

# Monthly Update – November 2013

## UN Resident Coordinator's Office Nepal



*This report is issued by the UN RCO with inputs from its UN Field Coordination Offices and other partners and sources. The report covers November 2013. The next report will be issued the first week of January 2014.*

### CONTEXT

#### Political update

The election to the second Constituent Assembly (CA) was successfully conducted on 19 November. The months leading up to the election had been marked by fears in some quarters that it would not take place, and the weeks leading up to polling day featured a violent and obstructive election boycott by the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-Maoist). However, unity among participating parties behind the election process, firm but restrained action by the security forces and a strong voter turnout on Election Day confounded the worst fears. The election was probably the most peaceful of Nepal's modern democratic history. The campaign was largely dominated by local and development related issues. According to the preliminary assessments of international and national election observation actors, the technical preparations and operations for the election (including the use of a new electoral roll and last minute distribution of voter ID cards) passed off relatively smoothly.<sup>1</sup>

The initial first-past-the-post (FPTP) constituency results indicated a major shift in the political landscape. The Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M) was trailing in third place far behind the Nepali Congress (NC) and Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML). This came as a major shock to the UCPN-M, with Party Chairperson, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, alleging a nationwide electoral fraud, withdrawing his party agents from counting centres and threatening to boycott the second CA. Other Madheshi and identity-based parties, which were also trailing in the results, soon followed suit. After the boycott announcements, uncertainty persisted for several days about what next actions the objecting parties might take. However, no significant protests by UCPN-M, Madhesh or identity-based parties were reported.<sup>2</sup> No specific evidence of major electoral fraud has yet emerged and interlocutors indicate that these parties internally accept that the election was essentially credible. These parties are now attempting to negotiate their position in the changed political equation, although they have not dropped their allegations of fraud.

The early trends in results were largely borne out as the counting process went on. The NC emerged as the largest party under the FPTP system with 105 seats, followed by the UML with 91 seats and UCPN-M with 24 seats. The Madheshi parties fared badly with only a handful of FPTP seats. The list of winning FPTP candidates is less inclusive than at the last election: in particular, only 10 women won compared to thirty previously, and 1 Dalit compared to 7 previously. These reductions will partly be addressed by the application of quotas under the proportional representation (PR) system. Under PR, the NC won 91 seats, the UML 84, the UCPN-M 54, and the royalist, anti-secular Rastriya Prajantantric Party-Nepal (RPP-N) came fourth with 24 seats. Altogether 30 parties won at least one seat through either system. The NC and UML therefore control very nearly two thirds of the seats in the 601 member assembly.

Negotiations have now begun on forming a coalition government, though it is impossible to predict how long this may take. The largest party, the NC, has called for all parties to join a consensus government with the objective of completing constitution drafting within one year. By the beginning of December, the UCPN-M had publicly committed to joining the new CA on certain conditions, including an investigation by a high-level independent commission into their allegations of mass election rigging, a constitutional amendment for returning to consensus decision-making in the CA and no reversal of all decisions undertaken by the previous CA (particularly those establishing Nepal as a secular federal republic).

<sup>1</sup> For example, see the 21 November preliminary statements / interim reports of: [The Carter Center](#); [EU Election Observation Mission-Nepal 2013](#); and the Nepal [National Election Observation Committee](#) (NEOC).

<sup>2</sup> Except for some limited and local protests in Sarlahi and Dhanusha districts on 22 November.

## Operational space

The principal operational space challenges faced by Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs) signatories during November were related to the ongoing election process, as well as enforcement of the 'election code of conduct'. BOGs signatories limited their interactions with stakeholders (including political parties) and postponed or canceled planned trainings, workshops and community visits to remain in line with the code of conduct (though key government and other counter-parts were also busy with election preparations).

Poll opposing political parties conducted an all Nepal *bandh* effectively in almost all districts on 11 November<sup>3</sup> and a subsequent all Nepal transportation strike from 12-18 November.<sup>4</sup> Some BOGs signatories (INGOs) and their implementing partners imposed self-restrictions on vehicle movements during the *bandh* and strike; additionally, the movements of their staff were further disrupted with the halting of public transport. Nonetheless, no obstructions of UN or diplomatic vehicles were reported during the *bandh* or transportation strike. On a positive note, there were no significant reports of donation demands on BOGs signatories by political parties or affiliated groups (though there were reports of sister-wing trade unions requesting donations from government employees to support election campaigns in some areas).

## EMERGING ISSUES AFFECTING PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

*The analysis below is based on the tracking of information about events consolidated from media, police, UN, NGO and other development partners—see Annex: Overview of Political and Election Related Violence (1 Oct to 19 Nov 2013).*

### Overall trends of violence during the election process

Overall, there was only a moderate level of violence related to the electoral process—some violence occurred between campaigning political parties, but the predominance of violence and obstruction was committed by parties opposed to the elections.<sup>5</sup> In many ways, this may have been the most 'peaceful' election in Nepal's recent modern history. While the poll opposing *bandh*/transportation strike from 11-18 November caused disruption across much of the country (accompanied by a campaign of IED plantings and explosions), it had diminishing effects as Election Day neared and there were few reported incidents of poll opposing parties directly obstructing the election operation (beyond IED plantings). Inter-party campaign violence remained relatively low throughout, though there was a modest 'spike' of incidents on Election Day itself. Overall, the number of reported incidents of direct violence was still relatively minor in comparison to previous elections and the overall voter turnout was very high<sup>6</sup>, potentially representing strong public confidence in and support of the election process.

In general, there were a number of key positive dynamics regarding the use of violence in the lead-up to and on Election Day:

- Political party youth wings were involved in very few instances of political violence (only 19 reported incidents from 1 October to 19 November—most of these incidents occurred in Rukum (5 incidents), Dailekh, Dolpa and Gulmi (2 incidents each)).
- Attributable armed group activities were negligible despite a security focus on the threat of 'armed groups' (though it has been suggested that special security measures put in place for the election neutralised this threat). However, armed groups may have been involved in some IED plantings or other 'anonymous' acts of violence (whether for their own interests or as 'contractors' for political parties).
- There were no significant incidents of 'communal' or identity-based violence related to the election

<sup>3</sup> The *bandh* was reported as not effective only in Doti, Dailekh and Rukum districts.

<sup>4</sup> The poll opposing parties downgraded a lengthy Nepal *bandh* (originally planned from 11-20 November) after its first day to a transportation strike from 12-19 November purportedly in order to minimize impact on the public. The strike cannot accurately be described as effective on 19 November, Election Day, as the government did not permit the movement of public or private vehicles that day (except for a small number for registered with passes for official purposes).

