



**OPINION**  
Dipak Gyawali



**VIEWPOINT**  
Katak Malla



**ARTICLE**  
Hemang Dixit

# NEW SPOTLIGHT

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WEEKLY

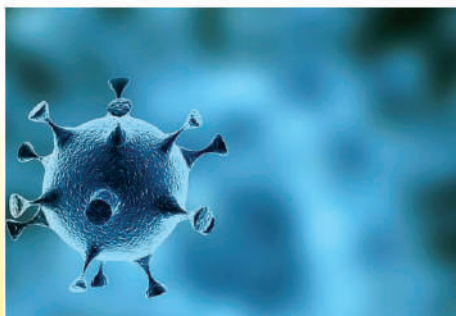
PRACHANDA'S THIRD INNINGS

## Shaking And Shocking

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DON'T PANICK**



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DEVRAJ BISHWOKARMA**

सर्वोत्कृष्ट स्वास्थ्य परीक्षणको लागि

जम्मा रु. १७,९५०/- मा होल बडी प्रिमियम प्याकेज

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**Lungs Function Test:**

- Spirometry on Body Plethysmograph (PFT)

**Liver Function Test:**

- SGOT, SGPT

**Cancer Marker:**

- CEA & PSA (Male)
- CEA & PAP Smear (Female)

**Infection marker:**

- CBC - (Haemoglobin, Packed cell volume, R.B.C. count, MCHC/MCV/MCH, Platelet Count, Total W.B.C./Differential Count, Platelet Count), ALP, ESR

**Osteoporosis Test:**

- Bone Mineral Density (Dexa Scan)

**Eye:**

- Vision Test

**Ear & Nose:**

- ENT Consultation, Audiogram (Optional, at 30% discount)

**Thyroid Test:**

- TSH

**Heart Function Test:**

- ECG (GE Marque Resting ECG)
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- ECHO Cardiogram (GE VIVID S6 Echocardiography)

**Diabetic Test:**

- HBA1C
- Fasting Sugar

**Kidney Test:**

- Urea
- Creatinine
- Sodium
- Potassium

**Other Test:**

- LIPID (Fat) Profile (Cholesterol, HDL Cholesterol, LDL Cholesterol, Triglycerides)
- Urine Routine Examination
- Calcium, Albumin, Phosphorous, Gamma G.T
- Uric Acid
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What it says, there is nothing impossible in politics. This is what Maoist revolutionary rebel leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, who waged the People's war to abolish the monarchy and unitary state, has shown to become a prime minister for the third time. Breaking an election alliance with Nepali Congress, he joined a new alliance with his arch and bitter rival CPN-UML leader K.P. Sharma Oli to ride to power. Furthermore, Prachanda also has a handshake with monarchist leader Rajendra Lingden and anti-federalist leader Rabi Lamichhane. To become prime minister, Prachanda has changed everything. With this; Nepal began a journey of the new political alliance for the year 2023. For Nepal, the year 2022 was as a year of political turmoil and surprise. After breaking the alliance with the ruling NC, the Maoist leader is now leading the coalition with CPN-UML. As Nepal's politics remains unpredictable all the time, no one can predict what will happen next. International politics is still unstable. After the Russian invasion of Ukraine, there is a shift in the power balance. With the invasion, Russia has completely isolated itself. As a small country, Nepal also condemned the Russian invasion and voted in support of the independence and sovereignty of Ukraine. New Spotlight shares Nepal government stand. As the year 2023 is approaching, the New Spotlight Family wishes a Happy and Prosperous New Year 2023 to our subscribers, clients and well-wishers.

**Keshab Poudel**

Editor

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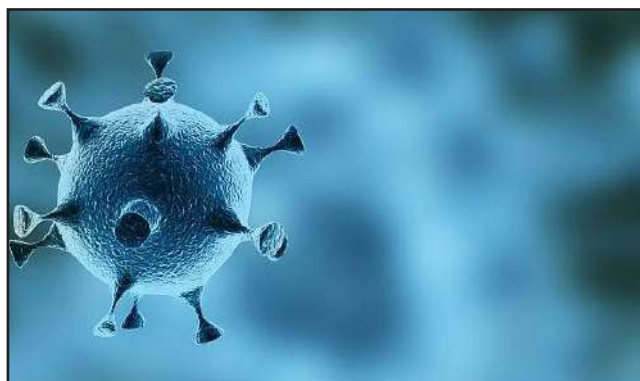
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### Indian Prime Minister Modi Congratulated PM Prachanda

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated newly elected prime minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda through twitter.

“Warmest congratulations @cmprachanda on being elected



as the Prime Minister of Nepal. The unique relationship between India & Nepal is based on deep cultural connect & warm people-to-people ties.

I look forward to working together with you to further strengthen this friendship,” tweets PM Modi on December 26.

In his reply, PM Prachanda tweeted that he looks forward to working closely with him to consolidate bilateral freindship

“Thank you, Prime Minister @narendramodi ji for your warm message. Nepal and India share close cultural ties and a natural affinity. I look forward to working closely with you to consolidate our bilateral friendship,” tweeted PM Prachanda.

### Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio Congratulated Prime Minister Puspa Kamal Dahal For His Inauguration

Japanese Prime Minister Kishida KISHIDA Fumio, Prime Minister of Japan, sent Puspa Kamal Dahal an official letter congratulating his inauguration as Prime Minister of Nepal on December 26, 2022.

The Government of Japan is looking forward to



further working with the Government of Nepal to promote the bilateral relations and friendship between two countries and cooperate in the social and economic development of

Nepal under the leadership of Prime Minister Dahal.

### The United States Congratulated Newly Appointed Prime Minister Dahal

The United States congratulates newly-appointed Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal and his coalition on their victory in Nepal’s federal election. We are proud to have had robust and longstanding ties with Nepal and will continue to stand with the Government of Nepal to promote issues of bilateral, regional, and global importance, such as achieving sustainable economic growth and strengthening democracy and human rights.

Nepal’s commitment to democracy is an example to coun-

tries around the world, and we commend all those involved. We look forward to supporting Nepal as it continues to deepen its democratic traditions. China To Lift Quarantine For Inbound Travelers



### China Congratulates Prachanda On Becoming Nepal’s New PM, Hopes To Deepen Bilateral Ties

China has congratulated Pushpa Kamal Dahal, chairman of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Center), also known as Prachanda, on his appointment as the new prime minister of Nepal, and is willing to continue working with the Nepalese government to deepen bilateral ties, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said on Monday.

President Bidya Devi Bhandari appointed Prachanda as the new prime minister after the latter garnered the support of 169 lawmakers in the 275-strong House of Representatives.



Prachanda, who had previously served twice as prime minister, was sworn in on Monday afternoon.

China noticed that the election in Nepal was conducted smoothly and congratulated Prachanda on becoming the new prime minister, Mao Ning, spokesperson of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, told a routine press conference on Monday.

We believe that with the joint efforts of the Nepalese government and people, and with the consultation and



## NEWSNOTES

coordination of various parties and political forces, Nepal will maintain stability and economic and social development, Mao said.

As a traditional friendly neighbor, China attaches great importance to China-Nepal relations, and is willing to work with the new government of Nepal to expand and deepen friendly exchanges and cooperation between the two countries in various fields, the spokesperson said.

The two countries will jointly build a high-quality Belt and Road network, injecting new impetus into the development and prosperity of China-Nepal friendship from generation to generation, Mao said.

### Japan Provided Assistance For The Construction Of Sunaulo Library In Province 1

The inauguration ceremony of the Sunaulo Library took place in Sunsari district, Province 1 on December 24. Kikuta, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, attended the ceremony to celebrate the inauguration.

The library was damaged by the 2015 earthquake



and was no longer accessible. Now an earthquake-resistant library has been constructed as part of a project supported by Japanese

Government under the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects schemes.

The project is being implemented by Japanese NGO Shanti Volunteer Association, and it is currently in its final year. The project aims at improving services provided by community libraries and learning centers, and supports the construction of a total of four libraries and learning centers, including the Sunaulo Library. The library will not only operate as a library, but also be equipped with rooms for children and women, a computer room, and a meeting room, where various programs such as reading promotion activities for children, empowerment of women and youth, and activities to improve the lives of people in the community, will be implemented.

On the occasion, Ambassador Kikuta congratulated and appreciated the efforts of everyone involved in the construction of the library. Ambassador expressed his hope that the library will become a community asset that contributes to the development of the region and that the library will be further developed by community and local government. Ambassador Kikuta also mentioned that this

year marks the 120th anniversary since Nepal dispatched its first eight students to Japan for study and that he was delighted to see the completion of the library construction in this celebratory year.

He added his hope to see various people who use this library play a leading role in people-to-people relationships between the two countries as well as in the development of Nepal in the future. The Embassy of Japan in Nepal hopes that the assistance further strengthens the relationship between Japan and Nepal, and the friendship between the peoples of the two countries for future generation

### Embassy Of India Organised India-Nepal Agri Meet Cum Curtain Raiser For The International Year of Millets 2023

Embassy of India, Kathmandu organized an India-Nepal Agri Meet cum Curtain Raiser for the International Year of Millets 2023 in hybrid format in association with the Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) also participated in the event. Nepali side's participation in the event was led by Dr. Govind Prasad Sharma, Secretary (Agriculture Development), Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Government of Nepal.

The resolution to celebrate the International Year of Millets 2023 (IYM 2023) was adopted in the United Nations in 2021 at the initiative of India with the support of 72 other countries.

India is the world's largest producer of millets, producing 17 million tonnes annually of nine different varieties of millets, which is about 20% of the global production. Millets offer unique nutritional benefits and can grow on arid land with minimal rainfall and relatively resilient to changes in climate. According to FAO, they offer an ideal solution for countries to increase self-sufficiency and reduce reliance on imported cereal grains.

India-Nepal agricultural cooperation is anchored in the 'India-Nepal New Partnership in Agriculture', which was launched in 2018 with a focus on collaborative projects in agricultural research, development and education. India

Nepal are also significant trading partners of each other for a variety of agricultural



products, including millets.

Addressing the gathering, ShriPrasannaShrivastava, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India, Kathmandu highlighted the importance as well as potential of millets in ensuring food security for the world. Dr. Tarun Bajaj, Director, APEDA, elaborated on the export promotion and capacity building efforts by APEDA towards IYM 2023.

From the Nepali side, Dr. Govind Prasad Sharma, Secretary (Agriculture development), Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock Development, Government of Nepal, spoke about the importance millets hold in Nepal, and also identified the areas of bilateral cooperation in the agricultural sector. Dr. Ram Krishna Shrestha, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock Development delivered a presentation on the “Millets Promotion Endeavours of the Government of Nepal and International Year of Millets 2023”.

Embassy will continue to promote India-Nepal cooperation in agriculture and will promote millets through a variety of activities centered around the theme of the International Year of Millets 2023.

### Israeli Ambassador To Nepal Hanan Godder Paid A Courtesy Call On COAS General Sharma



Ambassador of Israel to Nepal Hanan Goder Goldberger has paid a courtesy call on Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) General Prabhu Ram Sharma at Nepal Army Headquarter today.

During the meeting CoAS General Sharma and ambassador Hanan Goder Goldberger discussed the issues of mutual interest and bilateral relations. According to a press release issued by Public Relations and Information Directorate of Nepal Army, this kind of meeting helps to further strengthening the excising bilateral relations between the two countries.

### Japan Hands Over Medal Grand Cordon Of The Rising Sun To Former Speaker



The Ambassador of Japan to Nepal Kikuta Yutaka handed over Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun to the former speaker of House Of Representatives Ram Chandra Poudel amid a function today at the residence of Japanese Ambassador to Nepal.

Former speaker Poudel received the decoration on April 29, 2020, in recognition of his contributions towards strengthening the relationship between Japan and Nepal and promoting the interchange of members of parliaments of both countries. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, the ceremony has been unfortunately postponed, but was successfully completed today.

Member of House of Representatives Poudel contributed to the activation of contacts between parliamentarians of the two countries. He established the Japan Nepal Friendship Parliamentarian League in 1999 when he was the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Nepal. He was the first Chairman of the League from the beginning until 2017.

He was also actively involved in the promotion of bilateral relations by receiving many VIPs from Japan such as His Imperial Highness Prince Akihito and Her Imperial Highness Princess Michiko, Prime Minister MORI Yoshiro, State Minister for Foreign Affairs KIUCHI Minoru, and others. Furthermore, he participated in the 40 year, 50 year and 60 year anniversaries of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries and made congratulatory statements.

Japanese Decorations are conferred upon foreigners twice a year, on 29th April and 3<sup>rd</sup> November, concurrently with the conferment of decorations and medals to Japanese nationals.

The Order of the Rising Sun is bestowed upon individuals of merit, in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the nation or public. This is also conferred upon foreign nationals who have made notable contributions to the promotion of relations between Japan and other countries in areas such as politics and diplomacy, research and education, medicine and social welfare, economy and industry, and culture and sports.

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The Government of Japan announced the foreign recipients of the 2020 Spring Imperial Decorations in 2020. Former Speaker of the House of Representatives of Nepal Poudel was among 2020 year's foreign recipients.

The medal was conferred him in recognition of his contributions towards strengthening the relationship between Japan and Nepal. For this role, Poudel has received the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun.

In his speech following the program, ambassador Kikuta said that Poudel contributed to the activation of contacts between parliamentarians of the two countries and established the Japan Nepal Friendship Parliamentarian League in 1999 when he was the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Nepal.

"He was also actively involved in the promotion of bilateral relations by receiving many dignitaries from Japan such as Prince Akihito and Princess Michiko, Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, Minoru Kiuchi, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, and others and participated in the 40 year, 50 year and 60 year anniversaries of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries," said ambassador.

