







Analytical Report on Media Monitoring

Constituent Assembly Election 2013

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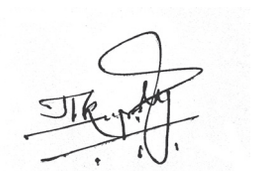
MESSAGE FROM
CHIEF ELECTION COMMMISIONER

Year 2013 saw the successful holding of the Constituent Assembly Election in Nepal. This historic event holds added significance in a situation when the nation was in a perplexed condition in the absence of an elected Legislature and Executive and where the head of Judiciary had to discharge the executive duty as well. The voter turnout recorded in this election was also historic, with about 80 per cent participation. The Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) feels proud to be in the centre of all those historic achievements. The success of the election is credited to all the election stakeholders – voters, political parties, all employees of the government and the election commission, the media and civil society, the international community and observers.

The ECN is revolutionising the management of election with the use of modern technologies as much as possible. Particularly mention-worthy in this context is the media monitoring activity that helped ECN to oversee the adherence to the related election code of conduct by the media. The media monitoring function was

awarded to Nepal Press Institute, which had been serving in the country for over 25 years, as this was an institution with the requisite professionals with the necessary experience of media monitoring in previous elections. I am pleased to state that NPI and the professionals associated with it for media monitoring for the CAE of 2013 have accomplished the task to the satisfaction of ECN. I was pleased to receive periodic reporting of the nationwide monitoring activities. The task was completed successfully in spite of the acute time constraints faced even for preparatory tasks. I reckon that the media monitoring task accomplished by NPI and its professionals is a milestone in the history of election media monitoring in Nepal.

In your hands is a book that records not only the compliance of the code of conduct by Nepalese media outlets, but also various aspects of media monitoring for the election. I am sure that the publication will prove useful to all concerned, including media outlets. It is not just a routine report on code compliance but covers a wide range of topics related to media monitoring. In other words, it should prove to be a valuable reference point for future media monitors in Nepal. I would like to thank UNDP/ESP for providing support for the work. Finally, I would also thank the NPI for its contributions to making the entire election exercise a success.



Neel Kantha Uprety
Chief Election Commissioner
Election Commission Nepal
August 10, 2014

MESSAGE FROM
ELECTION COMMMISIONER



I am very proud to be part of our media monitoring exercise, conducted for the Constituent Assembly Election 2013, as it is an important tool for the Election Commission Nepal to enforce the media code of conduct as well as evaluate a whole lot of other factors. Recognising the importance of media monitoring as an organic function of election, the Election Commission took it upon itself to conduct media monitoring. Since it was my responsibility to oversee the gargantuan task that brought together media clippings from around the country, to analyse their compliance of the media code of conduct, I had the opportunity to visit the Nepal Press Institute premises several times to see firsthand how things were progressing. The monitors were working under tremendous pressure as there was not even a month's time for monitoring left when they were asked to do the job. Preparation and implementation of the task had to be achieved within that short period. I only wish there was more time available to them to carry out their job. It was truly a memorable experience, seeing our media colleagues working frantically to fulfill their mandate. The Commission was supplied with all these media clippings that remained at their disposal at all times and only a few mouse clicks away. What I can say for sure is that, this time, ECN has totally succeeded in improving on past monitoring exercises.

The report you have in your hands is an outcome of that historical exercise. It does not just analyse the newspaper clippings collected from throughout the country, but also provides in detail the whole monitoring event- from the planning stage to its completion. I would like to thank NPI for the great work that they have done.

Ila Sharma
Election Commissioner
(Co-ordinator, Media Monitoring Committee)
Election Commission Nepal
10 August, 2014

FOREWORD
OF THE PROGRAMME PARTNERS



Presence of a vibrant media is essential to a functioning democracy, including elections. A free and fair election is not about the freedom to vote and the knowledge of how to cast a vote, but also about making informed choices where voters engage in public debate and have adequate information about parties, policies, candidates and the election process. Media provide this space -- working as a watchdog to safeguard the transparency of the process.

The Election Commission of Nepal commissioned a media monitoring for the Constituent Assembly elections 2013 in line with the media code of conduct prepared for elections. The objective was to foster reflection and subsequent professional development of the media fraternity in reporting elections. This analytical report on media monitoring provides a rich view of how the media reported elections in 2013.

I am confident that this document will serve as a guide and improve future election coverage by the media. A credible media reporting on future elections will further cement public trust on democratic processes.

On behalf of European Union, DFID, Norway, Denmark and UNDP, I would like to thank the Chief Election Commissioner, Mr. Neel Kantha Uprety, and other Election Commission and UNDP officials for their contributions to this "Analytical Report on Media Monitoring of Constituent Assembly Elections 2013" and for conducting free and fair elections.



Shoko Noda
UNDP Country Director

A NOTE OF GRATITUDE
NPI CHAIR



This report contains various aspects of media monitoring that Nepal Press Institute undertook for the Election Commission during the 2013 Constituent Assembly Election. The publication claims to be slightly off-the-beaten-track in that it is not just an analysis of the media codes, but a holistic record of the media monitoring exercise. This should give a better perspective to the reader regarding the background of the monitoring event.

NPI has tried to organise the report into several segments. After a brief summary of the publication, the setting is provided by two chapters relating to the history of elections in Nepal and the way the media have come to treat these exercises. Another section deals with the monitoring activities which are detailed by chapters on how the monitoring system was designed and how the logistics were managed. The analytical part follows with the actual monitoring reports, including analysis of various aspects using statistical tools. There is also a chapter on specialised campaign reporting- viz on the coverage of gender, inclusion and campaign reporting. For those interested in social media activities, a chapter has been added to analyze Twitter activities during the campaigns and after. This was not part of the mandated monitoring task assigned to NPI, but has been included, nonetheless. The legal perspective, i.e. the legal challenges facing enforcement of codes of conduct, is also discussed in the Analysis section.

Nepal Press Institute is proud to have successfully conducted the media monitoring event. The nationwide exercise was truly monumental in not just scope and scale but also in throwing up new challenges to be tackled. NPI had been waiting for a long while for just such an opportunity to come its way as it had not been able to utilize the vast experiences accumulated from earlier monitoring exercises. And, the greatest of the challenges was to be able to overcome those brought about by the hopelessly short time within which everything had to be conducted.

We are grateful to the Election Commission for entrusting us with this historical task. We would like to express special gratitude to Chief Election Commissioner Honourable Mr. Neel Kantha Uprety's continuous support and encouragements to go along in spite of the hurdles, particularly those related with deadlines, and Commissioner Ms. Ila Sharma for having an abiding faith in our abilities in spite of the short time available for everything. Similar gratitude goes to UNDP/ESP officials, mainly Chief Technical Advisor/Project Manager Andres Del Castillo, Deputy Project Manager Kundan Das Shrestha and National Electoral Education and Information Centre Coordinator Nikila Shrestha for their efforts in helping us conduct our mandate with a resounding success.

Last, but not the least, NPI deeply appreciates the efforts put in by the

media monitors stationed in different parts of the country where many of them had to work in a rush and still come out with the output expected of them. The untiring efforts of NPI's supporting staff too are memorable.

Advisors, editors and translators deserve our deep appreciation for their valuable services without which this report would not be possible.

Coordinators of NPI Regional Media Resource Centres Birendra Kumar Sharma (Biratnagar), and Mohammad Arif Ansari (Nepalgunj), and monitoring center coordinators Brij Kumar Yadav (Janakpur), Punya Poudel (Pokhara), Janak Aryal (Chitwan), Hari Thapa (Kathmandu) and Umid Bagchand (Dhangadhi) contributed box items to enrich this report with their experiences. They merit special mention.

Special thanks are due also to the team members who contributed their expertise and hard work in the making of this report and wrote individual segments.

To establish the settings for the report Komal Dhamala delves into the *History of Elections*. (Dhamala is an undersecretary at ECN). Kundan Aryal in *Media and the Codes* looks into the media performance in relation to the election codes of conduct. (Aryal is a journalist and lecturer at Tribhuvan University.)

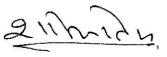
In the next section, which deals with the actual monitoring, Hari Uprety, in *A Monitoring Concept is Realised,* gives an overview of the realm of media monitoring as practised in Nepal in the recent times. (Uprety is a journalist and he coordinated the monitoring team for the Media Monitoring project.) Chiranjibi Khanal, in *The Logistics and Management*, discusses the swift implementation of the nationwide media monitoring. (Khanal, who led the team, is a professor of journalism with Tribhuvan University.)

In the core analysis section, Yogesh Koirala, in his report, *How the Media Fared*, revisits the daily reports submitted to the ECN to provide a qualitative analysis of the findings of the nationwide efforts. (Koirala is a journalist, with prior monitoring experience at NPI.) Tara Prasad Bhusal, in *Statistical Analysis*, gives a quantitative description of the findings. (Bhushal is a statistician and Reader in economics with Tribhuvan University.)

To supplement these analyses, Shobha Gautam, in *Gender, Inclusion and Election Reporting*, zeroes in on the few instances of the election coverage to analyse it from the gender perspective. Tanka Prasad Dulal, in *Legal Perspective*, analyses the cases of code violation detected in the course of monitoring, reviews the existing legal and policy framework and makes a few recommendations. (Dulal is a lawyer with considerable experience on media-law studies.)

In the *Social Media Platform: Trends Followed By Election Tweets*, Jagadish Pokhrel examines the handle, text and time associated with the election conversation in the emerging social media platform, Twitter, as an additional analysis pertaining to media monitoring. (Pokhrel is a journalist working with *The Rising Nepal*.)

The designers, Rabin Sayami, Arbindra Man Singh and Rajendra Shakya deserve thanks for their painstaking efforts to bring the report to this shape.



Shobha Gautam
Chairperson
Nepal Press Institute
10 August 2014

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PROLOGUE

Thanks to the consultations with the Election Commission, Nepal and the faith reposed by UNDP in Nepal Press Institute, the unique and mammoth task of preparing the Media Monitoring pertaining to the 2013 Constituent Assembly elections has been possible. The partnership in cooperation has resulted in this report which is highly and uniquely comprehensive in both its size and breadth. The report is a statement on the performance of the Nepal media in the course of the November 2013 elections in which more than 12 million voters (or, 79 percent of the eligible voters) exercised their rights in fulfilling their duties as citizens. A total of 120 political parties and Independents fielded 6,126 candidates in the first-past-the-post segment whereas 122 parties had enclosed nearly 11,000 candidates in the PR list of the two-pronged electoral system.

As monitoring elicits feedback and public discussion, it was indeed an essential opportunity for media professionals themselves to consult the check-list as to how they performed and, more importantly, how they could do even better the next time. The effort offers the ECN, UNDP and other international agencies like the Election Support Programme, as well as NPI a reference point in their quest for making future media monitoring exercises qualitatively and quantitatively more comprehensive.

The Code of Conduct issued by the ECN for various sectors, including the media, political parties and candidates in the fray, was the benchmark for all concerned to fulfil their respective roles. While there are undoubtedly many areas where things can improve in future exercises, the month-long Media Monitoring activity was a uniquely challenging task. In response to the UNDP call for conducting the media monitoring, NPI submitted its proposal and was duly awarded the task within days after the sponsors gave a go-ahead.

NPI has had the longest experience in professional media monitoring—a decade. The BBC Trust commissioned NPI to monitor the Nepali media—print, radio and television in 2003. The project entailed monitors to work in three shifts from morning through the afternoon to the evening round the year without a break.

What NPI needed to undertake was a nation-wide job. This wish too was fulfilled with the decision to hold the Constituent Assembly Election in 2013. As soon as the job was handed over to NPI, decision makers sat down to make the final preparations to launch the task. With only about 19 days to go for the election, the campaign period was fast coming to a close for any monitoring of campaign reporting to be done.

Ideally, the news media mirror events, processes and personalities. In media monitoring work, the purpose of the report is to reflect which news media covered what and whether the contents abided by the Code of Conduct that the ECN issued. The ground reality is that not all the media followed the code prescription for the specified election period leading to the November elections. NPI, therefore, graded the individual contents carried by the media and flagged off the results to the ECN/UNDP for perusal and appropriate follow-up action. The Media Monitoring project covered 547 newspapers and 210 radio stations from across the country. In addition, ten TV channels and another ten online news portals were monitored.

As many as 147 personnel were mobilised for the task. A central database was devised to collect media clippings from every district. The monitors would file their news clipping after marking them for priority viewing to the database. The analysts would then get down to writing their daily reports to the ECN about the number and types of code violation by the monitored media. This gave the ECN an immediate accessibility to the media files to decide whether it should take action on them in the course of enforcing the codes of conduct.

A number of must-do pre-launch activities could not be conducted for lack of time and, more importantly, resources. This included orientation of the newly inducted monitors in different parts of the country and also essential equipment. But these activities needed to be carried out, even if only in a makeshift manner. Orientation sessions were held over the phone and Skype. The equipment shortage was made up by bringing out old computers from the storage and repairing them. Monitoring would not have been possible without the earlier NPI background. Some of the key hands involved in earlier monitoring work, including those involved from the very beginning, were mobilised in November as well.

During the project period, 135 monitors uploaded a total of 10,491 items: 828 online; 6,167 print, 2,094 radio and 1,402 TV. Interviews and talk shows were also included. A bird's eye view of the issue of honouring/ violating the Code of Conduct by the media stands as follows:

a) Complete code violation: 3 per cent;
b) Serious violations: 8 per cent; and
c) Some bias: 27 per cent.

When it was found that these efforts were not enough at least two trips had to be organised, one to Nepalgunj and the other to Biratnagar. For the necessary equipment, several scanners had to be procured from the marketplace, in spite of the contractual limitations. The ECN too was approached to meet the shortage of servers and computers, and it helped in this regard to a certain extent.

An interesting aspect of the monitoring was also the relatively new world of the social media. Throughout November 2013, short texts about Nepal's bid to elect the CA regularly appeared on the walls of Twitter. Authors shared assorted messages, ranging from doubts and fears to hopes about the election. A few hundred sent the most tweets, interacted with their friends and followers, and drove the social conversation. Others, in thousands, participated in the digital echo chamber by sending just a tweet or two each. Technically, voters with interest, Internet access and search skills could tune in to the public tweets and archive them. Building a corpus of 9,533 election tweets from a similar personal archive, this exploration describes their manifest features in terms of handle, text and time. Some of the key features of the findings are incorporated in the related article carried by the Media Monitoring report reviewing also studies in the intersection of tweets and electoral politics and recommends further research in this emerging area.

The general consensus among the army of 135 media monitors was that the worthwhile venture should be a continuous process in familiarising journalists across the country with the workings of the electoral process and the various elements and issues involved. This will help voters to contribute more to their citizens' role. Informed voters make informed decisions. The high turnout of voters is an impressive record for South Asia in particular. Voters in large numbers mentioned that they learnt from the media about the issues, parties and candidates. This might have also contributed to the large voter turnout, notwithstanding the call and threats by some groups pressing for a boycott of the entire election process.

Regular monitoring on specific issues relevant to the ECN is necessary. Maintaining such an undertaking should go a long way in educating voters and also improving journalists' skills together with their knowledge of the electoral process so that they are able to carry out their responsibilities better and improve the quality of their contents both in their and, indeed, the general public's interests.

That women constituted 27 per cent of the monitoring unit's staff members indicates the level of achievement women have attained. It is a question of opportunity. Given the fact that thousands of girls from all over the country graduate annually from various campuses and acquire skills in a variety of areas, their meritorious inclusions should not be a big difficulty, provided equality of opportunity is put

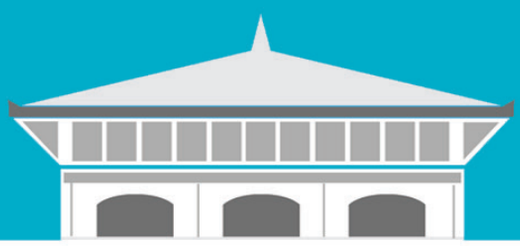
into practice in all earnest. An activity like media monitoring requires at least a Bachelor's level academic qualification, computer skill, fair idea of news operation and lots of energy and patience to work under deadline pressures. Such being the case, however, the general social attitude can be gauged from the fact that during the Media Monitoring period that UNDP commissioned to NPI, election related news and views from the gender perspective accounted for a mere 1.22 per cent.



THE SETTING

- History of Elections in Nepal
- Media and the Codes

HISTORY OF ELECTIONS IN NEPAL



BACKGROUND

The history of a democracy is linked with the history of elections. Nepal's, constitutional history began in 2004 BS. The first parliamentary election was held only in 1959AD. The Nepal Government Act 2004 BS is considered to be the first written constitution of Nepal. It was drafted during the autocratic Rana rule and it contained provisions on the structures and mode of formation of the legislature and the election of the people's representatives. At that time, an election was held for the Rastra Sabha and for that an Election Commission was formed. Mr. Subarna Shamsher was appointed the first Chief Election Commissioner. However, there were no electoral rules and regulations, neither was there political awareness amongst the people.

The Interim Governance Statute of Nepal, 2007 BS, for the first time, provided specific functions to the Election Commission. The functions were to look after, control and direct elections. It was also entrusted with the responsibility of the preparation of electoral rolls. In 2007 BS the voters' roll began to be prepared. Similarly, the Constitution of Kingdom of Nepal, 2015 BS that established democracy ensured 109 representatives for the House of Representatives but there was no provision for an Election Commission in the Constitution.

It was a milestone in the history of the Election Commission of Nepal that the first amendment to the Constitution of Nepal, 2019, assured that the Election Commission was an independent constitutional body, and the second and third amendments specified its functions, duties and powers. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 2047, Wfurther consolidated the Commission as an independent constitutional body. Based on the Constitution, the Election Commission conducted national elections in 2048 BS, 2051 BS, 2056 BS and the local elections in 2049 BS and 2054 BS.

The Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007 AD, has made provisions related with the Election Commission in Part 14, Articles 128, 129 and 130. Article 128 provisions up to five election commissioners, including one chief election commissioner, to be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Constitutional Council. Similarly, Article 129 provides

the functions, duties and powers of conducting, supervising, directing and controlling the legislative, local and other elections as well as referendums as provisioned by the Constitution and other relevant laws of the state. It is also mandated to prepare electoral rolls for the elections.

Structurally, the Election Commission has two distinct hierarchies, the Commission and the Secretariat. The Commission is the apex body which makes policy decisions, while the Secretariat works under the Commission. The Secretariat is headed by the secretary of the Government of Nepal, and it implements the decisions made by the Commission. There are four divisions and 10 sections in the Secretariat, and it has 75 district election offices across the country. The concept of five regional election offices has also been introduced. There are about 700 officials working in the ECN headquarter and the districts.

After the restoration of multiparty democracy in 2046 BS, the Nepalese people could experience real democracy bringing about substantial changes in their lives. The role of the media and civil society was well recognised by the post-2046 state. The Nepalese people wanted a Constituent Assembly (CA) way back in 2007 BS but it did not materialise until 2064 BS. The ECN successfully managed the first CA election, 2064 BS.

With the aim to improve the electoral system, electoral management and electoral procedures, the ECN formulated its five-year strategic plan in 2065 BS. The plan, envisions establishing ECN as an independent, impartial, and competent organisation to hold credible elections with the effective participation of all stakeholders. The ECN is guided by the principles of public accountability, participation of all the stakeholders, transparency, professional integrity and impartiality to ensure free, fair and credible elections.

The plan has also recognised the media as a significant stakeholder in EC's activities. It has envisaged the role of the media as a support in the conduct of free and fair elections by disseminating electoral information, observing the code of conduct for the media, informing the voters, creating an environment for the elections, publicising irregularities during the electoral process and promoting the respect and observance of the code of conduct.

The ECN also managed the CA Elections, 2013, with a historic participation of voters. The role of the media, in elections after the restoration of multiparty democracy, has greatly been promoted by the ECN. Along with the growth and access of the media networks, the ECN has always given an emphasis on the role the media for increasing awareness in the people.

THE HISTORY OF ELECTORAL PROVISIONS AND PRACTICES IN NEPAL

Nepal's electoral history is not long. It started after the downfall of the 104 year long Rana regime. In the initial phases, there was the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system. With the Constituent Assembly Election, 2064 BS, a mixed parallel electoral system, comprising first-past-the-post (FPTP) and proportional representation (PR) systems, has been adopted. Similarly, there has been a drastic change in the voter registration process which was done manually until 2064BS. After that, registration has been made fully digital to include biometric details of the



The voter ID card: Proud moments.

voters. Similarly, another aspect worth appreciating, particularly after the restoration of multiparty democracy, has been in voters' education. This process has received a lending hand by the unprecedented growth of different media outlets in the country. Moreover, the issue of social inclusion has been included in all the electoral systems and processes. An overview of the electoral history of Nepal follows:

Government of Nepal Act, 2004

The first written constitution of Nepal was called the Government of Nepal Act, 2004 BS. It provisioned a two-tier Parliament- a National Assembly and a Legislative Assembly. The National Assembly was the Lower House, and it had provisioned 60-70 representatives. Out of them 42 were elected and 28 were nominated by the king. The Legislative Assembly or the Upper House would be formed with the combination of the Panchayat Sabha and the Kendriya Sabha. But the Constitution did not mention the electoral system, voters' roll, age for eligible voters, and the number of voters and parties.

Interim Governance Statute of Nepal, 2007 BS

The Interim Constitution formed after the end of 104 years of autocratic rule of the Ranas provisioned only a one-chamber assembly. It also provisioned some kind of Election Commission to oversee the elections. The minimum age of the eligible voter was fixed at 21. But the kind of electoral system to be adopted was not defined by the Constitution.



The ballot at work.

The Constitution of Kingdom of Nepal, 2015 BS

After the establishment of democracy, several governments were formed. In 2015 BS, the Government of Nepal announced a constitution named the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal. It provisioned two houses of assembly: the Pratinidhi Sabha and the Maha Sabha. The Pratinidhi Sabha had 109 representatives, and the Maha Sabha 36. At that time, the voters' roll was prepared as per the People's Representatives Act, 2015 BS, which was the first enactment allowing the preparation of a voter-roll for elections. In addition, the eligible age to be a voter was fixed at 21 years. The then Election Commission was named Nirbachan Commission.

The Parliamentary Election, 2015 BS

The Nirbachan Commission, with the authority and responsibility provided by the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 2015, held the parliamentary election in 2015 BS. In this election, 4,246,468 voters participated. Furthermore, nine political parties were competing, and the ceiling of campaign spending was fixed at Rs.5,000 for each candidate.

The Constitution of Nepal, 2019 BS

After the December 1960 takeover by the then king, the new Constitution of Nepal, 2019 was brought into effect. It provisioned a one-house parliament,

called the Rastriya Panchayat. The House included 90 members elected from the Anchal Sabha, or zonal assemblies, 15 representatives elected from the Bargiya Sangathan, or class organisations, and four from university graduates- those who had completed their Bachelor's degree. Moreover, the king nominated 15 per cent of the total number of members. In this Constitution, the election management body was the Ministry of Panchayat and the National Direction Ministry. These two ministries conducted the election of the Rastriya Panchayat.

First amendment to Constitution of Nepal, 2019 BS in 2023 BS

The King amended some provisions of the Constitution of Nepal, 2019 BS, in 2023 BS. It was the first time an Election Commission was established as a constitutional body by the Constitution and it provisioned the appointment of the chief election commissioner and other commissioners. The main function of the commission was to conduct all types of elections at different levels of the Panchayat system.

Second Amendment to Constitution of Nepal, 2019 BS in 2032 BS

In 2032BS, the second amendment to the Constitution of Nepal, 2019BS was made. The amendment modified some provisions of the national elections. The Rastriya Panchayat would have 112 elected members and 28 members would be nominated by the King. The provision of the Election Commission as a constitutional election management body remained intact.

National Referendum, 2037 BS

The Referendum of 1980 AD is an important milestone in Nepal's electoral history. It was conducted in May 1980 and it was termed "National Referendum". Voting was to take place to choose between a multiparty democracy and a modified Panchayat system. Citizens above 21 years of age were eligible for voting. The voters' list was compiled under the law of the Voter's Name Collection Regulations, 2036. Unfortunately, even though there was a constitutional Election Commission to conduct the elections, the referendum was conducted by an independent parallel commission, called the National Referendum Commission. The total number of voters in this referendum was 7.192 million.

Third Amendment to Constitution of Nepal, 2019 BS in 2037 BS

In 2037BS, the third amendment to the Constitution of Nepal, 2019, was carried out and some provisions were modified regarding national elections. The Rastriya Sabha would have 112 elected members and 28 members nominated by the king. The provision of the Election Commission as a constitutional election management body and the minimum age required to be an eligible voter were not changed.

The Election of Rastriya Panchayat, 1981 AD

As per the third amendment in 1980 AD of the Constitution of Nepal, 2019BS, an election for the Rastriya Panchayat was held in 1981AD for 112 members. The king, as per the provision in the Constitution, nominated the rest of the 28 members. This time, the constitutional election management body, the Election Commission, managed the election. The limit for the election campaign expenditure for each candidate was set at Rs. 30,000/-.

The Election of Rastriya Panchayat, 2043 BS

After the completion of a full term of five years, the new election of the Rastriya Panchayat was held in three phases. The number of members to be elected was the same as that of the pervious election. Again, the Election Commission was the constitutional election management body responsible for the election. In this election, 9.34 million voters participated. The electoral system was of the first-past-the-post type.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 2047BS

Multiparty democracy was restored after the people's movement of 1990. The restoration brought about many substantial changes in the democratic state of Nepal. A constitutional reform and recommendation commission was established to recommend the drafting of a Constitution that was more democratic as per the people's demand reflected in the movement. After the recommendations were received from the Commission, the King promulgated a new Constitution, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 2047BS, on Kartik 23 the same year. It provisioned an electoral system, the electorate and the Election Commission as well. According to the constitutional provision, there was to be a two-tier parliament, a Lower House called the House of Representatives and an Upper House called the National Assembly. The Lower House had 205 members elected through the FPTP system from 205 electoral constituencies, and the Upper House had 60 members, both elected and nominated. The system of a Single Transferable Vote was adopted for the election of the Upper House, or the National Assembly. It was also a mixed system where only 35 members were elected through this kind of vote while 15 were regional representatives and ten were nominated. There were three women representatives as well. The Election Commission was to be an independent constitutional body. The provision of a chief election commissioner, other commissioners and their qualifications were also clearly mentioned in the Constitution.

The Election of House of Representatives, 2048 BS

According to the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 2047, the first election of the Lower House of Representatives was held in May 1991. The electoral system was FPTP, and the minimum voting age was 18. The ECN was responsible for conducting the election. In this election there were 11.19 million voters with 20 different political parties competing.

The Election of House of Representatives, 2051 BS

Before the full term of the elected representatives of the election in 1991AD had expired, a mid-term election was called in 1994AD as per the Constitution. In this election, there were 12.33 million voters, and 24 different political parties were in the fray. This election was also conducted under the same electoral system as the previous one.

The Election of House of Representatives, 2056 BS

The third National Election held after the restoration of multiparty democracy was in 1999AD, after the completion of the full term of the parliament elected in 1994. The 1999 election was held in two phases. Regarding the electoral system, it was the same as the previous election. The total number of voters participating in this election was 13.52 million. Moreover, 39 political parties competed in the election. It was the last election



Election Commissioner Ila Sharma at an information sharing session.

for the House of Representatives before the People's Movement of 2005-6 overthrew the system.

The Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2063

After the Second People's Movement of 2005-2006BS the Interim Constitution, 2063BS was promulgated. In this Constitution, only the Constituent Assembly election has been provisioned. The CA would also work in the capacity of the legislature, apart from formulating the new Constitution of Nepal. The electoral system for the CA election was quite different from those of the past. It provisioned a mixed system called a parallel mixed electoral system. According to the Interim Constitution, the total number of the CA members would be 601: 240 members, one from each constituency, were elected through the FPTP system, 335 members through the Proportional Representation (PR) system, and the remaining 26 members were to be nominated by the government.

The Constituent Assembly Election, 2064 BS

According to the provision in the Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2063 BS, the first CA election was held in 2064 BS. It was the first time that two electoral systems were used in an election. Voters polled in the FPTP system to elect one member from each constituency. They also voted in the PR system to elect 335 more members from across the country. Voters who reached 18 years of age in Mangsir, of mid-December 2007, participated in the election. The ECN conducted the election in a very



Vote is worth a few more steps with such burden.

free, fair, credible and transparent manner. The total number of voters in this election was 17.61 million and the participating political parties were 54 in number. There was also a provision for a limit of election campaign expenditure for the political parties and candidates. According to the provision on campaign financing, Rs. 459,500/- was the limit for election expenditure for each party and Rs. 50,000 for each candidate.

The Constituent Assembly Election, 2070 BS

The first CA was dissolved without completing its assigned task of drafting a new Constitution for Nepal. To complete the task left by the previous CA, the date of the next CA election was declared and all the officials of the Election Commission were appointed. The electoral system adopted was the same as that for the previous CA election of 2064BS.The CA Election 2070BS appears to be a replication of the CA Election of 2064BS. This election was held based on a list of voters with their photographed identity cards. The Election Commission had started to collect the voters' list using a biometric system since 2067 BS in the course of making the voter roll accurate. Because of this, the number of voters decreased to 12.15 million for the 2070 elections. All the duplications in the previous rolls were eliminated. On the other hand, the number of political parties taking part increased dramatically, reaching 122. The election campaign expenditure limit for each candidate was Rs. 75,000/- for the PR system and Rs. 1,000,000/- for each candidate for the FPTP system.

The CA election, 2070 BS, was a slightly different from that of 2064BS because of the number of political parties participating. There were 54 political parties in the 2064 elections. In 2070 there were as many as 122 political parties, of which 30 have been able to represent themselves in the CA.

There were 240 constituencies, 10,013 polling locations and 18,438 polling centres across the country. For the management of the election, 18,775 polling officers, 18,775 assistant polling officers, 56,323 assistant officials, 34,643 office assistants and 88,940 volunteers had been deployed. There were 1, 21, 47,865 eligible voters for the election. On the FPTP electoral system, there were 5,447 male and 668 female candidates, including one third-gender candidate contesting. Of the total votes, 78.34 per cent (9,516,734 voters) was cast in the FPTP electoral system and 79.82 per cent (9,776,703 voters) in the PR system.

The percentage of invalid votes was reduced in the 2070 election in comparison with the election of 2064. This time only 4.96 per cent and 3.2 per cent of the votes had been invalid in the FPTP and the PR system respectively. There were 5.15 per cent and 3.66 per cent of invalid votes in the 2064 election. For the management of the election, a total of 65 types of election materials had been used. For enhancing the efficiency of the officials to manage the election, a total of 312,507 officials were trained using the cascaded method in such themes as voter education, logistics management, election management, polling counting, security, observation and the media. Similarly, for voter education, 29,708 election education workers, volunteers and others had been deployed.

ELECTIONS AND THE MEDIA

An election is a public affair in which the election management body, the voters, political parties, the government and the security forces are the key stakeholders. The cooperation and coordination among these stakeholders are of prime concern for the successful management of elections. For the effective coordination among these, the role of the media is of much significance. So far, the media have played their key role in voter education, stakeholders' coordination, observance of the electoral code of conduct and dissemination of electoral information. The role of the media in elections has been great after the restoration of multiparty democracy in 2046 BS. The intensity of their contribution to the election management is said to have a proportional relation with the expansion of their number and their reach across the country. The Election Commission's media friendly policy has further contributed to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the media's role in elections.

The Media and the Constituent Assembly Election, 2064 BS

In order to ensure free, fair and credible elections in 2064 BS [2008 AD], the Election Commission of Nepal focused on three major areas-- the dissemination of information regarding activities of the Election Commission, election related information and information related with political parties. The Press Council of Nepal was asked to deliver analytical reports on the activities of the media to the Election Commission. The Press Council was to check if all the media treated all the political ideologies equally, if they delivered adequate information about the election and voting, if they rightly informed voters

about their rights and duties and also if they indulged themselves in voter education. The Council was also to monitor the media and keep relevant records, with tags to show the time and place of dissemination. It was also asked to categorise the recorded information to show whether they were neutral, positive or negative in their tones and then report to the Election Commission.

Media monitoring centres were set up by the Council in Kathmandu and the five regions. The regional centres were to report to the centre in Kathmandu on a regular basis. The Press Council was to provide prompt reports to the Commission during the election so that election code compliance could be enforced. The Commission had provided logistics for the Press Council to carry out the monitoring. This ensured an effective media monitoring in the 2064BS [2008 AD] elections.

Moreover, to deliver election related information to the wider public in a timely and reliable manner, the Commission had established a media centre where Nepalese and foreign media workers could get information about electoral activities, press releases, information related with the code of conduct and election results. The centre provided computers and internet facilities for the media personnel. It also issued passes for media persons to enter polling centres on the polling day. The Commission entered into contracts with Radio Nepal and Nepal Television to manage free time for the dissemination of the manifestoes of the political parties to enhance fair competition among them.

The Commission had sought cooperation from all national and local print and audiovisual media to carry out voter education. Specifically, different televisions had been contracted to broadcast election related video clips. Regarding the broadcast media, three-umbrella unions of FM radios, namely Broadcasting Association of Nepal, Federation of Community Radio and Kathmandu Valley FM Radio Broadcasting Forum, were contracted to disseminate election related information, public service announcements and to clarify polling procedures to the public. In this way, all types of media were working to create an election environment for a free, fair and credible election in 2064.

The media and the Constituent Assembly (CA) Election, 2070 BS [2013 AD]

The Commission's relationship with the media received a further boost during the 2070 CA Election, especially in terms of capacity development of media workers for electoral education. The Commission took upon itself to carry out media monitoring this time around to make the process participatory and independent. It sought to further systematise information management. Furthermore, the Commission used different approaches to manage information and media relations, such as by formulating and implementing the Information and Communication Policy of the Commission, the Media Centre Operation Directives, and the Voter Education Policy and Directives. It established and operated the Media Centre and the Call Centre successfully during the 2070CA elections.

The Commission's Information and Communication Policy, 2070 BS

The Election Commission brought out its Communication Policy in 2070. The policy was to address queries and interests of all the stakeholders by providing timely and relevant information during the election period, including pre-election, and post election activities. The policy helped



Ballots you bet!.

the Commission to deliver information to national and international media, not to mention actual, factual and credible information to all the voters.

The Information and Communication Policy, 2070 states that information management has a crucial role in managing the election in a free, independent, impartial and reliable manner. Information needs to be managed properly to address the interest and stakes of citizens regarding the election system and procedures before, during and after the election. The national and international mass media need to be provided with factual information on all activities regarding election procedures, and the people need to be provided true, factual and reliable information via these media. The policy aimed to manage the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of information and messages regarding elections. This was done systematically so that overall internal and external communication process became effective. The policy spells out the following:

(a) Easy dissemination of information regarding the progress and activities of the Commission pursuant to the spirit of the Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2063, (2007) and the Right to Information Act, 2064, (2008).

(b) Election information system shall be formed and operated to manage and make the collection, processing, analysis, production, storage and distribution of information effective.



Voters' turn.

(c) The Commission's internal and external information system shall be made simple and easy to disseminate true, factual and reliable information regarding the elections to the citizens in an effective manner.

(d) Information disseminated regularly by the Commission shall be categorised based on the subject, area, targeted groups and geographical basis, and different languages, styles, and the media shall be used to reach the citizens from the backward groups, areas and the marginalised communities.

(e) To disseminate independent, impartial and reliable information through the media during the election period and to regulate the activities of the media sector during the election period media-related issues shall be included in the election code of conduct.

(f) There shall be a focus on the institutional management and capacity building for the information and communication management of the Commission.

(g) There shall be essential cooperation with stakeholders to strengthen and make the information system effective.

Moreover, the policy has also developed the following strategies to implement the policy statements:

(a) A one-door policy shall be implemented by revising and



updating the existing information system of the Commission to guarantee the rights of the citizens to receive information relating to elections.

(b) Modern technology shall be used to manage and make the collection, accumulation, processing, analysis, production and distribution of information regarding elections more effective.

(c) Media and information shall be categorised and selected based on the area, type, reach, media and time, after analysis of the information and messages disseminated by the Commission.

(d) Publishable information and meaningful messages shall be published in the national dailies at the central level and local newspapers at the local level.

(e) Audio information relating to election shall be broadcast via Radio Nepal and the FM/ Radios operating at the national and local level.

(f) Audio-visual matter shall be broadcast via Nepal Television and other TV networks operating at the national and local level.

(g) For publication of the Commission's information in weeklies, fortnightlies, monthlies, tri-monthlies, half-yearly, annual reports, calendars, pocket calendars etc., publication criteria shall be based on separate guidelines, based on their characteristics such as readership numbers, area, originality, relevance, economy of costs, number of copies, regularity of publications, distribution systems, etc.

(h) To publish or broadcast information and advertisements, modern technology, online portals and other social networks etc. shall also be used.

(i) Website, media centre, call centre, media monitoring, video conferencing etc. shall be established, operated and updated to effectively disseminate information on all election procedures for managing the elections.

(j) A Media Coordination Committee shall be established to coordinate and facilitate the analysis, coordination and control of information, messages and news published/ broadcast by the mass media during the election period.

(k) Appropriate training, seminars, interactions and other programmes shall be conducted for capacity building of the human resources involved with the information and communication management of the Commission, and those of the mass media.

(l) Provisions shall be made to impart information in as many local languages as possible, in coordination with local stakeholders, to disseminate information and election messages even to the citizens of backward areas and the marginalised communities.

(m) An Election Education and Information centre shall be equipped with physical and technical infrastructure for the effective management of information compilation for the Commission.

(n) Essential coordination and

cooperation shall be made with the national and international mass media to make the information and message flow more effective.

For the effective implementation of the policy, it has also directed the establishment of a media coordination committee and a media monitoring committee. The coordination committee prepared the TOR to analyse, coordinate, facilitate and control the information, messages and news published and broadcast by the mass media.

Media Monitoring Directives, 2070 BS

Based on the information and communication policy, 2070 BS, the Media Monitoring Directives, 2070 BS was formulated and implemented in the CA elections of 2013. The media monitoring directives were also prepared to make the elections free, fair and transparent and to implement provisions related to monitoring mentioned in the Election Commission's Communication Policy, 2013.

The Directives, in fact, is another milestone in strengthening the relations between the Commission and the media. The directives envision different institutional mechanisms to ensure participatory media monitoring in the elections. There is the provision of a six-member Media Monitoring Committee coordinated by a commissioner in which the secretary of the Ministry of Information and Communication and the Head of the Department of Journalism, Tribhuvan University, are among its members.

Among the other mechanisms, a Recommendation Implementation Committee, an Assistance Committee to assist the Media Monitoring Committee and a Media Monitoring Unit are some of the structures in place worth mentioning. Though all the committees are participatory in nature, the Assistance Committee is more so, because almost all of the representatives of media houses and forums are members of the committee. They include those from the National News Agency, the Federation of Nepali Journalists, the Television Broadcasters Association, the Community Radio and the Cable Television Association and so on. The committee is to assist in determining standards for media monitoring, to motivate the media to abide by the Code of Conduct for the Media and to deliver other suggestions to the Monitoring Committee.

The Media Monitoring Committee remained at the apex of the media monitoring work, and it had the following members:

Election Commissioner (with responsibility for media)	Coordinator
Secretary, Election Commission	Member
Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communication	Member
Chief, Journalism Department, Tribhuvan University	Member
Spokesperson, (Joint Secretary) Election Commission	Member
Information Officer, Election Commission	Member Secretary

The committee was entrusted with the responsibilities of developing the necessary monitoring standards for the monitoring of communication media, training monitoring officers and monitoring groups, determining related work policies for monitoring, submitting monitoring reports and analysis to the Commission, and if it appears that any media or media persons are violating the code of conduct, supply details of the misconduct to the Commission and request it to take action.

Similarly, there was another committee named the Recommendation Implementation Committee to take action against the code of conduct violations observed by the monitoring unit. The Committee was constituted with the coordination of an Election Commissioner comprising other members from Press Council Nepal, the Election Commission Secretariat, the Media Monitoring Unit and others.

A Communication Media Support Committee was constituted to provide necessary support to the monitoring committee in monitoring. The committee had its members from the Election Commission, the National News Agency, the Federation of Nepali Journalists, the Television Broadcasters Association, the Community Radio Broadcast Association, the Broadcasting Association of Nepal, the Valley Radio Broadcast Forum, the Nepal Cable TV Federation and the Nepal Print Media Network.

The directives also provisioned the Communication Media Monitoring Unit to make the task of monitoring of communication media well managed, effective and productive. Under the coordination of a Joint Secretary of the Commission, The Communication Media Monitoring Unit was established. The Unit had the responsibility of carrying out the monitoring and coordination with relevant experts. It was entrusted with the task of submitting daily reports and analysis to the Committee, and inform the Committee/Commission about the daily activities regarding monitoring.

The directives also provisioned the establishment and operation of regional, and district media monitoring centres. As provisioned in the directives and carried out in practice, the regional media monitoring centres had members from the Regional Election Office and the Regional Journalists Federation. The local government media representative and the monitoring officer were the other members.

The responsibilities of the Regional Monitoring Centres were to monitor if the media publish/broadcast in support of or opposition to any political party, to see if any articles, news, talk shows etc. are published/broadcast directly affecting the election environment, to make available news and information and to submit the daily monitoring report to the monitoring centre, receive daily monitoring reports from the district monitoring centre and evaluate the monitoring reports and submit them to the monitoring centre at the ECN with recommendations and analysis.

Besides the code of conduct, the directives had also made some provisions about the duty of the media. Some of the duties were to observe the prevailing election laws and the election code of conduct, to show appropriate behaviour towards voters, candidates, observers, political parties or their agents, election officials and stakeholders, not to get involved in any kind of activity that encourages a voter to support or oppose a party or a candidate, not to interview any voter, observer, candidate or agent of political party or official within the polling station, not to take photographs of the activities within or near the polling station and to respect the secrecy of the activities within the polling centre.

Code of Conduct for Media

The Interim Constitution of Nepal provides for freedom of expression and freedom of the media. It guarantees the right to publish without prior censorship as long as the publications are not defamatory or do not threaten the national sovereignty or integrity.

There are diverse laws regulating the media in Nepal. In the election period the code of conduct issued by the Election Commission happens to be a primary one. In the CA elections of 2070, the Election Commission issued a code of conduct for the election period. According to the code of conduct, during the election campaign period, the media are expected to remain impartial, to avoid using abusive speech or language that could instigate violence or disturb social harmony and to give priority to news and information relating to voter education.

The code of conduct also provisioned free airtime for manifestoes on national radio and national television. According to the code of conduct, the electronic media should record all election related information disseminated during the election period and keep the recordings for 35 days. The Commission had the power to ask any media found to be breaching the code of conduct to rectify the violation. Similarly, the code of conduct established that the Commission should monitor the information and news related to the election campaign being disseminated by the media. In case of violation of the code of conduct, the Commission should direct the concerned media to make necessary corrections.

To share information easily and reliably, an Election Management Information System (E-MIS) has to be established and operated.

Depending on Section 95 of the code of conduct, the Commission managed the media monitoring parameters and structures. For this, the Commission launched the Media Monitoring Directives, 2070. Based on the Directives, as earlier mentioned, the Commission established a Media Monitoring Committee, an Action Implementation Committee, a Monitoring Assistance Committee, a Monitoring Unit in the centre, and Regional Monitoring Centres in the five regions and deputed media monitoring officers in all the 75-district offices. The Media Monitoring Unit would receive complaints, analyse, summarise and report them to the Media Monitoring Committee. The Unit was supported by the Nepal Press Institute to conduct its monitoring activities in cooperation with UNDP/ESP. The monitoring process was run with a good chain of command in which the district monitoring officers would regularly report to the regional centres and the regional centres would report to the centre. From the media monitoring unit in the centre to the media monitoring officer in the district, they all had a well defined job description.

Depending on the complaints registered in the Media Monitoring Unit, with support of the Nepal Press Institute, complaints were investigated in depth and decisions finalised. According to the preliminary report of the Commission, 15 different types of papers, two online media, two FM radios and four television stations were found to have violated the code of conduct. The media that breached the code of conduct were directed to correct their lapses by the Commission. The summary report of this is as follows: (See next page table)

The European Union Election Observation Mission to Nepal submitted its report to the Election Commission of Nepal in which it has written that in the CA elections of 2070, the media in general provided a diverse platform for the political parties to present their messages to voters in an environment of expression. It has further written that both the public and private broadcasters and

S.N	Name of media	Subject	Complaint filer	Action /Answer
1)	ABC Television	Live broadcasting of Maoist programme	Nepali Congress	Directed to stop broadcasting until 5pm of 19 november, 2013
2)	TV Filmy	Broadcasting party specific live programme	Nepali Congress	Answer of the media stating no discrimination on political basis
3)	Himalaya Television	Party specific live programme	Verbal report	Answer of the media stating no live programme of specific party
4)	Avenuse	Broadcasting Maoist Mechi-Mahakali programme live	NPI media monitoring	Answer of the media was unclear provision of code of conduct
5)	Maitri FM	Live Broadcasting	Do	Answer of the media that it was not live but a news bulletin
6)	Star FM	Broadcasted on behalf of a party and a candidate	NPI	ECNs direction to stop the action.
7)	Naya Patrika Daily	Published on behalf of a party in silence period		Answer of the media with commitment to COC
8)	Rajdhani Daily	Published on behalf of a party in silence period		Answer of the media that it was not news but grievances of voters
9)	Karobar Daily	Published on behalf of a party in silence period		Answer of the media that it was for the purpose of voter education
10)	Nagarik Daily	Published on behalf of a party in silence period		Answer of the media that it was for the purpose of voter education
11)	Gorkhapatra Daily	Published on behalf of a party in silent period		
12)	Nepal Samachar patra	Published on behalf of a party in silent period		Clarification asked
13)	Aarthik Patrika Daily	Published on behalf of a party in silent period	`	Clarification asked
14)	Janadesh Daily	Published on behalf of a party in silent period		Clarification asked
15)	Republica Daily	Published on behalf of a party in silent period		Clarification asked
16)	Annapurna Post Daily	Published on behalf of a party in silent period		Clarification asked
17)	The Kathmandu Post Daily	Published on behalf of a party in silent period		Clarification asked
18)	Janamanch Weakly	Published on behalf of a party in silent period		Clarification asked
19)	Chhalphal Weakly	Published on behalf of a party in silent period		Clarification asked
20)	Deshantar Weakly	Published on behalf of a party in silent period		Clarification asked
21)	Himalayan Times Daily	Published on behalf of a party in silent period		Clarification asked
22)	Setopati .com	Published on behalf of a party in silent period	NPI	Clarification asked
23)	Ratopati.com	Published on behalf of a party in silent period	NPI	Clarification asked

newspapers provided fair coverage with proportionate distribution of airtime and space, and the reports were generally presented in a neutral tone.

Media and Voter Education

The Voter Education Policy, 2070 BS has clearly stated that production, distribution and dissemination of voter education materials would be carried out through governmental, not-governmental and private organisations and the media. Standing on the policy, the Commission formulated the Voter Education Directives, 2070, and implemented its voter education programme.

For the enhancement of voter education the Commission adopted different approaches, viz. human relations approach, media based approach and techno-cultural approach. In human relations approach, voter education volunteers and voter education workers manned all the polling locations across the country. They made door to door visits and distributed print materials. Similarly, the techno-cultural approach focused on the use of the social media, digital and LED displays as well as street dramas and community based focused programmes.

Among these approaches, the media based approach was the most significant in terms of expenditure and access and coverage. Under this approach, the entire national and the local level media were deployed. Secondly, both types of electronic media, i.e. audio and video, were deployed. The contribution of these media for the CA elections was not only limited to voter education, but they also worked as the hands of the Commission to know the local reality and about the implementation of the code of conduct in the local political campaigns and other political activities. The media also helped in swift dissemination of the election results from the centre and the districts.

Most of the voter education programmes were based on airing and broadcasting public service announcements, radio jingles, dramas and publishing electoral information in the national and local newspapers. The Commission wanted to reach across Nepal, therefore; it entered into contracts with Radio Nepal, Nepal Television, the Television Association of Nepal, the Broadcasting Association of Nepal, the Community Radio Association, the Radio Broadcasters' Forum and the National News Agency for disseminating information in time and with priority. As stated by the Chief Election Commissioner the successful conduct of the CA election was due to the cooperation of all the sectors and stakeholders, particularly the media.

For effective voter education the media houses were provided with different education materials for publishing and broadcasting. The summary of the media mobilised at the centre and local levels for voter education in the CA elections of 2070 BS, are as follows:

S.N	Name of Media	Total Number	Period
1.	Television	11	2 Months
2.	FMs	400	2 Months
3.	Radio Nepal	1	3 Months
4.	Nepal Television	1	3 Months
5.	National Daily	12	2 Months
6.	Local Daily and others	450	15 Days
7.	Social Media	1	1 Month

Capacity Building and Other Programmes

Besides the policies and directives, the Election Commission also gave priority to make its own operational activities

effective by helping the media during the CA elections, 2070 BS. In the preparation phase, the Commission developed its programmes and budgets bearing in mind the role of the media in the local and national level. It made provisions for providing election training to media persons, developing media based programmes like radio dramas, PSAs, jingles, tele-dramas, tele-films and publication of notices in the national and local magazines and papers.

The Commission provided Election and Communication Training to media persons at three levels. The master training included senior media persons of the national media at the national level. They worked as resource persons for the regional level trainings. Similarly, in the five regions, trainings of trainers were conducted where senior level media persons from different districts were participants. Finally, this cascaded training targeted for the media was conducted in all the 75 districts across Nepal. There were 2,481 media persons who were trained for the CA election, 2070 BS. The regionwise training details are as follows:

No. of Trainees on Election and Communication

Region	Male	Female	Total
Eastern	434	117	551
Central	570	134	704
Western	396	79	475
Mid-Western	366	95	461
Far Western	247	43	290
Total	2013	468	2481

The output from the training for media persons was significant because, based on the knowledge gained from the training, these media persons reported in a free, fair and neutral manner. They were also familiarised with election related jargons so that they became able to report to their respective media houses with efficiency, accuracy and credibility.

The Election Commission believes in participatory performance, which has already been reflected in its Strategic Plan, 2009-13. Based on the same principle, the Commission established and maintained it in and around the CA elections of, 2070. To ensure the participation of all the media and related stakeholders, the Commission called the media representatives from different established media houses and deployed them at the Commission during the election period. The Commission would acquire suggestions from them to draft and implement new programmes designed for the media. They would also facilitate the Commission for easy dissemination of press releases and other information of the Commission, besides their contribution in drafting and launching programmes for the media.

A milestone in the cooperation between the media and the Election Commission is reflected in the management of free airtime provided to political parties to broadcast their manifesto. For this, the Election Commission signed contracts with Nepal Television and Radio Nepal and requested all the political parties to broadcast their manifestoes through them. The airtime for the parties had been allocated on the basis of the total number of candidates filed by the political parties in their PR lists. This programme of providing free time for the political parties is also linked with state funding for election campaigning.

The free time allocated to the political parties to broadcast their manifesto on Nepal Television was as follows:

S.N	No. of Party Candidates in PR list	Free Time Allocated
1.	From 34 to 100	2 minutes
2.	From 101 to 200	3 minutes
3.	From 201 to 300	4 minutes
4.	From 301 above	5 minutes

Similarly, on Radio Nepal the free time allocated for the political parties to broadcast their manifesto was as follows:

S.N	No. of Party Candidates in PR list	Free Time Allocated
1.	From 34 to 100	5 minutes
2.	From 101 to 200	10 minutes
3.	From 201 to 300	15 minutes
4.	From 301 above	20 minutes

All together, there were 122 political parties that received free time for broadcasting their manifesto during the CA elections of, 2070 BS. The practice of providing free time for the political parties to broadcast their manifesto was begun during the CA elections of 2064 BS.

Media Centre and Call Centre

The Election Commission benefits from facilitating the media during elections. For that it needs to provide election related information easily and in time. It was for this that a Media Centre was set up for an effective management of the flow of information during the CA elections of 2070 BS, in accordance with the media Centre Operation and Management Directives, 2070. This has greatly helped deliver election related information to the citizens as well as coordinate district election offices, offices of returning officers, the Election Commission and the national and international media during elections. The centre is steered by the Communication and Coordination Committee chaired by a commissioner.

There were 13 officials mobilised for the management of the media centre at the operational level.

The media centre took up the responsibility of providing election related information to the public via the media swiftly, keeping record of different media houses and coordinating with them. The spokesperson of the Commission works as a coordinator from the centre. The directives had also outlined the nature of information to be provided to the media. Some of the areas in which the centre could provide information were information related to the CA election, 2070 BS, official information of the Commission, results of the elections, and other information approved by the Communication Coordination Committee. However, the centre is restricted from providing information having bearing on national security, sovereignty, integrity, foreign relations, personal information and other information to be kept secret as stated by the prevalent laws.

Some facilities are made available to media persons at the media centre. These facilities included computers, the internet, photocopiers, digital display and printers. Similarly, a special provision for photojournalists has been made by providing appropriate rooms for them. The centre has the capacity to host 80 media persons in the hall. The centre also distributed 1,176 press passes for entry into the polling centres on Election Day.

The Commission also provisioned a call centre at its premises. Such a provision was the first in the history of elections in Nepal. The objective was to deliver election related information to all the voters directly and to answer the queries of the voters. There were 12 officials deployed for operating the call centre. The centre operated through a toll-free number (16600144222) where the

Symbiotic Relationship

The Nepali media have been a crucial partner in the country's quest for freedom, democratic equality and order. In various forms, they have acted as a watchdog at every difficult moment of history - be it during the autocratic regime or conflict-hit period. The Fourth Estate constantly and consistently stands by the people to ensure their inherent, fundamental rights. An integral part of Nepal's political transformations, the country's media have come a long way since the early days of evolution which commenced with the country's political movements and modernisation process some six decades ago. Today it has become clear that the Nepali media and politics have developed their symbiotic relationship - in the absence of one, another is deficient. The media, or journalism as popularly known previously, have flourished in a free democratic environment. In a similar manner, the media have oiled the wheels of politics when it stagnates and falters. This appeared to be the case, just ahead of the second Constituent Assembly (CA) election held on 19 November 2013.

voters and other stakeholders could ask their questions and get the relevant answer. The facility of call transfer, call recording and conference call assisted officials in providing prompt responses.

The queries of the callers were classified in 10 categories so that the concerned responsible officer could handle each category separately. The categories of queries were: the electoral and voting process, the electoral district, voter registration and voter roll, voter education, electoral law, political party candidate, observation and electoral passes, the website of the ECN and the code of conduct, among others. Among these , the highest number of queries were seen in the voter registration and voter roll category of queries , while the category of queries regarding political party candidates recorded the least number.

The call centre also decided to communicate through the social media and the website of the Commission. The centre would daily update its Facebook status and table the comments thus received at the meeting of the concerned officials. Foreign volunteers supported the operation of the Facebook conduit during the election period.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Nepal has undergone many lashes and dashes in its democratisation process-- from autocratic rule of the Ranas before 1950, Panchayat rule after 1960 to multi-party rule in the 1990s. A new constitution is being drafted to meet popular aspirations fanned by the 2006 movement. Today, participatory democracy, inclusive democracy and media based democracy are being consolidated within a competitive multi-party democratic system. For the maximum participation of people and for the representation of all the sections of societies, a mixed parallel electoral system has been adopted since 2008. Similarly, from the same time voter education and initiatives for social inclusion have been adopted. There are still challenges to further strengthen the democratic practices. Key components of democracy, such as electoral participation, a competitive environment and an independent media need to be further strengthened.

Election is the heart of a democracy while the Election Commission is the guardian of elections. The Commission ensures the representation of people

in the governance process through proper management of polling. The Election Commission of Nepal has been able to conduct free, fair and credible elections ever since its establishment, but now we see that it cannot declare the election date on its own. Predictable periodic elections are needed and the Commission should be provided with the authority to do so.

The media and elections are two sides of the same coin. Where there is a free and independent media system, there is much possibility for free, fair and credible elections. On the contrary, if the media are not free, elections are not expected to be free, fair and credible. Therefore, election management bodies and the media cannot be separated in this context. The Election Commission has always understood this. In its quest for mobilising the media for different purposes, the growth and development of the media based democracy in Nepal has played a supporting role.

The Commission has already launched the Media and Communication Policy and Directives to strengthen relations with the media. It has also facilitated access of the media to the election management activities by providing different facilities, such as the media centre, spokesperson, information officer and a call centre.

As the number of audio, video, print and social media are increasing day by day in Nepal, they have contributed not only for the conduct of free and fair elections but also for transparency, public accountability, people's awareness, information dissemination, anti-corruption campaigns and for the promotion of a democratic culture in the country. Therefore, it is necessary for the election management body to work alongside the media in the days to come.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Election management is a public process in which each citizen is the primary stakeholder. To bridge the gap among the election management bodies, the political parties, the citizens, the national and international stakeholders, the information sharing system can be consolidated with the cooperation and coordination of media establishments. Taking these into account, the following recommendations are suggested for ensuring free, fair and credible elections:

- **An independent Election Commission:** Though the commission is a constitutional body, it does not have its own officials, budget and other resources. It has to depend on the government for the election date to be announced. Even if it is a historical practice for the government to decide the election date, it has to be changed to ensure the predictability of elections, avoiding unnecessary expenses.

- **Succession planning in the commission:** Throughout history, the Commission has repeatedly remained vacant. This has created hurdles to the smooth operation of its activities. Therefore, there should be a succession plan in the Commission in which a commissioner knows that s/he is going to be the chief. Political appointment of commissioners should be at the lowest level, the higher level by succession planning. These will ensure accountability and ownership of the activities of the Commission.

- **Regular media networking:** The Commission usually focuses on media relation only during the election period which is not a good practice. Every programme that the Election Commission conducts is of public concern, such as voter registration, registration of political parties and



An information session at the Media Center at ECN.

voter education. Therefore, the Commission should interact with the media in the pre-election and post-election scenarios as well.

- **Implementation of Information and Communication Policy, 2070:** The Information and Communication Policy has promised many things for better relations between the media and the Commission and for the management of electoral information. But an effective implementation of the policy is still a prime concern for consolidating cooperation and coordination between the Commission and the media.

- **Permanent media monitoring mechanism:** The election and the media do not have seasonal relations. They should always work together. Thus, the current practice of ad-hoc media monitoring has to be changed with some independent and stable mechanism. This would provide an important listening post for the Commission as well as ensure good relations between the Commission and the media.

- **Increase the coverage of media monitoring:** The Commission usually monitors fairness in the publication and dissemination of information or news or editorials. There is no practice of monitoring Commission funded electoral education related activities of the media. Thus, the Commission has to initiate the monitoring of all the media performing their information providing function or educating voters. The Commission

only focuses on the code of conduct of the media at the moment.

- **Establishment of E-MIS in ECN:** Management Information System is a modern system of ensuring information sharing mechanism among stakeholders. Thus, to share information easily and reliably, an Election Management Information System (E-MIS) has to be established and operated. It helps not only in organisational coordination but also information dissemination.

- **Formulation of internal and external communication strategy:** A media relation strategy has to be developed ensuring timely update of electoral information to the people. It helps enhance transparency as well as accountability of the organisation. Similarly, an internal communication strategy has to be devised so as to avoid duplication in the works of different sections and divisions.

- **Training for media persons:** The Election Commission Nepal has already started training for the capacity development of media persons across the country. This process has to be further accelerated by providing more extensive training. Similarly, the frequency of such training has to be increased; it should not be only a seasonal happening limited to the election period.

- **Making a roster of media experts:** Media relation is one of the major components of election management. Professional bureaucrats do not necessarily know each and everything about the media. Therefore, a roster of media persons has to be developed, and they should be deployed for drafting media related policies, strategies and programmes.

- **Use and management of social media:** Nowadays, social media is the fastest and most effective means of communication and coordination. Thus, they should be adopted as a means of disseminating information. The Election Commission has started to focus on this aspect, but it should be institutionalised in the organisation so that it can be run sustainably.

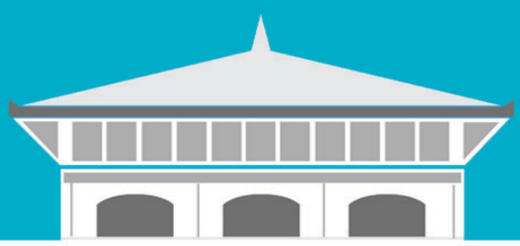
- **Participation of media experts in electoral media plan and monitoring:** As the media are said to be the fourth pillar of the state, their participation in the process of making programmes and monitoring activities has a crucial role for the success of such programmes. It enhances their ownership on the programmes.

- **Training for the media monitoring institution:** Due to the massive expansion of media houses, their monitoring is getting to be difficult day by day. Therefore, media monitoring institutions have to be established and strengthened. This will not only help the Commission but also other state organs.

- **Address socio-cultural diversity in monitoring:** As the Commission has always treated the media as a good means of enhancing electoral education in rural and urban areas; their access and cultural friendly dissemination have also to be monitored. It is necessary to do so because not all the media houses are culturally friendly and fair in their broadcasting and publication activities.

- **Long term media relation:** Though the first strategic plan of the Commission has acknowledged the media as one of the stakeholders, it should be clear on how they can be best utilised for electoral proposes. Thus, in the upcoming strategic plan, long term media relation strategies have to be identified.

MEDIA AND THE CODES



Over the years, the Nepali mass media have proved themselves to be instrumental to uplift the values and norms of democracy. The Nepali media have been playing a pivotal role in the functioning of democracy in the country. In general, during the CA election of 2013 the Nepali mass media echoed the nation's diversity and pluralism. Different opinions and points of view manifested themselves through media outlets. Thus, at the macro level the Nepali mass media played a positive and constructive role during this election. However, at the micro level there are issues to be addressed regarding the professional standards of Nepalese journalism.

Apart from short-lived upheavals, the mass media, in post-1990 Nepal, have been enjoying all the political rights that are necessary to operationalise freedom of opinion and expression. The media landscape has been widening everyday over the past two and half decades. Consequently, significant developments have surfaced in terms of presentation in commercially run, well managed media outlets.

Nepal's media landscape is full of diversity. Apart from traditional print media the country has been witnessing the proliferation of conventional new media such as radio and television as well as today's New Media. As per the documentation of Press Council Nepal a total of 3,580 newspapers-- dailies, weeklies and fortnightlies-- have been registered by the end of last Fiscal Year (Press Council Nepal, BS 2070: 47). The Council reveals that as per the government registration, there are 581, 30, 2584 and 385 dailies, bi-weeklies, weeklies and fortnightlies respectively. The number of weeklies is high among the print media.

It is observed fact that the Nepali weeklies are the biggest violators of journalist's own code of ethics whether during the election period or otherwise. Most of the weeklies in Nepal acknowledge party allegiance. Some of them are radical in echoing the voice of their respective political parties. But in post-1990 Nepal weeklies have been lagging behind the broadsheet dailies in terms of professionalism. The general audience are almost dependent upon the broadsheets in order to get information and opinions from various corners. There are 12 broadsheets from nine publication houses. Among them four are English

Dailies	581
By weeklies	30
Weeklies	2584
Fortnightlies	385

Source Press Council Nepal, 2070

language broadsheet-dailies, namely: *The Rising Nepal, The Kathmandu Post, The Himalayan Times* and *The Republica*. Similarly, in Nepali there are *The Gorakhapatra, The Kantipur, The Nagarik, The Annapurna Post, The Rajdhani, The Nepal Samachar Patra, The Naya Patrika* and *The Himalaya Times.* Some of the dailies from Kathmandu have been publishing separate editions form different parts of the country. Besides these big dailies published from the capital, there are well managed dailies in other cities outside the Kathmandu valley as well.

According to the Ministry of Information and Communications currently as many as 360 FM radio license holders (Issued licenses, 2014) are on air operating their stations regularly. The Ministry, reveals that altogether 75 licenses have been issued for television broadcasting, applying satellite, terrestrial and cable technologies. The number of archives and independent online news portals have been increasing. Online Journalists Association of Nepal has estimated that the number of both kinds of news portals that are covering day to day events and activities in Nepal has reached above 50.

In the midst of this encouraging scenario, there are hindrances on the part of the media to meet professional standards. Partisan attitude is one of the crucial factors resulting in media outlets providing unequal treatment to different political parties. Commercially run media outlets do not show overt partisan interest and, somehow, maintain a semblance of impartiality in their coverage of news and views. But there are local newspapers started with the sole aim to be the publicity tool of a certain party or candidate. Radio, television and online media outlets have also been used as the instrument of publicity during the CA

HIGH ORDER

There are universal values, norms and standards in the profession of journalism. In the context of Nepal, we do have the code of journalistic ethics with the latest amendment and revision after the peaceful political revolution of 2006. Though the responsibility to act as the custodian of the code of ethics has been given to Press Council Nepal, the code has been accepted by the Federation of Nepali Journalists and the entire media community. Section (7), (8) and (9) of the code of journalistic ethics of Nepal have explicitly called for Professionalism of a high order, Decent behaviour and Readiness to rectify errors from the Nepali journalists. Section (8) reads: Faithfully exercise professionalism of a high order so as to be responsible, accountable and reliable, and dedicated to the basic norms and principles of journalism.

Section (8) asks professionals to: Remain alert towards working style and use of language that are moral, courteous and characterised by decency, while at the same time observing social courtesy in one's professional conduct. Section (9) of the code of journalistic ethics of Nepal says: Upon receiving information of any error or mistake in a publication or broadcast, rectify such error or mistake, as soon as possible, and give proper place to any refutation or response that is accompanied by evidence, by publishing-broadcasting the same in clear language.

election of 2013. Some of the media outlets blindly ignored not only the election code of conduct but also their own professional norms, values and ethics in order to serve a certain political party or candidate.

The online medium is in the process of becoming a mainstream medium in Nepal. Immediacy and low cost have made it popular, especially with the proliferation of mobile devices. However, when it comes to human resources and subsequently the content, the new media need drastic improvement. Several online news portals were used by the political parties against all professional values, norms and standards of journalism to promote their own interests. Online journalists need to understand that the trade is not based merely on technology, and they cannot ignore their moral existence in society. Trade of communication would be propaganda not journalism.

It would have made much difference if the Nepali media had abided by the code of journalistic ethics of Nepal during the CA election of 2013. Primarily, the Nepali media are equipped with such a code of ethics. Moreover, the election code of ethics for media seeks to enrich their professional conduct.

In fact, the CA election of 2013 provided a playground for political contestation and a chance for keen observers to assess the level of fair play in Nepali journalism. Thus, the Election Commission Nepal (ECN) and media people including media practitioners and media educators, need to work rigorously in order to uphold the ideal of impartial performance of the mass media. Since, the issue is directly linked with the credibility and, subsequently, with the economics of the media institutions, media entrepreneurs need to be aware of the importance of their impartial role.

Like political parties and candidates, local newspapers, online news portals and some of the televisions and radios breached the election code of conduct mostly during the Silence Period when campaigning is prohibited. They tried to supplement the election campaign for the respective parties as per their allegiance.

INTRODUCTION

Along with a powerful and efficient election commission, impartial and fair media are essential in order to conduct elections in a free, fair, and credible manner. In a democratic polity, mass media are supposed to provide platforms for diverse ideas and viewpoints. It is the duty of the media to provide equal opportunity for different voices expressed in the public domain. Media are expected to treat all parties in a free and fair manner. Bias hinders the objectivity of the media that play a crucial role especially in elections. Street (2001: 80) views that bias blocks or distorts people's capacity to act as citizens, their ability to make political judgments and act upon them. Kharel (2010: 230) views that bias in journalism is toxic to public trust in the media. It is hostile surveillance, not monitoring. He adds that this kind of approach stifles the voice of reason.

The readiness to treat all political parties equally or give an issue-based criticism was generally inadequate among all kinds of media outlets in the CA election of 2013.

Davis (2010: 3), based on Robert Dahl's 1971 work *Polyarchy, Participation and Opposition* published by Yale University

Press at New Haven, CT, states that basic characteristics that distinguish representative, liberal democracies are free and fair elections, the right to vote, freedom of association and the right to join or lead a political organisation, and an independent media providing free expression and alternative information. Nepal's Constituent Assembly (CA) Election 2013 was held against the backdrop of all these characteristics, the constitution and complementary legislation.

Furthermore, a care-taker government—the Interim Election Council of Ministers—was established under the leadership of the Chief Justice to hold the election in consensus of the political parties in parliament. All the ministers of the cabinet were former bureaucrats who did not harbour direct political interests in the elections.

Vertical diversity covers a number of options offered by a single channel while horizontal diversity includes options available at any time across a range of channels.

Mass media play a crucial role in elections and the Nepali media also proved to be instrumental for the success of the CA election in 2013. Primarily, for the sake of this chapter, functions of the Nepali media during the period of Elections to the Constitution Assembly in 2013 are gauged using two indicators. The first indicator looks at whether the media outlets are giving equal treatment to all political parties; furthermore, whether they are providing equal opportunity for all political parties to express themselves before the public. The indicator also covers whether they are offering fair treatment to all political parties. The second indicator presents whether the media exposed the wrongdoing of the government and the political parties. It regards the mass media as important for their role in surveillance of the environment by providing hard news and interpretation.

The Election to the Constituent Assembly 2013 also proved to be a historic moment in the Nepali political life as well as for the media. It reasserted people's determination for the new political system—the republic in Nepal, which was declared by the Constituent Assembly in 2008. The 2013 CA election upheld the democratic exercise in the country and media played a catalytic role in the process. Burton (2010:112) states that the media, apart from the obvious examples of newscasts, offer a variety of political activities and points of contact which involves citizens. In the course of covering elections, the Nepali mass media intensified the dialogues amongst political parties, candidates and voters.

However, the readiness to treat all political parties equally or give an issue-based criticism was generally inadequate among all kinds of media outlets in the CA election of 2013. The trend was not explicit in case of major national newspapers, televisions and radios. Most of the local news media became part of the campaign and all they tried to do was influence the coverage.

In general, the Nepali media landscape manifested pluralism and an enhanced degree of freedom of expression. The country has witnessed media diversity. Watson (2004:109), while examining a number of principles that seek to define normative, or best media performance, states that at the macro-level these can be identified as diversity of sources and outlets and accessibility on the part of the whole public to information, both of these contributing to plurality of opinions in society. Watson (2004:109) states that diversity applies to channel as



Election information is just a call away here.

well as content and style; and that would mean a diversity of channels as well as a diversity of ownership and control. He (Watson, 2004:110) further points out the need to assess both vertical and horizontal diversities. Vertical diversity covers a number of options offered by a single channel while horizontal diversity includes options available at any time across a range of channels.

As Craig (2007:4) states, media are the sites where politics and public life are played out, the sites where the meanings of public life are generated, debated and evaluated. That is, according to Craig (2007:4), modern public life which is defined as a mediated phenomenon. Nepal's political parties are aware of this phenomenon and they have been doing strategic thinking in order to receive some positive media coverage about them.

Burton (2010:111) mentions that politicians and political parties have come to believe that media can be influential in generating public opinion. They depend on media as a means of promoting (or marketing) their differing views, most crucially at times of national and local elections. The Nepali political parties are no exception to such a universal phenomenon.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

In this chapter qualitative approaches have been adopted to assess the media coverage of relevant political actors.

The study draws primary data from an archive of media monitoring set up by Nepal Press Institute (NPI) in the CA election in 2013.

An exploratory method has been adopted to collect data on media functions in the pre- and post-polling days of the CA election 2013. Several observation reports produced by a group of different organizations have been analyzed in order to examine the state of the Nepali mass media in the second CA election.

NEPALI MEDIA IN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTION 2013

Irrespective of media outlets, ranging from print to broadcast and online media, Pushpa Kamal Dahal (aka Prachanda) received the most media exposure, a clear lead amongst the candidates. Nepal Press Institute (NPI) monitoring for radio and television coverage show the fact explicitly.

ECN says that as many as 23 media institutions, including online news portals, radio stations, televisions and newspapers, were asked for clarification or informed to be prepared to face legal action (Nirbachan Samiti, BS 2070: 30).

Dahal, chairman of the UCPN-Maoist, had contested from Kathmandu-10 and Siraha-5. He lost the election in Kathmandu.

Unlike weekly newspapers, small FM radios and online news portals that bore allegiance to political parties, broadsheet dailies did not demonstrate overt inclination to any of them. Broadsheet dailies and big broadcast media presented their materials with fairness in comparison to the weeklies and small radios. However, almost all media had some inclination towards the respective political parties.

On 20 September 2013, *The Rajdhani*, a broadsheet daily that has been publishing from the capital under Rajdhani News Publication Private Limited, published news informing that its chairman cum managing director took the membership of the CPN (UML) during a ceremony organised by the party. Some of the television channels overtly demonstrated partisan interests. For instance, they showed an election symbol and the face of a candidate of a particular party for a considerable span of time on the screen without giving similar treatment to others.

The Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) has noted that the role played by the Nepali media during the Constituent Assembly Election 2013 was generally supportive. ECN has revealed that the percentage of voters increased in this Constituent Assembly Election. The number of invalid ballots was low. The Commission gives credit to the Nepali media, along with different agencies and its staff, for playing an important role, for impartial information dissemination in order to make the election successful (Editorial, BS 2070: 3). However, at the micro level, ECN faced challenges to hold some of the media outlets accountable for their writing or presentations. ECN says that as many as 23 media institutions, including online news portals, radio stations, televisions and newspapers, were asked for clarification or informed to be prepared to face legal action (Nirbachan Samiti, BS 2070: 30).

A Citizen's Campaign for Clean Election (Monitoring Report, 2013:155), a loose coalition of civil society organisations, recommends that media need to adopt fairness towards all political parties during the election. It urges the Nepali media to abide by the Election Code of Conduct.

During the whole period of election, the mass media used their independent reporting. The media provided the political parties with various platforms to disseminate their messages. Although the mass media mainly focused on covering the issues related to three big political parties, they also attempted to give adequate space to smaller parties. It is observed that at the local level, FM radio stations allowed candidates to convey their message.

The National Human Rights Commission mentions that it issued press statements and organised news conferences as its major activities in the CA election of 2013. NHRC (Rashtriya Manav Adhikar, BS 2071: 16) further states that people's rights regarding the election were reiterated. According to NHRC, it presented a report that was based on a nationwide situation monitoring. It urged all concerned authorities, through various media outlets, to respect the people's rights.

Broadsheet dailies from Kathmandu also took sides but with reason. On 11 November, *The Kathmandu Post* published a headline: "Maoist position falters in Rapti-Karnali bastion". NEOC (2014: 28), in this regard, states that in a few cases, particularly in the East, observers found that reports on incidents involving poll opposing parties were exaggerated in the national media containing details not thoroughly verified. Four days before the polling-day, the *Annapurna Post Daily* signaled its bias through a headline that read, "Koirala is confident in Chitwan". Obviously, the daily was promoting NC supremo Sushil Koirala.

On 17 July 2013 *Nagarik* daily published the main news in a box. The four-column-news reads, "After election Congress will be Number One: UML second, Unified Maoist will be in third position." The news with the a *Nagarik* correspondent byline was based on a study undertaken by the Nepal Chapter of one NGO named "State of Democracy in South Asia" in support of "International Idea". The report had predicted that CPN-Maoist (Baidhya) would get 3 per cent votes, the party that was launching the campaign for an election boycott. Since, the news was published five days before the election code of ethics came into effect; technically, the codes were not violated. However, the news indicated the political inclination of the newspaper. As per the CA Election Code of Ethics 2013, ECN had announced that the codes were in effect for three months starting from 22 July 2013.

The mainstream media, especially the national daily newspapers, did not appear overtly prejudiced. They packaged politics in their presentation professionally.

The mainstream media, especially the national daily newspapers, did not appear overtly prejudiced. They packaged politics in their presentation professionally, concealing their strategic interest. The *Annapurna Post*, on 13 November, published a news item that denigraded the UCPN-Maoist. The headline read, "Another Maoist terror over an innocent". On 2 November, *The Republica Daily* predicted through its headline: "UCPN-Maoist likely to lose seats in Far-West".

The role played by the Nepali media during the election period could be divided into two categories: role of surveillance and role of campaigner.

ROLE OF SURVEILLANCE

It was observed that the Nepali media, including online, radio, television and print, played the role of watchdog which helped ECN.

As NEOC (2014: 28) observes that the overall impression of media coverage before, during and after E-day was that it was often reliable. News stories were often factual with little fabrication, and journalists and newspapers largely maintained their professionalism and applied balanced coverage. NEOC assesses the role of media in the election process as generally positive.

Harold Lasswell, according to Baran and Davis (2000: 250), notes the primary functions of mass communication. In his findings, two functions such as surveillance of the environment and correlation of the parts of society in responding to the environment are described as vital for a political process of any society. Surveillance of the environment refers to the media's collection and distribution of information. Correlation of parts of society refers to the media's interpretive or analytical activities.

Partisan media accused the opponent parties or candidates for ignoring the campaign code of conduct.

Baran and Davis (2000: 250) explain that surveillance refers to what we popularly call the news and information role of the media. The mass media do not supply just facts and data. They also provide information about the ultimate meaning and significance of those events. They (2000: 250) further state that not everything that happens in the world on any given day can be included in the newspaper or in a TV or radio newscast. Media organisations select those events, allocate time and space, and decide how much prominence they are to be given. Various gatekeepers involved in the selection process judge stories that ultimately make it to the papers or the newscasts.

A very common example of the interpretation function can be found on the opinion-editorial pages of a newspaper. Principally, interpretation, comment, and opinion are provided to a reader so that he or she gains an added perspective on the news stories carried on other pages.

For instance, on 18 November 2013 *setopati.com* made public a secret recording of UCPN-Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal instructing his cadres to secure his win in the election by applying any means, including money, in Constituency-5 of Kathmandu. Similarly, on 15 November, *The Nepal Samacharpatra Daily* published a news story, exposing UCPN-Maoists' strategy to win the election by applying inappropriate means. Headline of the news read: "5 formulas adopted by CPN-M to get victory by hook or by crook".

The most observable role played by the Nepali mass media in the CA election of 2013 is in raising the issue of the code of conduct. Although violations of the election code of conduct by the political parties, candidates and the media outlets were common and widespread, the media from across the country called for its enforcement and compliance. On 11 November, *The Nagarik Daily* published a headline that read: "EC unable to enforce code of conduct". On 17 November, *Himalayan TV* presented a reportage stating that even during the Silence Period the



On the records: Voter database.

actors have been violating the codes of ethics. On the same day, *Channel Nepal* also broadcast news stating that candidates are active amongst the electorates in a clandestine manner.

Online portals also provided coverage of the issues of disobedience of election code of conduct. On 18 November, *hamrokura.com* posted a news item based on GEOC's statement regarding increased incidences of violation of the code of conduct. Like online news portals, small FM radios also played the role of surveillance in some instances. On 19 November, on the polling day, one such news was broadcast by *Makawanpur Radio* of Hetauda. The news said that even after the advent of the blackout period clashes amongst the parties have not come to an end. On the polling day, *Krishnasagar FM* of Nepalgunj also showed the example of presentation of news in neutral manner.

On 7 November, *The Chitwan Post Daily* reported that in Chitwan District alone 12 complaints against the violation of the election code of conduct had been filed thus far.

Blame game regarding the election code of conduct was interesting. On 10 November, the *Kavre Post Weekly* published a news item in favour of a particular party whose headline read: "NC Everywhere in villages and towns of Kavre". In the same issue, another headline read: "Violation of code of conduct on the rise in Kavre".

Partisan media accused the opponent parties or candidates for ignoring the campaign code of conduct. A news item posted by *kathmandutoday.com* on 18

November had a headline that read, "Khanal and Nembang of UML defy the code of conduct". On the same day, the news portal posted news accusing the party: "UML asks people to vote in exchange for money in the garb of election observers". On 15 November, *setopati.com* posted a news item with the headline: "Government makes political appointments on the eve of election".

The Mechikali Daily of Butwal showed an example of balanced presentation. On 9 November, it tried to balance the coverage of different political parties by providing equal space for them. One headline read: "Election preparation is rapid in Lumbini Anchal". It provided space for a different party on 9 November under the headline: "Forum's door-to-door campaign peaks".

NPI media monitoring reveal that they were most active with biased news or talk shows such as interviews 48 hours before the polling, during the Silence Period.

NPI media monitoring unit observed that *onlinekhabar.com* played the surveillance role on 9 November through a news story with the headline: "Political cadres become election observers". The tone of the news story was flagged neutral.

On 14 November, *onlinekhabar.com* presented an example of impartial news story under the headline: "Code of conduct is being ignored nationwide". The news is based on a source of ECN. On the same day *setopati.com* posted another new story whose headline read: "ECN closes its eyes on colour posters that have been published by the parties".

On 12 November, *hamrokura.com* posted a news item in an impartial manner. The headline said: "24-hour summons to *TV Filmy* and *Himalayan TV"*. On 16 November, the *Gorkhapatra* showed another example of surveillance by publishing news concerning code of ethics. The headline of the news read: "Prachanda is far ahead of all in using helicopter". On the same day, *Mero Jagaran Weekly* also published a news item on implementation status of code of ethics under the headline: "Violation of code of conduct on the rise". On the eve of the polling day, *Sambridda Samaj Daily* warns through its headline: "Violation of code of conduct could impact the results". On the same day, *Dainik Patra* warns with: "Do not assassinate others' character against the code of conduct".

ROLE OF CAMPAIGNER

Political parties and candidates always try to make best use of the mass media. Their strategies were two-fold during the 2013 CA election in Nepal. First, they made plans to secure maximum time and space in the mainstream commercial mass media. Second, they started their own media outlets, mostly newspapers, in order to run propaganda for political benefits. In both cases, their primary object was to form a favourable public opinion.

In *Public Opinion* (1922), Lippmann presented the theory of Public Opinion Formation. According to Baran and Davis (2000:76), his ideas raised serious questions about viability of democracy and the role of free press. What do you do in a democracy if you can't trust the people to cast informed votes? What good is a free press if it is literally impossible to effectively transmit the most vital forms of information to the public? Lippmann, as explained by Baran and Davis, believes that propaganda posed such a severe challenge that drastic changes in our political system were required. The

public was vulnerable to propaganda, so some mechanism or agency was needed to protect them from it.

Although poll surveys were banned, the media did publish the so-called 'poll results,' mentioning that a particular party will be the largest party on the eve of Election Day. One such news item was published online. On 18 November 2013, *kathmandutoday.com* was red flagged for election prediction based on a personal survey by Purusottam Dahal. Clause 101 of the Code of Conduct, Chapter 8, under Miscellaneous heading, prohibits carrying out any survey or publishing survey results about Political Parties and Candidates from the date of submission of candidacy until the voting is over.

In order to discourage the bias demonstrated by some of the Nepali media that were playing the role of campaigner for a particular political party or candidate, the EU Election Observation Mission forwarded a couple of recommendations. The Mission (2013:39) states that a revision of the Press Council Act, and of its Code of Conduct, contemplating more effective sanctions to be applied by the Council in response to violations of the Code of Conduct by the media, would contribute to reinforcing the legal authority of the institution. According to the Mission, reinforcing the independence of the Press Council is also advisable. The EU Mission (2013: 9) has highlighted that this media issue needs priority action. It also emphasises, as another issue of priority action linked with the mass media, a proper and comprehensive implementation of the Right to Information Act, 2007, would contribute to a more free media environment, in line with international commitments.

In some instances, the weekly and local newspapers, and online news portals were seen not following the basic professional standards of journalism. It was the result of using the media as a tool for election campaigns by political parties and candidates. In this regard, NEOC (2014: 28) notes that a number of media outlets—both at the district and national levels—were either directly owned, sponsored by, or perceived to be affiliated with a particular political party or candidate, which often led to a strong editorial bias and at times the local media landscape was described as polarised. However, it further states that bias to some extent appears to have been counteracted by the plurality of media and the presence of independent media.

In Janakpur, Sanjay Saha, a Sadbhavana Party (Mahato) candidate from Dhanusha-4, started a newspaper *The Gangasagar Weekly* just after the nomination of his candidature. The paper was started as one of his election campaign tools. The weekly folded up after the election. Watson (2004: 92) views the term propaganda generally with brazen strategies of persuasion, with information that is distorted, partisan or untrue.

The newspapers, in general, showed their impartiality or bias through the headlines of the news during the CA Election.

Four days before the polling day, on 15 November, *The Hetauda Sandesh* published from Makawanpur District carried a headline with an aim to promote a particular political party by saying: "Youths are lined up to join UCPN-Maoist". Just two days before the polling day, on 17 November, *Youth Today Daily* put a headline: "Vote to UML is like pouring water in sand, this is time for UCPN-Maoist". On the same day, *Chure Kunj Weekly* forwarded an

anti-Maoist campaign: "UCPN-Maoist will also fall down like the monarchy".

