

# When one private firm reigns supreme over many: State of land grabbing in Nepal

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## INTRODUCTION

There are many ways to define land grabbing<sup>1</sup>. Generally, land grabbing is understood in relation to commercial pressure on land, wherein land is taken over, usually through aggressive means or force, to expand territorial holdings or broaden power, which may also include large-scale investment in agricultural land.

In Nepal, commercial pressure on land is not a big a factor as there is not much investment by multinational companies in the industrial sector.

Because of this, many civil society organizations including the Community Self Reliance Centre (CSRC) proposed to define land grabbing as *“to obtain or appropriate or the seizing of land unscrupulously or forcibly or unfairly by a nation-State, or organization, or an individual and disregarding the tenancy rights of the peasants and the farmers, including the customary rights,*

and debilitating the productivity of land and leading to violation of right to feeding oneself”<sup>2</sup>.

Land grabbing can also cover the practice of leasing government or public land to the private sector for business purposes i.e. for the establishment of hotels, cable cars, national parks and so on.

Public land in Nepal is defined as the “land allocated for use not only by individual but by general public like path, pond, water-sprout, well and their banks, exit for cattle, grazing-land, graveyard, public inn, temple, place for religious practice, memorials, court-yard, sewerage, market-place, public entertainment and sports ground and other lands specifically denoted so by Government of Nepal (GoN) through publication in the Nepal Gazette” (Acharya, 2008).

In November 2019, the GoN agreed to extend for another 25 years the lease contract of Yeti

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<sup>1</sup> Action Aid (2011), Peoples Action in Practice, p. 113

<sup>2</sup> CSRC (2005), Land Grabbing in Nepal’s Context: Searching for a politico-economically informed definition of land grabbing in Nepal (proposed paper for discussion)



Mass gathering against land grabbing in Kalikasthan Rasuwa on 17 May 2019. Photo by CSRC.

Holdings, a private company, covering the Gokarna Forest Resort, even before the expiry of the current lease period.

This despite criticisms from different CSOs, media, and other private companies. Various sources claimed that the lease was extended because the owner of Yeti Holdings has strong ties with some of Nepal's highest government officials.

It is important to note that the 30-year lease contract forged in 1996 between the then Royal Palace and Yeti Holdings covering 142.09 hectares of forest land clearly states that "the lease period cannot be extended before the expiry of the current lease period" (Sapkota, 2019).

The Supreme Court of Nepal later summoned government officials to explain the decision to extend the lease. Lawmakers also sought clarification. However, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli brushed off criticisms and said the government made the right decision.

The GoN claims that the move will create more job opportunities, has a positive long-term impact on national development, and it has the authority to lease out public land as past administrations had done. It likewise reported that it had earned 6.45 billion Nepali Rupees (approximately US\$55.3 million) by providing land to the private company.

The case of Yeti Holdings is but one example of questionable moves by the government to lease land to the private sector, even if it means taking land away from citizens who continue to wait for their chance to own their own land and possibly damaging natural resources available in these public or government land.

### ***Objectives of this Study***

The general objective of this study is to conduct a sectoral study of the seeming preference of the GoN to lease land to the private sector. In particular, the study aims:

- to analyze a representative case of a private company, which has been repeatedly awarded contracts by the GoN;
- to publicize the cases of how the GoN has been leasing public land to a single private company; and,
- to recommend to the government necessary measures for the prevention of land leasing trend in Nepal.

### **Methodology**

This study is mostly guided by qualitative data, and therefore, qualitative methodologies were applied for this study. Quantitative data were gathered from different media sources, different publications and key informant interviews.

Some of the tools used to put together this study are:

- **Document Review.** National and international journals, media reports, reports of government, NGOs, and the private sector were reviewed to collect information relevant to this study such as land leasing practices of Nepal and their impact on the larger community in Nepal.
- **Case Study.** Some representative cases of land leasing in Nepal were collected and analyzed. Three cases involving subsidiaries of the same company were identified and analyzed to support the study. These cases were selected because of their importance, particularly because even the Supreme Court also got involved in reviewing government tendencies to lease public land to the private sector.
- **Key Informant Interview (KII).** Some key informant interviews were also conducted with land rights activists, government stakeholders, and some representatives of the private sector. Ten persons were interviewed to collect information on land grabbing and its effect in Nepal.

