



## **Political Incidents Between February 8 and March 22**

Analysis Update – 19

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There was a significant increase in the number of political incidents between February 8 and March 22, 2018. 73 political incidents were recorded during this period compared to 32 during the previous reporting period between January 8 and February 7, 2018. The increase in incidents during this period can be attributed to the increased activities of unidentified groups and the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN). 25 of these incidents were related to unidentified groups, and 27 involved the CPN. Of the 27 CPN-related incidents, 14 were carried out by their cadres, while the remaining 13 involved the arrests of CPN cadres for allegedly carrying out violent activities. Nine incidents were the disputes related to the changing of the local unit centers and two concerned protests over the location of the provincial capitals.

Among the 10 other incidents: two entailed demonstrations demanding the resignation of the Chief Justice; two concerned Nepal Student Union (NSU), the student wing of Nepali Congress, protesting against the president's approval of three members to the National Assembly; one was related to inmates in Kailali district prison staging a hunger strike demanding their release; one involved an armed group exploding improvised explosive device (IED); one entailed Member of Parliament Nawaraj Silwal's supporters demonstrating in front of Kathmandu District Court; one involved the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) burning an effigy of Sanghiya Samajwadi Forum Nepal (SSFN) chairperson in protest of SSFN's decision to appoint a Muslim as the Chief Minister of Province 2; one was related to Nepal Tarun Dal (NTD), the youth organization of Nepali Congress, protesting in front of the party office demanding an end to factionalism within the party; and one concerned a clash between cadres of Sanghiya Limbuwan Rajya Parishad (SLRP) and a group of residents over dispute on construction of a water reservoir tank.

41 of these 73 incidents were violent. Of the 41 violent incidents, unidentified groups were involved in 25, while 13 others were carried out by the CPN cadres; an armed group was involved in one incident, one clash occurred during the protest over shifting the center of a local unit, and one clash involved cadres of SLRP and a group of residents. During this reporting period, there was an increased trend of violent incidents targeting large infrastructures. 15 of these incidents targeted hydropower projects and telecommunication towers. Among these 15 incidents, unidentified groups were involved in 12, while CPN cadres carried out the remaining three.

21 violent incidents were recorded on February 20 alone, on which day the CPN had called a nationwide *banda* protesting the arrest of their leaders and cadres during the third national congress of Rashtriya Yuwa Jana Swayamsewak, CPN's sister organization, held in Biratnagar Metropolitan City on February 18.

## **Overview of Incidents<sup>1</sup>**

### Incidents Related to Unidentified Groups

- On February 10, two hydropower projects were attacked by IEDs in two separate incidents. Unidentified groups attacked Upper Karnali hydropower project in Dailekh and Arun-III hydropower project in Sankhuwasabha. The explosions caused some physical damages to the projects, but there was no report of human casualties in either of the incidents.
- On February 12, an unidentified group detonated an IED at a telecommunication tower of Ncell company at Bachhyauli in Ratnanagar Municipality of Chitwan. A device of the tower was damaged, however, the tower was largely intact after the explosion.
- On February 12, an unidentified group completely destroyed a crusher factory and an excavator after setting them on fire at Phedibazar in Arun Rural Municipality of Bhojpur. The factory and the excavator were being used to construct Naradmuni Thulung highway that links Bhojpur district headquarters with Dhankuta.
- On February 13, an unidentified group exploded an IED at a telecommunication tower of Ncell company at Gwani of Jayaprithvi Municipality in Bajhang. Although no human casualty has been reported, four solar panels and three batteries of the tower were damaged by the explosion.
- On February 20, Nepal Army's bomb disposal team defused an IED at Purano Bus Park of Baglung Municipality, Baglung. Local residents informed police after noticing an abandoned hot case.
- On February 20, an unidentified group exploded an IED at Bijaypur of Kaski. The IED had exploded before the Nepal Army's bomb disposal team reached the site. A local journalist and a police person were injured in the incident. They were taken to Gandaki Medical College for treatment.
- On February 20, a bomb exploded at Dhawalagiri Chowk of Baglung Municipality, Baglung. The explosion cracked glass panes of a local shop.
- On February 20, Nepal Army defused an IED at Chardobato of Madhyapur Thimi Municipality in Bhaktapur. The residents informed police when they discovered the bomb near Sajha Petrol Pump.
- On February 20, an IED was found near the Smarak Gate of Hetauda Sub-Metropolitan City, Makwanpur. After being informed by the residents about a suspicious object, police surrounded the site and called Nepal Army's bomb disposal unit.

