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**VIEWPOINT**  
Dr. Tilak Rawal



**OPINION**  
Dr. K. Uprety



**FORUM**  
Pratima Pande

# NEW SPOTLIGHT

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Dec.- 09, 2022

FORTNIGHTLY

## KVPT Completing A Great Task

### INSIDE



**POLITICS**  
UNCERTAIN COURSE



**NEA**  
EIGHT BILLION PROFIT



**FACE TO FACE**  
KRISHNA MAN PRADHAN

HBL

विशेष  
बचत  
खाता



# हर एक विशेष ग्राहकहरुका लागि

सरल, सहज हिमालयन बैंकको 'विशेष बचत खाता'

नाबालक, बृद्ध-बृद्धा, लेखपढ गर्न नजान्ने तथा फरक ढंगले सक्षमहरुका लागि न्यूनतम मौज्जात रु. २ हजारमा नै विभिन्न बैंकिङ्ग सुविधा निशुल्क पाईने 'विशेष बचत खाता' खोली भविष्यको लागि आजैबाट बचत गर्नुहोस् ।

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

HBL



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Himalayan Bank (Viber)

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\*शर्तहरू लागू हुनेछन् ।





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As the mandate of recent general elections is for a broader coalition, it is almost certain that Nepal's political future will likely see intense instability in the coming years. The votes secured by the political parties have shown that the five-party ruling alliances secured a thin majority. As other smaller parties including the newly emerged Janmat Party from the southern plain agree to support the ruling coalition, the ruling party alliance could form the next government. However, the matter is yet to be clear who leads the government now? The decision of the Maoist Center to open political alliances with all political parties indicates that option to form an alternative government with the main opposition remains. At a time when CPN-Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal is showing interest to lead the government, the decision of the Maoist center is meaningful. With this, Nepali Congress leader and prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, who is yet to open his mouth, is in a difficult position. Joining the Maoist alliance, Nepali Congress secured a reasonably good position winning quite a large number of seats in the elections. In this context, the Nepali Congress, which has at least a couple of aspirants from two generations to lead the government, will have to bargain hard with Prachanda. Along with the prime minister, the ruling coalition has also to decide on a speaker, deputy speaker, president and vice president. Thus, future negotiations will be tough. However, we have decided to cover the successful completion of the reconstruction of temples and monuments by the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) as our cover story for this issue. Besides, we also give space to the economic and another contemporary issue this week.

**Keshab Poudel**

Editor

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# An Overture Filled with Confusion



BY: DR. K. UPRETY

Finally, the verdict is out. The message from voters is loud. The system of governance imposed from haunts and practiced for more than two decades has failed to deliver as expected and stand erect. The little that has been achieved by the larger citizenry does not seem to be meaningful enough to justify the collateral damage that has been made to the Nation. A large segment of the voters, through their ballots, appear to have opted for an overhaul of the system. Not cosmetic only, but a change of its shaft, nuts, and bolts.

The message is also loud in saying that ignoring party loyalty, association, and length of service to favor nepotism and creed-based choices, that too in blatant breach of the constitutional spirit beyond moral and ethical standards, can be costly. The adage “united we stand, divided we fall” and the stratagem “alliance for a common cause rather than individual victory” certainly have shown contextual relevance.

In some respect, however, the message is a bit blurry too. It has not traced a clear path for players to take in the parliamentary game of numbers. The suspense looms large in the type of alliance that will be formed. The spectrum for speculation is wide enough to prognosticate whether the formation of an alliance will be based on the players’ common development agenda, ideological proximity, generational affinity, or their nexus with external puppeteers, perpetually and proactively writing the script of internal theatre they direct. The dilemma of choice posed to the cohort of leadership is similar to that which happened a few years ago, during which time the leaderships were juggling with the then-established equation to create a balance in their own favor, parallelly advancing a few leagues forward to ultimately return to the point of origin.

The blurriness of the message is also tricky. Whilst several heavy-weight leaders as well as the prodigal heirs of supreme leaders, considered invincible, were eliminated by unfamiliar faces, candidates who are still facing felony charges or fielded from state penitentiaries were ratified by the voters. It is difficult to gauge whether this is due to the voters’ political ignorance or misjudgment, or a calculated teaser of sarcasm, making a mockery of the democratic process that

considers the conduct only of election as a holy imperative, regardless of the quality and integrity of the process. True, the mockery was already ostensible in the act of a number of candidates who agreed to participate in the electoral exercise governed by the same constitution which they

vouched to tearing into pieces. In the midst, given the granularity of data and based on comments on social networks, many seem to be unsure as to whether the parties who were at the helm of power for such a long time need to be consoled, condoled, or congratulated. This lack of willingness to accept the electoral message leaves the door wide open for implosions within parties.

Certainly, the unseen benefit projected by the results should also not be ignored. Indeed, this time the equation in the electoral graph has changed drastically, with the arrival in national politics of new and seemingly energetic quadragenarians with noble objectives and action plans aiming at confronting, or replacing, the old guards. The hope they bestow upon the people for the revival of nationhood through the redrawing of the political mosaic is highly commendable but needs to be appreciated in its broad sense, at best. Time will tell how successfully the new faces will manage to cushion themselves against the coercion of many of those who have several decades of experience in the game of power and are experts in ruthlessly distorting fair play of politics by not-so-healthy maneuvering and manipulating. This is perhaps where the larger citizenry should stay alert to save the newcomers from unwarranted encroachments and help them become successful in their mission.

But as we know it, all that glitters is not always gold. Without any one party being able to secure a clear majority in parliament --a deliberate design feature of the constitution-- the future bears the risk of continued horse trading leading to fragile coalitions filled with a plethora of

contrasting programs and plans, thus making it difficult for those who will have the reign of power to fulfill their promises and satisfy their constituents. The immediate challenge, thus, seems to be that of forming a council of ministers with a premier who secures the required support of peers to exercise effective and real power to implement government programs, and to respond, react, and rebut to a responsible opposition party which stays honest enough to meaningfully and ably scrutinize government actions.

No doubt, troubled days, in unknown form, shape, and content are still ahead, but this time with a sliver of hope for better years in sight!



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## NEWSNOTES

### 16 Day Of Activism Against Gender Based Violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a serious and widespread violation of human rights worldwide. Statistics tell us that in Nepal, GBV affects more than one in four women and girls in their lifetime.

Violence disproportionately affects women and girls who face multiple forms of discrimination based on disability, caste, or ethnicity, limiting their access to protection, treatment, and justice.

This year, on 30 November, the United Nations in Nepal and International Development Partners, marked 16 Day of Activism Against Gender Based Violence Campaign at



the Dhangadhi Sub-Metropolitan Office together with the Ministry of Social Development of the Sudurpaschim Province and representatives from Embassies,

development partners civil society, and the women's movement.

Speaking at the event, Ganesh Singh, Acting Secretary of the Ministry of Social Development, Sudurpaschim Province, urged everyone to unite to end gender-based violence.

This event served as a platform to mobilize stakeholders to take action to prevent and respond to gender based violence against women and girls by strengthening comprehensive essential services to survivors of violence; investing in reliable data collection on GBV; increasing programming on addressing gender discriminatory norms; and strengthening protection mechanisms to prevent and eliminate violence and discrimination against women's rights advocates/activists in line with international standards.

Speaking on behalf of the United Nations in Nepal and as Co-chair of the International Development Partners Group, Elke Wisch, UNICEF Representative in Nepal, "Gender-based violence continues to undermine the rights, dignity, security and autonomy of women, girls as well as LGBTIQ+ persons particularly those from marginalized communities. Beyond violating the rights of each individual, neglecting women and girls undermines half the potential for progress, prosperity and well-being for all. It will therefore require a 'whole of society' effort to break down the silence and tackle the culture of acceptance to achieve zero tolerance for violence against women, girls and other marginalized community members.

Representing Bilateral Development Partners and Head of Cooperation, European Union Partner's Group Co-Chair Dr. Marco Gemmer opined "We all, including men and

boys, have our roles to play as individuals and beyond our mandates. It is not enough to not be involved of the violence- we need to champion the message that we will not accept, condone or let pass any kind of violence, and it is our obligation to speak up if we observe any instead of being silent. We need to be part of the change of these norms that also hurt us, by limiting how and what we -regardless of gender- should, can and want to be."

The event, streamed live on Facebook, featured an interactive play advocating for the creation of safe spaces for survivors of violence from marginalized backgrounds whose needs are not met by existing systems. The event also featured a panel discussion featuring Sabitra Ghimire, Chair - Dalit Women Rights Forum, Sajina Pariyar - Child Club Member, Nirang Chaudhari - Sudurpaschim Samaj and Dr. Jagadish Bisht from the One Stop Crisis Management Center at the Seti Hospital in Dhangadhi, where the panelists called for greater action and resources to be committed to end the scourge of GBV in Nepal.

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an international campaign which takes place each year. It commences on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to 10 December, Human Rights Day. It was originated by activists at the first Women's Global Leadership Institute in 1991 and is coordinated each year by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership. It is used as an organizing strategy by individuals and organizations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.

As a unifying theme running global activities, the UNiTE campaign has utilized the colour orange to represent a brighter future, free from violence against women and girls. For the past years, the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Nepal has been marking 16 days campaign with awareness building and advocacy campaigns across Nepal. Some of the key activities undertaken were 'oranging' monuments and provincial buildings, engaging audience across Nepal through films, social media, and radio campaigns.

### JICA To Support Program For Elevating International Migrants

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed a Record of Discussions with the Government of Nepal in Kathmandu for the 'Project on Career Development and Entrepreneurship Support Program for International Migrants', a technical cooperation



project.

This project will be implemented for Career Development and Entrepreneurship Support Program of the returnee migrants from Japan aiming at enhancing their information access and developing their capacity so that the industrial development of Nepal can be promoted. The project adopts a demand-driven approach that supports returnee migrants who want to acquire skills and competencies and further implement their acquired knowledge for establishing a productive business/career in Nepal eventually contributing to the economic development of Nepal. The project intends to fulfill SDGs Goal 8 “Decent Work & Economic Growth.”

The project plans to appoint mentors who continuously provide training to the returnees recipients for enhancing their capacity in career planning and entrepreneurship throughout the migration flow (pre -migration, while-in Japan and after returning).

The total period of the project is 5 years (2023-2027) and the Implementing Agency for the project is Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS), Department of Foreign Employment(DoFE) and Foreign Employment Board(FEB) .

#### **Suresh Raj Sharma Appointed As A Member Of Independent UN's Independent Audit Advisory Committee**



UN General Assembly elected Suresh Raj Sharma as a member of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee of the United Nations for a three-year term of office, beginning on 1 January 2023.

#### **Peace Corps Associate Director of the Office of Global Operations Scott Beale Calls On Foreign Secretary Paudyal**

Peace Corps Associate Director of the Office of Global Operations Scott Beale Calls On Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal today at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singh Durbar.

Beale, arrived for a two-day trip to Nepal as part of a visit to the region today. While in Kathmandu, Associate Director Beale will meet with government and civil society representatives to discuss the plans to return Peace Corps Volunteers to Nepal.



According to a press release issued by the U.S. Embassy in Nepal, after the global evacuation of Volunteers in March 2020

due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Peace Corps is planning to return Volunteers to the country in early 2023. Peace Corps first established operations in Nepal in September 1962. Since that time, nearly 4,000 Americans have served in Nepal working in multiple sectors and across the country. At the time of the global evacuation in March 2020 due to COVID-19, Peace Corps had 124 Volunteers and trainees working in the areas of agriculture, health, and education.

#### **Ambassador Of India Naveen Srivastava Inaugurated Art Exhibition On Deities Of Nepal**

Ambassador of India Naveen Srivastava inaugurated the exhibition “Deities of Nepal” on 27 November 2022 in presence of the President of the Federation of Handicraft Associations of Nepal Prachanda Shakya, Nepal Art Council President Sagar SJB Rana and Deputy Mayors of Lalitpur and Kathmandu Metropolitan City Manjiri Shakya and Sunita Dangol.



This exhibition is being organized to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Nepal Art Council and the 50th anniversary of the Federation of Handicraft Associations of Nepal. The art exhibition is being held from 27 November-10 December 2022 at Nepal Art Council.

SVCC (Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre), Kathmandu is also organizing a two-day lecture series titled as “Iconographic Expressions of the Deities of India and Nepal” on 28-29 November 2022.

#### **Japanese Ambassador To Nepal Kikuta Addresses Nepal-Japan Educational Dialogue at Tribhuvan University**

The third round of Nepal-Japan Educational Dialogue hosted by the University of Tokyo was held on 28th at IOE, TU with more than 500 students participating in person and online.

Ambassador Kikuta Yutaka congratulated the exchange between Japan and Nepal that began 120 years ago and continues to this day, noting that Mr. TAKEI Shunsuke, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs, visited Nepal last weekend to observe the elections. He also encouraged young students that they will play ever more important role for the development of Nepal after the elections.



## NEWSNOTES

As former MEXT scholarship students, Prof. Dr. Khadga KC, Associate Prof. Dr. Hari Ram Parajuli, and Assistant Prof. Dr. Khem Gyanwali attended the Dialogue. Prof. Dr. Shashidhar Ram Joshi, Dean of IOE, shared with the students the diligence of the Japanese people, which he learned through his experience as a research fellow in Japan, and the environment in which they can learn in English even in Japan.

