

# Political will must to check anti-competitive practices: Experts

## REPUBLICA

KATHMANDU, July 11

Though the government has stepped up consultations for endorsing the Competition Promotion and Market Protection (CPMP) Guideline, experts say mere issuance of another policy guideline will not promote competition in the market unless the political leadership showed willingness and acted firmly to crack down syndicate, cartel and other anti-competitive practices.

"There already exist laws that clearly cite transporters syndicate as illegal, and black marketeering and cartel as grave crime against consumers. If the government is drag-

ging its feet to enforce those laws, how will CPMP guideline ensure competition in the market?" wondered former deputy attorney general Narendra Prasad Pathak.

Pathak noted that the law in itself was nothing unless there were commitments to enforce them and effective mechanism to implement them. "There should also be strong coordination between inspection officers and government attorneys if we are to implement CPMP Act effectively," he stated.

Speaking at a program that South Asia Watch on Trade Economics and Environment (SAWTEE) organized to share the guideline that it drafted among concerned

stakeholders, commerce secretary Lal Mani Joshi agreed to what experts said. "It is true that we lack the will to implement policies and acts that

Joshi admitted their implementations have remained weak. He blamed weak state machinery, insufficient manpower and poor technical

assistance of United State Agency for International Development (USAID) had outsourced the task of drafting the guideline to SAWTEE.

The draft of the guideline that SAWTEE shared among the concerned stakeholders, however, did not feature how general consumers can take steps from their side to uphold their rights.

However, Apurba Khatiwada of SAWTEE, who presented the guideline, said the guideline would ease works for the implementing agencies. "Establishing clear cut activities to check anti-competitive practices becomes difficult at times. Hence, it is important to have a clear guideline on hand," he stated.

**The draft of the Competition Promotion and Market Protection Guideline, however, did not feature how general consumers can take steps from their side to uphold their rights.**

we formulated to protect consumers' rights and promote competition in the market," said Joshi.

Though the government enacted Consumers' Rights Protection Act in 1998 and CPMP Act in 2006 along with CPMP Regulations in 2009,

know-how of concerned offices for their poor implementation.

"Despite that, we decided to formulate the guidelines, as it will at least make operations at the office level easier," Joshi said.

The government with the