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"I am very grateful to the Government of Japan for kindly conferring on me the high decoration on the Order of the Rising Sun Gold and Silver Star," said Poudel. "I served as Ambassador of Nepal to Japan. I will work in future to further strengthen relations between the two countries," said Poudel. He said that Japan is a great friend of Nepal as it has been supporting Nepal for over five decades in the economic progress,

"Poudel has been actively involved in the promotion of bilateral relations between the two countries. The honor will be handed to the personalities for their contribution to the promotion of political, diplomatic, research, education, medical and social welfare, economic, industry, culture and sports between the two countries," said Minister of Communication and Information Technology Gyamendra Bahadur Karki.

On 29 April, 2020, the Japan government announced the foreign recipients of the 2020 Spring Imperial Decorations.

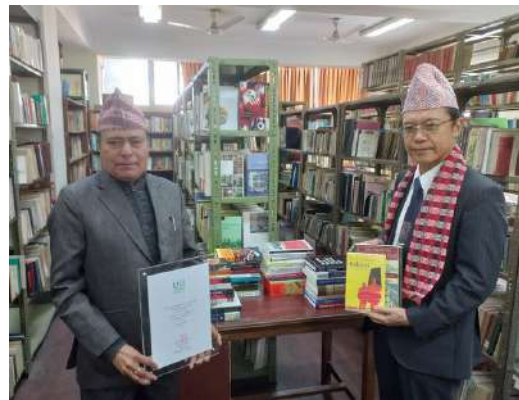
**Japan Hands Over Books for Japanese Study to Campus of International Languages, Tribhuvan University**

Ambassador of Japan to Nepal KIKUTA Yutaka handed over 168 Japanese study books to Tribhuvan University, Campus of International Languages. Dr. Yadav Raj Panta, Campus Chief, KAMIMURA Yoshiharu, Japanese teacher of Department of Japanese Language, faculties and students studying Japanese were present at the handover ceremony.

After the ceremony, Ambassador Kikuta met with faculties and students on campus. He told them that language learning is not only memorizing words and capturing grammar and hoped that the students would understand Japan's deep history, fascinating culture, and efforts for modernization during their study in Japanese. In a friendly atmosphere, the students asked the Ambassador many questions on topics such as how to remember Kanji characters and recent Japan-Nepal relations.

The books are donated by the Nippon Foundation "Read Japan Project". They include a wide range of titles, from classics on Japanese literature and culture to contemporary

political and economic issues and will be housed in the library of the Campus of International Languages, Tribhuvan University.



national Languages, Tribhuvan University.

Finally, on this occasion, the Ambassador visited the office of JALTAN, Japanese Language Teachers Association Nepal, which is located in the premise of the Campus, to express his deep appreciation for their dedication to Japanese language education in Nepal, not only in the classroom but also through various events such as speech contests and karaoke competitions and encouraged the teachers.

### **Development Of Nepal Is Always A Priority For JICA; Executive Senior Vice President of JICA Yamada**

The Executive Senior Vice President of JICA Dr. Junichi YAMADA (Ph. D.) was on a 3 days visit to Kathmandu, Nepal from 04 to 07 December 2022.

During his visit to Nepal, he held talks with the high level officials of the Government of Nepal and discussed on the future JICA cooperation policy to Nepal. Additionally, he also observed the activities of JICA supported projects namely Sindhuli Road and Nagdhunga Tunnel Construction Project.

Upon his visit to Nepal, Dr. YAMADA stated that,



“I always longed to visit Nepal and am delighted to finally come here this time. My brief visit to Nepal has been very fruitful. I got an opportunity to travel through the Sindhuli Road built by Japanese cooperation and also witnessed the progress made in the construction works of Nagdhunga Tunnel. I was impressed that Sindhuli Road, the construction of which started in 1996, is well utilized and provides good facility to people. I also had chances to meet some of the high level officials from various ministries for discussing future opportunities of co-partnership between Nepal and Japan for prospective development projects. I see a lot of potential to expand Official Development Assistance (ODA) in Nepal significantly for infrastructure projects with Loan assistance to cater to the need of the Nepalese people.”

Dr. YAMADA's association with JICA dates back to April 1982 when he joined the OECF (one of the predecessor organizations of JICA) as an employee. He holds



substantial experience related to ODA loan projects especially in countries such as the Philippines, Indonesia and India. He has been dispatched in JICA Of-

fices in Myanmar and Malaysia, and has held the posts of Director General of the Middle East and Europe Department, Director General of Operations Strategy Department, and Senior Vice President successively, prior to his current position.

JICA has implemented various cooperation projects, especially in the areas of social and economic infrastructure development, disaster resilience and poverty reduction. Dr. Yamada's mission in Nepal therefore is significant in enhancing future cooperation in Nepal for developing pioneering projects aimed to contribute to the economic growth of the country.

### European Union Brings Relief To The Victims Of Earthquake In Nepal

In response to the strong earthquake that struck western Nepal in early November, the European Union is providing €200,000 (over 27 million Nepalese rupees) in humanitarian funding to assist the most affected families.

This EU funding supports the Nepal Red Cross Society in delivering much needed assistance, including the provision of shelter materials, such as tarpaulins, blankets



and mattresses, as well as the construction of latrines and water supply facilities. Health promotion activities will be organised to ensure access to essential health care services. The most affected people will also receive cash grants to meet their basic needs.

The humanitarian aid will directly benefit 11,000 people whose houses have been destroyed or damaged in the wake of the earthquake.

The funding is part of the EU's overall contribution to the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Approximately 30,000 people were affected when a powerful 6.6-magnitude earthquake hit remote areas of Nepal's Sudhuraschim province on 9 November. Followed by several aftershocks, the tremor left close to 1,000 homes destroyed while over 5,000 others were damaged. Most of the affected families were forced to live out in the open due to the extensive damage of their homes and the fear of aftershocks.

The European Union and its Member States are the world's leading donor of humanitarian aid. Relief assistance is an expression of European solidarity with people in need all around the world. It aims to save lives, prevent and alleviate human suffering, and safeguard the integrity and human dignity of populations affected by natural disasters and man-made crises.

Through its Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department, the European Union helps millions of victims of conflict and disasters every year. With headquarters in Brussels and a global network of field offices, the European Union provides assistance to the most vulnerable people on the basis of humanitarian needs.

The European Union is signatory to a €3 million humanitarian delegation agreement with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to support the Federation's Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF). Funds from the DREF are mainly allocated to "small-scale" disasters – those that do not give rise to a formal international appeal.

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The Disaster Response Emergency Fund was established in 1985 and is supported by contributions from donors. Each time a National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society needs immediate financial support to respond to a disaster, it can request funds from the DREF. For small-scale disasters, the IFRC allocates grants from the Fund, which can then be replenished by the donors. The delegation agreement between the IFRC and ECHO enables the latter to replenish the DREF for agreed operations (that fit within its humanitarian mandate) up to a total of €3 million.

### ADB Approves \$200 Million Loan To Strengthen Education System In Nepal

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) today approved a \$200 million concessional loan to help the Gov-



ernment of Nepal strengthen the equity, quality, and resilience of its school education.

The program will assist the implementation of the first 5 years of the government's School Education Sector Plan 2021–2030 in a sector wide approach supported by eight development partners, including ADB. The program will enhance learning provisions for basic and secondary schools; strengthening teaching and learning in schools; accelerate the recovery from learning losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; and improve capacity of local governments in education planning, monitoring, and reporting.

"Nepal has done significantly well in terms of improving access to education, however, there is still a need to address remaining equity issues to access and importantly to take a holistic approach to address persistent challenge in improving learning outcomes," said ADB Principal Social Sector Specialist for South Asia Rudi Van Dael. "This program will help accelerate reforms and transform the country's education system to develop human capital, reduce social inequity, and attain sustainable growth."

Selected secondary schools will be upgraded to increase opportunities to study science education in grades 11–12, especially for girls. The pro-poor scholarship

scheme will be expanded from grades 9–12 to grades 6–12 to improve retention.

To mitigate learning loss from the COVID-19 pandemic, a recovery and accelerated learning program will be jointly implemented with community and civil society organizations. "To prepare schools against future learning disruptions, more and better accessible e-resources will be made available through the Sikai Chautari online learning portal. The program will further strengthen local government's capacity to deliver education in the federal system," said ADB Senior Project Officer (Education) for South Asia Smita Gyawali.

ADB will provide an additional \$1 million technical assistance grant from its Technical Assistance Special Fund and administer equivalent of \$600,000 grant from the Government of Norway to support capacity building activities, strengthen program management and coordination, and improve the monitoring and reporting capability of the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology.

### India Agrees To Remove Embankments Constructed At Nepal's Side In Mahakali River

Following the intervention from central level, a major tension appeared at the local level averted. Using quite diplomacy through Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nepal reached to Indian authorities about the construction of embankment by local Indian authorities towards Nepali border and violent regiment in Nepal side which could easily be exploited by inimical forces of both the countries.

After direction from New Delhi as per the demand of Nepal, Indian authorizes agree to dismantle the embankment constructed at Mahakali and push the river channel in its original route.

Nepali and Indian district administrative officer and security officials agreed to resolve the crisis appeared following the construction of embankment by India to shift the original course of Mahakali River towards Nepal's dis-





trict headquarter in Khalanga.

A meeting held on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, chief district officer of Darchula District Dirgharaj Upadhyaya conveyed Nepal's stand to his Indian counterpart in the Uttarakhand district of Pithoragarh.

As per the request of Nepal, Indian authorities agreed to dismantle the embankment constructed in the past few days and allow Mahakali River to back its original course.

Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends a diplomatic note requesting India to stop the construction of embankment in the river with an aim to divert river course to Nepal. The meeting was held in an attempt to resolve the dispute. He said the Indian side had agreed to halt embankment construction for the time being.

Local people organized anti-embankment rally as they fear India's "unilateral" embanking of the river will permanently change the river's course and hence the repeat scuffles, said Upadhyaya, the Darchula CDO.

Earlier, there had been an agreement between Nepali and Indian officials whereby both sides would refrain from constructing embankments along the disputed parts of the river.

"After high-level meeting, India agrees to suspend the construction work. This will likely to end anti-dam protest in the district headquarter," Upadhyaya said. "Nepal and India are good neighbors. This is the reason we were able to amicable solve the crisis and

After getting report, Nepal urged to strengthen its own embankments on Mahakali and immediately take up the matter with India.

"The Ministry of Home Affairs has on Monday written to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs requesting a long-term solution to the recurring disputes in Darchula," Basanta Bhattarai, deputy spokesperson at the Home Ministry told the Post.

On the basis of the report received from the District Administration Office, Darchula and similar past incidents in the district, we have asked the foreign ministry to initiate talks with India to seek a long-term solution, said Bhattarai.

### **Nepali And Indian Army Starts the 16th Nepal-India Joint Military Exercise**

The 16th India-Nepal Joint Military Exercise 'SURYA KIRAN' commenced on 16 Dec 2022 at Nepal Army Battle School, Saljhandi. The exercise commenced with unfurling of the National Flags and both armies marching in harmony on the India and Nepal military tunes.

During the two weeks arduous exercise, an Infantry Battalion each from the Indian Army and the Nepali Army will be training together to enhance inter-operability and share experience on Counter Insurgency and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief operations. A Gorkha battalion from the elite Gorkha regiments of the Indian



Army is participating in the exercise.

During the exercise, both the armies will familiarize themselves with each other's weapons, equipment, tactics and procedures while operating in Counter Insurgency environment especially in mountainous terrain.

To further enhance the scope and scale of exercise, the contingents will be exposed to scenarios dealing with Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, High Altitude Warfare and Jungle Warfare operations. The Joint Military Training will culminate on 29 Dec 2022 with a grueling 48 hours validation exercise to validate performance of both the armies in Counter Insurgency environment.

Ex Surya Kiran will go a long way in improving bilateral relations and mutual cooperation between both the armies and further strengthening the unique, traditional and time tested friendship between India and Nepal. Suryakiran series of exercises also stands testimony to strong Indo-Nepal relations, which are vast and varied, and unlikely to be found anywhere in the world.

### **Israeli Embassy In Nepal Observed Hanukkah**

Embassy Of Israel In Nepal Observed Hanukkah, the Jewish festival of lights amid a function at the residence of ambassador of Israel to Nepal.

Attended by people from various walks of life including the members of SALON Clubm Hanan Goder Goldberger, Ambassador of Israel to Nepal, highlighted the importance of the Hanukkah in the life of Jews people.

He said that Israel also observes various festivals like Nepal. Ambassador Hanan said that Israel and Nepal have many similarities. Both the countries are small but both the country observe many festivals.

Hanukkah commemorates the Maccabean (Hasmonean) victories over the forces of the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes (reigned 175–164 BCE) and the rededication of the Temple on Kislev 25, 164 BCE. Led by Mattathias and his son Judas Maccabeus (died c. 161 BCE),



## NEWSNOTES

the Maccabees were the first Jews who fought to defend their religious beliefs rather than their lives. According to I Maccabees, a text of the Apocrypha (writings excluded from the Jewish canon but included in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Old Testament canons), Antiochus had invaded Judaea, tried to Hellenize the Jews, and desecrated the Second Temple in Jerusalem. Following the Jewish victory in a three-year struggle against Antiochus, Judas ordered the cleansing and restoration of the Temple. After it was purified, a new altar was installed and dedicated on Kislev 25. Judas then proclaimed that the dedication of the restored Temple should be celebrated every year for eight days beginning on that date. In II Maccabees the celebration is compared to the festival of Sukkoth (the Feast of Tabernacles or Feast of Booths), which the Jews were unable to celebrate because of the invasion of Antiochus. Hanukkah, therefore, emerged as a celebration of the dedication, as the word itself suggests.

### Hanukkah lamp

Although the traditional practice of lighting candles at Hanukkah was not established in the books of the Maccabees, the custom most likely started relatively early. The practice is enshrined in the Talmud (Shabbat 21b), which describes the miracle of the oil in the Temple. According to the Talmud, when Judas Maccabeus entered the Temple, he found only a small jar of oil that had not been defiled by Antiochus. The jar contained only enough oil to



burn for one day, but miraculously the oil burned for eight days until new consecrated oil could be found, establishing the precedent that the festival should last eight days. The early date for this story or at least the practice of lighting eight candles is confirmed by the debate of the 1st-century-CE scholars Hillel and Shammai. Hillel and his school taught that one candle should be lit on the first night of Hanukkah and one more each night of the festival. Shammai held that all eight candles should be lit the first night, with

the number decreasing by one each night thereafter.

