

Many registered political parties have permission to publish election-related materials such as pamphlets, journals and booklets, but they face severe financial problems which limit their efforts, according to party sources.

Win Sein, who heads the information committee of the Union Democratic Party (UDP), told The Irrawaddy, that the party received permission to publish last week, but it is unable to print campaign related material because it lacks money.

Cho Cho Kyaw Nyein, a leader of the Democratic Party, said, "To tell the truth, we can not publish a journal because of lack of money. I don't know about the future."

The Press Scrutiny and Registration Division (PSRD) requires political parties to register before publishing campaign material. It charges 100,000 kyat (US \$100) and a 500,000 kyat (\$500) a deposit.

Nay Myo Wai, the Peace and Diversity Party (PDP) secretary, said, "We don't depend on publications. We mainly pass on information from media inside and outside the country. To publish, we would need more funds."

Burmese media including The Myanmar Times, Voice, Biweekly Eleven, Modern and 7 Day News now carrying special sections devoted to election news and interviews.

The PSRD announced on March 17 that registered parties can apply to the censorship board to publish material in accord with the 1962 Printing and Publishing Act.

However, the publications must conform to certain rules such as "not oppose" the ruling State Peace and Development Council, make any attempt to criticize the armed forces and they must conform to the law, the statement said.

Meanwhile, registered political parties are beginning to put up parties signs in some townships.

The Union of Myanmar Federation of National Politics chairman, Aye Lwin, told The Irrawaddy on Tuesday, "In Mandalay, Sagaing and Patheingyi, we've started our campaign. The party is charging 500 kyat (\$.50) for a membership fee and monthly dues of 100 kyat (\$.10)"

Phyo Min Thein, the UDP chairman, said, "Starting from June 1, the party will begin organizing in Mandalay, Magway and Sagaing. Patron Shwe Ohn will open a sub-office in Taunggyi, he said.

Nay Myo Wai, the PDP secretary, said the party will not collect a membership fee. He said the party's headquarters in Mingalardon Township has about 15 volunteers.