

# Monthly Update – June 2012

## UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator's Office Nepal



This report is issued by the UN RCHCO with inputs from its UN Field Coordination Offices and other partners and sources. The report covers June 2012. The next report will be issued the first week of August 2012.

### CONTEXT

#### Political update

The past month – after the Constituent Assembly expired on 28 May – saw only one limited collective interaction between the four major political actors of the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M), Nepali Congress (NC), Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) and the United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF). On 22 June, the four political forces met for the first time since 27 May after they had time to introspect, internalize and evaluate political developments and the challenges posed by the current political crisis and parliamentary vacuum. However, the Parties remained firm in their positions on how to proceed to end the crisis and vacuum and have different visions both in terms of substance and sequencing. The opposition (led by NC and UML) termed the government unconstitutional and insisted on the immediate resignation of PM Bhattarai as a precondition for any discussion on the continuation of the constitution making process and any future national elections. The Government coalition (UCPN-M and UDMF) insisted a road map be formulated to forge agreement on the new constitution and its promulgation, followed by the formation of a national unity government and elections. The PM's visibly increasing confidence in his government's ability to carry through until a new parliament is in place was reflected in a series of actions and statements by the PM. However, given the amount of pressure against PM Bhattarai by many political forces, his leadership seems to be untenable for long without a solution to the current political crisis.

During June, Nepal's largest political party, the UCPN-M, officially split after more than four years of protracted internal party struggle. On 18 June, senior Vice Chairman and Maoist ideologue Mohan Bairya Kiran announced the formation of the Communist Party of Nepal, Maoist (CPN-Maoist) following a three day national gathering of more than 2,000 cadres and leaders in Kathmandu. A split in the Madhesi People's Rights Forum-Democratic (MPRF-D), a member of the UDMF in coalition with the government, saw the formation of the Rastriya Madhesh Samajbadi Party (RMSP) led by Sarat Singh Bhandari on 28 June. The split in both parties raised questions about PM Bhattarai government's political majority. The major political forces face the challenge of accommodating the two new political forces of the CPN-M and RMSP (Bhandari).

President Ram Baran Yadav maintained his delicate position as a largely ceremonial head of state and urged the parties to reach consensus on a way forward. The President issued ordinances on the Mutual Legal Assistance Bill and Extradition Bill and is under pressure from the government to pass the budget in July through an ordinance, despite opposition from the NC and UML.

#### Operational space

The month of June witnessed a significant reduction in the disruption of operational space for Basic Operating Guidelines (BOGs) Signatories in comparison to May, when operational space in many areas of the country was closed down amidst *bandhs*, protests and clashes between activist groups with conflicting demands for federal structuring in the constitution drafting process. In the last days of May and the first week of June, the country largely returned to normal operations.

The *Tarai-wide bandh* imposed jointly by the National Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) and the JTSC from 7-8 June had a minimum effect on UN and blue-plate vehicles movement; however, public vehicle movements were obstructed in many Tarai districts across the country. The only major event during June that restricted the movement of BOGs Signatories in the Western and Central regions was a *bandh* on

9 June organized by local people protesting against the suspicious death of a person. UN and blue-plated vehicles were obstructed along the east-west highway in Bardibas (Mahottari District) and some other BOGs self-restricted their movement during the *bandh*.

Numerous international development and humanitarian organizations have expressed concern regarding statements by media and some actors (such as Brahman Samaj, Chhetri Samaj, Thakuri Samaj) that development and humanitarian actors are perceived to be promoting so-called ‘ethnic federalism’ and ‘ethnic conflict’. At the local level, there are concerns that these sentiments and perceptions may have implications for operational space in the months to come. Development and humanitarian organizations have also raised concerns about the immediate impact of the split of UCPN-M party, for example the potential need for organizations implementing projects at the district level to include both UCPN-M and the newly established CPN-Maoist in their monitoring visits and district level coordination meetings.

## EMERGING ISSUES AFFECTING PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

### Local identity politics and activism on federalism

As noted in the May Update, a wide range of groups with conflicting demands over federal state restructuring intensified protest programmes across much of the country, most acutely in the Far West Region. After the dissolution of the CA, these protest activities quickly faded away. However, during June, a number of events linked to identity-based political groups demonstrated that the dynamics underlying the disruptions of May continue to persist.