### **Scope and limitations**

This study is mostly limited to secondary data and only covered Yeti Holdings, which has been frequently awarded public land leases by the Government of Nepal, enabling it to expand its business.

Short case studies related to Yeti and its subordinate companies were used as reference for this paper. It also depended a great deal on media accounts, reports of different organizations, and interviews with some key informants.

Data on the affected communities and the community perception towards land leasing tendencies of government were not analyzed in this report.

## **SECTORAL OVERVIEW**

### **Introduction of the Sector**

In a democracy, it is essential that land leases or purchases be fully transparent, and that the revenues are used for the benefit of the local population.

However, it appears that in some cases, land is leased at very low rents, or sold below market prices, or even given away because of vague promises of employment creation or transfers of technology.

However, while States have a right to engage in economic affairs, it is corollary under the Declaration on the Right to Development (UN GA Resolution 41/128 of 4 December 1986) that they should “formulate appropriate national development policies that aim at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals, on the basis of their active, free, and meaningful participation in



development and in the fair distribution of the benefits resulting therefrom” (Art. 2.3.).

This requires that States ensure the adequate participation of the local communities affected by land leases or purchases, and that the decision-making process is fully transparent (Art. 6.3. and 8.2.). Participation is key to ensuring long-term sustainability and success of investments.

However, after the abolition of monarchical system in Nepal, private investors and governments have shown a growing interest in the acquisition or long-term lease of large portions of public land which government acquired from the former monarchy and his family.

The government has not been transparent about any competitive bidding process, specifically how and why it awarded numerous public land leases to the same company - Yeti Holdings.

Yeti Holdings, an influential private company established in Nepal in 1995, is reputedly the largest travel and tourism group in the country. It was established by two Sherpa brothers – Ang-Tshering and Sonam Sherpa – to promote tourism and travel.

The two brothers started small but were eventually able to grow their business and expand to airlines, resorts, and other tourism sectors. The group today has multiple companies under the brothers’ umbrella and one of these is Thamserku Trekking.

Various sources including the leading media organization of Nepal say that the owners of Yeti have close relations with the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN), especially its Chairperson and other top leaders.

Due to the influence and close relations with those in power, the Yeti Group was able to secure a 30-year lease over a 142.09-hectare piece of public land following the decision of the Council of Ministers on 9 December 2019.

In the same way, Thamserku Trekking, one of the sister companies of Yeti Holdings, was awarded another huge piece of land at the capital city of the federal government (near Soaltee Hotel in Kalimati). According to the 30-year lease agreement with the Nepal Trust, a commercial building will be constructed on that land.

Apart from Gokarna Forest Resort, Yeti Holdings has likewise secured a huge plot of prime land at Durbarmarg, Kathmandu.

So far, the Trust has been silent about its decision to lease out land in Kalimati to Thamserku Trekking, which is owned by the family members of the Yeti Group.

Gajendra Thakur, secretary at the Nepal Trust, said that the company will pay Rs 180 million (approximately US\$1.54 million) to the Trust for using the land. “The housing design for the business complex to be built on the land will be as approved by Kathmandu Metropolitan City,” he said.

The government has been accused of misusing its power to lease out former royal family property to Yeti Holdings. The government had reshuffled the Nepal Trust Committee (NTC) and revised the Trust Act to open the way for the lease of Gokarna Forest Resort. Going against the general practice, the Trust extended the lease for the Gokarna Forest Resort for another 25 years even before the existing contract expired.

## Significance of the Sector

The Nepal Trust Act of 2008 states that the GoN can indeed lease out land upon the recommendation of the NAC.

However, there is no clear criteria for deciding to whom it can lease land, whether to an individual or to a company, giving rise to the possible misinterpretation of the objectives of the existing laws in Nepal to favor leasing land to select private companies.

Private companies have been aggressively securing assets, thus the rampant land grabbing in Nepal, due in part to the easy credit access extended by the commercial banks for commercial ventures such as real estate and tourism development.

So far, the government has not objected to the practice of leasing public land to private companies. One reason is that the private sector pays the highest taxes, providing the government with much needed revenues.

## Trends

The Constitution of Nepal provides that the GoN should protect, respect, and fulfil the rights of people by taking care of public properties such as land and other infrastructure.

