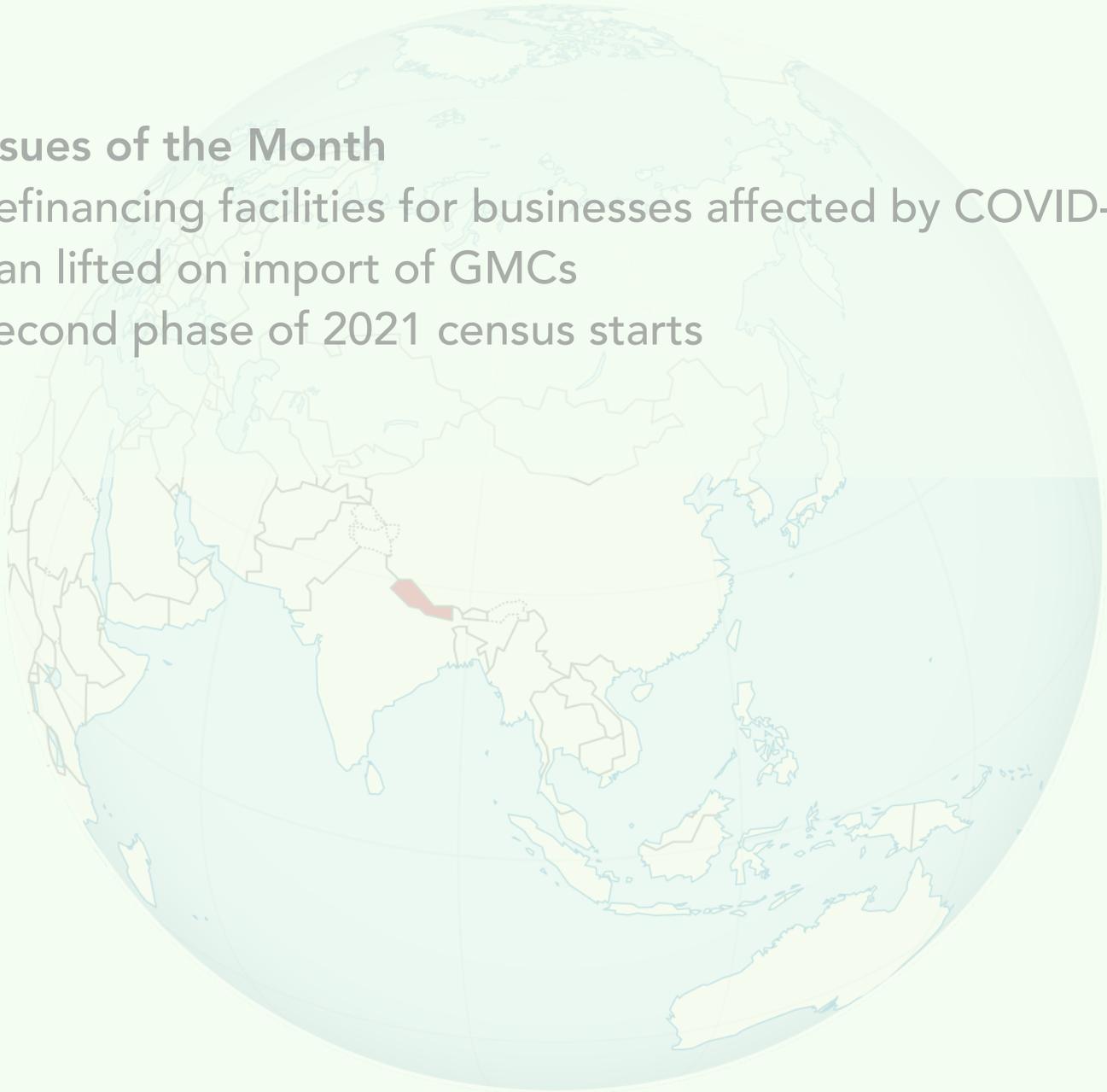


**Issues of the Month**

Refinancing facilities for businesses affected by COVID-19

Ban lifted on import of GMCs

Second phase of 2021 census starts



## ABOUT NEPAL INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

Nepal Institute for Policy Research (NIPoRe) is an independent and non-partisan think-tank based in Kathmandu, Nepal. It aims to generate evidence-based debates among citizens and key stakeholders in both the public and private sectors on contemporary policy issues from Nepal and Asia. Our team members represent the diversity of academic disciplines, professional backgrounds, and geography. We adopt a multi-disciplinary approach in our research and analysis of policies, supported by researchers trained at universities and professional environments (from) across the globe.



