

Candidates for the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party (SNDP), the most popular ethnic party in Shan State which is also known as the “White Tiger Party,” were defeated by candidates from the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), the Burmese military regime's proxy party, with the help of rigged votes and unfairly obtained advance votes, local sources say.

In Taunggyi, SNDP candidate Hla Yeir Htut said the junta began collecting advance votes on Nov. 5 under questionable circumstances.

“If the voter list named 3,000 people, then before the election the junta already had 2,000 advance votes. When we complained to the Shan State Election Commission (EC), they said they will take action but nothing has changed,” said Hla Yeir Htut.

Teachers who volunteered as poll observers in Shan State said the USDP concentrated on taking advance votes from rural people, who they trained to vote.

“The voters were trained to queue systematically. Their leader stood beside them to monitor how they voted,” said Nang Than Shwe, a SNDP candidate from Hopone Township in southern Shan State.

“Some soldiers informed us that they didn’t fill out the ballot, but had to give their signature,” said an SNDP member from His Tsaw Township.

Sao Youn Paing, the chairman of the SNDP, said that on election day in Mawkmai Township in southern Shan State, 823 people voted for the SNDP candidate for the People's Parliament (Lower House), 763 for the Nationalities Parliament (Upper House) and 723 for the State Parliament. Nobody voted for the USDP.

However, after the polls closed local authorities and EC officials went to Honamp Village in the township and forced the villagers to vote. The USDP candidates then received 3,945 votes for the People's Parliament, 3,879 for the Nationalities Parliament and 3,871 votes for the State and Region Parliament, and the SNDP lost all 3 seats, said Sao Youn Paing.

“Many local people are dissatisfied with the poll results—we were told that all of the voting papers have the same hand writing,” he said.

A teacher who monitored polling station (3) in No 12 Ward, Lashio Township, in northern Shan State, was sent to the hospital because a car accident took place while transporting the ballot box from the polling station. “We are inquiring what happened to the ballot box,” said a local resident.

In Namkhan Township, northern Shan State, Pan Say Kyaw Myint, a reported drug lord who attended the junta-organized National Convention, was accompanied to a polling station by a group of Chinese who voted even though they have no national identity card, said the Shan State Election Watch Group.

There are 54 townships in Shan State and 176 seats for the People's, National and State

parliaments combined. The SNDP competed for 156 seats across the country. The Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) contested most constituencies.

“The USDP wants to win a higher percentage than the National League for Democracy won in the 1990 election to prove to the international community that they have a lot of supporters,” said a representative of the Shan State Election Watch Group.

In the 1990 election, the Shan National League for Democracy Party won a landslide victory in Shan State. Their leaders are now serving long prison terms in remote areas of the state.