

Pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi is allowed to vote in the Nov.7 election, according to the voter list posted on Friday in the ward Election Commission (EC) office in Bahan Township where she lives despite the election law that bans detainees from voting.



EC sources in Rangoon said when the voter lists began to be posted at sub-election commissions across the country on Monday, Suu Kyi and two women who live with her at her lakeside residence were excluded due to “reasons of space.”

“Her name is on the list today, although we couldn't do this on Monday. In fact she and her two companions were already on the list,” said an EC official speaking anonymously.

Although the March 2010 election law states that any person convicted by a court and currently serving a jail term is not eligible to vote or run for office, observers said the Burmese junta’s intentions in putting Suu Kyi's name on the voter list are uncertain.

“Today Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is on the voter list, which implies she is not serving a jail term,” said Suu Kyi's lawyer, Nyan Win, who is also a leading member of the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD).

“We can assume that putting her name on a separate sheet of the voter list was a last minute order from Naypyidaw. But according to the election law, the EC has to produce the full list of names on the voter list at the beginning.”

Local sources said they did not see Suu Kyi’s name in the voter list on Monday, adding that Suu Kyi's and her housemates names appeared along with Ye Naing Win's on a separate paper on Friday.

Ye Naing Win, the son of former prime minister and spy chief Gen Khin Nyunt, lives in the same ward as Suu Kyi and has been under detention since his father's arrest in Oct. 2004.

Suu Kyi’s voter list number is 2833 while Ye Naing Win's is 2836.

Human Rights groups said there are more than 2,000 political prisoners including Suu Kyi and the significant 88 Generation Students group currently in detention.

On Aug. 11, 2009, a special court in Rangoon sentenced Suu Kyi and two women accomplices for three years in jail for receiving American intruder John Yattaw, but in a last-minute reprieve, junta chief Snr-Gen Than Shwe reduced the sentence to 18 months under house arrest.

Suu Kyi is set to complete her sentence on Nov. 13, according to Washington-based Freedom House.

However, Nyan Win was skeptical, saying: "We cannot totally assume she will be free. From another legal perspective, we can say that her name on the voter list means she is not being detained under the conditions of a jail-term, so she could be kept in detention after her 18-month sentence has expired."

Suu Kyi has been under arrest for 15 out of the last 21 years. She was detained three times separately in July 1989, September 2000 and May 2003. Before her arrest in 2003 in Depayin, Sagaing Division, Suu Kyi and her convoy were ambushed by thugs.

Human rights groups claimed more than 100 people were killed in the attack, which was organized by the junta-backed mass organization Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) and regional military commands in Sagaing and Mandalay divisions.

In April, the USDA transformed into the Union Solidarity and Development Party chaired by Prime Minister Thein Sein in order to run in the election.

Suu Kyi and her party, the NLD, refused to participate, saying the polls under the junta-backed laws could not be free, fair and inclusive.

Meanwhile, US President Barack Obama was scheduled to raise Burmese issues such as the election at a meeting with leaders from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Friday.