Many local FM radios were active to present favourable materials to the respective political parties or candidates during the election. Outcomes of NPI media monitoring reveal that they were most active with biased news or talk shows such as interviews 48 hours before the polling, during the Silence Period. However, local radios with partisan interest were active in election campaigning during the entire period of the election. On 16 November, *Maitri FM* of Kathmandu played an interview with a UCPN-Maoist leader and candidate from Rolpa-1. The interviewer was glorifying the interviewee in such a manner as if it was a publicity material. On 16 November, *Radio Sano Bheri* of Rukum broadcast news accusing other parties of distributing money to voters. On 17 November, *Janapriya FM* of Achham said that a UCPN-Maoist leader was urging voters to vote for UCPN (Maoist) and not run after others.

For the past 25 years, the Nepali media have been enjoying political freedom. Now it is high time they become ethical and sensitive to their profession and deliverables.

The EU Election Observation Mission-Nepal (2013: 39), in this regard, recommends that a revision and update of the Libel and Slander Act, 1959, appears to be necessary. The current provisions of the Libel and Slander Act, with provisions of up to two years prison sentence for slander, seem outdated and contrary to international best practices. It states that in the same line, a proper and comprehensive implementation of the Right to Information Act, 2007, would contribute to a more free media environment, in line with international commitments.

With an aim to discourage potential media manipulation, the EU Election Observation Mission-Nepal (2013:39) says it is advisable to develop clearer instructions for media on airing/ publication of spots/advertisements paid for by political parties and candidates during the campaign period. The Mission says it is also advisable to establish clear instructions on deadlines for newspapers regarding respect for the campaign silence period. According to the Mission report, it would be useful to establish all these instructions before the start of the campaign period in order to avoid the introduction of amendments to the code of conduct after the electoral campaign takes off.

NEWSPAPERS THROUGH THE LENS OF HEADLINES

The newspapers, in general, showed their impartiality or bias through the headlines of the news during the CA Election, 2013. Most of the weeklies, though their influence is lower in comparison to the broadsheet dailies, indicated acknowledged bias through their headlines. Reah (2011:13) states that a headline should encapsulate the story in a minimum number of words, attract the reader to the story and, if it appears on the front page, attract the reader to the paper *(Table I)*.

The Janakpur Today from Janakpur consistently manifested prejudice. On 11 November, 2013, one of its headlines read: "The wave is in favour of NC". On 9 November, *Janabidroha Daily* published the headline: "UCPN-Maoist is strong in Sunsari-2". Later, out of six constituencies, the Maoists could not get any seat in Sunsari-2. In the capital, the weeklies were polarised. For instance,

Table I: Examples of discrepancies between rhetoric and reality

S.N.	Headline	Newspaper	Date	Result
1.	Maoist Leading in 200 constituencies	Pokharapatra, Pokhara	Nov 12, 2013	Maoist won 26 seats
2.	Maoist is making its definite victory	Kavre Hotline Weekly, Kavre	Nov12, 2013	Out of total 4 seats, 2 seats went to NC and 2 for UML in Kavre
3.	Oli is going to lose second time	Janabidroha Daily, Morang	Nov 12, 2013	KP Oli won the election from his constituency, Jhapa-7
4.	People who are in favour of justice vow: Kavre District is fort of UML	Kavre Chautari Weekly, Kavre	Nov 11, 2013	Out of 4 constituencies, UML won in two places (Kavre-2 and Kavre-4)
5.	CPN-Maoist is strong in all 4 constituencies in Kaski	Adarsha Nepal, Pokhara	Nov 9, 2013	CPN-Maoist lost election in all 4 constituencies

on 11 November, 2013, the *Deshantar Weekly* said in its headline: "Congress will have historic victory".

On 7 November, *The Kayakairan Daily* of Chitwan made a degrading comment on a contesting party which read: "UCPN-Maoist is in cross-roads of an existential fight". Some of the newspapers overtly portray bias with dull headlines. For instance, *The Muktichhetra Daily*, on 4 November, presents a headline that read: "Election campaign of UCPN-Maoist". In the course of examining the election coverage, most local newspapers were found to be caught by a high degree of campaign fever. On 3 November, *The Bhimeshwor Weekly* showed its bias through a headline: "NC is wining in both constituencies". Later, the election results showed that it lost both seats. On the same day, one of the headlines of *The Satyapan Weekly* states that victory to UML is essential to save the country.

Contrary to general trends demonstrated by local newspapers, a newspaper, from a small town of western region, Lamjung, provided positive coverage of different parties. On 12 November, one of its headlines said: "Maoists busy with door-to-door campaign in both constituencies". On the same day, another of the newspaper headlines said: "NC gears up publicity, door-to-door campaign in Beshisahar". Another headline of that day in *The Lamjung Aawaj* tried to put the news in more balanced way: "UCPN-Maoist local leader enters NC, waves also to enter UCPN-Maoist and UML".

ROLE OF NEW MEDIA

An online news portal, *kathmandutoday.com*, received many red flags from NPI media monitors as the portal consistently indulged in propaganda. On the eve of the polling day, it posted a news story with a negative tone towards ECN. The headline said: "Election commissioner Sharma tells candidate to shut up ".

On 16 November, just three days before the polling day, *kathmandutoday.com* posted a story which was defamatory to a senior NC leader. Headline of the story said that Ramchandra Paudel was aging, was going to be defeated and had already lost the race to prime ministership 17 times.

On 14 November, *hamrokura.com* posted a news story in a tone negative to UCPN-Maoist. Its headline read: "Wave to leave the party among the cadres of UCPN-Maoist has been rising".

Two days before the polling day, on 17 November, *ratopati.com* posted a so-called survey poll which was another example of gross violation of election code of conduct.

NO OFFICIAL RESTRICTIONS AND INTERVENTIONS

During the second CA elections, the Nepali mass media did not face any restrictions from the government's side in the course of enjoying their right to provide voice to all parties and candidates. They also enjoyed their right by covering parties and politicians who strongly opposed the government and applied it to all campaign issues that journalists consider important for citizens and for the future.

The online journalists of Nepal need to demonstrate their responsible and accountable behaviour in their presentations and practice in order to gain credibility.

Reporters without Borders (11) states that the right to free expression during political campaigns must be guaranteed to all parties and candidates, as well as to all citizens. According to Reporters without Borders such freedom can be expressed through:

- The right of access to media to present programme and/ or to express opinions.
- The exposure of attempts to hinder freedom of expression.

Reporters without Borders states that examples of the latter include a government preventing a candidate from holding a campaign rally, or a political party pressuring a citizen not to reveal first-hand knowledge of election fraud. The Nepali mass media as a whole contributed to the democratic exercise during the CA election in order to make it a success, provided access to all voices and exposed wrong doing.

There are separate provisions for good conduct during elections for the government-owned national media. The EU Election Observation Mission-Nepal (2013: 39) recommends that more detailed instructions on the allocation of free airtime to political parties and candidates in the national electronic media are needed. Fixing the dates of broadcasts would allow political parties and candidates to plan their campaign agenda and their recording schedule well in advance. Similarly, as the Mission states, it is also advisable to establish clear instructions and specific dates in the Code of Conduct for the start of media monitoring by ECN in order to make this exercise more effective.

Clause 90 of the code of conduct of the Nepali mass media during the period of election states that ECN will be provided time on radio and television for political parties in proportion to the votes they obtained in the Constituent Assembly Election of 2008. The ECN made some free air time available on national television and radio to disseminate educational messages. Clause 91 of the code of conduct manages the availability of ECN time in three phases. First: Five to twenty minutes on radio for public unveiling of the manifesto of a political party; second: Two to five minutes on television for election campaigning; third: One minute to each political party on television for making the final appeal to the voters before the Silent Period begins. Clause 92 makes provisions for the relevant political party to prepare the materials for the above and provide them to the relevant media.

MEDIA'S TREATMENT TO POLITICAL PARTIES

Major newspapers do not urge their readers to vote a particular party. No political leader since the signing of a peace accord in 2006 has enjoyed a wider coverage as Pushpa Kamal Dahal in Nepali media, including the 2013 CA election coverage. One of the causes behind this could be his mobility and activeness.

On the eve of the election (8 a.m., 18 November 2013), ABC TV presented an interview with its managing director-cum-news-chief Shubhashanker Kandel. Kandel claimed that the channel had not violated any code of conduct. He accused the government of trying to stop the channel and that this was against the spirit of press freedom. As many as seven clips showed ABC officials challenging the EC decision to take action against the news channel.

By afternoon, the channel had repeated the news many times with the following text flashing on the screen: *Banda gara dusprachar* [Stop the misinformation].

In the afternoon, ABC TV started live broadcasting of a press conference organised by ECN. The Chief Election Commissioner addressed the conference. *NTV, Avenues, News 24* and *Mountain TV* broadcast live the entire conference whereas *Image* did it for a short while only. NEOC (2014:28), in this regard, mentions that on 18 November ECN directed the government to bar *ABC Television* from broadcasting until 5 p.m. the next day, as the channel was found to be clearly favouring a party in their broadcasting. However, following an objection from *ABC Television* the directive was not implemented by the government.

It is worthy to mention here that Clause 95 of the Election Code of Conduct, 2013 had authorised the Election Commission to conduct a regular monitoring of election information carried by the mass media. If the monitoring finds any violation of the code, ECN may issue directives to the concerned media to make a correction. The media concerned will have an obligation to abide by the code.

Chapter 5 of the Code of Conduct to be observed by Mass Media emphasises, in Clause 78, election information and news based on truth, facts and objectivity. Clause 79 stresses unbiased coverage and no special treatment to any person. Section 83 prohibits undue benefits and nothing contrary to professional ethics and norms. Clause 88 ensures appropriate opportunity to political parties or candidates to express their views, policies and programme to voters. Clause 93 forbids election publicity during the silent period, beginning forty-eight hours before voting starts and ending with the closure of the last polling Centre, except for the electoral information coming from the Election Commission. Clause 94 urges keeping records for 35 days of every election news or information transmitted, published or broadcast by the mass media.

The General Election Observation Committee, Nepal (2013: 31) stated that for the purpose of holding CA election in a free, fair, independent and credible manner, the election laws have also stipulated certain code of ethics for the mass media. The code urges the mass media to report fact-based materials without bias and in an objective manner.

MEDIA'S ROLE IN VOTER EDUCATION

One of the traditional functions of the mass media is to educate the general public and help them to improve their

Table II: Further expectations from the Nepali media for voter›s education

S.N.	Report of observation	Expectations
1.	National Election Observation Committee (NEOC)	Media along with EC, civil society and NGOs should play a crucial role in broadening electoral education and voting skills of the electorates in those election constituencies where voters' turnout is considerably low and invalid votes are high.
2.	General Election Observation Committee, Nepal (GEOC)	The mass media is required to give priority to news and reports related to voters' education.
3.	European Union Election Observation Mission	A higher involvement of community radio stations in the implementation of ECN voter education and information campaigns and strategies is highly advisable. Given the crucial role that community radio stations play, especially in rural areas, informing voters, targeting these radio stations well in advance for education; better planned distribution of ECN voter education materials to the electronic media, avoiding accumulation of materials to be used and aired in the last days of campaign period are also required.

life. This could be done by providing the public with learning opportunities. In the context of Nepal also, it is a general expectation that the media play a more constructive role for voters' education.

A quick survey conducted by General Election Observation Committee, Nepal during the day of polling revealed that 65.7 per cent electorates came to know about the significance of voting in CA election through mass media. The committee had collected 6,955 questionnaires from 6,652 polling centres under observation (2014: 31).

As in the previous elections in the country, the mass media proved instrumental in achieving widespread voters' education. Various organisations and agencies, which were involved in election observation, reached a conclusion that the media outlets need to be used as an effective means to spread voters' education. Clause 89 of the Code of Conduct to be observed by mass media puts an emphasis on voter education materials *(Table II)*.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Partisan interests and party-allegiance were identified as the major causes of unprofessional practices and violations of the code of conduct in media outlets in elections. ECN, media community, including practitioners and media educators, therefore, need to start a concrete exercise to address the issues. Since the issues are directly linked with the credibility and subsequently with the economics of the media institutions, media entrepreneurs need to be aware of the importance of their impartial role. For the past 25 years, the Nepali media have been enjoying political freedom. Now it is high time they become ethical and sensitive to their profession and deliverables.

- The nexus between the political parties and the media needs to be sorted out. There should be a clear line of demarcation between the act of politics and the trade of journalism. However, for the existence of such a clear distinction, the media community should first come forward with measures for self-regulation. A critical press or credible news media should act as a watchdog that spares no political party and criticises misdeeds with adequate evidence and reasoning. Such type of news media treat all political parties equally, praise or criticise based on their performance and behaviour. The famous dictum put forth by Mahatma Gandhi is still relevant in this regard:

One of the objects of a newspaper is to understand the popular feeling and give expression to it; another is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments; the third is fearlessly to expose popular defects. Even in this era where the print and broadcast media co-exist, against the backdrop of rapidly expanding media landscape, the dictum is applicable as well as relevant.

- Media persons and institutions need to be aware of and adhere to universal values and norms of the trade, including fairness, truthfulness and independence. They need to achieve these goals by taking responsibility and self-governance. They need to be accountable towards society for their product in any circumstance. Professional organisations need to come forward to create an enabling environment and promote these values in society.

- Standards of journalism need to be upheld even in difficult circumstances in order to develop media credibility, which ultimately leads to the path of sustainability. The growing media industry of Nepal needs to increase its credibility and improve the quality of its products. However, irresponsible and unaccountable practices have lowered its credibility.

- Journalism in Nepal has more strengths and resources—both physical and intellectual—compared to what it had some years ago. Now it needs self-assessment in order to enhance its intellectual and ethical standards. In this regard, at least the well managed big media houses need to start to put a clear editorial policy in the public domain. Since the editorial policy shapes media content, such an approach would contribute to increasing people's trust in the Nepali mass media.

- The opportunity provided by the 2013 CA election was not fully utilised by the Nepali media for enhancing their professional standards. In a democracy, media get an opportunity to build and strengthen their reliability and people's trust, for instance, by putting journalistic principles of fairness and impartiality into practice.

- Based on the experience of the 2013 CA election 2013, it could be summed up that online journalists need to understand that the profession is not based merely on technology. By ignoring their moral duty and accountability, they are promoting propaganda, not journalism, through a trade in communications. The new media, including online news portals, are being considered equivalent to the mass media. However, the online news media should first establish credibility. The online journalists of Nepal need to demonstrate their responsible and accountable behaviour in their presentations and practice in order to gain credibility. But the misuse of cyberspace, in utter disregard to professional norms and values of journalism, deters the process of mainstreaming the online media. Therefore it needs to demonstrate decent and responsible behaviour.

- The Nepali mass media exposed a lot of instances of violations of the election code of conduct by the political actors through their news coverage of the 2013 CA election. ECN needs to examine the full account of these facts in order to develop more strategies to hold elections in a freer and fairer environment in the future. ECN needs to come up with a more focused strategy to facilitate the media outlets so that they can cover the election process in a free and fair manner. ECN needs to monitor me-

dia outlets more intensively and interact with them regularly to provide them with constructive feedback.

- Since objective, impartial and vibrant media are instrumental for a well-functioning democracy, review of and subsequent amendments to the existing legislation as well as enactment of appropriate, new media laws are essential. The media community needs to start public discourse in this regard.

- Not all the aspects of media coverage during the 2013 CA election were discouraging. There are rays of hope for creating a more professional media atmosphere within the Kathmandu Valley and beyond, where local media outlets are bringing out balanced and fair news stories and providing space to diverse opinions. The country is witnessing vertical and horizontal diversities: Diversity in terms of channels of mass communication as well as diversity of media outlets within a channel, and diversity in content.

- Pluralism and diversity of contents provided, though in a varying degree, checks and balances to situations where a lot of information and diverse views were being exchanged in the run-up to the 2013 CA election.

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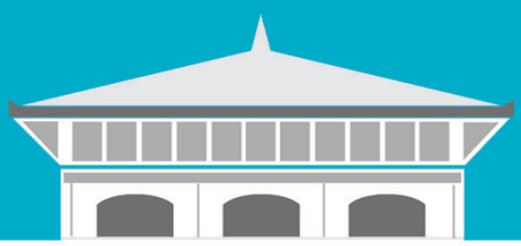
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THE MONITORING

- A Monitoring Concept is Realised
- The Logistics and Management

A MONITORING CONCEPT IS REALISED



INTRODUCTION

Media monitoring as a professional undertaking has had a very humble beginning in Nepal. This specialised activity requires the gathering of all media clippings, be they in print or multimedia, and then sorting them out to suit one's requirement. Some may like to focus on political issues and record their trend while others may want to monitor only business news related with a particular trade. In a sense, journalists are monitors in their own right as they need to follow the developments taking place regarding issues that their beats cover. For a larger monitoring effort, the coverage widens beyond a beat and an ordered filing and indexing of the clippings is a must as it is more of a future reference material available for anyone interested. Over time, a comprehensive library of the clippings is the result.

Very few people in Nepal are engaged in monitoring the media in the professional sense, even today. Several Nepalese political analysts and journalists are seen to have an organised library of newspaper clippings for their own private use. Personal clippings libraries rarely have multimedia clippings even though they may have a comprehensive index of press clippings ordered to suit the issues that the person in question wants to keep track of. This is mostly because multimedia requires a lot more resources– time, money and space.

Media establishments today do have a reference library where clippings– audio, video and print– are indexed and stored for reference. Dedicated employees are hired for the purpose. In the olden days when Nepalese media literacy was low and media outlets very few, these libraries mostly depended on foreign press clippings. This is not the case today, as proliferation of media outlets and media houses is the norm in almost all parts of the country.

Who carries out the monitoring? Although no specific qualification appears necessary for filing of clippings in an orderly manner, professional monitoring does require the monitor to be a professional journalist with considerable experience, language and technical skills, such as computer literacy, to suit the job. Hence, monitoring of Nepalese media would call for experienced Nepali language

journalists if the monitoring is to be done for a Nepali organisation. If Nepalese media are to be monitored for a foreign organisation, translation skills too are required for that particular language, and so on.

The proliferation of NGOs in Nepal has lent a helping hand to the monitoring profession because of their need to track issues they are involved in. Foreign missions in Nepal are known to hire news monitors in the garb of political advisors, translators and such. They help the missions to not only keep track of events in Nepal as they unfold but also play a vital role in making suitable responses when the missions themselves are at the butt end of the news.

Today, even business houses have their own monitoring units to track their visibility in the marketplace so that they can develop their strategies accordingly. Such specific needs require specific orientation of the monitors, quite unlike monitoring of the general trends in media reporting with regard to the overall national scene. Every monitoring task needs to be geared towards meeting a particular objective.

Although the need is there, professional monitoring has not been able to get off the ground in Nepal so far. Dedicated professional monitoring organisations are still absent, perhaps because of the size of a market that might not be big enough to support sustained monitoring. In spite of this, as already mentioned, some form of monitoring is done by all kinds of organisations not only to locate their own positions in the milieu of things they hold dear, but also to acquire information on the developments that concern them. For example, every government body has some form of a media monitoring facility, or at least a semblance of it. If they do not, then ad hoc measures are applied to gather the information, whether broadcast or published, that they need. This ad hocism in foreign missions or embassies translates into arrangements for political analysts and newspaper translators. Such arrangements offset the need for professional monitoring.

When ad hocism is resorted to by institutions and bodies that require monitoring, it is no surprise that professional monitoring gets the brunt. This appears to be a big waste, considering the resources needed to sustain such a large number of translators and analysts by so many organisations. Professional monitors can do the job more efficiently as they can focus on whatever needs a client may have in a professional manner. The Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) is perhaps the only state organ that appears set to routinely hire media monitors. The effort began since the first Constituent Assembly election held in 2008. Because that was a maiden venture for the state body, the project seems to have aroused the awareness of the need for monitoring.

BRIEF HISTORY

Hardly any professional monitoring activities are on in Nepal for the time being. Nepal Press Institute was approached by BBC Monitoring (BBCM) in 2003 to carry out professional monitoring for the organisation. Politically, the period was a tumultuous one, and the need for Nepalese media materials must have been in demand among international clients for the professional activity to be launched here. Several senior journalists were approached by NPI and briefly oriented to the task at hand. The monitoring then was focused on media with a national network and



At the election booth.

those based in Kathmandu. Except for a brief period, when Bhutanese radio was monitored from the Nepalese soil, the focus did not shift from Nepalese political developments throughout the entire seven–year period that BBCM operated in Nepal.

NPI's monitoring experience went deeper and wider with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the then Seven Party Alliance and the Maoists who had just emerged from a 10–year long insurgency to join the multiparty political mainstream. At that moment, the United Nations was asked to oversee the peace process and the UN Mission in Nepal set up shop in Kathmandu. The international body also wanted media monitoring to be done by NPI. NPI quickly set up a unit to take up the task. After sitting down with UNMIN officials and assessing their needs, a framework was developed to meet their demands. Both these tasks were completed successfully during the contract period.

The UNMIN monitoring went on for some time even after the mission left Kathmandu at the end of its mandated period.

The difference between the BBCM and the UNMIN monitoring was that the former already had a system in place for which monitors needed to be oriented to, while for the UNMIN, a system needed to be developed from scratch. The BBCM experience did give a lot of the expertise to NPI to devise and fulfil the UNMIN demands. NPI was now ready to launch monitoring for almost any organisation if their specific needs were spelt out clearly. This is a valuable resource that NPI has acquired over the years.

But these professional activities had to be closed down because of financial crunch on the contractors' side. During the last Constituent Assembly elections, the Press Council had approached NPI for assistance in monitoring of the media in the regions and districts. NPI

did agree to do so. But that monitoring by Press Council did not seek NPI's expertise, only the resources that it had in different parts of the country. What this shows is that NPI was becoming an important resource centre regarding media monitoring even though its regional resource centres and resource persons elsewhere were not trained in monitoring beforehand. It can be said that the professionalism that NPI has developed over the years in monitoring is unparalleled in Nepal. Even then, that expertise was gathering dust as time went by and NPI had been sitting idle on the monitoring front, with all the experience thus accrued, until the 2013 Constituent Assembly elections were announced and it was decided that media monitoring needed to be done.

Monitoring itself is not a complex job, but the complexity arises with the need to routinise the tasks according to the focus of the monitoring. For example, business news monitoring requires an adept hand at recognising the nuances of economics and business management. Additionally, the monitor in question should be ready to collect the necessary clippings from the media as and when they appear in print or broadcast. A paper may devote several pages for business items or not at all. A broadcast agency may air this specialised programming at a particular time of day. A monitoring agency therefore will have to hire the monitor with the required qualification and ask him or her to monitor specific media outlets or specific pages or, in the case of broadcast media, at specific times. Only then can a suitable routine, for monitoring business-related material, be said to be in place. What kind of arrangements is needed if we are going to monitor elections?

MONITORING FOR THE ELECTION COMMISSION OF NEPAL

Since NPI had been conducting media monitoring in the past, there was no problem in conceptualising the framework within which the job would be done for the ECN. It just needed to focus on the elections as the priority issue for monitoring and to expand the monitoring to other parts of the country. In the past, monitoring was centred at NPI's Kathmandu offices only. But if most of the media outlets were to be covered in the country, that locality limitation had to be broken. The crucial requirements for this, particularly the widening of the monitoring job to cover the whole country, would be time and resources to meet the demands of the job. Once these requirements were met, there should not be too much difficulty as the concept was already clear.

Media monitoring would be expected to give the ECN a detailed picture of political campaigns and behaviour of political parties and candidates during this critical phase in a nation's democratic practice. It would give the ECN a tool to enforce its directives, prevent the election campaigns from going wayward and ensure that the polls remain free and fair. All this could be carried out immediately even as events unfolded. Monitoring would, therefore, be an important component in improving the quality of electioneering, the conduct of elections and the overall functioning of democracy in Nepal.

For an effective monitoring for the Election Commission, the task would generally involve looking into how the different media channels were abiding by ECN directives, election codes of conduct and reporting in a free and fair manner to prevent any unwarranted support to or criticism

of any particular election issue or candidate. In concrete terms, there were two steps to be taken-- first NPI would file the monitored products and report to the ECN, as directed to, and then address feedbacks regarding the items thus sent, e.g. queries and requests from ECN to NPI.

Another aspect of the monitoring is that it is also an essential opportunity for media professionals themselves to look at themselves, as it provides feedback by analysing the state of their own profession in real time. Professionals can improve on their work by making the necessary on-the-job rectification even while doing their campaign reporting. What is more, the entire monitoring task and the report that was expected at its conclusion would be a crucial document, fit for archiving and disseminating for future guidance for the Nepalese media as a whole, not to mention future media monitoring exercises. These were the two main goals of media monitoring during this election.

CONCEPTUALISATION AND REALISATION

How did the conceptualisation evolve? The monitoring needed to be designed to suit the needs of the ECN whose primary interest was to see if the Nepalese media would violate the election codes of conduct during the run-up to the elections for the Constituent Assembly, a historic event from many perspectives. The importance of the elections cannot be minimised if you look at it from the viewpoint of it being conducted for the second time in merely five years. The first task for the monitors would be to collect all the election related news items published in all parts of the country. This in itself would be a mammoth task and an unprecedented one at that.



TV footage of Chief Election Commissioner Neel Kantha Uprety during his inspection visit to the monitoring centre at NPI, Kathmandu, with NPI Chair Shobha Gautam.

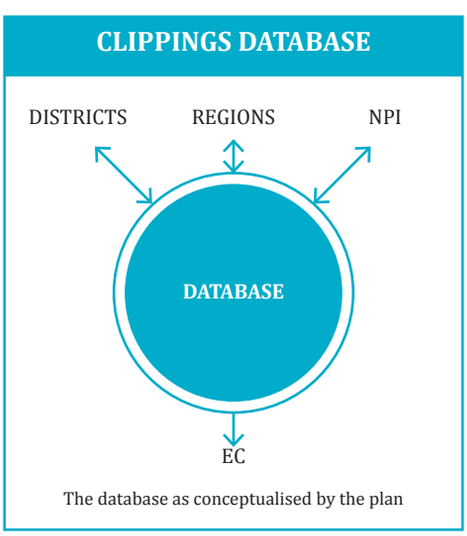
After that was done, these collected items needed to be scrutinised for their abidance [or not] by the ECN codes. If they were identified as violating the codes, they needed to be flagged to bring them to the notice of the concerned ECN officials so that they could pursue further action on the media outlet concerned. This, in brief, was NPI's mandate regarding media monitoring.

NPI devised a system whereby monitors were told to gather all election related clippings and to upload them to the main servers. They were also asked to flag the items, particularly where code violation was suspected, so that the ECN could check them immediately and initiate the necessary action. Other ECN related materials too would be of ECN's concern, hence a circular to all monitors not to leave out any clipping that had anything to do with the election, even if remotely.

A three-tier organisation was set up to monitor the media goings-on in the country throughout the period that the codes of conduct were being enforced– district level monitoring, regional level and the central level. According to the initial plan, the districts would primarily focus on print and radio while the regional resource centres of NPI would also include television. But because

of contractual requirements and the constraints that arose, NPI was forced to drop multimedia monitoring from the districts and regions. In Kathmandu, the task became more extensive as NPI had to carry out the coordination of the tasks throughout the country apart from monitoring of the local news outlets. Separate teams would monitor the media outlets, namely print, radio, television and online. A smaller fourth team would coordinate with the districts and the regions. Kathmandu would also include a dedicated team of analysts to provide the analytical updates.

The hub would be an electronic database to organise and manage the vast amount of information collected during the monitoring. The database would be able to address not only the day to day organising and filing of monitored items and their analysis but also work to simplify the final analysis at the end of the project which was expected to be published for wider consumption. Since this involves the database being able to manage the needs of both NPI monitors and the ECN, the two needed to sit down, along with the database expert, to discuss the details of the database format. This orientation did not take place formally, but informal meetings between the two sides did help in making things workable.



The database as conceptualised by the plan

The nature of the equipment needed and the manpower involved are more or less fixed for the job at hand. But the specific numbers necessary could also be determined once the extent of monitoring was finalised. News monitors, coordinators, translators, software and hardware experts, statisticians and managers would make up the monitoring staff. Equipmentwise, multimedia computers, recorders of audio and video, scanners, power supply, broadband connections and other peripherals would make up the bulk, apart from transport arrangements and other paraphernalia.

Hiring of monitors needed to be such that qualified human resources filled the posts at every level. This is challenging even in the best of circumstances, given the scale of the task and the technicalities involved. The limitations of hiring comes about when expediency has to match with other priorities like inclusion and shortage of time. This almost always means that working journalists have to be hired and, in the districts, there aren't that many to choose from. Whoever was inducted in the monitoring team would have to balance between the need to meet the needs of his or her understaffed media outlet and at the same time the objectives of his or her newfound job of monitoring. In spite of such constraints, at the end of the day, NPI was able to put together a monitoring team that was a mix of gender and ethnic groups including Dalits who carried out their job in a very satisfactory manner.

ORGANISATION

NPI's regional resource centres in Biratnagar and Nepalgunj were the other hubs of activity, apart from Kathmandu. Regional centres not only used their resources to carry

out the day-to-day monitoring and coordinating of the districts, they were involved in hiring of personnel and other preparatory activities. Pokhara and Dhangadi too played a very important role in the initial phase and also in coordinating their respective districts in the day-to-day monitoring. For any organisation, all this would have been a daunting task. It is precisely here that NPI's strength lies. Its own roster of networked journalists working in different parts of the country becomes useful at such times. This network of journalists is involved in many other activities of NPI. Placement, therefore, went like a breeze.

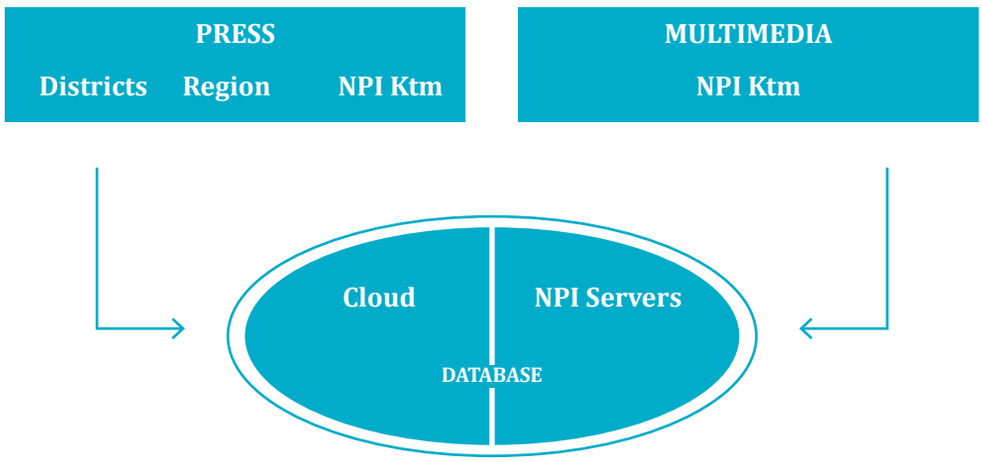
Regarding the equipment needed, computers were the primary tools of monitoring as all the clippings needed to be digitised and stored in the electronic database. Multimedia clippings would require multimedia computers, meaning new ones, while press and online clippings could do with less powerful computers. And if shifts were arranged carefully even a limited number of powerful multimedia computers could be put to greater use.

In Kathmandu, where the monitoring task was the heaviest, with the number of monitors reaching almost 50, shifts had to be organised to manage the available space and equipment and to reset the deadlines, especially in the case of multimedia monitoring, as TVs and radios have their prime time broadcasts confined to a limited time of day. Three shifts were organised to meet these requirements.

Newspaper monitors handled the morning shifts to scan the day's publications as soon as they were published. This formed the backbone of the monitoring job. Regional level monitors were asked to coordinate not only the local monitors but also those working from the districts surrounding them. In many instances, particularly during the initial phase, when monitors in far-flung districts were still developing their access to the database over the internet, the district monitors would email their work to the regional monitors who would then upload them along with their own work to the servers. About 400 newspapers from the districts were selected for monitoring for the CA election. Fifteen online news sites

OFF-BEAT FINDING

The absence of initial familiarization classes for the monitors did produce some headaches to the central coordinator as he had to do a lot of troubleshooting just to get things on track. Receiving phone calls from remote districts regarding basic things was the order of the day. Another routine work was to check whether all the monitors were inputting data according to their assignment. These did reveal some interesting findings regarding the functioning of the Nepalese media. It was soon found that many newspapers were not being published in the districts as a number of journalists and publishers in some districts were taking part in the election campaigns of their pet candidates. This important aspect of election campaigns was not reported, hence not unearthed by scanning of the district based media. It came to NPI's notice only in the course of implementing the monitoring task. Nonetheless, its significance to Nepalese journalism cannot be undermined. Although journalists throughout the country were found to be busy during the elections, it is hard to believe that there were even those who shut down their publications to back their candidates.



The planned database was modified for expediency by separating press clippings from multimedia files. Press material was stored in the cloud while audio and video got stored at NPI's servers. The two were later merged into a single database.

also added to the volume of text being processed and analysed.

Regarding multimedia clippings, ten TV stations and ten radio stations had been chosen for routinely monitoring within Kathmandu Valley. Separate monitors were hired for the purpose. Separate shifts were organised for radio and TV due mainly to the shortage of monitoring equipment and also for the purpose of expediency. The evening shift, 6.00 pm to 12.00 midnight, took care of TV monitoring while a morning shift took care of radio. The shifts were organised to cover prime time bulletins and shows. Since TV stations air their flagship news bulletins and prime programmes, talk shows and the like, in the evenings, the shift was asked to cover the most important broadcasts. And, since asking the radio monitors to do the same in the evenings would have produced too many similarities in the clippings collected, they were asked to take up the other prime time slot, i.e. the morning prime time hours.

Since multimedia monitors had to deal with large electronic files they needed direct access to the servers and since the servers were networked to the monitors in Kathmandu only, this produced another limitation in carrying out extensive multimedia monitoring to cover the whole country. All national TV and radio networks were based in Kathmandu, anyway. As infrastructure constraints made it difficult to cover the district based radios, a roundabout way was organised to cover them too. A contractor was asked to record about 200 radio stations from different parts of the country and submit the tapes to NPI on a daily basis for the monitors to look for relevant information. This resolved the problem of lack of multimedia monitoring infrastructure at other NPI monitoring centres. Contractual obligations did require NPI to carry out multimedia monitoring outside Kathmandu Valley too, at least to the extent that NPI could cover its mandated tasks.

THE MEANING OF WAR-FOOTING

However, like earlier hinted, what was unknown during the planning phase was that NPI would encounter a shortage of the necessary equipment from the very beginning. The data input devices, or computers, were not the only issue. More powerful network devices like servers were not forthcoming even at the moment

of launching of the monitoring task. This difficulty led NPI to devise a workaround by splitting the data collection into two separate databases– print and audiovisual sections, the former based on the internet and the other, a more bandwidth-intensive task, on a small intranet to be linked between the NPI and the ECN. Both the databases could be integrated at a later date, time permitting. The idea of setting up an intranet to cover all the monitors was abandoned at the very beginning for lack of resources and time.

In fact, the original plan had to be trashed from the very beginning. The monitoring project was finalised at the very last hour, so to say. When NPI got the go-ahead to pursue the project, there were barely three weeks left for the election. The timing of the contract-signing too left no room for carrying out any task apart from internal meetings for finalising the plan. The next day began with a Saturday, immediately after that by the Tihar holidays. NPI took a fast track to recruitment, procurements and software and database preparation by mobilising its existing network.

With only about 19 days left for the election, it would be considered lucky if the preparatory work could be completed before the elections were held. But perseverance has a strange way of paying back, if only in small instalments.

Under normal circumstances, it would have required at least a month of preparation-- acquiring the equipment, setting them up, developing the database, hiring the monitors, training them, developing manuals for the training and then finally launching a trial run for at least a week to identify the bugs that were sure to surface in the entire system. Removing them would need some time.

OFF-BEAT FINDING

We know that proliferation of media, both print and broadcast, throughout Nepal has been astounding this past decade, at times attracting world attention even. Indeed, considering that even remote districts have their own media outlets, this is an admirable development. An absence of adequate infrastructure means that broadcast media are left dependent on national networks and the worldwide web for their news stories, which would have been available to most of the audience anyway, even without these outlets. Does this have any bearing on the cost that a nation incurs for the benefit it accrues from having a high number of media outlets?

One finding concerns the FM revolution that the country has witnessed over the decade. While there is no debate over the rapid expansion of the FM network throughout the country what struck as odd to this monitor was that there was hardly any local news being aired by them. If we look at this in light of the international hullaballoo created when these networks were banned from airing news during the royal takeover in 2006, one is left wondering about what the fuss then was all about. Almost all district based FM stations either relay news aired by some other radio station, the internet or some international media outlets like the BBC.

One may question as to why NPI should be complaining about lack of infrastructure and resources if it had already been doing monitoring in the past? The answer is simple. Every monitoring task requires a different set of priorities and is carried out on different scales. This means different

types of planning, manpower training, equipment and expenses. Even the same monitoring task can be done in different ways. One can collect clippings manually and archive them in the old fashion or use modern IT infrastructure to speed things up, or use a combination of the two methods. The amount and type of resources vary with each method.

Inconsistencies would arise even in the best laid plans. Therefore, one needed to be ready for any contingencies that could surface. Actual events later showed that NPI needn't have bothered itself with such worries. That worry would have been, in a quirky way, a welcome thing as that would have meant that things were going according to plan.

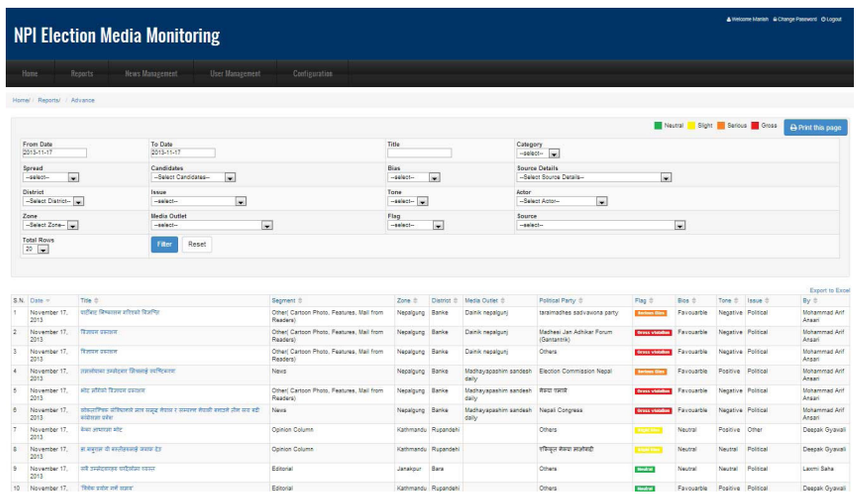
Everything had to be hurried through, mostly under impossible circumstances. Monitors were being hired and at the same time old equipment were being brought out from the stores to repair and upgrade them to meet the requirements of the task at hand. Even then, the monitors based in Kathmandu can be said to be lucky, compared with their counterparts in the districts. These Kathmandu based monitors at least had some orientation, be it on the job. Those in the districts did not even have that chance, many of them were receiving instructions from Kathmandu over the telephone, and, in lucky instances, over Skype.

Servers that would provide the database infrastructure were not available. Hence, makeshift servers were fashioned out of simple desktop home computers, at least half a dozen years old. Software developers and database managers were working round the clock to induct the sketchy ideas that NPI was dishing out to them. And ideas were changing constantly with each new hurdle thrown by time constraints. It was possible to recruit the monitors in such short notices only because NPI already has a long roster of journalists working in different parts of the country. Regional recruitment units were quickly set up, along with the regional monitoring units, to oversee the monitoring activities in the districts surrounding them.

Since digital technology was used extensively, wherever feasible, the day-to-day monitoring was speeded up significantly. Any other type of monitoring would have a hard time processing and storing such a large volume of information. But elections are periodic events and reporting on the election would soon end with the conduct of the polls. This would mean that even though there is a high turnover of media clippings, it would only be for a short period– until the elections. So, this system of monitoring does serve the purpose of ECN. And, flagging of select items would help narrow down the focus on code compliance.

An ideal monitoring model would involve briefing the ECN on the kinds of media items available and seek its feedback before dispatching any material. This is slightly more time consuming than the model followed by NPI in the 2013 elections, but would nonetheless limit the processing of the monitored items, as only those items selected by the election body would need focus. But in this model, even the ECN would need to hire its own set of monitors to be in control of their side of the line. NPI monitors would then have to await ECN approval before uploading each item.

Following this model in urban centres with good IT infrastructure would be feasible, but waiting for the districts, especially those where the number of media outlets are few, to provide the press briefs and then asking them to process the selected items after the resultant time lag might not be too good an idea. Therefore, the most



Press clips in the database are flagged red, orange, yellow and green to show their level of compliance with the election code of conduct.

doable option would be to train the monitors beforehand to focus on the code of conduct and see if the media abide by them. They would simply be asked to upload to the database anything related with elections after appropriately marking and tagging them. Since the ECN requirements did not include lengthy processing, like translating and summarising, they could just convert the news item into the digital format and upload them. If they saw anyone veering off course, they would just prioritize the item in their regular dispatch. This method was found to be very efficient.

CAPITALISATION ON THE GAINS

Every day, hundreds of media clippings were uploaded by the monitors throughout the country. A total of about one terabyte of data was processed and analysed in the month-long monitoring. Some of those items were marked for priority viewing by the concerned ECN officials. If the ECN does not use these items, monitoring becomes redundant. To give teeth to monitoring activities, a dedicated team of officials must keep a close watch on what is being updated, spot trends and advise the monitors to follow particular developments, especially if they are of interest regarding code compliance by the media. These officials would actually be monitoring the monitors. This aspect did not manifest itself during the election. This time around, the ECN's monitoring unit was designed to focus only on code compliance by the media. Future monitoring assignments by the ECN should take a broader mandate into account so as to capitalise on the huge flow of information available during monitoring.

Why is this important? Monitors generally examine the media for anything related with the election. The ECN unit being talked about needs to be specialised in watching the Nepalese media over a period of time so that it can spot any trend inimical to the fair and free conduct of the polls. The members of that body would be tasked to sort out the actionable information from that which may serve its other purposes. Monitoring on such a huge scale provides a rare opportunity as all the news would be available to the ECN from different parts of the country and

OFF-BEAT FINDING

It was found that media in remote districts sent their publications to be printed in more infrastructurally able districts headquarters or towns. For example, newspapers published from Jumla are actually printed in Nepalgunj. This was a finding that might surprise some, but for the monitors this also meant that they needed to be based in Nepalgunj if they wanted to monitor the media in Jumla. This is because waiting for the newspaper to arrive in Jumla for distribution would take time while the immediate availability of the paper in Nepalgunj made it more deadline-friendly for the monitors based there.

they would all be related with elections, even though they might not all be related with compliance of the media code of conduct. Thus arises the need to group the clippings into different streams according to the needs of the ECN. Some of the information may have to do with the functioning of the election body, some others may relate to the conduct of ECN officials, others may have to do with relevant actors like the government, security forces and election monitors, while still others may have to do with the system of election itself. More precisely, the variety and the amount of news items monitored by the monitoring team can give the ECN more than a tool to enforce the codes of conduct. Much of the information can be had only during elections and seeking that information when monitoring is going on would mean killing two birds with one stone. While there is such a huge opportunity, why focus only on code compliance? In a manner of speaking, monitoring is open intelligence and the gathered information must be put to good use.

BENEFITS FOR THE MEDIA

Another aspect of the gains to be made from monitoring concerns the media itself. This nationwide media survey is also a chance for media professionals to look into the mirror for once. Such type of research is what NPI itself specialises in and it falls well within the NPI's ambit of activities. For NPI to cash in on the information available thus, it should be able to use it while conducting future trainings for journalists. It can also disseminate the findings by other means for the benefit of the journalists at large. But first, the available information must be gleaned from the monitored items and formatted to suit the needs of the media professional. These needs have to be matched with the capability of the database and other inherent constraints.

The code of conduct developed by the ECN has a strong element of the journalists' own professional code of conduct, since it was finalised after intense consultations with the professionals themselves. Training the monitors to spot code violations would not have been too difficult because they were all trained journalists and all they needed to do was to focus only on the elections; call it a new beat of sorts for them. After this, things get a bit more complicated as a database needs to be designed with all this in mind. Here, journalistic imperatives must be matched with the imperatives of data management. This means tailoring the system to meet the needs of the day. Databases have been designed and managed by professional monitoring systems elsewhere, but the problem is that they are usually proprietary and, worse, suited only to particular monitoring organisations' needs. For Nepalese elections, the database should address the needs of both the ECN and the monitors based throughout



Media focus on the election.

Nepal. It should be simple enough to be understood by all but efficient enough to carry out the task at hand; not too large for it to be un-feasible or unsustainable, but accommodative enough to meet the challenges of a nationwide data flow, even though it would only be for a month.

The fact that the codes of conduct had to be tallied with every news item monitored should not have been difficult. But, again, in spite of its simplicity, organising this vast amount of data collection and management meant bringing together all these clippings, running into hundreds of election related news items every day, from different parts of the country. Since IT is a growing phenomenon, increasingly being put to practical use by almost every profession, monitoring too needed to follow suit. Not just the database, but the collection and filing of the clippings too needed to be electronic as far as practicable.

Regarding the task of managing this huge repository of information, the IT expert, the data analyst and the monitors needed to sit down to hammer out the difficulties they would face in indexing, labelling and analysing the individual data before uploading them to the database. The data analyst would obviously want the database to give him as much narrowly objectified information as possible. The monitor would, on the contrary, prefer as wide a canvass as possible for his or her subjective judgments to be part of the input with as little effort as possible. This, needless to say, is bound to produce some sort of sparring between the two.

OFF-BEAT FINDING

We have mentioned elsewhere that journalists were found to be engaging in campaigning for candidates of their choice rather than engaging in their own profession. In several instances, the monitors found that they stopped publication of their papers to do so. This was a nuisance for the monitors if such publications were in their list of media outlets to be monitored. And, this did happen in some of the districts. But later on after the elections were conducted, these papers somehow appeared in the newsstands, some of the editions were in fact a combo of several past issues put together. The scribes had clearly found time after the elections to come out with their back issues. This they might have done to fulfill their obligation to the advertisers or for whatever reasons. But it was quite an odd situation for the monitors to handle.

Hence, the role of the IT professional becomes crucial in mitigating the differences. Consultations were a matter to be pursued with priority as the closer the relation among monitors, analysts and IT experts, the more hassle-free the whole task would be.

Let it be said here that having a common language understood by both IT professionals or statisticians and journalists is not a done deal as of yet. Some attempts have been made towards quantifying newsroom priorities into numbers, especially by monitors in developed countries, to calculate news bias, tone of reporting etc. But quantifying can only be done in environments where the professional codes are firmly in place. We know that calculation of different variables can be done only if the environment remains constant.

MEASURING THE UN-MEASURABLE

Certainly, journalism in countries like Nepal is an ever-evolving profession with hardly any or no constant to provide a level ground for analyzing the variables. Ever-evolving, because professional journalism is not a given in Nepal. It is subject to one's interpretation through ideological prisms of one's own preference. We know that journalists here have openly declared that they have their priorities, like "mission journalism" or some other similar goals. Many senior journalists today are veterans of the communist movement or the multiparty struggle whose job then was to reflect those lofty ideals in their work. The result of such stellar people running after their high ideals and putting them into practice in everyday down-to-earth journalism also has a downside. It is therefore no surprise to find party based media outlets deliberately employing like-minded journalists for their own partisan interests. In other words, trying to find a given professional constant in the Nepalese media cross-section is a challenging task, to say the least. A cynic may even say that partisanism is a constant in Nepalese journalism and easily get away with it. But this is a topic discussed in voluminous works elsewhere by renowned media professionals.

Media monitoring for elections have become a routine affair in many democracies, especially emerging ones. The models adopted also follow a beaten path where news clippings are scanned to see if there is any code violation or if bias is seen in presentation by the concerned journalists and media houses. Some help from statisticians is acquired to enhance the objectivity of the findings. Nepal too has had an experience with this model in the past. Monitors sit down to measure the spread of the item

on the newspaper being monitored and the time allotted to each actor in a news broadcast. All this is done to find out the degree of bias in the news. In a way, the monitoring is expected to correct journalists' professional behaviour as well, not just make him or her comply with the election codes.

But, every journalist knows that news priorities in the newsroom do not follow any statistical imperatives. Desk priorities usually supersede other priorites, leading to awarding of a greater amount of space to a particular item than another similar item. Sometimes, the importance of the event being followed is the key to awarding prominence and space, rather than any set statistical criteria for equal treatment. One may find it difficult to see any desk editor trying to provide an even amount of space to all items. Sometimes, news items are shortened to fit into a tight space. At others, one may need filler lines added to consume all the available space. So, the idea of pointing to the area covered by the news item to prove bias is not going to find many takers among desk editors. If codes are expected to be followed by journalists, a more practical solution understood by them must be found, not something that appears to be imposed by the statistician. Only then can corrections be made on journalistic bias. Indeed, if monitoring is expected to correct journalists' behaviour, that is never going to happen if news and news desk pressures are not taken into account in determining bias in the news. And, these, as we have said, are not easily quantifiable.

Similarly, statistical measurements can only be done on items that have been published or broadcast. In the news business, one sees a lot being said by journalistic decisions of blacking out select news. How is this aspect incorporated into the measurement criteria? There are many other news nuances that the monitors have not been able to incorporate into their models to give a true picture of bias in reporting.

And, again, in Nepal, one is hard pressed to find the rationale for looking for news bias, where a majority of news outlets have openly sided with one political party and business house or another. Readers or audiences who are a little media savvy know better than to rely on only one version of any story. Banal as it may sound, to get a complete picture of any story, one needs to go through the whole spectrum of news outlets. All journalists know the difficulty of maintaining perfect neutrality while writing any story. All desk editors know that any news he or she has prioritised in his or her media outlet is given less prominence by other media outlets even in cases where both outlets pursue professionalism with utmost care.

All this haranguing about journalism and statistics and why a marriage between the two is difficult, if not impossible, does have a point. The point here is: How can one resort to quantification of data emanating from such a skewed landscape and still arrive at a logical conclusion? The safest bet would be to abandon the quantification approach and leave it for the gut-instincts of the monitor to deal with. Although this may not be the best approach, a comparison of the gut-instinct method vs. statistical measurement approach, especially regarding journalistic bias, would not produce a clear winner.

Therefore, for the purpose of monitoring the media for the election, the best model would only try to focus on code compliance. The statistical models would do well if they focus on measurable issues and work to provide

OFF-BEAT FINDING

Some newspapers in the advertisement-starved districts were making a great deal of hay while the election sun shone. The same newspapers were bombarded with advertisements from different candidates, especially if they appeared neutral in reporting the campaign activities. Although this looks like a normal phenomenon, in a mediaworld, where political preferences rule the roost among journalists, this should show that professionalism does pay, if only for a short period.

input to journalism schools instead of trying to measure the un-measurable in a bid to shape the quality of reporting.

Now, putting these dilemmas into the database would be challenging under any circumstances. But once that was done and the database visualised, it would be networked with the monitors, working from different parts of the country, for their inputs. The regions would be a hub for the district activities and the centre, i.e. Kathmandu, would finalise the data before making it available to the ECN officials for their own processing.

MEETING SHORTCOMINGS

Like earlier mentioned, a flagging system was devised to prioritise items regarding code violation. There is a story about how the system got designed.

The rush to expedite the task produced some unexpected outcomes, mainly in the software and database that were being developed. The data analysis form that was to give a clear signal for the ECN about actionable information was not quite ready by the time the actual monitoring began. A quick way of letting the ECN know that some of the items being dispatched needed to be noticed by them so that they could follow through with their action on the violators of the media code. This quick workaround produced the flagging system with three different colours– red for gross violation of the codes and orange and yellow for less serious types of violation. This saved the day, as it came to the immediate rescue of the monitors by being able to notify the ECN of code violations. And, it got stuck to the very last day. It did result in some unintended consequences as well.

Cropping the length of the database input forms gave birth to the flagging system, but it did not cater to other needs envisaged by the detailed forms– that information would be unearthed to conduct an in-depth study of the media during a crucial phase of a democracy. Since NPI has been carrying out academic works on journalism, the Institute was not going to let such an opportunity slip through its fingers. This extensive study, bandied about so much within NPI, was not to be. The hurriedly fashioned data forms simply did not bring in adequate amount of information for the purpose.

The priority was rather in looking for a sure-fire method to deliver the data to the ECN as and when they were being collected. This was achieved by the flagging system. The study methodology had to be sacrificed. The flags would still be there to alert the concerned ECN officials, even if this meant that a major opportunity for studying the countrywide newspaper data remained unexploited. Analysis and reporting too had to undergo changes to suit the flagging system rather than depend on more sophisticated statistical tools. In spite of all this, the quantitative data



Colour of media coverage: Keeping a tab on election stories.

analyst did manage in salvaging some important data for analysis, which he has presented elsewhere in this publication. Journalists across the country should benefit from it.

Along with the attempts at quantifying the data to analyze them, the parallel offshoot system of flagging was producing a huge quantity of subjective data. As already said, the flagging system was designed to inform the ECN of notable items and this action had no roots in quantitative analysis. Flagging was done by individual monitors by relying on their gut instincts, rather than statistical tools. And, gut instinct is not a very reliable variable for quantitative analysis, unless one is studying the various aspects of that human psyche. Therefore, NPI's daily report needed to cover the items flagged by the monitors. This called for another analyst who would confine his daily reporting to the ECN on the flagging basis. Except the number of media outlets monitored and the number of different flags that the monitored items received, there was very little of the numerical dimension covered in his reports. He confined himself more or less to running a daily commentary on the monitoring findings. The essence of his reports too is presented elsewhere in this publication. This, at least, fulfilled the NPI's commitment to the election body. And, with two analysts doing their work, the analysis part would be satisfactory for everyone involved.

The analysis of the data is worthy of comment because this was the main casualty of the cropping of the original

plan. Like mentioned earlier, the originally planned analysis was more geared towards studying the cross-section of the Nepalese media, rather than merely fulfilling the mandate given by the ECN to NPI so that even mediapersons could get some benefit from this nationwide task. Originally, the monitors were supposed to handover the monitored data to a group of analysts for a thorough statistical analysis before it reached the ECN. The quantitative and qualitative analysts at the centre would then include the results in their daily report to the ECN. A huge number of analysts would be the result. The modified plan was limited to hacking off the army of analysts and the necessary fields in the data upload forms. It was instead merely geared towards meeting the ECN needs. This exclusion of the study part of the plan did produce some long faces, especially among those anxiously awaiting some academically useful masala.

The modification of the plan forced by lack of time did not only force NPI to clip its own lofty needs, like the media study just mentioned. It extended to doing away with vital components of the very monitoring itself. For example, monitoring began even without carrying out orientation classes for the monitor recruits. In hindsight, it is hard to believe how monitoring got launched without even first telling the players the rules of the game.

The main reason for the planning of the orientation classes was to acquaint the monitors with the system they would be part of and also the extensiveness of the task, with all the technical details that come with it. Although many of the monitors chosen had already done the work in the first CA elections, their experience was not necessarily a good thing. The system they were to be part of was going to be something quite alien to them. With this important part of the plan done away with, the only option was to allow a more costly and time consuming "learning by doing" method to be adopted. Come to think of it! The brief training was done away with because of time and money constraints only to give in to a more time consuming and costly method of learning-by-doing.

So, when monitoring actually took off, it did not begin throughout the country at one go. First, the Kathmandu unit, the biggest of them all, had to start kicking. Here, one saw NPI hurriedly making space for the job at its central facilities in Kathmandu, pulling out all its old computers from the storage to repair and equip them for the job at hand, carrying out recruitments, making placements where they were necessary, orienting them for the job, developing the database and removing the incoming hurdles, all at one go. It was a scene worth watching. All the mad conundrum going on as if the sky was about to fall.

NPI had to dispatch someone hurriedly to the Eastern Region to finalise the recruitment and organise a makeshift orientation to the main monitors there so that things would move smoothly. Similar was the case with Nepalgunj which refused to trickle any monitored items until someone went to equip the place with manpower, computers, scanners and skills to upload the collected data to the database.

To top it all, the delay in getting the monitoring activities moving meant that NPI was falling short on its commitment to the contract, according to which monitoring should have started in full swing on 1 November 2013, an impossibility given the late signing of the contract, on the same day, for the job. In other words, NPI had to assign additional monitoring tasks to the monitors by collecting back-dated media files and carrying out the job, the

staleness of the data notwithstanding. Those media files were being collected immediately after the contract was signed. This particular task was devised purely to satisfy the conditions of the contract, rather than informing the ECN with real-time monitored data. Things did start falling into place after a couple of days, however.

Under normal circumstances, once the database was finalised, a period of test runs would reveal the systemic bugs which would have been removed when the actual monitoring would be launched. Things would have been moving smoothly once the actual monitoring began. Orientation sessions would have removed the need to constantly link up with monitors in far-flung places to get them to correct their mistakes even while they were uploading their materials to the database. From holding technical sessions to explanation of the monitoring methods to familiarisation with the system itself thus became all part of the central level staff's daily routine. This time could have been more fruitfully utilised for seeking a greater amount of input from the ECN to make changes in the system to suit the ECN's needs even better.

POST-MORTEM

For monitoring to be meaningful, the period chosen to do the monitoring should be relevant to the objectives at hand. NPI's election monitoring should have begun at least a few days ahead of the enforcement of the poll codes of conduct. This would have given the monitors at least three months to do their jobs. One month is not enough even to make a proper appraisal of the job done. The project began so late that when actual monitoring began there were barely three weeks left for the election to be held, even though the agreed period of monitoring was for a month– the post-poll period of about a week included. Preparations had to be carried out within this period. This meant that the actual monitoring for code compliance by the relevant actors could shrink even further. One may blame the suspense surrounding the holding of the election that had already been postponed several times or some other political or procedural culprit for the delay and the resultant short period available for monitoring, but the fact is that the actual monitoring task would be facing the brunt of it, no matter how you explain it.

Since NPI had been conducting media monitoring for a long time, it might have seemed that NPI could do it in a jiffy. Those familiar with this specialised media activity know that things are not as simple. Each monitoring requires a machinery that is geared towards a particular objective and preparations are needed for that, even though monitoring might be the staple of that monitoring agency. For a vast task such as monitoring of the entire spectrum of the Nepalese media, one needs to start from scratch– preparing the manpower, training them for the particular job, arranging the hardware and developing the software etc. This needs to be done each time monitoring is conducted, as election monitoring is done only when elections are held and they are held after a considerable gap of time, a time when monitoring is not done.

Secondly, when signing contracts for a monitoring job one needs to carefully go through the conditions spelled out on paper, as these determine the scope of activities one will have to carry out a project of a national scale and fulfill the main objectives of the contract. Although NPI's own resources could be put to use to override constraints, and this was done where its necessity

was deemed absolute, such conditions should not occur.

This brings us to the training issue. Orientation to the system is necessary not only for each monitor carrying out the tasks in far-flung districts; it is also necessary for ECN officials to get into the system and unearth the data that they need. It gives them an idea about what to expect from the database and how best to put the available information to use. As time went by, the ECN did get acquainted with the system, but it would naturally have been better had some form of orientation session taken place beforehand.

This means that there is also the need for a proper monitoring unit of dedicated individuals at ECN's end who need to familiarise themselves with the system of monitoring in place and, as a consumer of the end product, be able to absorb all the information flowing to it and use it to enhance the activities of the ECN.

Since the election related clippings do not only concern with the election codes of conduct, but the entire gamut of the election, there is a lot of information out there that would be required by the ECN at some point of time. For example, news regarding the activities of a political party during the campaign may not have anything to do with the codes of conduct, but could prove vital in ECN's dealing with the said party in the future. There are news stories related with a host of other institutions, the government, the security forces and even the general people's attitudes. If the news items have something to do with these institutions and the elections they are uploaded by the monitors, albeit with a neutral flag. As far as the ECN is concerned, the item may just be ignored as it has nothing to do with the codes of conduct. But if these items can be integrated in their own database, the ECN can use this as a valuable resource in the future. For this, the ECN will need to orient its staff manning the monitoring unit to sorting these items into several streams and store them in their own database. Obviously, those that are flagged are not the only items that the ECN needs.

The state body should realise that there is a lot of material out there that is available only during elections and other materials that are not available then. This means that apart from arming itself with the tools to enforce the codes of conduct, it can also gather information on the developments regarding the political actors, government activities and, not the least, the ECN itself. If we look at the terms of reference for the election media monitoring in Nepal, it is clear that even the ECN's monitoring requirements show that the task mandated to the monitors are more concerned with making the media more professional than with gathering information on elections for its own use.

This points to another need that the ECN will feel later on. Monitoring of the media only during elections will be not enough, especially if monitoring braces a wider canvass than mere code compliance by the mass media. Such realisation would empower the election body with adequate amount of information to carry out its tasks effectively and give it early warning signals regarding its own course of action. A regular tracking of the functioning of the media would also give it a comprehensive knowledge of the media landscape. Such knowledge helps one to anticipate likely scenarios, including likelihood of code of conduct violations, and prepare for such eventualities accordingly when elections take place, for example, developing targeted codes of conduct



Election Commissioner Ila Sharma (third from right) during a visit of the NPI media monitoring centre in Kathmandu.

for a more effective compliance. The sooner this realisation dawns, the better. Once that happens, a permanent monitoring unit, albeit a smaller one, would be the order of the day, rather than just during elections. All ECN needs to do during the elections is to expand the activity to cover all the constituencies where elections are being held.

One can sense a growing realisation on ECN's part of such a need, but that realisation needs to be manifested into action now. And, once the ECN knows the value of monitoring it could show the way forward to other government agencies what benefits media monitoring can bring to the organisation. An ideal situation would be to have a central government database where all the media clippings are available and each government unit or state organ can access them according to its need. This would facilitate the governance process much better. It would in fact act as the government's ear to the ground.

For NPI's part, the institute needs to try and find the most feasible and expedient way to serve the ECN with the data that they need by streaming them into actionable and useful information that the ECN needs. This was achieved by the flagging system put in place and seems to have served the ECN well this time around. The kind of flag used for a particular item is based on what the monitor feels about that particular item and, hence, a purely subjective decision on the monitor's part. But since statistical tools have been widely used to

determine the quality of news items by many election monitors around the world, there is a need to study them carefully before applying them in the Nepalese context.

Although the flag system appears to completely replace this form of pursuit of objectivity, at least for the purpose of enforcing the code of conduct on the media, objectivity tools would surely be able to give a wide array of data for other uses, like the media study that NPI had in mind. If NPI can persuade any future agency that it will be monitoring for, not just the ECN, about the need to conduct such studies beforehand, it would not be too difficult to conduct them. This instance of monitoring for the ECN should serve as a lesson about why time is of essence regarding preparation for such a scale of activity.

Quite stark in the NPI's monitoring efforts is that in spite of completing several projects involving monitoring, monitoring itself has not been able to get off the ground as a sustainable activity. Each time there is someone who wants professional monitoring services and approaches NPI, the Institute scrambles together the necessary equipment and manpower to take up the job until the client feels it no longer necessary. Hence, the human resources that have been developed for particular jobs usually involve part-timers whose main base is somewhere else.

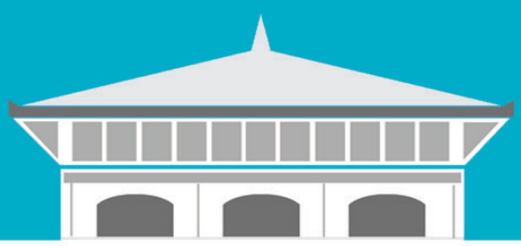
Because of the hiccups in the development of monitoring efforts in Nepal, it may make sense to have some kind of training course dedicated to developing manpower for professional monitoring. This idea makes sense in light of the fact that NPI, a pioneer in developing journalism hands in the non-governmental sector, has remained the hub of professional monitoring thus far. A training course lasting several weeks that can lay down the basics of monitoring for interested journalists to develop monitoring skills would go a long way in the development of professional monitoring in Nepal.

Granted that journalism schools do not run specialised classes for monitoring. And, of course, this means that publications on theoretical knowledge on monitoring is not available. But these things develop along the way with training courses getting honed as time goes by. There is already some experience available regarding monitoring in Nepal. And this can make a good starting point when it comes to transferring that knowledge to interested journalists. This could give a shot in the arm for those wishing to give continuity to professional monitoring. NPI should initiate such a training.

Yes, there is enough reason to scoff at the idea of providing an academic dimension to what is essentially a mere collection of clippings and filing them. But, remember that there were those who said the same thing about mainstream journalism until some time ago– that journalists were born and not taught. And professional journalism far preceded its academic courses in the universities. Today, journalism is a thriving faculty in numerous universities throughout the world.

The idea behind the concept of training for monitoring is that with some knowledgeable manpower available, there is bound to be efforts aimed at sustaining the profession as a specialised branch of journalism in Nepal.

THE LOGISTICS AND MANAGEMENT



1. INTRODUCTION

With the past experience the Nepal Press Institute (NPI) had in monitoring the media, it successfully implemented a nationwide media monitoring programme for the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) in November 2013. The Electoral Support Project (ESP) of UNDP had provided financial assistance to swiftly put a media monitoring mechanism in place and assess the media coverage of the Constituent Assembly election in terms of the Election Code of Conduct for the Mass Media 2013. Nepal's major political parties were preparing to intensify their campaign for the crucial poll to be held on 19 November 2013. An alliance of 33 parties was creating obstructions to the election campaign with general strikes and violent acts. Major Nepali festivals, mainly Tihar and Chhath, were also around the corner, keeping the people busy in travel and celebration planning.

In that backdrop, the NPI needed strategies to start media monitoring as soon as a contract for services was signed with the UNDP on 1 November 2013. The contract spelled out the task: 'Monitor the media for the 19 November 2013 Constituent Assembly election in relation to the Election Code of Conduct for the Mass Media as issued by the Election Commission Nepal (ECN) in 2013.' The Terms of Reference required the NPI to recruit and depute monitors throughout the nation and see how the mainstream Nepali media, that is, newspaper, radio, television and online news portals, complied with the election code for the mass media, that had been brought in to force by the ECN. The code sought to ensure that the media coverage of the election campaign, campaign blackout, voting, and results were fair and impartial. Election actors, mainly, the political parties, candidates, voters and election managers, were waiting for the campaign to heat up from the first week of November, when the festivals would be over.

The NPI officially announced the vacancies for media monitors on the day it signed the contract. The political protests that rejected the very process of election under a non-political government had made free movement of people from one place to another difficult. Recruiting 135 media monitors and other personnel from

the centre and posting them to the monitoring stations in the districts and regions through elaborate processes of application, interview, training and orientation sessions in less than a week was not possible. At the same time, selection of the media monitors without the due processes of testing their fitness for the job at hand was risky. It demanded skill, experience and ingenuity to meet the needs of skilled media monitors, who knew how the media worked during elections, in the midst of the need for fast-track recruitment process.

Before the NPI submitted the proposal seeking support to launch the media monitoring operations, it had done some homework about the anticipated structure of the monitoring operations and the staff needed to cover a wide spectrum of news media from all parts of the country. As a media training and research institution, the NPI already had a network of past trainees across the country and three independent regional media resource centres in Biratnagar, Butwal and Nepalgunj. It assigned the team leader, who oversaw the proposal process, to mobilise its network of regional centres and journalists. After the NPI signed the contract with the UNDP/ESP on 1 November 2013, the team leader started the hiring process right away, asking the regional centres and sub-centres, on day one, to contact potential applicants, interview them about their interest and skill in media monitoring and send their names, with resumes, to the centre.

In Kathmandu headquarters of the NPI, the team of media monitoring leaders and experts, as per the initial proposal, held their first meeting on 1 November 2013. The meeting discussed the setup of the monitoring infrastructure at the centre and suggested strategies to implement the project nationwide. It suggested online sessions for staff recruitment, orientation, training and problem solving for districts and regions, where the national team leader and monitoring coordinator would not be physically available for carrying out the tasks.

On another front, the central team of media monitoring leaders and experts established a channel of communication with the ECN so as to make the findings of the monitoring available on a network of computers for viewing by officials with access privileges.

Until late into the campaign period, there was doubt among the political actors about whether the election would be held. Except for some sporadic violent incidents on the voting day, the elections were, surprisingly, fair and peaceful, despite the anxiety. A cursory glance at the media headlines showed that as the Election Day drew nearer, the people were more and more certain that the election would be held as scheduled on 19 November 2013. During the campaign, the media started taking partisan views, particularly regarding the prediction of victory for the candidates and parties they favoured. This went on well into the silent period. In monitoring terms, the number of red flagged items, showing code violations, rose to the highest during the campaign blackout.

The findings above, for example, showed that the NPI was going way beyond the ambit of general media monitoring, of the clipping and indexing type, to handle a special monitoring situation like the national election. Its client was an autonomous state organ, the ECN, which was tasked with the major responsibility of managing the crucial election to the next CA, five years after it had held the CA election in 2008. The ECN took cues from the findings



At the election booth.

of media monitoring to enforce mass media compliance with its election code during the people's democratic exercise of participating in a fair and impartial election. The scale of the task at hand stretched the limits of media monitoring to the realms of political analysis and the academic world.

The steering committee arranged external and internal monitoring and evaluation of the project work. Officials from the ECN and the UNDP/ESP visited the monitoring centre in Kathmandu.

The core team leaders followed up with the monitors regarding their assignment on phone, through field visits, and on Skype sessions. In the course of a hectic month, the NPI learned some lessons on managing the project of a national scale in a short time. The data collected by the NPI needs to be preserved for future use and analysis.

1.1 Structure of the article

This article limits its scope to setting the context in which the NPI undertook to monitor the election media under a services contract detailing how the services were successfully delivered. The next section is structured to focus on the past experiences of the NPI in media monitoring in general.

Following these are the highlights of the proposal process and services contract. In the section after that, the focus will shift to how the team leaders, experts and monitors worked overtime and managed to send the media monitoring updates into the

THE CONTRACT REF: PISU/PROF/014/2013

Title: Media Monitoring for the CA Election 2013

Task: Monitor the media for the November 19, 2013, Constituent Assembly election in relation to the Election Code of Conduct for the Mass Media as issued by the Election Commission, Nepal (ECN), in 2013

Duty station: Throughout Nepal

Duration: 1-30 November 2013

Goal of services: Provide the ECN with routine media monitoring reports and analyses of electoral communication

Services provided to: ECN and UNDP/ESP

Services provided by: NPI

Payment for services by: The Electoral Support Project (ESP) of the UNDP *(See Annex for Contract)*

database for viewing within less than a week from the signing of the agreement between the NPI and the UNDP/ESP. This section deals with the contract implementation and reporting of the progress of work to donors and the subsequent section lists issues and risks, preparing the ground for mention of the lessons learned. In the end, recommendations are made for future work in this area.

1.2 Past experience of the NPI

The NPI had the requisite expertise, with an impressive record of carrying out media monitoring for the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) during the implementation of the peace accord between the then seven political parties and the Maoists, who were emerging from an insurgency to become part of the legitimate mainstream of a multiparty polity. The NPI's monitoring unit ably handled the monitoring task for the BBC monitoring during all the seven years the international monitoring establishment worked in Nepal, from 2003 until it pulled out of the country citing budgetary constraints. The UNMIN monitoring took place from 1 January 2008 to 15 September 2011. One year of monitoring was carried out for another UN organisation, the UNDP, until the available financial resources were shifted away to other UNDP priorities. Events-related media monitoring had also been carried out successfully for three organizations and governments. In implementing some of these projects, which sometimes involved works in three countries, namely, Nepal, Bhutan and India, the NPI had developed strategies to get the job done despite complexities *(See A Monitoring Concept is Realised, page 55-74 page)*.

Moreover, the individuals involved in election media monitoring had highly relevant past experiences, including election observation. The team leader and the NPI Chairperson had been election observer themselves.

So far, few Nepali institutions were dedicated to monitoring the media in a professional manner like the NPI did.

Against that background, the Media Monitoring for the CA Election 2013 started as a major media monitoring endeavour that the NPI sought to take to another level. The core team brainstormed about the time and resource constraints, prioritized the objectives and broke them down into

activities for implementation under a timeline.

Efficient oversight and regular communication to clarify the concerns of experts and clients guided the monitoring work to a successful outcome. If the monitoring had lapses in approach or some technical details during the haste, the nationwide presence of monitors, many of whom were journalists covering elections and politics, must have acted as a deterrent to election code violation by the media.

1.3 The proposal process

Well before the election mood built up, the NPI board had decided to seek financial support to monitor the media for the November election and see how well they performed on their democratic function of keeping a watch on a free and fair election. Duly a proposal was prepared and submitted. It assigned a leader, who had led several media monitoring projects on other normal occasions, to put up a team and prepare the modus operandi for an election media monitoring on a national scale. The leader formed a core team of experts to see through the proposal process and decided on the specifics of methods and variables.

The NPI needed to rework its proposal, mainly in response to the Request for Proposals advertised by the UNDP/ESP on 24 October 2013, and submitted it for consideration by the ECN, the client, to evaluate its effectiveness to assess the media compliance with the Election Code of Conduct for the Mass Media.

1.4 Professional services contract information

The following is the main official information about the contract for services.

1.5 Objectives of the assignment

Generally, as the agreement between the NPI and the ESP spelled out, a media monitoring service aims to provide clients with tailored documentation, or copies of media content of interest, and/or analysis of the print, electronic and internet media and delivers information in a timely manner as and when possible.

Specifically, the objectives of the contract were:

- To monitor media coverage of political and/or public affairs communication during the election period, as per the ECN Media Monitoring Guidelines, 2013
- To provide an impartial analysis of the media coverage and help the ECN's efforts in holding credible, inclusive and professional election
- To regularly update the ECN with the findings of the media monitoring for it to enforce the election code of conduct for the mass media during electioneering, voting day and vote counting periods
- To use the infrastructure set up for the CA elections to conduct media monitoring until the local election

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONTRACT

When the ESP/UNDP called for proposals to monitor the media just a month before the Election Day, the NPI reviewed its existing media monitoring infrastructure and came up with a proposal in response to the call. Working overtime, the NPI advertised vacancies for the media monitors, set up a steering committee, got the key project personnel into

gear on a fast track, upgraded its computers in the centre and regions, established its own database system and started monitoring the campaign media coverage. The implementation schedule, shared with the personnel on day one, gave a basis to kick-start the early work. With speed as the mantra, the media monitoring work was going on at a full scale from the first week of November 2013.

Implementation schedule

Although the database system was being tested, despite the collection of news stories and summaries from several places in the central database, the weekly Tihar holidays affected the work and reporting schedule of the first week of November.

The database technicians helped the ECN with the data views. The team leaders flew to the various regions, setting up regional offices, recruiting coordinators and monitors, shifting some districts for better supervision from one region to another, and providing orientation to the new recruits to start work right away via face-to-face, phone and online (Skype) sessions.

The NPI approached the assignment from three fronts simultaneously: i) Personnel recruitment (including 26 % women) and setting up media monitoring units in Kathmandu and regions ii) Work routinisation, and iii) Updates for the ECN.

2.1 Personnel recruitment

When the NPI undertook the project, it knew that media monitoring was a complex but urgent task, which would be difficult to implement without adequate time for preparation and an elaborate set-up to avoid glitches. Complicating the matter, street demonstrations, general strikes and violence staged by the 33-party alliance, led by the CPN (Maoist), had made free movement of people from one place to another difficult.

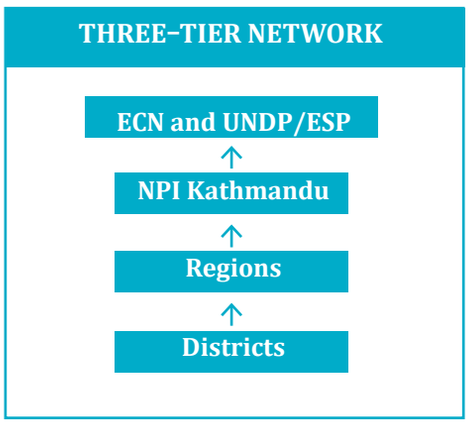
To short-circuit the time needed for travel during political uncertainties and major festivals, the NPI announced vacancies for all media monitoring personnel on 1 November 2013 via its own organizational website and assigned the team leader, who had seen the proposal process, to recruit a fleet of about 135 media monitors and a dozen other personnel with the help of contacts. Hiring them all from the centre and posting them to the monitoring stations in districts and regions, through elaborate processes to fulfil the formalities of application, interview, training and orientation sessions in less than a week was not possible.

For fast-track recruitment, the team leader mobilized the NPI regional media resource centres which contacted the prospective candidates, interviewed them about their interest and skill in media monitoring, and sent the possible names, with resumes, to the NPI headquarters.

2.2 Work routinisation

The project envisaged a three-tier set up to monitor the media activities in the country during 1-30 November 2013 - district, regional and central level monitoring. The districts primarily focused on the print media and radio while the regional resource centres of the NPI also included television. In Kathmandu, the task became more extensive as the NPI was geared towards coordinating the tasks throughout the country as well as monitoring the local news outlets. Separate teams monitored the media outlets- viz. print, radio, television and online news.

The flow of information from the local level to the centre and then on to the EC through the three–tier network was as follows.



A database tailored to the needs of the election media monitoring was developed and presented to the ECN and the UNDP/ESP. The cost, of physical and human resources, determined the depth and breadth of the work done in response to the assignment. The project team believed the wide ranging media samples from all regions and districts produced pointers for the ECN to enforce code compliance for the media.

The project then routinised the monitoring tasks to regularly update the ECN on the state of the electoral code observance by the mass media throughout the country during the campaign, blackout, the Election Day and the vote counting periods. By the end of the first week, the media monitoring programme submitted the report of the early preparations, received the ESP colleagues at the NPI to show how the nationwide monitoring infrastructure was set up to work on a regular basis for the month and apprised them of the problems, mainly the lack of powerful database servers, which were necessary to run such a massive project without technical glitches.

The project steering committee arranged for internal and external evaluation of the progress of activities towards the objectives. Internally, the key personnel kept tab on the quality and progress of the media monitoring work with the help of internal and external reviews, follow-up meetings and progress tracking measures. They anticipated risks and solved problems as and when they arose during the project implementation. The EC-Committee arranged for external monitoring and evaluation by paying visits to the NPI headquarters to see how well the monitoring was going on.

Internally, the central monitoring coordinator regularly carried out an appraisal of the previous day's work. With help from the database people, the number of stories and quality of reports of the monitors were filing from across the country, The follow up meetings, discussions and actions were managed by phone, email and Skype sessions with the regional leaders and monitors.

Regarding analysis, provisions were made for field check, quality assurance and filling in of the missing data. Due to initial server problems, the monitors were asked to fill up the forms for print outlets published as far back as 1 November 2013, the day the contract was signed.

Technical assessment was carried out regularly – with initial focus on removal of system bugs, integration of audio-video and print, changing the view, such as for summary of reports, and application training and adaptation as the work progressed from the second week onwards.

Because of the holidays and the short time available for setting up the infrastructure to begin monitoring, the project was implemented in Kathmandu right away and then

expanded to the various regions and districts. This demanded logistic management accordingly.

Once the routine produced regular inputs and updates into the database, the steering committee made an internal review of the work and evaluated the performance of Kathmandu, Biratnagar and Nepalgunj as excellent. Janakpur and Dhangadi carried out satisfactory work. Pokhara region performed well. The monitors followed guidelines from the centre and performed better when they had received orientation, training and Skype/phone sessions.

Print and radio monitoring deadlines for the districts and regions were set as per a schedule so that the ECN received the reports for print, radio and online news sites, from separate desks of monitors, by the final deadline of 12:00 noon. Database and monitoring officials with the team leader visited the ECN to familiarize them with the use of the database system and offered support later. The ECN officials now had access to the full text of an item listed in the print headlines.

Regarding deadlines for the television media, the evening bulletins were chosen for monitoring the channels. Hence, the deadline for uploading the television media monitoring report of the evening news was 12:00 midnight. Special arrangements assigned monitors and analysts to go beyond the routines to record some on-air bulletins and talk shows from selected channels as per the request by the ECN during the days of peak campaigning and also during campaign blackout.

2.3 Updates for ECN

When the NPI signed the contract, it was prepared to implement the nationwide monitoring task between 1-30 November 2013. A database, specifically tailored to the needs of monitoring, had been designed and demonstrated during the proposal process and sample media outlets were almost ready.

One hundred and thirty five media monitors uploaded a total of 10,491 stories in the database. The media sample included 400 print outlets, 200 radio stations, 10 television channels and 10 online news portals from across the country. At the completion of the project, the NPI delivered reports, analyses, indexing of clippings and compilations of the findings of the monitoring task to the partners.

The database technicians worked with the ECN officials to set up a network for the latter to access the findings from their own terminals. It took a while for the ECN to get used to viewing the updates regularly. During the campaign blackout, the designated staff at the ECN were sending letters to code violators, including some television channels, alerting them against the risk of crossing the lines of impartial campaign coverage and the need to stop the partisan coverage of election candidates in the blackout period.

3. RISKS AND ISSUES

This section elaborates on the risks and issues that arose during the implementation of the project. It also highlights how the management resolved the issues, despite some severe constraints, to fulfil its obligations to provide the client with the specified deliverables. They were related with aspects of management, structure of organization and approach to service.

3.1 Management

The project management anticipated the main risks to arise from the need of equipping its central and regional

Reporting CA 2008 and 2013

The socio-political condition in which the first CA poll was held in 2008 was quite different from that of the CA election 2013. The entire nation had plunged into election in 2008. One political force that had come fresh from a jungle-based insurgency joined the peace process and it was only through election that their journey to the peaceful and competitive politics could be sealed. All wished to see that CA poll be held at any cost. There were two armed forces - the Nepal Army and the Maoist combatants - and they both were confined to the barracks in order to make the peace process effective. "Holding election was more important than maintaining electoral integrity. So, the EC closed its eyes to many incidents of code violation," confesses EC chief Neel Kantha Uprety, who was one of EC commissioners during 2008 poll. The parties had erected welcome gates to attract the voters and displayed life-size statues of their candidates. "If the EC had gone to demolish them, the country would have risked losing CPN-Maoist from the actual election process."

Even in such a trying moment, the media acted a watchdog to create a favourable atmosphere for the election. Media-persons were not lenient when it came to expose the excesses of the former rebels' party. Some journalists had lost their lives while in the line of duty. Even in such hostile environment, the media stood firm and contributed to bringing the political process to the right track. The EC chief is full praise for the media: "Journalists' role in institutionalising Loktantra is highly praiseworthy. Coming to the next CA poll in 2013, one finds media-men and women were getting professionally mature."

Still, he does not hesitate to say that the media as a whole is not free from certain biases. "It is better they stop making a mountain out of a molehill," he advised.

offices and recruiting personnel on a short notice to implement the nationwide monitoring of the media coverage of electoral communication. To mitigate these and other unforeseen risks, the project started in Kathmandu and expanded its operation in the regions and districts later. It mobilized the existing NPI offices, with staff and resources, in the centre and regions, to begin the media monitoring work to cover the run-up to the CA election in a full-fledged manner.

3.2 Structure of organization

The steering committee was on the top tier of the media monitoring work. It acted as a conduit between the project personnel and the NPI board and made important policy decisions, such as announcing vacancies and endorsing personnel for recruitment. It also facilitated communication with the ECN and attended meetings to sort out issues. The core team, database personnel, regional team leaders, and monitors worked in a loose hierarchy to get the teamwork going. Kathmandu monitoring included separate units for radio, television, online, and print (weeklies and dailies).

Similarly, regional team leaders worked in the regions with monitors, focusing on the overall administration and oversight functions.

3.3 Approach to service

The management took a flexible approach in dealing with the risks and issues arising out of time and resource constraints. It promptly acted as and

when the routine monitoring and reporting were concerned. Notable are the following actions, meetings and visits.

Central level actions solved problems right away but, without sufficient time to anticipate and analyze the risks associated with them, there was no room to be complacent that they were the best actions possible in the circumstances. For example, when monitors entered data differently, the central coordinator asked them to follow a set of rules. This meant some of the entered data would need revisiting. Another possibility, such as allowing the monitors to enter the data the way they did or re-do the work, was never explored. To address the issues and mitigate risks, as and when possible, meetings were held and visits organized to discuss them.

