

Webinar on “Nepal’s National Election 2022: Impacts on her Relations with the Regional Powers”

A Webinar on “Nepal’s National Election 2022: Impacts on her Relations with the Regional Powers” was held on 19 November 2022 (Saturday). It was jointly Organized by the South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG) of North South University, Bangladesh, and the Master of Public Policy and Management (MPPM) & Policy Lab of Kathmandu University School of Management (KUSOM), Nepal. The panelists were: Prof. Dr. Achyut Wagle, Registrar, Kathmandu University; Mr. Yubaraj Ghimire, Editor, Deshsanchar.com; Dr. Uddhab Pyakurel, Director, Global Engagement, Kathmandu University.



During his speech, Prof. Dr. Achyut Wagle, Registrar, of Kathmandu University asserted that financial resources matter more in determining votes than political ideologies. Although the Election Commission imposed publicity restrictions, this is not the only solution. Long-term reform of the political and electoral landscape is required which Nepal is missing a great deal. He also said that both China and India are building relations with the Nepalese political parties without prioritising the relations with the Nepalese government and the people. Now it is up to the Nepali political parties to decide whether they will be influenced by regional powers or uphold their domestic democratic values.

Mr. Yubaraj Ghimire, Editor of Deshsanchar.com, stated that the coalition among the parties may not remain after the elections. He also speculated that no single party or coalition will get a majority

resulting in a hung parliament. About the influence of regional powers in Nepal, he said that in post 2006 scenario, India brought the US, EU, and the west in catalyzing political changes in Nepal which resulted in China's enhanced presence in Nepali politics. China openly got engaged with the political parties in Nepal and gave a strong signal to India and the west. And now, China is keenly watching this election and she will always try to neutralize the West-backed Indian influence in Nepal.

Dr. Uddhab Pyakurel, Director, of Global Engagement, at Kathmandu University said that In comparison to previous elections, there is less excitement in election campaigns this time. He predicted that voter turnout will be probably low this time as well. According to Dr. Pyakurel, Nepal's political parties are quite pragmatic regarding the country's foreign policy, therefore the results of the election might not significantly alter Nepal's relations with China and India.

The webinar began with the welcome Speech by Dr. Purna Bahadur. Nepali, Associate Professor, Kathmandu University School of Management (KUSOM). It was moderated by Professor Sk. Tawfique M. Haque, Ph.D., Director, SIPG, & Chair, Department of Political Science and Sociology, North South University. Academics, researchers, diplomats, journalists, and students from Bangladesh and Nepal were present at the webinar.