

Nepal GOVERNANCE WEEKLY



Nepal's Governance Reforms and the Significance of Honest Bureaucrats

Nepal is entering a period of heightened public scrutiny of governance. Citizens are increasingly demanding better service delivery, greater transparency in public spending, stronger accountability mechanisms, and tangible results from both elected leaders and state institutions. While political leaders often dominate public attention, the success of governance reform processes also depends heavily on the bureaucracy, particularly honest government officials who enable effective and accountable implementation.

In Nepal, reform efforts are frequently slowed by administrative bottlenecks, lengthy procedures, frequent transfers of officials, risk-averse decision-making, and, at times, vested interests that resist change. As the country continues to strengthen federalism and improve public service delivery, these challenges can undermine both reform efforts and public trust. On the other hand, while governance challenges are real, this narrative often overlooks the many honest and dedicated civil servants who work quietly within the system to serve citizens, uphold public interest, and drive positive change. In a bureaucracy often criticized for delays, inefficiency, and resistance to reform, there are such individuals who demonstrate that integrity and public service still exist within government institutions.

Honest government officials, at all levels of public service, play a crucial role in building trust between citizens and the state. They ensure that public resources are used responsibly, services are delivered fairly, and reforms are implemented effectively. More importantly, they challenge the assumption that corruption is inevitable in public service and show that ethical leadership can exist even within challenging systems.

As Nepal's new government prioritizes governance reforms, recognizing, supporting, and expanding the space for such honest public officials is key to strengthening a governance system that citizens can trust and rely upon. The 'INTEGRITY ICON NEPAL' initiative has been playing an important role in identifying and celebrating such honest, ethical, and dedicated public officials who lead by example. By showcasing positive role models within the bureaucracy, the campaign encourages a culture of integrity and inspires greater public trust in government institutions. And when people with integrity begin to rise, the power of corruption falls. Since starting in 2014, the initiative has made efforts to 'name and fame' 54 honest government officials in Nepal who were selected among thousands of officials nominated by Nepali citizens across the country. Check the stories of integrity [here](#).

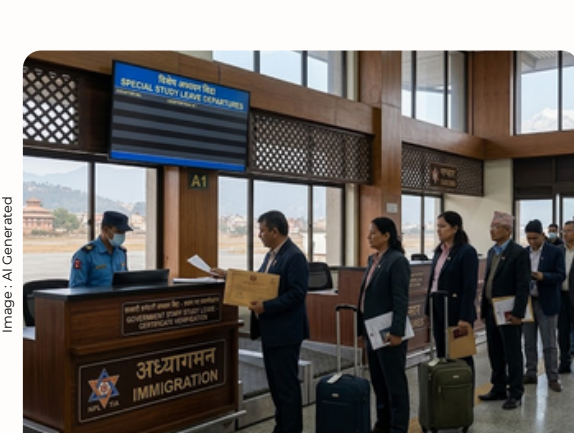


Weekly Snapshot



- Ranisain Tension: Market and Corridor Blocked:** Members of Ranisain Victims Struggle committee in Karnali have advocated for their rights following reports that over 100 individuals from Humla burned several houses and forced 35 Bhothe households to leave their residences. Tensions further escalated when tourists visiting the area were attacked, causing injuries to the local leaders and police personnel accompanying them. The government has since deployed a 28 member joint security force for three months. [Read more](#)

Amendment to the NRB Act Tabled: An amendment bill to the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) Act, 2058 BS, has been filed to create greater autonomy, accountability, and technological readiness in line with international norms and budgetary objectives of the current fiscal year. For the first time, digital money will be recognized as legal tender in law as per the bill. In addition, the bill has re-categorized digital wallets, payment portals, and remittance services under the umbrella of financial institutions. It also introduces financial holding companies, among other measures. [Read more](#)



Missing Government Staff: Big Abuse of Study Leaves:

The government records of over 7,000 Nepali government employees on study leave and special leave have gone off the radar. Despite statutory mandates requiring them to resume their duties upon completing their studies, these personnel have remained in foreign countries unauthorized. Furthermore, certain individuals have collected salaries during their absence, leading to substantial monetary losses for the state. To resolve this issue, the Ministry of General Administration has issued a three-day ultimatum for them to report back. [Read more](#)

- Disability-friendly governments emerge in Nepal:** In an effort to support people with disabilities and users with limited computer proficiency, the Department of Technology has upgraded more than 800 government websites. The websites have incorporated font resizing, contrast adjustment, and keyboard navigation to improve user access. Built-in screen readers are also available to help blind and low-vision users' access to site content. The Home and Law ministries' websites, along with 753 local government sites hosted on different servers, remain notable exceptions to these improvements. [Read more](#)



- 2.5 Million Nepali Farmers Join Digital Registry:** Over 2.5 million farmers in Nepal are registered in the government through the new digital registration program. To ensure the government aid is reaching the right farmers, the Ministry of Agriculture is tracking the landholdings and crop data. Government officials are expediting the registration of the remaining 1.6 million of Nepal's 4.1 million farming families. Once registered, farmers will be divided into four categories based on the size of their commercial operations. [Read more](#)



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