

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



**OPINION**  
Dr. Surya Dhungel



**ENVIRONMENT**  
Batu Uprety



**FORUM**  
Dr. Kishor Uprety

# NEW SPOTLIGHT

[www.spotlightnepal.com](http://www.spotlightnepal.com)

April 11, 2025

FORTNIGHTLY

POLITICAL VIOLENCE

## Culture of Impunity

INSIDE



**PM OLI MEETS PM MODI**  
Relations As Usual



**KUL MAN GHISING**  
Bowing Down To The People



**AMBASSADOR MAEDA TORU**  
Warm Regards



# APPLY FROM ANYWHERE, ANYTIME! **FAST LOAN AGAINST SHARE (FLASH)**



Apply Online via  
Digital Universe



► SAME DAY  
LOAN APPROVAL



► COMPETITIVE  
INTEREST RATES



\*TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY

For Global IME Bank Customers (Natural Person)  
having eligible shares in own name.



**Global IME Bank**

ग्लोबल आइएमई बैंक लि.

सबैका लागि बैंक



**GLOBAL CONNECT**

Call Us: **+977-1-5970600**

[globalconnect@gibl.com.np](mailto:globalconnect@gibl.com.np)

**Editor and Publisher**

Keshab Poudel

**Contributor**

Sabine Pretsch

**Design/Layout**

Sahil Mokthan, 9863022025

**Marketing Manager**

Madan Raj Poudel

Tel: 9841320517

Nabin Kumar Maharjan

Tel: 9841291404

**Editorial Office**

Kathmandu, Nepal

Tel: 977-1-4430250

**E-mail**

spotlightnepal@gmail.com

P.O.Box: 7256

**Website**

www.spotlightnepal.com

**Kathmandu DAO Regd. No.**

148/11/063/64

**Central Region Postal Regd.**

No. 36/067/068

**US Library of Congress Catalogue**

No. 91-905060, ISSN : 2091-0711

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

**Printing**

Megha Offset Printing Press P. Ltd.,

Dhapasi, Kathmandu

Tel. : 977-1-4363624

**Notes From The Editor**



Nepal has a history of political transformation characterized by violent incidents and widespread political impunity, creating a culture of violence. The 2015 Constitution of Nepal legitimizes violent actions by glorifying those who have made sacrifices for political change in its preamble. This legitimization sets a troubling precedent, as evidenced by the violent political incident on March 28 during a Pro-Monarchist rally, highlighting potential future dangers. The ruling alliance and rally organizers are pointing fingers at each other for the violence, showing no willingness to compromise. The government has arrested more than three dozen pro-monarchy supporters, including two senior leaders, and is actively searching for the main commander of the pro-monarchist group. Social media posts reveal the heavy-handed tactics of security forces, prompting criticism from human rights activists.

A week after the protest, which led to three deaths and extensive damage to public and private property, the political situation remains unstable. There is increasing pressure on the government to establish a high-level Judicial Probe Commission. Initially opposed to the idea, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has shown a more flexible approach following his visit to Thailand. This week, our cover story delves into the history of Nepal's violent political culture over the past seven decades. We also cover Prime Minister Oli's trip to Thailand and the dismissal of Kul Man Ghising as Managing Director of the Nepal Electricity Authority. New Spotlight also extends its best wishes for a Happy New Year 2082 to its subscribers, patrons, and well-wishers.

**Keshab Poudel**

Editor

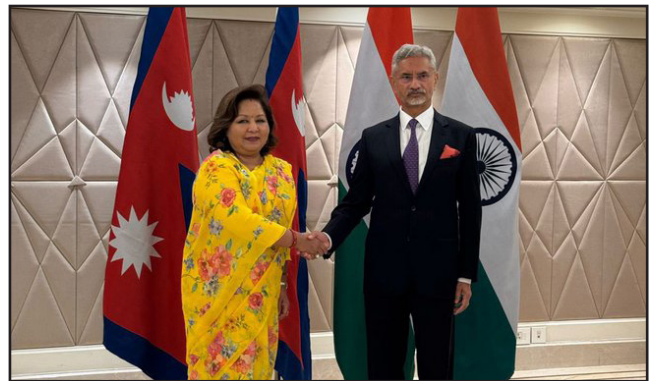
# CONTENT

<b>VIEWPOINT</b>	
Sanjay Upadhya	3
<b>NEWSNOTES</b>	4
<b>BUSINESS BRIEF</b>	8
<b>OPINION</b>	
Dr. Surya Dhungel	12
<b>PM OLI MEETS PM MODI</b>	
Relations As Usual	16
<b>PM OLI'S THAILAND VISIT</b>	
Flip Flop	17
<b>BIMSTEC SUMMIT</b>	
Nepal's Stand	18
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	
Batu Uprety	24
<b>KUL MAN GHISING</b>	
Bowing Down To The People	26
<b>FORUM</b>	
Dr. Kishor Uprety	29
<b>ARTICLE</b>	
Zakir Kibria	32
<b>AMBASSADOR MAEDA TORU</b>	
Warm Regards	34



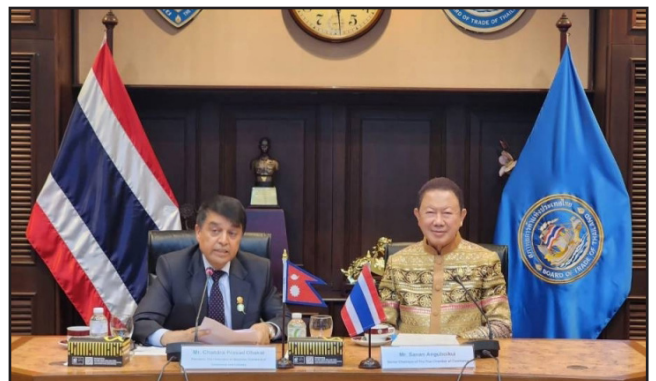
**COVERSTORY: POLITICAL VIOLENCE** : Culture of Impunity

19



**FM Dr. Deuba's India Visit: Mission Aborted**

14



**NEPAL-THAILAND: Joint Business Council**

35

# Revolution, Regression And Rampage

*Royalists persist in their effort to restore the monarchy, while republicans strengthen their stance.*



BY: SANJAY UPADHYA

THE highly anticipated royalist demonstrations on March 28 devolved into chaos and violence, raising questions about the future of the monarchy restoration project in Nepal. Two people lost their lives, around 100 were injured, and numerous vehicles and businesses were set ablaze, prompting the government to impose a curfew in parts of Kathmandu and deploy the army.

Two senior leaders of the monarchist Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) – senior vice-president Rabindra Mishra and general secretary Dhawal Shamsher Rana – along with several other individuals, are in custody for incitement. At least a dozen people were arrested for looting a department store.

The police are searching for the chief protest organizer, Durga Prasai, who escaped from the scene. Government supporters held a separate protest on the same day in a different part of Kathmandu, which passed peacefully.

The former vice-chancellor of the Nepal Academy, Jagman Gurung, has been appointed as the new head of the Monarchy Reinstatement Movement Committee. He replaces Navaraj Subedi, who is currently under house arrest. Gurung will now serve as the acting leader of the committee as royalist groups advance their protest plans.

The government and its allies immediately held former king Gyanendra accountable for the chaos, leading to a reduction in his state-provided security detail. Three days later, Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli informed parliament that Mr. Shah was responsible for the mayhem and asserted that the guilty would not escape punishment.

The government is under pressure from both the ruling parties and the opposition to arrest the ex-monarch and revoke his passport. Kathmandu Municipality imposed a fine of nearly Rs. 800,000 on Mr. Shah for the damage caused to public property and the environment during the protests. The ex-king has not made a public statement on the violent protests or the allegations against him. Some reports suggest that he has been placed under informal house arrest.

The pro-monarchy movement in Nepal has intensified since February, following a message by Mr. Shah on Democracy Day. In his video message, the deposed monarch urged Nepalis to join him in 'saving the nation'. Since then, monarchists have staged multiple rallies across Nepal, demanding the restoration of the 240-year-old institution.

The immediate narrative following the March 28 anarchy was that the pro-monarchy cause had been severely damaged – perhaps irretrievably – by the actions of the protesters. However, video footage of the events began circulating on social media, fueling speculation that security forces had used excessive force before any real security threat emerged. Protesters claimed they were merely responding to police provocation and asserted that government and party provocateurs had infiltrated the demonstration.

The most horrific episode was the burning alive of video journalist Suresh Rajak when the building he was working in was set ablaze. The government blamed the protesters for the arson, a charge they vigorously deny. It is not clear whether the second deceased, Sabin Maharjan, was a protester or a bystander. However, some eyewitnesses claim he was the victim of police highhandedness in an area that was not a security risk.

Such conflicting accounts regarding the events before and during the protests have challenged the initial assertion of a significant defeat for the royalist cause. The RPP and other groups have pledged to persist with demonstrations as part of a larger uprising against the government and the federal secular republican system.

The protests were fueled by escalating public frustration over corruption, mismanagement, impunity, and the government's overall lack of direction. Even some members of the ruling parties and advocates of the republican system concur that the government must alter its approach to regain public support.

However, they insist that regressing to a monarchy is not the answer.

Royalists perceive the monarchy as a symbol of national unity and stability. They seek to reinstate the institution along with Nepal's Hindu state identity, which was abolished in 2008. Some believe Nepal has become overly influenced by foreign powers, particularly India and Western nations, and view the

monarchy as a means to reclaim sovereignty and national identity.

Republicans argue that a return to the monarchy is impossible due to insufficient political and public support and constitutional obstacles. They point out that while royalist protests have occurred, they suffer from weak leadership and lack nationwide momentum. Previous controversies surrounding the monarchy also work against a restoration of the institution.

Royalists express confidence that public frustration with the current order will encourage more Nepalis to reconsider the monarchy as a stabilizing force. They argue that the institution has played a crucial role in preserving Nepal's Hindu identity. Additionally, they maintain that shifting regional political dynamics could lead to either direct or indirect external support for a transition towards monarchy.

For now, the contest will likely continue to take place on the Nepali street.

LINK <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/nepal-revolution-regression-rampage-sanjay-upadhyaya-yh5ie/>



## NEWSNOTES

### Nepal- India Signed Memorandum Of Understanding (MoU) For 10 Projects

Nepal and India have signed MoUs for 10 high-impact community development projects to be implemented in the education, health and culture sectors in Nepal under the grant assistance of the Government of India.

The Embassy of India in Kathmandu, the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration, Government

of Nepal, and the project implementing agencies of the Government of Nepal have agreed to implement 10 High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) in Nepal with a total project cost of Rs 625 million with Indian assistance.

The embassy has stated that these

projects in Nepal will be implemented through local bodies of the Government of Nepal, such as metropolitan cities, sub-metropolitan cities, municipalities, and rural municipalities.

The implementation of these High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) will help provide better educational, healthcare, and cultural facilities to the people of Nepal.