From Japan, Saitama University, Shimane University, Yokohama National University, Kyushu University, Tokyo International University, and Hiroshima University attended online and shared their unique programs for international students!

The application and selection process at each university for admission in 2023 is currently underway. Interested students should check their websites.

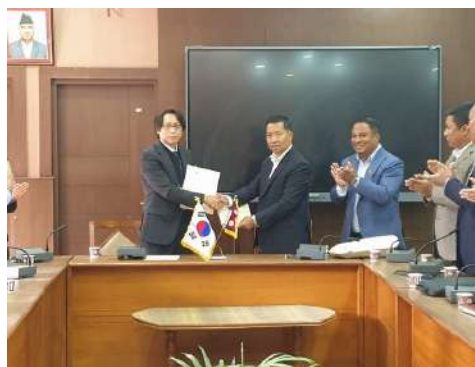
### Korean Government Agree To Support Expansion Of Nepal Korea Friendship Hospital

Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA) signed the Record of Discussion (RoD) for “The Project For Capacity Building Of Medical Service To Achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) For The Poor In Vulnerable Areas In Bhaktapur, Nepal” on 15 November 2022 at MoFAGA.

The main objective of this project is to enhance the capacity of medical infrastructure and professionals for quality hospital management, infection control, and improved coverage of public health insurance to attain the goal of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Bhaktapur, Nepal which will be implemented by KOICA in Nepal Korea Friendship Municipality Hospital (NKFMH) in close collaboration and coordination with MoFAGA and Madhyapur Thimi Municipality.

The RoD was signed by Sunghoon Ko, Country

Director of KOICA Nepal Office and Rudra Singh Tamang, Joint Secretary of the MoFAGA Surendra Shrestha, Mayor and Bijaya Krishna Shrestha, Deputy



Mayor of the Madhyapur Thimi Municipality were present at the ceremony. The Korean Government through Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) has allocated USD 9 million for the project.

In the program, Joint Secretary Tamang expressed the importance of well-equipped and capacitated health facilities on maternal and child health care and to control the massively increasing health infection issues. He further extended his gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Korea for

the partnership which will enhance the friendly relation between the two countries. He further assured to fully cooperate for the successful implementation of this project.

### Australian Ambassador Felicity Volk Inaugurates Resource Centre At The Madarsa School In Biratnagar

Australian Ambassador to Nepal, Felicity Volk has inaugurated a Resource Centre at the Madrasa Shahabjia Secondary School in Biratnagar which has been established with Australian funding.

“Delighted to open a resource centre at Shahbajiya School, which will help create a safe learning space for students. Very pleased to support the focus on girl’s education by

Australia alum, Shehnaz Ansari, who initiated the centre under the Australian Alumni Public Diplomacy Fund,”

tweets ambassador Felicity Volk.



Inaugurating centre, Ambassador Volk said that social inclusion underpins all Australian development activities in Nepal and the Australian Embassy is pleased to support expanded learning opportunities for girls and boys from the Muslim community in Biratnagar reports the media.

The Resource Centre, established through Embassy’s Australian Alumni Public Diplomacy Fund, was conceived by Australia Awards alumna, Shehnaz Ansari. The Centre is equipped with a library to encourage good reading habits and support understanding of different cultures and geography.

During the event, the Ambassador congratulated Ansari, representing the Association of Nepalese Alumni from Australia (ANAA), for ANAA’s success in promoting networks and friendship between Australia and Nepal.

### EU Support Contributed To Revive Traditional Newari Settlement To Grow Green

Deputy mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City Manjali Shakya Bajracharya said that the European Union-funded Praya Sampada project has greatly contributed to reviving and heritage sites within the old settlement in Kathmandu Valley.

Addressing a project closing workshop, the deputy mayor thanked European Union and UN-Habitat for helping Municipality to restore the old settlements in Pilachhe and Bungmati.

Under the EU-Switch Asia Project, UN-Habitat has implemented the project “Sustainable Tourism and Green Growth for Heritage Settlements of Kathmandu Valley” since



2018. There were three major areas of intervention like green growth and heritage conservation, community participation and institutional strengthening and promotion of sustainable tourism through local livelihood enhancement.

She said that the project achieved its objective of the green rebuilding of Bungamati with a focus on Sustainable Heritage Tourism. She said that the municipal and community capacity enhanced in green development planning and procurement, tools for green buildings and heritage conservation developed and green tourism promoted.

The Deputy mayor holds the view that Praya Sampda is an exemplary project driven by the support and participation of the local community aiming to improve livelihood by reviving traditional practices.

The Deputy mayor also thanked the ambassador of the European Union to Nepal Nona Deprez and her team for effective coordinative roles to complete the project on time.

“LMC is grateful to the EU for funding such an important project which can be replicated throughout the country to restore the settlements in a sustainable way,” said Deputy Mayor Bajracharya.

Attended by a large number of stakeholders from the project areas, participants shared experiences and successful programs in a half-day workshop. Dr. Marco Gemmer, counselor and Head of Delegation of the European Union to Nepal, expressed happiness over successfully completing the project and achieving its target.

During the National Workshop, the organizer showcased the achievements and learnings of the project. In addition, different policies drafted related to green, heritage and sustainable tourism will be presented along with a way forward for the stakeholders.

He said that European Union has been providing



support to the projects aiming to improve the livelihood of Nepali people. He said that it is the government, local levels and community to carry

out the project as per their need.

Dr. Gemmer expressed the hope that the Nepal government, local level and community continue to carry out the

After four years of implementation, the Praya Sampda, Sustainable Tourism and Green Growth for Heritage Settlements of the Kathmandu Valley, project concluded successfully.

Funded by European Union under SWITCH-Asia, UN-Habitat together with Lumanti Support Group has imple-

mented the project in various settlements in the Kathmandu Valley to reconstruct the heritage sites destroyed by the 2015 earthquake and revive the livelihood.

Nawaraj Pyakuryal head of Kathmandu Valley Town Authority (KVPT) said that Praya Project has shown how active participation of the community helps to complete the project a grand success.

Joint secretary from the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Dr. Surya Shrestha said that the revival of heritage sites in the old settlement of Kathmandu valley will ultimately boost tourism in Nepal supporting local livelihood.

## Korean Embassy Provides Awards To The Winners of 2022K-Culture Online Video Contest

The award ceremony for 2022K-Culture Online Video Contest was held on the premises Of Embassy of Republic of Korea recently. The winning participants were provided with



certificate and gift. The 1st Prize was Samsung Galaxy A13 Mobile, 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize was Samsung Galaxy A04s mobile and 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize was Samsung Galaxy Buds2.

The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Nepal hosted the 2022 K-Culture Online Video Contest from August 16 to September 18. The winner announcement was made on October 11, 2022.

The Top 3 winners of 2022 K-Culture Online Video Contest are Sharia Ali, 1<sup>st</sup> Prize winner, Sesam Rana Magar, 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize winner and Puja Lamsal 3<sup>rd</sup> Prizewinner.

All three participants showed their interest in Korean Culture in their unique way. Sharia Ali presented the video in Korean Language. Sesam Rana Magar explained about finding opportunities in South Korea, and Puja Lamsal shared how K-pop has influenced her.

K-Culture Online Video Contest is an annual Online Public Diplomacy program of the Embassy, which began in 2021. The theme for this year's contest was “What I love about Korea.”

The contestants were expected to create video content related to Korea or Korean culture, how you came to know about Korea or anything related but not limited to history, drama, movies, food, music, beauty, entertainment, etc. or why you love Korea.

The Embassy will organize the K-Culture Online Video Contest every year. Thus, the Embassy hopes that many Nepali youths will actively participate in this program in the coming years.

## BUSINESS BRIEF

### KOICA-KAAN Organized KAAN General Meeting 2022

KOICA Nepal Office, with its alumni association KOICA Alumni Association of Nepal (KAAN), organized the KAAN General Meeting on November 27, 2022. The meeting was organized to reflect on the 5 year-long activities of the Alumni Association. There



was an active participation of 130 KAAN members from different sectors.

Rajeshwor Gyawali, Former President of KAAN appreciated Korean government for continual-

ly supporting Nepal especially for providing capacity development program to improve Human Resources Development of Nepal government officials. He mentioned that Nepal government is grateful to Korean government for its generous support for socio economic development of Nepal. As many government employees have got training in Korea, he urged each one of them to implement the learning in every possible ways.

Addressing “KOICA –KAAN General Meeting 2022”, Jeong Eun Song, Country Director a.i of KOICA Nepal Office thanked KAAN for the impressive progress it has made despite the challenge of COVID 19. Especially, she appreciated the initiation towards the hospital support program which is very commendable. She hoped KAAN will apply every possible innovative ideas to make its activities meaningful in upcoming days. She also congratulated the team of KAAN Executive Committee for successful tenure.

KAAN activities from 2018 to 2022 were presented by Nabaraj Gautam General Secretary of KAAN in detail during the program. The major activities were blood donation program, knowledge sharing programs, KAAN Night, school support programs, KOICA-KAAN networking meetings, action plan sharing workshops, fair trade day celebration etc. Since the outbreak of COVID 19, KAAN has focused its activities towards COVID response programs. KAAN has supported different types of medical equipment with regards to COVID 19 to Methinkot hospital, Kavre and Rak-sirang Basic Hospital, Makwanpur.

### Make In Nepal Products Will Be Promoted: Secretary Gyawali

Secretary of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies Dr. Toya Narayan Gyawali has said that the government is positive to give concessions to the members who join the Make in Nepal

‘Swadeshi’ campaign.

He made this remark at an interaction organised by Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) on the occasion of the 8th Industry Day 2022.

He said that the ministry was working on industrial

infrastructure, investment infrastructure and planning.

He said that they were working on what should be the industrial policy for at least 10 years. Director General of Industry Department Ramchandra Tiwari said that the CNI is effectively forwarding its activities for industrial development.

He said that the Confederation is moving forward with intensive studies for the development of the industrial sector and said that the government expects similar efforts from the private sector.

He said that industrial development can be achieved through the cooperation of the private sector and the government.

CNI President Vishnu Kumar Agrawal asked to give concessions to the members to the Make in Nepal ‘Swadeshi’ campaign, which the Confederation is implementing in collaboration with the government.

The Make in Nepal campaign is being conducted under the leadership of the government in India, Australia and other countries.

Agrawal said that the products involved in the Make in Nepal campaign will be given incentives to increase domestic production and export.

Emphasising that the Ministry of Industry should become the focal ministry of industrialists, he said that it would increase the importance of industries and help coordinate with other ministries and stakeholders in solving the problems of industrialists.

### NIBL Ace Capital To Invest In H Medical & Diagnostics Private Limited

NIBL Ace Capital to invest in H Medical & Diagnostics Private Limited, (Dugar Healthcare) a growing healthcare company in Nepal in collaboration with TATA Group, India”

NIBL Ace Capital Limited (NIBL Ace), a leading investment bank in Nepal, announced to invest in H Medical & Diagnostics Private Limited, (Dugar Healthcare Company, in collaboration with TATA Group of India.

Shivanth Bahadur Pandé, Chief Executive Officer of NIBL Ace and Abhishek Dugar, Vice Chairman and CEO of H. Medical & Diagnostic Private Limited (HMDL), a division of Dugar Healthcare, have signed a definitive investment agreement on 27 November 2022.

HMDL in collaboration with Tata Medical and Diagnostics, a wholly owned subsidiary of TATA Group, India’s largest salt to software conglomerate, has grown to become one of the leading companies in medical tech and diagnostic sectors which develops, produces and markets futuristic diagnostic products including medical equipment, reagents, pharmaceuticals drugs and other products.

HMDL, which was established in 2021, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, quickly created a niche for itself by importing affordable PCR kits manufactured by Tata Medical and Diagnostics. So much so it captured major market share in Nepal by building a highly recognizable brand portfolio with robust sales of COVID PCR kits and reagents. HMDL also introduced a Tata manufactured mobile diagnostic van which can access remotest of the areas in Nepal’s mountainous regions to carry out diagnostic tests.

With the laudable objective of providing affordable healthcare all over Nepal, the company plans to establish and operate fully fledged manufacturing units to produce diagnostic and reagents products in Nepal, apart from setting up high tech futuristic diagnostic centers all over the country and launch different products & services.







es in collaboration with TATA medical and diagnostics, India. Their entire business focus would be integrating futuristic and emerging technologies into healthcare. They will also work in tandem with other

diagnostic labs and hospitals to provide integrated and affordable healthcare solutions to the masses.

### Global IME, BoK Seal Merger Deal

The signing of the final agreement between Global IME Bank and Bank of Kathmandu to merge with each other has been completed.

Chairman of Global IME Bank Chandra Prasad Dhakal and Chairman of Bank of Kathmandu Prakash Shrestha signed the agreement on Monday.

Previously, the boards of directors of both banks had approved the share swap ratio of 1:1 based on the valuation report of current and fixed assets, liabilities and transactions received from the evaluator for the purpose of merger between Global IME Bank and Bank of Kathmandu.



After the merger, the bank's total capital will reach Rs. 57 billion, paid-up capital Rs. 35.77 billion, total deposits Rs. 400 billion, and total loan disbursement will reach above Rs. 379 billion, according to a press statement of Global IME Bank.

The new bank formed after the merger will become the largest bank in Nepal in terms of total capital, paid-up capital and business size, it said.

The name of the new bank will be Global IME BoK and the board of directors will consist of five people, including Chairman Chandra Prasad Dhakal on behalf of Global IME Bank and two people on behalf of Bank of Kathmandu.

