

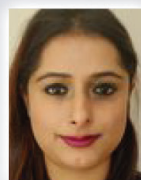
DAO Kathmandu Regd. No. 148/11/063/064
ISSN: 2091-0711



OPINION
BINOJ BASNYAT



DOCUMENT
Areet Narang Bastola



HEALTH
Areet Narang Bastola

NEW SPOTLIGHT

www.spotlightnepal.com

June 18, 2021

FORTNIGHTLY

CHILD LABOUR

Alarming High

INSIDE



PM OLI
Mending Ties



WORLD BANK
Supporting Higher Education



NEPAL COVID-19 THIRD WAVE
Children Under A Threat

कालो ढुसी (म्यूकरमाइकोसिस) सम्बन्धी जान्ने पर्ने कुरा

कोभिड-१९ भएका बिरामीमा आँखा, नाक र अनुहार बिगाने
कालो ढुसीको संक्रमण नेपालमा अहिले केही मानिसमा पुष्टि भएको छ।
यो संक्रमण विरलै देखिन्छ तर संक्रमण गम्भीर भए प्राणघातक पनि हुनसक्ने
भएकोले समयमा नै ध्यान पुऱ्याउनु आवश्यक छ।

कालो ढुसीका सामान्य प्रारम्भिक लक्षणहरू



अनुहार, मुख, नाक,
आँखा वरिपरि दुस्ने



आँखा र नाक सुनिने,
रातो हुने वा दुस्ने



नाकको वरिपरिको छालाको
रंग कालो हुँदै जाने, रगत
बग्ने, बाक्लो सँगान आउने



ज्वरो आउने



आँखाको ढकनी सुनिने
र ढकनी म्फुक्ने, आँखाले
धमिलो देख्ने



दाँत दुस्ने वा हल्लिने

उच्च जोखिम भएकाहरू

- कोभिड-१९ उपचारका क्रममा स्टेरोइड प्रयोग गरेका व्यक्तिहरू
- चिकित्सकको सल्लाह बिना एन्टिबायोटिक वा अन्य औषधीको जथाभावी प्रयोग गर्नेहरू
- मधुमेह भएका वा शरीरको रोग प्रतिरोधात्मक क्षमता कमजोर भएकाहरू

घरमा आइसोलेसनमा बस्दा अपनाउन सकिने

रोकथामका उपायहरू

- सफा र सुरक्षा मास्क प्रयोग गर्ने, डिस्पोजेबल मास्कको पुनः प्रयोग नगर्ने
- नियमित रूपमा हात धुने वा स्यानिटाइजरको प्रयोग गर्ने
- व्यक्तिगत सरसफाईमा ध्यान दिने
- घर बाहिर वा फोहरमा काम गर्नु परे डिस्पोजेबल पन्जाको प्रयोग गर्ने
- घेरै धुलो भएको र ओसिलो ठाउँमा नजाने
- नुनिलो पानीले नाक सफा गर्ने
- पोभिडोन आयोडिन भएको तरल पदार्थले घाँटी र मुख कुल्फा गर्ने
- मधुमेह भएका बिरामीले सुगर नियन्त्रणमा राख्ने
- स्वास्थ्यकर्मीको सल्लाहमा मात्रै औषधी प्रयोग गर्ने

यो कोरोना जस्तो एक मानिसबाट अर्को मानिसमा सर्दैन

कोरोना संक्रमणबाट बच्नका लागि जनसमुदायका सबै मापदण्डको पालना गर्नु



मास्क लगाउनु



भौतिक दूरी कायम गर्नु



बेलपेलमा सडुनपाईले हात धोनु



नेपाल सरकार

सञ्चार तथा सूचना प्रविधि मन्त्रालय
सूचना तथा प्रसारण विभाग



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

www.spotlightnepal.com

Kathmandu DAO Regd. No.

148/11/063/64

Central Region Postal Regd.

No. 36/067/068

US Library of Congress Catalogue

No. 91-905060, ISSN : 2091-0711

(Print), ISSN: 2091-0754 (Online)

Printing

Megha Offset Printing Press P. Ltd.,

Dhapasi, Kathmandu

Tel. : 977-1-4363624

With support from international agencies like International Labour Organisations (ILO) and UNICEF, Nepal had made big progress containing child labor throughout the country. Along with advocacy campaigns, the new laws and regulations have helped to discourage employing child labor in factories and another hazardous workplace. New laws even have certain provisions making the child as labor as a crime punishable up to 3 years. Published last year, a survey conducted by ILO and CBS has shown that child labor has drastically declined. Following the surge of Covid-19 since last year, the situation has drastically changed. The success galore of Nepal is crumbling fast as the economic disparity is growing in rural and urban areas. As the economic conditions of rural people are deteriorating, it will put pressure on the parents to send children for work. As a part of the UN Convention against child labor, Nepal has also celebrated world day against Child labor. Although there are several issues before us, New Spotlight has decided to make Nepal's moves against child labor is our cover story. Along with this, we also cover the political situation of the country and also cover the issues of preparation for the possible third wave of Covid-19 pandemic as other important stories.

Keshab Poudel

Editor

CONTENT

MIGRATION TO INDIA

Survival Way 3

NEWSNOTES

4

OPINION

BINOJ BASNYAT 8

ARTICLE

ILO 11

ENVIRONMENT

Batu Uprety 12

NEPAL COVID-19 THIRD WAVE

Children Under A Threat 14

PM OLI

Mending Ties 16

MADHU KUMAR MARASINI

Vision of Change 18

ADB

28

DOCUMENT

Areet Narang Bastola 30

HEALTH

Areet Narang Bastola 32

WORLD BANK

Supporting Higher Education 34

BOOK

On Indian Philosophy 35

ARTICLE

Hemang Dixit 36



COVERSTORY: CHILD LABOUR: Alarming High

19



TANAHU HYDROPOWER: Another Breakthrough

26



KMC: A Successful Drive

10

MIGRATION TO INDIA

Survival Way

As the number of Covid-19 cases recedes in India, large numbers of Nepalese of western and far-western region have started to migrate to India for work

By A CORRESPONDENT

Returned home two months ago following the massive surges of Covid-19 in India, Nepalese from mid-west and far-west region have started to return India for work and save family from starvation.

With no job opportunities back home, India is a big job markets for Nepalese from these regions. According to police in Nepalgunj, over 300 Nepalese are crossing daily from Jamunaha Border Point.

While the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic is still going on, people have started to enter India in search of employment. At a time when people have no options back home, they are compelled to go India for employment.

The Jamunaha Police said that as the daily COVID-19 infection rate started declining in India and as the lockdowns implemented in various hotspots were lifted, the number of Nepalis entering India for employment had increased.

The Police said that mostly the youth of Lumbini, Karnali, and Sudurpaschim Province was going to India from the Jamunaha border.

According to Sub-Inspector Bishnu Giri, chief of Jamunaha Area Police Office, around 300 people were leaving Nepal daily for the past two-three days.

The Nepalis at the border who were marching towards India

said that they were compelled to go to India for employment as the pandemic and restrictions imposed to control the virus had left them in a starving condition.

“My family had to live in hunger after I became unemployed

Nepal daily from the Nepalgunj border point.

Nepalis go to various places of India including Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Gujrat, Punjab, and Delhi for seasonal works.

This is not only here. The



for two months due to the pandemic. I am left with no option other than going to India for employment,” said Deepak Thapa of Salyan.

Thapa said that many youths in his area were moving to India in search of jobs.

Likewise, Hari Bahadur Khatri of Paanchkatiya, Jajarkot said, “We decided to go to India after we heard about the resumption of transportation and industries over there.”

Meanwhile, the Jamunaha Police said that the number of people returning to Nepal from India was also on the rise. SI Giri said that over 500 Nepalis were returning via the Jamunaha border daily. Similarly, around 500 to 700 people enter

situation in Gaurifanta, Sunauli and Kanchanpur is same as large numbers of Nepalese have started to return India for work. Keeping the consideration of humanity, Indian officials are allowing Nepalese to go India for work.

Although the government claims that they have generated an employment back home, Nepalese citizens from mid-western and far-western region have to go to India for seasonal work to feed family back home.

Like in the last year, many Nepalese returned home following Covid-19. All of them returned soon after normalization in India, This year is also not exception.

NEWSNOTES

Nepal And India Agree To Collaborate To Fight Against Covid-19



Indian ambassador to Nepal Vinaya Mohan Kwatra paid a courtesy call to Minister of Health and Population Sher Bahadur Tamang at Ministry. During the meeting, Indian ambassador Kwatra and minister Tamang discussed the issues of mutual interest and collaboration between Nepal and India in the health sector.

Minister Tamang also thanked India for continual support to Nepal in fighting against Covid-19 despite problems faced by India.

According to a press release issued by the Ministry of Health and Population, minister Tamang had shown special interest in the vaccine purchase agreement and the existing complex and difficult situation in Nepal during the meeting.

UNDP Nepal Handed Over Medical Equipment To Nepal

The UNDP Nepal today handed over to Nepal medical equipment and supplies to help Nepal fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Senior officials of the Ministry of Health and Population received 200 units of Bio Medical Oxygen Concentrators 5L and 200 units of Bio Medical Oxygen Concentrators 10L from



Ayshanie Medagangoda-Labé, Resident Representative to the UNDP, Nepal at a brief ceremony at the Ministry of Health and Population.

Representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Population, UNDP as well as WHO

were also present at the ceremony.

These medical items will be distributed to all seven Provincial authorities soon.

The Government of Nepal sincerely appreciates and thanks the UNDP Nepal for its valuable support of critical medical items at a time Nepal is fighting against the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic.

India Provides Ventilators And Ambulances To Nepal Army

Fighting COVID-19 together, India handed over medical equipment including Ventilators & Ambulances to Nepal Army amid a function today at Nepal Army headquarter.

India hands over ten ventilators to Nepal. These were handed over to Chief of Army Staff General Purna Chandra Thapa by Indian Ambassador to Nepal Vinay Mohan Kwatra at Army Headquarters.

As a gesture of solidarity & close cooperation, medical equipment including Ventilators & Ambulances was handed over today by Ambassador Kwatra to General Purna Chandra Thapa, Chief of the Nepali Army.

Indian Army Handed Over Medical Equipment To Nepali Army

As part of its 'Neighborhood First' policy, medical equipment and supplies worth Nepali Rupees 28.80 Crores provided by the Indian Army were handed over to the Nepali Army today.

In a ceremony at Nepali Army Headquarters, Tundikhel today, the medical equipment was handed over by Ambassador Vinay Mohan Kwatra to General Purna Chandra Thapa, Chief of the Nepali Army. The ambassador reaffirmed India's support to Nepali Army in its fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and lauded its contribution in this respect.

According to a press release issued by The Embassy of India Kathmandu, the medical equipment, including Ventilators, Ambulances, ICU beds, PPE Kits, PCR test Kits etc was delivered to Kathmandu on 10 June 2021. The Indian Army has been assisting the Nepali Army to fight COVID-19 through various kinds of assistance since last year, including 1 Lakh doses of COVISHIELD vaccines which were provided in March 2021.

Izabella Koziell Appointed Deputy DG Of ICIMOD

Izabella Koziell has joined the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) as Deputy Director General.

"We are thrilled to announce that @izabella_koz has joined us as our new Deputy Director General! Welcome to the team, we're glad you're with us!," announces ICIMOD on its tweet.

"So excited to join @icimod to work with a fantastic team on hugely important #climatechange #environmentalawareness #sustainability challenges in the #HKH," tweets Izabella Koziell.

With thirty years' experience working in environment and development, in multiple leadership roles, and across policy, development and research, Izabella's work has spanned topics critical for the Hindu Kush Himalayan region, including climate change, water scarcity, biodiversity loss, and land and ecosystem degradation.

Izabella has spent 15 years with the UK's Department for International Development (now FCDO) based in



Kenya, London, and New Delhi, ICIMOD said in a statement.

Her most recent position was as Director for the CGIAR Research Programme on Water Land and Ecosystems, based in Sri Lanka with the International Water Management Institute.

"I am really excited at joining ICIMOD at this critical time for the planet. As DDG, a large part of my focus will be to ensure that ICIMOD is at the forefront in addressing the climate, economic and environmental challenges that this region faces, since it matters not just for our region but for the globe," said Izabella.

South Korea Supports RT-PCR (complete sets) Test Kits To Nepal Worth USD 200,000

The Government of the Republic of Korea granted

complete sets of RT-PCR test kits worth USD 200,000 through Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) to the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) on June 4, 2021. This will enable the Ministry to carry out 17,760 PCR tests.

A m b a s s a -

dor Park Chong-suk handed over the kits to Dr. Roshan Pokhrel, Chief Specialist, Health Co-ordination Division, Ministry of Health and Population in Tribhuvan International Airport.

The supported PCR test kits are complete sets, composed of three different types of kits required for collection, transfer and stable diagnosis of Covid-19.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Roshan Pokhrel expressed gratitude to the Korean Government for extending continuous helping hands to Nepal during the time of pandemic.

During the hand over event, Park Chong-suk, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Nepal expressed that "this assistance will support the Government of Nepal to conduct mass testing of the citizens of Nepal to control wide spread of the second wave of COVID 19".)

In order to support Nepal government in its fight against second wave of COVID 19 pandemic, KOICA will continuously put its efforts to support the Government of Nepal, added Mr. Sunghoon Ko, Country Director, KOICA.

In addition, KOICA has procured 378 pieces of oxygen concentrator for the Ministry of Health and Population and it is scheduled to be delivered by July/August. The support would help in saving lives of seriously infected people.