3.3.2 Meetings

The team leader and the central coordinator held regular meetings with the core team members on several issues, including recruitment, sample decision and assignment of monitors, as per the ToR.

The following give the gist of suggestions the key personnel made or the briefings they gave at the meetings.

Team leader. The team leader visited Biratnagar for setting up the regional office and provided orientation to monitors. Flying to Nepalgunj, together with the national media monitoring coordinator, they resolved issues concerning the office setup, mainly the lack of equipment and monitors, to cover the sample outlets. Acting as the focal point, he held Skype and phone sessions with regional team leaders and some monitors, with the help of the database specialist.

Media specialist. The media specialist suggested more brainstorming for the core team to arrive at an understanding of what each variable meant, how to code the media content for the variables, and how to share that understanding with the 135 monitors in the field.

Data tabulation specialist. The data tabulation specialist regularly monitored the quality of the data. The specialist suggested charts and graphs for viewing by users with database access privileges. These inputs were included in the mid-term review and report as well. Working with the core team and technicians to finalise the variables and indicators to be included in the database, the tabulation expert helped with the quantitative analysis in this report.

Legal specialist. The legal specialist simplified the list of provisions on the Election Code of Conduct for the Mass Media and suggested the need to follow the contract ditto and to relate all the output with the code of conduct. From the legal side, the specialist urged the project to follow the decisions of the meetings about personnel recruitment and management.

Political/election specialist. As a member of the steering committee, the political/election specialist got down to troubleshooting at the centre, as soon as the work began, typically with a notebook, to resolve queries by monitors and other project personnel about the definition of variables, such as actors and sources, in the database forms. The job required the listing of media outlets obtained from across the country as sample candidates for regular media monitoring. In Janakpur, Dolakha was shifted from its previous grouping with Rautahat, Parsa and Bara, for supervision by the centre. The political election expert

sat with specialists and the analyst to resolve issues regarding the quality of monitoring and analysis. The political/ election specialist recommended: before starting out monitoring, it would have been better to study what in the media was likely to affect the election.

Gender specialist. The gender specialist suggested looking at women in the candidate selection committees and women's issues in the election documents, from the Election Code of Conduct to the political party manifestoes, stressing the need to take in to account gender bias, gender advantage and gender neutrality while monitoring the electoral communication.

Central monitoring coordinator. The central coordinator flew to Nepalgunj with the team leader to provide orientation to the monitors and made sure of the initial progress of work and intervened when needed to make it smooth in the centre and the regions. Later, developing a system with the database technicians to follow up on the number and quality of stories each monitor was inputting into the database on a daily basis. The coordinator was a part of all meetings, dealing with the concern about the time and equipment constraints that limited his ambition to monitor the media throughout the nation in a more effective manner.

Database specialist. Responding to the demands of the core team, the database technicians devised new approaches to swiftly start monitoring work. Fixing bugs as and when they appeared, the IT specialists constantly worked on the backend operations to make the web database application serve the monitoring purpose without errors. The technicians remained in touch with the regions, and even districts, to provide support to the input process and provided support to the core personnel and the ECN officials on demand basis. At the ECN, they helped set up a network of computers for viewing the monitoring findings.

3.3.3 Visits

The project arranged visits by teams of the ECN and the UNDP/ESP officials to observe how the media monitoring work was going on. Chief Election Commissioner Neel Kantha Uprety paid an inspection visit on 15 November 2013. CEC Uprety expressed satisfaction that despite time and equipment constraints, the work was smooth. Earlier, Election Commissioner Ila Sharma had inspected the operations and offered additional equipment support (servers and laptops) to the centre and some regions. The ESP officials visited the Kathmandu centre for review of the work and its progress on several occasions.

3.4 Field strategy

The project also geared itself to meet the contract requirements of delivering reports, analyses, indexing facilities, clippings and compilations of the findings of the monitoring task. 135 media monitors from across the country scanned the news media and recorded electoral information in a database for storage, retrieval, analysis and viewing by the people with database access privileges. The media monitoring adopted a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. It identified the relevant actors in electoral communication and flagged off media narratives about them, mainly when the content called attention to any clause in the Election Code of Conduct for the Mass Media or when it dealt with election related political violence.

The field strategy responded to enable the method adopted for media monitoring at the NPI to do the following:

- List election headlines of news, write-ups and programmes from newspapers, electronic media and online outlets as they appeared throughout the country
- Upload full and original text of print items related with abidance of the EC directives and Code of Conduct as they related to the mass media. In case of the electronic items, records of the audio and video and/or transcriptions could be made available;
- Prepare a once-a-day analytical report regarding the general trend of media reporting of the elections

3.5 Deliverables

Designated ECN and UNDP/ESP officials with access privileges were allowed to view the summaries of monitored items as and when the media monitors from across the country submitted their forms, reports and analyses, in the morning, daytime and evening. The system delivered some of the agreed services, as listed in this section in bullet points, more efficiently and, hopefully, in a more useful manner. The client could use the database for a quick view of flagged stories from around the country, go into the details of a particular story of interest or sort the problematic ones by days, outlets and several other categories.

The agreed deliverables were as follows:

- Each day's media monitoring report with detailed media analyses
- Indexing of the clippings "title wise" with links to the actual item
- Detailed report on print and electronic media
- Report on web monitoring
- Complete and compiled final reports

The first four deliverables of the above bullet points were covered by the database system, which allowed greater efficiency and ease of use than originally planned. Final reports, with all details in print, were delivered separately at the end of the programme.

3.6 Outcome

The outcome of the project was twofold. The first was the opportunity for the media persons and others to get a picture of the true state of democracy in the country as the monitoring task not only gave a glimpse of the events and developments during the practice of a critical component of democracy- viz. periodic elections- but also an analysis of another vital component, that is the exercise of freedom of expression by the media and political players. Overall, it helped indicate the health of Nepal's democracy.

Secondly, with this analytical report the NPI got the opportunity to put together another project which will be an important document for further polishing the skills of Nepali journalists and help inform future media monitoring efforts.

At the least, the monitoring findings helped the ECN decide how to enforce the code of conduct for the mass media. It asked several media outlets to refrain from code violations during the crucial campaign period and its actions must have played the role of a deterrent.

4. CONCLUSION

Media monitoring during special times such as the national elections is challenging as well as rewarding. Despite severe time and equipment constraints, the NPI quickly set up the infrastructure to monitor the media and routinely updated the ECN with stories flagged for their content that potentially called attention to the Election Code of Conduct for the Mass Media, which was brought out by the ECN to ensure media impartiality in the coverage of the candidates in the fray. The data collected served the immediate purpose of the ECN in conducting free and fair elections.

One of the findings was that the media started taking partisan views, particularly with regard to prediction of the victory of the candidates and parties in their favour. This went on well into the zero hour periods. Except for some sporadic violent incidents on the voting day, the elections were, surprisingly, fair and peaceful, despite the anxiety. The findings have a larger implication – they can inform the interested people about the crucial media coverage of the Constituent Assembly election. Going beyond that, if preserved properly, in print and electronic forms, the media monitoring findings will be useful to serve the wider public, including the media, government and election management officials, donors and researchers, providing an institutional memory of a historic time in Nepal's political transition from a unitary to a federal nation.

5. LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Lessons

Media monitoring is a complex task, which needs an elaborate setup and a lot of preparatory work before the monitors begin to input the data into the database. Enough time and resources, including modern tools, are a must for standard media monitoring.

- Sharing of experience in meetings between the NPI and the ECN officials helped resolve several issues at the central level. Such meetings and orientations are needed in the regions, as well.
- Sustaining the media monitoring effort beyond the election time needs to be a priority for all.
- Regional and local monitoring units need to be better equipped to handle the local broadcast outlets.
- Media monitoring has to begin simultaneously with the issuance of the Election Code of Conduct for the Mass Media so that the entire campaign period can be covered.

5.2 Recommendations

- In the preparatory phase, arrange adequate training for monitors and provide time for trial run.
- As the review of work is conducted, make arrangements for the ECN officials to visit regions.
- Elections are a routine feature of democracy. To support the holding of free and fair elections, organizations should help the media monitoring efforts at the regional and local levels.
- Local FM stations and television channels are increasing in number and expanding their outreach. The regional monitoring efforts should be strengthened to cover them.
- The campaign period begins when the ECN issues the Election Code of

Conduct. Media monitoring should cover the entire campaign period to assess the media performance of that time. Comparing this with the post election coverage should also be a priority.

- The NPI has collected the media coverage data of the crucial election time. They are in the cloud server at the moment and need protection for future use. A local server for the data should be given a priority.

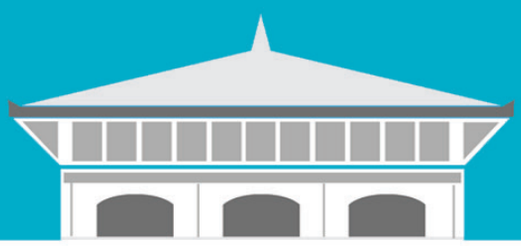
- The findings of the media monitoring efforts have implications for the media behaviour during times of elections, including the local election. They need dissemination among the wider public, including the government and election management officials, donors, media and the interested people. Support should be sought to serve the institutional memory in print and electronic book forms, which will be readily accessible for others in the future.



THE ANALYSIS

- The Report : How the Media Fared
- Statistical Analysis
- Gender, Inclusion and Election Reporting
- The Legal Perspective
- The Social Media Platform
  Trends Followed by Election Tweets

THE REPORT
HOW THE MEDIA FARED



BACKGROUND

Although the election date was fixed for 19 November 2013, people had doubts as to whether the poll would actually be held. Rumours of deferring the poll date to April or May to accommodate the CPN (Maoist) were widespread. The CPN (Maoist) had announced that the party and its allies would boycott the election if it was conducted on 19 November by the incumbent government of Chief Justice Khil Raj Regmi.

Even the political parties who were for the election were not certain about it, although they were planning to launch their campaign in style and firmly move ahead in favour of the election. Those who were against it were already on a campaign to boycott vote in the election.

Despite widespread doubts, the government was consulting with different government bodies and making the needed arrangements to ensure that the election would be held peacefully on the designated date of 19 November. Soon, the political parties started campaigning with much fanfare. Even as they went on door to door campaigns and as the campaigning gained momentum, uncertainties lingered on because of the general apathy and indifference of the people from the distasteful political experience of the past four or five years. On top of it, the CPN (Maoist) called for a 10-day strike from 7 November 2013.

Although, officially, media monitoring began on the first of November, the system that was just set up was rudimentary. In much of the early days, there were not enough computers. Desks were re-arranged constantly to fit in new monitors and monitors took turns at the computer to finish their bit of assignment.

The software and network system and equipment were there, but needed building on that, improvising and customising them to the needs. The job of this report writer was to browse through all of the monitored news items and prepare a daily report, focusing mainly on flagged items that violated the Election Commission's codes of conduct, mainly as it applied to the mass media. News items on political violence too were flagged. This was not the mandated task of the monitors but deemed necessary for the Election Commission Nepal to enforce its codes.

The personal desktop window where the reporter could see all the uploaded news items of the monitors had not been designed until the end of the first week. One had to wait till the morning shift monitors, monitoring radio stations, ended their shift at noon for analysis of the day's work.

Monitoring had been done before by NPI but it was limited in scope, subject matter and coverage. This time around the coverage was nationwide to include all the selected popular media from each district. So, the monitored news items came from far flung districts. The project was massive and gathered 10, 491 media items from all the 75 districts in the month long period.

The media that had to be monitored were divided into four categories: TV, radio, online and print. The morning shift monitored the FM radios. The day shift worked on newspapers and the online, while the evening shift worked on TV items. First the analyst went through the monitored morning news items from the morning radios and the TV channels of the nights before and wrote a summary. Then items on online and print media were in line for the day's summary as well.

For every news item the monitors were asked to flag them with red, orange, yellow or green for gross violation of the code, serious bias, slight bias or neutral in that order, according to the severity of code violation. The Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) had asked NPI to check the media coverage in relation to two main themes: one was the Election Code of Conduct for the Mass Media and the other was political violence. So there were two types of code violations that drew our attention. One was the violation of the media code of conduct. The other was political violence that included threats, vandalism or explosions and the like of a political nature. There were also items showing violation of the political code of conduct by political campaigners and they were also flagged. When these items were flagged it was done merely to notify the ECN rather than only to point out code violation by the concerned media. In the latter cases, the media does not violate any code, it merely points to incidences of violation of the political code by candidates. Here, the media is only doing its job of reporting a code violation by a candidate. Only by the content of the news were monitors able to make out whether it was flagged for code violation by the media or for reporting a political violence or a political code violation.

Most of the news items that violated the political code of conduct were inter-party clashes, planting of improvised explosive devices (pressure cooker bombs kept at different places), vehicles being vandalised, death threats and the like. Media code violations included biased and partial reporting providing unequal treatment to the different parties and candidates, toeing certain party lines and the news selection highlighting only the news that would be highly favourable to a certain party.

Technology has made it all easy for media outlet. News could be aired directly by FM radio or could be broadcast live from a TV station using mobiles and telephones. For example, Pushpa Kamal Dahal's *Mechi Kali Abhiyan* was aired live by some TV stations and radios. This was a gross violation of the media code. Giving live coverage from the campaign spot is campaigning and singularly propagating ideas of a certain party. Campaigning is done by parties and not the media which is a direct violation of the media code. This media got a red flag without difficulty on the analytical front. Flagging was also subjective and was left to the

judgment of the individual monitors, because flagging some items could only be done subjectively. There were many parties that were not heard of but were running for the election. They were hardly seen in the media. This was because most of the media were partial to the three major political parties. And if the media does not provide space or time to other parties is it not being biased against them? Will the media not be violating the code of conduct if it is stuck to the three main parties? The media was definitely being partial but was it violating the code of conduct or not? So, in their selection, the monitors were compelled to use their subjective judgment in flagging the news items as they could not include all the parties. Although flagging is a rational act it is also based on personal rationality of the monitors. So, although much of the flagging done by the monitors was a judicious evaluation of the media reports for violation of the code, some news items were flagged based on the sheer judgment of the monitor.

News items that were flagged red for political reasons were for threatening, vandalism, for blocking the roads or for using children in the election campaigns. The media received the flag here for the imputation on political events, rather than the media that carried the news. If the media is partial or has become a propaganda tool for a certain party, then the media violates the media code and the media is flagged for code violation.

Even here personal gut feeling of the monitors was responsible for marking the news with red, orange or green. The CPN (Maoist) had declared that it would go against the election. The other three parties were competing with one another. The violations of the codes, related to political violence, campaign codes and the media codes, were raised because of the clashes between these forces. As the days drew closer to the election date, these activities intensified, and, thus, the violation of the codes was greater.

But, the election itself was full of intrigue, and no one was certain about what would happen on the day of the election. No one knew what would happen and whether voting would take place, because they were frightened or disinterested until the morning of the Election Day.

PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGNING

First Week

Monitoring of the election campaign reporting began from 1 November 2013, the date Nepal Press Institute undertook to implement the project. The campaign had started; but, with doubt on everyone's mind as to whether the election would really take place. This was because there was a general indifference in the people's mind as the last CA had been dissolved unceremoniously without writing the constitution. And the Interim Constitution made for the interim period had to undergo drastic changes enabling the Supreme Court Chief Justice to head a caretaker government to conduct the election for the new CA. Politics had gone through so many turns that a straight forward thing like holding an election was doubtful. On the other hand, after splitting from the UCPN (Maoist) party, the CPN (Maoist) party did its best to disrupt the election. They called a 10-day general strike for early November. There was a total shutdown for one day. The strike caused immense hardships to the common man. From the second day of the strike, government vehicles were provided security escorts. The CPN (Maoist) called off the general strike and limited it to a vehicle-shutdown only. Nonetheless,

the party promised sterner measures to disrupt the election as the election date drew nearer. They were planting, hoax and real, improvised explosive devices in different parts of the capital and the districts, while the government and most other parties were pushing for the election.

Meanwhile, the parties that were running for the election began their campaigning, assuring voters that the poll would be held on the pledged date. In their campaign, NC president Sushil Koirala and UCPN (Maoist) vice president Baburam Bhattarai were making speeches, reiterating that the election date would not change. NC's Ramchandra Poudel from Damauli claimed that the election would be held on the stipulated date, according to Online Khabar. The same outlet on the same day quoted Kamal Thapa saying that to leave out the CPN (Maoist) from the election was not good.

But as the election date drew near, the campaigning intensified. Clashes between the CPN (Maoists) and those parties that were for the election became evident. The competition among the parties running for the election also brewed clashes. These led to many violations of the election code of conduct for political campaigning, through acts like torching of vehicles of candidates, felling trees on to block highways falling on the campaign trails, planting improvised explosive devices and so on. This was the political scenario that made much of the election news during this pre-election period.

But, despite the pressure against the election from the CPN (Maoist) alliance, campaigning for the election began in earnest. As early as 1 November, 2013 banners started fluttering and the loudspeakers booming. The Election Commission too got down to the business of cracking down on parties with posters that were much bigger than the size allowed from early on. After the reprimands, the parties had grudgingly yielded to the code enforcement by the Election Commission.

Similar incidents occurred in Biratnagar where Bijay Kumar Gachchhadar took out a rally with hundreds of cars. The Election Commission had allowed the use of only two cars. Defiance against the code from some big guns in politics went on without obstruction. Even though the parties were aware about the right size of the posters and banners that were permitted, candidates continued to use those that they had already prepared. Only after the Election Commission was stern and said that it would disqualify the candidacy of the defaulters did most of them obliged. However, little action was taken against the media that constantly violated the media code.

Violation of the political code

ECN's political code violations included threats, terror, and vandalism, booth capturing and so on. In the first week of campaigning the CPN (Maoists) used various means to disrupt the election. With hoax and real bombs, they targeted constituencies of different candidates who were running for the election. News of this form of political violence was also flagged red for violation of the political code of conduct.

On 1 November, *kathmandutoday.com* reported that a vehicle belonging to a UCPN (Maoist) cadre was torched by CPN (Maoist) cadres in Sunsari. *News Today* reported that a bomb was found planted at the office of a UCPN-Maoist candidate, Barsha Man Pun, from Morang Constituency- 9. A clash between the Nepali Congress and the CPN (UML) cadres started when they tried to hoist their respective party



The keen ears and eyes from the fourth estate.

banners at a house in Sankhuwasabha on 4 November, *Public Times*, a local newspaper, reported.

Devi Prasad Devkota's vehicle was vandalised in Bhaktapur, reported *kathmandu today.com.* Two vehicles, belonging to a local, Bharat Shrestha, were vandalised by the boycotting Maoist party for not obeying a call for its strike on 2 November, *Nepali Express* daily said. On 7 November, the UCPN (Maoist) carried party cadres on a bus to hold a campaign meeting. In the process, they obstructed the traffic on the highway in Urlabari, Morang, *Rastriya Samacharpatra* reported.

The UCPN (Maoist) blocked the highway traffic to hold their campaign meeting at Urlabari in Morang. In doing so, the party disregarded the code of conduct completely, *setopati.com* reported.

The CPN (Maoist) called for a vehicular strike in Siraha to restrict the UCPN (Maoist) from campaigning for the election. The Nepali Congress workers threatened the UML's Bharat Khatri with death, *Public Times* reported. The item was flagged red for gross violation of the code of conduct by the NC.

A *ratopati.com* opinion piece eulogized Shaligram Jammarkatel, a UCPN-Maoist candidate from Dhading, Constituency-3 on 4 November.

International communities were also eager to make their comments public. They spoke against the 10-day strike and said that it was the right

of the people to vote and that the CPN (Maoist) call for the strike was against the people's right, reported *Onlinkhabar.com*.

Ramchandra Poudel in Damauli reiterated that the election would in no way be postponed and that the election wave was in favour of the Nepali Congress, *Online Khabar* reported on 4 November. The news was flagged yellow for slight bias.

In these items, the political leaders said that the election would be held on the stipulated date. Nepali Congress President Sushil Koirala, UCPN (Maoist) leader Baburam Bhattarai, RPP-N Chairman Kamal Thapa and Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum Chairman Bijaya Kumar Gachchhadar said the election date would not change. They said this while they were campaigning in their respective constituencies. They were all reported but flagged neutral.

Defiance against the code from some big guns in politics went on without obstruction. Even though the parties were aware about the right size of the posters and banners that were permitted, candidates continued to use those that they had already prepared.

In another news item, the the Election Commission struck off the name of Bal Krishna Dhungel and Fakir Shah from the UCPN (Maoist) candidates' list. They were contesting elections under the proportional representation category. They were deemed ineligible to run in the election. These reports were monitored on *Radio Nepal, Kantipur FM* and *Star FM*.

The CPN-Maoist called a transport strike in Siraha District to foil the UCPN-Maoist election campaign in Rajbiraj where Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Baburam Bhattarai were to address rallies, *Krishna* daily reported. Security was tightened in Inarwa after a bomb was found in front of the main gate of the Nepal Construction Entrepreneurs Association, *Krishna* daily reported. The item was flagged orange for serious violation of the political code by the Maoists.

Newspapers were also carrying news of big guns of the political parties. Madav Kumar Nepal's addresses on his campaign trail were reported by *kathmandu.com* and *Online Khabar*. Slanders against other parties by the leaders were also reported. "Those who are campaigning for multiple identities are like hermaphrodites," said Baburam Bhattarai, *Online Khabar* reported. *Mithila Bishesh*, highlighting Baburam Bhattarai's speech that said he was a leader of an international stature and was sure to bring in development in Butwal whether he won or lost, was flagged orange by our monitors for serious bias.

The "international community" said that the 10-day strike called by the CPN (Maoist) was against the people's rights and against the law, *onlinekhabar.com* reported. The news item was flagged yellow for slight political bias.

Six CPN (Maoist) cadres robbed some voters' education materials in Charanbi village in Bhojpur, *onlinekhabar.com* reported. The news item was flagged orange for serious violation of the political code. The Election Commission looked helpless in withdrawing the candidacy of Jayaraj Samyok Limbu, a candidate of Morang Constituency-2 from Forum Loktantrik. His case was similar in nature to that of Bal Krishna Dhungel who was convicted by the court for murder and was withdrawn from the proportional representation

candidacy of the UCPN (Maoist) party, *setopati.com* reported. The news item too was flagged orange for serious bias.

Channel Nepal and *Avenues* news channel also came up in the list. A *Channel Nepal* telecast presented UCPN (Maoist) Narayan Kaji Shrestha as denying using a helicopter in his campaign and said that he was wrongly represented and that he has reported this to the EC . A news clip of an NC press meet violating the political code of conduct had it that the UCPN (Maoist) was buying votes in Constituency- 2 of Kathmandu. *Channel Nepal* and *Avenues* carried that report, hence received the red flag. *Himalayan TV* was tagged orange for a news clip on parties wooing Manang is living in Kathmandu to return to Manang to vote for them. This appeared to be wrongly flagged as it is the job of parties to ask voters to return to their constituencies for voting.

Second Week

UCPN-Maoists blocked

The date for the election drew nearer. Those for the election and those against it intensified their programmes after the second week of November. Those opposing the polls were targeting campaign offices of, and places where mass meetings were planned by, big parties like the UCPN (Maoist), the CPN (UML) and the Nepali Congress. News of hoax bombs being planted in Kathmandu and other places attempted to scare the voters and deter them from going to the poll.

The major parties, however, were fully geared up and were intensifying their campaigns. So the tussle among all the political forces became more intense. Leaders and leading speakers from the UCPN (Maoist), the Nepali Congress (NC), and the CPN (UML), the main three contesting parties, were touring the country to garner an edge over the others. The UCPN (Maoist) went on with their Mechi Kali Abhiyan. This led to more clashes between the party cadres leading to political violence and, thus, to violation of the political code of conduct. The media outlets supporting one party or the other were more aggressive. Some media outlets that were supporting certain parties were literally campaigning for them. The trend of violation of both the media and political codes shot up as the election date got closer.

The clips red flagged for political violence and media code violation went up by three per cent to about seven per cent of the total clips during this week.

The Ministry of Home Affairs had already announced on the first week of November that the Nepalese Army would be mobilised, apart from the police force and the armed police force, for the election. Many including ex-home secretaries spoke against this move of the government. They reasoned that even a tussle between the army and those going against the election could lead to clashes and trigger a civil war. But the government went on with its plans, and the CPN-Maoist that had opposed the election went on with theirs to stop the election from being carried out raising the possibility of political violence.

Violation of the political code

On 8 November, the Nepalese Army defused an improvised explosive device [pressure-cooker bomb] kept at the UCPN (Maoist) Constituency-9 office in Urlabari, Morang, *Swatantra Birat Weekly* reported. A vehicle was set on fire, and a pressure cooker bomb was found near the house of a Maoist candidate running under direct election. An attack was attempted on a CPN (UML) candidate, Prakash Jwala,

from Salyan Constituency-2 when he was going on a door to door campaign, *Aguwa Samachar* reported.

A bomb attack was reported by the *Annapurna Post* on 13 November. Bombs were planted in Udayapur on 14 November. The police had to fire in the air to take control of the situation, *Morning Times* and *Ujyalo* daily reported.

Meanwhile, an UCPN (Maoist) candidate running for direct election from Sankhuwasabha 4 was attacked and two vehicles of two candidates were vandalised in Rautahat on 10 November.

On 16 November, *Hamro Karnali Khabar* reported an attack on an UML candidate by the UCPN (Maoist).

In Butwal, a female NC proportional representative candidate was physically abused by the Tarai Madhesi Loktantrik Party, reported *hamrokura.com*.

A clash between the UCPN (Maoist) and the Nepali Congress cadres caused tension in Doti on 11 November. The UCPN (Maoist) blamed the Nepali Congress for the incident, reported *Highlights Samachar*.

A *Blast Times Daily* item was flagged for gross violation of the code by UCPN (Maoist) for prohibiting other parties to hold meetings at Khejenim in Taplejung on 14 November. A *Channel Nepal* news of its 7:30 news bulletin was tagged for gross violation in its report on CPN (Maoist) leader Mohan Baidy's press conference where he disowned attacks on vehicles and blamed the government for those acts.

A *Muluki* daily news item got a red flag for reporting an obstruction by CPN (Maoist) of a UCPN (Maoist) mass meeting in Udayapur on 15 November. In the course of the campaign an IED was also set off there.

Compared to the first week, more improvised explosive devices were found at different places throughout the country. At first, unidentified actors were blamed for planting them, but later those responsible started to reveal their identities as belonging to the CPN (Maoist). Trees were felled and other barriers set up on the way to where the three main parties were campaigning. There were also hoax bombs to create confusion and fear. So, as the Election Day approached nearer uncertainty loomed because the CPN (Maoist), a major playerwas doing its best to ward it off.

A number of media outlets were flagged red or orange for their news selection and presentation. Moreover, those flagged for bias towards a certain ideology or party were doing so consistently from the day the campaign started:. Those that got flagged for media code violation and biases were the same outlets that were biased against or for one political party, and this was also reported to the Election Commission.

News biases and code violations rise

Among the FM stations *Maitri* and *Mirmire FM* drew most of the red flags and did this consistently by selecting news that favoured the two Maoist parties- the UCPN (Maoist) and the CPN (Maoist). And they drew red flags almost every day for media code violation. Newspapers also took sides and reported or predicted the victory of their candidate and projected them as iconic figures. All these were flagged for serious code violations for giving top priority to and campaigning along the party lines of the UCPN (Maoist)

and the CPN (Maoist). *Maitri* featured a recorded speech of the UCPN (Maoist) leader Prachanda from his campaign on 9 November. This was repeated again on 10 November. *Mirmire FM* was red flagged for broadcasting a news item against Prachanda who used a helicopter on the campaign. It was earlier reported that helicopters couldnot be used for campaigns except with prior permission. *Maitri FM* got flagged again for the fourth time in a row on 12 November, this time for gross violation and serious bias for broadcasting an extremely unbalanced and partisan speech of the UCPN (Maoist) leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal who was on his last leg of the election campaign. These FM stations had consistently earned red flags from the beginning.

Similar was the case with ABC TV that was literally campaigning for the UCPN (Maoist) and was flagged for most of its news broadcast for many days. For proof to show how the channel had violated the media the EC requested the Nepal Press Institute (NPI) to record their programmes. On the afternoon of 14 November, the NPI recorded and uploaded a three hour long clip and sent it to the EC with the monitor's analysis as "REMARKS" on how the channel was violating the codes of the EC.

Triyuga Daily from Udayapur was also flagged red a few times for similar reasons. On 16 November most of its front page coverage was given to promote an NC candidate for which it was flagged red. These biases generally happened intermittently in the print media but not consistently like in the electronic media.

Election still uncertain: Baidya still not convinced

Up until 14 November, the general people had doubts as to whether the election would take place. Aggression was on the rise as the CPN (Maoist) were buckling up in the last days prior to the election to ensure that the election would not be held. These affected the political situation and gave rise to more violence and violation of the political and media codes.

Analysing the situation, the *Annapurna Post* wrote on 14 November, that on the one hand the government had announced stern action against those against the election, but on the other the CPN (Maoist) were attempting to train themselves to find means to make their strike more effective. Unless the CPN (Maoist) backed out, clashes were imminent and may go on to the day of elections. It was not just the *Annapurna Post* that spelled doubts. A newspaper editorial from Jhapa wrote that because of the start of violence, free and fair election was becoming doubtful in the east because the Limbuwans had warned of "physical action" against the 33-party alliance. Reports from another newspaper from Jhapa envisaged even more violence. They were flagged orange for serious bias.

Blast Times Daily was flagged for gross violation for its report on the UCPN (Maoist) prohibiting other parties to hold meetings at Khejenim in Taplejung. *Hamro Karnali Khabar* reported an attack on a UML cadre by a UCPN (Maoist) cadre. The paper was also red flagged for gross violation of the political code. *Darshan Daily* from Morang also got red on 14 November for news on the rising trend of placing suspicious objects at different places to incite fear. A newspaper from Jhapa had an editorial derogating the violent attack on public transport. This item was red flagged for a political code offense on the same date.

Meanwhile, industrialists had vowed to keep their industries open despite

the call of a *bandh* on 9 November by the CPN (Maoist) after the government committed itself to compensate for the loss incurred on that day.

Election Campaign: Leaders attack other leaders

UCPN (Maoist) leader Prachanda called on all to vote in favour of federalism, secularism and a republic and appealed to all to give his Maoist party a two-thirds majority. He said that the CPN (UML) leader Jhalanath Khanal was the Number One betrayer. He was addressing a meeting in Sarlahi, *kathmandutoday.com* reported on 8 November. The news item was flagged orange for serious bias. On 10 November, in Kapilbastu leader of the UCPN (Maoist) Pushpa Kamal Dahal accused the CPN (UML) of not having a clear perspective and betraying the country, *kathmandutoday.com* reported. This item was flagged orange for serious bias.

Nepali Congress President Sushil Koirala, fearing defeat in Constituency-3 in Chitwan, attempted to coordinate with the CPN (UML) to pull out a win, *Onsnews.com* reported. The news item was flagged orange for serious bias on 14 November.

Reports Times of Janakpur printed a photo of the NC election symbol on 15 November making it a gross violator of the media code.

News 24 was on the gross violation list for its 19:30 programme on 16 November. The channel was flagged for character assassination of Bhumi Raj Niraula of the Chure Bhavar party.

During an interaction in Surkhet, Chairman of the CPN (Marxist-Leninist) CP Mainali claimed that his party was the only nationalist party in the country, *Surkhet Daily* said. This item was flagged red for gross violation of the code. This should merely have been a case of bias in reporting rather than a gross violation of the code.

Using children in campaigns: another political code offense

Using children in campaigns is a code offense. In this election some parties went as far as to shut down schools to take children to election campaigns. There were five news items in the week that were red flagged for reporting use of children for election purposes.

Teachers too were reported on 8 November going on the campaign trail shutting down their school in Baglung. The school remained shut until 6 Mangsir, reported *Annapurna Post.* The item was flagged red for the political code violation. *Pokhara Patra* carried news about the UCPN (Maoist) using children for election campaigns in Melamchi on 8 November. Political parties had been using children to put up posters and for other campaign activities in Saptari, reports said on 8 November.

Kalpristha carried a news item on 11 November saying six thousand school children were used for election campaigns. This happened in Melamchi, Kailali and several other places. *Pashcim Today* got red for its report on UCPN (Maoist) using children in campaigns in Kailali, on 14 November.

A *Muluki* daily *news* was also red flagged for a photo of EC officials using children carrying ballot boxes on 15 November.

Janakpur Today reported on the action taken by the Election Commission on cues from the monitoring team against those violating the Election Codes in Janakpur.

Among the 37 news items that had the orange band for serious bias, Nepali Patra and Janabidroha were banded for criticizing foreign observers.

Third Week

This was the most eventful week and it was when the election campaigning peaked. The last day of election campaign was on 16 November. This was followed by a zero hour, a period of 48 hours of silence before the election, when no campaigning was allowed. The Election Day was 19 November.

Of the monitored items during this period, the number of red flagged items was the highest in the first three days, constituting 18 per cent of the total number of clips. That figure is the highest for the entire monitoring period.

The campaigning stopped 48 hours before the election date after the final crescendo on the evening of 16 November. But, again, during the Zero Hour, or the Silent Period, the parties and electoral candidates found new ways to give one last push to reach out to the voters. Some candidates ignored the Zero Hour while others found new ways to woo the voters. A buffet was hosted by a candidate while others reached out to the voters through the social media using thousands of cell phone messages. News items of threats, intra-party violence and the resistance of the CPN (Maoist) against the election continued as they did before. Many CPN (Maoist) cadres doing the rounds to deter the election were already rounded off and were under police custody.

Nonetheless, barricades were raised and hurdles were created against parties that were taking part in the election. The media outlets that were giving priority to news items of their preferred parties were doing that till the start of the third week also.

Intra-party tussle continued. The court ordered the CPN (Maoist) party to withdraw all its strikes to which the Mohan Baidya faction paid little heed. Baidya said in a statement that he was going to continue with the strike, whatever the order.

Bomb blasts continue

On November 15, incidents of bomb blasts occurred in different parts of the country. *Ujyalo Daily* reported an explosion in Udayapur. Police had had to resort to blank fires to take the situation under control. *Udghosh Dainik* reported that a bomb was found at a CPN (UML) office in Rangeli, Morang. *Naya Patrika* reported a bomb attack on a bus in Kathmandu.

Kantipur daily said that a CPN (Maoist) cadre was injured while he was setting up a bomb on a microbus in Kathmandu. *Udghosh* daily reported a bomb attack on a UCPN (Maoist) function in Bhojpur. There was also a bomb blast in Mugu. *Upatyaka FM* reported that the home of the chairman of the Education Union was set ablaze in Gorkha. *Setopati.com* reported an attack on CPN (UML) cadres by their UCPN (Maoist) counterparts in Rukum.

On 16 November the court ordered the CPN (Maoist) to withdraw the strike, reported *Mechi Kali Times*. Baidya, however, defied the order and said that he was going on with the strike. This was reported by many TV stations and FMs along with News24 TV. Defying the court order was an open violation of the political code by the Maoist party, hence deserving a red flag.

The Campaign Silence Period or Zero Hour

The campaign Zero Hour period started in the evening of 16 November. This 48-hour period was a time for rest

Vigorous Campaign

The media made the election their key agenda and campaigned vigorously for it with a belief that it was only a new and inclusive CA that could give a reliable outlet to the crisis-ridden nation. It continued to press the key stakeholders and urged the people for their enthusiastic participation in the election. The media made the unilateral call for a free, fair and credible election. Different media outlets together instilled confidence in the electorate. In their opinion columns and editorial writings, the media outlets constantly pushed the voters for electing a new CA with fresh mandate to promulgate post-monarchy Nepal's first constitution.

and restraint to mark the end of the campaigning period. But the parties and the media were making one last push. Some of candidates still went on campaigning. Others discretely were sending SMSs' from their homes. The flagged items that grossly violated the media or political code reached 11 per cent of the total number of clips. Most of the items falling within this band violated the Zero Hour code by publishing advertisements, holding rallies and putting on banners. Opinion surveys are prohibited during Zero Hour.

Political violence continues

The Election Commission had to take action against 18 media stations that day for violating the Zero Hour code.

On 16 November there were news items of a few election related violence that also got flagged red. A clash between the CPN (UML) leader Rajendra Pandey and the UCPN (Maoist) youth group Young Communist League (YCL) was reported by *Channel Nepal. Himalayan TV* had two similar reports. One clip showed a bomb blast in Mugu and another clip showed an attack on a passenger bus in Kathmandu. The bus was heading towards Gaur from Kathmandu. The two clips were aired in its 8:00 pm news bulletin. An NC activist named Tara Pudasaini's house was set on fire in Gorkha, *ratopati.com* and *kathmandutoday.com* reported. CPN(UML) cadres vandalised and set an UCPN (Maoist) cadre's motorcycle on fire. The news report came from the two media outlets respectively. Similarly, *setopati.com* reported that the ballot boxes and other election materials had been snatched away by unidentified persons.

On 17 November, there was a news item saying that five hundred thousand voters did not know how to vote.

The Morning Times reported Subas Nembang declaring that the CPN (UML) was to become the Number One party, a biased report in his favour. Rastriya Janamukti Party Youth Force chairman accused the main parties of spreading rumours about his party candidates resigning from his party to lend support to them.

A news item by *kathmandutoday.com* was red flagged for election prediction based on a personal survey by Purusottam Dahal. Opinion surveys are prohibited during this period by the election code.

The Election Commission asked ABC television and 15 other media houses for clarification for publishing or broadcasting items in violation of the media code even during the Zero Hour, reported *kathmanutoday.com.*

Daily Express was marked red for publishing Sadhbhawana Party candidate Sanjay Shah in an ad in its latest issue. The same was done for

Samaya weekly that advertised the Nepali Congress symbol and candidate Sushil Koirala running for the election from Banke-3. *Udghosh Daily* reported that the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum chairman Bijay Kumar Gachchhadar violated the Zero Hour code by taking out a rally in his constituency in Sunsari-3, *Udghosh* reported. *Naya Corse* was red flagged for publishing an appeal of Purna Kumari Subedi and *Adarsha Nepal* published a photo ad of the CPN (Maoist) crossing the line of the Zero Hour code. Other news items that were red flagged for gross violation comprised highlights and personal partial surveys favouring party lines.

Himalayan TV reported that UCPN (M) leaders and candidates were still campaigning with banners and posters in Kathmandu Valley. UCPN (Maoist) chief Prachanda attended a blood donation programme at Asan, Himal Sharma joined a party meeting in Putali Sadak and Hisila Yami, a UCPN (Maoist) candidate, went out on the campaign trail in her constituency in Kathmandu. *Channel Nepal* in its 19:30 bulletin, reported that Rajendra Pandey, CPN (UML)'s Dhading candidate of Constituency- 3 went campaigning stealthily door-to-door and clashed with UCPN (Maoist) cadres who were also busy campaigning.

ABC TV was again flagged red for gross violation of the Zero Hour code as it had aired Pushpa Kamal Dahal's assessment of his own Mechi Kali campaign through its Outlook programme. Similar zero hour code violations were reported by *Star FM*. The channel was flagged red for favourably presenting RPP (Nepal) Chairman Kamal Thapa. *Star FM* was marked for campaigning for the Nepali Congress in its 6.00 AM news bulletin. In its 8:30 bulletin the channel aired an UCPN (Maoist) candidates' appeal to vote for a majority for his party as only a majority government would be able to transform the country.

Of the 15 television channels monitored that day, 11 of them got flagged red for gross violation of the election codes of conduct, two for serious bias and two for slight bias while none were flagged neutral.

One news related to election violence broadcast by *Upatyaka FM* was about the home of the chairman of the Education Union being set ablaze in Gorkha. A daily reported that a bomb went off in Golbazar in Morang. *Kathmandutoday.com* reported a clash between cadres of the Nepali Congress and the CPN (UML) in Ilam. *Setopati.com* reported an attack on Nepal Students Union district chairman Harihar Sharma by Janamorcha workers.

Armed forces personnel took control of a petrol bomb in Banke, *Onlinekhabar.com* said. Another news item, on security workers diffusing bombs, reported by *Kathmandutoday.com* was tagged neutral. *The Kathmandu Post* reported that 25 people were injured in a pre-poll clash in Morang. *Ujyalo Patra* reported of a bomb planted outside the UCPN (Maoist) campaign office in Golbazar, Siraha.

An *Avenues TV* item was flagged red for its report on inter- party clashes in Tanahu, Dhading, Gorkha and Okhaldhunga. *Sram Srijana Daily* reported bombs found in different parts of Kailali prior to the poll date on 18 November. Twenty five people were injured in an intra-party clash in Morang, *The Kathmandu Post* reported.

Cut throat campaigning

A *Kathmandutoday.com* news that Puspha Kamal Dahal distributed three million rupees to buy votes was flagged red for violating the media code as the

news item had no firm evidence and was negative-campaigning against the Maoist leader.

A hamro kura.com item was flagged orange for serious bias for alleging that Nepali Congress cadres had confiscated food kept to feed the voters by UCPN (Maoist) candidate Lekh Raj Bhatta in Kailali. *Setopati.com* made public a secret recording of UCPN (Maoist) chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) instructing his cadres to secure his win in the election by applying any means necessary, including money, in Constituency-5 of Kathmandu. In its report an election monitoring organisation named GEOC said that some parties were buying votes to win the election. In a press conference, the organisation reported that money was being doled out to woo voters on 18 November. The report was flagged red for violation of the political code by the candidates.

Mirmire FM received an orange flag for serious bias for its news item about the 33-party alliance holding a meeting and asking people to refrain from voting. *Mirmire FM* was marked for serious bias for its partisan views in its 6:00 and 6:30 roadcasts. In the clip that was monitored, it said that the election was taking place because of the intervention of foreign powers. In another of its clip, *Mirmire* derogated the election process and said that the poll booths were like army camps making it doubtful that the elections would be impartial.

An *ABC* news was marked for gross violation for propagating the UCPN (Maoist) election campaign and grossly transgressing all boundaries of the media code. In its 1:00 pm news, the channel aired a 40-minute clip where Maoist candidates were allowed to broadcast their views, one by one. In another news clip, the same channel broadcast different views of Pushpa Kamal Dahal made public while he was in the Tarai during his Mechi-Kali campaign. This channel had also covered those activities of the Maoist party. On many occasions, live and recorded speeches of the UCPN (Maoist) leader were broadcast as he was electioneering through his Mechi-Kali campaign.

ECN's attention

As the number of media code violations increased during the Zero Hour, the Election Commission began efforts at containing it. On 18 November, the Election Commission requested NPI's media monitoring unit to record a whole day's programme of those media outlets that had defied the media code and to send a summary report showing proof of their violations.

NP then recorded seven video clips throughout the day lasting several hours each on 18 November 2013. The clips showed *ABC* television officials challenging the ECN decision to take action against the news channel. On the eve of the election (18 November 2013), at 8 am, *ABC TV* presented an interview with its managing director cum news chief, Shubhashanker Kandel. Kandel, who claimed that the channel had not violated any code of ethics. He accused the government of trying to stop the channel from broadcasting against the spirit of press freedom. He also lambasted the ECN officials in a derogatory manner.

In the afternoon, the channel repeated the same interview time and again with the following text flashing on the screen: *Banda gara dusprachar* [Stop the misinformation] purporting that it was the ECN that was doing the misinforming. Instead of relenting the channel was challenging the Election Commission flashing slugs directed

at the ECN asking it to stop the misinformation as it was against the fundamental right of press freedom. They rationalised and justified what they did without any heed to any of the election codes issued to the media by the ECN. Their argument: shutting down the media is equivalent to obstructing press freedom, a fundamental right provided by the Interim Constitution.

Of the 13 TV news items monitored in the evening, eight were red flagged for gross violation, one got flagged for serious bias and three for slight bias. Of the channels monitored *ABC* TV was flagged red for gross violation of the media code of conduct for seven of its nine items uploaded during the Silent Period. In these items, the channel is seen defends itself against the action taken by the Election Commission.

Meanwhile, the channel continued Zero Hour code violations by airing campaign activities going on in the districts and making favourable predictions for the UCPN (Maoist) party. In its 21:05 bulletin of 18 November, the channel was red flagged for airing interviews of Krishna Jwala and Somat Ghimire who defended the channel against the Election Commission action. In another clip, Om Sharma does the same and says that the reactionary forces do not like Nepal becoming a republic and a federation and that they were hatching plots and imaginary thoughts to defame the channel.

On a programme called "ABC and the code of conduct" that was uploaded on ECN's request, journalist Shyam Shrestha and Shuva Shanker Kadel said that the parties, other than the UCPN (Maoist), were violating the political code, instead. On its "Operation Big News" newsmagazine, the ABC presenter committed gross violation of the Zero Hour code by praising the UCPN (Maoist) and lambasting all the other parties. The presenter said that the Unified Maoists have played a constructive role from the time of the insurgency up to now. He also presented reports of the party activities in the districts with pre-poll predictions in the party's favour. In "ABC and Shuva Shanker Kadel", Kadel defends *ABC* against the action of ECN.

In other cases, *Janamanch* got flagged red for a news story about the Chief Election Commissioner misappropriating funds. Similar political trends figured in other news items and were flagged serious, slight bias and neutral. Of the 11 TV channels covered on 16 November, four received the red flag for gross violation of the election codes of conduct, one was flagged for serious bias while six for slight bias.

Election Day: 19 November

On Election Day, the electronic media were reporting live what was happening throughout the country. Reports from the radio were about events in different parts of the country. News of booth capturing and attacks on polling booths were the main code violation clips monitored by online media.

Political violence goes to the polling centres

Setopati.com reported an attack on a Nepali Congress village unit chairman of Balkot in Rukum and a UCPN (Maoist) attack on CPN (UML) cadres with *khukuris* in Dolakha at the Thulo Patal Poll Centre. *Rastriyasadarbhadaily.com* got red for reporting code violation. It was a news item on people being terrorized by the discovery of bombs in Constituency-2 in Rukum. Two news items from *setopati.com* and one from *ratopati.com* were flagged orange for serious bias. *Ratopati.com*

reported booth capturing in different places in Gorkha. *Setopati.com* said the members of Baburam Bhattarai's own party captured four booths in his constituency in Gorkha. Nepali Congress candidate Amresh Singh was reported to have captured booths in Sarlahi by *setopati.com.* These items were tagged for serious bias.

In the print media, *Kanchanjunga Times* reported an attempt to abduct CPN (UML) leader Subas Nembang in Panchthar. Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum workers vandalised the vehicle of Udaya Chaudhari, a CPN (UML) candidate, in Itahari, according to another paper. Both items were marked red for political violence and violation of the code.

Ujyalo Patra said five people had been arrested for campaigning against UML candidate Guru Prasad Baral, in Morang. The news was flagged red for Zero Hour code violation. *Janabidroha* was flagged red for predicting an UCPN (Maoist) win. *Reporters Time* was flagged red for gross violation of the Zero Hour code by publishing Madheshí biased news. Six people, including five candidates, were asked to clarify for their code violation. The Saptari District Election office asked for the clarification, according to *Udghosh*.

Arun Tamor bimonthly reported that the CPN (Maoist) was preparing strategies to oppose the polls in Udayapur. *Karobar* reported that four people were arrested in Gaighat for activities against the election. *Karobar* said 80 people were sued in court for public offence in Purbanchal. It also reported that a petrol bomb was found near a polling centre in Kailali and thus flagged orange. Bombs were also placed at different places in Kanchanpur. *Ajur* daily said Shiva Sena burned voters' identity cards. These items were flagged for serious bias.

Ten media outlets received flags for gross violation of the code. *Makawanpur Radio* was red flagged for violation of the political code issued by the Election Commission. A bomb was set off at the CPN (UML) party office in Bharatpur. Similarly, *Mirmire FM* received an orange flag from NPI monitors for serious bias when reporting that a Nepali Congress worker got injured during police firing when he attacked a sleeping CPN (UML) candidate in Udayapur.

A *Mirmire FM*'s report was red flagged for another violation of the political code of conduct. It reported that the UCPN (Maoist) chief ordered his cadres to apply all means to win the election through a tape made public recently. An item that the station aired was also red flagged for saying that candidates were luring voters with money and goodies even after the time for open campaigning was over. This was reported by a Civil Society leader.

Fourth week

Post election period

The evening after the polling day, when the counting of the votes were in full swing, almost all the channels focused on the counting. Fittingly, they started giving the latest results of the top three candidates, where the Nepali Congress and the (CPN UML) were leading and the UCPN (Maoist) was trailing behind. Early poll results started showing an unexpected defeat for the party that had garnered the most seats during the 2008 CA election. This led to the development of a chaotic political scenario in the following week.

On 21 November, the UCPN (Maoist) pulled out its representatives from the vote counting venue alleging massive rigging in the election and threatening to boycott the Constituent Assembly. Much of the news items monitored revolved



No mean feat: Election security.

around this reaction and the other parties and international organisations urged them to return to the mainstream. The Election Commission naturally refuted the rigging allegation the next day and gave a go ahead to the counting till it was completed.

In due time, the results of the candidates were announced despite the UCPN (Maoist) staying out of the counting process. The victors held rallies, and they were interviewed by different media adding to the post-election frenzy. By 29 November, the results of all the first-past-the-post seats (FPTP) were out and the Nepali Congress party, by winning most seats in the parliament, became the largest party. It was to lead the new government in partnership with the second largest party CPN (UML). The UCPN (Maoist) was relegated to the third position to the total disbelief of the party's leaders.

After the election, although the election codes were lifted and did not apply, many monitors continued to flag the monitored news items like before. The post election period produced some confusion among media monitors as well. The election code was still on for some time even though the campaign period was over. The monitors were told to adjust to the situation and file their clippings accordingly. But the monitors went on doing what they were doing before. As a result, the same UCPN (Maoist) issue was flagged differently by different monitors. The flags ranged from slight bias to serious biases and gross violation of the media code.

News of the UCPN (Maoist) boycott came through *NTV, Channel Nepal* and *Himalayan TV.* Similarly, at a press conference organised by Maoist leader Agni Sapkota in Sindhuplchowk, he said that the election did not represent the true mandate of the people and that the election was a conspiracy, according to *ABC TV*. Sapkota told *Maitri FM* that such a large scale rigging of the votes throughout the country cannot be ignored and demanded a re-polling. This item was flagged yellow. On 22 November, again, over the "Operation Big News" programme of *ABC* channel the Maoists broadcast a feature report where it said that [empty] ballot boxes were found at police posts and questioned their presence there. "Such instances can be found in different parts of the country and that it was proof that voting was rigged," the channel said. This news item was marked for serious bias.

Meanwhile, Kathmandu District Election Officer clarified that the ballot boxes were kept as backup to fill any contingent need in police posts near polling booths, *Avenues TV* reported. This item was flagged neutral.

On 22 November, Barsa Man Pun said that his party was tricked and conspired against by giving them papers [Form No. 58] that were different from the directives given by the Election Commission. "The national and international forces have done this with the purpose of not letting them institutionalise their agenda," he said to *Himalayan TV*.

On 24 November, *ABC* aired the upcoming review meeting of the UCPN (Maoist) party. In the meeting, spokesperson Agni Sapkota said that the party reflected on its own weaknesses and things that other parties did to contribute to bring about the current results. He also said that the election was rigged. The item was flagged yellow for slight bias.

On 26 November *Maitri FM* reported that the UCPN (Maoist) had hinted on reviewing its previous decision to reject the election and boycott the Constituent Assembly. Barsa Man Pun said that rigging took place in some places in a planned way. "We want investigation on the rigging. We will gladly accept the mandate and the decision of the people," another news item of *Maitri FM* said. *Maitri* also said that ten parties, including the UCPN (Maoist), had demanded a high level investigation commission to investigate the "election fraud".

On 29 November, UCPN (Maoist) leader Baburam Bhattarai said that ballot boxes were handed over to the Nepali Army for transportation for the first time in the electoral history of Nepal without any formal decision regarding it. If any attempt is made to bring back the Constitution of 2047, he warned that there would be a strong counter action to it, *Nepal Samacharpatra* said. This was flagged as a neutral item.

On 24 November, in a neutral item broadcast at 19:00, *Avenues TV* showed Chief Election Commissioner Neel Kantha Uprety requesting all not to doubt the credibility of the election. He said that the election process had been transparent and that the parties, candidates and media persons had access to the election process. Uprety had said this in a press conference.

Meanwhile, on 22 November, other party leaders and international leaders asked the UCPN (Maoist) to accept the results of the election. NC leader Sushil Koirala and Jimmy Carter of the Carter Centre requested the UCPN (Maoist) to accept the election results, said *Himalayan TV* and *Channel Nepal*. The news was marked with red and orange for gross violation of the political code and serious political bias respectively.

On 29 November, NC president Sushil Koirala said the UCPN (Maoist) could go to the Electoral Court with evidence if they thought that the election was rigged, *Avenues TV* reported.

Election results

Almost all media outlets focused on bringing out the latest election results as counting was progressing fast in Kathmandu Valley and outside. News items about election results and pledges were the main issues in the media after the poll results flowed in. The victors took out victory rally and made their pledges to the people on their development plans.

Upatyaka FM said that the polling that was stopped in Humla the day before was being re-conducted peacefully on 22 November.

Himalayan TV said that the UCPN (Maoist) had taken out victory rallies in Saptari after its candidate for Constituency-2 Ashok Kumar Mandal managed a slender win over his Nepali Congress rival. The TVs and FMs, providing coverage included *Choice FM, Gorkha FM*, *Namaste FM*, *Rupandehi Radio*, *Argakhanchi Radio*, *Buddha Awaj* and *Machapuchre FM*, besides other FMs in Kathmandu Valley on 23 November.

After winning the last Constituent Assembly election corrupt ministers misusing the Madhes name were chased away by the people in this election, *Taja Khabar* of 26 November said.

New parliament-elects had started to visit villages right after their win because the villagers had complained about their long absences after each election, *Rajdhani Daily* wrote.

A complaint was lodged at the Constituent Assembly Court demanding annulment of the poll in Solukhumbu, *The Kathmandu Post* said.

The temporary police personnel hired to mind the election processes were paid one billion and 260 million rupees, reported *kathmandutoday.com* on 26 November. The 45 thousand temporary police personnel hired for the CA election of 2070 B.S. were seen off. Seventy thousand temporary policemen were hired for the last election, *Kantipur TV* reported.

The UCPN (Maoist) organised a press conference to make public the claim that ballot papers were found in Nepalese Army barracks in Jhapa, according to *Janaabidroha* on 27 November.

Of the 100 TV items monitored on 26 November, ten were marked for slight violation of the code. All others were neutral. Narayan Kaji Shrestha of the UCPN (Maoist) party claimed that votes had been rigged at the time of transportation of the ballot boxes. The boxes were kept overnight in barracks instead of taking them directly to the counting booths, he said. This *Avenues Television* report was flagged yellow for slight bias. The CPN (UML) leader Jhalanath Khanal was to address a victory rally to be organised to mark the winning of its new parliamentarians in Biratnagar on Mangsir 13.

Political violence: sabotage

There were many incidents of intra-party clashes. The clashes erupted after one faction of the party accused the other faction of sabotaging the victory of their own party. This nature of violence was typical of the post election phase in contrast to the pre-poll violence that started when one party clashed with another. The incidences of political violence were red flagged for violation

of the political code. Of course, the code had fallen to disuse since the polls.

An item flagged red for political violation of the code was carried by *karobar.com.* In the news Dirgha Raj Sodari, a Constituency-4 NC candidate, attacked Khadga Saud accusing him of sabotaging for the former's loss in the election on 23 November. A *Hamro Karnali Khabar* news said the Nepali Congress youth force Tarun Dal padlocked its own office in Kalikot demanding action against partymen who sabotaged the election against their own party.

The UCPN-Maoist obstructed Nepali Congress leader Ram Sharan Mahat in Nuwakot from coming to Kathmandu after addressing a victory rally organised to mark his win from Constituency-2 on 27 November, *Mountain TV* said.

In total, 10, 491 news items were monitored. There were 6167 print items, 828 online, 2094 radio and 1402 TV items. There were 586 items that were red flagged in print, 61 in the online section and 44 radio and 21 TV clips.

In a press conference, the Nepali Congress demanded that the government take action against those responsible for an incident that happened during the Zero Hour on Mangsir 3 and Mangsir 4. In the incident, more than 20 of its party workers were injured, some of them critically. This *Kantipur* daily report was red flagged for gross violation of the political code. *Ajur* daily reported that the NC's Sunsari unit was going to revolt if their workers were not released from custody by the authorities. The press release issued by the party on 27 November said that their workers were put under custody for criminal offense without proper investigation. Binod Limbu, a Youth Force leader, was attacked by unknown persons in Sunsari for which, NC claimed, they were wrongly accused and made culprits for the attack.

Naya Patrika of 28 November reported a UML decision to go to the court against a Nepali Congress cadre for firing a gun on the Election Day in Dolakha. They said it was a criminal offense. *Janaprahar* weekly wrote on 26 November that Baburam Bhattarai captured poll booths by keeping the media persons and voters out in Gorkha.

On 25 November, Nepali Congress leader Sushil Koirala met with UCPN (Maoist) leader Prachanda in Kathmandu requesting him to accept the election results and to join the Constituent Assembly. The UCPN (Maoist) was under pressure to accept the election results and join the Constituent Assembly, *Onsnews.com* said.

The Kathmandu Post's report on the members of the diplomatic community in Kathmandu, and former US President Jimmy Carter, urging UCPN (Maoist) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal to stay within the new Constituent Assembly process was yellow-flagged.

The Himalayan Times reported that US Ambassador Peter W Bodde called on Unified Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal and urged him to respect the people's verdict. This news was flagged yellow for slight bias.

The European Union met with the Chairman of the Nepali Congress Sushil Koirala and discussed the political developments. They congratulated Koirala for his party's success in the election of the Constituent Assembly, according to Ram Sharan Mahat, senior leader of the same party. This was a neutral item from *Avenues TV* on 27 November.

The Himalayan Times said that the Indian ambassador congratulated NC Chairman Sushil Koirala for leading in the vote count at the latter's residence in Maharajgunj. The same daily said that ex-chief of the Indian secret service agency, Peter Henen, met Prachanda and Baburam Bhattarai telling them not to panic from the election results and briefed them of the future plan they were to follow on 26 November.

American ambassador Peter W Bodde met senior leader of UCPN (Maoist) Baburam Bhattarai at the latter's residence in Sanepa on 28 November, according to *NTV*. This item was flagged neutral.

Foreign envoys accelerated their activities even as the results of the proportional representation were coming in. The ambassadors of India, China, and the European Union and the USA were meeting different leaders, *Nepal FM* reported on 28 November. *Upatyaka FM* added that the ambassadors were putting pressure on the UCPN (Maoist) to join the Constituent Assembly.

On 29 November, the President of the Nepali Congress met with Japanese ambassador Masasasi Ogawab at the former's residence. They discussed the latest political developments of the country, *NTV* reported. Sushil Koirala also met Chinese ambassador Wu Xuntai and was congratulated for his party's win, This neutral item was from *Himalayan TV*.

The Chinese government was providing Nepal with 667.1 million rupees to buy six aircraft. An agreement was reached between the Nepali and the Chinese governments, *Himalayan TV* reported on 29 November.

According to a neutral news item aired on *Avenues TV*, senior leader of the CPN (UML) Madhav Kumar Nepal met with different ambassadors to discuss the political situation and forming of the Constitution.

Meanwhile, *Mountain TV* said that the Minister of Foreign Affairs remained oblivious of the breaches in diplomatic protocol even as the diplomats made rounds to congratulate the winning party leaders. This was a neutral item broadcast on 26 November.

The victors

According to a *Tamakoshi Sandesh* of 27 November, 26 indigenous people from the major parties were elected to the Constituent Assembly. Ten women candidates were elected in the 2013 Constituent Assembly election from the first past the post criteria- six from the Nepali Congress, three from the CPN (UML) and one from the UCPN (Maoist), according to Nepal FM.

The Nepalese Army refuted a *Karobar* item that said that the Army had raised serious objections to the UCPN (Maoist) accusation that it was involved in vote rigging. Meanwhile, *Himalayan TV* said that Election Commissioner Ayodhi Prasad Yadav, on November 27, refuted allegations about the election being rigged and requested the parties not to doubt it.

CPN (Maoist) discussed the political scenario in the new context after the election results in a meeting organised in Budhanagar. This was flagged a neutral item aired by *Sagarmatha TV*.

Government formation

Ratopati.com's opinion piece on the tussle between the Congress and the CPN (UML) over who was to be the president and prime minister received the flag. *Himalayan TV* was also yellow flagged for slight bias for an item on a

dispute regarding the continuity of the current president and vice president in their respective positions even after the formation of the new CA. The Nepali Congress was saying that the president should continue in office; while other parties thought he should be replaced, the *Himalayan TV* said.

National Election Observers Committee (NEOC) claimed that the election was historic and was conducted in a fair, free and peaceful manner. This was another yellow flagged item for slight bias from *Himalayan TV*.

Chairman of the CPN (UML) Jhalanath Khanal requested president of the Congress Party, Sushil Koirala, to lead a consensus government. This was a *Himalayan TV* news on 29 November.

In an interview with *Upatyaka FM*, a Samyukta Janamorcha leader said that a national government should be formed to include all parties. He claimed that ethnic issues and regional issues, raised by other parties have been defeated. "Our party has lost but we will not go about crying around after losing the election. Although, our party has lost, the nation has won," he said. This was a neutral item and was flagged green.

UCPN leader Prachanda went to the election without paying heed to astrologers' advice, according to a report of *Dibya Chakchu* weekly. *Chahara* weekly reported that Prachanda had to bear a shameful defeat because he went along with the designs of Indian and American secret service agents while it benefited him. The agents pulled him down from his pedestal later leading to his defeat, the weekly said.

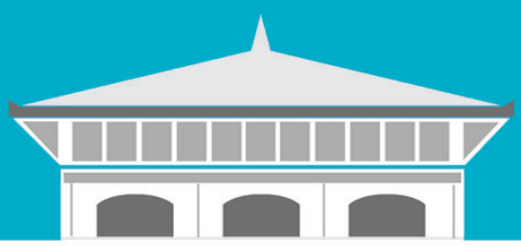
A news item of *National News* said that Jimmy Carter visited India to be briefed before coming to Nepal as an election observer. *Sanghu* weekly reported that the negative effect of Nepali Christians campaigning for UCPN (Maoist) ultimately resulted in its defeat. The same newspaper said that ethnic federalism is now unacceptable to the people.

Hindu followers demanded that Nepal be declared a Hindu nation on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Hadiababa at Hadiababa Mandir In Nepalgunj, according to, *Rajdhani* daily's issue of 25 November.

Of the 122 parties that participated in the Constituent Assembly election, 92 parties will not have their representation, *Nepal FM* reported on 29 November.

In total, 10, 491 news items were monitored. There were 6167 print items, 828 online, 2094 radio and 1402 TV items. There were 586 items that were red flagged in print, 61 in the online section and 44 radio and 21 TV clips. Serious biases totalled 1524 in print, 191 in online, 168 radios and 146 TV. Slight biases were 3661 in print, 510 in online, 1850.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS



1. INTRODUCTION

As is said so often, information is power. In this equation, the news media play a variety of important roles. They report on the current events from around the world, provide frameworks for interpretation, mobilise the citizenry with respect to various matters, reproduce predominant culture and, of course, entertain. Many of these functions are reinforced during election campaigns and the media become the principal forum where the electoral competition is played out. Freedom of expression is a human right and an essential attribute of democracy pursuant to which the media have the right to broadcast, with no prior censorship, information and opinions based on their selection criteria within the framework of respect for certain principles such as accuracy and impartiality. At the same time, one of the fundamental rights of citizens is the freedom to obtain information through the mass media. That implies that all those who play a role in social, political or economic life should be able to make their voices heard through the media.

In an electoral context, the need to preserve pluralism of information takes on fundamental importance, for citizens have the right to be able to take stock of the political options, the candidacies and their proposals. To ensure that this indeed happens, it is fundamental that all candidates have access to the media in equal conditions and with no discrimination whatsoever. Only to the extent that the citizenry is able to receive sufficient and rigorous information from all options will they be able to make a free and informed choice so one can speak of substantially democratic elections.

Nepal has a diverse media environment, with media divided along political lines. Many outlets remain strongly influenced by their owners, and only a few of them succeed in pursuing a more independent editorial policy.

Against this background, media monitoring can be defined as:

- A technique of scientific observation producing reliable and rigorous results;
- A way to study the production and performance of the media in a systematic and impartial way;
- A tool to promote basic rights re-

lated to freedom of expression and right to participate in public life.

Monitoring involves not only the time devoted to subjects but all the factors shaping a campaign on the media. Elections do not only consist of candidate but also a whole set of dynamics and groups that play a role in the elections and are active in the processes and production of mass communication.

Media monitoring, therefore, focuses on different aspects and targets:

- Visibility of political actors and groups;
- Quality of their coverage;
- Main bias related to their coverage;
- Issue of campaign;
- Civic education for voters;
- Infringements of the relevant laws regulating and protecting media activity.

If properly conducted, media monitoring is a practical and constructive way to support democratic and fair elections. Findings and conclusions of media monitoring can have an influence on the awareness and behaviour of four main target groups:

- Regulatory bodies controlling media activity;
- Politicians and candidates;
- Citizens, voters and associations of civil society;
- Journalists and media professionals.

Media monitoring constitutes an effort to study and produce reliable information on media performance that are of growing and changing importance both for citizens and the political classes. For this reason, it is vital to undertake it by employing methodological standards, professional commitment, rigor in data gathering and interpretation. This brief overview is not intended to be exhaustive. Rather it constitutes an attempt to provide media monitoring units with suggestions, pointers and reflections that can be helpful in their activities and that can support or increase the effectiveness of their work.

2. OBJECTIVES OF MEDIA MONITORING

The purpose of the media monitoring programme at Nepal Press Institute was two-fold: One, to monitor the news media coverage of the electoral campaign, thereby contributing to the overall assessment of the electoral process in Nepal as per the guidelines of Election Commission of Nepal (ECN): Media Monitoring Guidelines, 2013. Two, to provide feedback to the media outlets themselves on their work which may enhance their reporting skills for present and future elections. The specific objectives were:

i. To observe how the print and electronic media, both government-controlled and independent, covered various aspects of the election campaign.
ii. To see if the political parties and candidates had fair access to the media?
iii. To monitor media coverage of political and/or public affairs communication during the election period, as per the ECN Media Monitoring Guidelines, 2013.
iv. To provide an impartial analysis of the media coverage and help ECN's efforts in holding credible, inclusive and professional election.

v. To regularly update ECN with the findings of media monitoring for it to enforce the election code of conduct for the mass media during electioneering, voting day and vote counting periods.
vi. To use the infrastructure set up for the Constituent Assembly(CA) elections to conduct media monitoring until the local election.
vii. To assess the newspaper coverage of the election campaign.
viii. To assess whether the coverage was sufficiently informed thus allowing the electorate to make a fully informed decision on who to vote for.
ix. To monitor and document fully incidents of harassment, coercion or intimidation of journalists and publishing houses.
x. To assess whether the independent media reflects a genuinely balanced view of candidates, members, parties and policies.

3. METHODOLOGY OF MEDIA MONITORING

3.1. Conceptual framework

Electoral equity

For the purpose of this methodology, electoral equity is defined as "the existence of conditions of impartiality and liberty in the Campaign Period, Election Day and the Counting Period, allowing candidates to participate under relatively equal conditions for public office. Electoral equity is defined as balanced coverage that allows candidates to present their political platforms, defend their visions and present their electoral campaigns, with news pieces that do not contain bias in the description of the information", at all times in full respect of freedom of expression for all. (A Manual for OAS Electoral Observation Missions, General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, 2011).

Based on this definition, the following are some of the parameters taken into consideration to assess electoral equity with regards to the media:

Role of the electoral authority

- Instruments to monitor the use of the media and the amount of electoral expenses incurred by political parties.
- Capacity to enforce sanctions to those who act outside the law.

Conditions for electoral competition

- Framework for political parties' access to the media.
- Existence or lack thereof of regulations for public and private financing for political parties and their relation to access to the media.
- Existence or lack thereof of regulations on the use of public/state media for electoral purposes.

Spending

- Existence or lack of regulations on expenditure caps or limits for media advertising and propaganda.

Role of the Media

- Presence in the media of all political parties participating in the election.

Freedom of the Media

- The freedom to communicate information through the media is vital to an equitable and democratic electoral race.

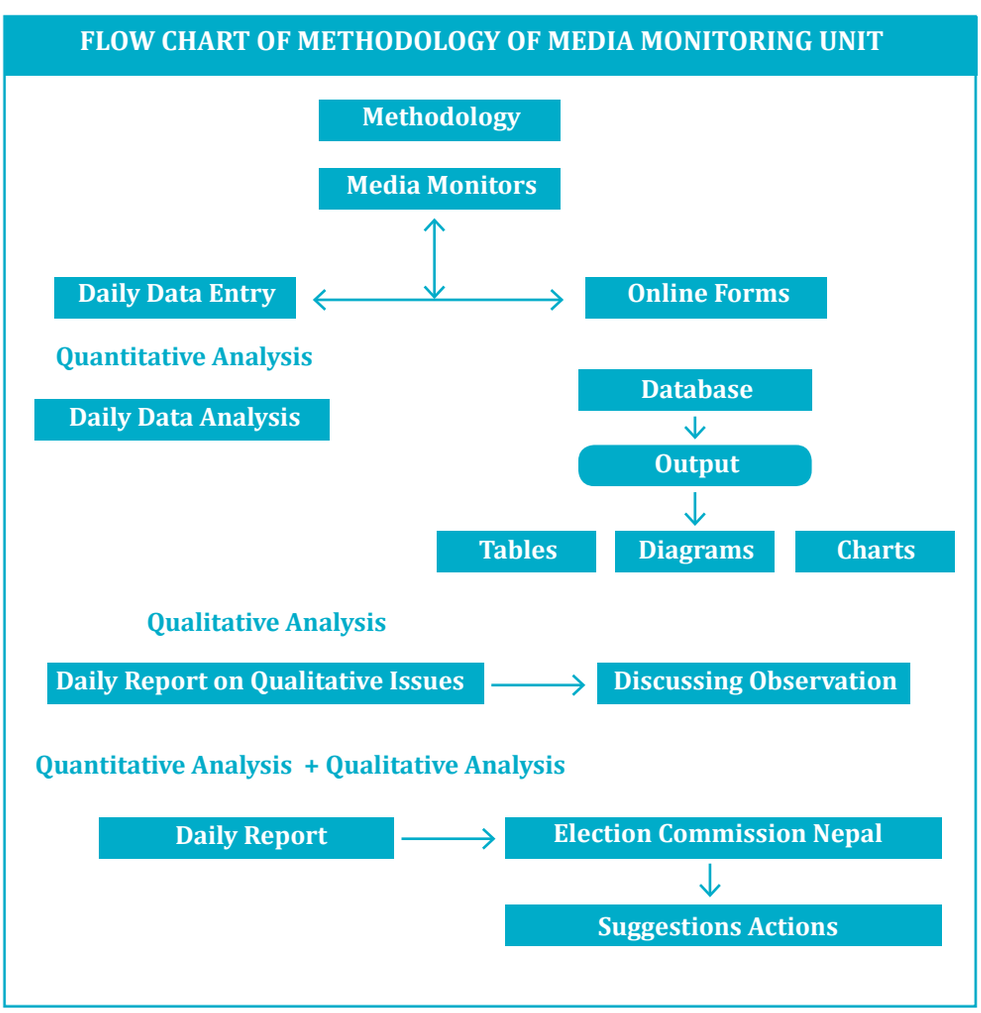
For this reason, it is the responsibility of the national authorities to provide the basic conditions for the media to be free

to investigate, publish and inform the population of the events that transpire during an electoral process, and to do so without fear of censure or retaliation. Pieces of information include digital press, radio and television as described in this methodology.

3.2. Methodological framework

Most voters gain general information on participants in political campaigns through the media. To have a free and fair election, it is very important that the media adopt a fair and objective approach towards all political parties and candidates. The methodological framework can be given as in the following flow chart.

Monitoring, therefore, tries to quantify and qualify time dedicated to candidates and political parties by the media. This analysis is produced in charts to show whether the coverage of the selected monitored subjects is objective, balanced and fair. However, not all forms of the media coverage could be evaluated either quantitatively or qualitatively. Therefore, specific indicators have been established to measure such events of manipulations and bias. Results of quantitative and qualitative analyses are important elements that serve for the general public as information on whether the coverage about political contestants by the media is fair and balanced.



Media monitors are specially trained to conduct qualitative and quantitative analyses of newspaper, TV, radio and online news coverage to see whether they follow the basic rules of balanced and fair journalism. They fill out specially designed monitoring forms and consequently a data collector inputs all the monitored data into online forms.

All the recorded data and newspapers are stored in archives for future reference if the results should be questioned by anyone.

Data collector controls the monitored sheets and inputs them into a computer. Therefore, it is important that monitors write clearly and agree on any acronyms for the selected political subjects in advance to avoid misunderstanding or incomplete results.

In broadcast media, the monitors use stopwatches to measure the actual time of appearance of selected political subjects on camera as well as when they are mentioned or quoted by someone else. In newspapers, an area dedicated to the political entities is measured in cm2.

Sometimes, it is impossible for a political subject to be given a measurable amount of time or space, despite the fact that the subject was mentioned. Such information is called a reference or remark and is also included into both the quantitative and qualitative charts.

An evaluation mark is also attached to all subjects, in addition to space and reference, which provides information on how the subject was portrayed. It is attached to all monitored subjects to determine whether the subject was presented in negative, positive or neutral light *(See A Monitoring Concept is Realised)*.

Given the fact that the qualitative analysis is rather a subjective form of evaluation, the five-grade scale is designed to provide monitors with a larger scale of choice they are to make in evaluating the presentation of political entities.

Balanced news coverage means that a media outlet attempts to cover events in a balanced, fair and objective manner by offering time or space to all subjects of a certain item to present their views. Such news item is purely informative and does not contain any one-sided evaluating standpoints or criticism.

In other words, the stories or items presented have a specific intent to manipulate or affect the public. The reason for creating this category was the obvious absence of basic journalistic principles and standards. Each story, which does not meet the basic requirements for a non-biased story falls into the category of media effects. The main criteria for such evaluation are set as those stories lack relevance, exactness, transparency, balance, variety and clarity.

The purpose of the media monitoring programme at Nepal Press Institute was two-fold: One, to monitor the news media coverage of the electoral campaign. Two, to provide feed back to the media.

To carry out an assessment that is standardised and easy to replicate, the methodology for media monitoring and the results in each one of the applications shall be based on the following general principles:

- **Clarity.** The methodology and its results should be easily understood by the public at large. The language employed should be clear and straight-

forward. Using everyday language to report the results fosters a perception of transparency when analysing and communicating results. Results should be presented in a simple manner, with a clear link between text and graphs, where applicable.

- **Verifiability**. It is imperative that the results from the application of this methodology be demonstrable and verifiable over time. It is necessary to store copies of the news pieces observed that will be the basis for the final report, for future analysis and consultation.

- **Public availability.** The methodology and guidelines established for media observation in EMMP should be made accessible to the public; whoever wishes can consult the document and indicators used.

- **Comparability.** The indicators used for this methodology and the results obtained must be comparable across time to other results that may arise from the application of this methodology in other electoral processes, in the same country. This comparison shall be possible taking into consideration the variables and limitations established and standardising the criteria presented.

- **Impartiality.** The media observation team shall strictly abide by the principle of impartiality when analysing the variables registered. Although there is always a risk of subjectivity in the observation of the media and assessment of indicators, the risk must be kept to a minimum. Any mistake arising in this regard should be the result of unintentional acts. Similarly, this risk may be identified and corrected through the procedures for verification established by this methodology.

Table 3.1: Total media outlets monitored

SN	Media Outlets	Number
1	Online	10
2	Newspaper(daily + others)	547
3	Radio	210
4	TV	10

Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

- **Defined Scope.** The methodology takes into consideration restrictions on space, timeframe, human resources, technology and other factors that define the conditions for its implementation.

- **Inclusiveness.** The analysis shall include the most representative media outlets. The selection of media channels arises from an extensive prior analysis and takes into account several variables, explained in detail below. Producing a comprehensive media map is imperative for selecting the best sample for observation and analysis.

3.3. Sample design

One of the main activities of election media monitoring programme (EMMP) was monitoring of election and political coverage by a nationwide sample of mass media outlets to see how well they followed the election code, instead of agenda setting and hate speech, for example, to fulfil their democratic functions. In order to obtain the stated objectives, the NPI team monitored media coverage of the Constituent Assembly (CA) Elections, published or broadcast between 1-30 November 2013. The media monitoring took place all over Nepal, with a central media monitoring unit at NPI and four regional monitoring units, employing a total of 147 media monitors and personnel.

Table 3.2: Names of the media outlets used for media monitoring at the centre

Name of Media Outlets			
Online	**Print**	**Radio**	**TV**
www.onlinekhabar.com	Kantipur daily	Ujyalo FM	Nepal Television
www.setopati.com	Kathmandu Post daily	Sagarmatha FM	Kantipur TV
www.ratopati.com	Nagarik daily	Radio Nepal	Avenues TV
www.nepalnews.com	Republica daily	CIN	Sagarmatha
www.hamrokura.com	Gorkhapatra daily	Image FM	ABC Television
www.kathmandutoday.com	Rising Nepal daily	Mirmire FM	News24
www.onsnews.com	Annapurna Post daily	Maitri FM	Mountain
www.pooplesreview.com	The Himalayan Times daily	Upatyaka FM	Tarai TV
www.ekantipur.com	Karobar daily	Nepal FM	Channel Nepal
www.nagariknews.com	Abhiyan daily	Star FM	Himalaya
	Rajdhani daily		
	Nepal Samacharpatra daily		
	Naya Patrika daily		

Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Media Monitoring Units commenced their activities on 1 November 2013. Observation contitued on a more reduced scale till the end of November to assess post election media coverage. NPI carried out media monnitoring of 10 online portals, 10 TV channels, 210 radio stations and 547 print outlets, including 13 Kathmandub ased daily newspapers and 534 other newspapers on a daily basis. The media included in the sample were ramdomly selected according to a numbers of criteria, including territorial reach, estimated audience/circulation and ownership and/or registration. Table 3.1 shows the different categories of the media outlets used for media outlest used for media monitoring.

The other different media outlets from all over Nepal are given in Appendix 4. The following table shows the different categories of the media outlets monitored during the period.

The table 3.2 shows the names of Kathmandu based media outlets for media monitoring for Constituent assembly (CA) election 2013.

3.4. Quantitative and qualitative criteria for media monitoring

The monitoring of election and political coverage was based on both quantitative and qualitative analyses and it aimed to observe and assess the extent to which media provided fair and balanced coverage of politicians and other stakeholders. During the election, the project also monitored hate speech or inflammatory language, either reported on or originating from the media themselves, to assess whether the media acted as agents of pacification or rather contributed to increase any potential tension related to elections.

The monitoring of hate speech or inflammatory language, either reported on or originating from the media themselves, aimed to assess whether the media acted as agents of pacification or rather contributed to increase any potential tension related to elections. This exercise helped monitor whether the media published or broadcast hate speech through and by any political speaker; whether the media themselves promoted violence; the main sources of hate speech and the target groups affected by it.

This overview of the media headlines sketched the priorities in the public discourse as well as representing a complementary element to assess the quality of media coverage of issues of public interest. The main headlines of the major media outlets were collected on a daily basis; specific information regarding the output and/or the headlines was reported in a specifically tailored manner.

3.4.1. Qualitative component

The indicators adopted have two components- one relates to the professionalism reflected by the monitored item in question and the second one is related with the compliance with the Election Code of Conduct. NPI attempted to gauge the professionalism of the monitored item by looking at the bias and tones it adopted.

a. Bias: Shows if the particular news item is biased towards or against a political party, leader or actor concerned. Does the news item speak in favour of the actor in question or not? It was not a quantitative approach that defined bias in monitoring. A cursory glance of the item should show this to the monitor for him or her to mark it accordingly.

b. Tone: Another subjective judgement that the monitor indulged in is the tone in which the monitored item is presented. An item favourably biased towards a particular actor may not necessarily be written or aired in a positive tone. Even negatively toned items have been found to be favourably biased towards an actor.

c. Flag: The flag is an indicator of code compliance by the media outlet or political actor. It is designed to notify the ECN of noteworthy items (Green flagged neutral items, yellow showed slight bias, orange showed serious bias and red drew attention to gross violation).

   For example, if an item violates the ECN code of conduct, it is flagged to denote the item's priority for the ECN to do the needful. Monitors flag the item not only when a media outlet is seen to violate the media code of conduct. They do so if the monitored item does not violate the media code, but contains instances of violation of the political code of conduct by political actors. In sum, all items noteworthy of ECN's immediate attention are flagged for urgency *(See A Monitoring Concept is Realised).*

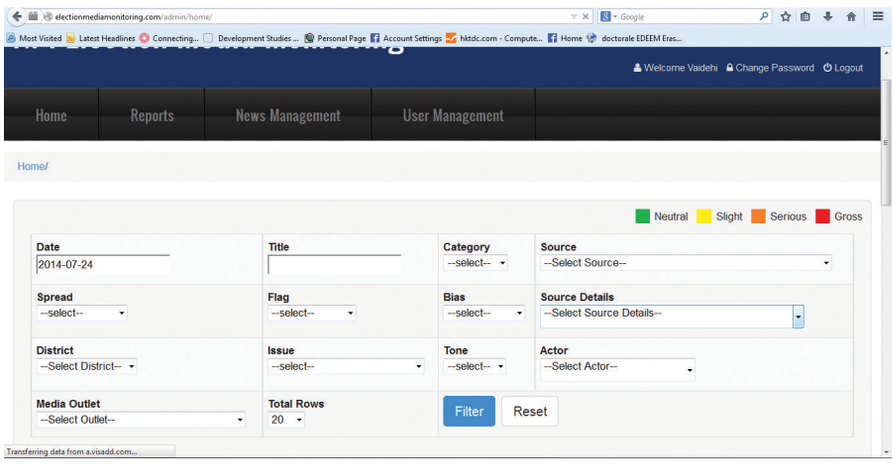
3.4.2. Quantitative analysis

Quantitative analysis implied the selection of elements of the media output that could be counted and focused on in the time and space allocated to different parties or candidates. Each mention of the subject was logged separately and the amount of time and space allocated was then recorded. Each mention was also classified in terms of tone in which a political actor was described according to a three-value scale of positive, neutral and negative.

The qualitative analysis was based on the systematic observation of specific themes and issues: voter education, women and gender balance, coverage of election authorities and the election process, the context and standards of media work in Nepal.

The media plays a major role in keeping the citizenry abreast of current events and raising awareness of various issues in any society. It also has an extremely significant impact on the public's views and way of

Screen View: Online forms to be filled by the monitors



The data sheet can be designed and worked with using Excel, but of course depending on the resources of each organisation it can be adapted to other more complex programmes like SPSS and STATA software.

thinking. The media are the primary means through which public opinion is shaped and at times manipulated. If this is the media's role in normal course of events, it becomes even more vital in exceptional periods, one of which is electoral junctures, when the media becomes a primary player. Elections constitute a basic challenge to the media, putting their impartiality and objectivity to test. The task of the media, especially national media outlets, is not and should not be to function as a mouthpiece for any government body,party or particular candidate. Its basic role is to enlighten and educate the public and act as a neutral, objective platform for free debate on all points of views.

All the information is obtained from the online forms filled by the monitors as shown in the following screen view. The resulting information from the analysis of each of the stories should be noted on a data sheet that will be used for collecting the information. It will therefore be helpful first to visualise an example of the data sheet in order to understand, one by one, the variables that have been selected and that are relevant for this methodology. The online forms for each category are presented in the following corresponding categories.

3.5. Methodology for television monitoring

Pre-election Media Monitoring of television channels includes quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative component includes the time allocated to the subject, direct and indirect speech and the tone of coverage. Components of the qualitative monitoring are: balance, accuracy, fact-based coverage, manipulation with footage and music.

Direct and indirect speech differentiates whether the subject is talking in the news item in person or if he is being talked about by: journalists or other respondents.

The coverage tone is assigned to the subject when somebody is talking about her/him indirectly and also when s/

he is talking about himself, about other subjects or about general issues. The flags show three categories of tones: positive, neutral and negative. While counting the time allocated to the subject, the tone of this allocated time is also evaluated. Attention is paid to the text of a journalist or a respondent, and also to the overall context of the news item.