Since 2003, India has worked on over 573 HICDPs in Nepal, including the 10 projects for which MoUs were signed today, and has provided assistance in the areas of education, health, roads and bridges, river training, drinking water, electrification, irrigation, culture, social welfare and creation of other public utilities have been completed at the grassroots level in all seven provinces of Nepal. The remaining projects are being implemented in various phases.

### Nepali Ambassador To India Dr. Shanker Sharma Called Upon UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath

Amidst the ongoing discussion of deteriorating relations between Nepal and India, Nepal's Ambassador to India Dr. Shankar Prasad Sharma and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath have met.

The meeting between them took place in Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh, amid speculation that Yogi Adityanath is supporting the monarchist movement in Nepal.

During the meeting, discussions were held on expanding bilateral trade and economic cooperation, promoting religious and cultural tourism, higher education and scholarship opportunities, cooperation in hydropower and other energy projects, improving transportation and connectivity, border security, mutual cooperation, and development prospects.

It is understood that discussions were also held on the current situation in Nepal. Ambassador Sharma and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath are understood to have discussed ways to further strengthen Nepal-India relations.

Sharma, who was appointed as the ambassador from the Nepali Congress quota, is considered close to Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba and Foreign Minister Arzu Rana Deuba. The meeting between Ambassador Sharma and Yogi took place despite several attempts by Foreign Minister Deuba to arrange a high-level meeting.

During his meeting with Yogi, Ambassador Sharma expressed his commitment to take initiatives to further deepen the historical friendship between Nepal and India and to emphasize mutual development and prosperity by expanding bilateral cooperation.

There is talk in political circles that the meeting was held to show political goodwill, even though there were discussions on matters of mutual interest and understanding. However, it is said that Ambassador Sharma was not able to hold high-level talks in the Indian capital, New Delhi.

### Embassy of Israel Celebrates Good Deeds Day With Children And Elderly At Tulasi Foundation

Marking the spirit of 'Good Deeds Day' on 31 March, 2025, the Embassy of Israel in Nepal dedicated

a full day to community service at the organization- Tulasi Foundation, located in Lalitpur. With an aim to spread kindness and compassion, the Embassy family, together with members of the Shalom Club (Nepali alumni who studied in

Israel), spent the day with children and elderly citizens under the care of the foundation, sharing a hot meal, engaging in various fun activities and creating memories together. The Embassy also donated essential food supplies, fruits, and toys for children.

Expressing his joy, Ambassador Shmulik Arie Bass said, "Tikun Olam" (World Fixing) is a concept in Judaism that means nurturing and improving humanity's lifestyles. In modern time, the concept of Good Deeds Day was also invented in Israel in 2007 coordinating 7,000 volunteers in hundreds of NGOs for the society to raise the value of



ongoing assistance during all the year to make Humanity and standard of living better in our world. This year more than 110 countries including Nepal has joined the efforts to help make the world better even with a small gesture. Let's make the World better!"

The Embassy of Israel has been organizing Good Deeds Day in previous years as well, taking a break from regular Embassy work and spending a day doing community work. This initiative reflects Israel's commitment to social responsibility and volunteerism, for the betterment of the society.

Good deeds day is an annual tradition dedicated to doing good together, volunteering time, energy and expertise for the benefit of the society.

### Ghode Jatra 2081 Concluded



With various programs at the Military Podium, Tundikhel, Ghode Jatra 2081 Concluded today. President Ram Chandra Paudel was the chief guest of the functions.

The ceremony included horse racing, charger horse racing, tent pegging, cross tent pegging, show jumping, as well as a performance by military dogs.

At the ceremony, the chief guest, the Honorable President, presented awards to Amaldar Parshuram Budhamagar and Sepoy Arun Thapa, who came first and second in show jumping, and Jamdar Sheshraj Khadka and Sepoy Laxman Rawal, who came first and second in tent pegging.

The Honorable Vice President, Prime Minister, Chief Justice, Chairperson of the National Assembly, and Speaker of the House of Representatives were present on that occasion.

Similarly, ministers, heads of various constitutional bodies, secretaries of the Government of Nepal, heads of other security agencies, Ambassadors, military attachés of various countries, military and non-military dignitaries, media persons, and the general public also observed the horse parade.

### KTTOAN 2025 Night Held In Kathmandu

Korea Tours and Trekking Operator Association of Nepal (KTTOAN) mark 8th anniversary of establishment in the Hotel Mercure Kathmandu on 27th March 2025.

Speaking on the occasion Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Nepal, Park Tae-Young said that

KOTTAN would help further develop the relations between South Korea and Nepal. "As Nepal is a popular destination for Koreans, the new effort of KOTTAN will help attract more Korean tourist in Nepal." He also express that the embassy will work closely with KOTTAN to invite more tourists to Nepal and vice-versa.

KOTTAN President Amar Bahadur Shahi said that KOTTAN is committed to promoting tourism as well as enhancing people to people relations between the two countries. KOTTAN Treasurer Ngawa Ngima Sherpa said that the association was always working for the promotion of Nepal's tourism in the Korean market.

As usual, a large number of Korean and Nepalese business people, media personnel, and senior government officials attended the KTTOAN Night.

### Joint Exercise Completed

The exercise - Multinational Planning Augmentation Team Tempest Express (MPAT TE - 40), which was conducted in Kathmandu from 2081 Chaitra 04, has been completed today, 2081 Chaitra 14.

The exercise was conducted with the aim of effectively enhancing disaster response capabilities in the future through the exchange of theoretical, practical, and specific experiences between military, non-military, and various other agencies related to disaster management.

A total of 92 people, including 56 from the Nepali Army and other security agencies, government and non-government agencies affiliated with the Government of Nepal, and 36 from different countries, participated in the exercise, which was jointly organized by the Nepali Army and US INDOPACOM.

The closing ceremony was attended by the Ambassador, Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy in Nepal, officials, various government and non-government agencies affiliated with the Government of Nepal, and high-level officials from foreign organizations.



## WVI Nepal Brings Stakeholders Together To Reflect On A Year Of Impact For Children

World Vision International (WVI) Nepal, a child-focused organization dedicated to improving the well-being of children for over 24 years, hosted a national-level symposium in Kathmandu today to disseminate its Annual Progress



Report for Fiscal Year 2024 (October 2023 – September 2024).

The event showcased key achievements and best practices across WVI Nepal's core areas of work

– health, education, child protection, livelihood, advocacy, gender equality, and disaster risk reduction – implemented in close collaboration with government bodies, civil society, and local partners.

In addition to the progress report, WVI Nepal also shared the findings of two recent studies: 'Keeping Children Safe Online – A Study on Online Safety among Children in Nepal' and 'Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices on Substance Use among Adolescents in Nepal'.

The event was graced by the Mayor of Kirtipur Municipality as Special Guest and brought together a diverse group of participants including Member Secretary of National Child Rights Council, Deputy Mayor of Chandragiri Municipality, child representatives, community representatives, government officials, donors, civil society organizations, media, and partner agencies.

Speaking at the event, the Mayor of Kirtipur Municipality, Mr. Krishna Man Dangol said, "We aim to declare Kirtipur Municipality a child-friendly municipality by the end of B.S. 2083, and we look forward to the collaboration of World Vision International Nepal in achieving this goal." He also emphasized that there is no child labour in the municipality.

National Director of WVI Nepal Roslyn H. Gabriel said, "Keeping children safe is crucial to helping them reach their full potential. As risks to children continue to grow, World Vision remains committed to delivering impactful programs that protect and support the children and communities we serve."

The Annual Progress Report for FY 2024 showcases WVI Nepal's impact across health, education, livelihoods, child protection, and humanitarian response, with a strong focus on collaboration, sustainability, and child participation.

Over the past year, WVI Nepal helped 10,596 children recover from malnutrition and supported improvements in 61 health facilities. In education, 207

teachers were trained, 8 schools received computer labs, 438 classrooms were equipped with essential learning materials, and 29 new classrooms were built. Additionally, 10 local governments achieved Child-Friendly Local Governance (CFLG) status with WVI Nepal's support in fulfilling the required indicators.

The installation of 216 hand pumps improved access to safe drinking water, and 170 assistive devices were distributed to children with disabilities to promote inclusive education. The organization also reached 46,450 people with emergency aid and built 32 temporary learning centres following the earthquakes in Jajarkot and Bajhang.

## Provincial Credit Guarantee Fund And Udaya Challenge Fund Launched In Koshi Province For Small And Medium Entrepreneurs

The Koshi Province Government has launched the Udaya Guarantee Fund and Udaya Challenge Fund to facilitate loan guarantees for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). These funds aim to mitigate lending risks for banks and financial institutions, enhancing access to capital for SMEs in Koshi Province to foster business growth, innovation, and operational efficiency.

The funds were officially inaugurated at an event in Kathmandu by Damodar Bhandari, Minister of Industry, Commerce, and Supplies, Hon'ble Ram Bahadur Magar, Minister of Economic Affairs and Planning, Koshi Province, and Danielle Meuwly, PhD, Ambassador of Switzerland to Nepal.



Addressing the event as the chief guest, Minister Damodar Bhandari emphasized the crucial role of SMEs in Nepal's economic development. He noted that the lack of collateral has hindered SME growth, and Koshi Province's initiative will serve as a model for federal and other provincial governments in supporting small businesses.

Speaking on behalf of the Swiss Government, Ambassador Danielle Meuwly commended the Koshi Province Government's commitment to SME financing. She emphasized that the Provincial Credit Guarantee Fund and Udaya Challenge Fund would serve as models for sustainable economic transformation.

She also underscored Switzerland's longstanding development partnership with Nepal, stating that this initiative aligns with the broader goal of shifting from aid-based to trade-based economic growth.

## Flag Hoisting Ceremony On The Occasion Of 85th National Day Of Pakistan

Ambassador Abrar H Hashmi hoisted Pakistan's Flag on the auspicious occasion of 85th National Day of Pakistan, a



Flag Hoisting Ceremony was held at the Embassy of Pakistan, Kathmandu.

Messages from the President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister were read out on the occasion.

Ambassador Abrar H Hashmi in his remarks, congratulated the community and staff. On the occasion he said we salute our forefathers for their vision and heroic and peaceful struggle to achieve independence.

The key to Pakistan's progress and prosperity lies in our unity, hard work, and determination. He also invited the community to stay engaged locally and contribute in whatsoever way to make Pakistan-Nepal friendship aloft.

## US Approves Certain Programs Under MCC, Review Underway

The United States government has approved the implementation of certain programs under the MCC Nepal Compact Agreement.

But the authorization does not "indicate any specific outcome" from the Trump administration's review of grants Nepal has received from the US under the Compact, MCA Nepal said on its website.

"The activities that have been allowed to proceed include important procurement activities and essential office operations," MCA Nepal said in a statement on Friday. "MCA-Nepal is managing the resumption of activities and is committed to transparency."

MCA Nepal added, "MCA-Nepal is awaiting updates on the US government's foreign assistance review and is coordinating closely with the Government of Nepal and the Millennium Challenge Corporation to ensure that its work is done."

In February, the US government informed the

Government of Nepal that it had suspended payments under the MCC for 90 days to review the grants received by Nepal.

