NPL105570.E

Nepal: Prevalence and availability of fraudulent documents such as police certificates and reports, medical reports or hospital records, employment records and certificates (2014- June 2016)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. Production and Acquisition of Fraudulent Documents

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, the Nepal researcher for the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), an independent Hong Kong-based NGO "which seeks to promote greater awareness and realization of human rights in the Asian region" (AHRC n.d.), provided the opinion that "forgery of documents is big business" in Nepal (ibid. 29 June 2016). Without providing further information, the same source indicated that if an individual is aware of "the proper channel" and can offer "adequate money," documents can "easily" be forged or bought (ibid). The Researcher also stated that in Nepal "you can easily design a letterhead [or] stamp for less than [US$]5" (ibid.). According to the source, in addition to police reports, medical and hospital records and reports, and employment records and certificates, forged documents also include citizenship certificates, passports and driver's licenses (ibid.).

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a lawyer from a Kathmandu-based law firm expressed the opinion that to obtain fraudulent documents in Nepal, individuals "loiter around the concerned offices looking for help," after which agents "approach the clients, pretending to help them," and then negotiate a price for forgery services, which depends on the "nature of the document and the urgency" (Lawyer 6 July 2016.). In July 2014, The Himalayan Times, a Kathmandu-based English language daily newspaper (The Himalayan Times n.d.), quoted police sources as stating that "forgery rackets are on the rise in the Kathmandu Valley," after they arrested five people for their involvement "in producing fake documents and counterfeiting government seals and signatures;" one individual "operating a photocopy stall " was reportedly "the mediator between the clients and the racket" (ibid. 5 July 2014). The same source added that in June 2014 the police had arrested 15 people "involved in sending Nepali students to Japan ... by producing fake documents" (ibid.).

According to the US Department of State's Trafficking in Persons Report June 2016, "some government officials are reportedly bribed to include false information in genuine Nepali passports, including of age documents for child sex trafficking victims, or to provide fraudulent documents to prospective labor migrants" (US June 2016, 281). The US Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2015 indicates that in June 2015 Nepal's Commission for the Investigation of the Abuse of Authority (CIAA) "arrested twelve Department of Foreign Employment (DFE) officials accused of issuing work permits based on fake documents in exchange for bribes from recruitment agencies" (US 13 April 2016, 22). According to the same source, a similar case occurred in March 2014, in which six DFE officials were arrested for accepting bribes to allow 172 migrants with fraudulent documents to travel to Qatar and Dubai (ibid.).

In August 2014, República, a Nepali English-language newspaper (República n.d.), reports that an "assistant informant" of the National Investigation Department (NID) was arrested on charges of "producing
fake visas, using government stamps and other official documents for foreign employment in France" (ibid. 13 Aug. 2014). The source also reported that following the incident, police recovered "several fake letterheads of different government offices, education certificates of the Tribhuvan University, [and] stamps of [the] National Human Rights Commission, ministries and police offices" (ibid).

In November 2014, The Himalayan Times reported an arrest of an individual for driving with a forged driver's license; the fraudulent licence reportedly contained "an official stamp for Bagmati Zonal Transportation Management Office with a signature of an official and was numbered" (The Himalayan Times 20 Nov. 2014).

In August 2015, The Kathmandu Post, an English language daily newspaper (The Kathmandu Post n.d.), reported that the police raided 22 educational consultancies and charged their owners, who arranged for students to study abroad in exchange for "hefty fees," with "illegal operation and document forgery" (ibid. 19 Aug. 2015). The same source further cited a police source involved in the raid as stating that "in some cases, the consultancies issued fake certificates to students and their other clients" (ibid.).

In June 2016, República reported that the Metropolitan Police Crime Division in Kathmandu arrested two people over "alleged misuse of letterhead, official stamp and the signature of the authority deputed in Nepali Embassy in Qatar" (República 29 June 2016).