The Korean government has been contributing to support Nepal's efforts to combat COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, the Korean government provided more than 40

thousand complete sets of RT-PCR test kits to the MoHP and, KOICA, in particular, supported PPE, gloves, masks, sanitizers etc. worth USD 75,000 to various hospitals.

Korea has always extended its support to Nepal during its tough times be it disaster like earthquake and floods or pandemic. Korea has been gradually increasing its grant assistance to Nepal over the years.

Nepal received a medical consignment of 17,760 sets of RT-PCR test kits provided by the Government of the Republic of Korea today. H.E. Mr. Park Chong-suk, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea (ROK) to Nepal, handed over the medical assistance to Dr. Roshan Pokhrel, Chief Specialist at the According to a press release of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Population in a brief hand-over ceremony held at Tribhuvan International Airport this afternoon.

The Government of Korea is also providing Nepal with 378 oxygen concentrators which will arrive in Kathmandu next month.

The representatives of the Ministry of Health and Population, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and KOICA, among others, were also present during the handover ceremony.

Germany Supports Nepal To Combat COVID-19 Surge

As part of ongoing cooperation between Germany and Nepal to contain its rapid surge in COVID-19 infections, Germany supports Nepal with 112 ventilators, 2,068,500 K95 masks, 29,000 pulse oximeters, 34,030,000 surgical masks, 5 isolation centre tents, 400 gum boots, 25,000 litre hand disinfectants and others items. The first part of the shipment has arrived today in Nepal.

"This German support of today is part of a bigger European effort. I am grateful to the European Civil Protection Mechanism for ensuring coordination amongst all EU Members States and for organising our transport logistics. And I am confident that here in Nepal, through the Nepali tracking system eLMIS, these goods will reach the places in Nepal where they are really needed", said Roland Schäfer, German Ambassador to Nepal.

In recent weeks, Nepal has received a series of shipments from EU Member states (Spain, Finland, France and Belgium) and more to come. The shipment from Germany is also facilitated through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in response to the Government of Nepal's call for support.

The materials were handed over to Minister for Health and Population, Honourable Sher Bahadur Tamang, by German Ambassador, Roland Schäfer. Ambassadors of



NEWSNOTES

the Delegation of the European Union, France and Finland were also present on the occasion.

“We also need more vaccines, to make us all safe. The EU has already exported 240 million doses to 90 countries, which is about as much as we have used within the EU. And the European industrial partners have committed to deliver 1.3 billion doses of vaccines before the end of 2021 to low-income countries at no-profit and to middle-income countries at lower prices. This is the real effect of “Team Europe”. Nepal should be able to receive or purchase its share of vaccines by the end of the year”, Roland Schäfer, German Ambassador to Nepal, added.

Germany Handed Over Medical Consignment To Nepal

Roland Schafer, the German Ambassador to Nepal, handed over the consignment to Sher Bahadur Tamang, Minister for Health and Population, at a brief ceremony held at the Tribhuvan International Airport this morning.

In response to the request of the Government of Nepal, the Government of the Federal Republic of

Germany has extended support of medical equipment and supplies to help Nepal fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Speaking on the occasion, the Hon. Minister for Health and Population conveyed the gratitude of the Government and people of Nepal to the Government and friendly people of Germany for their generous support. Hailing the German medical cooperation as a gesture befitting the longstanding Nepal-Germany friendship, the Minister stated that the materials would be critical in containing the surge of COVID-19 cases and treatment of the affected people.

The German cooperation, being received under the European Union’s Civil Protection Mechanism, contains 62 ventilators; 27,500 FFP2 masks; 30,000 surgical masks; 100 gum boots; 200 body bags; 5 isolation centre tents; and 25,000 litres of disinfectant. Some of the items are being shipped at a later date.

Australian Defence Forces Carry Essential Medical Supply To Nepal To Fight Against Covid-19

A special aircraft of the Australian Defence Force carrying essential medical supplies to support Nepal in its fight against Covid-19 pandemic reached Kathmandu today.

According to a

press release issued by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the shipment consisting of masks, gloves and coveralls were handed over to Lieutenant General Prabhu Ram Sharma, Chief of General Staff of the Nepal Army by the Ambassador of Australia to Nepal Felicity Volk amidst a brief ceremony held at the Tribhuvan International Airport. A representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs too was present on the occasion.

The Government of Nepal appreciates and thanks the Government of Australia for this valuable support.

Ambassador of Australia to Nepal Felicity Volk tweeted that Delighted to hand over to CGS Lt Gen Sharma A\$1.8m of PPE provided by Flag of Australia frontline COVID-19 responders in Flag of Nepal.

KOICA Supports Nepal Korea Friendship Municipal Hospital

KOICA through its KOV program supports Nepal Korea Friendship Municipality Hospital worth USD 5,000 in COVID Response Program

KOICA Global Doctor Byungcheol Kim working as a volunteer in Nepal Korea Friendship Municipality Hospital supported medical equipment as well as safety items worth USD 5,000 to Nepal Korea Friendship Municipality Hospital for COVID Response program. The handover program was completed on May 30, 2021 in the presence of Madan Sundar Shrestha, Mayor and other related officials of Municipality and the hospital.

The main objective of this program is to support in COVID response program via supporting medical equipment and safety items to increase the health services/facility of the hospital. Dr. Kim believes that the support will contribute in strengthening the capacity of the hospital to deal with the second wave of COVID-19. In addition to this, KOICA support is expected to upgrade the hospital performance and improve the service delivery to the patients. The supported items are Oxygen concentrator-1, PPE 230 sets, Head Cover (disposable) 10,000 units, examination gloves 84 boxes, disposable mask 5000 units.

KOICA through its KOV program, he has been partnering with the Nepal Korea Friendship Municipality Hospital since 2017 A.D. Since then he has been actively working in this hospital. He has already supported some projects to this hospital. Madhyapur Thimi Municipality as well as Nepal Korea Friendship Municipality Hospital appreciated the work done by Dr. Kim.

KOV program is one of KOICA most important development cooperation program which has been imple-



mented since 1991, with this program KOICA aims to contribute in the socio-economic development of the partner countries at the grass root level. KOICA dispatches Korean national volunteers to government organizations as per the need and request. KOV serves in Nepal for 1 to 2 years in various fields such as education, health, agriculture, ICT, tourism etc.

Nepal-China Executive Council Donates Medical Equipment Worth Rs 5 Million To Nepali Hospitals

Nepal-China Executive Council (NCEC), a Nepal-China friendly organization, has donated the essential medical equipment to Sahid Gangalal Hospital in Kathmandu on Thursday.



The organization donated oxygen concentrators, Powered Air-Purifying Respirators (PAPRs), PPEs, surgical and N95 masks, surgical

gowns, sanitizers and surgical gloves among others to hospital's COVID unit.

Handing over the equipment, President of NCEC, Anoop Ranjan Bhattarai, shared that the organization has been extending assistance to the Nepali hospitals since the first wave of the pandemic. The organization also donated masks, gloves and sanitizers to Yunnan and Sichuan Province of China last year in February when the pandemic had peaked in China.

"We have donated Powered Air-Purifying Respirators to Nepali hospitals for the first time. We believe that PAPRs will be instrumental in protecting doctors and nurses who are working to save the lives of COVID patients," Bhattarai said. The major use of PAPRs is to provide respiratory protection to healthcare practitioners, who are exposed to greater risks of acute respiratory infections.

Dr Chandramani Adhikari, Executive Director of Gangalal Hospital extended thanks to the Chinese organization for providing such important equipments at a crucial time. "This will really boost our capacity to serve more COVID patients."

Trying the new Powered Air-Purifying Respirator, Dr Asish Govinda Amatya, head of department at Anesthesiology, remarked that it would help the doctors, who are directly in contact with the covid patients, to get prevented from the infections.

On Wednesday, the similar equipments were handed over to the Covic unit of National Ayurveda Research and Training Center located in Kirtipur, Kathmandu. Similarly, some essentials like children-masks will be handed over to Kanti Children Hospital as well.

The latest consignment is of worth Rs 5 million in total generously donated by their Chinese counterpart The People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries

of the Tibetan Autonomous Region of China(PAFFC TAR). Since the beginning of 2020, Nepal-China Executive Council has already received and donated the medical assistance worth about one million USD from PAFFC TAR, divided in three phases.

"The Chinese aid is not just focused in Kathmandu, but also in other parts of the country. We distributed the medical essentials to 20 government hospitals all over the country, from Bhadrapur to Dhangadhi, last year. We had handed over ventilators, PCR machines, mobile X-ray machines and mobile ultrasound worth Rs 7.5 crores to Province 1 alone," Bhattarai said.

"China and Chinese people are with Nepal and Nepali people in these tough times," he added.

The organization, established in 2003 to promote trade, investment and tourism, has been focusing on medical assistance for the year 2020 and 2021 to help Nepal and Nepali people fight the pandemic.

Slovenia, Austria And Malta Extend Support To Nepal To Fight COVID Pandemic

Medical equipment donated by three EU Member States – Slovenia, Austria and Malta arrived at the Tribhuvan International Airport Sunday morning. The Member States have supplied the equipment through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism to assist Nepal in its fight against this terrible second COVID wave.

The delivery of the consignments today is yet another show of solidarity to the ongoing efforts of Team Europe to assist Nepal during times of need and emergency.

The relief equipment comprises of antigen tests, pulse oximeters, FFP2 masks, face shields and more equipment to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

This is in response to the Government of Nepal's earlier call for support. Slovenia, Austria and Malta' goodwill gesture for Nepal comes immediately after Spain, Finland, France, Belgium and Germany provided their support in the recent weeks and more emergency supplies from Ireland, Italy, Denmark Lithuania to come!

Honorary Consuls of Slovenia and Austria, joined by EU Ambassador to Nepal, Nona Deprez handed over the materials to Dr. Roshan Pokhrel. Chief

Specialist, from the Ministry for Health and Population during a short ceremony at the airport this evening .

"Since the start of this pandemic, Team Europe stands in solidarity with Nepal and we will continue to do so, no one is safe until everyone is," EU Ambassador Deprez said.



COVID 19: Planning Fallacy And Final Challenges



BY: BINOJ BASNYAT

In honor of frontline workers fighting the ongoing public health catastrophe across the world and particularly in Nepal, it is imperative to understand why a second wave swept across the country leaving more than seven thousand deceased in 14 months. Amongst multiple factors responsible for this, one stands out as deeply rooted in the Nepali way of management. An optimistic bias surround most of the “planning” that is drawn up to overcome a problem, however in execution of those plans, there’s always difficulty and pessimism over resources needed to implement those plans. This may be referred to as “planning fallacy” by behavior scientists. In simple words plans adopted in paper don’t get implemented, and this is one of the major causes of the current public health catastrophe in Nepal and may continue to be a management concern in our future.

COVID-19 Crisis management Center (CCMC) was formed on 10th June 2020 with the objective to put into action required political and administrative measures at the federal, provincial and local level- to contain the spread of the virus. CCMC was the most powerful and resourceful constitutional body, headed by a Deputy Prime Minister and seven Ministers. It was formulated to lead the fight against and prevent a COVID-19 disaster.

However, Nepal was unprepared as the second wave of the virus with four new variants swept in towards mid-April 2021. Affected people now lack basic oxygen supply, Intensive Care Unit beds and ventilators are unavailable, and the vaccination drive has come upon logjam leaving millions without any prevention against the pandemic.

Furthermore, there are two strategic bodies under the Ministry of Home Affairs; Disaster and Conflict Management Center (DCMC) and National Disaster Risk Reduction and management Authority (NDRRMA). The Ministry of Population and Health holds the Health Emergency and Disaster Management Unit (HEDMU) which has been dealing with diseases and currently with the pandemic as well. Diplomatic exercises and government appeal to assistance too has been an ongoing effort.

Come to think of it, none of what is happening in Nepal now could’ve gone unforeseen by this strategic team of professionals. Further risks must have been assessed too. However, plans yet again seem to have been restricted to paper. There’s little more than only blame to spare the responsible. With an Ordinance, on 20 May 2021, the CCMC was modified into a working committee and brought under a political steering center lead by the Prime Minister. The CCMC is now headed by a CEO.

Worse still, 74 out of 77 districts have imposed lockdown and prohibitory orders expressing serious health concern, the general public is now facing imprisonment of up to six months and a fine of up to three lakh Nepali rupees if caught violating lockdown orders. Day to day life in Nepal is pushed into darkness.

Therefore, a question to understand this matter ought to be taken up, “Why is it that strategies curve into a planning fallacy

in Nepal”? “What can Nepal do to make plans work?”

It also reminds me of at least five articles written a year ago on the management of COVID-19 and impacts foreseeing second and third wave unfolding due to millions working abroad, poor public health arrangements, weak governance system and contested political behavior, stressed on the five principles that was indispensable. Firstly, by building trust and unity within the country and the global front, building a narrative of optimism, opposing forces that divide, providing all and sundry a role by fostering the grass-root and lastly adopting “Exit Strategy” with disengagement and engagement course of action justly defying new discrimination, corruption and dissuade exploiters and free riders.

Realpolitik and Distraction amid a pandemic

Nepal-India 1,200 kilometers border have been regularized with thirteen points of entry remaining open of the thirty-five though border crossing is informal. Domestic and international flights have been suspended except for two flights from Delhi. Prime Minister Oli has time and again directed the ministries and bodies concerned to put full effort and even remove all legal obstacles to save lives of citizens.

