



**OPINION**  
Dr. AB Thapa



**VIEWPOINT**  
Hanan Goder-Golberger



**ARTICLE**  
Hemang Dixit

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# NEW SPOTLIGHT

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FORTNIGHTLY

## MELAMCHI PROJECT Water At The Tap

### INSIDE



**THL**  
A Breakthrough



**STATUE OF LATE DILLI JUNG THAPA**  
Cause For Recognition



**POLITICS**  
Unfolding Challenges



HBL

SME  
LOAN

# व्यवसाय गर्न सिप र मेहेनत चाहिन्छ, पैसा हामी दिन्छौं हिमालयन बैंकको SME Loan

अधिकतम १२ वर्षको लागि १२ करोड सम्मको सरल कर्जा सुविधा लिई  
आफ्नो सिप र मेहेनतलाई सफल व्यवसाय निर्माण गर्न अघि बढ्नुहोस् ।

विस्तृत जानकारीको लागि नजिकको शाखा वा फोन नं ४२२७७४९/४२४६२९८ मा सम्पर्क गर्नुहोस् ।

\*शर्तहरू लागू हुनेछन् ।

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HBL



Himalayan Bank Ltd.

कर्पोरेट अफिस: कमलादी, काठमाडौं

himal@himalayanbank.com | www.himalayanbank.com



himalayanbankltd



@himalayanbanknp



Himalayan Bank Ltd.



Himalayan Bank (Viber)

**Editor and Publisher**

Keshab Poudel

**Contributor**

Sabine Pretsch

**Design/Layout**

Sahil Mokthan, 9863022025

**Marketing Manager**

Madan Raj Poudel

Tel: 9841320517

Nabin Kumar Maharjan

Tel: 9841291404

**Editorial Office**

Kathmandu, Nepal

Tel: 977-1-4430250

**E-mail**

spotlightnepal@gmail.com

P.O.Box: 7256

**Website**

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## Notes From The Editor



Nepal's politics is taking a more chaotic course. With the decision of CPN-Maoist Center to withdraw its support to the government, PM Oli will lose the majority status of his government. However, the Maoist action cannot change the Oli government. As the largest party, with just a few seats short of majority, PM Oli will still hang in power. Although opposition parties can put pressure on PM Oli to prove its majority, it is not constitutionally mandatory for the government to test its strength at the floor of the House of Representatives. After the withdrawal of support by Maoist, there will be a start of a new chaotic situation. Since the composition of the House of Representatives is very tricky, there is the need of three opposition parties to forge a majority alliance. However, PM Oli needs just one party to prove a comfortable majority. Leaving the uncertainty in the political course where it is, we have decided to cover the launching of the distribution of water of Melamchi to Kathmandu valley as our main story. New Spotlight regards the event to be historic since it took almost four decades to materialize the transfer of the water from Kosi basin to Bagmati. From King Mahendra to Birendra and NC leader KP Bhattarai, bureaucrats and engineers spent their life to bring the water from Melamchi. However, the water came to Kathmandu during the period of Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli and Minister Mani Chandra Thapa. For this, much of the credit goes to secretary Madhav Belbase, a professional engineer who rescued the project from a virtual state of collapse. This is the moment for great satisfaction for the last project manager Tirak Bahadur Khatri as well. March 28 has thus become a historic day for Nepal's development efforts. Supported by the Asian Development Bank, the mega project is the first effort that transferred water from one basin to another.

**Keshab Poudel**

Editor



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Nirvana Chaudhary

# Global Youth Leader

*Nirvana Chaudhary Selected As A Young Global Leader (YGL) 2021 By World Economic Forum*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**L**ike father like son. This is what Nirvana Chaudhary, son of Nepal's renowned businessman and Forbes listed Billionaire Binod Chaudhary, has proved in his early career.

Like his father Binod Chaudhary, who is known for his humble and charismatic character, young Nirvana Chaudhary, Chaudhary Group's Managing Director, has so many commonalities with his father. Following his father's path, young Chaudhary is making his own independent position and place in Nepal as well as abroad.

Managing Director, Nirvana Chaudhary's selection as a Young Global Leader (YGL) 2021 by World Economic Forum is the beginning. The forum brings together, dynamic, diverse, and 'new-age' leaders who have made an impact in the world through their contributions.

Chaudhary Group is Nepal's first and only billion-dollar conglomerate listed in Forbes since 2013, founded by Dr. Binod K. Chaudhary an entrepreneur and philanthropist.

Nirvana Chaudhary, is the eldest scion of the founding Chaudhary Family and is also the Managing Director of Chaudhary Group with special emphasis on group verticals such as telecommunication, FMCG, Banking, amongst others

Since its inception in 2004 by Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, the platform strives to be a way of help to the world to meet increasingly complex and interrelated challenges. The World Economic Forum has become a global phenomenon celebrating leadership.

With 1,400 members and alumni representing over 120 nation-



alities, YGLs head governments and Fortune 500 companies, are recipients of Nobel Prizes and Academy Awards and serve as UN Goodwill Ambassadors. This year over 10,000 candidates were publicly nominated. To create a truly representative body, candidates were evaluated by a selection committee, which selected 112 new members from 56 countries.

Shedding light on the moment, Nirvana Chaudhary, Managing Director Chaudhary Group, commented, "I am ecstatic to be chosen as a part of such an esteemed panel with equally remarkable personalities for this class of 2021. The YGL platform has always inspired me with its unequivocally remarkable initiatives that have contributed immensely to reshaping the global entrepreneurial ecosystem. Being an international platform, it has played a pivotal role in forging a community of responsible leaders to build bridges across sectors, regions, and

identities, in making valuable contributions to our world. I eagerly look forward to joining the class with such bright minds, hustling towards building a better future for the generations to come."

YGL as a foundation invests in enriching leaders' insight and capacity to realize sustainable economies and societies. It shares their stories to illuminate what leadership could and should look like across the world. In turn, with enhanced knowledge, tools, and purpose, YGLs assume more high-impact leadership positions and have a more pronounced effect on the world. Drawing from trust-based relationships and peer inspiration, they develop ambitious, collaborative projects to tackle the global challenges that others shy away from. Together, they accomplish more than they might otherwise.



## NEWSNOTES

### Indian Army Gifts 100,000 COVID-19 Vaccines To Nepal Army



Under the Government of India's 'Vaccine Maitri' Initiative, the Indian Army gifted 100,000 doses of Made in India vaccines to Nepal Army. In a ceremony at Nepal Army Headquarters, Tundikhel, the vaccines were handed over by Ambassador Vinay Mohan Kwatra to the Chief of Army Staff of the

Nepali Army General Puran Chandra Thapa.

Chief of the Army Staff of Indian Army General MM Naravane joined the ceremony through video conference from India. He reaffirmed the special fraternal bonds that tie the armies of the two countries. Chief of the Army Staff of the Nepal Army General Thapa appreciated the gesture and thanked Indian Army and Government of India for the gift.

The vaccines had arrived at the Tribhuvan International Airport by an Air India flight on 28th March 2021. The Indian Army has been assisting the Nepali Army to fight Covid-19 through various kinds of assistance since last year including Remdesivir, X-Ray machines, computed radiography systems, ICU ventilators, video endoscopy units, anesthesia machines, laboratory equipment and ambulances. This latest gift of vaccines is another testament to the close cooperation between the two armies and the two countries, particularly in times of need.

### China Handed Over 800,000 Vero Cell Chinese Vaccine To Nepal



Chinese ambassador to Nepal Hou Yanqi handed over 800,000 doses of Vero Cell vaccine under the China aid COVID-19 vaccine to Minister of Health and Population Hridayesh Tripathy amid a function at Tribhuvan International Airport.

The vaccines have arrived from Beijing Capital International Airport today. Earlier, the spokesperson at the Ministry of Health and Population Dr Jageshwar Gautam informed that the vaccine arrived.

The government has approved the 'Vero Cell' vaccine manufactured by Beijing Institute of Biological Products Co Ltd (BIBP), China, under Sinopharm, for emergency use against Covid-19 in Nepal.

### President Bhandari And Prime Minister Of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina Held Discussions



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed of Bangladesh paid a courtesy call on President Bidya Devi Bhandari who is on a two-day state visit to Bangladesh. The meeting was held at the Hotel InterContinental based in Dhaka, the capital of Bangla-

desh reports RSS.

During the high-level talks, matters relating to bilateral relations, mutual support and collaboration were discussed. Minister for Foreign Affairs Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Nepali Ambassador for Bangladesh, Dr Banshidhar Mishra and Foreign Affairs Minister of Bangladesh Dr AK Abdul Momen were also present on the occasion.

President Bhandari arrived here today to attend a special ceremony to celebrate the birth centenary of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladesh's Founding Father, at the cordial invitation of Bangladesh's President Mohammad Abdul Hamid.

The 54-member delegation includes President Bhandari's daughter Usha Kiran Bhandari, Minister Gyawali, high ranking government officials, artists and media-persons.

### Embassy Of India Kathmandu Organized Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

The Embassy of India, Kathmandu had organized an All-Women Hike at Shivapuri National Park, on 27 March 2021. The hike was dedicated to building 'a society free from trafficking and other forms of exploitation against women and children'. The event is part of the ongoing 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations marking the 75th anniversary of Indian Independence.



'AzadiKaAmritMahotsav' is an initiative of the Government of India to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of the Indian Republic and the rich history of its people, culture and achievements.

The Main Curtain Raiser Event of the Mahotsav was held on 12 March at Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat wherein, interalia Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off a freedom march (padyatra) of Padyatris from Sabarmati Ashram culminating at Dandi in Gujarat.

Eminent Nepali women drawn from different walks of life participated in the hike along with women officers from the Indian Embassy led by Deputy Chief of Mission Namgya Khampa. Pooja Kwatra, Spouse of Ambassador of India Vinay Mohan Kwatra, also took part as a Special Guest of Honour.

### Germany Provides Rs.1.4 Billion Grant To Nepal

Joint Secretary Shreekrishna Nepal of the Ministry of Finance and German Ambassador Roland Schaefer signed financial and technical cooperation agreements on behalf of their respective governments, worth Euro 10 million (equivalent about NPR 1,4 billion) of grant assistance.

This new initiative will support the private and public sector to expand grid-connected solar farms, solar irrigation and industrial rooftop solar in semi-urban areas for an inclusive economic growth. In remote areas, the initiative aims at promoting isolated solar mini-grids providing reliable and clean electricity to the rural population. To do so, the technical cooperation component will improve the capacity of the public and private sectors to plan and implement such projects, while





the financial component will provide investment support.

“With today’s signing, Germany shows solidarity with Nepal in these economically challenging times, and also supports the worldwide efforts in tackling climate change. Energy is a key-factor enabling economies to grow, but the sector

is also one of the biggest emitters of greenhouse gas worldwide. All countries need to come together to rise to this global challenge! Germany joins Nepal’s Development Partners in their joint commitment to support the Government of Nepal’s Relief, Recovery and Resilience Plan, to enable a green recovery and inclusive development, especially after the Covid-19 shock,” Ambassador Roland Schaefer said on the occasion.

The agreements are part of the German Climate Technology Initiative (DKTI), an initiative that aims to disseminate climate and environment friendly technologies that can contribute to substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries. With these new projects, the total volume of bilateral technical and financial cooperation from Germany amounts to around Euro 1 billion since cooperation began in 1959.

### Senior Journalist Sushil Sharma Is No More

Senior Journalist Sushil Sharma died at the age of 62. He was suffering from a long ailment and died while undergoing treatment at Om Hospital in Kathmandu.

At the start of his career in The Rising Nepal, late Sharma covered sports and entertainment. Following the restoration of democracy in 1991, he joined The Kathmandu Post.

Later Sharma worked for Spotlight Weekly as an executive editor. Establishing the first English Magazine, he moved to BBC Nepali Service in 1996.

Late Sharma had established himself as a professional of note and well known political commentator, when he

resigned from BBC Nepal as its Bureau Chief in 2011.

Late Sharma is survived by his wife and son and daughter-in-law. His last rites were performed at Pashupati Aryaghat.



### Japan Provides Support To Child Labor Reduction In Makwanpur

The Government of Japan has extended US dollars 265,576 (approximately NRs. 30.85 million), to SHAPLA NEER – Citizens’ Committee in Japan for Overseas Support, under the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Pro-

jects Schemes.

SHAPLA NEER Japan, an international NGO based in Japan, will work with a Nepali partner NGO, Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN-Nepal), to reduce child labor through strengthening the child protection mechanism in Makwanpur District.

A grant contract for this project was signed and exchanged on 15th March, 2021 by Yoshioka Yuzo, Charge d’Affaires ad Interim of Japan to Nepal and Katsui Hiromi, Country Representative, SHAPLA NEER Nepal Office, at the Embassy of Japan in Nepal.

### Israel Embassy Provides Assistance To Patan Hospital

The Embassy of Israel has provided a set of medical equipment to the Patan Academy of Health Sciences (PAHS) or Patan Hospital, reports RSS.

Israel’s Ambassador to Nepal, Hanan Goder, handed anesthetic equipment, patient monitor and electrocardiograph equipment to Hospital Director Dr Rabi Shakya amidst a programme.



On the occasion, the Ambassador praised the hospital for its proactive role in the treatment and control of the coronavirus and said the Embassy had chosen it for the assistance, recognizing its contribution to stem the virus.