The NIPoRe Nepal Month in Review (NNMiR) is a monthly flagship publication of the Nepal Institute for Policy Research (NIPoRe). It reviews major local and global developments in NIPoRe's thematic focus areas on a monthly-basis to aware and inform the key stakeholders in Nepal and outside on related policy issues.

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**ECONOMY**

## Summary

*The government has announced relief for people affected by the pandemic and for the farmers whose crops were damaged by natural disaster. NRB has also called for applicants who require refinancing for their businesses.*

### Fiscal Sector (Month of Ashoj)

1. The total expenditure of the federal government was Rs. 234.52 billion in the review period.
2. The total revenue collection for the month was Rs. 255.04 billion in the review period.

### Monetary Sector (Month of Ashoj)

1. The overall inflation rate stood at 4.24 percent on a y-o-y basis.
2. The food and beverage inflation rate stood at 3.63 percent.
3. The non-food and service inflation rate stood at 4.72 percent.
4. The broad money supply expanded by 2.2 percent in comparison to the growth of 5.6 percent in the corresponding period last year.

### External Sector (Month of Ashoj)

1. The merchandise export increased 109.5 percent and merchandise import increased 63.7 percent in the review period (first three months of fiscal year 2021/22).
2. The total trade deficit increased 58.3 percent to Rs. 413.47 billion in the review period.
3. The remittance inflow stood at Rs. 239.32 billion in the review period. This was a decrease of 7.6 percent.
4. The Balance of Payments registered a deficit of Rs. 76.14 billion in the review period.

### Key Events

1. Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) issued a notice seeking applications for refinancing facilities from small and medium industries that were affected by COVID-19. The financial support will be provided in bulk and the applicants have until December 5 to get in their applications.

2. The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development has approved a Rs. 5.52 billion relief offer for farmers who have lost paddy crops due to extreme weather.
3. The 11.11 Daraz sales for this year has set a new record for serving 0.7 million shoppers in 24 hours with transactions amounting to Rs. 360 million.
4. The Ministry of Finance has called for applicants from pandemic-hit households for a cash grant of Rs. 10,000.

**GOVERNANCE**

## Summary

*After eight years, Nepal unbans the imports of genetically modified crops for the poultry industry. This month highlights the ongoing conflict between Chief Justices Cholendra Shumsher Rana and other justices which has jeopardised the independence and integrity of the judiciary. New provincial chiefs in Province 1, Karnali, and Sudurpaschim have been appointed. Due to the recent hike in the price of petroleum products, different political parties and students unions have been announcing nationwide protests.*

## Policies, Rules and Guidelines

1. The government has prepared guidelines for the distribution of cash grants of Rs 10,000 each to 500,000 poor households who lost employment and livelihoods to the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. The Ministry of Urban Development decided to suspend all kinds of procurement through consumer groups until a clear work procedure is formulated. The suspension came after various government reports identified anomalies and irregularities in construction works involving consumer groups.
3. Nepal has struck down an eight-year-old ban on the import of a number of food items produced from genetically modified crops following lobbying by American soybean exporters and Nepali traders that the ban was hurting the poultry industry.
4. Nepal Airline Corporation (NAC) has begun providing tickets to international destinations including Australia, Europe, and various Asian cities. This service has been made available following bilateral agreements with international airline companies.
5. The lawmakers have urged to pass a new citizenship bill to grant citizenship to children of citizens by birth. Many eligible citizens are not able to avail state services due to lack of new federal citizenship law.