The National Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) and the JTSC quickly organized a *Tarai bandh* from 7-8 June demanding that Dhan Bahadur Thanet Tharu (a Tharu activist injured in police action in Nawalparasi District on 9 May during the JTSC *bandh*) be declared a martyr after he died during treatment in Kathmandu on 5 June. NEFIN and JTSC halted the *bandh* on 8 June following the government decision to declare him a martyr and provide NRs 1 million compensation to his family. On 12 June in the Far West, the Nepal Army disposed an IED placed in Dhangadhi (Kailali District) where a pamphlet issued by little known “Seti-Mahakali Khaptad Tahalka Jamamukti Killer Party (Seti-Mahakali Khaptad Tahalka People’s Liberation Killer Party)” was discovered. In the pamphlet, the group claimed to have launched a campaign against those attempting to re-instate the monarchy and so-called ‘anti-federalism groups’ that contributed to the dissolution of CA by supporting an Undivided Far West or Undivided Mid West.<sup>1</sup>

The newly formed Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-Maoist) led by Mohan Baidya announced its split from the UCPN-M party on 18 June. During this process, the chiefs of a number of previously UCPN-M affiliated sister wings and so-called ‘ethnic fronts’ have decided to join the CPN-Maoist.<sup>2</sup> In the context of events during May and the highly contentious political discourse surrounding federalism, the movement of so-called ‘ethnic federalist’ UCPN-M groups aligning now with the CPN-Maoist party may further polarize identity-based politics across the country.

In the Far West in particular, there is widespread confusion among the general population as to how the new constitution drafting process (as well as the federalism agenda) will move ahead in the coming months and if any new process will address the strong political stances expressed through the vigorous protests and clashes of May.

### Impact of the split in the UCPN-M party

With the formal split of UCPN-M on 18 June, there have been instances of competition and tensions between both UCPN-M and the newly formed Communist Party Nepal-Maoist (CPN-Maoist).

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.inseconline.org/index.php?type=news&lang=en&id=10080>

<sup>2</sup> There reportedly include leaders from the: Madhesi Liberation Front (Revolutionary), Tharuwan National Liberation Front, Limbuwan National Liberation Front, Nepal National Dalit Liberation Front, Magar National Liberation Front, Kirat National Liberation Front, Chepang National Liberation Front, Thami National Liberation Front, Rai-Danuwar National Liberation Front, Chhantyal National Liberation Front, Dhimal National Liberation Front, Federation of Ethnic and Regional Fronts and the Muslim National Liberation Front

Both parties have increased their political activity at the local-level to attract and mobilize cadres, Former Maoist Combatants (FMCs) and Verified Minors and Late Recruits (VMLRs). In the Eastern Region, for example, UCPN-M leaders addressed a gathering of FMCs and VMLRs in Itahari (Sunsari District) where a Regional Committee of these two groups was formed.<sup>3</sup> According to local journalists, approximately 200 FMCs and VMLRs from all the districts of Eastern Region participated in the gathering. The gathering also decided to form a district branch of the ‘Ex-PLA Association’ and the leaders affirmed that FMCs and VMLRs will be mobilized during the coming elections. Conversely, four ex-Constituent Assembly (CA) members and a district chief of the Young Communist League – the youth wing of UCPN-M – have joined the CPN-Maoist in Morang District. Likewise, the Limbuwan Mukti Morcha and the Kirant Mukti Morcha, two organizations previously affiliated to the UCPN-M, decided to join the CPN-Maoist.

CPN-Maoist leaders have also made announcements that the party will begin capturing land and property, according to reports by local human rights activists in Banke District. During a press interview on 26 June, the Banke District CPN-Maoist in-charge stated that, “Based on our discussion at the central level, we are prepared and will shortly announce our campaign to capture the land of those who cannot disclose their sources of income.” In response, the district chairperson of a Madhesi political party based in Nepalgunj said that, “This could be an attractive ‘catch-line’ for the party; however, capturing land would not be that easy for them.” The Banke Secretary of UCPN-M mentioned that, “We will not allow land capturing in the name of Maoists.” Any such actions by the CPN-Maoist may add to the complexities already surrounding the return of land seized during the conflict-era. Despite the commitments in the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the 1 November 2011 Seven-Point Agreement of major political parties to return all conflict-era seized property, much of such land remains still occupied (in the Mid West Region in particular).<sup>4</sup>

