Min, vice chairman of the government's Union Peace-Making Work Committee (UPWC), told the second Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting



(JICM) on Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. Drafting of the framework is expected to begin before December 14 and the formal dialogue is expected to start before January 14, next year, Xinhua news agency reported.

**Link:** [http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/myanmar-to-draft-framework-for-holding-political-dialogue-115111700775\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/myanmar-to-draft-framework-for-holding-political-dialogue-115111700775_1.html)

### **UN seeks more access to conflict zone**

Myanmar Times, 17 November 2015

The United Nations has called on the authorities to allow more humanitarian access to the conflict zone in central Shan State, where local aid workers say about 7000 people have fled fighting and air strikes by the



Tatmadaw.

A spokesperson in New York for UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in a statement yesterday that the UN “has continuously been raising protection concerns in the affected areas and pushing for greater humanitarian access”.

Pierre Peron, spokesperson in Yangon for the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said the UN and its partners were supporting the response of local groups in the area by providing supplies of hygiene kits, clothing, blankets, food, medicine, shelter and water and sanitation.

**Link:** <http://www.mmtimes.com/index.php/national-news/17648-un-seeks-more-access-to-conflict-zone.html>

## **LAW AND GOVERNANCE**

### **From Political Prisoner to Political Office**

The Irrawaddy, 17 November 2015

Not only will the National League for Democracy form the next government in 2016, but the next parliament will see more than 100 political prisoners in its ranks.



Burma’s Nov. 8 election saw a landslide victory by the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD), but the result is historic for many reasons. Of the 1,139 candidates declared winners so far, 110—or around 10 percent—have spent years behind bars as political prisoners.

Many of those who spent time behind bars for their political activities plan to use their new platform in Naypyidaw to call for an end to the incarceration of prisoners of conscience.

**Link:** <http://www.irrawaddy.org/election/news/from-political-prisoner-to-political-office>

### **Myanmar’s Parliamentary Speaker Urges Pre-Election Lawmakers to ‘Play Fair’**

Radio Free Asia, 16 November 2015

Myanmar’s parliamentary speaker Shwe Mann on Monday urged lawmakers who lost their seats in last week’s general election to “play fair” and carry out their work as the legislature reconvened for its final session before incoming MPs are sworn in next year.

“Although most MPs, myself included, have little reason to return to parliament because we lost in the election, we must work in the interest of the country and people in good faith and fairness during the rest of our time as lawmakers,” Shwe Mann told the session in the capital Naypyidaw.



Shwe Mann also extended his thanks to “all organizations and individuals who participated in holding a successful election,” and pledged to collaborate with the new government and the military—which is guaranteed one-third of the seats in parliament under the constitution—to “ensure peace and stability in the post-election period.”

Link: <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/lawmakers-11162015194732.html>

## ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT

### ADB loan to help upgrade road in Kayin State on GMS corridor

Mizzima, 12 November 2015

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$100 million loan to improve a 66.4 kilometre section of road connecting the towns of Eindu and Kawkareik in Kayin state, the missing link of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) East-West Corridor, ADB said in a statement on 12 November. “Kayin has been affected by sectarian conflict for decades resulting in weak infrastructure and high levels of poverty. But it also has the principal road link to Thailand long which 25% of the country’s land-based trade passes,” said James Leather, Principal Transport Specialist in ADB’s Southeast Asia Department. “Upgrading this stretch of the road will complete improvements to the Myanmar sections of the GMS East West-Corridor. This will open up new economic opportunities for the state and country and support inclusive growth.”



Link: <http://www.mizzima.com/development-news/adb-loan-help-upgrade-road-kayin-state-gms-corridor>

## CENSUS AND ELECTION

### UN chief congratulates people of Myanmar for ‘their patience, dignity and enthusiasm’

Mizzima News, 10 November 2015

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has congratulated the people of Myanmar for “their patience, dignity and enthusiasm” in historic elections and has encouraged all stakeholders “to maintain the dignified spirit, calm and respect throughout the completion of the electoral process.”

The UN News Centre reported on 9 November.

Mr. Ban’s Spokesperson, Stéphane Dujarric, said that the UN chief also commended Myanmar’s Union Election Commission, as well as its various state, regional and local institutions for their important work. Noting that results of the “momentous event” have started to come in, he said the Secretary-General encouraged “all stakeholders in Myanmar to maintain the dignified spirit, calm and respect throughout the completion of the electoral process.”



Link: <http://www.mizzima.com/news-election-2015-election-news/un-chief-congratulates-people-myanmar-%E2%80%98their-patience-dignity-and>



### [Asian election foundation applauds Myanmar's readiness to embrace democracy](#)

The New Light of Myanmar, 11 November 2015

THE Asian Network for Free Elections Foundation, which observed Sunday's general election, praised Myanmar people and the Union Election Commission for holding a peaceful, free and fair election.



Mr Damaso G Magbual, President of the Asian Network for Free Elections Foundation (ANFREL), said at a press conference in Yangon yesterday that initial reports found that Myanmar queued at polling stations with patience and calm, thereby demonstrating a strong collective will to change the country and a readiness to embrace Democracy.

Mr Damaso also said that the November 8 election exceeded their expectations and brings great opportunities for Myanmar to develop democratic governance. He urged the UEC and authorities to settle reported irregularities in a timely manner.

