



## Focused COVID-19 Media Monitoring, Nepal



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*-Sharpening the COVID-19 Response through Communications Intelligence*

**Date: August 26, 2021**  
Kathmandu, Nepal

## EMERGING THEME(S)

- Nepal reported 1,862 new COVID-19 cases, 44 deaths on August 25; critically ill COVID-19 patients on the rise in Kanchanpur, number of positive cases also soaring; ICU beds allocated for COVID-19 patients in Kathmandu's big hospitals are filling up rapidly since last week
- Sexual minorities finding it difficult to get vaccinated against COVID-19 as they do not have citizenship certificate

## RECURRING THEME(S)

- Cases of violence and rape against women and children have increased since the COVID-19 pandemic, 8,669 women and kids disappeared since the beginning of pandemic, no data yet on missing 4,346

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<sup>1</sup> This intelligence is tracked through manually monitoring national print, digital and online media through a representative sample selection, and consultations with media persons and media influencers.

## ISSUE(S) IN FOCUS

Nepal's coronavirus caseload reached 752,863 on August 25 with 1,862 more people testing positive for the infection in the past 24 hours, while the countrywide COVID-19 mortality toll increased to 10,612 with 44 more fatalities. Nepal's COVID-19 recovery rate stands at 93.5 per cent, the fatality rate at 1.5 per cent, and the active COVID-19 case count currently is 38,287.<sup>2</sup>

A total of 12 people undergoing treatment at different hospitals of Gandaki Province have lost their lives due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the past 24 hours.<sup>3</sup>

The number of critically ill COVID-19 patients is on the rise in Kanchanpur, a Tarai district in Sudurpaschim Province that borders India. Positive cases are also soaring in the district, officials say. "The number of critical COVID-19 patients has been increasing for the past few days, we have referred three patients in need of ICU beds to Dhangadhi in the last two weeks," said Gobinda Rokaya, the COVID-19 focal person at the Mahakali Provincial Hospital.<sup>4</sup>

The ICU beds of big hospitals of Kathmandu Valley allocated for COVID-19 patients are being filled up in the last one week. Likewise, the World Health Organization had prepared a website and handed it over to the Ministry of Health and Population to make it possible for people to check online whether the beds, ICU, and ventilators are available in a hospital or not. However, the website is never updated.<sup>5</sup>

The sexual minorities are finding it difficult to get the COVID-19 vaccine as they lack citizenship certificate. The Supreme Court has ordered that the citizenship and other certificates be provided to such people based on their identity, but the administrations issuing the certificates are not that sensitive regarding the case, which has made it difficult for them to get the certificates needed for activities like vaccination, banking transactions and others.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> THT Online

<sup>3</sup> Ratopati

<sup>4</sup> The Kathmandu Post

<sup>5</sup> Kantipur

<sup>6</sup> Kantipur

The cases of violence and rape against women and children have increased with the surge in the COVID-19 cases, according to the data of Nepal Police. A total of 8,669 women and children have disappeared since the beginning of the pandemic in the country — out of them there is no data of 4,346 being found.<sup>7</sup>

## OTHER(S)

### National News

“I don’t have a good relationship with the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), we lack good coordination,” said Balananda Sharma, CEO of the COVID-19 Crisis Management Center on August 25 amidst an event in Lalitpur. He also pointed out that there is no coordination between the federal, provincial and local levels. The MoHP only talks about lockdown and does not say anything about relief programs, and we had disagreement on the same topic, he said.<sup>8</sup>

### VACCINATION DRIVE

As of August 23, Nepal has received 13,227,590 doses of COVID-19 vaccines, 16.47 per cent of the population has taken the first dose, and 12.85 per cent has been fully vaccinated.<sup>9</sup>

The people of Kathmandu, who have taken the first dose of Vero Cell vaccine will get the second dose from August 27.<sup>10</sup>

The Health Office, Kathmandu has started giving the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine to the members of Nepal Scout and National Cadet Corps from August 25.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ratopati

<sup>8</sup> Ratopati

<sup>9</sup> The Kathmandu Post

<sup>10</sup> Onlinekhabar

The Gokarneshwor Municipality will give the first dose of AstraZeneca vaccine to locals above the age of 18 from August 26.<sup>12</sup>