But most significantly, the CPN-Maoist split from UCPN-M has generated specific hostilities between the two parties, and also clashes, in contention for control of party offices and property. On 20 June, CPN-Maoist cadres reportedly ‘took over’ the UCPN-M district offices in Dang and Kapilvastu and erased the word ‘Unified’ from the office hoarding boards. Nirmal Acharya, the UCPN-M Dang District in-charge said, “The cadres of Baidya captured our party office in a violent way. The new party should have opened an office on its own.” Subash Pun, the Assistant in-charge of CPN-Maoist in Kapilvastu, justified the actions saying that, “The local [CPN-Maoist] cadres had been using the party office since long.” In the Mid West Region, there were reported ‘quarrels’ between UCPN-M and CPN-Maoist cadres in Jajarkot District over the occupancy of the party office, with CPN-Maoist cadres allegedly padlocking the party office. In Chitwan, disputes over ownership of party offices led to clashes on 30 June between UCPN-M and CPN-Maoist cadres over the ownership of the UCPN-M district party office. The clash erupted as activists of both parties came to attend separate programmes scheduled at the same time at the Krishnapur party office meeting hall in Chitwan District. It was reported that approximately a dozen were injured, with two UCPN-M cadres seriously injured when gunshots were apparently fired by cadres during the clash. UCPN-M has accused CPN-Maoist cadres of opening fire during the clash. Police have taken control of the party office following the incident, while over three dozen cadres from both the factions were detained for several hours immediately afterwards. UCPN-M organised an hour long vehicle strike in Bharatpur the next day and then a Chitwan *bandh* on 2 July, demanding action against the persons responsible for the shootings. A resident of the area where the office is located, expressed fear the people felt due to the tense environment in and around the office. The resident explained that the whole neighbourhood is terrified given that the movement of cadres has increased and police have been stationed at the office twenty-four hours a day to prevent any possible clashes between the two parties. Disputes between the two parties over property in other districts of the Western and Central regions are also reported to have occurred; although they have not escalated to violence, the potential for clashes exists.

A senior journalist in Chitwan described that every party cadre “sustained a pain” during the party split and this might come out as a “form of anger” which in turn might lead to clashes between the two sides over any

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<sup>3</sup> Nepali name of the organization is पूर्व जनमुक्ति सेना संघ नेपाल ('Ex-PLA Association')

<sup>4</sup> The Carter Center, *Land Commitments in Nepal's Peace Process: An Update on Implementation* (20 June 2012) – available at: <https://cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/democracy/nepal-land-062012-eng.pdf>

pretense at any time. For the journalist, a clash of any sort would worsen the current political stalemate and widen polarization instead of creating an environment of consensus. In the Eastern Region, according to some local observers, the divide between the parties at the local level may be less ‘ideological’ and more about securing individual political careers. An example was given of the district-level split in Saptari where most of the so-called ‘ideologically indoctrinated’ cadres have sided with the ‘establishment’ UCPN-M rather than buying into the so-called ‘radical line’ followed by Baidya’s CPN-Maoist.

## **HUMANITARIAN UPDATE**

### **INSARAG Asia Pacific Regional Meeting concluded (2-3 July Kathmandu)**

The meeting was jointly arranged by the Government of Nepal and the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) Secretariat. The meeting was inaugurated by Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Mr. Bijaya Kumar Gachhadhar and chaired by the Secretary of Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) and INSARAG Asia-Pacific Regional Chair Mr Sushil JB Rana. The meeting was held with the technical and financial support of UN OCHA Nepal under the funding from the Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection-Nepal European Commission (DIPECHO).

In the press statement released by MoHA on 3 July, it has highlighted that the two day INSARAG meeting provided clear guidance to the partners and Government of Nepal (GoN) for building and strengthening Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) capacity in the country. Through the Press release, the GoN has requested internal assistance to build the USAR capacity of Nepal. Nepal has formally handed over the chairmanship of next INSARAG regional meeting to the government of Singapore. The meeting had more than 35 International experts and 65 national participants.

