

NEPAL

# GOVERNANCE

Issue 49 || December 23, 2022

## Passport Chaos: Has the Electronic Passport Further Added to the Public's Burden?

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Source: Kantipur

In Nepal, it is not unusual for the government to slam decisions before making thorough preparations and planning. One such decision was definitely introducing electronic passports. In November 2021, Nepal government decided to introduce electronic passports replacing the machine-readable passport (MRP) - which would still be relevant for a few more years.

Under the existing system, individuals are obliged to obtain a National Identity Card before creating a passport. Additionally, people need to register on the Department of Passport's website to book an appointment date. But the site is always heavily trafficked, and people are compelled to waste hours or days to get through the registration process. Such hassle is also giving rise to touts/middlemen [charging exorbitant amounts](#) to navigate the registration process.

The passports are distributed from the Department of Passport, District Administration Office, Area Administrative offices, and Embassies abroad. But due to the lack of sufficient quotas for the districts and expertise to operate the electronic system, the district offices are finding it difficult to cater to the service seekers, compelling the locals to visit the Department of Passport in Kathmandu for the passport.

It now feels imperative for the government to think holistically before making any decisions that concern the citizens directly. The government should also speed up decentralizing their services truly by enhancing the capacity of institutions outside Kathmandu and allowing the Provinces to take ownership of matters like these.

Read More: [Kantipur](#)

### Governance Issues of the Week

- 13 members of the previous parliamentary committee of the House of Representatives have refused to return the laptops they received for work purposes. This has raised countless issues of misuse of restricted information on the parliament's side, whereas challenges of personal data being leaked of the precious users of laptop also remain.  
Read more: [Kantipur](#)
- Nepali citizens working abroad or operating businesses abroad have also become eligible to participate in the social security scheme in Nepal. Social Security Fund (SSF) is implementing a contribution-based social security scheme for the purpose, which will come into effect from March 2023.  
Read more: [The Rising Nepal](#)
- Nepal has earned NRs. 11 billion by selling electricity to India from early June till December 2022. The earnings from electricity were the third largest export of a single commodity in the last fiscal year 2021/22. Nepal was allowed to sell electricity in the Indian market from November 2022, via a competitive bidding process.  
Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)
- 10 political parties are set to receive the status of the parliamentary party in the House of Representatives, as per the election results from 20 November 2022. It is double the number of parliamentary parties from the previous elections. As per the results, 12 political parties and 5 independent MPs have been elected in the HOR.  
Read more: [Naya Patrika](#)
- Pokhara International Airport has successfully "conducted" a demo flight from the old Pokhara airport to the new airport on 22 December 2022. The preparations are underway to conduct all flights, except small airlines, helicopters, and ultraflights (ultra light aircrafts) from the new airport from 1 January 2023.  
Read more: [Onlinekhabar](#)
- The Supreme Court has issued a short-term interim order against the Nepal Army's decision to award the sixth package of the Kathmandu-Nijgadh Fast Track project to the China First Highway Engineering Company Limited. The Indian Afcons Infrastructure Company, which was the second lowest bidder for the same tender, had filed a petition against Nepal Army's decision on 5th December.  
Read more: [Himal Khabar](#)

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.

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