

# Three surprises of Nepal election results

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Three surprises of Nepal election results:

**1. CPN(MAOIST) won more than half of the directly elected seats where counting was completed!**

**2. Counting of votes under the PR system began, the Maoists were leading there too !!**

**3. 10 percent of the winners were women, most of them from the Maoist party !!!**

Nepal's former rebels surprised observers Tuesday by winning more than half of the directly elected seats where counting was complete in an assembly that will shape the Himalayan nation's political future.

The former insurgents, now known as the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), had won 114 of 207 directly elected seats by morning, the Election Commission said. The remaining 33 races for directly elected seats have not yet been declared. The intense desire in Nepal for a change, which saw its former Maoist guerrillas headed for a landslide win in the historic constituent assembly election, continued to propel them ahead on Tuesday as vote counting continued for the fifth day.

As the Maoists, who had spent 10 years underground waging a guerrilla war in support of the election demand, were headed for majority in the direct fights, their performance had also improved in the second phase of the fights under the mixed election system. Direct fights would elect 240 representatives to the 601-member constituent assembly. However, the contest would be clinched by the proportional representation (PR) system of voting, which would choose 335 members.

Final results for the 601-seat Constituent Assembly, which will govern Nepal and rewrite the country's constitution, are still a few weeks off, but officials say they should have a clearer picture of what it will look like later this week.

The centrist Nepali Congress party had won 31 seats and the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist) had 28, the commission said.

As counting of votes under the PR system began, the Maoists were leading there too. Of the 54 constituencies where counting for PR votes began Monday, the once banned party had captured almost 33 percent votes with the NC following with 23 percent.

While the Maoists were leading in the constituencies where they had won during the direct fights, they were also improving their performance in seats they had lost in the first past the post system.

Capital Kathmandu seemed poised to favour the NC and Maoists under the PR system, as it had in the direct fights, while its neighbouring town Lalitpur was rooting for the former rebels in all three constituencies.

The surprise element of the election, the first national one after nine years, was the emergence of

women, who were also turning out to be giant killers.

Almost 10 percent of the winners were women, most of them from the Maoist party.

The Muslim community got its first woman representative as debutant ethnic party, the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum, saw its contestant Karima Begum win from the Terai plains.

The twice-postponed election also saw the rise of ethnic parties from the Terai. The Forum had won 21 seats while another new Terai party, the Terai Madhes Loktantrik Party headed by former NC minister Mahanta Thakur, had captured seven seats.

The intense desire in Nepal for a change, which saw its former Maoist guerrillas headed for a landslide win in the historic constituent assembly election, continued to propel them ahead on Tuesday as vote counting continued for the fifth day. As it seemed the Maoists would lead the next government, congratulations started pouring in from the diplomatic community with foreign ambassadors meeting Maoist chief Prachanda.

The ambassadors of India, Japan and Norway had congratulated him, along with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's special representative for Nepal, Ian Martin. Conspicuous by her absence was the US ambassador to Nepal, Nancy Powell, whose government still considers Nepal's Maoist party a terrorist organisation. Powell Tuesday met Koirala to discuss the developments after urgings by former US president Jimmy Carter that Washington should rectify its serious error in shutting down all communication links with the Maoists and start to "do business" with them. (Indo-Asian News Service / ASSOCIATED PRESS )