### **Earthquake in Pokhara, Kaski District**

According to the National Seismological Centre, an earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale shook Pokhara with an epicentre on the border between Thumkodanda and Namarjung VDCs in Kaski District on 9 June. The majority of the residents in Pokhara felt the quake and evacuated buildings due to the fear of aftershocks and further damage. Except minor cracks in a few buildings, no loss of life or major damage to property was reported.

### **Accidental Fire in Banke District**

Two accidental fires in Banke left 246 families homeless and destroyed a large number of properties. Altogether, the fires claimed one life and seriously injured three people in Matehiya and Indrapur VDCs on 12 and 15 June. According to the joint assessment report carried out by the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), VDC Secretary and security forces, a total 184 houses were completely destroyed in Matehiya VDC and 62 houses were destroyed in Rambhapur of Indrapur VDC. Fire victims of both VDCs are staying in temporary shelter provided by NRCS and some are living with their relatives. According to the DDRC, no hazards related to health and sanitation reported so far from both affected areas.

The NRCS has distributed non-food relief items (NFRIs) and ready to eat food to all fire victims of Matehiya VDC and NFRIs to the victims of Indrapur VDC jointly with the SC. DDRC provided relief assistance in cash (NRs 5,000 each) to 142 fire victims of Matehiya and 62 of Indrapur VDC. However, 42 families of Matehiya VDC are yet to receive relief fund from DDRC. The local UNESCO club, civil societies organisations (including the FNCCI), local NGOs, local youths and the Madhesh based political parties have provided food to the victims of both the VDCs.

### **MIRA and Early Warning Training conducted in two Far Western districts**

A two day Multi-Cluster Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) training was organized in Kanchanpur District. A total of twenty participants (17 government officials and 3 NGO representatives) participated in the training. The program was organized to orient DDRC members on assessment and cluster coordination mechanism and was jointly organized by Mercy Corps and NRCS Kanchanpur, with facilitation by OXFAM.

Similarly, a three day Early Warning Training to the Users Group was organized in Kailali District for the user

group focal persons<sup>5</sup> of Kailali, Kanchanpur and Doti. The training focussed on the upstream downstream link and role of Users Group in life saving through the early warning system. Thirty-five focal persons from different User Groups participated in the training program. The program was organized by Mercy Corps and facilitated by officials of the Department of Hydrology and Metrology and OXFAM.

## **Cluster updates**

### ***Food Security Cluster***

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) chaired its first Food Security Cluster (FSC) meeting, having taken over the cluster leadership from WFP on 29 May 2012. The meeting discussed the need of linking the cluster with the government line ministries and highlighted that the Food Security Cluster should be led by the concerned ministry of the Government of Nepal. Since the cluster was originated under the disaster management concept with the aim of strengthening the capacity to protect lives and livelihoods in emergency situations, many ministries fall under its scope. There has always been a confusion about which Ministry should take a lead on the Food Security Cluster from the government side. The meeting agreed that as MoHA is the nodal ministry and coordinating emergency and disaster related activities, the cluster should approach MoHA and discuss the issue.

### ***Health Cluster***

A Health Cluster coordination meeting was held on 21 June, co-chaired by the Government of Nepal Health Cluster Coordinator. The meeting discussed updating of the existing Health Cluster Contingency Plan (from June 2011) in which it was emphasized to make reference to the IASC Contingency Planning guidelines 2007. The meeting also looked at the role of cluster partners within the NRRC Flagship Programme; specifically the Hospital Safety Component of the NRRC Flagship 1, the Health component of the NRRC Flagship 2 and the Health Sector CBDRR of the Flagship 4 in which WHO is coordinating was discussed where engagement of the health cluster partners was encouraged. Lastly, the meeting discussed how MoHA and UNHCR initiated a Community Based Development Programme (CBDP) targeted at Bhutanese Refugees, refugee hosting communities and refugees impacted communities in Jhapa and Morang districts in which WHO is leading the health sector component. The CBDP health sector strategy including project proposals were developed and submitted for funding through UNHCR.

### ***Shelter Cluster***

The first phase of temporary shelter construction has been completed in Aurahi VDC, Siraha District, where a fire in May destroyed 1,080 houses. A total of 461 people have benefitted from the shelter support. The design of the shelter is being made based on the available resources. The shelter construction has been planned for 3 phases. During the 1st phase, 2 bundle of CGI sheet and 15 pieces of bamboo with fixings (nails, wire) were given to the fire affected families. Habitat for Humanity has facilitated shelter construction at field level through establishing bamboo treatment points, cluster planning and technical assistance to construct fire proofing houses in some extent. NRCS has distributed NFRIs kit to the affected families already.

