



BI-ANNUAL REPORT

JAN-JUNE 2019

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TRENDS OF VIOLENCE AND CONTESTATION IN NEPAL

This is a bi-annual report from the Nepal Peace Monitoring Project (PMP), covering the period from January - June 2019. The PMP gathers data on contestations related to politics and governance by compiling reports from all major online news portals, national dailies, local newspapers from 20 districts, and incidents reports directly submitted to us. The goal of the PMP is to improve our understanding of violence in Nepal in order to better respond to it and to promote peace. The numbers recorded in this report are based on the reports mapped by NepalMonitor.org.¹

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the six months, from January to July 2019 the PMP recorded 1910 incidents (1312 of them violent and 598 non-violent incidents of protests, public contestation or threats). A total of 230 people were killed and 551 were injured in violent incidents.

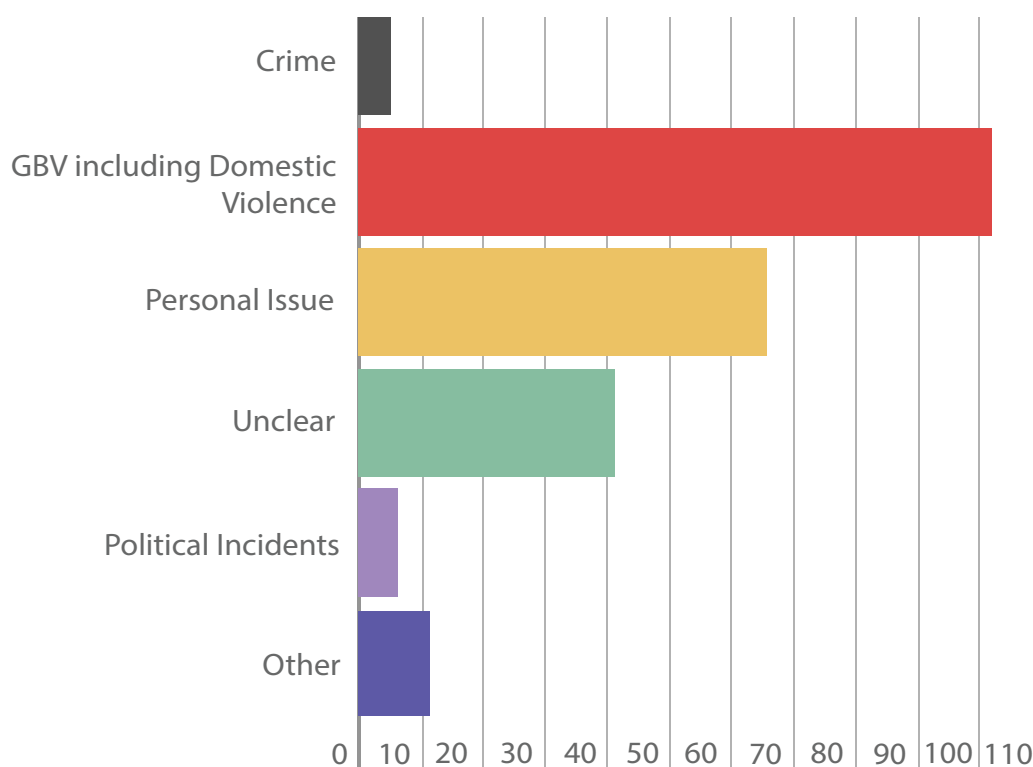
Gender based violence (GBV) continued to remain as one of the main causes of violent fatalities. In these six months, PMP recorded 674 incidents of GBV which include 151 incidents of domestic violence, 501 incidents of rape/sexual assault and 16 incidents of dowry related violence. GBV caused the death of 102 people and left 67 injured.

Issues related to governance, politics and economy caused the majority of non-violent contestation and public protests during these six months. As in the past, the involvement of cadres of the Biplav led Communist Party of Nepal (CPN-Chand) in violent activities and public protests is suspected. Early 2019 saw an escalation of Chand group activities, media attention on the group and state measures purportedly intended to address and curtail them, including mass arrests.

VIOLENT AND NON-VIOLENT INCIDENTS RECORDED FROM JANUARY TO JUNE 2019

From January - June, 2019 the PMP recorded 1910 incidents of which 1312 were violent and 598 were non-violent. Incidents of violence killed 230 people and injured 551. Gender based violence (GBV) and personal issues were the leading causes of death; being a prime factor in the deaths of 102 and 65 people respectively.

Fig 1: Triggers of Violence Resulting in Fatalities



Out of the total recorded incidents, the highest number were related to GBV with 674 incidents followed by political contestation (351 incidents), governance (346), personal issues (190) and economic issues (98). Governance related incidents mainly involved issues related to quality of public service, freedom of expression and civil rights and legal action against perpetrators and justice. Political issues mainly involved events concerning the constitution and federal restructuring, whereas economic issues mainly included issues related to labor disputes and infrastructure development.