## UNICEF And The Government Of Finland Continue Their Partnership To Support The Education sector Of Nepal



Finland and UNICEF have signed a partnership agreement for the years 2023-2027. Finland is committing 4.2 million euros (approx. 590 million npr) to UNICEF's efforts in Nepal to enhance quality services for children. Finland and UNICEF have been collaborating in the education sector in Nepal since 2019, and the agreed support is a continuation of this partnership.

At a ceremony held in Kathmandu on December 22, 2022, Riina-Riikka Heikka, the Ambassador of Finland to Nepal, and Usha Mishra, UNICEF Representative to Nepal a.i., signed a partnership agreement for the years 2023-2027.

Finland is committing 4.2 million euros for the enhancement of quality services for children in Nepal. Finland and UNICEF have been collaborating in the education sector since 2019 – the agreed support is a continuation of this partnership. With the signed agreement, the partners reaffirmed their aspiration to strengthen inclusion and quality education for children in Nepal.

The renewed partnership will focus on strengthening school readiness, foundational learning and inclusive education models, targeting particularly the most vulnerable children. It also addresses those children who have been particularly hit by the Covid-19 pandemic or other disasters e.g. floods, in terms of their access to education participation and learning outcomes. The partnership also supports the new School Education Sector Plan (SESP) of the Government of Nepal, to which both Finland and UNICEF are contributing.

## Rahughat Hydel Project To Be Completed By August, 2023

The project manager of Rahughat Hydel Project Raj Bahadur Bista said that work has been accelerated from all aspects of the project to complete by August 2023. The deadline for the construction, which was completed a year ago, has been extended by another two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, floods and landslides, Bista said.

The construction of the 40 MW Rahughat hydro-power project, under construction at Raghuganga Rural Municipality in Myagdi, has gained momentum recently.

Bista said that the preparation for the installation of the equipment has been started along with the construction of the power plant building in Tilkenichaur. He said that the work of the power house is almost finished and the work of the unit base has started.

He said that the construction of the project has accelerated since October. "We have made the necessary preparations to continue the construction at the dam site even during the summer." A contract agreement was signed with Jaiprakash Associates (JP), the civil contractor for the project.

The project is being built with the joint investment of the NEA and the government and a concessional loan



of USD 67 million from the Indian Export-Import Bank (EXIM Bank). After the expiry of the contract period of 45

months, it has been by two and a half years. The capacity of this project, which was initially designed at 32 MW, has now been increased to 40 MW.

According to the project, 40 per cent progress in physical infrastructure and 50 per cent in finance has been achieved so far. Construction of the tunnel, dam site and power house has been expedited together.

Rahuganga Hydropower Limited, a subsidiary company of Nepal Electricity Authority, which is overseeing the project, has already constructed 3,700m of the 6,270m long tunnel. The project manager Raj Bahadur Bista informed that the tunnel construction was going on through three audits along with the work of digging 180 to 200 meters of tunnel per month.

## Chinese Team Arrived To Conduct Feasibility Study Of Nepal-China Cross-border Railway

An expert team from China for the feasibility

study of the Nepal-China cross-border railway arrived in Kathmandu today.

The Chinese expert team was welcomed by Wang Xin, charge d'affaires of the Chinese embassy in Nepal, according to the Chinese embassy.

"The expert team for the feasibility study & survey of China-Nepal Cross-Border Railway arrived today and (was) welcomed by Charge d'affaires Wang Xin, important implementation of our leaders' consensus and a solid step forward to turn Nepal



from a landlocked to a land-linked country," said the Chinese embassy in its Twitter.

The first batch of Chinese experts have arrived in Kathmandu today to conduct the feasibility study and survey of the China-Nepal cross-border railway, read the embassy press release issued today.

To conduct the feasibility study and survey of the China-Nepal cross-border railway has been a long-cherished dream of Nepali people and an important consensus reached by leaders of our two countries. It is also an integral part of jointly building the Belt and Road initiative between China and Nepal. China gives priority to Nepal's aspiration and needs in this regards, and will proactively push ahead with the feasibility study with the grant from China. The two countries will maintain close contact and coordination in jointly carrying out the work ahead with a view of building trans-Himalayan multi-dimensional connectivity network, said the Chinese embassy.

## PM Prachanda Stresses The Need To Improving Economy

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' said that the government is primarily focused on improving the economy of the country.

In a meeting held at PM's Khumaltar residence with the president of the Nepal Chambers of Commerce





## BUSINESS BRIEF

(NCC), Rajendra Malla and other high officials, PM Prachanda said that he is well aware of the problems surfaced in the country's economy lately.

The PM said, "The economy of the country is going through a complex and challenging situation lately with issues such as increased interest rate and liquidity crisis, so the focus of the incumbent government will be towards improving the economic situation of the country."

### South Korean Government Provides High Breed Cows To Nepal Through Heifer International Nepal

Cows brought from South Korea, at the initiative



of Heifer International Nepal, with the approval of the Government of Nepal, have been distributed to the farmers.

The cent percent purebred cows from Heifer International Korea were brought to Nepal and distributed to the farmers today. A total of 63 cows and calves brought to Nepal from South Korea were distributed, according to Veterinarian at Heifer International Nepal, Dr. Bhola Shrestha. According to him, 22 more cows are yet to arrive.

The cows obtained from Heifer International Korea were handed over to the government of Nepal on behalf of the Korean government and distributed to the farmers of Sindhuli.

Dr Shrestha said that the cows were not brought to replace the local Nepali cows, but to improve the breed and protect them. He said that Nepal Agricultural Research Council, Department of Animal Services is doing the work of protecting the local cows of Nepal.

Only about 20 percent of the 7.3 million cows in Nepal are of advanced breed. Dr Shrestha said that there is a need to increase milk production in Nepal and said that purebred cows with higher production capacity have been brought.

It is said that these cows can produce 8 to 16 thousand liters of milk per lactation.(RSS)

### India's Accor Group To Open Hotel In Kathmandu

Accor Group, a world famous hotel business, has entered Nepal. Desh Bandhu Basnet (Ajit), member of the working committee of Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), and Chairman of NRN and Bi-national Committee, introduced this group to Nepal.

Accor, a world-leading augmented hospitality group with over 430 hotels across India, the Middle East, Africa and

Turkey, has signed its first Mercure property in Kathmandu. Set to open in 2023, Mercure Kathmandu will have 105 rooms in Sukedhara, offering

great proximity and connectivity to the city's main attractions and centre.

Basnet has introduced Accor Group in the management of The Metropolitan Hotel Private Limited, which he is about to bring into operation in Nepal. The hotel is going to be put into operation under the brand name of 'Mercure' by Accor Group. An agreement was signed between Accor and The Metropolitan in New Delhi, India recently to introduce the brand in Nepal. Accor is managing more than 5,300 hotels in more than 100 countries in Asia, Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

The agreement was signed by Basnet, President of The Metropolitan Hotel and Punit Dewan, Senior Vice President of Accor. Basnet said that it was a matter of pride to bring a world-class brand to Nepal. This has created an opportunity for visitors to Nepal to get world-class hospitality services.

Likewise, Dewan said that the agreement will greatly contribute to the development of Nepal's tourism, and Accor will provide world-class service to foreign guests in Nepal along with Nepali traditional hospitality. The hotel will have all the facilities required in a five-star hotel, including a gym and swimming pool.

### China Ready To Buy Electricity From Nepal: Acting Chinese Ambassador

Wang Xin, Charge D' Affairs of the Embassy of the people's Republic of China in Nepal, has said that the Chinese government is ready to buy the electricity produced in Nepal.

After the release of the book titled "What is there in the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China ?", Charge D' Affairs Wang conveyed the message of China's preparedness to purchase electricity from Nepal.

Dr. Sarbottam Shrestha, the first vice-chairperson of the Araniko Society, translated and edited the released book.

He stressed that the need to take the friendly rela-





tionship between China and Nepal to new heights. He said the feasibility study about expanding the roadway from China to Nepal is being made to strengthen the relationship between the two countries.

He said that the Chinese government has been planning to take its 1.4 billion citizens towards modernization by the year 2050, and added that Nepal and Nepalīs would benefit from it.

He claimed that the strict enforcement of COVID-19 restrictions in China had saved 4 million people. China is walking in the footsteps of maintaining world peace and increasing economic production.

Prof. Rupesh Krishna Shrestha, former editor of the Gorkhapatra daily, Puskar Bhakta Mathema, Bindanam



Pradhan, Assistant Professor Suman Man Shrestha, Suresh Lalakhe of Patan Museum, Mahendra Shrestha and journalist

Upesh Maharjan reviewed the book in the launching programme.

### **NEA To Expand Transmission And Distribution System In Kailali And Kanchanpur**

Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) is going to expand the network of transmission and distribution systems to increase electricity consumption and improve supply in Kailali and Kanchanpur of Sudurpashchim Province.

According to NEA, it will strengthen and expand the existing transmission and distribution structures to solve the immediate problem.

A high-capacity transmission line will be constructed to solve the long-term problem, it said.

During the summer, consumers complain about low voltage and tripping problems in urban areas such as Attaria in Kailali, Dhangadhi in Tikapur, Mahendranagar in Kanchanpur.

A high-level team including Managing Director of NEA Kul Man Ghising and Deputy Managing Director of Distribution and Customer Service Directorate Manoj Silwal visited the area on Saturday and Sunday and received information about the work to be done to improve power supply.

The team had a discussion with the chiefs of municipalities, representatives of industry and commerce associations about the demand and supply system of electricity.

The team discussed with the chief of NEA's Sudurpashchim provincial office and distribution centre and directed them to complete all the electricity supply improvement works before the start of summer season and to submit the necessary budget estimates for that immediately.

Similarly, the team has given instructions to keep the electrification of the districts of Sudurpashchim Province as a high priority and work accordingly.

Ghising said that a team is being formed to study the work that needs to be done immediately and in the long term to solve the problem of power supply in Kailali and Kanchanpur areas.

"Because the 33 kV line is used beyond its capacity, there are problems such as voltage and overload, especially in the summer season. To solve this, we are going to start the construction of a 132 kV transmission line from the Attaria substation in Kailali through the south region and a 132 kV substation around Dhangadhi. Punarbas and Belauri areas of Kanchanpur will also be connected by the 132 kV line. Once the 132 kV line comes to the centre, there will be no problems like voltage and tripping," he said.

Currently, there is a problem due to the situation of bringing electricity from the long transmission line of Kaligandaki to this area for supply.

"This year, about 100 megawatts of electricity from the hydroelectric projects constructed in Bajhang, and Darchula can be distributed to this area through Attaria substation, so the voltage problem will be solved to a great extent," he said.



The Authority team also monitored the route of the proposed transmission line and the construction of the substation, the operating substation and the projects under construction.

Ghising said that 400 kV transmission lines are going to be constructed for the power supply of the hydroelectric projects to be built in the Karnali, Seti, and Mahakali River catchment areas.

Lamahi-Chhinchu, Chhinchu-Dodhara, Dodhara-New Attaria (Daiji) 400 kV transmission lines are under study.

A 400/132 kV substations will be constructed in Lamahi, Motipur Chhinchu and New Attaria, said the NEA

# Insights And Qualms Of Conservationists



BY: DIPAK GYAWALI

– In August this year in Bangalore, at the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the non-profit socio-environmental research organization ATREE, I listened to an unconventional keynote speech by an elephant conservationist. It was Nitin Sekar, an American of Tamil parentage who was challenging conventional ecological myths with gusto. He and others at that conference reminded me of the famous upstate New York's Mohonk Conference almost four decades earlier, where the then dominant "theory of Himalayan environmental degradation" (or THED that argued that "*poor and fecund peasants were cutting trees in the mountains and causing floods in Bangladesh*") was debunked by watershed scientists from all over the world. It was indeed a watershed moment of paradigm shift that is not often encountered in one event. Mohonk proved that when well-meaning environmentalists champion half-baked theories to simplistically explain away complex, often intractably "wicked" socio-environmental problems, and when policy makers and development agencies uncritically follow their misguided advice, one is forced to wonder if the worst enemy of the environment are such environmentalists themselves!

Nitin later sent me his iconoclastic book *What's Left of the Jungle: a conservation story*, which I have just finished reading. And I must admit, it is among the few books that I have recently encountered which not only provides a sharp picture of the convoluted challenges environmentalists face in the Global South but also helps many like me reflect on our own, often unsatisfactory, past efforts to right the wrongs we have encountered. It documents how the inexorable drivers at work make any textbook solution fail even before they are tried because of the enmeshing of acute poverty and chronic hunger among subsistence dwellers around national parks with the sleazy pressure of market forces, the corruption rife within the ranks of officials tasked with protecting the forests, and the logic of mass electoral politics that protects transgressors from prosecution.

The book can be read at many levels: it is a non-fiction documentation of a conservationist's field diary; the travails of a PhD student's fieldwork studying wild elephant habitat; a story of poverty-stricken villagers battling for survival in forest margin villages against marauding wild animals and even more dangerous corrupt official-

dom in cahoots with timber smugglers; and well-meaning efforts of outsiders to help villagers that sometimes work (expensive medical treatment for one's research assistant) but often don't (modern income generating efforts disconnected from local economic reality).

For Nepalis, it is also the story of the centuries of Nepali migration eastward pushed by village usury or other social ills in the hills and pulled by the prospect of subsistence economy's relief in Assamese jungles. For those who have encountered Lil Bahadur Chhetri's Nepali literary classic *Basain* (settlement), here is a modern English version. Chhetri's novel is about Pudkey Damai forced out of his native village by its Shylock money lender to Assam with his young wife to eke out a livelihood by raising cows. Nitin's book is about his Nepali research assistant Akshu Atri (whom he calls his co-author) whose family was forced out of Sikkim and battles poverty, disease, mental disorder of a brother, love and death of family members, as well as harsh Brahminical social norms that that survive such migration transcending all odds. It is a story that has repeated itself down the ages, in migrations from the hills of Jumla to the jungles of Bardiya and Chitwan, from Lhotshampa expulsions from Bhutan to jungles of Assam and Jhapa, and even from Bajhang to Bangalore.