The Directive Principles and the Policies of the State in the Constitution of Nepal said: *“The State shall pursue a policy of raising the standards of living of the general public through the development of infrastructures as health, education, housing and employment of the people.”*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Article 51, The Constitution of Nepal

However, indiscriminate leasing of land to private companies goes against this responsibility to ensure the individual’s housing, health, and education rights. For example, the government always says that there is not enough land to give to landless individuals, and yet it can award hectares of land to a single company under a lease contract and at a nominal rent.

Table 1 shows how much public land the Nepalese government has awarded to the same group of companies over the years.

## Persons/entities involved in land grabbing

The primary culprits behind land grabbing in Nepal are the State and State agencies, specifically the following:

**Nepal Trust Committee (NTC).** As mentioned earlier, the Nepal Trust Act 2008 provides for the formation of the NTC to regulate the land held in trust in Nepal. The Trust was established to take over the land of the former King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya (who were killed during the massacre of 2001).

**Table 1. Public lands awarded to Yeti Holdings**

Company	Award Date	Land Area (Ha)
Pasang Lyahu Foundation	May 2006	0.200
Kongde Resort	August 2017	2.540
Thamserku Trekking Ltd.	February 2018	0.050
Yeti Group	May 2018	0.050
Pathivara Cable Car Ltd.	May 2018	0.710
Yeti Group	June 2019	0.057
Gokarna Resort Pvt. Ltd.	December 2019	142.090
<b>Total</b>		<b>145.687</b>

**Note:** All of these companies belong to the same group i.e. Yeti Holdings



The Government of Nepal can lease out trust land to the private sector upon the recommendation of the NTC, which is led by a minister. Supposedly, the main responsibility of the committee is to protect the land. However, the provisions of the Nepal Trust Act 2008 have been misinterpreted, leading to the questionable entry into lease agreements with some private companies.

**The Prime Minister of Nepal.** Members of Parliament, CSOs and other stakeholders have long called on the government to investigate the indiscriminate leasing of public land to private companies, particularly to Yeti Holdings.

However, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has always defended Yeti Holdings, saying that the lease agreements were above board. Different media and other informants said that there is a strong connection between the owners of Yeti holdings and the Prime Minister, hence the preferential treatment.

**Minister of Defense.** The Prime Minister of Nepal made the Defense Minister responsible for the coordination of NTC as per the Trust Act 2008. Amid widespread criticism, Defense Minister Ishwar Pokharel accused previous governments of providing public land to private sector on lease.

Issuing a white paper on 25 February 2020, he claimed that the incumbent government did not provide any land on lease, even though it has just extended the lease contract of Yeti for the Gokarna Forest Resort for another 25 years.

**Yeti Holdings.** Yeti Holdings, one of the largest companies in Nepal, has influenced government agencies to lease it extensive tracts of land without any transparency. Many questions have been raised about PM's favors to Yeti Holdings, but the owners have not responded to these grave issues.

### **Forms of control**

Many experts including lawmakers have claimed that public land has been leased to private companies due to corruption.

This happens during elections, when private firms provide support to political parties, thus helping them win. Then once elected, private companies exert influence on them, such as in voting for policies or amending laws that will benefit their interest.

The Nepal Trust Act 2008, for example, was successfully amended to advance the interest of the private sector because the court can no longer interfere with the legislative and the executive branches when implementing the said Act.


Then, short-term contracts can be renewed for longer periods. In the case of Yeti, the GoN allowed the renewal for 40 years of a lease contract and at a cheap price.

Based on the provision of Nepal Trust Act, the contract between the GoN and Yeti cannot be changed in middle without the consent of both parties.

As mentioned earlier, Yeti Holdings has forged several lease contracts covering pieces of prime public land. However, the process of awarding has not been transparent.

Informants of this study claimed that the government had unduly favored Yeti Holdings by bending the law to their advantage. Yeti took advantage of the favorable amendments to the existing laws, thus was able to secure land leases.

Lawmaker Khimlal Bhattarai, a party whip of the ruling Communist Party of Nepal (CPN), said the government's ill intention in amending the Nepal



Trust Act to favor private interests could turn out to be a serious case of policy-level corruption.

