

A majority of Rangoon residents said they will not vote in the Nov. 7 election, while others are expressing little interest in the political parties contesting the election, according to an informal survey by The Irrawaddy.

Out of 227 Rangoon respondents to a questionnaire conducted by The Irrawaddy, 121 said they would not vote on polling day, while 106 said they would vote.

Fifty-four said they were undecided. A total of 187 people said they were not prepared to vote at this time, compared to 40 who said they were ready to vote. The random survey was done Friday through Monday.

“Far be it from thinking about voting, we still don't know how many parties are contesting the polls,” said a 34-year-old man. “But I want this election finished so that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is freed.”

A 63-year-old woman, a government pensioner, said that people have little interest in the election since they have no confidence it will lead to meaningful change.

“We don't even know how to vote? So forget about selecting which party you like,” she said, adding that the political parties that are contesting the election cannot get information out to raise public awareness, and they cannot conduct organizing campaigns among the public.

On the other hand, a 35-year-old man said he had selected his favorite political party and he was ready to vote.

Out of 40 people who said they were ready to vote, some admitted that they were still

undecided about which party or candidate they would support.

People who said they are not ready to vote but would vote in the election shared a concern that their ballots would be misused by the government authorities.

A 34-year-old woman who said she would not vote said, “No matter what government comes into power, it won't change our lives.”

A journalist in Rangoon said the public has little interest in the election and the political parties contesting the election.

“The exiled broadcasting radio stations which have a great influence on the Burmese public are negative about the election,” he said. “And the media inside Burma is barely allowed to publish any election coverage. So it's no wonder why few people are interested in this election. ”

Rangoon-based Irrawaddy correspondents contributed to this story.