Hospital director Dr Shakya said the Academy which had suffered a severe financial crisis for around ten months due to coronavirus crisis could extend its service after receiving the assistance.

### India Supports Reconstruction Of Dharmashala At Budhanilkantha

Chief Executive Officer of National Reconstruction Authority Sushil Gyawali and Deputy Chief of the Embassy of India to Nepal Namgya C. Khampa and jointly laid the foundation stone for the reconstruction of Dharmashala at Budhanilkantha Temple, Kathmandu.

The event was attended by Swami Nigamananda, Mathadhish of Temple, Laxman Khadka, Chairman, Budhanilkantha Management Committee, Mani Ram Gelal, Secretary of NRA, Tek Narayan Pandey.

Secretary, M/o Land Reform & Mgmt, Jay Bahadur Chand, Chief of Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority, Uddhav Prasad Kharel, Mayor, Budhanilkantha Municipality, Chakra Bandhu Aryal, Chairman, World Hindu Federation, officials from the Embassy of India, NRA, among others, were present.





## BUSINESS BRIEF

### Himalayan Bank Limited Starts HBL Dollar Prepaid Card



Himalayan Bank Limited has started “HBL Dollar Prepaid Card” service aiming to ease international payment. Under this service, an account holder of Himalayan Bank can avail the dollar prepaid card.

The dollar prepaid card, not exceeding USD 500.00 per year, can be used to purchase goods and services through various E-commerce sites from all over the world other than India. This service can be availed from any branch of the Bank. The interested customers can either contact the nearest Branch Office or Card Department located at the Head Office, Kamaladi.

Currently, HBL has been serving its customer through 71 Branch Offices, 4 Extension Counters, 146 ATM booths and more than 4200 POS terminals.

### GIBL Launches Dollar Card

Global IME Bank Limited has launched ‘Global E-com Dollar Card’. The card is brought out as per the provision made by the Nepal Rastra Bank on issuing pre-paid card in foreign currency.



It can be used to pay the bill in foreign currency while buying goods and services through online channels.

The bank said that the card can be used to pay the bill while buying

goods online or paying for the services like Netflix recharge, educational fee payment, and promotion of businesses through various social networks like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp.

Customers can obtain this facility by opening a bank account at the GIBL, and submitting their citizenship and PAN card and paying Rs. 500 service charge.

The bank said in a statement that it would continue to launch programmes and products to benefit and facilitate the customers.

### NIBL Launches Digital Wallet Service Thaili

Nepal Investment Bank Ltd. (NIBL) announces the launch of its very own digital wallet service, Thaili. The contemporary scenario demands that people drastically reduce physically visiting banks and ATMs thereby promoting the culture of transferring funds through smart-phones. The launch of Thaili comes just weeks after Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) lifted previously placed restrictions and increased the amount of money transferable through digital mediums.



Thaili Digital Wallet is a Nepal Investment Bank Mobile Money Wallet application that quickly and securely allows you to send, receive, check balance and spend money at Zero Transaction Costs. Thaili Digital Wallet is both a mobile banking and mobile wallet application. Through its mobile application and web portal Thaili.com.np, Thaili enables Nepal Investment Bank clients to link their bank accounts to Thaili Wallets and make instant payments to any other Thaili Wallet User at Zero Transaction Fees. Thaili Wallet will also enable various P2P Fund Transfers, and Cash-In, Cash-out through its Agent Network.

Agents and Merchants can soon avail separate Thaili Agent Wallet that will allow Bank appointed agents to enroll new wallet users and provide Cash-in and Cash-out Services. Nepal Investment Bank has also launched a new loan product called Thaili Overdraft that aims to provide SME Loans and overdrafts to Kirana Stores, Merchants and Small Businesses that avail Thaili Wallet Services.

### World Bank Approves \$75 Million For COVID-19 Vaccines

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved \$75 million from the International Development Association (IDA) to support access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines and equitable vaccine distribution by strengthening Nepal's health and vaccination system. The financing is expected to facilitate vaccination of at least one-third of the population through an equitable distribution plan.

“The pandemic presents immense challenges and an uncertain environment, particularly in the purchase, supply and distribution of vaccines,” said Faris Hadad-Zervos, World Bank Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. “It is a testament to our strong partnership with Nepal that the Bank has been able to move quickly to support the government's ambitious plans to vaccinate at least 72 percent of the population.”

The additional financing builds on the \$29 million for the original COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project that was approved in April 2020, the existing Bank-supported health programs, and confirmed support of other development partners in the context of the government's overall COVID-19 response.

### NIBL Starts PaisaPathaune App To Help Nepali Migrants In India

Nepal Investment Bank Ltd. (NIBL) announces that it has entered into an arrangement with BankOnUs, India offering “PaisaPathaune” app, a unique service for Nepalis in India, to transfer funds from India to Nepal 24 hours from their cell phones.







This facility is available to Nepali migrants, and residents anywhere in India. Paisa Pathaune app offers convenience, speed, safety and low service cost transfer of money from India to Nepal, on all days of the year, even on bank holidays in India.

In just 3 simple steps, Nepalis staying anywhere in India, can transfer funds digitally from their bank account in India, to their family members in Nepal.

Paisa Pathaune app supports Digital Mobile Payment platforms duly authorized by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) such as BHIM, UPI, Google Pay, PhonePe, PayTM, WhatsApp Pay, BharatPe & NEFT / IMPS. In these pandemic times, the senders in India need not take the risk of going out of their home to visit a bank or give cash to a friend, to be given to their families in Nepal.

The 24x7 facility helps Nepalis in India, to stay safe and, from within the comfort of their home, financially assist their families back in Nepal. The initiative offers information to the sender and also gives detailed transaction receipt. When the family member gets funds in Nepal, the sender in India gets an SMS confirmation.

### Himalayan Bank Ltd Donates Stationary Items

Under the Bank's CSR initiative, Himalayan Bank Limited has donated various stationery items to 31 schools situated at Khaptad Chededaha Rural Municipal during an event organized by the village on March 12, 2021.

The event, conducted with joint effort of Himalayan Bank and Chededaha Rural Municipality was organized as a celebration of the successful completion of "One House One Account" campaign which has been successfully conducted as the first campaign to announce a Model Municipal Village in Nepal. The education materials were handed over to the

Principals and representatives from different schools present during the event.

Subash Chandra Ghimire, Director, Province Office, Dhangadi, representing NRB, Mrigendra Pradhan, Chief Operating Officer, Saroj Regmi, Sudur Pashim Province Head and Kiran Rijal,

Branch Manager, Chededaha representing Himalayan Bank as well as Nar Bahadur Rawat, Chededaha Village Municipal Head attended the event and celebrated the success of the campaign.

The Chief Operating Officer, Pradhan stated that the study materials were donated to the local schools under the Bank's CSR initiative as an attempt to promote education system in Chededaha. Similarly, on the behalf of the village, Rawat, Rural Municipal Head expressed his gratitude towards Himalayan Bank for the great help.



## BUSINESS BRIEF

### Nilam Dhungana First Female Deputy Governor Of NRB

Nilam Dhungana has become the first women deputy governor of Nepal Rastra Bank. In its over six decades of history, Dhungana is the first woman to reach that top position of Nepal Rastra Bank.

The Government has appointed Bam Bahadur Mishra and Nilam Dhungana to the vacant posts of the deputy governors of Nepal Rastra Bank.



A meeting of the Council of Ministers took the decision on the two posts that had remained vacant since March 2 after the term of then deputy governors Chinta Mani Shiwakoti and Shiva Raj Shrestha expired.

They were appointed on the recommendation of NRB Governor Maha Prasad Adhikari.

### AB InBev Introduces Budweiser In Nepal

Anheuser-Busch InBev (AB InBev), the world's leading brewer, has announced the launch of its global brand Budweiser in Nepal, fortifying the brewer's presence in South Asia.

With this launch, AB InBev aims to expand its product line-up to cater to evolving consumer preferences and redefine the beer segment in the country. The world's leading brewer forayed into Nepal last year with the introduction of Foster's beer, in an exclusive partnership with Raj Brewery Pvt Ltd from the Jawalakhel Group of Industries (JGI).

Commenting on the launch, Kartikeya Sharma, president - India and South East Asia, AB InBev, said, "We are thrilled to introduce Budweiser, for our consumers in Nepal which is an important market for us thanks to its growing young adult population and its dynamic beer drinking culture.

As a leading brewer, we are committed to constantly introduce top quality products to address the ever-evolving beer preferences of today's consumers."

Budweiser is a medium-bodied, flavourful, and crisp American-style lager, that was first introduced in 1876.

Staying true to its time-honoured 140-year-old legacy, Budweiser is brewed with the choicest barley malt and hop varieties for the perfect balance of flavour and refreshment, as per a media release.

It is beechwood-aged and brewed longer for unparalleled smoothness, balance and character. Since its launch, Budweiser has grown to transcend tastes, cementing its position as the world's most valuable beer brand. AB InBev, which is headquartered in Leuven, Belgium, is the world's leading brewer with over 600 years of brewing heritage.



# Uttarakhand Glaciers And Recent Disaster: A Lesson To Our Country



BY: DR. AB THAPA

It did not surprise much to those studying water resources at the news that very recently a big 520 MW hydropower at an advanced stage of construction has been significantly damaged and another smaller hydropower has been completely washed away when all of a sudden the glacier triggered Dhauliganga river deluge struck. More than 200 people were killed. Professor HC Nainwal of Garwal University considers Glacier lake outburst to be the likely cause of this flood disaster.

Existing and proposed hydropower projects and human settlements in northern mountain regions of Nepal particularly in Kosi and Gandak basins are exposed to grave danger from the breach of giant glacier lakes located in Nepal as well as Tibet. The Dhauliganga glacier flood event should serve as a reminder to our country also that resolution of glaciological flood problems must be accorded top priority to prevent from happening disastrous glacier lake outburst flood events.

## Glacier Lakes Formation

Scientists have predicted that during global warming, the northern regions of the Northern Hemisphere heat up more than other areas of the planet. Mountain glaciers shrink. Regions experiencing light winter snow receive no snow at all. In temperate regions, snowlines shift to higher elevation and the snow packs melt earlier.

The adverse effect of the climatic changes is already being observed in Himalayan regions of our country. Glaciers are slowly retreating and new glacier lakes are being formed. Such glacier lakes pose serious threat to northern region of our country. Water resources planners in Nepal have already started to encounter serious problems arising from the glacier lake outburst floods (GLOF).

Glaciers are formed by accumulation of ice and snow on lands over a long period as a result of solid precipitation exceeding melting and evaporation. Glaciers differ from other bodies of land borne ice in their ability to flow. Ice streams form in mountain valleys and move downstream under the effect of gravity. Ice caps cover large land masses and spread out radially because of the great pressure built up by their weight.

Initially the snow deposits have density of about 0.1 and gradually change into a coarse crystalline structure with density of about 0.5. This formation is known as "neve or firn". As new snow is deposited on the firn, it is further compacted and much of the air is expelled. Over a period of several years, the density increases and nears 0.90 under strain imposed by glacier movement. A realignment of the crystal structure occurs. The final transformation converts the firn into glacier ice,

a tightly fitting crystal structure with density of 0.9 or slightly higher.

A glacier moves down its valley in nearly the same manner as a stream. Velocity surveys across glaciers show that there is a definite central current i.e. velocities near the valley walls are much lower than in the center of the glacier. On nearly horizontal or adverse slopes the greatest velocities is near the bottom of the ice mass, while on steep slopes the maximum velocity is near the surface. Ice is plastic under stress. Cracks and shear planes develop in glaciers because ice is relatively weak in tension.

A glacier carries large quantities of rock waste which is called moraine. Some of this is torn from the valley bottom by the glacier and is embedded in its bottom and sides. The moraine along the sides of the glacier is called lateral moraine; that along the front of the glacier is called terminal moraine and that at the bottom of the glacier is called ground moraine.

In temperate regions the minimum thickness of ice required to induce flow in glaciers is between 30 to 45m. The glaciers are extremely sensitive to climatic change. Prolonged changes in the mean annual or mean summer temperature of less than one degree may instigate glacier advances or retreats amounting to hundreds of meters.

## Glacier Lake Outburst Floods

Sudden outbursts of water from glacier lakes are also termed as "Jukulhlaup" or glacier floods. These sporadic outbursts take a heavy toll of human lives and properties. The discharge hydrographs from glacier floods resemble normal storm hydrographs except that the flood rise is slow but fall is abrupt

The dam materials of a glacier are unconsolidated moraine or glacier ice. The glacier lakes usually outburst under two conditions in Himalayan region. A glacier dam would collapse due to external factors when a big mass of lake water overtops it consequent upon the wave motion triggered by falling rocks or avalanches. Earthquakes can also result to glacier dam failure. Glacier dam could collapse if the dam slopes are weathered. It could also collapse if the seepage from the dam body significantly rises.

## Glacier Lakes Outburst History in Nepal

On August 4th 1985 the nearly completed Namche hydropower plant was completely destroyed by the Dig Tsho glacier lake outburst flood (GLOF). The Dig Tsho glacier is on the terminus of the Langmoche Glacier. The GLOF damaged not only the entire Namche Hydropower station but also all the bridges, trails, cultivation fields, houses, livestock along



its path to the confluence of the Dudh-Kosi and the Sun-Kosi rivers at a distance of 90 km from the Dig Tsho glacier.

