

Since registering for the election on Monday, the pro-junta National Unity Party has vowed it will “serve the people” if elected.

The pro-military junta National Unity Party (NUP) has vowed to serve the people if elected, according to Han Shwe, one of the party's central executive committee members.

The NUP registered as a political party on Monday and announced its intention of competing in this year's general election through the state-run newspaper, *Myanmar Ahlin*.



Previously called the Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP), led by late dictator Gen Ne Win, the NUP won 10 seats in the 1990 election.

Speaking with *The Irrawaddy* on Wednesday, Han Shwe said, “We have applied to the Election Commission to register our party.

“Our political ideology is to serve the people,” he added.

The party is now waiting for the approval of the newly-selected Union Election Commission, he said.

Led by former deputy commander in chief of Burma's armed forces, Tun Yi, the NUP has 23 central executive committee members, including General Secretary Than Tin and Joint General Secretary Khin Maung Kyi.

Han Shwe said that with about 500,000 party members nationwide, the NUP has high expectations for the upcoming election.

“We expect to win in many constituencies,” he said. “We hope that our party will win more than 200 parliamentary seats in total.”

The party will contest seats across the country, but will focus on constituencies where there is potential for the party to win, Han Shwe said.

He said that the party had been surveying the constituencies it intends to contest and has been actively recruiting party members since its registered for the election.

Party registration laws state that parties may spend a maximum of 10 million kyat (US \$10,000) for each candidate running for a seat in parliament. The expenditure can come from either the party's funds or from a candidate's private funds.

Some observers said the party registration laws favor wealthy and influential candidates.

Han Shwe said the campaigning allowance per candidate is high, but that the NUP will try its best to collect “legal and sincere” funding from the party's candidates, members and individuals who support the party.

The NUP's flag has a red background with three white stars on the left side. The party will base its headquarters in Bahan Township in Rangoon Division.