The first dose of Vero Cell vaccine will be given to the locals of Bhaktapur above the age of 40 and students above the age 18 on August 26.<sup>13</sup>

All the inmates of Central Jail Jagannath Deval have been given both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. There are 3,215 inmates in the jail at present.<sup>14</sup>

The Department of Health Services is set to increase the storage capacity of vaccines. As more low temperature is needed for Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, they are enhancing the capacity, as per its Supply Management Division.<sup>15</sup>

The prohibitory orders have been extended till September 3 in Kaski. Vehicles will be allowed to ply on the basis of an odd-even number system.<sup>16</sup>

The District Administration Office Chitwan has extended the prohibitory orders till September 5, with some relaxations in place.<sup>17</sup>

Ilam Municipality has demanded the federal government to provide them with a relief package for those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, COVID-19 vaccine for the locals as well as the expansion of the COVID-19 test for the control of the pandemic in the area.<sup>18</sup>

Students across the nation are looking forward to their schools to reopen. They miss the in-person classes when the schools were open — it was more than studying. They used to interact with teachers, have fun, play and more. However, the online

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<sup>11</sup> Onlinekhabar

<sup>12</sup> Baarhakhari

<sup>13</sup> Ratopati

<sup>14</sup> Setopati

<sup>15</sup> Ratopati

<sup>16</sup> Onlinekhabar

<sup>17</sup> Baarhakhari

<sup>18</sup> Nagarik

classes are limited to teaching only which the students find monotonous.<sup>19</sup>

Pratima Nima Memorial Academy has handed over healthcare materials worth Rs 8,500,000 to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic to the Gandaki provincial government.<sup>20</sup>

International flights were affected due to the lockdown imposed by the government in 2020 to control the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic — this caused a loss of Rs 10,760,000,000 to Nepal Airlines.<sup>21</sup>

The government has collected nearly Rs 100 billion as revenue in the month of Shrawan (July-August) amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>22</sup>

The COVID-19 test report of all Nepali players and staff who have reached Oman for the ICC World Cup League-2 has come back negative. They were tested for COVID-19 after staying in quarantine for 24 hours.<sup>23</sup>

## International News

US President Joe Biden is set to be briefed on the US intelligence community's investigation into how COVID-19 started, with the report likely to disappoint in delivering clear answers about the deadly pandemic's origin in China. Three US government officials and a fourth person familiar with the scope of the investigation said they did not expect the review to lead to firm conclusions after China stymied earlier international efforts to gather key information on the ground.<sup>24</sup>

At a factory in Sri Lanka's Dehiwala-Mount Lavinia city, workers use staples and glue to assemble long cardboard boxes, which will be used as coffins for some of the country's coronavirus victims. The coffin is made out of recycled paper and costs

<sup>19</sup> Annapurna Post

<sup>20</sup> Onlinekhabar

<sup>21</sup> Onlinekhabar

<sup>22</sup> Nagarik

<sup>23</sup> Baarhakhari

<sup>24</sup> Reuters (in The Kathmandu Post)

a sixth of the cheapest wooden casket. As Sri Lanka's death toll from COVID-19 surges, some are opting for these cardboard coffins when they cremate their loved ones. "To make 400 coffins you have to cut some 250 to 300 trees. To prevent that environmental destruction, I proposed this concept to the health committee of the Council," said Priyantha Sahabandu, the local government official who first came up with the idea.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Reuters (in The Himalayan Times)

## Contacts for further details

### Dr Sunoor Verma

Strategic, Risk and Crisis Communication Consultant  
World Health Organization, Country Office for Nepal  
[sverma@who.int](mailto:sverma@who.int)  
[sunoorv@gmail.com](mailto:sunoorv@gmail.com)

### Ms Tsering Dolkar Gurung

NPO (Communication, Media and Public Information)  
World Health Organization, Country Office for Nepal  
[gurungt@who.int](mailto:gurungt@who.int)

***WHO's COVID-19 response in Nepal is made possible through the generous support of the Government of Azerbaijan, the Government of Canada, UK Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO), Government of Germany, and USAID.***

Reference Code: 21AUG26MM\_015