Since the nineteen forties, according to Sino-Nepal study, there have been at least 10 cases of glacier lake outbursts within the basins investigated. Among them there have been five bursts in three glacier lakes of the Arun River Basin, and four in three glacier lakes of the Sunkosi River Basin. According to data published by ICIMOD there are 15 potentially very dangerous glacier lakes threatening Nepal out of them 10 such lakes are in Tibet and 5 in Nepal.

In Arun Basin the most common are the end moraine-dammed lakes. Because the end moraine-dammed lakes mostly consist of end moraines formed in the Little Ice Age and are closer to their source glaciers, or connect directly with the glaciers. Changes in the glaciers directly influence the water level of the glacier lake and the stability of the dam. At the same time, owing to the fact that the end moraine dams are composed of new and loose till, they are uncompacted and therefore unstable. This type of glacier lakes are easy to burst and cause floods and debris flows. The end moraine-dammed lakes are distributed most at the source of several short and small tributaries in the left side of the Arun River. They are distributed over a transitional zone from maritime to continental glaciers.

Gelhaipuco is an end moraine dammed lake located in the headwaters of Gelhaipu Gully (Natangqu River Basin, east of Riwo, Dinggye County). At 14.00 on Sept. 21, 1964, the lake burst abruptly. According to the study of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, there was a heavy precipitation in the Nantangqu River Basin, which caused the glacier of the Nantangqu River to slide. Huge amount of ice slid into the lake. The generated shock waves triggered the lake water to overflow the moraine dam causing the burst. There was a breach across the dam which was 30 m deep. The debris flow rushed down to the lower reaches of the Arun River in Nepal, and caused heavy economic losses.

At mid-night, July 11, 1981, an end moraine dammed lake located at the headwater of the Sunkosi River suddenly burst. A breach of 50m deep and 40-60m of bottom width was formed at the moraine dam. The highest burst discharge was about 1600 cu. m./ s, which was observed 23 minutes after the burst. The high flood lasted about 60 minutes and the burst water amount was estimated at 19 million cu. m. The debris flow damaged the Kodari Highway and the Sun-Kosi Power Station in Nepal. The flood destroyed the Friendship Bridge at Kodari. According to the investigation of 1984, there had been a similar burst in 1964 from that same lake, but the burst discharge and damage caused was smaller.

### Glaciological Studies

At present glaciers are retreating in the Himala-

yan region, as a result, glaciers lakes are being formed. Such ephemeral lakes disrupt communication systems and various infrastructures like hydropower directly, or indirectly subjecting the mainstream to periodic catastrophic floods. Glacier lake outburst floods also produce peaks in sediment transfer.

Need for the glaciological studies of the Himalayas had been felt since a long time. In 1973, in cooperation with the International Hydrological Decade (IHD) 1965-1974, which was promoted by the UNESCO, observation studies of the glaciers in the Himalayan mountains within the Nepal territory were initiated by the Japanese Society of Snow and Ice. The studies were rewarded with good results. In 1980s, Royal Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (RONAST) was striving to set up an international center for the study of snow and ice primarily concerned with the glaciological studies in the Himalayas to promote sustainable economic and social development in Nepal and in adjacent countries. .

In 1988 a joint team of Sino-Nepalese conducted the studies of the glaciers and glacier lakes in the Arun and the Sun-Kosi basins primarily in the Tibetan region of China. The Lanzhou Institute of Glaciology and Geocryology took part in the study from the Chinese side, similarly the Water and Energy Commission took part from the Nepalese side. The field investigation team used satellite imagery data to locate the lakes and to estimate their dimensions as well as their morphological characteristics. In Arun basin there are 737 glaciers in Tibet. whose total water storage is estimated to be 121 billion cu. m. It was found that there are 229 glacier lakes and out such glacier lakes 24 are potentially dangerous. Similarly there are 45 glacier lakes in the Sun-Kosi basin with a total storage volume of 388 million cu. m out of them 10 are potentially dangerous.

In 1990s Dr. Tomomi Yamada of Japan and Dr. B.P. Upadhyay, Professor of TU were involved in the study of glacier lakes within Nepal. The study was conducted under the Water and Energy Commission. Their study covered Lower Barun, Chamlang Tsho, Naulekh, Sabai Tsho, Dudh Kund, Mojang, Tsho Rolpa, Duwo, Thulagi, Khyimjung and Kang Guru glacier lakes.

### In Conclusion

It is almost certain that in the years to come our planet is going to be much warmer. Such climatic change will have adverse impact on Himalayan glaciers. Nepal must put more efforts into the studies of snow and ice primarily concerned with the glaciological problems arising in the Himalayas to promote sustainable economic and social development of our country.

Retreating glaciers are now posing serious threat to northern region of our country. We are already encountering serious problems arising from the glacier lakes outburst floods (GLOF).





## POLITICS

# Unfolding Challenges

*With politics divided on the issue of forming the new government and vote of no-confidence motion, Prime Minister K.P.Sharma Oli is giving life to the present government*

By A CORRESPONDNET

Having different opinions regarding future political strategy including selecting new prime minister and vote of no-confidence among opponents of PM Oli, the strength of his government continues to grow.

Although CPN-MC leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal has announced that his party will withdraw support to the government any time soon, he is not making any announcement on who will lead the government and when they will table a vote of no-confidence.

According to the provision of the present constitution, it is not legally mandatory for Prime Minister Oli to seek a vote of confidence in the House of Representatives. Given the present numbers of seats, even if prime minister Oli did not

get the majority, he can again recommend the dissolution of the House and seek fresh elections for November.

CPN-Maoist Centre Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal has said that his party would withdraw support to the government within a day or two no matter what the consequences.

Dahal said his attempt was to forge consensus among the Nepali Congress, CPN-MC and Janata Samajbadi Party-Nepal as these parties had opposed Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's 'unconstitutional and undemocratic' move of dissolving the House of Representatives.

"We want to do two things simultaneously: register a no-trust motion and withdraw support to the government," said Dahal. He said that political

leaders had always taken bold steps in recent years from the time of the 12-point agreement till now. "We will come out with a common agenda to pull down the government and form a new coalition," said Dahal.

However, the political game is not as easy as Dahal visualizes. At a time when Nepali Congress leaders are giving priority to holding the general convention in August. Overwhelming CPN-UML parliamentary members backing PM Oli and division in CPN-MC have made overthrowing the Oli's government a tough task.

Seconding second generation leader Minendra Rijal at a public meeting, Nepali Congress has shown that the party prefers its general convention rather



than indulging in power game.

Rijal has made it clear that NC will support a no trust motion against the Oli government. His party would vote in favor of the motion. "We never had trust in PM Oli," said Rijal.

As an opposition party, it is natural for NC to vote in favor of the motion. However, there is no certainty that the opposition will muster the required magic numbers to pull down the government.

Janta Samajbadi Party-Nepal is yet to open its card on no-trust motion and new government. JSP-N Co-chair Mahantha Thakur said his party was mainly concerned about its demands.

"Our party lawmaker is in jail, our provincial assembly member and other cadres face cases for taking part in agitation, we want our cadres and leaders released from jails and the false cases against them withdrawn," said Thakur.

"Our party was given importance when the need to form a coalition government arose, not on other occasions," said Thakur expressing anger over political parties. "Madhesis were never viewed positively in the nationalism debate."

He said that other leaders, including Dahal, could be a victim now, but did not have to face the problems that the marginalized communities were facing.

As Maoist leader Prachanda and faction of CPN-UML led by Nepal and Khanal, have been making efforts to weaken Oli, PM Oli had told the parliamentary party meeting that Nepal and Bhim Bahadur Rawal face punitive action for penning accusatory clarifications against him.

C P N - U M L leader Madhav Kumar Nepal, who leads the rival faction of the ruling party, said the SC gave a strange decision when it nullified the unification that had resulted in formation of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP).

He said he would not be deterred by PM Oli's action, and that he stood steadfast in his counter-charge against Oli and his decision not to go to Baluwatar to attend party meetings.

#### **Nepal-Khanal faction threatens legal battle**

The Madhav Kumar Nepal-Jhalanath Khanal faction of CPN-UML decided to urge the party leadership to call a meeting of the central committee that existed before the CPN-UML merged with the CPN-Maoist Centre.



"We have decided to fight a legal battle if the party leadership did not call the CC meeting," said Surendra Pandey, Nepal-Jhalanath faction leader.

However, UML Chair and Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli have refused to rescind his decision to amend the party statute and induct 23 former Maoist leaders in the party Central Committee.

The faction has threatened to revive parallel committees if party Chair Oli does not revive committees that existed before the UML's merger with the CPN-MC. The Nepal-Khanal faction has said that they had maintained their majority in the party committees, but Oli unilaterally amended the party statute to ensure his own majority in the party



## POLITICS

### PM Oli To Take Action Against Nepal

At a time when Nepal-Khanal faction has been making efforts to contain PM Oli, he is putting more pressure on Nepal and his faction saying that it was impossible to withdraw the decisions taken by the party on March 12 and thereafter. PM Oli said there was no chance of backtracking the on decisions of March 12.

PM Oli said since the decision to appoint 23 former Maoist leaders as central committee members was made in accordance with the party's statute, there was no possibility of withdrawing the decision.

"There exists no faction in the CPN-UML. There is only one party. We will only accept individual criticisms but not the factional one," said Prime Minister Oli.

As Nepal and Khanal are forging a new alliance, young leaders Gokarna Bista, Yogesh Bhattarai and Ghanashyam Bhusal seem to have been pursuing unity in the party.

### New Parliamentary Party Statute

Following the endorsement of amendment of the CPN (UML)'s parliamentary party statute, PM Oli can expel any member who can challenge his position. The new amendment has made parliamentary party leader more powerful.

According to party chief whip Bishal Bhattarai, the statute was amended as it was outdated and revised statute grants a right to the parliamentary leader to suspend up to six months a lawmaker going against the party decision and working against the party interest.

Similarly, it has the provisions for the parliamentary party leader to nominate the parliamentary party deputy-leader, chief whip and whip, National Assembly's whip and the party's representative.

The meeting unanimously endorsed the decision to form a 24-member Parliamentary Board on the basis of March 18 proposal. The Board comprises parliamentary party leader and Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, deputy leader Subash Nembang, chief whip Bhattarai, and whip Shanta Chaudhary, ex-officio member Jhalanath Khanal, Madhav Kumar Nepal, Suman Pyakurel, Khimlal Bhattarai, Dr Binda Pandey, Radha Kumari Gyawali and Damodar Pandey among others.

At a time of division in opposition and weakening strength of Nepal-Kha-



nal led faction in CPN-UML, prime minister Oli is yet to face major challenges for his power now.

Oli's government will test its strength only when the government will present the annual policy and programs in the House of Representatives. In case of the failure of the policies and programs in the parliament, PM Oli will face moral and legal dilemma.

If government policies and programs fail in the House of Representatives, PM Oli may again recommend the dissolution of House of Representatives and elections for November.

# तिनै तहका सरकार जिम्मेवारः अन्त्य गरौं लैङ्गिक हिंसा र दुर्व्यवहार



नेपाल सरकार  
सञ्चार तथा सूचना प्रविधि मन्त्रालय  
सूचना तथा प्रसारण विभाग



# Isn't This The Time, Honorable Minister, That Nepal Will Make The Change In Your Voting Pattern?



BY: HANAN GODER-GOLDBERGER

This year we have marked 60 years for the courageous step taken by BP Koirala to establish relations with Israel. Much was said by early speakers on this move so I will only add here: Israel will never forget that Nepal was the first one and for many years, the only one from this part of the world to have such relations. Let me also add after so many others are mentioned- the good bilateral relations on all levels of cooperation and they are indeed so many.

With your permission, the honorable Minister, I would like to try to explain this close friendship. What are the reasons for such a level of trust? How come Nepal is kept as a dream in the minds of young generation Israelis that have made Nepal into part of their maturing process including spending months of trekking or community work in different parts of Nepal? What are the reasons that make Israel be the most prestigious and lucrative destination for Nepali workers? Why is that Nepali workers or students that return from Israel talk about this country with such appreciation? What are the reasons that made 200 Israeli Doctors and medical team, to leave all that they were doing and come to help Nepal within 36 or 48 hours after the devastating Earthquake of 2015?

You can mention the "Learn and Earn" program which is changing the faces of Nepalese in rural areas today and you can also mention thousands of members of Shalom Club that were trained in Israel or thousands of those who spent years with Israeli families as caregivers. All is right and all is relevant.

However, each one of the points that I just mentioned will need a long background and complete explanation to understand. Each one will have a long list of details but they all share one element, which plays an important role in this intimate relationship:

It all starts when we look at ourselves in the mirror and try to identify and determine who we are: we see ourselves, Nepalese and Israelis as part of small entities, small cultures, surrounded by big neighbors. Our identity is important for us and we will do any possible action to keep, preserve and protect it. We are proud nations that are proud of what we are and who we are. From here will come all other explanations. Israel has no global interests in Nepal and it is the same when we talk about Nepal's interest in Israel. Even the topic that keeps us very much apart, became a major issue of cooperation between the two countries,

**Isn't this the time, Honorable Minister, that Nepal will make the change in your voting pattern? Isn't it time that the excellent bilateral relations will reflect on the multilateral relations? Isn't it time Nepal's neutrality in international conflict will include the votes that involve Israel?**

and I talk about the alliance made between Mount Everest (Sagarmatha), and the Dead Sea: the highest and the lowest places on earth which both countries issued stamps on the same day and later established monuments on both sites.