Fig 2: Triggers of Incidents

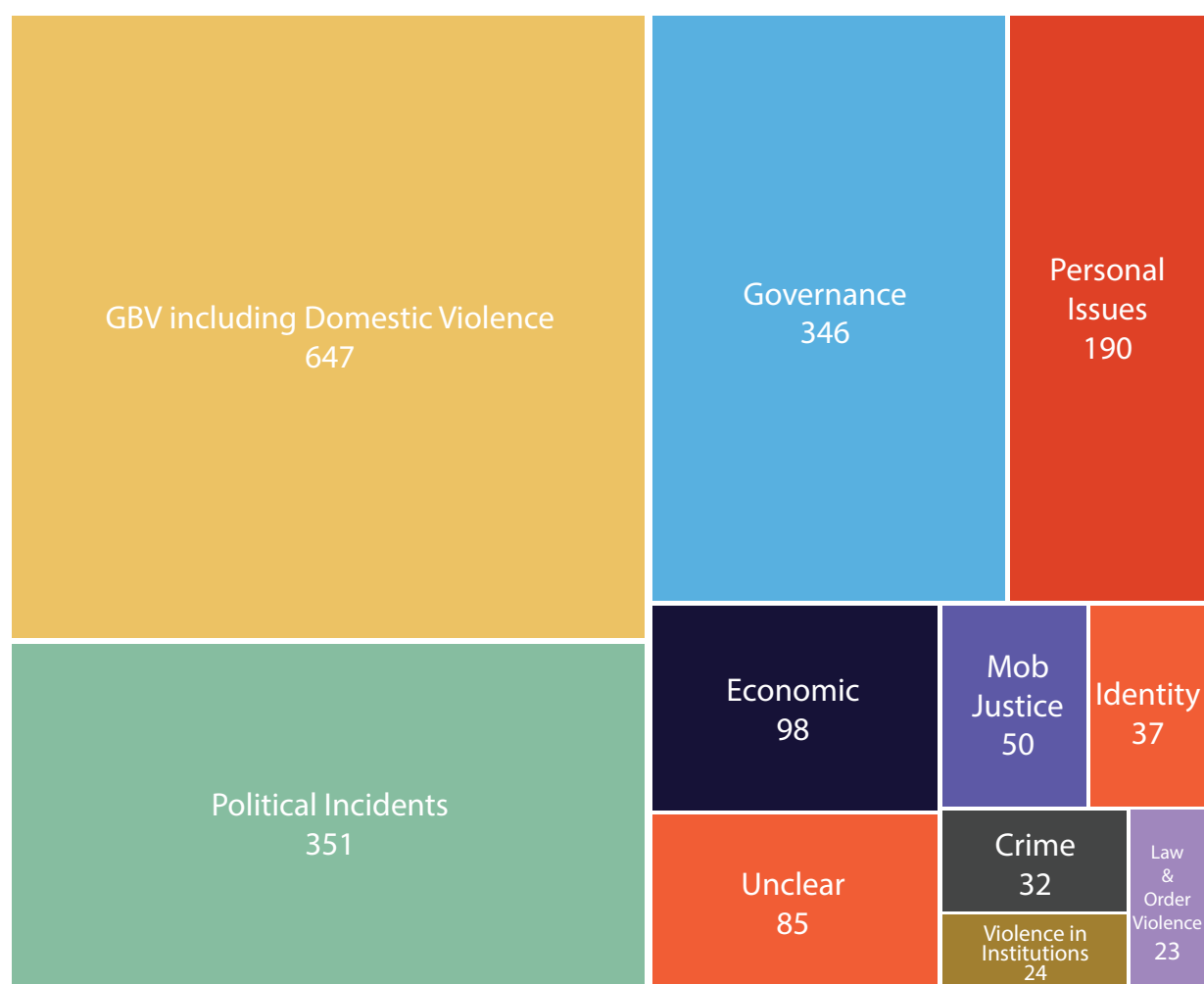


Figure 3: Incidents and Their Impacts