Similarly, Ratnaraj Bajracharya, the chief executive officer of Global IME Bank, will remain as the chief executive officer of the bank after the merger.

A total of five commercial banks, 10 development banks and six finance companies will be included in the Global IME BOK, which will be formed by merging 21 banks and financial institutions.

In addition, both banks have earned a net profit of more than Rs. 1.47 billion till the first quarter of the current fiscal year.

Chairman of Global IME Bank Dhakal said that the banking sector will be developed according to the country's needs.

He said that there will be a need for large and powerful banks to invest in large infrastructures, provide financial access throughout the country and reduce banking costs, and the bank that

will be formed after the merger will address that.

Stating that Global IME Bank is always the first to comply with the instructions given by the government of Nepal and Nepal Rastra Bank, he said that the final memorandum of understanding of this merger was signed accordingly.

### NIBL Wins "The Banker" "Bank Of The Year 2022" Award

Nepal Investment Bank Ltd. (NIBL) have won the prestigious Financial Times, Bank of the Year 2022 award. Nepal Investment Bank has been selected as the best bank of the country. This is NIBL's sixth time winning the coveted award of the banking industry, making us the bank that has won this award for the most number of times from Nepal.

"Nepal Investment Bank Ltd. (NIBL) is extremely proud to have won the prestigious Financial Times, Bank of the Year 2022 award. Nepal Investment Bank has been selected as the best bank of the country. This is NIBL's sixth time winning the coveted award of the banking industry, making us the bank that has won this award for the most number of times from Nepal," said a press release issued by NIBL.

Winning this award is a testament to NIBL's significant contributions made towards Nepal's financial sector and society in general. It is also the bank's willingness to strive towards growth and sustainability that has helped us bag this prestigious accolade. The Chairman of our bank Prithvi Bahadur Pandé and CEO Jyoti Prakash Pandey personally attended the award in London, United Kingdom on December 1st Thursday and received the award on the bank's behalf. The bank won this award by meeting the required criteria set by Financial Times.



The bank's upward growth and performance were as a result of strategic initiatives and technological advancements undertaken which has given the bank a competitive advantage over its competitors. The bank has also offered various products and services to its broad customer base to gain an upper hand in the market. The bank has consistently focused in providing financial accessibility and inclusion to the underprivileged segments of our society by providing low interest deprived sector lending products thereby improving the standard of living in those areas. NIBL has further provided financial awareness and training programs to people who have not had access to banking services in these areas. The bank has significantly contributed towards CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) by vehemently supporting Nepali culture arts and heritage wherever possible. NIBL would like to thank the Financial Times for the deserved recognition bestowed upon us as well as the bank's shareholders and stakeholders for making this award a possibility.



# Perpetual Instability



BY: DR. TILAK RAWAL

As decided by the Government of Nepal, parliamentary and provincial polls were held in single phase on November 20. On the whole, the Election Commission deserves appreciation for accomplishing the job in a relatively commendable way. Much to the satisfaction of Prime Minister Deuba and his associates, the five-party ruling alliance has won most seats and Nepali Congress (NC) has emerged as the largest party. If we remember how hard Deuba worked to save the coalition government from falling apart and the flexibility shown by him in reaching a seat sharing deal with his political partners, credit for this electoral gain should be given to him, more than anybody else. A cunning player of power game, Deuba, is said to have played a role in splitting the two major communist parties earlier and thereafter never let Oli, Prachanda and Madhav Nepal come closer, showing every kind of flexibility to placate the latter two. Indeed, in absence of this collaborative arrangement, performance of NC could have been more disappointing than the disastrous performance of it in the polls some five years ago when Deuba was both head of government and party president. It may be noted that Oli and Prachanda-led parties had fought the electoral battle under a joint manifesto and secured almost two-thirds majority in the Parliament. Expectedly, friendship between the two did not last long, which led to a split in the merged party and catapulted lucky Deuba to power one more time. The electoral gain is something NC, particularly Deuba, could draw some solace from in these difficult times.

Deuba-led government may also draw some solace from some positive signs seen in the economy, mainly in its external sector. It may be mentioned that balance of payment (BOP), after a long period of fourteen months, has turned positive by Rs.12.43 billion in the first three months of this fiscal year. Likewise, remittance income has gone up by 16.8 percent, which had declined by 7.1 percent last year. Although still negative, current account also seems to be heading towards correction as the deficit of Rs.150 billion in the three months of last fiscal year has dropped to Rs.34.28 billion currently. Foreign exchange reserve has also slightly increased, which is attributed to increasing number of workers (150 thousand workers in the last three months) leaving Nepal for work outside and government's strict measures

to control import. It may be mentioned that goods export in the three months has decreased by 35.7 percent, while goods import has gone down by 16.2 percent. Last year, import had increased by 63.7 percent. Situation on the internal front, however, still remains far from satisfactory as the wished growth of 7\8 percent looks unachievable and inflation is heading north, making the life of low income people miserable. It may be noted that inflation which remained at 4.24 percent in the first three months of last fiscal year has climbed to 8.5 percent now. Likewise, declining import and reduced internal production has negatively impacted revenue collection. In the

**As has been the case all these years, capital expenditure has remained very disappointing this time, too as only 6.79 percent (Rs.25 billion) of the targeted Rs. 380 billion was spent in the first three months. Consumers are complaining of soaring prices of essentials, financial institutions complain of inadequate loanable funds and entrepreneurs complain of high interest rate.**

three months, only Rs.264 billion has been collected, which is just 18.84 percent of the target. The drop in revenue was very much anticipated in an import-based economy, which has failed to increase internal production to mitigate the negative impact on revenue of curtailed imports. Sometimes measures initiated on an ad hoc basis end up doing more harm than good to the economy. Nepal government has also not been able to spend amounts kept under different heads in the

annual budget. As has been the case all these years, capital expenditure has remained very disappointing this time, too as only 6.79 percent (Rs.25 billion) of the targeted Rs. 380 billion was spent in the first three months. Consumers are complaining of soaring prices of essentials, financial institutions complain of inadequate loanable funds and entrepreneurs complain of high interest rate. Direct foreign investment has also taken an unprecedented nose dive (.08 billion rupees) in the three months of this fiscal year, registering a fall of 98.42 percent compared to the corresponding period of last fiscal year. Looks like the concerned authorities have no time for all these things as the urging of the people concerned are paid no attention to. Probably our rulers feel that Nepal's should not be complaining about their problems at a time when the global economy is not doing well and people all over the world are suffering. Rising cost of living has ignited fire of discontent, let us not forget, and people even in rich countries have begun to take to streets in protest. Rising cost of living has made us hungrier and poorer. It is very difficult to predict the supply situation of grains and fossil fuel, the two culprits fueling inflation, on the global market as OPEC, mainly Saudi Arabia, has defied US request to increase supply to arrest

the undesired hike in fossil fuel prices. Moreover, Russia has not given a clear signal to extend the UN-Turkey- brokered Black Sea grain deal, leaving the supply of Ukrainian grains uncertain. Countries are taking turns in weaponizing supply chains, finance and winter. Snow as well as Russian missiles are falling from the sky on Ukrainians these days.

Things globally are not encouraging. Global economy is expected to grow by just 2.3 percent, sharp drop from growth earlier. Rising inflation, war in Ukraine and falling demand are cited as reasons. China, still struggling hard to control the recent rise in Covid-19, is experiencing slowest growth in 40 years. Chinese economy is said to be shrinking under zero-Covid policy. Natural calamities have also taken a toll on it. Government's zero- Covid policy is being strongly protested there. Situation in UK is also complicated with Inflation touching 11 percent and no positive signs of improvement seen in the economy that convulsed during the short rule (42 days) of Liz Truss who went for huge unfunded tax cuts and hike in spending. A non-white Rishi Sunak, who has become (at 42) the youngest Prime Minister of Britain in more than 200 years, is having a tough time managing the economy which he commanded during Boris Johnson's premiership. Things in the United States, however, are not as hopeless, which could be attributed to the aggressiveness shown by the US government in stimulating the economy during the pandemic, allowing huge deficits in primary budget. Moreover, energy cost has not risen much, unlike the alarming hike seen in Europe

and the Ukrainian war has not much harmed the largest economy in the world, despite America's involvement in it. It may also be noted that natural gas prices have remained historically higher in Europe than America. These days they are about five times higher. America is awash with its own energy. In fact, monetary tightening coupled with negative shock from soaring energy prices, has already paved way for a deeper recession in EU. On the contrary, demand has not flattered even after months of monetary tightening in the US. These developments, however, may not suffice to arrest global economy from getting into recession.

Despite organizing polls successfully on November 20 and some positive signs visible in the external sector of our economy, strong headwind is likely to blow shaking both political and economic fronts. Foreign trade of Nepal is reported to have shrunk by 20 percent in the four months of this fiscal year. Likewise, revenue collection (19.11 percent) has fallen short of recurrent expenditure (23.78 percent) in the fourth month of this fiscal year. This unpleasant situation is said to have reoccurred again after years. Farmers do not get fertilizers on time nor do they get reasonable prices for farm products. Each year government announces different meas-

ures to support the farm sector and every year farmers are seen accusing the government of not making proper arrangements related to marketing of agricultural inputs and output.

Despite five-party alliance looking set to form the government, the nation does not look stable politically and the situation is likely to further deteriorate in times to come. The five-party electoral alliance has fallen short of acquiring a majority, let alone NC or any other party, leaving the field wide open for battle amongst parties to form a new government. While Deuba, likely to remain in full control of the NC parliamentary party, is expected to be prime minister for sixth time, Oli is also said to be actively working to garner support of elected representatives to form the next government. As head of UML party, which has secured most votes (around 127,000) more than NC) under the proportional system, Oli has every right to remain active and alert and even try to mend differences with Prachanda who does not seem to be happy at the electoral outcome. Oli can convincingly

**People are not that keen about who ascends to the seat of power because no leader so far has shown genuine concern to the suffering of Nepalis and done something to relieve them of anxieties emanating from different sides at different periods of time. In the new situation unfolding before us, people are likely to see our leaders engaged in more intense destabilizing power battles aimed at furthering their personal and group\party interest, often at the cost of this country and its people.**

state how Prachanda's party fared (winning 36 directly contested seats) five years ago when the two had joined hands and the poor performance (winning just 18 directly contested seats) of the Maoist-Centre now when Prachanda decided to cooperate with Deuba under the five-party electoral alliance. It has now become a matter of common knowledge that NC and Madhav-Nepal led United Socialist Party benefitted from the arrangement, while benefit from this endeavor did not trickle to the Maoist party. Prachanda now has

reasons to believe that NC left more or less their supporters free to vote for candidates of their choice, while Maoist voters voted for the party they were told by their leaders. Atrocities committed by the Maoists on NC supporters during a decade-long insurgency is another reason why they did not vote for the Maoist party. Deuba could show generosity to his alliance partners by giving them more seats (74 this time) and fielding his candidates in just 91 constituencies across Nepal, but he cannot force, even if he tries, NC supporters into voting for the Maoist Centre. Disappointed by the electoral outcome, a shrewd politician, Prachanda, may make moves at an appropriate time to say good bye to Deuba. People are not that keen about who ascends to the seat of power because no leader so far has shown genuine concern to the suffering of Nepalis and done something to relieve them of anxieties emanating from different sides at different periods of time. In the new situation unfolding before us, people are likely to see our leaders engaged in more intense destabilizing power battles aimed at furthering their personal and group\party interest, often at the cost of this country and its people.

***Dr. Rawal is a former governor of NRB***

## POLITICS

# Uncertain Course

*Despite getting a thin majority, it is yet to clarify whether the Nepali Congress led-coalition continue till the formation of the new government*

By A CORRESPONDENT

As the verdict shows, Nepali politics is heading towards an unstable course by changing the political alliance in the course of forming the government.

The decision taken by the high-level meeting of the Maoist Center, which was called to evaluate the performance of the election, to open all options for the formation of the government indicates looming uncertainty over the future of the new government.

“Our meeting has decided to open all possibilities to form the government. However, our preference is to continue ongoing political alliance,” said senior vice president Krishna Bahadur Mahara. “Since the verdict is fractured, it is natural to open options for all the alliances.”

Alarmed by the rise of the Nepal Swatantra Party in the General Elections, Nepal’s three old parties, who have monopolized the Nepali Congress-led ruling alliance, secured comfortable positions winning a thin majority in the parliament.

“People of Nepal have lost interest in the existing major parties, all led by the older generation,” writes renowned political scientist Professor Dr. Sukh Deo Muni. “The low

turnout doesn’t have much impact on the traditional or resident political parties such as Nepali Congress (NC), Communist Party of Nepal—United Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML), and Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre)—CPN (Maoist) who have been running the show for more than three-plus decades.”

Given the current trend, it looks that the NC-led ruling coalition will secure a thin majority against the UML led opposition alliance. The Nepali Congress-led ruling alliance is poised to retain office in Kathmandu.

Leaders of major political parties agree on certain shortcomings. “Voters have rejected the old generation leaders and favor new leaders. The time has come for Prime Minister Deuba to allow me to run the country,” said Gagan Thapa. “Our party will have no future at the hand of old leaders.”