All this was fine if we could conclude this seminar on Bilateral relations, however, relations between countries stand on two legs: one is this excellent leg of the bilateral leg but the second leg is the multilateral leg.

Yes, the second leg is less famous, less known and has much lower visibility. It does not happen -not in Israel and not in Nepal. The multilateral relations take place mainly in the UN building in New York and in the Human Rights Council in Geneva, and sometimes in other locations. The "over attention" and double standards were taken by these international organizations lead to 26 anti-Israeli resolutions that are brought to vote every year. Yes, our world that suffers from long international changes like health, poverty, lack of development, and lack of democratic values, find time to bring these votes every year as an endless ritual going in circles that bring the region where Israel is located to useless votes that have led nowhere.

But let me remind all that recently, we see some hope when four and soon other countries in the Middle East established formal relations with Israel. The change is happening now.

Isn't this the time, Honorable Minister, that Nepal will make the change in your voting pattern? Isn't it time that the excellent bilateral relations will reflect on the multilateral relations? Isn't it time Nepal's neutrality in international conflict will include the votes that involve Israel?

I said earlier that relations have two legs: the bilateral and the multilateral. Standing on one leg, for too long, is not good for stable and cordial relations as we all believe Nepal and Israel should have.

I can only quote again, what the former speakers just said: it is the time that both bilateral and multilateral levels are also reflected in the voting pattern of Nepal at the UN as well as other global forums.

Let me use this opportunity, the honorable Minister, to thank you for your personal friendship and your good involvement in promoting the relations between our two sisterly nations. Long live the Nepal-Israel relations!

*Hanan Goder-Goldberger is the Ambassador of Israel to Nepal. This is the excerpt of the speech delivered during the seminar on Nepal-Israel Relations.*

# Tokyo Olympic Committee Is Now Preparing For The Coming Summer

*As the Olympic Games coming closer, TATSUO OGURA, Project Director of International Communications Team , spoke to KESHAB POUDEL via virtual interview. Excerpts of the interview*

**Nepal has been preparing for Tokyo Olympics for the last few years, how do you see the possibility of now hold the Olympics given growing COVID-19 challenges?**

It is really an unprecedented situation for all of us under the current state of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Tokyo Olympic 2020 is the first-ever game that was postponed for one year. We are now preparing for the coming Olympic Games for summer. Even though we have postponed the game in very unprecedented circumstances, we are glad to have the games incoming summer. Prime Minister of Japan Yoshihito Suga has already expressed his determination to hold the games. As the government is leading the various coordination meeting and COVID-19 countermeasures, various infection countermeasures are under consideration which will able us to hold the games. All our delivery partners including the national government of Japan, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Organizing Committee as well as IOC and ICC are focusing on hosting the game this summer. Thus, we hope that the situation will be conducive to hold the games in the summer. We are taking every step to hold the games.

**Nepal has a great attachment with Tokyo Olympics as Nepal has started participating in Olympics following participating Tokyo Olympics in 1964, how the preparation of the Olympic Games currently going on?**

As I have already mentioned, this is the first game ever postponed due to unprecedented circumstances. It is not easy to hold the game but we have been working very closely with all different stakeholders to make the game possible. Despite making several efforts, the challenge is still COVID-19 Pandemic. Obviously, the great challenges are COVID-19 Pandemic countermeasures.

**Can you explain the state of preparation now?**

We have been working with various delivery partners. We held series of meeting regarding COVID-19 Pandemic countermeasures with the Government of Japan and Tokyo Metropolitan and the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Committee last year. We have published the interim summary in December 2020. It proposed many aspects of COVID-19 countermeasures. International Olympic Committee (IOC) highly commended our progress made in such a period of time. We also published playbooks for each stakeholder. The first one has already pub-



lished on February 3. This is for National Olympic Committees and International Sports Federations, broadcasters press people. There are playbooks dedicated to each of them. It is very important for them to understand how we have made these countermeasures. We have to be on the same page. It talks about every detailed aspect including criteria for entering Japan and playtime. Until leaving Japan, everyone has to alliance with this.

**Given COVID-19 Pandemic, the Olympic has already postponed for a year, how will be it different from the earlier one?**

Despite the pandemic, the numbers of games and venues remain the same as last year. We really appreciate it as all delivery partners are supporting us including the venue holders. All the owners agree to provide us. International Federations and National Olympic committees, marketing partners are supporting us to hold these postpone games. We thanked them for their sincere support. Given such circumstances, we will be able to hold the games upcoming summer in the same manner originally planned.

**As Nepal has just started to administer COVID-19 Vaccine for frontline workers, it may take a longer time to administer the vaccine for the age group representing Olympic. Does the organizing committee have any plan to provide vaccines for participating athletes?**

For vaccination Government of Japan, Tokyo Metropolitan Government and 2020 Olympic Organizing Committee have held several meetings regarding the vaccine and how to hold the game securely and safely even with vaccination taking place. IOC has been working with national Olympic committees and each government about this. IOC works with NOCs and it can encourage and assists athletes and officials get vaccinated in their home countries



in line with national immunization guidelines before they go to Japan. This will contribute to holding the safe environment of the games and also out of respect of the Japanese people. Such drive will help not only to protect the athletes and officials but also the Japanese people. During the consultation call with the NOCs, IOCs told that the numbers of government have already taken a positive decision in this respect. IOC has been working on that direction. Vaccination is not a prerequisite for athletes to compete.

**What are your message to Nepalese athletes and Nepalese sports lover?**

This is a very tough and unprecedented situation for everybody around the world. It is not easy to host the games in such circumstances as one year has already postponed. We are trying our best to make better conditions to provide a secure and safe environment to all athletes and officials from all over the world. We hope that we can have an Olympic game in the summer and showing the path we hope to see all the athletes who wish to see to join the games.

## MELAMCHI PROJECT

# Water At The Tap

*Following the discharge of water from Sundarijal water treatment plant on March 28, the water has reached over 100,000 households through the old water pipelines of Kathmandu Valley. However, the worries of TIRESH PRASAD KHATRI, Executive Director of Melamchi Water Development Board, have increased. ED Khatri, who has not slept well since the beginning of filling the water in the tunnel, remains alert monitoring through his mobile app the state of water in tunnels, treatment plant and discharge rate for distribution. For all the challenges, hardship and stress, ED Khatri shares part this historic work completion with secretary Madhav Belbase*

By KESHAB POUDEL

For Tiresh Prasad Khatri, ED of Melamchi Water Development Board, March 28 was a remarkable day when the water received from Melamchi was distributed to the consumers through KUKL's pipelines. As secretary Belbase was leading a team in Kathmandu, observing the distribution

of water, ED Khatri was discharging the water from treatment plant and monitoring the entire process along with his technical team in Sundarijal.

Secretary Belbase and Khatri, the 14th ED of the board, proved to be the luckiest persons to see this grand success in distribution

of water brought from a 27-kilometer long tunnel. Although many of his predecessors aspired for this to happen, ED Khatri snatched this opportunity.

As a saying goes, pride and pleasure come with sacrifice and price, ED Khatri, who is haunted by the tragic event of last July,





in which two persons died when one of the gates of the tunnel outflanked, remains highly alert and concerned about monitoring the level of water and movement in the tunnel from his mobile app. For the last six weeks, ED Khatri, so to say, has not slept well.

Under the leadership of secretary Belbase, a well experienced civil engineer known as father of TBM Tunnel technology in Nepal, the board and entire team have not spared any time and effort to make this testing and commissioning secure and successful. Once bitten, twice shy, as they are, because not all went well in the past.

Learning from past events, secretary Belbase took all necessary technical safety measures before testing and commissioning of tunnel. ED Khatri remained highly alert all the time.

“I woke up several times in the midnight during these days. From early morning to midnight, I

rely so much on mobile app to observe the state of the tunnel and water treatment plant,” said ED Khatri.

Backed by secretary Belbase and his entire technical colleagues in the process, ED Khatri is not alone in the effort. But, his responsibility as an Executive Director put him in stress and worry.

“Our entire teams have been working very cautiously with high alert. Secretary Belbase is inquiring frequently and directing us as required. This is entirely a great team work,” said Khatri.

Joining civil service as a civil engineer at the Department of Drinking Water and Sewerage in 1990, Khatri has spent his entire career in this sector. Although Khatri also completed some major drinking water projects including one in Birendranagar Surkhet, he derives a greater satisfaction over leading the team for finalization of Melamchi drinking water project. In his twenty eight years in the sector, this is his lifetime’s achievement, a rarest of the rare event for any engineer to cherish.







When Khatri joined as a young engineer, he used to read the statements of then prime minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai saying that the dirt of roads of Kathmandu would be flushed out by the water of Melamchi river.

After almost three decades, ED Khatri does not have enough water to flush the expanded and over crowded streets of Kathmandu valley. However, his team has been up to supplying enough water to households of thirsty Kathmandu.

How strange, at a time when Khatri is at the helm of Melamchi Drinking Water Supply Board, his water tap is yet to get the water from Melamchi. “I will have to wait for a few more months to receive the water. However, it gives me immense pleasure and satisfaction to see the water coming from the taps of the valley,” said Khatri. “If others get it now, I will also get it later.”

#### **History of Melamchi**

Visualized by King Mahendra in 1968 and King Birendra put the project at policy level and former Prime minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai picked up Melamchi as a political debate in 1991, making it his election promise to his voters. However, not only Bhattarai, all the candidates of Nepali Congress except Daman Nath Dhungana, lost the elections in 1991 from Kathmandu Valley.

Melamchi river is regarded by local Hyalmo Community as a sacred river coming from power of Padmasambhava, reportedly identified during King Mahendra’s visit of 1965. Some of the most ancient old monasteries like Tarkeghyang and many other Buddhist monasteries are there as testimonies.

CPN-UML swept the valley votes making mockery of Bhattarai’s slogan to flush the streets of Kathmandu with Melamchi water. Although Bhattarai won the elections in 1999 from Birgunj Constituency,

he fulfilled his promise by taking the decision to revive the project.

What a coincidence, PM Oli, who made so many jokes on Bhattarai’s Melamchi remarks, is now hailing Melamchi Drinking Water Project as major achievement to defend his tenure.

Over a dozen of secretaries have contributed in the Melamchi process. However, secretary Madhav Belbase guided and took major decisions at the crucial moments to complete the project.

A graduate of College of Engineering, Roorkee, Belbase is known as the father of TBM Nepal for successfully using the technology to construct Bheri Babai diversion tunnel. Completing the testing and commissioning of the Melamchi Tunnel is another milestone for him.

What an interesting linkage, the first Nepali graduate of College of Engineering Roorkee Chief engineer and colonial late Dilli Jung Thapa



was the first to make a Tunnel in Nepal 103 years ago.

### **Madhav To Madhav**

Melamchi too has some interesting linkages. As then head of Foreign Aid Division of Ministry of Finance, former chief secretary and minister late Madhav Prasad Ghimire had revived the Melamchi finalizing the financial matter with Asian Development Bank in 1999. Coincidentally, another Madhav, that is secretary Belbase, has rescued the project from virtually nowhere when the contractor left the project at the last minute and from a major disaster in July.

Watching all the decisions and moves closely regarding the Melamchi Drinking Water Project from the very inception of the project as section officer at Foreign Aid Division, economic advisor to Prime Minister KP. Sharma Oli and former finance secretary Lal Shanker Ghimire, gives credit to late Ghimire for giving life to the project in 1999 negotiating with Asian Development Bank.

From early days, many creams of the cream of Nepalese engineers have contributed to the project till the time of the current secretary Belbase, who finally emerged as a Bhagirathi bringing the water to Bagmati.

In the word of Dipak Gyawali, Belbase is professionally successful and fortunate as engineer who made a breakthrough of Tunnel of Bheri Babai Diversion and completed the work and now brought the water to Kathmandu from Melamchi despite all political and institutional anarchy. Namaskar to a modern Bhagirath!!! Folded hands. “Nyaah! It is we who have to thank you for maintaining high standards of service in such mad, politically frustrating times! I hope younger engineers find inspiration from you.”

“Karna Dhoj Adhikariji and Madhusudhan Dhakalji (both secretaries of Min Water Resources under which Department of Water Supply

& Sewerage was located in those late 1970s, early 1980s days) who took critical decisions regarding valley water supply,” Dipak Gyawali wrote in a tweet.

In a reply to Dipak Gyawali, Arun Dhoj Adhikari, who also served as an engineer at the Ministry of Water Resources, tweeted, “Bhubaneshwor Pradhan who succeeded my father as Director General of Irrigation Department in 1973 and who later became Secretary of WECS and 1980, Secretary of Min. Water Resources and then Secretary. at NPC in 1992/93 knew Melamchi inside out.”

“Melamchi was already part of King Birendra’s ‘Achieving Asian Standards by 2000’ program in 1984/85. The search for reliable water supply for Kathmandu was initiated in 1968 followed by setting up WSSD, including Kodku, Balkhu,” tweets Gyawali.

Melamchi Drinking Water Board organized a get-together of all the former executive directors, secretaries and ministers. Attended by former minister Bina Magar and Water Supply minister Mani Thapa and secretary Belbase, former Executive Directors shared their experiences. Former finance secretary and executive director of the board Suman Prasad Sharma said that all those who attended the program shared their experiences.