Some commented that the postponement raised questions about the future of the largest foreign aid Nepal has ever received.

## Indian Embassy Celebrated 60th IETC Day In Kathmandu

Embassy of India in Kathmandu celebrated the 60th Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Day with a function. Foreign Minister of Nepal Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba graced the event as Chief Guest.

At the ceremony, Foreign Minister Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba, recalling her experience studying in India, expressed gratitude for the numerous initiatives of the Indian government in the fields of development and education.

Indian Ambassador to Nepal Naveen Srivastava expressed his commitment to further expand the ITEC initiative and introduce more customized programs in line with the evolving priorities of the Government of Nepal.

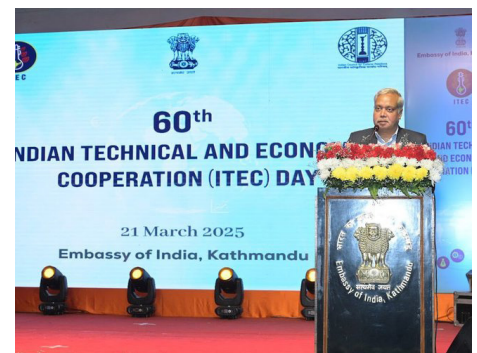
Attorney General Ramesh Badal, Assistant Coordinator of the National Security Council Secretariat and ITEC alumnus Assistant Rathi Pawan Khatri, and Armed Police Superintendent of the Armed Police Force Dayaram Sharma shared their experiences about ITEC.

The Indian cultural group 'Yagya', led by renowned artist Kuleshwar Kumar Thakur and supported by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, presented a

mesmerizing Mayurbhanj Chhau dance performance, while Nepal's renowned Kant Dab Dab Band performed a mesmerizing instrumental folk fusion.

ITEC, one of the oldest institutional arrangements for international capacity building, was established in 1964. It has trained more than 200,000 officials from more than 160 countries.

In 2024-2025, 510 professionals from Nepal were trained for various courses at various major institutes in India. In 2024-2025, 18 customized courses were arranged for Nepali doctors (50), government lawyers (30), members of the National Judicial Academy (15), Nepal Police (143), Armed Police Force (80), Ministry of Home Affairs (24), and Ministry of Drinking Water (40) in 10 major institutions in India.



## BUSINESS BRIEF

### Global IME Bank And IFC Partner On Digital Transformation And Embedded Finance Advisory

Global IME Bank Limited and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) have signed an agreement to provide advisory services to advance digital financial services and embedded finance models.



The agreement was signed by Global IME Bank CEO Surendra Raj Regmi and Alain Forlemu, FIG, Asia and Pacific Regional Industry Director, on behalf of IFC.

Under this agreement, IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, will assess Global IME Bank's digital transformation and data maturity, identify areas for improvement, and provide strategic advice to enhance the bank's digital banking capabilities.

In addition, IFC will provide advice to Global IME Bank by studying the feasibility of fintech to promote embedded finance models.

The bank is confident that after this agreement, it will be easier to develop innovative and technology-friendly services by transforming the various services and facilities available at the bank. Surendra Raj Regmi

Informing that Global IME Bank is committed to providing international-level digital banking services to its customers, the bank's CEO Surendraraj Regmi said that this agreement will help promote the bank's digital banking and support new developments and applications in fintech.

He expressed confidence that the knowledge and experience gained by IFC from around the world in digital banking and fintech partnerships will take Nepal's banking sector to new heights.

Global IME Bank was honored as the best bank in Nepal in two categories: Global Finance's Best Bank Award 2024 and Euro Money Award for Excellence 2024.

Additionally, Global IME Bank has been honored in various categories by various national and international organizations.

Global IME Bank is the first private sector commercial bank with a branch network in all seventy-seven districts of the country.

### World Bank Approves \$150 Million To Improve Resilience Of Bridge Network, Connectivity, And Access To Services In Nepal



The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors today approved a financing package of \$150 million for Nepal's Third Bridges Improvement and Maintenance Program (BIMP-III) to strengthen the resilience of bridges in the Strategic Road Network,

ensuring safer and uninterrupted connectivity across the country's diverse and challenging terrain.

Nepal's bridge system serves as critical lifelines connecting remote and urban communities to essential services, including healthcare, education, and economic opportunities. Vulnerabilities caused by frequent climate-induced disasters such as floods, landslides, and earthquakes severely affect the bridge infrastructure.

The program, led by Nepal's Department of Roads, will focus on climate-resilient measures such as enhanced structural designs and innovative technologies, including real-time monitoring systems to safeguard bridges against extreme weather events. The program will also support bridge designs prioritizing accessibility for all users, connecting marginalized communities to vital services.

"The resilience of Nepal's bridge network is fundamental for safe and sustained connectivity," said David Sislen, Division Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. "This program emphasizes resilient infrastructure development and promoting access to markets and services for vulnerable communities while promoting Nepal's sustainable growth."

The program includes capacity-building initiatives for the Department of Roads, promoting innovative solutions and strengthening institutional systems for effective infrastructure management.

### NIBL Equity Partners Announces Strategic Investment In Laxmi Steels Limited

NIBL Equity Partners, a SEBON-registered private equity fund managed by NIMB Ace Capital Limited, has invested in Laxmi Steels Limited (LSL). The agreement was signed on March 25, 2025, by the Chairman of NIMB Ace Capital, Mr. Sachin Tibrewal, and the Director of Laxmi Steels, Mr. Bimal Kumar Sawartha. This partnership is set to bolster LSL's advanced manufacturing capabilities and accelerate its market expansion, reinforcing Nepal's steel industry as a pillar of national development.

A Pillar of Nepal's Steel Industry

Founded in August 2008 under the esteemed Saurabh Group, Laxmi Steels Limited is a leading manufacturer of TMT Rods, Billets, and Ribbed Wires. Operating a state-of-the-art facility in Sunwal, Nawalparasi, LSL is committed to producing high-quality steel products that underpin Nepal's infrastructure and industrial growth.

This strategic investment from NIBL Equity Partners will empower LSL to enhance its manufacturing capabilities, boost production efficiency, and expand its market reach. The partnership aligns with LSL's ambition to strengthen its leadership in Nepal's steel industry and contribute to the nation's economic progress.

Sachin Tibrewal, Chairman of NIMB Ace Capital, stated, "We are proud to join forces with Laxmi Steels Limited, a cornerstone of Nepal's industrial landscape. NIBL Equi-



ty Partners is committed to supporting strong businesses that drive economic growth and create opportunities. With this investment, we aim to help LSL scale new heights and reinforce Nepal's infrastructure backbone."

The alliance between NIBL Equity Partners and Laxmi Steels Limited represents a pivotal step forward for Nepal's industrial sector. By combining financial expertise with operational prowess, this partnership aims to deliver lasting value to stakeholders while advancing the nation's infrastructure goals.

### **Upper Trishuli-1 Hydropower Project Handed Over Ambulances**

The Nepal Water and Energy Development Company (NWEDC), the promoter of the 216MW Upper Trishuli-1 hydropower project, sponsored by the Korean state-owned utility company KOEN

as the main shareholder, has donated two ambulances to rural municipalities in the district.

These two well-equipped, modern health ambulances have been provided to facilitate the transportation of local patients from rural

municipalities to nearby hospitals in Battar and Kathmandu for medical treatment.

Speaking at the handover ceremony in Rasuwa, Byeongsoo Min, CEO of NWEDC, stated that the company has provided ambulances worth NPR 2.5 million each as part of its Community Support Program (CSP) for remote villages in the project-affected area. Ministry of the Health and population has provided the exemption on taxes as per GON regulations on import of the Ambulances.

The clearances of the Ambulance to Amachhodingmo Rural Municipality already received and for the Uttargaya is in process. Min emphasized that the project remains committed to supporting local communities, having already implemented multiple CSP initiatives, and seeks continued cooperation from local residents for the successful and timely completion of the project. CEO Min affirmed the commitment to implementing the CSP in collaboration with the local community.

Similarly, the Chairman of Amachhodingmo Rural Municipality, Buchung Tamang, highlighted the significant health benefits the ambulances would bring to affected communities in remote regions of the project area. Mr. Tamang acknowledged and appreciated the company's contribution to the affected area.

The local health posts in these rural municipalities will be responsible for operating the ambulances. The ceremony, organized by the company, was attended by Ward Chairmen of Amachhodingmo 1 and 2, Indigenous People Governing Board General Secretary and members together with other local community leaders.

About 170 million rupees have been spent so far

through community support in the affected areas of Upper Trishuli-1 hydroelectric power project of 216 MW net capacity under construction in Rasuwa district.

The promoter of the project, Nepal Water and Energy Development Company Pvt. Ltd., through programs such as education, health, drinking water, road infrastructure, culture, distribution of relief, livelihood and income growth under CSP, institutional social responsibility and indigenous people plan (IPP) programs. It has been helping the affected areas.

With direct foreign investment led by Korean companies, structures including dams of Haku Project in Amachhodingmo Rural Municipality-1 of Rasuwa and underground power plants in Uttargayaon Municipality-1 are under construction. As of now, the physical progress of the project is 56%. The project is expected to complete by December 2026.

The generated electricity is used for domestic consumption. Upper Trishuli-1 is the largest project under construction with direct foreign investment.

### **Nepal Investment Mega Bank's 'Global Money Week-2025' Eoconducts**

Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited conducted financial literacy programs nationwide on the occasion of 'Global Money Week-2025'.

With the aim of making the 'Global Money Week 2025' a success, Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited conducted a financial literacy program from Chaitra 4th to 10th through various branch offices in all seven provinces.

Under this, a total of 83 branch offices of the bank, including 12 in Koshi Province, 12 in Madhesh Province, 16 in Bagmati Province, 13 in Gandaki Province, 14 in Lumbini Province, 6 in Karnali Province, and 10 in Sudurpaschim Province, conducted financial literacy programs.

In the context of 'Global Money Week-2025', the bank also organized financial literacy rallies at Lumbini Regional Office, Hetauda, Dhangadhi, Hariiban, Lalbandi, and Syafrubesi.

In the financial literacy program, the bank provided knowledge to students on banking systems, savings and loan schemes, savings requirements, account types, mobile banking, digital banking, QR, PIN and password security, cyber security, ways to avoid digital fraud, etc.

The bank had distributed its recently published picture book on financial literacy, "The Magic of Digital Banking," and pamphlets on cyber security to students from various schools across all seven provinces. The bank also disseminated awareness-raising materials through its social media.



## Minister Singh Bhandari Inaugurates Kathmandu Technical School (KTS)

IME Group and IXI Corp have launched a technical school in Kathmandu to meet the demand for skilled manpower in the job market.

Minister for Labor, Employment and Social Security Sarat Singh Bhandari inaugurated the school at a special ceremony organized on the premises of Kathmandu Technical School in Dhumbarahi, Kathmandu on Tuesday.

This school will conduct training in more than three

dozen employment-oriented and self-employment-oriented disciplines, including hospitality, culinary arts, caregiving, barista, bar tending, and more.