Professor Muni, a Professor at the Indian premier university JNU, holds a similar view. “People of Nepal have lost interest in the existing major parties, all led by the older generation in their 70s. They have no substantial agendas which people are pursuing for. Major political parties have lost their credibility. It seems that even



the young leaders of the old parties are contesting only for power. So, many people sided with the Rashtriya Swatantra Party in this election due to their dissatisfaction with the bigger parties, who have failed to check corruption and instability,” said Muni.

However, senior leaders of the Nepali Congress including Dr. Shekhar Koirala and Ram Chandra Poudel do not budge with professor Muni. “Young leaders will support me this time to run the country. I will groom youth to take power next time,” said Poudel.

Despite retaining the simple majority, the trends suggest a divided polity with voters refusing to give a decisive mandate to any party. The CPN-UML, the main opposition group, too will have a substantial presence in the federal parliament.

The impressive performance of the pro-monarchy Rashtriya Prajatantra Party and the rise of the Rashtriya Swatantra Party, a party of young activists set up in June this year, point to the presence of a range of ideological strands in an extremely competitive electoral space.

This proliferation of political views and the successful conduct of an





election under a contentious constitution augurs well for Nepal.

Although his critics inside the party and outside called the current results against him, the results can also be seen as an endorsement of the leadership of NC chief Sher Bahadur Deuba.

Deuba had negotiated a coalition with CPN-Maoists and CPN-Unified Socialists to form the government after CPN-UML leader K P Sharma Oli was forced to resign as prime minister. Deuba steered the government to a middle path from the perceived pro-China stance of the Oli administration.

Nepal's fiercely nationalistic populace is clearly uncomfortable with outsiders dictating terms to Kathmandu. Deuba has skillfully stayed away from aligning too closely with either New Delhi or Beijing, or for that matter with the Americans and Europeans. The challenge for Deuba is to stay on this middle path and craft an economic agenda that can address the developmental concerns of his country.

This is easier said than done for he has to achieve this while managing a coalition of ambitious and ideologically non-compatible allies. His coalition partners — Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda and Madhav Kumar Nepal of the Unified Socialists among them — will need

to reconcile with the plurality of the polity, including the presence of monarchists. Oli, after having failed to deliver on the development front, had turned to anti-India nationalism, which failed to deliver him the election.

The results are also a warning to the aging leaderships of the established parties — the NC to the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) offshoots. The surge in favor of the



137. Two seats are short of the majority. With five seats in the house, Jannat Party decides to back the ruling alliance. This means the ruling alliance has enough strength to form the government.

Similarly, CPN UML 78 with 44 in FPTP and 34 in Proportional representation, RPP 14 with 7 FPTP and 7 Proportional, and Janta Samajbadi Party 12 with 7 FPTP and 5 Proportional. This alliance has 104.

Rashtriya Swatantra Party 21 with 7 FPTP and 14 proportional, Jamamat Party 5 with 1 FPTP and 4 Proportional, Nagrik Unmukti 3 and Independent 6. This group has 30.

Although the NC-led alliance is preparing to form the government, its thin majority will create the uncertain situation in the country. Given the current Maoist stand, the new coalition will be shaky.



Rashtriya Swatantra Party indicates the presence of a groundswell for new, young leaders, fresh aspirations and an anti-corruption agenda.

Delhi has found it easier to do business with the Deuba-led coalition in the past: Under Oli, Kathmandu had become closer to Beijing — which facilitated the merger of the main communist groups, Prachanda's CPN-Maoist Centre and Oli's CPN-Unified Marxist-Leninist, before they split. However, it should be cautious not to be seen as intervening in Nepal's domestic affairs, including in regional disputes.

#### Status Of Party

Nepali Congress will likely secure 89 with 57 in the first past and 32 in proportional representatives. Maoist 32 with 18 FPTP and 14 proportional. CPN-US 10 FPTP and Loktrantrik Samajbadi Party 4, Rashtriya Janmorcha 1. This alliance secured



# Nepali People Have Lost Interest In The Existing Major Parties

SD Muni

SD Muni is considered to be one of India's foremost experts on the issue of Nepal. He taught for over 30 years at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). He completed his Ph.D. in Nepal's foreign policy in 1972. He has also published a number of books on Nepal.

Nepal successfully conducted national and provincial elections on Sunday. It was the second democratic election following the promulgation of its new constitution in 2015 — which provided a framework to institutionalize peace and the democratization process. Millions of voters in Nepal cast their ballot to vote for the 275-member parliament, as well as the 550 members of seven provincial assemblies through a mix of first past the post and the proportional representation system.

Around 61 percent of the people cast their votes, which is six percent less than the local elections held earlier in May this year. There has been a relatively low turnout of voters in the election.

This interview with SD Muni was conducted by the editorial board of The Mero Tribune.

**Nepal successfully conducted national and provincial elections on Sunday. Around 61 percent of the people cast their votes, which is six percent less than the local elections held earlier in May this year. What may be the reason for a relatively low turnout?**

The reason for a relatively low turnout may be that the people of Nepal aren't much interested in this election. They have lost interest in political parties and their promises. Other reasons may be that people have gone out and missed the opportunity to vote.

**What can be its effects on major political parties?**

In my opinion, the low turnout doesn't have much impact on the traditional or resident political parties such as Nepali Congress (NC), Communist Party of Nepal—United Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML), and

Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist CentreCentre)—CPN (Maoist) who have been running the show for more than three-plus decades.

**Rashtriya Swatantra Party is emerging as a new political force in Nepal. How do you take this?**

People of Nepal have lost interest in the exist-

ing major parties, all led by the older generation in their 70s. They have no substantial agendas which people are pursuing for. Major political parties have lost their credibility. It seems that even the young leaders of the old parties are contesting only for power. So, many people sided with the Rashtriya Swatantra Party in this election due to their

dissatisfaction with the bigger parties, who have failed to check corruption and instability.

**In your opinion, which alliance will form the new government?**

As the election results are not out completely, it's hard to say but I think the ruling coalition will form the new government and it seems they need the support of other independent candidates or parties.

Do you think the decline of Madhes-centric forces and parties in Nepal may make India unhappy?

Madhes-centric parties are fragmented. Nepal's election has thrown up an early surprise with the defeat of Madhesi leaders like Upendra Yadav and others who have been one of the tallest leaders of Nepal's Terai or Madhes region. India looks at Nepal as a whole and it looks for the interest of its people rather than certain parties.

*Courtesy Mero Tribune*



# Election Musings



BY: HEMANG DIXIT

Now is the time to be nostalgic. Was the election ill-timed as the paddy had not been harvested? Voter turnout of 61% was less by 7% this time. Was it because of old faces and voters boycott? Many wanted 'Ram-ro not Hamro' candidates. Though there was some improvement in election conduct, public demand for the option of 'None of the Above', as a voter right and one approved by our Supreme Court in 2014 was not still implemented. Such facility is available in India, Spain and Columbia. Another should be provision is 'Right to Recall' a MP for poor performance? Non-implementation of this is because of opposition by the major parties who consider it their birthright to rule over us people. Parties are scuttling essential demands because of fear of candidates losing. Sadly six police personnel lost their lives in the performance of duty and some public too in election skirmishes.

It is an accepted fact of life that changes are imminent processes that goes on all the time. The single embryo in a woman's womb becomes a newborn goes through life in different stages and finally dies.

Politicians all over the world claim that they are special people capable of lording over others and in fact have done so all over the world! This has been commented upon by two individuals – one from US and the other from UK:

1. Politicians and diapers must be changed for the same reason. Mark Twain.
2. Both politicians and nappies need to be changed for the same reason. Margaret Thatcher.

A Nepali version of this has been posted in FB.

The major battle cries of the Nepali electorate - 'No Not Again' or 'Never Again', signifying that all 'Oldies' over 65 should be shunted by the wayside was not fully successful. Many of the old 'Used Diapers' were re-elected. Perhaps neither the effort, nor the tempo was enough. What a pity.

A complaint is that our present system is nonsensical. A particular case in point is of a candidate, who shall remain unnamed, was elected to parliament with just 9.58% of the vote. He however lost his deposit as this tally was below the 10% which was a requisite. Should there not be a clause that a candidate must have at least over 50% of the vote to win? If no candidate gets it, then an electoral run off should be done between two top contenders. Two recent examples from abroad are between Emmanuel Macron & Marine le Pen in France and Lula da Silva & Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil. Of course, having a second run-off election will be more costly.

The French have claimed that they are masters in the art of constitution writing having made seven so far. A recent TikTok going around states that Nepal has had seven constitutions in seven decades! A current feeling in Nepal is that the present setup with three tiers i.e. Federal, Pradesh and Local is too costly and that the Pradesh should be done away with!

Another thought is that the First Past the Post FPTP) system of the UK, copied by us is not suitable. Ms. Liz Truss, who

was UK's PM for barely six weeks is said to get Pounds 118,000 per year, plus many other additional facilities. Each of our ex-PMs not only gets lesser facilities for life and also has transport and security personnel for 24

hours protection. Whilst they travel, all autos on the way have to heed to the siren and let the let their cavalcade pass. Ex-PMs and Home Ministers take it as a God given right. Some even utilise army and police personnel for domestic and personal duties! Whilst such protection may have been pertinent at one time, it is no longer necessary. It can be always implemented during crises. FPYP system being unsuitable we ought to switch completely to the Proportional Representation System (PRS) which will suit us more.

That the people should elect a Head of State with executive powers has been voiced by many young Nepalis contesting the elections. An alternative opinion is for an elected Prime Minister with executive authority from among the political parties of the land. In provision with this members elected to the House of Representatives (HOR) or the National Assembly (NA) will not be eligible to become Ministers. They will be responsible for making the 'Laws of the Land' and work towards its implementation in their respective districts.

The elected President or PM will choose a maximum cabinet of 25 individuals with specific expertise in various areas. Such persons would be answerable to the members of the HOR and the NA during regular 'Zero Hour' in which there will be the gnashing and grinding of teeth. Whilst HOR representatives will be elected every five years, the NA will continue as now with six years term, of which one third being elected every two years.

The seat distribution in HOR of 165 on a population density basis will be retained. In districts with even representative numbers there will be equal number of male and female candidates. In odd number sites the candidate's sex will alternate at each election. An additional 85 candidates will be chosen as per the PRS, making a total of 250 all. With the selected maximum of 25 ministers the total will come to 275 as now. This replaces the 165 elected and 100 selected as per the PRS.

Desirability is to enable voters to vote where they are, rather than to go where they were born, though there is less chance of false voting this way. This will ensure less individual cost and greater participation. Later one can even make it mandatory to vote. When Nepal is kept afloat by the one third of its population working abroad it is only right and just that Online Voting should be available.

We seem destined for a 'Hung Parliament'. What will be the state of us people? All Nepalis hope for a better world, for as Victor Hugo has written, "The paradise of the rich is made out of the hell of the poor". Lastly it is worth remembering the words of Charlie Chaplin who said, "Nothing is permanent in this world, not even our troubles".

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



## GENERAL ELECTIONS

# From Diplomat's Lens

*Facilitated by Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Kathmandu based diplomats expressed their experiences observing various polling stations*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Along with holding the elections ensuing free and fair atmosphere for domestic players, it is also necessary to secure legitimacy of the elections process from Nepal's international friends providing them opportunities to observe the voting process.

Along with Election Commission, here comes the role of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and its organizational mechanism. Led by secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal, a carrier diplomat of Nepal's diplomatic service

eral Elections on November 20.

"The Ministry had deputed 40 liaison officers to escort diplomats in observation mission," told foreign secretary Paudyal. "MoFA has been doing these kinds of job for long time."

Handling the observation mission requires coordination with Election Commission, security agencies and all other stake holders involved including voters and political stake holders.

Taking part as an election observer, Felicity Volk, Australian Ambassador to Nepal too expressed her own experiences. "Grateful to the Nepal Government for allowing

the diplomatic corps to observe elections on Sunday. Congrats to Nepal on the conduct of these elections. Australia was pleased to support Elections Commission Nepal with funds to train staff & provide improved access for differently-abled voters," tweets ambassador Volk.

For the MoFA the observation expressed and noted by



the diplomats is highly important. After participating elections observation tour, various diplomats described their observation experiences through social media.

Although he arrived just a few months ago, U.S Ambassador to Nepal Dean R. Thompson found time to observe the voting in Nepal. What he said in his tweet is inspirational for Nepal and Nepali.

"It's an incredible opportunity to witness democracy in action. I was able to visit polling stations in the Kathmandu Valley to learn about the voting process in Nepal. Congratulations to the Nepali people for exercising their democratic rights today!", "Tweet-



having a long experiences working in the ministry, MoFA performed its role taking Kathmandu based head of diplomats and their staff's observation tours during the voting time in different parts of Nepal.

Facilitating for election observation, MoFA provided liaison officers and other administrative support to diplomats who had shown interest to observe the Gen-



ed U.S. Ambassador to Nepal.

Not only this tweet, U.S Embassy also issued another tweet endorsing Nepal's elections," Congratulations to Nepal and its citizens on a successful election. Yesterday's events show that Nepal has a vibrant democracy, from the excitement at polling stations to the pride shown in the many photos taken by those who voted. We have partnered with Nepal through 75 years of diplomatic relations and will continue to support Nepal's democratic processes, institutions, and people."

Nepal's other important development partners, European Union also tweeted their election observation mission."Four teams of EU along with Finland & Norway observed the voting to the HoR & Provincial assemblies in 43 polling centers in & around Kathmandu. They observed the opening in 4 & closing in 4 other polling stations, including the sealing of the urns. Tweets EU in Nepal.

