

NEPAL

GOVERNANCE

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Loopholes in the Supreme Court's decision might lead to the construction of Nijgadh International Airport

The Environment at Risk!

WEEKLY

On May 26, 2022, the supreme court made a final [verdict](#) asking the government to find an alternative site to construct the Nijgadh International Airport, considering its environmental concerns. But contrary to the decision, the government soon [incorporated](#) the plans of building the airport by allocating the budget for the project in the Fiscal Year 2022-23. This had already raised many concerns that the airport would be constructed against the supreme court's decision.

But now, even the Supreme Court has paved the way to build the airport within the pre-decided Nijgadh area. On 29 June 2022, the court released the full text of the decision consisting of the views of all five justices where two of the justices have stated the airport should be built within the Nijgadh area ensuring less environmental damage, while the remaining three have stated the airport should be built by conducting a thorough environmental impact assessment. Surprisingly, no information on finding an alternative site for the construction, as previously stated by the supreme court, has been mentioned in the full text. This decision clearly provided a loophole for the government and stakeholders who had been vying to build the project in the pre-decided Nijgadh area to move forward.

The government ministers and leaders of various parties have also repeatedly expressed their views that the airport should be built in the same place. But doing so would again jeopardize the 2.4 million trees and the lives of various species of animals and birds which was the reason it was halted in the first place. When will our government and authorities really make decisions that are long-term and sustainable, and not short-lived based on political gains?

Read More: [The Kathmandu Post](#)

Governance Issues of the Week

1. The government has decided to establish a new separate company to build the Budhi Gandaki Hydropower Project which had been on hiatus for over a decade due to a political dilemma on funding modality. The 1,200 MW hydropower project is expected to take eight years with an estimated cost of NRs. 325 billion.
Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)
2. The Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal and the Department of Forest have reached an agreement to cut down the trees at Rithepani Hill, Kaski to minimize the risks of operating flights and landings at Pokhara Regional International Airport. The hill will be cut from 12 to 40 meters, clearing 600 trees out of the forest.
Read more: [Online Khabar](#)
3. The supreme court has issued an interim order to ensure the voting rights of the prisoners in the upcoming federal and provincial parliament elections, by updating the names and details of the prisoners on the voter list.
Read more: [Naya Patrika](#)
4. The COVID-19 pandemic had disrupted routine immunization programs along with other regular health services. Around 50,000 children are estimated to have missed their regular vaccine. The Family Welfare Division, under the Department of Health Services, is planning to start a specialized program for reaching such children.
Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)
5. 27 years after signing the Mahakali Treaty, the water under Mahakali Irrigation Project was finally released towards the Nepali side during the third phase of testing of the project. The water released through Tanakpur Barrage will have a flow of about 130 cubic meters per second and will benefit 33,520 hectares of land.
Read more: [Kantipur](#)
6. The World Bank has approved a grant of around NRs. 162.5 billion under the ACCESS program to boost regional trade between Nepal and Bangladesh. The program will minimize the key barriers to regional trade between the countries by addressing trade and transport costs and transit time along the regional corridors.
Read more: [The Rising Nepal](#)

Nepal Governance Weekly is an analytical update of Nepal's current affairs based on media and real sources mining, to sensitize the communities on hot news on various governance issues from the perspective of accountability.

Presented by



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