For all its similarities, the book also brings into sharp relief the contrasting forest management styles of India and Nepal. In India, the forests were nationalized by the British Raj, "owned" by the central government's forest department as the overall landlord, with all those traditional subsistence dwellers in and around it seen as trespassers on its private property. Forests were also seen as something to be "mined" for market-worthy products (primarily construction timber and railway sleepers) that could be extracted for the government's revenue enhancement.

In contrast, although Nepal's forest department has also been very powerful since the time of the Ranas (Nepali Shoguns till 1951 who minted money supplying railway sleepers to the Raj) and unlike other government departments has enjoyed independent judicial and police powers, the fact that independent Nepal was not a colony has meant that its local institutions and cultural practices have survived. This, as India's perceptive water resources secretary the late Ramaswamy Iyer confessed to me, has



allowed the country to introduce and experiment with innovative, people-centric management styles such as community ownership in forestry, electricity, rural drinking water and irrigation as well as women's self-help groups such as *Aama Samuha*. The entrenched rigidity of the colonial forest act makes such institutional innovation near unthinkable within India's entrenched Babudom. In the book, this is only briefly mentioned in a remark by a Nepali villager who had been to Nepal and seen Nepal's community forestry when discussing Joint Forest Management and the difficulties of actually implementing it around Buxa Tiger Reserve by devolving power to the local groups.

This is not to say that political pressures don't exist within Nepali establishment against the country's devolution successes. The forest bureaucracy hates community forestry and is always looking for opportunities (especially when semi-literate MPs become ministers) to wrest power back, as is happening with its purported "scientific forest management" plan that has nothing really "scientific" about it, just more of Dehradun Babudom replication! And the officers and trade unions within Nepal Electricity Authority are forever scheming to make sure the 300-odd community electricity groups functioning across Nepal since 2003 – and who have demonstrated amazing village-level innovations especially by women's groups – are made to fail! And strangely, this innovation, initiated by the King's government, was targeted for roll-back when socialism-espousing Nepali Kangress and Maoist ministers were in power: they shut down the NEA's Community Rural Electrification Department and did away with the 20:80 program (if villagers come up with 20% of the money required for electrification, government would put up 80%). Happily, thanks to grassroots political pressure, such regressive decisions were rescinded subsequently!

That resistance to actual "people's empowerment"

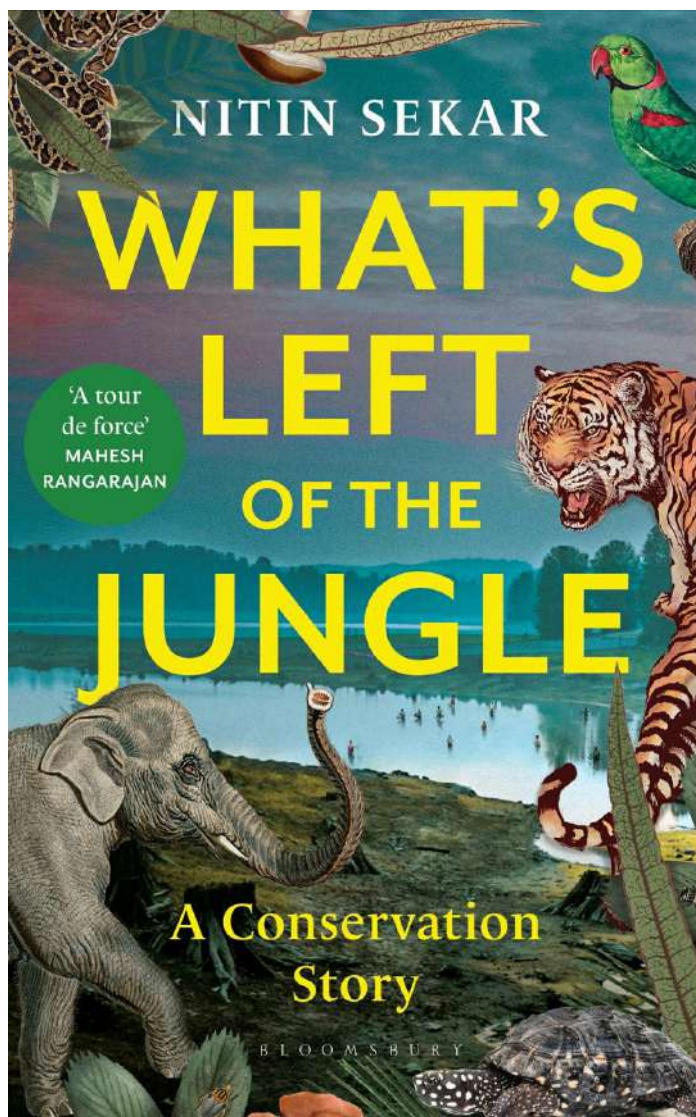
can only be partially explained by Nitin's description of the distortions wrought against nature conservation by mass electoral politics. Why would parties swearing by socialism, Marxism and Maoism be against community electricity or forestry? Explanations would have to be found in the more pluralistic social science called Cultural Theory. The cynical adage that fox hunting Lords and Dukes make the best conservationists because they need to preserve the foxes so they can hunt them has behind it also a *noblesse oblige* aspect to it: hierarchs can only preserve their hierarchy if they maintain the moral upper hand that is the preserve of egalitarian activists. Nepal's national parks and conservation areas were all set up during the Panchayat rule of kings, as were community forests: mass electoral politics is under no pressure to cater to these higher callings.

In October last, King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC, now renamed NTNC or National Trust for Nature Conservation) celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As a former trustee, I had to point out during the ceremonial speeches that its seminal contributions – people-centric nature protection and the idea of community forestry buffer zones around national parks that gave villagers a stake in preserving the forests – were all initiated during absolute and constitutional monarchies. It then attracted luminaries like the British Field Marshall, former Japanese Prime Minister as well

heads of global conservation outfits as trustees and chapter supporters. Today, it is a shadow of its former self, peopled by party hacks with neither the global or national clout nor any innovative ideas.

Enlightened statesmanship for nature conservation is the real endangered species in Nepal, in South Asia and in much of the rest of the world!!

Sekar, N. (2022). *What's Left of the Jungle*. New Delhi: Bloomsbury, India.





Prachanda Sworn In As PM:

# New Tie-ups In Nepal, Concern In India

*For India, Sher Bahadur Deuba in power was the best-case scenario, with Prachanda's ally in the current government, KP Oli, being viewed as pro-China. Here's what is happening in Nepal, and what it can mean for India.*

By Yubaraj Ghimire

**P**ushpa Kamal Dahal “Prachanda” was sworn in as Nepal’s new Prime Minister on Monday after he switched sides to join hands with a bitter foe, the former prime minister Kharga Prasad Oli.

This is Prachanda’s third stint as the head of government in the 14 years since Nepal’s monarchy was abolished. Before joining mainstream politics in 2006, he had led the Maoist revolt in Nepal for over a decade.

Until Sunday, Prachanda was in a pre-election alliance with former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba. This five-party alliance, led by Deuba’s Nepali Congress, was the frontrunner after the November 20 elections, winning the largest number of seats in a fractured mandate. However, Prachanda walked out of the alliance at the last moment, after Deuba turned down his demand for the PM chair.

## Strange bedfellows, new deals

Within hours on December 25, Prachanda and Oli, who have been bitter adversaries, buried the hatchet and drove together from Oli’s residence – through crowds of cheering supporters – to meet the President with a letter of support from 170 members

of Parliament, well ahead of the 138-half way mark.

Their coalition is not just an alliance of two Communist parties – Prachanda’s Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) and Oli’s Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist). A clutch of smaller parties, with at least one being pro-monarchy, are adding to the UML’s 78 seats and the Maoist Centre’s 32.

The other parties in the coalition are the brand new youth-centric Rastriya Swatantra Party, which has no clear political ideology but won an impressive 20 seats; Nagarik Unmukti Party, an outfit led by murder convict Resham Chaudhary; Janamat Party led by C K Raut with its base in Eastern Tarai; and the Janata Samajbadi party.

But the biggest surprise is the support of the pro-monarchy Rastriya Prajatantra Party, which has 14 members. The party has been critical of the US, European Union and India for their ‘active’ involvement in Nepal’s transition to a federal and secular republic, from a unitary Hindu monarchy.

## Unyielding Deuba

The Nepal Congress-led coalition might have succeeded had Deuba agreed to a grand bargain with Prachanda. This would

have meant letting go of the Prime Minister ship. Observers spoke of a deal by which Deuba’s politically inclined wife might have been given a post in government if he took a back seat.

But Deuba’s claim to remain the Prime Minister was based not just on the Nepali Congress emerging as the single largest party with 89 seats. In back-room negotiations, he is also said to have boasted that he enjoys the “support of both Washington and Delhi”.

Indeed, after the results were out, the US and Indian ambassadors met Deuba and Prachanda frequently, in the hope that their alliance would remain intact.

There was criticism of the two ambassadors meeting the leaders, with rivals and critics warning that any act to influence government formation could be seen as ‘subversion of the mandate’, and that their actions might draw China in as well.

## China factor

There has been no Chinese ambassador after the departure earlier this year of Hou Yanqi, Beijing’s most high-profile envoy yet in Kathmandu. Hou was instrumental in stitching up the Communist alliance of 2018

between Oli and Prachanda — which fell through in 2021, as it had four years earlier. The new Chinese ambassador, Chen Song, will arrive in Kathmandu after the new government is installed.

Maoist Centre General secretary Barshaman Pun, who has always favored an alliance between the two Communist parties, returned recently after spending two weeks in China, reportedly for medical treatment, and played a key role in bringing Oli and Prachanda together.

President Bidhya Devi Bhandari, who is close to Oli, supports the coming together of Leftist forces, and was hardly comfortable with the Deuba-Prachanda alliance, is said to have remained in close contact with Chinese diplomats and other senior officials in Beijing all throughout.

### India's interests

For India, Deuba in office was the best-case scenario. Delhi views Oli as pro-China, and the coming together of Communist forces to form the government is a turning back of the clock from its point of view. After the bitterness in ties during Oli's terms in office from 2015-2016 and 2018-2021, India-Nepal relations had

improved after Deuba became PM in 2021.

Still, in an indication of how important this relationship is to India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the first foreign leader to congratulate Prachanda. The Maoist leader has been a beneficiary of India's support since 2005, and in 2016, when he dislodged Oli; there was palpable relief in Delhi.

At present, however, Oli's influence over Prachanda's government will be a factor in



bilateral ties. Moreover, Modi also avoided meeting Prachanda despite his request when he visited Delhi earlier this year. Just two months earlier, Deuba had received a red carpet-welcome.

Among the immediate concerns for Delhi would be the fate of the West Seti hydro-power project, which the Deuba government awarded to India. Oli's UML had opposed the decision.

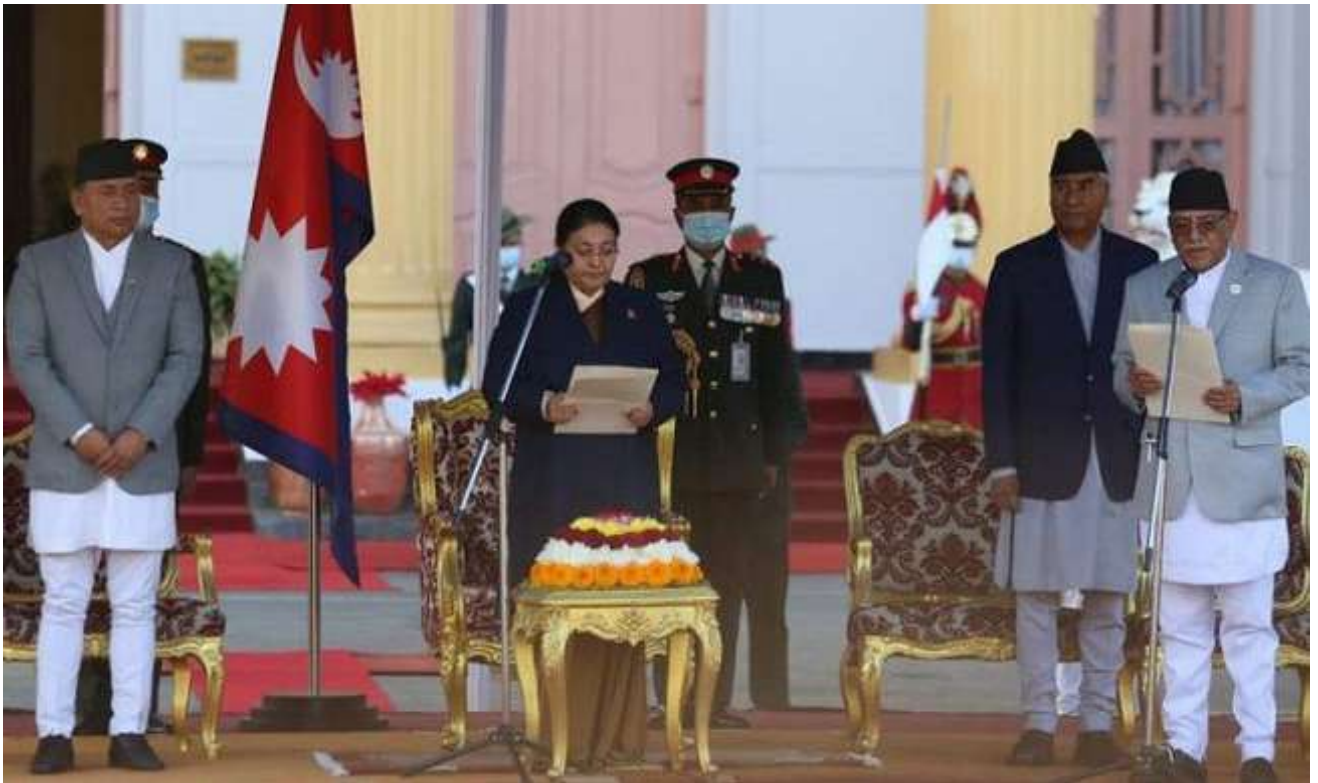
### Unstable coalitions, challenges ahead

Since its transition to a parliamentary democracy in the 1990s and a republic in 2008, Nepal has seen 33 governments in 32 years.

