

proceeded to vote. A few that our observers spoke to said that they were from the town of Kachchini about 12 km distance. They said that a candidate had arranged for the transport and also provided them with little pieces of paper with party symbol and the number of the candidate and the name of the candidate.

Although the environment on Election Day was peaceful and calm, and the level of pre-election violence was less than what took place at the Presidential Election of January 26 2010, the election process as a whole continued to display the infirmities that PAFFREL and other independent observation groups have previously noted at this election and preceding ones as well.

These infirmities include the inaction of the Police in dealing with violations of electoral laws pertaining to illegal propaganda and the misuse of the state machinery by candidates and supporters of the ruling alliance to further their election propaganda work. We regret that the police were reluctant to take deterrent action against government supporters who were violating election laws even on the day of elections.

Another major flaw in the election was the high visibility transfer or punishment of public servants and police personnel prior to the election by the government without the consent of the Election Commissioner. Once again PAFFREL makes the point that the 17th Amendment to the Constitution needs to be implemented to better guarantee a reduction in the level of political interference and a better system of checks and balances that would ensure free and fair elections.

PAFFREL is concerned about the relatively low voter turnout at this election. The turnout is estimated to be in the range of about 55 percent, which is considerably less than the 76 percent turnout at the last General Election in 2004.

Finally, PAFFREL is gratified that the level of post election violence has been low, with only two incidents reported. We support the Police Inspector General's request that victory celebrations not be held for one week to permit a cooling off period.



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