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<sup>1</sup>For a complete list of incidents, see Nepal Monitor's records. <https://nepalmonitor.org/>

- On February 25, an unidentified group exploded an IED at Madhuwan Municipality Office in Bardiya. Although human casualty was not reported, the office had its window panes smashed and the walls damaged. The unidentified group claimed that the explosion was a protest against the municipality's decision to evacuate an area occupied by squatters.
- On February 26, an unidentified group vandalized the office of Ward 5 in Tatopani Rural Municipality, Jumla. The group took away a laptop and its charger, a multi-plug, a calculator and five registers from the office.
- On March 12, an unidentified group shot the mayor of Ghodaghodi Municipality in Dhangadhi. The group attacked the mayor with a khukuri and shot him at his residence in Sukhkhad Bazar. The mayor had a head injury by khukuri and bullet injuries on his leg and waist.

#### CPN-Related Incidents

- CPN took responsibility of attacking the office of Upper Karnali hydropower in Birendranagar Municipality of Surkhet on February 10. A politburo member of CPN said that the incident in Birendranagar was against the governmental decision to add tenure of the project against national interest.
- On February 13, an IED was detonated at a telecommunication tower of Ncell at Kochang in Madi Rural Municipality of Rolpa. A CPN district level leader took responsibility of the incident. He further said that CPN had planned to hit Ncell towers in Rolpa, Pyuthan and Salyan but they became successful only in Rolpa. A battery storing room was destroyed by the explosion.
- On February 15, CPN threatened elected representatives of Kalikot to resign from their positions. A letter signed by the self-claimed head of the 'People's Government', Bishakhar Jaisi, threatened Rural Municipality chairs, vice-chairs, Municipality chairs and vice-chairs to resign.
- On February 20, CPN cadres detonated an IED at a supermarket in Damak Municipality, Jhapa. After the explosion, other shops, which were open, also shut down. CPN had called a nationwide *banda* on February 20.
- On February 20, CPN cadres set fire to a governmental vehicle at Mid-Baneshwor in Kathmandu. According to police, the incident took place in the morning when the vehicle was parked at a house.
- On February 20, CPN cadres threw stones at a bus parked at Piparichapa of Kanchan Rural Municipality in Kapilbastu. According to police, glass pane of the vehicle was shattered in the incident.

- On February 20, CPN cadres threw a petrol bomb at a bus in the East-West Highway near Khairanipur of Kapilvastu. Police said that the incident injured 12 passengers in the bus. Three seriously injured passengers were taken to the Lumbini Zonal Hospital in Butwal.
- On March 5, CPN enforced a strike on educational institutions across the country demanding the release of its arrested cadres.

#### Arrests of CPN Cadres

- On February 18, police arrested 32 CPN cadres including two central leaders from various places in Biratnagar of Morang. The cadres had come from several districts to participate in the national congress of Rashtriya Yuwa Jana Swayamsewak, a sister organization of CPN. Deputy Superintendent of Police of the district said that the arrests were made for an investigation.
- On February 20, police arrested CPN cadres from across the country on the day CPN had announced nationwide *banda*. Police arrested one cadre from Dunai of Dolpa, six from Bodegaun of Kapilbastu, four from Koshi Highway section at Tankisinwari in Biratnagar of Morang, one from Tulsipur of Dang, four from various places in Kathmandu and two cadres from Kapurkot Bazar of Salyan. According to police, the CPN cadres were arrested while they were enforcing *banda*.
- On February 21, police arrested three CPN cadres, alleging them of planting an IED near the bridge of Bijaypur River in Pokhara of Kaski on February 20. The explosion injured a journalist and a police. On the same day, Nepal Army diffused IEDs planted at three different places in Pokhara.
- On February 23, police arrested three CPN cadres from various places in Dang. CPN's Rapti bureau in-charge said that police arrested the cadres as they were preparing to organize a corner meeting in Ghorahi Sub-Metropolis of Dang. Superintendent of Police at the district said that the cadres were arrested for an investigation.
- On March 13, three CPN cadres accused of attacking the mayor of Ghodaghodi Municipality were arrested from Kailali. The mayor was attacked by an unidentified group with Khukuri and was also shot with bullets at his residence in Sukkhadbar. The CPN had alleged that the mayor had failed to take any action against the beating of a woman in name of witchcraft.

