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OFFICIAL MEDIA

NLD WINS GENERAL ELECTION

The Union Election Commission (UEC) announced on 13 November that the National League for Democracy (NLD), has won the majority of seats in Myanmar's general election. Counting began a day after the historic vote was held on 8 November. As of 9 pm, 13 November, the NLD had won 247 Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) seats, 131 Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) seats, 459 state/region parliament seats, 14 state/region Hluttaw for ethnic seats, totaling 851 parliament seats. Out of 657 Pyidaungsu Hluttaw seats, the NLD has won 378 seats. As it has won more than half the number of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw seats, the NLD will form Myanmar's new government.¹

ELECTION COMMISSION TO ANNOUNCE REMAINING RESULTS ON 14 AND 15 NOVEMBER

The Union Election Commission will announce all remaining general election results on 14 and 15 November, a commission official said during a press conference held 13 November at the commission's media centre in Nay Pyi Taw. UEC member Myint Naing responded to questions from journalists during the press conference, which has been held every day at till 9 pm since 9 November. Arrangements are underway to issue certificates of recognition to the winning candidates, Myint Naing said. He also said that the final report of the UEC on the general election will be submitted within 45 days after the final announcement of results. As of Friday evening, UEC has announced 1,089 seats out of a total 1,150 seats, which amounts to 94.70 percent of the total.²

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES PLEDGES TO ACCEPT ELECTION RESULTS

The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing told the media after casting his vote on 8 November that the results of the elections will be accepted. The Commander-in-Chief in responding to the media, said that he hoped that the party most trusted by the people would win the elections and that there was no reason not to accept the election results, as the results are chosen by the people of Myanmar. He added that he hoped that the representatives of various parties elected by the people would cooperate in the interests of the country's development. Min Aung Hlaing also pointed out that it was necessary for the public to abide by the law and to accept the results, which will be announced by the Union Election Commission. He said that any transfer will adhere to

¹ NLD wins general election – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-14-red.pdf> (GNLM) 14 November 2015 (p. 3)/
NLD continues to dominate election results – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-13-red.pdf> (GNLM) 13 November 2015 (p. 3)/
NLD wins majority of seats in two days results – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-11-red.pdf> (GNLM) 11 November 2015 (p. 3)/
UEC announces 45.5 percent of election results – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-12-red.pdf> (GNLM) 12 November 2015 (p. 3)/
Union Election Commission continues announcement of electoral results – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-12-red.pdf> (GNLM) 12 November 2015 (p. 5)/
Election results announced by UEC – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-11-red.pdf> (GNLM) 11 November 2015 (p. 3)/
Votes swiftly tallied: NLD dominates the first round of election results – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-10-red.pdf> (GNLM) 10 November 2015 (p. 1)/
UEC hails election a success, announces first results – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-10-red.pdf> (GNLM) 10 November 2015 (p. 3)

² UEC to announce remaining results on 14 and 15 Nov – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-14-red.pdf> (GNLM) 14 November 2015 (p. 6)

the requirements set out in Myanmar's constitution. The senior general urged the public to exercise their democratic rights responsibly.³

SENIOR GENERAL MIN AUNG HLAING MEETS US AND JAPANESE AMBASSADORS

In his meeting with US Ambassador to Myanmar Derek Mitchell in Nay Pyi Taw on 13 November, the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said the successful completion of the general election fulfilled the desires of Myanmar's defence services. There was some doubt among Myanmar people living both at home and abroad about pre-election efforts on the part of the government, the defence services and electoral officials, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said. The government had a responsibility to display its achievements in reforms during its tenure, whereas the Tatmadaw had the responsibility to display its capability to protect the people, serve the public interest and safeguard the country's territorial integrity, he added. Their discussions focused on the announcement of official election results, follow-up responsibilities, the possibility of a meeting with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, the government's ongoing reforms and national peace process, Myanmar's foreign relations, and prospects of better relations with the United States.