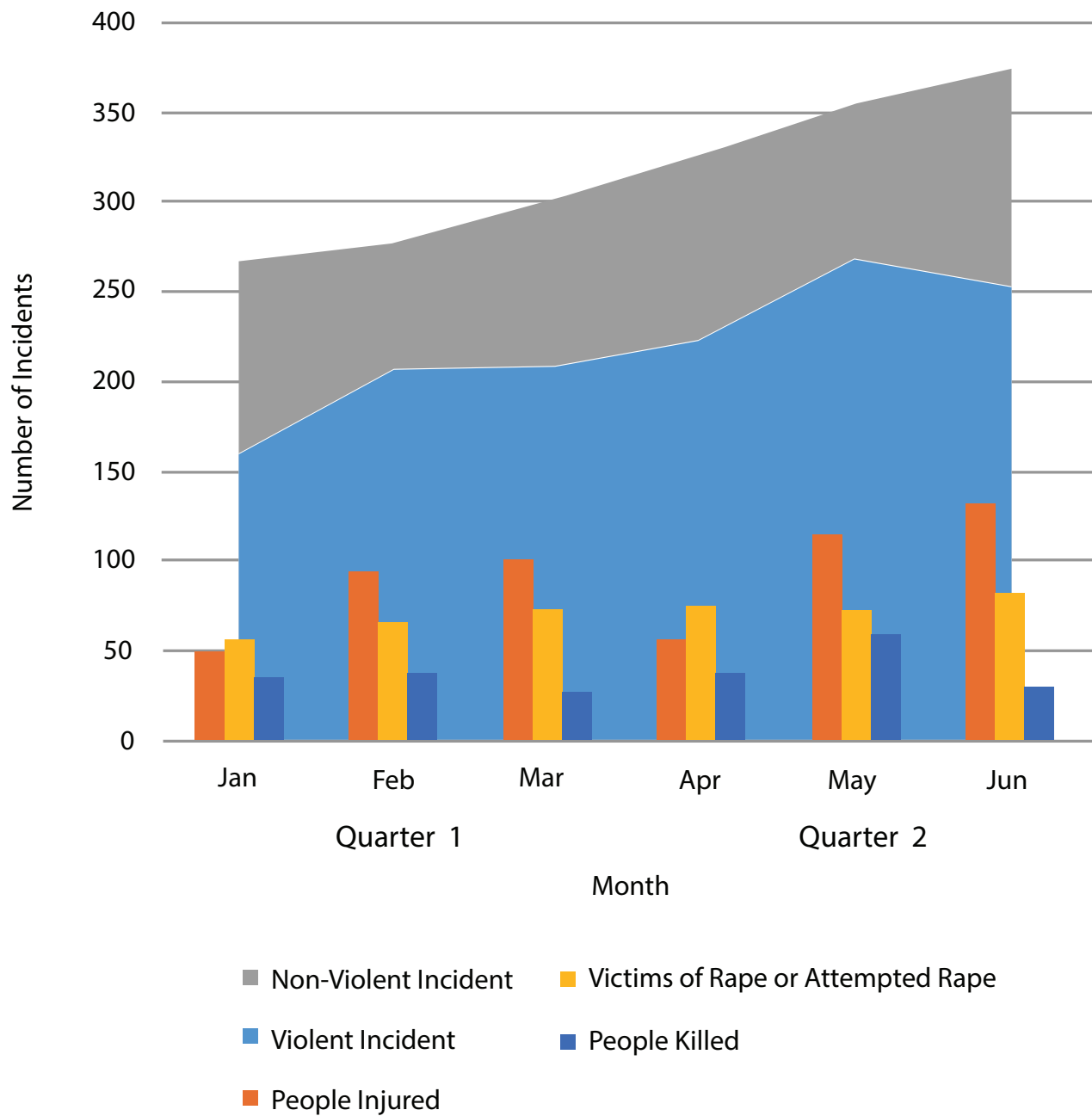
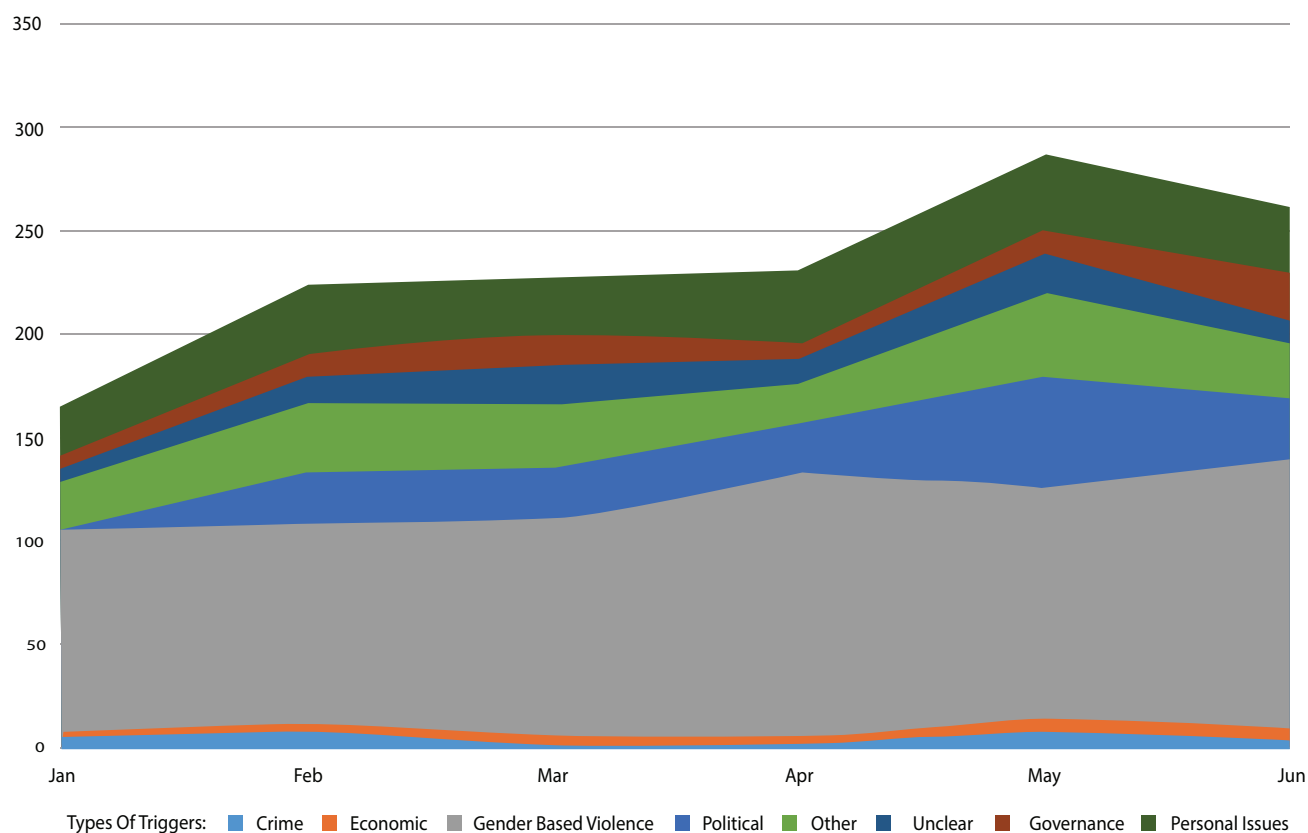