The school aims to produce more than 100,000 skilled manpower and profes-

sionals in the next decade.

In its two and a half decade business journey, IME Group has operated numerous industries and projects in the banking and financial sector, insurance, tourism and hospitality, tourism infrastructure, hydropower, manufacturing, and other sectors.

More than 25,000 people have been directly employed in companies under the IME Group. The group has also helped the same number or more become self-employed.

IXI Corp works in the areas of alternative investment, alternative energy, alternative education, technology, and public policy.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Minister Bhandari said that the government has prioritized partnerships with the private sector as only a combination of skills, employment, entrepreneurship, and capital can solve the problems of unemployment and poverty.

He said that the production of technical human resources is a priority for the government. He said that the government is ready to support the private sector in skill development and production of technical human resources.

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, President of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry and IME Group, said that with the formal operation of this Kathmandu Technical School, IME Group has now moved forward in the field of technical manpower production.

He said that this school will play an important role in providing employment or self-employment to thousands of additional youth.

"We expect this school, established with the goal of ushering in a new era in technical and vocational education in Nepal, to make a positive contribution, especially in employment, education, society, and the overall economy," he said.

"We have set a goal of producing more than 100,000 skilled manpower and professionals in the next decade. For this,

this school will conduct training in more than three dozen employment-oriented and self-employment-oriented disciplines," he said.

He said that the government should also encourage and support the establishment and operation of technical schools and training centers. Stating that the biggest challenge facing Nepal at present is unemployment and youth exodus, Chairman Dhakal said that skill development is the solution.

"Even if you don't want to be employed or self-employed in your home country and want to go abroad, if you have the skills, you can get a good job and a high wage or salary. This will also have a positive impact on the amount of remittances the country currently receives."

Kathmandu Technical School (KTS) Chairman Manoj Poudel said that the school inaugurated today will help in achieving the government's goal of producing 100,000 skilled manpower in the next ten years.

He also said that KTS aims to provide world-class training and education to the youth. This school will not only prepare them for employment abroad, but will also create various opportunities within Nepal, he said.

He said that KTS has adopted a policy of collaborating with local and national industries as well as international partners to enable its students to compete on a global scale.

The program was attended by representatives from the Government of Nepal, the private sector, foreign diplomatic missions and donor agencies, and other stakeholders.

## Global IME Bank Organizes Programs Targeting Students And Youth In All Seven Provinces On The Occasion Of Global Money Week 2025

Global IME Bank Limited has conducted financial literacy programs targeting students and youth on a week-long basis around Global Money Week 2025.

The bank has conducted various financial literacy programs targeting youth and students in all seven provinces.

More than 6,000 students and youth participated in various programs organized by the bank nationwide on the occasion of Global Money Week 2025.

In addition, Global IME Bank employees participated in programs organized by Nepal Rastra Bank and other organizations with banners promoting financial awareness.

Global IME Bank aims to run financial literacy and digital banking promotion programs through all its 355 branches.

The program provides information on topics related to savings, loans, remittances, digital banking, insurance, investments, additional banking services, financial fraud, and financial discipline.



## **FNCCI And CNI Condemn Violence, Demand Compensation To Loss**



The Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce (FNCCI) and Confederation of Nepalese Industries (NI) the Federation of Nepali Industry and Entrepreneurship have condemned the violent incidents perpetrated at Tinkune on Friday, and demanded proper compensation for the damages

caused.

Releasing separate press statements, both business entities demanded stringent action against those involved in the violence. Although everyone has the right to organize and be involved in peaceful demonstrations with demands, they must not violate the rights of citizens and industrialists to carry on their business.

The business entities said their attention was drawn seriously towards the attack on private and public property, looting and arson.

“The loot, arson and attack on private property and loss of human life are condemnable,” the FNCCI wrote.

Likewise, CNI also demanded the action against those who involve in the looting and arsenal and compensation for the damage.

Similarly, another Federation appealed to all sides concerned to create a free and fair atmosphere for running a business. The criminal activities orchestrated at Tinkune and Koteswor area on Friday are deplorable, it added.

The business entities must not be damaged and nor the industrialists attacked, they said, reminding that such activities dent national economy.

## **Global IME Bank Has Released A 2082 BS Calendar Featuring Rare Images That Reflect The Nepali Lifestyle From Decades Ago**

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, President of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry and chairman of Global IME Bank, unveiled the calendar during a function at the bank’s corporate office in Kamaladi.



The calendar showcases rare photographs depicting traditional Nepali customs and practices from the past, serving as a reminder of the changing lifestyles and customs over time and educating

future generations about the historical way of life.

President Dhakal announced the release of the calendar, highlighting Global IME Bank’s commitment to corporate social responsibility through various social initiatives. He emphasized the importance of preserving and promoting Nepali art, literature, culture, and civilization for the overall development of Nepal. The event was attended by the bank’s board of directors, top management, employees, and other guests.

Global IME Bank, the first private sector bank with branches in all seventy-seven districts of Nepal, is also the largest commercial bank in the country based on financial metrics.

The bank operates over 1,100 service centers, including three international liaison/foreign representative offices, across all 77 districts of the country. With a customer base exceeding 5 million, Global IME Bank offers exceptional services and facilities to cater to the needs of all.

Additionally, the bank plays a vital role in the economy by receiving remittances from various countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Malaysia, South Korea, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, India, Jordan, Hong Kong, and more.

## **NIMB Announces The Lucky Winners Of Visa Spend & Win Dashain Campaign**

Nepal Investment Mega Bank (NIMB) is delighted to announce the winners of “Visa Spend & Win Dashain Campaign”, a special initiative launched to reward Visa cardholders for their transactions during the festive season September 17, 2024 to October 31, 2024

Out of the total of 25 lucky winners across Nepal, six of our valued customers have emerged as winners, making us one of the top-performing banks in this nationwide promotion campaign. With 24% of the total winners from NIMB, this achievement highlights the bank’s growing influence in driving digital transactions in Nepal.

Our six lucky winner customers are Mr. Manoj Mohan Pradhan, Mr.NisheshDhungana, MsBinaChalise, MrTika Ram Sharma, MrSarojPrasad Pradhan &MsMeenaKarki.

The “Spend and Win campaign for Dashain” was launched by Visa to promote the use of Visa Debit, Prepaid and Credit Cards issued by Nepal where the winners are rewarded with an exclusive round trip air ticket for two person to popular international destinations.

This campaign is part of our continuous effort to promote card payments and reward our loyal customers for choosing Visa and NIMB for their everyday transactions. We remain committed to providing secure, seamless, and rewarding banking experiences for all.



# The Last Opportunity: The Imperative For Peace And Transitional Justice In Nepal



BY: DR. SURYADHUNGEL

Nepal stands at a critical crossroads in its quest for lasting peace and sustainable development. Despite the refined legal framework introduced through the third amendment to the Transitional Justice (TJ) Act in August 2024, progress on the TJ process had remained stalled—until recently, with the appointment of the Prime Minister’s TJ and Human Rights Adviser and the formation of a new Search Committee. However, the state’s persistent inability to act decisively, coupled with the previous search committee’s failure to recommend members for the two transitional commissions, underscores the urgent need for meaningful intervention. This stagnation undermines not only the prospects for reconciliation and restorative justice but also threatens Nepal’s future stability by risking a recurrence of unresolved conflict. The voices of thousands of victims and their families are fading, largely ignored by both the post-conflict state and the international human rights community, including the United Nations and other global stakeholders.

## The Stalled Preparatory Work

While the latest amendments to the TJ Act demonstrate a formal commitment to addressing past injustices, the state’s preparatory efforts remain paralyzed by bureaucratic delays and political indecision. The previous search committee’s failure to nominate qualified commission members reflects deeper systemic dysfunction and irreconcilable differences among key political leaders over the expected outcomes of the TJ process. Without clear, credible, and efficient mechanisms to advance, victims and affected communities remain side-

lined, and the likelihood of meaningful justice continues to diminish.

The growing disconnect between legal frameworks and their implementation further erodes public trust in political leadership, both domestically and internationally. Administering the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) process, along with providing genuine reparations to thousands of victims and their families, will require skilled, tactful, and politically impartial management. Political interference and biases could exacerbate the situation rather than resolve it.

More than 63,000 complaints remain unopened and unprocessed, with substantial evidence still requiring verification and application. Furthermore, additional complaints—particularly those related to sexual violence—are likely to surface. The burden of ensuring security guarantees and sensitive witness protection measures will be formidable. International standards and comparative experiences in TJ processes, each tailored to unique national contexts, must be taken into careful consideration.

## Lessons from the International Arena

Nepal’s political leadership would do well to learn from global precedents. The recent experience in the Philippines—where former President Rodrigo Duterte faces arrest and intervention by the International Criminal Court (ICC)—serves as a cautionary tale. While Nepal’s situation is distinct, failure to conduct a credible TJ process and address victims’ concerns could

attract similar international scrutiny and consequences, as warned by multiple human rights organizations.

Fairness and transparency in addressing past abuses are not merely legal obligations; they are vital to sustaining domestic legitimacy and securing international support. Last year, the Supreme Court of Nepal referenced observations from the UN Human Rights Committee regarding 59 complaints from Nepal—a stark reminder of the global community’s watchful eye. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), as mandated with its global ‘A’ status, must remain vigilant throughout the TJ process and its eventual implementation.

### The Call for Immediate Action

Key stakeholders, including the NHRCN, have consistently called for urgent action. Continued delays are no longer tolerable. The evolving international landscape, with shifting geopolitical priorities and rising accountability standards, presents unprecedented challenges that Nepal must urgently address. Aligning domestic efforts with global expectations is critical; further inaction will jeopardize Nepal’s progress toward justice and sustainable development. Any further delay by the newly formed Search Committee in recommending credible, competent, and politically neutral commissions will severely undermine resource mobilization and international support. Political party leaders must not underestimate this moment. Fact-finding, truth-seeking, societal engagement in reconciliation, reparations, prosecutorial scrutiny, and guarantees of non-recurrence through institutional reform are all essential pillars of a successful TRC process. Global experiences show the TJ as complex blend of quasi-judicial and non-formal justice mechanisms, while challenging and diverse, however, remains achievable.

Close monitoring by the NHRC, UN mechanisms, victims’ networks, and strict enforcement of witness protection and security measures will be indispen-

sable for its success.

### A Way Forward for Peace

Nepal’s future peace and prosperity are inextricably linked to the timely and just resolution of its transitional justice process. Continued delays will deepen historical wounds and destabilize the fragile progress achieved so far. Recognizing this urgency, the NHRCN and other committed stakeholders stand ready to offer full support and actionable recommendations to accelerate the process.

Drawing on global experiences, Nepal has made commendable efforts through the third amend-

ment of TJ Act in August 2024, to redesign a comprehensive and improved TJ model that places victims at its core—at least in principle. The revised TJ Act provides avenues to integrate restorative, reconciliatory, participatory, reparative, prosecutorial, and reformative justice approaches through both informal and formal mechanisms. Even the ethical justice theory of Ronald Dworkin, which emphasizes fidelity to international transitional justice norms, finds resonance within this legal framework.

