

NEPAL

GOVERNANCE

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Amendment to the Citizenship Act: Achievements and Gaps

The Nepali parliament has recently endorsed the amendment to the Citizenship Act. Now the amended bill allows the children of the parents who received citizenship by birth to acquire citizenship by descent. It has also allowed everyone born in Nepal before April 12, 1990, to acquire citizenship by birth. Furthermore, the bill has opened doors for the children born in Nepal to a Nepali woman whose father is “unidentified”.

Compared to the existing act, the bill has introduced progressive provisions such as the one where non-resident Nepalis outside South Asia can acquire citizenship with limited political and administrative rights; the children can choose to put either the surname and address of their mother or father; acquire citizenship through favored gender identity; the citizenship will have details of both father and mother; and the orphans will be allowed to receive citizenships based on testimonials from shelter houses or respective local governments, etc. In the case of children with an “unidentified father”, their descent citizenship will be converted to naturalized citizenship, if the father is later found to be a foreign national. However, a Nepali father doesn't require to mention the citizenship of a child's mother for the child to receive citizenship.

Moreover, there are also conflicting and discriminatory provisions such as the act allowing foreign women married to Nepali men to obtain naturalized citizenship once they began the process to renounce their previous citizenship. There is no cooling-off period. But, the foreign men married to Nepali women are obliged to follow all provisions applied to any other foreigners to acquire it. There is still clearly a discriminative gap between the spouses of Nepali men and Nepali women when it comes to receiving citizenship. In the process to ensure gender equality, all such provisions should be considered by the government before passing and amending laws.

Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)

Governance Issues of the Week

1. After a lot of controversies, the Nepal government has finally written a letter to the US government stating that it will not be a part of the State Partnership Program (SPP), a program aimed at forging closer cooperation between the Nepal Army and the US National Guards. The government had made the decision to not pursue SPP in June but hadn't formally sent a letter.
Read more: [Onlinekhabar](#)
2. The special parliamentary probe committee has given a clean chit to the former Finance Minister Janardan Sharma, as it could find no evidence regarding the entry of outsiders to influence the tax rate changes during budget planning. The Central Police Forensic Laboratory has submitted the CCTV footage to the parliamentary panel, but there is still skepticism about the information in the report.
Read more: [Setopati](#)
3. The Secondary Education Examination (SEE) has observed the weakest results in the last five years this year. It is the first year after the pandemic that the Board conducted the exams since the results of the previous two years depended on evaluation from respective schools. Although an average high GPA does not necessarily denote the quality of overall education and students' creativity, the number of students scoring a GPA of 4 has dropped down to 42 from over 8000 in the previous years.
Read more: [Kantipur](#)
4. 216 local levels are found to have dispersed around NRs. 62.4 million as social security fund allowances twice or more to the same person. The local levels are also found to have disbursed amounts to the accounts of deceased persons, dormant bank accounts, and one with similar ID cards, etc.
Read more: [The Himalayan Times](#)
5. Nepal has achieved its commitment of doubling the number of tigers by the year 2022. The country increased the tiger population from 121 in 2009 to 355 in 2022. But along with it, the human-tiger conflicts are also increasing in most parts, which calls for proper management. Nepal has the potential to properly sustain 400 tigers.
Read more: [The Rising Nepal](#)
6. The government has decided to pursue the Health Insurance Program through the government and community hospitals only, from July 1. The decision came at a time when the government is failing to reimburse the insurance amounts to a total of 11 hospitals including private and government hospitals.
Read more: [Naya Patrika](#)

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