Figure 4: Triggers of Violent Incidents



YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS: THE PRIMARY VICTIMS OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

GBV was the main driver of violence recorded in this report, with 674 incidents causing the death of 102 people. Sexual assault was the most common form of GBV with 501 incidents including 426 incidents of rape in which 344 victims were women and girls below the age of 26. In 46 cases of rape, a family member or a relative was the main perpetrator of the crime. In 20 cases, the victims were physically challenged person. The victims of this heinous crime were girls as young as three and elderly women as old as 81 years.

On January 20, the Central Investigation Bureau of Nepal Police arrested a 50 year old British national on charges of pedophilia and rescued three boys from his apartment in Kalimati, Kathmandu Metropolitan city 13.² The culprit was caught in the act of molesting the three children when the police raided the apartment.

On June 6, 2019, a rape case of a 15 year old girl was settled after the perpetrator's family threatened the victim and her family. The victim's family was given Rs. 11,0000 in the presence of political parties in Mithila Municipality- 2 Dhanusha district.³ To avoid any kind of threat the family had to forcibly accept the reconciliation amount.

Domestic violence was the second most common form of GBV. This resulted in 151 incidents, 84 deaths and 54 injuries. In one particularly shocking incident Sunita Yadav, 45, was beaten to death by her husband, who had a long history of committing violence against her. The perpetrator had regularly tortured his wife over the course of 16 years, and reportedly expressed grievances about not receiving sufficient dowry.⁴ The perpetrator had a long history of abuse; having regularly tortured his wife over the course of 16 years. After she filed a torture complaint against him, he made a written commitment to the District Administration Office (DAO) to cease the abuse against her. However, Sunita died at TU Teaching Hospital on March 29, 2019, with her body showing evidence of beating and torture involving objects including an iron rod, wire and electric shock and he stands accused of the crime

On January 20, 25 years Sima Sharma, from Janakpur metropolitan-4 committed suicide after poisoning her two year old daughter. She was reportedly driven to such desperate measures, having been repeatedly tortured by her in-laws over dowry.⁵ Her in-laws were arrested but her husband, at the time of reporting, was still at large.