Similarly, CGI sheets have been distributed to fire affected families (115 households) at Shivanagar VDC. Due to the lack of enough resources, bamboo has not been distributed to the affected population in Shivanagar. The Shelter Cluster is coordinating with NRCS District Chapter in Siraha and providing guidance and technical support as needed. UNDP has planned to implement Early Recovery programmes through the LGCDP fund. Early Recovery programmes will focus mainly on infrastructures, livelihoods and disaster response awareness as well as local capacity building.

### ***Education Cluster***

In response to the May Siraha fire incident, Save the Children (SC) supported the establishment of 4 Child Friendly Safe Learning Spaces for under-five year old children and distributed education kits to 531 school age children. The Department of Education has provided text books to 335 children who are enrolled in

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<sup>5</sup> Users Group of project areas of OXFAM, Care Nepal, Mercy Corps and NNSWA

community schools. As of the reporting period, the schools have fully resumed. The Siraha District Education Office and PABSON Nepal has also provided support to the fire victims.

Plan Nepal has recently carried out a field research on **Impact of Climate Change on Children's in Nepal** as a part of Plan South Asia Regional initiative on Child Centered Climate Change Adaptation. In this connection, on 26 June Plan Nepal organized a national consultation on **Impact of Climate Change on Children in Nepal** to share the outcomes and collect stakeholder's opinions. The workshop was attended by Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Network expert members.

The Regional Education Directorate of Eastern Region organized a five-day Training of Trainers on School Earthquake Safety Programmed to prepare 27 trainers from eight districts. The training was supported by UNICEF and facilitated by NSET. The aim of the training was to prepare district trainers for the implementation of earthquake awareness and preparedness programmes in their respective schools involving teachers, students and school communities through a simulation exercise and developing a school safety plan.

## RECENT MAPS AVAILABLE

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

Nepal: Report of Security Incidents, 1-30 June 2012

<http://www.un.org.np/maps/nepal-report-security-incident-1-30-June-2012>

Nepal: Report of Bandhs/Strikes 1-30 June 2012

<http://www.un.org.np/maps/nepal-reports-bandhs-strike-1-30-June-2012>

Nepal: Siraha District Fire Incident (as of 18 May 2012)

<http://www.un.org.np/maps/nepal-siraha-district-fire-incident-18-may-2012>

## RECENT REPORTS AVAILABLE

Some of the recent reports available on the UN Nepal Information Platform are listed below:

RCHCO Field Bulletin: Federalism discourse in three districts in the Eastern Tarai, Issue #42