The Commander-in-Chief also met Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Tateshi Higuchi and stated the military's stance on politics and also pledged the impossibility of backsliding due to the election results or other options, saying that efforts were being made to encourage remaining ethnic armed organisations to enter into the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, which was signed in October. "The army will continue to cooperate with other stakeholders in restoring peace and national development," he said, promising that they would join hands with the incoming government to promote the welfare of the people of Myanmar.⁴

PYIDAUNGSU HLUTTAW (UNION PARLIAMENT) PRAISES GENERAL ELECTION

Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Thura Shwe Mann on 13 November praised the Union Election Commission (UEC) and its sub-commissions, the Union Government, local and foreign organisations and the people of Myanmar for the holding of successful general elections on 8 November. He said he issued his congratulations on behalf of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. An announcement released on Friday 13 November by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office said that the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) will cooperate with department officials for convening the second Hluttaw sessions in accordance with the existing laws and rules and regulations.⁵

EU OBSERVERS PRAISE MYANMAR'S POLLS, BUT NOTE SOME FLAWS

Myanmar's 2015 general elections were well-run and peaceful, said the European Union's Election Observer Mission (EU EOM) during a press conference on 10 November. Polling stations around the country were well organised and voters had a real choice between different candidates, said Chief Observer Lambsdorff while summarising the mission's preliminary statement about Sunday's historic vote. Approximately 150 election observers visited more than 500 polling stations across the country and reported very positively on the voting process, with 95 percent rating the process as "good or very good," said Lambsdorff. "People of Myanmar turned out in large numbers to calmly cast their votes in a well-run polling process and the election campaign period was nearly entirely peaceful." Most voters' names were on the voter list, with irregularities observed at seven percent of polling stations, he added. The process of in-constituency and out-of-constituency advance voting was less well

³ No reason not to accept election results: Senior General –

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-09-red.pdf> (GNLM) 9 November 2015 (p. 3)

⁴ Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets US, Japan ambassadors –

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-14-red.pdf> (GNLM) 14 November 2015 (p. 3)

⁵ Pyidaungsu Hluttaw praises general election –

<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-14-red.pdf> (GNLM) 14 November 2015 (p. 3)

managed and transparent, the mission chief pointed out. "I want to say very clearly that the election is not over yet. As long as counting is going on and until the final results are announced the election is still ongoing," said the mission chief. He added that EU observers will remain in the field to observe the tabulation and result processes, as well as any complaints or appeals lodged. He said that the mission will remain in Myanmar until 2 December to observe dispute resolution and complaint mechanisms. "We congratulate the people of Myanmar and we will continue to support the democratisation of the country," said Ana Gomes, head of the European Parliament's delegation. "Now is the time to seize the opportunity for reconciliation," she said during the press conference.⁶

PRESIDENT OBAMA PHONES MYANMAR PRESIDENT TO PRAISE GENERAL ELECTION

US President Barack Obama phoned President Thein Sein on 12 November to commend his Myanmar counterpart and his administration for the success of the country's historic general election on 8 November. The US president said that the cooperation that existed between the Union Election Commission, the international community, political parties and civil society groups contributed to the country's ability to hold peaceful elections. The US president said the general election was an important step in solidifying Myanmar's reforms. He said the brave reforms initiated by Myanmar's president have brought about significant change for the future of Myanmar. President Obama promised to continue cooperating with President Thein Sein's government until a new government took office. The US President also expressed hope that the US will be able to promote further cooperation and to help ensure stability and prosperity for the people of Myanmar. President Thein Sein stated that he was proud of Myanmar for holding such a peaceful and smooth general election and acknowledged the contribution made by members of the government, the UEC, political parties, the public and international organisations. He also pointed out the importance of peace and stability throughout the post-election period and that he plans to meet with the political parties to ensure a smooth transfer of power within the period stipulated by the country's constitution. The Myanmar leaders also thanked the US administration for its commitment and continued cooperation to Myanmar during its reform process.⁷

GOVT TO LAY FOUNDATIONS FOR PEACE DURING REMAINING TERM

The government is committed to continuing to work towards the effective implementation of the terms of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement during its remaining term in office, said Minister Aung Min. "The government will continue to implement the process in line with the agreement, laying out sound foundations for the future government," Aung Min said during a meeting with political parties at Myanmar Peace Centre in Yangon on 12 November. Representatives from the government and more than 80 political parties held talks on the role of political parties in upcoming political dialogue and the selection of 16 representatives from political parties for the Union Political Dialogue Joint Committee. There will be a total of 48 representatives on the committee.

While the government, including the Tatmadaw, and ethnic signatories have already named 16 members each for the committee, the selection of political representatives from Myanmar's 91 political parties is expected to be finalised during the next meeting, which is scheduled for 21 November. It will take place at the Mingala Hall of Yangon Region Government, said Senior Adviser Hla Maung Shwe from the Myanmar Peace Center. "A tripartite meeting of 16 representatives from political parties, the government and ethnic signatories is also set to meet at Myanmar Peace Centre on 24 November in order to form a committee to draw up a framework for political dialogue," he said.

