

Members of the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) led by Burma's current Prime Minister are sticking posters in front of people's houses in South Dagon township and Thaketa townships, Rangoon Division, identifying them as party members during the election campaign, Rangoon sources said.

Thu Wai, the chairman of the Rangoon-based Democratic Party, said, "They have been sticking posters up in front of houses saying 'the occupants of this house are USDP party members' in South Dagon township and Thaketa townships.



"Actually, those households were not USDP members but the posters were designed to prevent other party representatives from approaching those houses while putting pressure on the occupants to join the USDP," he said.

The USDP, the most powerful party running in the election, is a proxy party for the military and is running their election campaign. Many observers expect that the party is going to win the Nov. 7 election in Burma with a landslide victory.

USDP members have started intensifying their campaigning as the election draws nearer. Pictures of party candidates have been put on electric poles, in public markets and hospitals and party pamphlets have been distributed in townships.

Opposing political parties have complained that the USDP has violated the election law during their campaign, meanwhile.

Nai Ngwe Thein, chairman of the All Mon Regions Democracy Party, said: "When they launched their campaign in Mon State, they took photos of houses and gave party membership application forms to their occupants.

"They told people that they will build new roads and give special privileges to them after they became party members," he said.

Campaigning in villages in Karen State, USDP members pointed to a large photo of Prime Minister Thein Sein held up in front of the people, saying they all have to vote him, said a Karen man who had recently arrived in Mae Sot on the Thai-Burmese border.

Khin Shwe, a USDP candidate who is going to run in the Upper House (Amyotha Hluttaw) in Kawmu, Kungyangone, and Ton Tay townships, Rangoon Division, paid 5,000 kyat to people who came to listen to his campaign speeches, according to local sources in Kawmu township.

Despite the Union Election Commission law that bans political parties from using national and religious buildings during the election campaign, USDP members have been continuing to use them regardless.

The use of religious buildings by the USDP in breach of the election law has sparked anger among Buddhist monks. Monks in Sittwe, the capital of Arakan State, have recently refused to let the USDP use their monasteries for election campaigning.

In central Burma and Arakan State in August, USDP members distributed loans to local farmers at two percent interest, well below the 10 percent rates other places normally charge.

“We have collected evidence of all their election law violations and have requested that the EC take action on this,” said Thu Wai.

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