

Monthly Bulletin



RIGHTS Nepal

Human Security | Good Governance |

Monthly Bulletin

RIGHTS Nepal is a think tank founded in 2020, based in Kathmandu with the mission of focusing on nationwide policies, decisions, plans, actions and their justified need, development and outcome.

This publication has been specifically designed to assess the important events of the past month on the basis of four major pillars: **Strategic Engagements, Good Governance, Digital Transformation and Human Security.**



RIGHTS Nepal

The content of this report is validated as accurate news extracted and summarized at the time of publishing. The report in itself is to be viewed and treated as an unbiased and impartial source of information.

For further inquiries, contact: info@rightsnepal.org

Human Security

Nepal's 2022 federal and provincial elections and newly appointed Prime Minister- Pushpa Kamal Dahal

On 20 November 2022, the general elections of Nepal were held to elect the 275 members of the House of Representatives. The election was held alongside provincial elections for seven provincial assemblies. There were 12 political parties which were represented at the House of Representatives following the election where only 7 parties met the three per cent threshold to become national parties. Nepali Congress became the largest party after the elections winning 89 seats, followed by CPN (UML) which won 78 seats, CPN (Maoist Centre) which won 32 seats and Rastriya Swatantra Party which won 20 seats. President Bidya Devi Bhandari called on the parties to form a government on 19 December 2022 after the final results of the election. Pashupati Shamsheer Jung Rana from Rastriya Prajatantra Party, as the senior most member of the HoR was sworn in on 21 December 2022 by the president.

Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', the 68-year-old CPN-Maoist Centre leader was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Nepal for the third time on December 26, 2022, after joining hands with opposition leader K.P. Sharma Oli. The newly appointed prime minister won the vote of confidence in the House of Representatives on January 10, 2023. Out of the 270 members in the House of Representatives (HoR) present during the voting, 268 voted in favour of the prime minister while 2 voted against him. The required number of votes required for the prime minister to continue his term was only 138 votes. The prime minister stated that he had not expected Nepali Congress to vote for him and that his responsibility has further increased after receiving vote of confidence from Nepali Congress in the parliament. He also revealed that there had not been any kind of agreement with other parties for the post of president, vice president, speaker and deputy speaker as a part of the power-sharing deal and that he would bring all parties into confidence during the election of these posts.

According to the prime minister, the country is in a difficult position in terms of good governance and economic as well as financial development and the main priority during his term would be to overcome these challenges. On the occasion, he also stated that he would make his first foreign visit to India and that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has already initiated preparations.

Rabi Lamichhane Citizenship row

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs Rabi Lamichhane was stripped of all posts by the Supreme Court on January 27 on account of not having a valid Nepali citizenship. He was appointed Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister on December 26. Rabi Lamichhane renounced his US citizenship in 2018 but the Supreme Court ruled that Lamichhane did not complete the process to regain Nepali citizenship. According to the Supreme Court, after he renounced his US citizenship, he did not submit the application with the details to the District Administration Office, due to which his citizenship was not valid. Hours after the Supreme Court verdict, Lamichhane tendered his resignation as a minister, which Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal approved. Not only did he lose his ministerial posts but also the presidency of his Rastriya Swatantra Party.

Good Governance

Rabi Lamichhane got his US citizenship in 2014 before returning to Nepal and becoming a popular television personality. Also in 2015, he obtained Nepali passport using his Nepali citizenship that was already void. For the period between 2016 and 2018, he seemed to have two passports of different countries. According to Section 21(a) of the Passport Act, 2019, if a passport is obtained by giving false information, it is deemed to be an offence. If it is confirmed that Lamichhane lied, the act provides for a fine of up to Rs 500,000 or imprisonment for 1 to 3 years or both. A complaint asking to investigate Lamichhane for his obtaining his passport illegally is also under consideration at the District Administration Office, Kathmandu. The DAO has sent the complaint to the police for investigation. The investigation will go on regardless of him getting back his Nepali citizenship. Several lawyers also claimed that Rabi Lamichhane should be punished as he had deceived the state by participating in the election using an illegal citizenship certificate and won.

Rastriya Swatantra Party to quit government

After Prime Minister Dahal refused to re-appoint party president Rabi Lamichhane as the Home Minister, Rashtriya Swatantra Party has decided to leave the government. The party had won 20 seats in the federal election, making it the fourth-largest force in the parliament. According to Shishir Khanal, Minister for Education, Science and Technology, a central committee meeting of the party was held at the party office in Basundhara where the decision was taken. With the decision, Minister Khanal, Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security Dol Prasad Aryal and Minister of State for Health and Population Toshima Karki, who were in the Dahal-led Cabinet, will vacate their posts. According to the party leaders, even though the ministers have been called back, the party has decided to continue support given to the government.