The efforts of the political party leaders and political party in power are struggling to give direction with wrong priority when the people are suffering with indecisiveness and reactive measures rather than initiative to solving the health challenges. All the constitutional provisions have been exercised as well as the Judiciary encounters have been performed in grappling for power. There are four contemplations; political instability steering to incorrect priorities, secondly, the tools and instruments dependency on political directions in crisis and third, politicization of institution and lastly corruption.

Four Variants of Planning Fallacy

First, ABSENCE OF STRATEGIC COORDINATION AMONGST STAKEHOLDERS: Synergy between stakeholders vertical and horizontal including political, administrative, private, as well as non-governmental bodies seem to be in scatter, all moving in their own direction, but with the invariable aim. If particular targets were set for individual stakeholders under a farther-reaching coordination body results could’ve varied, for the better. A call for non-governmental resources to focus on regenerating oxygen plants, life-threatening care medicines private sector efforts to tackle hospital requirements, vaccines, testing supplies and government to methodize ‘herd immunization’ that means getting 80 percent of the population vaccinated to avoid ‘hot spots’, focused skilled human resources and so on. However, strategic level coordination seemed absent setting a confusion of priorities amongst stakeholders. Even federal line ministries, provincial and local governments seemed to lack coordination. Flow on data and information on demand and methods of supply seemed inefficient and ineffective. Synchronisation on structural requirements seemed loose as well, besides Lumbini, which recently initiated the provincial ministry

of health, all the other six provinces do not have health ministry even while health was perceived the greatest national challenge.

The second reason why plans encounter troubled implementation is MONETARY FASCINATION: World around and specially in the developing world, value of money supersedes the value of work. This understanding or behaviour leads individuals and groups to believe that 'where there is money there is work and willingness' while 'where there is ineffective work there must have been little money and willingness'. This fascination with money leads has led to several obstruction or managing problems.

Ken Poirot said "Where there is power, greed, and money there is corruption", if I may add "where there is power, inefficiency and corruption there is blame".

The third reason could be reinforced BELIEF IN CONVENTIONAL SYSTEMS. Rather than mechanizing innovative systems that suite varying problems, we tend to keep going back to what is already in practice. Definitions of working models in Nepal, are all borrowed, this has restricted Nepal from defining their own methods of solving problems. With drop backcustomized methods, willingness to develop borrowed methods seem to be lagging and facing what we can call 'pessimism bias's too. Even the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) system which could've worked well is addressing the ongoing health catastrophe seems to lack trust, infrastructure, and required resources. Nepal ranks 111 in health security index.

Finally, INOPERATIVE REGIONAL RESOURCES lead to obstruction in implementations of plans in Nepal. Efforts to joint intervention at the regional scale seems to be a fading priority whereas Nepal could've benefitted from and helped neighbouring countries through higher engagement. Activating South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Disaster Management Centre (SDMC) was floated on March 2020 via video conference initiated by PM Modi with a call for an emergency fund in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. A total of US\$ 21.8 million still lies on the coffer where Nepal also contributed US\$ 1 million. This was an encouraging indication of cooperation and coordination which turned out again to be just of spirit. The proposal which came to many as a surprise seems to have remained a surprise.

Final Challenge

Politics is just at the corner when the pandemic is raging and looking at togetherness. The second wave of political conduct shadowed the second wave of COVID-19 with the dissolution of the House of Representative by the Oli led United Marxist Leninist left government being challenged at the Supreme Court.

Preparation for the possible third wave that will affect youths under the age of 18, which is 40 percent of the population as per the UNICEF report 2017 or another upsurge with status-quo management system. To inoculate at least 51.6 percent of the population from the age of 15 to 54 that counts to 22.7 million doses was the vaccination plan. The second inoculation drive has not concluded with just more than 3.1 million doses available.

Precarious scarcities in vaccines, oxygen, testing supplies, skilled human resources and life-threatening care medicines and provisions are obligatory for immediate lifesaving so national resources must be expanded by conducting one, short precise health training programs pursuing the possible unemployed for multiplying health assistance. Two, local political unit could have community health services, isolation centers with PPP on temporary and permanent foundation. Third, international aid and spread-out NGOs and INGOs could consider on health security to prevent and mitigate adverse health impacts. This will be a huge step in assisting security of health.

Identifying whereabouts the people are through community (local political entity) health services with local administration's coordination and cooperation will assist the campaign. National success in the fight against COVID-19 is simply winning at the lowest level with community vaccination campaign and establishment of health centers with temporary and permanent foundation.

The UN and other major powers and bilateral assistance to manage surge in COVID-19 is on rise with persistent diplomatic efforts to self-assure vaccines to bolster the irresolute immunization

campaign as supplies run out. The UN and Partners summoned for international harmony calling for US\$ 83.7 million to assemble emergency response over the next three months to assist 750, 000 vulnerable people. Australia, China, India, Spain, Switzerland, UK, US and the Non-Residential Nepalese Associations have been in the fore-front in putting efforts to counter the outpouring.

But more demanding is

the government's prioritization to undertake the challenge with the new structures now out. Mobilizing DCMC, NDRDMA and HEDMU may well be suitable for effectual management attempts.

Nepal is the most expensive country in South Asia with the rise in inflation and the just announced parliamentary election. The politically affiliated, criminal activities, smugglers and intent of corruption is taking advantage of the unstable socio-economy, socio-political and security situation. Precedence ought to be given to security of supply and security of food and basic essential.

Let the investments and extraction plan in governance of public health, that is at the top of the list for decision makers not gradually receive less attention in the future due to human behavior fading to newer priorities with focus on the third wave of political events in the coming weeks and months as the main three contests are unreliability of the eradication of virus, immunity and reoccurrence.

Basnyat is a strategic analyst and a former Major General of the Nepali Army



A Successful Drive

KMC Successfully Launches Vaccination Drive administering vaccine to 100,000 people

By A CORRESPONDNET

If the political leadership and administrative leadership are capable and work in coordination and collaboration at local level, citizens of the concerned areas will get enormous benefits.

Under the leadership of Mayor Bidhya Sundar Shakyu and deputy

has shown in recent months. Although the first phase of vaccination campaigns started from Hospitals, they were unorganized and difficult for elderly citizens.

With the authority to administering the vaccine given to local level like KMC, the situation is different

and easier. After completing successfully administering the second doses of Chinese vaccine Vero Cell, KMC is providing the first dose of the China-aid Vero Cell vaccine against Covid-19 to people of the age of

Kathmandu Metropolitan City have got vaccinated against COVID-19,” said Kunwar.

According to RSS, the metropolis launched the drive to administer the Chinese VeroCell vaccines on June 8. The vaccination drive is available at all 32 wards of the metropolis.

On the first day, 8,747 people between the age of 60 and 64 got vaccinated against the infection and 9,366 got the shots on the second day, said the health division of the metropolis. Stating that the five-day drive aims to administer the vaccine to over 100,000 people in five days, Division chief Hari Bahadur Kunwar urged all the city residents to involve in the drive.

According to the vaccination schedule, the vaccine will be administered to people of 64 years of age on June 8. Likewise, people of 63 years of age will receive the vaccine on June 9, people of 62 years of age on June 10, the people of 61 years of age on June 11 and those of 60 years of age on June 12.

KMC’s recent activities have shown that strong local leadership backed by the efficient and dynamic civil servant can make a lot of differences to effectively deliver the service to the people.

mayor Hari Prabha Khadgi and administrative head Rajesh Gyawali, a young enthusiastic and dedicated bureaucrat, Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) has been in forefront against Covid-19 campaign.

City with densely populated and modern medical facilities, people visiting Kathmandu remains high so as the infections. However, KMC has been doing its best to save city dwellers and provide them various facilities.

In a march to fight covid-19, elected representatives and administrative head Gyawali have been themselves taking stock of the activities including the recent vaccine drive.

Given authority and responsibility, local levels can make everything possible. This is what the Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC)

59-64.

The vaccination campaign was kicked off at 10:00 am on Tuesday among all 32 wards of the KMC and continue till 11 June.

Kathmandu Metropolitan City aims to administer the vaccine to over 100,000 people in five days drive,

Division chief Hari Bahadur Kunwar urged all the city residents to involve in the drive. “So far more than 18,000 people in



ILO projects Slow Jobs Recovery And Increased Inequality Risk Long-Term COVID-19 Scarring

ILO projections highlight the danger of a COVID-19 labour market legacy of increased geographic and demographic inequality, rising poverty and fewer decent jobs.

GENEVA (ILO News) – The labour market crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over, and employment growth will be insufficient to make up for the losses suffered until at least 2023, according to a new assessment by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The ILO's World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2021 (WESO Trends) projects the global crisis-induced 'jobs gap' will reach 75 million in 2021, before falling to 23 million in 2022. The related gap in working-hours, which includes the jobs gap and those on reduced hours, amounts to the equivalent of 100 million full-time jobs in 2021 and 26 million full-time jobs in 2022. This shortfall in employment and working hours comes on top of persistently high pre-crisis levels of unemployment, labour underutilization and poor working conditions.

In consequence, global unemployment is expected to stand at 205 million people in 2022, greatly surpassing the level of 187 million in 2019. This corresponds to an unemployment rate of 5.7 per cent. Excluding the COVID-19 crisis period, such a rate was last seen in 2013.

The worst affected regions in the first half of 2021 have been Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe and Central Asia. In both, estimated working-hour losses exceeded eight per cent in the first quarter and six per cent in the second quarter, compared to global working-hour losses of 4.8 and 4.4 per cent in the first and second quarter, respectively.

Global employment recovery is projected to accelerate in the second half of 2021, provided that there is no worsening in the overall pandemic situation. However this will be uneven, due to unequal vaccine access and the limited capacity of most developing and emerging economies to support strong fiscal stimulus measures. Furthermore, the quality of newly created jobs is likely to deteriorate in those countries.

The fall in employment and hours worked has translated into a sharp drop in labour income and a corresponding rise in poverty. Compared to 2019, an additional 108 million workers worldwide are now categorized as poor or extremely poor (meaning they and their families live on the equivalent of less than US\$3.20 per person per day). "Five years of progress towards the eradication of working poverty have been undone," the report says, adding that this renders the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goal of eradicating poverty by 2030 even more

elusive.

The COVID-19 crisis has also made pre-existing inequalities worse by hitting vulnerable workers harder, the report finds. The widespread lack of social protection – for example among the world's two billion informal sector workers – means that pandemic-related work disruptions have had catastrophic consequences for family incomes and livelihoods.

The crisis has also hit women disproportionately. Their employment declined by 5 per cent in 2020 compared to 3.9 per cent for men. A greater proportion of women also fell out of the labour market, becoming inactive. Additional domestic responsibilities resulting from crisis lockdowns have also created the risk of a "re-traditionalization" of gender roles.

Globally, youth employment fell 8.7 per cent in 2020, compared with 3.7 per cent for adults, with the most pronounced fall seen in middle-income countries. The consequences of this delay and disruption to the early labour market experience of young people could last for years.

The pandemic's impact on young people's labour market prospects is laid out in greater detail in an ILO brief published alongside the WESO Trends. The Update on the youth labour market impact of the COVID-19 crisis also finds that gender gaps in youth labour markets became more pronounced.

"Recovery from COVID-19 is not just a health issue. The serious damage to economies and societies needs to be overcome too. Without a deliberate effort to accelerate the creation of decent jobs, and support the most vulnerable

members of society and the recovery of the hardest-hit economic sectors, the lingering effects of the pandemic could be with us for years in the form of lost human and economic potential and higher poverty and inequality," said ILO Director-General, Guy Ryder. "We need a comprehensive and co-ordinated strategy, based on human-centred policies, and backed by action and funding. There can be no real recovery without a recovery of decent jobs."

As well as looking at working hour and direct employment losses, and foregone job growth, the WESO outlines a recovery strategy structured around four principles: promoting broad-based economic growth and the creation of productive employment; supporting household incomes and labour market transitions; strengthening the institutional foundations needed for inclusive, sustainable and resilient economic growth and development; and using social dialogue to develop human-centred recovery strategies.



WED 2021: Restoring Ecosystems



BY: BATU UPRETY

Countries have agreed to implement and initiate number of decadal (2021-2030) programmes to protect the 'Mother Earth'. Integration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national plans and programmes, commitments to reduce greenhouse gas (GHGs) emissions, build adaptive capacity & climate resilience through commitments in the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and implementation of several national and global agenda are some of the decadal programmes that provide multiple opportunities to protect the Planet, if implemented effectively. Translation of these initiatives into action requires higher level of commitment, huge investments, capacity and skill, and technologies along with collaborative efforts.

On 5 June 2021 Saturday, countries are observing the World Environment Day (WED) on the theme 'ecosystem restoration'. The UN Decade (2021-2030) on Ecosystem Restoration (DER) will be formally launched. The UN General Assembly decided to observe 2021-2030 as the UN DER on 1 March 2019 to prevent, halt and reverse the loss and degradation of ecosystems worldwide. The UNEP and FAO are tasked to lead the implementation of this global initiative. This DER will contribute to restore Nature and further encourage countries, people and communities 'to live with Nature' for own survival.

The WED is observed every year since 1974 on 5 June, the Day in 1972 at Stockholm, Sweden the UN Conference on Human Environment began. Nepal is also celebrating it every year from 1974 to primarily raise awareness. This year, Pakistan has announced

to host WED observance in partnership with UNEP and has linked it with her '10 Billion Tree Tsunami' 5 years programme, launched with the target of restoring over 1 million ha of forests. Pakistan has also launched an Ecosystem Restoration Fund to support Nature-based solutions to climate change. Its Protected Area Initiative is expected to create over 5,500 green jobs. Restoration of forest ecosystems and greening initiative would increase carbon sinks and will provide countries to meet their GHGs emissions commitments as well, as reflected in the updated NDCs.

