

NEPAL

GOVERNANCE

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Nepal Left with no Finance Minister as the End of the Fiscal Year Approaches

Photo from Onlinekhabar.com

Finance Minister Janardan Sharma resigns after being accused of changing tax rates and deleting suspicious CCTV footage. He has denied these allegations, but he has been charged with breaching budgetary discipline. A special committee of 11 people has been formed to investigate Sharma's alleged role in changing taxes just before the budget was presented. This is not the first time Sharma has been accused of misconduct. He has been involved in a series of controversies since assuming office including the suspension of the governor of Nepal Rastra Bank, an increase in the taxes on electric vehicles, removing provisions to reveal sources of FDI in cement and steels, etc.

Upon his resignation, Nepal is left without a Minister of Finance and Finance Secretary just before the end of the fiscal year 2021-22. With no leadership in the Ministry of Finance, there has been a lot of confusion regarding budget, revenue collection, and policy hurdles. Although assurances have been made that the chief secretary will carry on the work without hindrances, a lack of leadership in a key sector makes one question the quality of the results. With the country already heading towards an economic crisis after the pandemic, incidents like this only make it worse.

Read more: [Online Khabar](#)

Governance Issues of the Week

1. The Election Commission has recommended for the government to hold both federal and provincial elections on the same date on 18 November 2022, before the tenure of the present House of Representatives expires. The commission states that conducting both elections in a single phase will **make** management more efficient and cost-effective.
Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)
2. The government has decided to withdraw the Citizenship Act Bill that has been pending in parliament since 2018. The division over political parties on a provision requiring foreign women who marry Nepali citizens to wait for 7 years to acquire matrimonial naturalization has caused the delay. The government plans to amend the draft and pass it through a fast-track process.
Read more: [The Himalayan Times](#)
3. The government has added 223,330 households from 23 districts to the poor lists, as part of a program to identify the poor and distribute identity cards. In 2016, the government set up a coordination committee for the task, who identified 391,831 poor households from 25 districts. It was later dissolved and the Ministry assumed its tasks. The poor have not been able to benefit from the program due to delays in information collection.
Read more: [Kantipur](#)
4. The Bagmati Province government scrapped the Hetauda-Kathmandu tunnel after spending NRs. 15 million on it, only to allocate NRs. 10 million again for the feasibility study of three new tunnels. The Hetauda-Kathmandu tunnel that was deemed the province's pride project was allocated a budget for the last three fiscal years, but no progress besides DPR could be made.
Read more: [Naya Patrika](#)
5. The House of Representatives has recently passed three new bills on water supply and sanitation, social security, and a bill to amend acts related to criminal offenses and procedures. The Education Ministry has completed the drafts of six long-awaited education bills covering higher education, technical education, etc.
Read more: [The Rising Nepal](#), [The Rising Nepal](#)
6. The Sajha Yatayat has begun the operation of 3 new electric buses on two routes within Kathmandu Valley with all women drivers and conductors. The transportation service has stated that it will add 37 more electric buses by mid-August.
Read more: [Nepal Times](#)

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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