

NEPAL

GOVERNANCE

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Combating Corruption in Nepal requires Systemic Changes

Photo from The Himalayan Times

On February 11, 2023, the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), the primary organization responsible for monitoring and preventing corruption in Nepal, celebrated its 32nd anniversary. During the event, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal declared that the government would adopt a "Zero Tolerance Policy" towards corruption and stated that the government was dedicated to taking action against any individuals engaged in corrupt activities. The Prime Minister also emphasized that efforts would be made to strengthen the CIAA's ability to combat corruption.

Is it really that easy to empower the institution? Strengthening the CIAA to effectively combat corruption requires significant systemic changes, which should commence with the institution's political independence and expanded jurisdiction. Currently, existing policies only allow the CIAA to investigate cases of minor bribery while avoiding policy corruption. Moreover, the CIAA Act restricts the institution from scrutinizing the decisions made by the federal cabinet, resulting in the tendency of leaders to make decisions at the secretary or minister level during cabinet meetings.

Likewise, the current legislation also prohibits the CIAA from overseeing the decisions made during meetings of the House of Representatives or parliament committees. While it is widely recognized that corruption in the private sector is prevalent in Nepal, the CIAA lacks the authority to address it. The failure of political leaders to improve anti-corruption measures is further exemplified by the fact that two bills aimed at combating corruption, the CIAA Act of 1991 and the Prevention of Corruption Act of 2002, have been stuck in the National Assembly for the past three years. These laws are crucial for harmonizing Nepal's anti-corruption laws with the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and for bringing major cases of policy corruption under legal scrutiny.

Read more : [The Himalayan Times](#), [The Kathmandu Post](#)

Governance Issues of the Week

1. A preliminary investigation has hinted that an engine malfunction caused the January Yeti Airlines crash in Pokhara. The flight's take-off, climb, cruise, and descent to Pokhara were normal; however, the propeller rotation speed of both engines unexpectedly decreased to produce zero thrusts. Further investigation of the crash's circumstances is yet to be realized.

Read more: [The Himalayan Times](#)

2. The government has proposed a new provision in a bill related to preventing money laundering and promoting a better business environment. The bill allows individuals to document their unsourced property by paying taxes if allegations against them regarding the source of the property couldn't be confirmed.

Read more: [Ekantipur](#)

3. The regulation drafting committee agreed to transfer impeachment motions to the new Parliament if the previous Parliament's term expires without concluding the motions. This decision intends to prevent any indecision and ensure that the impeachment has adequate time. Parties have agreed that lawmakers shouldn't be suspended until convicted by the court.

Read more : [The Kathmandu Post](#)

4. The 12 people involved in the T20 cricket league spot-fixing scam have been put forward for prosecution. Police investigations have found that those in managerial roles were also involved in the scam. If found guilty of spot and match-fixing, the accused could face imprisonment of up to 3 years and a fine of up to Rs 50,000.

Read more: [The Rising Nepal](#)

5. The losses of the Janakpur-Jayanagar Railway have more than tripled since its operation on 2 April 2022. The Nepal Railway Company purchased two trains for NRs. 1 billion on 18 September 2020, but because of the lack of the Act, the railway couldn't operate and incurred a loss of NRs. 30 million. But even after its operation ten months ago, it has nearly borne a loss of NRs. 100 million.

Read more: [Naya Patrika](#)

6. Karnali province, the reservoir of the highest value medicinal plants like Yarsagumba, Kakoli, Guchi Chyau, Satuwa, Jatamansi, and Kutki, faces proper market challenges. Production of herbs decreased due to climate change, and 30% of the produced herbs go wasted because the government fails to provide permits and storage facilities on time.

Read more: [Ekantipur](#)

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