Earlier Ambassador of European Union to Nepal Nona Deprez paid a visit to Election Commission and discussed the matter with Chief Elections Commissioner.

"At our meeting with Chief Election Commissioner at Unofficial European Union Del-

egation to Nepal confirmed it would carry out local diplomatic observation on elections day," tweets EU Ambassador to Nona Deprez.

Embassy of Norway to Nepal and Finland re-tweeted EU's statement.

British Ambassador to Nepal Nicola Pollitt also visited polling centers. "Election Day in Nepal! Great to be out on the streets of #Kathmandu, seeing people exercise their right to vote and choose how they are represented in the next government." Nicola Pollitt, British Ambassador to Nepal.

Swiss ambassador to Nepal Elisabeth von Capeller also visited polling center. "I was happy to observe the voting stations in Lalitpur today and to see that the voting was peaceful and orderly. Congratulations to #Nepal once again! #NepalVotes2022," tweeted Swiss ambassador to Nepal Elisabeth von Capeller.

At a time when many am-



bassadors prefer to stay in Kathmandu, Israel Ambassador to Nepal Hanan Goder Goldberger travelled to Sindhupalchok district to observe the general elections. He visited polling stations of remote but beautiful Nepal. "Nepal is beautiful and Nepalese are nice wherever they live."

Having sharing her experiences of elections in Nepal, Meghan T Nalbo, country representative of Asia Foundation, too shared her views.

"Crazy KTM streets come to a standstill to make voting for all an option. Workers in the US don't even get a day off from work. Reflecting on democracies. Happy Election Day Nepal. I'm 10km into my day walking around town feeling the vibes," tweets Meghan T Nalbo, tweets country representatives of Asia Foundation.

As in the past, the comments and observations of diplomats is matter for MoFA and country as a whole to show globally democratic exercise in Nepal. Credit to project Nepal's image globally goes to the leader and professional cadres of MoFA.





NEA

# Eight Billion Profit

*Under the leadership of Managing Director Kul Man Ghising, Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has shown how a good manager can change the state of public utility*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Following his appointment as a Managing Director of NEA in his second tenure, Kul Man Ghising has launched several projects to improve the distribution and transmission systems and efforts to reduce the losses.

The profit made in the last three months and foreign currency generated from the export of electricity to India, NEA has shown nothing is impossible provided qualitative leadership.

With a surplus of electricity, MD Ghising has also announced to expand of the new transmission line and improvement of distribution systems in Madhesh to increase the domestic consumption of electricity.

Visiting different parts of Nepal to inspect the NEA's system from time to time, MD Ghising is able to address the difficulties and challenges faced by the NEA in distribution and transmission.

His intense work is paying reducing the leakage and to increase the profits.

## Eight Billion Profits

The Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has in the first three months of the current fiscal year, 2022/23 secured a profit of Rs 8.5

collection and other sources of income. When the total expenditures of Rs 24.88 billion of the period are deducted, its profit stands at Rs 8.5 billion before tax payment.

As per the proactive disclosure of its activities made as per the right to information (RTI) Act,

the NEA in this period purchased power worth Rs 14.15 billion from the private sector.

It, through the supplies of power generated by the powerhouses under its ownership and purchases from the private sector, earned a net income of Rs 22.20 billion in the period. Its income from the power trade to India in the first

three months was Rs 6.17 billion.

In the fiscal year 2072-73 BS (2015-16), the annual loss of the NEA was Rs 8.89 billion. However, it made a U-turn to report the profit in the following years. Its annual profit was Rs 16.16 billion in the last fiscal year.



billion.

According to the NEA's financial details (unprocessed) for the months of Saun, Bhadau and Asoj (mid-July to mid-October) of the current FY, its income has been calculated at Rs 32.98 billion: through power trade, interest



According to the NEA managing director Kulman Ghising, factors like intervention in power leakage, power export to India, rise in domestic consumption, and control of expenditures are credited for converting it into a profitable organization.

### High Capacity Transmission Line

As Nepal's electricity generation has been increasing, there need to build infrastructures to increase the domestic consumption. The recent announcement of MD Ghising to construct a high-Capacity transmission line in

Madhesh is highly important.

Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) is going to construct a high-capacity transmission line corridor along the southern part of Bara, Parsa, Rautahat, Mahottari, and Dhanusha districts by 2050.

NEA Managing Director Kulman Ghising informed that more than Rs 50 billion will be required for the construction of transmission lines and substations, which will be raised through the investment of Nepal government and NEA. Rest of the required funds will be fulfilled through concessional loans from Exim Bank of India, Asian Development Bank and others.

A high-level team including NEA MD Ghising and consultants visited the proposed line construction site recently and ascertained the possible places for the construction of 400 and 132 kV transmission lines and substations, electricity demand and consumption conditions.



Ghising said that the south corridor transmission line is going to be constructed in a phased manner to increase domestic consumption and to export surplus electricity to India.

“In the first phase, the transmission lines and substations that are urgently needed to increase consumption will be built, followed by the south corridor main line in the second phase and the cross-border transmission line for international electricity trade in the third phase,” said MD Ghising.

“Some transmission lines and substations are under construction, some are starting immediately whereas other long-term works

such as land acquisition for substations, determining the route of transmission lines, and starting the process for environmental studies are being done.” He further said that electricity can be exported to Motihari, Sitamani,

Under the Bara-Parsa Industrial Corridor, the national grid

electricity transmission will be built to support the consumption of about 3,200 megawatts of electricity in the Birganj area and 800 megawatts in the Janakpur area.

Four circuit transmission lines and substations of 400 kV will be constructed parallel to

the Postal Highway on the southern border with India. Out of the four circuits, in the initial phase, the transmission line corridor will be constructed by operating the upper two circuits at 400 kV and the lower two circuits at 132 kV.

For local electricity supply, substations will be built in various places where NEA is currently working to determine the route of the proposed transmission line and the location of the substations.

With this, there will be sufficient and reliable power supply in the districts of Madhes Province, which has a great potential for the expansion of cities and industrial areas.

## ENERGY

### Export of Rs.10 Billion

Along with improving the infrastructures to increase domestic consumption, NEA has been also taking initiative to export surplus electricity to India. In the last seven months, NEA Exported Rs.10.38 Billion Worth Of Electricity To India.

Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) Kul Man Ghising said that NEA has exported electricity worth Rs. 10.38 billion to India during the first five-and-a-half month.

After Nepal started exporting power to India in June this year, NEA has been

exporting electricity to India saving the same amount of money Nepal used to spend on the import of electricity. In total, NEA saves Rs. 21 billion in equivalent foreign currency.

According to Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), upwards of 1.26 billion units of surplus electricity were exported, earning Rs. 10.389 billion in revenue by mid-November, 2022. The Authority started selling the surplus electricity in the monsoon period through competition in the day-ahead market of Indian Energy Exchange Limited (IEX) from June 2, 2022.

However, the rivers are drying with the start of winter, the export will likely to reduce. "As

the flow of water in the rivers is decreasing, the export of electricity is also gradually decreasing along with the reduction of power generation from the hydroelectric power stations based on river flow," said MD Ghising.

"Industries are currently

of IEX through competition.

The Authority has now received permission for the sale of 409 MW of electricity generated by 8 hydropower plants in the market.

Since the electricity trade with India is done in Indian rupees,

during this period, around IRs. 6.49 billion has been brought into Nepal from the sale of electricity.

In the beginning, 39 megawatts of electricity generated by two power plants was considered as a source and was sold to IEX on a daily basis. After that, 364 meg-



not taking electricity according to the approved load, due to which the demand for electricity in the industrial corridors in the country is not increasing. At present, it is likely that the excess electricity will be exported by the third week of December," said MD Ghising.

In a process of allowing more power import from Nepal, the NEA has also received permission for electricity export from the Solukhola Hydropower plant with an additional 23.5 MW installed capacity of the rainy season.

On November 11, the Central Electricity Authority under the Ministry of Power of the government of India gave permission for the sale of electricity generated by Solukhola in the day-ahead market

awatts produced by six hydropower plants were being sold daily in the Indian market at a competitive rate from June 10, 2022.

With the start of electricity export from Chilime and Solukhola on November 4 and 5 respectively, the approved capacity of electricity exported to India has reached 409 megawatts.

In IEX, 24 hours are divided into 96 blocks of 15 minutes each and electricity is traded at a competitive rate set by the market.

Therefore, the price of each block is different. The average rate of electricity exported by the Authority till mid-November is Rs. 8.23 per unit.

NEA Is Expanding Transmission Line And Strengthening



Distribution Systems All Over Nepal: MD Ghising

Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) Kul Man Ghising said that they are going to expand the transmission and distribution infrastructure to make the electricity supply reliable and trustworthy and to target the places where there is a possibility of settlement expansion and establishment of industrial corridors.

Keeping in mind to increase the internal consumption and export surplus electricity to India, Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) is going to expand and strengthen the transmission and distribution system in order to increase domestic consumption of electricity. The Authority will expand transmission infrastructure to export surplus electricity to India and Bangladesh.

A high-level team led by MD Ghising recently visited Sunsari, Morang and Jhapa and took information on the infrastructure needed to increase electricity consumption and export.

"In the long term, it is seen that India's Siliguri, Purnia and Kishanganj points will be closer to India and Bangladesh for electricity export, therefore it is necessary to expand the transmission network by constructing a 400 kV transmission line from the 400 kV Inaruwa

substation along the Postal Highway and a 400 kV substation in the Anarmani area of Jhapa," he said.

"This line is essential to make the electricity supply reliable in that area. This line will also support increased consumption of electricity and more transmission networks will be prepared for the export of electricity to India and Bangladesh."

The team visited Siliguri Substation 400/220 kV Binnaguri of Power Grid India in West Bengal and acquired information about

built for power export in India and Bangladesh, it said.

The Authority is running a campaign to strengthen the transmission and distribution system and expand the infrastructure with short-term and long-term plans to increase domestic consumption of electricity generated in the country.

There is a program of the Authority to upgrade the existing infrastructure as well.

The team has carried out on-site studies to identify the

possibility of constructing a cross-border transmission line between the Indian State of West Bengal, the shortest route for power export to Bangladesh, suitable locations for the construction of transmission lines and substations, said the NEA



electricity import and export.

Electricity generated from the Tala Hydroelectric Project of Bhutan is connected to the substation.

Targeting Sunsari, Morang and Jhapa districts under Province 1, which have the potential to boost electricity consumption, the NEA will build high-capacity electricity transmission and distribution line infrastructure.

In addition, more transmission line infrastructure will be

The team also conducted an on-site study and received information about the electricity transmission and distribution infrastructures under construction and currently in operation in Sunsari, Morang and Jhapa.

In his first tenure, MD Ghising created history by ending decades-long load-shedding. In the second tenure, he has already made Nepal from a net importer of electricity to a net exporter.



# COP 27: Flagging the Impacts in the Mountains



BY: BATU UPRETY

Nepal has continuously flagged the alarming impacts of climate change in the mountains right from mid-1990s through her political statements in the high-level segment of the Conference of the Parties (CoPs) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This was reiterated by the then Prime Minister in 2009, President in 2018 and Prime Minister in 2021 during the climate change conferences. Messages of the cabinet meeting at Kalapatthar, the sub-regional conference on Kathmandu to Copenhagen and Copenhagen marchpast of the mountaineers were communicated to the international communities at Copenhagen where Nepal declared to launch 'Mountain Initiatives'. This resulted in the adoption of the Kathmandu Declaration during the international conference of mountain countries on climate change in April 2012, including the urgency of addressing the severe impacts of climate change through the national level conferences at Rara, Gufa Danda and recently at Mustang.

Twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties (COP27) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the 17th session of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP17) and 4th session of the COP serving as Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA4) were held at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt from 6-18 November 2022 (extended up to 20 November). Annual COPs are organised to implement the Convention, Protocol and Agreement effectively so as to, inter alia, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, build adaptive capacity, and promote climate-resilient development.

Nepal participated in this 'implementation COP' under the leadership of Ms Uma Regmi, Minister for Women, Children and Senior Citizens. She made a statement during a meeting of the ministers of South Asian countries. Nepal, in its statement at the high-level segment, has reiterated the climate crisis and snow and ice melting in the mountains, flagged inadequate progress in reducing emissions and temperature levels, reinforced her commitment to net-zero emissions by 2045, urged for adequate technical and financial support and developed and economically emerging countries to set more ambitious targets through their nationally determined contributions (NDCs), requested the international community to include a mountain agenda in the climate negotiation process,

and informed financial facility on loss and damage as her bottom line during COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. In addition to core negotiations in different agenda items, several activities such as leaders' summit, roundtables, country statements, and side

events happened at COP27. Media communicated the state of negotiation, and 'climate activists' put additional pressure on negotiators for desired outcomes.

One hundred and twelve world leaders participated in the Sharm el-Sheikh 'Climate Implementation Summit', also called the African COP, adaptation COP, solution COP or the development COP, on 7-8 November 2022. Realising the outcomes of the scientific reports, the gravity of the climate challenge, a climate emergency and the increasing risks and adverse impacts of climate change on the planet, people and livelihoods, Heads of State and Government showed strong political will to translate climate commitments into actions. Ministers-led roundtables were organised on 7 and 8 November to discuss, generate political will, and agree on strategies for priority areas such as just transitions, innovative finance

for climate and development, food security, energy, water security and climate change & sustainability of vulnerable communities. Roundtables focussed on finance, technology transfer, and capacity building to implement the climate commitments. This political will provides guidance to the negotiators to make it an 'implementation COP'.