Indeed, the Prime Minister has been accused of replacing the home minister with the defense minister as Nepal Trust Board Chairman because the former refused to lease out land on private company.

Fortunately, the Public Account Committee (PAC) started investigating the cases and had asked the government agencies to submit all pertinent documents including the credentials submitted by Yeti Holdings to justify the land leases.

The PAC is rightfully concerned that the government pushed for the amendment to the Nepal Trust Act to pave the way for the awarding of the lease over the Gokarna Forest Resort to the Yeti Group, a full six years prior to the expiry of the existing lease.

It was also said that the Trust had given prime land on Durbarmag to the Yeti Group at giveaway rates and without going through any competitive bidding.

According to the Chairperson of PAC, they have asked the Nepal Trust to furnish all relevant documents for investigation as the leases involve the potential misappropriation of over Rs 6 billion (approximately US\$51.4 million).

### **Purposes**

There are two perspectives on why land leasing is happening in Nepal.

The government, on one hand, says it leases public land to promote tourism and employment opportunities for Nepalis. However, it seems that the cost to the environment is greater than what the government claims.

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CSO members and other concerned citizens, on the other hand, claim that land leasing is happening to benefit the interests of the same private company, thus violating existing laws and regulations in Nepal.

### **SOME CASE STUDIES**

#### ***Kongde Resort***

The Yeti Group has managed to transfer the ownership of land inside the Sagarmatha National Park to its name to establish Kongde View Resort. A total of 2.54 hectares of land located inside the UNESCO World Heritage Site, was awarded to the Group, following a Supreme Court decision issued on 21 August 2017.

On 7 July 2009, the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), instructed the Land Revenue Office in Solukhumbu district (where the Sagarmatha National Park is located) to bring the land under government ownership. The ownership of the disputed land was transferred to Sonam Lakpa Sherpa, the Chairman of Yeti Group, from Dadiri and Lakpa Tenzing Sherpa.

A writ petition was filed by the Sherpa family in the Supreme Court following a decision of the Solukhumbu Revenue Office to bring the land under government ownership. The Supreme Court, however, awarded the land to the Sherpa family.



### **Pathibhara Cable Car**

On 27 February 2019, the then Minister of Culture, Tourism and Culture Aviation, Rabindra Adhikari, was killed in a helicopter crash. Minister Adhikari and the team were flown to Terhathum in a helicopter of Dynasty Airlines, a subsidiary of the Yeti Group.

Before the helicopter crash in Pathibhara (where all passengers and crew members died), Minister Adhikari had said in Chuhandanda, “I am here because the Prime Minister wanted to.”

It was reported that the Yeti Group wanted to apprise the Minister of the 2.5 kilometer-long Pathibhara Darshan Cable Car project, for which the group had secured permission. The 56th report of the Office of the Auditor General stated, however, that the 80-year lease agreement was illegal.

According to *Republica*, a national daily of Nepal, the Fungling Municipality of Taplejung granted

a permission to operate to Pathibhara Devi Darshan Cable Car Pvt Limited, owned by the Yeti Group. The project joins Pathibhara Temple, a famous religious place of Nepal from Kaflepati in Taplejung district.

The municipality gave the go-ahead to the project without publishing it first in the local gazette.


Clause 102 (3) of the Local Government Implementation Act 2017 requires that the local governments should publish locally-enacted laws in their respective gazettes. Without the publication, the laws cannot be implemented.

In August 2017, the first municipal assembly had granted the permission. However, documents show that the company registered its application only on 23 May 2018, 10 months after the assembly decision. A letter of permission was issued on 28 May 2018 for 80 years, with the current 40 years permission to be extended by another 40 years.



Mass gathering against land possession. Photo by CSRC.





Using its political influence, the Yeti Group also managed to shift the cable car project to the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA) from the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transportation (MoPIT), according to a source at MoPIT.

The project was shifted to another ministry following an application of the company to the local government. The Nepal Gazette of 4 July 2018 has empowered the MoFAGA to manage issues related to “Rajjumarja Cable Car.”

### ***The Saga of Gokarna Resort***

The government has extended the lease of Yeti Holdings over the Gokarna Forest Resort by another 25 years, long before the current lease agreement expires in 2025. The resort has been leased at a substantially cheaper rate, depriving Nepal of revenues.

