

Burmese media have been ordered by the censorship board not to publish comments made by US Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell about his recent visit to Burma.

Burmese media were ordered by Burma's censorship board not to publish comments made by US Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell about his recent visit to Burma, according to Rangoon editors.

"We could only report that Campbell went to Naypyidaw and held a press conference, that's all," a weekly journal editor told *The Irrawaddy*. "We couldn't report the statement he made before leaving Burma."



The Ministry of Information's Press Scrutiny and Registration Division, which oversees the censorship board, also ordered the removal from the Web site of the journal *Eleven* of news and comment on Campbell's meeting with detained opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

In a farewell statement at the end of his visit to Burma, Campbell, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, called for the release of Suu Kyi and other political prisoners ahead of the planned election.

Editors and reporters say the PSRD is tightening up restrictions on the press as the date of the

general election draws nearer.

The PSRD routinely inspects and censors books, journals and newspapers, rejecting any criticism of the military junta. Particular attention is reportedly being paid to coverage in the privately-owned press of the junta's Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), led by Prime Minister Thein Sein.

A Rangoon journalist told *The Irrawaddy* on Friday: "We cannot report the fact that the Union Solidarity and Development Association formed a party and we cannot carry interview comments on the election commission or the election law."

A censorship board official confirmed that the PSRD had instructed the censorship board to suppress critical reporting on the election and also any coverage of the now unregistered National League for Democracy. "We are performing under instructions from Naypyidaw," the official said.

Businessmen closely linked to the present regime have meanwhile obtained licences to publish new weekly journals.

Zaw Min Aye, son of Lt-Gen Tin Aye, ranked No 5 in the *Tatmadaw* (Burmese armed forces), will reportedly publish a news weekly, titled *Messenger*, which will appear every Monday.

Zaw Min Aye manages an import-export firm, Pyae Swan Yee Co, one of Burma's wealthiest concerns. It has a concession for importing motor vehicles, and is reportedly also involved in IT, business services, electronic components and supplies, printing and publishing.

He is also the owner of the Rangoon-based *Ecovision* weekly and runs "Moe San Pan" media.

Myat Khaing, a close associate of former Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, minister for information and publisher of the journal *Snapshot*, is publishing a new news journal, *Monitor*, which focuses on the upcoming election. The first issue has already appeared.

The PSRD licenses the publication of 326 newspapers, magazines and journals, and a further 10 are expected to appear.

*Rangoon-based correspondents also contributed to this report.*