Link: [http://issuu.com/yelay/docs/11\\_nov\\_15\\_gnlm](http://issuu.com/yelay/docs/11_nov_15_gnlm)

### [Suu Kyi camp rejoices over early election victories](#)

Bangkok Post, 10 November 2015

Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi's party was dominating early official results released early Tuesday, boosting the spirits of jubilant supporters who sang in the streets for a second night anticipating victory in the nation's historic election.

The National League for Democracy was the victor in 25 of 28 seats for which results were available, the election commission announced, though there are hundreds more contests left to count from Sunday's vote. Despite the fact that the co-chair of the military-backed ruling party said his party likely lost more seats than it won, Ms Suu Kyi urged caution.

The early results are coming from the NLD's strongholds in the nation's cities and central heartland. It will need to win 67 percent of those in order to select the next president given that the military is guaranteed a quarter of the seats in parliament.



Link: <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asean/759296/suu-kyi-camp-rejoices-over-early-election-victories>

### [Work Together, without grudges President pledges peaceful, smooth power transfer](#)

The Global New Light of Myanmar, 15 November 2015

President U Thein Sein pledged to systematically transfer power to the incoming government within a set timeframe, in line with the Myanmar constitution.



At a meeting with political parties in Yangon on Sunday, the first since general election on 8th November, the president stressed that the current government would work for a smooth transition in line with existing laws, regulations and procedures, and would do so calmly, peacefully and smoothly so as not to cause worries about the power transfer.

The president said he would send invitations to convene the second parliament in accordance with established procedures. He also reminded political Parties to make preparations to participate in political dialogue, as they also play a role in the peace process.

Link: <http://globalnewlightofmyanmar.com/work-together-without-grudges-president-pledges-peaceful-smooth-power-transfer/>

### **Myanmar's rebel groups welcome election victory of opposition NLD**

Dpa new, 15 November 2015

Several of Myanmar's ethnic rebel groups are eager to start peace negotiations with the next government, they said Sunday after the election win by the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD).



Some of the holdout rebels told dpa the result will pave the way to end the decades-old civil war.

"We are eager to start peace talks," said La Nan, spokesman of the Kachin Independent Army. "We have no doubt in the next government led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and hope we can build genuine peace," he told dpa by phone, using an honorific to refer to Suu Kyi.

The SSA refused to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in October "as we don't believe it could bring real peace. I think that's why the military is attacking us heavily," the group's Major Sai La told dpa by phone.

"But we will be okay with a government led by the NLD. We are ready to talk with them," he said.

The United Wa State Army, one of the largest groups, said Saturday it also welcomed the NLD's victory.

Link: <http://www.dpa-international.com/news/asia/myanmars-rebel-groups-welcome-election-victory-of-opposition-nld-a-47167019.html>

### **Myanmar ethnic parties win nearly 100 seats**

The Nation, 13 November 2015

The ethnic minority parties of the United Nationalities Alliance (UNA), which has good relations with the National League for Democracy (NLD), have secured nearly 100 seats across the Lower House, Upper House and state parliaments.

The UNA members are the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD), Mon National Party (MNP), Arakan National Party (ANP), Zomi Congress for Democracy, Kokang Democracy and Unity Party in Shan State, Kayan National Party, Kachin National Democracy Congress and Kayan People's Party.



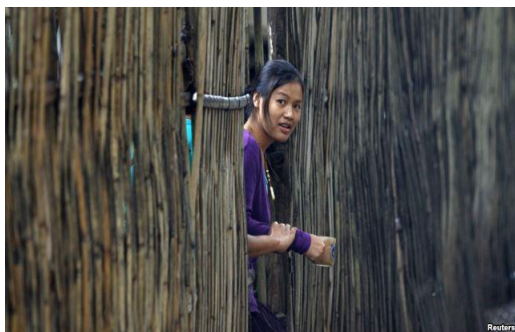
Photo from: Independent Mon News Agency

Link: <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/breakingnews/Myanmar-ethnic-parties-win-nearly-100-seats-30272884.html>

### **Myanmar Refugees in Thailand Hopeful, Cautious, After Election**

Voice of America, 17 November 2015

Tens of thousands of Burmese refugees living in Thailand are more optimistic about returning following the November 8 election wins of the National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Aung San Suu Kyi. However, many who fled decades of conflict in Myanmar remain cautious.



Many live in several official camps along Thailand's western border and have seen little chance for returning home. But the November 8 election of the NLD has changed that outlook. Many in the camps have long supported Suu Kyi and deeply opposed the military government.

Vivian Tan, regional spokesperson for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), said the ceasefire agreements will be key in the refugees' decision making of returning to Burma.

"The national ceasefire agreement is just as important – if not more important for the refugees because they really want to see the provisions of this agreement upheld – that there is a firm end to the conflict so they can resume their lives back home," said Tan.

The UNHCR's position, said Tan, is for the refugees to return voluntarily backed by continuing support from international donors.

**Link:** <http://www.voanews.com/content/myanmar-refugees-in-thailand-hopeful-cautious-after-election/3061372.html>

The content of the UNHCR Thailand Media Monitoring Reports does not reflect the official view or opinion of the UNHCR.

**Links:** Thailand-Myanmar Cross Border Web Portal: [www.commonservice.info](http://www.commonservice.info)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/commonservice](https://www.facebook.com/commonservice)

[www.facebook.com/commonserviceburmese](https://www.facebook.com/commonserviceburmese)

[www.facebook.com/commonservicekaren](https://www.facebook.com/commonservicekaren)