Tone-based evaluation of the time allocated to the subjects is given in two ways: evaluation of total time allocated to the subjects on a given channel based on the tone, and tone of coverage/ mentioning of subjects by a certain journalist.

While performing qualitative monitoring, emphasis is laid on the balance, i.e. if there are several different opinions about the covered subject represented in the news items. The emphasis is also laid on accuracy, and for evaluating this, the monitor observes if the journalist's conclusion and the materials used in the news items are relevant to each other (footage, comments of the respondents), or if there are any mistakes in the names, figures, identity of respondents. They also observe if the news item refers to any particular fact, and if there is any footage/comments provided in this news item to confirm this fact.

The quantitative component includes the time allocated to the subject, direct and indirect speech and the tone of coverage. Components of the qualitative monitoring are: balance, accuracy, fact-based coverage, manipulation with footage and music.

The monitoring pays attention to cases of manipulation of footage and music in the news releases. It is assumed that there was a case of manipulation with footage and music, if the footage or photos used in the news item are represented and there is a music accompanying that footage, which creates certain disposition and results in sharply positive or negative association.

Monitoring focuses on factual media presentations with respect to a balanced and fair presentation of the facts. The monitoring itself consists of TV programmes that are watched and recorded on videotapes – so the recordings can be viewed several times by a monitor entering all the relevant data into the TV monitoring form.

The form for monitoring TV news coverage consists of different heads. The first contains general information on the subject. The second is for recording data from individual coverage and the last is for media effects and other observations. The following online fields are to be filled by the monitors. The sample consists of 10 national TV channels. The details of the media used for monitoring is shown in appendix 3.

Variables/fields for collecting information from TV

Variables/fields for collecting information from TV

1. **Date:**
2. **Channel:**
3. **Programme:**
4. **Protagonist (source / actor)**
   i. Political party
   ii. Election committee
   iii. Media outlet
   iv. Other (government, civil society, internal organisation etc)
   (A source of information, i.e., one who speaks or gives information; an actor, i.e., the person about whom the source speaks)
5. **Section**
   i. Headlines

ii. Segment 1
iii. Segment 2
iv. Segment 3
v. Segment 4

6. Segment (Genre of journalism)

i. Main news: News is informational text par excellence and the material most widely used by the television. Its main objective is to report in a concise and descriptive fashion a given event or situation offering the most important data (what, who, when, where, why or how).
ii. Interview: An interview is a dialogue involving two or more persons in which one asks questions and the other responds.
iii. Reportage: This is an expanded, exhaustive and documented narrative of an event. In it, resources from other journalistic genres, such as interview, chronicle, and the news, may all be used at the same time. It makes use of supporting devices such as images, info-graphs, statistical tables, etc.
iv. Viewer's response: The viewer's response is the response of viewers of the program.
v. Other

7. Size /Length

Length can be measured in seconds.

8. Types

i. Video clips
ii. Still image
iii. Paraphrase
iv. Summaries

9. Tone (For political party)

i. Positive
ii. Neutral
iii. Negative

10. Issue

i. Gender
ii. Education
iii. Health
iv. Security
v. Development and environment
vi. Social policy and poverty
vii. Multiculturalism

11. Bias of the issue

i. Favourable
ii. Unfavourable
iii. Neutral

12. Image

This is the pictorial aid that accompanies the news item. The image may be presented in the following ways.

i. There is an image but neither the source nor the actor appears in it.
ii. There is an image and the actor and source appear in it.
iii. There is an image and only the actor appears in it.
iv. There is an image and only the source appears in it.

3.6. Methodology for radio monitoring

Monitoring consists of quantitative and qualitative stages of research. During the quantitative research the following indicators are observed: time allocated to the subjects, direct and indirect speech and the tone of coverage. At the stage of qualitative research a monitor is observing the following qualitative indicators: balance, impartiality, accuracy, facts-based coverage, timely coverage of facts, and ignorance of the news.

At the stage of quantitative research, the time is calculated (in seconds), when the subject is talked about by the anchor of the news release, radio reporter of the news item or any respondent of that news item.

The coverage tone is assigned to the subject when s/he is talked about indirectly and also when s/he is talking about himself/herself, about other

subjects or general issues. There are three categories for evaluating the tone: positive, neutral and negative. Always, while counting the time allocated to the subject, simultaneously, the tone is also evaluated, i.e. the amount of time is counted, for how many seconds/minutes this or that subject was talked about with a specific tone. While evaluating the tone the emphasis is laid not only on the contents of the news item, but also on the context as well. Such evaluation aims at determining whether we create positive, neutral or negative impression for the audience with regards to the subject. Besides, it should be noted that the tone is not assigned to the whole news item. The monitors divide the news items according to the subjects mentioned therein and then input each of them into the database according to the coverage tone, air time allocated to them (in seconds), source of information and topic. This is because sometimes one news item contains various statements of different tones in regards to one or more subjects.

Direct and indirect speech differentiates whether the subject is talking herself/ himself in the news item or if s/he is being spoken about. Qualitatively, the monitor observes whether the fact/issue covered in the news items is provided in a balanced way, i.e. whether the audience has an opportunity to listen/ watch this issue from different angles, and evaluate this event from his point of view. In this case the attention is paid to the sources of information and the respondents of various viewpoints shown in the news item. Besides, impartiality is also monitored, for which emphasis is laid on whether any subject/s is distinguished and enjoys longer coverage and mostly positive or negative tone. Moreover, for evaluating the accuracy, the monitor observes how relevant the journalist's opinion and the materials used in the news item are (respondents' comments), if there are mistakes in the names, figures, respondents' identities. If the news release of any channel does not cover any important fact happening in the country, then this is also reflected in the monitoring.

While the media landscape is ever expanding and diversifying, radio remains the most prevalent and accessible form of media worldwide. Where FM radio is sparse or non-existent, AM radio is often still accessible. The advent of satellite radio has also greatly expanded the variety of radio programming available to individuals worldwide.

In Nepal, FM radio is the most common means of media. In 2012/13, there were 363 FM radio stations regularly going on air. Out of them only 210 selected FM stations are monitored. The details of the media used for monitoring is shown as in the Appendix 4.

Variables/fields for collecting information from radio

1. **Date:**
2. **Station:**
3. **Programme:**
4. **Protagonist (source / actor)**
   i. Political party
   ii. Election committee
   iii. Media outlet
   iv. Other (government, civil society, internal organization etc)
   (A source of information, that is, one who speaks or gives information; an actor, i.e. the person about whom the source speaks).
5. **Section**
   i. Headlines
   ii. Segment 1
   iii. Segment 2
   iv. Segment 3
   v. Segment 4
6. **Segment (genre of journalism)**

i. Main News: News is informational text par excellence and the material most widely used by the radio. Its main objective is to report in a concise and descriptive fashion on a given event or situation offering the most important data (what, who, how, when, where, why)
ii. Interview: An interview is a dialogue involving two or more persons in which one asks questions and the other responds.
iii. Reportage: This is an expanded, exhaustive and documented narrative of an event. In it, resources from other journalistic genres, such as the interview, chronicle, and the news, may all be used at the same time. It makes use of supporting devices such as images, info-graphs, statistical tables, etc.
iv. Viewer's comment: Comments from the viewer's are reported here.
v. Other:

7. Size /length: Length can be measured in seconds.

8. Types
i. Audio clips
ii. Paraphrase
iii. Summaries

9. Tone (For political party)
i. Positive
ii. Neutral
iii. Negative

10. Issue
i. Gender
ii. Education
iii. Health
iv. Security
v. Development and environment
vi. Social policy and poverty
vii. Multiculturalis

11. Bias of the issue
i. Favourable
ii. Unfavourable
iii. Neutral

3.7. Methodology for print media monitoring

Election media monitoring of the press consists of qualitative and quantitative components. The quantitative component includes the space allocated to the subjects and the tone of coverage. Components of the qualitative monitoring are: balance, accuracy, fact-based coverage, language of the article.

For counting the space allocated to the subject, the tone is also assessed at the same time. Emphasis is laid on the text of a journalist or a reporter and also the whole context of the article. On the one hand, there is a distribution of total area dedicated to the subject based on the tone, and on the other the space, where the journalist is writing about the subject, is also evaluated.

During the qualitative monitoring, the emphasis is laid on the balance, i.e. at to what extent the article provides several different opinions about the topic of the article and whether the reader has an opportunity to have a comprehensive impression on the issue.

Besides, the monitor evaluates accuracy of the article, how the journalist's conclusion is consistent with the facts provided in the article or if there are mistakes in the names, figures, identities of respondents. It is also evaluated if the article has been constructed based on the facts, which first of all means whether the information provided by one source has been double-checked, and if the reader

has an opportunity after reading the article to get correct information about the happening.

During the monitoring, attached illustrations are also observed, if any of the monitoring subjects are reflected in them. Other than determining the space, tone of the illustration is also assessed based on what kind of disposition it generates for the reader.

Another component of the qualitative analysis is the language of the article, which in some respects, is similar to the journalist's tone assessed during the quantitative analysis, but the difference is that more emphasis is laid on the journalist's words and phraseology during the qualitative analysis not only with regard to the subjects of monitoring, but also in the whole article. In some cases, the journalist is not writing about the subject of monitoring, but the text is still notable and interesting for qualitative analysis.

A reader actively seeks information in newspapers, which is different from the sort of passive reception of the news provided by the broadcast media. Therefore, the front page is very important – the headlines, placement of photographs, cartoons and other illustrations.

The form used for entering data from monitoring of newspapers is enclosed. The articles are monitored page by page. Thus the order of monitored articles is kept in order for later checks or corrections.

The print media form consists of two pages. The front page contains space designed for the data each monitor enters while monitoring relevant articles. The date is entered into the upper half of the second page. The third page is designed for media effects.

Each column is designed for entering data gathered from individual articles. The focus is on which political subject is presented, whether they were given space or whether they are merely mentioned. That is the subject, an evaluation mark and space. On the left hand side of the column, a page number and the actual headline of the article is entered. After reading a politically relevant article it is necessary to try to evaluate the main subject of the story (or the intention of the writer). Since the newspapers are more analytical in their approach (than the electronic media), it is inevitable to determine which political subject the article is about or whether one subject is a dominant topic and others are less important. However, if the article is clearly divided into certain segments, the monitor should not hesitate to allocate those segments to the monitored subjects both qualitatively and quantitatively. If one monitored subject clearly dominates the article, the monitor should then assign the whole space to him/her. Remarks about other subjects are monitored as remarks. These remarks are also given an evaluating mark. Remarks are measured as $1cm^2$.

A size of a political photograph, cartoon or joke is given cm^2. The data is also recorded in the relevant column, but instead of headline, we indicate that it is a picture/cartoon etc. The picture or cartoon is also evaluated for its positive, negative or neutral content and is also given a mark.

The size of a front-page headline is measured in cm^2 and indicated in the column right after the headline. It is also possible to create a chart from the amount of space dedicated to all the candidates on the front page or in the form of pictures in the entire newspaper or only from the pictures on the front page. It is obvious that a headline and

picture on a front page attracts readers' attention (in a positive or negative way).

According to the economic survey of Nepal 2013, the number of newspapers and magazines registered in different districts by mid-March 2013 totals 6,590. Our sample consists of 13 Kathmandu based daily news papers and 534 other newspapers. The details of the media used for monitoring is shown in appendix 3.

The different fields used in monitoring print media are as follow;

Variables/ fields for collecting information from print media

1. **Date:**
2. **Name of newspaper :**
   i. Daily
   ii. Weekly

3. **Protagonist (source / actor):**
   a) Political Party
   b) Election Committee
   c) Media outlet
   d) Other (government, civil society, internal organization etc)
   (A source of information, that is, one who speaks or gives information;
   An actor, i.e., the person about whom the source speaks)

4. Placement
   i. Front page
   ii. Back page
   iii. Inner Page

5) Segment (Genre of journalism)
   i. News
   ii. Interview
   iii. Reportage
   iv. Chronicle
   v. Opinion column
   vi. Editorial
   vii. Other (Cartoon photo , features ,mails from readers)

News: News is informational text par excellence and the material most widely used by daily newspapers. Its main objective is to report in a concise and descriptive fashion a given event or situation offering the most important data (what, who, when, where, why, how).

Interview: An interview is a dialogue involving two or more persons in which one asks questions and the other responds.

Reportage: This is an expanded, exhaustive and documented narrative of an event. In it, resources from other journalistic genres, such as interview, chronicle, and the news, may all be used at the same time. It makes use of supporting devices such as images, info-graphs, statistical tables etc.

Chronicle: A chronicle narrates a past event subjectively on the basis of real facts and data. It is the most literary of journalistic genres.

Altogether 10,491 news items were monitored. The table shows that out of total media monitored, 828 are online, 6,167 are print, 2,094 are radio and 1402 are TV news stories.

Opinion article: Opinion articles represent the position and opinion of a person (who may or may not be a journalist) on an issue of social interest.

Editorial: An editorial represents the position and opinion of the media outlet itself on a matter of social interest.

Other:

6. Size: This means the space in square centimetres (height x width)

To determine the size one must follow :

- The total size of the story is obtained by considering the headline, byline, introduction, complete text, photographs, info-graphs, tables, and any other graphic aid accompanying the story in question.

- The size of the photo should be added to the size of the text. If several persons appear in the photo, one divides the size of the photo by the number of persons who appear in it, and the resulting figure is attributed to each of them.

- In the cases in which we find several relationships between source, actor and issue in a single story are found, yet in the introduction no reference is made to any of them in particular, the space taken up by the introduction will be divided by the number of relationships, and this figure will be added to the size of each of these relationships.

- If the source only mentions a political actor (or political actors) and does not develop any idea or opinion about him, her, or them, it is considered a 'mention' 2 and 1 cm or 1 second is attributed to this actor.

- The final figure obtained after multiplying the width by the height of the space occupied by the relationship among source, actor and issue is rounded. The size should be a whole number: decimals are not used. To this end, a simple method for rounding is used: when the fraction is less than one-half, one rounds down, and when it is greater than or equal to one-half, it is rounded up.

- Comic strips and cartoons that are generally presented in the media, independent of their frequency, are considered as news stories and should be analysed like any other.

7. Spread

i. Single
ii. Double
iii. Main

8. Tone (For political party)

i. Positive
ii. Neutral
iii. Negative

9. Issue

i. Gender
ii. Education
iii. Health
iv. Security
v. Development and environment
vi. Social policy and poverty
vii. Multiculturalism

10. Bias of the issue

i. Favourable
ii. Unfavourable
iii. Neutral

11. Photo

This is the graphic or pictorial aid that accompanies the news item. The photo may be presented in the following ways.

i. There is a photo but neither the source nor the actor appears in it.
ii. There is a photo and the actor and source appear in it.
iii. There is a photo and only the actor appears in it.
iv. There is a photo and only the source appears in it.

3.8. Methodology of monitoring the online media

The NPI monitoring took place from 1 November 2013 through 30 November 2013 and our sample covered 10 most highly rated news portals:

1. www.onlinekhabar.com
2. www.setopati.com
3. www.ratopati.com
4. www.nepalnews.com
5. www.nagariknews.com
6. www.onsnews.com

7. www.pooplesreview.com
8. www.ekantipur.com
9. www.kathmandutoday.com
10. www.hamrokura.com

Information was collected through online forms containing the following fields.

Variables / fields for collecting information online

1. **Date:**
2. **Website:**
3. **Program:**
4. **Protagonist (source / actor)**
   i. Political party
   ii. Election committee
   iii. Media outlet
   iv. Other (government, civil society, internal organisation etc)
   (A source of information, that is, one who speaks or gives information; an actor is the person about whom the source speaks).
5. **Segment (genre of journalism)**
   i. News
   ii. Interview
   iii. Reportage
   iv. Chronicle
   v. Opinion column
   vi. Editorial
   vii. Other

News: News is informational text par excellence and the material most widely used by daily online portals. Its main objective is to report in a concise and descriptive fashion a given event or situation offering the most important data (who, what, when, where, why how. Breaking news and flash news are displaced on the website on a regular basis.

Interview: An interview is a dialogue involving two or more persons in which one asks questions and the other responds.

Reportage: This is an expanded, exhaustive and documented narrative of an event. In it, resources from other journalistic genres, such as the interview, chronicle, and the news, may all be used at the same time. It makes use of supporting devices such as images, info-graphs, statistical tables, etc.

Viewer's Comment/readers' comment: In this, the viewer's or readers' comments are placed.

Other: Cartoons, features, mails from readers

6. **Size /length (in percentage)**
7. **Spread**
   i. Main
   ii. Double
   iii. Single

8. **Types**
   i. Still image
   ii. Audio links (no of downloads)
   iii. Video clips (no of download)
   iv. Paraphrase
   v. Summary
9. **Tone (towards political parties)**
   i. Positive
   ii. Neutral
   iii. Negative

10. **Issue**
   i. Gender
   ii. Education
   iii. Health
   iv. Security
   v. Development and environment
   vi. Social policy and poverty
   vii. Multiculturalism

11. **Bias of the issue**
   i. Favourable
   ii. Unfavourable
   iii. Neutral

12. **Photo/Image**

This is a pictorial aid that accompanies the news item. The image may be presented in the following ways.

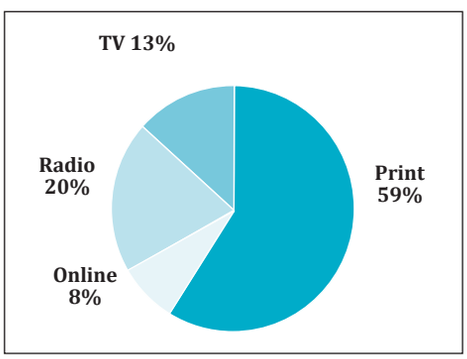
- There is a photo/image but neither

Table 4.1:
Category wise media monitoring

SN	Category	Total
1	Print	6,167
2	Online	828
3	Radio	2,094
4	TV	1,402
	Grand total	10,491

Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Figure 4.1: Category wise media monitoring



Source: Author's Calculation

the source nor the actor appears in it.

- There is a photo/image and the actor and source appear in it.
- There is a photo/image and only the actor appears in it.
- There is a photo/image and only the source appears in it.

4. MAJOR FINDINGS OF MEDIA MONITORING OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTION 2013

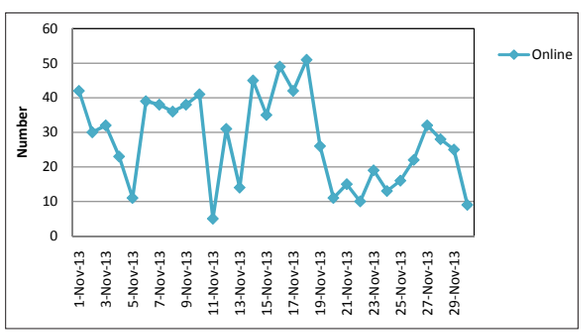
4.1. Category wise media monitoring

During the period of media monitoring (1-30 November 2013), altogether 10,491 news items were monitored. The table shows that out of total media monitored, 828 are online, 6,167 are print, 2,094 are radio and 1402 are TV news stories. Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of media monitoring.

Summary of media monitoring from 1 to 30 November 2013 is given in the above pie-chart. It shows the total monitoring coverage comprised 8% online media, 59 % print media , 20% radio and 13% TV news.

4.2. Trend of media monitoring

Figure 4.2:
Trend of number of online news monitored



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

in different categories

Although all the monitors were monitoring and sending their findings through online forms on a daily basis, there was a lack of consistency in the news monitored due to the variable availability of the news related to election. The daily trend of news monitored is given below.

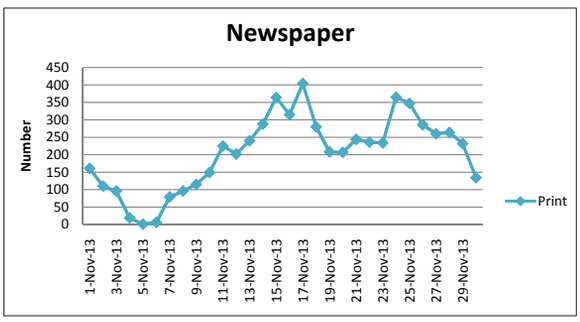
4.2.1. Trend of online news stories monitored

On the basis of above online form filled by the monitors, the trend of news monitored is given in the following graph.

It is seen that the number of online news monitored is at the peak level during the silence period.

4.2.2. Trend of print media monitored

Figure 4.3:
Trend of number of newspapers monitored

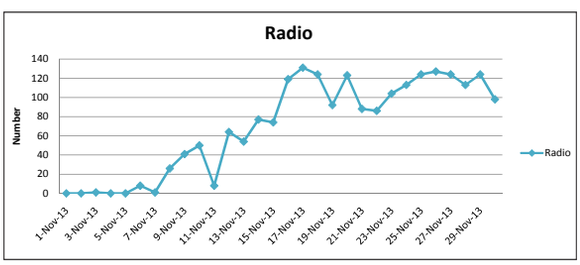


Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

The following graph shows the trend of newspapers monitored. Monitoring was started from 1 November 2013. The number of newspaper news monitored decreases from 161 from first day to lowest, one, on the day of Deepawali, the second biggest festival of Nepalese people.

After Deepawali, the number of news monitored went up until it reached its peak on November 17, the day the silence period began. On that day, a total

Figure 4.4:
Trend of Radio news stories monitored



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

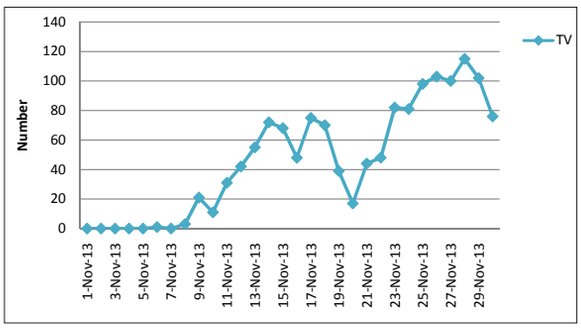
of 404 news items were monitored.

4.2.3. Trends of Radio News Monitored

The graph (Figure 4.4) shows the trend of radio news monitored from 1-30 November 2013. It is found the number of radio news monitored is at the peak on the eve of the election day.

4.2.4. Trend of TV news

Figure 4.5: Trend of TV news monitored



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

monitored

On the basis of these fields, a total of 1,402 news items have been monitored. The trends of news monitored each day can be stated in the following graph. The graph (Figure 4.5) depicts the trend of TV news monitored. It is seen that the trend is increasing and reaches its peak during the counting period.

4.3. Trend of media monitoring in different phases

The whole monitoring period was divided into four phases as below.

4.3.1. Election Campaign Period (1- 16 November 2013)

The campaign is the period when the political parties fielded their candidates and put forward arguments to persuade people to vote for their candidates and parties. It is intended for the political parties to carry out their election campaigns on healthy lines, avoid clashes and conflicts and to ensure peace and order during the campaign period and thereafter until the results are declared. During the campaign, the number of news monitored increased after Deepawali only. Most of the media houses were closed for the festival. During the campaign period, news relating to election increased in all the media -- print, online, radio and TV.

4.3.2. Silence period (17-18 November 2013)

Election silence operates to allow a period for voters to reflect on events before casting their votes. During this period, no active campaigning by the candidates is allowed. The figure 4.2 shows that during the silence period the number of news monitored reaches the maximum number. All the monitors were carrying out their duties and media houses also released news as far as possible. All the monitors related to different media categories; Print, online, Radio and TV actively monitored the news during this period. Media houses also very actively disseminated news related to CA election.

4.3.3. Polling Day (19 November 2013)

Polling is normally held on the same day by enabling the security forces and those monitoring the election to keep law and order and ensure that voting during the election is fair. The polling was carried out on 19 November 2013. On the polling day, the number of news monitored started to decrease, except for radio news.

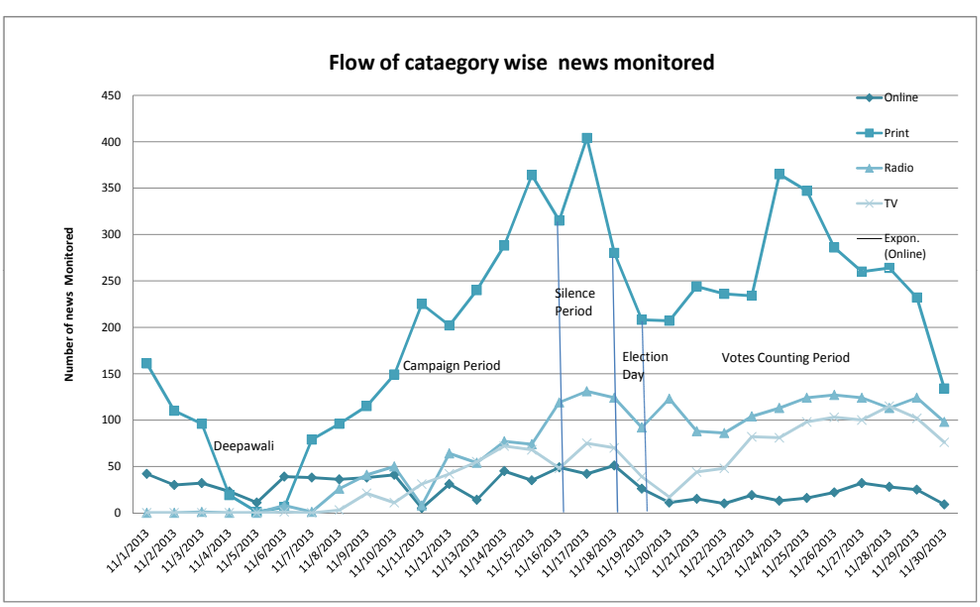
4.3.4. Counting Period (20-30 November 2013)

Counting period begins after ballots are collected from various constituencies. It is a very crucial period during election. The election results are announced after counting of votes. After 20 November 2013, the first day of counting, the flow of news monitored slowly decreased. But on 24 and 25 of November the flow of news monitored again started to increase.

The graph shows the trends of media monitoring under different categories. Monitoring was begun from the 1 November 2013 and the number of news events monitored decreased from the first day and it slumped to its minimum on the day of Deepawali.

It is seen that the trend of news moni-

Figure 4.6:
Flow of category wise news monitored



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Box 1: News clip



150,000 voters left capital to cast votes

People headed for districts to the east of the capital for the Constituent Assembly election pictured at Koteshwar, Kathmandu on Monday, on the eve of the election.

SANGEET SANGROULA
KATHMANDU, Nov 18

Nearly 150,000 voters have left the Kathmandu Valley over the week for their villages to cast their vote in the Constituent Assembly election, according to the authorities concerned.

According to Metropolitan Traffic Police Office (MTPO), around 17,000 have been leaving the valley on a daily basis despite the transport strike imposed by the poll-opposing forces.

Suman Timasina, Deputy Superintendent Police (DSP) at MTPO, says that if the average number of passengers is anything to go by, the number of people leaving the valley has crossed [illegible] in the past seven days.

An alliance of 33 fringe parties led by the CPN-Maoist has called the nationwide vehicular strike since November 11 in a bid to foil the election.

The flow of voters leaving the Kathmandu Valley for their hometown to cast their vote from their stipulated polling stations continued even on the eve of the election.

On Monday, around 18,000 passengers left the valley for their villages, according to MTPO.

As many as 1,357 vehicles including buses, trucks, motorcycles and microbuses had left from three major check posts --Nagdhunga, Bhaktapur and Pharping, reported MTPO.

On Sunday alone, 19,252 voters had headed toward their villages from the valley.

Dolnath Khanal, general secretary at National Federation of Nepal Transport Entrepreneurs (NFNTE), said due to the strike, number of long route public vehicles is very less. But voters were ferried to their constituencies by candidates of various political parties from Kathmandu.

According to member-secretary of Central Security Coordination Committee of Nepali Congress for the CA election, Prem KC, party candidates contesting from different parts of the country have already bused over 45,000 voters from the capital since the beginning of the transport strike.

KC said that more than 1,000 buses were hired by candidates of the party to transport the voters to the districts.

Likewise, Keshav Gajurel, a liaison officer of the CPN-UML for Mechi Zone, said candidates of the party had hired around two dozens buses to transport voters to several districts in Mechi zone.

He said that around 45 passengers were transported in each bus.

Khanal said that hundreds of voters went to their districts in the buses hired by various political parties as traveling by such vehicles were safer than ordinary public vehicles.

The Ministry of Home Affairs had escorted such vehicles under tight security from Kathmandu.

Gajurel said that his party did not have to hire a large number of buses as many voters close to their party are already in their villages to observe festivals like Tihar and Chhat.

"In the last CA election, we had hired 40 buses to transport voters," he added.

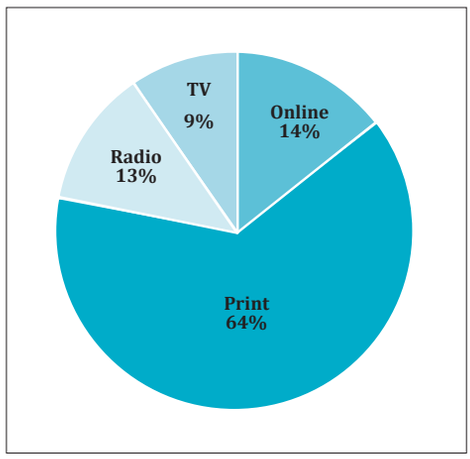
Likewise, hundreds of voters also went to their villages independently. Many voters had even traveled to their districts even on the rooftops of buses as there were fewer number of public buses plying on the road due to the bandh.

Similarly, the number of voters returning to their constituencies by two-wheelers was also considerably high.

On Monday, 532 motorcycles had made exist from the valley. However, 765 motorcycles had left the valley on Sunday.

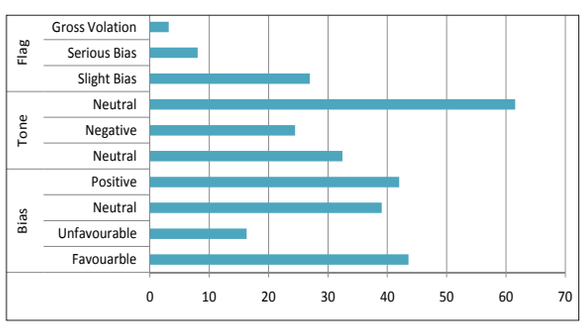
tored is not regular. Initially, the number of news monitored decreases slowly and reaches to the lowest on 5 November, the day of the second biggest festival in Nepal, Deepawali. After Deepawali, the number of media monitoring increases rapidly and reaches its maximum during the silence period. This indicates that both monitors and the media were most active during the period.

Figure 4.7: Total news monitored during the election Campaign Period



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Figure 4.8:
CA Election media monitoring findings during election campaign period (November 1 - 16, 2013)



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

4.4. Findings of CA election media monitoring during Campaign Period: 1 - 16 November 2013

Table 4.2: CA Election Media Monitoring Findings for Election Campaign Period

Date :1-Nov to 16-Nov											
Category	Total	Bias			Tone			Flag			
		Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Neutral	Slight Bias	Serious Bias	Gross Violation
Online	460	176	57	225	214	108	136	297	128	24	10
Print	2057	1013	402	610	892	621	511	1122	635	211	79
Radio	404	105	49	250	108	196	100	339	47	13	5
TV	304	111	18	175	141	121	42	227	58	11	8
Grand Total	3225	1405	526	1260	1355	1046	789	1985	868	259	102
Percentage		44	17	39	42	32	24	62	27	8	3

Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Box 2: Example of Biased News



प्रचण्डको नेतृत्व मुलुकको खाँचो

▲ प्रा. कृष्ण खनाल

बिपी कोइराला जीवनभर कम समय पदमा बसे । तर, सबैभन्दा लामो समय मुलुकलाई नेतृत्व दिए र आज उनी नहँदा पनि उनको वैचारिक नेतृत्वले महत्त्व राख्छ । नेतृत्वको महत्त्व त्यो हो । प्रचण्डजीसँग हामी त्यो अपेक्षा गर्छौं । तपाईंकै नेतृत्व यो मुलुकको खाँचो हो । एउटा मतदाताको हिसाबले पनि म तपाईंलाई शुभकामना व्यक्त गर्न चाहन्छु र समर्थन पनि व्यक्त गर्न चाहन्छु । उहाँ निश्चित रूपमा जित्नहुन्छ । त्यसमा शंका छैन ।

खनाललाई चुनाव हराउन ओलीको ५० लाख

○भावी सरकार र पार्टी नेतृत्व कब्जाको होडबाजी





दमक, २ मंसिर/ नेकपा एमालेभित्रको आन्तरिक किचलो र गुटबन्दी यस पटकको संविधानसभा निर्वाचनमा पनि सतहमा देखिएको छ।

आगामी निर्वाचनपछिको सरकार प्रमुख वा राष्ट्रप्रमुख को हो भन्ने निर्क्यौल गर्न नसकेको एमालेभित्र आगामी नेतृत्वको विषयमा चुनावमै अन्तरघात भएको रहस्योद्घाटन भएको छ।

एमालेको आसन्न महाधिवेशन र ठूलो पार्टी भए सरकारको नेतृत्व कसले गर्नेभन्ने विषयमा शीर्ष नेताहरुको चुनावी परिणाम जोडिएकोले एकअर्का विरुद्ध अन्तरघात गर्न नेताहरु लागिपरेका छन्। संविधानसभा निर्वाचनको समानुपातिक उम्मेदवार चयनमा झलनाथ खनाल र माधव नेपालले मनोमानी गरेको सार्वजनिक आरोप लगाएका एमाले नेता केपी ओलीले अध्यक्ष झलनाथ खनाललाई पराजित गर्न सम्पूर्ण शक्ति परिचालन गरेको खुलेको छ।

इलाम क्षेत्र नम्बर १ बाट संविधानसभा निर्वाचनमा अधिल्लो पटक विजयी हुनुभएका झलनाथ खनाल चुनाव जितेपछि पार्टीको कार्यबहाक महासचिव हुँदै अध्यक्ष र प्रधानमन्त्री बनेकोले निर्वाचनको परिणमलाई एमालेभित्र पार्टी र सरकारको आगामी नेतृत्वसँग जोडेर हेर्ने गरिएको छ। अघिल्लो संविधानसभामा पराजित भएकै कारण महासचिव माधव नेपालले राजिनामा दिनुभएको थियो भने दोश्रो तहका नेता केपी ओलीले पनि पराजयकै कारण नेतृत्वको दावी गर्न सक्नुभएको थिएन।

यसपटक संविधानसभा निर्वाचनलगत्तै पार्टीको महाधिवेशन हुने भएकोले निर्वाचनमा एकअर्कालाई हराउन एमाले नेताहरु सक्रिय भएका छन्। पार्टीको महाधिवेशनमा माधव नेपाललाई अध्यक्ष र सरकारको नेतृत्व पाए झलनाथ खनाल प्रधानमन्त्री बन्ने सहमति दुई नेतावीच भएकोले नेता केपी ओली त्यसलाई रोक्न सक्रिय हुनुभएको छ। त्यसकै छनक उहाँले संविधानसभा निर्वाचन अगाडि अध्यक्षको निर्देशन विपरित युवा संघको बैठक राखेर दिईसक्नुभएको थियो।

ओली संविधानसभा निर्वाचनको लागि झापा ७ बाट सर्वसम्मत उम्मेदवारको रुपमा सिफारिस भए पनि उनीपक्षीय कार्यकर्ताको विरोधका कारण खनाल इलाम १ बाट सर्वसम्मत रुपमा सिफारिस हुन सकेका थिएनन्। क्षेत्रबाट खनालसहित तीन नेताको नाम सिफारिस हुनुले पनि ओली खनाललाई जसरी पनि चुनाव हराउने अभियानमा लागेको पुष्टि हुने एमालेकै कार्यकर्ताहरुबीच चर्चा छ।

अहिले संविधानसभा निर्वाचनको संघारमा पनि नेता ओलीले झलनाथ खनाललाई इलाममबाट चुनाव हराउन कंग्रेस उम्मेदवारलाई सहयोग गरेको खुलासा भएको छ। स्रोतले दिएको जानकारी अनुसार नेता ओलीले त्यसको लागि झापा ७ का आफ्ना विश्वासपात्र रोमनाथ ओली र इन्द्र भण्डारी तथा ओली निकट रहेका एमालेका इलाम जिल्ला सचिव गणेश बरालेलाई परिचालित गर्नुभएको छ। ओलीको निर्देशनमा खनाललाई इलामबाट चुनाव हराउँन ५० लाख रुपैयाँ कांग्रेस उम्मेदवार हिमालय कर्मचार्यलाई आर्थिक सहयोग गरेको एमाले श्रोतले जनाएको छ।

एक साता अगाडि दमकमा इलाम जिल्ला सचिव बरालेलाई बोलाएर ओलीले आफ्ना विश्वासपात्रमार्फत कर्मचार्यलाई विजयको शुभकामनासहित आर्थिक सहयोग गर्नुभएको हो।

एमाले झापाका नेता रोमनाथ ओली र इन्द्र भण्डारीमार्फत नविल बैंकको दमक शाखाबाट ५० लाख रुपैयाँ निकालेर ओलीले इलाम जिल्ला सचिव बरालेलाई हुँदै हिमालय कर्मचार्यलाई सहयोग गर्नुभएको हो। एमाले सचिव बरालकै आफन्त तथा कांग्रेस इलामका सदस्य दुर्गा बरालमार्फत कर्मचार्यसम्म ओलीको सहयोग पुगेको छ। आफूलाई भावी प्रधानमन्त्रीको रुपमा पेश गर्दै ओलीले आफूपक्षीय इलाम १ का कार्यकर्तालाई खनालले चुनाव जिते अध्यक्ष र प्रधानमन्त्रीको दावी गर्ने भन्दै कांग्रेसका कर्मचार्यलाई मत दिन निर्देशन दिएको एमालेकै एक कार्यकर्ताले बताए।

ओलीको खनाल हराउ अभियानकै क्रममा आइतबार नयाँ पत्रिका दैनिकले प्रकाशन गरेको पार्टीहरुको आन्तरिक चुनाव परिणम मूल्यांकनमा एमालेले इलाम १ मा पराजय स्वीकार गरेको उल्लेख भएको स्रोतले जनाएको छ। 'नयाँ पत्रिकामा प्रकाशन भएको मूल्यांकन एमालेको मूल्यांकन नभएर ओलीको मूल्यांकन हो'- नाम उल्लेख नगर्ने सर्तमा खनालपक्षीय एक कार्यकताले भने- 'अधिल्लो चुनावमा पनि जितेर प्रधानमन्त्री भएका खनाल हार्नेकुरै छैन, बरु पार्टीभित्र पनि कंग्रेस धारको नेतृत्व गर्न ओलीलाई नै एमाओवादीको गोपाल किरातीले चुनौति दिएका छन्।'

अधिल्लो संविधानसभा निर्वाचनमा झापा ७ बाट पराजित भएका ओलीले यस पटक पनि चुनाव जित्न सहज नदेखेपछि भावी प्रधानमन्त्री र अध्यक्ष संकटमा पर्ने देखेर खनाल हराउन अभियान थालेको बताइएको छ। त्यसो त ओलीले नेता माधव नेपाललाई पराजित गर्न काठमाडौं २ मा पनि कार्यकर्ता परिचालन गरेको जनिएको छ।

Box 3: Example of Unbiased News



चुनावी माहौल बढ्यो, तीन शक्ति प्रतिष्पर्धी

खोटाङबजार संवाददाता

खोटाङ/ जिल्लामा चुनावी रौनक बढेको छ। एमाओवादी, कांग्रेस, एमाले, राप्रपा, राप्रपा नेपाल, संघीय समाजवादी पार्टी, नेपाल कम्युनिष्ट पार्टी, सम्भावना राष्ट्रिय मोर्चा, नेकपा मालेक्रगायत दलका तिला तथा कार्यकर्ताहरु गाउँगाउँमा पुगेर चुनावी प्रचार तिव्र पारेका छन्। चुनावी सभा र पर्चा पोष्टरले जिल्लादेखि गाउँ क्रमसम्म पारेका छन्। एमाओवादी उम्मेदवार तथा नेता-कार्यकर्ता जिल्लाको दुवै क्षेत्रमा मतदातालाई रिझाउन चुनावी सभा र घरदैलोमा व्यस्त छन्। क्षेत्र नं-१ मा एमाओवादीकी उम्मेदवार दुर्गाजयन्ती राई, पूर्व सभापत रामकुमार राई लगायतका नेता-कार्यकर्ता घरदैलोमा छन् भने क्षेत्र नं २ मा एमाओवादीका उम्मेदवार देवान राई, पूर्वसभासद सविता कार्की लगायतका नेता-कार्यकर्ता घरदैलोमा जुटेका छन्। घरघरमा हरेक इलाका इन्चार्जहरुको नेतृत्वमा इलाका-इलाकामा चुनावी कार्यक्रम भइरहेको एमाओवादी कार्यालय सोपेव सेरेमा बताए। एमाओवादीले एक चरण गाविसस्तरीय कार्यक्रम सकेर डोको सरुमको घरदैलो कार्यक्रममा जुटेको हो। कांग्रेस उम्मेदवार तथा नेता-कार्यकर्ता पनि चुनावी प्रचारमा गाउँगाउँ पुगेका छन्। क्षेत्र नं-१ का कांग्रेस उम्मेदवार नरेशकुमार भेष्ठ, समानुपातिक उम्मेदवार सरस्वती अधिकारी, विगत साईलगायत नेता कार्यकर्ताले चुनावी सभासंगै घरदैलो अभियानमा जुटेका छन्। क्षेत्र नं-२ का कांग्रेस उम्मेदवार रामकुमार राई र जिल्ला सभापत विमार प्रसाद भुषण राईसहित टोली बनाएर पूर्व सभापत्व तथा समानुपातिक उम्मेदवार हिरा गुरुङ, अर्का समानुपातिक उम्मेदवार रविप्रकाश राई लगायतको टोलीले गाविस नभर प्रत्यक्षतर्फ चुनावी सभा गरी जनतासँग घरदैलोमा पुगिरहेका छन्। उम्मेदवार राईका अनुसार विभिन्न गाविसबाट एमाओवादी र एमाले लगायतका कार्यकर्ता कांग्रेस प्रवेशले हौसला बढाएको छ। जिते कांग्रेसको ठूलो शक्ति बन्नेगरी एक चोटी कांग्रेसलाई दुस्रो दल बनाउने छन्।' एमाले उम्मेदवार तथा नेता-कार्यकर्ता पनि चुनावी अभियानमा गाउँ गाउँमा पुगेका छन्। क्षेत्र नं-१ मा एमाले उम्मेदवार पार्वतकुमार राई र क्षेत्र नं-२ मा एमाले उम्मेदवार विशाल भट्टराई पनि नेता-कार्यकर्ता साथमा चुनावी सभा लिएर गाउँ गाउँमा पुगेका छन्। जुनसुकै गतिबमा पनि उनाहट जनक उपस्थितिले एमालेको 'माहौल राम्रो देखिएको एमाले शीर्षनेता जनाएको छ। संघीय समाजवादी पार्टीले पनि चुनावी अभियान तातारको छ। उसले दुवै क्षेत्रमा चुनावी अभियान तिव्र पारेको छ। जिल्लाको एमाओवादी, कांग्रेस र एमाले तीनै दलबाट पार्टी छाडेकर कार्यकर्ताहरु संगठित संघीय समाजवादी पार्टीले पनि गाउँमा चुनावी माहौल तताएको छ। क्षेत्र नं-१ मा संघीय समाजवादीका उम्मेदवार देवराज राई तथा क्षेत्र नम्बर २ मा उम्मेदवार गणबहादुर राई लगायतका नेता कार्यकर्ता चुनावी अभियानमा जुटिरहेका छन् भने राप्रपा, राप्रपा नेपाल, नेपाल कम्युनिष्ट पार्टी, सम्भावना राष्ट्रिय मोर्चा, नेकपा मालेलगायत दलका उम्मेदवार तथा नेता कार्यकर्ताहरुको प्रचार प्रचार पनि कम छैन्। चुनावमा तीन मूलधारका शक्ति प्रतिस्पर्धी देखिन्छन्। एमाओवादीले आफ्नो प्रतिस्पर्धी कांग्रेस ठानेको छ भने कांग्रेसले क्षेत्र नम्बर १ मा एमाओवादी र क्षेत्र नम्बर २ मा एमालेलाई प्रतिस्पर्धी सूचिमा राखेको छ। एमालेले भने कांग्रेसलाई प्रतिस्पर्धी देखेको छ। एमाओवादीले जित आफ्नो पोल्टोमा पार्ने सपना सजाएको छ। कांग्रेसले अघिल्लो सभिधानसभाको चुनावमा आफुलाई हराउने एमाओवादी पहिलो प्रतिस्पर्धीको रुपमा निशाना बनाएको छ। एमालेले भने एमाओवादीको कूट एमाओवादी विरुद्ध कार्यकर्ताको विष्फोटन, फाटो सहितको मतदाता मनाउनी लगायतले एमाओवादीको भीत भदर्ने प्रहरण गर्दै कांग्रेस नै पहिलो प्रतिस्पर्धी मानेको छ। जिल्लाका विश्लेषकहरुका अनुसार यस चुनावमा क्षेत्र नम्बर १ मा एमाओवादी उम्मेदवार दुर्गाजयन्ती राई र कांग्रेस उम्मेदवार नरेशकुमार भेष्ठ तथा क्षेत्र नम्बर २ मा कांग्रेस उम्मेदवार विष्णुकुमार राई र एमाले उम्मेदवार विशाल भट्टराईका बीच कडा प्रतिस्पर्धा हुने बताइएको छ। अघिल्लो निर्वाचनमा क्षेत्र नं-१ मा एमाओवादीका समर्थनमा राई ९६ हजार ६ सय ७७, कांग्रेसका सुशला चौरसेलाई ५ हजार ९९, एमालेका मिक लामेले ७ हजार ४ सय ९३ मत ल्याएका थिए। क्षेत्र नं-२ मा एमाओवादीकी सविता कार्की ९८ हजार एक सय ९८, एमालेका विरात भट्टराई दश हजार ६ सय ६५ र कांग्रेसका शिव वसनेत ६ हजार एक सय दुई सत प्राप्त गरेका थिए। यसैबेर जिल्लाको कुल मतदाता एक लाख ८६ हजार लाग सय ९४ जनाले २७ हजार एक सय इई मत खसेको थियो। यी चोटी ९९ हजार ६ सय ९२ जना मतदाता छन्। जिल्लामा संघीय समाजवादी पार्टीले चौथो शक्ति बनने दाबापनी छ। वि पछले चुनाव बिधीले केन्द्रीय निर्देशन पालना गरि विरोधका कार्यक्रमहरु गुरु गरेको छ।

मतदाता परिचयपत्र वितरण सम्बन्धी जिल्ला निर्वाचन कार्यालय, खोटाङको सूचना !!

संविधानसभा सदस्य निर्वाचन २०७० मंसिर ४ गतेका लागि फोटोसहितको मतदाता नामावलीमा नाम दर्ता भई सकेका मतदाताहरुको परिचय-पत्र सम्बन्धित मतदानकेन्द्रहरुमा खटिने कर्मचारीहरु २०७० कार्तिक २९ गते मतदान केन्द्रहरुमा पुगेपछि सोहि दिनदेखि मंसिर २ गतेसम्म वितरण गरिने भएको छ। मतदाता आफै आफ्नो मतदान केन्द्रमा उपस्थित भई आफ्नो परिचय-पत्र बुझिलिन वा आफै उपस्थित हुन नसकेमा एकाघरको सदस्यले आधिकारिक नाता खुल्ने प्रमाण देखाई बुझिलिन सम्बन्धित सबैमा अनुरोध छ। मतदाता स्वयम् वा प्रमाणसहित एकाधरको व्यक्ति बाहेकलाई परिचय-पत्र नदिइने व्यहोरा समेत सबैमा जानकारी गराइन्छ। २०७० मंसिर ४ को मतदानमा मतदाता परिचय-पत्र साथैमा लिई आउनु पर्नेछ।

साथै राजनीतिक दल, सञ्चारकर्मी, बुद्धिजिवी, कर्मचारी, शिक्षक, विद्यार्थी नागरिक समाज लगायत सम्पूर्ण खोटाङवासी बाजुभाई तथा दिदीबहिनीहरूले यसै सूचनालाई आधार मानी आफ्नो छरछिमेकका मतदाताहरूलाई जानकारी गराई यस कार्यमा सहयोग गरीदिनुहुन अनुरोध छ।

जिल्ला निर्वाचन कार्यालय, खोटाङ
फोन नं. ०३६-५२०२८८

एगाछ स्वादु अनि र पछि साम्री साबुन पालीले टाम पोओं।
पिउने पानी उमालेर मात्र पिऔं,
स्वस्थ जीवनको परिचय दिऔं
नोट : खाना, लत्ता र बासको लागि सधै छाणीलाई सम्झनुहोस् ।
प्रोपाइटर : जानेन्द्र लयालु
फोन नं. ०३६४२०२०३/४८४२८४४०७४/५७४३००६२४३
होटल लयालु दिक्तेलबजार



धनुषा ४क चुनावी चर्चा

त्रिकोणात्मक प्रतिस्पर्धाक संकेत

सुजीत कुमार झा

जनकपुरधाम, अगहन २ ।

धनुषा निर्वाचन क्षेत्र नम्बर ४मे त्रिकोणात्मक प्रतिस्पर्धाक संकेत देखा रहल अछि।

नेपाली कांग्रेसक राम सरोज यादव, सद्भावना पार्टीक संजय कुमार साह आ तराई मधेश लोकतान्त्रिक पार्टीक वृषेश चन्द्र लाल बीच प्रतिस्पर्धा देखल जा रहल अछि।

एहि बेरक चुनावमे राष्ट्रिय मधेश समाजवादी पार्टीक मनोज चौधरी, मधेशी जनअधिकार फोरम लोकतान्त्रिकक कृष्ण चन्द्र साह, एकीकृत नेकपा माओवादीक अरविन्द साह आ मधेशी जनअधिकार फोरम नेपालक डा. रामस्वार्थ रायक मते सेहो निर्णायक भऽ सकैत अछि। संजय साह, मनोज, कृष्ण चन्द्र आ अरविन्द एकै रंगक मतदाता पर जोड़ दऽ रहल छथि तऽ राम सरोज यादव आ डा. राम स्वार्थ रायकेँ एक प्रकृतिकेँ मतदाता पर जोड़ अछि। वृषेश चन्द्र लाल लग चुप्पा मतदाता देखल गेल अछि।

स्थानीय वासीसभक अनुसार क्षेत्र नम्बर ४मे जातीय समीकरण जकरा बढ़िया लागत ओहे विजेता हएत। राम सरोज यादव ब्राह्मण, भूमिहार, यादव, साह, दलित आ मुस्लमान मतदाता पर जोड़ दऽ रहल छथि तऽ संजय कुमार साहक अधिकांश समय साह पर खर्च कऽ रहल छथि।

वृषेश चन्द्र लाल सेहो सभ जाति पर गहकाज कऽ रहल छथि। वृषेश चन्द्र लाल लग मुस्लमान आ फोरवार्ड जातिक मत आबएकेँ संभावना अछि।

एहिसँ पहिलका चुनावमे क्षेत्र नम्बर ४सँ संजय कुमार साह निर्वाचित भेल छलथि।

साहकेँ १३ हजार ४ सय २२ मत आएल छल। सातक निकटतम प्रतिद्वन्दी रघुवीर महासेठकेँ ९ हजार २ सय ८२, तेसर नम्बरमे रहल वृषेश चन्द्र लालकेँ ४ हजार ९सय ६५ तथा नेपाली कांग्रेसक लिला कोइरालाकेँ ४ हजार ३ सय ६३ मत आएल छल।

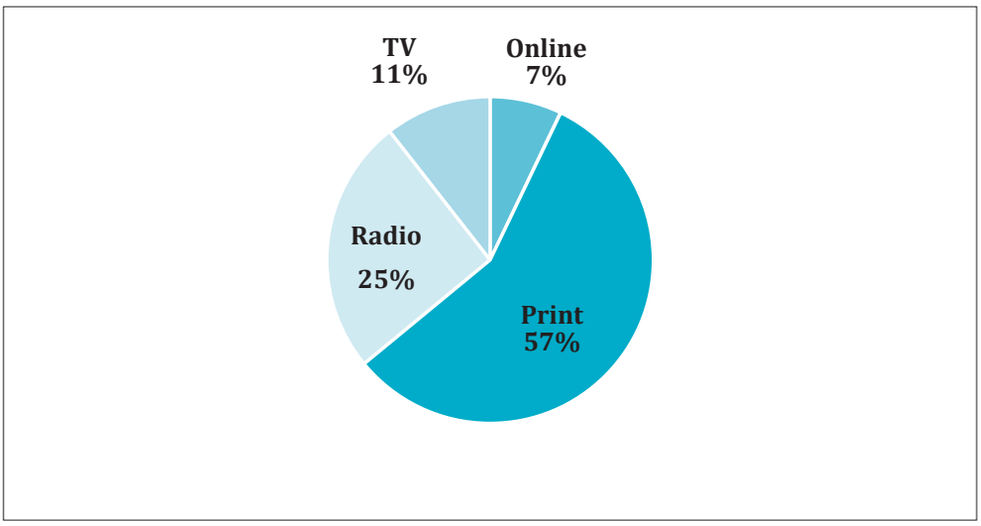
एहि बेर क्षेत्र नम्बर ४सँ नेकपा एमालेक श्रीप्रसाद साह चुनाव लड़ल छथि। हुनको एहि क्षेत्रसँ बढ़िया मत आबि रहल अछि।

५३ हजार ७३ मतदाता रहल एहि क्षेत्रमे जनकपुर नगरपालिकाक १६ वार्ड आ ५ गाविस रहल अछि।

गाविससभमे कनकपट्टी, प्रक महुवा, कुर्था, बसबिट्टी आ बिन्धी रहल अछि।

जनकपुरमे मोटरसाइकिल जुलुशक माध्यमसँ नेपाली कांग्रेस आ सद्भावना पार्टी दुइए गोटे प्रतिस्पर्धामे छी देखाबएमे प्रयास कएने होइतो तेसरो उम्मेदवारक शक्तिकेँ नजर अन्दाज नहि कएल जा सकैत अछि।

Graph 4.9: Category wise media monitoring during Silence period



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Box 4: Example of news during Silence Period



आजबाट प्रचारप्रसार बन्द

नयाँ पत्रिका
काठमाडौं, १ मंसिर

४ मंसिरका लागि घोषित संविधानसभा निर्वाचनको कार्यतालिका अनुसार आज आइतबारबाट मौन अवधि सुरु भएको छ । मौन अवधिमा राजनीतिक दलले आन्तरिक रणनीतिबाहेक अन्य प्रचारप्रसारका कुनै पनि कार्यक्रम गर्न मिल्दैन । निर्वाचनको मितिभन्दा ४८ घन्टाअघिको समयलाई मौन अवधि मानिन्छ । जसअनुसार दलहरूका सभा तथा चुनाव प्रचारप्रसारअन्तर्गतका घरदैलो कार्यक्रम प्रतिबन्धित हुनेछन् ।

'मौन अवधिमा प्रचारप्रसार गर्न पाइँदैन,' निर्वाचन आयोगका प्रवक्ता दीपकबहादुर सिंहले भने, 'यो अवधिमा आचारसंहिताविपरीतका प्रचारप्रसार भए नियमअनुसार कारवाही हुन्छ ।'

संविधानसभा सदस्य निर्वाचन आचारसंहिता २०७० अनुसार राजनीतिक दलसहित सञ्चारमाध्यमलाई समेत मौन अवधि लागू हुन्छ ।

आचारसंहिताको दफा ३४ मा भनिएको छ, 'मतदान हुने दिनभन्दा ४८ घन्टाअघिदेखि मतदानको काम पूरा नभएसम्म जुलुस निकाल्न, नारा लगाउन, राजनीतिक दल वा राजनीतिक दलसँग आबद्ध संस्थाको झन्डा, निर्वाचन चिह्न र अन्य कुनै पनि सामग्री प्रदर्शन गर्न र निर्वाचन प्रचारप्रसार हुने कुनै पनि कार्य गर्नु र गराउनु हुँदैन ।'

मौन अवधिमा सञ्चारमाध्यमले कुनै विशेष राजनीतिक दल वा उम्मेदवारको निर्वाचनको प्रचारप्रसार हुनेगरी सूचना वा समाचार सम्प्रेषण, प्रकाशन र प्रसारण गर्नसमेत मिल्दैन । तर, मौन अवधिमा निर्वाचन आयोगले प्रवाह गरेको सूचना तथा समाचार सम्प्रेषण, प्रकाशन वा प्रसारण गर्न भने बाधा मानिँदैन । यस्तै मौन अवधिपछि मतदानको दिन मतदातालाई हवाईजहाज, हेलिकप्टर, बस, ट्रक, जिप, मोटरसाइकल र अन्य कुनै पनि सवारीसाधनबाट ओसारपसार गर्ने प्रतिबन्ध लगाइएको छ ।

यसैबीच निर्वाचन आयोगले मौन अवधिमा आचारसंहिताले निर्देश गरेका नियम पालना गर्न राजनीतिक दल तथा सञ्चारमाध्यमलाई आग्रह गरेको छ । आयोगले विज्ञप्ति जारी गर्दै सो अवधिमा आचारसंहिता उल्लंघन भए नियमअनुसार कारवाही हुनेसमेत जनाएको छ ।

आयोगद्वारा जारी विज्ञप्तिमा भनिएको छ, 'मिति २०७०/०८/०९ गते राति १२ :०० बजेपछि मतदानको दिन अन्तिम मतदान केन्द्र बन्द नहुञ्जेलसम्म कुनै पनि राजनीतिक दल, उम्मेदवारले जुलुस निकाल्न, नारा लगाउन, राजनीतिक दल वा सोसँग आबद्ध संस्थाको झन्डा, निर्वाचन चिह्न र अन्य कुनै पनि सामग्री प्रदर्शन नगर्न, निर्वाचन प्रचारप्रसार हुने कुनै पनि कार्य नगर्न र नगराउन आयोग अनुरोध गर्दछ ।'

आयोगले सो अवधिमा मतदातालाई मतदान गर्न डर, धाक, धम्की दिने वा अन्य कुनै पनि किसिमले प्रभावित नपार्न तथा मतदान गर्नबाट वञ्चित हुनेगरी कुनै अवरोध नपुऱ्याउनसमेत आग्रह गरेको छ ।

इलाम पोष्ट दैनिक
वर्ष ३ अंक ३०७ २०७० कार्तिक २८ गते बिहीबार

'देशैभर आचारसंहिता उल्लंघन भइरहेको छ'

इलाम पोष्ट संवाददाता
काठमाण्डौं, कार्तिक २७

सरकारले निर्वाचनका लागि शान्ति सुरक्षा चुस्त बनाएको दावी गरे पनि नागरिकहरुले चुनै अवरोधको सामना गर्नु परिरहेको बताएको छ ।

आयोगले बुधबार विज्ञप्ती जारी गरेर भनेको छ-'यसमा निर्वाचन प्रक्रियामा सहभागी भएका राजनीतिक दलहरुबीच भएका हिंसात्मक गतिविधि एवम् निर्वाचन बहिष्कार गर्ने दलहरुको क्रियाकलाप मुख्य कारक रहेको पाइएको छ ।'

संविधानसभा निर्वाचनमा सबै पक्षको सहभागिता हुन् अपरिहार्य भए पनि केही दल बहिष्कारको बाटोमा लाग्ने परिस्थिति पैदा हुनु दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण भएको आयोगले बताएको छ ।

निर्वाचन बहिष्कारको नामसा बन्द-हड्ताल जस्ता आमनागरिकको दैनिक जीवनमा प्रतिकूल असर पार्ने कार्यक्रम अघि सार्नुले संविधानसभा सदस्यको निर्वाचनमा नागरिकको निर्भय र स्वतन्त्रतापूर्वक सहभागी हुन पाउने अधिकारलाई समेत प्रभावित पार्ने अवाञ्छित छ आयोगले भनेको छ-'यस्तो परिस्थितिमा वार्ता र संवादको वातावरण सिर्जना गरी संविधानसभामा सबै पक्षको सहभागितालाई प्रश्रय दिदै राजनीतिक दलहरुबीच बढ्दै गएको हिंसात्मक र छरास्मक गतिविधि, आरोप-प्रत्यारोपका श्रृखलाहरु तथा निर्णयहरुको राजनीतिको अन्त्य गरी सहमति एवम् सहयात्राको मार्ग पहिल्याउन आवश्यक छ ।'

मानवअधिकार आयोगले संविधानसभा निर्वाचनलाई भयरहित वातावरणमा स्वतन्त्र, निर्भय र निष्पक्षतापूर्वक सम्पन्न गर्ने वातावरण बनाउन दलहरुलाई आग्रह गरेको छ ।

यस्तै चुनावको समयमा शान्ति सुरक्षालाई सजबुत बनाउन र आपराधिक क्रियाकलाप र आचारसंहिता उल्लंघनकतालाई कारवाही गर्न सम्बद्ध पक्षहरुलाई मानवअधिकार आयोगले आग्रह गरेको छ ।

आयोगको अनुगमनबाट प्राप्त भएका तथ्यहरु

- हालसम्मको अनुगमनबाट प्राप्त तथ्यहरुका आधारमा निर्वाचनको सम्पर्भमा राजनीतिक दलहरु एवम् उम्मेदवारहरुले प्रयोग गरेका सवारी साधनहरुमा आक्रमण गर्ने, आगजनी गर्ने, तोडफोड गर्ने घटना अधिक मात्रामा भइरहेको पाइएको छ ।
- यसको साथै उम्मेदवारहरुले आयोजना गरेको सभा एवम् राजनीतिक चुनावी अभियानको क्रममा आक्रमण गर्ने तथा बम समेत प्रहार भएका घटनाहरु एवम् बन्द तथा आमहड्तालको आयोजना गर्ने कार्यले स्वतन्त्र र भयरहित वातावरणमा निर्वाचनमा सहभागी हुने अधिकारलाई कुण्ठित गर्ने अवस्था पैदा गरेको पाइएको छ ।
- शान्ति सुरक्षाको व्यवस्था प्रभावकारी बनाउन खोरिएर पनि जनमानसमा भय र त्रास कायमै रहेको पाइएको छ ।

This period, not surprisingly, is a thoroughly preparatory one. This is usually the phase that is most neglected, despite the number of "lessons learned" from past elections. One of the common reasons it is neglected is a lack of funding or resources in general, particularly in countries in transition to democracy that are approaching their first or second elections like Nepal. The ECN is expected to be busy focusing on securing funding, hiring staff, fixing facilities, and so forth during these crucial weeks or months. This is the time to conduct audience analysis, media mapping, message testing, and finally to devise a comprehensive strategy. In addition, this period is the time for the ECN to be consulting, communicating and educating both the media and stakeholders about their rights and responsibilities during the elections, relevant laws and regulations, complaint mechanisms and so on. The ECN may be involved in media briefings and trainings on these issues organised by itself or others.

Table 4.2 shows that during the election campaign period a total of 3,225 news items were monitored. It is seen that 44% of the news are positively biased, 17% are unfavourable, while 39% are neutral. Considering the tone, 42 % have positive tone, 32 % neutral and 24% negative.

In the pie-diagram (Figure 4.7), it is seen that 14% of the news items have been covered from online, 13% from radio, 64% from print media and 9 % TV news.

Figure 4.8 also indicates that of the total news monitored, the highest number of news items have netural tone. In case of bias, the number of positively biased news is the heighest.

4.5. Constituent Assembly election media monitoring findings during Silence Period: 17 - 18 November 2013

An election silence operates to allow a period for voters to reflect on events before casting their votes. During this period, no active campaigning by the candidates is allowed. In connection with the CA election of 2013, monitoring was taking place during the silence period from 17-18 November 2013.

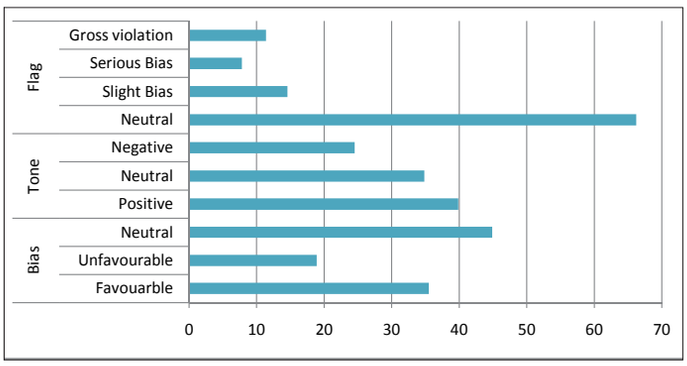
In Nepal the silence is generally legally enforced, though in some countries it is just a "gentlemen's agreement" between

Table 4.3: Summary of the findings of the media monitoring during silence period

Date : November 16- 18 , 2013											
Category	Total	Bias			Tone			Flag			
		Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Neutral	Slight Bias	Serious Bias	Gross Violation
Online	142	67	49	26	68	2	71	67	20	12	43
Print	803	350	177	265	358	217	217	464	148	91	100
Radio	371	77	39	255	112	199	60	314	41	11	5
TV	194	42	20	132	64	108	22	155	11	4	24
Grand Total	1510	536	285	678	602	526	370	1000	220	118	172
Percentage		35	19	45	40	35	25	66	15	8	11

Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Figure 4.10: Summary of the finding of the media monitoring during silence period



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

leading parties. The following pie-chart shows the summary of the news monitored during the silence period.

During the silence period 45% of the news were neutral bias and 66% percent news were with neutral tone (Table 4.3).

Figure 4.10 shows that during the silence period most of the news items were neutral and unbiased.

4.6. Findings of media monitoring on Constituent Assembly election on Polling Day (19 November 2013)

Polling is normally held on the same day by enabling the security forces and those monitoring the election to maintain law and order and ensure that voting during the election is fair. Polling was carried out on 19 November 2013.

This period is guaranteed to be an intense one, involving preparation for voting itself, along with a variety of campaign issues.

The total number of news monitored can be seen in the pie-chart(Figure

Box 5: Example of unbiased news



आज संविधानसभा चुनाव

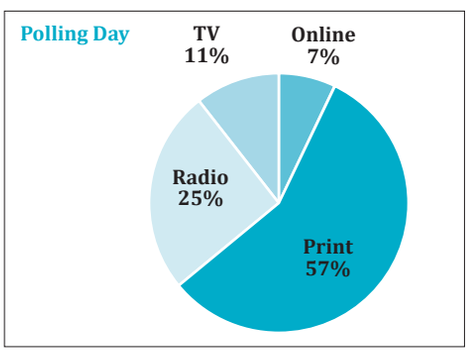
राष्ट्रपतिद्वारा चुनावमा सहभागी हुन आह्वान

Table 4.4: Summary of media monitoring on polling day

Date : November 19, 2013											
Category	Total	Bias			Tone			Flag			
		Favour-able	Unfa-vour-able	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Nega-tive	Neutral	Slight Bias	Serious Bias	Gross Violation
Online	26	13	11	2	11	1	14	13	2	6	5
Print	208	73	42	86	78	70	54	136	31	18	23
Radio	92	8	16	68	19	50	23	78	4	4	6
TV	39	2	1	36	5	32	2	36	2	0	1
Grand total	365	96	70	192	113	153	93	263	39	28	35
Percentage		35	19	45	40	35	25	66	15	8	11

Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Figure 4.11: Distribution of media category on the polling day



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

4.11). On the polling day, the news monitored comprised 7 % online, 57 % print, 25% radio and 11 % television.

On the polling day, a majority of news items are favourably biased and neutral (Box 5). The reason behind this is the action taken by ECN against some media houses during the campaign period.

Table 4.4 shows that out of 365 the total news monitored, 192 are neutral and 153 have neutral tone. The same is shown by the following figure also.

The figure 4.12 shows that the majority of the news are neutral on the polling day.It was found that the news in terms of flag , tone and bias are neutral.

4.7. Constituent Assembly election media monitoring findings during Counting Period (20 - 30 November 2013)

Counting period begins after the ballots are collected from various constituencies. It is a very crucial period during election. The election results are announced after vote counting. Transparency in vote counting and announcement of results are some of the most

Figure 4.12: Summary of media monitoring on Polling Day

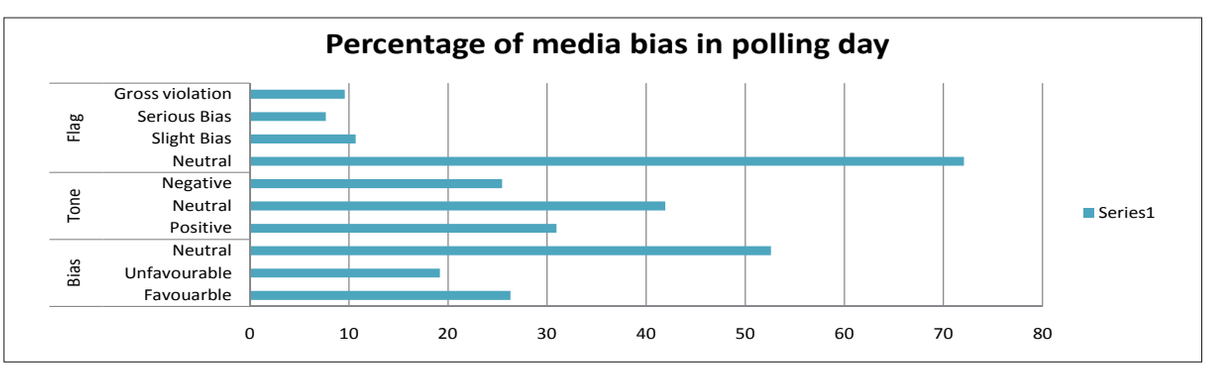
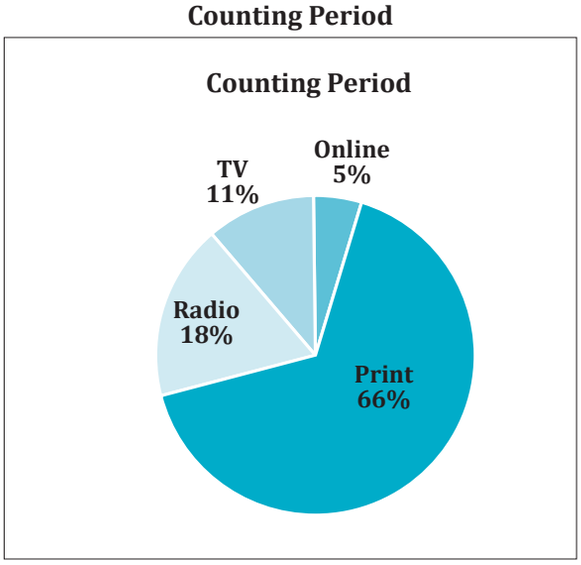


Table 4.5: Summary of media monitoring during Counting Period

Date : November 20- 30, 2013											
Category	Total	Bias			Tone			Flag			
		Favour-able	Unfa-vour-able	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Nega-tive	Neutral	Slight Bias	Serious Bias	Gross Violation
Online	200	90	50	60	77	49	74	132	41	19	8
Print	2787	1011	563	1195	1037	1115	619	1815	657	234	81
Radio	753	111	74	568	152	477	124	667	61	12	13
TV	475	79	17	379	127	325	23	406	59	6	4
Grand total	4215	1291	704	2202	1393	1966	840	3020	818	271	106
Percentage		35	19	45	40	35	25	66	15	8	11

Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Figure 4.13: Summary of media monitoring during Counting Period



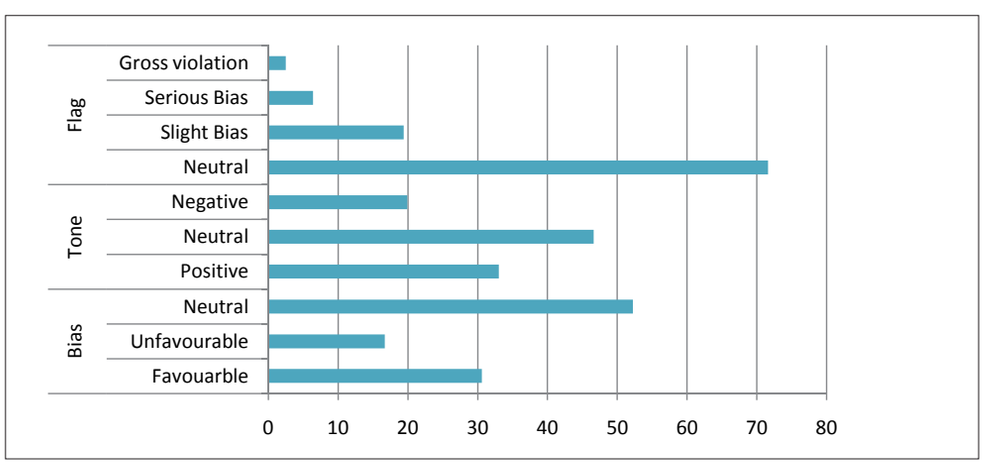
Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

important tasks of the ECN. The election is something the whole country and sometimes the whole world waits for with anticipation, and is sometimes marked by conflicting news reports.

Depending on the circumstances and specific procedures of an election, the counting period may last from a matter of hours to a matter of days, or even weeks. The following figure 4.13 shows that during the vote counting period, 66% of total news monitored are print,18% are radio, 11% are TV and 5 % are online news stories.

Table no 4.5 shows that during the counting period a total of 4,215 news

Figure 4.14: Summary of media monitoring during Counting Period



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Box 6: Example of news during counting



आगजनी आई पार्टिजनहरू | निर्वाचनमा मतदान गर्न देशका विभिन्न भागमा जान नागेकाहरूलाई लिएर काठमाडौं कोटेश्वरबाट आइतबार छुट्टै गरेका बस । भरिभराउ बस रिजर्भ गरेर आ-आफ्ना जिल्लामा मतदान गर्न राजधानीबाट जाने क्रम बढेको छ ।

तस्बिर : नरेन्द्र श्रेष्ठ/ कान्तिपुर

निर्वाचन परिणामबाट दुनियाँ आश्चर्यचकित

काठमाडौं । संविधान सभाको दोस्रो निर्वाचनको परिणामले नेपाली जनताको उच्चस्तरको चेतना र विवेकलाई प्रष्फुटन गरिदिएको छ । यो निर्वाचनबाट नेपाली जनता शान्ति, स्थिरता र स्थायित्वको पक्षमा उभिएको देखिएको छ भने हिंसा, दमन र ज्यादतिलाई मुखभरिको जवाफ पनि दिएका छन् ।

निर्वाचनको प्रत्यक्ष तर्फको मत परिणामले नेपाली कांग्रेस र एमाले मध्ये एउटा ठूलो दल हुने निश्चित देखिएको छ । एकीकृत नेकपा माओवादी भने तेस्रो स्थानमा पुग्ने छाँट देखिएको छ । यद्यपि जनमतको प्रवृत्ति हेर्दा समानुपातिक तर्फको मत गणना नहुँदै तेस्रो स्थानमा को आउँला भन्न हतार हुने धारणा पनि आइरहेका छन् । प्रत्यक्ष तर्फको मतमा समेत राप्रपा नेपालको बलियो उपस्थितिका कारण समानुपातिकको मत नआई तेस्रो स्थानको निक्यौंल नहुने धारणा आएका हुन् । त्यसो त समानुपातिकमा राप्रपा नेपालले कुन पक्षको मत बढी काट्ला वा न्यूट्रल मतदाताहरूले समानुपातिकमा कसलाई मत दिएका छन् भन्ने विषय पनि

प्रजातन्त्र पार्टीले पनि राम्रै कम्याक गर्ने संकेत गरेको छ । राप्रपा नेपाल जस्ता तुलनात्मक रूपमा कन्जरभेटिभ दलहरूको समेत आगामी संविधान सभामा बलियो उपस्थिति हुने देखिएको छ ।

२०६४ को निर्वाचनपछि गठन भएको संविधान सभा संविधान नै नबनाई विघटन भएपछि तत्कालीन प्रधानमन्त्री बाबुराम भट्टराईले अन्य दलहरूसँग सल्लाहसमेत नगरी संविधान सभा विघटन गराई आफ्नो दललाई दुई तिहाइ दिलाउने भन्दै संविधान सभाको दोस्रो निर्वाचन घोषणा गरेका थिए । तर, नेपाली जनताले बाबुराम भट्टराईको उक्त कदमलाई गलत

यो निर्वाचनको परिणामले नेपाली जनताको उच्चस्तरको चेतना र विवेकलाई प्रष्ट पारेको छ भन्नु अतियुक्ति हुने छैन । किनभने अघिल्लो पटक ठूल्ठूला सपना बाँडेर युद्धबाट आएको माओवादीलाई नेपाली जनताले सबैभन्दा ठूलो दल बनाइदिएका थिए ।

युद्धबाट आएको नेतृत्व हुनाले अकिंकति आशा, उनीहरूलाई नै सत्ताको साँचो दिँदा देशमा शान्ति हुने विश्वास र निर्वाचनको बेला उनीहरूले फैलाएको त्रास जस्ता विषयले तत्कालीन माओवादीलाई सबैभन्दा ठूलो दलको रूपमा नेपाली जनताले स्थापित गरिदिएका थिए । तर, सो दलको नेतृत्वको दूलमुले बोली र व्यवहार, चरम व्यक्तिगत स्वार्थ, भ्रष्टाचारको आहालमा डुब्नु, कार्यकर्ताहरूको दम्भ जस्ता माओवादीहरूका चरित्रलाई जनताले

बाँकी सातौं पृष्ठमा

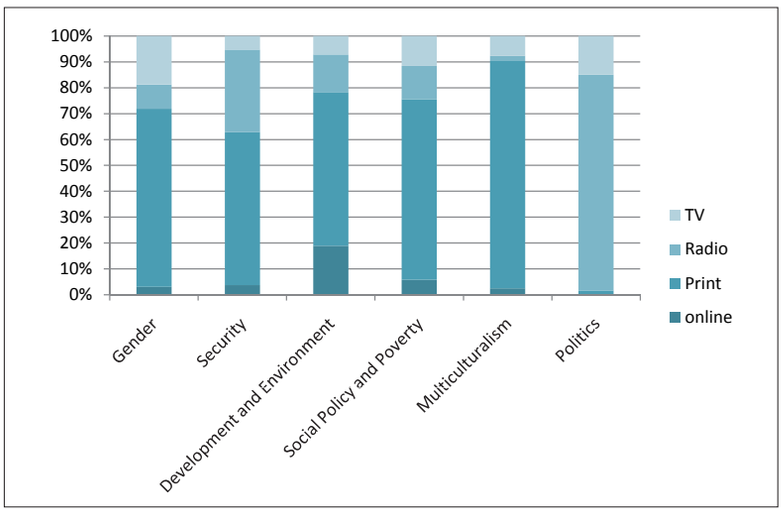
Table 4.6: Main Issues of News Coverage

Issue	Issue					
	Online	Print	Radio	TV	Grand total	Percent-age
Education	0	20	9	6	35	0.370
Health	1	22	3	6	32	0.338
Gender	5	78	42	7	132	1.396
Security	132	412	101	50	695	7.348
Development and Environment	5	60	11	10	86	0.909
Social policy and poverty	3	103	2	9	117	1.237
Multiculturalism		1	50	9	2	0.021
Politics	625	3960	1522	1180	7287	77.046
Others	11	647	285	129	1072	11.334
Total	782	5303	2025	1406	9458	100.000

Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

items were monitored. Of these, 200 were online 2,787 print, 753 radio and 475 TV news reports. During the counting period, a majority of news items were favourably biased and neutral (Figure 4.14). The reason behind this is the action taken by ECN against some media houses during the campaign period.

Figure 4.15: Main issues of news coverage in all media



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

4.8. Main issues of news coverage according to media category

The following table shows news coverage by the media on different issues during election. Table 4.6 shows that during the period of 1-30 November 2013, the media focused on the topics of politics. About 77% of media coverage was about politics. The issue of security and gender covers only 7% and 2 % respectively. These persentage are based on the total newsmonitored on the different issues only, i.e., 9458 as shown as in the following table.

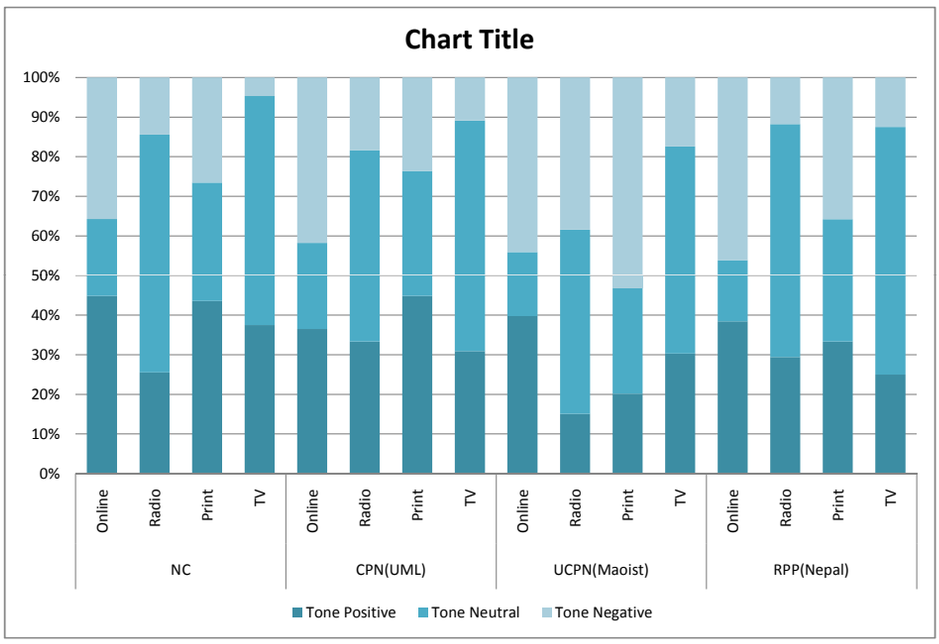
Table 4.6 shows that the issue of education, health, social policy and poverty, gender, security, multi-culturalism, de-

Table 4.7: Tone of news coverage of different parties in print media

Party	Category	Tone		
		Positive	Neutral	Negative
NC	Online	370	160	295
	Radio	46	108	26
	Print	220	151	134
	TV	48	74	6
CPN(UML)	Online	42	25	48
	Radio	49	71	27
	Print	188	132	99
	TV	17	32	6
UCPN(Maoist)	Online	37	15	41
	Radio	53	163	135
	Print	36	48	95
	TV	47	81	27
RPP(Nepal)	Online	5	2	6
	Radio	5	10	2
	Print	27	25	29
	TV	6	15	3
Others	Online	84	42	95
	Radio	315	930	152
	Print	2022	1756	1134
	TV	285	704	53

Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Figure 4.16: Tone of news coverage to different parties on all print media



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

velopment and environment are raised by print media whereas the issue of politics is raised by FM Radios. Of the total 9,458 issues raised by the media, 7,287 are related to politics. There were only two issues related to multiculturalism in the media during the election campaign.

Figure 4.15 shows that the issue of education, health, social policy and poverty gender, security, multi-culturalism, development and environment were raised by the print media whereas the issue of politics was raised by FM radios.

4.9. Tone of news coverage of different political parties in print media

From the table 4.7, it is seen that online media has highest positive as well as negative tone against NC. Other media outlets have no significant difference in tone.

The table 4.7 shows the tone of news media. It is seen that NC has more negative online news and UML more negative news on print media. Similarly, UCPN (Maoist) has more negative tone in radio and RPP(Nepal) has more negative tone in print than other media categories.

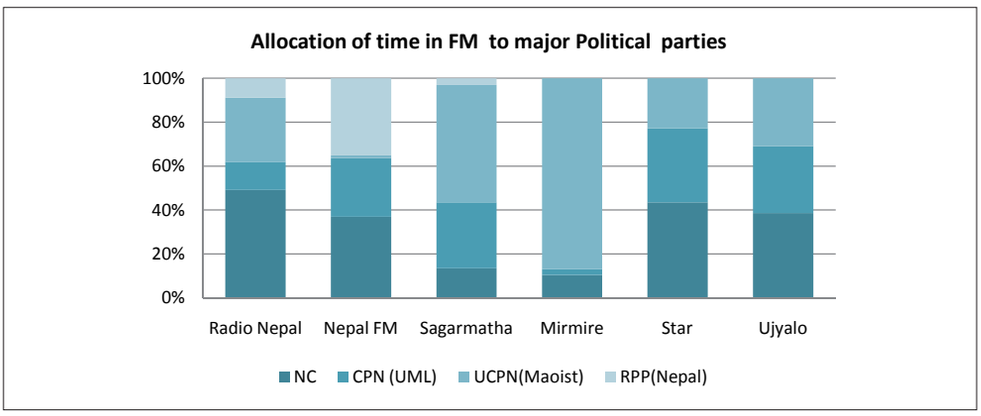
The above figure 4.15 shows the tone of news media. It is seen that media outlets have no significant difference in media

Table 4.8:
Allocation of airtime to political parties in news programmes by FM radios (in seconds)

Party	Radio Nepal	Nepal FM	Sagarmatha	Mirmire	Star	Ujyalo
NC	5498	600	555	2140	44	1214
CPN (UML)	1432	432	1224	553	34	958
UCPN(Maoist)	3264	21	2179	17721	23	969
RPP	987	568	126	0	0	0
Other	15000	1060	7381	13699	1199	8836

Source: Database of NPI media Monitoring

Figure 4.17: Allocation of airtime to political parties by FM radios (in percent)



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

tone. The media outlets have no significant difference in shaded area coloured blue, red and green.

