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**DVB Debate** is produced by DVB Multimedia Group Ltd. Co. The debate is recorded every Saturday morning in Yangon with a live audience, which is invited to join the discussion as well.

 <b>DVB TV</b>		<b>DVB RADIO</b>	
Sunday	7.30 pm	Saturday	Evenings
Monday	1.30 am / 7.30 am / 1.30 pm	Sunday	Mornings
Wednesday	8.45 pm	<b>DVB ONLINE</b>	
Thursday	2.45 am / 8.45 am / 2.45 pm	dvbdebate.com	24/7
Friday	7.30 pm	facebook.com/ dvb.debate	
Saturday	1.30 am / 7.30 am / 1.30 pm	twitter @dvbdebate	

DVB Debate aims to contribute to a new culture of open debate, in which anyone can participate and agree to disagree, in order to exchange ideas, create better mutual understanding and find solutions for societal issues to improve the future of Myanmar.

The team invites fellow media and debating clubs to join this initiative for open debate. A weekly press release, press picture and cartoon are available shortly after the recording. DVB Debate also has a modest budget to support local debating initiatives.

For any inquiries, remarks or questions, please call 01292743 (office hours), leave a comment on facebook.com/dvb.debate or email [debate@dvb.no](mailto:debate@dvb.no).

# DVB DEBATE



Welcome to DVB Debate,  
Myanmar's 1st open debate program.  
This week's debate question is:  
***Constitutional change: Now or Later?***

If you have any remarks, suggestions or questions,  
please ask a team member,  
call 01292743 (office hours) or email [debate@dvb.no](mailto:debate@dvb.no).

## This week's topic is THE CONSTITUTION

### **Historical context:**

The Constitution of Burma has changed several times since Independence. In 1988 the military government suspended the 1974 constitution and it took almost 35 years before a new version was drafted. The third, and current constitution, part of the military government's "Roadmap to Democracy", was adopted in 2008 following a referendum.

Despite much criticism the referendum was held just days after the country was devastated by Cyclone Nargis, one of the worst natural disasters in recorded history. It was generally regarded as a fraudulent vote by the opposition party (the NLD) and foreign observers, due to many reported cases of voting irregularities, including premarked ballots and voter intimidation, as well as the official high turnout and the comparatively low numbers that appeared at ballot stations. In drafting the constitution, the commission adhered strictly to six objectives, including giving the military a leading political role in the future state. The constitution also effectively bars opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi from becoming president because her husband and children hold foreign citizenship. Many political groups are calling for the constitution to be amended or rewritten.

### **Facts & figures:**

- Burma has 1947, 1974 and 2008 Constitutions.
- The 2008 constitution was adopted on 29th May 2008.
- 25% of the parliament is reserved for military representatives nominated by the Commander-in-Chief. (Constitutional law No 109b and 141b)
- According to section 59 of the Constitution the President must have military experience and must not have parents, spouse or children who are foreign citizens
- In May 2008, 92.48% of voters cast a "YES" vote for the approval of the draft constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. (2008 Constitution)
- 99% of the recommendations submitted to the parliamentary review committee now support Constitutional reform (Constitution Review Committee)
- There are 109 committee members in the Constitution Review Committee.

### **Points of view:**

"As the constitution reform is part of the future of the country and very important and fragile issue, the reform initiators should have the better well-procedured strategy than that of now."  
(Dr. Nay Zin Latt, the advisor to the president)

"We simply want to see a fair fight that reflects the will of the people."  
(Derek Mitchell, U.S Ambassador)

"Actually, to amend the constitution, only one person is needed. It is a soldier. 75% agree. If all agree, then a soldier is chosen. And, it can be changed"  
(Salai Ngun Chun Lian)

"I believe that a healthy constitution must be amended from time to time to address the national, economic, and social needs of our society,"  
(President Thein Sein)

"Constitutional amendment is imperative for the economic development of the nation. Anybody that encourages business or investment or any other activity in Burma while at the same time totally ignoring the need to amend the constitution is not being pragmatic"  
(Aung San Suu Kyi)

### **Information links:**

[www.burma-center.org/en/publications/documents/item/288-constitution-of-the-republic-of-the-union-of-myanmar/](http://www.burma-center.org/en/publications/documents/item/288-constitution-of-the-republic-of-the-union-of-myanmar/)  
[www.thailawforum.com/database1/constmyanmar.html](http://www.thailawforum.com/database1/constmyanmar.html)  
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[www.globaljusticecenter.net](http://www.globaljusticecenter.net)  
[www.dvb.no/elections/changes-to-constitution-must-be-made-in-time-for-2015-elections-shwe-mann-burma-myanmar/37419](http://www.dvb.no/elections/changes-to-constitution-must-be-made-in-time-for-2015-elections-shwe-mann-burma-myanmar/37419)  
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