Further and corroborating information on these incidents could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

2. Fraudulent or Forged Police Certificates and Reports

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, an official with the Canadian Consulate in Kathmandu indicated that they "[were] not aware of the availability of fraudulent or forged police certificates in Nepal" (Canada 27 June 2016). In contrast, the lawyer provided the opinion that "fraudulent or forged police certificates and reports are very common in Nepal" (Lawyer 6 July 2016). The same source further stated that these documents are of two varieties: "totally forged documents including official pad, signature, and seal" and documents with false information that the authorities themselves write for bribes (ibid.).

According to the lawyer, "in some documents, the police have started pasting security stickers (holograms)", but that he has "heard of instances of the holograms being copied by fraudsters" (ibid.). He also gave the opinion that it "seems quite easy" to obtain fraudulent police certificates (ibid.). Further and corroborating information on fraudulent police reports and certificates, including prevalence, and security features or tracking numbers of genuine documents could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3. Medical Reports and Hospital Records

Without providing further information, the official at the Canadian Consulate in Kathmandu indicated that they "are aware of the availability of forged medical reports and hospital records in Nepal" but that "they are usually of poor quality and carry no security features" (Canada 27 June 2016). The lawyer stated that "fraudulent or forged medical reports and hospital records are widely available and common in Nepal" (Lawyer 6 July 2016). Without providing further details, the same source added that "usually, smaller hospitals are more involved in such practices" (ibid.).

Information on security features or tracking numbers on genuine medical reports and hospital records could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

4. Employment and Education Records and Certificates

Without providing further information, the official at the Canadian Consulate stated that they "are aware of the availability of employment records and certificates in Nepal" but that "they are usually of poor quality and their security features do not match with those in the genuine documents" (Canada 27 June 2016). The Lawyer indicated that fraudulent or forged employment records and certificates are available, but not "widely" (Lawyer 6 July 2016). The same source noted that the only way to distinguish fraudulent or forged documents from genuine documents is to verify them with the concerned institution (ibid.).

In 2016, media sources reported on "Operation Quack" (República 20 June 2016; The Himalayan Times 29 Mar. 2016), an "investigation to identify bogus doctors who used fake academic credentials to obtain medical degrees" (ibid.). Media sources report that during this operation, the Central Investigative Bureau (CIB) arrested 17 allegedly fake doctors in March 2016 (ibid.) and made an additional 36 arrests in June 2016 (República 20 June 2016). The Himalayan Times reported that following "Operation Quack," the Nepali Police launched an investigation into engineers who used fake academic credentials to obtain engineering degrees,
arresting five "alleged fake engineers and members of a forgery racket" on 26 April 2016 (The Himalayan Times 27 Apr. 2016).

Information on security features or tracking numbers on genuine employment records or certificates could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References


Canada. 27 June 2016. Consulate of Canada in Nepal. Correspondence from an official to the Research Directorate.

The Himalayan Times. 27 April 2016. "After Quacks, it's Bogus' Engineers' Turn Now." (Factiva)

The Himalayan Times. 29 March 2016. "CIB Steps Up 'Operation Quack'." (Factiva)

The Himalayan Times. 20 November 2014. "One Arrested for Forging a Driver's License." (Factiva)


The Kathmandu Post. 19 August 2015. Manish Gautam. "Police Raid 22 Firms, Detain Owners (With Firm Names)." (Factiva)


Lawyer, Kathmandu. 6 July 2016. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.


República. 20 June 2016. "CIB Arrests 36 Doctors in 3 Days." (Factiva)


Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Kathmandu Medical College and Teaching Hospital; Kusum Law Firm; Mainali Law Office; Nepal-Embassy in Ottawa, Police.

Internet sites, including: Amnesty International; BBC; ecoi.net; Factiva; Freedom House; Human Rights Watch; International Organization for Migration; Nepal-Police; Nepali Times; Radio France Internationale; Transparency International; UN – International Labour Organization, Refworld, United Nations Development Program; US – Embassy in Nepal; World Bank.

Tips on how to use this search engine.

Date modified: 2016-01-05