

EP : 03 26/ JAN /2026

Analysis

FPTP Nominations Show Minimal Change from Previous Cycles

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- Opportunity to join the *petition* calling for accessible polling stations.

38 DAYS
TO GO

We aim to bring you timely updates and thoughtful analysis on the March election. Share your feedback at:

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FPTP Nominations Show Minimal Change from Previous Cycles

As Nepal prepares for the upcoming House of Representatives (HoR) elections, political parties have finalized their First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) candidate lists, igniting renewed debate over the participation of women, youth, and marginalized communities. According to preliminary [reports](#), a total of 2,263 candidates have filed from 68 political parties, while 1,143 individuals have filed as independent candidates. In the proportional representation category, 58 political parties have registered. These numbers highlight the scale of competition, but they also raise questions about how inclusive the process truly is.

This election is particularly significant as it follows the Gen-Z movement, a youth-led uprising that reshaped political discourse in Nepal. The movement demanded greater youth involvement, more equitable representation, and the transformation of long-standing power structures. At first glance, the candidate lists show some signs of generational change, as several parties have nominated first-time candidates and younger faces.

A total of 583 candidates between the ages of 25 and 35—comprising 515 males and 67 females—account for 16.7 percent of all nominations. Candidates aged 36 to 50 account for 1,610 nominations, representing a substantial 46.2 percent of the total. For example, out of Rastriya Swatantra Party's (RSP) 163 candidates, nearly 40 percent are under 40 (including 12 under 30 and 53 aged 30–40). Similarly, the Nepali Congress has nominated 97 new candidates, 7 of whom are under the age of 40. And in contrast, 33 percent of the candidates are above the age of 50 in UML. Despite these figures, youth participation remains limited compared to the expectations generated by the Gen-Z movement.

Alongside, more concerning is also the persistent underrepresentation of women in FPTP candidacies. Among major parties, women continue to occupy only a [small fraction](#) of tickets. The Nepali Congress has nominated just 11 women, representing 6.67 percent of its 165 FPTP seats, far below the constitutionally mandated one-third threshold. The RSP has fielded 17 women candidates, or 10.3 percent, while the CPN-UML has allocated only eight seats to women, and the National Communist Party (NCP) has nominated 10. Collectively, 18 districts have no women candidates at all, underscoring systemic exclusion.

This disconnect is especially stark when viewed against the composition of the electorate. Women constitute nearly half of the voters, while youth voters make up [52 percent](#). Yet their presence in FPTP candidacy remains disproportionately low. The [representation](#) of Dalits (2.18%), sexual and gender minorities (0.02%) and other marginalized communities is even weaker. The fact that these patterns persist across both traditional and newer political parties suggests that the issue is very deep-rooted and structural. Barriers such as unequal access to resources, entrenched party hierarchies, and prevailing social norms continue to influence candidate selection. While striving for a more inclusive electoral process, Nepal must also address these underlying factors, which contribute to the entrenched gerontocracy in politics.

Without deliberate reforms to create space for youth, women, and marginalized groups, the promise of this inclusive democracy remains symbolic, falling short of the meaningful change envisioned by the Gen-Z movement.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NEWS

- **Government Launches Election Police Cyber Cell:** The government has launched an [Election Police Cyber Cell](#) to curb online rumors, mis/disinformation, and digital interference that could affect the election. Announced by Home Minister Omprakash Aryal and officials, the cell will work with the Election Commission to track suspicious content on social media, support investigations, remove verified misinformation, and take legal action when necessary.
- **ECN to Use AI Tool “E-Monitor Plus” for Social Media Monitoring:** Ahead of the HOR elections, the Election Commission has announced the use of an [AI-based monitoring system](#), “E-Monitor Plus,” to curb negative and misleading online activities. Working with the Nepali Army and Nepal Police, the system tracks misinformation, hate speech, and harmful content across major social media platforms. The system is trained on 200+ media links and election-related keywords, it analyzes content in Devanagari, Roman Nepali, and English. Meanwhile, the commission has stated private messages will remain inaccessible.
- **ECN Launches Joint Election Operations Centre for 2082 House Elections:** The Election Commission has [launched](#) the Joint Election Operations Centre (JEOC) to facilitate the election process. Led by the Commission Secretary, the centre brings together representatives from the Ministry of Home Affairs and all four security agencies, including the Nepali Army, Nepal Police, and Armed Police Force. The JEOC will monitor election developments nationwide, compile daily situation reports, coordinate security reviews, address emerging challenges, and propose measures to prevent and manage election-related incidents.
- **Half of PR Ballots Printed:** As of January 20, 2026, the Janak Education Materials Center has printed 1,230,000 [PR ballots](#) for the upcoming HOR elections, completing around 50% of the required 2,083,000 ballots. The center has delivered 1,098,200 ballots to the Election Commission, packed in 7,841 boxes so far. Printing for the direct election ballots will begin after the final candidate list and election symbols are confirmed.

NEPAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ELECTION 2026

Key Election Events

JANUARY

JAN 16

Election Officers offices established nationwide

JAN 20

Code of Conduct enforced; FPTP nominations filed and preliminary candidate list published.

JAN 21–22, 2026

Objections filed, inquiry conducted, and nomination decisions finalized and published.

JAN 23

Candidate withdrawal, final FPTP candidate list published, and election symbol allotment.

FEBRUARY

FEB 3, 2026

Final PR closed candidate lists published.

FEB 15, 2026

Official election campaign period begins nationwide.

MARCH

MAR 2

Silent period begins (48 hours before polling).

MAR 5, ELECTION DAY

Nationwide polling for FPTP and PR.

MAR 6

Vote counting begins after all-party meeting.

MAR 19

FPTP results declared across constituencies.

MAR 26

2026 Political parties submit PR candidate names.

APRIL

APR 3

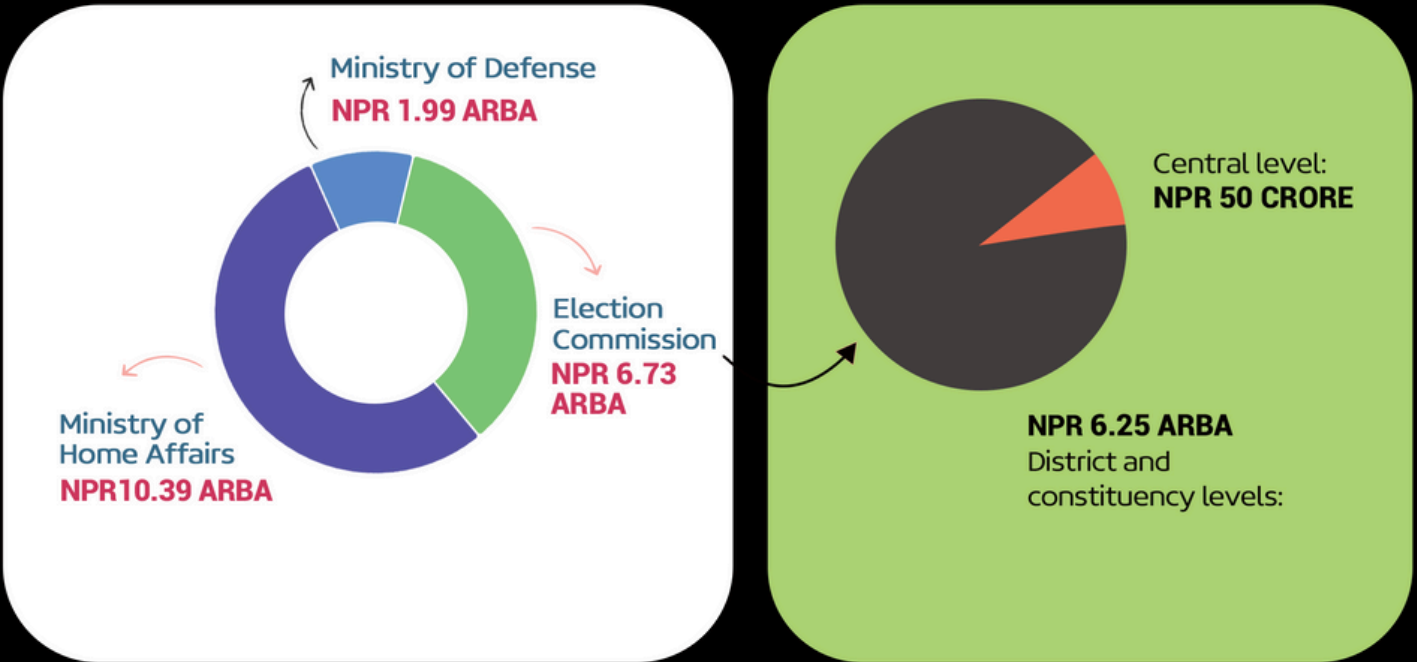
Final election report submitted to the President of Nepal.

