Abstract
The study analyzes the representation of the Chepang in the local election 2022. Political representation is only the way to participate people into decision making process. The issue of proper representation has been raised in since long time. Constitutionally and legally Nepal has made some provisions of proper representation and implemented through election process. In this context, the study concentrates on how is the situation of representation of the Chepang in local government that has just been formed by the election of April 2022. The study was followed qualitative research design and data were collected through secondary sources. In qualitative research design, the study applied interpretative technique and data were interpreted projected through table. Conclusion has been made on the basis of data interpretation and analysis. Through data it is found that the situation of the political representation of the Chepang in local government is in increasing trend but the current elected number is not sufficient decision making process.

Keywords: Chepang, local government, Nepal, representation

1. Background of the Study
The study highlights the issue of political representation of the Chepang in local government hat was held in April 2022 in Nepal. The word representation refers to someone or something to be exhibited. The word political representation is used in the context of the participation of elected person in the decision making process of people. It is related to an inclusive decision making process. Two Theories are used in the political representation. The first one is related to politics of idea that Pitkin (1967) notes, "two theoretical perspectives of political representation seemingly oppose. First one is related to the representation of abstract citizen and the second is the political idea of a political party " (p.7).The next theories focus on the participation that Christophe Jaffrelot (2009) expresses his idea in his book entitled The Changing Face of Indian Legislative Assemblies and highlights, "Second, the representation of the characteristics and identities of deferent groups and communities, of deferent sexes, ethnicities and castes that link representatives with represented, is emphasized in a ‘politics of presence'" (p.5). Political representation is not only related to participation of decision making process it is related to the question of identities. Alcoff, (1991) explains the issue as "Ideally the message will vary and it will hardly matter if the messengers remain the same. However, the particular messengers seated in decision-making bodies will have a monopoly on articulating policies and ideas" (p.7). In a context of political representation, people from different groups participate in decision making process. Nepalese political system also follows the inclusive democracy which emphasizes on the representation of different ethnic and indigenous groups in decision making process.

Chepang is one of the indigenous nationality having own language and culture. Chepangs are indigenous nationalities living in central part of Nepal, Chitwan, Makawanpur, Gorkha and Dhading districts. Most of the Chepang villages are scattered at the altitude between 800-1500 meters in the very rugged and partially forested hills. But in the recent
years, they have also migrated to the plain area of surrounding districts. The total population of the Chepangs is 68,399 (Centre Bureau of statistics Report, 2011). Chepangs, as Gurung states, "have flat and short nose, round face, dark and brown complexion, then and medium ears, dark eyes and prominent eye brows" (6). The physical features of Chepangs are similar to the people of other indigenous groups of Nepal although they have their own language, rituals, traditions and beliefs which make them different and unique among other ethnic communities. Political representation of indigenous group in government is one of the main political issues in Nepal. It had begun since the time of unification because existence of the nation only remains on political representation. During the time of the Rana only a family handled the nation and there was no question of political representation. After the establishment democracy in Nepal, the issue of political representation was raised in a political circle. However, the democratic system of government had dissolved by king Mahendra and panchayat government established in Nepal with the promulgation of the constitution of Nepal 1962. On the basis of constitution, local bodies have been formed. In the first local bodies election, some Chepangs were elected as and some were nominated in local bodies. In this regards, Adhikari (2016) notes:

During the panchayat period even in democratic era Chepangs were used as vote bank of political parties or certain leaders. Panchayati leaders used Chepang as vote Bank. In some cases they were nominated by leaders. In Chitwan, Jhapuram Praja was nominated as member of Jilla panchayat. He has been member of Jilla Panchayat for long time. (p.41)

Above lines indicate that during panchayat period certain individual was nominated as a member. Such practice was given the name of inclusive representation. After reestablishment of democracy in 1990, political parries tried to address the issue of political representation. Self government act 1999 brought some provisions about political representation. The act mentioned the provision of local government as, "a Ward Committee shall be constituted comprising of the Ward Chairperson and Ward Members as follows elected by the Nepalese citizens who are in possession of the qualifications to become voters under the prevailing law. One Ward Chairperson, (b) One Woman Ward Member, and (c) Three Ward Members" (p.6). In the law, there is provision of participating women in the decision making process. The act is the first act that ensured the women representation in politics; however, the act is silent on the representation Dalit and marginalized people.