4.10. Allocation of airtime among political parties by FM radios (in seconds)

FM radios broadcast news and other election related programmes regularly and intensively covered the election process and candidates in a variety of formats and programmes.

It is seen that NC dominated coverage in Radio Nepal and Nepal FM. On the other hand, Sagarmatha and Mirmire gave greater coverage to UCPN (Maoist). Star FM has also given greater coverage to NC. Diagram 4.17 shows that Mirmire FM broadcasts news programmes related to Maoist only.

4.11. Allocation of airtime to political parties in TV coverage by media outlet (in seconds)

The table shows media coverage by major Television channels of various parties. NTV and News24 have dominant coverage for NC. Similarly, ABC, Sagarmatha and Avenues broadcast news programmes in favour of UCPN (Maoist).

The allocation of airtime among political parties in news programmes by major TV channels can also be seen in the following diagram.

Table 4.9: Allocation of airtime among political parties in news programmes by major TV channels (in seconds)

Television Channel						
Party	NTV	Kantipur	Sagarmatha	ABC	News24	Avenues
NC	1181	10345	19277	745	4960	3792
CPN (UML)	305	790	10162	927	770	623
UCPN(Maoist)	876	11104	20775	15243	3991	14231
RPP (Nepal)	123	2031	2244	577	150	1735
Other	1614	2009	1737	2314	3071	4679

Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

4.12. Allocation of airtime to political leaders by radio and tv (in seconds)

The allocation of airtime among the presindents of four major parties NC, UCPN (Maoist), CPN (UML) and RPP (Nepal) in news programmes radio and TV channels are as below;

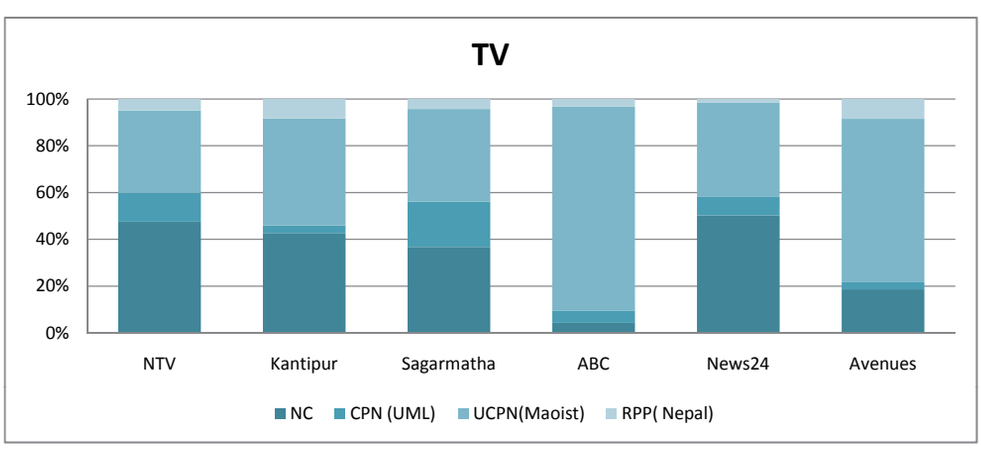
The table 4.10 shows that the total time of news monitored on radio is 1,237,569 seconds and on TV 1,479,136 seconds. Of the total time, more time has been given to Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachan-

Table 4.10: Allocation of airtime to political leaders in radio and tv (in seconds)

Name of Leaders	Name of Party	Radio	TV
Sushil Koirala	NC	6632	20572
Pushpa Kamal Dahal	UCPN(Maoist)	33335	149145
Jhalanath Khanal (Prachanda)	CPN(UML)	15873	6271
Kamal Thapa	RPP(Nepal)	1152	10026
Others		1180577	1293122
Total		1237569	1479136

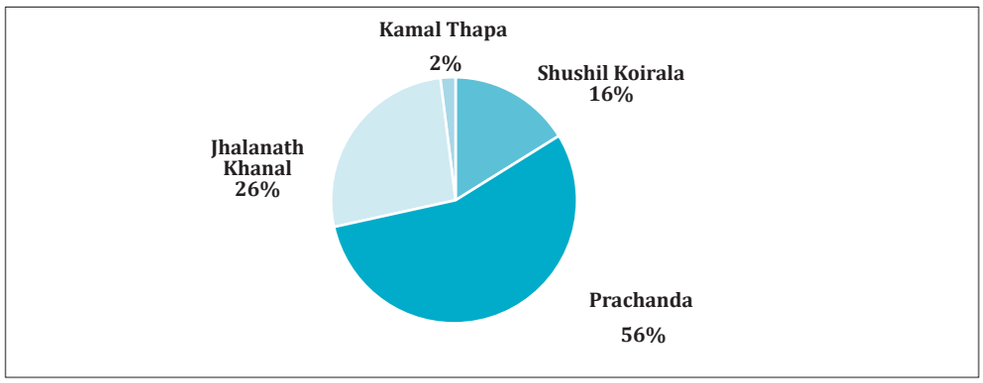
Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

Figure 4.18: Allocation of airtime among political parties in news programme by major TV channels (in percentage)



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

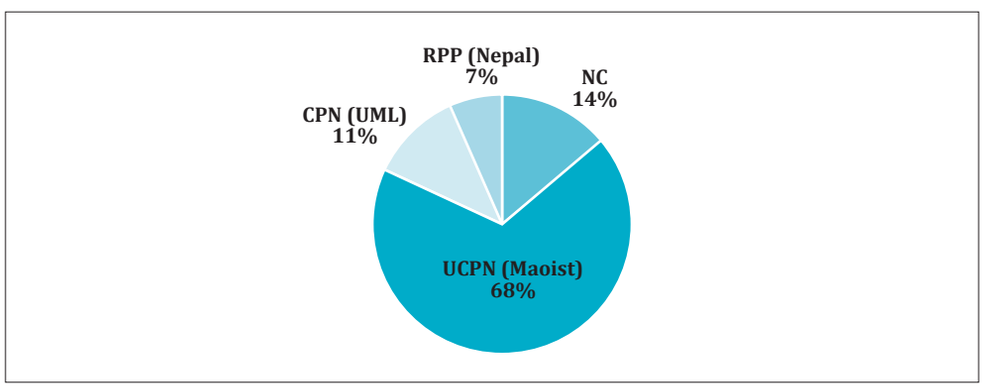
Figure 4.19: Allocation of airtime to political leaders by radio



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

da) presindent of UCPN (Maoist). About 33,335 seconds of the total time has been given to him on radio and 149,145 on TV. Only 15,833 seconds, 6,632 seconds and 1,152 seconds are given to Jhalanath Khanal (President of CPN (UML), Sushil Koirala (president of NC) and Kamal Thapa (president of RPP(Nepal) respectively

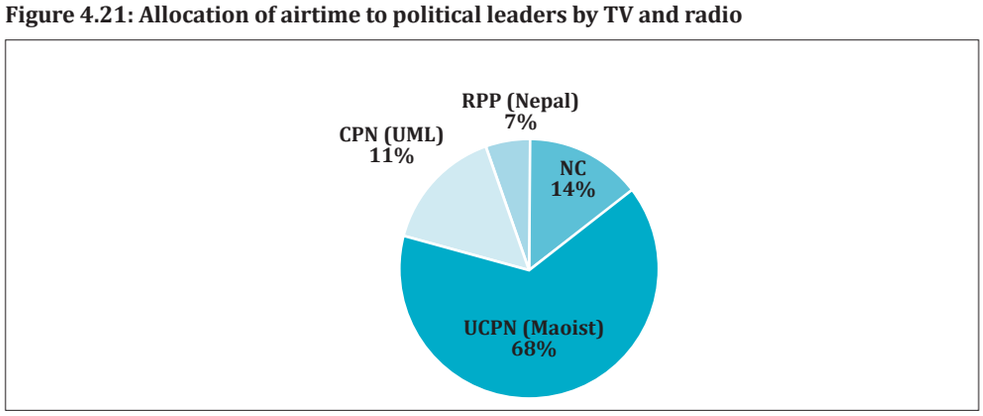
Figure 4.20: Allocation of airtime to political leaders by TV



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

on Radio. Similarly, only 6712 seconds, 20572 and 10,026 seconds is allocated to Jhalanath Khanal, Sushil Koirala and Kamal Thapa respectively on television.

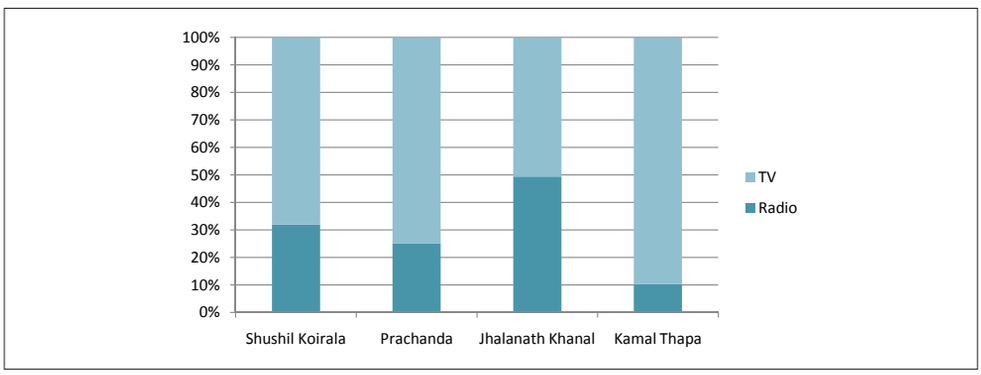
Figure 4.21: Allocation of airtime to political leaders by TV and radio



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

The pie- chart 4.19 shows that on radio and FM programmes, more time has been given to Pushpa Kamal Dahal. About 56 % of the total time has been given to him. Only 26 %, 16 % and 2 % of total time has been given to Jhalanath Khanal, Sushil Koirala and Kamal Thapa respectively.

Figure 4.22: Allocation of airtime to political leaders in radio and TV (in percent)



Source: Database of NPI media monitoring

The pie- chart 4.20 shows that in television programmes, more time was given to Pushpa Kamal Dahal. About 64 % of the total time is given to him. Only 11 %, 14 % and 7 % of total time was given to Jhalanath Khanal, Sushil Koirala and Kamal Thapa respectively.

The pie- chart 4.21 shows that on both radio and TV, 64 % of the total news coverage is for Pushpa Kamal Dahal. Only 16 %, 15 % and 5 % of total time was given to Jhalanath Khanal, Sushil Koirala and Kamal Thapa , chairmans of CPN(UML), NC and RPP(Nepal) respectively.

The above figure shows coverage of president of four major parties of Nepal: Nepali congress, UCPN (Maoist), CPN (UML) and Rastriya Prajatantra Party (Nepal). It is seen that that there is greater coverage of Jhala Nath Khanal on radio and Kamal Thapa in TV. Both Sushil Koirala and Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) have greater coverage on TV than in radio.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary of findings

The media coverage of politics and political actors during the complete monitoring period (1 –30 November 2013) shared a number of recurring features, which are as given below.

- The media monitors ensured regular and intensive coverage of political issues, candidates and politicians and issues of public interest through a variety of formats and programmes.

- The four main political parties, the Nepali Congress (NC), Communist Party of Nepal (CPN-UML), United Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) dominated the public discourse and media coverage. This feature was common to both audio-visual and print media although the press presented a slightly more diverse range of actors and views.

- The Counting Phase (20 - 30 November 2013) confirmed this polarisation not only in terms of political

parties, but also with regards to the news agenda of the observed media.

- Transparency regarding the use and payments of advertisements and propaganda was not ensured throughout the media monitoring period. Many sponsored articles and programmes were not labelled as such, the originators of the message thus being unclear to the audiences. Furthermore, the borderline between the propaganda of politicians and editorial news coverage was sometimes blurred, as the media was inclined to repeat certain statements without any commentary, feedback or analysis.

- The tone of coverage used by journalists when reporting on politicians was not found to be neutral in the audiovisual media as well as in print media.

- All media outlets breached relevant provisions regarding the prohibition against covering candidates and campaign activities by reporting about the elections on the day before the actual voting began.

- The media demonstrated bias in their coverage of the elections favouring the four main parties.

- This trend was evident in all of the media monitored, but was more pronounced in the state controlled media where the imbalance in coverage was overwhelming.

- All broadcast media monitored, especially the privately owned, failed to comply with basic obligations of balance and equitable coverage of parties and candidates.

- The Electoral Law failed to achieve a level playing field for the candidates to access the mass mediums of newspapers, radio and television. It failed on all fronts when tested against the principles of access, diversity and pluralism. It is evident that the present Electoral Law is insufficient in guaranteeing that the media provide balanced and fair coverage of elections. It is also evident from the qualitative research conducted that there is a general consensus that the administration overtly abused certain resources and relationships in order to shape the nature of the media's coverage of the elections.

- Journalists appear to have been closely managed and censored during the election campaign period in a process that stifles their journalistic freedom and has resulted in a highly distorted and unfair balance in media coverage of the election campaign.

- The results of this monitoring suggest that the Nepalese media failed to effectively serve public interest during these elections. The range of information communicated was narrow and unbalanced both in tone and space devoted to the candidates and parties. The media therefore failed to serve democracy and it has failed to reach international standards that have been developed to ensure that the media cover elections according to democratic and transparent principles.

5.2. Recommendations

The Nepalese media law needs to be reviewed in order that the public are better served by a plural media sector that acts independently of political affiliations and patronage.

- The government should encourage the broadcasting sector to develop both private and public initiatives so

that television and radio provide an independent range of programmes.

- The present election law has failed to ensure adequate coverage of the whole spectrum of political representation. It is crucial that the election law enshrines the principles of access and balance to media outlets for all political parties. In this respect the law needs to be overhauled and modernised to ensure transparency and access for all of the parties and candidates. The law should develop an adequate framework to guarantee consistent implementation of the legal framework to regulate balanced quality coverage with equal access to the media.

- Despite the fact that equal access to the media is important, other means and formats should be developed to encourage quality coverage of the elections. To guarantee the public access to in depth information about candidates and parties, initiatives need to be developed, in order to support a greater range of information available to voters.

- The publicly funded broadcasters and newspapers should be obliged to serve the public, not political forces. In order to do so they should be guaranteed editorial and financial independence.

- There needs to be a clearer separation between programmes related to the election and other program formats. Programmes that are not directly related to the election should not be used to promote political parties.

- Paid advertisements should be clearly marked and regulated. Financial transparency should be guaranteed both for the funding of political parties and their campaigns to ensure equity between the contestants.

- Self regulatory guidelines for journalists and editors should be developed to ensure that there is respect for professional journalistic standards embodied in a code of conduct that is respected by all parties.

- Attempts by the authorities to block and suppress alternative media that supports the democratic development of Nepal as well as foreign media should be removed as serious infringements on the rights set out.

- Achieve media independence from the state, reformulate laws regulating media ownership, and administer media institutions to guarantee their impartiality and professionalism.

- Exercise care in selecting press leaders from among independent journalists, establish necessary regulations to achieve this, and include these regulations in the journalist code of ethics.

- Reconsider the regulations governing state-owned television and radio, and develop them so as not to restrict vital, competitive, and objective media coverage.

- Develop legislation regulating media performance during general elections that is suited to a competitive political environment and standards of neutrality and equal opportunity, and reinforce the compulsory nature of these statutes.

- Include state-owned papers in the laws and standards associated with the media and elections.

- Campaign laws should prohibit the government from issuing de-

crees, announcing policies, or inaugurating public projects that may be seen as campaigning for members of the government, the president, or the ruling party during the campaign period, and the state-owned media should abstain from covering such decrees during the campaign period.

- Legal and political instruments should exist to protect journalists from assault while doing their jobs.

- Develop the journalist code of ethics to include provisions on the professional principles that must be honoured during election coverage in a pluralistic political system, particularly the following:

  a. A clear distinction between news related to the activities or tasks of the party leaders or cabinet members and news coverage of them as candidates.

  b. The public should be made aware of paid ads, both on air and in print.

  c. Guarantee the right of timely response to any candidate or political party deserving of it.

- Activate the journalist code of ethics and the role of the journalists in monitoring and developing professional performance.

- Organise training sessions to improve the professional performance of media personnel.

- Develop training programmes specifically for election coverage to guarantee objectivity, fairness, and professionalism.

(See Annex III for the details of media monitoring findings at the end of the report.)

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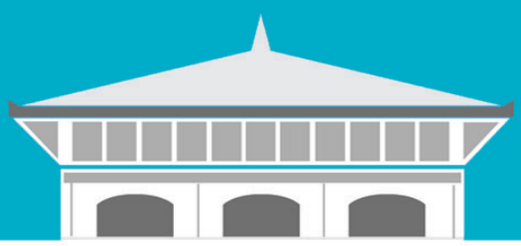
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GENDER, INCLUSION AND ELECTION REPORTING



1. BACKGROUND

Over the past several years, studies have been conducted regarding gender dynamics of election related news coverage. In the media, questions related to Dalits and children are frequently raised. In terms of media monitoring during election, the presentation of gender dynamics is crucial. Are the underrepresented given adequate coverage in proportion to their population? Have these underrepresented groups been duly prioritised? Media experts analyse these trends and exert pressure on the concerned authorities to adopt a policy to encourage news coverage on underrepresented groups. They also conduct training and orientation for journalists on the need to prioritise these issues. This has largely helped bring to the fore the neglected issues of gender and social inclusion.

Of the total 12,147,865 voters in the 2013 Constituent Assembly (CA) election, the number of female voters was 5,980,881, which is 49.23 percent of the total number of voters.

Similarly, in the total 240 election constituencies, the UCPN (Maoist) had fielded 26 female candidates. Nepali Congress had fielded 25, CPN-UML 26 and Nepal Workers and Peasants Party had fielded 34 female candidates among the 93 it fielded. The Madhesi People's Rights Forum had fielded 21 female candidates out of the total 107 constituencies it contested from.

Fifty per cent of the total 11,003 candidates fielded under proportional representation seats by the parties were female candidates.

2. NEED FOR MONITORING OF GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) had given high priority to media during the 2013 CA elections. The ECN provided training to journalists across the country on the election code of conduct, and media monitoring was carried out to enforce it. As part of the media monitoring effort, ECN had entrusted the responsibility of media monitoring to Nepal Press Institute.

ECN, after long efforts, has adopted a policy of gender and social inclusion. As per the policy, ECN had deployed

only-female officials in 120 polling centres across 59 districts. Similarly, in Shiksha Niketan Secondary School of Morang only Dalits had been deployed for the conduct of elections, while at a polling centre in Dhankuta only the disabled had been deployed. In the 2013 CA elections, a total of 76,000 women officials had been deployed. So, the media monitoring effort by the Nepal Press Institute (NPI), monitored news reports linked to gender and social inclusion in 2013 CA elections.

3. MEDIA MONITORING CONCEPTS AROUND THE WORLD DURING ELECTIONS

Various countries across the world are found to have prepared reports by analysing gender-based trends during elections. However, most of these reports are based on the priority given to news reports on female candidates and whether the words used are denigrating or not. In this regard, Catherine Shaushi Reeves of Cazier Library of Utahstat University Merill had conducted a study on media gender bias in the 2008 vice-presidential elections of the United States in which she had studied the coverage given by the media to vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin. In her report she claims that the media had presented the female candidate differently than her male counterpart. "The media unconsciously give biased coverage to female candidates instead of highlighting the competence and potential of the female candidates they focus on physical attributes in a denigrating manner and present them as losing candidates, which is humiliating to female candidates."

A. In the context of media monitoring, Nepal Press Council had conducted media monitoring during the 2008 Constituent Assembly election. However, the media monitoring reports presented by the Council did not include the gender aspect of news coverage.

B. In the Constituent Assembly election 2070, Sancharika Samuha had monitored 12 national dailies from 1 October to 11 November 2013 on a daily basis. The details of the media monitoring conducted by the Sancharika Samuha are as follows:

Newspapers	News	Editorials	Total
Kantipur	10	1	11
Nagarik	4	1	5
Annapurna Post	8	0	1
Gorkhapatra	8	0	8
Rajdhani	5	0	5
Naya Patrika	3	0	3
Samacharpatra	12	0	12
Himalaya Times	7	0	7
The Kathmandu Post	5	1	6
The Himalayan Times	3	0	3
Republica	5	0	5
The Rising Nepal	2	0	2
Total	72	3	75

Similarly, of the four radio programmes monitored by Sancharika Samuha between 3-9 November 2013, 178 of the total 483 news reports were political. Of them, 69 per cent were male related news while only 31 per cent of the news reports were related to female candidates. Likewise, of the 492 news reports in 30 news bulletins, 93.5 per cent were general news and 6.5 per cent news reports were related to females.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this chapter of the report are to:

A) Analyse the gender aspect of news coverage as seen in the NPI database

B) Analyse the gender aspect of news coverage by both the national and international media.

C) Scrutinise the women-centric agenda in the election manifestos of the political parties to inform the current analysis

5. METHOD OF ANALYSING GENDER BASED NEWS IN THE MEDIA

Various sources have been used to analyse the gender and inclusion aspects in election reporting. The central database prepared by NPI was used profusely for the purpose.

Timeframe: Gender analysis was done on the news materials monitored over 1 -30 November 2013.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE GENDER ANALYSIS

A) Because of absence of training on being gender sensitive during monitoring there remains the possibility of categorising some gender related news reports as general news reports due to limited knowledge among media monitors of the gender aspect of news coverage.

B) Possibility of other news reports related to women to be categorised in terms of gender aspect of news coverage.

C) Since data is available only for the month long monitoring period, there is the certainty of excluding women related news coverage before or after the election monitoring process.

7. ANALYSIS OF THE GENDER ASPECT OF NEWS COVERAGE DURING ELECTION

Gender Neutral news is news that is reported in an impartial manner without being biased against any of the sexes irrespective of the cultural, social, economic or political circumstances of a country. In a gender neutral news, events are covered by analysing the different impacts of society on males and females. In terms of the gender aspect of news coverage, four types of news reports are found.

7.i Gender-neutral

News which contains neither a negative or positive analysis in terms of gender is termed gender neutral. In such news, neither the negative nor the positive aspects are mentioned. Facts are presented as they are. Most of the news reports during the election were gender neutral. Some of the examples have been cited (see box below).

This news tells about the officials deployed for the election at the polling booths. However,it does not mention the number of males and females among the election officials. It also does not mention which kind of place the males were deployed to and which kind of place were allocated for females. Similarly it does not mention if female security personnel were also deployed. If female security personnel had been deployed it does not mention if proper arrangements had been made for them to stay at the polling centres. This kind of news items are termed gender neutral news.

EXAMPLE OF GENDER NEUTRAL NEWS REPORTED DURING THE ELECTION

Officials deployed for election
Bikram Mashrangi/ Janardan Ghimire
Palpa, Kartik 28

The District Election Office Palpa has deployed election officers and assistant election officers at all the polling booths across the district. The election officers have been sent to their respective polling booths along with election materials and security personnel.

Election officers have been sent to all the polling booths in constituency 1 of the district except for Tansen Municipality and the neighbouring villages. Chief election officer of Palpa district Dayanath Kharel said officers are yet to be deployed in some polling booths in constituencies 2 and 3 of the district. He said 1,429 election officials, excluding security personnel, have been deployed for the 206 polling booths in the district.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Sthaneswar Regmi said the district security agencies transported the election officials by providing security escort to polling booths with no transport services. He also said that tight security arrangements have been made to prevent untoward incidents after transport services are halted for the election day.

In the meantime, election offices of Gulmi and Nawalparasi have said that all the preparations for the elections have been completed. The offices have said that they have already provided appointment letters to election officials and deployed them to their respective polling booths. Ballot papers for both the first-past-the-post and the proportional representation seats have already been dispatched to the polling booths, according to the offices. The election officials have already been heading for the polling booths or have been receiving their remuneration before heading for their respective polling centres. The officials deployed for the remote villages of the district have already started leaving for their respective polling stations along with security personnel. The election office has said that the voter identity cards would be distributed from the polling centres. Special arrangements have been made for disabled, women at the polling booths. The district security agencies have claimed that they have made tight security arrangements for the polling day.

Nawa Janachetana, Year 19, Edition 112

8.ii) Gender-sensitive news

Gender sensitive news on the other hand deals with gender issues and agenda. In a fitting manner in most places, gender sensitivity is used synonymously with gender awareness. However, gender awareness differs with gender sensitivity in that the former has the ability to recognise agenda that are traditional. Gender sensitive news contains materials which help better analyse gender disparities.

An instance is the news regarding zero participation of females in the 2056 election held in Gainda Bherpur Village Development Committee (VDC)

RAMASAPA CHAIRMAN DEFEATED AFTER 32 YEARS

Jaleshwar Today
Mahottari, Mangsir 9

The national chairman of the Rastriya Madhes Samajbadi Party who had fielded candidacy from constituencies 1 and 6 of Mahottari district has lost election in both the constituencies.

This is the second defeat of Bhandari in his 32-year long political career. Before this, Bhandari had lost in the 2008 election. Bhandari a seasoned politician, had won in the first constituent assembly election as a candidate of the Madhesi People's Rights Forum. He had defeated Nepali Congress candidate Sitaram Bhandari in the first CA election and has been defeated by the same candidate in the second CA election. While Bhandari had defeated Sitaram by a mere 21 votes, the latter has defeated Sharat Singh in the 2013 election with a huge margin of 2,820 votes. In the first CA election Sharat Singh had secured 6,862 votes while Sitaram had bagged 6,841 votes. In the second CA election, Sitaram has secured 9,480 votes and Sharat 6,660 vote from the same constituency.

Similarly, in constituency 1 of the district UCPN (Maoist) candidate Girirajmani Pokharel has defeated Bhandari. Pokharel has defeated Bhandari by a huge margin of 3,846 votes. While Pokharel secured 10,895 votes, Bhandari bagged 7,049 votes. Bhandari, with this defeat, has been relegated to third position. Nepali Congress candidate Chiranjivi Hamal was the closest competitor in constituency 1, whereas Bharat Shah secured second highest votes in constituency 6 of the district.

Bhandari who had become a member of parliament by winning the panchayat election in a young age of 26 in 1981 had also won the panchayat election in 1986.

In the 1991 election, Bhandari who had contested as a candidate of Rastriya Prajatantra Party had lost to Nepali Congress candidate, while he has lost again in the second CA election due to disillusionment of the Madhesi electorate. Bhandari who had won the election even as an independent candidate could not even salvage the party he leads.

of Mahottari district. The news spoke about how female voters were deprived of their franchise rights. The news said that there was a tradition in the VDC for the leaders of political parties to take a decision on women's participation in the election. It was a result of this practice that no woman from the VDC exercised her voting right. However, half of the women exercised their voting rights in the election after the news was reported in the media. A report of the National Election Observation Committee states that only 12 women voters cast their votes even in the 2013 election. However, no journalist was found to have reported the issue in any of the newspapers. Had the journalists been able to report the news regarding how the women had been deprived of their voting rights, it would have helped raise awareness of the election commission, government and the local communities regarding women's right to vote. However, such news stories were rare in the media.

8. iii) Gender-blind news

The news items that do not deal with the questions of gender equality and do not deal with gender issues at first glance look as if they are gender neutral news. However, these news reports are written in a way that benefits either the male or female. For instance, this news published in Janakpur Today (year 1 edition 18), "National chairman of RAMASAPA defeated after 32 years", speaks about Sharat Singh Bhandari.

The news does not mention if there was any female contender fielded against Bhandari in the 1991 elections. It also does not mention if there was any female candidate fielded against him from constituency 6 in the 2008 CA election. How many female candidates had fielded candidacies from Mahottari in the second CA election? It could have been mentioned in the news whether the Parshadwad VDC where women are not allowed to vote falls in his constituency.

WOMEN OFFICIALS IN 80 POLLING CENTRES OF THE DISTRICT

Today daily
November 2013

The Election Commission has said that women election officers would conduct election in 80 polling centres of 41 districts.

With only 56 hours remaining for the crucial vote for the CA election, theElection Commission (EC) organising a press conference said that woman officers would lead at least one polling centre in each district. Meanwhile, the District Election Office, Triyuga has said only women election officials have been deployed at Bokse polling centre of constituency 2 of Triyuga Municipality -1. Chief election officer Bhojraj Sharma said this practice would not only encourage participation in the election but also boost their confidence.

Election Commissioner Ila Sharma at a press conference organised at the Election Commission said the EC has adopted the policy of deploying at least 50 per cent women officers at the polling centres and said that it was time now for the women to demonstrate their managerial capacity. Sharma also said that despite the policy EC has not been able to deploy adequate number of women as the number of women in civil and educational services is less than that of men. The EC has also made separate arrangements for female voters at the polling booths.

Speaking at the press meet, Sharma said there will be 10,013 polling booths and 18,457 polling centres across the country. Under the proportional representation electoral system, of the total 10,709 candidates, 5,291 are women candidates. Of the women candidates, 1,752 are from the Madhesi community, 508 Dalits, 1,699 from indigenous community, 1,819 from Khas-Aryan community and 72 from other backward communities.

Similarly, under the first past the post system, 667 of the total 6,128 candidates were women. Of the total candidates under both the electoral systems, 35.39 percent were women. It was also informed at the press meet that of the total 12147865 voters, 6166829 were women.

Commissioner Sharma also said that the Election Commission plans to make the elections more inclusive and gender friendly in the days to come.

8. iv) Gender-balanced news

The issues of males and females are presented in a balanced manner in gender balanced news. These kinds of news recognise the existence of both the genders separately. The news published in Today daily of Udayapur (Year 3 edition 120/2070, box item, *Women officials in 80 polling centres of the district*) can be taken as an example.

This news report informs about the number of polling centres and the number of male and female officials deployed for the election. Similarly, it also mentions the number of male and female candidates under both the electoral systems.

9. ELECTION RELATED INTERNATIONAL LAW ON THE QUESTION OF GENDER

As per the national and international standards, citizens from all groups, status and regions have the right to participate in the election process. Arrangements have also been made to protect and promote the franchise rights of women.

If the media are to take the convention related to elimination of all kinds of discrimination against women(CEDAW), they have to pay special attention to giving equal coverage to women as per the principle of equality. Considering men and women as equals, women should be treated on par with their men counterparts. CEDAW has envisaged improving things to empower women. It also envisages providing equal opportunities to women.

Article 7 of the CEDAW convention gives women the right to vote and to participate in election to eliminate political and social discrimination against women. Similarly, women and the media are major agenda of the Beijing work plan passed in 1995 and the successive review conventions that passed a dozen related issues. The objective of these conventions is to ensure participation of women at the policy making level through increased access to media and information technology. The major objective of the Beijing work plan is to ensure participation of women in the policy making level so as to increase their access to political, administrative and other important state mechanisms.

10. WOMEN'S POLITICAL RIGHTS IN NATIONAL LAW AND MEDIA

Article 12 of the Interim Constitution of Nepal speaks about the individual rights of Nepali citizens. Article 13 of the constitution also guarantees the right to equality. Likewise, Article 21, under social justice, guarantees women's proportional representation in state mechanisms while article 33D (1) of the constitution guarantees participation of Madhesi, Dalits, indigenous people, women and backward groups proportional representation in the state mechanisms. Article 142 of the constitution makes it mandatory for political parties to include women, Dalit, marginalised and downtrodden groups in their executive bodies for registration.

While the government has been making efforts to make policy level, structural and procedural reforms, NPI had made an attempt to monitor media sensitivity to gender issues while monitoring election related news during the 19 November CA election.

11. GENDER AND MEDIA MONITORING DURING ELECTIONS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES

The media play an important role in the society. A journalist can play an important role in highlighting an issue and to present it in a way that would attract attention of many. In journalism, facts are as important as the way they are presented. Hence, a journalist can present an issue which would otherwise have been uninteresting in an interesting and humane manner.

Normally, the news reports published in the media during elections concern the country's politics. Most of these reports relate to political personalities, political violence, corruption and good governance, transparency and accountability. In all these issues, gender aspects of the news reports are also mentioned. What kind of competition is there between male and female politicians in a party? What is the position of women in the political dispute within a party? What difference is there between the political opinion of a male and female politician? Why are news reports related to male and female politicians not presented in an equal manner? A journalist needs to delve into all these issues to make balanced news with regards to gender sensitivity.

Male and female members have equal rights with regards to voting, participation in an election, freedom of expression, participation in public affairs and appointment in public offices at all levels of the state mechanisms.

Media monitoring has been carried out in various countries across the world taking all these aspects into consideration. The Aaurat Foundation carried out media monitoring from gender perspective during the 2013 general elections in Pakistan.

Similarly, UN Women and IDEA had jointly prepared a media monitoring manual on election coverage from a gender perspective in 2011. Utah State University of the United States of America had also conducted a research on media bias in the vice presidential election of 2008. Other such studies include Gender in the 2011 South African Local Election in 2009, Botswana Election –GEMSA and Getting the Balanced Rights Gender in 2011 Lesotho Local Government Elections.

The monitoring carried out by NPI was very different from the monitoring carried out elsewhere. Even though arrangements were made to flag items related to gender and inclusion, monitors usually left the concerned fields blank. This happened due to lack of training on this specialised issue.

In the manual prepared by International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and UN Women, it had been directed to document them by preparing a data sheet of news coverage regarding elections by the media. In the Media Gender Bias in the 1984 and 2008 vice-presidential election prepared by Katherine Shaunesi Reeves of the UTAH University, the wordings used for the male and female candidates had been studied.

Date	Number of stories	Sources
Type of candidacy	Political grouping	Actors
Sex of actors	Type of candidacy	Political Grouping
Issues	Location	Section
Journalistic Genre	Cm	Photo
Bias in relation to actors	Bias in relation to issue	Stereotype

Before women in the United States had been given franchise rights, some women had frequented party offices demanding voting rights for women.

The women had to face criticism in the media for doing so. An agriculture and commerce commissioner had once questioned a woman candidate: Do you know how to prepare a blueberry muffin? This had nothing to do with her political candidacy. Male candidates never face such questions from journalists.

Similarly, Margaret Chass Smith had been elected to the senate for the first time in 2008. The Saturday Evening Post had published a picture of her wearing an apron. Newspapers by publishing such pictures show their stereotypical attitude toward women.

Nepali newspapers had published pictures of elected women CA lawmakers sewing clothes during the 2008 CA elections. The Aaurat Foundation had carried out media monitoring by collecting the clippings of election related news coverage in Pakistan during the 2013 general elections. It had also studied the number of times in which a male or a female candidate was addressed by mentioning their posts. Similarly, the number of questions regarding traditional gender roles of females after being elected to their posts was also studied.

But in the media monitoring carried out by NPI, the study focused on the following gender aspects of election related news:

a) The election related news was classified into four groups: neutral, biased, seriously biased and gross violation.

b) News analysis of gender bias, neutrality and gender favourable

c) Of the gender favourable news, information provided by Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) and other NGO activities had also been separated.

Gender dynamics in media monitoring

a) Monitoring staff [whether the staff had a good gender-mix]
b) News [whether it is covered from the gender perspective]
   1) Radio
   2) Print
   3) Television
   4) Online

The media monitoring carried out by NPI had also touched upon issues other than news analysis. These included:

a) Male/female voters and their coverage in media.

b) Inclusion in selection of candidacies.

c) The number of male and female employees of ECN

d) Male and female observers and their coverage by media.

e) Voting centres with only women election officials and their coverage in media.

f) Voting centres with only women security personnel and their coverage in media.

g) Male and female officials deployed for election and their coverage.

12. GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS OF MEDIA MONITORING

NPI mobilised a total of 147 staffers across the country to launch the election related media monitoring. Of them, one coordinator and a team leader each in Kathmandu, Biratnagar,

Post	Total Number	Number of females	Number of males	Female percentage	Male percentage
Team leader	1	0	1	0	100
Specialist	5	1	4	20	80
Coordinator	6	0	6	0	100
Monitors	135	37	98	27.41	72.59

Janakpur, Pokhara, Nepalgunj and Dhangadhi, and a total of 135 media monitors had been hired to monitor election related news coverage.

News analysis

A total of 10 online portals, 10 television channels, 10 radio stations, 13 daily newspapers and 20 weekly magazines published from Kathmandu were monitored from 1-30 November 2013. Similarly, a total of 514 newspapers (published from districts), including 437 newspapers published regularly, and 77 newspapers published on special occasions were also monitored during the period. Likewise, 200 FM stations in various districts were also monitored during the period.

A total of 10, 491 election-related news stories of the aforementioned media were monitored during the election monitoring period. Of them 132 news items had considered the gender aspect of the election process in their reporting. Of these, 828 of these news reports were published by the online media. Five of them or 0.60 per cent of the news reports included gender issues. Similarly, of the 6,167 news reports published in the print media, 78 or 1.26 per cent news reports included gender issues. Likewise, 41 of the total 2,094 (2.24 per,cent) news reports in the radio and FM stations and seven of the total 1,402 (0.5 per cent) news reports on television included gender issues.

13. CLASSIFICATION OF THE MONITORING PERIOD FOR ANALYTICAL PURPOSES

i) News reports monitored before election

ii) News reports monitored during election

iii) News reports monitored after election

Published news reports were also categorised on the basis of whether they were sourced from the ECN or NGOs. It was found that most of the news reports dealing with the gender aspect of the Election process were NGO related news.

13 (A).Television monitoring

Of the total 1,402 election related clips, sourced to 10 television channels, that were monitored, seven dealt with the gender aspect of the election process. On 13 November, women

News Coverage on Gender Issues

	Issue	Category					
Issue	Total	Online	Print	Radio	TV	GenderTotal	Percentage
Gender	10491	5	78	42	7	132	1.258

rights activists were reported to have complained about the political parties' failure to present a women-friendly candidate list.

At a function organised by a non-government organisation, a woman candidate complained that even her own party has not been fair toward women. Women had also complained that it was not fair for the party's top leadership to field their candidacies under the proportional representation electoral system instead of contesting under the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system. The complaint appeared to point towards the parties' lack of interest in fulfilling the 33 per cent quota of women while fielding the FPTP candidates. Thus, in the CA elections held on 19 November, 2013, of the total candidates only 667 were women candidates, whereas to ensure 33 percent women representation, it was necessary for the parties to field at least 6,128 candidates. Although news reports took up the issue, it was found that not enough pressure was applied by media persons to fill the women's quota of 33 per cent. Additionally, no special news report or programme had been dedicated to women candidates during the election.

A news report regarding Nepali Congress (NC) leader Sujata Koirala's request to parties to respect women candidates was also covered by the media. At a function, Sujata had urged the parties to increase representation of women. As the news report focused only on women, media monitors termed the news as being biased toward women.

Analysis

Before covering the events in all the three stages of the election process, it is necessary for the election commission, government, civil society, journalists and ordinary citizens to be aware of their respective roles in the election process. A journalist in order to write an election related news report must have proper knowledge of the election cycle and the capacity to analyse the role of male and female members in the election process. It is necessary to train journalists to carry out gender analysis while monitoring election related news. As journalists were not trained in this aspect of the media monitoring, it was found that news related to violence against women were also included in the gender aspect of election related coverage. Training to journalists in the gender aspect of election related news would help make monitoring more effective in the days to come.

13 (b) Radio monitoring

Of the total 2,094 radio reports monitored during the period, 41 or 1.71 per cent were related to the gender issue.

Of the 41 news reports, a report on rape of a policewoman who was deployed for election security speaks about the difficulties that women have to endure even in public service. Radio Himal FM, Solukhumbu reported that a temporary policewoman deployed for election security was raped by a police officer. The incident happened in Dadeldhura where the woman had been posted.

Similarly, Vijayee FM Nawalparasi, on 28 November 2013, presented a gender-based analysis of the CA election. According to the FM station, women in Lumbini zone were worried as no woman was elected to the CA from the zone and as a result their concerns may not be raised effectively in the CA. No woman won the first-past-the-post election from all six districts of the Lumbini zone. The radio report said the parties should nominate women and Dalits in the proportional representative seats in the district. The

same kind of analysis is not found when it comes to male candidates who lose elections.

On 25 November, Sagarmatha FM in a report headlined "Few women elected under the first-past-the-post system" stated that just 10 women got elected under the FPTP electoral system. According to the report, nine out of the 10 women are new faces. There were apprehensions in the political parties that fielding a woman candidate would cause dispute and that the candidate would lose the election.

During the November 2013 elections, a total of 667 women were candidates contesting for FPTP seats. In an interview with Nagarik daily, women candidates said disputes arise in the party when women are selected as candidates and they usually do not get due support from the party in their election campaigns, so most of them lose the election.

Likewise, on 24 November, Radio Chitwan covered the issue of poor performance of women in the election and stated that just 11 women were elected through the FPTP system.

Kaski-based Annapurna Radio on 25 November aired an interview with women's rights activist Mandira Dhakal. She told the radio that in Kaski, women's participation in the election was not even 33 per cent, but she felt proud as one woman candidate was elected from the district under the FPTP system. Dhakal pointed out that women need to support women candidates.

Sagarmatha FM aired a report on 19 November [the Election Day], which highlighted the following facts about women's participation in the CA election:

On 17 November, Sagarmatha FM quoting the ECN stated that the

Total FPTP seats	240
Total number of women candidates under FPTP	6128
Total number of proportional representation (PR) seats	335
Total number of women candidates under Proportional Representation system:	10,709
Total number of political parties participating in the election under PR system:	122
Women's candidature in the election under both systems:	5893 or 35.39%

National Women's Commission was prepared to monitor the elections on 19-20 November through 21 women's rights organisations. The commission was deploying a total of 700 election observers in all electoral constituencies, according to the report. Also, Radio Nepal had, on 16 November, aired a similar report stating that the National Women's Commission, through 31 women's rights organisations, would monitor the post-election situation and the constitution-writing process.

Similarly, Chitwan-based Kalika FM on 14 November aired an election awareness message involving a homemaker. The message aimed to make women aware about the election process and the election code of conduct.

Likewise, on 9 November, Ujyalo FM aired a report by a non-governmental organisation stating that women's rights activists had launched a campaign to elect 667 women candidates to the Constituent Assembly.

On 17 November, Sagarmatha FM aired a report headlined "80 voting centres to be manned by women staffers". According to the Election Commission, arrangements had been made to make sure that at least

one voting centre in each district is manned entirely by women staffers. The FM report stated that 80 women returning officers and subordinate women staff had already been deployed in 41 districts by that date.

Analysis

Although over 210 radio stations in Nepal aired election-related news reports for a month, very few were related to women. Moreover, reports unrelated to elections were also aired under the pretext of presenting gender-related reports. Some media monitors have even included reports on Madhesi and ethnic minorities among other things under gender-related reports. The monitors appeared to be unaware about the differences between the gender issue and the inclusion issue. Inclusion is only one dimension of inclusion. This lack of knowledge also means, gender-related reports will continue to be sidelined until and unless the media monitors are imparted proper orientation on the issues.

13 (C) Gender issue in online news monitoring

During the month-long monitoring of 10 Kathmandu-based news websites, it was found that 828 election-related reports were dispatched and five reports (0.6 per cent) were on gender.

After the elections when all the FPTP and PR seats were filled, media reports said that women were pressuring parties to ensure their 33 per cent representation in the CA. This, they said, could be done by nominating women in the remaining 26 vacant seats. Currently women's representation in the CA is just 29 per cent so they had to exert pressure for a greater share, according to women's rights activists.

A report headlined "UCPN (Maoist)'s defeat in election, a loss for women" published by Kathmandu Today website stated that in the last CA election, 30 women were elected from the UCPN (Maoist) and this had ensured their respectable representation in the CA. In the last CA, a total of 197 women made it to the CA with 30 elected through FPTP, 161 selected under PR system and six nominated by the Council of Ministers.

From the UCPN (Maoist) alone, 79 women were represented in the then CA. Of the 43 women FPTP candidates from the party, 24 won the election. So it can be said that the UCPN (Maoist)'s defeat in the November 2013 election was a huge setback for women's representation.

This time the UCPN (Maoist) had fielded 29 candidates under FPTP system but only one of them won. Similarly, NC and CPN-(UML) had fielded 25 and 27 women candidates respectively under the FPTP system, but only six were elected from the NC and three from the CPN-(UML). So, the analysis goes, the UCPN (Maoist) loss in the election led to poor representation of women in the new CA.

13 C (i) Women pitched against senior leaders

Apart from the defeat of the UCPN (Maoist), another reason for poor representation of women in the new CA is that parties pitched women candidates against senior leaders in many electoral constituencies. The parties, in order to comply with the mandatory provision requiring each party to field at least 33 per cent women candidates, pitched women against senior leaders of other parties. So election win for many

women candidates was difficult or impossible.

NC had fielded Pratima Gautam from Kathmandu Constituency-2, where CPN-UML senior leader Madhav Nepal was a candidate, and she lost the election. In Kathmandu Constituency-1, where Nepali Congress veteran leader Prakash Man Singh was a candidate, UCPN (Maoist) candidate Renu Dahal and CPN-UML's Bidhya Neupane were fielded and both lost. Outside Kathmandu, NC Sushila Karki lost against CPN-UML Chairman Jhalanath Khanal in Sarlahi Constituency-1, UCPN (Maoist) candidate Lila Bhandari lost against NC senior leader Sher Bahadur Deuba in Kailali Constituency-6 and another UCPN (Maoist) candidate Dharmashila Chapagain lost against NC General Secretary Krishna Sitaula in Jhapa Constituency-6.

In the past CA, Purna Kumari Subedi was elected deputy chair of the Constituent Assembly while Jayapuri Gharti, Kamala Panta, Thammaya Thapa, Pratibha Rana, Janak Kumari Chalise and Kalpana Rana were elected whips of their respective parties. But this time, only a few women could make it to the CA through proportional representation.

13 C (ii) Election winners

Although 24 women from the UCPN (Maoist) were elected to the past CA, this time just one candidate, Onsari Ghartimagar, of the party won the election. Last time, Ghartimagar was sent to the CA for the PR seat. Gharti, who was a central committee member of the party and had also served as deputy secretary of the party's Newa State Committee, has been elected from Rolpa Constituency-2 by defeating CPN(UML)'s Kumar Dasaudi. Ghartimagar bagged 14,064 votes while her rival Dasaudi could secure just 9,374 votes.

Among the parties, the most number of women elected were from the NC, which saw six of its women candidates elected. Sushila Chaudhari of the party defeated CPN(UML)'s Shanta Chaudhari in Dang constituency-2. Shanta Chaudhari was member of the previous CA. Sushila, a member of the NC Mahasamiti, has been active in the party since1994.

Likewise, Kiran Kumari Yadav of NC won from Mahottari, Constituency-2 by defeating Jayalal Rain of Rastriya Madhes Samajbadi Party. Kiran Kumari is the niece of President Dr Ram Baran Yadav. She won 7,357 votes while Rain bagged 5,023 votes. Although Yadav was included in the PR candidates' list by the NC in the 2008 CA election, she was not selected as lawmaker.

Similarly, Parvati DC Chaudhari of NC was elected to the CA from Dang, Constituency-1 defeating CPN-UML's Revati Raman Ghimire. Chaudhari secured 8,719 votes while her nearest rival Ghimire bagged 7,075 votes. Chaudhari has a bachelor's degree in political science from the Tribhuvan University. She started her political career by joining Nepali Congress' student wing, Nepal Students' Union, in 1980.

Among other women candidates from Nepali Congress, Sharada Paudel won with 11,661 votes in Kaski Constituency-2, Sita Yadav won with 11,150 votes in Siraha-3, and Gyan Kumari Chhantyal emerged victorious with 100,079 votes in Baglung Constituency-3.

Similarly, among the CPN(UML) women candidates winning the CA elections are, Sita Giri, who won from Kaski constituency-4 with 15,438



Only fair: A significant presence of women voters.

votes; Manju Chaudhari, who won from Udayapur constituency-2 with 7,534 votes; and Nazma Khatun, who won from Bara constituency-4 by securing 12,361 votes. Nazma was made election candidate in place of her husband, who was shot dead in October, a month before the election.

13. D: Monitoring of print media

A total of 514 newspapers, which include 13 dailies and 20 weeklies published from the capital, 437 newspapers including dailies and weeklies from outside Kathmandu Valley, and 77 other newspapers, were monitored for a month. These newspapers published a total of 6,167 election-related news reports during the period. Of the 6,167 reports, 78 [or 1.26 per cent] covered gender issues associated with the election.

The reports were based on the information provided by the Election Commission, Civil Society, I/NGOs, political parties and interview of certain individuals by journalists. The news reports were categorised into three groups – pre-election reports, election-time reports and post election reports.

13.D.1 Pre election news coverage

The reports that covered election-related gender issues included issues like: areas having the most number of voting centres; number of voting centres manned entirely by women; and things needed to be done to

increase women's representation in the CA. There were reports on third gender candidates, pressure created to increase women candidates under FPTP electoral system, and enthusiastic participation of women in the election campaigns.

13 D 1 a. Election atmosphere sets in

Fewa weekly of Pokhara on 6 November published a report entitled "Election atmosphere sets in". The report reflected the enthusiasm of an elderly woman voter. The reporter, Tara Acharya, has summed up the enthusiasm of the elderly in this manner: (Pic. No.1)

13 D.1.b.More women in proportional representation list of parties

A report on women candidates included in the proportional representation list by political parties was published by Gorkhapatra. The report said the number of women candidates is higher than that of men in the closed list of candidates of the political parties under the PR system. A total of 5,596 women were in the closed list. The Gorkhapatra report presented in detail the number of women candidates included in the list by major political parties.

13 D.1.c.Women tools of politics

Ujyalo weekly published from Taplejung district published an opinion article that said the male-dominated society has not given due importance to women's creativity. It said the male-friendly politics will never recognise the contributions made by women who play active role in politics and use women merely as a vote bank.

Likewise, the Mechikali daily on 12 November published a news report headlined "Women are belittled for being women", which was based on an interaction by a non-governmental organisation with 10 FPTP and 12 PR candidates of Rupandehi district.

13 D.1.d.Gender-sensitive electoral campaigning in all three constituencies

A report published by Baruwa Times Daily in Udayapur on 14 November said constituency-level consultations were held in all three electoral constituencies in the district by an INGO. The INGO provided training to women and members of marginalised communities on the ways to vote properly and to the candidates of their choice.

13 D.1.e.Three voting centres in Jhapa supervised entirely by women

A report headlined "Three voting centres in Jhapa supervised entirely by women" was published in Darshan daily in Jhapa on 15 November. The Election Office in the district said that the election centres had all women staff – from returning officers to junior staff.

Likewise, Gaighat Today daily published from Udayapur on 16 November reported that an election centre in Udayapur Constituency Number 2 was supervised by women alone. Seven women were deployed per booth and there were four booths supervised entirely by women. A total of 3,076 voters were registered at the voting centre.

13 D.1.f.164 Women in election fray in Eastern Region

According to a 17 November report published in the Naya Patrika daily, a total of 164 women – including 17 independents – were candidates under the FPTP electoral system in the 16 districts in the eastern region.

Among the candidates, 42 were from indigenous groups and 62 were Madhesi. There were 12 independent women candidates. Likewise, nine of the candidates were hill Dalits and Madhesi Dalits and three were Muslim.

Similarly, Taplejung district-based Janabiswas weekly on 17 November published a report stating that a total of 12 women were in the election fray under both FPTP and PR system in the district.

13.D.2. Election Day news

In the course of monitoring over 6,000 newspaper reports originating from across the country, it was found that newspapers did not publish gender-based news on Election Day. Even on the eve of the elections, reports were not found covering issues such as security arrangement for women candidates; how women voters, and women election staff and women security personnel deployed in the election centres were treated during the elections; if there was any special arrangement for pregnant women, new mothers, sick people and disabled; and if there was any difference in the level of enthusiasm between men voters and women voters and if women were keen about voting women candidates to victory, among other things.

On the Election Day, newspapers were devoid of gender-based electoral news. Looking at the news reports on the Election Day, the need for training journalists on gender-based electoral reports was seriously felt.

13.D.3.a. Post-Election News

Annapurna Post on 24 November published report stating that just 10 women were elected under the FPTP system from 240 electoral constituencies.

13.D.3.b. Editorials

A Gorkhapatra editorial of 22 November said the election was conducted in a gender-friendly manner.

13.D.3.c. All women candidates lose election deposits

A report published in Rajbiraj daily on 28 November stated that all women contesting the CA elections under the FPTP electoral system in Saptari district failed to protect their election deposits. As none of the women candidates here was able to secure even 10 percent votes, they lost their election deposits.

Among those losing their deposits in Saptari Constituency-1 were Laxmi Giri of Nepali Congress, Geeta Gupta of Nepal Sadhbhawana Party and Kalpana Chaudhari of Tharuhat Tarai Party. Likewise, in Saptari Constituency-2, Kavita Devi Pramanil of Tarai-Madhes Sadhbhawana Party, Mahata Sah of Sanghiya Samajbadi Party and Phaliyadevi Mukhiya of CPN (Marxist-Leninist) lost their election deposits.

In Constituency-3 of the district, Manjudevi Sah of CPN-UML, Bindu Kumari Yadav of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum-Democratic, Ashadevi Tharuni of Tharuhat Tarai Party, Letanidevi Sada of Dalit Janajati Party, Binadevi Mahato of Lavk Dal, Ram Sundari Devi Yadav of Nepali Janata Dal, and Ramiladevi Sah of Rastriya Janata Dal were among those losing their security deposits.

Similarly, in Constituency-4, Madhesi Janadhikar Forum Nepal's central treasurer and former minister Renu Kumari Yadav also could not retain her security deposit. She was elected from the constituency in the previous CA election. Other women candidates

losing their security deposits from the constituency include Pushpa Thakur of Madhes Democratic Party, Lalita Kumari Yadav of Rastriya Prajatantra Party, and Ushadevi Majhi of Janata Party.

In Constituency-5, UCPN (Maoist) central committee member Saraswati Kumari Chaudhari lost her security deposit. Others losing security deposits from the constituency include Madhuri Kumari Sah of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum-Republican, Pramila Devi Khang of Nepal Majdoor Kisan Party, and an independent candidate named Soni Kumari Sah.

In Constituency-6 of the district, the only woman candidate, Lalita Devi Lata Yadav of the Sadhbhawana Party, also lost her security deposit.

Although over half of the voters were women in the district, most women candidates failed to retain their security deposits, according to locals.

Biratpath daily on 29 November published a report stating that women from the eastern region could not make it to the Constituent Assembly. (Pic. No. 9)

Analysis

Of all the news reports published and broadcast during the three phases of the election – pre-election phase, election phase and post-election phase – it is sad that only 1.22 per cent covered the election news from gender perspective. Among the published news items, many news reports with ordinary headlines were found to have contained views on women by important personalities, and this caused difficulty for some media monitors to incorporate gender-based reports in their work. And, this is not a very good premise for an objective analysis of the issue.

Also, newspapers and media outlets, while dispatching gender-related election news, failed to cover all aspects during all the three phases.

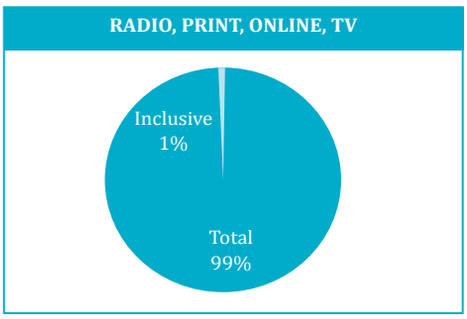
Media monitoring is about monitoring of the election code of conduct. It is equally important to monitor as to what extent did the election code of conduct pay attention to the gender aspect.

Not all the news reports that covered gender-related issues, were gender-sensitive. An interesting finding from the clippings analysed was that some regions were more gender-sensitive than others. Reports from the Eastern Region were found very sensitive about gender issues and they covered reports from a variety of aspects of gender, but this was not the case with reports published from Mid-western and Far-Western Regions.

Under media monitoring, reports on election monitoring are also regarded as equally important. In the reports related to election monitoring, one or two reports were on funds misuse. But reports were silent on questions like, how many men and women were involved in election monitoring and what aspects of gender-related issues were covered by the monitoring. Although, newspapers and media outlets dispatched reports that said the National Women's Commission's election observers would include women only, the media outlets failed to analyse if the recommendations and suggestions of the Commission's observers were implemented.

14) MONITORING OF INCLUSIVENESS ASPECT OF ELECTION-RELATED NEWS REPORTS

Of the total 10,491 news reports that received the attention of the nationwide monitors after they



were printed and broadcast from across the country over the month of November 2013, only 67 reports were found to have covered the inclusiveness aspect. The reports included issues including federalism, international concerns with regard to secularism, election of only two Dalits under FPTP system, defeat of many Madhesi leaders and election of 18 Tharu members to the Constituent Assembly. Likewise, candidates from Brahman and Chhetri communities winning most number of CA seats, many candidates from indigenous communities failing to win FPTP seats, ethnic Limbuwan parties' poor show in their strongholds, and Madhesi candidates pitted against each other also made news. Also, reports said the election results showed rejection of ethnic-based politics and multiple provinces.

Also, looking at the reports, it is apparent that NPI did pay heed to inclusiveness in the process of hiring monitors and as a result the reports and analyses were lacking in understanding of complex issues such as inclusiveness. This has indeed presented some difficulties in analysing the data made available. This situation arose also partly because there was no field for the monitors to fill in the data upload forms under optional drop-downs like "inclusion". Instead reports were monitored under the "multicultural issues" category. This should not have posed much difficulty for well-trained monitors, but an absence of adequate training did produce confusions.

Another reason could have been that the issue of inclusiveness was not given due priority in the news reports this time around because social harmony had suffered during the last election as the issue of inclusiveness was then hotly debated and pro-inclusion and anti-inclusion sides had resorted to strong forms of protests including general strikes and shutdowns.

Although the Interim Constitution of Nepal has put the varied ethnic-based groups under six categories, there were not enough reports in the media on these groups. It was found that just 1 per cent of the reports covered the issues associated with these groups. This situation points at the need for conducting training and orientation for journalists on gender and social inclusiveness policy of the ECN before the Commission starts election media monitoring in future.

15. ELECTION OBSERVATION AND THE ISSUE OF GENDER

Nepal Election Observation Committee (NEOC) has been monitoring the election process for the last two years before the elections right from the voter registration process to the announcement of election results. NEOC's report stated that the gender aspect had been given due attention in the entire election process. The committee's report says it had deployed a total of 10,052 election observers – 6,183 men and 3,669 women – for the November 2013 election. The men-women ratio was 6.1 to 3.9.

However, the General Election Observation Committee (GEOC) has not stated the number of men and women deployed as observers during the election. But its report also praises

the election process for covering all aspects of gender-sensitivity. According to a survey by GEOC of 6,989 individuals, 55.5 per cent of the respondents said the election was good from the gender perspective. (page 31 of CA Election Observation Report, GEOC).

Likewise, page 32 of the same report states that 94.41 per cent respondents of the survey said that no untoward incident happened against women at the voting centres. Likewise, with regard to the implementation of the gender directives issued by the Election Commission, 93.5 per cent respondents said the directives were implemented.

Looking at women's participation in the election, 52.7 per cent of the total election centres had a minimum of 10 percent women staff while 72.7 percent of the election centres had at least five women security personnel.

The election observers also covered the issue of violence against women in the districts. They found that 41 per cent of the total election centres had arrangement to receive complaints of violence against women while 33.7 per cent election centres did not have such arrangements. Likewise, 17.8 election centres did not have information about the provision allowing filing of such complaints while 7.5 per cent election centres did not respond if they had information about such provision or if any complaints were filed, according to GEOC report.

Meanwhile, NEOC report has categorised women's participation in the election. According to the report, of the total 6128 FPTP candidates, 667 or 10.8 percent were women while 35 per cent of the polling staff were women. On the other hand, of the total 10,709 PR candidates, 5,291 or 49.41 per cent were women, the report stated.

There were a total of 10,013 polling stations and 18,457 polling centres.

Strong aspects of news reports

- It was found that some reporters improved the skill of presenting gender-sensitive reports in simple manner.
- Reporters outside the capital successfully reported on the issues of election-time gender-based discriminations.
- Even the editorials of newspapers stressed the need for increasing women's participation in the electoral process.
- Newspapers published with priority the issue of fielding of less women candidates by political parties.
- Basically, the election-time news reports showed that reporters were becoming more aware on gender-related issues.

Weak aspects of news reports

- News reports were lacking in gender-based analysis
- Women candidates were not given due priority in news reports compared to male candidates.
- More reports were based on incidents and such reports did not cover the gender-aspect.
- Women candidates from small parties and independent women candidates were not given space in news reports.
- News reports were almost devoid of quotes and statements of women politicians.

- Televisions and radio stations did not give due space to women in their election-related talk programmes.

- Basically, there was lack of gender-related awareness and gender-related sensitivity among reporters.

Conclusion

- In order to make the media gender-friendly, it is important to provide the reporters necessary training on gender-related issues. Apart from reporters, the media monitors also need training on gender-based monitoring. The training should cover issues ranging from citizenship certificate, voter registration, conducting of election, right to contest the election, voter education, right to electoral campaigning and security – all from gender aspect, and the monitors should be able to study and analyse the aforementioned issues.

- During the election time, training should have been conducted for journalists on gender policy.

- Although political parties were found adhering to the election code of conduct to a higher degree compared to the past, it was still insufficient.

- Communications media need to give women equal space as men.

- Communications media failed to give due priority to the reality that political parties fielded women candidates in the constituencies where their presence was weak.

- Reports were published about women expressing reluctance to contest as FPTP candidates, but no such reports about male were published.

APPENDIX 1

Election facts as provided by the ECN

Population:
Women account for 51.1 per cent of the country's population

Literacy:
Among women 51.45 per cent, and among men 72.25 per cent

Gender gap:
Nepal ranks in 121st position among 136 countries (Global gender report, 2013)

Women account for 74.8 per cent of the labour force that does not get remuneration for its work.

Total voters:	**12,147,865**
Women voters:	**6,166,829**
Male voters:	**5,980,881**
Third gender voters:	**155**

CAE2013

FPTP

Candidates:

Male: 5458
Female: 667
Third Gender: 1

Winners:

Male: 230
Female: 10
Third Gender: 0

2PR

Candidates:

Male: 5418
Female:5291
Third Gender:0

Winners:

Male: 173
Female: 162
Third Gender: 0



जतातैै चुनावी सरगर्मी

२०७० कार्तिक

तारा आचार्य

महिला राजनीतिको

झापाको तीन मतदान केन्द्रमा मात्रै महिला कर्मचारी

शुक्रबार कार्तिक २९ गते २०७०

लैंगिक संवेदनशील चुनावकालागि परामर्श कार्यक्रम

समानुपातिक सूचीमा महिला बढी


पूर्वाञ्चलमा १६४
महिला प्रतिस्पर्धामा
सम्पादकीय
लैङ्गिकमैत्री निर्वाचन
दस नेत्रीले चुनाउ जिते
राजविराज दैनिक
सबै महिला उम्मेदवारहरूको
जमानत जफत

CAE 2013

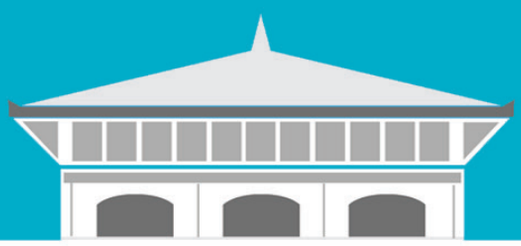
District wise FPTP male female

		Candidate			Winner		
DISTRICT_CD	NAME_ENG	Male	Female	Third gender	male	Female	Third Gender
1	Taplejung	21	2	0	2	0	0
2	Panchthar	33	1	0	2	0	0
3	Illam	37	2	0	3	0	0
4	Jhapa	145	26	0	7	0	0
5	Sankhu-wasabha	28	3	0	2	0	0
6	Terhathum	17	1	0	1	0	0
7	Bhojpur	26	2	0	2	0	0
8	Dhankuta	30	0	0	2	0	0
9	Morang	244	26	0	9	0	0
10	Sunsari	197	26	0	6	0	0
11	Solukhumbu	12	0	0	1	0	0
12	Khotang	21	2	0	2	0	0
13	Okhald-hunga	26	2	0	2	0	0
14	Udayapur	53	13	0	2	1	0
15	Saptari	228	22	0	6	0	0
16	Siraha	214	27	0	5	1	0
17	Dolakha	46	1	0	2	0	0
18	Ramechhap	31	1	0	2	0	0
19	Sindhuli	41	5	0	3	0	0
20	Dhanusha	310	24	0	7	0	0
21	Mahottari	235	15	0	5	1	0
22	Sarlahi	232	23	0	6	0	0
23	Rasuwa	12	4	0	1	0	0
24	Dhading	58	5	0	3	0	0
25	Nuwakot	39	9	0	3	0	0
26	Kathmandu	290	75	0	10	0	0

27	Bhaktpur	54	10	0	2	0	0
28	Lalitpur	94	16	0	3	0	0
29	Kavrepalan-chowk	72	5	0	4	0	0
30	Sindhupal-chowk	47	7	0	3	0	0
31	Makwanpur	73	15	0	4	0	0
32	Rautahat	251	19	0	6	0	0
33	Bara	222	19	0	5	1	0
34	Parsa	194	16	0	5	0	0
35	Chitwan	97	18	0	5	0	0
36	Gorkha	29	9	0	3	0	0
37	Manang	5	0	0	1	0	0
38	Lamjung	19	0	0	2	0	0
39	Kaski	62	15	0	2	2	0
40	Tanahun	38	11	0	3	0	0
41	Syangja	35	4	0	3	0	0
42	Gulmi	31	4	0	3	0	0
43	Palpa	29	5	0	3	0	0
44	Ar-ghakhanchi	20	2	0	2	0	0
45	Nawalparasi	153	20	1	6	0	0
46	Rupandehi	227	12	0	7	0	0
47	Kapilwastu	190	18	0	5	0	0
48	Mustang	5	2	0	1	0	0
49	Myagdi	13	2	0	1	0	0
50	Baglung	29	6	0	2	1	0
51	Parbat	26	3	0	2	0	0
52	Rukum	18	2	0	2	0	0
53	Rolpa	23	3	0	1	1	0
54	Pyuthan	19	1	0	2	0	0
55	Salyan	18	5	0	2	0	0

56	Dang	84	23	0	3	2	0
57	Dolpa	9	2	0	1	0	0
58	Mugu	17	0	0	1	0	0
59	Jumla	9	1	0	1	0	0
60	Kalikot	20	0	0	1	0	0
61	Humla	9	2	0	1	0	0
62	Jajarkot	19	0	0	2	0	0
63	Dailekh	28	0	0	2	0	0
64	Surkhet	42	5	0	3	0	0
65	Banke	98	17	0	4	0	0
66	Bardiya	70	14	0	4	0	0
67	Bajura	15	0	0	1	0	0
68	Achham	19	0	0	2	0	0
69	Bajhang	29	0	0	2	0	0
70	Doti	19	0	0	2	0	0
71	Kailali	136	17	0	6	0	0
72	Darchula	12	0	0	1	0	0
73	Baitadi	17	2	0	2	0	0
74	Dadeldhura	15	1	0	1	0	0
75	Kanchanpur	72	17	0	4	0	0
	Total	5458	667	1	230	10	0

THE LEGAL PERSPECTIVE



Mass media form the backbone of information and communication. The general public expects to get true and accurate information through them. They are important for the institutional development of the modern democratic system through the medium of a legitimate governance process. Article 27 of the Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007 has given the people their right to information. On the other side, periodic elections are important means to institutionalise democracy. Information management has a key role to play in creating a clean, free, fair and reliable electoral management. Proper management of information is necessary to address the interest of the general public and the government in the electoral system and process during the pre-election, election and post-election periods. It is the responsibility of the nation to provide factual and accurate information about all the activities during the election process to national and international media and true, factual and reliable information to the general public through the mass media.

Months before the Constituent Assembly (CA) election of 19 November 2013, the Election Commission Nepal (ECN) had developed the ECN's Communication Policy, 2013. The foreword of the said policy clearly mentions that it was promulgated to manage the collection, processing, analysis and distribution of information and news about the election, to provide true, factual and reliable information to the citizens, to ensure proper coordination with the mass media and to regularise and make effective the entire election-related internal and external communication.

The ECN, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 46 of the Election Commission Act, 2007, issued the Mass Media Monitoring Directive, 2013 to implement the management of monitoring of the mass media to have a free, fair and credible CA Membership Election, 2013, as mentioned in the Election Commission Communication Policy, 2013. The main objective of the mass media monitoring was to ensure the fairness, reliability and authenticity of the information provided by the mass media, which was imperative to manage the elections in a fair and reliable way; and to monitor if the Code of Conduct to be followed by the general mass media as mentioned in 'Paragraph 5 of Constituent Assembly Membership Election Code of Conduct,

2013' was observed or violated in the CA Election, 2013.

Nepal Press Institute (NPI) carried out the Mass Media Monitoring to fulfil the above mentioned objective. CA Election, 2013 the NPI monitored the mass media by adhering to the norms of Mass Media Monitoring Directive, 2013. Simplification of provisions of Section 78 to 95 of CA Election Code of Conduct, 2013, as it applied to the mass media, was done and provided to media monitors of the NPI during the mass media monitoring process. The incidences and facts received regarding violation of the Act, rules, policies, directives and Code of Conduct pertaining to the CA Election during the process of mass media monitoring and the legal action taken about them were studied and analysed. This report is prepared to suggest reforms in the existing policy and legal provisions to improve effectiveness of legal action in relation to the code of conduct.

The main objective of the mass media monitoring was to ensure the fairness, reliability and authenticity of the information provided by the mass media, which was imperative to manage the elections in a fair and reliable way.

2. LEGAL AND POLICY PROVISIONS FOR MASS MEDIA MONITORING

a. Election Commission Act, 2007

Following are the provisions of the Election Code of Conduct issued in accordance with the Election Commission Act, 2007 to manage and conduct clean, free, fair and reliable elections.

- The Election Commission, in consultation with concerned stakeholders, has issued the Election Code of Conduct in exercise of the powers conferred by the legal provisions of Sub-Section (1), Section 28 of Election Commission Act, 2007. This Election Code of Conduct is to be observed by the Government of Nepal, offices and staff of government and semi-government organisations, human resource involved in election work, political parties, candidates and people associated with them, and the government mass media and the private sector mass media in order to hold the election in a free, fair, transparent and fear-free environment. It is legally binding for the mass media to abide by this Code of Conduct.

- The Government of Nepal has made arrangements in the Constituent Assembly Election Code of Conduct, 2013, by which it can announce new policies, plans, and programmes to positively influence impartiality and fairness of the elections, mobilise human resource and resources and ban government vehicles from being used by political parties for election campaigning against the spirit of the Election Code.

- It is the duty of all concerned to observe the Code as issued by the Commission. Provision for this is made in Section 28 (3).

- There is a provision by which, the ECN, during the course of implementation and monitoring of the code, to find out if the code promulgated in accordance with Section 28 is followed or not, can, as and when required, have suitable mechanism, as prescribed, in district and election areas and conduct inquiry and monitoring.

- A provision has been made in Section 29 (2) by which during the course of inquiry or monitoring, if anyone is found not to have followed or violated the code, the ECN is authorised to give high priority to issue directives to the concerned political party, candidate, person, organisation, official or body to discontinue or annul such work.

- If any political party, candidate, person, organisation, official or body is found not discontinuing or annulling the activity as per the directive given in accordance with the Section 28 (2), there is a provision in Section 29 (3) by which the ECN may punish such offender with a fine of up to NPR 100000.00.

- There is a provision by which, if the ECN is confident that the election is not going to be free and fair and may be marred by unrestrained behaviour or miscreants due to the violation of the Code of Conduct announced by the ECN by any candidate, the ECN, by providing clear evidence and reason, may cancel the candidacy of such candidate. It shall provide a fair chance for clarification to the concerned candidate before such cancellation.

The legal provision of Section 29 (3), of punishment with a fine of up to NPR 100000.00 on any political party, candidate, person, organisation, official or body that does not discontinue or annul the activity in accordance with the order given by the ECN is applicable in case of mass media also. The ECN can fine any media outlet up to NPR 100000.00 if it does not abide by the Section 78 to 95 of the CA Election Code and may recommend to the Nepal Government to take action against it by concerned body and under concerned laws like National Broadcasting Act 1993, Press and Publication Act 1991, and Radio Act 1957.

During the analysis of data collected by the NPI at the time of monitoring of and the implementation of Section 29 (3), a problem was found. When any media outlet violates the code, in spite of having a provision of recommending action by concerned body under concerned law like National Broadcasting Act 1993, Press and Publication Act 1991, Radio Act 1957, due to the provision in Section 15 of Interim Constitution of Nepal there is a problem in immediately prohibiting the concerned programme for violating the code. The only action possible is to punish such offender with a fine of up to NPR 100000.00 as per the legal provision of Section 29 (3).

Right to Publication, Broadcasting and Press :

- There is no anticipatory ban on any publication or broadcasting of any news, editorial, article, composition or any other written, verbal or visual material through any medium like electronic publication, broadcasting and printing or any other medium. But nothing shall be deemed to prevent the making of laws to impose reasonable restrictions on any act which may undermine the sovereignty and integrity of Nepal, or which may jeopardise the harmonious relations subsisting among the peoples of various castes, tribes or communities, or on any act of sedition, defamation, contempt of court or incitement to an offense; or on any act which may be contrary to decent public behaviour or morality.

- If any material is published or broadcast or printed using any audio, audio-visual or electronic medium, registration of such radio, television, online or any other digital or electronic, press or any other media publishing or broadcasting or printing such material shall not be cancelled, closed or confiscated.

- The registration of any newspaper, magazine or press shall not be cancelled, closed or confiscated for having published or printed any news, article, editorial, composition or any other reading material.

- Except on conditions as referred to in law, any press, electronic broadcasting and communication equipment like telephone shall not be subject to impediment.

As this provision is made regarding freedom to mass media in response to positive media freedom, media should follow it sincerely with self motivation. A constitutional provision must be made by which, in case of violation, to enforce the observance of the Code of Conduct, in case of violation of the Code of Conduct, the Election Commission can immediately prohibit the concerned programme that had committed violation from continuing.

As this provision is made regarding freedom to mass media in response to positive media freedom, media should follow it sincerely with self motivation.

Though the Section 15 of National Broadcasting Act 1993 and Section 15 of Press and Publication Act 1991, state that the Government of Nepal may, in view of the national interest, by publishing a Notification in the Nepal Gazette, issue an order prohibiting the publication of any programme violating the Code of Conduct; there must be a constitutional provision to empower the Election Commission to immediately prohibit publication of any program violating the Code of Conduct in order to enforce observance of the Code of Conduct whenever any media is found violating it. If publication of any programme violating the code cannot be prohibited immediately and the ECN is not authorised to do so, it is proved from the data collected by the NPI during the CA Election, 2013 that the media had played a strong role in the ECN's work and caused serious problems in managing the elections in a free, fair and reliable manner and also in information management. Therefore, it is imperative to have constitutional provision to empower the Election Commission to prohibit, throughout the election period, the publication of any program of any media that is not following the Code of Conduct.

B. Election Commission's Communication Policy, 2013

Provisions are made regarding the ECN's policy to ensure management and conduction of clean, free, fair and reliable election:

- **Background of the Election Commission's Communication Policy, 2013:** Information and communication are very important for the institutional development of democracy. Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2063 (2007) has laid emphasis on right to information to every citizen. Periodic election is very important for institutionalisation of democracy. Information management plays an important role in managing and conducting clean, free, fair and reliable election. Proper management of information is necessary to address the interest of the general public in electoral system and process during the pre-election, election and post-election period and of the government. It is the responsibility of the nation to provide factual and accurate information about all the activities of the election process to national and international media and provide true, factual and reliable information to the general public through dissemination by these media. It is mentioned that this

policy was promulgated to manage the work of collection, processing, analysis and distribution of information and news about the election, to provide true, factual and reliable information to the general public, to have proper coordination with the communication media and to regularise and make effective the entire internal and external communication process of the election.

- **Objective of the Election Commission's Communication Policy, 2013:** The main objective of the Communication Policy, 2013 was to ensure management and conduct of clean, free, fair and reliable election. This meant how to:
  - Manage the entire internal and external communications of the ECN and provide true, factual and reliable information to the general public through effective medium in a prompt, effective and trustworthy way.
  - Manage the work of collection, processing, analysis and distribution of electoral information and news.

- **Election Commission's Communication Policy 2013:**
  - Policies of the ECN's Communication Policy, 2013 to ensure management and conduction of clean, free, fair and reliable election :
  - Disseminate information about the activities and functions of the ECN in a simple manner in accordance with the essence of the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 and Right to Information Act, 2007.
  - Establish and operate the Election Management Communication System to manage and make effective, the work of collection, treatment, analysis, production, storage and distribution of electoral information and news.
  - Make the internal and external communication system of the ECN simple and easy for dissemination of true, factual and reliable information to the general public in a prompt and organised manner.
  - Classify the regularly disseminated information by the ECN on the basis of subject, area, target group and geography and gradually use different languages, styles and medium to provide access to the citizens of backward class, area and marginalised communities.
  - Include the mass media in the Code of Conduct to have free, fair and reliable flow of information from the media sector and to restrain the activities of the mass media during the election time.
  - Institutional management and capacity development for the management of information and communication of the ECN shall be enhanced.
  - Cooperation with the concerned persons of the ECN shall be solicited whenever required to make the information system strong and effective.

- **Strategy and Working Policies of the ECN's Communication Policy, 2013:** Strategy and Working Policies of the Election Commission's Information Policy, 2013 were to ensure management and conduct of clean, free, fair and reliable election:
  - The ECN's existing information system shall be reviewed and updated and one window policy enforced to ensure the right of the general public to election information.
  - Latest technology shall be used to make the process of

collection, treatment, analysis and distribution of electoral information and news systematic and effective.

- Information and news disseminated by the ECN shall be analysed to classify and select the medium for dissemination of information on the basis of area, nature, accessibility, medium, time etc.
- Information and notices published through press media shall be published in national newspapers in the centre and in local newspapers and magazines at the local level.
- Electoral audio material shall be broadcast from Radio Nepal at national level and local FM/ radios at the local level.
- Arrangements shall be made to broadcast visual material from Nepal Television and other channels at national level and from local television channels at local level.
- Separate criteria shall be prepared if it becomes necessary for the ECN to publish informative notices in publication materials like weekly, monthly, fortnightly, quarterly, half yearly, yearly magazines, periodical newspapers, calendar, pocket diaries; after taking into consideration specific requirements like the number of population (readership), area, origin, frugality, quantity of publication, regularity of publication, and distribution method.
- Online portals of latest technology and other social networks shall be used to publish and broadcast informative notices and advertisements.
- Websites, media centres, call centres, media monitoring, video conference shall be set up, operated and modernised to disseminate information about all electoral process and activities carried out for elections management.
- A Communication Coordination Committee shall be formed to analyse and coordinate the information, news published and broadcast during the election time by mass media and to provide directives.
- Programmes like training, workshop and interaction required for capacity development of human resources associated with the ECN's information and communication management, and mass media's human resources shall be launched.
- News shall be transmitted in as many local languages as possible with the cooperation from the local stakeholders to increase the reach of electoral news and information to the people from backward areas and marginalised classes.
- An Electoral Education and Information Centre shall be set up and it shall be provided with latest technical and physical support for the effective management of the ECN's information archives, records and informative material.
- The technology employed in the communication sector shall be made up to date and modern by carrying out necessary coordination and cooperation with national and international mass media.

➲ **Institutional provisions of the ECN's Communication Policy, 2013:** Institutional provisions of the ECN's Communication Policy, 2013 were made to ensure management and conduct of a free, fair and credible election :

- Communication Coordination Committee : There is a provision to set up a Communication Coordination Committee with an Election Commissioner, looking after communication portfolio, as its convener, to analyse, coordinate, facilitate, and issue directives regarding news, information, notices disseminated by the mass media.
- Media Monitoring Management Committee: There is a provision to set up a Media Monitoring Management Committee with an Election Commissioner, looking after communication portfolio, as its convener, to ensure the fairness, reliability and honesty of the information flowing through the mass media which is necessary to conduct clean, fair and reliable elections.
- Institutional management shall be regularly improved upon to make it up-to-date to facilitate constant communication and coordination with the mass media during pre-election, election and post-election periods and capacity building of employees of election commission as well as of journalists associated with the election.
- Media centres, call centres, video conference centres, websites etc shall be set up to transmit electoral information and news in a prompt and smart manner.

- **Fiscal provision in the ECN's Communication Policy, 2013:** Fiscal provisions of the Election Commission's Communication Policy, 2013 sought to ensure management and conduct of clean, free, fair and reliable election: The Election Commission was to provide necessary resources for implementation of this Policy.

- **Coordination in the ECN's Communication Policy, 2013:** Provisions for coordination in the ECN's Communication Policy, 2013 were made to ensure management and conduct of free, fair and reliable election: The ECN can coordinate with Nepal Government, the media, experts from the communication sector, other organisations and stakeholders to facilitate implementation of this policy.

The data collected by the NPI during the course of media monitoring and implementation of ECN's Communication Policy, 2013 was analysed. The data collected by the Nepal Press Institute during the course of media monitoring in the CA Member Election, 2013 has proved that if the programmes violating the Code of Conduct cannot be prohibited from continuing the activity throughout the election period or since this authority is not given to the ECN; whenever media did not oblige the Code of Conduct properly; the media became more powerful in the elections and there were grave problems in the management of clean, free, fair and reliable elections and in the information management. For the effective implementation of ECN's Communication Policy, 2013, in order to manage and conduct clean, free, fair and reliable election, it is necessary to follow the Code of Conduct.

C. Constituent Assembly Members Election Code of Conduct, 2013

Provisions of code of conduct for the mass media given in the CA Member Election Code of Conduct sought to ensure management and conduct of clean, free, fair and reliable election:

- **Preamble**: The Preamble states that this Code of Conduct was promulgated since it is necessary to en-

sure free, clean, fair, transparent and reliable conduct of CA election and to regularise the conduct of all stakeholders and thus the ECN, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 28 of the Election Commission Act, 2007 after consultations with the stakeholders, has promulgated this Code of Conduct.

- This Code of Conduct came into force from 22 July 2013.

- Constituent Assembly Members Election Code of Conduct, 2013 shall be applicable for the mass media. It has explained the mass media as governmental, public or private sector electrical/electronic, print communication media.

- To ensure management and conduct of clean, free, fair and reliable elections, mass media must abide by the following arrangements of the Code of Conduct throughout the election period in accordance with Chapter -5, Section 78 to 95 of Constituent Assembly Members Election Code of Conduct, 2013:

  - Focus shall be on the dissemination of detailed, true and unbiased information.
  - Information and news relating to election shall be disseminated properly without being biased.
  - No necessary information and news shall be hidden or suppressed or prevented from being disseminated.
  - Electoral news and information shall not be published or broadcast in such a way that confuses the general public.
  - High priority shall be accorded the dissemination of news related to the educational news. If any person causes obstruction or hindrance in the collection and dissemination of such information, that matter shall also be disseminated.
  - No undue benefits from anyone shall be accepted, nor shall anything be done that is against professional ethics and norms.
  - Use of language at the time of dissemination that suggests discrimination or incites violence in any way, or that may adversely affect the goodwill among Dalits, oppressed caste/ethnic indigenous groups, backward regions, Madhesis including gender, linguistic, religious and political or other groups shall not be permitted.
  - Dissemination in elections shall be done in a way that will play conducive role to encourage the participation of different castes, religion, gender, language and community.
  - If any error and misinterpretation has been detected in already published and disseminated materials, high priority shall be given by the concerned media house to carry out the correction on the report.

- Conduct of the governmental mass media to ensure management and conduct of clean, free, fair and reliable elections.