<sup>5</sup> However, the attribution of some violence as being 'poll opposing' or 'campaign' related is challenging as many incidents (e.g. IEDs, vehicle 'torching', attacks, etc.) were 'anonymous'. It is also likely that some violence during the process was not, in fact, election or political related—some actors will likely have committed violence for 'non-political' purposes (criminal, economic, 'settling scores', etc.) and, therefore, the 'true' levels of electoral or political violence were somewhat lower than presented here.

<sup>6</sup> The Election Commission of Nepal media release on 3 December states voter turnout was 78.34% for FPTP and 79.82% for PR.

process, despite underlying identity-based political and communal tensions in some areas.

- The use of weapons was generally low, with the exception of IEDs plantings that escalated significantly in the last week of the election (coinciding with the poll opposing *bandh*/transportation strike).
- There were only two deaths directly attributable to political violence during the election period (both due to injuries resulting from attacks by poll opposing parties on buses defying the transportation strike)—this was significantly lower to the elections process in 2008 (one report estimates that 50 people were killed, 1,286 were injured and 116 people kidnapped<sup>7</sup>).
- The security services deployed in strength down to the local level as a robust deterrence and, for the most part, appeared to use limited and proportional force in maintaining public order (even in reported incidents of confrontation with political actors) during the process and on Election Day.

### **Poll opposition violence and disruption during the election process**

The CPN-Maoist and the 33 party alliance<sup>8</sup> opposed to the 19 November elections continued their protest and obstruction activities during November. Poll opposing violence and obstruction did not begin to escalate until after the *Dashain* festival in late October, with a series of mostly effective regional *bandhs* at the outset of the *Tihar* festival (beginning of November). After Tihar, the poll opposing parties successfully enforced an all Nepal *bandh* in almost all districts on 11 November<sup>9</sup> and followed this with a national transportation strike from 12-18 November. The transportation strike was initially effective in almost all districts, but began to have diminishing strength from 14 and 15 November onwards in the Eastern and Central Regions where more vehicles began to ply in local and urban areas and authorities organised moderately successful protection of long-distance public transit. The strike remained largely in effect in most districts of the Far Western, Mid Western and Western regions; though, again, local traffic also began to progressively ply as the days wore on and there were some limited measures put in place to protect some long-distance public transportation routes. Although not always directly attributable to the poll opposing parties, there were several attacks (arsons, petrol bombings and shootings) on public buses defying the strike, resulting in injuries and eventually the death of two transportation workers who were injured in two separate attacks.

Coinciding with the transportation strike, there was a significant escalation of IED incidents<sup>10</sup>—while there were at least 11 IED incidents reported in 10 districts during October, there were perhaps up to 197 IED incidents reported in 55 districts from 1-19 November (with 34 IED incidents reported in 22 districts on Election Day itself).<sup>11</sup> While it is not possible to directly attribute these IED incidents, suspicion for these has mostly fallen on the CPN-Maoist and poll opposing parties. Though many IEDs targeted campaigning parties, many also targeted the general public. In many cases, IEDs were found to be ‘hoaxes’; nevertheless, hoax IEDs (until ‘defused’) still disrupted local public life, tied-up security resources and caused fear. Many of the IEDs were genuine and there was a significant escalation in the number of explosions in the final weeks of the election process—while there was only one explosion believed to be related to political events in the three months previous to November, this jumped to 39 explosions between 1-19 November (with 11 explosions in 10 districts on Election Day itself). Injuries were reported in a number of cases, but no fatalities were reported. Perhaps up to 26 districts experienced at least one explosion during November.

While attacks on buses and the escalation of IEDs and explosions leading-up to Election Day caught headlines, for the most part there was relatively limited use of directly attributable violence by poll opposing

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<sup>7</sup> See Democracy and Election Alliance Nepal, ‘Election and Political Violence in Nepal—Final Report’ (Kathmandu, 2008).

<sup>8</sup> It is important to note that as November progressed, a great number of the parties originally a part of the alliance began to ‘pull out’ and distance themselves from the movement.

<sup>9</sup> The *bandh* was reported as not effective only in Doti, Dailekh and Rukum districts.

<sup>10</sup> ‘IED incidents’ are defined as any event in which IEDs (including hoax, unexploded and exploded IEDs) have been planted with the assumed intent to cause harm, fear and/or civil disruption.

<sup>11</sup> Overall, during the election process (from 1 October to 19 November), the districts with the most number of IED incidents were: Kathmandu, Banke, Kailali, Dang, Bardiya, Chitwan, Morang and Kanchanpur. In the week leading up to Election Day, the districts with the most number of IED incidents were: Kathmandu, Kanchanpur, Kailali, Banke, Chitwan, Nuwakot, Dang, Ilam, Kapilbastu, Kavrepalanchok, Mahottari, Parbat and Sunsari. On Election Day itself, the districts with the most IED incidents were: Kathmandu, Bajhang, Dang, Kailali, Dailekh, Morang and Palpa.

parties. Over the entire campaign period (from 1 October to 19 November), the principle election obstruction tactics used by poll opposing parties (discounting IEDs) were *bandhs*/transportation strikes, campaign obstruction and vandalism—direct attacks and inter-party clashes only made up a minor component (perhaps a tenth) of all reported activities by poll opposing parties. During November, there were also very few attempts by poll opposing parties to directly obstruct the government's electoral operations (even as sensitive materials were being distributed across the country) and there were relatively few direct clashes between poll opposing parties and the security forces (though there were an increasing number of arrests leading up to Election Day). Overall, poll opposition activities were most prevalent in the Eastern and the Mid Western regions and in the Kathmandu valley—the districts with the most incidents of poll opposition violence from 1 October to 19 November were: Morang, Panchthar, Kathmandu, Kavrepalanchok, Sunsari, Dang, Tanahun, Ilam, Kaski, Pyuthan, Salyan and Surket. In the week leading up to Election Day, the districts with the most incidents of poll opposition violence were: Kavrepalanchok, Makwanpur, Sarlahi, Kathmandu, Mugu, Panchthar, Salyan and Surkhet. On Election Day itself, the districts with the most incidents of poll opposition violence were: Sarlahi, Dailekh, Dang, Jumla, Chitwan, Dhanusha, Jajarkot, Kailali, Kavrepalanchok, Nuwakot, Rautahat and Rolpa.

### **Election campaign violence during the election process**

In the lead up to the Election Day, political parties and candidates greatly intensified their campaigning in all regions, reaching out to their constituencies and electorate through door-to-door campaigns and ward, village and mass meetings. The visits by several central-level leaders to the regions, particularly several remote districts and VDCs, contributed to amplifying the election mood amongst voters (though the use of helicopters and other resources drew allegations of election code of conduct violations). Despite the activities of the poll opposing parties, particularly the transportation strike, election participating political parties were mostly able to carry out their campaign activities across the country. In line with the election rules, political parties concluded their campaigns on 16 November at midnight (two days before voting).