For the new Prachanda-Oli coalition, the formation of the cabinet with a ceiling of 25 will be the first challenge, with all coalition partners and Independent-ents clamoring for positions and portfolios.

With elections for President and Vice President due by mid-March, and for Speaker and Deputy Speaker of Parliament soon, the parties would have to show more accommodation, especially in context of the partisan roles these offices have played over the past few years.

The new government may also face a dilemma over the Deuba government's endorsement of the Millennium Challenge Corporation fund, a \$500-million infra pledge from the US, which the Communist parties suspect has a hidden security agenda.



## PRACHANDA'S THIRD INNINGS Shaking And Shocking

*As his rise in politics, Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal's third inning as a prime minister is also shaking and shocking*

By A CORRESPONDENT

From a rag-tag Maoist terrorist, the CPN-Maoist leader's sudden rise as a leader of Nepal's mainstream politics is always shocking and shaking. His third inning as a prime minister dramatic way has shocked many particularly the leaders of the Nepali Congress.

After being rejected by Nepali Congress to allow him to lead the new government, the Maoist leader joined a new alliance with his arch-rival CPN-UML leader KP Sharma Oli to be a prime minister.

Touted as a revolutionary

republican, Pranchanda joined a coalition that includes monarchist RPP and most anarchists Independent Party led by populist media anchor Rabi Lamichhane.

From his old style of coat and pants, Pushpa Kamal Dahal also agreed to change his national Nepali dress to show his flexibility for power sharing. From revolutionary communist leader, Pranchanda is now the leader of the rightist RPP and anarchist independent.

With this entire new trap; President Bidya Devi Bhandari ad-

ministered the oath of office and secrecy to the Prime Minister as well as eight councils of ministers today. The oath of office and secrecy was taken in a special ceremony held at the President's Office Sheetal Niwas on 26 December, the day of Mao's birth anniversary.

As Pranchanda issued a statement commemorating Mao's birth anniversary, Indian PM Narendra Modi, termed as rightists Hindu, congratulated Pranchanda for his third tenure as

President Bidya Devi Bhandari administered the oath of



Office and Secrecy to Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' as prime minister as per Article 76(2) of the constitution.

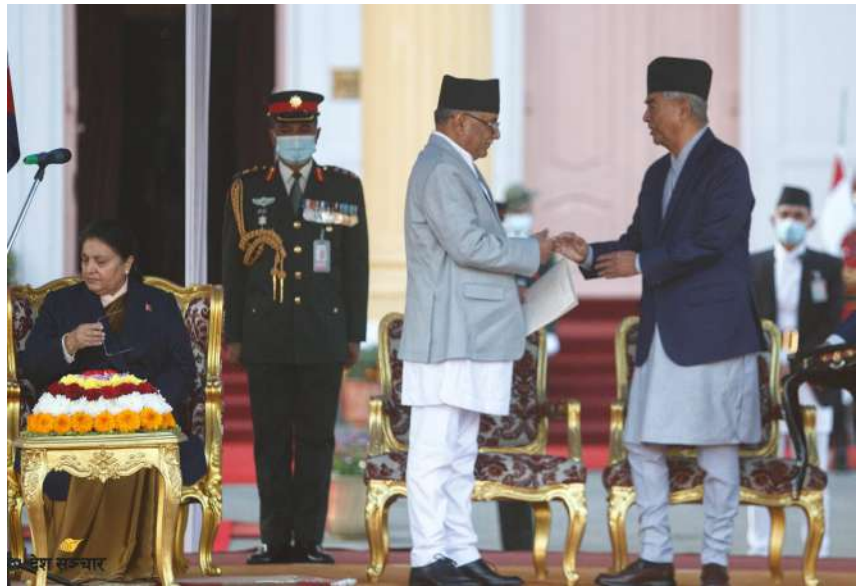
After PM Prachanda, three Deputy Prime ministers and four ministers without portfolios took the oath of office and secrecy.

Bishnu Poudel took an oath of office and secrecy as Deputy of Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Narayan Kaji Shrestha as Deputy of Prime Minister and Minister for Physical Infrastructure and Transport, and Rabi Lamichhane has taken the oath of office as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs.

Likewise, Damodar Bhandari, Jwala Kumari Sah, Rajendra Rai, and Abdul Khan took an oath to office and secrecy without portfolios.

Of the eight, Two ministers including Prime Minister and one deputy Prime Minister are from CPN (Maoist Centre), four ministers including one deputy Prime Minister from CPN (UML), Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister from Rashtriya Swatantra Party and Abdul Khan from Janamat Party.

With the backing of 169 Members of the House of Representatives (HoR), CPN (Maoist



Centre) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' has been appointed the Prime Minister of Nepal for the third time.

President Bidya Devi Bhandari appointed Prachanda as the PM following Article 76 (2) of the Constitution of Nepal on Sunday.

Though the Nepali Congress and CPN (Maoist Centre) and some other parties had forged an electoral alliance, the CPN (Maoist Centre) walked out of the alliance at the last moment and joined hands with CPN (UML) and other political parties for becoming the PM.

Before this, Prachanda served as the country's PM in 2065 BS after the first Constituency Assembly (CA) while he became the PM for the second time with support from the Nepali Congress (NC) in 2073 BS.

For his premiership, Prachanda has got-

ten support from the CPN (UML), Rashtriya Swatantra Party Nepal, Rashtriya Prajatantra Party, Janamat Party, Nagarik Unmukti Party and Janata Samajwadi Party, and three independent Members of the HoR.

Earlier today, a meeting of the top leaders of the CPN (UML), CPN (Maoist Centre), Rashtriya Swatantra Party Nepal, Rashtriya Prajatantra Party, Janamat Party, Nagarik Unmukti Party and Janata Samajwadi Party held at UML Chairman KP Sharma Oli's residence in Balkot had decided to name Prachanda as the new PM.

Born to a family of Mukti Ram and Bhawani at Dhikurpokhari of Kaski district in 2011 BS, the leader obtained his early education at Dhikurpokhari itself. Later, the Dahal family migrated to Chitwan from Kaski.

Prachanda, who married Sita Poudel in 2026 BS, had four children and of them, a daughter and a son passed away some years ago.

Passing SLC from Narayani Bidhya Mandir Secondary School in 2026 BS, he passed I.S.C from Patan Multiple Campus



## COVERSTORY



and obtained Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture from Rampur Agriculture Campus in 2033 BS. PM Prachanda is also an MPA graduate.

Professionally, he taught at Narayani Bidhya Mandir in Shivanagar, Danda Secondary School in Nawalparasi and Bhimodaya Secondary School in Arughat, Gorkha.

For his political journey, he began politics in 2028 BS after getting membership from Pushpalal faction and also formed a Marxist Study Group in 2031 BS by uniting with Ram Bahadur Thapa, Mitra Dawadi, Khem Bhandari and Pushpa Bhurtel.

Prachanda went underground in 2038 BS and that continued till 2063 BS when he joined the peaceful politics.

He was the party's whole-timer since 2035 BS and was elected the Chitwan district committee member of the party.

In 2038 BS, he was elected the party's regional bureau member and general secretary of All Nepal youth Association and was elected the Chairman of the youth association in 2040 BS.

Prachanda was elected the central committee member of CPN

(Mashal) in 2041 BS from the party's fifth general convention and party's politburo member in 2042 BS, general secretary in 2046 BS and he became the general secretary of CPN (Ekata Kendra) in 2048 BS.

But the party was renamed as the CPN (Maoist) in 2051 BS and he became the party's powerful general secretary and led the people's war in 2052 BS.

In 2057 BS, he was elected the party's Chairman from the Second Conference. Since then, he is the party's chairman continuously.

Likewise, he was named the People's Liberation Army (PLA)'s supreme commander in 2058 BS.

The PM has penned several articles, books and other creations as well.

In the first CA, he was elected from Kathmandu-10 and Rolpa-2, in the next CA from Siraha-5 while in the general elections taken place in 2074 BS, Dahal was elected from Chitwan-3 as a candidate of the left alliance.

In the recently-held general elections, he was elected from Gorkha-2 by getting 26,109 votes.

As the five-party alliance failed to forge a consensus on the leadership of the new government, Prachanda reached the helm of the power today itself by garnering support chiefly from the CPN (UML) and several other parties and three independent MPs.

Prime Minister and CPN (Maoist Centre) Chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' and CPN (UML) Chair KP Sharma Oli held a meeting today.





## COVID-19 NEW VARIANT

# Don't Panick

## *Experts argue that Omicron BF.7 Not That Worrisome*

By A CORRESPONDENT

With the evolution of Covid virus, the symptoms related to the infection have also changed significantly. The symptoms like loss of taste and smell and shortness of breath, which was once classic indications of COVID are no longer that common. Meanwhile, people today regularly complain of sore throat, sneezing and gut-related sickness when they contract the infection.

Amid the sudden surge in cases in China and a few cases of Omicron BF.7 (the variant behind China's infection surge), people are worried about the symptoms that might indicate that they have COVID. Here are COVID symptoms that are currently considered common in India.

### **What are the most common symptoms now?**

Currently, Omicron is the most dominant variant across the world so we should be aware of the symptoms this strain can cause.

Here are the top most reported symptoms:

- sore throat
- runny nose
- blocked nose
- sneezing
- cough without phlegm
- headache

- cough with phlegm
- hoarse voice
- muscle aches and pains
- an altered sense of smell

The list has been collated by ZOE Healthy Study, which has keenly observed the symptoms of COVID from the initial phase and has been updating its list since then.

### **Omicron BF.7 not that worrisome**

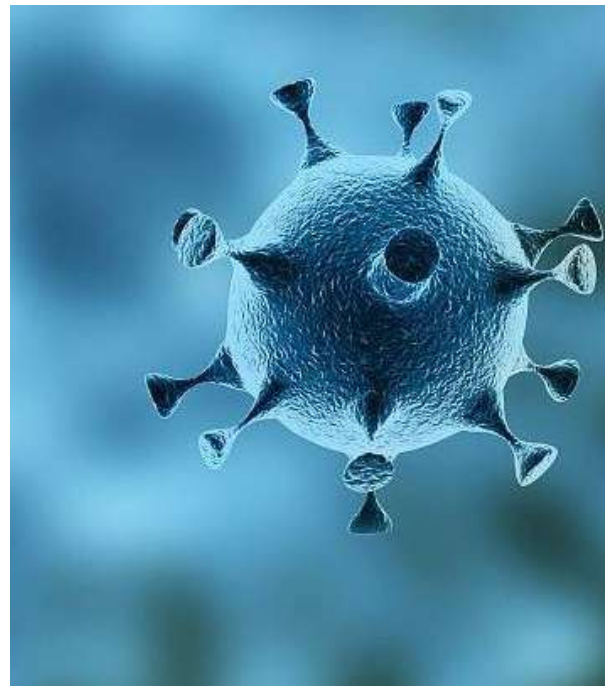
Last week, experts opined that India need not worry too much about its severity on the population.

"This is a sub-variant of Omicron. Main features will be like Omicron except some small changes, there is no big difference. Most of us have gone through the Omicron wave. So, we don't have to worry about it. Essentially, it is the same virus," he said.

China is experiencing a surge in infections due to its "zero-Covid policy", under which authorities block apart-

ment buildings or even cordon off a neighbourhood once a resident tests positive, causing great inconvenience to the people, the scientist said.

As per available reports, nearly 5.37 lakhs new cases have been reported in last 24 hours from major countries like USA, Japan, South as per the



available reports, nearly 5.37 lakhs new cases have been reported in last 24 hours from major countries like USA, Japan, South Korea, France and Brazi

# High Places



BY: HEMANG DIXIT

After President's call to form a government, neither alliance was able to attain a majority and a situation of 'What to do' resulted? Finally following the breakdown of the existing *Gathbandan* a new government was formed with friends or cronies in high places. It seems the *Bahun* / *Chetris* are still running the show in the major parties. Is it simply 'Old wine in New Bottles'? Is the new coalition a re-alignment of broken down groups or an *Aatiuttam Gathbandan*? Only time will tell.

As Nepal was introduced to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century world by the then Western Germany, let me state some facts about political culture there. It was with the help of Willy Brandt, then West Germany's Chancellor that BP Koirala's Nepali Congress became a member of Socialist International, stepped onto the world stage and earned its political feathers. A concise summary of a united Germany is worthwhile to understand the functioning of national politics there.

After the reunification of Germany in Dec. 1990, a ruling coalition of the CDU/CSU and the FDP was formed in the national interest, to administer the country with Helmut Kohl as Chancellor. In 1998 this coalition lost the election and subsequently Gerhard Schröder of the FDP, an opposition party but a constituent of the ruling coalition became the new Chancellor. In the 2005 Federal elections, the CDU/CSU and the FDP won the same number of seats and could not form a government. A grand coalition was formed with Angela Merkel as Chancellor and equal participants from the two groups from 2005-09. A grand coalition

of the two large groups CDU/CSU and FDP was again formed for Merkel's third term 2013-18. In 2018-21 Angela Merkel formed yet again a grand coalition with Olaf Scholz's SPD. After 2021 election Scholz came to power with a coalition of his own. One notes too that Germany has a proportional representation system both at the federal and state levels.