Ecosystem provides four distinct widely-recognised services. They are: (i) provisioning services such as food, fodder, fuel, fertiliser, fibre, furniture/wood, and fresh water etc; (ii) regulating services such as maintaining quality of air, climate, water and soil, controlling flood and disease etc; (iii) cultural services (non-material benefits) such as nature- and culture-based tourism, recreation, aesthetic etc; and (iv) supporting services such as habitat for plants and animals, biodiversity, water and nutrient cycling etc.

Ecosystems are of different kinds - forests/grasslands, farmlands, wetlands and cities. These ecosystems are exposed to and highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. Natural process of reducing climate vulnerabilities and adopting with the changes has been reduced significantly due to increased temperature rise, unpredictable weather and high rate of ecosystem degradation. This has accelerated losses in natural capital and ecosystem functions and services.

Ecosystem restoration will recover degraded or

destroyed ecosystems by planting appropriate tree species, conserve 'intact' ecosystems by reducing human pressure, and protect biodiversity by promoting regeneration. Depending upon the type of ecosystems and magnitude of challenges, one could clean-up a lake or park or other natural area, regulate access on ecosystems, plant multi-use species to green living areas, schools or a public spaces, and engage in greening, cleaning and safeguarding both natural or man-made ecosystems, and assisting in natural regeneration. In urban areas, greening of public places counts a lot in making air and water healthy, reducing temperature effect or cooling urban 'heat islands', and improving biodiversity condition.

Forests and trees have multiple values for human beings and other life-forms. They provide us clean air and water, reduce soil erosion, landslides and floods, store or sequester climate-heating carbon dioxide, and also provide home to biodiversity. But high rate of ecosystem degradation is affecting lives and livelihoods of billions of people. FAO and UNEP have estimated loss of about 10 million ha of forests every year.

This global call (UN DER) to action is expected to restore 350 million hectares of degraded terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems by investing US\$ 1 trillion. This restoration is estimated to generate ecosystem services equivalent to about US\$ 9 trillion, and remove 13 to 26 gigatons of GHGs from the atmosphere. Economic benefit is expected nine times the cost of investment. The UN DER will provide opportunities to fight against climate change impacts and biodiversity loss. Realisation of the urgency of conserving and/or restoring ecosystems as an integral part of human survival would help countries to further realise forest management and understand the role of plant species.

In Nepal, nearly 45 percent of total area is under forest category. A total of 118 ecosystems, 75 vegetation types and 35 forest types have been documented. Besides forests, aquatic ecosystems or wetlands, agriculture/farm and urban ecosystems are also biologically rich. These ecosystems are being conserved through policies, strategies and legal measures. About 23 percent of the total

area is under protected area - national parks, wildlife reserves, conservation areas, hunting reserve and buffer zones. Nepal has also practiced landscape management in the form of Terai Arc (TAL) and Chitwan-Annapurna Landscapes (CHAL). However, degradation of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems is accelerated along with conversion of natural to built-up areas.

On 28 May 2021, Rt. Hon'ble Prime Minister K.P. Oli stated that Nepal's ecosystems and forests have special contributions on climate adaptation and environmental balance. He committed to take initiatives for optimal resources and support from international finance and technology instruments for climate adaptation and effects mitigation along with the organisation of Sagarmatha Dialogue on climate change in FY 2021/22. Budget speech on 29 May 2021 commits to implement, inter alia, sustainable forest management, construction of 200 ponds in Siwalik and Mahabharat, plantation of 15 million species in Chure and Terai-Madhes area, and implementation of carbon emission reduction programme in 13 Terai-Madhes districts. The budget speech

also includes 'widely commented' programme on export of 'dhunga, gitti, and baluwa' to reduce trade deficit on the basis of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

As forest is considered a public and common resource, there is a growing tendency to use forest area for infrastructures, social development sectors such as public health and educa-

tion. Forest fire has become one of the major challenges. However, commitments on ecosystem conservation and climate change do not match with actions in some cases. Decisions on Nijgadh airport in dense and biodiversity rich central Terai forests, conversion of forest area into a provincial capital in far west, and submergence of parts of the Shivapuri National Park into a reservoir are some of the examples of national initiatives to destroy or degrade pristine and intact forest ecosystems. This looks like an 'anti-current' move against our national and international commitments and obligations.



Children Under A Threat

Facing deadly second wave Covid-19, Nepal has started preparation for the possible third wave which will likely to hit children Hard

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although it is yet to know when Nepal will face the third wave of Covid-19, it is almost certain that it will likely to hit Nepal after the reduction of the second wave likely be in October.

Experts predict that the third Wave Of COVID-19 will likely hit Nepal within six months after the weakening of the second wave. Virologists have predicted that the third wave of the COVID-19 is likely to hit Nepal within six months after the weakening of the second wave. They have warned that children will be the most vulnerable if the third wave breaks out.

With the third wave close to Nepal, the Ministry of Health and Population asked its hospitals on Friday to reserve beds for children for fear another surge in coronavirus infections will hit them hard, something officials in neighboring India are also preparing for.

The move came as the government approved for emergency use the COVID-19 vaccine made by Sinovac Biotech of China.

Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli's government has been criticized by experts for its handling of the ongoing second wave in Nepal, which has led to an acute shortage of oxygen, hospital beds and medicines.

"Hospitals and medical institutions must set aside at least 20% of beds for children, who are likely to suffer the most in the potential third and fourth waves of coronavirus," the Ministry of Health and Population said in a statement.

"Hospitals must also ensure the availability of enough oxygen."

Daily infections in the Him-



alayan nation are hovering around 5,000 after hitting a peak of more than 9,000 in early May. Nepal had reported fewer than 100 daily cases in March. It has reported 581,560 infections in total and 7,731 deaths.

Donors have rushed aid including oxygen, protective gear, drugs and face masks to the country, which is also struggling to secure vaccines after neighboring India stopped exports to meet its local demand.

Santosh K.C., a spokesman for the Department of Drug Administration, said "conditional permission for the emergency use" had been given for the coronavirus vaccine (Corona Vac) made by Sinovac Biotech of China, the fifth shot to be approved by Nepal.

Earlier it had approved two Indian-made vaccines - AstraZeneca's AZN.L and COVAXIN - China's Shinopharm and Russia's Sputnik V for emergency use in the Himalayan nation.

Spokesperson of the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), Dr. Krishna Prasad Poudel, has said that the third wave of the virus that is likely to hit India will probably affect Nepal as well.

"The antibodies created by people infected in the current wave of the virus will wear off in the upcoming six months and that is when the third wave of the virus is likely to affect the country," Poudel told TRN Online.

Poudel further mentioned that children were expected to be most vulnerable to the virus. "Since the vaccines are only being administered to people above the age of 18, this leaves an entire section of the population without any access to vaccines which is the reason why children are expected to be most affected by the virus," Poudel said.

Poudel added that clinical trials had only been conducted on adults for all currently available vaccines. "However, clinical trials are being

conducted on children in other parts of the world,” he added.

“As of now, we are also looking to increase the number of ICU beds for children. Currently out of the 2400 ICU beds in the country, only 125 of them are designated for children, we are planning to increase that to 275 beds to accommodate more children who may need them for the third wave,” he said.

Former Director of the Epidemiology and Disease Control Division (EDCD) and also a virologist, Dr. Basudev Pandey, has also predicted a strong probability of the third wave of the virus to hit Nepal leaving children more susceptible.

“We had conducted a Sero-prevalence survey last year in Septem-

as compared to adults leaving children more vulnerable to the virus,” Pandey said.

He said that children were relatively safer in the first wave of the virus as they produced fewer amounts of Angiotensin-Converting Enzyme (ACE) receptors which were responsible for providing access to the virus. However, now, the mutated virus has found several ways to enter the body.

Pandey has suggested several measures to increase the immunity of children. One of them is that all parents should ensure that children are vaccinated for all diseases as mandated by the government, especially for Pneumonia and Influenza. The second that is children should avoid junk and street foods.

increased emotional support increases resilience and in turn immunity.” he added.

Moreover, former MoHP spokesperson Dr. Jageshwor Gautam said that it was possible to curb the effects of the third wave of the virus if people follow social distancing measures, sanitize their hands after coming home, and avoid large gatherings once the prohibitory order is lifted.

Although Nepal has already provided at least 3.8 million vaccinations to its people so far and expected to provide vaccination to over 10 million population by December, officials expect that they would be more prepared.

However, given the lethargic health administration and hacky



ber to find the extent of the infection in the population by looking for antibodies in people. Among the 13 percent of the population who had created antibodies, we noticed that children created significantly fewer antibodies

He has also urged parents to ensure emotional support for children, “The prohibitory order is tough for children as they are restless and need to play outside which can affect their morale. Studies have shown that

for lacy nature of citizens, people will soon forget the deadly second wave and give up health protocol resulting in more deadly the third wave which will likely kill more people with the strong mutant virus.

Mending Ties

Prime Minister K.P Sharma Oli said that Nepal And India Enjoy A Unique Relationship

By A CORRESPONDENT

Historically, culturally, civilization and geography, all make Nepal-India relations unique. Divided on the basis of political lines, communists and recently even Nepali Congress use Nepal-India relations for political gain.

Despite the ups and downs in political relations, Nepal-India relation is always in the same pace. There is a reason for this. As a close neighbor with unique relations, India always comes first to support and rescue Nepal at the time of crisis and disaster.

Even during the current coronavirus pandemic, India backed Nepal supplying medicines and other medicals, oxygen and vaccine as Nepal is among few countries to start vaccination with support from India.

Although India has badly suffered in the second wave with large numbers of infections and faced scarcity of oxygen, it continued to supply much-needed life-saving oxygen to Nepal at the height of crisis. Thanks to the goodwill and generosity of India, Nepalese does not have to face scarcity of oxygen.

Groomed in anti-Indian flank, PM Oli has recently started talking the realistic remarks on the relations realizing Nepal's unique pattern of relations. This is a good sign.

In a change of stance that may have political implications in Nepal, Prime Minister K P Oli declared he had "resolved" his problems with India.

"Yes, there were misunderstandings at one time, but now those misunderstandings are gone. We should not be stuck in past misunderstandings but move forward looking at the future. We have to pursue a positive relationship," he said in an interview with BBC.

He was been quoted in the interview as saying that Nepal and India enjoyed a unique relationship. "Neighbours share both love and problems. Don't people in Chile or Argentina have a problem?" he was quoted as saying by the local media. "I would like to make a request to PM Modi.

In view of these times and our friendly relations, India should extend full cooperation to Nepal. That doesn't mean I haven't got help from India. At this time, Nepal needs vaccinations, for which Nepal is urging both its neighbors and all countries," Oli was quoted as saying.

"Whoever provides us vaccines, be it India, China, the United States or the UK, it is fine to receive vaccines. It is not necessary to politicize it and we thank both our neighbors very much. On one hand, China has given us 1.8 million vaccines and on the other, India has given 2.1 million vaccines. We have the help of both. We are also getting medical equipment from both. So thank you both," he added.

Whatever one can say personally about Nepal's relations with India, both the countries share same civilization and values and what only difference between the two countries are political human-made boundary.

POLITICS
Crumbling
Constitution

Nepal's current political events show that Nepal's constitutional process is crumbling

By A CORRESPONDENT

For the second time in recent months, Supreme Court involved in the internal political issue of political parties affecting the power balance within the political parties.

Opposing the seating judges chosen for five members constitutional bench, lawyers representing the petitioners demanding the restoration of House of Representatives questioned the neutrality of two judges.

For the first time in the history of the Supreme Court, four judges chosen to represent the constitutional bench present-

ed arguments against each other. This does not end here. Supreme Court Bar Association visited the chief justice and reportedly put pressure on the chief justice in selecting justice.

This is what petitioners act. In an unprecedented and unusual manner, the Attorney General of Nepal and two defense lawyers of Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli objected to the presence of two judges selected to sit in five-member constitutional benches. They questioned the impartiality of two judges who were involved in two other judges of the bench.

Although the hearing has started on the dissolution of the House of Representatives at the constitutional bench, the court's



decision will likely create more political controversy in the coming days.

For the past seven decades, Nepal's Supreme Court has been established itself as a guardian of the rule of law individual freedom, the dignity of man and the constitution. Whether it is during the Panchayat system or Multi-party system, Nepal's Supreme delivered hundreds of landmark decisions.

Petitioners and defenders always respect the decision of the court to choose the judge by the court. However, this time the situation was different. The petitioner objected to the judges' choice for the bench

and forced the chief justice to amend the bench. In a dispute Attorney General, who represents the state organ, opposed the composition of bench-like petitioners making the whole process is a mockery.

Speaker Sapkota calls all-party meet

As the petition is in the Supreme Court, any discussion outside the court is regarded as sub-judice, speaker Agni Prasad Sapkota hosted an all-party meeting to discuss restoration of the House of Representatives ignored the court,

Speaker Sapkota, a former Maoist rebel commander, told the leaders of political parties including Maoist Chair Prachanda, NC President Sher Bahadur Deuba and UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal he will restore the house if it requires. Since the case of dissolution is now under judicial consideration, it is not suitable for a person who holds the position of speaker of the House of Representatives.

“Speaker is a judge in the cases related to impeachment. Thus, he should be impartial. In the issue of parliament, the speaker needs to be a judge. He is a judge of the whole political process. In this context, he needs to avoid controversy,” said a constitutional lawyer.

Speaker of the now-dissolved House of Representatives Sapkota, who called an all-party meeting to discuss issues related to the dissolution of the House of Representatives, has declared that he has the constitutional right to restore the house.