Compared to poll opposing parties and campaigning violence in previous elections, inter-party campaign violence and obstruction was generally very limited. Inter-party violence only began to occur with any frequency after the *Dashain* festival at mid-October before lowering over *Tihar* in early November and then rising moderately until a final 'spike' of incidents (perhaps up to 39) on Election Day itself. 'Attacks' by one party on another and 'inter-party clashes' were the most prevalent types of violence by parties participating in the elections—these mostly involved scuffles and physical attacks on one another during campaigning. There were also some incidents of vandalism against vehicles, property and election materials (though it is possible that 'anonymous' acts vandalism against campaign opponents were carried out by election participating parties but were attributed to the poll opposing parties). There were relatively few clashes between election participating parties and the security forces, though some clashes and arrests occurred on Election Day itself and there were perhaps up to 14 reported incidents of election participating parties attempting to obstruct the electoral process on Election Day. Over the full extent of the election process (from 1 October to 19 November), the districts with the most incidents of campaign-related violence were: Rukum, Bajura, Chitwan, Gorkha, Baitadi, Dadeldhura, Kathmandu and Rautahat. In the week leading up to Election Day, the districts with the most incidents of campaign-related violence were: Baitadi, Chitwan, Kathmandu, Sarlahi, Bajhang, Dadeldhura, Gorkha, Rautahat and Rolpa. On Election Day itself, the districts with the most incidents of campaign-related violence were: Sarlahi, Dolakha, Rautahat, Bajhang, Bajura, Dang, Gorkha, Kavrepalanchok and Siraha.

No fatalities were reported in any incidents and the overall election campaign environment remained relatively stable throughout the election period. Many local interlocutors consistently commented that there were significant security resources and deployments maintaining public order and there was a high degree of 'open' political space and competition amongst parties.

## HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

### Overview of recent local disasters

The month of November remained relatively quiet in terms of natural disasters throughout the country, except for few incidents of fire outbreak in the Eastern Region and Central Tarai. Taplejung, Jhapa, Udayapur and Dhanusha districts witnessed fire outbreaks because of short-circuits and other reasons, with a girl dying in Dhanusha and a significant loss of property. District Disaster Relief Committees (DDRCs), local chapters of the Nepal Red Cross Society and local chapters of the Nepal Chamber of Commerce actively supported the fire affected people in those districts. Longer-term shelter support has been identified as the key gap for the fire affected people in Jhapa and Taplejung districts.

In the Western Region, some six families were reported to have been displaced in Armala VDC of Kaski District because of sinkholes emerging in their neighbourhoods during the last week of November. Around 15 houses have developed cracks and courtyards have caved in—around 35 families are at risk by such sinkholes. The affected families have themselves managed to find alternative shelters amongst neighbours and rented houses. A team comprising District Development Committee, District Administration Office, Department of Mines and Geology and Nepal Red Cross Society visited the affected area on 26 November and came up with a preliminary finding report.

### Disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction efforts

The UN Field Coordination Office in Biratnagar co-facilitated interagency meeting to discuss and finalize the modality, cooperation structure and participation of the district authorities for the upcoming Disaster Risk Management training planned for the second week of December in Biratnagar.

In the Far Western Region, establishment of the Kanchanpur District Emergency Operation Centre (DEOC) has got momentum with support of Mercy Corps. After the DEOC is constructed, support equipment and some life saving equipment will be supplied by Mercy Corps. The UNDP 'Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Programme' has already agreed with the Ministry of Home Affairs to support a full set of DEOC equipment, such as ICT equipment, HF radio, solar panel and some life saving materials. In the mean time, a three-day training program was conducted in Dadeldhura District to review the progress and challenges of Community Based Early Warning System (CBEWS) for natural disasters and to strengthen the linkages between the CBEWS and its task force with the Department of Hydrology and Metrology (DHM) and DEOC. The training was successful in securing the commitment of local media to provide timely dissemination of information and warnings for expected disasters in order to save lives and livelihoods. Overall, the training strengthened the relationship between local media, the DHM and the DEOC. The Nepal Climate Change Support Program was launched in the Far Western Region (it will initially target 14 districts in Mid and Far Western Region), with the goal of contributing towards ensuring that the poorest and most vulnerable communities in Nepal are able to adapt to the negative effects of climate change.

## RECENT MAPS AVAILABLE

The RCO Information Management Unit produced a number of mapping products, some of which are listed below and also available on the UN Nepal Information Platform (<http://www.un.org.np/resources/maps>):

Nepal: Constituent Assembly Election 2013 under FPTP- Elected Candidates by Political Party  
<http://www.un.org.np/maps/elected-candidates-political-party>

Nepal: Constituent Assembly Election 2013 under FPTP- Percentage of Total Votes Secured by Elected Candidates  
<http://www.un.org.np/maps/percentage-total-votes>

Nepal: Constituent Assembly Election 2013 under FPTP- Breakdown of Elected Candidates by Age  
<http://www.un.org.np/maps/elected-candidates-age>

Nepal: Constituent Assembly Election 2013 under FPTP- Breakdown of Elected Candidates by Gender  
<http://www.un.org.np/maps/elected-candidates-gender>

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Visit the UN Nepal Information Platform at [www.un.org.np](http://www.un.org.np)

**Disclaimer:** *The information in this report is consolidated from media, UN, NGO and other development and humanitarian partners, subject to availability of data. Although the RCO aims to confirm reports independently, occasional factual inaccuracies can occur.*

