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Analysis

2026 Nepal Elections Held: The GenZ Mandate Propels RSP on Way to Secure Historic Win

IN THIS EPISODE

- Analysis of the Election's historic result.
- Major highlights across the media including the online ads activities during election and zero voters turn out in Dolakha region.
- 'Factsheet' showing how the federal MP is selected in Nepal based on the PR system.
- 'Community Voices' covering the voices of *Youth Election Observers* from Accountability Lab Nepal from across Nepal.

MARCH EVENTS

- **March 5 (Election Day):** Nationwide polling for FPTP (First-Past-The-Post) and PR (Proportional Representation).
- **March 6:** Vote counting begins after the all-party meeting.
- **March 19:** FPTP results declared across constituencies.
- **March 26:** Political parties submit PR candidate names

2026 Nepal Elections Held : The GenZ mandate propels RSP on way to secure historic win

Marking a historic shift in its democratic trajectory, Nepal has successfully held the 2026 House of Representatives Election following the Gen Z-led revolution. The election took place in a politically charged environment demanding stronger accountability, responsive governance, and political reform. Consequently, expectations from the new federal parliament are particularly high, especially among young voters. Despite some uncertainties over whether the elections would take place as scheduled, the Interim Government led by PM Sushila Karki was ultimately able to conduct it in a safe and largely peaceful manner. Only a few incidents were reported across the country, and these were quickly addressed by authorities, allowing the electoral process to proceed smoothly.

The election recorded a [60 percent voter turnout](#), which is lower compared to previous national elections. Lower participation may reflect several factors, including voter fatigue, dissatisfaction with traditional political parties, and limited confidence that elections will produce meaningful political change. Another significant factor is the absence of provisions for out-of-constituency and out-of-country voting. An estimated 25% of Nepali voters reside outside their registered constituencies or abroad, limiting their ability to participate in the electoral process. Approximately 2.1 million Nepalis are living abroad, many of whom were unable to vote in these elections. While the exact number of voters unable to vote due to internal migration remains unclear, it likely represents a substantial share of the electorate, further contributing to the lower turnout.

Vote counting is currently underway for both the FPTP and proportional representation seats. As of this writing, the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP), a burgeoning political force, is heading toward a landslide victory. Projections suggest they may secure not only a simple majority but potentially a two-thirds majority in the new parliament. Established parties trail significantly, with preliminary counts showing a meager seat share. The Nepali Congress currently holds 15 seats, while the CPN-UML follows closely with approximately 8, reflecting a stark departure from their historical dominance.

On the other hand, the preliminary results also suggest the emergence of a relatively weak opposition in parliament, creating both opportunities and challenges for governance. On the one hand, a weak opposition may reduce parliamentary checks and balances and risk weakening democratic practices. On the other hand, if strong institutional norms and inclusive democratic principles are upheld, a stable governing majority could facilitate smoother policymaking and implementation, outcomes that have often been difficult to achieve under fragmented coalition governments or hung parliaments.

Ultimately, the true [measure of this electoral earthquake lies ahead](#). The next five years will determine if the RSP's landslide victory translates into tangible policy shifts and a revitalized democracy, or if it remains a symbolic rejection of the old guard without the substance of meaningful institutional change. At the same time, it is important for political actors, civil society, and citizens to engage constructively with the new political landscape. Supporting democratic institutions while maintaining strong expectations for accountability will be key to ensuring that the promise of this election leads to tangible progress for Nepal.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NEWS

Candidates Spend Over NPR 11.9 Million on Facebook Ads:

During the election period, candidates and affiliated pages spent over [NPR 11.9 million](#) on Facebook ads, according to Facebook's Ad Library. The page "My Voice Counts" led spending, running 128 ads in 30 days for around \$4,173 (NPR 613,431), mainly sharing election-related opinion polls—a potential violation of the election code of conduct. Other significant spenders included pages promoting Dr. Ajay Kranti, Kshitij Thebe, and Nain Singh Mahar, as well as multi-candidate campaign pages. Business person Binod Chaudhary ranked 20th among top Facebook ad spenders for election promotion.

Nearly Half of Voters Sit Out the Polls in Sudurpashchim:

Almost half of registered voters in Sudurpashchim province did not participate in the March 5 election. The Provincial Election Office reported a 50.9% turnout, with 874,177 voters casting ballots out of 1,716,660 registered. A total of 842,483 voters (49.07%) abstained. District-wise turnout was 55.4% in Kailali, 58.6% in Kanchanpur, 39.2% in Achham, 40.9% in Doti, 52.6% in Bajura, 41.1% in Bajhang, 46.8% in Baitadi, 53.8% in Darchula, and 49.2% in Dadeldhura. In Darchula, voting was disrupted after a village reportedly boycotted the election. The voter turnout was 57.8 percent in the last elections.