SYRINGE ATTACKS ON WOMEN IN KATHMANDU

Four women were attacked with sharp needle like objects by assailants on motorbikes in Kathmandu and Banepa within a six week period in May and June.⁶ On June 27, police arrested a man from Maharajgunj on charge of the attack. According to the perpetrator, at first he used a sharpened wooden stick as a weapon and later moved to using a metal syringe.⁷

NINE MEMBERS OF TWO FAMILIES MURDERED IN PANCHTHAR

On May 20, a group of masked people, murdered nine members of two families in Miklajung rural municipality-3, Panchthar in which a 12 year old member of the family survived the attack.⁸ On May 20 a group of masked people murdered nine people in two households in Miklajung rural municipality 3, Panchthar. A 12 year old girl was the only survivor of the attack.⁹

VICTIMS OF ALLEGATIONS OF WITCHCRAFT

The PMP recorded 15 incidents of allegations of witchcraft during this period. In 12 of these incidents the victims were women. On April 24 an elderly couple in Sundarharaicha Municipality 11, Morang, was beaten by a group of people claiming witchcraft as the motivation.¹⁰ According to the perpetrators, the elderly couple practiced witchcraft and made their family members ill. Similarly, on June 26, the police arrested a self-proclaimed goddess from Balaju, Kathmandu for torturing a young girl at Bhadrakali temple in the name of exorcising evil spirits from her.¹¹ The incident came to light after the video footage of the girl being tortured went viral and provoked public outcry.

NIRMALA PANTA'S CASE: NO JUSTICE

On January 27, a committee formed by National Human Rights Commission to investigate the rape and murder of Nirmla Panta submitted their report with a four point recommendations and 24 point directives to the government.¹² It has been a year since the rape and murder of 13 year old Nirmla Panta, yet the perpetrator is still unknown or arrested. Even the United Nations Human Rights rapporteur has raised the question and pressured the government to deliver justice to the victim's family.¹³ According to the police officials they have not stopped their investigation. This incident created a great public outcry and protests demanding justice yet the criminal is yet to be arrested.

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DALITS

The PMP recorded 27 incidents of discrimination against Dalits during the reporting period. The incidents include; people from Dalit community being restricted from entering a temple, being beaten for touching a communal water tap or for touching a person from a higher caste, Dalit students being mistreated or discriminated against at school and cases of arrests against people who discriminated against Dalits.

In addition to external oppression and discrimination, Dalits are also affected by violence stemming from internal divisions and hierarchy. On June 6, a woman from an upper caste within the Dalit community beat a woman from lower caste of the same community for drinking water from a well in Saini, Dogradekar Municipality - 1 in Baitadi.¹⁴

On May 2, the ward chairman of Thulibheri Municipality- 11, Dolpa was accused of attempting to settle the case of caste based discrimination.¹⁵ After being beaten by a person from the higher caste, the victim went to the District Police Office to lodge a complaint but due to political pressure his complaint was not registered.

GOVERNANCE RELATED INCIDENTS ON THE RISE

Issues related to governance, politics and economy were the main triggers of protests with 346, 351 and 98 recorded incidents respectively. Out of the 346 incidents recorded, 71 were violent incidents which injured 73 people. Governance related incidents include lack of freedom of expression and civil rights, legal action

against criminals and lack of access to justice and issues regarding quality of public services and the role of local authorities.

The PMP recorded 45 incidents related to freedom of expression of which 15 were violent incidents in which six people were injured. The incidents mainly involved attacks and arrests of journalists for writing certain news, journalists organizing protests against the government regarding their freedom of expression. On January 24, journalist Ganesh BK was arrested for writing a report regarding the smuggling of drugs with police coordination in Bajhang district.¹⁶ Similarly, in a press release issued by the CPN Chand on March 28, the party threatened media houses against the coverage of the party, its movement and leaders and also warned them against publishing false and baseless news regarding the activities of the party.¹⁷

In the case of local governance, the PMP recorded 45 incidents, of which 17 were violent in nature. Issues related to local governance mainly involved local authorities taking situations into their own hands. For instance, on March 14 the ward chairperson and Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Sadananda Municipality-8 Bhojpur became involved in a physical dispute over a demand of a financial advance made by the chairperson, with the CAO beating the chairperson.¹⁸ Similarly, on June 24 a technical team from the National Reconstruction Authority (NPA) working in Dimipokhari, Sunapati Rural Municipality-2 stopped their work after their assistant sub-engineer was beaten up by the ward chairperson; the beating supposedly precipitated by an argument about the proper use of ward office stationery.¹⁹ On the same day, after a dispute between the mayor and deputy mayor of a municipality in Mahottari the deputy mayor padlocked the municipality office.²⁰ The deputy mayor accused the municipality for misappropriating the budget of development grants.

