

## People's Alliance for Credible Elections (PACE) and Phan Tee Eain (PTE)

### Campaign Monitoring

### Preliminary Findings (September 3 to October 7)

October 17, 2018

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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On September 3, PACE and PTE deployed 12 long-term observers to monitor the campaign environment in the by-election areas. Each week, the LTOs interview election officials, candidates and ordinary voters, and directly observe campaign rallies. During the first five weeks of the campaign period, PACE and PTE's long-term observers (LTOs) observed a few cases (six) related to inciting comments against people of other ethnicities during rallies. However, the observers did not find any personal or inciting comments against other candidates when they observed rallies and interviewed candidates. Sub-commission officials reported that they received four official complaints during these five weeks. The reasons of complaints were related to damaged NLD and USDP campaign materials, the NLD's alleged use of the president and state counsellor's image while campaigning, and one to a village head issuing inciting comments against a candidate and using official resources for the campaign.

When candidates conducted their campaign activities, they mostly distributed materials (69%), conducted rallies (60%) and hung posters (46%). Of the 43 interviewed candidates, 33 said that they have appointed a campaign manager (electoral agent) for their campaign activities; only two of these campaign managers are women. Rallies were mostly held at public places such as markets, parks, etc., and at private offices or homes. There were a few rallies in religious places. Candidates conducted civic education activities specifically targeted at women in only four of the 12 observed townships.

PACE and PTE observers will continue monitoring the campaign environment until November 2.

#### KEY FINDINGS

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Starting from September 3, PACE and PTE deployed 12 long-term observers to observe campaign activities, inquire about official complaints, and monitor whether candidates follow the code of conduct during the campaign period in 12 vacant constituencies where by-elections will be conducted on November 3.<sup>1</sup> The document contains the findings of the observation of the first five weeks of the campaign period. LTOs will continue to observe the rest of the campaign period through November 2.

The following findings represent the viewpoints of individual campaigns as expressed in 214 interviews with candidates or their official staff, responses from 60 interviews at sub-commission offices, and direct observation at 150 rallies. This information does not include

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<sup>1</sup> Among 13 vacant seats. This observation does not include the vacancy of Shan ethnic minister seat for Mandalay region.

activities or viewpoints of party headquarters, other party supporters or other groups. It also does not include information about activities conducted by parties or candidates before the official campaign period began.

### **Campaign Policies**

PACE and PTE's LTOs asked candidates about their three main policies for their constituencies, three main policies for their state/region or the whole country, and three main policies to benefit the social, economic and political life of women. The following sections describe the main policies as described by the 43 respondent candidates. The LTOs sought information from four categories of political parties: USDP, NLD, other big parties in their constituencies, and small parties or independent candidates. The "other big party" category includes parties such as the Kachin Democratic Party, the Chin Democratic Party, the Chin National Democratic Party, the National Unity Party (NUP), the Democratic Party (Myanmar), the Myanmar Farmers' Development Party, the Arakan National Party (ANP), the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD), the Democracy Party For Myanmar New Society, the National United Democratic Party (N.U.D) and the National Democratic Force(NDF).

### **Main Policies to Benefit the Constituency**

When observers asked each candidate to name their three main policies to benefit the constituency, "workers' affairs" was a common theme among all four categories of parties. Table (1) shows the main policies of each of the four categories parties in detail.

<b>USDP</b>	<b>NLD</b>	<b>Big Party</b>	<b>Small Party/Independent Candidate</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers' affairs</li> <li>• Farmers' affairs</li> <li>• Solving issues of the constituency</li> <li>• Cost of living</li> <li>• Rule of law</li> <li>• Security and safety of the constituency</li> <li>• Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers' affairs</li> <li>• Farmers' affairs</li> <li>• Solving issues of the constituency</li> <li>• Cost of living</li> <li>• Economic development</li> <li>• Rule of law</li> <li>• Peace</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Constitutional reform</li> <li>• Developing employment opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers' affairs</li> <li>• Farmers' affairs</li> <li>• Cost of living</li> <li>• Policy of business permits to take natural resources</li> <li>• Economic development</li> <li>• Peace</li> <li>• Federalism and democracy</li> <li>• Constitutional reform</li> <li>• Fight against drugs</li> <li>• Developing employment opportunities</li> <li>• Safety of women and children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers' affairs</li> <li>• Farmers' affairs</li> <li>• Constituency development</li> <li>• Cost of living</li> <li>• Peace</li> <li>• Federalism and democracy</li> <li>• National reconciliation</li> </ul>

Table 1: Main Policies to Benefit the Constituency

### **Main Policies to Benefit the State/Region or Country**

When observers asked each candidate to name the three main policies to benefit the state/region or country, economic development and the rule of law were common main priorities of all four party categories. Table 2 shows the main policies of each of the four categories parties in detail.