  - The governmental publication or broadcasting agencies shall not write or broadcast editorials in favour or against any political party or candidate.
  - The governmental mass media shall provide opportunity to political parties or candidates to express their opinions, policies and programme to the voters.
  - The governmental mass media shall give priority to publish and broadcast materials relating to voter education.

- **Free transmission facility:**

  - The ECN has made arrangements to provide free of cost time on radio and television for transmission services to political parties regarding their policies or canvassing for Constituent Assembly Members Election in proportion to total candidates of the concerned party contesting the election in accordance with the proportional representation election system.

- **Free time provided by the ECN in accordance with Section 90 is provided in three stages** as given below :

  - In the first stage, five to twenty minutes to be allocated for radio transmission to make public the manifesto of the political party,
  - In the second stage, two to five minutes of television transmission time for election canvassing and in the third stage one minute each to every political party before beginning of the silent period in accordance with Section 93 for television transmission service for last minute chance to express its opinion.
  - Materials for dissemination mentioned in the stages of Article 91 shall be prepared by the concerned party and given to the concerned transmission service provider.

- **No canvassing in the silent period:** Mass media shall not disseminate any information about the political parties or candidates during the silence period. This Section shall not prevent dissemination of material prepared by the ECN. Explanation: In this Article, "Silence Period" shall mean period starting forty eight hours prior to the polling day till the last polling centre closes.

- **Maintain record:** All materials relating to elections disseminated by the mass media shall be safeguarded for 35 days from the day of dissemination of that information.

- **Monitoring of disseminated information:** The ECN shall carry out regular monitoring of all information disseminated by the mass media.

  - During the course of monitoring, if Code of Conduct is found violated by dissemination of any material, the ECN shall instruct the concerned media house to carry out the correction on such disseminated material.
  - The concerned media house shall carry out the correction on such disseminated material on receipt of the directive.

The data collected by the NPI during the course of media monitoring and implementation of Constituent Assembly Members Election Code of Conduct, 2013 were analysed. The data collected have shown that if the programmes violating the Code of Conduct could not be prohibited from continuing throughout the election period and since this authority was not given to the ECN whenever media violated the Code of Conduct; the media became more powerful during the elections and there were grave problems in having a clean, free, fair and reliable elections and in information management.

For an effective implementation of the Code of Conduct, the ECN must be given constitutional authority to prohibit the programme violating the code of conduct from operating throughout the election period

To implement / have implemented the Election Code of Conduct effectively, it essential to give the responsibility of monitoring of the Election Code of Conduct and of media to a single ECN member. This will prevent duplication in jurisdiction. Some problems are seen in an effective implementation of monitoring the Constituent Assembly Membership Election Code of Conduct, 2013 due to dual jurisdictions.

D. MEDIA MONITORING GUIDELINE, 2013

By exercising power conferred by Section 46 of the Election Commission Act, 2007, the ECN enacted the "Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 in order to manage and hold elections in a clean, free, impartial and reliable manner and in order to monitor whether provisions of the code of conduct applicable to the media as mentioned in the Code of Conduct for Constituent Assembly Member Election, 2013 has been duly complied with or not. The following provisions have been made in this guideline for monitoring of the media.

The Preamble says;

Whereas, it is expedient to enact guidelines regarding the implementation of provisions relating to monitoring of the media as mentioned in the Media Policy of the Election Commission, 2013 in order to make the Constituent Assembly member election, 2013 free, impartial and clean the Election Commission, has, by exercising power conferred by Section 46 of the Election Commission Act, 2007 enacted this guideline.

"Media" has been defined in this guideline as;

"Media" means all the electronic and paper media recognised by the Government of Nepal, and this term also includes online media and international media having authorised representatives or liaison offices in Nepal.

"Information" has been defined in this guideline as;

"Information" means the thematic issues and messages desirable for being conveyed to the general stakeholders by the Commission.

Institutional Arrangement of Monitoring

Section 3 of the Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 has made provisions for the institutional arrangement of monitoring. The following Media Monitoring Committee has been provisioned at the commission for the purpose of monitoring news, information and activities published/ transmitted/ broadcast by the media during the election period.

- Honourable Election Commissioner (Media)- Convener
- Secretary, Election Commission- Member
- Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communication- Member
- Head of Department, Central Department of Journalism, Tribhuvan University- Member
- Spokesperson (Joint-Secretary), Election Commission- Member
- Information/Communication Officer, Election Commission- Member-Secretary.
- It is provisioned that the expert in the related field or subject and the staff officer serving at the Commission may be invited in the meetings of this committee as necessary.

- The functions of this committee have been prescribed as follows:
- To formulate required standards for monitoring of media,
- To make arrangements for the orientation of monitoring officers and persons of monitoring groups,
- To determine the scope of subjects of media monitoring and procedures thereof,
- To submit analysis of report and details received from the media monitoring to the Commission,
- In case of any finding, at the time of monitoring, that any media or media person had breached code of conduct; to recommend required action to the Commission by mentioning grounds thereof,
- To perform other functions as prescribed by the Commission.

Implementation Committee

Section 4 of the Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 has provisioned the following Action Execution Committee in order to force action relating to infringement of the Code of Conduct as found by the monitoring unit.

- Commissioner, Election Commission- Convener
- Chairperson, Press Council- Member
- Joint Secretary, Law and Political Party Division- Member
- Director-General, Department of Information- Member
- Chief, Media Monitoring Unit- Member-Secretary

It is provisioned that this committee shall perform the following functions;

- To send correspondence to the concerned authority for execution of action as per the decision of the commission regarding complaints against the media,
- To make coordination and cooperate with the Media Monitoring Committee and the Media Support Committee,
- After completion of action, to inform the same to the Commission through the committee,
- To perform other functions as prescribed by the Commission.

Media Support Committee

Section 5 of the Media Monitoring Guideline, 2070 (2013) has provisioned for a Media Monitoring Support Committee comprising the following members in order to provide the required support to the Media Monitoring Committee in the monitoring of the media.

- Spokesperson (Joint-Secretary) of the Commission- Convener
- Director-General, National News Agency- Member
- Chairperson, Federation of Nepali Journalists- Member
- Chairperson, Television Broadcasters Association- Member
- Chairperson, Community Radio Transmitter Association- Member
- Chairperson, Broadcasting Association of Nepal- Member

- Chairperson, Valley Radio Transmitter Forum- Member
- Chairperson, Nepal Cable T.V. Confederation- Member
- Chairperson, Nepal Cable T.V. Entrepreneur Confederation- Member
- Chairperson, Nepal Paper Media National Network- Member
- Chief, Media Monitoring Centre
- Joint-Secretary or Under-Secretary-Member-Secretary

There is a provision that the committee shall prepare a roster of experts related to the media.

There is a provision that the experts listed in the roster of experts may be invited as invited members in the Media Monitoring Committee and Media Support Committee formed pursuant to Section 3 and Section 5 respectively as per necessity.

It is provisioned that the functions of the Media Monitoring Support Committee shall be as follows;

- To provide support to the committee in determining the required standards for media monitoring,
- To motivate all media for their compliance to the election Code of Conduct during the election period,
- To provide advice and support to the committee by reviewing functions performed by the Monitoring Centre from time to time.

Media Monitoring Unit

Section 6 of the Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 has provisioned that the committee shall constitute a Media Monitoring Unit under the convener Joint Secretary (Media) of the Election Commission- in order to make the media monitoring works systematic, effective and achievement oriented.

The functions of the Media Monitoring Unit have been prescribed as follows;

- To monitor the media, to submit daily reports and analysis to the monitoring committee in coordination with consultants, experts, monitors' group (monitoring centre) and to inform about the daily activities of monitoring to the committee/Commission,
- To inform immediately to the committee in case of infringement of code of conduct and receiving complaints about such infringement during the media monitoring,
- To perform other functions as prescribed by the committee.

Monitoring Centre

Section 7 of the Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 has provisioned that there shall be a central monitoring team comprising an expert and a consultant of the related subject and monitors for performing works of media monitoring. It has been provisioned that notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1) of Section 7, the committee may assign any institution or person working in the concerned field in monitoring works by affiliation with the same at any time.

There is a provision that the committee may assign an expert amongst the experts of central monitoring group as the team leader.



Monitors consult before deciding on a story at Nepalgunj centre.

The job description of the Central Monitoring Group has been prescribed as follows;

- To monitor whether the media have published/transmitted election related material by being neutral, without favouring or going against any political party while publishing/ transmitting such material and to arrange monitoring from the Regional Monitoring Centres and from the District Monitoring Centres as prescribed by the Committee,
- To monitor whether the media have complied with the code of conduct issued by the Commission or not,
- To monitor whether news, articles and interviews have been published/transmitted by adversely affecting the election environment or not,
- To receive notice and information communicated by the Commission and to provide such notices to the monitoring centres established in the regions and districts for monitoring,
- To receive daily updated reports of materials published/transmitted from the regional media from the Regional Monitoring Centre, to appraise the same and to prepare an unified report and to submit it to the committee as recorded through the unit,
- To submit daily updates and monitoring reports to the committee through monitoring unit,

- To study election related notice, news, articles, compositions, views, reaction, events published/transmitted through the online media and to keep the record of same and to monitor,

- To make site monitoring and appraisal of publication, transmission, exhibition and collection of notices by conducting spot visits of the media as per the necessity,

- To keep records of the views and messages expressed by the political parties and members and candidates of parties in the media,

- To receive daily monitoring report from monitoring units established in the Regional Monitoring Centres and from the District Monitoring Centres; to study and observe monitoring reports as received on a daily basis and to submit them to the committee along with recommendation and feedback reviews,

- To coordinate and cooperate with the committee and unit,

- To coordinate with the Regional and District Monitoring Centres,

- To inform about problems seen in the course of monitoring and measures to settle problems to the committee,

- To perform other functions as prescribed by the commission and committee.

Regional Monitoring Centre

Section 8 of the Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 has provisioned that the committee shall constitute the following Regional Monitoring Centres in all five regions for conducting effective monitoring works of the media.

- Regional Election Officer- Convener

- Representative of Regional Journalist Federation- Member

- Reporter of any governmental media- Member

- Monitoring Officer- Member- Secretary

There is a provision for a monitoring officer and an assistant and a helper in each Regional Monitoring Centre for media monitoring by setting up of a monitoring unit, and the Commission shall arrange resources required for monitoring works.

The functions of the Monitoring Centre have been prescribed as follows;

- To monitor whether the media have published/transmitted election related materials by being neutral and without favouring or going against any political party while publishing / transmitting such material and to arrange monitoring from the District Monitoring Centres as prescribed by the committee,

- To monitor whether news, articles and interviews have been published/transmitted by adversely affecting the election environment or not,

- To receive notices and information communicated by the monitoring centre and to provide such notices to the monitoring centres established in the districts for monitoring,

- To receive daily updated reports of materials published/transmitted from various media of the area, to appraise the same and to prepare a unified report and to submit the record to the monitoring centre,

- To submit daily updated monitoring reports to the monitoring centre,
- To keep records of views and messages expressed by the political parties and members and candidates of the parties in the media,
- To receive daily monitoring reports from the District Monitoring Centres: to study and observe monitoring reports as received on a daily basis and to submit them to the monitoring centre along with recommendations, feedbacks and reviews,
- To coordinate and cooperate with the monitoring centre,
- To comply with the directions of the committee and the monitoring centre,
- To perform other functions as prescribed by the monitoring centre.

The committee may constitute the District Monitoring Centre in the prescribed districts in order to support the Regional Monitoring Centre. There is a provision that the same monitoring centre shall monitor articles, notices, news, compositions, views and reactions published and transmitted by the media and to submit daily reports, thereof, to the Regional Monitoring Centre and to comply with the directions received from the Regional Monitoring Centre.

Human Resource and Equipment for Media Monitoring

The Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 has provisioned that the monitoring centre and unit shall have human resources as decided by the commission for effectively conducting the media monitoring. Apart from this, experts of social networks, televisions, radios, newspapers and online sites shall work as communication experts in such centres and units.

A unit comprising a media monitoring officer, an assistant staff and a helper has been arranged for each District Election Office for media monitoring. Since the following equipment and other merchandises are required for media monitoring works, there is a provision for arrangement of those equipment and other merchandises.

- Equipment having facility of online record capable to record transmitted matters as per necessity, televisions, radio sets etc. for the monitoring of all channels,
- Computers having a fast-speed internet facility capable of receiving information immediately from the districts monitored and to monitor information/news and thematic issues transmitted from various online news portals, faxes, telephones and printing machines,
- Equipment capable of recording television channels in the districts monitored, and equipment capable of recording radio transmissions, computers with internet facilities, faxes, televisions, printing machines and telephones, etc.

Duties of the Media

The following duties have been prescribed for the media and representatives of the media in the Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 in order to manage and hold elections in a clean, free, impartial and reliable manner and in order to effectively implement the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Constituent Assembly Member Election, 2013 and in order to implement provisions of media monitoring mentioned in the Media Policy of the Election Commission, 2013.

Media and representatives of the media:

- shall have to comply with the prevailing law relating to the election and election Code of Conduct,
- shall have to be courteous to the voters, candidates, observers, political parties and their agents and employees involved in the election and all other stakeholders,
- shall not be involved in activities to provoke voters or candidates in favour of or against any party,
- shall not take interviews of voters, observers, candidates or agents or office bearers of any political party within the polling booth,
- shall not take photos and videos of the activities in the premises of the polling booths without acquiring permission of the polling officer and shall respect secret information of the polling booths, ballot boxes and personal secrecy of all, and
- Shall not create any hurdle or intervene in the election process by any means.

The Nepal Press Institute had, subject to aforesaid provisions of the Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 conducted monitoring to determine whether the Code of Conduct for CA Member Election 2013 had been complied with or not in the CA Member Election, 2013 and had conducted the media monitoring containing all details that needed to be mentioned in the report pursuant to the format of monitoring report- mentioned in Annex-1 of the Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 and had submitted details and reports to the ECN. The following details had been contained in that report.

- The prescribed area for monitoring
- Date of monitoring
- Details of monitored media such as name of the media, type of the media (paper/electronics), details thereof
- Time of monitoring
- Whether the notices and information of the ECN had been published/ transmitted as they were or not, and if not details the name of such media and date, the page number in case of the print media, time and

CA Election Media Monitoring Findings for Election Campaign Period

Date : 1-Nov to 16-Nov											
		Bias			Tone			Flag			
Catagory	Total	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Neutral	Slight Bias	Serious Bias	Gross Violation
Online	460	176	57	225	214	108	136	297	128	24	10
Print	2057	1013	402	610	892	621	511	1122	635	211	79
Radio	404	105	49	250	108	196	100	339	47	13	5
TV	304	111	18	175	141	121	42	227	58	11	8
Grand Total	3225	1405	526	1260	1355	1046	789	1985	868	259	102
Percentage		44	17	39	42	32	24	62	27	8	3

Source: Database of the NPI media monitoring

programme in the case of the electronic media had been mentioned.

- The details of whether news, articles, comments, interviews etc. were focused on a single political party or all the political parties had been covered while publishing/ transmitting the same in the election period, and if they focused on a single party, details-name of such media and date, the page number in case of the paper media, the time and programme in case of electronics media, of what happened had been mentioned.

- The monitoring had been conducted to see whether news, articles, interviews etc. were published/transmitted by obstructing the environment of the election or not. If published/ transmitted, details-name of such media and date, the page number in case of the paper media, the time and programme in case of electronic media, of what happened- had also been mentioned.

- The monitoring had been conducted determined whether the code of conduct issued for the election period had been fully complied with or not. In case of not being complied with, details name of such media and date, the page number in case of the paper media, the time and programme in case of the electronic media of what happened- had also been mentioned.

By pursuing provisions of Section 78 to Section 95 of the Code of Conduct for Constituent Assembly Member Election, 2013, issued by the ECN in order to manage and hold the election in a clean, fair free, impartial and reliable manner- applicable to the media as indicator of monitoring, the monitoring had been conducted about whether the same code of conduct has been fully complied with or not. While analysing the statistics received in the course of monitoring, the state of compliance of the provisions of the Code of Conduct of Section 78 to Section 95 of the Code of Conduct for CA Member Election, 2013 applicable to the media- had been found as follows. The events of complete violation of those provisions of code of conduct were found to be three per cent.

The events of serious violation were eight per cent. Events with some biasness were 27 per cent. These statistics received in the course of monitoring had been obtained by using different coloured flags. The comprehensive details, thereof, have been given in table *(CA Election Media Monitoring Findings for Election Campaign Period)*.

While analysing the statistics received during media monitoring by the NPI and the state of implementation of the Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 it is shown, by the figures received during the media monitoring of Constituent Assembly Member Election, 2013 conducted by the NPI, that in case the media had violated the code of conduct and the concerned programme violating the Code of Conduct was not halted immediately or temporarily during the election period, and, if this right to enforce action is not conferred to the ECN for managing and holding elections in a clean, free, impartial and reliable manner and for effective implementation of the election code of conduct, then the media might go beyond their mandate in the election processes creating serious problems in the management of a clean, free, impartial and reliable election and in information management.

That is why, in case the media violates the Code of Conduct; the Election Commission might, constitutionally,

need to halt the concerned programme that violates the Code of Conduct immediately or temporarily during the election period for a clean, free, impartial and reliable election and for implementation of the Code of Conduct of the Media Monitoring Guideline, 2013 and its institutional arrangements to be effective.

It will be appropriate to arrange the functions of monitoring of the election code of conduct and monitoring under the Media Monitoring Guidelines under the responsibility of the same commissioner for the effective implementation of the election Code. This will avoid duplication in jurisdiction. The duplication in jurisdiction has created problems in the effectiveness of implementation during the monitoring of the CA Member Election Code of Conduct, 2013.

E. MEDIA CENTRE OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINE, 2013

The fact has been mentioned in the preamble of this guideline that the ECN has, by exercising power conferred by Section 46 of the Election Commission Act, 2007 enacted this guideline in order to manage and hold elections in a clean, free, impartial and reliable manner and to make the process of election management more transparent and to make the functions of acquisition, processing, storage and distribution of information effective and to implement provisions of the Media Policy of the Election Commission, 2013 and for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the Constituent Assembly Member Election Ordinance, 2013. The following provisions have been made in the "Media Centre Operation and Management Guideline, 2013.

"Media" has been defined in this guideline as:

"Media" means all the electronic and paper media recognised by the Government of Nepal, and this term also includes online publication.

Section 3 of this guideline has the provision of establishment of the Media Coordination Committee. There is a provision for the establishment of a coordination committee under the convener- the Election Commissioner (Media) for analysis, coordination, facilitation and direction of information, messages and news to be published and transmitted from the public media. The Commission may acquire the service of an expert of the concerned subject upon recommendation of the committee.

Functions, Duties and Powers of the Committee

The functions, duties and powers of the committee have been prescribed in Section 4 of this guideline as follows:

- To enact and modify policy, guideline, procedure, standard etc. relating to information and communication and to recommend the same,
- To analyse and classify information relating to the election,
- To recommend information, messages and advertisements transmitted by the commission for approval,
- To coordinate between information flow utilisation mechanism, including the media centre, call centre, during the election period,
- To coordinate and facilitate information transmitted by the media,
- To issue required direction, to coordinate and facilitate other mechanisms, including units constituted under this committee, for the management of information and communication of the Commission,

Section 5 has made the following provisions in connection with the media centre operation and management:

- There is a provision that a media centre shall be established for providing election related information in a unified way to the citizens through the media by maintaining coordination amongst the Commission, the District Election Offices, the Office of the Election Officer and the national and international media, and the centre shall perform its functions under the direction of the Commission and the committee.

- There is a provision that this media centre shall comprise the following human resource;

  - Convener-1
  - Co-convener-1
  - Information Officer-1
  - Media Coordination Officer-1
  - Media Centre Management Officer-1
  - IT Engineer/Computer Officer-1
  - Computer Operator-2
  - Non Gazetted First Class Clerk-1
  - Editor-1
  - Photographer-1
  - Audio Video Technician-1
  - Office Assistant-1

- The committee shall perform functions of direction, coordination and facilitation in connection with the operation and management of the media centre.

- There is a provision that the working hours of the media centre shall be as necessary.

Section 6 of this guideline has prescribed functions, duties and powers of the media centre as follows:

- To perform functions by being involved in the context of development, construction and use of the media centre,

- To convey transmitted information relating to activities of the commission promptly to the general public through the media,

- To keep details of the communication sector and the various media and to coordinate with them,

- To provide information of public interest relating to the election to the media as per the direction of the commission,

- To perform other functions as prescribed by the commission,

- To prepare reports and to submit the same at the commission through the committee.

Section 7 of this guideline has prescribed functions, duties and powers of the convener of the Media Centre Management Unit as follows: The spokesperson of the commission shall perform functions as the convener of the Media Centre Management Unit and

- Invite media for collection of news, discussions and interactions,

- Arrange regular press meetings,

- Issue press releases as necessary,

- Function as contact person between the commission and the media,

- Coordinate with the Ministry of Information and Communication,

- Ensure authenticity of notices of the commission and notices published in connection with the commission or subordinated bodies and persons,

- There is also a provision that in case of absence of the convener, the co-convener shall perform all his/her functions.

Section 9 of this guideline has prescribed the functions, duties and powers of the information officer as follows:

- To coordinate the functions of the media centre,
- To prepare draft of press release in coordination with the spokesperson,
- To keep up-to-date information and to select important information to be conveyed to the voters and to maintain them in the priority list,
- To keep the activities of the Commission in the media centre for distribution,
- To respond to queries and information and to do the required preparation related to the same.
- Section 10 of this guideline has prescribed the functions, duties and powers of the media coordination officer as follows:
- To establish a regular contact and maintain coordination with various divisions and sections of the secretariat of the Commission, offices of the election officer, district election offices and stakeholders,
- To make arrangements for using of the media centre as the contact point for all stakeholders,
- To submit reports daily and as per necessity to the information officer,
- To establish contact and coordinate with communication cells constituted in various ministries and central bodies.

Section 11 of this guideline has prescribed the functions, duties and powers of the media centre management officer as follows:

- To support and coordinate in functions of the media centre,
- To prepare required documents for transmission,
- To perform other functions required for proper and effective management of the media centre.

Section 12 of this guideline has prescribed the functions, duties and powers of the Information Technology (IT) engineer as follows:

- To construct and manage an internal computer network in the media centre,
- To arrange security of network,
- To maintain up-to-date computers and peripherals in the media centre by installing and repairing the same,
- To supervise hardware, software and other computer and peripherals used in the media centre,
- To install, repair and maintain and manage communication equipment placed in the media centre,
- To make arrangements for keeping information and statistics of the media centre secure,
- To settle technical problems,
- To perform other prescribed functions.

There is a provision that the media centre shall transmit the following information pursuant to Section 13 of this guideline;

- The activities and views of the commission in connection to the next election of Constituent Assembly members,
- The authentic notice of the commission,
- The result of the election of the Constituent Assembly member,
- Other information having permission to be transmitted of the commission and the media coordination committee.

Section 14 of this guideline has made a provision that the media centre shall not transmit the following information:

- Matter carried on for action process,
- Matter affecting national security, crime investigations, sovereignty and integrity of Nepal and the foreign affairs or election works,
- Matter jeopardising peace and security or provoking violence and jeopardising relations subsisting among the peoples of various castes, tribes and communities,
- Matter which may create improper gain or loss to any person, institution or organisation, political party or candidate,
- Matter relating to personal secrecy,
- Matter prescribed to be kept secretly pursuant to the prevailing law,
- Matter prescribed as secret by the commission.

Section 15 of this guideline has prescribed powers of the media representative and Section 16 has prescribed the following obligations to him/her;

- Provision that the media representative shall have the right to receive information and service provided by the media centre,
- Provision that he/she shall have to abide by the election code of conduct and the code of conduct which are to be obeyed at the media centre, and he/she shall have to show the press pass distributed by the Department of Information upon recommendation of the Commission.

Section 17, 18 and 19 have made provisions that the media centre shall provide the following services:

- The media representatives shall be able to use computers placed within the media centre. They shall have to send information to their media from the media centre.
- The photocopy and print of essential information and materials related to the CA members' election can be made free of cost with the permission of an officer of the centre.
- There is a provision that in case of occurrence of any problems with the computers placed at the media centre; the Information Technology Officer of the centre could be contacted.
- No personal files can be saved in the computers placed at the media centre.
- There is a provision for the arrangement of a suitable room for photo journalists and cameramen in order to take photos and scene during the press conference and other programmes.
- There is a provision that no media representative can use the tel-

ephone service placed at the media centre for personal works.

While analysing the statistics received during the media monitoring by the Nepal Press Institute and state of implementation of the Media Centre Operation and Management Guideline, 2013 , it is shown, by the statistics received during media monitoring of the Constituent Assembly Member Election, 2013 conducted by the NPI, that in case the media violate the code of conduct the concerned code of conduct violating programme cannot be halted immediately and temporarily during the election period, and if this right is not conferred to the ECN for managing and holding elections in a clean, free, fair ,impartial and reliable manner and for the effective implementation of the election code of conduct, then the media will be operating without check in the election processes creating serious problems in the management of a clean, free, impartial and reliable election and in information management. Therefore, in case the media violate the Code of Conduct; the ECN might, constitutionally, have the right to halt the concerned code of conduct violating programme immediately and temporarily during the election period for a clean, free, impartial and reliable election and for the implementation of the code of conduct, creating problems in the effectiveness of the implementation of the Media Centre Operation and Management Guideline, 2013 and its institutional arrangements will also become effective.

It will be appropriate to arrange the functions of monitoring of the election code conduct and monitoring under the Media Monitoring Guidelines under the responsibility of the same Commissioner for effective implementation of the election Code of Conduct. It will not create duplication in jurisdiction. Duplication in jurisdiction has created problems in the effectiveness of implementation during the monitoring of the Constituent Assembly Member Election Code of Conduct, 2070 (2013).

3. LEGAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO ELECTION CODE OF CONDUCT AND ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINCE OF ELECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

It is found that the ECN has called for clarification from the media and initiated action on the basis of facts received by the ECN and the NPI during the media monitoring on compliance of legal provisions relating to the election code of conduct and some of representative incidents among them are as follows.

NEWS 24: Since NEWS 24 channel had transmitted news defaming the character of Chure Bhavar Loktantrik Party and its chairperson in the POWERNEWS programme at July 26, 2013; a correspondence calling for a reply had been sent to that channel and a reply had been received from the concerned channel. Afterwards, the ECN had called the presenter of that programme to the commission, and he had expressed his commitment to not violate the code of conduct in the future after discussions with the honourable chief commissioner/commissioners.

RATOPATI.COM: While correspondence had been sent to ratopati.com, the reply received from that media was not found satisfactory, thus, clarification on why action should not be taken had been placed with that media; and, later, reply was received from the media concerned.

T.V. Filmy Channel: Since this channel had been broadly campaigning for RPP Nepal, the Monitoring Section had sent correspondence in this regard.

Regarding the election campaigning in the silence period against the Code of Conduct, it was seen that the media had conveyed, published or transmitted notices or news campaigning for political parties and candidates during this period. The silence period started from 12.00 pm in the night 16 November, 2013 to the closure of last polling booth on the day of polling. Correspondence had been sent to Gorkhapatra Corporation, Nepal Samacharpatra daily, Naya Patrika daily, Aarthik Patrika daily, Nagarik daily, Rajdhani daily, Karobar Rastriya daily, Janamanch weekly, Chhalphal weekly, Deshantar weekly, Janadesh waily, The Himalayan time daily, Republica daily, Kathmandu Post daily, Annapurna Post daily calling them to reply within 24 hours, along with evidences, if there was any cause for not taking action for their act against the code of conduct.

ABC Television : Since that television had transmitted an interaction with Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, the Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist), on August 7, 2013 from Pokhara while sending correspondence in this regard, the same had given a unsatisfactory reply that it had not transmitted a live transmission. Furthermore, the Commission had, pursuant to Section 34 and 83 of the CA Member Election Code of Conduct, 2013, provided information of the starting of the silence period from 12.00 pm in the night of 2070/8/1 B.S. (November 16, 2013 through a press release and public notice of 16 November, 2013 This channel had been transmitting programmes for campaigning of the candidates and party against the code of conduct and provision of restriction on campaigning during the silent period. Thus, a correspondence mentioning serious action would be taken pursuant to the prevailing law if the ABC television failed to abide by the order - had been sent accordingly.

As Star F.M. Station had transmitted election related programmes conducted with Himal Sharma, candidate of the UCPN (Maoist) and Bhimsen Das Pradhan of the Nepali Congress at 8.15 am and 8.30 am in the morning of 17 November 2013 an order had, pursuant to Sub-Section (2) of Section 28 of the Election Commission Act, 2007, been issued to immediately stop the act of conveying, publishing and transmitting notices or news of election campaigning of any political

While observing the Code of Conduct, policy and guideline to be complied by the media and state of compliance, thereof, it is found that the efficacy in implementation of the aforesaid policy, code of conduct and guideline has increased in this election of CA members 2013 as compared to previous elections.

It is evident that self- regulation of the media has to be made efficient for effective implementation of the election code of conduct applicable to the media. In fact, the Code of Conduct was violated due to the weak provision of media self-regulation. The culture of media self- regulation is not developed. It has to be fully implemented by making provisions in the law. This is contradictory with jurisprudential norms and principles related to media self-regulation. Serious problem occurs in the implementation of the election code of conduct due to the influence of the political parties in the media of developing and undeveloped countries where the culture of media self-regulation is not developed and campaigning is conducted on the basis of party influence.

party or candidate during the period starting from 12.00 pm in the night of 16 November , 2013 to the closure of the last polling booth on the day of polling. A correspondence mentioning that serious action would be taken pursuant to the prevailing law if the station failed to abide by the order - had been sent accordingly.

Though it is found that the ECN had called for clarification from the media and taken action in connection with the (non) implementation of the legal provision relating to the election Code of Conduct as mentioned above, on the basis of statistics received during the media monitoring conducted by the ECN and the NPI, no fine was charged by taking action against the media which failed to comply with the code of conduct- pursuant to Sub-Section (3) of Section 29 of the Election Commission Act, 2007 . It seems that there is a lack of efficacy in implementation of the law.

4. CHALLENGES IN COMPLIANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE ELECTION CODE OF CONDUCT SEEN DURING MEDIA MONITORING

The challenges in compliance and implementation of legal provisions relating to the election code of conduct seen during media monitoring were as follows:

- Lack of self-regulatory culture in Nepalese media,
- The media have been used for party interest,
- Political parties indirectly influence and control many media,
- Decline in the efficacy of rule of law due to culture of impunity,
- Failure of media organisations in making self-regulatory arrangements effective,
- The provisions for freedom of press mentioned in Article 15 of the Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007 have been used wrongly rather than its principle, and the ECN is unable to make effective intervention in the acts directly performed against the election Code of Conduct.
- Lack of culture of compliance of the election Code of Conduct in the political parties, and its impact is directly seen in the media.
- Lack of enough skilled human resources, resources and institutions for media monitoring.
- Lack of adequate law and policy to regulate the social media during the election period.

5. CONCLUSION

In the context of Nepal, the culture of media self-regulation has not developed efficiently. Until and unless efficient development in the culture of media self-regulation takes place, the state shall have to operate special programmes focusing on self-regulation by way of concrete efforts for stopping activities against the election Code of Conduct of the media operating in line with party interests. Lack of self-regulation and not abiding by the election Code of Conduct has adversely affected the activities of the ECN mainly because the media operate mostly on the basis of partisan interests. Clear provisions in the law should be made in order to stop such acts.

Though it is found that the ECN had called for clarification from the media and taken action in connection with the implementation of the legal provisions

relating to the election code of conduct, as mentioned above, on the basis of statistics received during the media monitoring conducted by the ECN and NPI, no action was taken against the media which failed to comply with the Code of Conduct pursuant to Sub-Section (3) of Section 29 of the Election Commission Act, 2007. It seems that there is a lack of efficacy in implementation of the law.

While analysing statistics received during the media monitoring by the NPI and the state of the aforesaid implementation, it is shown, by the statistics received during the media monitoring of the CA Member Election, 2013 conducted by the NPI and the state of aforesaid implementation, in case the media violate the code of conduct. The concerned Code of Conduct violating programmes and transmissions cannot be halted immediately and temporarily during the election period, and if this right is not conferred on the ECN for managing and holding elections in a clean, free, impartial and reliable manner and for effective implementation of election Code of Conduct, then the media will be operating without check in the election processes, and it creates serious problems in the management of a clean, free, fair impartial and reliable election and in information management. That is why, in case the media violate the Code of Conduct; the ECN might, constitutionally, have the right to interrupt the concerned Code of Conduct violating programme immediately and temporarily during the election period. The laws, policies, guidelines and procedures have to be amended and modified on the same grounds and in line with the constitutional provisions.

It will be appropriate to arrange the functions of the monitoring of the election Code of Conduct and monitoring under the Media Monitoring Guidelines under the responsibility of the same commissioner in order to effectively implement the election Code of Conduct. It will not create duplication in jurisdiction. This duplication in jurisdiction has created problems in the effectiveness of implementation during the monitoring of the Constituent Assembly Member Election Code of Conduct, 2013. The capacity of media persons and institutions working in the field of media has to be enhanced for effective media monitoring.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been proposed to be implemented in order to cope with the challenges of compliance and implementation of the legal provisions of the election code of conduct of the election commission Act 2007 and election code of conduct 2013 found during the media monitoring and to enhance compliance and implementation of the legal provision of the election code of conduct of the election commission Act 2007 and the election code of conduct.

- Since the culture of self-regulation is lacking in the Nepalese media, until and unless efficient development of the culture of media self-regulation takes place the state has to operate special programmes focusing on self-regulation by the media by making concrete efforts to stop activities against the election code of conduct of the media operating in line with partisan interests. It has implications to the activities of the ECN when the media operate on the basis of party interests. A clear provision in the law in order to stop such acts should be there.

- In case the media violate the code of conduct; the ECN might, constitutionally, have the right to halt the

concerned Code of Conduct violating programme immediately and temporarily during the election period for a clean, free, impartial and reliable election and for the implementation of the code of conduct. The laws, policies, guidelines and procedures have to be amended and modified on the same ground and in line with the constitutional provisions.

- The ECN should be empowered more institutionally, functionally and financially as per the principle of the institutional, functional and financial independence and autonomy. For this purpose all the election related acts, rules, guidelines, procedures and manuals need to be reviewed in line with the principle of the institutional, functional and financial independence and autonomy of the ECN.

- It will be appropriate to arrange the functions of the monitoring of the election code of conduct and monitoring under the Media Monitoring Guidelines under the responsibility of the same commissioner in order to effectively implement the election code of conduct. This duplication in jurisdiction has created problems in the effectiveness of implementation during the monitoring of the Constituent Assembly Member Election Code of Conduct, 2013. It will not create duplication in jurisdiction.

- The capacity of media persons and institutions working in the media sector should be enhanced for effective media monitoring.

- The Press Council Nepal and the Federation of Nepali Journalists should strive for gradually removing the culture of the media being used for party interests.

- The Press Council Nepal and the Federation of Nepali Journalists should perform functions efficiently for gradually removing indirect influences and control of the political parties over the media.

- It is essential to make and implement laws to end the culture of impunity. The efficient role of the state is required in this regard.

- The Nepal Press Council and the Federation of Nepali Journalists should work for making self-regulation provisions comprehensive and efficient.

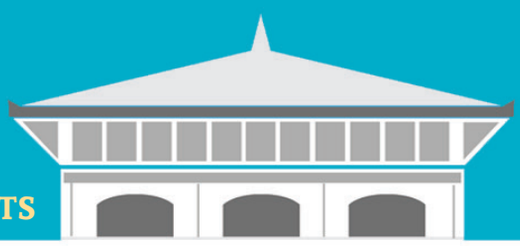
- The law and policy to regulate social media in the election period have to be enacted and formulate

- It is essential that the political parties focus on the development of the culture of compliance of the election Code of Conduct.

- It is essential that the state itself provide special support in capacity enhancement and arrangement of human resources required for monitoring the media.

THE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM

TRENDS FOLLOWED BY ELECTION TWEETS



1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout November 2013, short texts about Nepal's bid to elect the Constituent Assembly (CA) regularly appeared on the walls of a popular micro blogging site, Twitter, enriching the social discourse on the crucial vote. A few authors dominated the conversation by sending assorted election messages, from witty, funny or silly comments, for example, to interesting and important pieces of news, views and ideas. Most others chipped in with just one tweet or two in the month's election talks, making their participation hardly audible in the digital echo chamber. The texts generally featured notions of fact, doubt, fear and hope for their followers and friends to discover during the different election phases.

Technically, each election tweet was capable of reaching the voters. People with interest, Internet access and search skills could tune in to a stream of what the talking handles publicly shared in the online network. They could as well archive the tweets for viewing later. A similar personal archive of 39,292 Nepal tweets, built in the last quarter of 2013, yielded a corpus of 9,533 election-specific tweets for November. This article explores the manifest characteristics of the tweets in the corpus. It then describes the quantitative and qualitative features of the election tweets in terms of key variables--handle, text and time. Language of tweets, followers and friends help inform the analysis in a rather less direct way.

Several past studies have analysed tweets for their ability to predict the election outcome. As news, public opinion and knowledge adapt to this new frontier of human behaviour, the article also suggests, albeit tangentially, the need for further research on Nepal's election time social conversation.

In the last quarter of 2013, Nepali people were generally talking about festivals, mainly Tihar and Chhath, and games, mainly, Nepal's participation in ICC World Twenty20 Qualifiers 2013. The mainstream media covered these topics. So did the social media, including Twitter. At the same time, the authors of tweets, with Nepal in their text string, increasingly took part in the election conversation. Put together, the tweets in the network, each within their 140–character limit, would highlight some aspects of the real world over others. For example, as the election

campaign picked momentum around 1 November 2013 and officially ended on 16 November 2013, the texts of the period talked about the campaign atmosphere and the mood of the voters. For another two subsequent days, 17 November 2013 and 18 November 2013, Election Commission Nepal (ECN), the main election management authority, had ordered the political parties and candidates to stop their campaign and the mainstream media to stop their coverage of the campaign for 48 hours to allow the vote to take place in a free and fair manner on 19 November 2013. During this campaign silence period, when the key actors, that is, the political parties, candidates and mainstream media generally observed the code of conduct, the daily count of election tweets went up. The Election Day received the highest number of tweets compared to any other day in the entire month's archive. Between 20 November 2013 and 30 November 2013, the counting of votes sustained the interest of authors sending the election tweets. Early days of vote counting featured a number of tweets talking about how the political parties responded to the surprise results, which relegated the then largest party, UCPN-Maoist, to third place after the vote. Gradually, then, the interest as measured by the number of election tweets waned.

A few prominent handles received retweets, replies and mentions within their network. For an overwhelming majority of others, however, their tweet echoed back at themselves.

Until the announcement of the elections, the common people had expressed doubts if the election government of former bureaucrats, headed by Chief Justice Khil Raj Regmi, would be able to forge consensus among the political parties to call the elections. When it actually announced the election date as 19 November 2013, doubts persisted again as to whether it could convince the dissenting parties, including CPN-Maoist, which questioned the legitimacy of a non-political government to solve the country's political problems. More than 30 allies joined hands with CPN-Maoist in the street protests.

Swiftly yet steadily, ECN made elaborate preparations, from registering the political parties and candidates for the election showdown to collecting ballot boxes and counting votes. Until the campaign built up, waiting for the festivals of Tihar and Chhath to be over, the media messages noted the doubts about the possibility of holding elections and feared violence during the campaign. The 33-party alliance owned up the violent protests, such as burning of a passenger bus during a bandh [shutdown], and bomb blasts. Scattered tweets, mostly from journalists and their institutions, shared these predicaments within the network all along.

These social media texts were capable of travelling fast among millions of people. In its report for the last quarter of 2013, Twitter boasted about 241 million average monthly active users and timeline views of 148 billion (Twitter, 2014). In May 2013, a survey of Twitter users (Acharya, 2013) suggested some 7 out of 10 handles posting Nepal related tweets were based in Nepal with the remaining three posting from Canada (20%), Europe (16%), India (12%), and Arab countries (12%). Of the seven, four would be in Kathmandu. The remaining three would be in less urban Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, Chitwan and Kaski. Hence, a safe bet was to expect tweets could travel among urban and rural Nepali voters.

Strangely, however, given the typical disconnect of tweets with the touchy-feely world of humans, who were living long hours of #loadshedding, the messages were equally poised to get

lost forever. Even in the United States with far greater access to electricity and Internet, a Pew research had found, only a few adults used Twitter for news.

Recent efforts elsewhere had assessed the predictive power of tweets in the elections of USA, UK, Germany, Australia and India. Yet the findings were far from conclusive or generalisable (Gayo-Avello, 2012). Unlike in the case of snap polls, critics pointed out flaws in the sampling of tweets as undermining the veracity of election prediction. To survey the tweets, instead of people, to be able to say who will win or lose vote, all studies, by deduction, boiled down to suggesting this: we would need a lot of preparation, including skill, resource, tool and time, way before the beginning of the election campaign.

In Nepal, few instances of public research had examined the election tweets, which erupted around the clock thanks to the work of many humans and automatons, making even a modest effort to understand the engagement of social media with electoral politics urgent as well as novel.

1.1 The objectives

Therefore, to make a beginning, rather than examine the tweets to assess their predictive ability, this after-event exploration generally surveys the handle, text and time, associated with the election tweets, within a network of friends and followers. It will transform the text strings into numbers and visuals to support a narrative unfolding over the key phases of the CA election in November 2013.

Specifically, the exploration will answer the following questions:

- Who authored the tweets and re-tweets about Nepal's Constituent Assembly election in November 2013?
- Which words appeared the most often in their texts of different phases of election?
- Put together, what narrative did the tweets suggest about Nepal's November 2013 election?

1.2 A brief on the findings

The findings will assume, in certain respects, the tweets reflected an aspect of the real world:

- It was hard to tell who was who, except for some of the few hundred handles that dominated the election talk. Thousands took part in the conversation with just a tweet or two each for the entire month.
- On the different phases of the election, the authors mostly sent enunciative and narrative texts on topical themes for their followers and friends to discover.
- Together, the tweets showed the early doubt about the possibility of holding election and fear of violence in different phases gave way to confidence and hope on the Election Day and afterwards.

1.3 Review of general context and justification of the study

Any systematic effort at understanding the social media texts about elections would potentially shed light on the nuances of Nepal's expanding digital citizenship, participation and political engagement. Specifically, it would be interesting to know for its own sake what the men, women and machines, tweeting about the crucial vote of the nation, were like and what they were sharing in different phases of the national polls.

A survey of the Nepali public (Media Foundation Nepal, 2012) had found

social media networks, like Facebook and Twitter, were growing popular among Nepal's young and urban people. The number of blogs and micro-blogs by individuals and professionals had gone up drastically. Online journalism, another facet of the new media, had also seen a surge. Most traditional publications or broadcast outlets, the report said, had their online presence. Scores of online news portals, which included those operated from outside the country by members of the expanding Nepali diasporas, enabled readers and users to directly post their comments and feedback, making participation and engagement a reality.

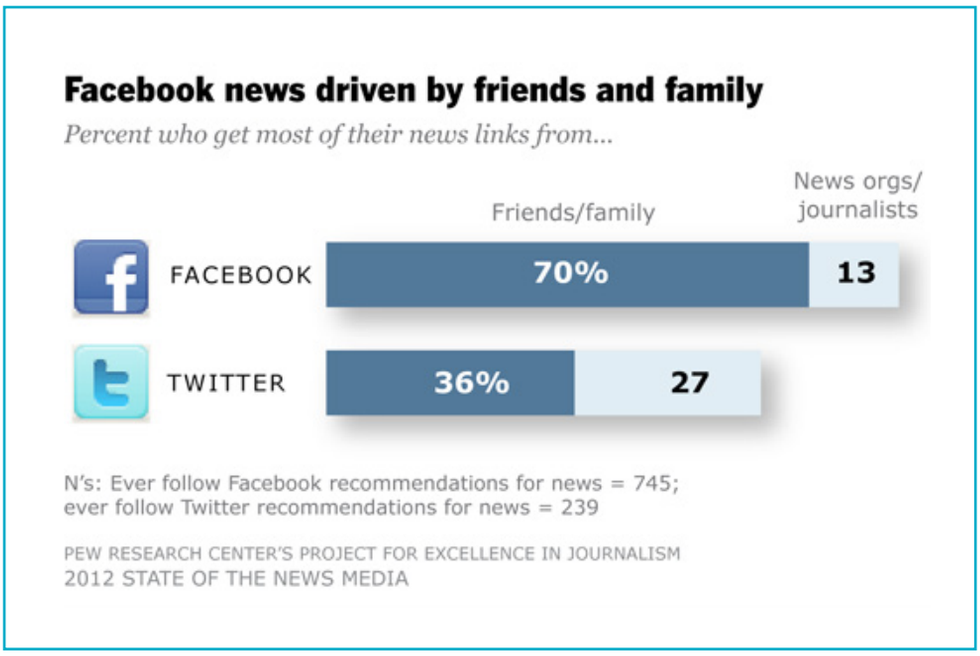
In the first quarter of 2014, a web information company, Alexa, placed facebook.com on top of the websites people visited the most in Nepal. It ranked Twitter 11th, after Google, Youtube, Onlinekhabar, Yahoo, Ekantipur, Blogspot, Wikipedia, and Nagariknews, among others (Alexa, 2014).

Prominent social and political leaders, such as Devendra Raj Pandey, @DRP39; and Nilambar Acharya, @nilacharya; and election candidates Baburam Bhattarai, @brb_laaldhwoj; Ram Sharan Mahat, @ ramsmahat; Kamal Thapa, @KTnepal; and Gagan Thapa, @thapagk; among others, for example, were posting tweets during the election time. Former prime minister Bhattarai had made some important announcements and offered clarifications through tweets before he resigned for Chief Justice Khil Raj Regmi @KhilRajRegmi, to take over as the head of the election government. Bhattarai's handle, @brb_laaldhwoj, was among the top gainers of follower for a good while. Journalists and tech enthusiasts were also swelling the Twitter users lists by the day.

In the ten years of Facebook and seven years of Twitter, as the Internet penetration rate grew (Nepal Telecom Authority, 2013), these social networks were assuming increasingly central place in the daily life of urban Nepalis and played a role in fermenting the public opinion. It was commonsense knowledge that the social media had supported the fight to end violence against women, with many Nepali users active in the recent campaigns on Facebook and Twitter. They also played a role in mobilising public opinion in favour of a well-meaning doctor, who went on a series of fast-unto-death protests for reforms in a teaching hospital of Kathmandu (SolidarityForProfGovindaKc, 2013).

Barely two years old in 2008, Twitter had only a few local authors sending tweets on Nepal's first CA elections. Among the early adopters, Nepalis, if the name of the few handles found in that regard, lama_2b @lama_2b, Deelip Khanal @deelipk, and harikarki @ harikarki, etc., suggested nationality, were apparently very few. In 2012, a newspaper article (ekantipur, 2012) waxed eloquent about Twitter saying that the platform could put you directly in touch with those that were shaping the news and views—you no longer even had to rely solely on the traditional media. "It gives you breaking news, often straight from the horse's mouth. And particularly in Nepal, where journalism is so centralised, it's become a great medium to find out what's going on far away from the centre, not just from journalists, but anyone who has access."

Twitter was clearly beginning to drive some portion of news and social conversation. Nepali print and broadcast outlets increasingly referred to social media in their news and comments. Some online 'newspapers', such as Setopati, (Setopati, 2013) routinely sampled what the social, political and government leaders were saying on the new media platforms and published their views on a daily basis.



Monitoring or archiving the tweets of the election time also made sense because the people tended to share a quick hint through the platform about what they had on mind. A little while earlier, as ECN prepared its mainstream media monitoring framework, an important donor organisation had posted a tweet in a casual manner saying that the Election Day in Nepal coincided with the Toilet Day. Before it deleted the tweet in the next breath, a prominent lady author commented in this thread, "but Nepal's election day, Nov 19, is still World Toilet Day", bringing the human folly to the fore through what critics have also dubbed is a kind of pointless babble, a coinage generally bandied about in describing much of the social media content.

Several users, however, were seriously making their business or politics better by employing the social media. Reputed organisations, including the UN and World Bank, ran their social media sites, Facebook and Twitter, among others, competing with other organisations and individuals for real world attention and followers. Almost all daily newspapers, several television channels and FM stations had online presence, with Facebook and Twitter serving their need for news tips or as platforms to share scoops. ECN, @ECNepal, was also gearing up to inform the candidates and voters of its electoral education and preparations through the use of several media, including Facebook and Twitter.

"Whether you are on Twitter or not, the messages you will be hearing from politicians will be shaped by it," said a noted PR man and blogger (BBC, 2012).

Nepalis, the CMR survey (Acharya, 2013) suggested, were on Twitter for news and information (85%), to understand public opinion on current news (59%), for gossiping (56%), to express feeling (50%), for networking (46%), for professional works (31%) and to spend leisure time (30%). The survey reported they tweeted anything they found okay to tweet, although their most popular topics comprised social issues (44%), interesting news (42%), politics (37%), profession (26%) and media (23%).

The most popular inspirations behind sending political tweets, another study showed, were to support (26%),

to ridicule (15%) and to provide information without any emotional content (13%). A computer scientist and his team at Canada's National Research Council had started with a million tweets related to America's 2012 election, analysed hashtags like #gop, #Obama and #RomneyRyan2012 and, with the help of crowd sourcing, classified a sample of about 2,000 tweets, with multiple readers assigning one of 11 purposes to each message. Mostly, they found, the tweets showed: negativity–criticism, venting, charges of hypocrisy (Mohammad, 2013).

The social media manager of one Independent Voter Network said there were now more tweets sent every two days than had ever been sent prior to 2008. Since its creation, Twitter had impacted the news cycle considerably. Suggesting the reasons why Twitter mattered in elections, the voter network manager said tweets meant: return to retail politics, real time reaction, #trending topics, debates, fact check, voter participation such as by way of re-tweeting, acceleration of the news-cycle, personal engagement, inclusion of voters, and real time journalism (Susskind, 2012).

On top of all, in a country where the penetration of social media among the people was expanding, it was necessary to make some modest beginning in the direction of exploring or gauging the pulse of public opinion about the CA election on social media, starting, perhaps, with Twitter.

1.4 Scope of work

The main line of interest that delineated the search, collection and analysis of the tweets was to see how the authors were using the platform to talk about the election. Done after the vote counting was over and an elected government of politicians replaced the election government, the analysis picked up the thread in how the early tweets showed doubts about the possibility of holding successful elections and fears about election violence. As the campaign picked up and vote happened, the fears fizzled out, giving way to confidence and cheers.

A few tech-savvy enthusiasts, with access to codes, tools and applications, analysed the campaign tweets and shared their findings, such as the bomb being a dominant topic, via the social media (Simplify360, 2013). These analyses had limited their scope to focusing on a few days of the campaign and voting.

By planning ahead of the peak campaign period, the current effort gradually built the main archive of tweets, pulling the first tweet almost a month before election and the last a month after it. Within the constraints of limited time, skill, resource, tool and technique, tweet handle @japokh used free online applications in tracking and archiving the tweets with 'nepal' and 'Nepal/ Election' strings.

Hence, the scope of this work will be limited to reading the election-specific tweets for their manifest content characteristics and interpreting, mostly through a visual exploration, who authored them and what they read like in different stages of the election process.

1.5 The structure of the write-up

The previous sections gave a quick summary of the assessment of Nepal's recent election tweets, spelled out the objectives, reviewed the general context to justify the study, gave a gist of the findings and limited the scope of the study to a reading and visual exploration of the election-specific tweets. This section offers a transition for the readers to see the key thrusts of some past studies in the intersection of tweets and

electoral politics. A brief description of the data, tools and methods, touching on the specifics of search strings, online and desktop tools, variables, and data, follows. The next section highlights the findings and discusses them. The final section will arrive at a conclusion and make some recommendations for further research.

2. PAST STUDIES OF ELECTION TWEETS

With hundreds of millions active users worldwide, Twitter was an emerging frontier of human behaviour inviting scrutiny, exploration and better understanding. A growing body of literature had looked into the relationship between Twitter messages and electoral successes. Computer science, communication and sociology departments of universities in the United States, Europe, and Australia, for example, were studying tweets.

In 2013, Indiana University researchers studied a random sample of 537,231,508 tweets from 1 August 2010 to 1 November 2010 alongside the data from 406 competitive U.S. congressional elections. They found more tweets meant more votes, even while accounting for the control factors (DiGrazia, 2013).

Another study, which analysed tweets from the run-up to 2009 German federal elections, however, saw no direct correspondence between the candidates' success on Twitter and electoral success. The researchers explained the results might show a deficiency in theoretical connection between the metric of choice (Twitter messages) and the outcome of interest (electoral success) or the methods the proponents of the predictive ability of tweets used to collect and analyse the underlying data (Jungherr, 2013). Earlier study of tweets from the same election had shown a more positive relationship (Andranik Tumasjan, 2010).

A Stanford study highlighted the feasibility of using election tweets to replace traditional polling. It had analysed the US republican primaries in the manner of snap polls (SNAP, 2012). Near home, in India, the talk of the tweeple favoured Narendra Modi in New Delhi elections.

The Hindustan Times, reporting the findings of two surveys, predicted as more and more young Indians went online, social media could swing 3-4% votes in India's April 2014 general elections (Hindustan Times, 2014).

In the context of the United States, a caveat came from a journalist: "Since everyone in the D.C. bubble is following everyone else on Twitter; it's an electronic echo chamber. And that echo chamber often forgets that just 8 percent of the public gets its news from Twitter and only 16 percent of the public uses Twitter at all (Washington Post blog, 2013)."

For several studies in the intersection of tweets and politics, forecasting election results was a tantalising proposition, thanks to Barack Obama's prudent use of social media for his election victories in 2008 and 2012 as the US president. The Obama tweet, 'Four more years', for example, received the record number of re-tweets ever.

On the other side of the brouhaha is this caution by a Spanish university researcher about any extraordinary ability of Twitter to reflect the sentiments of the people who sent them, giving important clues about the things people intend to do, like voting in elections. In the title of his review of past claims about the predictive power of Twitter, the author concluded: I Wanted to Predict Elections with



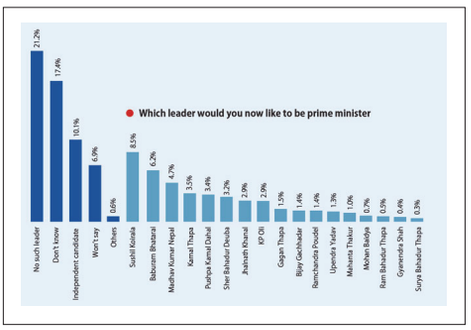
Twitter and all I got was this Lousy Paper: "A Balanced Survey on Election Prediction using Twitter Data. (Gayo-Avello, 2012)". The review challenged anybody working in this area: “There are elections virtually all the time, thus, if you are claiming you have a prediction method you should predict an election in the future!”

Back home, a *Nepali Times* story reported a survey, of people, not tweeple, though, that predicted Nepal's election 'in the future' as shown in the following bar diagram.

With the benefit of hindsight, it is safe to say the poll made a reasonably close prediction, with Sushil Koirala actually replacing Chief Justice Regmi from the Prime Ministerial chair (Nepali Times, 2013). Election predictions, from @ushaft and @akhanal, for example, also circulated in the Twitverse, ironically, during the campaign, and blackout, when the election code of conduct required the mainstream mass media to remain silent about parties and candidates and publish no poll predictions.

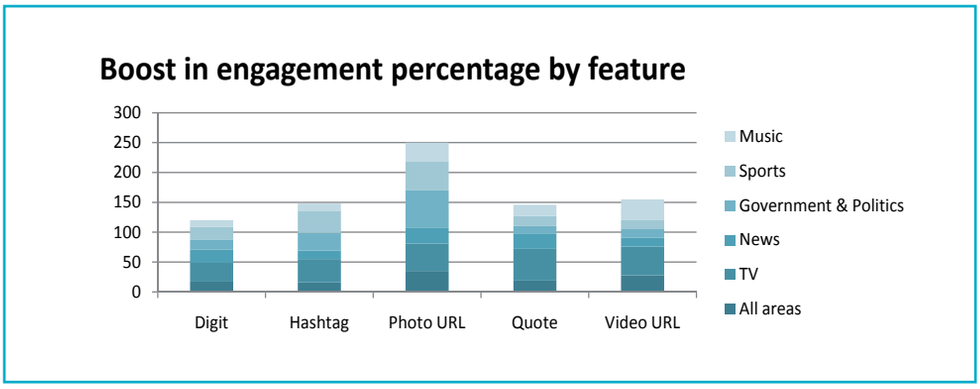
The tweets analysed as part of this exploration showed the key party leaders were making tall claims about election victory of their candidates while political pundits might have been cutting them short. Meanwhile, some predictions, such as a Maoist leader made on Facebook giving his party a thumping majority, came a cropper, way off the mark.

Some studies explored what in the tweets drove people's engagement. The diagram developed with data from the official Twitter blog (on the next page) shows interactive features in tweets boosted engagement in different areas variously (Twitter blog, 2014).



As many journalists were sending tweets on government and politics, those who were more interactive among them, therefore, were more likely to engage the audiences and reflect the mood and milieu of the moment. In a newspaper article, media scholar Dr. Dharma Adhikari, however, wrote a caution: "Some commenter's are bemused that the social networks now help to easily track journalists' political leanings... there are many news portals today that are far too biased, blatantly ideological, constantly spitting out vitriol against perceived opponents (Adhikari, 2013)."

Surprisingly, yet, some reactions in tweets seemed to be fairly in line with the election results, an author noted, citing an analysis by a staff at Simplify360: Positive words in tweets were associated with Nepali Congress and Gagan Thapa (Neupane, 2013). "Only 9.97 percent of women took part in online discussions. This too is in line



with the number of women elected in the CA, which was dismal," she wrote. Amidst several such possibilities, the risk of fatigue setting in for Twitter was also likely, just as it had been the case with Facebook lately (Today Tech, 2013).

3. THE DATA, TOOLS AND METHODS

3.1 Data: What the search produced

Two search strings, #nepal and Nepal/ Election, pulled matching tweets into two separate online archives for @ japokh to collect election time tweets for monitoring and analysis of their content features. A month-long free trial version of an online hashtracking application, hashtracking.com, fetched 28,251 #nepal tweets between 1 and 23 November 2013. Another spreadsheet, a free copy of @mhawksey's tweets-archiver, routinely harvested tweets with Nepal/ Election string in their texts, bringing a total of 11,041 cases between 24 October 2013 and 25 December 2013. The merger of the two collections gave 39,292 tweets as @japokh's universe of data. From that archive, 9,533 election specific tweets of November 2013 were extracted to build the election corpus for this analysis.

The table below summarises the data.

Data collection	# Tweets	Collection date range
Online spreadsheet	11041	24-10-013 to 25-12-013
Monitoring service	28251	31-10-013 to 23-11-013
Total tweets in archive	39292	24-10-013 to 25-12-013
Election-specific tweets	9533	01-11-013 to 30-11-013
Unique tweets	7,087	01-11-013 to 30-11-013
Unique authors	5,237	01-11-013 to 30-11-013

The alphanumeric text strings were in several languages, en= english (8972), zh-cn=chinese (8), ar=arabic (11) , ko=korean (2), el=greek modern (13), pt=portugese (39), ru=russian (17), it=italian (77), th=thai (2), de=german (35), hi=hindi (1), fr=french (75), id=indonesian (50), es=spanish (144), nl=dutch (7), ja=japanese (45), da=danish (5), pl=polish (3), sv=swedish (2), ca=catalan (3), fi=finnish (2), no=norwegian (6), ro=romanian (2). The quantitative analysis of handle, text and time looks into all these 9,533 tweets originating in November, irrespective of their language. Of the total, 8972 tweets were in English such as, "#natsec Gasoline bomb attack on bus injures 13 during transport blockade in Nepal ahead of election http://t.co/Id733sL709, Fri Nov 15" or a mix of English and Nepali such as, "अरुको देश बन्दै छ, मेरो देश बन्द छ ! #Nepal :/ #Election #NepalElects #NepalVotes." Nepali text also informed the textual analysis. In all, the data contained 7,087

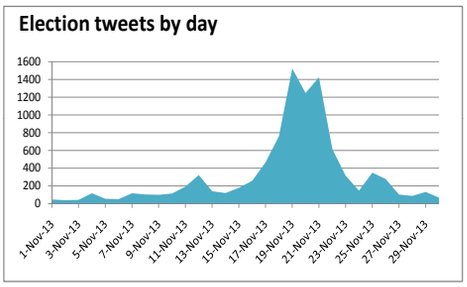
unique texts originating from 5,237 unique authors.

The sample of tweets in the Nepal topic corner of that online space, even by a liberal estimate, was too small to be worth generalization. Assuming a worldwide 218 million active users, who had tweeted something until a few months ago, the entire Nepal archive available for reference during the current exploration was only 0.0017 per cent of the Twittersphere.

The election tweets were analysed over four segments of time in November, starting with 1-16 November 2013, as the first time span. This was to take stock of how the election campaign mood on Twitter built up. After the campaign picked momentum, official campaign blackout, that is, 17-18 November 2013, was taken as the second band. The actual voting day, 19 November 2013, was the third band and the vote counting from 20-30 November 2013 formed the fourth time band for analysis. Plotted over time, the election-specific tweets produced a graph peaking around the Election Day and immediately after it.

3.2 Collection: What pulled the tweets into the archive

A free copy of TAGS v5.0.7, with code written by @mhawksey, routinely pulled tweets into a spreadsheet archive for @japokh over 62 days from 24-October 2013 to 25-December 2013. The initial attraction of the tool was in its capability to adapt to an online network visualisation application, the Tag Explorer (Hawskey, 2013). So, coinciding with the election campaign, @japokh shared the visualisation with colleagues via some social media. Only when the archive swelled daily, within Twitter API rate limit of



1,500, it began to make sense that digging a bit deeper might yield more insights into the handles and texts, interestingly without involving too much cost at all.

Another online application hashtracking.com, in a trial run, collected tweets which were initially meant to corroborate with whatever had ended up in the spreadsheet archive. The merger of the two archives built a universe of 39,292 Nepal tweets, from which election tweets were extracted for November to build a corpus for analysis, of 9,533 tweets.

3.3 Tools used

Several online and desktop tools, all freeware or trial runs, helped the quantitative and textual analyses. They were mostly search, analysis and semantic engines, including twitter.com, google.com, SocialBro, SocialBaker, SocialMention, Topsy, Tweet level, etcML, NodeXL, Tableau, Atlas.ti, Rapidminer, Weka, Trops and RStudio.

3.4 Variables

The key variables in the data were handle, text, time, language, follower and friend. For this analysis, language, follower and friend are taken only as some sensitising concepts, used sparingly in the analysis, to elaborate on the findings in relation to handle, text and time.

DEFINITIONS OF SOME IMPORTANT CONCEPTS USED IN THE ANALYSIS

unique handle. the username of the author who sent tweets that landed in the spreadsheet and online tweet monitoring archives. the frequency with which it appeared over the phases of election time was one measure of the handle size or importance. other measures were the number of its followers or friends, mentions and re-tweets

unique text. the body of a tweet containing unique alphanumeric character strings, mainly #nepal or Nepal/ Election, the search terms that built the archives. the frequency with which certain words appeared in the collection of texts in the archive for different phases of the election time was one measure of the importance of the text. the number of re-tweets was another measure. processing the text at word and phrase levels, with select codes, gave numbers for further comparison and analysis

time. the year, quarter, month, day, hour, minute and second in the timestamp records for each tweet post. the main variable to organize the handles and texts across phases of the election time

followers. all twitter account holders who followed the author of the election tweet during the time it was posted.

friends. all twitter account holders the author of the election tweet followed during the time it was posted.

verbs, expressing facts of action, were grouped into factive verbs, such as "to do", "to work", "to walk", etc.

stative verbs expressed states or concepts of possession such as "to be", "to stay", etc.

reflexive verbs expressed a statement about circumstances, beings, objects, such as, "to think", "to believe", etc.

performative verbs expressed an act through the language and contained within the language, such as, "I promise", "I demand", etc.

connectors, the coordinating and subordinating conjunctions and conjunctive phrases, linked various parts of the discourse together through the concepts of condition ("if", "in as much as", "in case", etc.), cause ("because", "in consequence of", "therefore", etc.), goal ("so that", "in order that", etc.), addition ("and", "moreover", "along with", etc.), disjunction ("or", "either... or", "whether... or", etc.), opposition ("but", "nevertheless", "however", etc.), comparison ("as", "like", "as well as", etc.), time ("when", "while", "since", etc.), place ("whereby", "whereupon", etc.)

modalities, adverbs or adverbial phrases, enable the speaker to get involved

in what he says, or to locate what he says in time and space, through concepts of time (“now”, “yesterday”, “tomorrow”, etc.), place (“there”, “here” , “below”, etc.), manner (“directly”, “together”, etc.), assertion (“absolutely”, “certainly”, etc.), doubt (“maybe”, “probably”, etc.), negation (“not”, “never”, “nothing”, etc.), intensity (“very”, “much”, “strongly”, etc.)

adjectives are either objective, that is, enabling the text to characterize beings or objects, regardless of the speaker’s standpoint (color adjectives, for example); subjective, that is, indicating judgement on something or on somebody, thus enabling to express the speaker’s standpoint (“beautiful”, “small”, “nice”, etc.), or numeral; that is, grouping together numbers (in letters or in figures), along with ordinal and cardinal adjectives.

personal pronouns are displayed in gender (“I”, “You”, “He”, etc.) and in number (“They”, “We”, etc.). The middle/old English “Thou” form is also searched and counted here.

3.5 Data analysis and interpretation

The article relied on a mixed approach to data: no prior rule or rigor made any demand on the data collected in the archive for both quantitative and qualitative interpretations. The spreadsheet data were transferred, merged and cleaned up in worksheets. Example cases were extracted and sorted manually. Quantitative analysis focused on three main variables, namely, handle, text and time, with followers and friends occasionally used to suggest abstract ideas such as the reach of a tweet. Qualitative analysis involving the +ve and -ve context or facts, doubts, fears and hopes were derived from the data through manual selection and on the basis of some personal judgment of @japokh, who created the visuals to help interpretation.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following section highlights the findings around the handle, text and time in words, numbers and visuals. It also briefly discusses the findings with the help of diagrams.

4.1 Handle

The analysis grouped the handles in several ways into [4.11] 'All handles in the archive', that is, the handles generating 39,292 tweets available in the archive, [4.12] 'Handles in the election corpus', all those who sent at least one election tweet or re-tweet during November 2013, [4.13] 'Most interactive handles', those who received the most mentions and replies in the tweets; [4.14] 'Elect handles', the handles that ended up in the corpus for containing 'election' string in their label, and [4.15] 'Funny handles', those who feigned as others and sent funny or silly tweets and [4.16] 'Real world authors', those whose real name or identity was clearer. A category [4.17] 'Handles back then' went outside the archive to look into the handles tweeting about election in 2008 for an idea of how the social media found local users increasing by many folds in going from 2008 to 2013.

4.1.1. All handles in the archive

In the archive of 39,292 Nepal tweets, a total of 12,071 unique handles sent 30,134 unique tweets, replies or re-tweets about Nepal and election

between 24 October and 25 December, over 62 days, in the last quarter of 2013.

As shown in the scatter plot (*diagram 1*), the density of their appearance over the period of archiving is the highest for the Election Day. Clearly, more authors sent tweets on that historic day and days closer to it, in the campaign blackout and immediate vote counting periods. This suggests more handles were using the social media megaphone in talking politics in November than they did in the other months of the last quarter of 2013.

Their participation in the conversation on electoral politics is also evident in that the authors posted more texts on the Election Day compared to any other single day over the 62 days of monitoring *(diagram 2).*

4.1.2. Handles in the election corpus

All handles that sent at least three or more election tweets are in the following handle cloud. The font sizes group handles sending more than 100 tweets, between 20 and 99 tweets, between 10 and 19 tweets and less than 10 tweets in the descending order of their frequency of appearance.

Nepalvotes
LeoWhitmanNepal
BullFightTaruka

RepublicaNepal AsiaDailyNews
npPoet Gopal_Birahi Nepal_
travels aakarpost milijulidotcom
storysouthasia NewsFromNepal News_
Addicted_ DeepakAdk NowInNepal

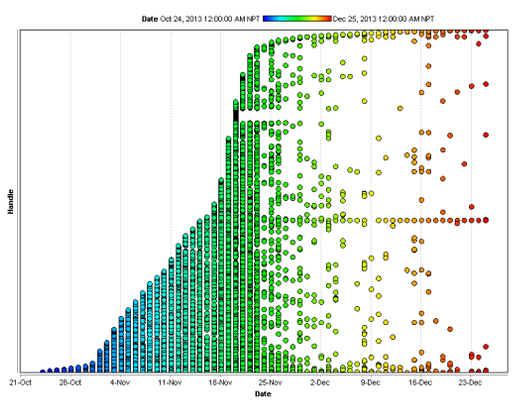


Diagram 1

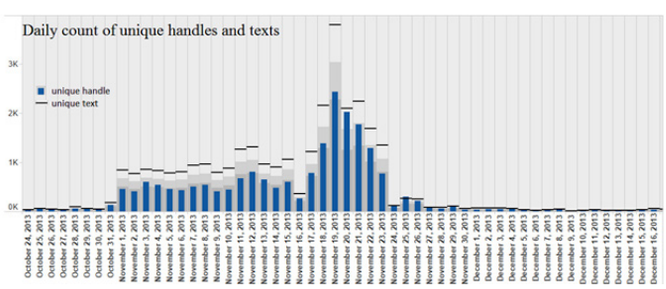


Diagram 2

WarshingtonPost elecnep ushaft ImNepalblog japokh BreakingNewsNEP TheAntariksha arpanshr jhyal prashantktm CrespiEnrico

N_H_Asia Nepal_Bot dwdRAJU happyhippopotam siromanid GlamourNepal akannampilly anilbhattarai drbishnuhnepal TheNepal bullet sagar__subedi nepalnewsfeed myganthan nepalkonews EvaSanchez TheTomar Ujyaalo ranjitpandey suzataz Aandhikhola KhushiS MeNingFull Sahadevision SharadChirag THTNepalVotes Aibkhadka RoshGhimire VoteNepal anilkarkie arunbudhathoki bhaktapuronline dhungelnischal suyogps AnupKaphle KhalidRafiq bibekbhandari chapagain irfan_nurhakim itscoolsky jamesgreid pdpbasyal sagartim

AccountLab AdkRamen ElectionTweets GhimirePrashant RaviNepal SatishKTM SulavKarki WorldNews XinhuaNepal dipak_drleplan neemeshe nirmalacharya parexitpokhrel pearl_nepal thstryttllrprjct votesafe Jane_Samuels MizoNews NepaliSagar Tukang_Update WorldHeadliners aavaas_ dpoudyalaya drishtikhatri ewickeri kashishds sushilpokhrel troll_nepal twitt_manoz AnnabellePerez AsiaPacNews EricWRandolph Mrophiophagus Nepal_Monitor NkkcNirmal OficialWizzy OzoneSN PathakSharad PrenitPokhrel SapphireG ShiwaniNeupane Sirish_Paudel ThePeakOilPoet bishaldhakal bnnNEWSLIVE breaking_news_ himnp ibnamra ilhamfahryh khabarJP kishorenepal madhumarasini nepalnews newstrackindia pramodbhagat secondago testrssnews thedatanepal youthpradip ActivismRocks AllTheNewsIsNow BaarahK BallavTweets BeingPrabesh BiKuKo BuchiBskillzs CollectedN Dipakpoudel EurasiaReview LekhnathPathak Mrs_Jamarkattel OTGNCanada ObiWanKenobl POMI_LoyalFan PalpalIndia PrachandaLife RauniyarIshwar Save_Delete ShivaThapaMagar SonamOngmo TejshreeThapa TheWorldNews UN_Piper VisualCSW VotingNews WWNby WYFKERIS WillordCapulong WorldNews_ Zmerch_ beingnep beshow bhaskargyawali chennaivision chhantyal damakant dipakbhattarai live_nepal mylovedotnp nepaldiary npsanjal pchilimzam ramghimiregulmi reuterswire sanjish seniormacuser sgviews sulthinar trpansh updatenewspaper we_magar wildromeo AakarTech BPasianews BammyOfficial Bhabasagar Charis DaniellePreiss DnAppeal Ghulam_Rasool GyaNeupane JPandhak Kazi_USA Kyodo_News_EN Lo_Nepal Madhu MathGuyProblems NepaleseAvenue NewsBlogged Newschomper Ojha_Tika Prabkhadka RECUROUSA SameerDilip SwetaBasnet Yami_LalSalam abicup all_latestnews banusharma bhadrarukum bkamatya fanuet hijas_ shrestha himalikiran jagannathlc jprat kaflemed keshuvko luinteljaya mughalbiz myakami mynepal nepaltroll nparaju numbanil prashanna qaerdsrdfftgjyh rdewan redditnepal sanjogdutta sardogsnepal shashikoirala shyy_guyy sxc_tu thaitvnews tu_wilber tweetjapan weeklynepal xBot AlinaHangma BeritaGw BerkleyBearNews Businessnewsca CA_NW_World CA_NewsWaver CanIndiaNews CarterCenter ChandrusWeb ConstTrans Electric_eye Farooqtariq FaziraAlHusien FidaSyahadah GamalSelem GdnDevelopment GeorgetownDG Gloomyguyarjun HumanityNews InNewsNet InsJournal JapanTodayNews JhattaiNews JwForum KevinWhipp KirstenGeelan MFMURMIND MuthuKrish NCElection NationSecurity NehaRaySays New_updates NewsUpdte OmarShabbi PakistanFeed PatrioticVirtue Phanindra ReutersIndia ReutersWorld RichaShivakoti RijalDr Sbasnyet SolheimDAC StanCrutiz Subhadraman SuryaRay TOPNEWS TheBiddhut Ucena Vincent__Patel Watcherone WorldRSSfeeds YeleMoni _prakashit_ advctMaheshwar agnibhandari ahhthatswhy amndasnellinger antloewenstein binitbhattarai blogdai csmonitor daulatjha dayasinghnp dhilipYo dineshkark dwatchnews elites_nepal emagazineindia eoiktmnp gcmcNepal geshan ghalegroup happyshiv iWorldRSS ians_india imdibyesh jgjhdar jitendraraut kancha kapshaltist kguragai khadka_prakriti kinsu krismyth kshtkr leylz lkafle maila_saau manesacharya manjushreethapa march mediafound mistu_ife navinshakya nepalisanchars nepalst neutralnews nisapandey ooda pan_kaji paramendra pasapelectoral peterfrancon pigreen praik sajjmh samrakchan samushr sanjaykafle sapangoyal saroose sbsigdelsantosh stNepali sumatee telegraphnepal thisismacdesign tommy_onsent weaker ADAMPLOW AbAnil AlaeLunaeDharma AmazingnepalNet AmitAgrhere Amy___Jones AoiroPlatform Ariane_Wilson AsiaRonn AslamChandio_ AsmitCFC AuliaRahmanFc AvinashMalla Bhuvanbagga BigPupazzoVerde BlogsOfWarAsia Blogus_Maximus BraboAlfa CMcGranahan CNNaab CPAryal CSMWorldDesk ChamSumanapala Cloro_Graph CommonBro DRP DTNFashion DTNIndonesia DanielCampbellp Deonguillory DesanBenz DevirupaM DilBhusanPathak DileshAryal Disaster_Update ElRicky EquipeNicoleBR EstherCassady FlorianKrampe GEanalyst GiriGiri GudangRizki GurungSanto HarlemshakesOfi IamWalexzy Indianews InfoDINE IsabellaObregom JHONCAROL Jesu_paulz Jitendrakshrest JumlaNepal KafleShristi KailaKaur KamalFaridi KanchanOjha Kazi_Australia Kazi_Canada Kazi_UK Kevin___Taylor Krittivasm LAHURNIPNepal Love_ World_Live Maktratap Marie___Taylor MinutePost MissRotasia MySathiyamTV NG_DailyNews NTrekker Naharnet NahomirachellW Nbh NepalNetwork NepalSamachar Neshaant NeutralityPolls NewsFeedJson Newsflashindia Newss_World NiliMajumder Nischal Oceane_Rodrigue PallaviDhakal PawanDulal PrabinRokaya PrajBaral PunKaurat Rajanghimire RajneeshB Rao_Krishna RealYeti ReutersChalmers RidhoHnf Rjushrestha RupaPokharel RyanJSuto SHADI_ALKASIM SLRCtweet Saatdobato SambidPant Scrpn Suffolk_Saxon Sunkesharee TASIBO TeamNpal TextSafal TheAsianist ThePatriotGuard ThejasMysore ToddSteinICT UN_Nepal US_NW_ World US_NewsWaver UjjwalAcharya VJMallet Velezinee VictorCloro_ WickedPromos WorldUSNews YetimNepal aaja_nepal aaryaavart abhishek_aditya acharyapramod adiadhikari adkys airnewsalerts andyluis ansarim arjunkhadka aryaltanka asimkc asthaghim avseq bhust bimalmaharjan bipul blairglencorse bnogr cazym_dx chalfal chirandulal chuhaizhou cnstimes csapkota cybersansar devicpokhrel djsuraj dpali dyingregime e_coastalworld famousshyguyII fantastic_fan frankietaggart freeNYTimes freeUnnamedNews gggioli globalnewsu gndemexchanges guardianworld gunaraj hamronepal hazespore hsibar iTommo_Queen ihiergeist ilovesuba inthecuttime

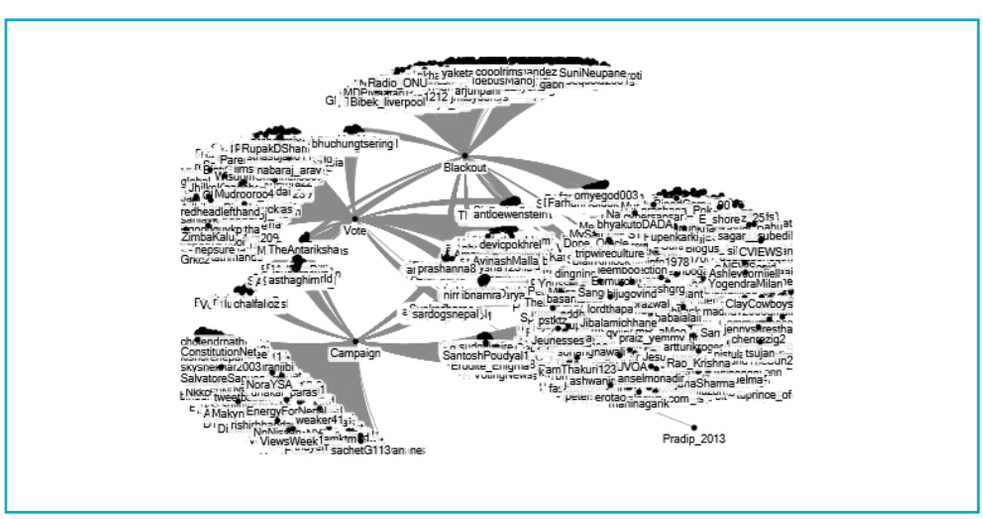


Diagram 3

isharaaryal jay_ulfelder jitendra_ johnparajuli johnxiethor kamzang kingwale knightktm kulvinator kylunmedia lenatara lreesorkeller luni_ba luzanb mR_aMoo mandeepkarpall manish mbahree mdarvas mikaness mohancb myPoliticaParty najushrestha narayanghimire ndtv nepalmonitor newmatilda newsblaze nissanpokhrel notifeed pbhattarairabin pcs photobu podin_ pollyinthecity prakas_KP pratikgyawali qvjirj rachelmsavage rajstha ramupangeni randysetiawan razivc realacc_ rightnowio_feed rijalsam riyaaaaantiw rsettles rssworldnews rubeenaa sagarmaathaa sameermdixit sanpokh santoshempire saul_AD sauravrt shoutyoursite smitaprakash sudeeppaul sudghimire sudipoudel sunOhigh svbel thikey timesofindia tm_insider tribenzil_ triomacan twanchor udhungel ujwalthapa ultramutra veraescaliente viajandoperdido worldnews xmilitaire

Handles talking about Nepal election in November 2013 formed network clusters for different phases of the election and some threads cut across clusters. The following is a visualisation of the clusters, with tweets of 16 days of the campaign period, two days of blackout, one day of vote and 11 days of counting *(diagram 3)*.

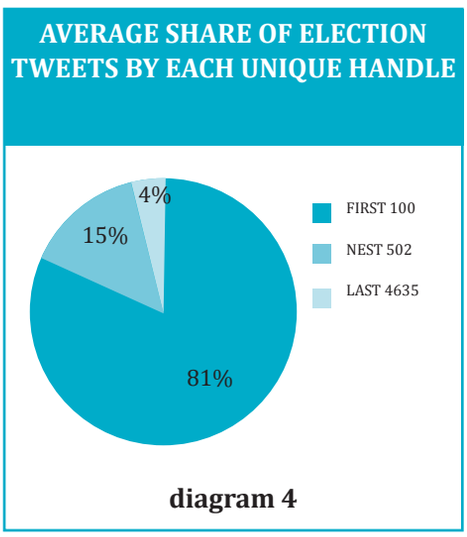


diagram 4

Tweeting often, the first 100 unique election-specific handles generated 81% of the buzz, while the last 4,635 handles sent just one or two tweets each (4%) for the month of November. Other 502 unique handles, in between, contributed 15 % of the buzz. The pie chart *(diagram 4)* shows how the talkative few sat in the corpus with the silent majority.

A scatter plot for the top senders of most tweets appearing over the campaign, blackout, voting and vote counting periods looked like this *(diagram 5)*:

4.1.3 Most interactive handles

Some handles received more mentions in the tweets than others. About 100 most mentioned handles are in the bar diagram *(diagram 6).*

The diagram *(diagram 7)* shows some of the handles receiving the most replies from friends and followers. The most interactive authors, frequently appearing in handle and text fields of the tweets across the election phases, are given below.

4.1.4 Elect handles

Some authors had chosen to include text string 'elect' or 'vot' or 'poll' in their handle names. The search pulled these strings into the archive for their new posts. Some of these are in the following list.

ElectionNepal13, NepalElection, ElectaEditore, Election_USA, electionguide, ElectionTweets2, ElectoralReport, NCElection, pasapelectoral, UK_ElectionNews, elecnep13, Election_Watch, electionista, Cleanelection, NeutralityPolls, F_A_Polls, Polliticko, Nepalvotes, Vote4Nepal, THTNepalVotes, votereportindia, votenet, votesafe, 14votes, Voter_In, Vote3rdPosition

These handles may have skewed the results for election related codes. However, their uniform control over the different phases of election must have minimised the effect.

