

▶ **Enforce Competition Law: Experts**

KATHMANDU, Dec 21: Experts and officials from the South Asia region have stressed the need for strong enforcement of competition laws in order to keep prices of goods low and relieve consumers from the illegal activities of the traders and retailers.

Addressing the concluding day of the two-day regional workshop in the capital on Friday, former commerce secretary Purushottam Ojha said there is a need to closely monitor the market and keep traders and retailers under surveillance and support consumers.

More than 50 experts from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participated in the workshop organized by South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE).

"Nepal introduced Competition Act in 2007, but it has become very difficult to enforce it," Advocate Apurba Khatiwada, an expert on competition law, said. "The Competition Act of Nepal itself is flawed. Retailers collective monopoly is legal under this act."

Experts have urged all the governments in the region to strongly punish those who break competition laws. The workshop also covered issues such as regional cooperation, climate change, agriculture sector and trade of agri products.

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