

GOVERNANCE

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Public Outrage Triggers Withdrawal of Statute of Limitations on Corruption

WEEKLY

Photo By BBC News Nepali

The recent amendment to the Corruption Prevention Act 2002, which proposed a shorter statute of limitations for corruption cases provoked substantial public outrage and criticism, leading to its withdrawal. However, the mere proposal of a five-year limit and the ensuing debate reflect deeper issues within our governance mechanisms.

It is particularly surprising that this statute of limitations was passed by the National Assembly. Experts argue that this short timeframe would significantly undermine efforts to combat corruption by potentially shielding powerful individuals involved in major corruption cases from prosecution. This provision could provide impunity in high-profile cases that remain unresolved due to political interference. This statute not only conflicts with Nepal's anti-corruption goals but also contradicts international standards. The UN Convention Against Corruption, which Nepal ratified in 2011, mandates longer limitation periods to ensure effective prosecution and justice. Article 29 of the Convention mandates that states establish extended statutes of limitations or suspend them in cases where offenders evade justice. The State Affairs and Good Governance Committee of the House of Representatives is also working to finalize the Corruption Prevention Act 2002 with new amendments. The government has also acknowledged the need to amend the provision.

In a broader context, the anti-corruption measures should take into account the incentive structures within the system. Legal instruments alone have limitations as their effectiveness is influenced by the social and political context. In Nepal, where political instability and frequent government changes are common, such provisions can also be used as loopholes by political leaders to grant impunity to their close ones or to resolve cases in their favor when they come to power. In addition to this, incentives also play a crucial role in shaping the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures and should be designed to promote ethical behavior rather than mere compliance with rules. Performance-based incentives must prioritize transparency and integrity to combat corruption effectively. For high-level cases, a principles-based approach focused on ethical values along with strict rule compliance is required. This shift, along with penalties for inaction, is crucial to improving anti-corruption strategies in Nepal.

Read more: [BBC News Nepali](#)

Governance issues of the week

- 1 The heads of 19 customs offices, including Bhairahawa, Krishnanagar, Mechi, and Nepalgunj, have been transferred within 10 months, raising concerns about customs administration stability. These transfers, often driven by leadership changes rather than performance, occur mostly between September and November— the festival season and critical months for revenue collection. This instability could also heighten the risk of smuggling.
Read more: [Setopati](#)
- 2 As South Korea becomes an increasingly popular foreign employment destination for Nepali youth, several schools, including Siddharatna Nath in Dang and Tila Secondary in Kalikot, have started offering Korean language classes in grade 11. However, it is also argued that Arabic might be more appropriate, as a higher number of youths seek jobs in the Gulf. The National Curriculum of School Education (Revised 2079) allows schools to offer 11 foreign languages as an optional subject in coordination with local governments.
Read more: [Ukaalo](#)
- 3 In the fiscal year 2023/24, the agricultural hub of Mahottari alone imported Indian agricultural products worth NRs. 3 billion rupees. India's export restrictions on paddy and rice have reduced some import quantities, but the reliance on other products and vegetables continues to increase. The inability of local companies to provide high-quality food, combined with changing lifestyles has increased the import, whilst also prompting concerns about Nepal's investment in the sector.
Read more: [Gorkhapatra Online](#)
- 4 The government provides NRs. 1,000 as an allowance to encourage hospital births, particularly in remote areas lacking birthing centers, to ensure the safety of both mothers and infants. However, many women struggle to access this allowance, often needing to return to hospitals multiple times to claim their benefits. The government aims to reduce maternal mortality to 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030 (currently at 151). However, improved healthcare access and increased awareness are essential to achieving this goal.
Read more: [Annapurna Post](#)
- 5 The Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology plans to introduce a unified academic calendar across all 13 universities in the country. To explore the possibilities, the ministry has called a meeting with university vice-chancellors and officials in mid-September. The absence of a standardized calendar has negatively impacted students and contributed to negative perceptions about education in Nepali universities.
Read more: [Ratopati](#)
- 6 The death toll of Nepalis in the Russia-Ukraine war has risen to 40 since February 2024. The Nepal Embassy in Moscow reports that DNA tests on 50 more suspected Nepali nationals are ongoing, potentially increasing the number. In the meantime, 174 Nepali nationals have been safely repatriated from Russia with the combined efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Nepali Embassy. The ministry is also making efforts to ensure compensation to the injured and deceased Nepali soldiers.
Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)

Readings/Read More: [Queeriosity](#)

(<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/cb5455be66.html#page/1>)

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