



तराई मानव अधिकार रक्षक सञ्जाल

TERAI HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS ALLIANCE

Ref.No:

Dispatch No:

Date: 16th May 2017

Press Release

As the second round of Local Election is going to take place on 14th June 2017 (31st Jestha 2073), THRD Alliance wants to share its take on the representation Tharus and Muslims in the local polls.

Article 306 (1a) of the constitution has defined the “minorities” as ethnic, linguistic and religious groups whose population is less than the percentage specified by the federal law, and includes groups that have their distinct ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics, aspirations to protect such features and subjected to discrimination and oppression.

A total of 98 castes and communities are listed as minorities. They include Sherpa, Sonar, Gharti-Bhujel, Kalwar, Kumal, Hajam-Thakur, Kanu, Rajbansi, Sunuwar, Sudi, Lohar, Tatma-Tatwa, Khatbe, Dhobi, Majhi, Nuniya, Kamhar, Danuwar, Chepang-Praja, Haluwai, Rajput, Kayastha, Badai, Marwari, Satar-Santhal, Jhagad-Dhagar, Baatar-Sardar, Barai, Kahar, Gangai, Lodh, Rajbhar, Thami, Dhimal, Bhote, Bin, Gaderi-Bhediyar, Nurang, Yakkha, Darai, Tajpuriya, Thakali, Chidimar, Pahari, Mali, Bangali, Chantyal, Dom, Kamr, Bote, Brahum-Bramo, Gaine, Jirel, Dura, Badi, Meche, Lepcha, Halkhor, Punjabi-Sikh, Kishan, Raji, Byasi-Soka, Hayu, Koche, Dhuniya, Walung, Munda, Raute, Yolmo, Patharkataa-Kushwadiya, Kusunda, Lyomi, Kalar, Natuwa, Dandi, Dhankar-Dhnikar, Kulung, Ghale, Khwas, Rajdhob, Kori, Naaching, Yamfu, Chamling, Aathpahariya, Sarworiya, Bantawa, Dolpo, Amaat, Thulung, Mewahang wala, Bahing, Lahopa, Deo, Sangpang, Khaling, Topkegola and Lohorung.

Under the current legal provision, there should be two candidates from Dalit or minority communities in rural municipalities and three candidates from Dalit or minority communities in municipalities. The current classification of minority communities will only apply to local levels polls. As per the census report of 1991, a community which only has 1, 32,473 population or fewer than, is listed as minority community.

Parameters for defining minorities, therefore, needs to be redefined to promote representation of Tharu and Muslim communities because current definition only lists population as the criteria for defining minority community. For example, under the current definition, Marwari caste listed as minority community but Marwaris have high representation in business and economy sector of Nepal. Tharus and Muslims have sizeable population, but their representation is far below in state organs and they have very low representation in elected bodies. Therefore, the current definition should be changed to list Tharus and Muslims as minority communities in order to increase their representation in local bodies.

THRD Alliance is deeply concerned about the state of representation of Tharus and Muslims in the Local Election and wants to draw the national and international community’s attention to this issue. The Muslims are from the backward caste whose representation is far below their demographic strength. On the other hand, Tharus belong to the vulnerable group whose representation needs to be increased in state structures.

Collective Voice for Equity and Justice

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