4.1.5 Funny handles

As the archive showed, some people had mimicked handles with somebody else's names or identifier strings and made funny, silly or simply sinister tweets. @Plaid_Regmi was a parody account for election prime minister Regmi as was @krr_baaldhwoj which had placed a hairful head in a mugshot

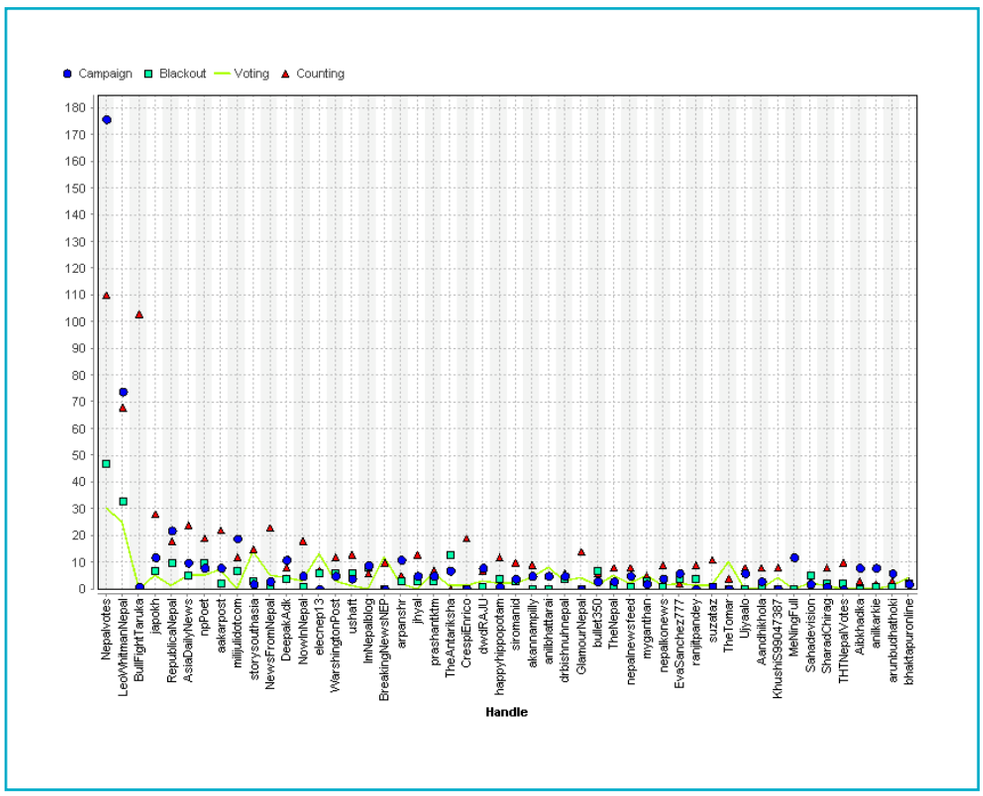


Diagram 5

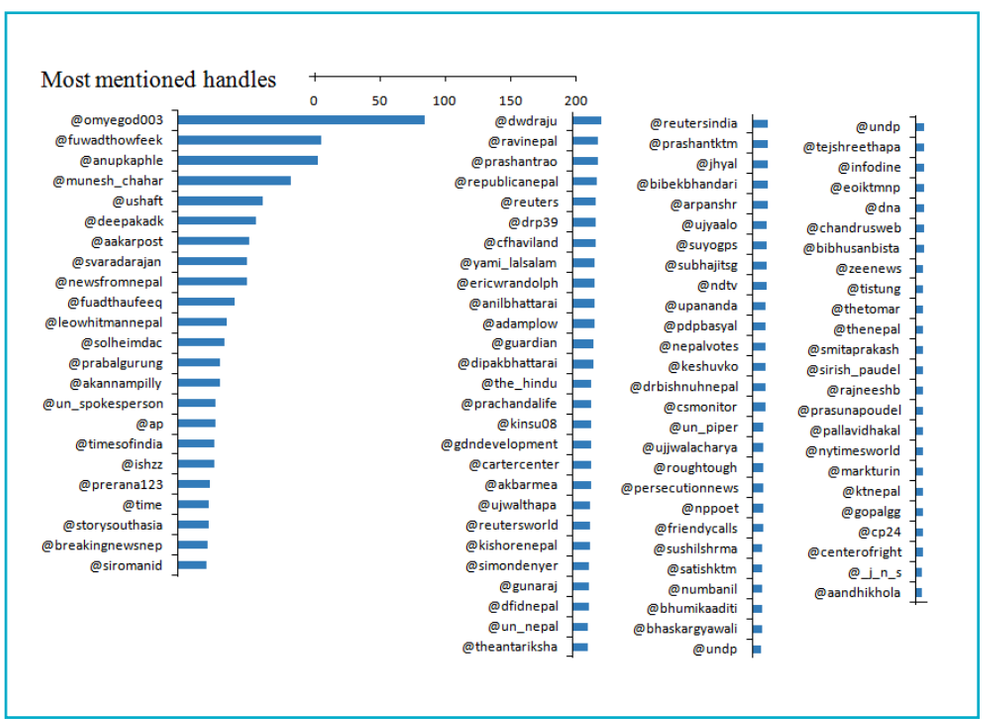


Diagram 6

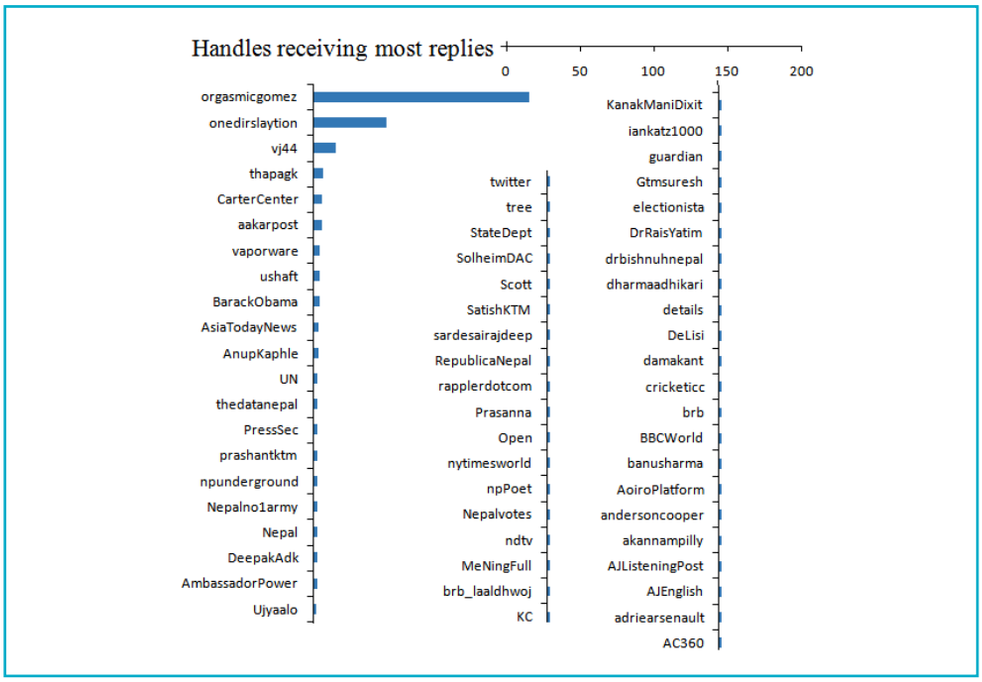


Diagram 7

of Regmi. Examples below *(diagram 8)* show some of these handles and their texts.

4.1.6 Real world authors

The variety of ways in which a user could choose the name of the handle made it difficult to say for sure if each reflected the author's real identity in some way. Twitter asks users for email verification to create their usernames. That, however, does not guarantee the user and username have similarities on which to draw conclusions. Moreover, many people have multiple email accounts. When they sign up for the micro-blog, they can choose handles that leave no trace in the name of who they are.

Even those who follow the guidelines may choose a variety of usernames. The official advice on choosing the username is this: there's no harm in using your actual name of course, provided someone else hasn't taken it already! "If your desired username has been taken, choose something that reflects you and how you'll try to use your Twitter account. There's no harm in being totally professional, but a little bit of character will make you seem more human (TweetLevel, 2013) *(Diagram 9)*."

The information in the profile pages would be helpful in some cases, but, in many others, the authors simply avoided showing their real identity. Reading the profiles of the top few authors, who contributed the most election-proper tweets to the spreadsheet archive, shows the nature of the problem as in the figure here.

Even these profile details are not always helpful to establish the fleshy identiy of the authors. Only by piecing together the handle name, profile picture, the description for the handle and some tweets could one confirm a known author.

Complicating the matter, according to the CMR survey, one in 10 Nepali users maintained multiple accounts.

Handle	Text	Time
@YAMI_LALSALAM Yami_LalSalam	बेजट ‼ बेजट !!! म बाउनकी श्रीमटी भाकोले सायद णेवारहरुले भोत डेनन् !! #Nepal-Votes #Nepal_Election #nepalelections	11/20/2013
@PRACHANDANEPAL	Maane mero bhaasan ko demand ta @KimKardashian ko sex tape bhanda charko cha ta. Harek mahina leak huncha. #lalsalam	Nov 18
@ LAL_PRACHANDA _prachanda PrachandaLife	Jite #dhoti leJhur khelyo #Nepal leRamro khelera harya vaye ni chitta bujhthyo baru#india... @KTnepal This will not last! Baburam promised. #Nepal #NepalVotes	11/19/2013 11/20/2013
@BRB_KAALDHWOJ brb_kaaldhwoj	RT @aakarpost: Great Analysis on Nepal CA Election Results by @akhanal in Tough Talk / @DilBhusanPathak. http://t.co/P4OAm1TDLJ [Must Watch…	11/26/2013
@WARSHINGTONPOST WarshingtonPost	#Nepal election puts Maoists, and a nation's disillusion ... #GaganThapa #NepaliCongress	11/18/2013

Diagram 8

Twitter verification would enhance the confidence about the person being known offline but it was applicable only in the case of a few Nepali handles, such as @AnupKaphle, @prabalgurung and @DeepakAdk of the analysed archive.

Even with knowing all this, one needed other guarantees that these persons were posting the tweets by themselves. Individuals and organisations deployed some device, software or application to send tweets on their behalf. The sources of tweets that came to the archive via the #nepal string indicated that authors were using mobile devices and tweet scheduling applications. Some had clear markers like @ japokh's UPDATE prefix and END suffix or even better, for example, [auto tweet] or satimage, etc. Several handles, it was visible, pulled texts from online tools for containing certain character-strings and auto-pushed these to their Twitter pages, creating a heady soup of text strings produced by humans and automatons of various persuasions. On behalf of the collector of these tweets, @ japokh, most election tweets over the 62 days of archiving came from an online push message service, with caps on the number of texts, to pull and push as tweets instead of the fleshy author sending them (dlvr.it).

The following network view *(diagram 10)* shows the nodes of some top handles in terms of the number of election tweets they posted in November 2013.

Some other handles, such as, @Nepal_ Time, despite being present during the campaign period, sent tweets containing the chronology of nothing but time itself: टिंग ! टिंग ! टिंग ! टिंग ! टिंग ! अहिले नेपालमा बिहानको ५ बजेको छ #TIME #NEPAL #NST. @PowerCutAlert also contributed regularly to expand the archive but its contents were obviously about load-shedding information.

The handles in the corpus, with their indicative total size of followers (42.64 million) and friends (6.79 million), used several languages to send texts about Nepal election: en= english (8972 tweets), zh-cn=chinese (8), ar=arabic (11) , ko=korean (2), el=greek modern (13), pt=portugese (39), ru=russian (17), it=italian (77), th=thai (2), de=german (35), hi=hindi (1), fr=french (75), id=indonesian (50), es=spanish (144), nl=dutch (7), ja=japanese (45), da=danish (5), pl=polish (3), sv=swedish

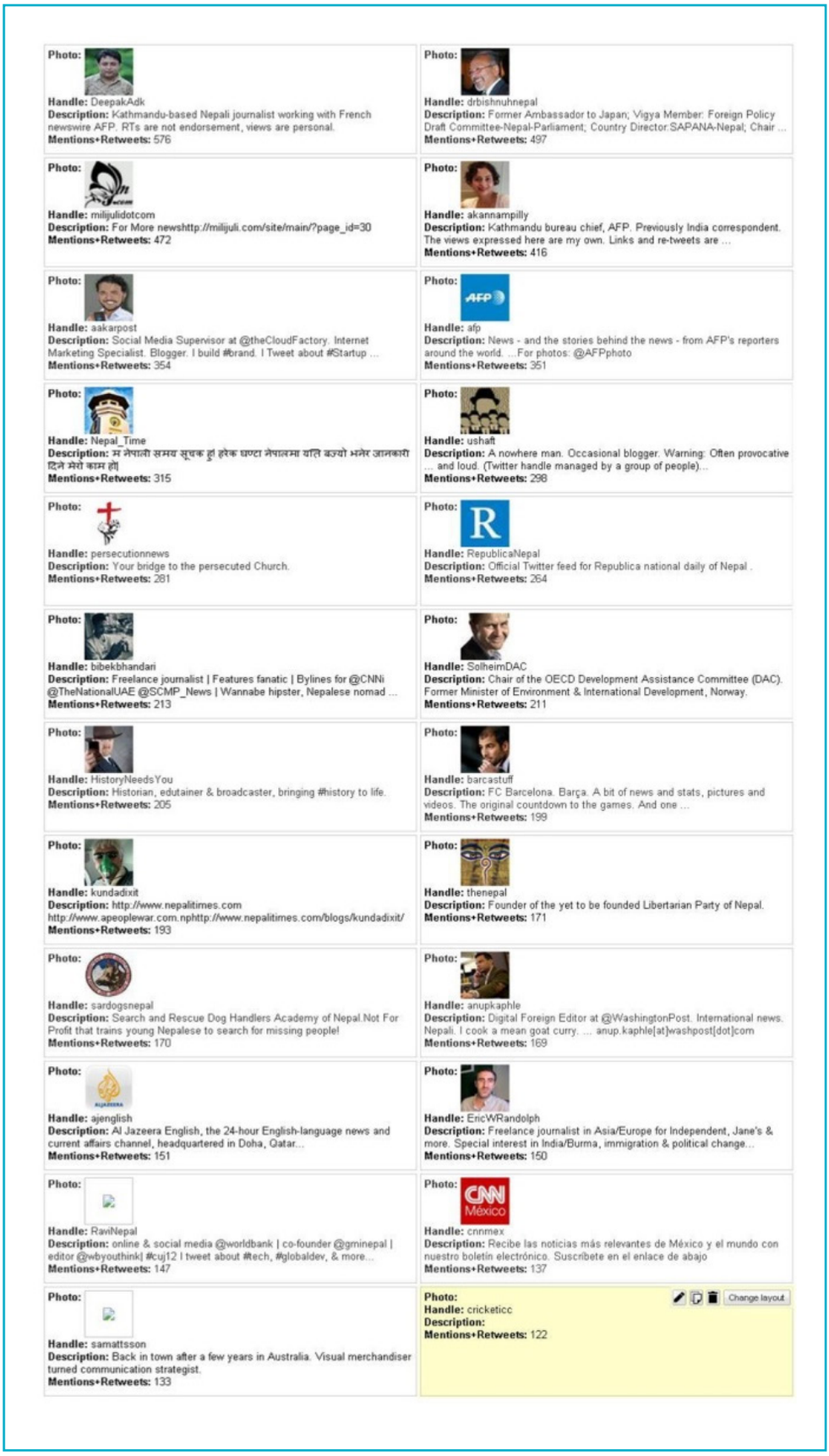

Photo:
Handle: DeepakAdk
Description: Kathmandu-based Nepali journalist working with French newswire AFP. RTs are not endorsement, views are personal.
Mentions+Retweets: 576
Photo:
Handle: drbishnuhnepal
Description: Former Ambassador to Japan; Vigya Member: Foreign Policy Draft Committee-Nepal-Parliament; Country Director:SAPANA-Nepal; Chair ...
Mentions+Retweets: 497
Photo:
Handle: milijulidotcom
Description: For More newshttp://milijuli.com/site/main/?page_id=30
Mentions+Retweets: 472
Photo:
Handle: akannampilly
Description: Kathmandu bureau chief, AFP. Previously India correspondent. The views expressed here are my own. Links and re-tweets are ...
Mentions+Retweets: 416
Photo:
Handle: aakarpost
Description: Social Media Supervisor at @theCloudFactory. Internet Marketing Specialist. Blogger. I build #brand. I Tweet about #Startup ...
Mentions+Retweets: 354
Photo:
AFP
Handle: afp
Description: News - and the stories behind the news - from AFP's reporters around the world. ...For photos: @AFPphoto
Mentions+Retweets: 351
Photo:
Handle: Nepal_Time
Description: म नेपाली समय सूचक हुँ हरेक घण्टा नेपालमा यति बज्यो भनेर जानकारी दिने मेरो काम हो|
Mentions+Retweets: 315
Photo:
Handle: ushaft
Description: A nowhere man. Occasional blogger. Warning: Often provocative ... and loud. (Twitter handle managed by a group of people)...
Mentions+Retweets: 298
Photo:
Handle: persecutionnews
Description: Your bridge to the persecuted Church.
Mentions+Retweets: 281
Photo:
R
Handle: RepublicaNepal
Description: Official Twitter feed for Republica national daily of Nepal .
Mentions+Retweets: 264
Photo:
Handle: bibekbhandari
Description: Freelance journalist | Features fanatic | Bylines for @CNNi @TheNationalUAE @SCMP_News | Wannabe hipster, Nepalese nomad ...
Mentions+Retweets: 213
Photo:
Handle: SolheimDAC
Description: Chair of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Former Minister of Environment & International Development, Norway.
Mentions+Retweets: 211
Photo:
Handle: HistoryNeedsYou
Description: Historian, edutainer & broadcaster, bringing #history to life.
Mentions+Retweets: 205
Photo:
Handle: barcastuff
Description: FC Barcelona. Barça. A bit of news and stats, pictures and videos. The original countdown to the games. And one ...
Mentions+Retweets: 199
Photo:
Handle: kundadixit
Description: http://www.nepalitimes.com http://www.apeoplewar.com.nphttp://www.nepalitimes.com/blogs/kundadixit/
Mentions+Retweets: 193
Photo:
Handle: thenepal
Description: Founder of the yet to be founded Libertarian Party of Nepal.
Mentions+Retweets: 171
Photo:
Handle: sardogsnepal
Description: Search and Rescue Dog Handlers Academy of Nepal.Not For Profit that trains young Nepalese to search for missing people!
Mentions+Retweets: 170
Photo:
Handle: anupkaphle
Description: Digital Foreign Editor at @WashingtonPost. International news. Nepali. I cook a mean goat curry. ... anup.kaphle[at]washpost[dot]com
Mentions+Retweets: 169
Photo:
Handle: ajenglish
Description: Al Jazeera English, the 24-hour English-language news and current affairs channel, headquartered in Doha, Qatar...
Mentions+Retweets: 151
Photo:
Handle: EricWRandolph
Description: Freelance journalist in Asia/Europe for Independent, Jane's & more. Special interest in India/Burma, immigration & political change...
Mentions+Retweets: 150
Photo:
Handle: RaviNepal
Description: online & social media @worldbank | co-founder @gminepal | editor @wbyouthink| #cuj12 I tweet about #tech, #globaldev, & more...
Mentions+Retweets: 147
Photo:
CNN México
Handle: cnnmex
Description: Recibe las noticias más relevantes de México y el mundo con nuestro boletín electrónico. Suscríbete en el enlace de abajo
Mentions+Retweets: 137
Photo:
Handle: samattsson
Description: Back in town after a few years in Australia. Visual merchandiser turned communication strategist.
Mentions+Retweets: 133
Photo:
Change layout
Handle: cricketicc
Description:
Mentions+Retweets: 122

Diagram 9

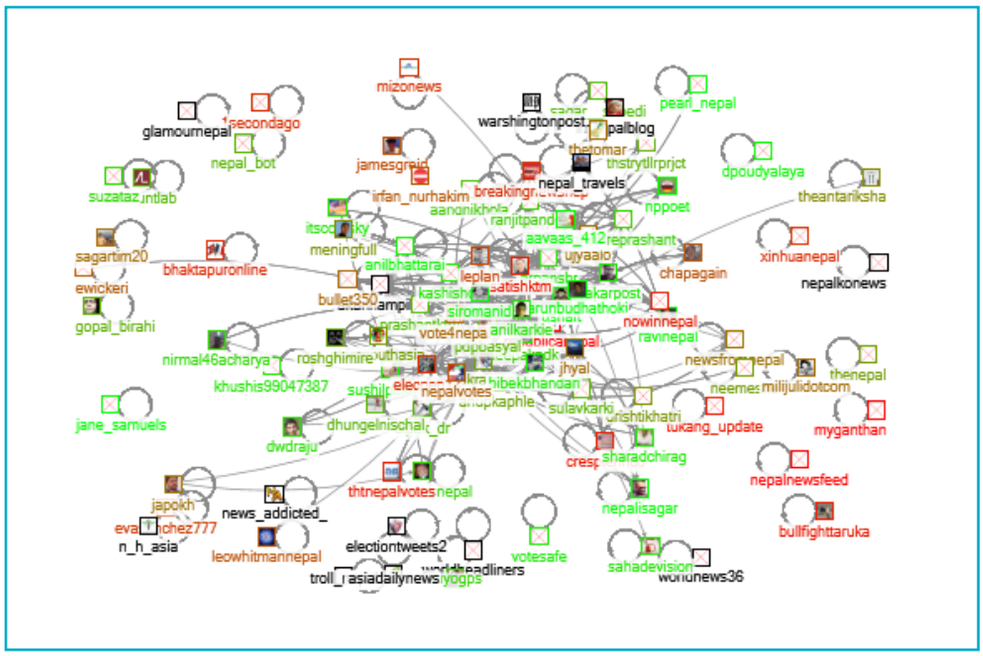


Diagram 10

(2), ca=catalan (3), fi=finnish (2), no=norwegian (6), ro=romanian (2) (Library of congress).

Some top handles, shown at random, in terms of the number of their followers, with the dates on which they sent Nepal election tweets, are shown in the network graph *(diagram 11)*.

If each follower, or friend, for that matter, of the handle looked up each tweet that came their way, the potential reach of all the tweets in the archive could have been immense.

The table *(diagram 12)* shows the topmost five by the size of their followers and examples of what they were tweeting, in which language and when.

4.1.7 Handles back then -- Talking about CA 2008

The following are some of the handles which were tweeting about Nepal's CA election back in 2008. Most were international media organisations. *(diagram 13)*

EXAMPLE TEXT 2008

- EP Nepal pone fin hoy a 240 años de monarquía: Nepal dejará de ser hoy una Monarquía para pasar a conve..
- Nepal Poised for Rebirth as a Republic http://tinyurl.com/4uy6zt
- At Least 8 Killed on Eve of Nepal Vote http://tinyurl.com/4skpd6
- Heavy turnout for Nepal elections: UN: Landmark elections in Nepal seem to have got off to a strong start..
- Nepal abolishes monarchy: Nepal's King Gyanendra has been given 15 days to v.. http://tinyurl.com/5yazx2
- Nepal results affirm Maoist victory: Final results from Nepal's elections show former M.. http://tinyurl.com/3oysvp

Campaign 2008, a public report of Media Monitoring Programme 2008, shows that Nepal's major media monitoring effort during the first CA had covered

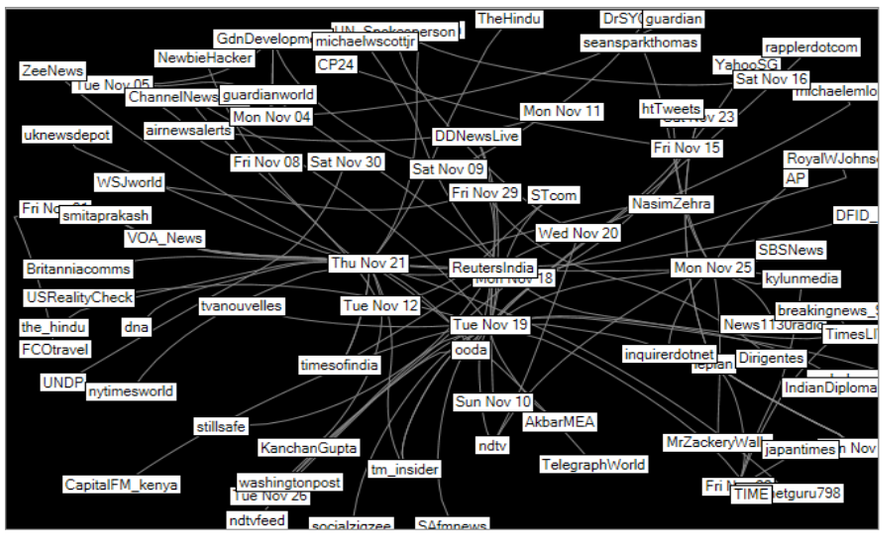


Diagram 11

Handle	Text	Time	Lan-guage	Follower
TIME	Nepal's election may not lift country's permanent sense of crisis http://t.co/ih3D51DqwK	Tue Nov 19	En	5160530
AP	Nepal's oldest political party is leading a first set of results from last week's election: http://t.co/zkJJNL2FJ1 - VW	Mon Nov 25	En	2696543
washingtonpost	RT @AnupKaphle: Nepal's election puts Maoists, and a nation's disillusion, in spotlight -- my story, pix from Kath-mandu. http://t.co/3QIWZM…	Mon Nov 18	En	2224538
guardian	Protests heighten tensions ahead #Nepal's elections http://t.co/t4yc8rC1yq #nepalvotes	Mon Nov 04	En	1582496
ndtv	Nepal's oldest party leads first election results http://t.co/1qF2N1sdlf	Mon Nov 25	En	1348977

Diagram 12



Diagram 13

accept	ballot	chink	cricketer	draw	frabjuos	holiday	legislate	mission	oqqhogy	punish	schedule	sunri	uncertainty
account	base	chndcwi	criticism	dream	freunnamednew	hoolqce	lesson	missionary	organization	push	school	supervise	unhappy
accountable	bbcnew	choice	cross	drive	friendycall	hop	let	mmwlawtao	other	put	scratch	support	unit
accredit	become	choose	crow	dry	frustrate	hope	lgemrxllg	modify	outcome	que	seal	supporter	unite
achievement	begin	christian	crush	dunyanew	frustrating	hotel	lie	moist	overshadow	queer	season	suppress	unsurprising
acro	belong	circulate	cue	eager	frustration	hour	like	monitor	paint	question	seat	surprise	unveil
action	billion	citizen	cuqliqqb	economist	fsouqkhw	house	limitation	month	pamphlet	queue	secure	surround	updat
activity	blast	city	dalit	effort	f**k	http	limp	mountain	parent	quote	security	sweep	update
actor	blight	claim	dat	elect	function	httweet	link	move	participate	raise	see	swing	urge
address	block	clash	decide	election	gadget	hurl	lion	muppet	party	rattle	seek	switch	urgent
advocate	bold	class	declare	electionresult	gain	hype	list	muscle	pass	reach	seem	system	use
affair	bomb	classroom	decrease	elite	gamble	illustrate	listen	myconstituence	path	reaction	select	take	vehicle
affect	book	clog	defeat	emerge	gardinerharri	implication	livetweet	name	pattern	read	sell	talk	verify
age	boost	close	defend	emurk	garnu	impose	loan	nation	peacebuild	reason	set	tantrum	veye
agency	booth	code	defy	end	gcrwdcg	inch	lock	near	peaceful	rebel	share	teacher	victim
agree	border	collapse	delay	enem	generation	incident	londoner	need	peak	recet	sharethi	technology	vie
alarm	box	colleague	delight	enter	get	increase	look	neglect	peel	recommendation	shout	tell	view
alert	boycott	collection	deliver	entertain	gift	india	loom	neharaysay	people	record	show	tensino	vignette
allegation	bpasianew	college	delivery	enthusiast	give	indicate	loose	neighbor	perform	reference	sideline	tension	violate
allege	break	combine	demand	error	gmklec	influence	lose	neighbour	persecutionnew	register	sign	terrorist	visitor
allow	bring	come	demobilize	estimate	go	infographic	loser	nepal	person	reinforce	sink	tgobjx	vnsrb
ambassador	browse	commence	democratize	event	grandparent	injure	loss	nepalcount	photo	reject	site	thailand	voate
americanew	buddy	comment	deny	examine	grant	injury	lot	nepalelection	photojournal	relative	smell	thaitvnew	volunteer
animal	bullet	commie	depend	excited	grassroot	insight	love	nepali	pic	release	smfuiy	theirfan	vote
announce	buoy	commissioner	deploy	exclude	grenade	interact	maddicharle	nepalitime	place	rely	snatch	think	voter
annoy	bus	communi	derrotado	exhibit	group	interview	make	nepalnew	plan	remain	socme	thrash	wait
answer	buy	communist	desert	exhilarate	grow	investigate	maker	nepalpolitic	plant	remark	soldier	threat	wane
apology	buyer	complaint	deserve	expect	gsrxiano	invite	maldive	nepalsmaoist	play	remember	solve	threaten	want
appeal	cadre	complete	destroy	expend	guarantee	involve	manage	nepalvote	player	remind	something	throw	wash
appear	call	comrade	detail	explain	guess	irregularity	mande	nepvote	polarize	remove	sound	tht	waste
apple	campaign	concern	develop	explode	guest	issue	manifest	nfdn	politician	report	source	thtnepalvote	watch
apply	cancel	concession	development	express	gun	itczxx	maobadi	nigeriandailynew	politics	represent	speak	thump	website
appreciate	cand	conclude	device	extend	guruda	japantime	maoi	nmiunbo	poll	representative	spend	ticket	week
approach	candidate	concratulation	die	face	guy	job	maoist	norm	ponder	require	sponsor	tobymathi	welcome
approve	capoll	conduct	difficulty	fact	hail	join	map	nytime	pool	resolve	staff	today	win
archive	capture	confuse	direct	faction	halt	journalist	mar	observe	portion	respect	stand	tomorrow	winner
area	car	congratulate	disability	fail	hand	jrvnrx	mark	observer	pose	respond	start	topic	wish
arrange	care	congre	disappear	family	happen	jungle	market	obstruct	position	response	stat	tourist	wolve
arrest	case	connection	discover	fan	happening	kashishd	material	occur	post	result	state	track	wonder
arrive	cast	consolidate	discuss	fast	have	khan	mathguyproblem	officer	poster	return	station	trail	wood
asemb	cause	constituency	discussion	fear	head	kick	matter	official	postpone	reuter	stay	travel	work
ask	celebration	constituentassemb	disrupt	feature	heart	know	meeting	okkfujr	procure	rival	stop	trek	worker
assembly	center	contest	distribute	fight	heighten	ktaatcy	member	one	program	road	story	trend	worldnew
asset	chance	continue	district	find	helicopter	kufrtltqw	menifestoe	open	progress	route	strategy	trouble	worldrssfee
associate	change	continuous	divide	finger	here	kyodonew	mention	operate	projection	ruin	stream	trust	worldwidenew
assume	channel	contradict	do	finish	hero	lack	merge	opponent	promise	rule	street	try	wound
assure	charge	contribute	doc	fire	hill	landscape	midterm	oppotun	promote	rupee	stress	tuesday	write
attack	chepang	correspondent	document	flight	him	language	mika	prayer	property	save	stretch	tune	yahoonew
attempt	cherish	count	dominate	focus	hint	launch	mile	pre	propose	say	strike	turn	yell
attract	chill	country	donate	follow	hit	law	million	predict	protect	successfu	struggle	tvanouvelle	
author	conversation	cover	doubt	footgae	hitch	le	mind	prediction	protest	successful	student	tweet	
authority	cook	crash	downloade	foreigner	hiwdzdj	leader	minister	preparation	prove	suck	suggest	tweeter	
avoid	cooolrim	create	dozen	form	hmnqoorti	leave	minority	prepare	publish	sucssesful	sum	type	
await	correct	creep	draft	foxnew	hold	led	miss	problem	pull	suffer			

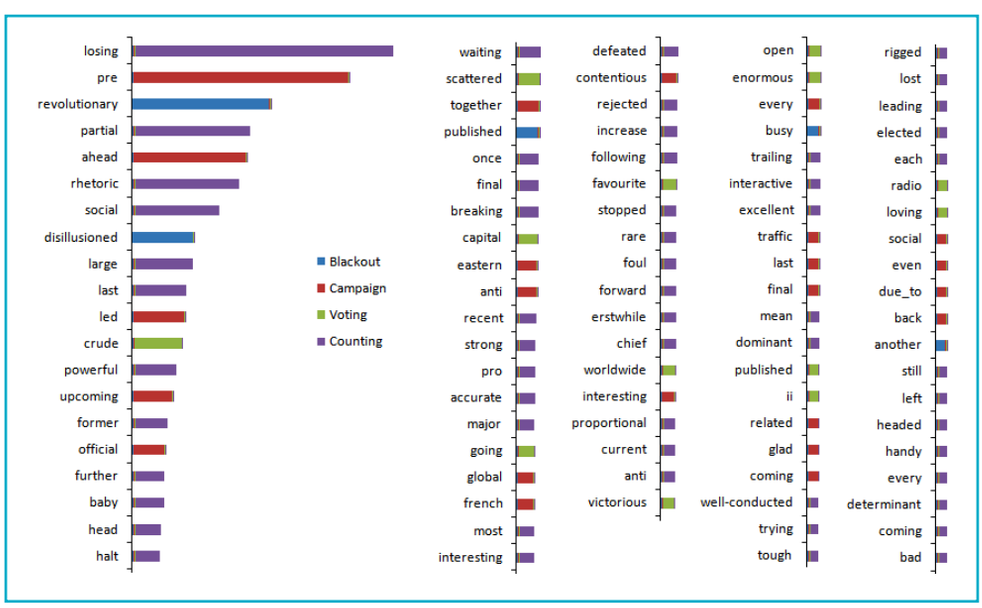
Diagram 14

only the mainstream media outlets, leaving social media and online news sites outside its routines (Nepal Monitor, 2008).

4.2 Text

The text contained words frequently appearing over the election phases to refer to various concepts. These included mention of handles and several undeciphered text strings. Stemming all these and removing duplicates, about 700 English words were found frequently used to build the most tweets sent in the election time. They are in the picture *(diagram 14)*.

Most frequent among the words across election phases are shown in the following diagram.



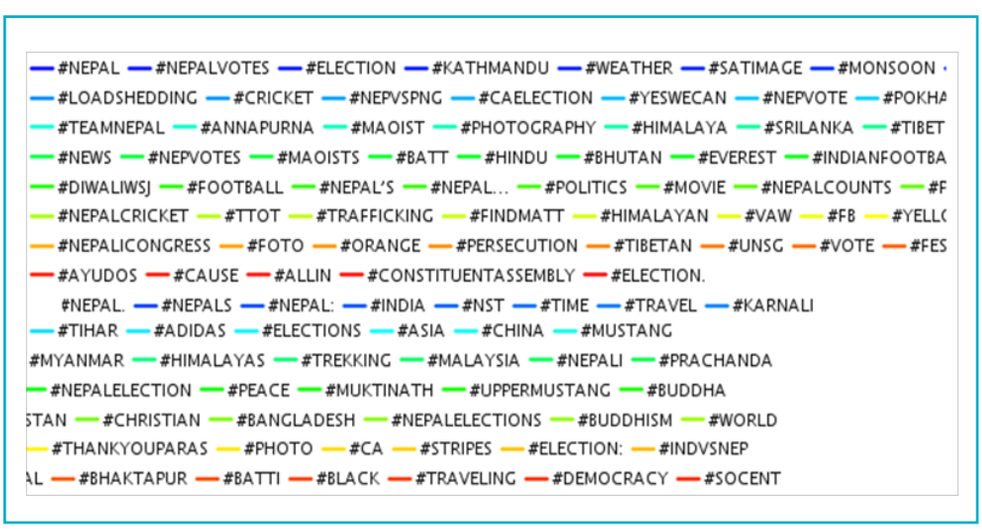
The table below lists some of the most frequent election related concepts with their frequency of appearance over November 2013.

Concept	Frequency	Concept	Frequency
Nepal election	469	Maoist leader	20
Election officials	267	NepalVotes Nepal	19
election results	213	Nepal Election Nepal	19
constitutional assembly	193	19th Nov	18
2nd election	190	great news	18
Election Commission	140	Highest participation	18
Charge Election Fraud	131	security forces	18
election day	130	national election results	18
revolutionary leader	124	pre-election strike	17
oldest political party	116	political parties Government	17
Politics election sports	107	Oldest Party Leads 1st Election Results	17
Maoists demand election investigation	98	gasoline bomb attack	16
Constituent Assembly election	93	proportional election system	16
oldest party	90	Constituent Assembly	16
political gridlock	76	little hope	16
Maoists face struggle	74	Nepali woman	16
CA election	70	other details	15
election demand vote count	68	French news agency	15
other news	63	good turnout	15
Himalayan country	63	post-war election	15
NepalVotes RT	61	Voter turnout	15
Social Media Buzz Analysis Report	61	former rebel leader	15
election result	60	social media	14
nepal votes	58	Assembly election day	14
Partial results	58	RT DeepakAdk	14
Permanent Sense	55	favourite countries	14
chance vote	55	free amp	14
Election day bomb	53	Vote Fraud	14
election violence	52	final Nepal election result	14
peaceful amp	52	powerful Maoists	14
Nepal Constituent Assembly election	52	successful election	13
story pix	51	Election fever	13
election Vote	51	Nepalese people	13

crude bomb	50	peaceful Nepal election	13
election show Communist Party	49	Election boycott	13
bomb blast	48	political party	13
Assembly Election	46	polls Tuesday	13
last week	46	election silence	13
reject election results	46	bombing threats	13
demand halt	46	Nepal Election Violence	13
first set	46	UPI -- More	13
election official	42	major channel	13
largest Maoist part	42	accurate poll-predictions	13
Election campaign	41	election code	12
Vote Results	41	new constitution	12
long-awaited election	40	capital hours	12
charter assembly	40	historic day	12
RT FuadThaufeeq	39	RT prabalgurung	12
Nepal Signal	39	election crisis	12
key election	38	strong man	12
Oldest Party Leads 1st Election Results Nepal	37	Maoists claim	12
new pragmatism	36	RT PrachandaLife	12
historic election	36	Nepalese election	11
election rally	35	Election Nepal	11
revolutionary leader Prachanda	35	Nepal Election Nov	11
chief alleges election fraud	35	Nepal Army	11
political parties	34	constitutional assembly election	11
hope lot	34	upcoming election	11
Election Live Nepal	34	heighten tensions	11
Sunday WashingtonPost	32	anti election campaign	11
day bomb	32	spark fears	11
election demand vote count suspension	32	Carter Center	11
Nepal protests	31	army soldier	11
Peaceful election	31	busy street	11
election Mountains	30	first general election	11
RT AnupKaphle Nepal	29	historic success	11
delivers baby	28	happy day	11
fair election	27	victorious one	11
United Communist Party	27	political certainty years	11

Civil War	26	least Hindu people	11
first election results	26	Maoist politics	11
vote names	26	demand suspension	11
Election http	25	permanent sunris	11
general election	24	demand election investigation	11
peace process	24	election updates	10
Interesting election week	24	national election	10
Many reasons	24	nepalvotes election	10
good news	24	ElectionNepal13 NepalVotes	10
Maoist party	24	splinter group	10
Jimmy Carter	23	little support	10
Election NepalVotes	23	Maoist leader Prachanda	10
successful conduct	23	happy today	10
Nepal CA Election	22	Best day	10
latest updates	22	powerful Maoist leader	10
voters Party	22	RT DFIDNepal Duncan Waiting	10
FF graphic	21	MJF D	10
Nepal election result	21	Party Win Lead NC	10
Nepal RT	20	Political Right Turn - New York Times	10
eastern Nepal	20	second C	10
Election May	20	excellent news	10

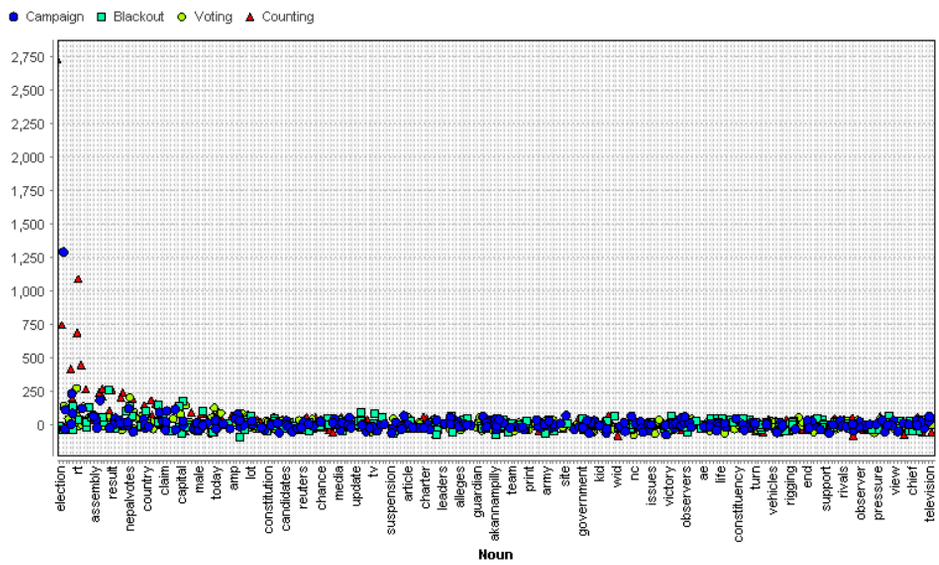
The top hashtags in the archive were the following.



These hint that routine topics, weather, load-shedding, travel, sports and festival were also part of the ongoing election conversation.

4.2.1 Nouns

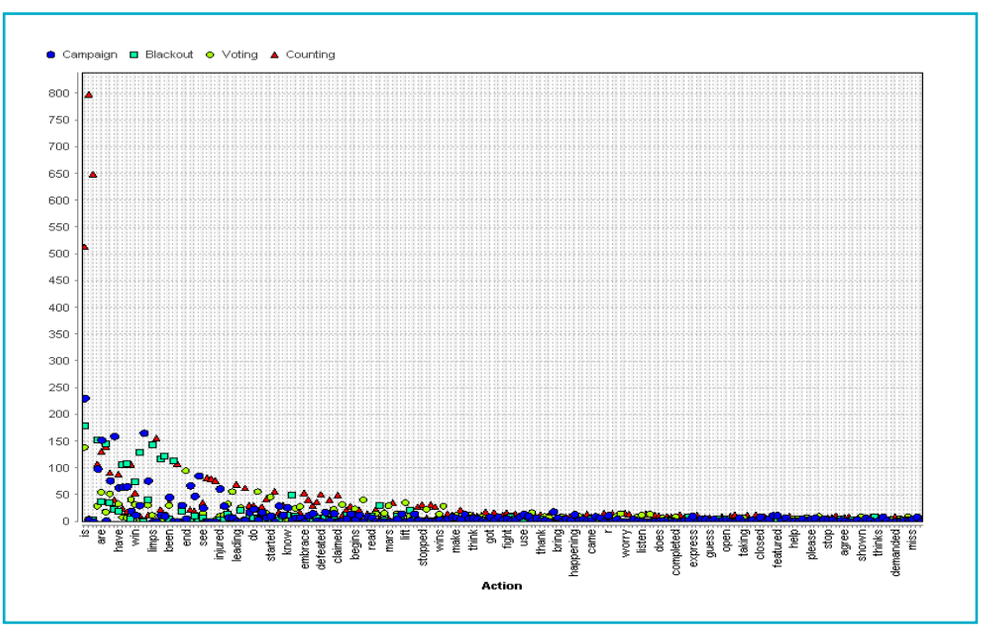
Top nouns are given in the following plot.



The colours and lines indicate a general pattern of mention for the name of concepts.

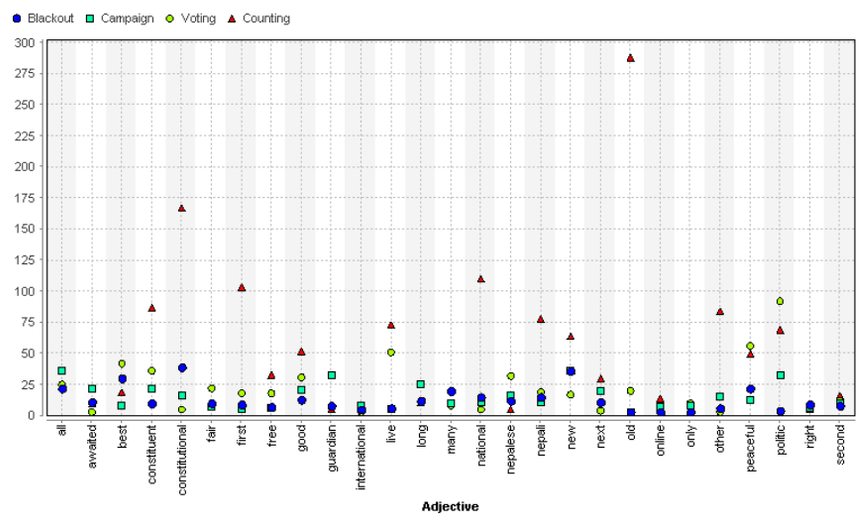
4.2.2 Verbs

Tweets used action words to describe what they had in mind about the election for the people in the network. The following plot shows the distribution of the verbs across time.



4.2.3 Adjectives

Some top adjectives to appear in the text across the phases are the following.



4.3 Time

This section shows the findings across election phases about handles and texts. The word clouds show the salience some topics received over others during the election phases.

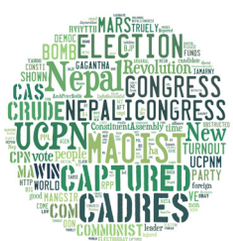
Campaign



Blackout



Voting



Counting



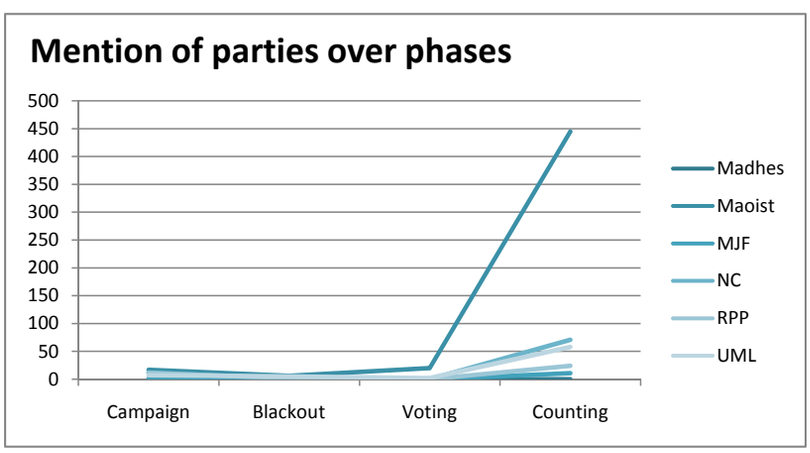
In the first cloud, on the top left, clash, strike, attack are words that evoke a sense of fear. The list and size of fear words grow on the campaign blackout period with bomb and blast prevailing over other words. The bomb continues to threaten the Election Day mood as well.

Some less desirable standalone words frequently appearing in the tweets over the election phases indicated that there were many things, some routine stuff like load shedding, in the minds of the tweeple to worry about during the election time.

Interestingly, the hope words were aplenty, too. Many tweets were sending upbeat vibes about festivals, games, adventures, luxuries, etc, during the election time.

Mention of some election actors

main political parties



Nepali Congress received the most mentions during the campaign, voting and vote counting periods. Tweets talked about UML during the blackout. UCPN-Maoist trailed in the third place.

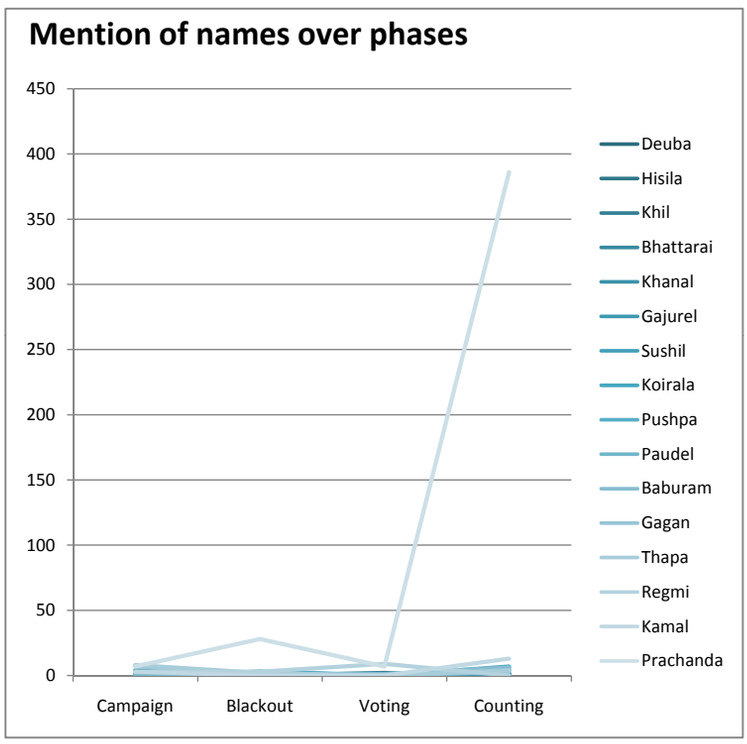
main candidates

Interestingly, among the labels used to develop the line graph *(diagram 16)* through their search in the election tweets over the different phases, Prachanda consistently toped the tally, reaching way higher than other leaders in the number mentions he received during the counting.

Further analysis of the text for its semantic features showed tweets were mostly enunciative during the campaign, blackout and vote counting, with the speaker and interlocutor establishing relations and making their standpoints known. On the voting day, the tweets together showed narrative features, talking about action and setting, mentioning place and time.

Based on a scheme to process the text at the level of words, the analysis started with the assumption that roughly one out of four words could be ambiguous in terms of

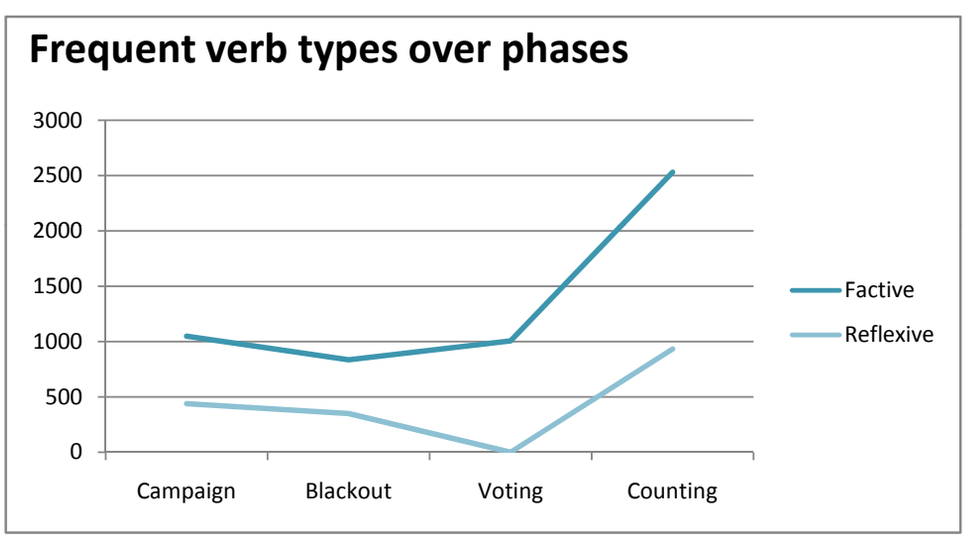
Diagram 16



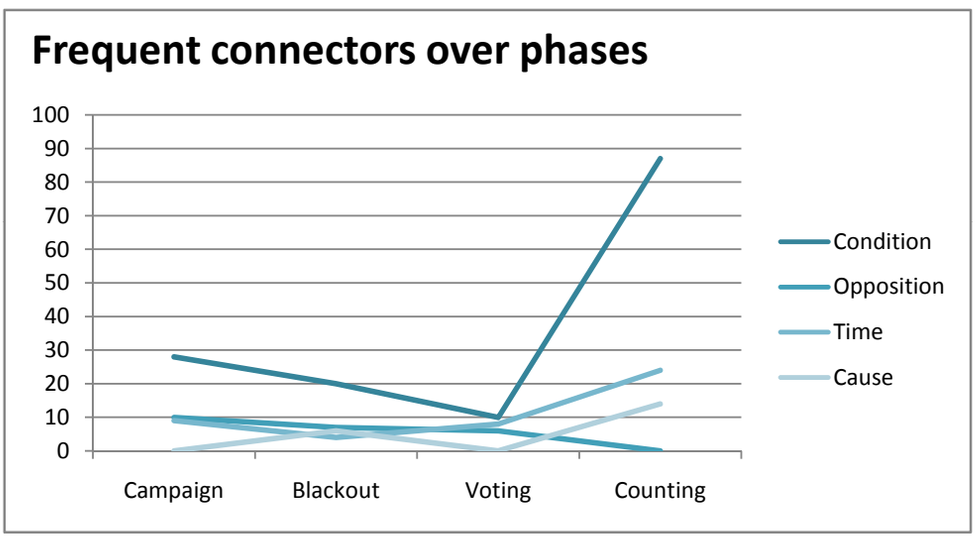
grammar, syntax and meaning. Too many text strings in the tweets written without much regard to spelling or grammar complicated the matter.

As far as the words appearing in the corpus of texts over time were good for use in the analysis, they were sorted and grouped into verbs, connectors, modalities, adjectives and pronouns. Other pronouns, articles, prepositions and non-qualifying adjectives were used by the software tool only for solving ambiguity.

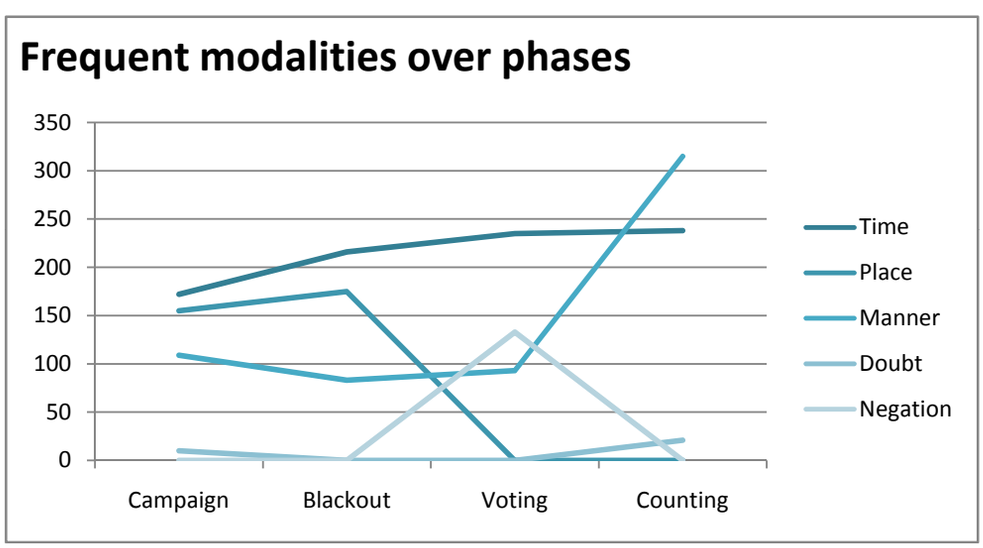
The findings for each of the above categories are given below.



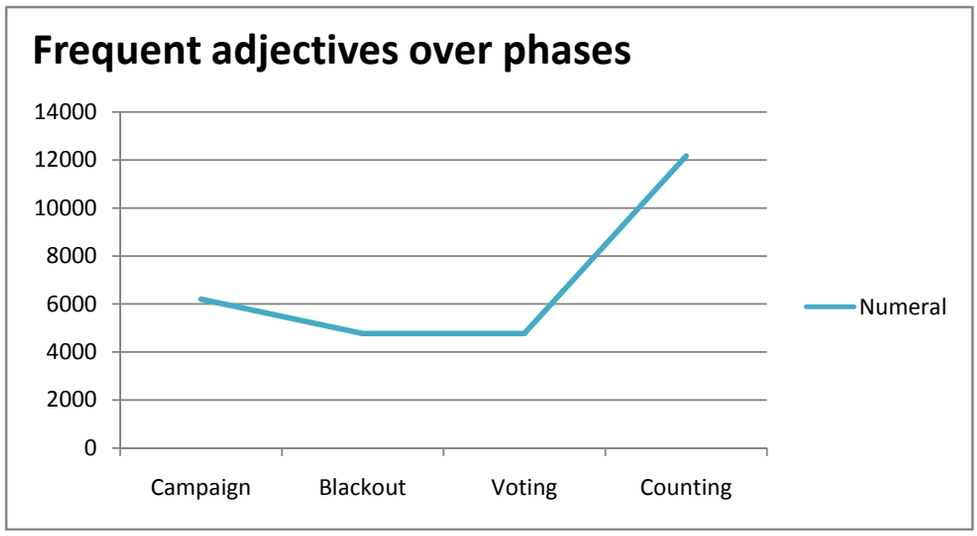
Facts of action, such as "to do", "to work", "to walk", topped the campaign, voting and counting phases. Verbs expressing states or concepts of possession such as "to be", "to stay", and statements such as "to think", "to believe", appeared mostly during vote counting. Performative verbs such as in, "I promise", "I demand", were very few all along.



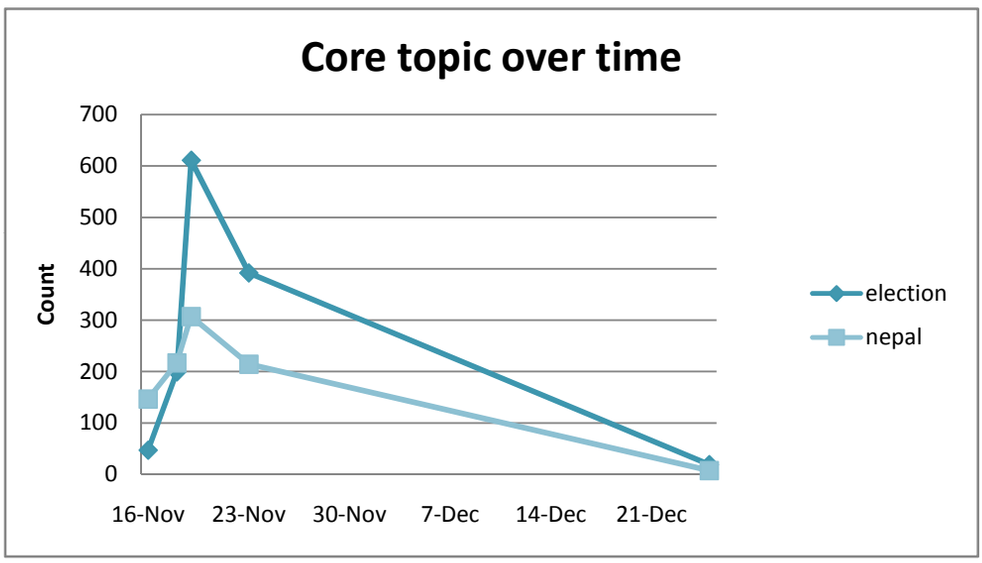
Addition and comparison words topped the tally generally in all phases of the election. Comparison peaked in the blackout period, next to comparison word during vote counting.



Time words such as now, yesterday or tomorrow appeared the most often in all phases of election. Modalities appeared the most often during the vote counting. Words modifying place, manner or showing intensity generally followed the trend next to time words. Words modifying assertion and doubt were few for all phases.



The description words were mostly objective, usually independent of the author's standpoint, throughout November. Objectivity was at its lowest during the campaign blackout. Judgement words generally increased in number from campaign to counting phases.



'You' topped the tally during the campaign, 'I' was in the most tweets during the blackout, and 'We' emerged on top during the voting and counting periods. 'They' appeared on the top during the counting phase. Thou was rare all along.

Looking at the sentence level, the tweets, most of which showed irregular syntactic features, were not amenable to automated computer analysis. Without building a sophisticated system to clean up, stem, parse, count and assign the text into locally relevant categories, nothing definitive can be said about the characteristic features of the tweets at the sentence or discourse level. It was not possible for this analysis to go to another level of sophistication.

Instead, this section of textual analysis and interpretation starts with a simple example of coverage of election code of conduct by tweets during the campaign.

EXAMPLE

Twitter coverage of election code during the campaign

handles *(Diagram 17)*



Diagram 17

texts

- EC lifts election code of conduct http://t.co/3888AFcbjR #nepal
- Election commission Nepal website not working here in Bangkok, can somebody send me media code of conduct
- Complaints lodged against UML candidates Khanal, Nembang for flouting election code of conduct http://t.co/JXWeU2imeJ #nepal
- Election Commission #Nepal ordered Nepal Govt to halt transmission of ABC Television citing violation of election code of conduct
- Dinner with Nepal election commissioner Ella Sharma; was busy all times on phone for implantation of code of conduct
- In this silence hour, my inbox is receiving urge 4vote by a candidate, breaking codes of election, where's the ethics?
- RT @RepublicaNepal: UCPN (M) is flouting election code of conduct, says UMLhttp://t.co/fLcZ0l3RG5 #nepal

- Election Code Violated by Media and Political Parties |सञ्चार माध्यमद्वारा निर्वाचन आचारसंहिता उल्लङ्घन |..
- RT @DhakalSaurav: I need Code for Conduct for Election Promotion : Some dev agencies people claim they are promoting candidate
- RT @PallaviDhakal: आचार संहिता कहाँ कहाँ उल्लङ्घन भैरहेको छ त ? यो म्याममा हेर्न सक्नुहुन्छ।
- Did the UCPNM violate the Election Code of Conduct with its "anti-Nepal banda motorbike rally"? And who else?
- NC draws EC's attention towards election code violation http://t.co/pxUdh6bRs0(eKantipur) #fb
- Federal Socialist Party Distributes Cards against Election Code |आचार संहिता विपरित भिजिटिङ्ग कार्ड वितरण :
- #Nepal EC removes poll materials that breached code of conduct: KAKADBHITTA: The Election
- Election Commissioner Sharma stresses on poll code of conducthttp://t.co/g3FpZ6xdMq (eKantipur) #fb
- Carter Centre urges respect for election code http://t.co/qmteDTEUCm #Nepal
- + So, the worst violators of the code of conducts are the President, this KhiRaRe#government and this said-to-be-
- More impunity is only outcome to expect once the failed politicians who r blatantly flouting EC code of conduct win this
- Govt engineer breaches election code of conduct http://t.co/f0DsRebwlM #nepal
- #Kathmandu: #Nepal's Election Commission has formed a high level committee to effectively monitor the #election code of conduct.
- Nepal poll panel to monitor election code of conduct
- हेलिकप्टरको प्रतिस्पर्धा : चुनाव प्रचारमा हेलिकप्टर चार्टरको प्रतिस्पर्धामा विघटित संविधानसभाको…
- हेर्दी जानुहोला एक दिन बैद्य को पछाडि एउटा माखो पने घुम्नऐ छैन। शायद त्यो दिन मङ्शिर ५ गतऐ पने हुन सक्छ। #Nepal
- हेर्दा हेर्दा हाम्रो देश नेपाल कस्तो भो, आलु प्याज भन्दा बम पो सस्तो भो #Nepal #Election #Nepalvotes #Nepalvote #Kathmandu
- हिमपातले प्रचारमा बाधा : बिहीबार अपराह्नदेखि मौसम परिवर्तन भई लेकाली बस्तीमा भारी हिमपात भएको छ…
- हिजो राती "बिग्रेको को प्रेसर कूकर" बाटो मा फलिदिएको,बिहान उठ्दा त बम डिस्पोसल टोली आएर डिस्पोसल गर्दै राइछ"…हा हा हा..
- हिंसा र भयरहित चुनाव गर्न किरात धर्मगुरु लिङदेनको आग्रह #Nepal #Nepalvotes #election #violence #Kirat

The following is an attempt to find patterns through examples and colour markers to highlight certain qualitative characteristics of the text strings as they appeared during the different phases of election.

4.3.1 Campaign content

The style of the campaign content was rather enunciative. The speaker and the interlocutor appeared as establishing mutual relations of influence, making their standpoints known. The colour highlights the style markers.

Carter and former Thai dpy PM minister Sathirathai going_to#Nepal to observe CA_ELECTION#Nepalvotes:
very neat portal and every easy_to_use portal to get all_the info for upcoming#nepal#CA_ELECTION#nepalvotes http://t RT @bimalmaharjan:
very neat portal and every easy_to_use portal to get all_the info for upcoming#nepal#CA_ELECTION#nepalvotes http://t RT @bimalmaharjan:
very neat portal and every easy_to_use portal to get all_the info for upcoming#nepal#CA_ELECTION#nepalvotes http://t .@Online_Khabar launches it's election page http://t. co
My constituency#Sindhupalchowk#Nepal#Election http://t. co/53ajjrh2wx Know yours too!!!
I wish a successful election in Nepal, hope majority people vote for their leaders for the better future of the nation.#
I wish a successful election in Nepal, hope majority people vote for their leaders for the better future of the nation.#
http://t. co/q6jdbtwy20 and http://t. co/Ggswenmf7t#Nepalvotes People in India interested in Nepal's Election http://t. co /nmvbcusysk Nepal going_to face second constitutional
election after 13 days hope it give us constitution
plz comment"Know about candidates and other details for all_the constituencies for upcoming#election in#Nepal at http://t. co /f1b2oewom3 RT@Bibhusanbista:
Know about candidates and other details for all_the constituencies for upcoming#election in#Nepal at http://t. co/f1b2 RT

The narrator was present in the setting, asking and encouraging something, as shown below.

Nov_19, 2013 11 DAYS FROM TODAY If you do not know where to vote,
ask someone to find_out location.#
Nepal #election"#Baburam Bhattarai and#Kamal Thapa are only politicians in#Nepal in_this#election who have courage to ask_for#vote from facebook?#
Nepal#Election"Encourage everyone to vote Nepal Election:
Nov_19, 2013 11 DAYS FROM TODAY#Nepal#election"I thought parties that support a particular religion,
caste or region doesn't qualify for election as political_parties!#

The setting involved "I".

How cud i know?+#
Vote for Me#Nepal Election is here http://t. co/Reb8pctv0w via@Twitpic RT@roughtough:
General_Election diary 1 I am here in Kathmandu, Nepal as an election observer.
Nepal Elections 2013 http://t. co/Z9zrqmy4ed#Nepalvotes I am
#politics Statement by#UNSG Ban Ki-Moon on the CA_ELECTIONS http://t. co/dqgcp9v09b#Nepalvotes I damn don't care
I am a free speech lover, self_determination lover,
I will vote for those who love democracy.#
me to vote him on election.
http://t. co/KPTIY44BUB"I Vote For Nobody!!!
I am to vote. #
KATHMANDU, Nepal I...http://t. co/SBPIJ8OJB3 Source:
But i pray to god you lose election from your area. jai nepal"#election time?
as far as i know India wants to have a election in Nepal before their own election in 2014 Five people injured in explosion at election rally in eastern Nepal http://t. co/6k6d6hj7m3 RT@arpanshr:
I wish my country#Nepal best wishes for prosperity, peace and stability.
All I hear is we will develop Nepal,
"If you ask me,
me too am a civic and
I disagree_with you because
I am_fevered not for this said-to-be_held#election. #
http://t. co/9gxfbduvyf I posted 9 photos on Facebook in the album"Handing_Over 48 Vehicles to Election_Commission of Nepal "http://t. co/kjzgzmj1yc PRESS_RELEASE:
I do refer to it.
I think fear
I think fear
http://t. co/MVT06YKBAD I've heard that PKD recetly said that the forthcoming#election will unveil how_much powerful CPN-M is,
I've heard that PKD recently said that the forthcoming#election will unveil how_much powerful CPN-M is,
Election Eve For Constituent Assembly II Analysis http://t. co/nyrvjixgsu I need Code for Conduct for Election Promotion:
I need Code for Conduct for Election Promotion:
Pre-poll scuffles spark fears over#Nepal's elections http://t. co/btunknmje0#nepalvotes Sounds about right"I will vote,
I think CA_ELECTION would be_held in Nepal in a stipulated time again in the second time.@

Some notion of doubt was detected.

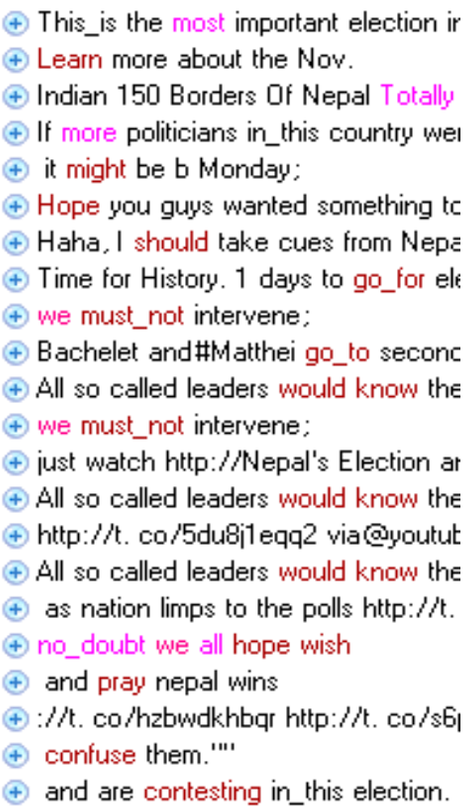
Voters almost voting a Hung Parliament in Nepal CA_ELECTION on Nov_19...
+and approximately the same number of the previous CA_ELECTION voters do not have their names in voters-list this time??#
Scenario almost clear.
Scenario almost clear.
Scenario almost clear.
Scenario almost clear.
Scenario almost clear.
http://t. co/0y21mscpgl Festival season is_done almost!
Festival season is_done almost!
Scenario almost clear.

Most characteristic parts of the text, although not a definitive indicator given the irregular syntax, were something like these examples below.

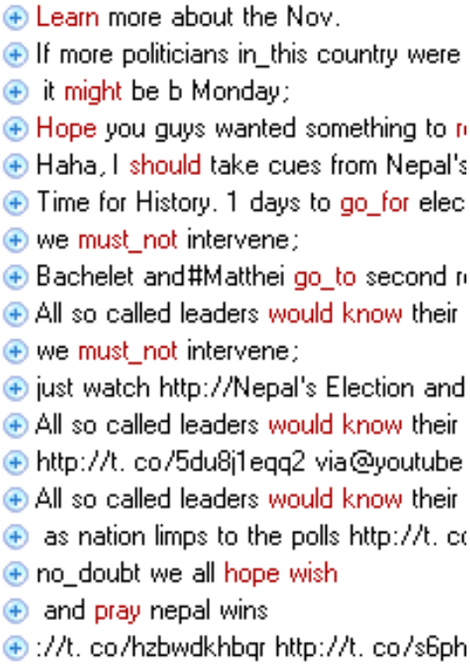
I'd risk election protests to be back there now#takemeback RT@Noraysa_:
I'd risk election protests to be back there now#take Countries are warning their citizens to travel Nepal in fear of election related violence.
Tensions Mount as Nepal Contentious Election Nears http://t. co/b7lbhr0bwv via@viewsweek Election campaign clashes!!!
Nepal Government is in_full preparation to go_ahead with the new Constituent Assembly (CA_ELECTIONS...
Election#Nepalvotes Tensions mount as Nepal CA_ELECTION approaches Constitutionnet-Supporting Constitution Builders Globally http://t. co/ve7ubwtq8s Of all_the tweets I follow
or read about#Nepal#Election, >
Of all_the tweets I follow
http://t. co/8rkl0pr2co VIA@Milijulidotcom"http://t. co/MQUYC8TCZ2 People need new leader, don't vote again to these old useless. #
1. @Brianlara 's prospective#Nepal visit 2.#Tendulkar's retirement 3. My #birthday 4. Nepal's election#Nepalvotes""RT @love_veedee:
1. @Brianlara 's prospective#Nepal visit 2.#Tendulkar's retirement 3. My #birthday 4. Nepal's elec""RT@love_veedee:
1. @Brianlara 's prospective#Nepal visit 2.#Tendulkar's retirement 3. My #birthday 4. Nepal's elec"Election Campaign Vehicle Torched???
latinamerica#africa#asia Tensions rising ahead of the elections in Nepal-will the vote be_seen as credible and inclusive enough?..
Tensions mount as Nepal contentious election nears,
Civil Society http://t. co/Kw7lawetdl#NEPAL In Nepal, is season of election.
+If he can't stand on the code_of_conducts legislated by himself,
Nepal ++So, the worst violators of the code_of_conducts are the President,
Nepal ++As_such (See previous),
I will_not partake_in such#election. #
Nepal#MAPREV Tensions mount as#Nepal contentious election nears http://t. co/6qkwyhstv4 RT@Genprev:#
MAPREV Tensions mount as#Nepal contentious election nears http://t. co/6qkwyhstv4 It is quite easier to select boy by girl and girl by boy in comparison to select leader by Nepali peoples. #
Tensions mount as Nepal contentious election nears http://t. co/0gtuct0ojz via@Mikehitchen Important piece by@dwdraju:
Nepal#Election#vote
nepal#Election#Nepvote Carter and former Thai dpy PM minister Sathirathai going_to#Nepal to observe CA_ELECTION #Nepalvotes:
Carter and former Thai dpy PM minister Sathirathai going_to#Nepal to observe CA_ELECTION#Nepalvotes:

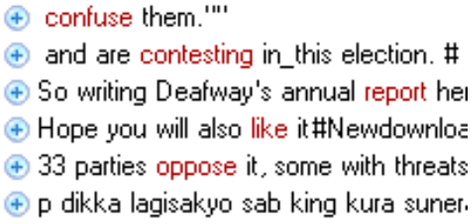
4.3.2 Blackout

The style of the text was rather enunciative again as the highlighted words suggest.



The setting involved the narrator.





"I" was used quite often.



Most characteristic parts of text follow.

A_lot in Nepali but oft Govt of India loans two advanced helicopters to Govt of Nepal, to be_us
India loans two advanced helicopters to Nepal,
Govt of India loans two advanced helicopters to Govt of Nepal, to be_used by Nepalese Army f
Govt of India loans two advanced helicopters to Govt of Nepal, to be_used by Nepalese Army f
India loans two advanced helicopters to Nepal,
://t. co/zfrr5zswxs India presents vehicles to#Nepal's Election_Commission and security agencie
ironically everyone is holding their breath watching Nepal play. #
India presents vehicles to#Nepal's Election_Commission and security agencies http://t. co/jds5
India presents vehicles to#Nepal's Election_Commission and security agencies http://t. co/jds5
We have election tomorrow.
we will choose good leaders@cricketicc#WT20#Nepal RT@omyegod003:
Nepal's#election results are_decided already:
JAYA NEPAL I hope the people in nepal are safe
In key election, Nepal's tumult drives new pragmatism-http://t. co/tyzyx5bkn1 For our internatior
http://t. co/Aib6fu2ja5 Nepal's Maoists face struggle to win_over disillusioned voters http://t. cc
Nepal's Maoists face struggle to win_over disillusioned voters http://t. co/0oro9qxz6x Nepal's M
tomorrow
Nepal's Maoists face struggle to win_over disillusioned voters http://t. co/jotsnvyqeh TNX Depc
so nepal u must win Nepal's Maoists face struggle to win_over disillusioned voters http://t. co/[
wofffffffff #wt20 Nepal's Maoists face struggle to win_over disillusioned voters:
Party has most to lose in Tuesday's election a...http://t. co/iiz7xig92o Nepal's Maoists face stru
://Nepal's Maoists face struggle to win_over disillusioned voters-The Guardian http://t. co/x9oi
struggle to win_over disillusioned
voters http://t. co/bwoftuiawx Nepal's Maoists face struggle to win_over disillusioned voters htt
Nepal's Maoists face struggle to win_over disillusioned voters http://t. co/u1zmbjrxtz''is it true?
Nepal's Maoists face struggle to win_over disillusioned voters:
http://t. co/9hwdb9pewb#TEAMFOLLOWBACK Nepal's Maoists face struggle to win_over disill
http://t. co/wvpypqjvwh Nepal's Maoists face struggle to win_over disillusioned voters:
CAELECTION#Election#Nepal#Election2070#Nepvote#Nepalvotes Nepal's Maoists face strug
win_over disillusioned voters:
Nepal''[Maoists] are facing a new battle to remain relevant to voters who feel they have_been le
. co/KNSXDGDKI2 Nepal
anyone here going_to Mohit Chauhan live_in Nepal?
CAELECTION#Election#Nepal#Election2070#Nepvote#Nepalvotes Disillusionment is definitely
win_over disillusioned voters http://t

4.3.3 Voting

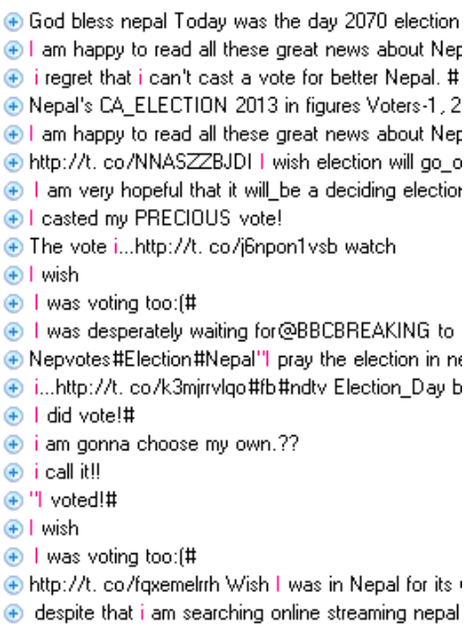
Text style of the day of voting was rather narrative, in which a narrator stated a series of events, happening at a given time, and in a given place, as suggested by the highlighted words.



Setting involved dynamic, action, words.

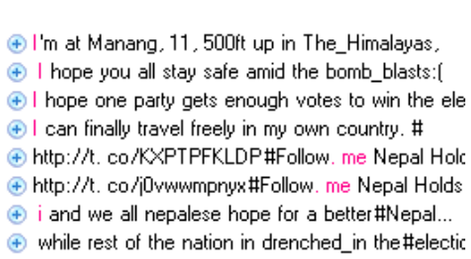


It also involved "I"





Irregular syntax, common in tweets, was detected.



Most characteristic parts of the text were as below.



4.3.4 Counting

The style of the text was rather enunciative.

- Prachanda did not accept the results of an election his party
- We've shown the world that we are peace loving and democ
- Is_claimed By Maoists In Nepal via New_York_Times http://t
- Worldnews Vote Fraud Is_claimed By Maoists In Nepal via Ne
- Worldnews Vote Fraud Is_claimed By Maoists In Nepal via Ne
- The election results may_be a determinant RT@japantimes:
- The election results may_be a determinant RT@bkamatya:#
- vj44 Nepal Election Update-so far, UML 32, NC wins 29 seat
- want counting stopped-"Talk_Show with Eva Joly:
- European_Union election observer in Nepal Vote Fraud Is_cla
- So happy about Nepal's peaceful &
- it takes EVERYONE to not lose the gai Vote Fraud Is_claime
- http://t. co/RV3IVT7T9B #Constituentassembly#Gaganthapa
- from@nytimes http://t. co/38dztuukxv contributed by@bhad

CA_ELECTION http

- "Waiting for the final Nepal election result which we all hope
- So happy about Nepal's peaceful &
- Carter congratulates Nepal for fairly conducted CA_ELECTION
- Economists worried about high cost of Nepal's CA_ELECTION
- 33"After defeat in election party leader resigns from post held
- In Nepal he says to boycott assembly to winning members.
- So happy about Nepal's peaceful &
- Nepalvotes Nepal Maoists demand halt to election vote count
- Nepal Maoist head Prachanda calls for election halt-BBC New
- reject result-The Times of India http://t. co/bqqosjhhet"RT@
- Vote Fraud Is_claimed by Maoists in Nepal-New_York_Times
- Nepal Maoists demand halt to election vote counting-http://t.
- 33"Vote Fraud Is_claimed By Maoists In Nepal-New_York_Tir
- Thanks a_lot. #
- http://t. co/WH90PZ33XP European_Union Election Observa
- European_Union Election Observation Mission find election ge
- violence as feared.

Setting involved the narrator.

- India should take_heart.
- Prachanda should shut_up.@
- prabalgurung Great to see You, following Nepal Election.
- Nepal's Maoists threaten to head for the hills.
- Nepal_Election#Nepalvotes"now forget about election and concerntrate on the game where nepal must win.#
- afgvsnep #wt20 Nepal election in shambles as Maoists claim fraud,
- reject result-The Times of India http://t. co/ve7vkbiimi Nepal Election 2013 Results:
- Matthei Go_to Second Round http://t. co/Cnqvzkq4r4 There,
- Losers Agree. #
- Losers Disagree:#
- Thank God My vote doesnt get waste,
- Cannot believe the horrific stories I'm hearing about the Nepal election.
- Time for History. in #Nepal ci sono state le elezioni ma le cose non sembrano mettersi bene Vote Fraud Is_claimed by
- in#Nepal ci sono state le elezioni ma le cose non sembrano mettersi bene Vote Fraud Is_claimed by Maoists in Nepa
- So this election changed public view on who is'hardline communist'?@
- Time for History. lets see who leads the Nepal...
- As a Nepali abroad it's it good see the progress Nepal is making throw your tweets..
- Why does NYT continue to let#Gardinerharris cover Nepal
- but we want you to win in today's match...
- D #Nepalvotes#Nepalelection#e Vote Fraud Is_claimed by Maoists in Nepal http://t. co/Nquxrliv4x Not so bad#dem
- Vote Fraud Is_claimed by Maoists in Nepal'http://t. co/Iv5hybngvn#Nepalvotes RT@omyegod003:
- Maoist is keeping Voters box_in different plant to argue for Reelection#Nepalvotes#Nepal RT@omyegod003:
- MT @Gopapandey"Smart, alert police_force deployed to maintain law &
- For latest election tallies and cool interactive election map of Nepal from@thedatanepal go_to:

Setting involved "I"

I'm watching Election Live Nepal 2070
I'm watching Election Live Nepal 207
http://t. co/Lzfjj4gra4 I'm watching E
Election in Nepal http://t. co/mmjtef
Mountains to climb http://t. co/Kpqd
http://t. co/6aryooclry#Jimmycarter#
si profila un testa a testa fra Congres
I'm happy that people of Nepal have
Cannot believe the horrific stories I'm
I am upto date with Nepal election re
I'm watching Election Live Nepal 20
I'm watching Election Live Nepal 207
i just switched to Nepalmandal Telev
. me Vote Fraud Is_claimed by Maois
. me Vote Fraud Is_claimed by Maois
http://t. co/d6vncftejq#corruption#r
I'm watching Election Live Nepal 20
Maoists got routed in#Nepal#Constit
i love u u know congrees is winner i
but iam amale send me too i want_t
Nepal election result http://t. co/HJ
Nepal#Gyanendra I suggest the EC
KATMANDU, Nepal (AP) Nepal's old
me up when they sort the constitutio
KATMANDU, Nepal (AP) Nepal's old
me following Team Nepal's superb p
KATMANDU, Nepal (AP) Nepal's old
I'm watching Election Live Nepal 20
I can imagine Prachanda still around
I can imagine Prachanda still around
http://t. co/S9jkf4lm89"Moists r mos
I'm watching Election Live Nepal 20
unless the Maoists blink http://t. co/
I'm watching Election Live Nepal 207
Mrs_Jamarkattel @sarita_giri I hope p
I support No Leader,

Some notions of doubt has been detected.

http://t. co/Gdyafvq8jt Apparently there_is an election going_on in Nepal Pa
Maybe he should have_stayed Maoist
Maybe they have a better Supreme_Court that doesn't meddle RT@dyinc
Maybe they have a better Supreme_Court that doesn't meddle RT@Rijalc
NONE of Nepal's mass_media has@Satishktm#sadbuttrue International p
Satishktm#sadbuttrue International pressure will probably moderate the sitt
probably the best site to see Nepal CA_ELECTION Results.
probably the best site to see Nepal CA_ELECTION Results.
probably the best site to see Nepal CA_ELECTION Results.
probably the best site to see Nepal CA_ELECTION Results.
probably the best site to see Nepal CA_ELECTION Results.
probably the best site to see Nepal CA_ELECTION Results.
but Maoists, apparently losing, disagree.
I'm in Melbourne n u won't believe it's almost 4am NCELL Cup:
to the Constitutional Deadlock, perhaps?
CA_ELECTION 2 is over in a good manner without addressing the almost
http://t. co/U6iv5h9nqk 2nd CA_ELECTION 2070 held in nepal almost p
and a nation's disillusion, in spotlight http://t. co/17ijpdmeqg THREE RE
down maoist, up congress which is going_to win, probably
Plate ma rakhera des lai paskine bhaye murdaar harule Baidhya perhaps I
and need for NC and UML to work to keep UCPN-M onside http://t. co

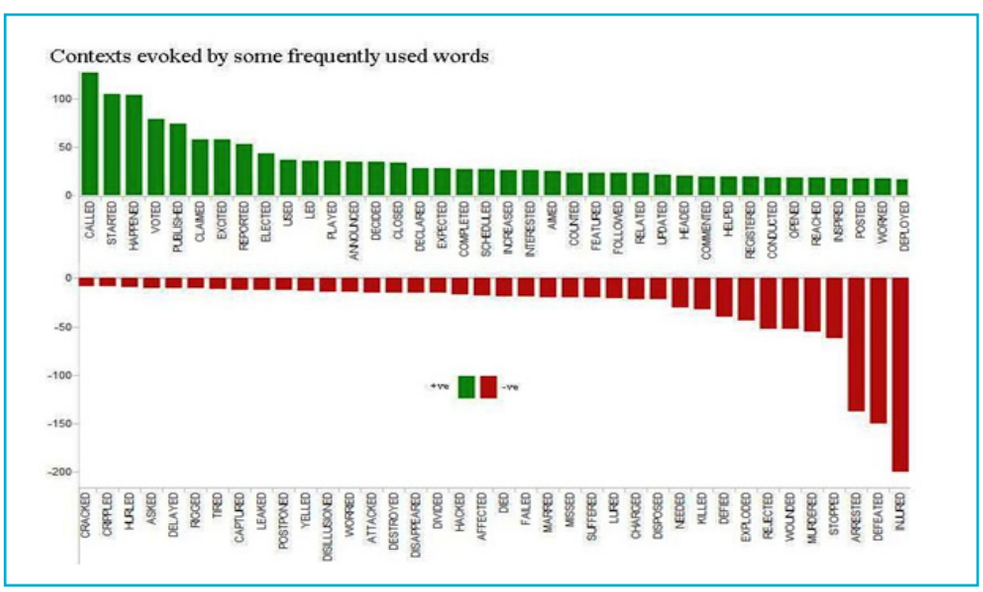
Most characteristic parts of text.