Former secretaries Tirtharaj Gyawali, Tana Gautam, Purna Kadariya, Kishore Thapa, Krishna Raj BC and Tulsi Sitaula attended the interaction. Among the former executive Director Poshannath Nepal, Dhruba Bahadur Shrestha, Rajkumar Malla, Hari Prasad Sharma, Krishna Prasad Acharya, Ghan Shayam Bhattarai, Ramchandra Devkota and current ED



Tiresh Khatri were also present.

Following the launching of Melamchi, 19 secretaries and 13 Executive Directors have already served in the project.

### **Melamchi Water Reaches Kathmandu**

The water from the Melamchi River in Sindhupalchok district finally fell into the water pots of Kathmanduites on March 28, approximately after 19 years since the beginning of the Melamchi Water Supply Project (MWSP). Water first flowed from about 512 taps in the Anamna-



## COVERSTORY



gar area at 2:00 PM.

“Congratulations residents of Anamnagar to receive the water first time from Melamchi,” tweeted Madhav Belbase on March 28.

“The water is distributed in Mahankal, Minbhawan and Anamnagar of Kathmandu and Khumaltar of Lalitpur area through the Kathmandu Upatasya Khanepani Limited (KUKL)’s distribution network in the first phase,” said Khatri, Executive Director of the Melamchi Water Supply Development Board.

“About 45 million liters of water was sent to the reservoirs in the Kathmandu Valley on the first day. The amount of water to be distributed would be increased to 85 million liters,” said Khatri.

### **Melamchi Made Kathmandu Modern**

Melamchi is not all about the tunnel and diversion of water. It also involve a huge modernization of water distribution system in the valley. In the history of Kathmandu valley, the Melamchi project has laid over 600 pipelines replacing over a century old system of pipelines.

Thus, Melamchi is working now with a cautious approach before sending water to the households. The newly installed pipelines should

be flushed and cleaned. The project stated that it might take about seven months to take water to every corner of the distribution.

As water from the Melamchi River would only be distributed through the supply network of the KUKL means the areas that have separate water supply projects would not be benefitted now.

The first phase of the MWSP was supposed to be completed in 2008 but it went through multiple deadline extension and cost overrun. It was affected by the bureaucratic process,

Maoist rebellion, 2015 earthquake and dispute with Italian contractor company CMC.

Melamchi is the first national pride project to be completed. Some construction at the head works still remains although water reached the valley.

Bulk distribution center built by the Project Execution Directorate, PID, is planning to distribute the water to every household through the old pipe. This distribution is a test until the system is stabilized from million liters daily.

After testing, cleaning and connecting to the household supply channel, water distribution will be started in the newly laid pipelines.

For Nepal government to Asian Development Bank, the completion of Melamchi is a matter of major achievement. With limited knowledge and skill, the transfer of water from Kosi to Bagmati river Basin is technically a milestone. Facing several obstructions, the project is very close to complete for the satisfactions for all. Several people have played roles, secretary Madhav Belbase finally succeeded to bring the water to Kathmandu as Bhaigrath.





# Project Description

## Melamchi Water Supply Project

The Melamchi Water Supply Project (MWSP) is considered to be the most viable long-term alternative to ease the chronic water shortage situation within the Kathmandu Valley. The Project is designed to divert about 170 MLD of fresh water to Kathmandu Valley from the Melamchi River in Sindhupalchok district. Augmenting this supply by adding about a further 170 MLD each from the Yangri and Larke rivers, which lie in the upstream proximity of Melamchi are also being investigated as future supply sources.

Ministry of Physical Planning and Works (MPPW) is the executing agency for the Project and an autonomous Melamchi Water Supply Development Board, formulated for Project implementation, is the implementing agency.

The Board, as an independent project implementing body has come a long way to collect the necessary funds to implement the project since 1998. The major donor of the project, Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a Loan 1820-NEP (SF) on 21st December, 2000 and it was effective from 28th November, 2001. After six years of project implementation, Government of Nepal and the project's funding partners, felt necessity to change the scopes of project implementation arrangement by splitting the MWSP into the following two distinct sub-projects in 2007;

(i) the Melamchi River Water Diversion Subproject (Sub-Project -1) covering all project activities in Melamchi Valley including constructions

of Water Diversion Tunnel (WDT) and Water Treatment Plant (WTP) at Sundarijal and

(ii) Kathmandu Valley Wa-

(PSP).

Various factors including political events during the past 6 years of MWSP and 3 years of SDP imple-



ter Supply and Sanitation Subproject (Subproject -2) comprising water distribution activities in Kathmandu Valley. EMP implementation requirements as per EIA and EMP of MWSP, 2000 and 2001 have been covered both of these sub-projects.

The MWSP originally comprised four parts:

- i) infrastructure development;
- ii) social and environmental support;
- iii) institutional reforms; and
- iv) project implementation support.

A complementary Kathmandu Valley Water Services Sector Development Program (SDP) has also been effective from December 2004 to support reforms and institutional development in the water services sector engaging private sector participation

ment did not make it possible to complete the project as planned. The withdrawal of the three co-financing development partners for the Project – the World Bank, NORAD, and SIDA resulted in a shortfall of \$133 million in the originally projected cost of US\$ 464 million as priced in 2000 AD.

ADB approved the proposed project restructuring, mainly reflecting the above mentioned financial and institutional changes made during its 6 years of implementation and proposing the removal of identified obstacles in implementation, in February 2008. After the restructuring, the Project has now been revised to a total of \$317.3 million and a completion date of June 2013. The cost will be jointly funded by several agencies such as: ADB

## COVERSTORY

(Loan 1820-NEP) – \$137 m, JBIC – \$ 47.5 m, JICA – \$18 m, NDF – \$10.5 m, OPEC – \$13.7 m, and GoN – \$ 90.6 million.

Out of US\$317.3 million Subproject I, Melamchi Water Supply Project (MWSP) will be utilizing US\$ 249.4 million with following contribution of different donors ADB – US\$ 103.8 m 41.62%, JBIC(JICA) – US\$47.5 m 19%, NDF- US\$- 10.5

about 510 MLD to treat the Melamchi River Water; and

Development and implementation of a social upliftment program, including – a) buffer zone development, b) rural electrification, c) health, d) education, and e) income generation/community development.

### Part B. Subproject II Comprises:

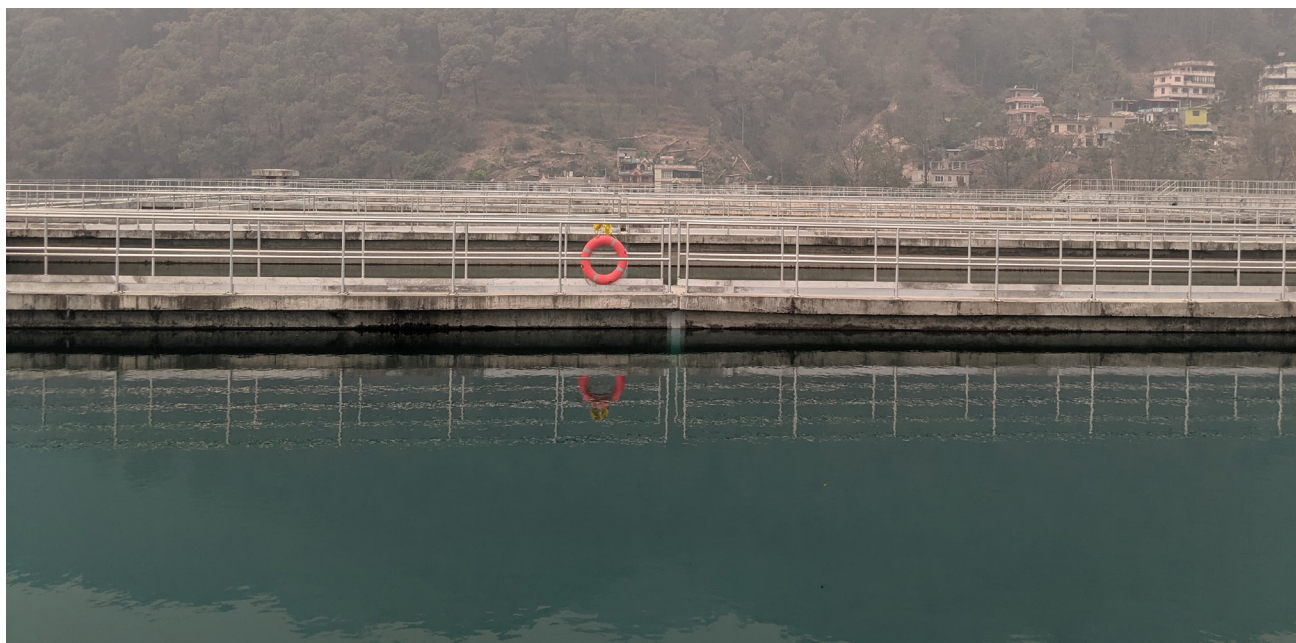
Rehabilitation and improvement of distribution networks at pri-

ments of waste water system in a phased manner; and

Development of a shallow ground water well field at Manohara within the Kathmandu Valley to extract, treat, and distribute about 20 MLD of water in Kathmandu valley.

### Part C. Subproject III Comprises:

Development and implementation of i) a resettlement action plan; and ii) an Environmental Management



m 4.2%, OPEC- US\$ 13.7m 5.5% and GoN US\$73.9 m (29.63%)

The revised Project comprises three components: Part A. Melamchi Valley Subproject (Subproject I), Part B. Kathmandu Valley Subproject (Subproject II), and Part C. Project Support (Subproject III) as described below:

### Part A. Subproject I Comprises:

Construction of Melamchi Diversion Scheme to carry out about 170 MLD of raw water from the Melamchi River into Kathmandu Valley through a 26.0 km tunnel;

Construction of about 43 km of access roads and upgrading of about 29 km of road to assist the construction of the Project facilities and their maintenance;

Construction of a water treatment plant with an initial capacity of at least 170 MLD and expandable to

primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, house connections, rehabilitation and improvement of existing water supply system including intakes, transmission lines, water treatment plants and service reservoirs;

Construction of a bulk distribution system comprising service reservoirs strategically located in the Kathmandu Valley and bulk water supply pipelines leading to the reservoirs from the water treatment plant in the pipeline and will be constructed once the fund is available;

Undertaking the improve-

Plan (EMP) to mitigate direct and indirect Project impacts, including a) hygiene education, b) public relations programs, c) (if required by ADB) a social and environmental monitoring program undertake by a panel of domestic experts, and d) a groundwater monitoring program; and

Provision of support to carry out various Project administration activities, including PMU operations, design and construction supervision, social and environmental activities and training provision of incremental administration and operation costs.



**Government of Nepal**  
**Melamchi Water Supply Development Board**  
**Kathmandu | Phone No.: 01-4443473**



# All Roads Lead North Are Less Travelled



Amish Raj Mulmi's unbelievable jubilation of 'Nepal's turn to China' and his painstaking efforts in proving the flawed argument how 'all roads lead north'—sweeps over the possibility of a genuine and unbiased account coming from him on China's misadventures in the South Asian region, their historical progression and Nepal's continuing vulnerability. With 66-pages in notes and purposefully featured details without connecting the dots, the book puzzles even a keen watcher of Nepal. The chosen plot is serious and the author's preoccupied romantic notion in dealing it makes the whole narrative reductionist—and deeply biased in favour of China, an expansionist force in the northern neighbourhood of Nepal.

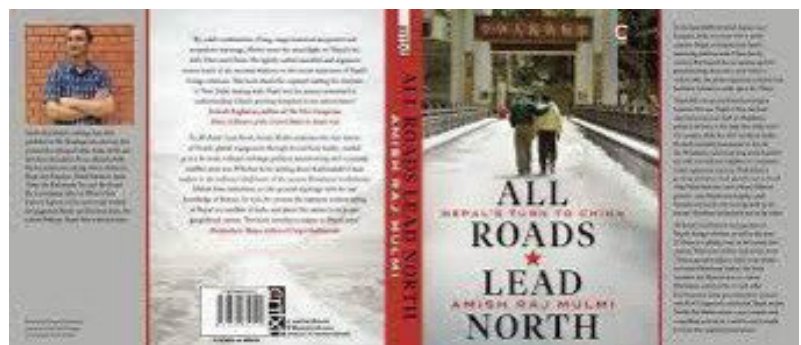
With hindsight, the author was not expected to juxtapose the ground realities with his uncaring assessment and projections—overlooking the fragile polity in country and regional geo-strategic sensitivities. The misinterpretation knows no bound when one reads it at the fag end of the book (page 209-210):

“China in many things at once in Nepal today. It is a superpower, a beneficent aid-giver, a friend in need, an essential provider, a demanding neighbour, an older brother, a competitor, a model of development and a vision of a developed future. China is changing regional and global dynamics in unprecedented way than Nepal. As China declares itself on the world stage, Nepal wants to tag along for the ride. Relations have never been better than in the contemporary era, but they need to be sustained, nurtured and developed as they evolve. It is in Nepal's interest to do so, and imperative to do it in a way that acknowledged

its own aspirations.”

BY: ATULK THAKUR

Mulmi's prose would have earned praise provided he had written his maiden book as an official spokesperson of People's Republic of China, as an independent observer, he had all the reasons to cope any compulsion that made him voicing for China despite its excesses at home and in the world. Just to shun India and downplaying the complementarity that India-Nepal relations stand for,



## Book Review:

**Non-fiction/2021; All Roads Lead North by Amish Raj Mulmi, Westland-Context, 290pp (Hardback), Rs 799**

he travelled extra miles and hurriedly write off India as 'non-performing asset' (page 213):

“Far away, in Delhi, one could imagine a chuckle in the corridors of South Block. Nepal's politics, and its politicians, are a quagmire. Its leaders play each other and its neighbours constantly in the struggle for power. India had long waded into the puddle, played the game and lost. Now, it was China's turn.”