After restoration of the parliament in 2006 Nepal follows the republic form of government and interim condition of Nepal was promulgated in2007. The constitution brings new insight in political representation of Dalit and marginalized group in the government. On the basis of the interim constitution, the constitution of Nepal 2015 is promulgated. On the basis of constitution of Nepal 2017, election of local bodies has held in 2074. Local government act and election act ensured the representation of women and Dalit in government. On the basis of rules, five elected persons are involved in ward committee including Dalit women, women, two members and ward Chairperson. Like that in executive body of municipality and village municipality Dalit, women and member from marginalized group should be involved. The representation of women should be ensured either Mayor or Deputy Mayor in municipality and chairperson or deputy chairperson in the rural municipality. (Local Government Operation Act, 2017). In the election of 2017 and 2022 around 240 Chepangs took part in election and took interest in decision making process of local government. The following table shows the elected member from the Chepangs.
# Table 1: Elected Representative 2074 B.S local election from Chepang Community

| S.N. | Name of Local Bodies | Wards | Name of Local Bodies (Elected Members) | Parties | Post |
|------|----------------------|-------|----------------------------------------|---------|------|
| 1.   | Rapti                | 3     | Sun Bahadur Praja                      | UML     | Members |
| 2.   |                      | 10    | Indra Lal Praja                        | UML     | "      |
| 3.   |                      | 11    | Dambar Praja                           | UML     | "      |
| 4.   |                      | 12    | Arjun Praja                            | NC      | Ward chief |
| 5.   |                      | 12    | Rel Bahadur Praja                      | UML     | Members |
| 6.   |                      | 13    | Surya Bahadur. Praja                   | UML     | Ward. Chief |
| 7.   |                      | 13    | Aaita Bahadur Praja                    | UML     | Member |
| 8.   |                      | 13    | Laxman Praja                           | UML     | Member |
| 9.   |                      | 13    | Sumitra Praja                          | UML     | Woman member |
| 10.  | Madi                 | 9     | Purna Maya Praja                       | UML     | Woman members |
| 11.  | Kalika               | 10    | Narjung Praja                          | UML     | Member |
| 12.  |                      | 10    | Janimaya Praja                         | NC      | Woman member |
| 13.  |                      | 11    | Krishana Bahadur Praja                 | UML     | Word chief |
| 14.  |                      | 11    | Milan Chepang                           | UML     | Member |
| 15.  |                      | 11    | Man Bahadur Praja                      | UML     | Member |
| 16.  |                      | 11    | Nirmaya Chepang                         | NC      | Members |
| 17.  | Icchakamana          | 1     | Prem Praja                             | UML     | Member |
| 18.  |                      | 1     | Bikrma Praja                           | UML     | Member |
| 19.  |                      | 1     | Anju Praja                             | UML     | Member |
| 20.  |                      | 2     | Pancha Bahadur Praja                   | UML     | Ward chief |
| 21.  |                      | 2     | Khir Bahadur Praja                     | UML     | Member |
| 22.  |                      | 3     | Dil Bahadur Praja                      | Maoist  | Member |
| 23.  |                      | 3     | Dambar Kumari Praja                    | Maoist  | Woman member |
| 24.  |                      | 6     | Bhupendra Praja                        | UML     | Ward chief |
| 25.  |                      | 6     | Ganiraj Praja                          | NC      | Member |
| 26.  | Benighat Rorang      | 6     | Sitaram Praja                          | UML     | Member |
| 27.  |                      | 6     | Krishana Maya Praja                    | UML     | Woman member |
| 28.  |                      | 8     | Kamana Praja                           | Maoist  | Member |
| 29.  |                      | 8     | Ramji Praja                            | "      | "      |
| 30.  |                      | 9     | Purnima Chepang                        | "      | Woman member |
| 31.  |                      | 10    | Bir Bd. Praja                          | Maoist  | "      |
| 32.  |                      | 2     | Sujan Praja                            | UML     | "      |
| 33.  | Gajuri               | 4     | Surendra Praja                         | NC      | Ward chief |
| 34.  |                      | 4     | krishana Bahadur Praja                 | NC      | Member |
| 35.  |                      | 4     | Gangal Praja                           | Maoist  | Member |
| 36.  |                      | 8     | Bir Bahadur . Praja                    | UML     | "      |
| 37.  |                      | 1     | Som Laxmi Praja                        | NC      | Woman member |
| 38.  |                      | 4     | Bishnu Bahadur Praja                   | UML     | Member |
| 39.  |                      | 6     | Ram Maya Chepang                       | "      | Woman member |
| 40.  |                      | 1     | Lal kumar Chepang                      | NC      | Member |
42. ,, 2 Gopi Chepang NC ,,  
43. ,, 5 Chandra Singh Chepang Maoist Ward chief  
44. ,, 5 Sujan Praja ,,, Member  
45. ,, 6 Nandalal Praja UML Ward chief  
46. ,, 7 Kul Bahadur Praja NC Ward chief  
47. ,, 7 Rishimaya Praja NC Woman member  
48. ,, 8 Ram Krishna Praja NC Ward chief  
49. ,, 8 Raju Praja NC Member  
50. Gandaki 6 Bhim Bd. Praja Maoist Member  
51. ShahidLakhan 4 Krishana Bahadur Praja Maoist Ward chief  

