



Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC)

Brief Observation Report on Third Phase of Local Level Election in Province Number 2 on 18 September 2017

The third phase of local level election has concluded on September 18 in province number 2. In all local levels, 100 INSEC observers have observed the polling centers of more than 136 local levels in all eight districts under province number 2.

In this election more than 73 percentage votes were casted according to the preliminary information. Voters were very excited to cast their votes in local level election almost after 20 years. There was a significant participation of women voters in the election. Until the afternoon, the participation of male voters were very low.

The country could not hold local level election for almost 20 year due to the political turmoil in the country. The decision to hold third phase of local level election came after the agitating Madhesi party decided to participate in the election. The first and second phase of election has already been concluded in other six provinces.

The exuberant participation of people, youth and representation of Dalit, women have strengthened the base of democracy. This election will play a vital role to access the rights of the people provided by the constitution. In this election, women voters are found to be more eager to choose their own representatives.

The election management, security arrangement and enthusiasm of people towards the election were praiseworthy. The distribution of voter's ID cards with colorful photos is the best part of the election but the decision of election commission to let voters to vote without ID card is not a good step. The arrangement in polling centers were found to be well managed because of which the polling process went smoothly according to our observers.

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For Human Rights and Social Justice

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Conclusion

Overall, the election was held peacefully despite some news of obstruction.

The importance of election will further increase if the weaknesses seen during the implementation of election code of conduct are corrected and the violators are brought under legal purview. Foundation of crime would be strengthened if those carrying out politics of crime, irrespective of who they are, are not brought under legal purview, and the people's faith towards democracy would be dampened. The transfer of CDO, Judges, police and other staffs on the eve of election is condemnable. Such steps will encourage to violate code of conduct and prove that Election code of conduct can be violated with permission. This practice can weaken the democratic system of the country by strengthening the crime. We hope that the commission will learn some lesson from this election and will perform better in upcoming provincial and HoR election scheduled for November.

Highlights of today's election

- In all districts under province number 2, vehicles were found to be used to transport voters according to our observers.
- Due to the rainfall last night, some of the polling stations were found to have stagnant water and in some places voters faced difficulty to be in a queue in very hot weather. Over all management was found to be weak.
- The quality of ballot paper was found to be low. Similarly, the quality of ink used for the stamp was also found to be of low quality.
- Even after the beginning of silent period, election materials within 300 meters from the polling centers were not removed.

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- In most of the public places, the election materials such as bigger flags and banners were found to be hanging in public places. People wearing T-shirts, vest and caps with printed election symbol were rampant.
- None of the candidates or cadres were found to be wall painting or wall-writing however, colored flexes, banner and posters were found to be used.
- The voter's education was found to be ineffective.
- In Janata Lower Secondary School polling center of Kankalini Hanuman Nagar-5, of Saptari district, the votes were casted without the signature of polling officer. However, after the all-party consensus it was decided to make all votes valid.

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