

Myanmar's Suu Kyi opens election campaign on Facebook

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) — Just five years ago, when Aung San Suu Kyi was still under house arrest, she commented that one day she hoped to get a Twitter account and chat with the outside world.

Earlier this month, the opposition leader kicked off campaigning for Myanmar's historic November 8 general election with a Facebook post — one of many signs of how far the country and its most recognizable politician have come in a few years.

In a video message, Suu Kyi called the upcoming election "a crucial turning point for our country."

Suu Kyi, who enjoys huge public support, is barred from running for president because of a clause in the constitution that excludes people with foreign spouses or foreign children from the presidency. The clause is widely seen as custom-made for Suu Kyi, who is the widow of a British academic and has two sons with British nationality. But she is seeking re-election to parliament.

"For the first time in decades, our people will have a real chance of bringing about real change," Suu Kyi said in the message posted on her party's Facebook page in Burmese and English. "We hope that the whole world understands how important it is for us to have free and fair elections."

More than 90 political parties will take part in the parliamentary elections, which are being closely watched as the next step toward democracy in a country that was run by a repressive military junta for nearly half a century.

The polls will be the first since a nominally civilian government was installed in 2011. But with the military still firmly in control of the process, there is widespread speculation over whether the election will be free and fair.

The polls will also be the first time Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party has contested a general election in 25 years.

The NLD is expected to make large gains at the expense of the military-backed ruling party, and might even win a majority.

The last time the NLD took part in a national election was in 1990, when it won by a landslide. But the result was ignored by the military, which kept Suu Kyi locked away under house arrest for 15 years without phone lines or internet and blocked virtually all contact with the outside world.

The party boycotted the next nationwide election in 2010 because Suu Kyi, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, was still under house arrest and barred from taking part. The 2010 polls were condemned by international observers for widespread irregularities. It was in 2010 that Suu Kyi commented through her lawyer that she wished to "sign



SUU KYI ON SOCIAL MEDIA. *Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi speaks during her "Election Awareness Tour" in Ho-Pong township in the Pa-O self-administrative zone in the southern Shan State of Myanmar. The election campaign opened September 8 with more than 90 parties contesting the seats. Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party is widely expected to make large gains at the expense of the military-backed ruling party, and might even win a majority. But the constitution bars Suu Kyi from becoming president because she was married to a foreigner and her sons are foreign citizens. (AP Photo/Khin Maung Win)*

up on Twitter" once she was released to "get in touch with the younger generation inside and outside the country."

A week after the 2010 election, Suu Kyi was released from house arrest. Her party took part in 2012 by-elections, winning 43 of the 44 seats it contested — including Suu Kyi's first elected post as a member of parliament.

"We hope to take our country to that point where there can be no return from genuine development in the democratic direction," Suu Kyi said in a video message. "Please help us by observing what happens before the elections, during the elections, and, crucially after the elections."

Associated Press writer Jocelyn Gecker in Bangkok contributed to this report.

Bangladesh court lifts ban on movie Rana Plaza

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — The Supreme Court in Bangladesh has lifted a ban on the screening of a movie about a garment worker who was rescued from the rubble 17 days after a factory building collapsed in 2013, killing more than 1,000 people.

In response to an appeal by the movie's producer, a four-member panel of judges led by chief justice Surendra Kumar Sinha decided to stay a previous high court order that banned the release of the movie for six months.

Producer Shamima Akhter argued that the movie should be released as the country's Film Censor Board had earlier approved the screening of the film after cutting some scenes in response to previous court directives.

The film's director, Nazrul Islam Khan, argued the real-life story of Reshma Begum depicts courage amid tragedy.

In August, the high court banned *Rana Plaza* after a petition was submitted alleging that the movie has scenes of horror, cruelty, and violence that could negatively affect workers in the country's vital garment industry.

Lawyers said the ruling means there are no more bars to releasing the movie, although it is not clear when that will happen.

The April 2013 disaster killed 1,135 people, with thousands more rescued from the ruins of the illegally built complex that contained five factories that supplied garments to international companies.

When the building began collapsing, Begum said she raced down a stairwell into the basement, where she became trapped in a pocket of space. She managed to survive after finding some dried food and bottles of water. She now works in a hotel.

The collapse triggered international criticism, and many big brands came forward to help Bangladesh improve work and safety conditions in its garment sector.

The collapse of the building is thought to have been caused by overloading of its structure with machines and generators. The building was constructed on swampy land and the owner illegally added floors.

Bangladesh earns about \$25 billion annually from garment exports, mainly to the United States and Europe, although the country has one of the lowest minimum wages in the world, at about \$72 a month.

The industry employs about 4 million workers, mostly women from rural areas.

Nintendo, Google spinoff Niantic in smartphone Pokémon game

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Its mobile game uses GPS technology to create a science fiction "augmented reality."

Kyoto, Japan-based Nintendo held back from smartphone games, but in March announced an alliance with Japanese mobile-game company DeNA to develop games for mobile devices. In the end, Pokémon GO was a pet project for its late president, Satoru Iwata, said Nintendo game designer Shigeru Miyamoto.

"Nintendo has created a wide

variety of games and game devices. All of them have helped to expand the game population," Miyamoto said. "Pokémon GO and Pokémon GO Plus represent another step in realizing that mission."

Conveying how the game might actually work is a challenge, acknowledged Tsunekazu Ishihara, president and CEO of Pokémon.

"You find the Pokémon with the smartphone. You'll have a map on your mobile device to find the Pokémon and you can try to catch them,"

he said.

A video virtualization of the game seemed almost hallucinatory, with images of the Pokémon showing up on a screen operating like a video camera and masses of people chasing them through the streets.

Ishihara said one of the biggest challenges of designing the game is ensuring that the real-world location data gathered by GPS and replicated in the game would not put people in danger. "You don't want people rushing into traffic," he said.

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