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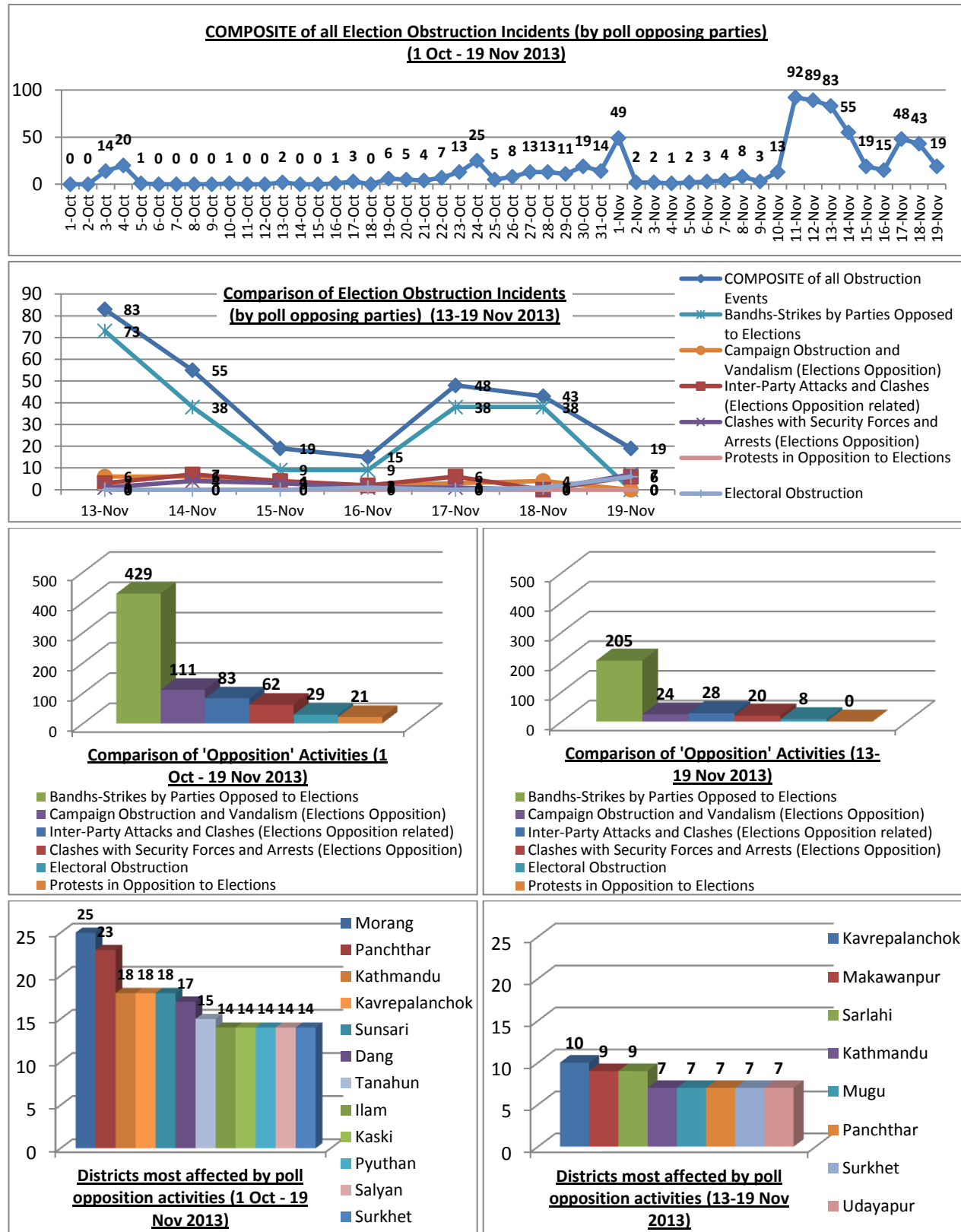
Visit the UN Nepal Information Platform at <http://www.un.org.np>

## ANNEX: Overview of Political and Election Related Violence (1 Oct to 19 Nov 2013)

The information below is based on the tracking of information about events consolidated from media, police, UN, NGO and other development partners. Although every attempt is made to confirm reports and validate information, the following analysis may be based on information containing some factual inaccuracies. The information presented is intended to highlight overall trends and dynamics. Although certain phenomena are 'quantified' below, it is important for readers to complement these numbers with other sources (especially qualitative assessments, such as on the impact of violence) in order to build a comprehensive understanding.

