

'Effective action' to be taken against NLD: Burmese junta

Mungpi

Mizzima News (www.mizzima.com)

September 9, 2007 - Burma's ruling military junta today said it will take action against the country's biggest opposition political party the National League for Democracy for inciting a riot-like unrest in league with 88 generation students. Observers did not rule out the possibility of a vindictive junta outlawing the party.

The junta in its announcement No. 2/2007, released today accused the NLD of masterminding the recent spate of protests in Rangoon and parts of Burma in collaboration with 88 generation students groups.

The announcement states that the authorities will take "effective action," against the NLD for inciting public unrest.

With the junta having already arrested 15 leaders of the 88 generation students' group, including prominent student leaders Min Ko Naing and Ko Ko Gyi, critics said today's announcement maybe an indication that the junta plans to outlaw the NLD, effectively banning all its activities including closing of its head office in Rangoon.

However, the NLD spokesperson U Nyan Win said the junta has regularly made such accusations and is not aware on what grounds the authorities will take action as the group has never committed any crime and has not violated the existing laws.

"We don't know how the authorities will take action against us [NLD], as we have not violated the law... and such accusations are routine and normal to us because we have been accused all the time," said U Nyan Win.

The junta in its announcement today accused the NLD of masterminding the recent wave of protests in collaboration with the 88 generation students, who are now detained, and for having contacts with 'destructive elements', he added.

"We have no connection with any terrorist groups nor are we masterminding the recent protests. We stand by our policy and the recent protests are the outpourings of the people's feeling and that does not have anything to do with the NLD," U Nyan Win told Mizzima.

The junta in its announcement No. 1/2007 released on Saturday accused the 88 generation students group of having contacts with terrorist groups based in the border areas. And in league with those groups are inciting riots and public unrest in Rangoon and other parts of the country.

Therefore, the junta said, 15 members of the 88 generation students are being held in custody for interrogation and 'effective action' will be taken according to the existing law.

Since August 19, when 88 generation students led over 500 people in Rangoon in a protest march, sporadic protests in Rangoon and other parts of the country has continued.

The recent spate of protests, sparked by a sharp increase in fuel prices on August 15, has spread in Burma with monks in some parts taking the lead to openly defy the present military clique in demanding a roll back in fuel and food prices.

The junta has indicated that the student leaders, who are reportedly being tortured during interrogations in Burma's notorious Insein prison, could face up to 20 years or even life imprisonment.

Except the head office of the NLD in Shwegonedine street Rangoon, the junta has effectively banned all other NLD branch offices and other political parties in the country.

Led by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the NLD is the last opposition party to have maintained it's presence in military-ruled Burma . And opposition groups, both inside and outside Burma, fear that the junta will declare the NLD as outlawed.

<http://www.mizzima.com/MizzimaNews/News/2007/Sep/33-Sep-2007.html>