



Government of Nepal
Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation
Singhadurbar, Kathmandu, Nepal



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PRESS RELEASE

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**Government of Nepal Announces Strong Measures to Address Allegations
Related to Mountain Rescue Operations**

Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) has taken serious note of recent national and international media reports, as well as the investigations, alleging irregularities in helicopter rescue operations in Nepal's trekking and mountain tourism sector. These reports have raised concerns regarding instances of exaggerated altitude sickness symptoms, unnecessary helicopter evacuations, and inflated insurance claims involving possible coordination among a limited number of operators. The Government of Nepal recognizes the urgency and sensitivity of these concerns and is undertaking immediate and decisive measures to address them.

At the same time, the Government clarifies that certain allegations reported in the media-such as claims of deliberate harm to trekkers, including the feeding of contaminated food-have not been substantiated by investigations conducted by the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB). The Ministry urges media outlets and stakeholders to verify such claims with official sources to avoid the spread of misinformation that may unjustly harm Nepal's tourism image.

While these incidents are not representative of the industry as a whole, the Government acknowledges existing gaps in monitoring and enforcement, particularly in remote trekking regions, and is addressing them with the highest priority. It is also mindful of the potential reputational impact on Nepal as a premier global trekking destination, as well as the unfair disadvantage faced by the overwhelming majority of ethical and responsible tourism operators who uphold Nepal's long-standing tradition of hospitality and integrity.

In response, the Ministry is implementing a set of immediate measures to ensure transparency, accountability, and system integrity. A zero-tolerance policy is being applied through strict investigation, blacklisting, and public disclosure of individuals and agencies found involved in fraudulent practices. The Government is open to engage directly with international insurance providers to establish verification channels and restore confidence, while a joint monitoring task force comprising MoCTCA, Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN), Nepal Police, Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), and aviation stakeholders has been mobilized to strengthen oversight and conduct regular audits and for authentic and timely communication.

In parallel, the Government is advancing medium- and long-term structural reforms aimed at strengthening the overall governance of the sector. These include the development of a technology-enabled Rescue Management System integrating trekker registration, rescue requests, and insurance validation; strengthening licensing requirements for guides and agencies with mandatory ethical compliance; standardizing medical protocols for altitude sickness diagnosis; enhancing local-level governance in trekking regions; and promoting ethical tourism certification standards.



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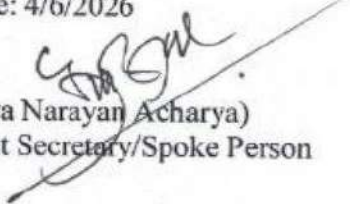
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The Government considers this a serious but manageable issue, reflecting isolated cases of malpractice rather than systemic failure. A high-level review committee, coordinated by the Joint Secretary of MoCTCA, has been formed to strengthen and ensure the strict implementation of existing procedures. With tighter regulation, digital verification systems, and firm action against offenders, Nepal is confident of renewing international trust and reinforcing its reputation as a safe, responsible, and world-class trekking destination.

The Government of Nepal remains fully committed to ensuring the safety, integrity, and sustainability of its tourism sector. It will continue to engage transparently with international partners, media, and stakeholders to elevate confidence and uphold Nepal's standing as one of the world's most trusted adventure tourism destinations.

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(Jaya Narayan Acharya)
Joint Secretary/Spoke Person