**Nepal’s political leadership would do well to learn from global precedents. The recent experience in the Philippines—where former President Rodrigo Duterte faces arrest and intervention by the International Criminal Court (ICC)—serves as a cautionary tale. While Nepal’s situation is distinct, failure to conduct a credible TJ process and address victims’ concerns could attract similar international scrutiny and consequences, as warned by multiple human rights organizations.**

### Conclusion

Nepal must urgently bridge the gap between ambitious legal frameworks and their effective implementation. Doing so will honour the memory of those affected, restore trust in the system, and chart a path toward a future grounded in justice and peace. Nearly two decades of delay have already tested the patience of victims and weakened the nation’s credibility. Failure to act decisively now may result in Nepal permanently losing its last, best opportunity for lasting peace and justice.

*Dr. Surya Dhungel is a professor of law, senior advocate, and currently serves as a Human Rights Commissioner.*

# Mission Aborted

*Foreign Minister Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba's nine-day visit to India was marred by statements from CPN-UML and the Energy Ministry, resulting in an unsuccessful outcome.*

BY KESHAB POUDEL

“Water is fluid, soft, and yielding. But water will wear away rock, which is rigid and cannot yield. As a rule, whatever is fluid, soft, and yielding will overcome whatever is rigid and hard. This is another paradox: what is soft is strong.” Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching.

The wisdom of Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu from the Tao Te Ching is still relevant today, emphasizing the power of softness and flexibility over rigidity and hardness. This philosophy can be applied to navigate challenges in Nepal's relations with its important neighbor.

During her recent visit to India, Foreign Minister Dr. Deuba demonstrated this approach by engaging in pilgrimages and participating in the Raisina Dialogue. She did not mention Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's upcoming Sagarmatha Sambad, an International Climate Dialogue, in her statement. Dr. Deuba also refuted claims by CPN-UML that India plays a role in Nepal's internal politics. Despite her efforts to improve relations as Foreign Minister, Dr. Deuba faced resistance from colleagues in the cabinet.

Nepal's foreign policy agenda has long been influenced by personal preferences, often overlooking the country's deep historical ties and cultural connections. The collaboration and friendship between Nepal and India, rooted in their shared history and traditions, are often emphasized. In religious ceremonies, individuals frequently acknowledge their geographical origins and affiliations, with



Nepalese people commonly chanting “Hari Om Tatsat” to recognize their place within the broader context of Aryavarta in Bharatkhand. This cultural sermon is deeply ingrained in the life cycles of the people.

Despite the strong historical ties and cultural connections, political leaders in Nepal sometimes fail to consider these factors when dealing with India. Each political group has its own agenda, with the UML focusing on attracting voters through anti-Indian rhetoric. During a parliamentary session, Prime Minister Oli used arrogant language to assert his position, further complicating the diplomatic relations between the two countries.

## Friction In Relations

When Foreign Minister Dr.

Deuba arrived in Ranchi, the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources, and Irrigation issued a rebuttal questioning the document signed by Kul Man Ghising, Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority. MD Ghising had signed the document agreed upon by the Secretary of the Ministry during a meeting with his Indian counterpart to revise the tariff of electricity imported from Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand by 1.5 percent.

Despite tariff being a standard business practice where prices are determined by supply and demand, Energy Minister Deepak Khadka proposed a 1.5 percent increase in tariff as a means of national interest.

During a meeting led by Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, con-

cerns were raised about the tariff hike and accusations were made against India for instigating Pro-Monarchy rallies. Foreign Minister Dr. Deuba's efforts to mend relations with India were overshadowed by domestic events in Nepal, despite her upcoming talks with Indian counterpart Dr. S Jaishankar.

PM Oli's unrealistic stance to win domestic votes has hindered FM Dr. Deuba's efforts to improve relations with India.

Despite her soft approach, the initiative was thwarted by unrealistic colleagues in Nepal. Relations between Nepal and India have been strained since the new Nepalese map was promulgated through a constitutional amendment.

### **Nepal's Policy Dilemma**

Despite being in a critical geo-political situation, Nepal's leaders are struggling to implement effective policies that benefit the country and its people. Instead of improving relations, Nepal's policies often create misunderstandings and suspicions.

In a time when global issues like glacier melting and climate change require a unified approach, Nepal announced its plan to host the Sagarmatha Sambaad, an international conference on climate change and glacier melting, without consulting its neighbor, India. This unilateral decision may lead to tensions with neighboring countries and hinder potential resolutions at the conference.

While the idea of hosting a dialogue in Nepal is commendable, the timing and current circumstances are not favorable to promote and protect Nepal's interests.

Foreign Minister Dr. Deuba's meeting with her Indian counterpart did not yield the desired results, as the formal invitation to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the upcoming Sagarmatha Dialogue in Nepal was reportedly not extended.

Efforts to arrange Prime Minister Oli's visit to India have also faced challenges, with recent developments suggesting that the Indian side,



unhappy with Prime Minister Oli and his government, is not keen on improving relations with him.

There is speculation that the decision made by the UML in Kathmandu, while Foreign Minister Deuba is working to improve relations, may have worsened tensions with India.

The UML believes that the demonstration in Kathmandu on Falgun 25 in support of the former king was incited by India. In contrast to the CPN-UML's accusations of Indian involvement in the pro-monarchy rally.

Foreign Minister Dr. Deuba denied any such involvement, stating that she did not see any indication of India trying to replace Nepal's current government. When asked by a journalist, she clarified that India always supports Nepal's democratic system.

She mentioned that there have been no discussions on the matter in India regarding recent political developments in Nepal. However, it is evident that India wants Nepal to uphold its democratic system.

Despite Foreign Minister Dr. Deuba's efforts to mend relations with India, Prime Minister Oli has maintained his stance and position towards India.

### **PM's Arrogant statement**

During a House of Representatives question and answer session, Prime Minister Oli took a confrontational stance on the new map

and EPG Report issues, responding bluntly to diplomatic matters. He has a personal attachment to the new map and Kalapani issue, having been involved in disputes over the Mahakali river sources and Kalapani. In 1996, a committee led by him submitted controversial issues on the Mahakali river sources during the Mahakali treaty ratification.

Nepal has many avenues for successful foreign policy, but it often leans towards an irritating and confrontational approach.

Navita Srikant, closely monitoring Nepal-India relations from New Delhi, noted that the recent meeting between Indian EAM Jaishankar and Nepali FM Dr. Deuba did not yield any significant progress. She emphasized the importance of Nepal addressing India's concerns sensitively and India supporting Nepal's development firmly.

In his book "Kathmandu Chronicle," former diplomat KV Rajan highlights the importance of a strong Nepal, not just for Nepal itself but also for India and for peace in South Asia. India should view Nepal as a partner in its development and offer concessions to rebuild trust. Shashvat Singh, a public policy analyst and sustainability consultant, recommends this book as a valuable resource for understanding the relationship between these two Hindu-majority nations.

# Relations As Usual

*Nepali PM K.P. Sharma Oli and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi Stress Strong India-Nepal Ties*

By KESHAB POUDEL

Following the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2024, Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held their second meeting in Bangkok on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC Summit.

Although the two leaders had a 35-minute one-on-one discussion, no significant achievements were made during the meeting. This came at a time when protests demanding the restoration of the monarchy and Hindu state were gaining momentum across Nepal, including in the capital, Kathmandu. Despite this, PM Oli and PM Modi continued their bilateral talks.

Although PM Oli described the meeting as a success, he has yet to receive an invitation to visit India. In contrast, PM Modi quietly declined Oli's invitation to attend the Sagarmatha Summit, stating, "Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will not be able to attend the Sagarmatha Sambad program organized by Nepal."

At a press conference, Prime Minister Oli explained that his planned visit to India had not materialized for various reasons. Speaking to reporters at Tribhuvan International Airport upon his return from Bangkok, he clarified that the visit was not impossible but had been delayed due to time constraints. Oli also mentioned that if time permits, he hopes to visit India before the Sagarmatha Dialogue.

Oli further shared that his conversation with Prime Minister Modi had been productive and that Modi was pleased with their discussions. He emphasized that both leaders are committed to expanding and improving Nepal-India relations, and even though minor issues may arise between the two countries, there is a strong understanding to resolve them through dialogue.

He also mentioned having a productive conversation with Indian Prime Minister Modi, adding that Modi was pleased with the meeting.

Indian Media

Indian Prime Minister Narendra

Modi met Nepal's Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok and emphasized that New Delhi attaches great importance to its relationship with the Himalayan nation.

After the meeting, Modi described the talks as "productive" and highlighted India's commitment to its ties with Nepal. "Had a productive meeting with Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli in Bangkok. India attaches immense priority to relations with Nepal," Modi wrote on X (formerly Twitter) following the meeting.

"We discussed various aspects of India-Nepal friendship, especially in sectors like energy, connectivity, culture, and digital technology," Modi added.

Modi also discussed the positive outcomes of the BIMSTEC Summit with Oli, covering topics from maritime transport to disaster management.

In their meeting, Prime Minister Modi assured his Nepalese counterpart, K.P. Sharma Oli, that India is fully committed to supporting democracy in Nepal. Sources familiar with the discussions, speaking anonymously, revealed that Modi and Oli held a private one-on-one meeting, without aides present, to allow for a candid conversation between the leaders. During the talks, Modi made it clear that India remains committed to supporting Nepal's democratic journey.

A readout from India's Ministry of External Affairs stated that Nepal is a "priority partner" for India under its "Neighborhood First" policy. The meeting between the two leaders furthered the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two countries. Modi and Oli reviewed the "unique and close" bilateral relationship between India and Nepal, expressing satisfaction with the progress made in enhancing physical and digital connectivity, people-to-people linkages,



and cooperation in the energy sector, according to the readout.

"They agreed to continue working towards further deepening the multifaceted partnership between our two countries and peoples," it added.

Oli, who has had a complex and fluctuating relationship with India during his four terms as prime minister and is seen by some in New Delhi as being close to China, recently voiced concerns over a possible Indian role in the pro-monarchy protests that erupted in Nepal on March 28. Media reports suggested that Oli told a meeting of the ruling Communist Party of Nepal-UML leaders that he would raise the issue in Parliament.

These concerns were reportedly fueled by the appearance of a poster featuring Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath alongside an image of former Nepalese King Gyanendra Shah during the protests. Nepal became a republic in 2008 after a mass movement forced the former king to relinquish power.

In a recent speech in Parliament, Oli accused Shah of inciting the protesters through a video message issued on February 18, in which Shah urged people to support him to secure Nepal's future.

Oli further warned that even the former king would not be spared if he was found to be involved in the recent violence. Nepal's home ministry is currently investigating the protests and is expected to release a report on the matter.

# Flip Flop

*Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's recent visit to Thailand yielded some achievements. However, the step to officially snub the meeting with PM Oli and the King of Thailand left a negative diplomatic impression*

By KESHAB POUDEL

While Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli's recent official visit to Thailand marked a some milestone as the first Nepali prime minister to do so in 65 years, his handling of a key event during the trip has raised concerns.

