

## Man marrying 'upper caste' fined Rs 60,000



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KATHMANDU: Society for Inter-caste Marriage Protection Nepal (SIMPAN) has drawn its serious concern over Rs. 60,000 fine slapped on the family of Amit BK of Jagannath VDC—6, Dailekh, for marrying an 'upper caste' girl.

Amit and Sabita Shahi had tied their knot on September 1 at their will but Sabita's maternal home not only opposed the inter-caste wedlock but also fined Amit BK, thrashed him and his brother, before snatching the girl from him.

The family, later, wedded their daughter to another person. "We have taken the incident as a mockery of democracy. It goes against untouchability-free society," SIMPN said in a press statement issued here today.

"No amount of condemnation can compensate the wounds that inflicted BK," the statement said, adding, "The incident paints a grim picture of Nepali society, where discrimination still thrives despite abolishing deep-rooted caste system in the country."

The government has recently announced a bounty of Rs 50,000 for an inter-caste marriage and encouraged widows to remarry. To encourage the practice, a package programme was announced in the annual budget for the fiscal year 2009/10. But the incident like this continues unabated, said SIMPN.

The SIMPN has demanded that the government take action against the guilty, return the cash to the victim and provide security to the family.

"We appeal to human rights activists and all those concerned to ensure that justice is done on the victims," it added.

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