



GOVERNANCE

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Nepal Hit by Catastrophic Floods & Landslides: Call for Collaborative and Proactive Disaster Preparedness

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The heavy rainfall on September 29th and 30th, 2024, caused widespread disruption across Nepal, triggering landslides and floods in various regions. The early reports suggest that over **228 lives** were lost and property worth more than **NRs. 11 billion** was damaged. Hundreds of families have been displaced, losing their homes and livelihoods. Moreover, 11 hydropower plants, with a combined capacity of 625.96 MW, have been affected, resulting in a halt of 1,100 MW in generation—nearly one-third of the nation's total capacity. 47 out of 80 highways have been obstructed, affecting the overall transportation.

However, was the disaster solely responsible for the damage, or did the government's lack of preparedness contribute to the devastation? The Meteorological Forecasting Division had issued warnings of heavy rain as early as September 22nd, 2024, and 56 districts were placed on red alert, and the media had widely circulated this information. However, the Ministry of Home Affairs took minimal action and even failed to hold any preparatory meetings. The government also failed to effectively engage provincial and local authorities, resulting in poor coordination between relevant agencies. This resulted in inadequate preparation for the incoming disaster. Therefore, it was overwhelming for the security personnel to carry out the rescue operations once the disaster started to occur.

Now, rebuilding the damaged infrastructure and providing compensation to the victims is likely to cost considerable time and resources. The construction of roads and bridges alone is anticipated to cost **NRs. 28 billion** by the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure. This figure doesn't account for human lives tragically affected or taken by the disaster. In response, the government has set up a Prime Minister's Relief Fund for Relief; with the federal government itself pledging NRs. 1 billion. The government has also decided to provide NRs. 200 thousand to the families of those who lost their lives or remain missing 10 days after the disaster. The Ministry of Health and Population has also pledged to provide free medical services to those affected by the disaster.

While the immediate relief for the disaster is underway, the government must also implement comprehensive and sustainable disaster preparedness measures. This should include enhancing inter-governmental cooperation, decentralizing disaster management by empowering local governments with adequate resources for effective disaster response, and integrating disaster anticipation into infrastructure planning and development.

Read more: [Naya Patrika](#)

Governance Issues of the Week

1. The Rapti Academy of Health Sciences is facing challenges procuring daily medicines and health equipment as the federal government fails to reimburse the insurance amount worth NRs. 12.15 million to the service users. It is also affecting the routine medical services of the hospitals. The hospital provides medical facilities to 10 million people annually, among which 46 hundred thousand use government insurance service.

Read more: [Onlinekhabar](#)

2. The Supreme Court administration's deputy registrar filed a lawsuit against the Nepal Bar Association's president for criticizing the selection process of chief justices by the Judicial Council. The president accused the Judicial Council of nominating two highcourt chiefs as Supreme Court justices on 27 September, 2024. However, the lawsuit was withdrawn by the deputy registrar.

Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)

3. The World Bank has forecasted Nepal's economic growth to rise from 3.9% to 5.1% in the upcoming fiscal year 2025. The report attributes this growth to factors such as increased tourist arrivals, hydropower development, and higher paddy production. However, it also points out challenges, including vulnerabilities in the financial system, policy inconsistencies deterring investment, delays in capital budget implementation, and economic shocks in migrant-receiving countries, among others.

Read more: [The Rising Nepal](#)

4. A tripartite agreement between Nepal, India, and Bangladesh has been signed on 3rd October 2024, enabling Nepal to export 40 megawatts of electricity to Bangladesh. Until now, Nepal's electricity trade has been confined to its southern neighbor India. As per the new agreement, from mid-June to mid-November each year, Nepal will supply 144,000 megawatt-hours (MWh) of electricity to Bangladesh at a rate of 6.4 US cents per unit.

Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)

5. The experts have voiced their opinions that a distinct nodal agency for artificial intelligence (AI) should be established, rather than an agency under the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology as mentioned in the government's concept paper. The vice president of the Computer Association of Nepal (CAN) federation, Umesh Raghuvanshi, asserts that while regulation of AI is required, it should not be restricted but rather facilitated.

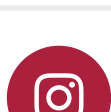
Read More: [eKantipur](#)

6. The Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) has reached an agreement with its Indian counterpart for construction of a pipeline and a storage facility. India has decided to grant NRs. 15 million as per the agreement to build a new pipeline from Siliguri to Jhapa, extend the Amlekhganj pipeline to Chitwan, and build a storage facility in Jhapa, while NOC is obliged to build one in Chitwan.

Read More: [myRepublica](#)

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Presented by



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