#### Local Restructuring-Related Incidents

- On February 11, residents of Subarnapur village burnt an effigy of the chairperson of Thori Rural Municipality in Parsa. The residents of Subarnapur were protesting against the rural municipality's decision to shift the service center of the rural municipality from Subarnapur to Gyangdanda.

- On February 14, residents of Bishrampur of Brindaban Municipality, Rautahat clashed with police while the residents protesting against the decision of moving municipality office from Bishrampur to Harshchowk. The incident took place when protesters picketing the meeting venue of the municipality officials started throwing stones at the venue and police retaliated with firing tear gas shells. The incident injured at least 12 police personnel and 12 residents.
- On March 2, residents of Dunai in Dolpa imposed a *banda* in the town to protest against the government's decision to shift the administrative center of Thulibheri Municipality from Dunai to Jufal. A municipal representative commented that the government had taken the decision without the local representatives' knowledge and consultation. The residents said that the indefinite *banda* would continue until the government reinstated Dunai as the centre of Thulibheri Municipality.

#### Other Incidents

- On February 12, cadres of VHP, a Hindu organization burnt effigy of SSFN chairperson in protest of SSFN's decision to appoint a Muslim as the Chief Minister of Province 2. SSFN chose Mohammad Lalbabu Raut Gaddi as the chief minister for the province.
- On February 14, supporters of Member of Parliament Nawraj Silwal demonstrated in front of Kathmandu District Court. The demonstrators accused the government of being vengeful against Silwal by filing a case against him at the court to tarnish his public image.
- On February 20, police arrested at least 12 protesters from Kathmandu District Administration Office. The protesters were demanding an investigation in a controversy of multiple age certificates possessed by the (then) Chief Justice Gopal Prasad Parajuli.
- On February 21, NTD, a youth wing of Nepali Congress, submitted a copy of the constitution to President Bidya Devi Bhandari as a protest against her approval of three members to the National Assembly recommended by the CPN-UML led government. The NTD cadres held that the president had no right to reject the recommendation made by the then Nepali Congress led government. NTD's secretary termed the president's move an 'unconstitutional step' and demanded it be ratified. On the same day, NSU, the student wing of Nepali Congress, took out a rally against the president's decision in Bharatpur Metropolis, Chitwan.
- On February 22, an IED exploded at Loktantrik Chowk of Lahan Municipality in Siraha, seriously injuring a local resident. Police found pamphlets of Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morcha, an armed group campaigning for free Tarai, at the incident site. The injured person received treatment at Jayamatadi Polyclinic.

- On February 25, students affiliated to Nepali Congress demonstrated outside the party office in Sanepa of Lalitpur Metropolis demanding an end to factionalism within the party.
- On March 4, 24 inmates of Kailali District Prison including an elected representative of Federal Parliament, Resham Chaudhary, staged a hunger strike in Dhanagadhi Sub-Metropolis. According to police, all the 24 inmates have been held in accusation of being involved in the Tikapur incident, which resulted in the death of eight police personnel and a two-year-old child. The inmates demanded that Resham Chaudhary should be granted the victory certificate by Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) and allowed to take oath as a parliamentarian. They also demanded all the accused inmates of the Tikapur incident to be released and their longstanding demands of the Tharuhat Struggle Committee to be addressed.
- On March 21, a group of residents and SLRP cadres clashed at Bijaypur of Dharan Sub-Metropolitan City in Sunsari over a decision to construct a water reservoir tank. Two cadres of SLRP were injured after police fired tear gas shells to contain the situation.

*Note: Please look below to see the map of incidents enlisted in the report.*

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