Yeti Group was able to secure the lease of Gokarna Forest from LM Suvir Brothers (Nepal). As per the agreement reached between the then Department of Crown Property, Royal Palace and LM Suvir Brother on 16 August 1996, LM Suvir Brothers was required to hold at least 51 percent of the venture throughout the lease period.

However, Yeti Holdings had managed to illegally buy 100 percent of the shares after the Executive Committee Board of Nepal Trust on 9 February 2014 decided to allow LM Suvir Brothers to sell away its entire share to Yeti Holdings against the terms and conditions of the agreement.

Advocate Kedar Karki called deal illegal.

*“The agreement was made between Department of Crown Property, Royal Palace and LM Suvir Brother, which is entitled to hold its 51 percent share until the expiry of the contract,”* Karki said,

adding, *“It does not allow any changes for the Yeti holdings to extend the contract.”*

***(The cases were excerpted from Republica Daily – 23 December 2019.)***

## **STATE POLICIES AND MECHANISMS THAT ADDRESS LAND GRABS**

***The Constitution of Nepal.*** For the first time in Nepal’s history, the Constitutional Assembly promulgated the Constitution of Nepal in 2015. The Constitution clearly mentioned the State’s responsibility to preserve natural resources including forest and public land for the promotion of tourism and protection of human beings.<sup>4</sup> The Directive principles, policies and responsibilities of the State of the Constitution stress that it is the government’s duty to protect and preserve public or government’s land.

The Constitution of Nepal has various provisions on agriculture and land reform in the country.

Article 51 (e) of the Constitution spells out the State’s policies regarding agriculture and land.

Sub-article 4 outlines that the land will be properly used by regulating and managing it on the basis of *inter alia*, productivity, nature of land, and ecological balance.

The Constitution also guarantees people’s rights, ensuring right to equality, property, food, and housing.

***Land Act 1921 (8th Amendment).*** This Act has several provisions on land reform. However, it does not say anything specific on leasing public land to private sector. What it does provide is a ceiling on land ownership to ensure land ownership for all people.

<sup>4</sup> Article 50 (f) development policy; Constitution of Nepal




Tenancy Campaign in Sarlahi. Photo by CSRC.

Clause 21.34 of this Act covers the sale and disposal of land. According to this clause, the prescribed authority shall sell or dispose of, as prescribed, the land acquired or confiscated pursuant to this Act to a local person of that local government from which that land had been acquired or confiscated. In making such sale or disposal, priority shall be given to the freed bonded labor, downtrodden (*Dalit*), indigenous and nationalities (*Janajati*), out of the local landless people.

This clause clearly shows that the land reform agenda has yet to be achieved, and that the poor, *Dalit* and tenants and other land-poor people are still seeking justice through land reform.

**Land Use Act 2019.** This Act categorizes land according to nine uses: agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, mining-mineral, forest, river-lake-wetland, public use and cultural-archeological. According to the Act, land that is categorized for one purpose shall not be used for another. The Act has also provided that the government is responsible for protecting and monitoring the best possible use of land.

The main objective of the categorization of land, according to the Act, is to conserve both public and private land. Therefore, it is unethical and perhaps even illegal to lease public forest or other land to a private company for its own commercial interests.



**Nepal Trust Act 2008.** After the abolition of the monarchical system in Nepal, the interim parliament endorsed this Act in 2008 to bring all the properties of the former Royal families – who were killed in the Royal Massacre in 2001 – into the government’s hands. The main objective of the Act was for the GoN to protect all of the properties of the then Royal families. However, the GoN amended the Act in 2019 and inserted a provision saying that the land under the Nepal Trust can be leased out upon the recommendation of a Nepal Trust Committee.

Many people said that the GoN amended this Act for the benefit of a specific private company.

**Local Government Operation Act 2017.** This Act has given local governments the authority to enact land reform measures. However, leasing or providing public land to the private sector is enshrined in the Nepal Trust Act 2008 and thus implemented at the federal level. All the roles and responsibilities of providing land on lease to private sector should be monitored by a committee i.e. Nepal Trust Executive Committee run by Defense Minister.

As per the recommendation of the Committee, the Trust can provide land on lease to the private sector. However, CSOs and land activists are against these provisions.