Another country to look at is the Republic of Lebanon which has a

**A common thought amongst the lay public is that with the experience of former NC and UML incumbents is that political individuals should not be in these two high posts.**

long chequered history of many centuries. It has an interesting governance set-up. The National Pact of 1943, though unwritten, states that its President must be a Maronite Christian, the Speaker of Parliament a Shia Muslim, its Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim, the Deputy

Speaker of Parliament and the Deputy Prime Minister must be Greek Orthodox. Such a system gives representation to all sections of society.

Political events are influenced by what we see in and around us. One has only to look at what is taking place in India. The President of India is the Head of State and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces but there are no specific requirements for this. The President is elected by the Electoral College of the country which consists of the National Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members plus other members of the Vidhan Sabha of the various state assemblies. Each category member carries a differing number of votes as per his/her status. Since India was proclaimed a Republic in 1950 of the fifteen presidents who have been chosen so far, eight were from the Indian National Congress, two were from the Bharatiya Janata



Party, four were Independents and one from Janata Party. Looking at it from a gender perspective, there have been thirteen men and two women. Over all there have been 3 Muslims, 1 Sikh and 3 from Schedule castes. The first president Rajendra Prasad was the only one who served two terms. The current president is Droupadi Murmu who is from a tribal community.

In Nepal it was customary after 1950 for the King to appoint a PM and a cabinet of ministers who represented different ethnic groups. However it has been seen during monarchical times and even later that certain sections of the community seemed always to have the upper hand. Though the cabinet did have some non-Brahmin or non-Chettri members it was mainly run by these two groups.

Bahun /Chettris have become PMs of the country again and again, some even five times! We should copy the political culture of the UK, where the PM or the opposition leader of any party resigns if s/he loses an election!

Following the declaring of the Republic the Maoists suggested the division of the country on an ethnic basis and at one stage the names suggested for the various provinces exemplified this. A glaring result of this is that even after five years Pradesh 1 was not able to give a name to it.

Current situation, after the passing of our constitution is that:

Our first President Dr. Ram Baran Yadav, like Lord Krishna was a Madeshi kshetriya and served for seven years. His Vice President, a Madhesi Brahmin Permananda Jha, was a retired lawyer who had taken his oath of office in Hindi as he stated that he could not speak Nepali! For some reason a bomb was planted at his residence, but thankfully only the compound wall suffered minor damage.

Our second President is a female Brahmin Bidhya Devi Bhandari nee kshetri Pandey and her Vice President is Nanda Bahadur (Kishor) Pun, of indigenous ethnicity, both of whom are serving their second terms.

There are currently discussions in the press as to who the next president should be. Major political parties all have an aged political leader in mind. A common thought amongst the lay public is that with the experience of former NC and UML incumbents is that political individuals should not be in these two high posts. Politicians naturally think otherwise! A current thinking is that someone with a legal background should fill this post and 'No Not a Politician Again'! Demands are for a legal oriented lady or someone who is from either a Newar, Janjati or Dalit community. The Electoral College has 884 members - 275 + 59 of the Federal set-up and 550 of the Pradesh Assemblies with

**The President is elected by the Electoral College of the country which consists of the National Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members plus other members of the Vidhan Sabha of the various state assemblies.**

79 votes for each Federal seat and 48 for each Provincial one. One must get 50% of vote and a run-off is arranged between the first two if this does not occur.

No Constitution is perfect and needs to be revised periodically

to changing times to cater for citizenship rights. Whether the Pradesh set-up, put on our shoulder by our Western well-wishers is something we can afford or not is a glaring question. Whether the existing election set-up with the FPTP and the Comprehensive Proportional Representation are compatible or not is another question. Queries regarding other posts e.g. PM and House Speakers are whether there should be specific qualifications for these too?

In Western societies there are 'Old wives tales', in Nepal it is 'Buda Netako Katha' with the country going down the drain. May Lord Pashupatinath guide us.

*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*

## Dalit Commission Is Working With Local Govt: DEVRAJ BISHWOKARMA

Having been involved in Dalit movement, **DEVRAJ BISHWOKARMA**, chairperson of National Dalit Commission, has developed his own way of working for the uplift of Dalits and ending all kinds of discrimination against them. Chairperson Bishwokarma, a young and dynamic head of the commission, talked to **KESHAB POUDEL** on various activities and role of National Dalit Commission. Excerpts:

### **How do you view the role of National Dalit Commission in the context of federalism in Nepal?**

National Dalit Commission is in a very initial stage of implementation of federalism in Nepal. We have collaborative relations with local and provincial levels but we are yet to have a legal foundation. We are planning to support local level governments to draft the laws, regulations and guidelines related to Dalits. We have been exploring resources for this.

### **What is the commission's mandate?**

Our commission, which was established by Part 27 of the Constitution, has been granted a particular mandate to protect and promote the Dalit rights guaranteed by the Constitution and ensuring social justice for them.

The legal mandate provided to our commission is broad enough to make the government accountable towards fulfilling the promises in the Constitution of Nepal towards marginalized and minority groups, and ending their historical marginalization and discrimination.

### **How are the mandates implemented?**

The mandates of the commissions are broad and encompass the provision of recommendations to government and other concerned bodies, conducting research, formulation of policies and programs, program implementation, individual complaint handling, and coordination and liaison with public entities.

### **What is your constitutional authority?**

Article 57 of Constitution of Nepal gives us authority to establish provincial level offices. However, the federal government is yet to allocate the budget and human resources. We have been asking the government to make all necessary arrangements but the government is yet to respond to it positively.

### **What about the commission's role at provincial and local levels?**

Despite constraints, the Commission has been working with provincial level and local government in close collaboration and coordination on Dalit's agenda and issue. We are in consultations with provincial and local governments to address the problems related to Dalits. We are planning to hold series of programs for the elected local leaders regarding Dalit empowerment. During such meetings we will also provide training for institution building and drafting the laws. We will help and collaborate with local level for this.

### **How are you collaborating with federal gov-**

### **ernment?**

If the federal government takes our demands to establish provincial level officers positively, it will solve the problems. If not, the Commission will support and collaborate with provincial government to formulate laws and institutions to empower Dalit. We are also taking necessary initiatives for this. Since provinces have enough resources, they can also help us.

### **What are future strategies?**

We are now working to draft a 10-year strategic plan. For this, we are in consultations with Dalit leaders, activists and people outside Dalit movement. As per the needs, we are also making five years working plan.

### **What other activities are being done by the Commission?**

We are also working in other areas. Dalit's problems are also national problems and this will affect country's entire progress. Solving the problems of Dalit will also be solving the national problems. To solve the national problem, there is a need to launch a national campaign. The Commission has been demanding launch of such programs at the national level. We have been discussing this issue with federal government. The sooner the federal government implements the programs and policies suggested by the commission, the better. It will end the problems in extreme exploitation and discrimination, that is, exclusion against Dalit Community.

### **Despite so many changes, there still exist rampant exclusion and discrimination against Dalit. What do you suggest to end this?**

There is the need to launch a national campaign through the joint collaboration between Dalits and non-Dalits. This kind of broader campaign can play an important role to end the discrimination and exclusion against Dalits. The current on-going programs implemented by the federal, provincial and local level governments are just partial. For full circle programs, there is the need to have bigger campaigns as proposed by the commission. Uplifting the Dalit requires collaborative and joint programs between Dalit and non-Dalit.

### **How do you assess the ongoing Dalit empowerment program?**

The current empowerment program is just a partial one. Inter-racial, cultural programs require ending the existing discrimination against Dalit. The commission appeals to all concerned stakeholders to come and



join in the launch of a national level broader campaign. According to Economist, Nepal has been losing up to 25-30 percent economic worth due to exclusion and discrimination against Dalits. This is not only the loss of Dalit but also the loss of the country. For this not only Dalit commission, all need to work together. We are now working to make a plan. Due to lack of enough resources, the commission has been unable to work in the desired speed.

**What is the state of Mdhesi Dalit?**

The state of Madhesi Dalit is very critical. Dalits living in Madsheh, Karnali and Sudurpaschim provinces have been facing severe problems related to exclusion and discrimination. They have also been facing violent attack from upper castes. Despite constitutional and legal provisions, the problems are yet to be solved. The issue of untouchability is rampant in those areas as Dalit communities have been living there in humiliation.

**How does distribution of citizenship and land-ownership certificates affect the state of Madhesi Dalit?**

It is unfortunate that over 75 percent of children born of Madhesi Dalit do not have birth registration certificates and an overwhelming number of them don't have citizenship certificates. As citizenship is required to get services provided by the state and birth certificate for school registration, these Dalit are excluded from state's programs. Despite having lived in Madhesh for centuries, they are unable to get citizenship. They are excluded from mainstream national policies due to lack of services and other facilities provided by state.

**What has the Commission been doing about this?**

We have been continually working to solve the problems of Madhesi Dalit. The commission has been raising this issue with the federal, provincial and local level governments. Similarly, the literacy of Dalit's children in Karnali is lowest, only a few percentages of children reach up to class 10. This is the same in Sudurpaschim. Our constitutional and legal role is advocacy so we have



been doing our best to raise these issues. It is the role of the government to implement and execute it. We have been raising the issues of Madhesh Pradesh, Karnali and Sudurpaschim.

**How have members of parliament responded to your annual report at the Women and Social Committee of House of Representatives?**

In my three years of tenure, it was the second time I was allowed to respond on our report at the Women and Social Committee of House of Representatives. The committee members asked various questions on our report and recommended federal government and concerned ministry to implement the suggestions given by us. We discussed our agenda before the sovereign parliament where we are accountable for our duty. It was quite good, we had intense discussions of about two hours.

Women and Social Committee, House of Representatives has directed the National Women Commission (NWC) to deliver its duties more effectively to serve the needs of violence survivors. The Committee's President Niru Devi Pal instructed us to focus on the promotion of overall interests of Dalit and deliver its duties effectively. The committee also directed to ensure effective collaboration and take integrated efforts to meet its objectives and goal of commission.

**What about discussions at provincial and local levels?**

Although we also handed over our report to heads of provinces, the provincial legislature is yet to discuss our report. There is no such provision at the local level but we

## INTERVIEW

are also sending our report before all Palikas. All commissions tabled their report to provincial parliament, they don't discuss it. Media should play an important role to make this happen at the provincial level.

**There are laws, regulations, and directives to protect the Dalits. However, the incident of discrimination and exclusion is still rampant. How are Palikas responding to the situation?**

Each ward of Palikas has a woman Dalit member, this provision has helped to increase the participation of Dalit. So far as their role to protect the other Dalits is concerned, it is disappointing. They themselves have been facing exclusion and discrimination at the Palika level. This is the reason the commission is taking initiative to call a nationwide conference of Palikas to inform them about the issues of Dalit exclusion and encourage Palikas to launch empowerment programs. Local levels are not taking seriously the complaints filed by Dalits. Instead of taking violence against Dalit case at policy level, leaders of local level tried to settle the disputes. In this scenario, many Dalits were denied justice. This is a painful situation.

**How do you see the state of Dalit now?**

I am happy to say that violence and discrimination against the Dalit have declined slightly due to wide media reporting. Thanks to attention given by media, many events are coming to public. In the past, many issues related to discrimination, violence and exclusion used to be settled informally by pressing Dalits to accept the compromising formula. Now, the issues are more formalized and are reaching the court. This is a major difference. The victims are receiving due compensation.

**How is the situation at the formal level?**

The situation is not encouraging at the formal level. For example, out of 1100 cases filed in the police, the court entertained only 200 cases. Out of them only two persons were punished. The volume of punishment is very nominal. However, we have to accept the fact that something is changing in formal sector as well. It used to be between victims and oppressor. Now, such cases are made public. This is not enough, however, we need to take it in a positive note that violence against Dalits and discriminations are appearing as major headlines. People are finding relief.

**This means the state is now Dalit friendly?**

Despite some changes, Nepal's state system is

not Dalit friendly. For generations, Dalits have been facing the discrimination. The state is not sensitive towards Dalits. If we all stakeholders take initiative, we can change the situation.

**What is the annual budget?**

Our budget is very nominal. The government has been giving us budget for salary and just a nominal amount to launch the programs. Due to budgetary constraints, the commission is unable to implement the program as it needs.

**Do you conduct the programs in collaboration with NGOs and other civil society organizations?**

We have been collaborating with various civil society organizations and holding various programs. They invite us and we present our case in their programs. We have planned to go ahead with them.

**Is there any support from bilateral agencies?**

We have been talking with them regarding the possible collaboration to launch the programs in welfare and uplift of Dalits. However, we are still in initial phase. Many development partners are also positive for our programs. We are now

developing the projects.

**How is the commission working with local level governments?**

We have a formal legal process to work with level governments. We officially inform local level leaders about our agenda of the visits. After discussion, we make some collaboration to implement and launch the programs. As each Palika consists of numbers of Women Dalit members, we use this mechanism to collaborate at the local level governments.

**How do you collaborate with provincial governments?**

Unlike local level governments, there is no such mechanism at the provincial levels. Despite the existence of issues of exclusion and discrimination at provincial level, only Madhesh Pradesh has established Dalit Development Committee to empower the Dalits living in Madhesh. However, the committee is yet to work satisfactorily. Although the committee has enough budget, it does not have employees. It is not functioning effectively. Other six provinces are needed to learn from the experiences of Madhesh provinces. So far as the programs are concerned, we don't have any knowledge that any other province has implemented programs.



# Voices For Peace In Time Of The Danger Of Nuclear War



BY: KATAK MALLA

The world is on the verge of a Third World War. The former US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger believes that the US is on the brink of war with Russia and China. Kissinger is a war strategist and controversial Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, who during summer 2022 was advocating that Ukraine should initiate negotiations with Russia even at the cost of ceding territories captured by the Russians. Kissinger has recently said that Russia has already lost the war. And, yet he is suggesting to tackle Putin diligently, including the possible use of nuclear weapons. John Mearsheimer, who is offensive realist, is alarming the danger of nuclear war.

In reality, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has turned into direct war between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Russia. This is a war between two nuclear powers, the US and Russia, holding the most destructive weapons in the world. At the same time, China continues its deadly arm exercises around Taiwan. North and South Korea are firing missiles across the sea border, which is another US war in the Korean Peninsula. Even Iran is being dragged into the European war for allegedly selling drones to Russia.