## BOOK REVIEW

Such words are disservice to Nepal, China—as well as India. While presenting Nepal as a welcoming turf for ‘tug war’, its sovereign status is undermined. India’s ties with Nepal hold not much significance, this book suggests—and China is at loss as it is represented in poor light as the ‘next interventionist power’ in Nepal. The author acknowledges the significance of ‘optics’ in international relations, however, he appears unassuming as he selectively drops it as a ‘virtue’ for judging the political course of action at homeland. Mulmi has not enlightened his readers’ with loads of preferential sourced materials—besides his travels to the places, meeting people and presenting them as the only authentic beholders of truth. More often than not, it seems, Mulmi counts not much on the text, context and people that have not come his ways.

The author missed an opportunity to write the first major book about India’s share of contributions and mistakes in Nepal as the closest ally integrated through the tenets in social, cultural, economic and diplomatic realms—Nepal’s inability to dissect the fallouts of mixing the domestic and international policies—and China’s expansionism leveraging the hiccups in bilateral relations between India and Nepal. As a sovereign country and functional democracy, Nepal should claim for a greater stake in South Asia. It would be undeserving on anyone’s part, if such a chance is denied for just polarising the discourse—thus leaving behind the aspirations’ of mass Nepali.

Even from the nationalist point of view too, it would be much more worthwhile to give due weightage to own action—rather accusing neighbours of interventionism and still expecting them to stay involved in rivalry at the geostrategic hotspot, Nepal. No longer an imagined one, it is very much real now. A clear demarcating line between the official and social historiography is essential for featuring the most

**Even from the nationalist point of view too, it would be much more worthwhile to give due weightage to own action—rather accusing neighbours of interventionism and still expecting them to stay involved in rivalry at the geostrategic hotspot, Nepal. No longer an imagined one, it is very much real now. A clear demarcating line between the official and social historiography is essential for featuring the most pressing issues, concerning masses.**

pressing issues, concerning masses.

The book fails to observe this and sadly offers confrontation rather the peaceful co-existence, its well-deserved due (page 218-219):

“Kathmandu’s determination to stand up to what it calls Indian ‘bullying’ has been partially driven by the weight of a newly resurgent China behind it. And China will only become stronger hereon, and Delhi’s ability and influence within the Kathmandu establishment will continue to weaken if it does not swiftly recognise and address the foundational shortcomings in the bilateral relationship.”

Negating the actual observations of King Tribhuvan and King Mahendra on the significance of accepting the neighbourhood in its shape and spirit can’t be pragmatic at this point of time when Nepal’s ‘tryst with the democracy’ is still fogged with self-inflicted challenges like endemic corruption and lack of responsibility bearing in public life. Be it the political or economic repercussions of China’s excesses in Pakistan and Sri Lanka and letting both the countries compromising their sovereign status under guise of the ‘developmental projects’—they found no particular elaboration from Mulmi. This is again very disappointing since he could have done some damage control here by commenting on China’s territorial aggression, including near the borders with Nepal.

Mulmi’s book should get a long shelf-life, in the official circle, it should be used widely for reference. His words are comforting for Nepal’s northern neighbour, the book should get translated in Mandarin for adding up to China’s existing archives of propaganda and misnomers. More than the diplomatic cables, this will give moments of fleeting happiness to the muscle-flexing policy makers in China. The political classes in Nepal will remain indifferent, this way, they will continue to avail their innocence. India will continue to be a friend, both officially and people front. Lest we forget it!

*Atul K Thakur is a writer and policy analyst with focus on the interface of politics and economics in South Asia, he can be reached at: [atulmthakur@gmail.com](mailto:atulmthakur@gmail.com)*



# For Sustainable Forest

*The World Bank provides loans and grant for a sustainable forest management in Nepal*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Following successfully implementing community forestry program, Nepal has expanded forest covered areas. The time has come for Nepal to manage the forest in a sustainable manner.

The recently signed agreement between the Government of Nepal and the World Bank is highly valuable in this regard. Under the agreement, Nepal will receive the \$24 million Forests for Prosperity Project (\$6.1 million as grant and \$17.9 million as concessional loan) that will help Nepal advance sustainable forest management.

The project will contribute to transforming Nepal's forest sector by improving sustainable forest management and developing a strong forest-based private sector. These activities will result in multiple benefits for forest-dependent people in selected municipalities in Province 2 and Lumbini Province, including inclusive economic benefits, ecosystem services, and greater climate resilience. It will help strengthen ongoing community-based conservation efforts while promoting inclusive sustainable use.

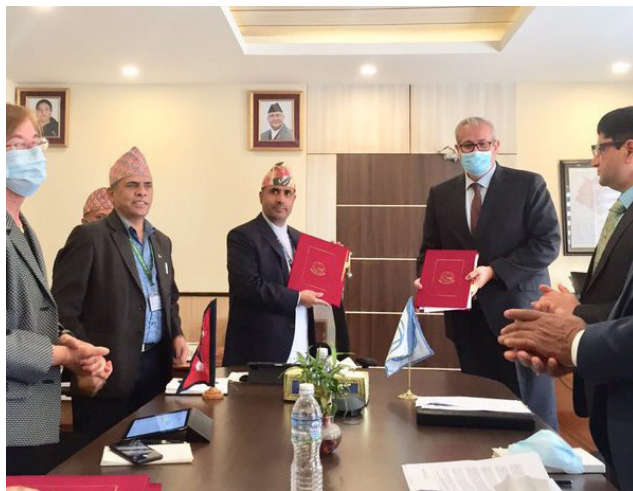
The agreements were signed by Finance Secretary Sishir Kumar Dhungana on behalf of the Government of Nepal and by the World Bank Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka Faris Hadad-Zervos. Additionally, a project agreement was signed by the Chief Executive Officer of the Agriculture Development Bank Anil Kumar Upadhyaya and the World Bank Country Director. The Agriculture Development Bank, as a project implementation entity will design and pilot a credit line for establishing and strengthening forest-based small and medium enterprises.

“Strengthening local communities, for whom forests are a traditional safety net during times of crisis, are especially important in the COVID-19 era. In that same spirit, the project will facilitate Nepal's forest-based private sector to invest in jobs and reduce dependence on timber imports,” stated Sishir Kumar Dhungana, Finance Secretary. “The project will also provide timely support to the institutions at the provincial and local levels to strengthen natural resource governance.”

The project is a key part of the government's Relief, Recovery and Resilience (3R) plan and Nepal's com-

for inclusive climate action and inclusive green economic growth based on Nepal's comparative advantage. We are confident that if the project yields the expected outcomes, there will be opportunities to scale up the project and allow more people to benefit,” stated Faris Hadad-Zervos, World Bank Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. “This project illustrates that the World Bank is honored to be a trusted partner of Nepal as it faces three challenges at once: COVID, climate, and community opportunities.”

The Forests for Prosperity Project is the first World Bank-supported forest sector investment project in Nepal in over 15 years, and the third part of a joint programmatic engagement on forest landscapes by the World Bank and the government of Nepal. The Forests for Prosperity Project complements the ongoing technical assistance for REDD+ (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation), as well as the recent signing of the Emissions Reduction Program for the Terai Arc Land-



mitments to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Aligned with this 3R plan, development partners led by the World Bank and UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, coalesced around a “Green, Resilient, and Inclusive Development” framework to mobilize investments over the next three years to secure jobs and livelihoods, build resilience, strengthen social inclusion, enhance sustainability, and promote efficiency.

“The project will support 50 municipalities, which is a starting point

for inclusive climate action and inclusive green economic growth based on Nepal's comparative advantage. We are confident that if the project yields the expected outcomes, there will be opportunities to scale up the project and allow more people to benefit,” stated Faris Hadad-Zervos, World Bank Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. “This project illustrates that the World Bank is honored to be a trusted partner of Nepal as it faces three challenges at once: COVID, climate, and community opportunities.”

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STATUE OF LATE DILLI JUNG THAPA

# Cause For Recognition

*Unveiling the statue, Nepal government has finally recognize Chief Engineer Colonel late Dilli Jung Thapa, a Rurkee graduate, for his contributions in opening the first tunnel*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**A**lthough he built the first tunnel in South Asia, it took almost 104 years to honor the great personality of Nepal Chief Engineer Colonel late Dilli Jung Thapa for his pioneer work in tunnel construction.

Amid a function in Churia Heatauda, Hetauda Sub-Metropolitan City and Churiamai Temple Management Committee have unveiled the statue of chief engineer colonel late Thapa in front of the entry point of tunnel.

Hetauda Municipality and the government of Bagmati Province have declared the tunnel a site of historic importance, planning to preserve it as a monument. Col Dilli Jung Thapa had also established a temple at Churiyamai, which is now an important religious site in Hetauda.

“This statue is not only the recognition of work of an individual but a recognition for Nepal’s engineering and history,” said Chanda Rana, whose research has opened several contributions of pioneer engineer late Thapa, addressing the program.

Built in 1917, the length of Nepal’s first tunnel was 500 meters.

It was built with local resources. Despite the negligence, the tunnel is still in good condition.

Built at a time when highway tunnels were a rarity in Asia, it cut travel time between Bhimphedi to the Indian railhead in Raxaul. Beyond Bhimphedi, it was possible to reach Kathmandu, three days away, by walking or on horseback.

The 500m tunnel through the Chure ridge between Hetauda

ple and family members. Despite his immense contribution in modernizing Nepal, the work of the great hero of modern Nepali engineering is gradually disappearing.

Thanks to the research of Granddaughter Chanda Rana, chief engineer Colonel Thapa’s work came to limelight.

From ropeway to tunnel, from neo-classic architecture to hydropower, irrigation canal and urban



and Amlekhganj was constructed by army engineer Col Dilli Jang Thapa with local resources, and is still in good condition.

The statue of Chief Engineer Colonel late Thapa unveiled in a gathering of officials and local people

planning, Chief Engineer Colonel late Thapa had played a key role in materializing Prime Minister Chandra Sumsher’s projects to bring change in the country.

When grand daughter Rana started the research, the Chure Tun-



nel, which is regarded as the first tunnel in South Asia, was on the process of demolition and destruction. With her efforts, Hetauda Sub-Metropolitan City agreed to protect the tunnel allocating budget for its renovation.

Centuries ago, the tunnel used to be a lifeline of Kathmandu Valley. With the construction of the tunnel, it reduces the distance as well as difficult and fragile road of Chure region.

“Of course, my grandfather was the architect of Tunnel. I am launching a struggle to save that period of the history of Nepal,” said Rana.

Along with building the first tunnel in Churia in Hetauda to Bhimphe-di-Matatirtha Ropeway and designing almost three dozen Rana Palaces in Neo-Classic styles, Chief Engineer Colonel late Thapa was also a lead designer of Chandra Nahar, the first modern canal to irrigate the land in eastern Terai in Saptari.

The Churia Tunnel, Bhimphe-di Road, and Chandra Nahar are still in good shape, neo-classic Rana Palaces, which remain a major heritage and buildings built in the Rana period, are now in the process of being demolished.

Grandson of Governor General of Eastern Nepal Colonel Gajraj Singh Thapa and son of Colonel Harsh Jung Thapa, chief engineer Colonel late Dilli Jung Thapa opened the floodgates of development engineering. One of his memorable works is signing the agreement on the use of Chandra Nahar.

“The tunnel was built on orders of Prime Minister Chandra

Shumshere Rana, and was supposed to reduce the time taken by horse-drawn carriages and lorries to travel from the Indian border to Bhimphe-di,” says Col Thapa’s grand-daughter Chanda Rana, who wants to turn the tunnel into a heritage site.

Col Thapa himself was the great-grandson of Jang Bahadur Rana, and got his engineering degree at the Thomson College of Engineering in Rourkee in British India. He died at the age of 52 in 1946.

Although it is not clear how much the tunnel cost, historians say the military completed the job ahead of schedule and returned the unspent budget to the treasury.

Rana, who is researching her grandfather’s life, says the government at that time was looking at several options, including a serpentine road over the Chure, a longer option around the mountain and the tunnel. Col Thapa is understood to have argued that although the tunnel would be costlier, it would save money in the long run because

of lower maintenance cost.

The Chure is made up of soft sediment of sand and boulders, without bedrock, thus making it easier to drill. Parts of the tunnel are still accessible and measure 2.7m wide and 3m high just enough to allow vehicles at the time to pass.

In his book, Nepal, Swiss geologist Toni Hagen writes about



seeing the tunnel during his walk to Kathmandu in 1950, expressing surprise at such a sophisticated tunnel in the largely underdeveloped country.

“Pioneer engineer Dilli Jung Thapa (my grandfather), com-

## NATIONAL

ing from Roorkee, started reconstruction of the damaged Durbars with his advanced neo-classic designs and with new touch. Some major reconstruction happened to old ones. Few changes were done here and there, with his brilliant engineering skill for which he had collections of branded catalogues from London, Europe, for his unique interiors, choosing chandeliers, glasses, railings to furniture to carpets to suit the

with RCC inside. Laxmi Niwas and a house near Ghantaghar were built using RCC. So mostly all Rana era durbars were reconstructed by my grandfather, including Bagh Durbar, part of Sital Niwas and Belayati Baithak, along with Putali Bagaincha.