<b>USDP</b>	<b>NLD</b>	<b>Big Party</b>	<b>Small Party/Independent Candidate</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of living</li> <li>• Economic development</li> <li>• Rule of law</li> <li>• Security and safety of the constituency</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Race and religion</li> <li>• Developing employment opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers' affairs</li> <li>• Solving issues of the constituency</li> <li>• Economic development</li> <li>• Rule of law</li> <li>• Peace</li> <li>• Constitutional reform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers' affairs</li> <li>• Farmers' affairs</li> <li>• Rule of law</li> <li>• Federalism and democracy</li> <li>• National reconciliation</li> <li>• Constitutional reform</li> <li>• Bureaucratic reform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solving issues of the constituency</li> <li>• Cost of living</li> <li>• Peace</li> <li>• Federalism and democracy</li> <li>• Race and religion</li> <li>• Equal rights for women</li> </ul>

Table 2: Main Policies to Benefit the State/Region or Country

### **Main Policies to Benefit the Social, Economic and Political Life of Women**

When observers asked each candidate about three main policies to benefit women, equal rights for women and the safety of women and children were common main priorities of all four party categories. Table 3 shows the main policies of each of the four party categories in detail.

<b>USDP</b>	<b>NLD</b>	<b>Big Party</b>	<b>Small Party/Independent Candidate</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing employment opportunities</li> <li>• Equal rights for women</li> <li>• Safety of women and children</li> <li>• Promote women's participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Developing employment opportunities</li> <li>• Improving women's lives</li> <li>• Equal rights for women</li> <li>• Safety of women and children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving women's lives</li> <li>• Equal rights for women</li> <li>• Safety of women and children</li> <li>• Promote women's participation</li> <li>• Improving the lives of marginalized women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving women's lives</li> <li>• Equal rights for women</li> <li>• Safety of women and children</li> <li>• Improving the lives of marginalized women</li> </ul>

Table 3: Main Policies to Benefit the Social, Economic and Political Life of Women

### **Campaign Activities**

#### **How many volunteers are used by candidates in their campaigns?**

PACE and PTE's long term observers conducted 214 interviews with 43 political campaigns from USDP, NLD, other big parties and small parties/independent candidates to learn more about their campaign activities. For consistency, each observer interviewed the same big party candidate and the same small party/independent candidate each week.

- Of the 43 interviewed candidates 33 (77%) reported that they had appointed a campaign manager (electoral agent) for campaign activities, while nine candidates (21%) said they didn't have a campaign manager (electoral agent), and one refused to answer.
- Of the appointed campaign managers (electoral agents), there were 31 men (94%) and only two women (6%).

- The number of volunteers used by USDP and NLD for weekly campaign activities was higher than the number of volunteers used by other big parties and small parties/independent candidates. In addition, there were some candidates who did not use any volunteers for their weekly campaign activities in all four types of party categories (Figure 1 and 2).

