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December 7, 2017

PRESS RELEASE

Dr. CK Raut arrested from Janakpur, today

Nepal Police has arrested Dr. C. K. Raut, Co-ordinator of Alliance of Independent Madhesh (AIM) today from his Janakpur residence by barging into the residence by breaking the padlock at the main entrance gate at 9.30 am this morning on December 7, 2017. The police personnel, clad in civil dress, broke into the residence with sniffer dogs, without any search or arrest warrant, confiscated Dr. Raut's personal computer, hard drive, mobile and threatened his assistant Satya Narayan Khang and confiscated his mobile too.

Dr. Raut had recently urged his supporters, in a social media address to go for No-Vote in poll being conducted today in Nepal. AIM (Alliance for Independent Madhesh) strongly condemns this illegal and arbitrary arrest of Dr. Raut and confiscation of his personal belongings and considers it as infringement upon his fundamental rights.

Nepal is holding the House of Representatives and provincial assembly elections on 26th November and 7th December 2017 in two phases, after promulgating its new constitution in 2015, which a majority of the Madheshi people have rejected. Some 272,000 security persons have been mobilised to conduct the election, and they have been targeting and attacking "no vote" (NOTA) campaigners as well.

In the absence of the "right to reject"¹ option in current elections, despite earlier provisions mandated by the Supreme Court,² the Alliance for Independent Madhesh (AIM) is deliberately seeking "invalid-votes",³ as a sign of rejecting Nepal's discriminatory constitution and colonial rule in Madhesh/Terai. It is requesting people to mark outside the box on ballot papers. But the Government of Nepal has not only banned this campaign, but during the local election in September 2017, police arrested the Spokesperson⁴ as well as dozens of supporters of AIM,⁵ and threatened and tortured thousands of others.

We strongly urge that Dr. Raut is immediately and unconditionally released. Until then, we kindly appeal to human-rights bodies, civil societies and international communities to assure his physical safety while in detention and guarantee that he is not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment. Besides, we also appeal to all relevant bodies to assure that the election is conducted in a free and fair manner following the internationally accepted norms and procedures.

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¹ "Right to reject' removed from election bill," Republica, January 28, 2017. <http://www.myrepublica.com/news/13878/>

² "Nepal court gives voters right to reject candidates," Business Standard, January 6, 2014. <https://goo.gl/5eawyJ>

³ "Madheshi activist seeks 'invalid' voting ahead of local polls in Nepal," Indian Express, June 15, 2017. <https://goo.gl/QuZibG>

⁴ "Spokesperson of AIM arrested (Nepali)," Nagarik Daily, June 17, 2017. <http://www.nagariknews.com/news/21997/>

⁵ "4 cadres of CPN and CK Raut arrested for anti-election campaign in Jhapa," Nepal Monitor, June 17, 2017. <https://nepalmonitor.org/reports/view/15339>



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(तुरन्त प्रकाशनका लागि)

प्रेस-विज्ञप्ति
२०७४ मंसिर २१ गते बिहीबार

डाँ. सी के राउत, जनकपुर निवास बाट आज गिरफ्तार
डाँ. सी. के. राउत लाई नेपाली प्रहरी ले बिहान ९.३० बजे आज २०७४ मंसिर २१ गते बिहीबार उनको जनकपुर निवास बाट गिरफ्तार गरेको छ। सादा पोशाक मा, जासूसी कुकुर सहित आएका पुलिस को एक जथ्था ले, बिना कुनै सुचना, बिना सर्च वारंट, बिना गिरफ्तारी वारंट को उनको निवास को ताल्चा फुटाई, अनाधिकृत प्रवेश गरी उनको सहायक सत्य नारायण खंग लाई धम्काउदै, घर को खनतलासी लिई, डाँ. राउत को निजी कंप्यूटर, हार्ड ड्राइव, मोबाइल, खंग को मोबाइल कब्जा मा लिई डाँ. राउत लाई गिरफ्तार गरेको छ। हिजो डाँ. राउत ले सामाजिक संजाल द्वारा आफ्ना समर्थक हरु लाई नो-वोट को अधिकार प्रयोग गर्दै मत बदर गर्न अपील गरेका थिए। नेपालको सर्वोच्च अदालतले विगतमा “राइट-टू-रिजेक्ट” को प्रावधान निर्वाचनमा राख्न निर्देश गरे तापनि वर्तमान निर्वाचनमा सो प्रावधान न राख्दा सो को विकल्पको रूपमा स्वतन्त्र मधेश गठबन्धनले, नेपालको विभेदपूर्ण संविधान तथा औपनिवेशिक शासन आफूलाई स्वीकार्य न भएको जनाउनका लागि, मतपत्रमा “कोठा बाहिर मोहर” लगाई “नो भोट” खसाउनका लागि जनतासँग अपील गर्दै आएको छ। तर नेपाल सरकारले निर्वाचनमा “नो भोट” खसाउनका लागि शांतिपूर्ण रूपमा जनतासँग आह्वान गरिरहेका कार्यकर्ताहरूलाई समेत निशाना बनाई तिनीहरूलाई डराउने-धम्काउने, यातना दिने तथा पक्राउ गर्ने कार्य गरिरहेको छ र सो अभियानको प्रचार-प्रसारलाई नै प्रतिबन्ध लगाएको छ। यस अगाडी स्थानीय चुनावको क्रममा समेत सो गतिविधिमा संलग्न भएको अभियोगमा गठबन्धनका प्रवक्ता समेत गरी दर्जनौं कार्यकर्ताहरूलाई नेपाल प्रहरीले गिरफ्तार गरेको थियो। मंसिर १० र २१ गते गरी दुई चरणमा हुन गई रहेको प्रतिनिधी सभा तथा प्रदेश-सभाको निर्वाचनका लागि नेपाल सरकारले २७२,००० सुरक्षाकर्मी परिचालित गरेको छ।

शांतिपूर्ण रूपमा “नो भोट” का लागि आह्वान गरिरहेका डाँ. राउत को गिरफ्तारीले लोकतान्त्रिक मूल्य-मान्यता तथा आधारभूत मानवअधिकारको घोर उल्लंघन भएको गठबन्धनको ठहर छ र उनको अविलम्ब निशर्त रिहाईको लागि स्वतन्त्र मधेश गठबन्धन माँग गर्दछ।

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