His statement indicates that there is no more constitutional limitation before him. Earlier, he holds several rounds of discussions with former Speakers of the House and other constitutional experts following the dissolution of the House in a bid to look for a solution to the current crisis.

Given the present context, there would not be any surprise to see a declaration of the revival of the House of Representatives by the speaker Sapkota no matter whether such moves are constitutional or not.

Chairman Oli Calls For Party Unity

Chairman of the ruling CPN (UML) and Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has agreed to resurrect the party in the condition it was before May 16, 2018.

In a statement issued Sunday night, Oli forwarded a six-point unity proposal, expressing his commitment to revive

all the party committees and structures that existed before May 16, 2018, for party unity.

Chairman Oli in his proposal said, “The signatures of the former lawmakers the CPN-UML, used in the writ petition filed in the Supreme Court demanding the removal of their party chairman from the post of the Prime Minister and appointment of the leader of the opposition as premiership, will be withdrawn.”

It is mentioned in the proposal that the structure of the UML Central Committee and the Standing Committee will be dynamic based on the members of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP)’s Central Committee who stand for unity.

He also expressed his commitment that there would be no prejudice, discrimination and action against any leaders based on their weaknesses and mistakes they committed.

Chairman Oli also called for party unity, citing that the country’s democracy could be strengthened and the nation could be united only if the party was strong.

Chairman Oli reiterated that he was always in favor of party unity. “The effort, contribution and sacrifices of thousands of warriors are implicit in the formation and development of the CPN-UML and people have immense faith in this party.”

“The communist movement can be strengthened and united only by strengthening the CPN-UML,” he added.

He recalled that the CPN-UML and CPN-Maoist (Centre) were unified in 2018, with the belief that the national unity of the country could be strengthened only by uniting the communist movement.

Opposition Meeting

At a time when the court has fixed a date for hearing, the opposition party alliance leaders Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba, CPN (Maoist Centre) chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal ‘Prachanda’ and leader Madhav Kumar Nepal held numbers of a meeting discussing ways to pressure PM Oli.

As Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli is taking initiative to dissenting the UML faction, Dahal met with Nepal and discussed the current political developments. Prachanda and Deuba see PM Oli’s move as politically dangerous for an alliance.



Dahal’s political meetings come at a time when uncertainty looms over the proceedings of the House of Representatives dissolution hearing in the Supreme Court.

The hearing on writs filed against House dissolution has been affected with opposition advancing from petitioners as well as defendants regarding the composition of the Constitutional Bench formed to hear the case.

Five PM against Oli

Five former prime ministers - Sher Bahadur Deuba, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, Madhav Kumar Nepal, Jhala Nath Khanal and Baburam Bhattarai - today issued a press statement urging the people, civil society and democratic forces to unitedly fight what they termed continuous attack by Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli on the constitution.

They said despite the Supreme Court’s ruling to invalidate PM Oli’s decision to dissolve the House of Representatives on December 20, the PM dissolved the House again on May 22 and exhibited his arbitrary, unconstitutional regressive character.

The PM who has been reduced to a caretaker prime minister arbitrarily formed a task force to amend the constitution without forging a national consensus on such a serious issue, indulged in undemocratically reshuffling the Cabinet repeatedly and issuing threats to the Supreme Court through the Attorney General, the five former prime ministers stated in their release. They said that the PM who was supposed to focus on controlling the COV- ID-19 pandemic and providing relief to the people, had been indulging in power games thereby creating political instability and uncertainty.

As the differences among the political parties are widening and bleaching the constitution from different branches of the government, Nepal is heading towards a major political and constitutional crisis. The crisis will push the country in uncertain courses for a long time to come.

MADHU KUMAR MARASINI

Vision of Change

With a decision, Madhu Kumar Marasini has digitalized the entire pension system of civil service launching EFT To Transfer Pension for 276,000 retired government employees

By A CORRESPONDENT

If a man has a will, he can transform the entire system. This is what Young Turk of Nepalese civil service Madhu Kumar Marasini has shown by digitalizing the pension system of Nepal's civil service.

Along with saving over Rs. 600 million commissions and other service charge to distribute the pension to civil servant, the new Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) will also help to quickly deposit money of the account of pensioner.

Although Nepal's almost two centuries old civil service has gone through many radical changes in its existence, the current EFT system is most visible and revolutionary.

In the past, an employee has to wait at least a week to transfer the cash into his or her account. Following the execution of new system, retired pensioner will receive the money same day the money sent to the account.

Under a dynamic and quality leadership, Financial Comptroller General Madhu Kumar Marasini, who has proved his quality leading several departments in civil service, the Financial Comptroller General Office (FCGO) executed an Electronic Pension Payment system.

A young a new breed of civil servant, secretary Marasini always prefers to introduce certain new systems. This is not the first one.

Following the implementation of this system, the Nepal government has expected to save Rs.600 million annually

Financial Comptroller General Marasini inaugurated Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT), for pension transfer on Sunday. According



to FCGO, The system will benefit about 276,000 retired government employees.

Marasini, who is also a chairman of Nepal Bank Ltd, has recently started a new QR code system to bring farmers into the digital economy.

As a Consulate General in New York, Marasini also took the initiative to bring back stolen sculptures from the United States. Although he returns, a number of stolen Nepalese sculptures started to return to Nepal.

Spokesperson of the FCGO

Gyanendra Paudel, the country spends about Rs. 55 billion to Rs. 60 billion every year in pension payments.

Earlier, the banks are charging 1 percent of the pension funds for the advance management of the payment which means the government would save about Rs. 600 million annually.

Marasini said that the facility would support the implementation of the government's announced 'Digital Nepal Framework'. The framework is a program designed to enable the country to harness its growth potential by leveraging disruptive technologies and driving socioeconomic growth.

Announced in 2019, the framework is expected to deliver an impact of up to Rs. 800 billion by 2022. "The new system will enhance transparency and reduce the cost of mobilizing the funds while facilitating the quick delivery of the service," said Marasini.

The FCGO has also maintained that paying pension money directly to the bank account of the beneficiary would make the cash flow management of the government more effective.

Secretary Marasini has shown a way for other younger generation civil servants to bring change in the country's overall system. Marasini shows that if there is a will, there is a way out.

CHILD LABOUR | Alarming High

As Nepal also hosts various programs On World Day Against Child Labor, the state of children is getting worse day by day. With a surge of Covid-19, more children are forced to labor. Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward” warns that progress to end child labor has stalled for the first time in 20 years. The International Labour Organization and UNICEF warn that the pandemic context may threaten Nepal’s progress in eradicating child labor

BY A CORRESPONDENT

Although Nepal has made major progress successfully achieving the target to reduce child labor, the recent surge of Covid-19 has been pushing Nepal where it was before.

Given the growing economic burden in the households due to lack of employment and other activities, parents are forcing their children to go to work. Given the current state, Nepal

Government has also introduced some policy level changes to contain child labor.

“The Government of Nepal has adopted a new master plan to eliminate. It intends to take an inclusive approach by empowering the local governments to declare themselves child labor free zones,” said Binod Prakash Singh, joint secretary of Ministry of Labour, Employment and So-

cial Security.

The recent study conducted by ILO and Central Bureau of Statistics shows a declining trend of Child labor recently. However, the Covid-19 pandemic will likely reverse such progress. ILO and UNICEF warns that the pandemic context may threaten Nepal’s progress in eradicating child labor

In Nepal, the pandemic is



also impacting the progress in eradicating child labor. Indeed, the Nepal Child Labour Report 2021, a joint publication of the ILO and Central Bureau of Statistics shows a declining trend of overall child labor in Nepal, reaching 1.1 million in 2018 from 1.6 million in 2008. A significant decline is observed in the number of children in hazardous occupations (0.62 million in 2008 to 0.22 million in 2018).

This important progress made is now challenged by the socio-economic realities of the COVID 19 pandemic. Children in child labor are at risk of physical and mental harm. Child labor compromises children's education, restricting their rights and limiting their future opportunities, and leads to vicious inter-generational cycles of poverty and child labor. "Preventing child labor and protecting

children from the associated risks of physical and mental harm, school drop-out and exploitation were already major challenges prior to COVID-19. As the new data shows, the severe socio-economic impact of the pandemic has hit families with children particularly hard. According to the rapid Child & Family Tracker survey carried out in late May, over 50 per cent of families across Nepal have lost jobs and related livelihoods in the current context," said Elke Wisch, UNICEF Representative in Nepal.

"Increased economic hardship combined with school closures caused by COVID-19 place children already in child labor at increased risk of working longer hours or under worsening conditions, while many more may be forced into the worst forms of child labor due to job and

income losses among vulnerable families. Our collective success in combatting COVID-19 needs to also be measured in the number of families we are supporting through these dire circumstances and the girls and boys who can continue to strive, grow and develop. This is not out of reach – It can be achieved through our collective investment in programs that not only get children out of the workforce and back into school but also social work and social protection programs that can help families avoid making this choice in the first place."

To reverse the upward trend in child labor, the ILO and UNICEF are calling for: Adequate social protection for all, including universal child benefits and eligibility criteria taking into account households socio-economic characteristics, increased spending

on quality education and getting all children back into school - including children who were out of school before COVID-19, promotion of decent work for adults, so families don't have to resort to children helping to generate family income., an end to harmful gender norms and discrimination that influence child labor and investment in child protection systems, social work, agricultural development, rural public services, infrastructure and livelihoods.

As part of the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour, the global partnership Alliance 8.7, of which UNICEF and ILO are partners, is encouraging member States, business, trade unions, civil society, and regional and international organizations to redouble their efforts in the global fight against child labor by making concrete action pledges.

Nepal is a pathfinder country of the Global Alliance 8.7 Alliance. This year, more than ever it is critical to expanding the path to opportunities, safety and care for all the children of Nepal.

The number of children in child labor has risen to 160 million worldwide – an increase of 8.4 million children in the last four years – with millions more at risk due to the impacts of COVID-19, according to a new report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNICEF.

Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward– released ahead of World Day Against Child Labour on 12th June – warns that progress to end child labor has stalled for the first time in 20 years, reversing the previous downward trend that saw child labor fall by 94 million between 2000 and 2016.

The report points to a significant rise in the number of children aged 5 to 11 years in child labor, who now account for just over half of the total global figure. The number of children aged 5 to 17 years in hazardous work – defined as work that is likely to harm their health, physical safety and psychological wellbeing – has risen by 6.5 million to 79 million since 2016.

“These new estimates indicate that despite the increasing commitment and efforts by governments, the social partners and civil society to tackle child labor, the problem remains on a massive scale, said ILO Director for Country Office in Nepal Richard Howard. “This situation represents an intolerable violation of the rights of individual children, it perpetuates poverty and it compromises economic growth and equitable development. It is high time for all of us to



COVERSTORY



join forces and implement programs to address vulnerabilities associated with child labor, including lack of social protection and decent work opportunities for families vulnerable to poverty and exclusion.”

The report warns that globally; 9 million additional children are at risk of being pushed into child labor by the end of 2022 as a result of the pandemic. A simulation model shows this number could rise to 46 million if they don't have access to critical social protection coverage.

Even in regions where there has been some headway since 2016, such as Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, COVID-19 is endangering that progress.

In Nepal, the pandemic is also impacting the progress in eradicating child labor. Indeed, the Nepal Child Labour Report 2021, a joint publication of the ILO and Central Bureau of Statistics shows

a declining trend of overall child labor in Nepal, reaching 1.1 million in 2018 from 1.6 million in 2008. A significant decline is observed in the number of children in hazardous occupations (0.62 million in 2008 to 0.22 million in 2018).

This important progress made is now challenged by the socio-economic realities of the COVID 19 pandemic. Children in child labor are at risk of physical and mental harm.

venting child labor and protecting children from the associated risks of physical and mental harm, school drop-out and exploitation were already major challenges prior to COVID-19. As the new data shows, the severe socio-economic impact of the pandemic has hit families with children particularly hard. According to the rapid Child & Family Tracker survey carried out in late May, over 50 per cent of families across Nepal have lost jobs and related livelihoods in the current context.” said Elke Wisch, UNICEF Representative in Nepal.

“Increased economic hardship combined with school closures caused by COVID-19 place children already in child labor at increased risk of working longer hours or under worsening conditions, while many more may be forced into the worst forms of child labor due to job and income losses among vulnerable families. Our collective success in combatting COVID-19 needs to also be measured in the number of families we are supporting through these dire circumstances and the girls and boys who can continue to strive, grow and develop. This is not out of reach – It



International
Labour
Organization

#EndChildLabour2021



The Government of Nepal has adapted a new master plan to eliminate child labour by 2025. It intends to take an inclusive approach by empowering the local governments to declare themselves “Child Labour Free Zones”.

Binod Prakash Singh

Joint Secretary
Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security



can be achieved through our collective investment in programs that not only get children out of the workforce and back into school but also social work



and social protection programs that can help families avoid making this choice in the first place.”

To reverse the upward trend in child labor, the ILO and UNICEF are calling for: Adequate social protection for all, including universal child benefits and eligibility criteria taking into account households socio-economic characteristics, increased spending on quality education and getting all children back into school - including children who were out of school before COVID-19, promotion of decent work for adults, so families don’t have to resort to children helping to generate family income., an end to harmful gender norms and discrimination that influence child labor and investment in child protection systems, social work, agricultural development, rural public services, infrastructure and livelihoods.

As part of the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour, the global partnership Alliance 8.7, of which UNICEF and ILO

are partners, is encouraging member States, business, trade unions, civil society, and regional and international organizations to redouble their efforts in the global fight against child labor by making concrete action pledges.