CPN CHAND BEHIND THE BOMB BLASTS IN KATHMANDU

The PMP recorded 268 incidents with the involvement of Communist Party of Nepal (CPN)- Chand²¹ in which 19 people were injured. In the first six months of 2019 there has been a 90% increase (from 45 to 268 incidents) in the amount of Chand-related incidents by comparison to the last six months of 2018. The incidents recorded mainly involved arrests of CPN cadres, bomb blasts to spread terror and vandalism of property by the cadres. On February 21, three people were injured after an improvised explosive device exploded outside Ncell head office in Nakkhu, Lalitpur.²² Following the bombings in Ncell and other places across Nepal, the government banned CPN-Chand in a cabinet meeting held in Baluwatar, Kathmandu on March 12.²³

According to one of the senior Minister, the government concluded that CPN Chand has been engaging in criminal activities by detonating bombs and disrupting peace in the country. In contrast, Gopal Kirati, the chairperson of Nepal Communist Party-Maoist Center, said that the government should withdraw its decision and that CPN-Chand should agree to hold talks with the government.²⁴ On an event on May 26 that terrorized the residents of Kathmandu, two Biplav cadres were killed and seven people including Biplav cadres, were injured in two separate explosions in a private house in Ghattekulo and in a barber shop in Sukedhara.²⁵ On May 27, while addressing the 19th anniversary of National Human Rights Commission, Nepal PM Oli called the perpetrators of the bombing “terrorists”.²⁶ He further added that the government should stop these kinds of terror and argued the main motive of CPN-Chand was to collect extortion money from the people.

CITIZENS DEMAND WITHDRAWAL OF THE CONTROVERSIAL GUTHI BILL

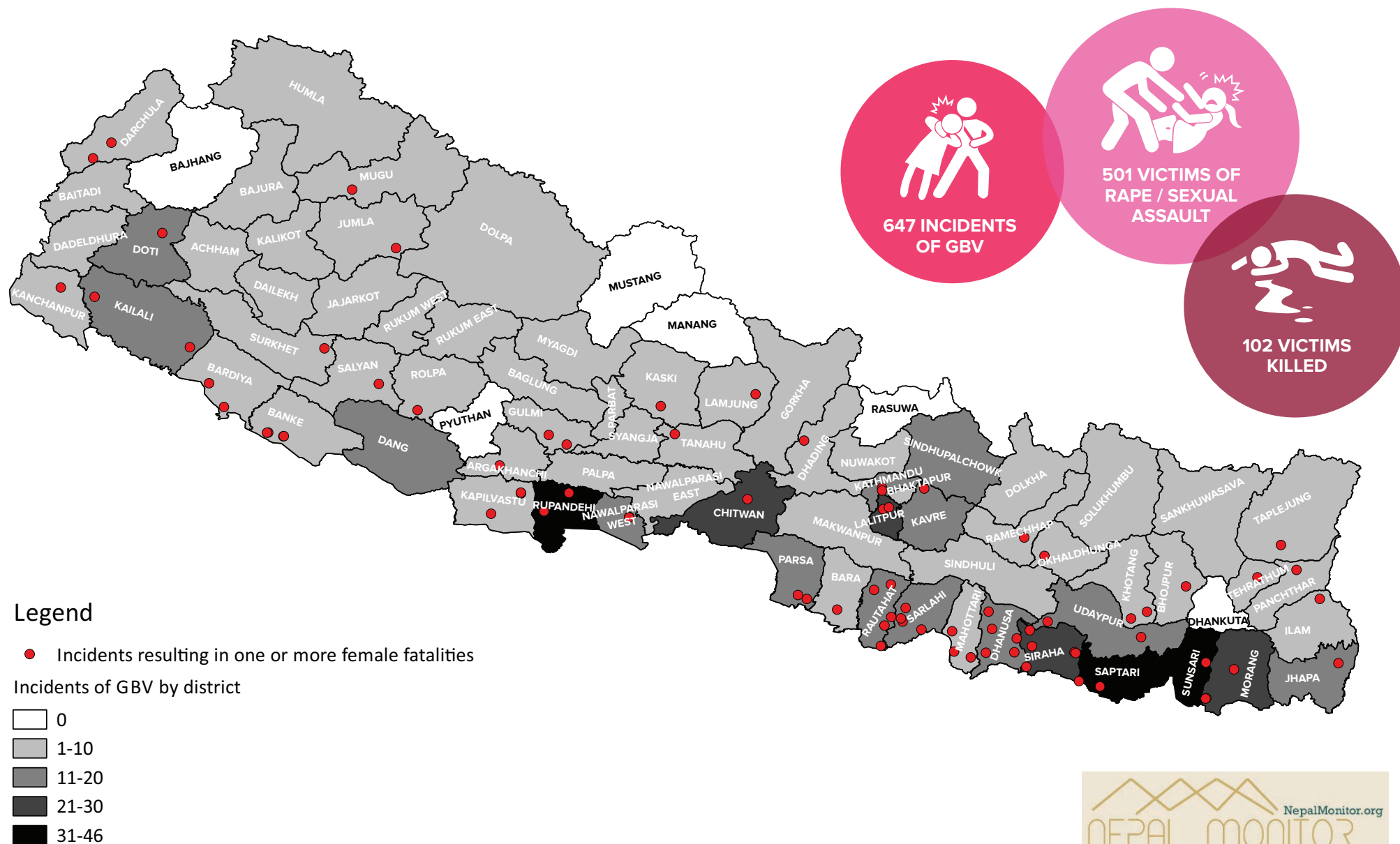
Guthis are social organisations, predominant in Newari society, which hold communal land and assets in trust. About 2000 Guthi in Nepal own 150,000 hectares of real estate and the responsibility of its management is passed down from one generation to another. They have not traditionally been subject to state management or taxation,

On April 29, the Minister of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation proposed the ‘Guthi bill’ at the upper house. The proposed bill made provision for a central government authority which will manage the Guthi owned property across Nepal.²⁷ This move prompted a swift and substantial backlash by a large number of Nepali citizens.