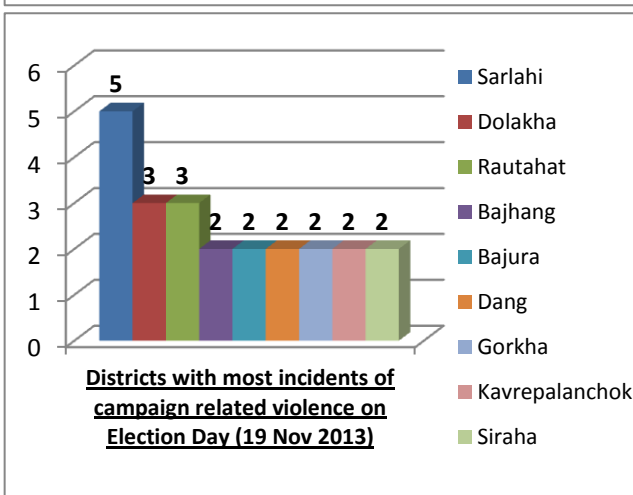
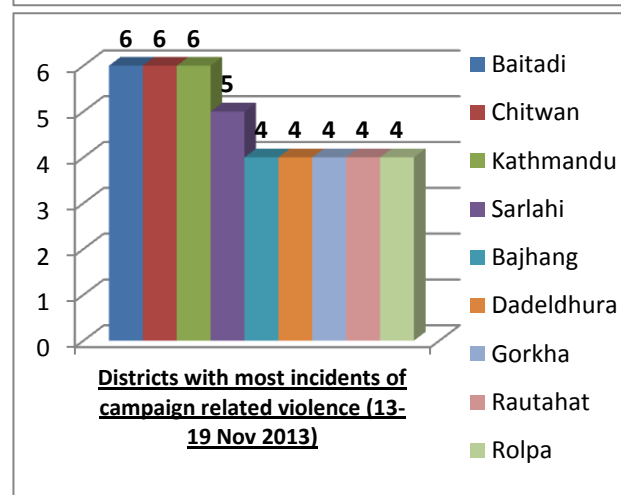
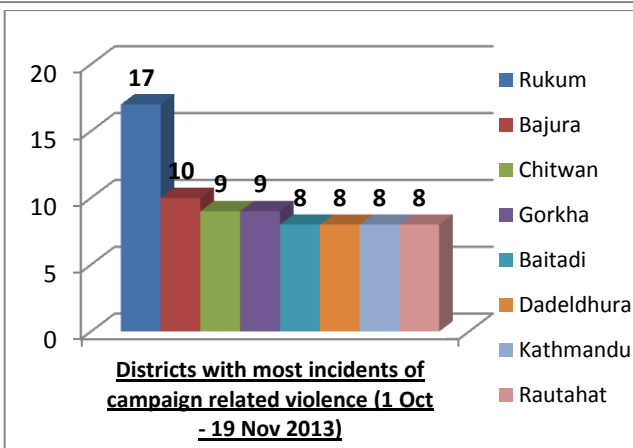
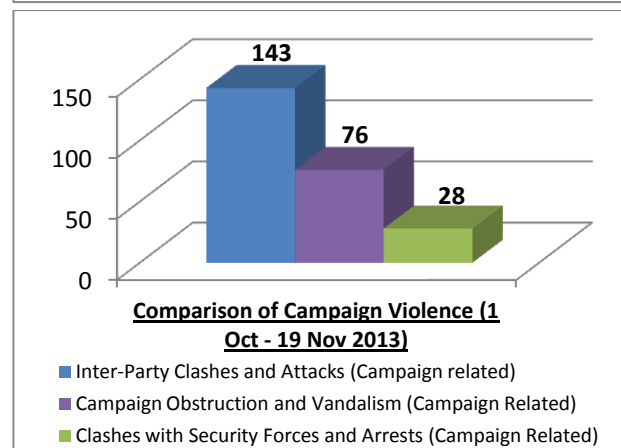
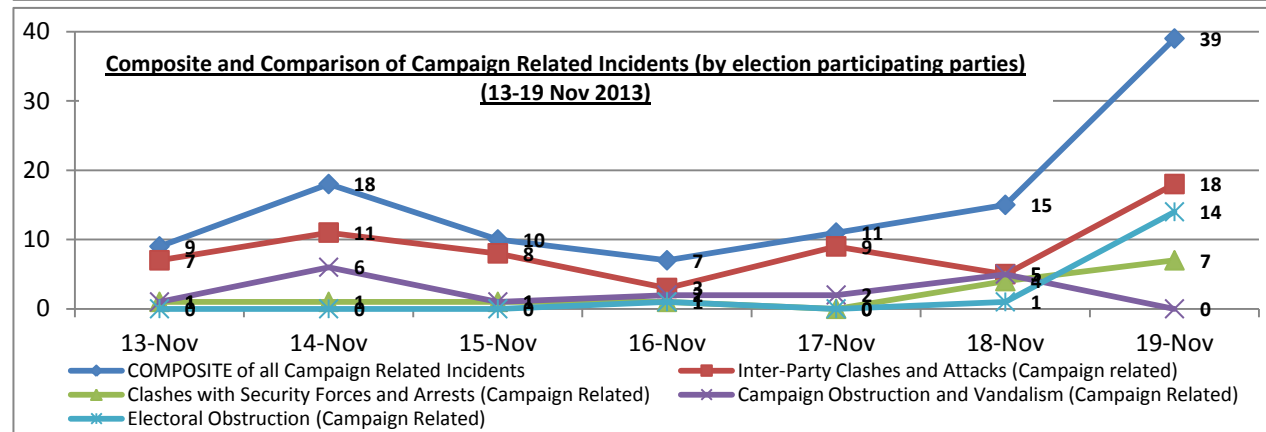
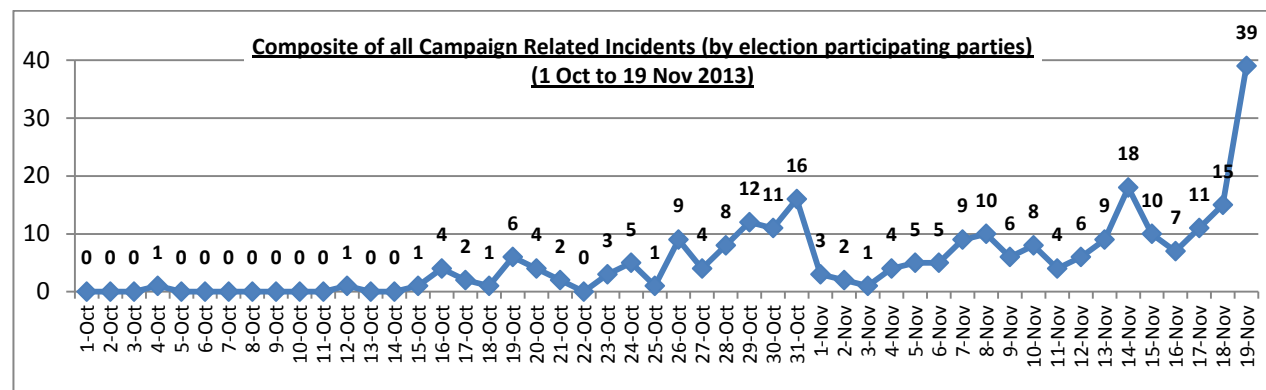
### Overview of poll opposition violence and disruption during the election process

- In the data below, 1 'bandh/strike incident' is the equivalent of '1 effective bandh occurring across 1 district for 1 day'





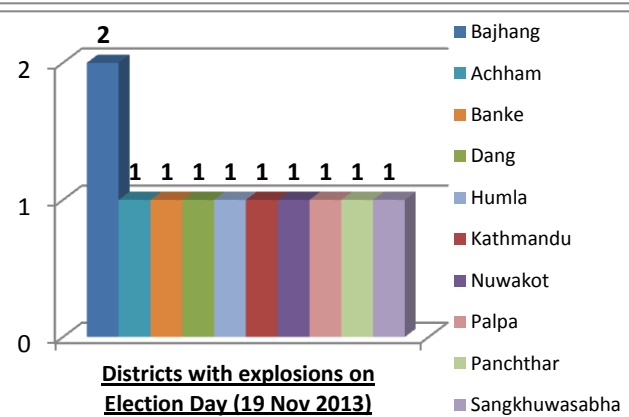
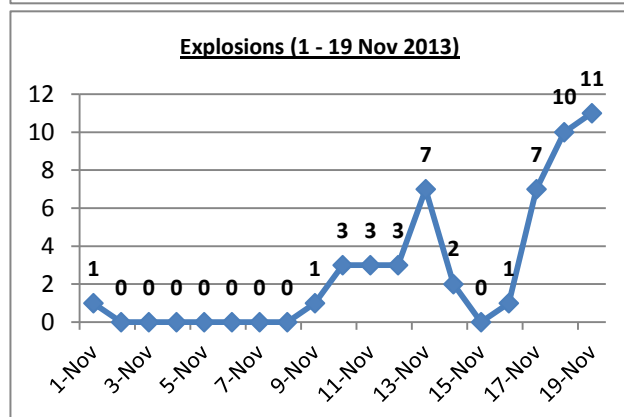
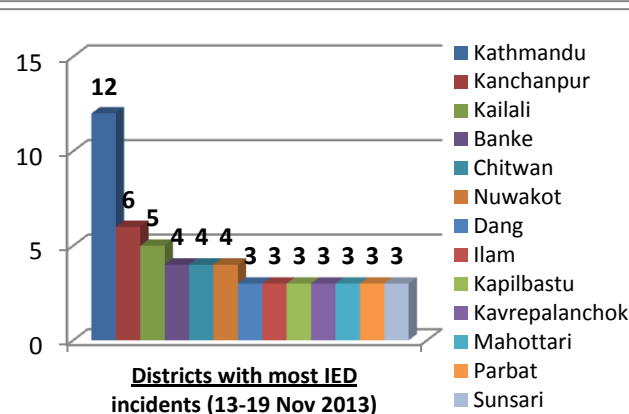
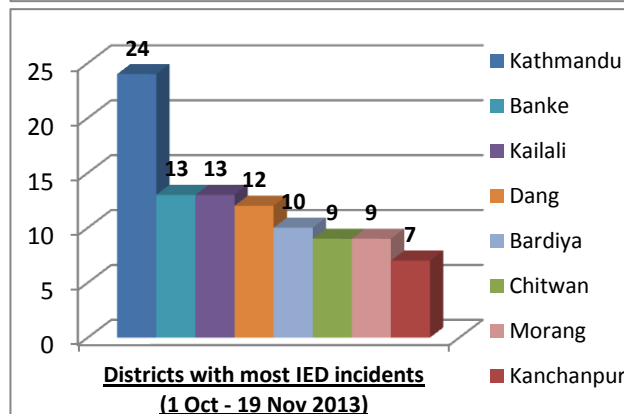
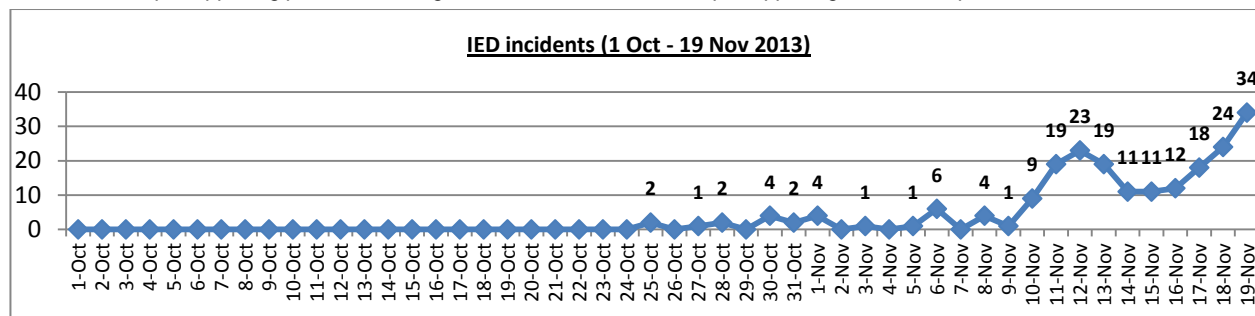
## Overview of election campaign violence during the election process:





