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Loan Shark Victims Await Justice from the State

WEEKLY

Photo: from Angad Dhakal/TKP

Six months after signing a five-point agreement in September 2022 to address their issues, victims of loan sharks have once again gathered in Kathmandu, this time walking on foot for 11 days to demand justice. The Nepalese government had promised to investigate the properties of loan sharks, provide compensation to victims, and support them in reclaiming their land through legal mechanisms. However, the victims claim that little has been done and that the loan sharks continue to receive political and institutional protection.

According to officials from the Home Ministry, 3,351 complaints have been lodged against loan sharks at the District Administration Offices (DAOs) of 35 districts. Only 346 of these cases have been resolved, while the rest are still awaiting justice. The government has announced plans to introduce a new law that will categorize loan sharking as a criminal offense. Until now, complaints against loan sharks have been dealt with as a civil code offense, similar to extortion and blackmailing, leaving victims to fight on their own.

The proposed law would enable the state to register cases against loan sharks and conduct legal fights against them. However, legal reforms alone may not be enough to provide justice to the victims. They also require access to information and knowledge of the legal mechanisms available to them. It is equally important to establish financial mechanisms for needy individuals to access loans during urgent monetary needs, reducing their vulnerability to fraudulent practices.

The victims hope their voices will be heard and the government will take appropriate measures to address their grievances.

Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)

Governance Issues of the Week

1. The Civil Aviation Authority Nepal has released a schedule for the next six months, which shows that Pokhara International Airport will not be hosting any international flights during this period. However, for Gautam Buddha International Airport, Jazeera Airways has been approved to operate three weekly flights, while Nepal Airlines has been granted permission to operate two weekly international flights.

Read more: [Onlinekhabar](#)

2. During the initial meeting of the Nepal-China Coordination Mechanism for Border Trade and Cooperation, Chinese officials agreed to open trade via the Rasuwagadhi and Tatopani border routes starting on April 1st and May 1st, 2023, respectively. These border points had been closed since early 2020 when China implemented its zero-COVID policy.

Read more: [Naya Patrika](#)

3. Effective April 14th, 2023, the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security has implemented a new provision enabling foreign employment seekers to submit their labor permit applications and renewals from any of the 753 local units in Nepal. The Employment Service Center will accept these applications.

Read more : [Setopati](#)

4. Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal has formed his seventh cabinet three months after taking office. This time, in addition to the Nepali Congress and CPN (Maoist Center), the cabinet includes three other political parties. However, the cabinet still needs to be completed, as the Prime Minister still holds five additional ministries.

Read more: [Kantipur](#)

5. The Pashupatinath Temple, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is reportedly suffering from significant neglect and corruption issues. These issues include missing portable toilets, poor sanitation, and embezzlement of pilgrim offerings. The Pashupati Area Development Trust, which manages the wealthiest Hindu Shrine, has over 24 temples at risk of collapsing. Unfortunately, there are no plans in place for their reconstruction.

Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)

6. The Chief Election Officer has been appointed to oversee the House of Representatives by-election, held on April 23rd, 2023, across three locations. The elections are being held to fill vacant seats in Tanahu-1, Bara-2, and Chitwan-2. The Tanahu-1 seat became vacant after Ram Chandra Paudel was elected as President, while the Bara-2 seat became vacant when Ramsahaya Prasad was elected as Vice-President. Finally, the Chitwan-2 seat was left vacant due to the suspension of Rabi Lamichhane over citizenship issues.

Read more: [The Himalayan Times](#)

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