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Prime Minister Thein Sein and other government ministers who are leaders of the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) will resign from their government posts this month, according to sources in Naypyidaw.

The resignations will affect almost all top ministers within the government including Htay Oo, minister of Agriculture and Irrigation; Zaw Min, minister of Electric Power-1; Aung Thaung, minister of Industry-1; Thein Zaw, minister of Telecommunication, Post and Telegraph; and Kyaw Hsan, minister of Information.



Sources said the resignations would probably be announced by Thein Sein during a press conference in Naypyidaw, the headquarters of the USDP. The USDP was approved by the Union Election Commission last week.

Following the resignations, the ruling junta is expected to appoint a new prime minister and ministers. Officials in Naypyidaw said announcing a new cabinet would likely take place after the regular first-quarter meeting of the junta and senior government official, which could be later this month.

Earlier, Lt-Gen Myint Swe, the chief of Bureau of Special Operation-5, was mentioned as the possible head of a temporary government in the pre- and post-election period.

The formation of the USDP with Thein Sein and other senior government officials is seen by most observers as violating the junta's own electoral laws, which ban government officials or staff from taking part in political parties and using government property for political purposes.

On Friday, the Union Democratic Party in a press release said that the prime minister and ministers should not be playing a role in the USDP while they are government officials and questioned if they used government property during the organization of the political party.

On Tuesday, according to state-run-newspapers, Thein Sein was in the Irrawaddy delta along with the junta's No.2, Vice Snr-Gen Maung Aye. His delta tour coincided with an official visit of Kurt Campbell, the US assistant secretary of state for East Asia and Pacific Affairs. Other junta leaders including Htay Oo, Kyaw Hsan, U Thaung met with Campbell in Naypyidaw on Sunday.

Local sources said Kyaw Hsan, who is in charge of the USDP campaign in Sagaing Division, has met with local division organizers. Thein Zaw has reportedly made similar campaign organization trips to Kachin State, as have other ministers to different regions of the country.

There are few signs, so far, that the general public is taking an interest in the election. The date of the election has still not been announced by the government.

The former main opposition National League for Democracy (NLD), led by Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, decided not to take part in the election, saying it lacked credibility and was undemocratic. Former NLD leaders who met with Campbell on Monday urged the US to keep pressure on the junta to release all political prisoners and not to recognize the election results.