Nepal is a pathfinder country of the Global Alliance 8.7 Alliance. This year, more than ever it is critical to expanding the path to opportunities, safety and care for all the children of Nepal.

“The Government of Nepal has adopted a new master plan to eliminate. It intends to take an inclusive approach by empowering the local governments to declare themselves child labor free zones,” said Binod Prakash Singh, joint secretary of Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security.

Child labor has risen to 160 million worldwide – an increase of 8.4 million children in the last four years – with millions more at risk due to the impacts of Covid-19, according to a new report by the International Labour

Organization (ILO) and Unicef.

“Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward” – released ahead of World Day Against Child Labour – warns that progress to end child labor has stalled for the first time in 20 years, reversing the previous downward trend that saw child labor fall by 94 million between 2000 and 2016.

“We are losing ground in the fight against child labor, and the last year has not made that fight any easier. Now, well into the second year of global lockdowns, school closures, economic disruptions, and shrinking national budgets, families are forced to make heartbreaking choices,” Unicef’s executive director Henrietta Fore said in a statement.

World Day Against Child Labour is being observed on Saturday and the UN has made 2021 the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour, calling urgent action needed to meet a goal of ending the practice by 2025.



Here's what the report on child labor said:

There has been a significant rise in the number of children aged 5 to 11 years in child labor, who now account for just over half of the total global figure.

The number of children aged 5 to 17 years in hazardous work has risen by 6.5 million to 79 million since 2016.

In sub-Saharan Africa, population growth, recurrent crises, extreme poverty, and inadequate social protection measures have led to an additional 16.6 million children in child labor over the past four years.

Covid-19 is endangering that progress even in regions where there has been some headway since 2016, such as Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Globally, nine million ad-

ditional children are at risk of being pushed into child labor by the end of 2022 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

A simulation model shows this number could rise to 46 million if they don't have access to critical social protection coverage.

Children already in child labor may be working longer hours or under worsening conditions because of additional economic shocks and school closures caused by Covid-19.

Many more may be forced into the worst forms of child labor due to job and income losses among vulnerable families.

The agriculture sector accounts for 70 percent of children in child labor (112 million) followed by 20 percent in services (31.4 million) and 10 percent in the industry (16.5 million).

Nearly 28 percent of children aged 5 to 11 years and 35 percent of children aged 12 to 14 years in child labor are out of school.

Child labor is more prevalent among boys than girls at every age. When household chores performed for 21 hours or more each week are taken into account, the gender gap in child labor narrows.

The prevalence of child labor in rural areas (14 percent) is close to three times higher than in urban areas (5 percent).

Child labor rises to 160 million – the first increase in two decades

The latest global estimates indicate that the number of children in child labor has risen to 160 million worldwide – an increase of 8.4 million children in the last four years. 63 million girls and 97 million boys were in child labor globally at the beginning of

2020, accounting for almost 1 in 10 of all children worldwide.

This report warns that global progress to end child labor has stalled for the first time in 20 years. The number of children aged 5 to 17 years in hazardous work – defined as work that is likely to harm their health, safety, or morals – has risen by 6.5 million to 79 million since 2016. In sub-Saharan Africa, population growth, extreme poverty, and inadequate social protection measures have led to an additional 16.6 million children in child labor over the past four years.

Additional economic shocks and school closures caused by COVID-19 mean that children already in child labor may be working longer hours or under worsening conditions, while many more may be forced into the worst forms of child labor due to the job and income losses among vulnerable families. The report warns that globally 9 million additional children are at risk of being pushed into child labor by the end of 2022 as a result of

the pandemic.

Children in child labor are at risk of physical and mental harm. Child labor compromises children's education, restricting their rights and limiting their future opportunities, and leads to vicious inter-generational cycles of poverty and child labor.

Key results from the 2020 global estimates include:

Involvement in child labor is higher for boys than girls of all ages. Among all boys, 11.2 percent are in child labor compared to 7.8 percent of all girls. In absolute numbers, boys in child labor outnumber girls by 34 million. When the definition of child labor expands to include household chores for 21 hours or more each week, the gender gap in prevalence among boys and girls aged 5 to 14 is reduced by almost half.

Child labor is much more common in rural areas. There are 122.7 million rural children in child labor compared to 37.3 million urban children. The prevalence of child labor

in rural areas (13.9 percent) is close to three times higher than in urban areas (4.7 percent).

Most child labor – for boys and girls alike – continues to occur in agriculture. More than 70 percent of all children in child labor, 112 million children in total, are in agriculture.

The largest share of child labor takes place within families. 72 percent of all child labor and 83 percent of child labor among children aged 5 to 11 occurs within families, primarily on family farms or in family microenterprises.

Child labor is frequently associated with children being out of school. A large share of younger children in child labor is excluded from school despite falling within the age range for compulsory education. More than a quarter of children aged 5 to 11 and over a third of children aged 12 to 14 who are in child labor are out of school.



Another Breakthrough

The recent breakthrough in opening access tunnel will pave the way to accelerate construction of Tanahu Hydropower Project

By A CORRESPONDENT

For a Managing Director, it is always a matter of satisfaction to see any breakthrough in a project in any normal circumstances. It will be more than this when a breakthrough is made in a circumstance like a Covid-19 crisis like this.

As the process of selection of new contractor took almost two years, the project has already two years behind the schedule. In this crucial period, the breakthrough of any kinds makes project head jubilant.

This is same with MD Pradip Thike. “Congratulation to the entire team along with my sincere appreciation to all for the immense efforts during the current difficult situation,” writes Thike, managing director Tanahu Hydropower Ltd in his face book wall.

Following health protocol, Tanahu Hydropower Project has made a breakthrough of Approach Tunnel to Dam. The construction of approach tunnel started four months.

This tunnel is critical as it will provide access to reach dam site, as the construction of access road is impossible, the project constructed tunnel to make access to dam sites from the rest of the project.

Constructed by the Syno Hydro, contractor of Package 2, 314 meter long tunnel will help the contractor of package 1 which has recently signed contract agreement with the project.

Categorized in national priority project, the construction of Tanahu Hydropower project has just few months back sign contract agreement with a contractor of package 1.

Although the project has suffered due to behind the schedule, the current pace of work gives consolation

to the project team including MD Thike.

After a long procedure issue following breaking contract agreement with Italian Contactor CMC, Tanahu Hydropower Ltd (THL) And Song Da Corporation, Vietnam-Kalika Construction (P) Ltd, Nepal (JV) has signed a contract agreement for the construction of package one of Headworks of Tanahu Hydropower Project.

As a storage type hydropower project with the capacity of 140MW with an estimated average annual energy generation of 587.7 GWh (Years 1-10) and 489.9 GWh (Year 11 onwards), the main components of the Project is 140 m high concrete gravity dam with crest length of 175m on the Seti River and reservoir with a total surface area of 7.26 km².

The elevation of Full Supply Level(FSL) is 415m above sea level. The waterway consists of 7.4 m diameter and 1,203m long headrace tunnel on the right bank for the river. An underground powerhouse measuring 27m wide x 46m high x 97m long will be built approximately 6 km (along the river course) downstream of the dam site.

A 190 m long tailrace tunnel will discharge the tail water back into the Seti River. Two permanent and primary access roads (totaling 7.3 km) and several temporary and

secondary access roads will provide access to the Project area. Temporary facilities include contractor's camps, equipment and maintenance yard, office areas, project staff's camp area, Construction Power Sub-station etc.

After the termination of agreement by Tanahu Hydropower Limited — the developer of Tanahu Hydropower Project — with Cooperativa Muratori e Cementisti di Ravenna on 1 October 2018, the main part of the the work stalled.

Although THL published the first tender notice on 25 April 2019, all the tenders were canceled and the re-tender was republished on 28 February 2020. With Covid-19 infection and another round of tenders, the project has further delayed.



Due to this dispute, the project is already running behind the project schedule. Although the new contractor has already started the process of construction of residential sites and other, the Covid-19 resurgence has affected the mobilization of contractor.

The present contractor Song Da Corporation, Vietnam-Kalika Construction (P) Ltd, and Nepal JV) is expected to accelerate the work after the mobilization. The breakthrough of the access tunnel will pave them for their work.

Realizing that the opening of the access tunnel is highly important to accelerate the speed of work and bridging the gap, MD Thike mobilized Syno Hydro, the contractor of package two, which has been currently undergoing its work, open the access road. Under the package, Syno Hydro has been working on tunnels, construction of powerhouse and supply of hydro-mechanical and electro-mechanical equipment.

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

Although Sinohydro Corporation, the Chinese contractor hired to execute the hydro-mechanical and electro-mechanical 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 package one is the biggest

an estimated annual energy generation capacity of 587.7-gigawatt-hours in the first 10 years of operation.



work with Nepalese and Vietnam joint venture signed the contract agreement worth Rs.16. 62 billion excluding VAT.

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

The Tanahu Hydropower Project will be one of the biggest reservoir-type projects in the country, with

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 total cost of the company's capital structure and financial management project (including transmission line, rural electrification and construction period interest) is US \$ 505 million, ADB 150 million, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) 184 million and European Investment Bank 80 million. 5 million and the Government of Nepal / Nepal Electricity Authority has been financed 86 million dollars.

At a time when the construction work under 3 package 220 kV double circuits Damauli Bharatpur Transmission line and package two are underway, the access tunnel breakthrough and mobilization of package one contractor will a breakthrough in project as well. This is a major success in the project.



The Post-pandemic Era Can Be A New Era For Asia's Roads, Too

Roads in Asia and the Pacific have brought us essential supplies and services, frontline workers, food and now vaccines. It is time to revive these vital arteries to prepare for economic recovery.

As our world struggles with the COVID-19 pandemic, with some glimmers of hope of emerging after extensive social regulations and vaccines, we now have this opportunity to recollect experience of the road sector in the past year, and to look ahead. For the last 70 years since the end of Second World War, the road industry has worked very hard to expand road networks, to upgrade services, and to respond to climate change. The hard work, together with those to improve rail, sea, and air transport, bring a much better-connected world than in any other time in human history.

This progress has been put in jeopardy as the pandemic hit the road sector badly. One impact has been the perception that transport connections, such as roads and air transport, helped spread the virus. By March 2020, almost all Asia and Pacific countries imposed domestic and international travel restrictions. We all observed amazing images of empty roads, sometimes only with birds and animals on them.

Secondly, formal and informal road-based public transport, including buses and modes such as jeep-

neys in the Philippines or three-wheelers in South Asia, were badly impacted by restrictions. This hurt the livelihood of vulnerable groups and underprivileged. Road transport is essential for poor families to reach basic necessities, education, and health-care services.

The third negative impact was on financing, both from the public and private sector. Existing toll roads encountered issues of near zero traffic, suspension of tolls, and evaporating credit from banks.

While these negative impacts were felt on the region's roads, the very same roads were playing a critical part in transporting essential supplies, frontline workers, and the needs of the population amidst the pandemic when restrictions were eased.

How can we keep these vital transport arteries open and healthy amidst pandemic recovery and prepare them for the return of robust economic activity?

For one, we need to keep the roads in good shape. Road maintenance is considered an essential service to continue, even during the lockdown in many countries. Road construction and maintenance resumed swiftly. The natural confinement of most maintenance activities to a stretch of road allows a relatively easy introduction of COVID-19 prevention measures. If the finance can be assured, the construction industry can



quickly resume the works when external environment and policies allow.

Due to the constraints in public resources, public-private partnerships will be needed even more than before the pandemic.

The surge of e-commerce, such as online shopping and food delivery services, has created a spike in last-mile delivery. For example, online grocery sales in Singapore have increased nearly fourfold since early April 2020. While logistics businesses faced serious short-term challenges, their growth during the period is as impressive. In the longer term, shifting retail purchases online and consolidating logistics networks would demand good road connections and conditions, but could contribute to reduced traffic and positive environmental benefits.

Public transport might see a rapid recovery while private transport would remain as the primary mode of travel on roads. Road space needs to be better utilized to accommodate these emerging transport modes. Walking and cycling gained in popularity as healthy transport during the pandemic, but they will need dedicated space and facilities to ensure their use and safety during and after recovery.

With the maturity of autonomous driving technology, estimates are that required road width may shrink significantly. The uptake of work-from-home practices, e-learning, and e-commerce could also cause changes to traffic patterns. These trends indicate opportunities for road designers to rethink the use of roads to accommodate more “pandemic-proof transport modes.”

Digitalization of the road sector also needs to be expedited. Efforts should be made to broaden digital inclusion to realize the full benefits of more integrated and agile systems. For example, the introduction of building information modeling can facilitate the progress of construction automation. Big data-based road asset management systems can help predict the requirements of road works in response to road deterioration, disasters, and pandemics. Travel demand of vulnerable groups, particularly low-income and underprivileged children, should also be monitored to meet their needs

in future pandemics.

As devastating as it was, the pandemic has provided a good opportunity for the road sector to upgrade its management and infrastructure. However, many developing economies are facing tight budgets, higher debt, and limited access to capital markets. Large scale public investments might not be immediately possible everywhere. In such a scenario, public investments should focus on essential social services and generating employment.

Due to the constraints in public resources, public-private partnerships will be needed even more than before the pandemic. However, the private sector is struggling as well, and the pandemic starkly brought out the need for proper risk sharing mechanisms to bring in private investors. This could include the government making larger investments in the partnership and underpinning user fees with “minimum revenue guarantees” so that the banking system is protected.

The resilience demonstrated by the road sector during the pandemic was commendable. Now is the time to kick-off of a new era for road sector. We know that recovery and continued progress toward an inclusive and sustainable road sector is within reach, and our efforts will ensure that we get there together.



