

Unofficial Translation

(The Speech of Honorable Chief Election Commissioner Dr. Ayodhee Prasad Yadav on the preparations of the elections to the House of Representatives and Provincial Assemblies scheduled for November 26 and December 7, 2017, delivered in a press conference held at the Media Center of the Election Commission on November 1, 2017)

Respected voters,

1) The Election Commission is working around the clock to hold the elections to the House of Representatives and the Provincial Assemblies in two phases on November 26 and December 7 in the course of implementing the Constitution of Nepal promulgated by the historic Constituent Assembly and institutionalizing the Federal Democratic Republic. You are all informed that tomorrow, November 2, has been set to register candidacy nominations for the second phase of the elections to the House of Representatives and the Provincial Assemblies, under the first-past-the-post system, scheduled for December 7. Candidates will file their nominations in 45 districts for 128 constituencies of the House of Representatives and 256 constituencies of the Provincial Assemblies. In this context, the Election Commission would like to urge all the political parties and independent candidates to reach the office of the Chief Returning Officers or Returning Officers under your respective

election constituencies between 10 am and 5 pm tomorrow to register your nomination.

2) The government of Nepal has made all security arrangements required for the entire election-related activities. Since Chiefs and top leaders of the political parties are going to file their nominations tomorrow for the second phase of the elections under the first-past-the-post category, the Election Commission would like to instruct the security agencies to manage high level security arrangements for the same. Besides, the Commission believes that all Chief Returning Officers, Returning Officers and Chief District Officers will take essential initiatives on time to accomplish the nomination process in a well-managed, disciplined and fearless atmosphere.

3) I would also like to inform all of you that the Commission is scheduled to unveil the closed list of candidates already registered for the elections to the House of Representatives and Provincial Assemblies under the PR system on November 3.

4) The process of procuring essential materials by the Commission for the forthcoming elections has already started. Similarly, the printing of 17.4 million ballot papers for the proportional electoral system of both the elections has finished. The printing of separate ballot papers for the elections to the House of Representatives and the Provincial Assemblies under the first-past-the-post category is also going on as per the verdict of the Supreme Court.

Approving the design of the ballot papers, green ballot papers for the House of Representatives and black ballot papers for the Provincial Assemblies, the Commission has already instructed the printing of ballot papers for 21 districts. The Commission is working in full swing to print and send all the ballot papers meant for the first phase of the elections to 32 districts by November 6.

5) The works of revising and amending the election-related regulations, directives and procedures are being intensified as per the verdict of the Supreme Court. The process of procuring and managing extra election materials like ballot boxes and *Swastik* stamps that are additionally required for the two separate ballot papers has already begun. The Commission is doing home work to immediately start to conduct trainings and workshops related to the voter education as per the revised regulations and directives. The Commission will soon launch the voter education program after revising the voter education calendar that the Commission had earlier approved.

6) The Commission strongly believes that all concerned stakeholders will definitely comply with the election Code of Conduct being enforced since October 30, 2017. The Chief Returning Officers, Returning Officers and Chief District Officers across the country has already been instructed to take necessary action if anyone is found violating the election code.

The Commission had issued directives to stop the operation of the Election Constituency Development Program recommended by the outgoing parliamentarians as the operation of the program was against the election code. The Commission has received the information from 77 districts that such programs cost of Rs. 10 billions have been annulled after the ruling of the Commission.

7) The Commission has formed a committee to study the issue of safeguarding voting rights of the government staff and security personnel to be deployed in the elections who have registered their name in the voters' list.

8) The Commission has formally requested national and international organizations to observe the upcoming elections. The Commission cordially expects the support and goodwill of all international actors, including the international community, friendly nations and development partners for the elections. The Commission also appeals to all concerned stakeholders to fully engage with the national campaign of making the historic elections a success because the upcoming elections are a must to implement the constitution.

Respected voters,

9) The Commission is moving ahead with determination to fulfill its responsibility assigned by the Constitution of Nepal. So, the Commission is carrying out all the preparatory works accordingly to conduct the forthcoming elections to the House of Representatives and

Provincial Assemblies on the scheduled dates. The Commission would again like to appeal to all the political parties and independent candidates to participate peacefully and enthusiastically in the candidacy nomination process, once again reminding them that the nomination process is slated to take place tomorrow in 45 districts for the second phase of the elections under the first-past-the-post system.

Respected media persons,

I would like to extend cordial thanks to all of you for attending the press conference accepting the invitation of the Commission. The Commission also pays high respect to your contribution that you are continuously offering in the campaign of institutionalizing the federal democratic republic in the country. The Commission is fully confident that your support and contribution will continue in the coming days as well to successfully celebrate the November 26 and December 7 elections as a great carnival. Thank You.