Parties to the CMA4 agreed to 'matters relating to a funding arrangement for addressing loss and damage' as a

sub-agenda under the finance agenda item. The COP27 President, Egyptian Foreign Minister Mr. Sameh Shoukry informed in the opening plenary that "The outcomes of this agenda item are based on cooperation and facilitation, and do not involve liability or compensation," and "It will launch a process with a view to adopting a conclusive decision no later than 2024." A few decisions that will remember African COP are summarised below:

In the early morning and closing plenary (20 November), the COP27 President said 'I invite the CMA to adopt a draft decision on funding arrangements for responding to loss and damage. I hear no objections. It is so decided'. Parties to the COP27 and CMA4 decided to 'establish new funding arrangements, a fund for responding to loss and damage, and a Transitional Committee' to operationalise the new funding



arrangement. Of 23 members of the Transitional Committee, three and two members will represent from Asia-Pacific region and LDCs respectively. This pledge-based fund is expected not to be an 'empty bank account'. Parties to the CMA also decided to initiate the development of a framework for the global goal of adaptation' with two functions, - enhance action & support, and review progress in achieving the global goal of adaptation. The framework 'will be informed by a structured approach to the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme in 2023' and the structured approach may take into consideration, inter alia, the terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems, comprehensive water resources management, mountain regions, biodiversity, community-based adaptation, nature-based solutions etc.

Parties to the COP27 requested the Adaptation Committee and LDC Expert Group to 'continue to identify the priority gaps and needs of developing countries related to the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans. Parties to the CMP

provided guidance on clean development mechanism (CDM) to matters relating to the 'transfer of eligible certified emission reduction (CERs)' and invited the CMP to 'request the Supervisory Body to cooperate with the Executive Board on implementing the process of transferring eligible CERs to the mechanism registry'.

Based on initial registration to attend the COP27, Nepal has included over 75 persons in the government delegation, including experts and representatives from different projects and non-governmental organisations. Four secretaries, over half a dozen of joint-secretaries and other officials, experts and a significant number of NGO representatives participated this COP 27.

Nepal's participation in this African COP can be grouped into those: (i) attending the negotiation meetings; (ii) sharing experiences and learning in the side events; (iii) participating in the bilateral meetings; and (iv) engaging in putting pressure (activists) for desired outcomes. Because of the significant number of government delegations, delegates should have followed the negotiating meetings (formal and informal) of the agenda items related to adaptation, mitigation, technology, capacity building, finance, and carbon trade. Most of the delegates may have attended 'loss and damage' meetings in view of Nepal's continuous effort and interest in raising this issue since 2012 and being a 'hot cake' in this COP. Furthermore, Nepal issued a national framework on climate change-induced loss and damage in October 2021.

Although members of the Nepal Delegation shared experiences, learning, concerns and impacts of climate change

through different side-events such as on water, women, mountains, NDC implementation plan, and most importantly adaptation, presenters forgot to reiterate her 'adaptation brand - the LAPA' (Local Adaptation Plan for Action) which gathered a high level of interest in developing and developed countries since November 2011. Furthermore, Nepal should continuously highlight its policy commitment of mobilising at least 80 per cent of the total budget for programme implementation at the local level by reducing administrative expenses. This

policy provision in 2011 encouraged LDCs to commit 'to develop strong climate finance architecture, with at least 70 per cent of flows supporting local level actions by 2030' as clearly reflected in 'LDC 2050 vision: towards a climate-resilient future.

Nepal may wish to benefit from existing decisions. Nepal may initiate a process to transfer the certified emissions reductions (CERs) as registered through the CDM (Clean Development Mechanism)

project under Kyoto Protocol to the new arrangement under the Paris Agreement. CDM projects on water mills, improved cooking stoves and biogas should provide financial benefits as envisaged during its development and government approval. Similarly, Nepal may wish to develop adaptation projects to access financial resources, including readiness projects, from existing funding mechanisms. In view of the existing adverse impacts of climate change, including on water resources, it is high time to expedite the 'pending' proposals and develop new ones to access additional funding. Participation of a good number of high-level government officials in the water resources sector at COP 27 is expected to promote developing water sector climate adaptation projects, access international funding and make climate-resilient sustainable utilisation and management of water resources. This will hopefully reduce the use of and subsidies for fossil fuels, increase investments in clean energy and reduce taxes on electric appliances, including transportation facilities.

Since the last three decades, delegates have highlighted finance facilities or separate funding arrangements for adaptation, GHGs emission reductions or loss and damage, but they are all pledge-based or seem 'token pledges' which do not meet the minimum funding requirements to adapt to climate change impacts. Promoting climate resilience development is a 'far destination'. Parties have also urged all contributors to fulfil their pledges. The time has come to make efforts for continuous replenishment of the existing funds.





## Nepal's Elections Observation Has Transformed A Lot In The Last Three Decades

KRISHNA MAN PRADHAN



As soon as the election processes began **KRISHNA MAN PRADHAN**, General Secretary of General Election Observation Committee (GEOC), has changed his daily routine. Waking up at early 3, and going to sleep late at 11. As he has to interact and hold meetings during the day time, Pradhan completes all his work between 3-11. He also has to handle coordinating work. For almost the last two months, he has not slept well. Out of 44 registered observer groups, eight organizations are together. After observing the elections for the last three decades, Krishna Man Pradhan has already established himself as the most experienced elections observer in Nepal. Having been involved in all level of elections as a national observer from General Elections Observation Committee since 1991, Pradhan, executive director of Nepal Law Society and General Secretary of the General Elections Observation Committee, has also

known ins and outs of the elections process. Along with observing the election, Pradhan, who has been established as a credible observer among different stakeholders including political parties, civil society organizations and donor partners, is also a good manager to manage many observers. As the elections are close to being complete, Pradhan is now compiling information to present an observation report to the Elections Commission and the public. He spoke to **NEW SPOTLIGHT** at his office on various issues related to the elections observations. Excerpts:

**You have started observation since 1991 when the numbers of observers were few. How do you see the state of elections observation now?**

As with all other sectors, the election observations area has also seen a sea-change in terms of numbers, quality and capacity of the observer. When we



started elections observation in 1991, it was the first election after the restoration of democracy. There were a few hundred observers. However, 8000 observers monitored the elections this time. The observers were selected fulfilling certain criteria like age (above 18), 10+2 pass qualification and being politically neutral.

**What are the differences you have observed among the political parties, voters and candidates?**

In 1991, political leaders, candidates and voters believed in principle and conscience. They were respectful of laws, the constitution and political ideology and principles of democracy. In other words, they were highly disciplined. The government was committed to holding free and fair elections as was the elections commission. No one thought about the election fraud and booth capturing. In 1991, sitting prime minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai lost the elections. He accepted it as a normal practice. This is not the case now. Political leaders are not in a position to accept the defeat.

**Have you seen any changes in the election campaign?**

The style of elections campaign has drastically changed over the years. With the upsurge of social media and electronic media, political parties and candidates are focusing their campaign messaging through these media. Wall poster, distributing of pamphlets, door-to-door meetings and mass rallies are getting fewer compared to the early days of elections. However, hosting a feast and tea parties are still common in rural areas. The first general and local level elections held in 1991 and 1993 were very normal in terms of campaign cost. After 1994 elections, political parties started to compete for power rather than ideology. Thus, there was the realization of the need for election observers. The number of observers started to increase from then onwards. In the local elections of 1997, the numbers of candidates and observers both increased. Similarly, candidates and political parties also began to spend more money in the election. The cost to contest the elections had gone up in the 1998 general elections. Candidates confided that they had spent a lot of money during the elections. They reported that the voters started to ask money for their vote.

**What is the state of elections after the first**

**Constituent Assembly?**

After the political change following the People's Movement of 2006, Maoist and seven political parties signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). As per the agreement, the first Constituent Assembly election was held in 2008 May. During the first elections, the Maoist party contested the elections blocking candidates of other parties. In rural areas, Maoists had monopolized the elections.

**What was the role of Nepal's development partners?**

During the first CA elections, Nepal's development partners had shown great interest in the elections. They also funded heavily to ensure the elections are free and fair by supporting many national and international observer groups. Around 50 donor countries backed the elections and provided around 15 to 20 billion rupees to ensure free and fair elections. In the elections, 153 observer groups received permission and 64,000 observers were mobilized. Even former U.S. President Jimmy

Carter himself came to Nepal and led the international election observation team. Over 500 foreign elections observers came to Nepal representing 13 different organizations.

**How were the modalities of observation back then?**

The modality of the elections observations of the first CA election was different because it was held under a larger international interest. Even UNMIN was there to

monitor the elections. Due to CPA, Nepal Army and Nepal Police maintained a passive presence and the Maoists controlled the rural and interior parts of Nepal. It was very difficult to observe the elections due to safety reasons. Many candidates even filed nomination paper from Kathmandu due to the threat of the rebel Maoist cadre. With the decision of the Election Commission, many candidates filed nomination papers through fax.

**How was the situation in the second CA elections?**

The second Constituent Assembly elections were held in November 2013. The election was drastically different than the first one as the Maoists had already joined mainstream politics and laid down their arms. The environment was much more conducive to peaceful





elections. Election Commission had also started to raise questions about the quality of observers in terms of age and qualification, and neutrality. Along with the GEOC, NEOC and Dean, there were 153 observer groups that had secured the permission. However, only a dozen of organizations were active.

**How do you see the quality of observers and what steps the Election Commission has been taking to improve the quality and neutrality of observers?**

Following the growing disputes over the quality and impartiality of the observers, the Elections Commission announced the observer Code of Conduct. Under the revised Code of Conduct, the commission has fixed the basic qualification, age limit and experiences and to ensure they are politically impartial. After this new reform, there was more maturity in election observers. During the early days, there were complaints that the observers were party workers and party workers were observers. During the local and national elections of 2017, election observers and observer organizations became more mature.

**What are your impressions on recently held two recent elections?**

So far as the local and national elections of 2022 are concerned, national observers have become more matured and capable. In the last local elections, only 36 observer organizations got permission. However, out of 36, only 7 observer groups were able to secure international funding. There were only 5000 observers.

**How much funding observer groups are getting now?**

International concerns over Nepal's elections are gradually declining. There is a major gap in the funding. Following the objections raised by the Nepal government and the Elections Commission on the observation report pre-

sented by the European Union's observer team in the election of 2017, European Union stopped sending its observer mission to Nepal. EU has stopped the funding and disassociated from the process. Now only USAID is providing support to observer groups and the amount is very small. Because of the lack of resources, only 8000 observers were mobilized in the recently concluded national elections. There were 44 national elections observer groups with only two international observer groups with less than 10 observers. Due to a lack of funding, the number of national and international election observer organizations has drastically fallen.

**How do you see the capacity of the Elections Commission?**

The Election Commission has already improved its organizational capacity and it is also getting more mature compared to last time in holding free and fair elections. EC has gradually changed and reformed the election process as suggested by the observer groups.

**What kind of reforms have taken place?**

The commission has already made reforms in the candidate nominations, registration, voter list, counting and boxes and another method of counting. The improvement in the procedures including the new code of conduct helped ensure free and fair elections. EC is getting further matured. As per observers' recommendations on candidate expenditure and unnecessary use of resources by the candidates, the EC has built a strong mechanism to control them. In the past, the observer group used to raise many questions on the ballot box, seals and representatives of the candidates and polling officers' neutrality. With the implementation of our suggestions, EC has already transformed itself into a strong institution. There are certain issues still there like sealed ballot boxes and transparency in counting.

**How do you suggest making the election bet-**





ter?

Now the time has come to use electronic voting so that the cancellation of the vote comes to zero and there is fast counting. This is the best way to prevent fraud. If political parties believe in the process, they have to go for electronic voting.

### **How was the state of pre-election atmosphere?**

Except for some sporadic incidents, we can say that the second elections of the House of Representatives and Provincial Legislature were held in a free and fair manner. Observing all the preparations and management, observers have very little to say about the process. However, Election Commission still needs to take reforms in vote counting and ballot box transportation. There needs to be reform in vote counting. We will release the report after the completion of the entire process.

### **What are your own experiences in managing observer groups during the elections?**

In the elections, 44 national and 2 international observer groups observed the elections for the House of Representatives and Provincial Assembly. There were nearly 8000 observers mobilized on election day. Having experiences of observing the elections, our observers include foreign chief justices, former chief election commissioners, media groups, women groups, Dalit and indigenous groups and other civil society. We released our pre-elections environment report in presence of national and district-level observers of GEOC, and representatives from NEOC, EOC, Insec, Sankalpa, Anagalo, Women NGO Federation, YFD and media. This wider and more inclusive representation is our strength to ensure observation is free and fair.

### **How do you see the EC's role?**

Compared to previous elections, Election Commission, Nepal Government, security agencies other stakeholders worked well. Learning from the past, the Election commission has made good progress in collecting voter lists, candidate registration, implementing codes of conduct, security arrangement, ballot paper,

ballot boxes, voting booths, management of employees and others.

### **How many districts did the GEOC observers cover?**

GEOC mobilized 331 observers in 261 Municipalities of 36 districts. Our observers have been closely monitoring the elections process since the publication of the voter list, candidates' registration and till the silent period, and also on the polling day and beyond. Our report is based on the observation of observers deployed in those areas. According to their report, except, for some sporadic incidents, the phase till the silent period indicated that the election was going to be held in a peaceful manner.