Chen Chen: country Director, Sri Lanka Resident Mission, Asian Development Bank

Ravi Peri, Director, Transport and Communications Division, South Asia Department, Asian Development Bank

Source: ADB Blog

Tackling COVID-19 Together with the International Community -Japan Co-hosted COVAX Summit-



On June 2nd, 2021, Japan co-hosted the COVAX AMC Summit with Gavi to procure funds to provide vaccines for developing countries. Taking this opportunity, let me sum up Japan's assistance for the world and Nepal in the fight against this formidable infectious disease. I think it useful for the readers to be presented with Japan's efforts in a rather comprehensive manner. Japan has been taking a multifaceted approach to this effect, i.e., international fora; bilateral context; vaccines; cold chain; medical equipment; enhancing the health sector (water, nutrition, etc.), and technical assistance for capacity building.

Below is a summary of the contribution which Japan has been extending to the world, as well as to Nepal, in the pandemic. Whatever the difficulties COVID-19 causes, I believe we will be able to overcome the pandemic by tackling it together.

1.COVID-19 Vaccinations for All: with the UN and International Organizations

Responding to the outbreak, the Government of Japan took a leading role to formulate the COVAX Facility in cooperation with Gavi to ensure everyone, including our Nepali friends, can be vaccinated. Japan was the first country that donated a financial contribution to the newly established COVAX Facility. We co-hosted the COVAX AMC Summit on June 2nd, 2021 to call further upon the solidarity and commitment of the international community. It is my pleasure to tell you that the Summit was a great success thanks to the additional pledges from governments and the private sector, achieving far more than the target of \$8.3 billion USD. This will enable 1.8 billion vaccine doses for nearly 30 percent of the population in the COVAX Facility AMC-eligible economies. Including Nepal of course. Japanese Prime Minister, Mr. Suga announced the additional contribution for the COVAX Facility from Japan, making it 1 billion USD

in total, the second biggest commitment from a single country only after the USA.

The vaccine is important, but the cold chain is also vital. It is necessary to deliver vaccines safely to the people who need it. Japan has contributed to UNICEF (41 million USD) for cold-chain facilities to ensure that the vaccine will reach down as "Last One Mile Support," for all to be vaccinated. We have installed medical equipment for cold-storage facilities to assist the transportation of vaccines for 25 South East and South West Asian and Pacific Island countries, including Nepal. We hope it becomes available in Nepal by August 2021. It is our wish that the facility will be used effectively for the rapid progress of the immunization process all over the country.

In addition, as the Prime Minister stated at the COVAX AMC Summit, Japan also places importance on support for health security in a wide range of areas including nutrition, water, and sanitation to achieve Universal Health Coverage. In this context, Japan will host the Tokyo



World leaders unite to commit to global equitable access for COVID-19 vaccines



- Japan demonstrated its commitment to ending the acute phase of the pandemic by pledging US\$ 800 million at the Summit, making their total contribution to the COVAX AMC US\$ 1 billion. Their leadership made way for other donors to help COVAX fulfill its financial ask

(Credit: Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance website, <https://www.gavi.org/news/media-room/world-leaders-unite-commit-global-equitable-access-covid-19-vaccines>)

Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 this coming December to raise awareness for better nutrition for all. Japan is determined to continue to lead international efforts in the health sector, with an emphasis on multilateralism, by leading the world to “build back better.”

2. More Medical Equipment to Hospitals All Over Nepal

On a bilateral front, Japan is providing medical equipment for hospitals all over the country under the Japanese Grant Aid (2.7 million USD). So far, 25 blood gas analyzers and 25 portable ultrasound image diagnostic systems were handed over to hospitals.

As the latest example of bilateral assistance, the Japanese Embassy handed over 160 high concentration oxygen generators to the Ministry of Health and Population of Nepal on June 3rd, 2021 and they will be delivered to 58 hospitals around the country for the urgent treatment of COVID-19 patients. Oxygen generators are significantly useful especially for the urgent treatment of COVID-19 patients. The high-tech equipment can “generate” highly concentrated oxygen without the need of oxygen cylinders. The Embassy of Japan is now working to provide additional numbers of such oxygen generators. What’s more, six ambulances will arrive in Nepal in October. While the shortage of ambulances is a serious problem in this pandemic, these Made-in-Japan Ambulances with medical equipment will serve as mobile hospitals to manage emergency care for COVID-19 patients.

Furthermore, I signed the note last April to provide medical equipment for eight advanced public hospitals, to be used for treatment and consultation of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as an MRI (9 million USD). Patients with underlying NCD diseases are at higher risk of becoming critical if they are infected with COVID-19. The enhancement of diagnostic and therapeutic services for NCDs in public hospitals has become more important and urgent than ever.

3. Secure Medical Equipment and Necessities: with the UN and International Organizations

In addition to the COVAX Facility, Japan joins hands with various UN and international organizations to secure medical equipment and necessities in Nepal to fight against COVID-19, cooperating with UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF and IFRC (4.17 million USD). We also assist food security in Nepal with WFP, supporting the mother and the child health and nutritional program in the vulnerable districts of Province 1 and 2 (3.47 million USD).

4. Training Nepali Government Specialists and Supporting Local Areas

One of our aims in Nepal is to improve the overall public health condition of the country. Japan has been training Nepali government specialists under our annual technical cooperation program since 2003. In the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to improve overall public health and we support the installation of water tanks for handwashing, and the capacity building of the Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in Sundarijal a part of the Melamchi Water Supply Project assisted by Japan. We also provide protective materials such as masks, sanitizers, gloves, and protective clothes as well as PCR test kits for local areas as part of our technical cooperation program.

Overall, I hope that Japan’s endeavors will help Nepali people and medical professionals who face diffi-



culties caused by the COVID-19 situation. Japan always stands behind Nepal to combat this pandemic together and to achieve sustainable socio-economic growth of the country.

Mr. KIKUTA Yutaka is the Ambassador of Japan to Nepal,

Mind Your Plate



BY: AREET NARANG BASTOLA

Depression and anxiety are the most common mental health conditions worldwide, making them a leading cause of disability. Even beyond diagnosed conditions, subclinical symptoms of depression and anxiety affect the wellbeing and functioning of a large proportion of the population. Therefore, new approaches to managing both clinically diagnosed and subclinical depression and anxiety are needed.

What we observe is a vicious circle—unhealthy food can worsen depression and depression leads to unhealthy eating. People who mostly consume fast food, commercial baked goods and processed foods such as fries, fried chicken, and packaged biscuits, cookies, and cake—were 37 percent more likely to be depressed than people who avoided junk foods. The more they consumed, the greater the depression risk (Sánchez-Villegas et al., 2012).

Science Behind Nutrition



Micronutrients are required for the synthesis of many chemical messengers in the brain known as neurotransmitters. The four major neurotransmitters that regulate mood and commonly known as happy hormones are Serotonin, dopamine, γ -aminobutyric acid (GABA), and noradrenaline. These chemical messengers are necessary to balance the intensity of signals between neurons in the brain and rest of the body. Low level of serotonin in particular have been linked with neurological disorders, anxiety and depression.

Vitamin B (such as milk, cheese, eggs, spinach, nuts, bananas, chicken, red meat etc) are essential cofactors for the synthesis of neurotransmitters. Choline (nutrient similar to Vit B) is a unique nutrient because it is not classified as a vitamin or a mineral. However, it is required for the production of neurotransmitter acetylcholine, which is

involved in mood and memory. Some evidence shows that folate, zinc, magnesium, iron, selenium and vitamin D may be protective against anxiety, mood swings, and irritability (Bjørklund et al., 2018). Numerous studies have shown

that patients diagnosed with depression are often deficient in one or more of these micronutrients. Hence a well-balanced diet will provide adequate sources of these nutrients, as they are commonly found in a variety of foods.

Gut Mood Connection

According to the studies, our gut microbiota is linked to anxiety, depression, and even schizophrenia (Madan et al., 2020; Rodrigues-Amorim et al., 2018; Simpson et al., 2020). A poor diet is a risk factor for these conditions. Supporting a healthy gut microbiome with a healthy diet of unprocessed foods and probiotic foods and supplementation is not only beneficial in preventing and treating depression, but can be as effective as anti-depressant medications.

Serotonin is a neurotransmitter responsible for regulating our moods, sleep, and appetite and it also inhibits pain. A lack of serotonin has long been blamed as the cause of depression, and this is often the case. However, we're learning that the lack of serotonin can be a symptom of chronic inflammation and inadequate gut flora. We now know that 95% of serotonin is produced in the gut, and that the presence of enough beneficial bacteria is essential for proper serotonin production. So if we have a history of antibiotic use or were not exposed to enough bacteria in birth or childhood, we may not produce enough serotonin (June, 2018).

The connection between diet and emotions stems from the close relationship between your brain and your gastrointestinal tract, often called the "second brain." Your Gastro-Intestinal tract is home to billions of bacteria that influence the production of neurotransmitters (Dopamine and Serotonin), chemical substances that constantly carry messages from the gut to the brain.

Eating healthy food promotes the growth of "good" bacteria, which in turn positively affects neurotransmitter production. A steady diet of junk food, on the other hand, can cause inflammation that hampers production. When neurotransmitter production is in good shape,

the brain receives positive messages and it can be easily reflected in your emotions. But when the production is limited the mood gets affected.

When the diet is healthy there are likely to get fewer mood fluctuations, an overall happier outlook and an improved ability to focus. There is a research which indicates that healthy diets help with symptom of anxiety and depression and unhealthy diet carries the risk of dementia and stroke. The food that support Body-Mind wellbeing are healthy fats like avocado, coconut oil, ghee etc, colourful vegetables & antioxidant fruits and naturally fermented probiotic foods. (June, 2018).

Energy And Mood

The brain requires glucose as its main source of fuel. In fact, the brain uses 20% of the glucose needed by the body, which means we require carbohydrate throughout the day for our brain to function at its best. The Glycaemic Index of a food refers to the rate at which carbohydrates (glucose) are released into the blood. High Glycaemic Index foods, such as processed foods, sugar-sweetened beverages, confectionery and cakes can cause dramatic spikes and drops in blood glucose. This fluctuation in blood glucose is often referred to as the 'sugar high' and 'sugar crash' and is associated with irritability, lack of concentration, feeling weak and mood swings. Sharp peaks in blood glucose can also trigger the stress hormone cortisol. One study suggests that consuming high Glycaemic Index food is associated with an increased risk of depression (Gangwisch et. al., 2015).

It is recommended to choose low Glycaemic Index food because they allow our blood glucose levels to rise and fall slowly. These foods are typically high fibre whole grains, oats, fruits and vegetables. Furthermore, eating regular, well-balanced meals with a combination of carbohydrate, protein and healthy fats provides stable blood glucose levels throughout the day as fat and protein can slow the rate of carbohydrate absorption. For example, combining boiled potatoes (high Glycaemic Index) with Rajma, Chana or Dal (protein & fibre) could help to prevent any sudden crashes in glucose for the brain and subsequent mood disturbances.

Here is the list of the food items that one can incorporate for good mood. Whole foods like fresh fruits and vegetables and food rich in fibre (apple, carrot, lentil, broccoli, banana, bamboo shoot) absorbs glucose in your body and helps in avoiding sugar rush and crashes. Food rich in antioxidants which are also inflammation fighters are found plenty in strawberries, leafy green vegetables, turmeric and food rich in omega – 3 fatty acids like flaxseeds, chia seeds and walnuts. Food rich in Vitamin D (such as mushrooms, cheese, egg yolks, tuna, salmon, dairy products, orange juice and Tofu) helps with production of serotonin, and Magnesium (pumpkin seeds, almonds, spinach etc. helps with everything from nerve and muscle function to keeping the heartbeat steady. A mineral deficiency can hurt the

bacteria in your gut and cause depression and anxiety like symptoms. Then comes the probiotics(kimchi, kombucha, yogurt etc.) which we can get from fermented food has live bacteria that are good for your digestive tract.

Food For Thought



Incorporating nutritious food into your diet can take some extra effort at first but once it's become a lifestyle it has long term benefits. Moreover general nutrition rules like staying hydrated, not skipping meals and being mindful of your caffeine and alcohol intake can directly impact your anxiety level. Being mindful of the healthy foods entering your body is also affective especially when it comes to combating cravings. Appreciate each smell, taste, texture for each food. Make a note of how the nutritious snack and meals make you feel forward. It may take days or weeks before you start to feel the mood-boosting effects of your diet depending how many changes you can implement. Accommodate regular exercises along with diet to observe affective changes in the anxiety and depressive mood.

There are many psychological, social and biological benefits of eating meals with other people. They give us a sense of rhythm and regularity in our lives, a chance to reflect on the day, and feel connected to others. Biologically, eating in upright chairs helps with our digestion. Talking and listening also slows us down so we don't eat too fast.

We should try making the most of mealtimes by setting aside at least one meal in a day to eat with family. One can choose a meal that's easy to prepare so it doesn't become a chore. Share responsibility so everyone has a different task like doing the shopping, setting the table, cooking or washing up and among others. Keep the television off so you can all talk and share (Feldman et. al., 2007).

Areet Narang Bastola is the Chief Executive Officer of Chaitanya Institute for Mental Health, Nepal. Email: chaitanyarehabnepal@gmail.com.

Supporting Higher Education

World Bank Approves \$60 Million To Strengthen Nepal's Higher Education

By A CORRESPONDENT

Despite substantial investment in the higher education over the years, quality of Nepal's higher education is declining with lack of infrastructures and other academic activities.

