Incidents Prior to Nomination for the Third Phase Local Election

Analysis Update – 11

Period: August 3 to September 5, 2017 | Published: September 8, 2017

There was a small increase in the number of election-related incidents during this reporting period.[1] This increase can be attributed to parties beginning preparations for the third phase of local elections that are scheduled for September 18. Seven election-related incidents were recorded between August 3 and September 5. Four of six incidents were intra-party disputes over the selection of candidates, one incident entailed an inter-party clash, and two incidents involved protest against the elections. There was one more incident related to protest against the local level restructuring process recorded during this period.

On August 11, after several rounds of dialogue, the ruling parties and the agitating Rashtriya Janta Party Nepal (RJPN) agreed to put the constitution amendment bill to vote. The bill was registered in parliament with an understanding that RJPN would take part in elections regardless of the result of voting.[2] The bill failed to pass its vote,[3] and RJPN on August 23 formally announced to participate in the third phase of local elections, as well as provincial and parliamentary elections.[4]

Meanwhile, on August 10, the Supreme Court vacated the previous interim stay order to not increase the number of local bodies.[5] This decision opened the way for the government to add local units in Tarai, which was one of the major demands of RJPN to participate in local elections.[6]

Though the number of election-related incidents remained low during the reporting periods after the completion of second phase elections, it is expected that the number of incidents may increase with election campaigns starting from September 6 in Province 2.

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[1] Six incidents were recorded during this reporting period, versus one during the last reporting period that covered July 11 and August 2. See Analysis Updates here.

[2] The amendment of the constitution remained a major precondition for RJPN to participate in elections.

[3] The constitution amendment bill was put to vote in the parliament on August 21. The amendment fell short of 48 votes in the parliament.

[4] The government announced that both provincial and parliamentary polls will be held in two phases, the first on November 26 and second on December 7, 2017.

[5] On May 26, the Supreme Court gave an interim stay order against the cabinet's May 22 decision to increase the number of local bodies in 12 Tarai districts. See The Kathmandu Post report for details.

[6] Following the decision, the government decided to add nine local level units in Province 2 on August 11, resulting in the creation of 59 rural municipalities and 77 municipalities including one metropolis in the province. Read The Kathmandu Post report on the number of increased local level units in Tarai.

Overview of Incidents

<u>Election-Related Incidents</u>

Intra-Party Incidents

- On August 25, two factions of RJPN supporters in Birgunj Metropolis of Parsa clashed during a dispute over candidate selection. Both groups were demanding that the party select their sought candidate for the mayoral position in the upcoming local elections. No injuries were reported.

- On August 30, women cadres of RJPN demonstrated in Gaur Municipality of Rautahat demanding that the party select Kiran Thakur as its deputy mayoral candidate for the municipality. The demonstration took place outside Siya Palace Hotel in Gaur where the RJPN District Working Committee was meeting. The demonstration ended after a district working committee member assured the protesters that women in Gaur would be nominated to reputable positions in the upcoming elections.

- On September 4, cadres of Sanghiya Samajwadi Forum Nepal (SSFN) locked Renu Kumari Yadav, the central vice-chairperson of the party, in her home in Rajbiraj of Saptari. The cadres accused Yadav of influencing the candidate selection process in Saptari district in order to give her son the mayoral candidacy in Boderbarsain Municipality. The cadres attempted to set fire to Yadav's house. Police were deployed to control the situation.

- On September 4, a group of Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML) cadres led by a party's member of parliament padlocked the District Party Office in Birgunj of Parsa. The cadres alleged that the party had sidelined its long time cadres and selected new recruits as candidates in the district.

Inter-Party Incident

- On August 29, RJPN cadres attempted to obstruct an assembly of CPN-UML cadres in Janakpur Sub-Metropolis in Dhanusha. RJPN cadres showed black flags to Madhav Kumar Nepal, a senior CPN-UML leader, and threw stones at the participants of the program. Police used force to control the situation, resulting in the injury of three RJPN cadres. The chairperson of RJPN in Dhanusha said that RJPN will not allow CPN-UML to campaign for elections in the district, since CPN-UML did not vote for the constitution amendment bill in the parliament.

Incident Against Elections

- On August 26, Madheshi Janadahikar Forum (MJF) organized a motorcycle rally with black flags in Birgunj Metropolis of Parsa in order to protest against the third phase elections being held in Province 2.[7] The protestors shouted slogans in favor of 'One Madhesh, One Province' and the population-based delimitation of electoral constituencies.

- On September 5, an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) exploded at the CPN-UML mayoral candidate's home in Lahan, Siraha. In a press release on the same day, Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morcha (Krantikari), led by Jaya Krishna Goit, took responsibility for the incident.

Local-Level Restructuring-Related Incident

- On September 3, residents of Ward 3 of Sarawal Rural Municipality in Nawalparasi padlocked the ward office after the rural municipality decided to move to a more spacious office in another place. According to the rural municipality's vice-chairperson of rural municipality, they were still looking for a proper place to move their office in the rural municipality. He also said that though the rural municipality office will move elsewhere, the ward office will remain where it is now. He claimed that the suspicion among residents that their ward office will also be moved led them to padlock the office.