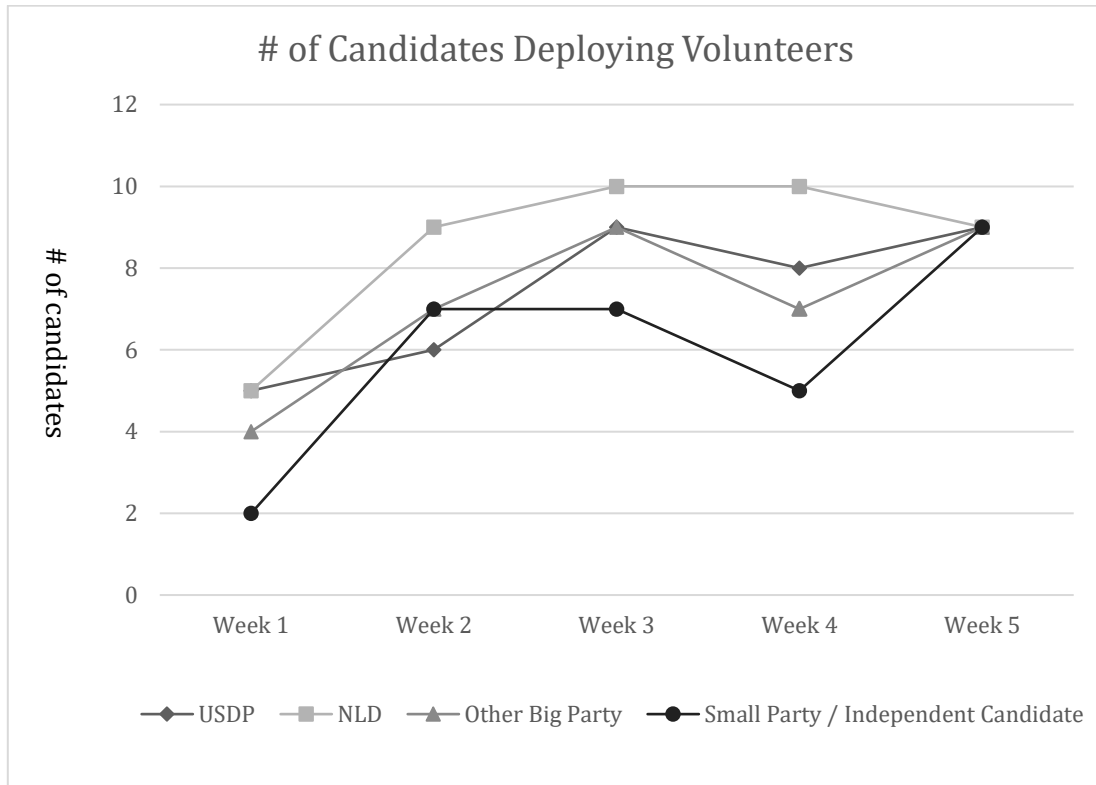


Figure 1: Number of Candidate Deploying Volunteers for Campaign

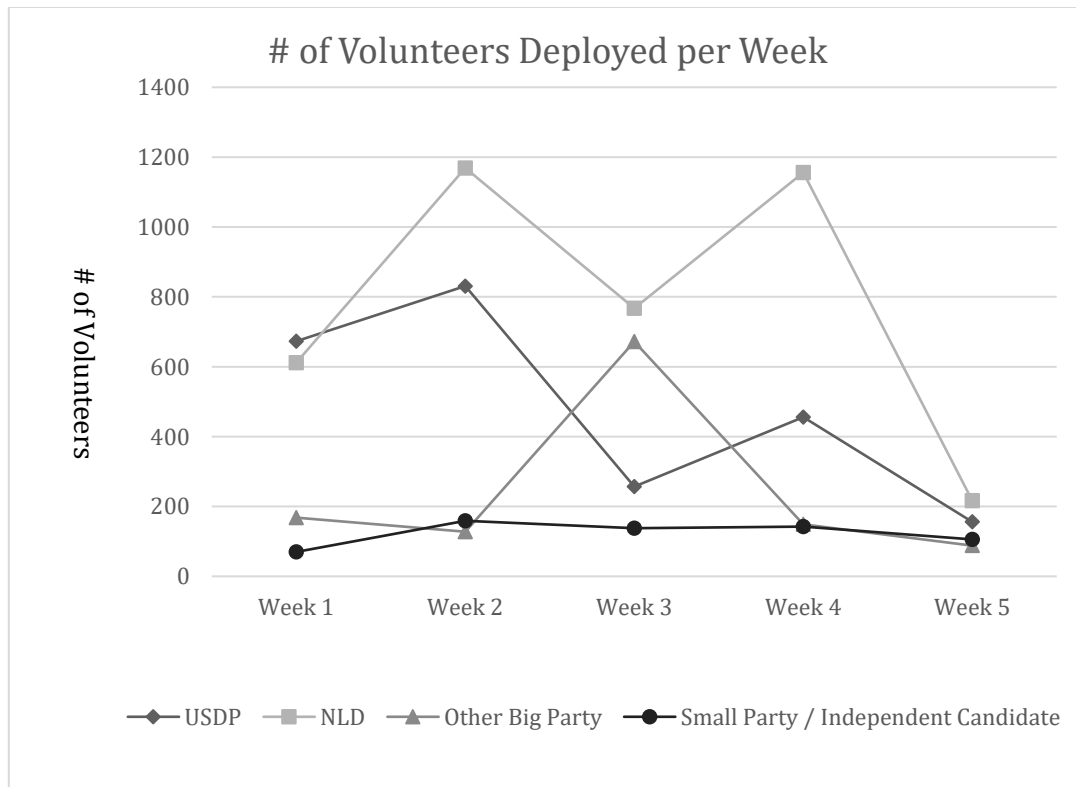


Figure 2: Number of Volunteers Deployed by Candidates

### **What activities are candidates using to reach voters?**

Each week, the LTOs asked the 43 target candidates which outreach activities they had conducted the previous week. The figures below aggregate outreach methods used by candidates throughout the five weeks of the observation. The data does not capture outreach activities taken by parties' central committees or other party supporters.

- The most common outreach activity candidates reported using was distributing materials (69%), followed by holding rallies (60%) and hanging posters (46%). Candidates also reported using parades/loudspeakers (27%), door-to door outreach (20%) and social media/Facebook (12%).
- Other technologies such as using e-mail, SMS, telephone and Viber, as well as conducting interviews with media to reach voters, were used only around 1% of the time.

### **Where are rallies held?**

During this period, PACE and PTE's LTOs observed 61 rallies in urban wards and 89 rallies in rural villages. The observers monitored a total of 150 rallies.

- Most of the rallies observed by LTOs were held in public spaces, like markets or parks (35%), private offices/homes (30%), religious places (17%) and party offices (7%). Very few campaign events were held in sports stadiums/fields (2%) or government buildings (3%).
- Small parties and independent candidates were more likely to use public spaces (like parks, markets, etc.) than candidates from the USDP, NLD and big parties.
- Other big parties were more likely to hold rallies in religious places than the USDP, NLD and small/independent candidates.

### **Who are the speakers at the rallies?**

- At the campaign rallies observed, speakers were more likely to be the candidates themselves (93%), their campaign managers (electoral agents) (42%), party leaders (41%), and celebrities (8%). Community leaders spoke at 2% of rallies, local authorities at 1% and religious leaders at less than 1%.

### **What materials or resources are distributed by candidates at rallies?**

- At most rallies observed, candidates handed out printed materials (88%). Candidates also distributed other goods, like food (19%) and party souvenirs (19%). At 6% of rallies observed, candidates did not hand out any goods or materials. Small parties and independent candidates were more likely to distribute party souvenirs or nothing at all than the other categories. There was only one report of money being distributed at a rally during this period.