## Bureaucratic and Political Institutions and Leadership

Nepal's top judge Chief Justice Cholendra Shumsher Rana has been under fire over a series of controversies. The ongoing confrontation between the Chief Justice and justices reached its climax when CJ Rana stressed that he will not tender his resignation and further stated that his appointment was made while the following due constitutional process and his exit will follow the same pattern. This ongoing crisis has resulted in a

sharp division in the legal fraternity where two lawyers came to blows on the premises of Nepal Bar Association on the issue of the Supreme Court justices boycotting the bench assigned by Chief Justice Cholendra Shumsher Rana. Three international human rights organizations have called for an end to the crisis in Nepal's Supreme Court addressing that crisis has jeopardized the independence and integrity of the judiciary.

## Provincial and Local Governments

This month saw the resignation of Bagmati Chief Minister Asta Laxmi Shakya after 71 days of appointment. Rajendra Pandey (CPN Unified Socialist) was appointed as her replacement. The government-appointed Parshuram Khapung, Tilak Pariyar and Dev Raj Joshi as new provincial chiefs in Province 1, Karnali, and Sudurpaschim respectively.

## Political Parties and Civil Society

1. Nepali Congress held its 14th general convention in a score of districts and federal constituencies. Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has instructed the elections committee to conclude the general convention by mid-December at any cost.
2. The Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) led by Netra Bikram Chand (Biplab) has announced its plans to stage nationwide simple protests against the recent hike in the prices of petroleum products.
3. Six student unions affiliated with various political parties have announced various protest programs against the government's decision to hike the price of petroleum products. The members of National Youth Federation Nepal and All Nepal National Free Students' Union (ANNFSU) burned an effigy of Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba to protest against the fuel price hike.

## Key Events

1. The Central Bureau of Statistics has been conducting the second round of 12th National Census 2021 from 12th November with the aim of reaching every citizen's doorstep.
2. Rubi Khan agreed to end the strike when the government decided to form an investigation committee to look into the death of Nankutri Dhobi of Newaji village and the missing case of Nirmala Kurmi.

**FOREIGN AND  
SECURITY  
AFFAIRS**

## Summary

*Doors for Nepal to sell its electricity to India have opened. The second phase of the 2021 census begins in Nepal. Bangladesh suffered its worst communal violence in years. Afghanistan is facing a serious humanitarian crisis. India hosted the first regional security meeting in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover. World leaders met in Glasgow for COP26. India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States began a new quadrilateral economic forum. Ethiopia declares a state of emergency.*

## National Issues

3. Nepal can now sell electricity to the Indian market at competitive rates.
4. This month 32 additional Nepali nationals stranded in Afghanistan have been safely evacuated to Nepal. With this, the total number of Nepali nationals evacuated from Afghanistan has reached 940.
5. India has handed over the 35-km long Jayanagar-Kurta railway to Nepal which India financed to construct.
6. MCC has expressed serious concerns over the delay of ratification of the \$500 million grant to Nepal as the government prorogued Parliament without ratifying the MCC.
7. The second phase of the 2021 census began on November 11 and is set to end on November 25. International media and the community have praised Nepal for making the 2021 census inclusive.
8. On 09 November, Nepal and Korea held the fifth meeting of the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism between Nepal and the Republic of Korea (ROK).

## Multilateralism and Aid

1. PM Sher Bahadur Deuba held bilateral meetings with the heads of different international organisations and with his counterparts from India and Sri Lanka on the sidelines of the World Leaders Summit of COP26.
2. China has announced an additional grant of two million COVID-19 vaccines to Nepal. This was announced during an hour-long telephone conversation between foreign ministers of Nepal and China on October 19.

## Regional Issues

1. Attacks on Hindu temples have increased in Bangladesh after an alleged “blasphemous post” went viral on social media during the Durga Puja celebrations.
2. Afghanistan is facing a serious humanitarian crisis. Taliban is struggling to consolidate power due to increased attacks by the extremist group- Islamic State-Khorasan.
3. India hosted the first regional security conference on Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover. China and Pakistan’s absence shows their unwillingness to help India pursue its interest in Afghanistan.
4. Russia has started supplying India with S-400 air defence missile systems. This put India at risk of sanctions from the US under a 2017 US law that deters countries from buying Russian military hardware.