Source: Election Commission's Report 2017. NC: Nepali Congress, CPN: Communist Party of Nepal, UML: United Leninist Marxist

Above table shows the number of elected member of local bodies in 2017. In the election 11 ward chairperson was elected. In total 52 representatives were elected from 10 local bodies. Among Ten local bodies, four ward chair persons were elected from Raksirang Village municipality and only one representative was elected from Madi and Shahid Lakhan Thapa Rural Municipality. The political parties did not select the Chepang for Chair Person and Deputy Chair person of the municipality and rural municipality. Representation of the Chepang was only limited to ward level.

In the local election of 2022, representation of the Chepang could not increase on the basis of their population. The population is around one Lakha (0.1 million) but the situation of the representation is not more 12 % where as total population of the Cheapng in selected local 10 bodies are around 24%. The following table shows the situation as:

Table 2: Elected Representative 2022 (2079 B.S) Local Election from Chepang Community

| S.N | Name (Bodies) | Ward. No. | Name | Parties | Post |
|-----|---------------|-----------|------|---------|------|
| 1.  | Manahari      | 3         | Hira Bahadur Praja | NC | Member |
| 2.  | ,,            | 4         | Dinesh Jung Praja  | NC | ,,    |
| 3.  | Raksirang     | 5         | hari Bahadur Praja | ,,  | Ward Chief |
| 4.  | ,,            | 7         | Ram Bahadur Praja  | ,,  | ,,    |
| 5.  | ,,            | 8         | Yushai Praja       | Maoist | ,, |
| 6.  | ,,            | 5         | Biraj Man Praja    | NC  | Member |
| 7.  | ,,            | 5         | Bisan Kumar praja  | ,,  | ,,    |
| 8.  | ,,            | 6         | Bhim Bahadur Praja | UML| ,,    |
| 9.  | ,,            | 7         | Keshav Praja       | NC  | ,,    |
| 10. | ,,            | 9         | Shukra Praja       | ,,  | ,,    |
| 11. | ,,            | 5         | Mithu Maya Praja   | ,,  | Woman member |
| 12. | ,,            | 6         | AnishaPraja        | Maoist | ,, |
| 13. | ,,            | 7         | Santa Maya Praja   | NC  | ,,    |
| 14. | Kailash       | 1         | Aashir Praja       | ,,  | Ward chief |
| 15. | ,,            | 4         | Nil Raj Praja      | UML | Member |
| 16. | ,,            | 7         | Man Bahadur Praja  | NC  | ,,    |
| 17. | ,,            | 2         | Dilmaya Praja      | NC  | Woman member |
| No.  | 3   | Name               | Party  | Position  |
|------|-----|--------------------|--------|-----------|
| 18.  | 3   | Ram Maaya Praja    | Maoist |           |
| 19.  | 4   | Surendra Bahadur.  | NC     | Ward chief|
| 20.  | 3   | Shyam Bahadur.   | NC     | Member    |
| 21.  | 4   | Jayaram Praja     | NC     |           |
| 22.  | 5   | Govinda Chepang    | UML    |           |
| 23.  | 6   | Krishana Chepang   | Maoist |           |
| 24.  | 10  | Bikash Praja       | NC     | Ward Chief|
| 25.  | 2   | Ram Bahadur Praja  | UML    | Member    |
| 26.  | 6   | Rajendra Chepang   | Maoist |           |
| 27.  | 7   | Sitaram Praja      |        |           |
| 28.  | 7   | Babulal Chepang    |        |           |
| 29.  | 8   | Gopiram Praja      |        |           |
| 30.  | 8   | Lok Bahadur. Praja |        |           |
| 31.  | 9   | Rajan Chepang      |        |           |
| 32.  | 9   | Narendra Chepang   |        |           |
| 33.  | 10  | Suryaman Praja     | NC     |           |
| 34.  | 6   | Sangita Chepang    | Maoist | Woman member|
| 35.  | 8   | Shreemaya Chepang  |        |           |
| 36.  | 9   | Rammaya Chepang    |        |           |
| 37.  | 2   | Pancha Bahadur. Praja | UML | Ward chief|
| 38.  | 6   | Laxman Praja       | UML    |           |
| 39.  | 1   | Prem Bahadur Praja |        | Member    |
| 40.  | 1   | Bikrama Praja      |        |           |
| 41.  | 3   | Dil Bahadur Praja  | Maoist |           |
| 42.  | 5   | Aakash Praja       | UML    |           |
| 43.  | 7   | Gani Raj Praja     | NC     |           |
| 44.  | 1   | Anju Praja         | UML    | Woman member|
| 45.  | 10  | Nara Praja         | NC     | Ward chief|
| 46.  | 11  | Krishana Praja     | UML    |           |
| 47.  | 3   | Krishana Bahadur. Praja | UML | Member    |
| 48.  | 9   | Chon Bahadur Praja | UML    |           |
| 49.  | 11  | Milan Praja        |        |           |
| 50.  | 9   | Lok Bahadur Praja  |        |           |
| 51.  | 1   | Sita Maya          |        | Woman member|
| 52.  | 13  | Aasok Praja        | NC     | Ward chief|
| 53.  | 12  | Arjun Praja        | NC     |           |
| 54.  | 13  | Aait Praja         | UML    | Member    |
| 55.  | 10  | Bishnu Bahadur Praja | NC |           |
| 56.  | 10  | Man Kumar Praja    | NC     |           |
| 57.  | 10  | Purna Bahadur Praja | UML |           |
| 58.  | 12  | Jit Bahadur Praja  | NC     |           |
| 59.  | 10  | Shova Praja        | NC     | Woman member|
Above table shows the situation of the representation of the Chepang in the election of 2022. The Chepang candidates were elected from nine local bodies including four districts. From nine local bodies only seven ward chairpersons were elected from CPN united Maoist, Nepali congress and CPN, UML. Communist groups like CPN united Maoist and CPN, UML provided more candidates than the Nepali Congress. Only males were elected in acting post (ward chair person) and women were limited to women reservation quota.