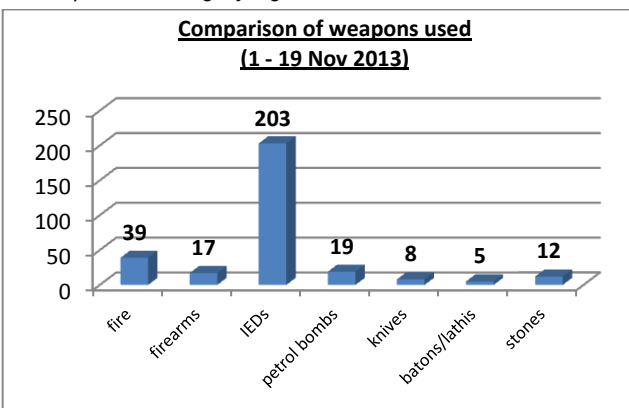
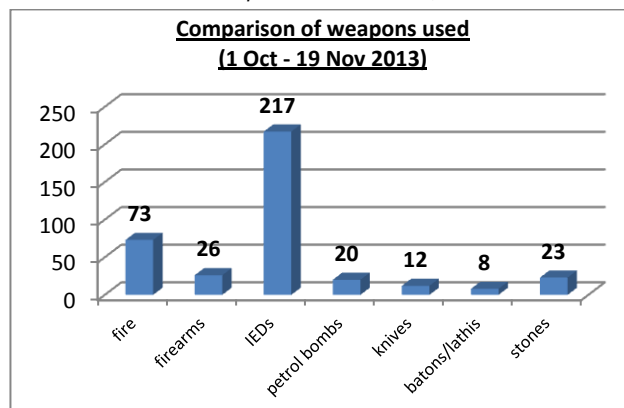
## IED and explosions related to electoral/political incidents:

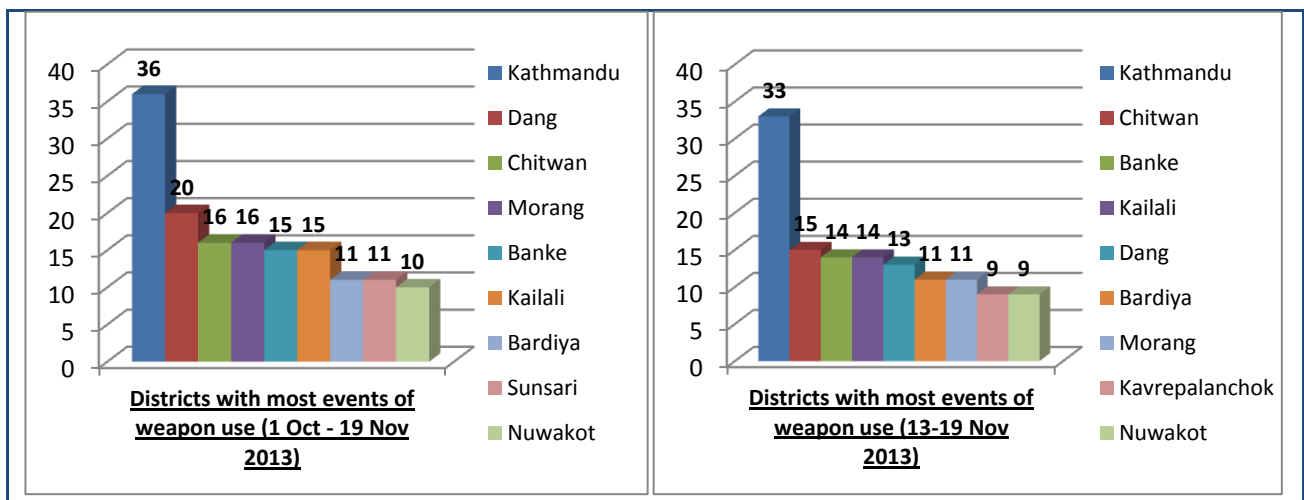
- In Nepal, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are typically pressure cooker bombs, socket bombs, pipe bombs or bucket bombs. The devices are used more for spreading fear among the public rather than for causing mass casualties.
- 'IED incidents' are defined as any event in which IEDs (including hoax, unexploded and exploded IEDs) are assumed to have been planted with the intent to cause harm, fear and/or civil disruption for political purposes.
- Generally, it is not possible to directly attribute the planting of IEDs to specific actors; however, in the majority of incidents, suspicion has fallen on poll opposing parties as a surge of IEDs coincided with the poll opposing bandh/transportation strike.