Note: Please scroll down to see the map of incidents enlisted in the report.
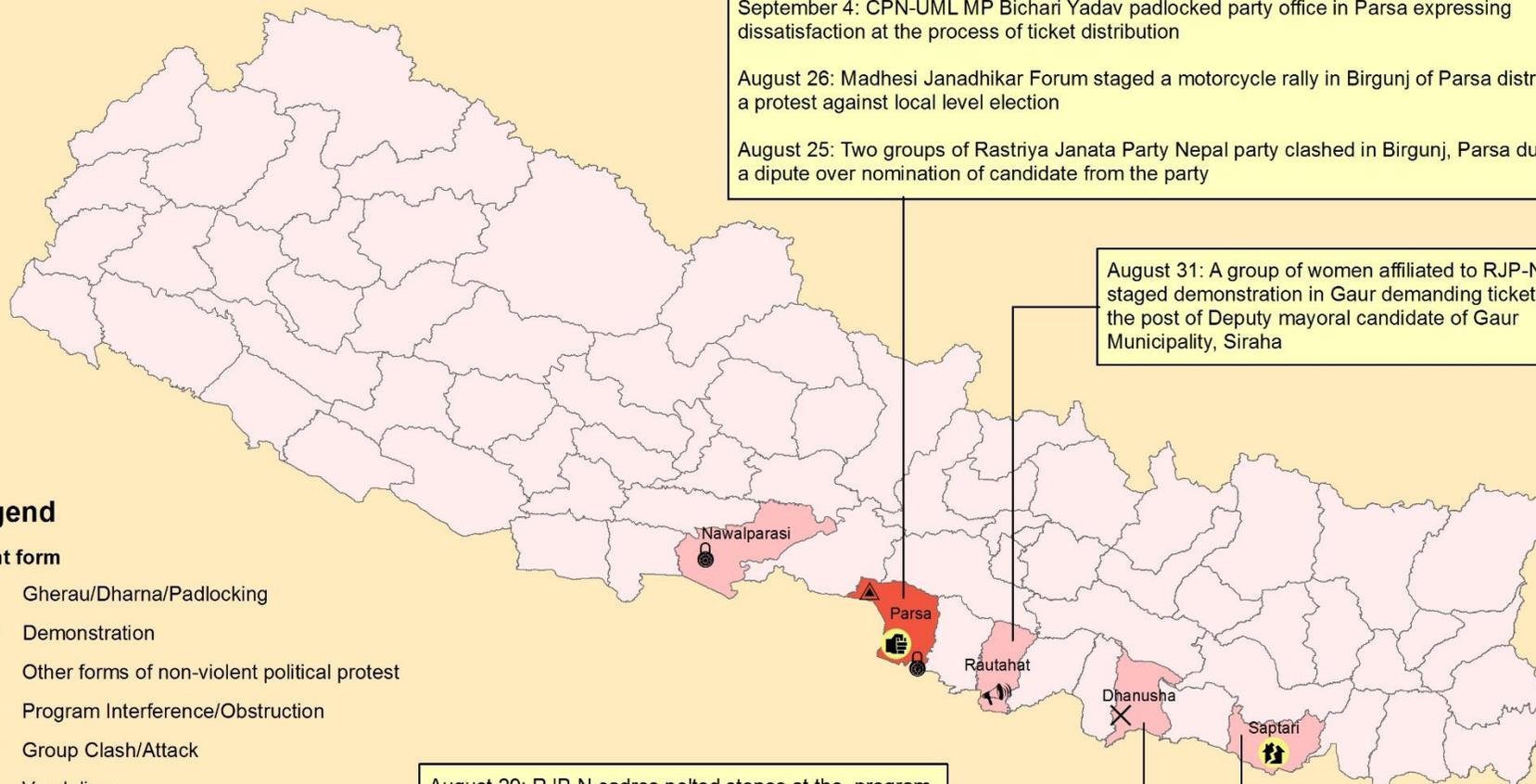
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[7] MJF is a splinter group from former Madheshi Janadhikar Forum Nepal.

Election Related Incidents, August 3 - September 5, 2017

September 4: CPN-UML MP Bichari Yadav padlocked party office in Parsa expressing dissatisfaction at the process of ticket distribution

August 26: Madhesi Janadhikar Forum staged a motorcycle rally in Birgunj of Parsa district as a protest against local level election

August 25: Two groups of Rastriya Janata Party Nepal party clashed in Birgunj, Parsa during a dipute over nomination of candidate from the party

August 31: A group of women affiliated to RJP-N staged demonstration in Gaur demanding ticket for the post of Deputy mayoral candidate of Gaur Municipality, Siraha

August 29: RJP-N cadres pelted stones at the program of CPN-UML held in Janakpur of Dhanusha district.

September 4: Cadres of Sanghiya Samajwadi Forum Nepal locked the party leader Renu Kumari Yadav and vandalized her house in Rajbiraj, Saptari

Nawalparasi

Parsa

Rautahat

Dhanusha

Saptari

Legend

Event form

🔒 Gherau/Dharna/Padlocking

📢 Demonstration

⚠ Other forms of non-violent political protest

✕ Program Interference/Obstruction

👊 Group Clash/Attack

⚡ Vandalism

Total number of Incidents

	0
	1 - 2
	3 - 5

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