On June 19, thousands of people from Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur took to the streets in protest, demanding the termination of the bill.²⁸ Some activists believe that the bill was intended to facilitate expropriation of community owned property by certain state and private sector interests.²⁹ In the month of June, PMP recorded 12 non-violent incidents demanding the withdrawal of the Guthi bill. On June 25, the government formally withdrew the Guthi bill from the national assembly,³⁰ following a request by the Minister of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation.



Incidents of Gender-Based Violence, Jan-Jun 2019



THE NEPAL PEACE MONITORING PROJECT

The Nepal Peace Monitoring Project (PMP) is a joint initiative by Collective Campaign for Peace (COCAP) | NepalMonitor.org. Building on the NepalMonitor.org platform, the PMP focuses on violence and contestation, with a view toward improving our understanding of, and response to, violence and conflict in Nepal. The PMP also provides an instrument to measure progress against Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Targets 16.1 (reduction of all forms of violence and related death rates) and 5.2 (elimination of violence against women) in Nepal.

The PMP monitors:

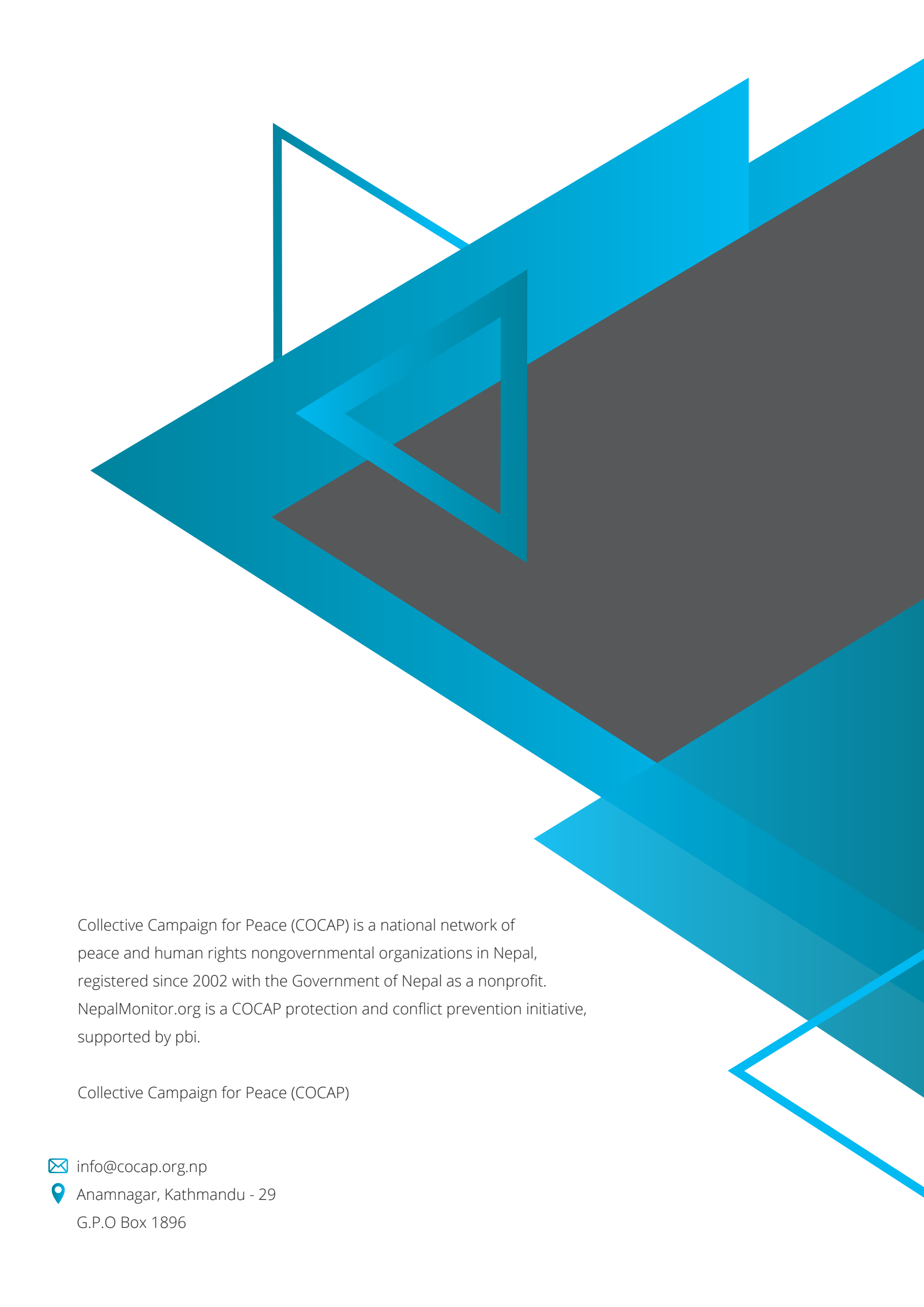
Violence: any incident involving the intentional use of physical force against another person or group that results or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, or other forms of physical harm to persons or damage to property.

