

GOVERNANCE

Issue 128 | JULY 5, 2024

Instability Looms as Nepal Prepares New Government Formation

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Photo by Nepali Times

Nepal is set to undergo a third government change within a year. The Communist Party of Nepal (UML) has opted to leave the coalition led by Prime Minister, Pushpa Kamal Dahal (from Maoist Party) and instead formed an agreement with the Nepali Congress to establish a new government. Under the agreement, the NC and UML will each lead the government for 18 months until the next election in 2027, with KP Oli being the Prime Minister first. This will mark the fourth term of KP Oli, who is 72 years old, and the sixth term of Deuba who is 78 years old.

Following the agreement between the leading parties, the UML leaders in the cabinet have resigned from their positions. It is likely to severely hamper the operations of 8 ministries under the responsibility of the PM. For now, PM Dahal has refused to resign from the government and is prepared to face the parliament to take the vote of confidence in a month. Currently, the NC and UML, who are also the first and second majority in the parliament respectively, have 168 seats combined, while the Maoists only have 32 seats. PM Dahal will likely be voted out.

This would be the 5th time PM Dahal would face the parliament in 18 months since the 2022 elections, highlighting significant political instability in Nepal. Moving forward, it seems unlikely that this coalition will endure. The alliance between the NC and UML appears situational rather than driven by a shared vision or purpose. Leaders from both parties, including KP Sharma Oli himself, are facing allegations of policy corruption. It was important for the parties to stabilize the situation.

There are also speculations about how the new coalition will behave, including concerns that it may suppress emerging alternative parties. It would also potentially dominate parliament, raising questions about the diversity of democratic decision-making processes. It would leave the parliament with a weak opposition, which is crucial for a healthy democracy. Needless to mention, this political instability would also severely affect Nepal's potential to meet its desired economic and development goals, and also further delay the legislative process to form important policies.

Read more: [Nepali Times](#)

Governance Issues of the Week

1. The government created its [first concept paper](#) on Artificial Intelligence (AI) to develop policies and laws for AI use. A five-member technical committee coordinated by Joint Secretary Anil Kumar Datta from the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology worked on this report. The report recommends policies for cybersecurity, data protection, a national AI strategy, and an integrated AI information portal. It emphasizes AI promotion, and privacy protection, and encourages research and investment in AI.

Read more: [The Himalayan Times](#)

2. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has launched a new 'Career Counseling' website to guide students in choosing professions based on their interests and abilities. The website consolidates information on scholarships, higher education, and diverse professions. The website aims to provide comprehensive career guidance aligned with labor market demands and individual talents, promoting sustainable and dignified career choices for students.

Read more: [Onlinekhabar](#)

3. The Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) has revised some regulations to enhance the investigation of corruption cases. The amendments include provisions to address asset recovery cases from corruption, mobilize undercover agents to gather information and establish a dedicated unit for special investigations. The CIAA has utilized the authority provided under Section 37 of the Corruption Investigation Act, 2048 BS, to enact these new provisions.

Read more: [Naya Patrika](#)

4. The working group on the Truth and Reconciliation Bill (TRC) has started discussions on key issues such as the definition of murder, demands of child soldiers and victim security personnel, potential for victims to reappear in court, and calls for shorter sentences. Mahesh Bertaula, UML chief whip, stated the talks aim to resolve bill disagreements to ensure justice for victims. Key figures, including Janardan Sharma and Ramesh Akhtar, are finalizing the bill, which is set for approval this session after review by a subcommittee and the report committee.

Read more: [Ekantipur](#)

5. In Kathmandu, the Department of Roads marks poles with 'स. व.ि' to indicate maintenance, causing confusion and misplaced blame on the Kathmandu Metropolitan City. This highlights unclear road control, as the federal government still oversees many urban roads. Conflicts over roads like the Ring Road and New Road led to disputes and claims of unauthorized, visually polluting markings. The Kathmandu Metropolitan City is considering removing the markings and calls for better coordination and clear responsibilities.

Read more: [Onlinekhabar](#)

6. The Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), Pokhara Chapter, conducted a raid on Pokhara Metropolitan City on suspicion of granting a tax waiver amounting to NRs. 190 million to Manipal Hospital for the approval of building construction. The CIAA has seized the approval documents and has proceeded with an investigation. The decision to grant the exemption, made 14 months ago, was kept confidential until the recent report by the Office of the Attorney General highlighted it.

Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)

Reading:

[2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: Nepal](#)

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