In view of the war in Europe and the developing scenario of US-China war in Asia, three crucially interrelated issues, as I presume, arise for consideration by international jurists, statesman and strategic thinkers and they are: Is it reasonable to risk dangers of a Third World War in favor of the right to self-defense of Taiwan and Ukraine (and if yes, is the world community ready for that)? Is the 'manufacturing of consent' for war by the world press media legally and ethically reasonable? Why are Nobel Peace Prize laureates not speaking up for peace?

Prior to proceeding further it seems logical to talk about rules of 'just war', 'offensive' and 'defensive' acts of war. When jurists talk about 'just war', self-defense is a natural right of states which is acknowledged by the UN Charter. Except for self-defense, any foreign intervention, invasion and/or other forms of war are prohibited by the UN Charter. When viewed from these ba-

sic norms of international law, the Russian invasion of Ukraine is illegal as was the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, which was wedged on pretension that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. Under the UN Charter, the five permanent members of the Security Council, UK, US, China, France and Russia, are responsible for maintaining international peace and security. In reality, the US and Russia have been disturbing international peace and security constantly. Overall, the growing global insecurity are causes and consequences of Security Council failures.

Russia is blatantly aggressive towards Ukraine, although Russia calls it a defensive war because of Ukraine being militarily supported by NATO member states. If and when China takes military action to unify Taiwan into the mainland, and whatever response the US will take to support Taiwan, it will be difficult to determine acts being offensive or defensive. Many experts compare the China-Taiwan and Russia-Ukraine situations with the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. The only difference between then and now is that now the crisis is at the doorsteps of Russia and China. Russian missiles then in Cuba were at the US doorstep.

## Risking nuclear war

A clear and convincing reply to the first question is not easy to ascertain. Utilitarianist and realist strategists believe that 'the end justifies the means', also known as Machiavellian tactics which are equivalent to 'Kautilya Niti'. In other words, it is about the security of the maximum number of people at the sacrifice of a few others. This also means if one state has the right to self-defense with nuclear weapons so has others, although all states are not in possession of such. The nuclear war, however, is such an extreme scenario where there is no guarantee of survival for anyone. Machiavellian tactics or 'Kautilya Niti', are not and should not be considered normal conduct of international relations.

War of mass destruction must be avoided by any means. Jeffrey Sachs made a telling comment at the



## VIEWPOINT

Athens Democracy Forum 'Aristotle-Confucius Dialogue' on 28 September 2022. Sachs said that Ukraine's President Zelensky would be the most culpable, abstaining from talks, if nuclear war were to occur. Sachs also suggested that the world's major powers should talk instead of pointing fingers at others or demeaning opponents. The war, as Sachs suggests, should not be seen as a battle between democracy and authoritarianism. And, the US should not try to prove its model superior to another. I understand Sachs' view as the transplantation of democracy by foreign forces has proved to be unsustainable. Sachs bluntly concludes that the current war in Ukraine was provoked by NATO by expanding itself into Russia's borders.

With regard to the Taiwan situation, Kevin Rudd ('The Avoidable War', 2022) writes, 'a war between China and the US would be deadly and destructive'. China and the US geopolitical crisis is still avoidable, says Rudd, suggesting that both countries must find 'a way to co-exist without betraying their core interests through strategic competition'.

### Manufacturing of consent

As to the second question, Edward Harman and Noam Chomsky's 'Manufacturing consent' has become a reality creating consent for wars. With a few honorable exceptions most of the Western media are legitimizing the wars. Manufacturing of consent for war is illegal as well as immoral and inhumane. The UN General Assembly, at its one hundred and eighth Plenary Session (November 3, 1947), adopted a resolution requiring Member States to take action against propaganda for war and incitement to war. Prohibition of propaganda for war is a key provision outlined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It is not an unreasonable restriction on the right to freedom of expression. Both sides of the Russia-Ukraine war are promoting their own facts and myths. As we know, truth is the first casualty of any war.

### Silence of Nobel Peace Prize laureates

Finally, why are the world's Nobel Peace Prize laureates not speaking up for peace? 'The 2022 Peace Prize is awarded to human rights advocate Ales Bialiatski from Belarus, the Russian human rights organization Memorial and the Ukrainian human rights organization Center for Civil Liberties'. But these Nobel laureates are keeping silent concerning the war in Europe. China's Liu Xiaobo was awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize. The Dalai Lama was awarded the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize.

No authoritative comment has come to the public from these Nobel laureates. The Dalai Lama is known as the man of peace and his advocacy for peace in Asia is more needed now than ever.

It should be acknowledged that the Nobel Peace Prize itself has not been free from controversy. Accusations include 'Nobel Peace Prize is politically motivated, premature, or guided by an incorrect definition of what constitutes peace.' Mahatma Gandhi was never awarded the prize. Jean-Paul Sartre refused to accept the 1964 literary prize. George Bernard Shaw, who accepted the 1925 Nobel Prize in literature, but refused to accept prize money, tells the truth (in 'The Man of Destiny') about preaching peace in disguise for war, i.e., 'English man, as the great champion of national freedom conquers and

annexes half the world and calls it colonization. When he wants a new market for his Manchester goods, he sends a missionary to preach peace'.

When the Nobel Prize was established Norway and Sweden were one country. As Alfred Nobel wished, the 'Peace Prize' is awarded in Norway and the other prizes in Sweden. Norway has been a member of NATO since 1949. Sweden has recently

applied for NATO membership. NATO was created in opposition to the Soviet-backed Warsaw Pact. NATO continued even when Warsaw Pact, along with the Soviet Union, dissolved in 1991. The ghost of the Warsaw military pact seems to be haunting Russia and Europe.

The answers to the three questions may be summarized as follows. The most powerful countries in the world are run by elected or unelected autocrats. The world is under threat of nuclear weapons, but nuclear war must be avoided at all costs. Media must stop building consensus for war, rather creating environment for peace and for citizens being able to question the power. Today Bertrand Russell and Jean-Paul Sartre are no longer speaking for peace and disarmament. Noam Chomsky has been calling for peace since the start of the Russia-Ukraine war. Jeffrey Sachs and Kevin Rudd are imparting useful knowledge. The voice of peace is becoming more important than ever.

*Dr. Malla is a Senior Fellow at the Stockholm Centre for International Law and Justice, Stockholm University.*

## Clean Cooking Forum 2022 Ghana

## Nepal's Learning

*With its several policy-level initiatives including announcements of programs and policies, Nepal is already in the forefront of clean cooking campaigns around the globe. Organized by the Clean Cooking Alliance (CCA) and co-hosted by the Government of Ghana the Clean Cooking Forum 2022, which was held from October 11-13 in Accra, Ghana, provides Nepal an opportunity to learn new emerging technologies and policies and financing issue including linking carbon trade with clean cooking*

By A CORRESPONDENT

As the countdown for 2030 has already started, it is more urgent than ever to mobilize the necessary funding, partnerships, and policies to achieve clean cooking for all and accelerate progress toward global climate and development goals for a country like Nepal.

Despite announcing programs by all three tiers of government to accelerate clean cooking, the federal government in Nepal is desperately looking the options to visualize clean cooking as a reality to reduce its dependence on imported LPG and dirty biomass fuels to save the life of thousands of rural women.

Participated by a high-level delegation led by a member of the National Planning Commission Prof. Dr. Surendra Labh Karna consisting of a government official, the private sector and NGOs, the recently concluded Clean Cooking Forum 2022 came as a boon to Nepal. The forum convened global leaders to pave the way for much-needed action to materialize clean cooking by 2030.

The participants were diverse and wide. Policymakers, entrepre-

neurs, investors, donors, and other key partners joined together to help bring clean cooking to the billions who live without it. For the Nepalese delegation, it was an opportunity to learn.

"It was really a big opportunity for a country like Nepal. The Nepalese delegation learned a lot in building up the contract to promote electric cooking in Nepal. One of the main learning from the conference is the idea of linking carbon trade and clean cooking. This will pave the way to generate the resources need to provide subsidies to the poor and vulnerable population," said Mohan Das Manandhar, Executive Director of Niti Foundation, a policy-related NGO, who participated in the conference as a member of the Nepali delegation. "Undoubtedly, Nepal is ahead in clean cooking. It is very interesting to note that Nepal has the largest number of biogas plants on the entire African continent. In Africa, they are yet to reach 100,000. However, Nepal already has over 600,000 plants.

With the recent energy crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Nepal is now in the energy

transition shifting its overwhelming reliance from fossil fuels to clean energy. After the policy announcement from the federal government, the provincial and local level government has already announced the policy and budget to minimize the use of LPG promoting the electricity, bio-gas.

Manandhar said that along with electric cooking, bio-gas is also very popular in the world for clean cooking. Emerging new technology has made bio-gas more viable to replace traditional energy systems.

"Although we are yet to use the new technology, Nepal is far ahead in the use of biogas in cooking. Despite making efforts, electric cooking is still early stages all over the world. However, Nepal is quite in a good position. Certain countries are pushing electric cooking to replace LPG and traditional fuel. With surplus electricity, Nepal also can follow the such idea. For this, there is also a need for quality stoves and technology. This was what we learned during the conference. With the availability of resources through carbon trade, electric cooking or clean cooking has a lot of advantag-



es to replace LPG and dirty traditional cooking energy.”

#### Global Conference

Over 700 in-person attendees from over 60 countries to the global Clean Cooking Forum, The Clean Cooking Alliance (CCA) and the Government of Ghana had made every effort to make it valuable.

According to the organizer, the landmark event, also watched by 2,500+ virtual attendees, showcased the need – as well as the path forward – for mobilizing the necessary investment, innovations, partnerships, and policies to achieve clean cooking for all and accelerate progress toward global climate and development goals.

Given the current trend, it will be impossible to meet global climate goals, achieve a just clean energy transition, protect the environment, achieve gender equality and provide a future for the next generation, without changing the way people cook.

For the Nepali delegation, the forum was highly valuable in terms of the policy change and learning implementation framework. “The Clean Cooking Forum was an opportunity to showcase the issue of clean cooking and inspire stakeholders around the world, to take more action towards a

just and inclusive clean energy transition,” said Professor Dr. Karna member of NPC.

“Along with discussions and presentation, the seminar also included an Innovation Expo, showcasing 40 organizations highlighting the latest developments in clean cooking technologies and business models, including many from Ghana; More than 150 business-to-business networking meetings.” Discussions on financing and investment, technology and business innovation, climate funding and results-based financing, national policymaking for market growth, youth, and women’s empowerment were highly valuable as well.

At a time when Nepal is facing a serious crisis of balance of payment due to imports of LPG, Clean cooking is a significant opportunity for the advanced economies to show their willingness to support the developing world in the direction of a clean and secure energy transition. Experts argue that today’s energy crisis can and should be a turning point in the global effort to meet this basic energy need for each and every person.”

As clean cooking is directly related to making better health of

women with over 25000 Nepalese women die annually and large numbers of women and children are suffering from air pollution-related diseases, the discussion held in the forum helps Nepal as well.

“In the commitments and announcements made at the Clean Cooking Forum, it’s clear you agree that the time is now,” said Dymphna van der Lans, CEO of the Clean Cooking Alliance. “Let’s continue this energy, continue this push toward collaborative, systemic approaches that mobilize commitment and finance, and accelerate progress at the pace and scale the challenge requires.”

“Game-changing innovations can dramatically contribute to scaling the sector and bring us closer to universal access to clean cooking solutions. These talks featured innovators who discussed how their products, services, or approaches have the potential to address key challenges in the sector.

For a country like Nepal, biomass remains the mainstay of cooking for households and an institution in rural settings where consumers have few viable alternatives and much of the biomass cooking that occurs in rural Nepal is neither clean nor efficient.



“The workshop also discussed the crucial place of biomass tools and fuel in the clean cooking sector and the evolving business models that are driving the adoption of clean biomass solutions. Speakers from some of the leading organizations in the segment unpacked key issues such as: why the segment has historically not attracted large investment, the role of innovation in driving scale and impact, what is missing to reach scalable biomass fuel distribution models, and the opportunities and challenges of carbon finance in the ecosystem,” said Karuna Bajracharya,” said Karuna Bajracharya, Country Manager of Clean Cooking Alliance for Nepal.



“One of the important parts of the forum was that changing the way people cook was also acknowledged in the forum. This session discussed the complexity of the global food crisis, explore the interconnections between clean cooking and efforts toward a sustainable food system, and share lessons from holistic regenerative agriculture approaches and institutional cooking efforts.

Experts pointed out thriving market systems are needed to achieve universal access to clean cooking and national governments have an indispensable role to play in supporting innovation, attracting private invest-

ment, and mobilizing the international resources required to ensure energy transitions are just and equitable for both people and the planet.

In Nepal, the federal government is facing many challenges that prevent them from implementing ambitious and sustainable clean cooking transitions. As a result, clean cooking mandates are not elevated, monitored, and optimized as effectively.

In the session on the role of governments, many interesting points

were raised.

“This session highlighted the catalytic potential of strong government leadership in delivering robust clean cooking ambitions. To avoid crisis, national governments require the support of the ecosystem to help set and deliver ambitious, locally-owned agendas. The Clean Cooking Delivery Units Network seeks to do just this by investing in local leaders, elevating their capacity, providing tailored funding and technical support, and facilitating connections to resources and peers.

**Scaling Modern Power Infrastructure**

Electric cooking is an essential part of the solution to deliver modern power infrastructure and access to energy. To maximize this potential, clean cooking needs to be integrated into national energy planning; bringing together stakeholders to ensure aligned policies and tariffs, appropriate household energy infrastructure and accessible products.

“Using inspiring global examples, speakers highlighted the opportunities to scale electrification and electric cooking. They covered the policies they have established, the tools they have used to model supply- and demand-side electric cooking scenarios and the steps they have taken to reach stakeholders and promote a supportive enabling environment for electric cooking.

