

**DYNAMICS OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL PARTIES UNDER
THE UNDEMOCRATIC REGIME IN BURMA
(1988 – 2005)**

THEIN OO

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M.A. (HUMAN RIGHTS)

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ABSTRACT

This study examines dynamics of political parties under the undemocratic regime in Burma. The research focuses on decision-making levels of political parties and processes before and after the 1990 General Elections in Burma. By 'dynamics of political parties' this thesis means the decision-making or policy-making ability of political parties.

The thesis finds that the capture of political power or its retention depends on the limitations of the prevailing political system. Furthermore, under the undemocratic government in Burma, political parties are marginalized and excluded from decision-making by legal means such as deregistration, or by coercive means, such as violence. The refusal of the undemocratic regime to allow election winning political parties to join the process of decision-making is the root cause behind the dysfunctional dynamics of political parties.

The findings of this study indicate that the lack of political will and action by the undemocratic regime has hugely impacted civil and political rights, and the political lives of people and political parties for over one and half decades, especially on matters pertaining to participation in the decision-making processes.

The study argues that the efficiency of a political system can be measured in terms of its capacity to make decisions. The thesis looks at the history of political parties, and their role in the 1990 elections. It describes how the Military government in Burma has systematically stopped the decision-making abilities of political parties. Moreover, this thesis focuses on the human rights standards of political participation, arguing that citizens' rights "To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives" are not met in Burma.

In order to encourage political parties' participation in the decision-making processes, the current undemocratic regime should move towards democratic principles and rule of law.

**KEY WORDS: POLITICAL PARTIES / DYNAMICS / DYSFUNCTIONAL
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