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[Home](#) > Current Observation on Burma Question and Answer

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Guest Column by Dr. Tint Swe

(The writer was a former member of parliament of the unfortunate 1990 elections when the NLD won a landslide victory. He was living in Delhi as an exile and was a regular contributor to SAAG. In 2014 he migrated to US.)

Q: Aung San Suu Kyi said the polls were not fair but "largely free" and there had been "areas of intimidation". What does she mean by "not fair" and what were the "areas of intimidation" she spoke about?

A: She means the election was held according to the constitution, which intentionally restricts her to be the head of the government and it is also meant for electing merely 75% of parliamentary seats. Besides the election commission is not impartial and that commission made a series of mistakes from voter list announcements, printing the ballot papers, collection of absentee vote and vote counting.

Q: How would you explain the fact that the USDP "lost completely" the elections (according to Kyi Win)?

A: Thanks to the people of Burma who are highly politicized as Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said. The people become more mature than 1990, 2010 and 2012 elections. The significant fact is that the voters correctly made the choice between Black and White rather than party A or B or else. Aung San Suu Kyi's appeal during the election campaign was not to choose the person but the party logo. The people chose White star from the NLD flag which was printed on yellow paper by the ministry of information.

The Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) made the same blunder as the National Unity Party (NUP) party formerly known as the Burmese Socialist Program Party (BSPP). The military leaders relied on secret reports. The intelligent accounts said there would be no party

which might win majority to be able to form the government. That means they underestimated the people of Burma.

Q: What significance has the poll for Myanmar's 1.3 million oppressed Rohingya?

A: The issue is extremely sensitive in Burma though is unreasonably highlighted outside the country. U Thein Sein government created that issue to seek Buddhist voters. Unfortunately that strategy got counterproductive. The consequence cause negative effect not only to the USDP but to the country. The extremist Buddhist group makes thing worse. The outside world does not talk about 3 million non-Rohingya migrant workers who also could not vote.

Q: Do you think Suu Kyi can now enjoy the results of the elections and stand for the oppressed in Myanmar?

A: Daw Suu has recently said that NLD will not discriminate any minorities whether they are non-Burmese or non-Buddhist.

Q: Suu Kyi said she would make all the decisions for the country, while the president "will have no authority": What plans does she have in mind for Myanmar? What may we expect from her policies and reforms?

A: Again she refers to a line of William Shakespeare: What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. During former dictator Than Shwe's era, the Kitchen Cabinet was known to everybody. Moreover according to the existing constitution, the president is under the Army chief. Definitely she will call the shots. Apart from that Burma needs a sort of dramatic change like a revolution which needs a strong leader loved by general population and respected by ethnic nationalities. All except the military agree Aung San Suu Kyi is the only choice.

Q: Her victory puts an end to the military-backed rule in Myanmar. What role can the military plan now? Will they range with the NLD? What type of relationship can the new government have with the army?

A: Really it is a golden opportunity for the military to make over the bad image of it. It is likely that the military's sunset trend can be shorter than expected. However, the people do not trust them. The gap is still wide. So I must say my optimism may be wrong.

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[Aung San Suu Kyi](#) ^[1]

[Myanmar](#) ^[2]

[Than Shwe](#) ^[3]

[Myanmar Elections](#) ^[4]

Category:

Papers [5]

Countries:

Myanmar [6]

Topics:

Political [7]

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[4] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/taxonomy/term/1262>

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[6] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/myanmar>

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