

ALTSEAN

ALTERNATIVE BURMA

ALTERNATIVE ASEAN NETWORK ON BURMA
campaigns, advocacy & capacity-building for human rights & democracy

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REFERENDUM UPDATE (30 APRIL – 08 MAY)

- On 30 April, SPDC authorities in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, instructed village administrative clerks who had been appointed as deputy village election commissioners to cast “Yes” votes on behalf of people who will not turn up at polling station by 1 pm on voting day.¹
- On 30 April, police in Bhamo Township, Kachin State, were forced to cast absentee “Yes” votes with their superiors looking on.²
- On 30 April, about 700 employees in the Ministry of Electric Power-2 in Rangoon were forced to cast absentee “Yes” votes with local referendum officials looking on. Those who refused to vote “Yes” were ordered to hand in their resignation.³
- On 30 April, activists in Nangkham, Northern Shan State, distributed anti-referendum posters and leaflets.⁴
- On 1 May, the United Nationalities League for Democracy (UNLD), a Rangoon-based umbrella organization of political parties representing ethnic nationalities, called for a boycott of the referendum.⁵
- On 1 May, SPDC Army soldiers from the Military Operation Planning Bureau were deployed to rural areas of Rambree Township, Arakan State, in preparation for the referendum.⁶
- On 2 May, the United Nations Security Council issued a presidential statement urging the SPDC to make the referendum “free and fair” and “inclusive and credible.”⁷
- On 5 May, police arrested four people in Northern Paletwa Township, Chin State, for distributing anti-referendum posters and leaflets.⁸
- On 6 May, police arrested three NLD members in Salin Township, Magwe Division, for distributing copies of the NLD instructions on the referendum voting procedures.⁹
- On 6 May, the SPDC postponed to 24 May the referendum vote in 47 Townships (40 in Rangoon Division and seven in Irrawaddy Division) hit by cyclone Nargis.¹⁰
- On 8 May, villagers from Hlegu Township, Rangoon Division, lodged a complaint before the local referendum commission, accusing the regime’s authorities of forcing them to cast an absentee “Yes” vote on 5 May.¹¹
- In early May, SPDC authorities in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, distributed pre-marked “Yes” ballots to local villagers. Authorities ordered villagers to cast those ballots on voting day.¹²

¹ Narinjara News (02 May 08) Clerks to vote "Yes" for people absent till 1 p.m. in Maungdaw

² Mizzima News (02 May 08) Bamaw police ordered to cast 'Yes' votes in advance

³ Reuters (02 May 08) Myanmar “forces” civil servants to vote for charter

⁴ SHAN (07 May 08) Despite threats 'no' vote leaflets being distributed

⁵ Irrawaddy (01 May 08) UNLD calls for referendum boycott

⁶ Narinjara News (02 May 08) Army to be deployed in rural areas for referendum

⁷ UNSC (02 May 08) Statement by the President of the Security Council - S/PRST/2008/13

⁸ Narinjara News (07 May 08) Four arrested for anti-referendum campaign in Chin state

⁹ DVB (07 May 08) Salin NLD members arrested for referendum pamphlets

¹⁰ AP (06 May 08) In nod to world pressure, Myanmar delays vote in some areas

¹¹ Mizzima News (08 May 08) Villagers complain to commission over forcible voting

¹² Narinjara News (08 May 08) Readymade Ballots Distributed Before Referendum