## Weapon use related to electoral/political incidents:

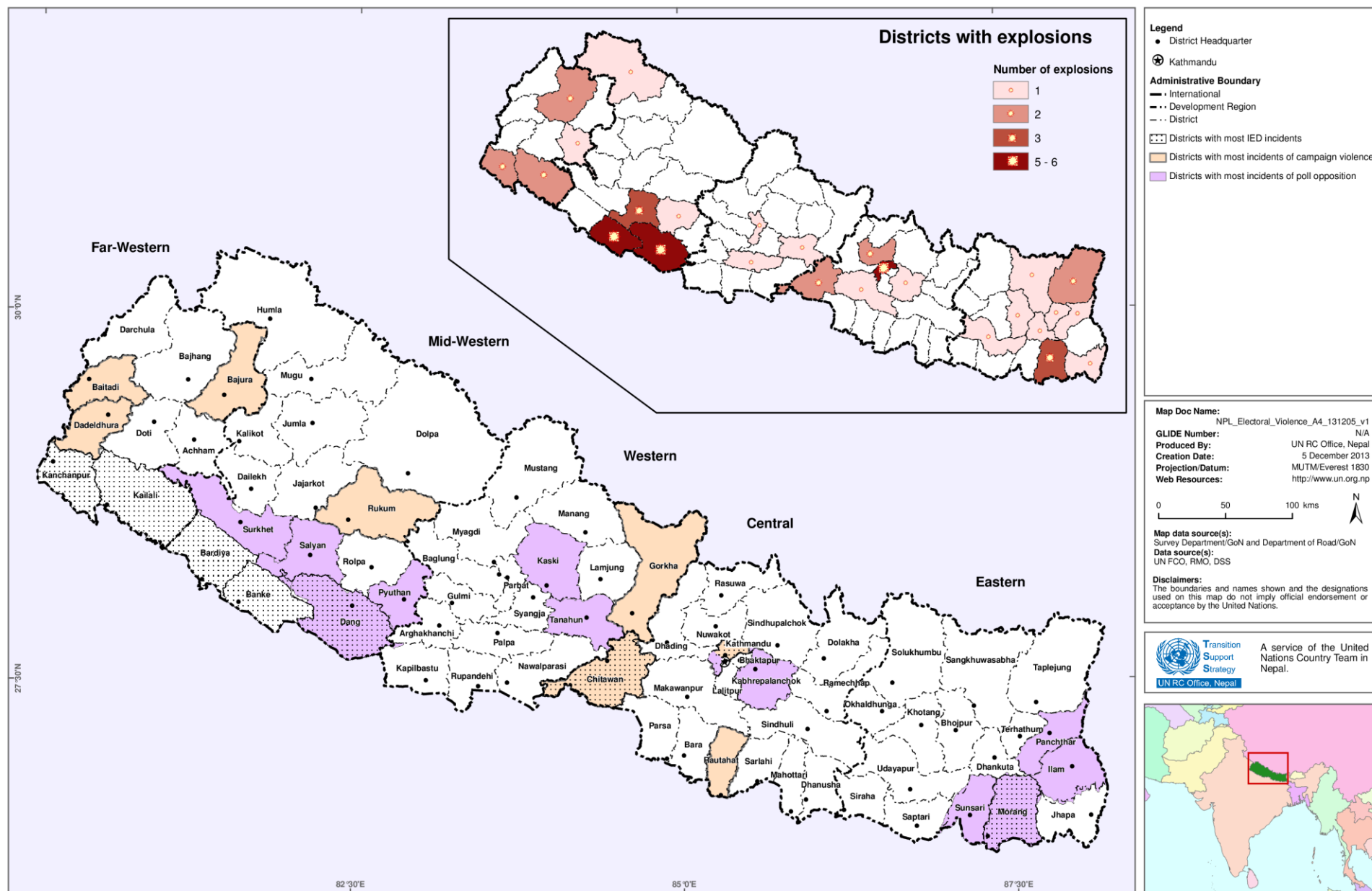
- In the data below, IED use includes 'plantings' of IEDs (hoaxes, unexploded and exploded), IED seizures and arrests of people 'armed' with IEDs or explosives—therefore, the numbers of IEDs in 'weapon use' is slightly higher than 'IED incidents' above.