The manner in which PM Oli and his team conducted the meeting with King Vajiralongkorn of Thailand was perceived as lacking in diplomacy and maturity.

A video shared on various social media platforms by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), and KP Sharma Oli himself, showcasing highlights of the visit, omitted any footage of the meeting with the Thai King.

The video, titled "Diplomacy in Action: Highlights of PM K.P. Sharma Oli's Landmark Visit to Thailand, Forging Stronger Ties," notably excluded the image of PM Oli with King Vajiralongkorn, which was later removed without acknowledgment.

In contrast, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi shared a photo of his meeting with the Thai King on his X account, emphasizing discussions on enhancing the strong friendship between India and Thailand.

Many observers of the visit view the diplomatic conduct exhibited by Nepalese officials, including PM Oli, as a violation of basic diplomatic norms. "While PM Oli and his team may hold differing opinions on monarchy, it is important to show respect to the head of state of another country. In Thailand, the King is held in high regard by the people," stated a former journalist and author of numerous books on diplomacy. "Even official media outlets like The Rising Nepal and Gorkhapatra, two official news paper, did not report on Oli's meeting with the Thai Royal couple in Bangkok."



During his visit to attend the BIMSTEC Summit 2025, Prime Minister Oli met with King Maha Vajiralongkorn of Thailand. As this marks the first visit by a Nepali Prime Minister to Thailand in the 65 years of diplomatic relations, every significant meeting should be acknowledged and publicized.

The lack of such recognition raises concerns among international relations observers and analysts. "Why wasn't the Nepali PM's royal audience with the King given more attention?" questioned Navita Srikant, a development expert and astute observer of Nepal's foreign policy based in New Delhi. "Does PM Oli have reservations about monarchy in any capacity?"

## Achievements of the Thailand Visit

During his official visit to Thailand, PM Oli emphasized that the bilateral relations between Nepal and Thailand have reached a new level. He mentioned that productive discussions were held with Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, focusing on enhancing regional and multi-sectoral cooperation, as well as strengthening bilateral trade, investment, and development in various sectors includ-

ing agriculture, tourism, culture, education, and human resource development.

Given the strong cultural and religious connections between Nepal and Thailand, particularly through Buddhism, both countries agreed to deepen their diplomatic relations by expanding economic and cultural activities.

PM Oli also highlighted that Thailand has pledged to support Nepal's national vision of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali' in key sectors such as agriculture, tourism, infrastructure, and information technology.

Furthermore, Nepal and Thailand have agreed to collaborate in international and regional forums to address common global issues such as climate change, world peace, and sustainable development.

During his visit, PM Oli met with Nepali and Thai entrepreneurs and encouraged them to invest in Nepal. He assured them that the government was committed to making foreign investment easy, safe, and results-oriented.

Although Nepalese leaders have been frequently showing diplomatic immaturity even with close neighbor thawing the relations, the case of Thailand.

# Nepal's Stand

*PM Oli highlighted the importance of BIMSTEC to bring countries of the region together for prosperity*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli addressed the Sixth Summit of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) in Bangkok today.

In his address, the Prime Minister reaffirmed Nepal's commitment to the BIMSTEC Charter and highlighted the multifaceted regional and global challenges, including climate change, economic disparities, and geopolitical uncertainties. He stressed the importance of deeper regional collaboration to address these challenges.

"The global order is being redefined. At this defining moment, BIMSTEC must not only navigate the changing tides but also seize the opportunity to reinvigorate our regional cooperation," he said.

Focusing on the summit theme, "Prosperous, Resilient, and Open BIMSTEC," he emphasized that these three pillars align with the Sustainable Development Goals and resonate deeply with Nepal's national vision of "Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali."

Acknowledging the critical role of the Himalayas as global heat sinks and the existential threats posed by the climate crisis, the Prime Minister invited BIMSTEC leaders to attend the inaugural "Sagarmatha Sambaad" in Kathmandu next month and contribute to its success.

The summit adopted the BIMSTEC Bangkok Vision 2030, the Eminent Persons' Group (EPG) Report, Rules of Procedures for BIMSTEC Mechanisms, and a Joint Statement on the impact of the earthquake in Myanmar and Thailand, as well as the Summit Declaration. The Chairmanship of BIMSTEC was handed over to Bangladesh.

In his address, PM Oli also shed light on various pressing regional and global concerns, such as economic inequality, rising economic risks, and political uncertainty. To address these challenges, he underscored the need for enhanced regional cooperation. The slogan of the BIMSTEC summit reflected Nepal's national ambition of "Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali," he shared.

PM Oli further shared that he also invited the BIMSTEC member countries' Heads for the participation in first edition of Sagarmatha Sambaad going to be organized by Nepal in order to hold a discussion on the environment and other regional and international challenges.

During the BIMSTEC Summit, Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli held meetings with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sri Lankan Prime Minister Dr. Harini Amarasuriya, Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, and Myanmar's Prime Minister Min Aung Hlaing.

PM Oli, leading a Nepali delegation, arrived in Thailand on April 1 for an official visit at the invitation of Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra. The visit was also to attend the Sixth BIMSTEC Summit.

As part of his official engagements, PM Oli held bilateral meetings with Dr. Harini Amarasuriya, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka; Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Chairman of the State Administration Council and Prime Minister of Myanmar; and Dasho Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Bhutan.

During these meetings, the leaders reviewed various aspects of their bilateral relations, characterized by cordial friendships, mutual trust, and growing people-to-people connections. They all stressed the importance of deepening cooperation for mutual benefits, both bilaterally and multilaterally, particularly within the framework of BIMSTEC.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by his spouse, Mrs. Radhika Shakya, Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bishnu Prasad Rimal, Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister, Dr. Yuba Raj Khatriwada, Economic and Development Advisor to the Prime Minister, as well as high-ranking government officials and representatives from the private sector.



In his address to the Summit, he mentioned that climate change has posed an existential threat to entire humanity.

He viewed that the Bangkok Declaration incorporated the issues—of implementing BIMSTEC Vision 2030 for the development, prosperity and sustainability of the BIMSTEC region, utilizing opportunities of economic growth regionally.

Ahead of the Summit, the BIMSTEC ministry-level meeting emphasized the need to approve an action plan focused on human resource development, public health, education, science and technology, and climate change. The meeting also called for swift implementation of these initiatives.



## POLITICAL VIOLENCE

# Culture of Impunity

*Over the past 75 years, Nepal has seen seven different constitutions and four political systems, with violence consistently being used as a means to challenge and overthrow these systems. The 2015 Constitution of Nepal, the sixth in this series, includes references to past violent political movements in its preamble, effectively legitimizing political violence. While all political parties have denounced the recent violent incident in Tinkune, the ruling parties responsible for the new constitution have been less vocal in their condemnation of the violence that occurred during a protest by Pro-monarchists. With the constitution itself acknowledging and even glorifying past violence, there seems to be no end in sight to the culture of impunity in Nepal.*

By KESHAB POUDEL

The blame game between the pro-monarchist and the forces of the current political establishment, both in power and in opposition, is dominating political discussions following a violent incident at a rally of pro-monarchist group in Tinkune, Kathmandu. Despite Nepal's 75-year political transformation from autocratic Rana Rule to the current republican, federal, secular, and inclusive system, there has been little progress towards a peaceful political culture. The Tinkune violence serves as a stark reminder of the challenges facing Nepal's political future.

The 2015 Constitution of Nepal glorifies all forms of political

violence, granting impunity to those involved in political upheavals, making peaceful transitions unlikely in the near future.

By legitimizing political violence as a means for freedom and change, the constitution paves the way for more extreme actions in the future. The saying that the mother of extremism is violent extremism, with no limits, is becoming a reality in Nepal's political landscape.

In response to the demonstrators, including former King, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has announced that the government is considering establishing a legal commission or administrative committee to

investigate the causes of the violence.

Nepal's political trajectory seems to be heading towards more extreme measures.

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has stated that there will be a fair investigation into the violence and use of force during the royalist protests, suggesting that a judicial inquiry may not be necessary. Mishra and Rana, senior leaders of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party, have been detained in a manner deemed humiliating. Despite the arrest of over 30 individuals, including Rabiendra Mishra and Dhabal Sumsher Rana, on sedition charges, the prime minister has hinted at forming a commission to examine the violent



incident that resulted in three deaths, including that of a journalist, and the destruction of public and private property.

### Pressure for an Inquiry Commission

Initially, human rights activists, media outlets, and ruling parties, including the main opposition, strongly criticized and accused the pro-monarchist party of orchestrating the violent chaos. However, with numerous video recordings shared on social media depicting police brutality, the blame is now shifting towards the government and the Ministry of Home Affairs. Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak has consistently blamed the pro-monarchists while defending his ministry.

Lekhak stated, “The police showed great restraint during the violent demonstrations by the monarchists. It was not the security personnel but the monarchists who incited the violence. We will ensure that all perpetrators are held accountable for their actions.”

In contrast, RPP leaders have refuted these claims. Former president of the Rastriya Pajatantra Party (RPP), Pashupati Shamsher Rana, has demanded the immediate release of all political detainees, including Senior Vice President Rabindra Mishra and General Secretary Dr. Dhawal Shamsher Rana.

During a meeting with journalists, Rana expressed concern over the government’s use of force against

peaceful protesters during a recent event in Nepal. The protesters were demanding a constitutional monarchy, an eternal Hindu kingdom, the abolition of federalism, and an end to corruption and misrule. Rana criticized the government for arresting people without valid reasons.

Human rights activists have also criticized the government for its treatment of RPP leaders, including Rabindra Mishra and Dhawal Shumsher Rana, who were reportedly held in police custody in a degrading manner. Charan Prasai, a former member of the National Human Rights Commission, highlighted the lack of democratic principles in the treatment of the detained leaders. He called for a fair

and impartial investigation into the situation. The government is

ring issue, protests and demonstrations are common. The Local Administration Act, 2028 (1971) specifies the conditions under which the police can use force.

It is emphasized that in a situation where peace cannot be maintained and firing becomes necessary, the police should warn the crowd clearly by saying ‘if you don’t move, we will fire’ before taking action. Even in the event of firing, the directive specifies that shots should be aimed below the knee.

However, during a curfew, the Chief District Officer has the authority to instruct the police to open fire on individuals or groups violating the curfew to restore order.

Former security officials are advocating for an impartial and neutral investigation into the violence that occurred during the pro-monarchist demonstration on March 28.

Former General of Nepal Army, Sudarshan Silwal, stresses the importance of the state preparing comprehensive plans in advance for



facing mounting pressure to establish an inquiry commission to investigate the violence that occurred

on March 28. In Nepal, where political instability is a recur-

such demonstrations and ensuring that security agencies are adequately equipped with resources.

He points out that the dissemination of false and misleading

information through social media has exacerbated the challenges, highlighting that traditional crowd management methods are no longer as effective.

Silwal emphasizes the need for security personnel to be provided with adequate resources, training, and motivation, which are currently lacking, especially considering the dangers they face when protesters resort to violence by throwing stones, bricks, rods, and even petrol bombs.

