

## EC recommends NA election on Feb 8

---



The government is preparing to hold National Assembly election on February 8 as per the recommendation of the Election Commission.

“The government will most probably announce NA election date as per the EC recommendation, which is February 8,” said PM Sher Bahadur Deuba’s Press Coordinator Govinda Pariyar, adding a Cabinet meeting to be held on Thursday was likely to announce NA election date.

The government is doing groundwork to fix NA election date, appoint province chiefs, fix the number of ministers in provincial cabinets and ready temporary headquarters of provinces, according to NC leader and Minister for Labour and Employment Farmullah Mansoor.

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has called an all-party meeting, including national-level parties, for Thursday morning to discuss appointment of province chiefs and announcement of temporary provincial headquarters, according to Pariyar. He said the PM decided to call the all-party meet after meeting CPN-MC Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal this evening.

Pariyar said the appointment of provincial chiefs would be made on the basis of consensus in the all-party meeting, but if the parties failed to reach consensus, the appointments would be made as per constitutional provisions.

This morning, PM Deuba, who is also the president of the Nepali Congress, met top leaders of his party and sought their views on fixing NA election date and appointing province chiefs. NC leaders suggested that the government should immediately

## EC recommends NA election on Feb 8

---

announce NA election date and appoint province chiefs after holding cross-party consultations, according to NC leader Bal Krishna Khand who attended the meeting.

Appointment of provincial chiefs is crucial for holding NA election because the electoral college includes provincial assembly members who are yet to be sworn in due to the absence of province chiefs. According to the constitution, the Election Commission has to submit the final results of provincial assembly elections to province chiefs who will then administer oath of office and secrecy to provincial assembly members.

“Since just announcing the date will not ensure NA election, we suggested that the PM immediately hold cross-party consultations to appoint province chiefs,” said Khand, adding that they also suggested that the PM appoint apolitical persons as province chiefs. The meeting also discussed NC leaders’ demand that the party immediately hold meetings of the Central Working Committee and Maha Samiti to introspect on the party’s defeat in the recently-held parliamentary and provincial elections and chart the course for the party’s revival. “The PM said he would soon convene CWC meet which would finalise the Maha Samiti,” said Khand.

Senior NC leader Ramchandra Paudel, General Secretary Shashank Koirala, Treasurer Sita Devi Yadav, Khum Bahadur Khadka, Bimalendra Nidhi, Ram Sharan Mahat, Prakash Sharan Mahat, Mahesh Acharya and Minendra Rijal also attended the meeting.

Source: The Himalayan Times, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2018