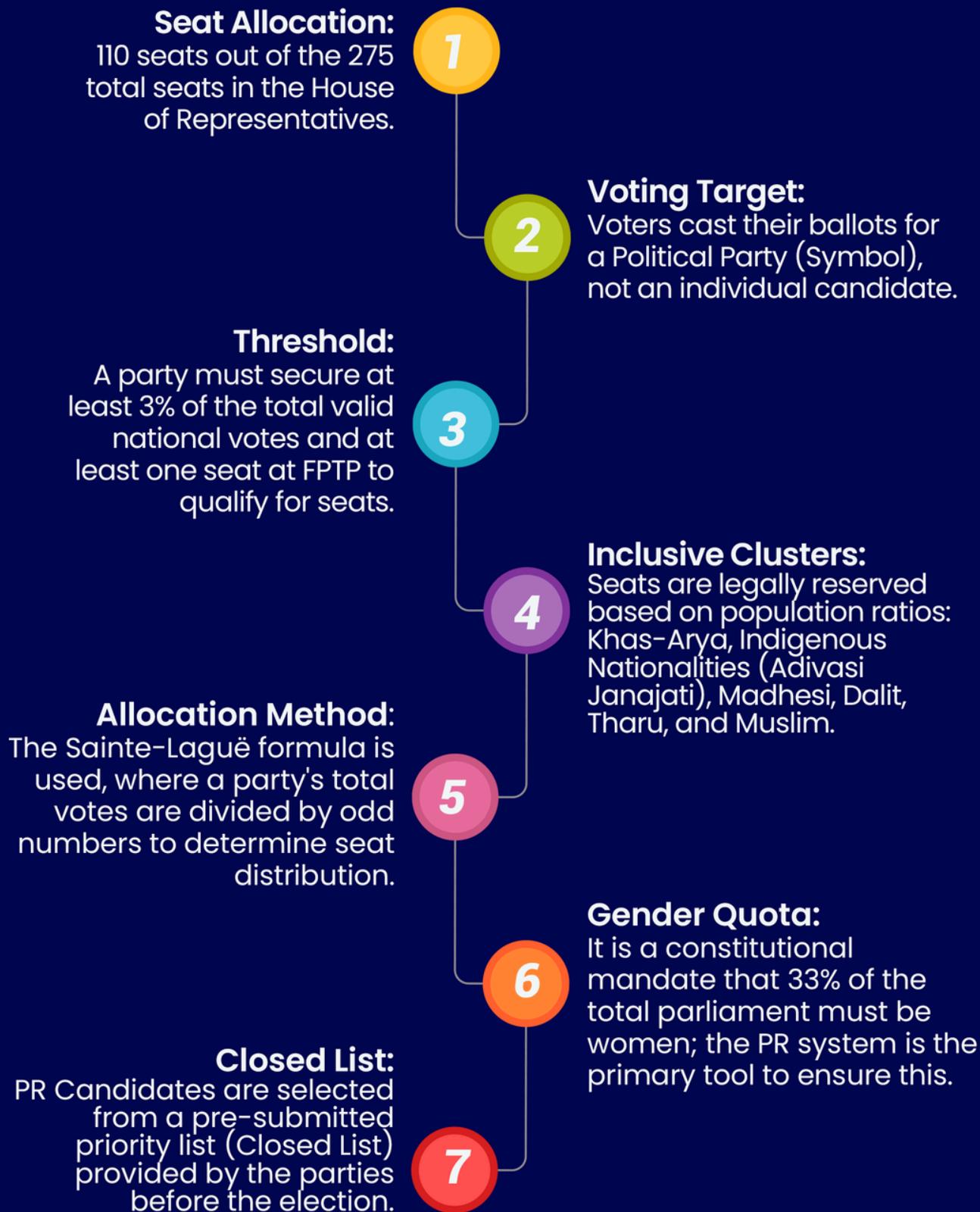
Nepali Workers in Gulf Face Tension Amid Regional Conflict:

Amid rising tensions in West Asia following military actions by the US and Israel against Iran, over 1.7 million Nepali workers and their families in the Gulf are affected. Currently, 357,913 Nepalis are in Qatar, 175,000 in Kuwait, and thousands across the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and other countries. Air travel [disruptions](#) have left over 1,300 Nepalis stranded at transit airports, with authorities providing temporary accommodation. Nepal's foreign ministry and embassies have activated emergency response teams and online portals to monitor and assist citizens.

No Voters Participate at Beding Polling Center in Dolakha:

No voters turned up [to cast their votes at the Rolwaling polling center](#) in Beding Basic School, Gaurishankar Rural Municipality-9, Dolakha. Election officials and security personnel were waiting for voters, but none of the 113 registered voters have come to vote. Many voters are in Kathmandu, but those in the village refuse to vote, saying their voices have never been heard and no candidates visited.

Selection of MP as per the PR System in Nepal





Synthesis of the voices of Youth Election Observers from Accountability Lab Nepal



The election was generally peaceful and conducted without significant incident. As observers, we noted the enthusiasm of voters. The presence of party representatives outside polling centers was mostly cooperative, contributing to an overall calm environment. However, there were efforts to influence voters until the very end. Some party representatives were seen distributing party stickers and making direct voting appeals while assisting voters with the list. Furthermore, a few polling stations experienced temporary disruptions (Sarlahi), causing delays for hours, though these did not escalate into serious issues.

A significant observation was the turnout of elderly voters, who often needed to rest while waiting in line. Polling staff offered necessary assistance but concerns about physical accessibility were evident at multiple locations. For instance in Kohalpur, where an elderly man with disabilities and no immediate family struggled to find assistance to cast his vote. While many polling stations used separate queues to maintain ease, physical access remained limited. A number of polling booths lacked essential infrastructure like ramps, making them unfriendly for wheelchair users. Such a situation prompts serious questions about the adequate integration of accessibility into polling station design and the effective use of resources allocated for polling infrastructure. Accessible polling environments are crucial to ensure that all voters can participate in the electoral process with dignity and ease.

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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