Sources :

- Ghimire.B. The Kathmandu Post. (Jan 28, 2023). Court Strips Lamichhane of all posts over citizenship. Retrieved from: <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2023/01/28/court-strips-lamichhane-of-all-posts-over-citizenship>
- Luitel. G. My Republica. (Jan 15, 2023). PM Dahal to bring NC in confidence while electing President and Speaker. Retrieved from: <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/pm-dahal-to-bring-nc-in-confidence-while-electing-president-and-speaker/>
- Online Khabar. (Jan 29, 2023). Rabi Lamichhane citizenship-passport controversy. Retrieved from: <https://english.onlinekhabar.com/rabi-lamichhane-citizenship-row-faqs.html>
- The Kathmandu Post. (Feb 5, 2023). Rastriya Swatantra Party to quit government, recalls ministers. Retrieved from: <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2023/02/05/rastriya-swatantra-party-to-quit-government-recalls-ministers>
- Wikipedia. 2022 Nepalese general election. Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2022_Nepalese_general_election#Timetable

Human Security

Dozens killed in Yeti Airlines crash in Pokhara

Yeti Airlines ATR72 aircraft, carrying 72 people consisting of 68 passengers and four cabin crew led by senior captain Kamal KC crashed near its destination (Pokhara International Airport) in Pokhara. The unfortunate event happened only 15 days after the inauguration of Pokhara International Airport. The aircraft was traveling from Kathmandu to Pokhara at 10:30 am. Among the passengers, six were children, 15 were foreigners and 53 were Nepali nationals. None of the traveling passengers as well as cabin crew survived the crash. The aircraft crashed into the Seti gorge which is located between the old airport and the Pokhara International Airport in Ward No. 15 near Sitaram Bridge. The pilot of the aircraft had asked for a change from the assigned runway 3 to runway 1, which was also granted by the airport officials, indicating a clear runway for landing.

According to the Aviation Safety database, there have been at least 27 fatal plane crashes in Nepal over the past 30 years. Difficult geographical structures, less investment in new planes, poor infrastructures are some of the leading causes of plane crashes in Nepal. A timeline of plane crashes and causes are discussed below:

Date	Aircraft	No. of Deaths	Cause of crash
May 2022	Tara Airplane	22	Bad weather
February 2019	Air Dynasty Helicopter	7	Violations of Operating Procedures
March 2018	US-Bangla Airline	49	Pilot's Disorientation
February 2016	Air Kasthamandap	2	Engine Failure
May 2012	Agni Air Dornier	15	Attempt to land at high altitude airport
September 2011	Beechcraft 1900D (Buddha Air)	19	Adverse weather conditions
September 2006	Shree Air Helicopter	24	Pilots enterin cloudy areas in unfamiliar terrain as well as bad crew resource managemnet
June 2006	Yeti Aircraft	6	Technical issue of the plane
July 2000	Royal Nepal Airlines	25	Collision on a hill
September 1992	Pakistani International Airlines A300	167	Collision on a hill
July 19	Thai Airways Airbus 310	113	Collision on a mountain due to minor failures

Human Security

Protest against Kathmandu Metropolitan City Mayor Balendra Shah

On January 29, 2023, a protest was organized against KMC mayor Balendra Shah in Maitighar against the illegal demolition of private structures and the use of dozers to clear public land. The protest started after the demolition of a wall of a private house in Shankhamul which belonged to Sayal Singh. According to Suman Sayami, who was leading the protest, the mayor was informed about the demolition of private property being illegal and not under the metropolis's jurisdiction. Still, shortly after the conversation, the metropolis sent a team of metropolitan police with a dozer and demolished the wall of Singh's house without any letter or notice. Various groups, including the Kathmandu Valley Road Expansion Victims' Struggle Committee, participated in the peaceful demonstration at Maitighar. The locals had also submitted a Right to Information request at the metropolis regarding the incident, which is yet to be addressed.

Protest demanding justice for Prem Prasad Acharya

A group of youths staged a protest at Maitighar Mandala demanding justice for Prem Prasad Acharya who died after setting himself on fire in front of the parliament building. His death posed some strong questions to the government along with the capitalist society. The incident has affected many societies of Nepal along with the government, businesses, labour and financial sectors. Prem Prasad Acharya listed the atrocities committed against him in his note. He mentioned being robbed by everyone including banks, insurance sectors, government offices and many big businesses. He said he was sacrificing his life so that the government would listen to his suffering and pain.

This incident has raised questions about our social, economic, financial and political systems. The practice of not listening and understanding a citizen's problems is seen in every sector of Nepal. Even before setting himself on fire, Prem Prasad Acharya made a disappointing conclusion about the country being corrupt and filled with discrimination and injustice everywhere. He also asked the government to make a mandatory rule of pre-paying the farmers by businesses so that they do not feel discouraged along with the demand to discourage corruption during grant distribution and labour approval by ending middlemen roles. On his note, he has asked political leaders to open their eyes and solve issues that are tormenting common people.

Sources:

- Indian Express. (Jan 15, 2023). Nepal's long history of plane crashes A timeline. Retrieved from: <https://indianexpress.com/article/world/nepal-plane-crashes-timeline-8382793/>
- Khatiwada. S. (Jan 28, 2023). Prem Prasad Acharya has asked serious questions to Nepal's government and society. Who'll answer them? Retrieved from: <https://english.onlinekhabar.com/prem-prasad-acharya-questions.html>
- Magar. D. (Jan 15, 2023). Pokhara bound flight crashes in Nepal. Retrieved from: <https://www.nepalitimes.com/banner/pokhara-bound-flight-crashes-in-nepal/>
- The Kathmandu Post. (Jan 29, 2023). Kathmandu locals protest against Mayor Balendra Shah. Retrieved from: <https://kathmandupost.com/stories/2023/01/29/kathmandu-locals-protest-against-mayor-balendra-shah>