### **Are candidates or other speakers using personal or inciting remarks at campaign rallies?**

PACE observed the language of candidates and official speakers at rallies to see if personal or inciting remarks were made. PACE did not observe the speech of candidates outside of rallies or speech by other actors.

- At all of rallies observed, LTOs did not witness any speaker making any personal or inciting comments against another candidate.
- However, there were six rallies where speakers made inciting comments against other groups or persons because of their religion, race and/or gender. While inciting language was detected in rallies of all four party categories, three of the six incidents were witnessed at rallies conducted by "other big parties."
- LTOs witnessed the use of state vehicles or other resources at three rallies, and disruption at a rally held by a small party or independent candidate.

### Do candidates say they are facing problems?

LTOs asked the 43 target candidates if they had faced any problems in the campaign. Although most candidates did not report facing any challenges, a few candidates identified some issues.

- In 2% of the interviews, candidates said they faced the problem of interference in campaign activities the previous week.
- Only in less than 1% of interviews candidates said they faced the problem of property/campaign materials destroyed the previous week.
- There was a very small number of candidates who reported having problems with friends/family (1 report) or at work (2 reports) the previous week.
- In 3% of interviews, candidates reported being asked to change the date and time for rallies/campaign events the previous week. In 2% of interviews, candidates said they were asked to change the location for rallies/campaign events the previous week. All of these reports were related to campaigns in Rathedaung (Rakhine) and Tamu (Sagaing) and affected all four party categories.
- In 2% of interviews, candidates said they had any other problems related with campaign activities.
- In 3% of interviews, candidates indicated that they had filed complaints related to the above problems.