While comparing the numbers of elected candidates between two election, it was found that numbers of elected candidate was high in 2022 but the number of ward chair person is decrease. The number of elected woman was higher in 2022 than the election of 2017. In both elections the Chepang candidate was not successful to be elected for the position of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of municipality and village municipality. The representation of the Chepang shows that political representation in Nepal is not developed in a proper way. Political representation is related to formal representatives like elected from term based election, nominated on the reservation.

In the context of Nepal, the then Maoist party took the agenda of ethnic based autonomous during the time of people's war. The time, Nepali Congress, Unified Marxist and Leninist political party along with some other small parties stood against Maoist agendas. The issue was taken and blamed as tool to divide the nation in different parts. Later, major political parties initiated federalism based on language and geography rather than ethnic based autonomous region. Maoist tried to reduce the representation of indigenous people in the name of political parties, Magar, (2013) highlights:

Politics of Nepal is paralyzing every section of the society. People are divided into the different political ideology in Nepal. This political chain is tied tighter in the daily lives of the people. Caste based social strata is lying beneath the political chains. People are recognized with their political ideological brand names. Indigenous ethnic activists are not exceptional from this political branding. This creates intra and inter-ethnic divisions within ethnic political leaders affecting ethnic political movements in Nepal. (p.4)

Ethnic conflicts were never expected in Nepal, however, major political parties blamed and minimized the representation of indigenous people as Bista (1991) mentioned the issue in his book *Fatalism and Development* highlights, "Limited representation or restriction on representation is the main problems of Nepali politics"(p.34). Representation does not only involve the people in a decision making process, but it also makes them responsible for the program. Without proper representation it is impossible to promote democracy in grassroots level.

2. Conclusion

In the context of representation of the Chepang in the local government, it was found that political parties neglected the issue of political representation and unable to address legal provision in practice. Till the time, major political parties did not make the Chepang as candidate of municipality Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson. In Rakising village
municipality, the Chepang are in majority but political parties hesitate to make candidate of chair person. Political representation of the Chepang was limited to the ward level. In one Lakh (0.1 million) population only 7 ward Chairpersons were elected in the local level election 2011. Chepang women were only elected in women reservation quota in both election 217 and 2022. In 2022, the number of elected candidate was little bit higher, than the previous local election still the negligence of political parties was found on the representation of the Chepang in the local government. Without representing in local government, it is impossible to participate in the decision making process in the local government. Unless they participate in the local government actively inclusive democracy will not be fruitful because they will not be responsible for other decision and other programs. Representation is not only related to participation also little bit concentrates on accountability and transparency the programs run of local bodies.

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