

Learning with The Irrawaddy, No. 49

To accompany the November 2010 issue of The Irrawaddy magazine.

Selected article: **Cartoons that Speak a Thousand Words**

A. Activities before reading

1. Cartoons

Discuss these questions:

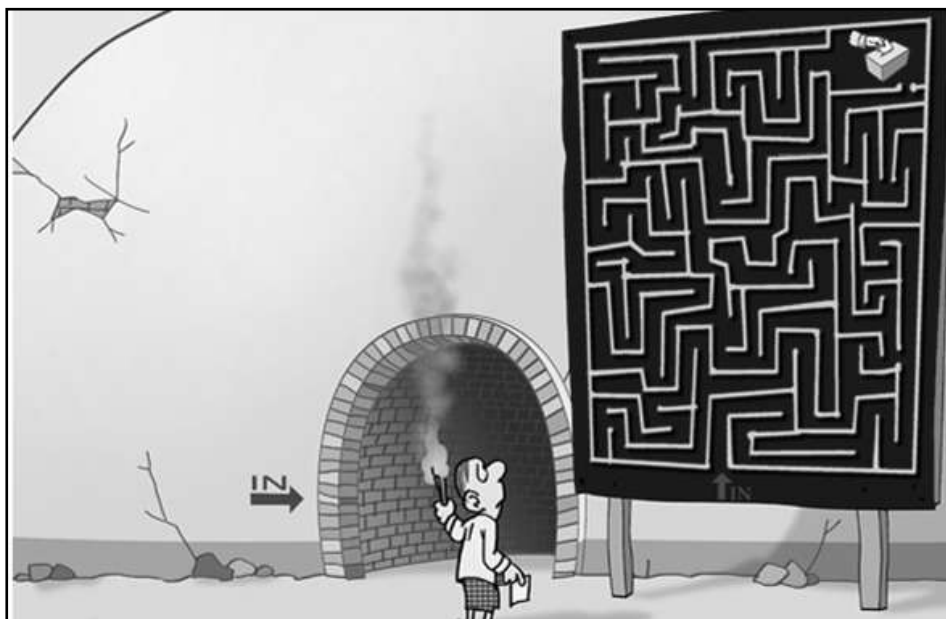
- What is a cartoon?
- What is a political cartoon?
- What are the differences between cartoons in a comic book or newspaper compared to political cartoons?

2. Predict from the title

The title of this article is *Cartoons that Speak a Thousand Words*. This comes from the saying *A picture is worth a thousand words*. What does this saying mean?

3. Predict from the picture

This cartoon is in the article. What do you think this article is about?



4. Vocabulary

Match the words and the meanings.

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1. leaflet | a. a leaf on a palm tree
b. a printed piece of paper
c. a newspaper article |
| 2. disseminate | a. give to people
b. teach people
c. take away from people |
| 3. download | a. to delete data on a computer
b. to save data on a computer
c. to receive data to a computer |
| 4. labyrinth | a. pathways and tunnels
b. government document
c. an election campaign |
| 5. benefit | a. an advantage or a gain
b. a government program
c. a fitness plan |
| 6. burden | a. a happy event
b. a complaint
c. a difficult concern |

B. Activities during reading

5. Comprehension

Fill the gaps using the words in the box.

political towns disseminate educate cartoonist villages regime inform campaign

1. Harn Lay is a _____ for *The Irrawaddy* magazine.
2. Harn Lay's cartoons reflect the Burmese _____ and the current _____ situation in Burma.
3. The purpose of the cartoon campaign was to _____ and _____ Burmese voters about the election.
4. The cartoons were distributed to people in _____ and _____ south of Rangoon.