<http://www.un.org.np/headlines/field-bulletin-42>

A Country Analysis 2011

<http://www.un.org.np/reports/country-analysis-2011>

Youth and the United Nations in Nepal

<http://www.un.org.np/reports/youth-and-united-nations-nepal>

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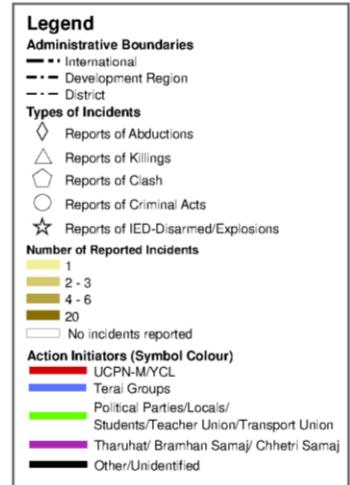
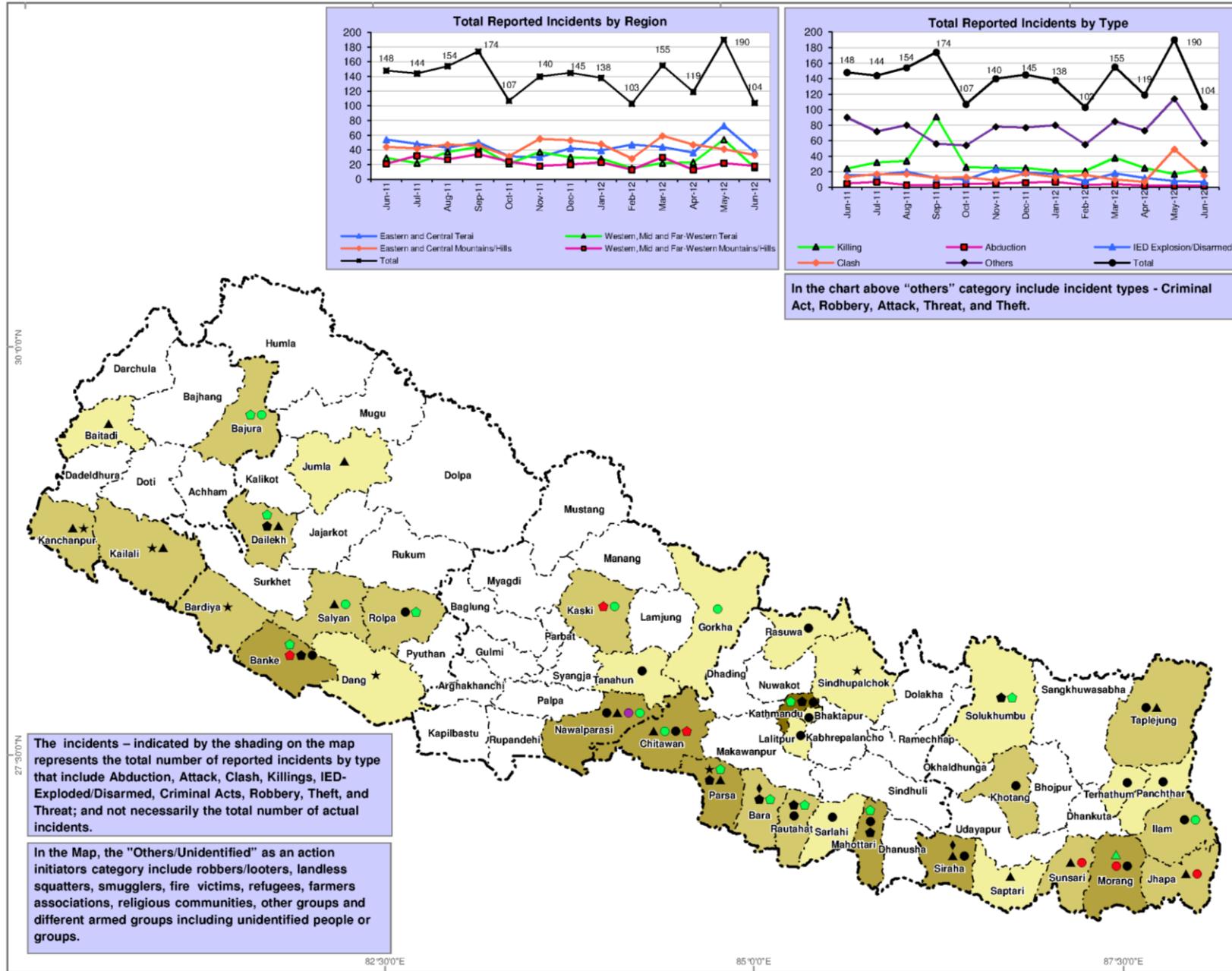
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**Disclaimer:** The information in this report is consolidated from media, UN, NGO and other development and humanitarian partners, subject to availability of data. Although the RCHCO aims to confirm reports independently, occasional factual inaccuracies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

# NEPAL - Reports of Security Incidents

1- 30 June 2012



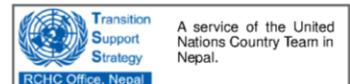
Map Produced by RCHCO with information consolidated by UNDSS.