### **What were the GEOC observation in the election campaign period?**

There were no agitations and disturbances in the elections this time. This time the campaigning for the elections was also not too expensive and flamboyant. Parties and candidates were disciplined during the election campaigning indicating that democracy is moving in the direction of consolidation.

### **How did candidates respond to the Code of Conduct?**

All the candidates followed the code of conduct and conducted the door-to-door campaign in a

peaceful manner. However, national leaders had tried to instigate voters during their election campaign. National leaders even tried to influence the voter announcing to offer unnecessary assurance. Due to their statements, their assurances had created a negative environment,

### **How were the relations among the workers of political parties during the campaign period?**

During our observation, the relations among the party workers were friendly. During the elections campaign period, the party workers did not use hate speech harming the rival candidates. Compared to previous elections, they contained themselves not to spread rumors and spoil the relations. However, there was a growing trend of rebellion among the party candidates due to dissatisfaction over the candidate selections. The number of rebel candidates is higher this time. Due to





## FACE TO FACE

this, there is a negative trend among party workers and voters.

### **What is the state of the Code of Conduct? Are political parties abiding by it?**

Due to the vigilance of the Election Commission and observer group, candidates and political parties have largely abided by the code of conduct. However, a few party leaders had also made effort to organize a big rally during the candidate registration. During the elections campaign, political parties and candidates have used very nominal banners and wall and hand pamphlets compared to previous elections. However, parties widely used loudspeakers creating a nuisance in rural areas. Our observers reported that voters opposed these activities. Thanks to the Code of Conduct issued by the Election Commission, parties did not use general party flags and symbols in a public places.

### **How do you see the role of the Elections Commission?**

Election Commission has been quite effective to ensure free and fair elections. The commission has played a very effective role in taking the necessary steps to ensure free elections. The preparation and management of the election till now have ensured that the election would be completed peacefully. Compared to the past experience there have been improvements in the voter list, candidacy registration, implementation of code of conduct, security arrangement, ballot paper, polling station, voter education, staff management, etc. In a report prepared based on the observation of the pre-election period, the preparations and environment for the election are much more stringent than in the past, providing a level of confidence for a clean and peaceful election.

### **How many observers did GEOC mobilize on election day?**

The GEOC conducted observations of elections through 331 representatives in 261 municipalities of 36 districts of the country to look at events such as party registration, candidate nomination, and election campaigning, among others. We mobilized 10 special

observers, 24 national observers, 36 district observers and 261 local observers on election day.

### **How do you find inclusion in the candidate's selections? What is the state of women candidates in First- Past-the-Post?**

Political parties did not abide by the spirit of the Constitution and Laws in selecting women candidates. Despite the mandatory provisions of 33 percent, only 9 percent of women are contesting under FPTP for the House of Representatives. Elections Commission needs to be more assertive to implement the provision of 33 percent. GEOC will recommend in its final report to press political parties to nominate more candidates under FPTP. Presently, they are trying to fill the gap by nominating more women from PR list.

### **How do you say that your observers are independent and non-partisan?**

We have our own code of conduct and we also abide by the code of conduct of the Election Commission. If we receive any kind of complaints questioning the neutrality of our observer, we take action immediately disqualifying him/ her in any observation



for life.

### **How are your own personal experiences of conducting the elections for such a long time and managing all activities?**

It is really a tough one. The process of observation starts from the publication of the voter list and ends after the results of the elections and presentation of our report to Election Commission. This involves a lot of processes. However, GEOC has good networking and high credibility due to the involvement of high-level dignitaries including former chief justices, former chief election commissioners, human rights activists, women's rights, Dalit rights and other activists. GEOC is a credible and inclusive election observer body having specialized in elections observation.

# Youths In Nepal Elections: From Social Media To National Platform

Nepal should take pride for successfully conducting another general elections. Representatives for the federal House of Representatives and seven province assemblies have been elected by the people of Nepal through largely peaceful and fair elections held in a single phase on November 20.

This was also a very special election for me personally. I had a great opportunity to work in a call center for the Nepal Law Society/General Election Observation Committee. The call center was operated to oversee and compile reports sent by the election observers from the field. This article is based on my experience of the same.

Observation of election is important for many reasons. First of all, it leads credibility and trust in the elections, and by extension, in the inclusive representative democracy. Secondly, observations are supportive of changes and reforms in the governance and administration of election.

In the recently concluded elections, the General Election Observation Committee had deployed a team of over 300 observers in 36 districts covering all seven provinces. The observers regularly briefed the call center.

Hence, I could have a close view of what goes on in the elections. I learnt the importance of election code of conduct and how the parties and the candidates made use of the elections to deepen their relations with the public.

## Election of the Youth

From the very beginning, the national narrative in this election was in favor of youngsters. Everybody talked about the need to displace the older set of leaders with the fresh blood.



Being myself a young girl, I was excited to see many young candidates in the election. I am equally excited to see some of them have been successful. Their true test begins now.

One very interesting aspect of this election was how the youths have galvanized around the topic through social media. Overwhelmingly, the politics and the government of this country is dominated by older people. They may be experienced but lack the zeal and enthusiasm.

Through social media like facebook, youtube and tiktok, the youths of Nepal constantly raised serious issues about the need to improve the governance of the country. They were very active in pointing fingers at discrepancies of by the established political parties and the leaders.

The youths used the new media tools to mobilize support for their candidates of choice. Given the active use of these tools by youths, even the senior most leaders were found visiting a club in Kathmandu with the aim to attract them. Music videos were also used targeting the youths.

However, the number of women as candidates were very low. Out of the total 165 seats to be elected under First-Past-The-



BY: SANGYA DHAKAL

Post (FPTP) for House of Representatives, there were just over 200 women in the field – which is less than 10 percent of the total number of candidates. It was a bit strange to see that though all parties talk about their commitment towards inclusion, they have not walked the talk.

The parties have tried to use the Proportional Representation (PR) system to fulfill the constitutional obligations to field at least 33 percent women candidates.

This may be constitutionally or legally correct – but cannot be morally or socially justified.

More and more women and youths should be fielded by bigger political parties – which will then inspire the entire country and the people.

As election results roll in, it is satisfying to see many youths getting elected – particularly in the Kathmandu valley. New party has also emerged. From social media, the youths have slowly travelled towards the national platform.

Now, they will have to face the actual challenges and use their vigor, energy and creativity to address them. If they are successful, the Nepali voters will certainly reward them in coming days. Otherwise, the same old pattern will emerge.

## Improving election

As I grew up, I used to hear stories of vote-rigging and violence during election. Security used to be one of the major concerns for conducting elections in Nepal.

This year the election commission and the government had deployed all security agencies including army, police and temporary police personnel to ensure safety. Despite all the arrangements, there were few violent incidents and sad loss of two lives on the election day in Bajura district. But, by and large, it was comparatively much more peaceful.

During my involvement in the call center, where I had the responsibility to collect reports from the observers posted in Gandaki province, I noticed the following key pattern:

People seemed increasingly aware about adhering to the election rules and code of conduct, which were followed strictly compared to the past elections. The security personnel have improved their efficiency. The Nepal police and Myadi police (temporary police) were deployed to each election booth and required areas properly. There was no serious fight or conflict between the party members and the local people. The local people were keen on exercising their right to vote. However, there is a need to be cautious because this time the initial national figures showed marked decrease in the voter turn-out. A healthy turn out is crucial for the health of democracy.

Likewise, election observers were co-operative throughout the process. The political parties' candidates did the campaigning by mostly following the rules and regulations, which made the pre-election days peaceful compared to last elections. There were exceptions though, such as use of money and materials to influence the voters. The polling stations were mostly the school grounds, which were quite comfortable for the local people to go and vote.

In the coming days, the authorities would need to keep on improving these aspects of election including the voters' education. Along with this, if there is further improvement in women and youth involvement, the democracy will continue to flourish in the country.

# KVPT Completing A Great Task

*Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) has shown how combining efforts and collaboration among local communities, international donors, and experts can rebuild and revive monuments, temples and heritage sites in their original shape on time. Devastated and destroyed by the earthquake in 2015, KVPT reconstructed and revival over 100 temples, monuments and heritage sites in Patan and Kathmandu in a matter of seven years. Following the completion of the project, the tangible and intangible parts of the religion and culture of Patan and Kathmandu came to normalcy now*

By A CORRESPONDENT

For Erich Theophile, co-founder of the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT), it was a very emotional moment when he stood at a podium to present the long saga of reconstruction and establishment of an organization to preserve and protect the heritage sites of Kathmandu valley.

When they realized the need for an organization to preserve and protect the temples and monuments of Kathmandu

Valley back in 1991, they hardly perceived that they have to work from ground zero clearing the rubble of the temples.

The 7.8 magnitudes of the earthquake on April 15 turned many temples into rubble and Nepal was in a desperate situation. Here comes KVPT's role. KVPT's Nepal Office in Patan under the leadership of country director Dr. Rohit Ranjitkar mobilized local communities and security personnel to collect all the artifacts from

the rubble and stored them in a safe place.

As KVPT completes its objective of reconstructing temples, monuments and heritage sites, it organized a celebration of the Success of the Earthquake Response Campaign 2015-2022 with a Gala Luncheon and Book Party in the Patan Palace Royal Garden.

This was a part of honoring Pratima Pande, Preservation activist and Board member of KVPT, Esteemed Donor to





the campaign, Master craftsmen of KVPT projects and Dr. Niels Gutschow, chief advisor and team leader.

Lalitpur Metropolitan City and the Department of Archeology backed and supported KVPT in the entire process. “It is a great pleasure and matter of satisfaction for LMC to back and support the KVPT team led by Dr. Ranjitkar to complete the reconstruction of our temples.” As a mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City LMC, I will announce a further Rs.50 million for the reconstruction work,” said Mayor Maharjan. He thanked the U.S. Japan, India and European Union are lending support to reconstruct the heritage sites and temples in the Lalitpur Metropolitan City area.

Director General of the Department of Archeology Damodar Gautama holds the view that working in collaboration with KVPT helped them to learn how to work with the community and donors.

“KVPT and DoA coordinated security, rescuing artifacts and cleanup efforts in Patan Durbar Square immediately after the EQ with Mangal Tole Sudhar Sangha, Patan Museum, LMC, Lalitpur Chamber of Commerce and local residents and community. Remnants of the fallen monuments in the Patan Durbar Square were secured with the help of hundreds of volunteers, local stakeholders, the Nepal Army, the Armed Police Force and the Nepal Police. All valuable historic building components were secured within the first ten days after the earthquake and stored in the Patan Museum compound. There they were documented and sent into storage with leveling. Among these thousands of rescued pieces are intricately carved wooden elements from the tiered temples that collapsed in the square,” said Dr. Rohit Ranjitkar, KVPT Nepal Director.

In the words of Erich, Co-Founder and Executive Director, they did a miracle in recon-

structing temples, heritage sites and monuments in the seven years period.

For him, the last seven years period since the earthquake in 2015 remains a time of pain and challenges. As he mentioned, it is a miracle for KVPT to achieve success to rebuild and restoring 30 monuments in Kathmandu and Patan.

Backed by Nepal Director Dr. Ranjitkar, who has dedicated all his time to guiding and supervising to rebuild of the monuments and temples of Patan and Kathmandu in the last seven years and the roles and contributions of board member Pratima Pande, a dedicated heritage conservationist and honorary counselor of Italy to Nepal, the reconstructions geared up.

“We are so proud that we were able to save all the elements from the rubble, even small pieces of carved elements. Of course, some of the elements were not reusable, but they will serve as evidence and references to make new replicas. Immediately after the

## COVERSTORY



earthquake, we have been repairing all those carved elements from completely collapsed temples, as preparation for rebuilding. Which we can see now in their respected locations. This is all possible due to collaboration between everybody. This is a team work, individual cannot do alone. I am sure this was same when it was built few hundred years ago. So we are very thankful and want to appreciate our nepali artisan team, so plz allow me to switch to in nepali language,” said Dr. Ranjitkar.

Pande, who is also president of Nepal Britain Society, welcomed Prince Harry at the earthquake reconstruction sites during his visit to Nepal in 2016. Prince Harry’s visit to Nepal raised the issue at the global level.

With the support and dedication of the Honorary chair of KVPT Kanak Mani Dixit, the support given by the Director Generals of the Department of Archeology, the mayor of Lalitpur Municipality Chiri Babu Maharjan and community leaders and others, KVPT has rebuilt and restored the monuments also contributed to achieving the mission to complete the reconstruction and revive the life.

“This has been a collabora-

tive effort. I am happy to say that seven years after the earthquake is a successful period for the reconstruction,” said Eric in his emotional speech.

Since its establishment 30 years ago, KVPT remains a leader in Nepal to support the reconstruction and revival of temples and heritage sites. Having world-renowned scholars on Chaitya and temples of Kathmandu Valley Niels Gutschow, a professor of Heidelberg University, as a senior advisor, KVPT does have pools of experts.

“As a director, I feel privileged to be associated with such a dynamic organization and



to be working with Eric, Rohit, Raju and the other Board members for two years. I have visited New York many times for KVPT programs and also London, where KVPT was recognized by His Majesty King Charles III for our work. We all are invited to Clarence House for lunch to be encouraged by His Majesty for the hard work that KVPT has tirelessly done since 1991 in Nepal,” said Pande.