Non-violent contestation: demonstrations, protests or other types of non-violent events that involve collective action and may be of potential significance to violence dynamics in Nepal. This includes strikes (bandh), hunger strikes, padlocking and other forms of political protest. Incidents involving intimidation and threats but no direct physical violence are also tracked.

The PMP uses a broad range of information sources, including national and district-level newspapers (from 25 districts), and reporting from police, human rights organizations, international agencies, civil society organizations, and citizens directly. For each incident, the PMP collects detailed information on the following variables: time and location of the incident, form of the incident, weapons used, reported cause/motive of the incident (political competition, land dispute, communal tensions, crime etc.), affiliations of perpetrators and victims, human impacts (broken down by gender and age) and damage to property.

ENDNOTE

1. Nepal Monitor utilises a diverse range of sources; primarily drawing upon publically available data. This means that some unreported incidents will be unaccounted for in our data. Individuals can report incidents to our team via phone, email and SMS to help strengthen the data.
2. See: [CIB Arrests British National on Charge of Pedophilia](#)
3. See: [Rape Case Reconciled in 11 Thousand Rupees](#)
4. See: [Doctor Beats Wife to Death Arrested](#)
5. See: [Tortures for Dowry, Woman Commits Suicide, Kills her Daughter too](#)
6. See: [Four Women Attacked with Sharp Objects](#)
7. See: [Sadist and Alleged Syringe Attacker Karki Made Public](#)
8. See: [Nine members of Two Families Murdered in Cold Blood](#)
9. See: [Panchthar Mass Murder Prime Suspect Found Dead](#)
10. See: [Group Thrashes Elderly Couple on Witchery Charge](#)
11. See: ["Self Proclaimed Goddess" Arrested on Charge of Torturing a Young Girl to Exorcise Evil Spirit"](#)
12. See: [National Human Rights Commission Submits its Report on the Nirmala Rape and Murder Case to the Government](#)
13. See: [A Year After Nirmala Panta's Rape And Murder](#)
14. See: [Upper Dalit Beats Another Dalit for Drinking Water from Well](#)
15. See: [Ward Chair Charged for Reconciling the Caste Discrimination Case](#)
16. See: [Journalist BK Arrested for Writing News on Smuggling of Drugs](#)
17. See: [Chand-Led CPN Threatens Media Outlets for Coverage Against Party](#)
18. See: [Chief Administrative Officer Beaten by Ward Chairperson](#)
19. See: [NRA Technical Team Halts Reconstruction As Ward Chief Thrashes Assistant Sub Engineer](#)
20. See: [Municipality Office Padlocked Due to Dispute Between Mayor and Deputy Mayor](#)
21. The CPN-Chand was formed on November 24, 2014 after splitting from the CPN-Maoist. The party was at first being headed by maoist leader Mohan Baidya, later the party split after serious differences between Chand and Baidya.
22. See: [At Least Three Injured After a Bomb Explosion in Lalitpur](#)
23. See: [Govt Bans Chand-led Party](#)
24. Ibid
25. See: [Two Killed, Seven Injured in Two Separate Explosions in Capital](#)
26. [PM Oli Asks What Chand's Outfit CPN Really Wants](#)
27. [Street vs Guthi Bill](#)
28. See: [Street Vs Guthi Bill](#) Guthi undertake religious ceremonies in temples and manage them and other religious sites on the basis of the money generated from thousands of hectares of land under the ownership of Guthi. All the Guthis are regulated by Guthi Sansthan, the state owned umbrella Guthi organization.
29. Ibid
30. See: [Govt Officially Withdraws Guthi Bill from National Assembly](#)



Collective Campaign for Peace (COCAP) is a national network of peace and human rights nongovernmental organizations in Nepal, registered since 2002 with the Government of Nepal as a nonprofit. NepalMonitor.org is a COCAP protection and conflict prevention initiative, supported by pbi.

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