⁶ Elections Free & Fair: EU observers praise Myanmar's polls, but note some flaws – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-11-red.pdf> (GNLM) 11 November 2015 (p. 1 &2)

⁷ Obama phones Myanmar President to praise general election – <http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-13-red.pdf> (GNLM) 13 November 2015 (p. 1)

If all things go to plan, the framework will be set up before 14 December this year, with the first round of political dialogue beginning before 14 January next year, he added.

The purpose of the Joint Committee is to facilitate political dialogue, which was included as one of steps to be undertaken after the signing of a ceasefire agreement between the government and eight ethnic signatories on 15 October. According to the terms of the truce pact, both sides are required to draw up a framework for political dialogue within 60 days of the signing and to hold political dialogue within 90 days. "We held discussions on how to select representatives from political parties, but no decision was made at today's meeting," said Democratic Party leader Thu Wai. Some proposed to choose one representative each from all 91 parties before selecting 16 members through voting, while others expressed different views, he added. During his address at the meeting, Deputy Minister for Defence Rear Admiral Myint Nwe insisted that the Tatmadaw [army] will continue to uphold its commitment to undertake the post-signing steps and adhere to the terms of the ceasefire agreement.⁸

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UEC: BIG FOUR MEETING WON'T AFFECT ELECTION RESULT

The leader of the National League for Democracy Aung San Suu Kyi has invited President Thein Sein, Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing and Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw to meet as soon as possible to discuss national reconciliation and the transfer of power to the election winner. All three accepted. Whatever is decided at the meeting will not impact the work of the Union Election Commission, said UEC member Myint Naing. "If complaints come up within 45 days, and we have to set up tribunals to investigate, and if the complaints are found to be true, then some of the election results may change. But the election results won't change because of the meeting of the Big Four," he said. "No matter what compromises are made at the meeting, it won't affect the MPs we have already confirmed," Myint Naing said. "Daw Suu is a far-sighted leader. She will continue to do all for the interest of the country," added Toe Naing Mann, a son of parliament speaker Shwe Mann, and a member of the Pyithu Hluttaw commission for legal and special affairs. According to Presidential spokesman and Minister for Information Ye Htut the meeting between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her three counterparts will take place after the electoral process has been wrapped up.⁹

UNFC SUSPENDS TWO MEMBERS

The Pa-Oh National Liberation Organization (PNLO) and the Chin National Front (CNF) have been temporarily suspended by the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) an umbrella organisation for armed ethnic groups. The decision was made at the end of the group's three-day conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand on 12 November. The 2 groups were under no illusions about why they had been booted from the UNFC. "The main reason is we signed the nationwide ceasefire agreement while they refused to sign it," PNLO patron Colonel Khun Okkar said. Both organisations attended the UNFC meeting in Chiang Mai. Col Khun Okkar said they opposed the decision, but later accepted it as the desire of the majority. He said the decision was mainly taken by four influential armed ethnic groups. Officials from armed ethnic groups could not be reached for comments.¹⁰

⁸ Govt to lay foundations for peace during remaining term –
<http://www.burmalibrary.org/docs21/GNLM2015-11-13-red.pdf> (GNLM) 13 November 2015 (p. 1& 3)

⁹ UEC: Big Four meeting won't affect election result –
<http://www.frontiermyanmar.net/en/uec-big-four-meeting-wont-affect-election-result> (Frontier Myanmar) 13 November 2015

¹⁰ Two suspended from UNFC –
<http://www.mmmtimes.com/index.php/national-news/17615-two-suspended-from-unfc.html> (Myanmar Times) 13 November 2015

ARAKAN NATIONALIST CONCEDES LOSS

The Arakan National Party (ANP) Chairman has conceded defeat to his National League for Democracy (NLD) rival counterpart. Dr Aye Maung acknowledged his loss of the Upper House seat in Arakan State's Munaung Township Constituency No.2. "I've learned that I lost the polls, to an NLD candidate, but I don't know exactly by how many votes as I was travelling to Sittwe to vote. I will accept the people's choice, their decision. "Now that I wasn't elected, I will not be able to implement the projects I planned out for the region," said Dr Aye Maung, adding that he was happy for the successful NLD candidate. Dr Aye Maung confirmed last week he was eyeing the Chief Minister role in Arakan State – a top job that would have allowed him to oversee the western state's economic agenda. The region has been the site of deadly communal tensions between the majority Buddhist and minority Muslim population in 2012, with resentments still simmering as many continue to face discrimination. The ANP were widely tipped to poll well in the region. The party was the result of a 2014 merger between the Arakan League for Democracy and the Rakhine Nationalities Democratic Party. The chairman previously told local news media : "We will win 100 percent in all parts of Rakhine [Arakan]."¹¹