Former administrators also highlight the security forces' limited ability to control crowds effectively. Former Home Secretary Mainali emphasized the importance of providing

have raised concerns about the violent and chaotic demonstration by supporters of the former king in Tinkune, Kathmandu on March 28, attributing the situation to weaknesses on both sides. They have called for an impartial investigation into the incident.

The government announced last week that the campaign led by Durga Prasai, which sparked the violent demonstration in the capital, would also hold the former king accountable.



The Home Administration estimated that around 3,000 to 4,000 individuals participated in the protest, which escalated beyond expectations.

Law enforcement has apprehended over 50 individuals linked to the incident, with some facing investigations for charges of treason and organized crime. The police are actively seeking Durga Prasai, believed to be the protest's commander.

Former Home Secretary Mainali criticized the security forces for failing to adequately assess the potential risks of the protest location. He highlighted that the chosen site near the airport posed significant dangers due to crucial services, international flights, and flammable tankers in the vicinity. The protest's proximity to Tribhuvan International Airport led to the suspension of flight landings for nearly an hour and a half.

The government is addressing the aftermath of protests and ensuring accountability for violence. Protesters caused airport disruptions, leading to flight suspensions. Former officials question intelligence failure and security response. Impartial i

Investigation needed. Former security officials suggest questioning roles of security forces and home administration. Deployment of 5,000 security personnel targeted both groups. Former AIG of Nepal Police raises concerns about managing the situation.

If the person leading the protest was known to potentially incite violence, the government should not



security personnel with the necessary tools and resources to handle situations without resorting to extreme measures like opening fire. He stressed the need for political movements to be managed politically and for those in power to address these issues.

Home administration officials claim that they are gradually equipping security forces with resources and tools. They acknowledge the importance of working within resource constraints, renewing equipment, and adopting new technologies to enhance security measures.

Former security officials

### Tinkune Incident

In a recent demonstration that turned violent, resulting in the deaths of two individuals, including a television journalist, over 100 people were injured, including security personnel. Approximately 20 individuals were struck by gunfire, with some claiming they were not even part of the protest. Several of the injured are in critical condition and are receiving treatment at various hospitals in the capital.

The protest also led to incidents of arson, vandalism, and looting in the vicinity, with media offices being targeted as well.



have granted permission for the protest, or if it did, the protest should have been held in an open area. I believe the events were planned. An investigation should be conducted to identify those responsible, and the Nepal government and the Home Minister should take accountability for the situation.

“The events on Friday have raised numerous questions,” he stated, emphasizing the need for an impartial investigation conducted by neutral parties, not affiliated with the Prime Minister.

As incidents of looting and arson escalated in various areas, the authorities deployed the army on the streets on Friday.

Sudarshan Silwal, a retired Nepal Army Officer, pointed out the visible weaknesses on both sides. He suggested that security forces must analyze critical situations and develop a risk mitigation plan. The state should prepare a comprehensive plan in advance and ensure proper implementation to prevent such incidents.

While maintaining peace and order is the government’s responsibility, he also stressed that those exercising their constitutional right to protest must take responsibility for their actions.

#### ‘Criminal Offense’

The Home Ministry spokesperson, Ramchandra Tiwari, stated that the incident on Friday is related to criminal offenses, and the police are currently investigating the matter. He emphasized that past protests have seen people throwing objects at government vehicles out of passion, and this incident is being treated as a criminal act.

Security officials are justifying their decision to permit the rally at Tinkune, stating that they did not expect it to turn violent. The police maintain that the organizers had no intention of holding a peaceful event and that protesters were incited to advance towards the Parliament Building. The police used tear gas, warning shots, and live bullets to control the situa-

tion, citing attempts to cause damage to sensitive structures and harm police officers.

**Accountability Requested**  
After Fatal Incident During the recent incident on Friday, Avenue TV cameraman Suresh Rajak tragically lost his life due to burns, and 29-year-old Sabin Maharjan from Kirtipur was fatally shot. As per the latest reports, nearly a dozen individuals are still undergoing treatment.

#### Calls for Accountability

Some security experts are questioning the use of lethal force by the state to quell the protest.

Former Additional Inspector General (AIG) of Nepal Police, Rajendra Bahadur Singh, has urged the government to investigate the circumstances leading to the police firing and provide a transparent response.

Reflecting on the 2006 People’s Movement, Singh recalled, “During that period, we were instructed not to use force against protesters. We didn’t even arm the police. Their

role was to manage crowds and build trust with the people.”

“Even when former Maoist rebels, who had been involved in internal killings during the armed conflict, joined the People’s Movement, the situation remained under control,” he added.

“The current concerns being raised are troubling. The police must

threw stones at the police and engaged in stone-throwing and arson at private homes.

To control the crowd, the police used water cannons, fired warning shots, and deployed tear gas. The Human Rights Commission also noted that tear gas was used near private residences, with some videos on social media suggesting that tear gas



remain impartial. When the police are present, protesters should feel protected. We must operate within the boundaries of the law, acting as a bridge between both sides.”

Security Options Limited in the Face of Violence and Chaos Former Home Secretary Mainali believes that the security forces had limited options in dealing with the violence and chaos during Friday’s protest.

He stated, “Until the administration takes strict measures against violent mobs, peace and security cannot be maintained. Shooting at a crowd is risky and often leads to tragic outcomes.”

The National Human Rights Commission reported that protesters breached the police barricade at Tinkune and clashed with security forces while attempting to enter the restricted area towards New Baneshwor. They

was fired from the roof of one of these houses.

Former AIG of Nepal Police, Rajendra Bahadur Singh, believes that the protesters were provoked after tear gas was directed at their stage.

Mainali believed that in certain situations, tear gas might be necessary during crowd control, but he strongly opposed the use of a private house to launch tear gas. Former AIG Singh questioned the need to fire tear gas from a roof when the police had already bravely handled large protests. He emphasized that the police should only be on a roof to protect VIPs and not enter private homes.

Mainali also noted that the proper process of warning and communicating with the crowd through a microphone was not followed, which may have led to the escalation when tear gas and bullets were used.

During a press conference, the police spokesperson clarified that tear gas was not fired from civilian homes and that the tear gas used was not expired. The Ministry of Home Affairs has directed the police to investigate the matter with sensitivity in response to the concerns raised.

Durga Prasai, appointed as the ‘Janacommander’ by the United People’s Movement Committee, is currently wanted by the police, raising questions about his actions.

A video that went viral on social media shows a man driving into a restricted area and trying to break through police barriers after clashes had begun at Tinkune. Former Home Secretary Mainali expressed concern over the incident, stating that if the vehicle had posed a threat to the police, it could have led to a dangerous situation. Former AIG Singh also criticized the man’s actions, suggesting that he should have been stopped from entering the restricted area. Police spokesperson Acharya confirmed that the man was arrested but could not be taken

away due to the large crowd present.

Prasai, known for his controversial statements, transitioned from running a medical college to politics. He was once aligned with Maoist Chairman Prachanda and Prime Minister Oli but now advocates for the reinstatement of the monarchy and a Hindu nation.

His social media posts, which often target business figures and political leaders, have raised concerns about potential threats. Analysts criticize the security forces for not taking adequate measures in response to these perceived threats.

As long as the culture of political impunity continues to overshadow legitimacy and the rule of law, political violence cannot be prevented. It is essential for all political forces to uphold the principles of rule of law and justice.

# Sagarmatha Sambad: Likely Bearing The Fruits



BY: BATU UPRETY

High-level initiative with an established domestic coordination mechanism to organise three-day Sagarmatha Sambad on 16-18 May 2025 is expected to draw the attention of the mountain stakeholders and international communities for the protection of the mountain resources from the adverse impacts of climate change. The Government of Nepal (GoN) made a decision to organise this 'multi-stakeholder, and cross-sectoral global dialogue forum' on 'climate change, mountains and future of humanity'. The GoN has planned to organise this platform every two years.

Previously planned to be held from 2 to 4 April 2020 as per the decision of 27 January 2020, Sagarmatha Sambad was postponed due to Covid-19 through a government decision on 1 March 2020.

In the recent years, glaciers around the globe are disappearing faster. About 9,000 gigatons of ice has been estimated lost from glaciers since 1975. This loss reached to about 450 gigatons in 2024 alone. The dramatic ice loss will likely intensify economic, environmental and social challenges across the world.

Himalayas and mountains are facing multifold impacts from climate change. Glaciers are melting fast. Climate-fuelled disasters are increasing over the years and will further accelerate polycrisis as glaciers are critical source of water for drinking, agriculture production, hydropower generation and recreation, including waste management and industrial production. ICIMOD informs about 65% increase in glacier mass loss during 2010-2019 period, as compared to the precious decade.

Mountain glaciers are considered one of the largest contributors to sea level rise, targeting millions at risk. Billions of people are connected to glaciers for water security and hence, glaciers require utmost attention for early protection.

Realising the urgency for protecting the glaciers, the 2025 is observed as the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation to raise awareness about the importance of

snow-capped Himalayas and fast depleting glaciers, role of glaciers in maintaining climate system and water security, and need for amplifying actions to preserve the fast-receding glaciers. The international community also observed the first World Day for Glaciers on 21 March 2025.

On 21 January 2025 - start of the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation, Right Hon. Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli announced the date to convene the Sagarmatha Sambad. The Council of Ministers decided on 03 February 2025 to organise it from 16 to 18 May 2025. To expedite the process, a 13-member Steering Committee, coordinated by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister has been constituted for policy guidance. A Management Committee has been established under the coordination of Hon. Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Hon. Minister for Forests and Environment shall function as its co-coordinator, including a secretariat which will be coordinated by the Secretaries of the Office of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers, and the Ministry of Forests and Environment.

The three-day Sagarmatha Sambad will provide participants opportunities to share country perspectives, experiences and learnings, issues, concerns, ideas, priorities and required climate actions, through 4 plenaries, and 12 parallel sessions under five themes namely: (i) beyond mountains: linking mountain to ocean; (ii) green economy; (iii) averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage; (iv) climate justice and humanity; and (v) global and regional partnership.

Four plenary sessions are designed to share national and sub-national to international level experiences, practices and learning with particular focus on: (i) ecosystem services: recognition, respect and reward; (ii) climate-induced disasters: risk reduction and resilience; (iii) innovative climate and carbon financing; and (iv) Sagarmatha Sambad Declaration.

The parallel sessions will concentrate presentations and discussions around: (i) urgency of 1.50C ambi-

tion for glaciers' preservation; (ii) connecting highlands to islands; (iii) food security and climate resilience agriculture; (iv) community-led climate initiatives in the mountains; (v) powering the future: harnessing clean energy; (vi) exploring nature, culture and adventure in the mountains; (vii) mountain risk assessment and monitoring; (viii) addressing loss and damage in the mountains; (ix) sustainable cities and communities; (x) building an inclusive future: gender and inter-generational equity; (xi) bridging science and technology for mountain resilience; and (xii) sustaining mountain economy for concrete outcomes, including the next steps in addressing the adverse impacts of climate change in the mountains.