Although the access to higher education has gradually increased, it is still traditional and inaccessible to the underprivileged and vulnerable students. Given the situation, the recent announcement of the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approving \$60 million is highly significant.

The support aims to improve the quality of Nepal's higher education, scale up online learning, and expand access to academic institutions for underprivileged and vulnerable students.

With the surge of Covid-19 infections in the country and shut down of the education institutions, universities have started online classes. However, it is still inaccessible to the large numbers of students due to financial conditions.

In this sense, the support announced by the world bank has more meaning to improve the online classes increasing the access of underprivileged and vulnerable students from different parts of Nepal.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of building back better and prioritizing human capital development," stated Faris Hadad-Zervos, World Bank Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. "Improving access to quality higher education and helping students acquire the skills that are in demand in the labor market will contribute to Nepal's COVID-19 recovery and strengthen its resilience."

Since last many years, the World Bank has been a major multi-lateral development parts of Nepal providing support to improve quality and access of people in higher secondary, primary and higher education. As Nepal has been passing through a major crisis following the upsurge of Covid-19, this support will be game changer to increase access and quality of higher education.

The Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program builds on Nepal's previous successful higher education projects supported through results-based financing. It will help the government of Nepal align its higher edu-

cation sector with labor market needs, boost collaborative research and entrepreneurship, improve governance, and access to quality higher education, especially for disadvantaged students. The COVID-19 pandemic has created strong incentives to expand online platforms and blended learning, which the program will help scale up across Nepal's universities.

"A key priority of the program is to promote the inclusion of disadvantaged students, including those facing economic hardship due to COVID-19," stated Mohan Aryal, World Bank's Program Task Team Leader. "The program will expand targeted scholarships to help disadvantaged students pursue labor market-driven academic programs and support equity grants to higher education institutions in needy and disaster-affected areas in Nepal."

The World Bank, one of the largest sources of funding and knowledge for developing countries, is taking broad, fast action to help developing countries respond to the health, social and economic impacts of COVID-19.



This includes \$12 billion to help low- and middle-income countries purchase and distribute COVID-19 vaccines, tests, and treatments, and strengthen vaccination systems. The financing builds on the broader World Bank Group COVID-19 response, which is helping more than 100 countries strengthen health systems, support the poorest households, and create supportive conditions to maintain livelihoods and jobs for those hit hardest.

BOOK

On Indian Philosophy

Renowned scholar professor Prasanna Gautam's book explores vast areas of Indian philosophy

By A CORRESPONDENT

From time immemorial Indian philosophy has been dominating the life of the Indian subcontinent and many parts of the Asia. As it is vast and immense, the philosophy is difficult to comprehend and interpret.

Written in Sanskrit, the language with based on so many sounds and complex grimmer, one can see various interpretations for the same words of Indian philosophy.

At a time when there are several interpretations creating confusion over Indian philosophy, professor Gautam, serious scholar of ancient Sanskrit literature, published a book in a tradition set by his grandfather Vidwatshiromani Sri Kul Chandra Gautam, a renowned scholar of Nepal.

Although he died a long time ago, late Vidwatshiromani Sri Kul Chandra Gautam's original works are still regarded as highly valuable document of Sanskrit literature world. Grandson Gautam published a book following his grandfather's way.

"I have not hesitation in saying that professor Gautam, too, has made an enormous contribution with his uniquely insightful exposure of the Rig Veda, by his word for word translation of that ancient literature. Readers will remain forever indebted to him for the scholarly work," writes Dr. Kashinath Neupane, professor of Buddhist and Sanskrit, Nepal Sanskrit University. "One can appreciate his methodical manner of introducing and expanding complex subjects. He begins by an introductory overview of Indian philosophical spectrum."

As professor Neupane writes in his forward, author Gautam very carefully choose the words to read the entire philosophy in easy way and comprehend it with better understanding. "Although appearing easy to read at first, the book guides the reader to comprehend the seriousness of the concepts, thus making

him want to learn more about this subject. This book is a must-read for understanding this ancient wisdom," said Gautam.

Writing about the importance Indian civilization, author Gautam said that Indian philosophy appears at first to be a bewildering plethora of concepts. "It is this curious potpourri of faith and logic that has made Indian philosophy an enigma," writes Gautam.

As Indian philosophy is ancient, it has gone through a series of evolutionary process. There need to have true understanding to know the broad prospective of Indian philosophy. At a time when there is lack of book to understand Indian philosophy, Gautama's book helps readers to understand its basic foundation as well as its broader perspectives.

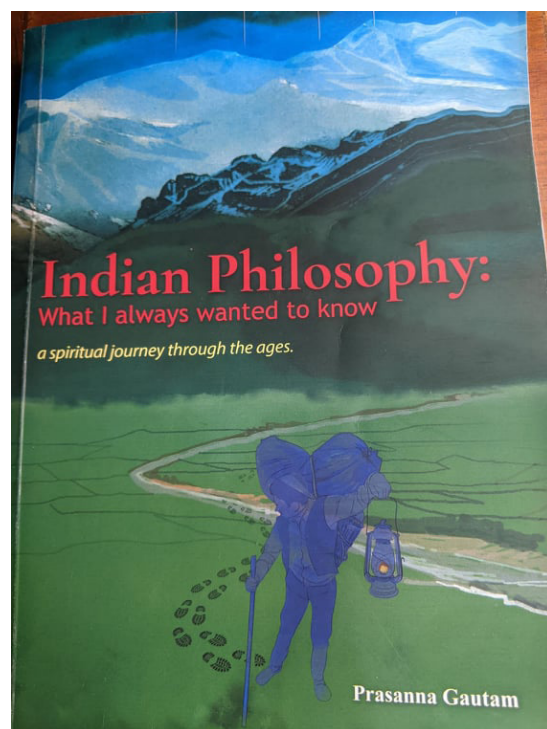
"Indian philosophy appears at first to be a bewildering plethora of concepts. It is this curious potpourri of faith and logic that has made Indian philosophy an enigma. Although the original works appear in simple, short phases, or sentences in Sanskrit, they do require some knowledge of the ancient culture and religion of that land to comprehend them."

"Many Indologists of great renown have tried to explain this philosophy and have produced many tomes of learned literature. They had become profoundly impressed to find that the Indian sub-continent had produced many great philosophers even earlier than the Greeks and Egyptians who had influenced their Christian world

Divided into 23 different chapters, the book discussed the various stages of Indian civilizations and its evolutions from time to time. The author discusses the earliest period Vedas, Circa 4000 BCE, The Vedas, Brah-

manas-Brahminisms, Tantra, Upanisads, Bhagvat Gita, Kautilya, Jainism, Buddha and all the important period in Indian civilization.

This is most read book for those who want to understand the basic of Hindu philosophy and civilization. In simple English language, the author has attempted to describe entire philosophy. Gautama's work will also help to non-Nepali and Hindi speakers to understand the basic of Indian civilization



Indian Philosophy What I Always Wanted to Know A Spiritual journey through the ages

Author: Prasanna Gautam
Publisher: Kulchandra Gautam
Smriti Sansthan, Gairidhara,
Kathmandu Nepal phone
Price: Rs.299 and £20.UK
Pages: 219

Sticks & Stones



BY: HEMANG DIXIT

There is an English saying that goes 'Sticks & Stones may break my Bones' which is a well known saying from time immemorial may be very appropriate in the context of Nepal. The export of timber and stones is definitely detrimental for Nepal in the long run.

As far as export of timber and boulders for the benefit of India is concerned, it has a long history. Besides contributing to the British fund for the World War I then PM Chandra Shumsher contributed on behalf of Nepal some two lakhs broad-gauge wooden sleepers, which now-a-days are made of concrete plus also two hundred and twenty sesame trees. Similarly during the course of World War II, PM Joodha contributed 3,000 walnut trees, of which 1,000 were gifts for the making of the wooden shoulder rests of rifles. Thus the export of timber, boulders and grit from Nepal has been going on for some time.

I remember that in the aftermath of the Kodari Highway, that as one travelled by the riverbank one saw plenty of boulder. Sadly these have now gone for one sees dredgers extracting sand and trucks carting them away. Of course one notices too that a number of mainly women and an occasional man working there for the sake of their livelihood. An alternative has to be found for them.

This reminds too of my bygone days of travelling from Tansen and Butwal. At a certain point along the highway, the bus would stop and passengers would be made to walk across a certain stretch of the road and wait a little bit afar off. The reason was there were always some stones coming from the top downwards. Then without any passengers in the bus driver would step on the gas and bring the vehicle swiftly across this hazardous stretch of road. An apt solution would be to build a short tunnel through which vehicles could pass and boulders hurtling down from above would no longer hit vehicles and kill people travelling on the road below. Sadly as one travels on the highway along the river one sees that that it does not have any big boulders as all these have been carted away.

It is noteworthy to note that the Panchayat Government, which many deplore, had the foresight to ban the export of boulders, gravel and sand to other countries. Some form of uncanny thinking must have prompted some of the administrative officials to suggest to our new appointed raw and untested politicians on the benefits of such official action i.e. the lifting the 1971 ban of exporting boulders etc from this land of ours. The stated reason to reduce the deficit budget seems bizarre. It is a dumb suggestion for it is well known that local politicians all over the country have bought bulldozer and in the name of making local road are bulldozing hills and causing landslides in many places. Thus it is not only in the Chure / Bhabber region but all over Nepal

We spend valuable diesel which we have brought with foreign exchange to transport relatively cheap boulders and gravel from our land. How foolish can we get? South Korea on the other hand exported highly expensive light but costly electronic goods all over the world and has become a world leader.

After all 5th June, 2021 was World Environment Day. Some environment conscious Nepalis are planting trees along river banks to improve and make the river banks stronger so that the floods do not erode it away. The foolish uncaring governmental authorities are definitely anti nationalist when they propose to restart the export of our boulders, our heritage to third countries. We should be conserving our resources.

One needs to be reminded of the deep seated thinking of a world power - nations. One such has been keeping the oil that it has underground whilst it uses up the resources that are elsewhere e.g. in the Gulf countries. A very wise policy if one may say it so. Unfortunately however oil will probably not be in so great a demand as electric vehicles come into use. Even more so efficient planes are being developed to use less oil derived fuel to reduce global warming!

Funnily the human habit to hoard and collect is causing problems in Spanish tourist beaches. Apparently many visitors gather the sea-shore pebbles and shells to take back home as souvenir. Some enterprising Spanish folks are abetting in this by empty bottles filled with pebbles to make a fast buck! What ingenuity. This however has bereft the beaches of Spain of what should be a natural habitat.

At this juncture I am reminded of what is said to be a favourite story of late Chairman Mao Ze Dong:

There was an old man who lived on one side of a huge mountain but his field over on the other side. Each day the old man had to climb up and go down the other side to till his field. One day he got tired of his routine and instead went to the top of the mountain and started digging. This went on for a couple of days and God seeing this felt pity on the old man.

'What are you doing?' he asked the old man.

'I am flattening this mountain so that I don't have to climb it every day to reach my field,' the man said.

'Don't be foolish old man. How can you possibly do that? It will take ages' said God.

'No matter. If I can't do it my son will follow me. If he can't do it his son will do it. If he too can't then his son will do so and so on till the mountain is flat,' said the old farmer.

God sadly shook his head and having pity on the farmer removed the mountain overnight. The old farmer could then walk easily to his field.

Mao's concept in telling the story is that nothing is impossible in this world. I only hope that our government advisors do not think that they have the ability to sell boulders and sand from all over the country for that will certainly lead to a disturbance of our ecosystem. We the current Nepalis will not be handing over to our future generations the Nepal that we found when we were born.

What we have to remember is that we do not inherit the earth from our ancestors: we borrow it from our children.

The author is a retired medical doctor and writes fiction under the pen name of Mani Dixit also. Website: www.hdixit.org.np. Twitter: @manidixithd



For News, Views, Comments & Perspectives

LOG IN

spotlightnepal.com

Latest Magazine



VOL. 14, No. 18, June 04, 2021
(Jestha 21, 2078) Publisher: Keshab
Prasad Poudel Online Register
Number: DOI 584/074-75



VOL. 14, No. 17, May 09, 2021
(Baisakh 26, 2078) Publisher:
Keshab Prasad Poudel Online
Register Number: DOI 584/074-75



VOL. 14 No. 16, April 16, 2021
(Baisakh 03, 2078) Publisher:
Keshab Prasad Poudel Online
Register Number: DOI 584/074-75



VOL. 14 No. 15, April 02, 2021
(Chaitra 20, 2077) Publisher:
Keshab Prasad Poudel Online
Register Number: DOI 584/074-75

NEW SPOTLIGHT
NEWS MAGAZINE

Kathmandu, Ph.: +97 1 4430250

Email: spotlightnepal@gmail.com

Why pay a fee? Get it done for FREE.

Introducing NIBL's Thaili, a zero transaction fee digital wallet.



Transfer money, pay bills and do much more
at zero transaction fees.

For anything and everything



DOWNLOAD the App now



(available soon for iOS users)

Here you go Sisi Your
BIRTHDAY SURPRISE! 🎂

Rs. 5000 transferred to sister's account.

Rs. 5000 deposited in account.

Oh Dai! You're the best.
ABA TA PARTY! 🥳



Features and services
updated regularly



Available for
Android users



iOS users get started on:
www.nibl.com.np/thaili



Download and experience
features and special offers



GET 4% AND 2% DISCOUNT
ON NTC AND NCELL TOPUP

Customer SUPPORT
☎ 01-4545481
☎ 01-4512044
☎ 01-4514561
email us at: thaili@nibl.com.np