



ASIA/NEPAL - Fasting against corruption

Kathmandu (Agenzia Fides) - A group of human rights activists launched a hunger strike to protest against corruption in the country. For six days, the coordinator of the initiative, the activist Sharada Bhusal, is in the central "Ratnapark" in Kathmandu, where he is fasting publicly. As reported to Fides from local sources, other activists have joined him in fasting and hundreds of people of civil society and of all religious communities are supporting the anti-corruption campaign. Sharada Bhusal has not eaten for a week, he only drinks a little water. His health has deteriorated significantly and, according to doctors, his life could be at significant risk.

The protest came from the population of the district of Mahottari, in the central region of Nepal, which accuses the local district of corruption, and is addressed in particular to the "Commission for the investigation of abuse of authority" (CIAA). The anti-corruption activists have filed a complaint to the Commission, on the fact that millions of rupees allocated for the committees of village development in the district of Mahottari ended up in the pockets of local officials. An official is accused of embezzling 1.9 million Nepali rupees (about 22 thousand dollars), another is accused of embezzlement of 7 million rupees. The activists report that they have received threats and warnings to not make irregularities public. The Commission today called on activists to end the fast, promising "a speedy and transparent investigation." (PA) (Agenzia Fides 01/03/2013)