**Land Policy 2019.** This policy acknowledges the State’s duty to ensure equitable distribution of benefits from land and land resources. The general objective of this policy is to bring economic prosperity through land distribution to marginalized people, and maximum utilization and good governance of land.

The vision of the policy is “Sustainable Land Management, Development, and Prosperity.” Its specific objectives are: 1) tenure security; 2)

access to land of land-poor farmers; 3) land use; 4) land taxation, valuation, and land market; 5) land acquisition; and, 6) strengthening land administration.

**Order of Court.** Patan High Court on January 2020 ordered a halt to the ongoing construction of a business complex by Yeti Holdings Pvt Ltd at Durbarmarg on the land owned by Nepal Trust (myRepublica, 2020).

The court issued the order in response to a writ petition filed by an advocate challenging Nepal Trust’s decision to lease the land to Yeti Holdings at a throwaway price. However, the GoN has not withdrawn its decision to award public land to the private company.

The Supreme Court of Nepal has summoned the government to a discussion regarding this controversial decision to extend the lease of Gokarna Forest Resort (in the name of Yeti Holdings) on 26 January 2019.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Respect

- Many landless, tenants and informal settlers have been waiting for their tenure security. CSRC strongly recommends that their rights to land be ensured.
- The GoN has interpreted the existing laws according to their own interest, specifically the personal interests of political leaders. We strongly recommend that the GoN protect public land for the benefit of future generations.

### Protect

- The GoN has ratified several international human rights instruments, including the



International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966 and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of 1966. Current laws in Nepal should be amended as per the provisions of such instruments.

- At the rate that public land is being leased to private companies, there will soon come a time when forests and other public areas will be cleared. The government should thus strongly implement the existing laws to conserve these valuable natural resources including forests.
- The government should remove the land lease provisions from the Nepal Trust Act 2008 and instead provide for the transfer of land to the landless and the rest of the people of Nepal who have been deprived of adequate housing rights.

### **Remedy**

- Proper compensation to the affected households i.e. around the business hub of the private company should be provided and based on consultations with affected families.
- It is the government's duty to preserve the natural surroundings of Nepal. The government should breach the contract with the private sector and penalize them to help in the promotion and protection of human rights.
- The government of Nepal should invest necessary resources to ensure land rights of landless, tenants and smallholders farmers. Adequate budget and human resources should be allocated.
- Thousands of communities have been affected by the environmental degradation and disasters due to the massive construction of infrastructure by private sector. The government should thus refrain from leasing public land to the private sector. ■

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## DISCLAIMER

The views of this study do not necessarily reflect of those of ILC.

## ACRONYMS

ANGOC	Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
CPN	Communist Party of Nepal
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSRC	Community Self Reliance Centre
EOCN	Election Observation Committee Nepal
GoN	Government of Nepal
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
KII	Key Informant Interview
MoFAGA	Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration
MoLMCPA	Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation
MoPIT	Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transportation
NTC	Nepal Trust Committee
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NRB	Nepal Rastra Bank
PAC	Public Account Committee



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THE STUDY

Terminology	Definition
Land Conflict	A situation wherein two or more stakeholders compete for control over land and/or resources, including decision-making and truth. Such conflicts emanate from loopholes in law and weak enforcement of legal and customary tenure systems thereby generating competing interests and putting the very system into question
Land Dispute	A situation wherein two or more stakeholders with presumed equal power compete for land and/or resources, including decision-making and truth.
Land Grabbing	To obtain or appropriate or seize land unscrupulously or forcibly or unfairly by a nation-State, or organization, or an individual and disregarding the tenancy rights of the peasants and the farmers, including customary rights
Land Rights Defender/s	A person or a group of persons involved in the protection and promotion of land rights
Stakeholders	Those persons who have interest or concern in land rights especially for the rights of landless, tenants and smallholders
Trust	An organization formed for the regulation and management of properties of late King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya
Public Land	Land allocated for use not only by individual but by general public like path, pond, water-sprout, well and their banks, exit for cattle, grazing-land, graveyard, public inn, temple, place for religious practice, memorials, court-yard, sewerage, market-place, public entertainment and sports ground; and other lands specifically denoted so by Government of Nepal through publication in the Nepal Gazette