

GOVERNANCE

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Surge in Violence Against Doctors Threatens Nepal's Healthcare System

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Photo by Nayapatrika Daily

In Nepal, there has been a troubling surge in violence against doctors following the viral spread of a video showing a patient's family physically attacking medical staff. This violence has quickly escalated into a nationwide issue, casting a pall over the entire healthcare sector.

As the violence against doctors continues to rise, it is affecting the morale of healthcare workers and the functionality of medical institutions across the country. In response to threats and attacks, many doctors have refused to work under these conditions, leading to the closure of health facilities and raising concerns about the safety of medical practitioners in Nepal. These disruptions not only impact citizens' access to healthcare services but also risk the destruction of healthcare institutions. Incidents of violence against doctors have been reported in various regions, including Kaski, Makwanpur, Lamjung, and Chitwan districts. These acts have included verbal abuse, physical assaults, and vandalism within healthcare facilities. As healthcare professionals cease non-emergency services and go on strike to protest against this violence, citizens are left with limited access to essential healthcare services.

While there are legal provisions in place, such as the Security of the Health Workers and Health Organizations Act, 2066 (2010) (First Amendment), recent events in Lamjung district have highlighted the vulnerabilities of medical practitioners. The Act states that it is the responsibility of the local governments to ensure the security of health workers if and when they feel unsafe. However, an elected ward chair in Lamjung has been implicated in acts of violence against doctors, and even security personnel have been [reported to have assaulted](#) medical professionals. This shows the severity of the situation when the same institutions that are supposed to protect health workers are engaged in acts of violence against them.

To compound matters, a [study by the Medical Education Commission](#) has revealed a severe shortage of 64,000 health personnel across Nepal. The increasing violence against doctors further discourages healthcare professionals from continuing their service in Nepal, leading many to seek safer opportunities abroad.

The escalating violence against doctors not only threatens the healthcare workforce but also endangers the health and well-being of the Nepali population. Urgent and comprehensive measures are needed to address this alarming trend and ensure the safety and security of healthcare professionals as they continue to provide essential medical care to the nation.

Read more: [Naya Patrika](#), [EKantipur](#)

Governance Issues of the Week

1. The Supreme Court has directed the government to remove all structures within 65 meters of Phewa Lake's high flood point in Pokhara, including the unauthorized Park Village Water Front Resort. The decision aims to safeguard the lake's beauty, emphasizing the need for preservation. Additionally, the court calls for the elimination of such constructions and encourages planting in the area to protect Phewa Lake's public heritage.

Read more: [The Himalayan Times](#)

2. Despite four years of operation, Nepal's Waterway Transportation Office is still in the process of formulating regulations for safe, efficient water transportation. Their aim is to boost the country's economy by overseeing both domestic and international water routes. However, the lack of specific laws and budget constraints has hindered their efforts in managing existing water transport operations.

Read more: [Online Khabar](#)

3. In the fiscal year 2022-23, government debt servicing expenditure rose to Rs 222.74 billion, up 83% from the previous year due to high domestic loan interest rates. Domestic debt interest alone accounted for Rs 64.51 billion. The total national debt is now Rs 2,299.35 billion, 42.73% of GDP, raising concerns among economists who warn that spending over 4% of GDP on debt servicing could negatively impact sectors such as health and education.

Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)

4. Approximately 5.5% of schools in Nepal have been found to have unsafe drinking water contaminated with arsenic, according to data presented at the National Conference on Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH). The conference revealed that only 74.9% of schools have sufficient water supply, while 97.8% lack access to drinking water.

Read more: [EKantipur](#)

5. Nepal's foreign direct investment (FDI) stock rose by 16% to NPR 264.3 billion in fiscal year 2021-22. India held the highest FDI stock at NPR 88.6 billion, followed by China, Ireland, Singapore, and Saint Kitts and Nevis. The industrial sector, especially electricity and manufacturing, attracted foreign investors. Also, in line with the global trend, gross FDI inflows decreased by 3.5% to NPR 19.2 billion in 2021-22.

Read more: [The Kathmandu Post](#)

6. Over the past four years, Madhesh Province in Nepal has experienced a concerning 460 drowning fatalities. Contractors involved in road construction projects are being investigated for unsafe practices, including the excavation of excessively deep pits that don't meet safety standards and leaving uncovered manholes, posing significant dangers, particularly to children.

Read more: [Setopati](#)

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