The statue of Dilli Jung Thapa was casted by sculptor Laxman Bhujel at the cost of Rs.800,000.00 contributed by Hetauda Metropolitan. Mayor Hari Bahadur Ma-

ue. Chanda Rana, granddaughter of Thapa coordinated with Department of Archeology for approval of the Tunnel's maintenance.

Two grandsons Arjun Jung Thapa and Janak Jung Thapa were thrilled at the event when bust of their grandfather chief engineer Brigadier Col Dilli Jung Thapa was unveiled with honor as both had worked hard as a team with their sister Chanda Rana on research of their grandfather's Golden contribution to the motherland as a pioneer engineer.

In the entire current media hubbub about proposed highway tunnels in Thankot, Sanga, and the Terai Fast Track, it may be worth remembering that Nepal's first ever highway tunnel was built as far back as 1917 in Hetauda.

Pedestrians used the tunnel to cross over to the other side till recently, but the army blocked it during the conflict. Parts of the tunnel collapsed in the 2015 earthquake, but the entrance is still intact. Engineers say that after repair, it could still be used for one-way motor traffic.

### Chanda Rana One Woman's Show

Thanks to the dedication and commitment of Rana, the work of Chief Engineer Colonel late Thapa was recognized after 104 years.

Chanda Rana has shown how hidden historical facts about Nepal can come to light. Chief Engineer Colonel late Dilli Jung Thapa is her great grand-father but he is also a great person in Nepal's engineering field -- he contributed immensely in building construction, dam, road and tunnel.

Thanks to her research and investigation of decades, the work of Chief Engineer Colonel late Thapa, who dig the first tunnel in South Asia, was recognized in 104 years.

Rana's work shows the path of dedication for all people.



various Durbars with each different pattern and style. "Daly", he used to be called, started reconstruction and renovation from 1935 B.S. I can claim my grandfather did 80 percent of the major reconstruction and built new Rana Durbars, too after the 1934 earthquake, Lalita Niwas, Laxmi Niwas etc. Not only had he renovated Ghantaghar and undertaken many other major reconstructions of damaged infrastructure then, chief engineer brigadier colonel Dilli Jung Thapa was also the first to introduce RCC buildings in Nepal. Scared by the earthquake, Mohan Sumsher Rana requested my grandfather to build earthquake resilient buildings

hat highlighted the historical contributions of late Thapa by constructing the tunnel which links Kathmandu and Terai. He said that this is the first gravel road of Nepal and first tunnel of South Asia.

Similarly, province 3 is responsible for maintaining the part of the damaged tunnel for which tender has already been called and 30 million rupees has already been allocated for retrofit and other maintenances.

Organized by Churia Mai and Tunnel Protection Committee, Prem Bomjoing, chairman of the committee, highlighted the importance of the tunnel to be developed as tourist spot and its historical val-



THL

# A Breakthrough

*Signing of contract agreement for the construction of package one is a major breakthrough to complete Tanahu Hydropower Limited*

By A CORRESPONDENT

For Pradeep Kumar Thike, managing director of Tanahu Hydropower Limited, signing the contract agreement with contractor for the construction of a package of the project was a time of jubilation.

As he signed the contract agreement, his entire team heaved a sigh of relief as the work of package one had been already two years behind the package 2 and package 3. “This is a very important day. We need to accelerate the pace to minimize the gap in interface,” said Thike.

After several difficulties and constraints, on Tuesday, March 23, Tanahu Hydropower Ltd (THL) And Song Da Corporation, Vietnam-Kalika Construction (P) Ltd, Nepal (JV) signed a

contract agreement for the construction of the package one of Head works of Tanahu Hydropower Project.

Even as the contract agreement was signed, it will be another few months for the mobilization of the contractor. “We are expecting to mobilize the contractor at not far than the beginning of June,” said MD Thike.

MD Thike and representative of the JV Bikram Pandey inked the agreement. The amount of the contract agreement is Rs.16.62 billion excluding VAT. “Today is the very important day for our project. Now, the construction of the project will move in full swing,” said MD Thike.

For the past two and half years, MD Thike, who preferred to work quiet-

ly but effectively, had faced very tough times terminating agreement, announcing retendering, evaluation of the technical and financial proposals, submitting to Asian Development Bank for approval and so on. COVID-19 Pandemic made the matter worse pushing the selection process at least over a year. MD Thike also went to court in Italy to reimburse confiscated over Rs.2 billion bank guarantee amounts.

“Once the team from Vietnam arrives, the project will intensively discuss how to accelerate the pace of the construction work,” said MD Thike. As Song Da Corporation, Vietnam-Kalika Construction (P) Ltd, Nepal (JV) are very reputed contractors in their countries respectively, they have capability to





accelerate the work.

Although the package one has been delayed due to termination of the contract with Cooperativa Muratori e Cementisti di Ravenna (CMC), the Italian contractor appointed to execute one of the components of the power plant, Syno-hydro, contractor of package two, has been making a good progress completing some of the major works.

With a rare media appearance, the contractor of 220 kV Damauli-Bharatpur double circuit transmission line has been making a good progress. As a managing director of the project, Thike has been quietly facilitating all the working process to finalize the project work.

As the contractor of phase one is two years behind the phase two, the challenge is to interface two contractors. Having a long experience of working in the hydropower projects including Upper Tamakoshi, Nepal's largest hydropower

project, MD Thike knows ins and outs of the construction management. Given his own experience, MD Thike can overcome the difficulties faced by the project.

Although the entire process has been delayed for a long time, MD Thike said that the construction work will complete within 57 months of the execution of the agreement.

The package one agreement of 140 MW Tanahu Hydropower includes diversion of the river and construction of dam. As per the agreement, the contractor company has to complete the construction work within the 57 months of signing the agreement.

ADB is helping Nepal develop a 140-megawatt hydropower plant to be located on the Seti River in Tanahu district. The project will build the medium-sized plant with water storage facilities and transmission system. It will also provide rural electrification

and community development in the area, and a reform and restructuring plan for the national utility, the Nepal Electricity Authority.

Tanahu Hydropower Limited — the developer of Tanahu Hydropower Project — terminated the contract signed with Cooperativa Muratori e Cementisti di Ravenna (CMC), the Italian contractor appointed to execute one of the components of the power plant, on 1 October 2018.

THL published the first tender notice on 25 April 2019. Following the evaluation, all the tenders were canceled and retender was republished on 28 February 2020.

After the upsurge of COVID-19 Pandemic subsequent announcement of lockdowns and restriction on international flights, the date for tender extended several times.



Finally, following technical evaluation of three international tenders, two were asked to submit financial proposals. Out of two, Song Da Corporation, Vietnam-Kalika Construction (P) Ltd, and Nepal (JV) was awarded contract as the lowest bidder.

The construction work under package two has been currently undergoing. This package includes tunnel, construction of powerhouse and supply of hydro-mechanical and electromechanical equipments.

The contractor company Syno Hydro has already completed the construction of Cable Tunnel and currently it is working on under-ground powerhouse, tunnel for search tank access and access tunnel to dam site.

Under the third package, the construction work of 220 kV double circuits Damauli Bharatpur Transmission line is underway.

Tanahu Hydropower Limited, the wholly owned subsidiary of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), the state-owned power utility had selected CMC to execute an important component of the \$550 million plant located in central Nepal.

Although Sinohydro Corporation, the Chinese contractor hired to execute the hydro mechanical and electromechanical works under the second package of the project has already mobilized the workforce

at the project site, the construction of the entire project will be affected as the tasks of the two contractors are interrelated.

The Tanahu Hydropower Project will be one of the biggest reservoir-type projects in the country, with an estimated annual energy generation capacity of 587.7 gigawatt hours in the first 10 years of operation.

The project can generate energy for six hours daily during the dry

season. Tanahu Hydropower is developing the project using a credit facility extended jointly by the Asian Development Bank, Japan International Cooperation Agency and European Investment Bank. The project is estimated to cost \$550 million.

The recent development means a delay in construction of the 140MW storage type project, which has been divided into two components with a contractor for each package.

Situated 150 km west of Kathmandu on Seti River near Damauli of Tanahu District, the project is a storage type plant capable of supplying peak power for minimum of 6 hours daily. The power will be evacuated through a 40 km long 220 kV double circuit transmission line to New Bharatpur sub-station.

According to the project, the estimated Annual energy will be 585.7 GWh, with Primary energy at 266.2 GWh and secondary energy at 319.5

GWh. The project will be equipped with sediment flushing system. The height of the dam is 450 meters.

The project is being funded by Nepal Government, Nepal Electricity Authority, Asian Development Bank, European Investment Bank and JICA. The contributions are: ADB 150 Million USD, JICA 183 Million USD, EIB 85 Million USD, GoN/NEA 87 Million USD. According to the provision, ADB loan will be used for the head works, rural electrification, transmission line, environment and social safeguard program, Project Supervision Consultant. JICA loan will be for water ways and power house including hydro-mechanical and electromechanical equipments, GON/NEA fund for pre-construction infrastructure like access road, bridge, construction power, land acquisition etc.

The main features of the project are as follows: Reservoir area 7.26 sq.km, reservoir length 18 km; Full supply level 415 m, Minimum operating level 378m; Diversion tunnel No.1 -556m, No.2 -622 m; Dam concrete gravity of height 140 m; Spillway chute type: gated spillway with roller bucket type energy dissipater; Intake: single tower type intake, Headrace tunnel: 1162m, Tailrace tunnel: 117m; Powerhouse: underground 5.

Two permanent and primary access roads and several temporary and secondary access roads provide access to the project area. The other pre-construction activities include camp facilities, Construction Power Sub-station etc.

The project will also include Rural Electrification (RE) and Transmission Lines (TL) component. A new 220 kV double circuits TL will

evacuate the generated power to the new Bharatpur substation. The length of the transmission line corridor is 35 km. In addition, the project will electrify almost all unelectrified villages through the Rural Electrification (RE) Program.

As all the contract agreements have now been completed, MD Thike, an experienced manager, will have another difficult task before him: to accelerate the work by mobilizing the contractors.



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SCALING UP SHOCK RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION IN SAPTARI

# Effective Disaster Response

*Scaling Up Social Protection Systems for Effective Disaster Response*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Unlike previous years, Sunar Bati BK, a seventy-five-year-old resident of Umar Tole of Saptakoshi Municipality Ward 3, did not have to face difficulty as the cold wave hit his family this year.

With the support from DCA's and its local partner Koshi Victim's Society (KVS) and close collaboration with Saptakoshi Municipality, BK receives NPR. 2000 to purchase clothes and essentials foodstuffs to feed his family of six.

BK, who belongs to the Dalit community, a historically marginalized and vulnerable group, had a bitter experience two years ago when his five-year-old grandson was hospitalized due to the cold. "It was a really tough time for our family. We didn't have money to purchase food and warm blanket and clothes," recalled BK. "This year, we received everything within a week of a cold wave hitting our area".

BK and his family are among the 460 households (229 male and 231 female) from 11

wards in Saptakoshi Municipality of Saptari District who received the NPR.2000 support.

The support was provided through cash transfer, using the existing 'Social Protection (SP)' system for cold wave response of the Saptakoshi Municipality. This combination of using cash transfer and integrating it with an existing social protection system is a pilot project initiated

ed, "In the past, the months of December to February, was a difficult time for me and my family. I always worried about not having enough food to survive during the winters. But the NPR 2000 cash really helped us." Of his family of six, Ganekhi Sada's son is the only earning member. "This winter, my son couldn't go to work. The NPR 2000 might have seemed like a small amount,



by DCA in collaboration with the Saptakoshi Municipality.

80 years old Ganekhi Sada, a resident of Ward No. 3 of Saptakoshi Municipality stat-

but it was lifesaving for my family. We bought food for the family with the money," informed Sada.

Integrated social registry along with the vulnerability



index at the household level to hazards, made it easier to target beneficiaries during emergencies. Cash transfer was provided through the banking system.

73-years old Ghich-

there might be a chance of the relief packages not reaching the cold-wave affected population. This has been reported by the media as well.

“This pilot for Shock Responsive Social Protection

mented on a small scale, DCA with its local partner KVS and the Saptakoshi Municipality mapped the Vulnerability Index at a household level to areas that are vulnerable to hazards such as flood, cold wave, and others.

With the pre-disaster database which includes SP and households and their vulnerabilities in one system, in any event, the municipality can quickly release assistance in the form of cash.

Along with cash, DCA also provided technical support to the Saptakoshi Municipality for developing Cash Voucher Assistance guideline (CVA), capacity development, and operational management support to deliver cash.



ne Devi Chaudhary, a resident of Utter Tole of Ward no 3 of Saptakoshi municipality, stated, “ I received Rs. 2000.00 in my bank account opened for social protection. I used the money to purchase warm clothes and a blanket.”

“Among others, the impoverished communities are at the receiving end of the harsh cold weather,” stated Biswash Pokharel social protection mobilizer at Saptakoshi Municipality.

Most of the poor people live in shacks built on unregistered land which are unsafe and lack basic amenities, increasing the risk of health ailments. “We had seen the cases of pneumonia, diarrhea, and common cold patients,” informed Pokharel.

