

The candidate for the National Unity Party (NUP) in Hinthada Township in Irrawaddy Division complained on Saturday to the Election Commission of illegal practices in collecting advanced votes by his rival, Htay Oo, the general-secretary of the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP).

“We received reports from our members that USDP members and the authorities are collecting advanced votes that are not in accord with the electoral law,” Saw Htun, who is a candidate for the People's Assembly (Pyithu Hluttaw) in Hinthata Township, told The Irrawaddy. “It has been going on significantly since last week.”

“Today, we officially sent a complaint letter to the election commission citing these illegal practices,” he said.

Asked whether Htay Oo is behind the illegal practices, Saw Htu said: “I think it is his plan, and he and his party have systemically planed to do that [collect illegal advanced votes].”

Htay Oo is the incumbent minister at the Agriculture and Irrigation Ministry. He served as general-secretary of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), which was transformed to the USDP, where he took the same position.

“In my view, the more the USDP sees the uncertainty of winning in the election, the more illegal practices they will commit,” said Saw Htun, who is a member of the central committee of the NUP. “We also complained to the Election Commission on Friday that the USDP placed campaign posters of Htay Oo within the restricted areas of polling stations, which violates the electoral law.”

There are 342 polling stations and 232,074 eligible voters in Hinthata Township.