

Second Phase of Parliamentary and Provincial election Preliminary Observation Report

7 December 2017

The second phase of Parliamentary and Provincial election was held in 45 districts on December 7. As per our preliminary reports more than 65% votes were casted. In first phase of election that was held in 32 districts, the vote turnover was 65% as per Election Commission.

In the second phase of election, 391 observers from INSEC have observed the election in 700 polling stations of 45 districts. Similarly INSEC district representatives of all 45 districts were deployed to collect the information and report at the central office. Apart from few incidents of bomb explosions and violation of election code of conduct, overall, the polling process was peaceful.

Province	Voters	Constituency	Province Constituency
1	2274216	21	42
2	2767369	32	64
3	2073469	24	48
4	1005808	10	20
5	2585252	24	48
6	478731	5	10
7	1048933	12	24
Total	12233778	128	256

With the completion of all level of Elections it is believed that the nation will pave its way towards ending decade long transitional period. Along with this, it is believed that the constitution will be implemented and nation will head towards on federal structure. In any democratic nation, the periodic election is the backbone of democracy and it is essential to hold the election in a clean, fair, fearless and peaceful environment.

What we have witnessed in today's Poll

The exuberant participation of voters without any fear despite of several incidents of bomb explosions has shown the importance of periodic election. Apart from few incidents, the polling process was peacefully held throughout the 45 districts.

- Same as in previous elections, person with disability has faced difficulties to cast their votes as the majority of polling centers were not disabled friendly.

- In some places, the polling centers were very narrow resulting difficulties for voters to cast their vote.
- The serial numbers of the voters having their voter's ID found to be different with the Election Commission record. .
- Voters in urban area were found to be in confusion about the voting process due to lack of voter education.
- In some polling stations of Morang, voters faced difficulties while finding their names as they were unaware in which polling center they are voting. This was due to the addition of polling centers in few polling stations.
- Clash was reported in Shregaun polling centers of Dangisharan Rural Municipality-6 of Dang district after a dispute between the left alliance and democratic alliance cadres while candidate Uttar Kumar Oli of left alliance who was queuing to vote. Two people were injured in that.
- There was a separate line for male and female voters. Senior citizens, pregnant women and patients were also given priority during the process.
- In some of the polling centers at Banke and Bardiya districts, polling begun at 7:30. There was dispute between the cadres of left alliance and democratic alliance at Amar Sahid Dashrath Secondary School Rajapur regarding the issue of putting political representative. Police have controlled four motorcycles near the polling center at Nepal Rastriya Secondary School Ganapur on charge of using them without the permission. Similarly, motorcycles were used without the permission around polling center in Siddhartha Basic School building in Kolhapur Municipality-5.
- In Betalmandu Secondary School polling center of Sanfebagar municipality-10 of Achham, Nepali Congress representative Tej Bahadur Badahit was injured in a clash with the left alliance cadgers.
- Police have arrested C.K. Raut, coordinator of Free Terai Alliance, from Dhanusha on charge of operating anti-election activities. Dr Raut had appealed locals to boycott the election through social network sites.
- Nepali Congress Party was found to be providing food to the voters near 100 meters from the Gaprawaha polling center at Dakeneshwori Municipality-8 with the objective of influencing voters.
- In two polling centers of Phoksi in Kaligandaki Rural Municipality-5 of Gulmi, the polling started at 11 PM. The polling was disrupted over the issue of intimidating UML leader Tika Ram Sapkota by NC cadres on the night of December 6. The polling resumed after the all-party meeting.
- The polling process in Raja Mahatma Secondary School polling center at Bardaghat Municipality-9 of Nawalparasi district was delayed after a bomb was exploded in the polling center.
- Three people were injured in a clash at Balkot Suryabinayak Municipality-3 of Bhaktapur in a clash between UML and NC. The police reached the incident site and controlled the mob.

- In Basic School polling center of Mahadeva Rural Municipality-2 in Saptari, the polling process could not start. There are 545 male and 415 female voters in the village where C.K Raut belongs. According to the polling officer Dhaneshwor Shah, none of the voters and political representatives were present in the polling center. After the absence of voters and representatives, the empty ballot boxes without any votes were sealed according to him.

Conclusion

The participation of voters in this election was found to be exuberant. The election commission, government and political parties had shown their commitment to make this election fair and fearless. However, violation of election code of conduct, unhealthy political competition and extravagant election expenses were some of the major e issues that came into surface. More than 2,000 complaints were lodged at the election commission, but they were somehow neglected. The election commission was seen to be apathetic to take action against those complaints by brining guilty to anyone in to the legal boundary. This is one of the major reasons for the increment in violation of code of conduct.

Expensive election campaign, financial anomalies within silent period and organizing feasts were reported to influence voters by the political parties. They are developing the concept of winning election anyhow either by hook or crook. Increment in such bad culture will definitely affect our democratic practice. The commission is found to be apathetic on stopping activities against the violation of code of conduct and at the same time, the political parties are ignoring to respect of COC. It is very important to correct the flaws as well as to enforcing election code of conduct and bringing guilt under legal boundary.

Groups, who were in a campaign boycotting the election process, were busy on terrorizing the citizens by exploding bombs targeting voters and candidates. Such activities must be stopped and guilt must be brought into the legal boundary, otherwise it will be a serious threat.