6. Analysis

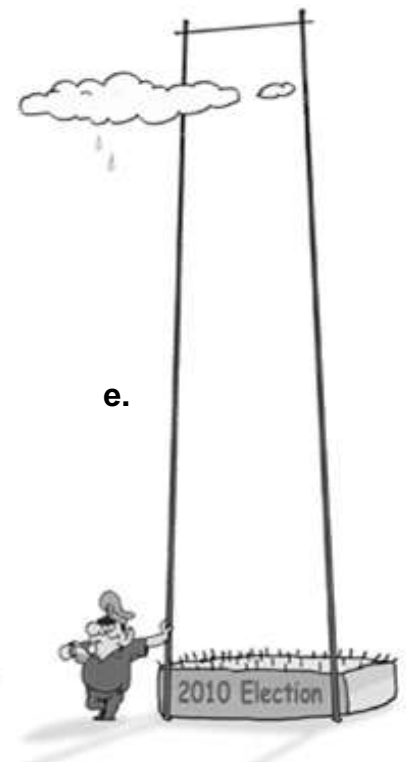
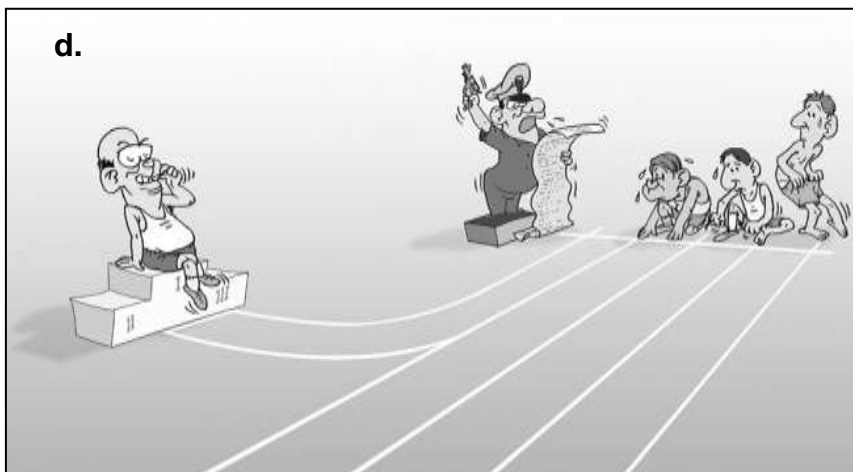
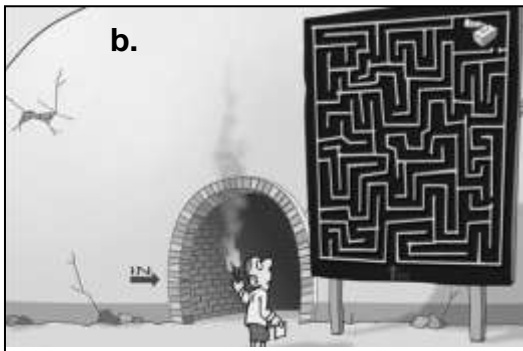
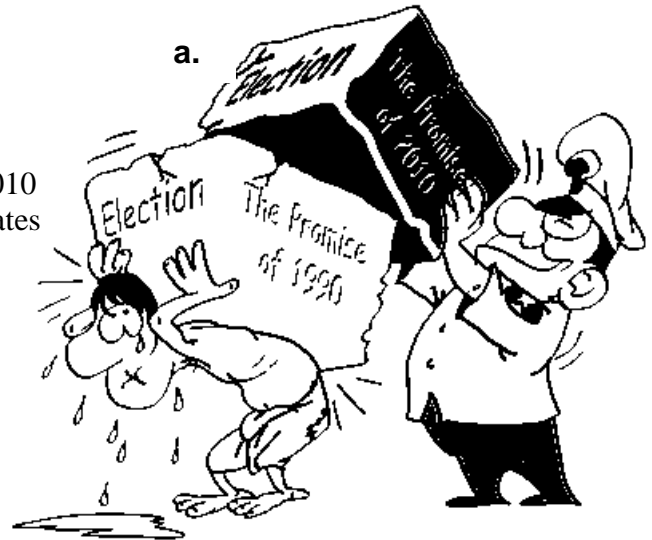
Answer the questions:

1. Why were campaigners distributing the political cartoons?
2. How were the cartoons disseminated to the Burmese people?
3. Based on the article, do you think the cartoon campaign was successful?

7. Match the caption

Match the cartoons and the captions.

1. On Your Marks, and Keep Right
2. The Load is Lighter, I Promise, in 2010
3. The USDP Unveils a List of Candidates
4. The Painful Challenge
5. All Change
6. Some Get the Benefits, Others Get the Burdens
7. Than Shwe's Election Labyrinth



f.



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8. Interpreting Cartoons

In groups, decide the message for each cartoon, for example:

Cartoon a: *the heavy weight represents the 1990 election. The general is putting more weight on the man's back for the 2010 election.*

C. Activities after reading

9. Discussion

In your opinion, do you think political cartoons are effective for educating the public about political issues? Why or why not?

10. Draw a Political Cartoon

Think of some political issues that concern you. If possible, do some research in the newspaper or on the internet.

On your own or in pairs, draw a political cartoon.

Cartoons That Speak a Thousand Words

Cartoons drawn by Harn Lay, *The Irrawaddy* magazine cartoonist, have been distributed in the run up to the election in the southern part of Rangoon by activists who launched an anti-election campaign, sources in Rangoon said.

Speaking to *The Irrawaddy*, a leading anti-election campaign activist in Rangoon said, “Many people are interested in these cartoon campaigns, even the children in the villages in the outskirts of Rangoon.” The campaigner said that people are more interested in the cartoon distribution campaign than other leaflet campaigns in the past.

The campaigners downloaded Harn Lay’s cartoons from the Internet and printed them out, distributing them to villages in the southern part of Rangoon, including Kungyagone, Payargone, and Aung Chan Thar.

The activists are sticking copies of the cartoons on electric poles, video stages, free water services and other public places. The campaigners have also given copies to children telling them to pass them to their parents.

“Many children like the cartoons, laugh at them and ask for more,” said a leading campaigner.

Another youth activist said, “We are targeting the villages as we have already distributed these cartoons in the towns.”

Kyaw Zwa Moe, the managing editor of *The Irrawaddy*, said, “It’s part of our mission to get information about the upcoming election disseminated among people inside Burma. Through our cartoons and stories, I am sure that the voters are more informed and educated so that they will make a right choice regarding the election.”

Harn Lay received a Hellman/Hammett award in April for his illustrations and political cartoons that reflect the image of the Burmese regime and current political situation in Burma.