In Nepal, maoist have_been fail to get expected result in election because_of their cast apartheid policy.
We've shown the world that we are peace loving and democratic.
Bomb and intimidation couldn't sto Maoist walkout raises fears for Nepal's election legitimacy:
Nepal Maoist chief alleges election_fraud after losing seat http://t. co/dq6vdjoxtz Live Election Update Nepal November_
Nepal Maoist chief alleges election_fraud after losing seat http://t. co/dq6vdjoxtz RT @persecutionnews:
Nepalvotes Election result live_on nepal television online at http://t. co/QOGAQZL0JL #NEPAL RT @ishzz:
70%people voted in Nepal Constitution Election."@
vj44 Nepal Election Update-so far, UML 32, NC wins 29 seats, UCPN-M 7. Counting continues,
European_Union election observer in Nepal Vote Fraud Is_claimed By Maoists In Nepal http://t. co/ZW7C1IY2NM RT @
it takes EVERYONE to not lose the gai Vote Fraud Is_claimed by Maoists in Nepal http://t. co/wiraqrw0zp Nepal:
PM Pushpa Kumar Dahal aka Prachanda lost the constituency assembly election to Nepali congress
I'm watching Election Live Nepal 2070 http://t. co/14gneyajmw via@Scribblelive"#Nepal election puts Maoists,
"Waiting for the final Nepal election result which we all hope will set the country on a path to development and pro RT @
it takes EVERYONE to not lose the gai RT @Xinhuanepal:
Economists worried about high cost of Nepal's CA_ELECTION http://t. co/4ehybgwbw1 Maoist walkout raises fears for N
In Nepal he says to boycott assembly to winning members.
it takes EVERYONE to not lose the gai ABC TV Sucks..
Nepalvotes Nepal Maoists demand halt to election vote counting-http://t. co/QCSBJT7UOU http://t. co/Wensk9cvh1"R
Nepal Maoist head Prachanda calls for election halt-BBC News http://t. co/Pxxby5tkdq TNX Nepal election in shambles
Nepal Maoists demand halt to election vote counting-http://t. co/d3dadw43s5 http://t. co/4blqanbh6m"RT @Newsfromn
http://t. co/5rdnhbhc9w"The results of Nepal's election are unclear.
I'm watching Election Live Nepal 2070 http://t. co/ca8ua9pl1l via@Scribblelive MT @Gopapandey"Smart,
Mountains to climb The Economist http://t. co/wsmjm234ev #Nepal BBC News-Nepal Maoist head Prachanda calls for el
Mountains to climb The Economist http://t. co/OMCS0PS3KB Prachanda lai jitauna election commision ko jodd...
hey bhagwan k vako yo nepal ma #Nepalvotes #Nepal election caused less trouble &
Mountains to climb The Economist http://t. co/OMCS0PS3KB #Nepal's election:
http://t. co/uhchcjpd4i MJF-Nepal has_opened its account in the election wins from Kapilvastu-5. The party's Abhishek F
We are ready to fight again,
"they yelled. #
Nepal's Maoists, Losing Vote, Charge_Election_Fraud http://t. co/MNEUPJXWVV"#CPN-UML candidate and former #Ne
Mountains to climb The Economist http://t. co/8ljkwtelfh Communists Lead_In Partial Vote Results in Nepal:
CPN-UML candidate and former #Nepal Prime_Minister #Madhavkumarnepal has_won election from #Kathmandu-2. Partial
KATMANDU, Nepal-Partial results in Nepal's...http://t. co/Qcck3cuznm Looking at update vote count_on Nepal election.
KATMANDU, Nepal-Partial results in Nepal's...http://t. co/keso6n123e #Nepalcongress President Sushil #Koirala won elec

4.4. The general story

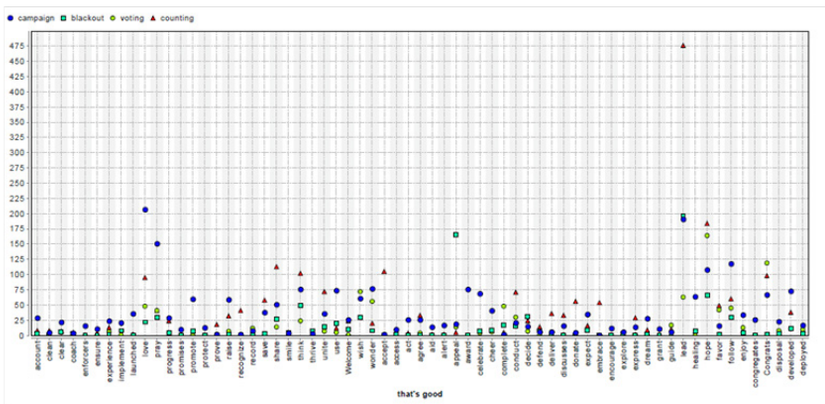
4.4.1 The context

The context of tweets, inferred from some past action words, showed that the authors were generating a mixed sentiment of fear and hope overall. The sentiment score is only suggestive and based on scores with some reworking of the sentiment score dictionary.



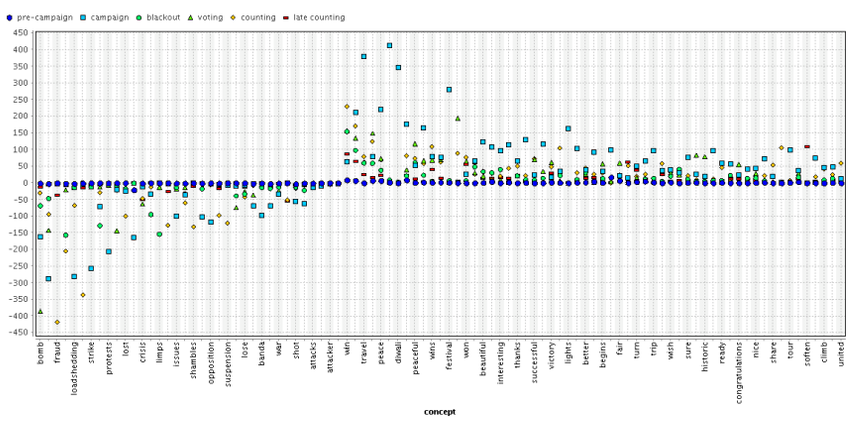
4.4.2 Present action

The types of positive action words in the present sense are shown in the scatter plot below.



4.4.3 Mood words

The frequent use of the following modifiers suggest the positive mood reigning over the different phases of the election time.



4.4.4 Narrative suggestions

- Gleaning from all these, it can be said that most authors sent the most texts on the Election Day, 19 November 2013, or days closer to it.
- Texts featured people's growing hopes after early doubts, and fears of violence gradually changed into defiance to naysayers and confidence in the election
- As if in real life group conversations, by sending the most tweets, replies and re-tweets over the election time, the first 100 unique authors created 81% of the buzz. The next 502 contributed 15% to the conversation. More than 4000 sent just a tweet or two over the month (4%).
- Interactive handles were far fewer than the active handles
- They were talking about many things from other tweeple to real people to festivals to sports to travel and politics

4.5 The first 99 handles and concepts: Some more number crunching

Handles. A quantitative summary of the dataset on first 99 most frequent handles across the election phases is given below.

99 observations and 5 variables

Maximum # NAs:0

Levels Storage

Handle 99 integer

Campaign integer

Blackout integer

Counting integer

Voting integer

+--------+----------------------------+

|Variable|Levels
|

+--------+--------------------+

| Handle |aakarpost, Aandhikhola, aavaas, AccountLab, Addicted, AdkRamen, Aibkhadka |

||akannampilly, anilbhattarai, anilkarkie, AnupKaphle, arpanshr, arunbudhathoki, Asia|

||AsiaDailyNews, bhaktapuronline, bibekbhandari, Bot, BreakingNewsNEP, bullet350 |

||BullFightTaruka, chapagain, CrespiEnrico, DeepakAdk, dhungelnischal, dpoudyalaya |

||drbishnuhnepal, drdipak, dwdRAJU, elecnep13, ElectionTweets2, EvaSanchez777 |

||GhimirePrashant, GlamourNepal, Gopal_Birahi, happyhippopotam, ImNepalblog, irfan |

||itscoolsky, jamesgreid, japokh, jhyal, Kazi, KhalidRafiq76, KhushiS99047387 |

||LeoWhitmanNepal, leplan, MeNingFull, milijulidotcom, myganthan, neemeshe, nepal |

||Nepal, nepalkonews, nepalnewsfeed, Nepalvotes, news, News, NewsFromNepal |

||nirmal46acharya, NowInNepal, npPoet, nurhakim, parexitpokhrel, pdpbasyal, pearl |

||prashantktm, ranjitpandey, RaviNepal, RepublicaNepal, RoshGhimire, sagar |

||sagartim20, Sahadevision, SatishKTM, SharadChirag, shrestha, siromanid |

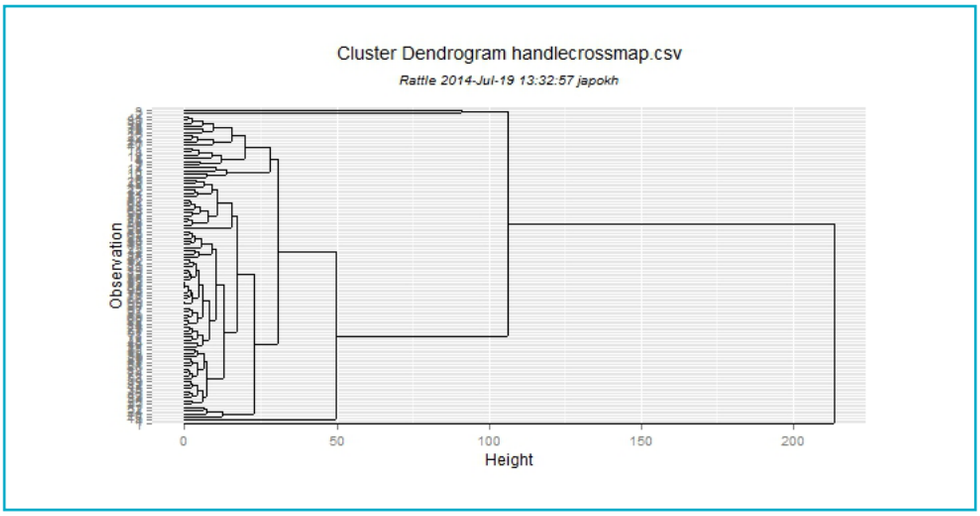
||storysouthasia, subedi, SulavKarki, suyogps, suzataz, TheAntariksha, TheNepal |

||TheTomar, thstrytllrprjct, THTNepalVotes, travels, Ujyaalo, UN, Update, ushaft |

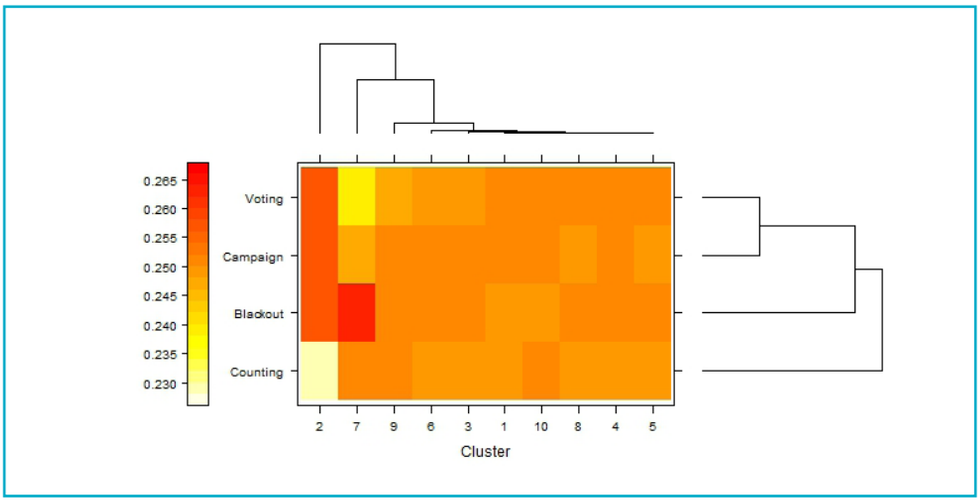
||Vote4Nepal, votesafe, WarshingtonPost, World, WorldNews36, XinhuaNepal |

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The following dendogram, built with the frequencies of appearance of these handles across the election phases, shows that a few of them were sending more tweets than the most others in all phases.



The handle weights for the different phases of election is shown in the viz below.



It shows most handles from handle clusters 2 and 7 from blackout period, for example above, match in their weight, as shown by similar colour, with those in the cluster 2 of campaign and voting. Cluster 7 of voting and cluster 2 of counting are closer but starkly different from the rest of the clusters.

Concepts

Below is the summary of the dataset of 100 most frequently appearing concepts across the election phases.

Levels	Storage
Campaign	100 integer
Blackout	100 integer
Voting	100 integer
Counting	100 integer

The following table lists the top 100 single word concepts for each phase of the election in the order of their decreasing frequency as we go down the list.

Campaign	Blackout	Voting	Counting
Nepal	Nepal	Nepal	Nepal
http	http	http	http
Co	Co	Co	co
Election	Election	Election	election
RT	RT	Election	Election
Election	Nepals	RT	RT
NepalVotes	Election	Day	officials
Violence	Maoists	NepalVotes	Maoists
pre-election	Polls	Bomb	Nepals
Nepal	Nation	Nepals	counting
Hit	Leader	Vote	votes
People	Loses	CA	begin
Nov	Appeal	Nepal	AP
Nepals	Limps	Political	results
CA	revolution-ary	Votes	KAT-MANDU
Ahead	Observe	Capital	onedirslay-tion
Day	NepalVotes	End	orgas-micgomez
Vote	There	Not	Maoist
Days	Too	Gridlock	NepalVotes
This	Take	Injures	Prachanda
Nepalvotes	Tonight	Reuters	demand
Heighten	Weeks	Voting	Vote
Maoists	Fu-wadThow-feek	Assembly	vote
Tensions	Leaving	Tuesday	result
Arrested	Rest	Today	CA
Protests	Male	Blast	Wednes
Not	Back	Nepalis	assembly
Elections	disillusion	People	Results
Nepalvotes	Puts	Commission	oldest
Least	Nations	Another	nepal
Commission	spotlight	Happy	st
Disillusion	AnupKa-phle	Hope	Fraud
Assembly	Nepal	This	nd
Puts	Reuters	Turnout	fraud
Nations	Voters	Assembly	News
Spotlight	Kath-mandu	Give	leader
Injured	disillu-sioned	Peaceful	Losing
Carter	Face	Chance	constitu-tional

Upcoming	Struggle	Historic	Charge
Campaign	win_over	Politicians	party
News	Story	Maoists	Time
opposition-led	CA	Constituent	reject
Now	observing	KATHMANDU	History
Guardian	Pix	Lot	Tomorrow
Time	This	Countrys	omyegod
Five	QIWZM	Violence	leads
Parties	Vote	Gt	Constitu-ent
Th	Tomorrow	All	Wednesd
Protests	CHAPA-GAUN	Police	claim
Political	Day	Exploded	news
Constituent	FuadThau-feeq	Started	loses
Jimmy	Nd	Three	Assembly
Bomb	assembly	Today	national
Candidates	tomorrow	Voters	shambles
Kathmandu	Time	News	politi-cal_party
Rally	constitu-tional	Polls	this
Strike	New	Wounded	Politics
India	History	Violence	set
DAYS	Carter	Charter	Report
ECNepal	Drives	Live	losing
TODAY	Key	Nepalese	Party
NepVote	omyegod	Bomb	not
November	pragma-tism	TIME	Partial
All	Tumult	Lift	count
Explosion	Not	News	led
KATH-MANDU	Prachanda	Polling	suspension
Observe	washing-tonpost	Day	investiga-tion
Polls	NepVote	Crisis	rhetoric
Voters	Nepali	Crude	soften
NEPAL	Most	Sense	sports
News	Best	Vote	people
Get	Sunday	Permanent	first
Goes	Wid	Kathmandu	Reuters
DeepakAdk	Article	Voting	trail
Official	Days	Elect	Nepali
Twitter	People	NEPAL	democracy
Party	CAElection	Nepalvotes	Media

Bus	Here	Crude	Commu-nist_Party
Looms	Party	Best	Social
Turn	India	Mars	NC
ELECTION	Washing-tonPost	One	Munesh_ Chahar
Lets	Time	Parties	UML
NepalElec-tion	Ushaft	India	other
Going	Vs	Nepal_Elec-tion	Ballot
New	Week	Akannampilly	Analysis
Analysis	Jimmy	More	nepalvotes
Aakarpost	Nepalese	Takes	more
https	Print	Lines	constitu-ent
Transport	RmCSBZGw	Nepalvotes	Both
What	Web	Lose	Happened
Himalayan	Lose	Two	Officials
Any	peaceful	DeepakAdk	halt
Attack	published	Disrupted	show
Blog	Silence	Gai	Nepalvotes
Traffic	Maldives	Good	If
Vote	Assembly	Prabalgurung	leading
Blockade	Chile	JohnSaeki	accept
Latest	Interesting	Begins	Buzz
long-awaited	Tuesdays	Country	Himalayan
Media	Results	Participation	seat

Transforming the above words into numeric values, the dendogram plots the clusters of most frequent concepts in the following visualisation *(diagram 18,19)*.

Words, albeit transformed for computation, in clusters 1 and 5 of counting match with cluster 4, for example, of the campaign period. The same can be said about cluster 5 and 4 of voting and cluster 2 of blackout.

4.6 Discussion

The first CA had squandered two years of its mandate, and a bonus two years in self-extended tenures, before it died a vegetative death on 27 May 2012 without accomplishing the task for which it had come into existence: writing and promulgating Nepal's constitution.

The big four parties of that time, namely, UCPN-Maoist, Nepali Congress, CPN-UML and the Madheshí front, were still working to overcome their political differences, which held the first CA hostage to indecision on several occasions. One fine morning then, as if

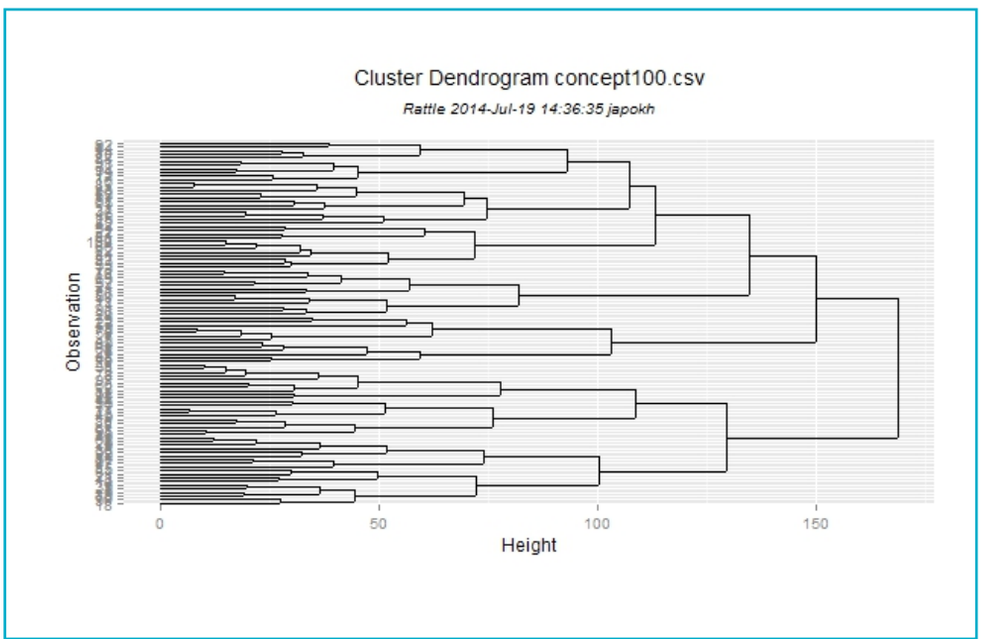


Diagram 18

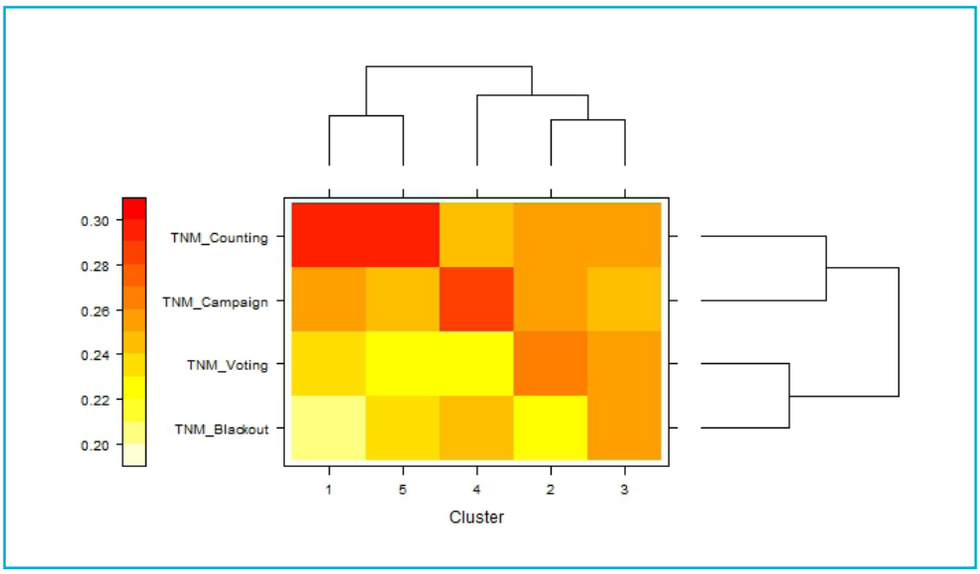


Diagram 19

the big four had decided to put their daily brawl briefly behind the public glare, they requested Chief Justice Khil Raj Regmi to arrange the 2013 CA elections. The Chief Justice took leave of office, formed a cabinet of former bureaucrats and lawyers and headed the election government. On 17 June 2013, the non-political government announced the holding of elections on 19 November 2013, engaging for a while in futile attempts to convince the dissenting political parties, mainly the splintered CPN-Maoist, to participate in the vote.

Chief Election Commissioner Neel Kantha Uprety, with his team of commissioners, also set out to convince the people that the elections would be held for sure and they would be peaceful. Election Commission Nepal proceeded with its schedule asking the political parties to file their candidates and voters to obtain their ID cards.

Tweet authors explicitly shared this context and related developments alongside their speculations about the fresh election prospects.

Adding fuel to fire fear-mongering or the general speculative propensities of Nepali twitizens, the 33-party anti-election alliance of the time led by the CPN-Maoist threatened, at times showing force, to disrupt the election. They urged the voters to boycott what they termed was an illegitimate election process, initiated by an illegitimate government, born through a secluded co-habitation of the big four parties. The political dissenters announced an indefinite shutdown, running for days and weeks in the campaign period, then planted bombs and torched vehicles. In some places, the people rejected their bandh and, in others, over the days, the intensity of opposition to the election waned on its own.

Only on the Election Day, when a record number of enthusiastic voters, between 70 and 80 percent, showed up at the election booths, tweet authors wrote words of surprise in place of their early doubts. Many narrated their own participation or that of others in the vote, defying the bomb scare of the morning, from right inside the election booths. Many authors posted pictures, although they are not analysed here, of the voters in queues as the hours passed by.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

Election tweets, as texts with the technological possibility of travelling far and wide at an instant, were increasingly being studied for their possibility to predict election outcomes. Thousands of authors sent tweets about Nepal in the last quarter of 2013, when the crucial Constituent Assembly vote was scheduled in the country. More than nine thousand tweets, talking about Nepal's November 2013 election, were available in a personal archive for this exploration of the handles, texts and times of the election posts.

The exploration, in words, numbers and visuals, sought to make a modest beginning towards understanding the nature of social media engagement during the vote in Nepal, starting with the Twitter archive. Many tweets were loaded with information of interest or value to individuals and society, but the way they were shortened in bits and bytes, links, replies, favourites and re-tweets, they carried too much of stuff all the time, demanding perseverance from the users to pick up something from there and take it to the real world of families and friends.

Worse, only a few users interacted within the network. When they did, they were inside a coterie of a few handles, talking about a few issues, without driving the conversation to go beyond the Twitter walls.

The interactive features of the tweets made it possible to sort the handles and texts in groups, which suggested clusters and networks forming around tweeple and texts that gave clues to the popularity or influence of some handles. A few tweeple dominated the conversation. As most tweets shared news and other web links, it was difficult to infer if the wit, gossip and gaffe heard on the Twitter wall was circulating in the real world.

The mood swung over the campaign, campaign blackout, voting and vote counting periods, creating an online buzz, available for public view, download and close reading. Early tweet authors showed doubts about the ability or intention of the government and the key political leaders to make the elections happen, or, in case they happened, make them peaceful. Some of them shared hazy references from the past to show what had transpired after the dissolution of the first CA until the election government was formed in March 2013. Others shared the immediate context of festivals, sports, doubts, threats and uncertainties; the future directions, mainly assertions and speculations about the fresh election prospects. Most joined in the jubilation over the successful holding of election.

As Twitter was increasingly being used in electoral politics by political and civil society actors, both individuals and organisations, with tools to tap into the public opinion pulse from tweets, several efforts had already been made to predict the election outcomes or explore or describe people's interest in partisan issues and substance. A few tech-savvy people had taken up to examine election tweets of Nepal within a limited scope. This content analysis, focusing on three key variables, namely, handle, text and time found the tweets reflect an aspect of the real world -- a few dominant tweeple drive the conversation and several others hear their own tweets in the digital echo chamber.

The implications of these findings are that the tweets promise to open up a new frontier of expanding digital participation, engagement and citizenship as political parties, civil

society leaders, journalists and common people, among others, are using the new media to share assorted news, views and stuffs of their interest among their friends and followers, who make up a vast network together reaching rural and urban voters.

More efforts in this area are imperative.

5.1.1 Limitations

All efforts, however, should overcome the following limitatations of the present exploration.

- Goals of analysis, early preparation, and availability of tools, among other things, will determine the usefulness of future endeavour in this area. This study, for example, relied on an archive that pulled tweets first before deciding the goals of analysis.

- The use of free online tools to extract and archive tweets may have been inadequate as was the use of just two simple search strings, because not every tweet would need to contain these strings to talk about Nepal's elections.

- The election tweets from the archive, built with #nepal and Nepal/ Election search strings, may not have represented all the election conversation that happened during the month.

- Obviously, sampling the election conversation on the social media in general needs nuanced understanding of how the social media works, training on tools and techniques to analyse large amounts of texts and careful planning way before the election campaign begins.

- Machine learning and natural language processing are increasingly becoming an important source of knowledge generation in the world of information abundance. There are several online applications such as etcML and Taporware to help even the non technical people to clean up, parse, stem and cluster tweets, but several of them will not work for mixed languages, such as English and Nepali. Urgent efforts should be made to design or tailor the tools to enable them to capture the local context.

- The limitations of studying election tweets as mentioned in the review of past studies should be considered in all future research works that seek to build on the predictive ability of Twitter.

5.1.2 Recommendations

- We need further research as our digital citizenship expands to electoral politics. Analysed properly, with the necessary skills, time and resources, tweets promise to open up a vast reservoir of information about political events and trends. As more people come on board the social media with various purposes and inspirations, academic departments, research organisations and individuals with interest should contribute further research in this emerging frontier of human behaviour, the insights about which should be accessible to both the users and non-users of the social media.

- ECN would do well to set up a social media unit with capabilities to disseminate its electoral information among the young social media-savvy voters and analyse their social conversation during the elections with a view to encourage their enthusiastic participation.

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MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Media monitoring of elections is essential. Therefore, there should be a permanent media monitoring centre at ECN.
- Newspaper, radio, television and online journalists have generally complied with the election code of conduct. In spite of this, there are some issues with media performance during the crucial democratic exercise. As online journalism expands in Nepal, journalists need to demonstrate their responsible and accountable behaviour in their presentation and practice in order to gain credibility.
- With the experience of undertaking a nationwide media monitoring during the election, NPI can provide training for media monitors in collaboration with ECN.
- Every major monitoring exercise should begin with adequate time for trial run to develop the confidence on the monitoring instruments and the results.
- As FM stations and online news sites expand across the country, the regional media monitoring should be strengthened rather than focusing more on the capital.
- There is a need to refine monitoring methodology and develop appropriate and efficient instruments to collect reliable data for future monitoring of election media.
- Quantitative data from the field give a larger context to the everyday work of monitors. They should be gathered with a long-term goal of strengthening media performance during future elections rather than building them into the everyday routines of reporting the media monitoring findings or sharing actionable information.
- Training and orientation of monitors, with special focus on the issues of inclusion and gender, is vital before implementing the media monitoring of elections
- ECN, as the regulatory body during the election time, should be enabled to act in relation to media programmes that violate the election codes.
- As digital participation in electoral politics widens in Nepal, serious research in the intersection of social media and election is imperative. ECN should better equip itself to expand its media monitoring routines to cover the social media.

KEY ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	ABC Television
BBCM	British Broadcasting Corporation Monitoring
BS	Bikram Sambat
CA	Constituent Assembly
CAE	Constituent Assembly Election
CEC	Chief Election Commissioner
CNN	Cable News Network
COC	Code of Conduct
CPN	Communist Party of Nepal
EC	Election Commission
ECN	Election Commission of Nepal
ESP	Electoral Support Project
FM	Frequency Modulation
FPTP	First-Past- the- Post
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
INSEC	Informal Sector Services Centre
IT	Information Technology
MJF	Madhesi Janasdhikar Forum

NA	Nepalese Army
NC	Nepali Congress
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHRC	Nepal Human Rights Council
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPI	Nepal Press Institute
NT	Nepal Telecom
NTV	Nepal Television
PR	Proportional Representation
RPP	Rastriya Prajatantra Party
RPP-N	Rastriya Prajatantra Party - Nepal
SPCBN	Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal
TOR	Terms of Reference
TV	Television
UCPN	United Communist Party of Nepal
UCPNM	United Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIN	United Nations Mission in Nepal
USA	United States of America
YCL	Young Communist League



ANNEXES

- Code of Conduct to be Observed by Mass Media
- Request for Proposal

Annex I

CODE OF CONDUCT TO BE OBSERVED BY MASS MEDIA

Mass Media shall observe the following Code of Conduct

78. Transmission of information and news concerning the election shall be based on truth, facts, and in an objective manner.

79. Transmission of information and news shall be unbiased and not give special treatment to any person.

80. While collecting or transmitting information and news shall not be suppressed, concealed or hidden.

81. Information and news shall not be transmitted, published or broadcast so as to mislead the general public.

82. To the extent possible, information and news of public concern shall be included in the news and transmissions, and if anyone obstructs or creates hurdles to transmit such news or information, that shall also be included in the news.

83. No undue benefits shall be accepted from anyone and nothing shall be done that is contrary to professional ethics and norms.

84. While transmitting, publishing or broadcasting any news or information, language indicating discrimination of any type against anyone or inciting violence shall not be used and no news or information shall be transmitted, published or broadcast in such a manner that may have an adverse effect of any type on relationships and good faith amongst peoples belonging to various castes, tribes, religions, communities including Dalit, indigenous peoples, backward regions peoples and Madhesi.

85. News and information shall be transmitted so as to promote the participation of different groups, religion, gender, language and community in the election.

86. In case any wrong or misleading news or information is transmitted, published or broadcast, the communication media concerned shall have to immediately rectify such information or news.

Code of Conduct to be Observed by Government Mass Media:

87. No editorial is to be written or broadcast in favour of, or against, any Political Party or candidate.

88. Appropriate opportunity is to be given to political parties or candidates to express their views, policies and program to voters.

89. Priority is to be accorded to publication and broadcasting of materials concerning voter education. Free Broadcasting Facility to be Made Available:

90. For the purpose of publicising the policies and programs of political parties taking part in the proportional representation election, the Commission shall make available time on radio and television in proportion to the votes they have obtained in the Constituent Assembly Election of 2008.

91. While making time available pursuant to subsection (90), the Commission shall make the time available in three phases as follows:-

a) In the first phase, five to twenty minutes on radio broadcasting service for the purpose of public unveiling of the manifesto of the political party;

b) In the second phase, two to five minutes on television broadcasting service for the purpose of election campaigning;

c) In the third phase, one minute to each Political Party on television broadcasting service for the purpose of making final appeal to the voters before the silent period begins.

92. As per section (91), the materials made available from the above phases should be prepared by the relevant political party and provided to the relevant media.

93. No Publicity Campaign during Silent Period: Mass media shall not transmit, publish or broadcast information or news campaigning in favour one political party or candidate during the silent period.

Provided that this section shall not be deemed to hinder the transmission, publication or broadcasting of information or news from the Commission.

Explanation: For the purpose this section, the silent period means the period beginning forty-eight hours before voting begins and up to the closing of the last polling centre.

94. Records to be Maintained: Mass media shall preserve the record of each news or information it has transmitted, published or broadcast with regard to the election, for a period of 35 days from the date of publication or transmission.

95. Monitoring of Information and News Transmissions:

(1) The Commission shall regularly monitor the information or news relating to the election that is transmitted, published or broadcast.

(2) If monitoring pursuant to sub section (1) finds that there is a violation of the Code of Conduct from such transmission, publication or broadcast, the Commission shall issue directives to the media concerned to correct such information or news.

(3) Upon receipt of the direction referred to in sub section (2), the media concerned shall have to correct the news or information.

Annex II

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Description of Requirements

Context of the Requirement	The UNDP has been providing technical assistance to the Election Commission of Nepal, since 2008 through Electoral Support Project. The main objective of the project is to provide strategic support to the ECN in inter election period with strong emphasis on building a sustainable and enduring institution and professional capacity within the ECN. UNDP/ESP has supported the ECN in Media Monitoring for the Second Constituent Assembly Election 2013, by contracting a company, for the mentioned work. UNDP had awarded a national company to for the media monitoring task through bidding process. The company has successfully conducted media monitoring throughout the country for the Election commission of Nepal from 1 November to 30 December 2013. The company has monitored 10 different online news portals, 10 television channels, 200 radio stations and 400 print outlets from across the country to access their election related media coverage, coding it into a tailored data base, flagging stories for their content that either called attention to the election code of conduct or features electoral violence and analyzing the day's data for use the ECN. The company has provided the reports of these activities to the UNDP/ ESP and the ECN after the completion of the project.
Implementing Partner of UNDP	Electoral Support Project (ESP)
Brief Description of the Required Services	The objective of this project is to prepare an analytical report of Media Monitoring of CA Election 2013.The report will be published in Nepali and in English language for the benefit of Nepali and English readers. Once the contractor present the final report in English and Nepali the UNDP/ESP will publish in large number for wider dissemination and use.
List and Description of Expected Outputs to be Delivered	The Contractor will be required to prepare and present a comprehensive analytical report on the Media Monitoring of the Constituent Assembly Election 2013 with special focus to Election codes of conduct to the media. The report should contain qualitative as well as quantitative analysis. A final report, subject to the approval by the ECN and ESP, should be submitted no later than **25 July 2014** **The final Report should consist of, among others, the following contents:** • Summary of findings of Media Monitoring of CA Election

	2013 • Define expected standards for monitoring of (what was being monitored?): 1. Compliance with code of conduct 2. Compliance with media and journalists standard 3. Reporting standard and levels of fairness towards parties and ECN 4. Report on educational role of media 5. Report on gender and social inclusion during election • Importance of Media Monitoring during Election. • Detail report of monitoring and conclusion drawn by media type (print and electronic), include graphs, pictures, illustrations, charts, case studies wherever required. The electronic and audio-visual should be presented. • Timeframe of monitoring • Composition of Monitoring Unit • Final layout with **colored cover design** in printable format JPEG or TAR **Format** • Final layout design of the Final report of "**Analytical Report on Media Monitoring of Constituent Assembly, 2013".** • Website format • Report of interaction programs • The Report should be prepared in English and Nepali. The contractor should provide the hard copy and soft copies of the report to the UNDP/ESP. **Refer to the Terms of Reference (TOR) attached as Annex IV for detail**
Person to Supervise the Work/Performance of the Service Provider	**Electoral Education and Information Center (EEIC) Coordinator**
Frequency of Reporting	The service provider will work closely with **EEIC Coordinator** of ESP Project and assigned staff by the project. The service provider will also

	report to the Chief Technical Advisor/Project Manager through the EEIC Coordinator
Location of work	☒ ESP Project
Expected duration of work	30 days
Target start date	25 June 2014
Latest completion date	25 July 2014
Facilities to be Provided by UNDP (i.e., must be excluded from Price Proposal)	NA
Implementation Schedule indicating breakdown and timing of activities/sub-activities	☒ **Required** ☐ Not Required
Names and curriculum vitae of individuals who will be involved in completing the services	☒ **Required** ☐ Not Required
Currency of Proposal	☒ **United States Dollars** ☐ Euro ☒ **Local Currency (NPR)**
Value Added Tax on Price Proposal	☒ **must be inclusive of VAT and other applicable indirect taxes** ☐ must be exclusive of VAT and other applicable indirect taxes
Validity Period of Proposals *(Counting for the last day of submission of quotes)*	☐ 60 days ☐ 90 days ☒ **120 days** In exceptional circumstances, UNDP may request the Proposer to extend the validity of the Proposal beyond what has been initially indicated in this RFP. The Proposal shall then confirm the extension in writing, without any modification whatsoever on the Proposal.
Partial Quotes	☒ **Not permitted** ☐ Permitted
Payment Terms	Payment will be linked to the deliverables
Person(s) to review/inspect/ approve outputs/completed services and authorize the disbursement of payment	Chief Technical Advisor/ Project Manager through EEIC Coordinator

Type of Contract to be Signed	☒ **Purchase Order** ☐ Institutional Contract ☒ **Contract for Professional Services** ☐ Long-Term Agreement ☐ Other Type of Contract
Criteria for Contract Award	☐ Lowest Price Quote among technically responsive offers ☒ **Highest Combined Score (based on the 70% technical offer and 30% price weight distribution)** ☒ Full acceptance of the UNDP Contract General Terms and Conditions (GTC). This is a mandatory criteria and cannot be deleted regardless of the nature of services required. Non acceptance of the GTC may be grounds for the rejection of the Proposal.
Criteria for the Assessment of Proposal	**Technical Proposal (70%)** ☒ Expertise of the Firm 30% ☒ Methodology, Its Appropriateness to the Condition and Timeliness of the Implementation Plan 30% ☒ Management Structure and Qualification of Key Personnel 40% **Financial Proposal (30%)** To be computed as a ratio of the Proposal's offer to the lowest price among the proposals received by UNDP. R**efer to the Evaluation Criteria attached as Annex V.**
UNDP will award the contract to:	☒ **One and only one Service Provider** ☐ One or more Service Providers, depending on the following factors:
Annexes to this RFP	☒ **Form for Submission of Proposal (Annex 2)** ☒ **General Terms and Conditions / Special Conditions (Annex 3)** ☒ **Detailed TOR (Annex 4)** ☒ **Summary of the Technical Evaluation (Annex 5)** ☒ **List of Media Outlets and Sample Clippings (Annex 6)** ☐ Others
Contact Person for Inquiries (Written inquiries only)	Pramila Tripathi UNDP Procurement Unit pramila.tripathi@undp.org Any delay in UNDP's response shall be not used as a reason for extending the deadline for submission, unless UNDP determines that such an extension is necessary and communicates a new deadline to the Proposers.

Other Information [pls. specify]	The Financial evaluation will be carried out only for the technically qualified submissions that passed the minimum technical score of 70% (490 points) of the obtainable score of 700 points in the evaluation of the technical proposals. The Financial Proposal and the Technical Proposal Envelopes MUST BE COMPLETELY SEPARATE and each of them must be submitted sealed individually and clearly marked on the outside as either "TECHNICAL PROPOSAL" or "FINANCIAL PROPOSAL", as appropriate. Each envelope MUST clearly indicate the name of the Proposer. All enclosures/documentation attached along with the proposal should reflect company's name on them. The outer envelope shall be Addressed to: Deputy Country Director (Operations) United Nations Development Programme UN House, Pulchowk Lalitpur, Nepal Marked with: "**UNDP/RFP/005/2014 – To Produce Analytical Report on Media Monitoring of the second Constituent Assembly Election, 2013".** Proposal will be disqualified if it does not follow above instruction.

Annex III

(Details of Media Monitoring findings reffered as appendices from Statistical Analysis.)

1: Daily report of election media monitoring for 1-30 November 2013

			Bias			Tone			Flag			
Date	Category wise	Total	Favour-able	Unfa-vourable	Neutral	Posi-tive	Neutral	Nega-tive	Neutral	Slight bias	Serious bias	Gross violation
11/01/2013	Online	42	18	3	21	19	12	11	24	14	4	0
	Print	161	88	39	33	85	42	30	83	61	13	3
	Radio	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Television	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Grand total	203	106	42	54	104	54	41	107	75	17	3
11/02/2013	Online	30	11	3	15	14	10	5	17	12	0	0
	Print	110	61	24	25	46	34	30	52	42	12	4
	Radio	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Television	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Grand total	140	61	24	25	46	34	30	52	42	12	4
11/03/2013	Online	32	16	1	14	20	6	6	17	15	0	0
	Print	96	55	21	20	47	28	21	46	40	9	1
	Radio	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
	Television	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Grand total	129	71	22	35	67	35	27	64	55	9	1
11/04/2013	Online	23	4	0	19	12	8	3	20	2	1	0
	Print	19	12	6	1	8	5	6	9	8	1	1
	Radio	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Television	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Grand total	42	16	6	20	20	13	9	29	10	2	1
11/05/2013	Online	11	4	0	7	8	2	1	9	2	0	0
	Print	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
	Radio	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Television	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Grand total	12	5	0	7	9	2	1	9	3	0	0
11/06/2013	Online	39	11	3	25	16	16	7	31	8	0	0
	Print	6	5	0	0	4	0	1	1	5	0	0
	Radio	8	2	0	6	1	7	0	8	0	0	0
	Television	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Grand total	54	18	3	32	22	23	8	41	13	0	0
11/07/2013	Online	38	14	4	20	20	11	7	23	13	2	0
	Print	79	47	13	19	42	20	17	53	19	3	4
	Radio	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
	Television	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Grand total	118	61	17	40	62	32	24	77	32	5	4

11/08/2013	Online	36	15	3	18	13	13	10	22	12	2	0
	Print	96	65	11	15	53	16	22	59	24	6	4
	Radio	26	17	2	7	13	10	3	23	2	1	0
	Television	3	0	0	3	1	2	0	3	0	0	0
	Grand total	161	97	16	43	80	41	35	107	38	9	4
11/09/2013	Online	38	12	2	24	17	12	9	29	9	0	0
	Print	115	60	15	39	64	24	26	82	23	8	1
	Radio	41	13	2	26	11	23	7	32	7	2	0
	Television	21	4	2	15	10	7	4	16	5	0	0
	Grand Total	215	89	21	104	102	66	46	159	44	10	1
11/10/2013	Online	41	8	0	33	19	8	14	34	6	1	0
	Print	149	74	14	57	57	51	36	85	41	16	6
	Radio	50	14	7	29	16	26	8	39	6	5	0
	Television	11	4	0	7	9	2	0	10	1	0	0
	Grand total	251	100	21	126	101	87	58	168	54	22	6
11/11/2013	Online	5	1	0	4	0	3	1	4	0	1	0
	Print	225	91	55	73	88	76	56	129	64	25	3
	Radio	8	1	1	6	0	7	1	7	0	0	1
	Television	31	12	1	18	22	3	6	24	7	0	0
	Grand total	269	105	57	101	110	89	64	164	71	26	4
11/12/2013	Online	31	19	6	6	13	4	14	20	6	4	1
	Print	202	78	39	81	78	78	44	111	60	21	9
	Radio	64	17	4	43	10	38	16	57	4	2	1
	Television	42	19	0	23	26	16	0	34	6	1	1
	Grand total	339	133	49	153	127	136	74	222	76	28	12
11/13/2013	Online	14	5	5	4	7	0	7	7	4	3	0
	Print	240	111	61	64	87	63	85	96	92	41	11
	Radio	54	5	12	37	8	24	22	43	10	1	0
	Television	55	20	4	31	15	33	7	41	13	1	0
	Grand total	363	141	82	136	117	120	121	187	119	46	11
11/14/2013	Online	45	23	18	4	24	0	21	21	20	2	2
	Print	288	126	63	97	120	98	66	163	79	26	20
	Radio	77	19	13	45	18	37	22	65	10	0	2
	Television	72	33	4	35	35	24	13	49	15	4	4
	Grand total	482	201	98	181	197	159	122	298	124	32	28
11/15/2013	Online	35	15	9	11	12	3	20	19	5	4	7
	Print	364	179	68	112	155	118	86	209	100	40	15
	Radio	74	17	8	49	31	22	21	63	8	2	1
	Television	68	19	7	42	22	34	12	49	11	5	3
	Grand total	541	230	92	214	220	177	139	340	124	51	26
11/16/2013	Online	49	27	12	10	29	0	20	22	13	3	11
	Print	315	155	56	99	148	89	75	177	91	32	15
	Radio	119	42	10	67	49	52	18	96	16	6	1
	TV	48	15	2	31	22	23	3	37	6	1	4
	Grand total	531	239	80	207	248	164	116	332	126	42	31
11/17/2013	Online	42	14	16	12	17	0	25	23	2	5	12

	Print	404	183	102	112	184	82	134	202	64	48	90
	Radio	131	19	12	100	37	73	21	110	16	3	2
	TV	75	17	8	50	27	41	7	60	2	2	11
	Grand total	652	233	138	274	265	196	187	395	84	58	115
11/18/2013	Online	51	26	21	4	22	2	26	22	5	4	20
	Print	280	101	68	109	107	88	81	181	36	37	26
	Radio	124	16	17	91	27	75	22	111	9	2	2
	TV	70	10	10	50	15	43	12	57	3	1	9
	Grand total	525	153	116	254	171	208	141	371	53	44	57
11/19/2013	Online	26	13	11	2	11	1	14	13	2	6	5
	Print	208	73	42	86	78	70	54	136	31	18	23
	Radio	92	8	16	68	19	50	23	78	4	4	6
	TV	39	2	1	36	5	32	2	36	2	0	1
	Grand total	326	96	70	192	113	153	93	263	39	28	35
11/20/2013	Online	11	9	1	1	9	0	2	7	3	0	1
	Print	207	80	31	95	98	74	34	157	23	15	12
	Radio	123	12	26	85	17	77	29	97	16	6	4
	TV	17	0	2	15	2	15	0	15	2	0	0
	Grand total	358	101	60	196	126	166	65	276	44	21	17
11/21/2013	Online	15	8	1	6	7	3	5	13	1	0	1
	Print	244	92	39	110	106	101	36	178	51	13	2
	Radio	88	15	6	67	22	44	22	78	7	2	1
	TV	44	7	3	34	10	29	5	37	2	1	4
	Grand total	391	122	49	217	145	177	68	306	61	16	8
11/22/2013	Online	10	1	3	6	2	4	4	8	2	0	0
	Print	236	81	54	99	97	88	51	146	55	25	10
	Radio	86	20	11	55	27	45	14	72	9	2	3
	TV	48	10	3	35	16	27	5	41	3	4	0
	Grand total	380	112	71	195	142	164	74	267	69	31	13
11/23/2013	Online	19	4	3	12	5	10	4	13	2	2	2
	Print	234	93	40	101	96	86	51	147	64	14	9
	Radio	104	21	7	76	27	67	10	94	8	2	0
	TV	82	19	2	61	12	63	7	60	21	1	0
	Grand total	439	137	52	250	140	226	72	314	95	19	11
11/24/2013	Online	13	4	2	7	4	8	1	11	1	1	0
	Print	365	135	71	155	128	160	73	232	89	32	12
	Radio	113	19	8	86	27	68	18	102	8	0	3
	TV	81	13	2	66	29	49	3	69	12	0	0
	Grand total	572	171	83	314	188	285	95	414	110	33	15
11/25/2013	Online	16	5	3	8	7	5	4	10	3	3	0
	Print	347	114	70	160	121	148	74	223	79	31	14
	Audio	123	14	11	98	10	91	22	109	12	0	2
	Video	98	16	2	80	27	71	0	92	6	0	0
	Grand total	584	149	86	346	165	315	100	434	100	34	16

11/26/2013	Online	22	8	3	11	8	8	6	14	5	2	1
	Print	286	103	72	110	99	106	80	177	74	23	12
	Radio	127	13	5	109	26	92	9	123	4	0	0
	TV	103	11	2	90	28	73	2	93	10	0	0
	Grand total	538	135	82	320	161	279	97	407	93	25	13
11/27/2013	Online	32	15	12	5	10	4	18	17	8	5	2
	Print	260	104	57	98	92	104	62	168	68	21	3
	Radio	124	21	5	98	25	86	13	116	6	0	2
	TV	100	2	1	97	23	76	1	94	6	0	0
	Grand total	516	142	75	298	150	270	94	395	88	26	7
11/28/2013	Online	28	17	11	0	15	0	13	17	7	3	1
	Print	264	98	51	114	92	113	57	185	60	16	3
	Radio	113	13	1	99	25	82	6	112	1	0	0
	TV	115	4	0	111	14	100	1	111	3	0	1
	Grand total	520	132	63	324	146	295	77	425	71	19	5
11/29/2013	Online	25	15	9	1	7	3	15	15	9	1	0
	Print	232	73	51	107	69	94	69	142	56	30	4
	Radio	124	10	4	110	15	103	6	120	2	2	0
	TV	102	2	1	99	17	84	1	96	6	0	0
	Grand total	483	100	65	317	108	284	91	373	73	33	4
11/30/2013	Online	9	4	2	3	3	4	2	7	0	2	0
	Print	134	42	29	62	43	56	34	77	42	15	0
	Radio	96	7	2	87	7	81	8	93	2	1	0
	TV	76	0	4	72	13	59	4	72	4	0	0
	Grand total	315	53	37	224	66	200	48	249	48	18	0

2: Daily media monitoring of different categories

	Category				
Date	Online	Print	Radio	TV	Total
01-Nov-13	42	161	0	0	203
02-Nov-13	30	110	0	0	140
03-Nov-13	32	96	1	0	129
04-Nov-13	23	19	0	0	42
05-Nov-13	11	1	0	0	12
06-Nov-13	39	6	8	1	54
07-Nov-13	38	79	1	0	118
08-Nov-13	36	96	26	3	161
09-Nov-13	38	115	41	21	215
10-Nov-13	41	149	50	11	251
11-Nov-13	5	225	8	31	269
12-Nov-13	31	202	64	42	339
13-Nov-13	14	240	54	55	363
14-Nov-13	45	288	77	72	482

15-Nov-13	35	364	74	68	541
16-Nov-13	49	315	119	48	531
17-Nov-13	42	404	131	75	652
18-Nov-13	51	280	124	70	525
19-Nov-13	26	208	92	39	326
20-Nov-13	11	207	123	17	358
21-Nov-13	15	244	88	44	391
22-Nov-13	10	236	86	48	380
23-Nov-13	19	234	104	82	439
24-Nov-13	13	365	113	81	572
25-Nov-13	16	347	124	98	585
26-Nov-13	22	286	127	103	538
27-Nov-13	32	260	124	100	516
28-Nov-13	28	264	113	115	520
29-Nov-13	25	232	124	102	483
30-Nov-13	9	134	98	76	317
Total	828	6167	2094	1402	10491

3: Summary of CA election media monitoring findings for 1-30 November 2013

Category	Total		Bias			Tone			Flag		
	Fabourable		Unfa-bour-able	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Nega-tive	Neutral	Slight Bias	Serious Bias	Gross Viola-tion
Print	6167	2534	1240	2308	2445	1486	2151	3661	1524	586	311
Online	828	345	167	316	369	295	164	510	191	61	66
Radio	2094	355	192	1547	469	1282	343	1850	168	44	32
TV	1402	239	61	1546	401	906	95	1197	146	21	31
Grand Total	10491	3473	1660	5717	3684	3063	2753	7218	2029	712	440

4: Monitoring Sample

Weeklies in Kathmandu	
	Sunday
1	Nepal
2	Chhalphal
3	Deshantar
4	Janamanch
	Monday
5	Janabhawana
6	Sanghu
	Tuesday
7	Dristi
8	Punarjagaran
	Wednesday
9	Janaastha
10	Tamakosi Sandesh
11	Budhabar
12	Ghatana ra Bichar
13	Rastrabani
	Thursday
14	Mahima
15	Janadharana
16	Hindu
	Friday
17	Sambhodhan
18	Nepalipatra
19	Bimarsha (red)
	Saturday
20	Dibya Darsan

Print media in details from the districts

Newspapers by District and Region				
S.N.	Outlet	Daily/Weekly	Zone	District
1	Aabeg Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
2	Aaha Sanchar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Rukum
3	Aaja ko Bikalpa Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
4	Aaja ko Batabaran Dainik	Daily	Biratnagar	Saptari
5	Aaja ko Samana Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
6	Aaja ko Bikalpa Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
7	Aanklan Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Dadeldhura
8	Aakraman weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
9	Aarthik Jagaran Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
10	Aarthik Khaptad Today Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
11	Abhibhar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Kalikot
13	Abhiyan Times	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
14	Abhiyan Times Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
15	Achham Aawaj Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Achham
16	Adarsha Nepal	Daily	Pokhara	Kaski
17	Adarsha Samaj	Daily	Kathmandu	Chitwan
18	Aguwa Sanchar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
19	Alkapuri (Nepal) Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Morang
20	Amargadhi Post Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Dadeldhura
21	Anjil Times Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
22	Ankush Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
23	Anmol Mani Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Morang
25	Antaranga	Weekly	Kathmandu	Lalitpur
26	Anukalpa Daily	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
27	Anumodan Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
28	Anukalpa Daily			
29	Api Times Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Darchula
30	Api Today Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
31	Artha Samachar Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
32	Arun Tamor Bimonthly	Weekly		Panchthar
33	Aujar Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Sunsari
34	Arjundhara Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Jhapa
35	Avenues Khabar Monthly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Rolpa
36	Babai Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Bardiya
37	Baitadi Sandesh Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Baitadi
38	Baitadi Sandesh Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Baitadi
39	Bajhang half Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Bajhang
40	Bajhang Update Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Bajhang
41	Balam Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Rukum
42	Bardiya Times Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Bardiya
43	Barun Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Jhapa

44	Baruwa Times Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Udayapur
45	Bhanjyang National Daily	Daily	Pokhara	Tanahu
46	Bhimeshwor weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Dolakha
47	Bhojpur Post Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Bhojpur
48	Bhojpuripati Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
49	Bhumadhya Rekha	Weekly	Kathmandu	Makawanpur
50	Bihani Ko Tara Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Jumla
51	Bijaypur Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
53	Bimba Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Doti
54	Biratpath Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Morang
55	Bishwadeep			
56	Biswasutra Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
57	Blast Times Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Sunsari
58	Buddhaawaaz Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Kapilbastu
59	Butwal Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Rupandehi
60	Bypass Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
61	Chandrakanta Weekly	Weekly		
62	Cheshta Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
63	Chhalphal national weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kathmandu
64	Chitwan Darpan	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
65	Chitwan Post Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Chitwan
66	Chitwan Saptahik	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
67	Chitwan Bhumi	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
68	Chure Kunja Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Bardiya
69	Chure Sandesh Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
70	Commander Post daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Kathmandu
71	Crime operation	Weekly	Biratnagar	Morang
72	Dadeldhura Post Daily.	Daily	Dhangadi	Dadeldhura
73	Dailekh Times Half Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Dailekh
74	Daily Express Daily	Daily		
75	Dainik Nepalgunj Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
76	Dainik Patra	Daily	Kathmandu	Rupandehi
77	Damauli Khabar Daily	Daily	Pokhara	Tanahu
78	Darchula Sandesh Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Darchula
79	Darshan Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Morang
80	Dashrath Times Half Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Baitadi
81	Deurali Daily	Daily		
83	Deshkoastitwa Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
84	Dhading Aawaj Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Dhading
85	Dhadkan weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Dhading
86	Dhamaka Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Dailekh
87	Dhangadhi Post Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
88	Dhangadi Post Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
89	Dhankuta Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke

90	Dhaopathan Daily	Daily	Pokhara	Baglung
91	Dharan Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
92	Dhadkan Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
93	Dhaulagiri Jagaran Daily	Daily	Pokhara	Baglung
94	Dhaulagiri Star Weekly	Daily	Pokhara	Baglung
95	Dhaulagiri Sanchar Weekly	Weekly	Pokhara	Parbat
96	Dibya Darshan Weekly	Weekly		
97	Dibyadristi Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Morang
98	Dibyaroshani Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
99	Dipayal Post weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Doti
100	Disa Nirdesan Kanchan Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
101	Dolakha Samachar Patra	Weekly	Kathmandu	Dolakha
102	Doteli Aawaj Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Doti
103	Doti Hailait Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Doti
104	Dristanta Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Morang
105	Duwari Daily Swarga	Daily		
106	Ekson Times Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
107	Farichh Nepal Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
108	Farwest Times Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
109	Fastime Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Sunsari
110	Fewa	Daily	Biratnagar	Morang
111	Fidim Post Weekly	Weekly		Panchthar
112	Ganatantra Daily	Daily		
113	Gandaki Khabar	Daily	Pokhara	Kaski
114	Gangasagar Daily	Daily		
115	Ganatantra Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Dang
116	Garmin Jagaran National Weekly	Weekly	Pokhara	Baglung
117	Gaughar Sandesh Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Dadeldhura
118	Gaunghar Satdine Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Dang
119	Gaighat Today	Daily	Biratnagar	Udayapur
120	Ghoda Ghodi Sandesh Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kailali
121	Godavari Express	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
122	Golden News	Daily	Pokhara	Kaski
123	Good News Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
124	Gorakchya Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Dang
126	Gramin Bikash Monthly	Daily	Nepalgunj	Jajarkot
127	Green Madhes	Daily	Biratnagar	Saptari
128	Halesi weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Khotang
129	Hamro Akhabar Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Surkhet
130	Hamro Ekata Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Pyuthan
131	Hamro Gorkha Daily	Daily	Pokhara	Gorkha
132	Hamro Indrawati Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
133	Hamro Jan Sandesh Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kailali
134	Hamro Kanoon Monthly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Rukum

135	Hamro Karnali Khabar Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Kalikot
136	Hamro Naya Nepal Bichar Daily	Weekly	Biratnagar	Dhankuta
137	Hamro naya Nepal Bichar Saptahik	Weekly		
138	Hamro Naya Nepal Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Surkhet
139	Hamro Nigrani Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Baitadi
140	Hamro Samachar Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
141	Hamro Seti Aawaj Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Doti
142	Hamro Seti Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kailali
143	Hetauda Sandesh	Weekly	Kathmandu	Makawanpur
144	Hetauda Today Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Makawanpur
145	Hetauda Sandesh Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Makawanpur
146	Highway Khabar Weekly	Daily	Kathmandu	Dhading
147	Hill times Daily.	Daily	Dhangadi	Dadeldhura
150	Himali Suskera Weekly	Weekly		Dolpa
151	Himchuli Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Dailekh
152	Himsagar Monthly	Monthly		
153	Hind Kush Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Dadeldhura
154	Hindu Weekly	Weekly		
155	Ilam Post Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Ilam
156	Ilam express Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Ilam
157	Jaleshwar Today Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Mahottari
158	Jaljala Post Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Rolpa
159	Jana Agenda Monthly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kailali
160	Jana Arpan Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
161	Jana Bhawana Weekly	Weekly		
162	Jana Sangharsa	Weekly	Kathmandu	Rupandehi
163	Janaandolan Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Jhapa
164	Janaawaj Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Morang
165	Janabidroha Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Morang
166	Janabiswas Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
167	Janajoyti Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
168	Janakpur Express daily	Daily	Janakpur	Dhanusa
169	Janakpur Today Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Dhanusa
170	Janamat Quarterly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
171	Janamukti Marga Weekly	Weekly		
172	Janapratirodh Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
173	Janasamsad Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Jhapa
174	Janatapatra Weekly	Weekly		
175	Janbhandahor Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
176	Janachetana Halfweekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Dadeldhura
177	Janakranti Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
178	Janasamarpit Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
179	Janasarokar Post Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Baitadi
180	Janashristi Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa

181	Janabadi Aawaj Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Morang
182	Jayprithivi Post	Weekly	Dhangadi	Bajhang
183	Jhilmila Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Dadeldhura
184	Josh Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
185	Jugal Times Weekly	Weekly		
186	Junkiri Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Rolpa
187	Jwarbhata Weekly	Weekly		
188	Kachari Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Humla
189	Kailali Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
190	Kailali Hotline Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
191	Kakani Post	Daily		
192	Kakrebihar Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Surkhet
193	Kalaiya Today Weekly	Weekly	Janakpur	Bara
194	Kalapani Post Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Darchula
195	Kaligandaki Dally	Daily	Pokhara	Parbat
196	Kaliyug Sandesh Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
197	Kalprista Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
198	Kalprista daily	Daily		Bajura
199	Kanchanjanga Times Daily	Daily		Panchthar
200	Kanchanpur Post Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
201	Kankre Bihar Daily	Daily		
202	Kanthpath Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Morang
204	Kapilbastu Darpan Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Kapilbastu
205	Kapilbastu Sandesh Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Kapilbastu
206	Karmada	Weekly	Pokhara	Lamjung
207	Karnali Khojkhabar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Jumla
208	Karnali Ko Sandesh Weekly	Daily	Nepalgunj	Jumla
209	Karnali Sandesh Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
210	Karnali Sarobar Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Humla
212	Kaski Aawaj	Daily	Pokhara	Kaski
213	Kavre Hotline Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
214	Kavre Kosheli Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
215	Kavre Post Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
216	Kavre Times Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
217	KayaKairan Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Chitwan
218	Khabar Chautari Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
219	Khalanga Darpan Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Jajarkot
220	Khaptad News Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Achham
221	Khulasa Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Dadeldhura
222	Kiran Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
223	Kreepa Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Bara
224	Lamjung Aawaj	Weekly	Pokhara	Lamjung
225	Lamjung Jagaran	Weekly	Pokhara	Lamjung
226	Lamjung Khabar	Daily	Pokhara	Lamjung

227	Lekha Jokha Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kailali
228	Lokmanch Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Surkhet
229	Lokpriya Samachar Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
230	Lokpriya Sandesh daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
231	Loktantra Sandesh Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Chitwan
232	Loktimes Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
233	Lumbini Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Rupandehi
234	Lumbini Khabar	Weekly	Kathmandu	Rupandehi
235	Madhyapaschim Sandesh Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
236	Madhya Marga Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
237	Madi Saptahik	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
238	Mahila Sanchar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
239	Malbara Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
240	Mandavi Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Pyuthan
241	Mankhind Sandhiyakalin daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
242	Mashal Darpan Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
243	Madhyastha weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Makawanpur
244	Mechi Times Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
245	Mechikali daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Rupandehi
246	Mission Madesh Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
247	Mission Today Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
248	Morning Bell Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
249	Morning Times Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Sunsari
250	Mugu Post Monthly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Mugu
251	Muktichhetra Daily	Daily	Pokhara	Baglung
252	Muldhar	Daily	Kathmandu	Kathmandu
253	Muluki Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Udayapur
254	Myagdi Sanchar weekly	Weekly	Pokhara	Myagdi
255	Naba Janachetana Daily	Daily	Pokhara	Palpa
256	Naba Janata	Daily	Kathmandu	Kathmandu
257	Nagarik Awaj Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
259	Namaste Times Weekly	Weekly	Janakpur	Bara
260	Narayani Dainik	Daily	Kathmandu	Makawanpur
261	Narayani Today	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
262	Naulo Jan ubhar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Dang
263	Naba Bikalpa weekly	Weekly	Pokhara	Myagdi
264	Naba Kshitiz Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
265	Naya Abhimat Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
266	Naya Corse Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
267	Naya Itihas Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Bara
268	Naya Patrika	Daily	Kathmandu	Kathmandu
269	Naya Bhawana	Daily	Kathmandu	Rupandehi
270	Naya Yugbodh Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Dang
271	Naya Sanchar Darshan Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre

272	Nepal Path Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Doti
273	Nepali express daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
274	New Madhesh express daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
275	New Pachimale Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
276	New Pashcim Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
277	New Samadhan Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
278	New Shristi Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Morang
279	New Today Nepal Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
280	Newmechi Times	Daily	Biratnagar	Jhapa
281	News Flash Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
282	News Force Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Doti
283	News Namaste Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
284	News Today Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Saptari
285	News Yatharth Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
286	Nispakchhya Dhoni daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
287	Nuwakot Pukar	Daily	Kathmandu	Nuwakot
288	Pahura Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
289	Pakhribash Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
290	Palpa Daily	Daily	Pokhara	Palpa
291	Palpa Times Weekly	Weekly	Pokhara	Palpa
292	Paradarshi Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Chitwan
293	Pardafas Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
294	Parbat Ghosana Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
295	Pashcim Express Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kailali
296	Pashcim Today Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
297	Paschim Nepal Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
298	Paschimseti half weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Bajhang
299	Pawar Laine Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
300	Peoples Times	Daily	Biratnagar	Jhapa
301	Phewa Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Morang
302	Phidim Post Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
303	Pipalbot Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Bara
304	Pokhara Hotline Daily	Daily	Pokhara	Kaski
305	Pokhara Patra	Daily	Pokhara	Kaski
306	Pradeshik Samachar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Kapilbastu
307	Prajwalit Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
308	Prateek Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
309	Pratidin	Daily	Biratnagar	Jhapa
310	Pratidin Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
311	Pratik Dainik Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
312	Prayas Mid Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Makawanpur
313	Pradesh Dainik	Daily	Kathmandu	Makawanpur
314	Public Times Weekly	Weekly		Panchthar
315	Purba Kshitiz Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke

316	Purba Nepal Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
317	Purba Post Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Taplejung
318	Purba Sandesh	Daily	Biratnagar	Jhapa
319	Purba Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Jhapa
320	Purbanchal	Daily	Biratnagar	Jhapa
321	Purnapusti Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
322	Purwajyoti Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
323	Purwajyoti Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
324	Pyuthan Samachar Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Pyuthan
325	Pyuthan Vision Monthly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Pyuthan
326	Rajbiraj Dainik	Daily	Biratnagar	Saptari
327	Rajbiraj Today	Daily	Biratnagar	Saptari
328	Rajdhani Aasth	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
330	Rama Rosan Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Achham
331	Ramaroshan Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Achham
332	Rapti Post Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Dang
333	Rapti Samachar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Dang
334	Rara Raiwar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Mugu
335	Rastriya Janahit	Weekly	Biratnagar	Morang
336	Rastriya Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
337	Rastriya Samachar Patra Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Morang
338	Rastriya Sandarbha Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
339	Reports Time Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Kathmandu
341	Review	Daily	Kathmandu	Kathmandu
342	Rolpa Khabar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Rolpa
343	Rolpa Samachar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Rolpa
344	Roshi Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
345	Rukumeli Bikash Lahar Monthly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Rukum
346	Rupse Dally	Daily	Pokhara	Myagdi
347	Sachi Khabar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Dang
348	Sadbhav Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
349	Sadbhav Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
350	Sagun Sandesh Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
351	Sahara Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
352	Sahara News Dally	Daily	Pokhara	Parbat
353	Sahikura Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Makawanpur
354	Sahayatri Post Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
355	Sailung Surya	Weekly	Kathmandu	Dolakha
356	Saina Maina daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Rupandehi
357	Sajha Bisauni Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Surkhet
358	Sajha Kura Dainik	Daily	Kathmandu	Makawanpur
359	Sajha News Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Kapilbastu
360	Sajha Partibimba Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Dailekh
361	Samacharpatra Daily	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kathmandu

362	Samaj Jagaran Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
363	Samakalinpath Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
364	Samaya Adhikar Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
365	Sambridda Samaj Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Makawanpur
366	Sampurna Khabar	Daily	Kathmandu	Chitwan
367	Samridhha Panchthar Weekly	Weekly		Panchthar
368	Sancharpatra Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Chitwan
369	Sandesh Sarathi Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Doti
370	Sandkpur Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Ilam
371	Sanghiya Express	Weekly	Kathmandu	Rupandehi
372	Sanjivani Patra Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
373	Saptahik Chitwan	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
374	Sarlahi Dainik	Daily	Biratnagar	Sarlahi
375	Sarobar Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Humla
376	Sarthak Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
377	Satti Karnali Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kailali
378	Satya Sandesh Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Parsa
379	Satyapan Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
380	Seti Samachar Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
381	Seti Sandesh Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Bajhang
382	Shankhanad Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
383	Saugat Khabar Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Baitadi
384	Shikhar half weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Darchula
385	Shivagadi Sandesh Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Kapilbastu
386	Shosthe Shetana Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
387	Shree Dishabodh Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kailali
388	Shree jan aakrosh dainik	Daily	Biratnagar	Saptari
389	Shree Nepal Times Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
390	Shreejanamat Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
391	Shuklaphanta Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
392	Siddhartha Dainik	Daily	Kathmandu	Rupandehi
393	Sikhar Halfweekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Darchula
394	Silingjung Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
395	Sindhuli Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Sindhuli
396	Sindhuli Saugat Daily	Daily	Janakpur	Sindhuli
397	Solu Samachar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
398	Solukhumbu Samachar weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Solokhumbu
399	Sram Srijana Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
400	Suchana Patra Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Dang
401	Sudhur Sandesh Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
402	Sudoor Khabar Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
403	Sudoor Pashcim Prayas Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kailali
404	Shuklaphanta Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kanchanpur
405	Sun Star Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Rolpa

406	Sunkoshi Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Kavre
407	Surkhet Pahichan Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Surkhet
408	Surkhet Patra Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Surkhet
409	Surma Khabar Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Bajhang
410	Surnaya Times Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Baitadi
411	Suvecha Sandesh Weekly	Weekly	Kathmandu	Chitwan
412	Swargadwari Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Pyuthan
413	Swatantra Birat Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Morang
414	Tesro Aankha Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke
417	The Public Today daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Kathmandu
419	Tikapur Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
420	Tikapur Times Daily	Daily	Dhangadi	Kailali
421	Tillotama Daily	Daily	Kathmandu	Rupandehi
422	Triyoga Times Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
423	Triyuga Express	Daily	Biratnagar	Udayapur
424	Udghosh Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Morang
425	Udghosh Weekly	Weekly	Dhangadi	Kailali
426	Udayapur Post Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
427	Ujyalo Khabar Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Kapilbastu
428	Ujyalo Taplejung Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Taplejung
429	Ujyalo Taplejung Weekly	Weekly	Biratnagar	Taplejung
430	Ujyaalo Rastriya Dainik	Daily	Biratnagar	Morang
431	Ujyalo Taplejung Weekly	Weekly		Taplejung
432	Ujyalo Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
433	Ujyalopatra Daily	Daily	Biratnagar	Morang
434	Yug Aaohan Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Surkhet
435	Youth today Weekly	Weekly	Nepalgunj	Banke
436	Yug Awhaan Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Surkhet
437	Yugyan Daily	Daily	Nepalgunj	Banke

438	Simanchal daily			
439	Sindhu Bulanda Weekly			
440	Sindhu Digdarshan Monthly			
441	Sindhu Jagaran Weekly			
442	Sindhu Jwala Weekly			
443	Sindhu Prabah Weekly			
444	Sindhu Sanchar Weekly			
445	Sindhu Sangram Weekly			
446	Sindhu Yatra Monthly			
447	Sindhuka Suseli Monthly			
448	Sindhupalchok Daily			
449	Sindhupost Weekly			

450	Su-Sandesh Weekly			
451	Sudoor Sandarbha Weekly			
452	Sundar Sandesh			
453	Surma Khabar Weekly			
454	Tahalka Dot Nepal daily			
455	Tanahu Udghosh Daily			
456	Tarai Time Daily			
457	Tawil Weekly			
458	The Exclusive Weekly			
459	Yalamber Times			
460	Suruwat Daily			
461	Shikar Paichan Weekly			
462	Setimadi Daily			
463	Saugat Khabar Daily			
464	Sanghu Weekly			
465	Sanjh Biswani Weekly			
466	Sambodhan			
467	Samadhan			
468	Salyani Sandesh Weekly			
469	Sadhin Sambad			
470	Sachi Post Daily			
471	Rastrachakra Weekly			
472	Rangun Darpan Weekly			
473	Pratush Daily			
474	Prabhat Pheri Weekly			
475	Paschim Today			
476	Pashcim Nepal Daily			
477	Paribartan Post Weekly			
478	Paribartan Post			
479	Panchpokhari Weekly			
480	Okhareni Weekly			
481	Omkar Bhet Weekly			
482	News Barhabise Weekly			
484	New Bimarsha			
485	Nepal Samachar Patra			
486	Nepal Times			
487	Nepal Magazine weekly			
488	Naya Yatra Weekly			
489	Naba Sangram daily			
490	Nawabihani			
491	Nawajagriti Weekly			
492	Nawasangram Daily			
493	National Janamanch Vernacular Weekly			
494	Natrawati Weekly			

495	Narayani Daily			
496	Mithila Bishesh Daily			
497	Mithila Dot Com daily			
498	Mero Jagaran Weekly			
499	Jagaran Daily			
500	Jai Pirthivi Post Weekly			
501	Janadesh Myagdi			
502	Janadharana Weekly			
503	Madiseti Prabah Daily			
504	Myagdi Sanchar Weekly			
505	Mahima Weekly			
506	Malika Post Weekly			
507	Malwara Daily			
508	Mangal Prabat Kiran Weekly			
509	Khandan Weekly			
510	Krishna dainik			
511	Krishna Daily			
512	Lawa Agrasan Weekly			
513	Loktantra Monthly			
514	Lokwani Daily			

Name of other FMs

S.N	Development Region	District	Name of FM	
1	Far Western	Achham	Radio Ramaroshan	
2	Far Western	Achham	Radio Janapriya	
3	Western	Arghakhanchi	Radio Arghakhanchi	
4	Western	Baglung	Dhorpatan Fm	
5	Western	Baglung	Dhaulagiri Radio	
6	Western	Baglung	Sayapatri Fm	
7	Far Western	Baitadi	Saugat Fm	
8	Far Western	Bajhang	Saipal	
9	Far Western	Bajura	Paurakhi Fm	
10	Far Western	Bajura	Radio Bajura	
11	Far Western	Banke	Radio Bheri	
12	Mid Western	Banke	Radio Krishnasar	
13	Mid Western	Banke	Radio Express Fm	
14	Mid Western	Banke	Radio Rubaru	
15	Central	Bara	Sanskar Fm	
16	Central	Bara	Radio Simara	
17	Mid Western	Bardiya	Radio Gurbaba Fm	
18	Central	Bhaktapur	Nepaliko Radio	
19	Central	Bhaktapur	Bhaktapur Fm	
20	Central	Chitwan	Kalika Fm-91Fm	
21	Central	Chitwan	Synergy Fm	

22	Central	Chitwan	Radio Arpan	
23	Central	Chitwan	Radio Chitwan	
24	Central	Chitwan	Radio Triveni	
25	Central	Chitwan	Radio Madi	
26	Central	Chitwan	Kalika Fm-95.2 Fm	
27	Central	Chitwan	Hamro Fm	
28	Far Western	Dadeldhura	Radio Amargadhi	
29	Mid Western	Dailekh	Dhrubatara Radio	
30	Mid Western	Dang	Hamro Pahuch Fm	
31	Mid Western	Dang	Radio Prakriti	
32	Mid Western	Dang	Radio Madhyapaschim	
33	Mid Western	Dang	Radio Tulsipur	
34	Mid Western	Dang	Radio Jharana	
35	Mid Western	Dang	Radio Highway	
36	Mid Western	Dang	Radio Swargadwari	
37	Far Western	Darchula	Naya Nepal	
38	Far Western	Darchula	Kalapani Fm	
39	Central	Dhading	Radio Dhading	
40	Central	Dhading	Radio Bihani	
41	Eastern	Dhankuta	Radio Makalu	
42	Eastern	Dhankuta	Radio Dhankuta	
43	Central	Dhanusa	Radio Mithila	
44	Central	Dhanusa	Mithilanchal Fm	
45	Central	Dhanusa	Radio Today	
46	Central	Dhanusa	Radio Janakpur	
47	Central	Dolakha	Hamro Radio	
48	Central	Dolakha	Radio Sailung	
49	Mid Western	Dolpa	Radio Dolpa	
50	Far Western	Doti	Radio Triveni	
51	Western	Gorkha	Radio Gorkha	
52	Western	Gorkha	Choice Fm	
53	Western	Gulmi	Radio Resunga	
54	Eastern	Ilam	Nepal Bani Fm	
55	Eastern	Ilam	Ilam Fm	
56	Eastern	Jhapa	Fm Mechi Tunes	
57	Eastern	Jhapa	Saptarangi Fm	
58	Eastern	Jhapa	Kanchanjunga Fm	
59	Eastern	Jhapa	Radio Sunrise	
60	Eastern	Jhapa	Radio Sargam	
61	Eastern	Jhapa	Radio Vision	
62	Eastern	Jhapa	Radio Birat	
63	Eastern	Jhapa	Pathibhara Fm	
64	Eastern	Jhapa	Birta Fm	
65	Eastern	Jhapa	Simana Fm	
66	Mid Western	Jumla	Radio Karnali Fm	
67	Mid Western	Jumla	Radio Karnali	
68	Far Western	Kailali	Radio Paschim Today	

69	Far Western	Kailali	Tikapur Fm	
70	Far Western	Kailali	Dinesh Fm	
71	Far Western	Kailali	Godavari Fm	
72	Far Western	Kailali	Sudursandesh	
73	Far Western	Kanchanpur	Radio Mahakali	
74	Far Western	Kanchanpur	Shuklaphanta Fm	
75	Far Western	Kanchanpur	Radio Nagarik	
76	Western	Kapilbastu	Radio Buddha Awaaj	
77	Western	Kapilbastu	Radio Kapilbastu	
78	Western	Kaski	Radio Barahi	
79	Western	Kaski	Radio Taranga	
80	Western	Kaski	Big Fm	
81	Western	Kaski	Pokhara Fm	
82	Western	Kaski	Radio Annapurna Fm	
83	Western	Kaski	Machhapuchhre Fm	
84	Western	Kaski	Radio Lekhnath	
85	Western	Kaski	Radio Janani	
86	Western	Kaski	Radio Safalta	
87	Western	Kaski	Radio Sunaulo	
88	Western	Kaski	Gurkhali Fm	
89	Central	Kathmandu	Classic Fm	
90	Central	Kathmandu	Capital Fm	
91	Central	Kathmandu	Citizen Fm	
92	Central	Kathmandu	Mero Fm	
93	Central	Kathmandu	Radio Upatyaka	
94	Central	Kathmandu	Star Fm	
95	Central	Kathmandu	Times Fm	
96	Central	Kathmandu	Hit Fm	
97	Central	Kathmandu	Radio Audio	
98	Central	Kathmandu	Maitri Fm	
99	Central	Kathmandu	Mirmire Fm	
100	Central	Kathmandu	Gorkha Fm	
101	Central	Kathmandu	Nepal Fm	
102	Central	Kathmandu	Image Fm	
103	Central	Kathmandu	Radiocity	
104	Central	Kathmandu	Radio Rajdhani	
105	Central	Kathmandu	Keeps Fm	
106	Central	Kathmandu	CIN	
107	Central	Kavre	Prime Fm	
108	Central	Kavre	Grace Fm	
109	Central	Kavre	Radio Abc	
110	Eastern	Khotang	Radio Halesi	
111	Central	Lalitpur	Headlines	
112	Central	Lalitpur	Kantipur Fm	
113	Central	Lalitpur	Sagarmatha Fm	
114	Central	Lalitpur	Ujyalo Fm	
115	Western	Lamjung	Radio Lamjung	

116	Western	Lamjung	Radio Marsyangdi	
117	Western	Lamjung	Radio Chautari	
118	Central	Mahottari	Jaleshwarnath Fm	
119	Central	Mahottari	Radio Rudraksha	
120	Central	Mahottari	Radio Sungava	
121	Central	Makawanpur	Radio Thaha Sanchar	
122	Central	Makawanpur	Radio Makawanpur	
123	Central	Makawanpur	Hetauda Fm	
124	Central	Makawanpur	Radio Palung	
125	Central	Makawanpur	Shakti Fm	
126	Eastern	Morang	B Fm	
127	Eastern	Morang	Radio Suseli	
128	Eastern	Morang	Radio Prayash	
129	Eastern	Morang	Makalu Fm	
130	Eastern	Morang	Koshi Fm	
131	Western	Myagdi	Myagdikali Fm	
132	Western	Nawalparasi	Radio Parasi	
133	Western	Nawalparasi	Bijaya Fm	
134	Western	Nawalparasi	Radio Madhyabindu Fm	
135	Central	Nuwakot	Nuwakot Fm	
136	Central	Nuwakot	Radio Trishuli	
137	Central	Nuwakot	Radio Jalapa	
138	Eastern	Panchthar	Sinhalila Fm	
139	Western	Palpa	Samudayik Radio Madan Pokhara	
140	Western	Palpa	Srinagar Fm	
141	Eastern	Panchthar	Eagle Fm	
142	Western	Parbat	Radio Didibahini	
143	Central	Parsa	Indreni Fm	
144	Central	Parsa	Aakas Fm	
145	Central	Parsa	Radio Birgunj	
146	Central	Parsa	Radio Bindas	
147	Central	Parsa	Narayani Fm	
148	Mid Western	Pyuthan	Radio Lisne Aawaj	
149	Central	Ramechhap	Radio Tinlal	
150	Central	Ramechhap	Hajurko Radio	
151	Central	Rautahat	Rautahat Fm	
152	Central	Rautahat	Radio Nunthar	
153	Mid Western	Rolpa	Radio Rolpa	
154	Mid Western	Rolpa	Radio Jaljala	
155	Mid Western	Rukum	Radio Sano Bheri	
156	Mid Western	Rukum	Radio Sisne Fm	
157	Western	Rupandehi	Butwal Fm	
158	Western	Rupandehi	Radio Lumbini	
159	Western	Rupandehi	Radio Namaste	
160	Western	Rupandehi	Radio Malmala	
161	Western	Rupandehi	Siddhartha Fm	

162	Mid Western	Salyan	Radio Sarada	
163	Mid Western	Salyan	Radio Rapti	
164	Eastern	Sankhuwasabha	Gurans Fm	
165	Eastern	Sankhuwasabha	Khandbari Fm	
166	Eastern	Saptari	Bhorukawa Fm	
167	Eastern	Saptari	Cfm	
168	Eastern	Saptari	Radio Chhinnamastsa	
169	Central	Sarlahi	Samudayik Radio Sarlahi	
170	Central	Sarlahi	Dhukdhuki Fm	
171	Central	Sarlahi	My Fm	
172	Central	Sarlahi	Radio Ekata	
173	Central	Sindhuli	Radio Sindhuligadhi	
174	Central	Sindhupalchok	Radio Sindhu	
175	Central	Sindhupalchok	Radio Melamchi	
176	Central	Sindhupalchok	Radio Planet	
177	Eastern	Siraha	Radio Phoolwari	
178	Eastern	Solukhumbu	Solu Fm	
179	Eastern	Solukhumbu	Himal Fm	
180	Eastern	Sunsari	Saptakoshi Fm	
181	Eastern	Sunsari	Bijaypur Fm	
182	Eastern	Sunsari	Radio Ganatantra Rapti Fm	
183	Eastern	Sunsari	Namaste Fm	
184	Eastern	Sunsari	Popular Fm	
185	Eastern	Sunsari	Star Fm	
186	Mid Western	Surkhet	Radio Bheri	
187	Mid Western	Surkhet	Bulbule Fm	
188	Mid Western	Surkhet	Jagaran Fm	
189	Western	Syangja	Radio Waling	
190	Western	Syangja	Radio Syangja	
191	Western	Syangja	Adhikhola Fm	
192	Western	Tanahu	Damauli Fm	
193	Western	Tanahu	Radio Tanahu	
194	Western	Tanahu	Radio Bandipur	
195	Western	Tanahu	Radio Dhor Barahi	
196	Eastern	Taplejung	Radio Taplejung	
197	Eastern	Taplejung	Radio Tamor	
198	Eastern	Terhathum	Terhathum Fm	
199	Eastern	Udayapur	Radio Udayapur	
200	Eastern	Udayapur	Radio Triyuga	

The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

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