The municipality carried out distribution of relief and cash packages on a random basis, and

(SRSP), opens up opportunities to collaborate with INGOs like DCA and local NGO like KVS, by using our SP to reach the disaster affected population,” stated Uttam Kumar Sharma, Mayor of Saptakoshi Municipality.

Through the pilot, Saptakoshi Municipality plans to integrate data collection of social protection for shock response.

According to spokesperson Shiva Raj Joshi of Department of National ID and Civil Registration, 398 local level governments now have an online payment system to distribute the Social Protection Benefits. Over 3.1 million people have been receiving the SP through the online banking system. “ Our data can be used for all the purposes including disaster response,” informed Joshi.”

Although it was imple-

“Through the pilot initiative, we generated knowledge and evidence for developing the national policy framework for SRSP. This will support us in informing policy level decision to integrate SRSP for effective disaster management, ” stated Dinesh Gurung, Program Manager- Humanitarian Response and DRR at DCA.

In the year 2020 and the beginning of 2021, the poor people in areas such as Saptari, faced economic challenges due to lockdowns induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The subsequent floods and the cold wave furthered added to their woes.

“Through our discussions, we came to know that during the lockdown, the families of daily wage labors faced more hardship,” stated Pokharel, social mobiliser. With over 3 month of lockdown, daily wage laborers

## DEVELOPMENT

and migrant workers' families were the most affected; with no jobs and increasing food insecurity at the household level.

According to a United Nations Development Program (UNDP) report, three in every five employees of both formal and informal micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Nepal have lost their jobs as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. This meant the affected populations had to endure the difficulties caused by both COVID-19 and the cold wave.

For 88 years-old Man Bahadur Paidol, a resident of Ward no 3 of Saptakoshi Municipality of Saptari district, the crisis had made his life more difficult as the lockdown had badly affected his family income. "As we ran out of food, I had to ask others for food. My son does not have a regular job. Our family relies on the small farm that I have. But since the lockdown I haven't been able to grow and sell anything and the cold wave further made things worse."

With the cash support, Paidol was able to purchase food supplies for 15 days, which helped his family. "The support was meaningful and well-coordinated. It was also crucial at that particular time of the crisis," stated Mayor Sharma.

The SRSP, is a relatively new idea in Nepal. It envisions to incorporate humanitarian assistance with existing SP system. Globally, the humanitarian discourse is promoting the idea of

Shock Responsive Social Protection.

Spokesperson of the National Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Authority (NRDDMA) of Nepal said that the agency has been supporting the cash distribution during disasters. The database of social



protection is yet to be used for such disaster response. From the center to the municipal level, there are established units of the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) System which works for response, preparedness, and assistance for affected population. However, the DRM effort has not yet taken steps to interlink between the beneficiaries under the SP and vulnerable populations under the DRM during an event of a disaster.

In the past, the DRM support is mostly undertaken through a blanket approach. The spokesperson of the Ministry of Home Affairs Chakra Bahadur Budha, said that the District Administration Office distributes a certain amount of cash to the affected people during floods and landslides for immediate purposes, based on the recommendations from the local level.

The government of Nepal and other humanitarian agencies have been distributing cash to the affected populations of disasters for a long time. The District Disaster Management Committee and District Administrative Office distribute a certain amount of cash to the affected populations as per the relief standards.

"In collaboration with UNICEF, Nepal Red Cross Society has been mapping and developing the data based on flood plain river basins of some of the municipalities for promoting SRSP," said Ramesh Ghimire, Cash Voucher Assistance (CVA) Coordinator of Nepal Red Cross Society. He further stated, "The SP data base will be useful in establishing linkages to the banking system," Ghimire.

Owing to the pandemic, and adverse effects of climate change, along with increasing frequency, severity of humanitarian crises, the elderly, marginalized and other vulnerable communities living in crisis-prone areas, face greater exposure to shocks and stresses. SP, including cash transfer programs, can play a vital role in helping families to prepare, cope, and recover from shocks and stresses.

DCA's pilot project in Saptakoshi Municipality has shown that supporting the government at the local levels to use social protection systems to respond to affected population of disasters is an effective way to reach the people in need.



# Global Order: Change Is Coming!



BY: ABIJIT SHARMA

The casualty figures show no sign of stopping any time soon. With the number of COVID-19 infected and deceased going up by the day and a second and even third wave being witnessed in different part of the world, governments across Europe and North America are scrambling to put measures in place. Talks of how the world will look like after the containment of the virus are slowly starting to emerge. New York Times columnist Thomas Freidman writes that the world will now have a new historical divide, BC—before corona and AC—after corona—while acclaimed author Yuval Noah Harrari feels that in the post COVID world, people might have to forgo their privacy for the sake of their health. Many others have their own arguments.

Only time will tell how the experts' prophecies will play out. But history does show that big events, be it pandemics or war, have always impacted the existing theological, philosophical, economic or political beliefs. The bubonic plague which spread across Europe between 1347 and 1351 challenged the religious dominance of the Roman Catholic Church with many questioning why God inflicted such suffering on humankind. The spread of smallpox and efforts to contain it in the 20th century led to a revolutionary change in the global health system. The effect of wars has been no less. World War I left much of Europe in severe economic distress and the dominance of Germany and the Ottoman Empire crumbled. The end of the Second World War ushered in another profound political change—the rise of the US and USSR as global superpowers.

There is no denying that we now live in a more scientifically advanced, peaceful, globalized and interdependent world that does limit chances of drastic transformations. But indications that we were in for some change was already apparent since a few years back. What were the indications? For one, the swift economic growth of China and India had already started to give signals that the coming decades belonged to the East. A change in the global order was slowly being predicted. In this context, what the COVID-19 outbreak has done is that it has simply accelerated the process. Kishore Mahbubani, author of *Has China Won? The Chinese Challenge to American Primacy* aptly puts it in one of his recent interviews. He says that a post-Covid-19 world will see a move away from the US-centric globalization to more China-centric globalization. I would go a bit further and term this Asia-centric globalization. How the outbreak will help accelerate this process is what we need to look into.

To begin with, despite its early missteps, China's handling of the pandemic was nothing short of heroic. Actions

were taken swiftly, lockdowns were put in place and the healthcare system, despite being overwhelmed, successfully coped with the outbreak. The political leadership never appeared to falter and in a matter of just three months, the country was largely able to contain the spread of the virus. China's success in handling the pandemic reflected how robust and efficient political system is in the country—the same political system that the West was so fond of lambasting. Moreover, at a time when the West, which often spearheaded aid efforts in the aftermath of calamities appeared completely paralyzed, China used the opportunity to engage in strategic diplomacy earning itself some crucial brownie points.

Change is inevitable, hence, a change in the global order is inevitable. However, if one is expecting a swift change, they are in for a disappointment. Students of international relations know that any change in the global order is always gradual. Since the global economy is in tatters, it will take countries, China included, some time to get back to their

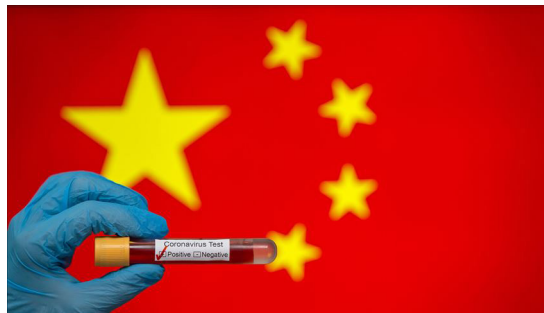
feet. Reviving an economy requires boosting both supply and demand. With the pandemic hitting incomes and purchasing power of people at home and abroad, the economy might still take to revive despite factories coming into operation.

But even on

this matter, the Eastern economies appear ahead. A recent report by McKinsey and Company predicted that it could take the US another three to four years to recover from the economic impact of the virus while for China it projects a much earlier resuscitation time of 2021. Even when the economies revive, the change will come about slowly. For instance, the Eastern countries will gradually have a stronger say in matters of global concern. The West will not be able to go about its way unopposed in all matters.

Economic transactions will be centered more around the East. Who knows, Eastern values might even reign supreme over Western values of materialism, individualism and crony capitalism. It might take a few years or a decade before the world can say that the East is now the new West, but the day will definitely come.

*(Abijit is a Political Science graduate from University of Delhi and an LLM graduate from ECUPL, China)*



# Why On The Thirteenth Day?



BY: HEMANG DIXIT

The Chief Justice of our Supreme Court decreed that the house which was no longer in existence should be revived within the next thirteen days. Why this particular injunction? To re-cap it was on Poush 5th (Nov. 2020) that our PM quoted the parliamentary practise of England, which incidentally does not have a constitution, as an example of his right. The parliamentary procedures, quoted by our PM KP Oli when he claimed the right to dissolve parliament however are no longer permitted in the UK!

It is surprising that our PM Oli called for the re-statement of our House of Representatives on the 13th day instead choosing the 3rd. Was this because of cultural roots or was he, for some reason or the other bidding for time? It seems surprising, for the thirteenth day is the final day of ritual for the deceased. A closing chapter in one's life! Choice of 3rd would have been more appropriate, like the resurrection of Christ, after he was crucified and buried! The first meeting of our House of Representatives, like a phoenix rejuvenated, was called for on 7th March 2021 but the session was short and rather rowdy! Was this inauspicious? Is this an indication of a bleak future for the Nepali populace whilst being a horse-trading bonanza for the politicians of our land? For whom are the heavenly stars in appropriate alignment for success? The future for us Nepalis seems very blurred and hazy.

As birds of the same feather flock together, and as there are neither permanent friends nor foes in politics, it is likely that the politicians will come to a political deal that suits them rather than what is best for the country. How we the people are currently leading our lives, not only in Nepal but elsewhere in the world too, is bizarre as one becomes aware of happenings elsewhere also. Can we in Nepal forget about Ram Rajya? Is it Kaliyug that we are on the threshold of? Can the Westerners forget about the Apocalypse?

What are some of the happenings in Nepal? On 7th March 2021, Suki Baduwal, a mother of 3 girls and a boy went out from their home at Aatibas Municipality of Dailekh District and jumped into the Karnali River. Whilst the bodies of the mother and 3 children were retrieved soon, that of the youngest girl was found downstream at Asarghat in Achham district a week later. Why did the mother take this drastic heart rending step on the eve of the International Nari Divas on 8th March that we are celebrating in Nepal? Cannot such tragedies be lessened if not stopped?

Previously at the time of Gai Jatra, more specifically during the afternoon when the Baowla Jatra was in progress, it had become customary to hold a Gay Parade too. This year's parade by the Nepal Queer Group on Nari Divas in Kathmandu has apparently been done for the third time to draw attention to the rights of the LGBTQ as a whole, is a second entity to hold such an event on an annual basis.

Nikolas Lobel, a CDU party representative from Mannheim, and Georg Nusslein a CSU representative were both charged for having received kickbacks in the ordering of masks for the Covid-19 epidemic and resigned from their posts. Even the German President Steinmeier has called for transparency in this matter! Another CDU parliamentarian, Mark Hauptmann has had to resign too for taking foreign tourist advertisements in a newspaper that he runs. One has only to recall the incident of Corona Testing Kits and Ventilators that were hastily imported into the country by a certain favoured firm in Nepal. Investigation of this misdeed has not been announced, so no results can be expected. Another news is that a group of 18 Chinese nationals were arrested by the authorities in Shanghai for having sold and dispatched abroad, vials filled with water but labelled as protective vaccines for the Corona pandemic. Such is the world status!

We are a poor country and cannot do what President Biden has done for the American citizens. There 1.3 Trillion Dollars will be used as handouts to improvised and unemployed citizens, buying and giving vaccines for Corona protection, helping schools and aid to small businesses, all for getting the country back on its feet. This action of his has been described as the greatest welfare deed in US history since the New Deal of Franklin D Roosevelt at the time of the great depression, ninety years ago. Opponents to these measures say that it will cause inflation but this creditable monetary input by the government is the requirement at these troubled times. President Biden has been praised for telling the truth to his countrymen. Will our politicians ever do that? May God grant them wisdom to strive for their communities rather than for themselves.

We in Nepal are at a watershed, on the threshold of great changes. Instead of the Nepali Janata being the Janardan, it is the current politicians who are taking decisions for personal benefit. Most of them, irrespective of which party they are in, are all turncoats, always prepared to throw their professed beliefs to the wind for the sake of personal benefits. The resurrected house after four sittings has still to start normal functioning. Possibilities of disturbances are very high. What will be the direction of our politics in future? Will there be a government for the people rather than a government that lives on its people? Will our current 7th Constitution have more amendments? Will major concerns of the Nepali people be decided on the basis of referendums rather than by the whims of some individuals prompted by foreigners in foreign countries? With all these important queries as background thoughts, the refrain from many simple Nepalis is: 'May Lord Pashupatinath look after our welfare (kalyan)'.

*The author is a retired medical doctor and writes fiction under the pen name of Mani Dixit also. Website: [www.hdixit.org.np](http://www.hdixit.org.np). Twitter: @manidixitdh*





# अटुट छ यो साथ जुनीजुनीलाई समृद्धिको सौगात, मेरी उनीलाई

## मेरी उनीलाई

मुद्दती खाता



### उच्च व्याजदर

#### खाताका विशेषताहरू

- अवधि ६ महिना माथि देखि ५ वर्ष सम्म
- यस खातामा ५० हजार भन्दा माथिको रकम पुनः थप गर्दै जान पनि सकिनेछ
- न्यूनतम मौज्जात रु. १००,०००/-

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डेबिट कार्ड



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