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Ruling Myanmar

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Ruling Myanmar

From Cyclone Nargis
to National Elections

Edited by
Nick Cheesman, Monique Skidmore
and Trevor Wilson



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Cover photo: People walk away from a polling station for the constitutional referendum, May 2008. The slogan on the roof reads: "National Discipline begins at school"

Photographer/Artist: Khin Maung Win
Courtesy of Getty Images

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BACKGROUND ON ANU 2009 MYANMAR/BURMA UPDATE CONFERENCE

Preparations are under way for the first elections in Myanmar/Burma since 1990, to be held in 2010 as part of the military regime's "Road Map for Democracy". The conditions under which the elections will be held are far from favourable, although the laws and procedures under which they will be conducted have not yet been announced. Political controls remain repressive, freedom of expression and assembly does not exist, and international access is restricted by government controls as well as sanctions. Nevertheless, is this a turning point for Myanmar/Burma? Presenters at the Australian National University 2009 Myanmar/Burma Update conference examined these questions and more. Speakers were leading experts from the United States, Japan, France, and Australia, as well as from Myanmar/Burma.

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NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY AND GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

In 1989, the military regime changed the official romanized name of Burma to Myanmar and changed the names of most cities and towns from the spelling used prior to that date. Inside the country today, the revised names and spellings are used. Opponents of the regime objected to these changes and so different authors have their preferred different usages (Myanmar/Burma, Myanmar, Burma, Rangoon/Yangon, Rangoon, Yangon, etc.). In this publication, the editors have not adjusted contributors' preferences to a single consistent usage.



Source: Map of Myanmar, no. 4168 Rev. 2 May 2008, reproduced with permission of the UN Cartographic Section.