

# Aung San Suu Kyi wins seat, requests meeting with military

By Vijay Joshi and Esther Htusan  
The Associated Press

YANGON, Myanmar — Myanmar's opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, has won her parliamentary seat, according to official results, leading a near total sweep by her party that will give the country its first government in decades that isn't under the military's sway.

While the win assures the National League for Democracy (NLD) of electing the next president, Suu Kyi is barred from becoming president by a constitutional hurdle inserted by the junta when it transferred power in 2011 to a quasi-civilian government. Still, she recently declared that she will be the country's de facto leader, acting "above the president," when her party forms the next government.

In an interview with Singapore's Channel News Asia television, Suu Kyi reiterated that plan.

"I make all the decisions because I'm the leader of the winning party. And the president will be one whom we will choose just in order to meet the requirements of the constitution," she said. "He (the president) will have to understand this perfectly well that he will have no authority. That he will act in accordance with the positions of the party."

In a sign she intends to play a key role, Suu Kyi requested meetings with the military chief, current president, and the chairman of parliament, apparently to discuss the formation of the new government. It is "very crucial that the government



**PENDING POWER.** Aung San Suu Kyi, right, the leader of the National League for Democracy party in Myanmar (also known as Burma), delivers a speech with party patron Tin Oo from a balcony of the National League for Democracy's headquarters in Yangon. Suu Kyi won her parliamentary seat, according to official results, leading a near total sweep by her party that will give the country its first government in decades that isn't under the military's sway. (AP Photo/Mark Baker)

implements, for the pride of the country and the peaceful desire of people," the results of the November 8 election, she said in three letters.

President Thein Sein's spokesman, Ye Htut, said on his Facebook page that the meeting with Suu Kyi can take place only after all official results are in. He said the government and the military will respect the results of the "free and fair elections."

The military, which took power in a 1962 coup and brutally suppressed several pro-democracy uprisings during its rule, gave way to a nominally civilian elected government in 2011 — with strings attached.

The army installed retired senior officers in the ruling party to fill cabinet posts and granted itself constitutional powers, including

control of powerful ministries and a quarter of the seats in the 664-member two-chamber parliament. In a state of emergency, a special military-led body can even assume state powers. Another provision bars Suu Kyi from the presidency because her sons hold foreign citizenship.

And while Myanmar's people voted overwhelmingly to remove the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) from power, it's clear that the military's involvement in the Southeast Asian nation's politics would not end.

"Sunday's poll does not mark democracy's triumph in Burma," said Ellen Bork of the Foreign Policy Initiative, a Washington-based think tank. "Over the past few years, it has

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## Copycat logos in Myanmar's election: fair or foul?

By Denis D. Gray  
The Associated Press

YANGON, Myanmar — Voters in Myanmar's landmark election stumbled into a virtual aviary when they saw their ballot papers. And the confusion ruffled political feathers.

Nine of the contesting political parties used a peacock as their logo, with most bearing a striking resemblance to that of the party headed by pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi. At least three other parties used other birds.

That meant every ballot included many variations, some very slight, on Suu Kyi's emblem, a "fighting peacock" flying toward a white star. All the avian logos are set against the same dark red background.

It was a ploy, some thought, to fool illiterate or rushed voters to accidentally pick another party instead of Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD). The NLD won big against the military-backed United Solidarity and Development Party. Nobody imitated its logo, a single star on a field of green and red.

Asked to point out the NLD symbol among a display of feathery logos, taxi driver Yangon Than Oo wasn't sure.

"Is this the one with the star?" he asked uncertainly.

NLD spokesman Nyan Win was not pleased.

"As a lawyer, I want to say that these similarities are wrong," he said in an interview. He said the party complained to the Union Election Commission, which oversaw the fiercely contested election. The



**FOWL FOUL.** Supporters of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party wave the party flag during a campaign rally for the general election in Meiktila, Mandalay Region, Myanmar (also known as Burma). Nine of the political parties that contested the country's historic election use the peacock as their logo, with most bearing a striking resemblance to that of the party headed by pro-democracy leader Suu Kyi. (AP Photo/Hkun Lat)

commission, he added, had taken no action.

But commission spokesman Than Sint Aung said the NLD complaint came in after the deadline, and noted that names of parties appeared on ballots next to logos. Plus, he added: "The peacock logo has been used since a long time ago. Myanmar people think it is really good."

Along with the white elephant and the chinthe — the mythical, lion-like creature which guards Buddhist temples — the peacock is a long-honored national icon with roots in Buddhism and animist beliefs.

The dancing peacock — the bird in courtship or feather display — was emblematic of Myanmar's last monarchy and an aggressively posed fighting peacock served the anti-British struggle of the 1930s led by

independence hero Aung San, Suu Kyi's father. It appeared on the flag of students who led a bloody, unsuccessful uprising in 1988 and has since been associated with the struggle against the military.

Zay Ta, chairman of the New Society Party, said its symbol — four stars and a peacock — was created to honor the 1988 students and not intended as an imitation.

Others disagreed.

"They want to confuse us ... [to] vote for the wrong party. But if you really know the party you want to vote for, you will get it right," said Nay Chi Lin, a 22-year-old hotel employee who rapidly pointed to the NLD logo on the display sheet. Nearby, Win Zaw, 44, also got it right. But his wife hesitated and pointed to another party's logo.

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