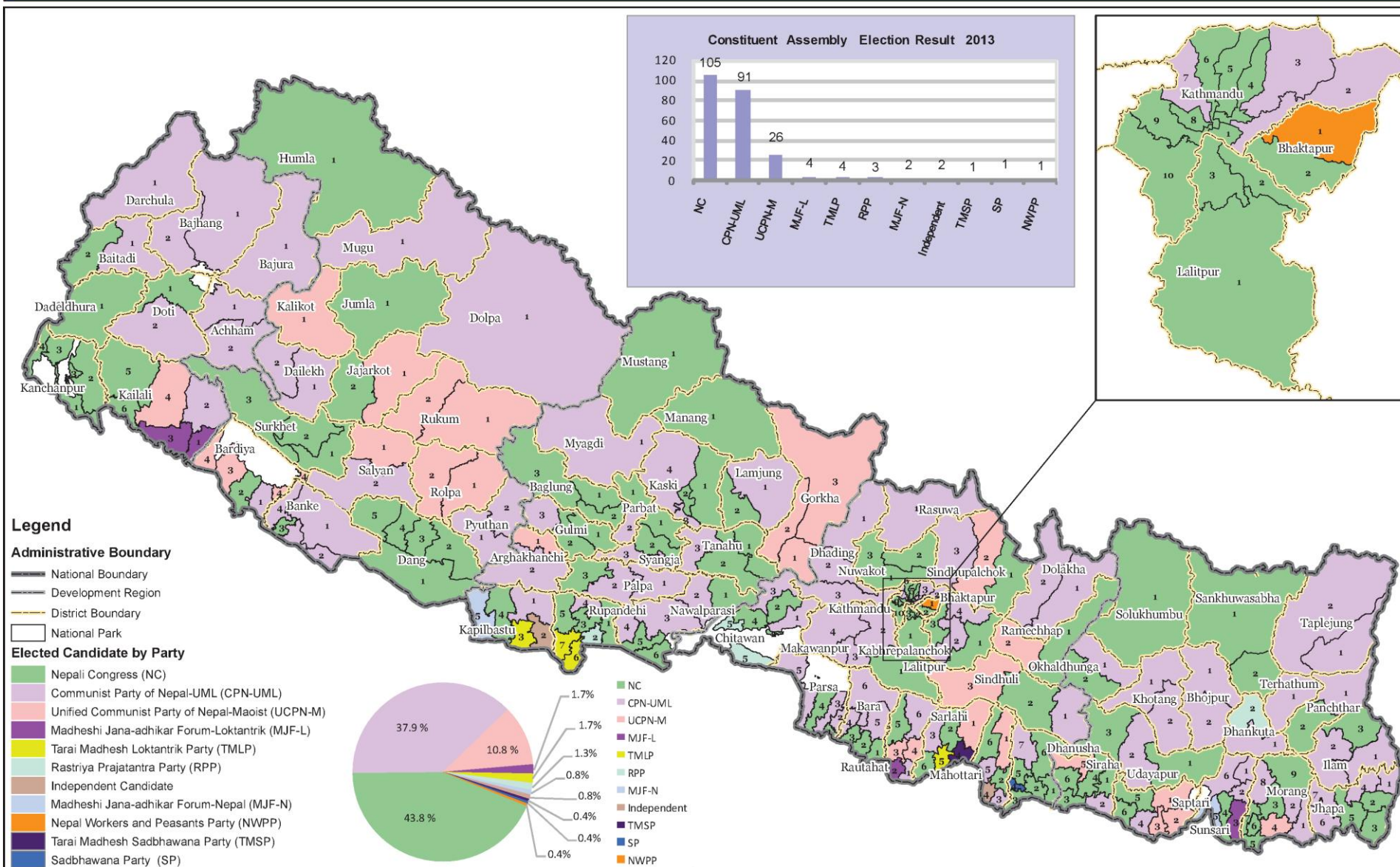


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# NEPAL - Districts with most incidents of political and electoral violence (1 Oct - 19 Nov 2013)



# NEPAL: Constituent Assembly Election 2013 under FPTP - Elected Candidates by Political Party



A service of the United Nations Country Team in Nepal.

**Map Doc Name:** Election\_Result\_2070\_Party\_11262013.mxd  
**GLIDE Number:** N/A  
**Creation Date:** 26 November 2013  
**Produced by:** UN RC Office, Nepal

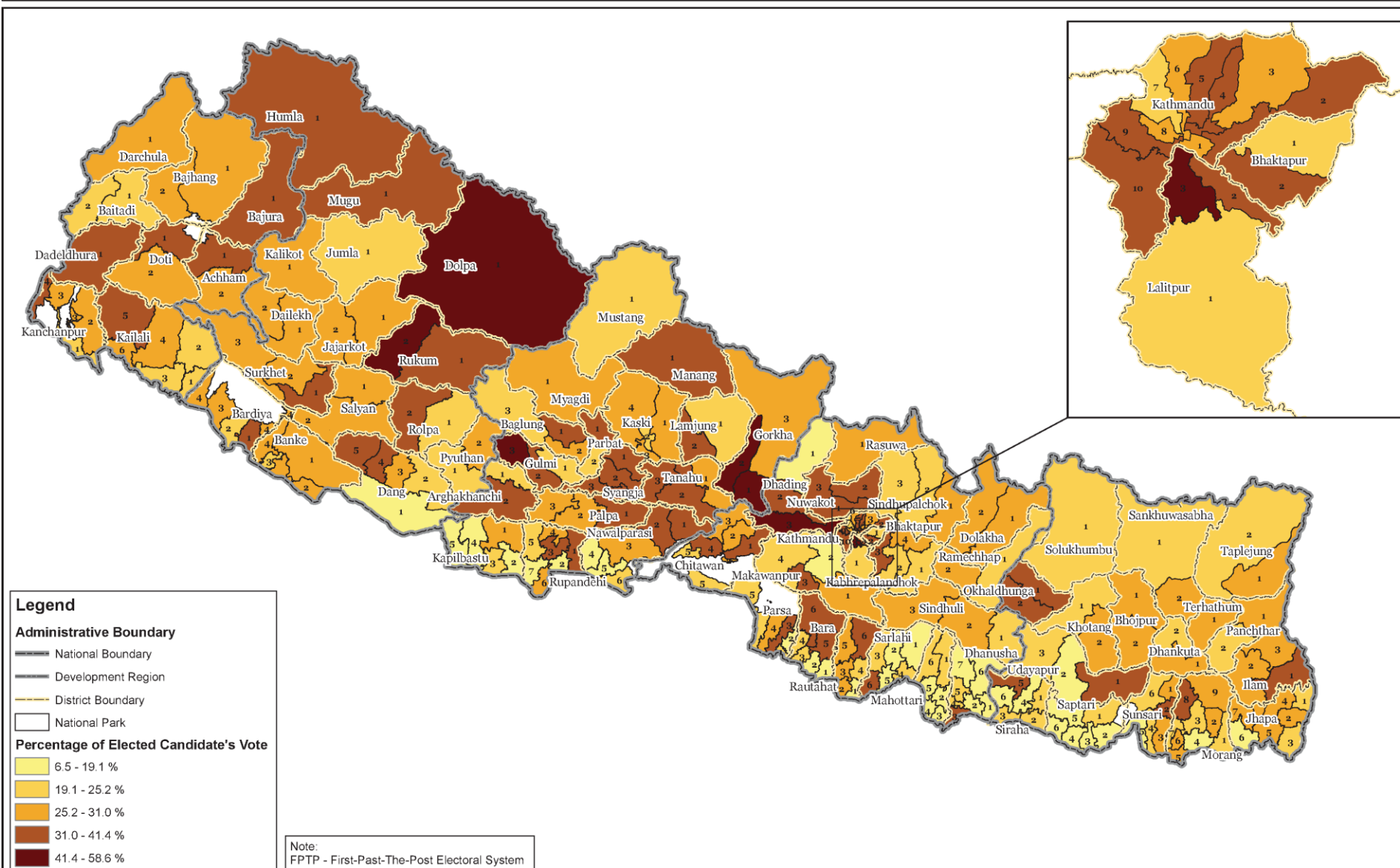
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**Projection/Datum:** UTM 44N/VGS84  
**Map data source(s):** GIST, ESRI,  
**Data source(s):** Election Commission of Nepal, GoN



**Disclaimers:**  
 The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



# NEPAL: Constituent Assembly Election 2013 under FPTP - Percentage of Total Votes Secured by Elected Candidate



A service of the United Nations Country Team in Nepal.

**Map Doc Name:** Election\_Result\_2070\_WinPer\_11262013  
**GLIDE Number:** N/A  
**Creation Date:** 26 November 2013  
**Produced by:** UN RC Office, Nepal

**Web Resources:** <http://www.un.org.np>  
**Projection/Datum:** UTM 44N/WGS84  
**Map data source(s):** GIST, ESRI  
**Data source(s):** Election Commission of Nepal, GoN

0 150 Km

**Disclaimers:**  
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Map Doc Name: Election\_Result\_2070\_Caste\_11262013  
GLIDE Number: N/A  
Creation Date: 26 November 2013  
Produced by: UN RC Office, Nepal

**Web Resources:** <http://www.un.org.np>  
**Projection/Datum:** UTM 44N/WGS84  
**Map data source(s):** GIST, ESRI,  
**Data source(s):** Election Commission

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