## Global Issues

1. World leaders met in Glasgow for the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26), which is touted as the last chance to save the planet, and made major climate commitments.
2. India, Israel, the UAE, and the US have started a new quadrilateral economic forum focused on trade, climate change, energy, and maritime security.
3. G-20 held its sixteenth meeting in Rome. G-20 leaders agreed to support the Paris Agreement’s 1.5-degree target for reducing greenhouse gases among others.
4. Ethiopia has declared a six-month state of emergency after Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) said they were marching towards the capital. The Ethiopian PM has urged people to take up arms to defend themselves against the TPLF.
5. The US has offered to meet North Korea for substantive talks without any preconditions.

## Ambassadorial Watch

1. The government has recommended Shankar Sharma, Shridhar Khatri and Gyan Chandra Acharya as ambassadors to India, the US, and the UK respectively.

# CLIMATE CHANGE

## Summary

*A group of organisations organised demonstrations in order to bring awareness about climate justice. Nepal also participated in COP26- where the government made a commitment of net-zero emissions by 2045.*

## National Updates

1. On November 8, People's Climate Mobilization—a group of 20 organisations—staged demonstrations on climate justice at Basantapur in Kathmandu. Around 80 demonstrators participated with placards that read "Climate Justice Now!" with slogans describing the urgency of the situation and art exhibits to highlight climate change issues.
2. COP 26 press notice of the Government of Nepal mentions conditional recommitment on net-zero emission by 2045, 15 percent clean energy by 2030, and 45 percent forest coverage by 2030.

## International Updates

1. The UN declared access to a clean environment a human right- the U.N. Human Rights Council recognized access to a clean and healthy environment as a fundamental right, formally adding its weight to the global fight against climate change and its devastating consequences.
2. On 6 November, the closing plenaries of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the SBI (Subsidiary Body for Implementation) adopted most decisions and referred Article 6, transparency, adaptation, response measures, and common time frames to the second week of the Glasgow Climate Change Conference.

# HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

## Summary

*Vaccination support has been received from the US, Maldives, Liberation Army of China, and China. The government also initiated the campaign to administer Pfizer vaccines to people above the age of 12. An increase in the number of rape cases and domestic violence has been seen all over the country. The education sector resumes physical classes.*

## Health and Nutrition

In the month of Kartik, 384 new cases and six deaths occurred due to COVID-19 according to the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP). As the pandemic rages on, the concern for children has increased. According to MoHP, a total of 50,887 children aged from 0 to 20 years were infected by the virus from April to October 31. This consisted of 12,813 children from age group 0-10, while 38,074 aged 11-20.

The government has initiated the campaign to administer Pfizer vaccines to people above the age of 12 and those who are suffering from chronic illnesses. Furthermore, the campaign to administer the first dose of the vaccine against COVID-19 will continue till November 20.

The United States donated 100,620 doses of the Pfizer vaccine that arrived in Nepal this month. The Maldives also supplied 201,600 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine to Nepal. The People's Liberation Army of China has provided 300,000 doses of Vero Cell vaccine to the Nepal Army. China has also provided 1.6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines.

## Human Security

Water-induced disaster is one of the most frequently occurring disasters in Nepal. 1600 houses in Bajura, are at high risk, 155 families in Rudi, 47 in Mukhtkot, and 14 in Joru of Swamikartik Khapar Rural Municipality are at high risk of landslides.

In the Bara district, rape cases are on the rise where according to statistics provided by the Bara District Police Office. 117 incidents were reported to the police in the last three years.

## Education and Skills Development

Schools across the country are resuming in-person classes that were disrupted since the start of the pandemic last year. The concern over the measurement of learning

achievements of the students to test if they have grasped the contents as prescribed by the curricula for the respective grades has increased. According to the government officials, no decision has been taken yet but the discussion for conducting a rapid assessment of the learning achievement of students is needed.

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