Map Doc Name: Security\_ Incidents\_June\_2012\_A4\_5Jul2012\_v1  
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 Web Resources: <http://www.un.org.np>

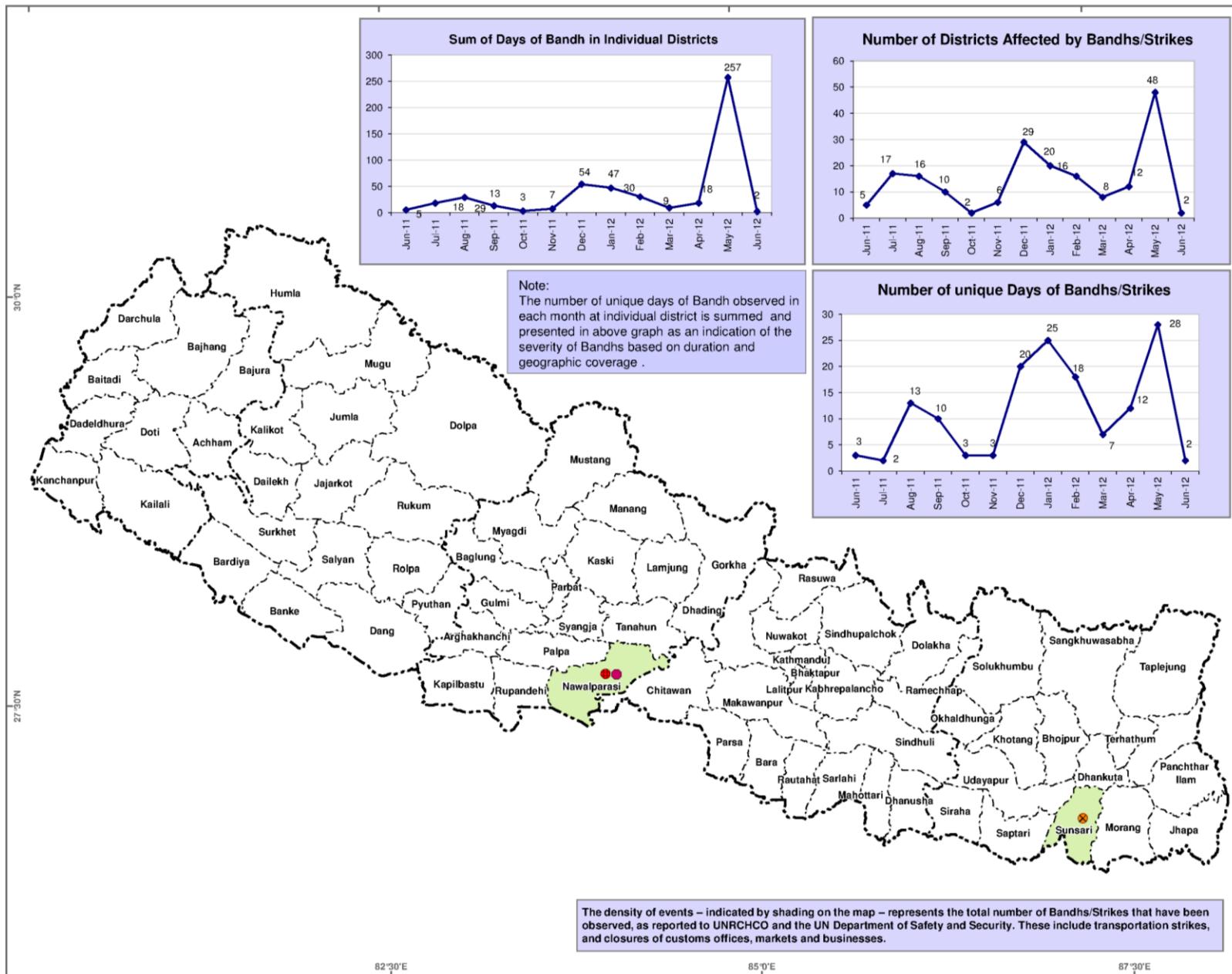
Map data source(s): International and domestic media and field reports from UN Agencies, Donors and I/NGOs.  
 Geodata: GIST, ESRI

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# NEPAL - Reports of Bandhs/Strikes

1 - 30 June 2012



Map Produced by RCHCO with information consolidated by UNDSS.



**Map Doc Name:** BandStrike\_June\_2012\_A\_6Jun2012\_v01  
**GLIDE Number:** N/A  
**Creation Date:** 5 July 2012  
**Projection/Datum:** UTM 44N/WGS84  
**Web Resources:** <http://www.un.org.np>

**Map data source(s):**  
Informational and domestic media and field reports from UN Agencies, Donors and I/NGOs.  
Geodata: GIST, ESRI

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