### Complaints Related to the Campaign

PACE and PTE's LTOs also conducted weekly interviews with sub-commission officials in each by-election township to gather information on formal complaints submitted by parties during the course of the campaign, such as number of complaints, who filed the complaints and against whom. Table 4 presents a summary of the complaints received by the sub-commission offices. During the course of interviews, sub-commission officials refused to answer questions about complaints four times.

Party submitting the complaint	Number of complaints	Group(s) or person(s) mentioned in the complaint
USDP	1	NLD
NLD	1	Unknown persons
Other big parties	0	
Small parties or independent candidates	1	Village head

Table 4: Parties that submitted the complains, and groups or persons mentioned in the complaints

Table 5 presents additional information on the causes of the complaints presented by two political parties and one independent candidate.

Who submitted files	Causes of complaints
USDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using images of the President and State Counsellor</li> <li>• Campaign materials damaged</li> </ul>
NLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campaign materials damaged</li> </ul>
Independent Candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using public resources</li> <li>• Personal or inciting comments against candidates</li> </ul>

Table 5: Reasons of candidate complaints

## Voter Education for Women

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PACE and PTE's LTOs asked both the candidates and sub-commission officials if they had conducted voter education activities for women during the campaign.

- The sub commissions in Matupi (Chin) and Tamu (Sagaing) reported that they had conducted two voter education activities for women each. No other sub-commission reported conducting events targeted at women.
- In 7% of the interviews, candidates said they had conducted voter education activities for women the previous week.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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### To the Union Election Commission

- Given that voter turnout in the 2017 by-election was only 34%, PACE and PTE urge the Commission to conduct more voter education and public outreach to increase the voter turnout for the upcoming by-elections.

### To Political Parties

- Political parties, candidates and agents should continue to follow the Code of Conduct all times until the cooling-off day.
- To mitigate campaign disputes and to reduce post-election disputes, political parties should promote and use mediation committees formed at every state and region where by-elections are scheduled.

## METHODOLOGY

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Between September 3 and October 7, PACE and PTE's LTOs conducted 214 interviews with candidates from four party categories: the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), the National League for Democracy (NLD), other big parties in the township<sup>2</sup> and small parties and independent candidates<sup>3</sup>. In weekly interviews, PACE asked candidates questions about their campaign activities and challenges that they faced.

PACE and PTE also observed 150 rallies of candidates from the same four party categories. PACE and PTE did not observe informal party gatherings or other political events conducted by other actors. In some cases, PACE and PTE were unable to observe rallies in very remote locations due to logistical challenges. PACE and PTE did not directly observe other political events or speeches by those not formally affiliated with the candidate.

PACE and PTE LTOs conducted these interviews and rally monitoring in all 12 vacant constituencies where elections are scheduled to take place on November 3. In addition to rally observation and interviews with candidates and sub-commission officials, LTOs conducted interviews with ordinary voters. Findings from those interviews will be shared in a later report.

The methodology implemented by PACE and PTE is designed to identify trends in the overall campaign environment. It does not focus on particular candidates, political races or incidents that might have been covered by media reports.

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<sup>2</sup> Depending on the township, "Other Big Parties" could be other national parties that are popular or could be local or state level parties that are strong in that township.

<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of analysis, PACE places independents and small parties in the same category as they lack the support and structure of a big party apparatus.

## **Period of the Observation**

First five weeks of the campaign period: September 3, 2018 - October 7, 2018

## **About the Observers**

PACE and PTE deployed 12 long-term observers. The observers were trained in September in Yangon on the nonpartisan code of conduct, conducting interviews and observing rallies, and completing observation forms. The LTOs are accredited as election observers with the UEC.

## **Acknowledgements**

PACE and PTE would like to thank first and foremost the 12 LTOs who are monitoring the campaign period of the 2018 by-elections. PACE also thanks the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID/UKaid), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) for their financial and technical support to conduct the election observation.

## **ABOUT PACE**

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The People's Alliance for Credible Elections (PACE) is an independent, non-partisan, non-government domestic election observer group working to promote transparency, accountability and inclusiveness in the electoral process. PACE mainly works on civic and voter education, election observation and electoral reform.

## **ABOUT PTE**

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Phan Tee Eain (PTE) was established in 2009 and provided civic and voter education for the 2010 Election. PTE promotes gender equality among parliamentarians and political parties by strengthening the leadership capacity and skills of elected and potentially elected women in Myanmar. PTE conducted voter education, voter list awareness and vote-for-women campaign.

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