MANY CHIN VOTERS UNABLE TO VOTE FOR ETHNIC GROUP HLUTTAW

Many Chin people in Kalaymyo, Sagaing Region were unable to vote for ethnic group hluttaw elections during the voting on 8 November. Similarly, people could not give their votes to ethnic group hluttaw, though they had given votes to Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyota Hluttaw and Region Hluttaw. Ko Mung No, official of Hornbill Organization for election watch, also said, "When we closely watch the reason of no right to vote for ethnic hluttaw, we find out that many Chin people have Burmese name, though they are Chin tribe, and the election commission had rejected them as Burmese. So that many Chin people cannot give vote for ethnic group hluttaw in this election." "I had given only 3 votes, I can't vote for ethnic group Hluttaw as I didn't find my name in the list. It is so sad," said There are 176 voting booths and 18,000 of Chin voters in Kalaymyo.¹²

ONLY FOUR MON CANDIDATES ELECTED IN ELECTIONS

Just 4 candidates from Mon political parties were elected in townships across Mon State, in 2015 elections, held on 8 November. 3 Mon political parties competed in respective constituencies throughout Mon State, including the All Mon Regions Democracy Party (AMDP), the Mon National Party and the Women's Party (Mon). However, only candidates from the AMDP and the MNP were elected. Dr Min Kyi Win won the State Hluttaw (2) in Mudon Constituency, Dr Min Soe Linn in Ye Township for State Hluttaw (1) and Nai Soiha won the seat for Amyotha Hluttaw (2) in Ye Township. MNP contested for 53 seats: 13 places for Pyithu Hluttaw, 12 places for Amyotha Hluttaw, 27 places for State Hluttaw, and 1 place for the Ethnic Representative. The AMDP also competed in 35 constituencies: 8 Pyithu Hluttaw seats; 10 Amyotha Hluttaw seats, 16 for State/Hluttaw seats and one place for the Ethnic Representative. However, the AMDP was victorious only with one candidate. Dr. Aung Naing Oo of the AMDP won in Chaungzone Township, for State Hluttaw (1). Candidates from the National League for Democracy (NLD) won the major votes in a landslide across 10 townships throughout Mon State.¹³

¹¹ Arakan nationalist concedes loss –

<http://www.dvb.no/news/arakan-nationalist-concedes-loss-burma-myanmar/58960> (DVB) 9 November 2015

¹² Many Chin people cannot give vote for ethnic group hluttaw –

<http://khonumthung.org/2015/11/09/many-chin-people-cannot-give-votes-for-ethnic-group-hluttaw/> (Khonumthung) 9 November 2015

¹³ Only four Mon candidates elected in 2015 elections –

<https://monnews.org/2015/11/12/only-four-mon-candidates-elected-in-2015-elections/> (IMNA) 12 November 2015

ANALYSIS

The people of Myanmar have shown their desire for change and voted overwhelmingly for the National League for Democracy (NLD) party in what has been deemed as the freest and fairest elections in Myanmar. While the Union Election Commission has yet to make its final and official announcement on the outcome of the elections, current indications are that the NLD will have control of both the Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) and Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) of parliament. This means that the NLD will name 2 of the 3 Presidential candidates with the Tatmadaw naming one. This will more or less ensure that one of the NLD's candidate will be elected by the whole Parliament to become the next President of Myanmar. President Thein Sein and the Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing have stated their willingness to accept the election results and to ensure a smooth transition of power.

The transition of power will however be not free from obstacles or challenges. Decades of military rule will not be easily eradicated. The success of Myanmar's democratic evolution will depend on how the NLD leadership works with the Tatmadaw. The relationship between the NLD and the military will not be easy and will take time to resolve.

In spite of the massive election victory, the people in Myanmar should not be over-excited. It will be a difficult transition from decades of military rule to a more open society. Furthermore, the new government will also be confronted with a myriad of unresolved and contentious issues including ethnic conflicts, racial and religious riots, corruption as well as dealing with the role of the military (Tatmadaw) in shaping the country's future. The support and understanding of the people and the international community will proved to be pivotal. It is therefore crucial from the outset that the new government state clearly its goals and visions and formulate policies and strategies in seeking to address Myanmar's decades of mismanagement.

The new government when it takes power in March 2016, will face pressure from all sides domestically and internationally. Expectations to deliver genuine changes and democratic reforms will be extremely high. The NLD will therefore need to adopt policies that will help to promote fundamental human rights, bring development to far-flung areas and prosperity to the entire country. The recent elections reflect the hope the people have in Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for a brighter future. Meeting all the expectations in a short time will be a challenge.