**Art and Science of Clean Cooking Policy Innovation**

The implementation of ambitious, locally owned clean cooking agendas will ultimately require the development of effective policies and strategies that put these ambitions into action by supporting and incentivizing clean cooking innovation and investment.

To be successful, national governments must incorporate high-quality data and technical expertise, ensure that policy and strategy development processes are inclusive of both public and private sector

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stakeholders and have buy-in at national and sub-national levels. While each country's context is unique, there is much that can be learned from the successful development of innovative policies and strategies across contexts.

### **Growing People, Growing Businesses**

Achieving universal access to clean cooking requires enabling policies, increased financing, and innovative business models. But there is another necessary factor that is often overlooked: whether we have the skilled workforce to deliver. Despite the growing demand for clean cooking appliances and fuels, there is a shortage of talent to design, manufacture, distribute, and maintain the solutions as well as drive innovations on policy and financing. Scaling the clean cooking sector is a massive economic opportunity, with the potential to create millions of decent jobs across its diverse value chains, including in remote communities that need eco-

nomic activity the most, and for women and youth who are most affected by the lack of clean cooking access.

### **House Hold Air Pollution**

Emerging Evidence on the Health Impacts of Household Air Pollution suggests that household Air Pollution is even more harmful than people thought.

The relationship between household air pollution and illnesses like pneumonia and heart disease has been well documented. But emerging evidence suggests that the health impacts of household air pollution reach

even further, contributing to negative birth outcomes, poor cognition, mental health disorders, and exacerbating COVID-19. New estimates from the World Health Organization show that exposure to household air pollution was responsible for 3.2 million deaths in 2019 globally over 23000 at the national level in Nepal.

### **Cities Can Lead the Way in Clean Cooking**

More than half the world's population lives in cities. Urban areas are engines of economic growth and innovation — but also huge carbon emitters, contributors of pollution

cooking sector to provide affordable and accessible solutions.

Cities are at a critical inflection point: Decisions made today will determine whether we continue on a path of fractured, unsafe, polluting growth, or succeed in creating a sustainable, resilient, more inclusive future. This session will discuss how national, state and city governments can collaborate to accelerate access to clean cooking and make cities around the world more resilient, inclusive, low-carbon places that are better for people and the planet.

“Nepal has already taken notice that fighting climate change means advancing clean cooking access. Nepal includes household energy or clean cooking-related goals in their NDCs. Announcing provisions for clean cooking through annual programs, the Federal, province and some local governments have started to transform these commitments into action,” said Manandhar.

For Nepali participation, Clean Cooking Forum opens the windows of opportunities to pave the way to accelerate the clean cooking campaign reaching all population by 2050. With the much-needed technical support from CCA and working in collaboration with National Planning Commission, Federal, Province, and Local Governments, the Alternative Energy Promotion Center, NGOs and the private sector, Nepal can make a change.

### **What Did Nepal Learn From Ghana? The Perspective**

**Prof. Dr. Surendra Labh**



and consumers of resources. The way in which cities are designed and governed impacts the quality of life for billions of people. In growing cities around the world, three-quarters of the infrastructure that will exist by 2050 has yet to be built.

Empowering cities to lead clean cooking transitions that best suit the needs of their citizens is essential to improving health, the environment, and the climate. Municipal energy, climate and development plans should integrate cooking needs and create an enabling environment for the clean



## Karna, a Member of the National Planning Commission Labh

After returning from taking part in the Ghana Conference, I have realized that the Nepal government, NGOs, private sectors and academic institutions have been heading in the right direction. Ghana's conference approves our policies and programs. We have very enthusiastic and highly motivated knowing that our programs and policies as per with the Clean Cooking Alliance movement. Each step is justified. Now we can work on new programs and introduce necessary changes at policy levels. This is related to empowering women. For us, empowering women is one important thing and generating resources through the carbon trade is another milestone. We can use our electricity, protect forests and reduce the LPG saving Nepal's foreign currency reserve. I believe that this is important.

After launching two programs at the Birgunj Metropolitan level and provincial 1 capital in Biratnagar, we realized that there is already a policy level change at two tiers of government. NPC is already working closely with different stakeholders to have a national-level policy. As the National Planning Commission was in the early stage of drafting the fifth-year plan, interactions and meetings in Ghana conferences helped to understand what need to make changes or what need to add to the policy level to promote clean cooking. Participated

by over 600 representatives from the world, Ghana Conference is the largest global conference aiming to promote clean energy. In terms of participants, the conference was diverse with the representatives from government, the private sector, donors and NGOs. It was a great privilege for me to lead a Nepalese delegation with government, private sector and NGO representa-

will be a major achievement. This will ease the burden on the government to use its limited resources to provide subsidies to the poor for clean cooking. We can easily use the resources generated from the carbon trade. We told the delegation that the situation is very conducive in Nepal to promote clean cooking. Access to electricity in Nepal is 94 percent, over 500,000 biogas

plants and promotes smoke-free stoves use wood. We have surplus electricity in Nepal and we have confidence that Nepal can go to electric cooking. Nepal is currently working to develop an action plan so that the pace of clean cooking can further accelerate. National Planning Commission is now finalizing an action plan for clean cooking with the Alternative Energy Promotion Center (AEPC). This is a major breakthrough. With the announcement by the government in its policy regarding promoting electric cooking

and budget announcement by federal government, provincial governments and local level governments, clean cooking is at the state of implementation at the national level.

At a time when we know that, 24,000 women are dying in Nepal and large numbers of children and women are suffering from smoke-related diseases, the Ghana Forum taught us a lot of lessons.

### Mohan Das Manandhar

There is no doubt that Nepal is ahead in clean energy at all lev-



tives. We have interacted with several different groups. Along with the main conference, the sideline meeting was also important where we had the opportunity to meet different stakeholders and players involved in the clean cooking campaign.

We have been talking about the carbon trade issue for a long period of time. However, we learned so many new things during the conference regarding the carbon trade and linking clean cooking to the carbon trade. If we link clean cooking with carbon trade,



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els. It is very interesting to note that Nepal has the largest number of bio-gas plants. This means we are much ahead. In Africa, they are yet to reach 100,000. However, Nepal already has over 600,000 plants. African countries are planning to create one million plants in a decade. Similarly, Nepal has already started to implement policies to materialize the commitment made to Social Development Goals and NDC.

Along with electric cooking, bio-gas is also very popular in the world for clean cooking and Nepal has advantages. Emerging new technology has made bio-gas more viable to replace traditional energy systems. Although Nepal is yet to use the new technology, Nepal is far ahead in the use of biogas in cooking. Despite making efforts, electric cooking is still early stages all over

the world including in Nepal. Certain countries are pushing electric cooking to replace LPG and traditional biomass fuel.

We have also learned the impacts of quality electric stoves and the availability of high-standard locally produced stoves are key to expanding it quickly. One of the main advantages of using electric cooking and other clean cooking devices is that there does no need to worry about resources. There are resources available from carbon trade and there are many organizations eager to support Nepal to exchange Nepal's carbon footprint

with the companies. By generating the resources from the carbon trade, Nepal also can support people by providing subsidies.

When we talked about electric cooking, Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) is a major party in terms of sustained and quality distribution and supply. If all the people use electricity for cooking, NEA's system will have to face the pressure. For this, Clean Cooking Alliance (CCA) has already made a proposal to conduct the study on how much pressure NEA will face

ernment at all three tiers of government allocated the budget.

As our development process is framed in poverty alleviation, we cannot say that we provide electric cooking only in urban areas. Our main focus of development is on the rural poor. PRSP started in 1998 and Nepal also has a mad evaluation process. NPC has a policy framework for evaluation. Our program is framed in LDCs. Our policy is famed for subsidies for the poor and the governments cannot provide any subsidy in urban areas. Thus, only the private sector can provide electric cooking stoves in urban areas at fewer prices. Given the press policy framework, Nepal cannot provide subsidies for electricity and its appliance used in the urban centers. Nepal's National Policies are still a rural focus. However, 55 percent population is urbanized and 50 percent



and what is the pick time for cooking how it affects distribution capability. We can learn more from Norway as they have already started electric cooking since the 1950s. Norwegian delegation suggested we go to electricity from LPG.

With the increase in global prices, this is the right time for the energy transition. On the first day, we took part in a discussion with the delegation of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). We talked about how to influence policy. We have a clear policy and white paper on how to convert LPG. This year Gov-

population lives in terai.

The question now is whether to provide a subsidy or not. What we have learned from Ghana is that there do no need to give subsidies for electric cooking because it generates money through carbon trade. We don't need donors and government to provide subsidies, Nepal can generate resources from clean cooking including biogas and electricity. The money coming from the carbon trade can be used for subsidies. If that money is directly given at the consumer level, the government needs not provide subsidies.

The good news is that Nepal has been investing huge amounts of resources to improve the transmission and distribution system. Thus, we may encourage people to use electricity in cooking by offering certain subsidies to the poor as announced by Birgunj Metropolitan City which will provide up to 30 units of free electricity.

**Karuna Bajracharya,**  
Country Manager-Nepal, Clean Cooking Alliance

Our participation at the Ghana Forum was extremely meaningful given the present state of energy transition in Nepal. Women are the driving force behind the clean cooking transition – feeding their families, working in sales, leading enterprises, implementing policy and structuring finance. They spark innovation despite all odds; they persist in the face of obstacles and insist on building a better future for all.

For too long the conversation around gender and clean cooking have focused on women as victims – suffering the disproportionate impacts of poor health and safety – or merely as passive beneficiaries, receiving improved solutions delivered by well-meaning donors. But this historic narrative does not reflect reality.

Accelerating access to clean cooking is a critical tool for empowering women and advancing gender equality. Women are essential to the widespread adoption and use of clean cooking solutions. Their agency as household decision-makers and consumers should not be underestimated. Their involvement as employees & entrepreneurs helps businesses thrive. Their leadership in policy and finance is essential to achieving progress at scale.

Similarly, youth have a vital role in achieving universal access to clean cooking, contributing to the cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable future that young people need to thrive. Ninety percent of the world's 1.8 billion youth live in developing countries where 2.4 billion people still rely on polluting fuels and stoves to



cook their food. The negative impact of traditional cooking on young people is substantial, both in terms of the size of the youth population affected and the cross-cutting nature of the adverse impacts on youth.

After listening to the views in the forum, we have a reason for satisfaction as Nepal is far ahead in electric cooking compared to many other LDCs and developing countries. To improve the policy, there needs evidence-based research. In partnership with the Alternative Energy Promotion Center and Nepal Open University, Clean Cooking Alliances and World Research Institute, the clean cooking explorer has already been launched to collect data and update information on clean cooking in Nepal. This is a platform based on digital data where one can extract the all information regarding clean cooking. One can access information regarding the state of clean cooking supply of electricity, connectivity and so on. Even the private sector can use these resources to involve in electric cooking. The platform disseminates information regarding the supply of electricity. We have already collected stove monitoring piloting data. Our aim is to provide data to NEA showing much pressure clean cooking devices give to the NEA's distribution system. The data will include the cooking time and picking of electricity demand and load pattern.

Ecuador has made good

progress in electric cooking. By increasing the prices of LPG, Ecuador is promoting electric cooking. They are ahead in this area. CCA has two objectives: working at the global level and developing market at clean cooking for developing and poor countries. . CCA is facilitating various companies within the country. CCA is approaching the new companies which have the latest technology to monitor the use of electricity in cooking.

We have been working in collaboration with various partner organizations. CCA can venture capitalists to manufacturers to produce stoves. CCA is piloting quality production. They have already made promotion piloting in two or three places. They will test Nepali manufacturing and others. They will also pilot metal stoves or improved cooking. This clean energy consists. They will provide technology. They will invest in linking carbon trade. CCA's sister organization Clean Climate Air Coalition (CCAC). We have finalized the decision on how to go and negotiate.

## जाडोबाट बच्न निम्न उपायहरू अबलम्बन गरौं

- तातो, झोलिलो पदार्थ प्रशस्त मात्रामा पिउने गरौं,
- न्यानो कपडा लगाऔं,
- घाम वा आगो तापौं,
- तेल मालिस गरौं,
- शारिरिक व्यायाम गरौं,
- बालबालिका, जेष्ठ नागरिक तथा अशक्तले सकेसम्म चिसोको समयमा घरबाहिर ननिस्कौं,
- ताजा र पौष्टिक खानेकुरा खाऔं,
- जाडोबाट बच्ने नाममा धूम्रपान तथा मद्यपान नगरौं,
- स्वास्थ्यमा कुनै समस्या परेमा स्वास्थ्यकर्मीसँग परामर्श लिऔं ।



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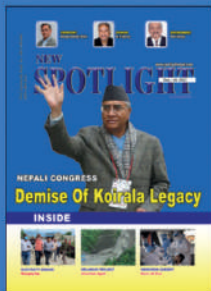


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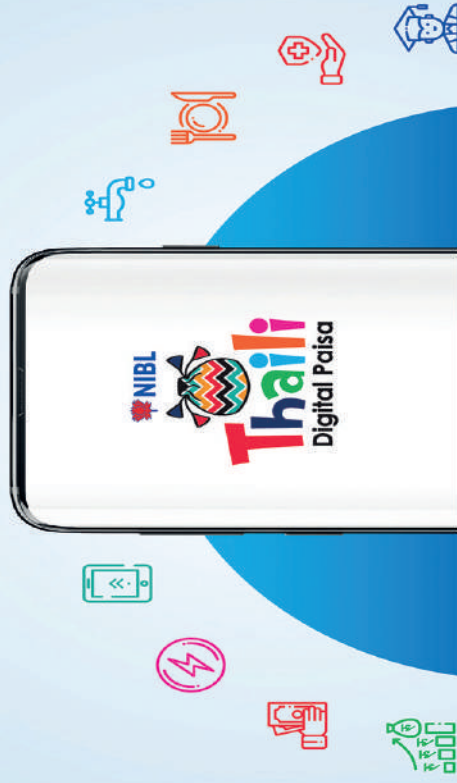


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