Supporting Nepal for all-around development for the last 75 years, the Government of the United States provided

much-needed financial assistance under U.S. Ambassador’s Fund for Cultural Preservation to rebuild the monuments in Patan and Kathmandu. With financial support from the US Embassy, KVPT rebuilt and renovated Basantapur Gaddhi Baithak in a matter of just 3 years.

Attending the program Earthquake Response Campaign 2015-2022 with his spouse, U.S. Ambassador to Nepal Dean Thompson has shown solidarity and support for Nepal’s heritage and monument preservation work.

Japan is one of the main supporters of rebuilding earthquake-destroyed monuments, temples and heritage sites. Japanese ambassador to Nepal Kikuta Yukata also attended the program. India has also been supporting to reconstruction and rebuilds Buddhist monasteries and Chaityas. Indian Embassy sent a head of the reconstruction division to attend the program.

Although Niels Gutschow did not attend due to health conditions, KVPT board members and friends of Nepal Peter Burleigh and Michael Doyle came from the Unit-







ed States of America for the events and to visit Nepal.

Similarly, the Gerda Henkel Foundation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany, Institute of Conservation University Applied Arts Vienna Prince Clause Fund for Culture Development and World Monuments Fund through support from American Express is chief sponsors.

Supporting heritage conservation and restoration, Himalayan Bank Ltd also provided funds and was recorded as a chief sponsor. Chief Executive Officer of Himalayan Bank Ltd Ashoke SJB Rana showed his commitment to conservation by attending the program. However, CEO Rana prefers to be a silent spectator.

Honorary co-chair Kanak Mani Dixit explained the reconstruction period and the challenges faced by them during the entire process. He said that the completion of the reconstruction of tangible things like temples and monuments also revived intangible things like traditional dances.

Founded by Dr. Eduard F. Sekler and Erick Theophile with the mission to safeguard the extraordinary and threatened architectural heritage of the Kathmandu Valley in 1991, KVPT has established itself as a rebuilder of monuments

and heritage of Kathmandu Valley.

Since 1991, the trust has saved 85 historic buildings including temples, monasteries, palaces, step-wells and private residences. A number of these projects were part of KVPT's previous campaigns including Buddhist Kathmandu (1995-1998), the Kathmandu Durbar Initiative (1998-2006) and the Patan Royal Palace Complex and Architectural Galleries (2004-2014).

Under Niels Gutschow's leadership, KVPT has published more than 14 books in the field of Nepalese architecture and preservation.

As KVPT organized a program Earthquake Response Campaign (2015-2022) at Patan Durbar square to commemorate the successful completion of reconstructing important monuments through in collaborating partnership, Himalaya Bahadur Pande, a well-known conservationist remain in low profile, reminded how then U.S Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch called a meeting of Nepal's imminent persons to raise the fund for the restoration of heritage sites.

"Only a few Ne-

pali imminent persons donated for the first meeting for the preservation of heritage sites," told Himalaya B. Pande to New Spotlight. I was convinced of the idea and donated for the purpose.

Today, his brother Prithvi Bahadur Pande, chairman of Investment Bank Ltd and sister-in-law Pratima Pande established themselves as big financial donors for Nepal's heritage rebuilding and conservation. His niece Sophia L Pande, who is one of the benefit co-chairs of KVPT, has been actively working in the conservation and reconstruction areas.

Although Prithvi Pande has been a lover of the heritage, culture and temples of Kathmandu contributing a large amount of money for the restoration of temples and heritage sites sponsored by the program, he remains a silent spectator not boasting about his own work.

### Erich's Expression

In his half, hour speech, Erich Theophile, who came to Nepal as a student in the 1980s, could not control his passion in explaining a lifetime miracle to serve to protect, revive and preserve the heritage sites of Kathmandu Valley.

Falling in love with the heritage, temples and monuments







of Kathmandu Valley, Erich has been actively working in New York to promote Nepal's heritage and temples.

Mentally shocked by the unbelievable destruction and devastation by an earthquake in 2015, Erich was emotional at the garden when KVPT is able to provide support to reconstruct those temples and give life.

Kanak Mani Dixit, an honorary co-chair, explained how the completion of the construction of tangible things revived intangible things and life in Patan durbar square as a miracle. Dixit, who reached Patan Durbar square just a moment after the earthquake saw rubbles and destruction, and recalled the Patan Durbar Square with rubble. He narrated how revived Dunbar Square has been attracting youth again.

Established as a small organization with support from renowned German Niel Gutschow, who is now senior advisor, in New York to support the Kathmandu Valley's Heritage Conservation, Erich Theophile, co-founder of KVPT's emotional statements has a reason. This is a great day for all particularly Erich.

## We Were Able To Save All The Elements From The Rubble

Dr. Rohit Ranjitkar, KVPT Nepal Director,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all, on the occasion of announcement of completing EQ reconstruction campaign, which KVPT committed. We all know 2015 earthquake which left widespread of destruction in the square. Which forced us to stay longer, not only on Palace sections but monuments in the square too. It also impaired the Valley's wider cultural heritage, with damages deeply felt in the three town squares of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur, all World Heritage Sites famed for their unique temples and historic houses.

KVPT and DoA coordinated security, rescuing artifacts and cleanup efforts in Patan Durbar Square immediately after the EQ with Mangal Tole Sudhar Sangha, Patan Museum, LM-C, Lalitpur Chamber of Commerce and local residents and community. Remnants of the fallen monuments in the Patan Durbar Square were secured with the help of hundreds of volunteers, local stake holders, the Nepal Army, the Armed Police Force and Nepal Police. All valuable historic building com-

ponents were secured within the first ten days after the earthquake and stored in the Patan Museum compound. There they were documented and sent into storage with leveling. Among these thousands of rescued pieces are intricately carved wooden elements from the tiered temples that collapsed in the square.

We are so proud that we were able to save all the elements from the rubble, even small pieces of carved elements. Of course, some of the elements were

not reusable, but they will serve as evidence and references to make new replicas. Immediately after the earthquake, we have been repairing all those carved elements from completely collapsed temples, as preparation for rebuilding. Which we can see now in their respected locations. This is all possible due to collaboration between everybody. This is a team work, individual cannot do alone. I am sure this was same when it was built few hundred years ago.

So we are very thankful and want to appreciate our nepali artisan team, so plz allow me to switch to in Nepali language.



# KVPT's Successful Earthquake Response Campaign



BY: PRATIMA PANDE

It is with great pleasure, as a director of the board of Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) welcome all of you to the Patan Durbar Square.

As a director, I feel privileged to be associated with such a dynamic organization and to be working with Erich, Dr.Rohit, Raju and other board members for twenty years. I have visited New York many times for KVPT programs and also London where KVPT was recognized by His Majesty King Charles III for our work and we were all invited to Clarence House for lunch to be encouraged by His Majesty for the hard work that KVPT has tirelessly done since 1991 in Nepal. He also generously donated to the Trust.

The KVPT has been working for the last thirty years, restoring our beloved temples and monuments in Kathmandu and Patan Durbar Square and around the Kathmandu Valley. This would not have been possible without the support of our local and international donors, well-wishers and friends of heritage conservation. Work was carried on steadily but the earthquake seven years ago destroyed many of our temples monuments and monasteries and reduced them to rubble which brought shock and sadness to the Nepali people and the rest of the world.

In the aftermath of the quake, we were in the process of literally picking up the pieces and putting them back together some as a jigsaw puzzle, especially with the old wood carvings which have very old sophisticated and complete systems. When they are assembled together you can then truly admire the skill of the Nepalese wood carvers and also the metal artisans and stone sculptors, plus the hundreds of other builders and laborers who slowly but steadily worked very hard to build back better so that in the next earthquake they will still be intact and not be destroyed. Most of our temples and monuments are over 300-500 years only and they do have a shelf life, it is amazing that they were in quite a good shape structurally and were fine had it not been for the nearly 7.8 scale quake of 2015.

Many were also restored after the great earthquake in 1934, eighty-eight years ago, so now we have to build stronger more thoughtfully and to be prepared to face other calamities

of Acts of God in the near future again. Nepal is famous for its mountains judges beautiful landscapes and friendly people.

People come from all over the globe to see and experience the seven monuments zone recognized by UNESCO within the Kathmandu Valley World Heritage Sites. Let's all of us gathered here today with common goals for the love of history, architecture, culture and beauty work together to save our precious monuments handed to us by our forefathers to preserve them for our future generations our society's children grandchildren and for the people our beloved country Nepal and the rest of the world. As you know in today's world we are one people one world on planet earth.



World Heritage sites around the world are of great interest to people and people travel to see their natural wonders natural and mandate archeological remains to marvel and wonder at what our ancestors have accomplished. This promotes tourism globally which is a very important revenue for all the countries like Italy.

The KVPT board would like to thank all the people who have donated so generously to help in the rebuilding of our precious monuments after the earthquake and for their support and love of world heritage sites, particularly in this Patan Durbar

Square. The American Ambassador Trust has been providing support over the years. Similarly, the Governments of Japan and the Government of India has been also been providing generous support to heritage conservation.

I would like to thank Rohit Ranjitkar and his team of builders and craftsmen who are working painstakingly to bring our temples and monuments back to their original splendor and glory. Finally, it is so wonderful to have Erich Theophile with us today to motivate encourage and lead the KVPT which is doing such wonderful work in heritage conservation and restoration. With his guidance, leadership and enthusiasm, all of us have been very motivated to continue our love for art culture and heritage construction.

A big thanks Erich and to Rohit for implementing everything here in Nepal.

***Pande is a board director of KVPT.***

## एड्स तथा यौन रोगबाट बच्न र बचाउन

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- एच.आई.भि. नियमित परीक्षण गरौं ।
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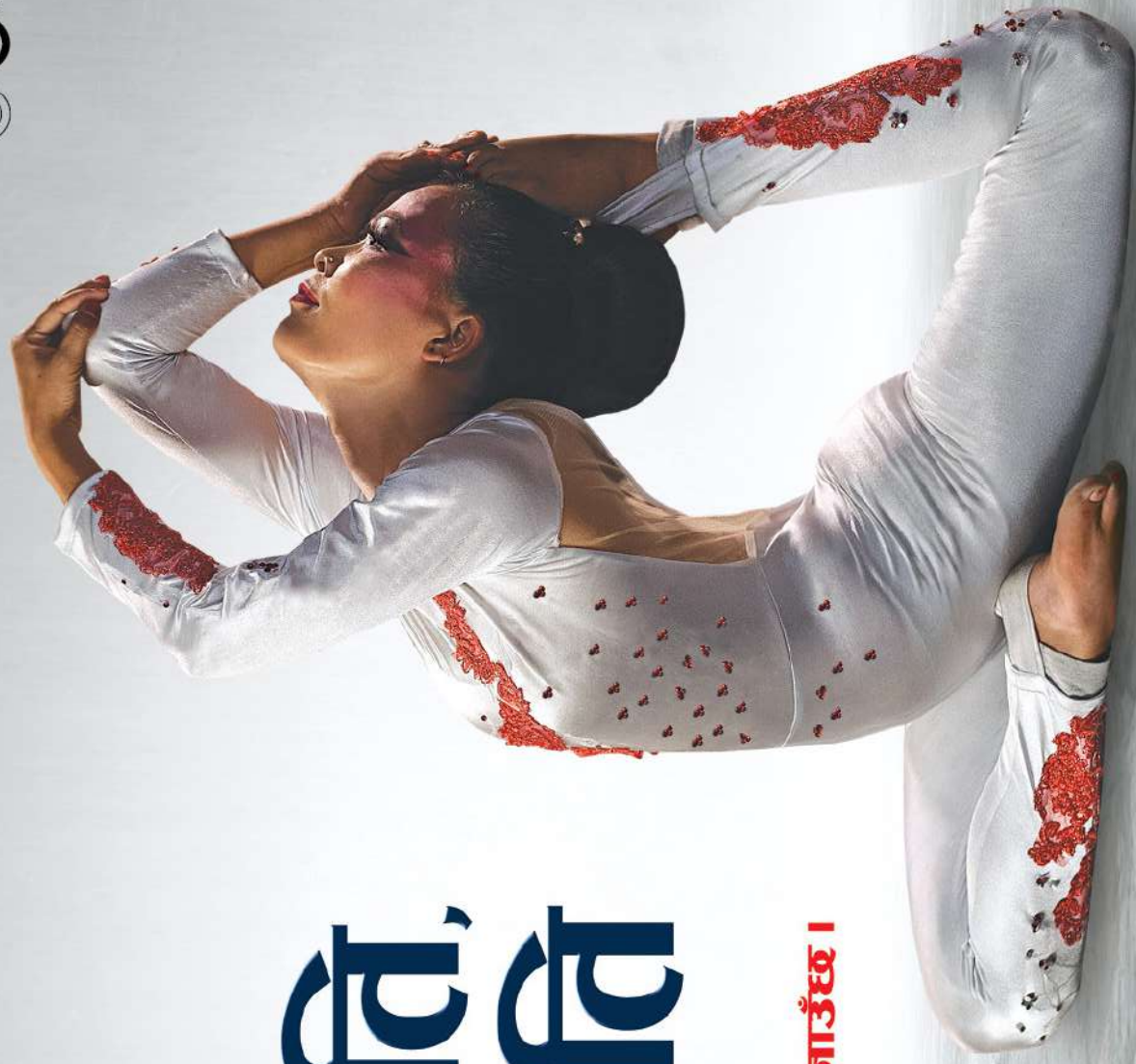


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