Source: Election Commission Nepal

NEPAL ELECTION BUDGET & PREPARATION 2082

TOTAL BUDGET

19 ARBA
21 CRORE NPR



ELECTION BUDGET EXPENDITURE



Source: <https://www.setopati.com/politics/380166>

DRN Publishes Handbook on 'Digital Rights & Election Reporting'

Amid rising threats from misinformation, disinformation, and digital interference in elections, Digital Rights Nepal (DRN), in collaboration with the Federation of Nepali Journalists and with support from Media Defence, has published the "Practical Handbook on Digital Rights and Security, Information Integrity, and Election Reporting." Designed mainly for journalists working in the digital space, the handbook offers practical guidance on digital security, privacy, fact-checking, identifying misinformation, and ethical election reporting. It aims to strengthen safe, informed, and responsible journalism during elections and other sensitive periods, supporting accurate, accountable, and democratic reporting in the digital era. Full read : [Digital Rights, Safety, Information Integrity & Election Reporting](#).



Jay Krishna Mahato

Dhanusha, Bateshwor Rural Municipality -2

Accessible polling station for ensuring voting rights.

I recall the last election when my friends and I had to physically assist one of our neighbors to the polling station due to his mobility limitations. I do not believe there have been any improvements for this election, and we may face the same necessity. There is a significant population of elderly people, people with disabilities, pregnant women and others in vulnerable states here, a fact I noted while volunteering for election registration. We are currently coordinating our efforts to pressure the government to ensure inclusive polling spaces. This would necessitate easily accessible booths, a dedicated resting area, adequate shading for poll workers and voters, easy entry and exits and readily available first aid and healthcare. We are uncertain if all of these provisions can be implemented before the March election but are hopeful that this initiative will contribute to broader electoral reform to be addressed beyond the scope of the current election. These steps are necessary to ensure that each individual exercises their voting rights with dignity as guaranteed by the constitution.



[Sign the petition to show your solidarity to the cause >>](#)



Bishnu Kumar Gupta

Youth Entrepreneur Jaleswor-2, Mahottari

I have voted twice in the election. Each time I had hoped that the government would address the issues of Madhesh. Here the major issues are that of disaster and the deteriorating state of agriculture, health and education. The unemployment rate is also high. The previous government had pledged to work on these issues but none of them have been fulfilled. Now there's new power on rise. The new parties are claiming for the change but are not able to clarify where this change will come from. The focus is on blaming the old parties. We are and want to be hopeful from the new alternative forces but in the lack of clarity in the communication of vision and how they would move forward there is also the concern of them following the same footstep. People are a bit hesitant and find it difficult to build direct trust.



Anita Panta

Co-founder, Intergenerational Civic Forum

The upcoming election is a blend of excitement and apprehension. Despite the general excitement around the election I am deeply concerned about the representation of female and marginalized communities in the election. The very limited space and opportunity for them from both the new and old political parties is really disappointing. Adding to this, the mainstream media too largely ignored this issue. Further there is minimal discussion surrounding party manifestos, especially regarding the inclusion of marginalized groups. Through our work from Intergenerational Civic Forum we are focusing on researching the development of these manifestos and ensuring they integrate the issues, voices, and mandate of the Gen Z revolution, emphasizing inclusivity.



This weekly newsletter is a joint initiative of Accountability Lab Nepal (ALN) and Digital Rights Nepal (DRN), specifically launched to provide comprehensive coverage and analysis of the 2026 elections in Nepal. During this time, this publication consolidates their regular newsletters, ALN's ***Nepal Governance Weekly*** and DRN's ***Digital Rights Weekly***. Consequently, those will not be produced separately until the election cycle concludes.

This material aims to promote electoral integrity and enable informed citizenry by delivering non-partisan, evidence-based analysis, and rights-oriented perspective. It does not endorse or oppose any political party or candidates.

The data presented here is synthesized from diverse credible sources, including government agencies, international organizations, news media, social platforms, and our extensive local networks. The topic selection are based on their prevalence, relevance, and potential societal impact, ensuring all information is accurate and verified at the time of publication.

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