To effectively organise this event and for desired outcomes, the Steering Committee and Management Committee have met, discussed on issues and priorities. High-level engagement is expected to mobilise all possible means and resources for meaningful participation and outcomes. Meetings and consultations have been organised with the development partners, experts, and stakeholders, including a virtual meeting by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with its diplomatic missions abroad in the recent past. Ministers and concerned government officials attending the conferences and meetings abroad have also extended invitations to relevant dignitaries. The organiser has expected participation of the Head of State or the Government from, ministers for foreign affairs and environmental ministers from mountain countries, 60 experts and panellists, and about 90 participants, representing the UN and international organisations and regional bodies. Delegates and representatives from nearly 50 countries are expected to attend this event. Newspapers mention government invitation to about 350 foreigners.

Recalling the launching of the Mountain Initiative (MI) as per the call to the mountain countries ("to come together, form a common platform and collectively raise concerns in the international arena ..) of the then Right Hon. Prime Minister at UNFCCC's CoP 15 held at Copenhagen in 2009, the government decided to organise the international conference of mountain countries on climate change on 4-5 October 2010. Nepal invited 51 countries, excluding representatives from UN and international and regional multilateral bodies, and experts. Nepal's sincere and continuous effort did not work and it was postponed due to 'low response for participation' of several mountainous countries. The government organised this

international conference on 5-6 April 2012 and it adopted the Kathmandu Call for Action (KCA) which agreed, inter alia, to "give continuity to MI, organise the next conference and develop the programme of work to carry forward the KCA" (<https://www.spotlightnepal.com/2020/02/25/sagarmatha-sambaad-towards-climate-friendly-development/>).

Further recalling the experience of planned 2010 conference, our request to the then Rt. Hon. Prime Minister of Nepal in February 2012 was to ensure participation of the neighbouring countries at political level but their participation turned to bureaucratic level.

Taking note of the level of engagement in organising the event, one might hope for high-level participation in the Sagarmatha Sambaad to be held in May 2025. It is mostly likely that the outcomes of the Sagarmatha Sambaad may offer Nepal additional opportunities to effectively engage and include mountain agenda in the climate change negotiation processes, preferably through the UNFCCC, KP and the Paris Agreement. However, Nepal's increased gaps amongst 'doing, saying and forgetting the previous initiatives or good practices' and recent repeated concerns on 'compensation' might distract the greenhouse gas (GHG) emitters, having historical responsibilities, and new emitters to effectively participate in the Sambaad at the political level and support Nepal, mountain countries and people to fight against climate change impacts.

Recalling the efforts of the then Prime Minister and UN Secretary-General in 2023 during CoP 28 at Dubai, UN Secretary-General's expression on the adverse impacts of climate change in the Nepal Himalayas both at Nepal and Dubai, and call of the Rt. Hon. President at Baku, Azerbaijan (CoP29) there is some hope for high level participation at the Sagarmatha Sambaad. However, climate change negotiation has much been a political and economic issue.

Noting the state of implementation of the previous initiatives, including the 2012 Kathmandu Call for Action, let us hope that there will be a dedicated follow-up and commitment for the the implementation of the Sambaad Declaration individually, jointly or collectively through collaborative efforts in a more coordinated manner. Let us also hope that the Sagarmatha Sambaad will bear a "bud" that may grow-up through the climate negotiation processes for the long-term supply of delicious fruit(s), with full of energy, to the mountains, its resources and people.



KUL MAN GHISING

# Bowing Down To The People

*Kul Man Ghising, the former Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), expressed his gratitude to the people for their overwhelming support and love. He mentioned that he is humbly acknowledging the people's justice by bowing down to them.*

By KESHAB POUDEL

During his time as the Managing Director of NEA, Kul Man Ghising revolutionized Nepal's energy sector, greatly improving electricity access to over 99 percent of the population. He boosted transmission capacity and increased revenue through electricity exports. Ghising successfully eliminated long power outages, a significant achievement in Nepal's energy industry. Despite his notable accomplishments, Ghising was unexpectedly dismissed just three months before completing his four-year term. He remained steadfast in his commitment to serving the public interest and resisted pressure from the Prime

Minister and Energy Minister to waive dues owed by industrialists who benefited from dedicated feeders during power cuts. Minister Khadka, a proponent of hydropower, proposed opening the Power Purchase Agreement for 5000 MW of electricity, but Ghising opposed the idea due to insufficient transmission and distribution capacity.

Since the beginning, some commission agents and hydro-power magnates, who financially support political leaders and parties, have been dissatisfied with Kul Man Ghising. Eventually, they succeeded in having him removed from his position as Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA).

Ghising, who was ousted, claimed that his dismissal was a result of his refusal to comply with

instructions that exceeded legal boundaries. "I express my gratitude to the people who have stood by me. It was a privilege to serve the people and the nation," Ghising remarked.

He elaborated, "From the

dedicated feeders."

After serving as Managing Director for seven and a half years, Ghising received strong support from the people. He expressed gratitude for the Nepali people's



start, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Energy, Water Resources, and Irrigation pressured me to waive Rs. 24 billion in outstanding dues from specific industrial entities. I faced continuous and relentless pressure on this matter for the past eight months. However, I firmly believed that it is the legal duty of whoever holds power to collect the Rs. 24 billion owed for utilizing the

unwavering support in his efforts to improve the country's electricity situation.

Ghising highlighted the successful elimination of load-shedding and the significant increase in electricity access as the key accomplishments of his tenure. He affirmed his commitment to continuing his work for the betterment of Nepal.

In response to the public's



backing and acknowledgment of his contributions, Ghising emphasized his dedication to brightening Nepal and combating any obstacles that hinder progress.

Despite his recent dismissal, Ghising acknowledged the warm reception from the people and their appreciation for his work, despite the government's actions.

During a press conference, Ghising clarified that his dismissal was due to a disagreement over dedicated and trunk lines, which led to his removal from office.

He refuted the government's claims of lack of accountability and failure to collect dues, explaining that his dismissal occurred when he sought approval for toll collection.

I was under constant pressure and received orders that hindered my ability to collect tolls," he explained.

Ghising refuted claims of being associated with the Maoist party, stating that he has no ties to any political faction. "I am not

aligned with any individual or political party. I am a public servant and I serve the people," he emphasized.

When asked about the possibility of entering politics, Ghising replied, "If the opportunity arises, I am willing to take on any responsible role for the nation." He concluded by stating that the support and affection from the people mean more to him than anything else. "Despite the humiliation of my dismissal, the encouragement and admiration from the public have been a source of solace. The people are paramount, and they have vindicated me," Ghising remarked. "My achievements as Managing Director in enhancing and fortifying the electricity supply in the country are evident to the Nepali populace," he added.

#### NEA's Board Decision

The decisions made during the initial board meeting, led by Minister Khadka with the

new Managing Director, Hitendra Shakya, provide insight into the potential future direction of the NEA.

The meeting granted the board of directors authority over the MD, specifically regarding the transfer of employees at the 10th level. The board also approved the opening of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for 5000 MW of electricity, a key priority for Minister Khadka. Additionally, the board decided to conduct a review of all bills charged by NEA to business houses to ensure



their validity and authenticity. Furthermore, NEA decided not to disconnect power to industries that had outstanding dues.

### Ghising Removed by Government

The government has dismissed Kul Man Ghising from his position as Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) and appointed Hiten-dradev Shakya as his successor.

Ghising was appointed as MD of NEA for a four-year term in late Ashar 2078 BS. Since the formation of the government under the leadership of UML Chairman KP Sharma Oli, with the support of the Nepali Congress in July of the previous year, there have been multiple attempts to remove Ghising from his position. Energy Minister Khadka had requested clarification on Ghising's removal three times.

In response, Ghising stated that the ministry did not have the authority to request clarification, as the Council of Ministers had already sought an explanation from him three weeks ago. The Council of Ministers, which convened on Monday evening, removed him from his position, stating that the explanation provided was unsatisfactory.

Prime Minister Oli and Energy Minister Khadka had been making statements in Parliament and public forums that undermined the dignity of their positions, specifically targeting Ghising.

As the power supply decreased, Ghising started disconnecting electricity lines to industrialists who had not paid their dues on dedicated feeders and trunk lines. Business groups, opposed to these actions, were determined to oust Ghising by any means necessary.

The dues on the dedicated trunk lines had reached Rs 21 billion, as per the Auditor General's an-



nual report, and have now increased to around Rs 30 billion.

Ghising faced government scrutiny after he refused to comply with Prime Minister Oli and Minister Khadka's plan to waive these dues. Following his removal as Executive Director, criticism of the government's actions has been widespread. Ghising's abrupt dismissal as MD of NEA could have significant negative repercussions.

As Kul Man Ghising, the Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority, continues his inspection visits to various parts of Nepal to oversee power supply management, the government is once again gearing up to replace him.

Due to his successful efforts in ending prolonged power outages and his commitment to ensuring a reliable electricity supply, MD Ghising continues to enjoy high public esteem. His removal from office

could have significant political repercussions, particularly as support for the monarchy is on the rise. Given his strong public support, Ghising's dismissal may trigger widespread protests against the government and ruling parties.

On the morning of March 24, MD Ghising was en route to remote areas of Chitwan District to inaugurate electricity distribution in Chepang settlements. Over the past week, he had also visited Birgunj, ChandraNigahapur, and other locations in Nepal to accelerate the construction of transmission lines, including the 400 kV Chapur-Hetauda section.

However, a coalition led by Energy Minister Khadka, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, and influential figures in Kathmandu decided to oust MD Ghising, marking the end of an era.



# The Time To Reminisce And Reiterate



BY: DR. KISHOR UPRETY

In an opinion published in Spotlight Magazine, in June 2013 (“Once Upon a Time”), I had dared contest the erroneous decision by leaders to bring in a completely new structure of governance as designed, drafted and dotted in the haunts, mainly because it was drawn and implemented by totally frustrating the process of change (in substance, form and method). Therein, I had also dared to predict the hurdles that could ensue in implementing the decision and, at some point that everybody would come to regret it.

That prediction was the sequel to an observation made two years earlier in Spotlight Magazine, in February 2011 (“Managing Equal Right to Development”) which flagged that “in any form of government, the nexus between equal right to develop (meaning without discrimination) and political governance (meaning without exclusion) had to be obvious”, and that it provided “a way of guaranteeing a much-needed holistic development”.

The time is ripe, it appears, for that 2013 prediction to be considered somehow merited and no less premonitory. Indeed, years have gone by, and the change as promised has failed to firmly establish. Problems looming large in those days reverberate in all ages, all directions, and all sectors. Certainly, the blame games also continue proliferating in all directions, including against personages that existed more than three centuries ago, of course, a tactic easily available to camouflage failures and save face. However, the efforts targeted by such tactical reactions may simply be futile, as the fault does not actually lie only in contradicting political and ideological beliefs, individual thinking’s, and traditional institutions. It mainly lies in the acts that were ultra vires and were carried with ill-intentioned and willful negligence of the conventional process.

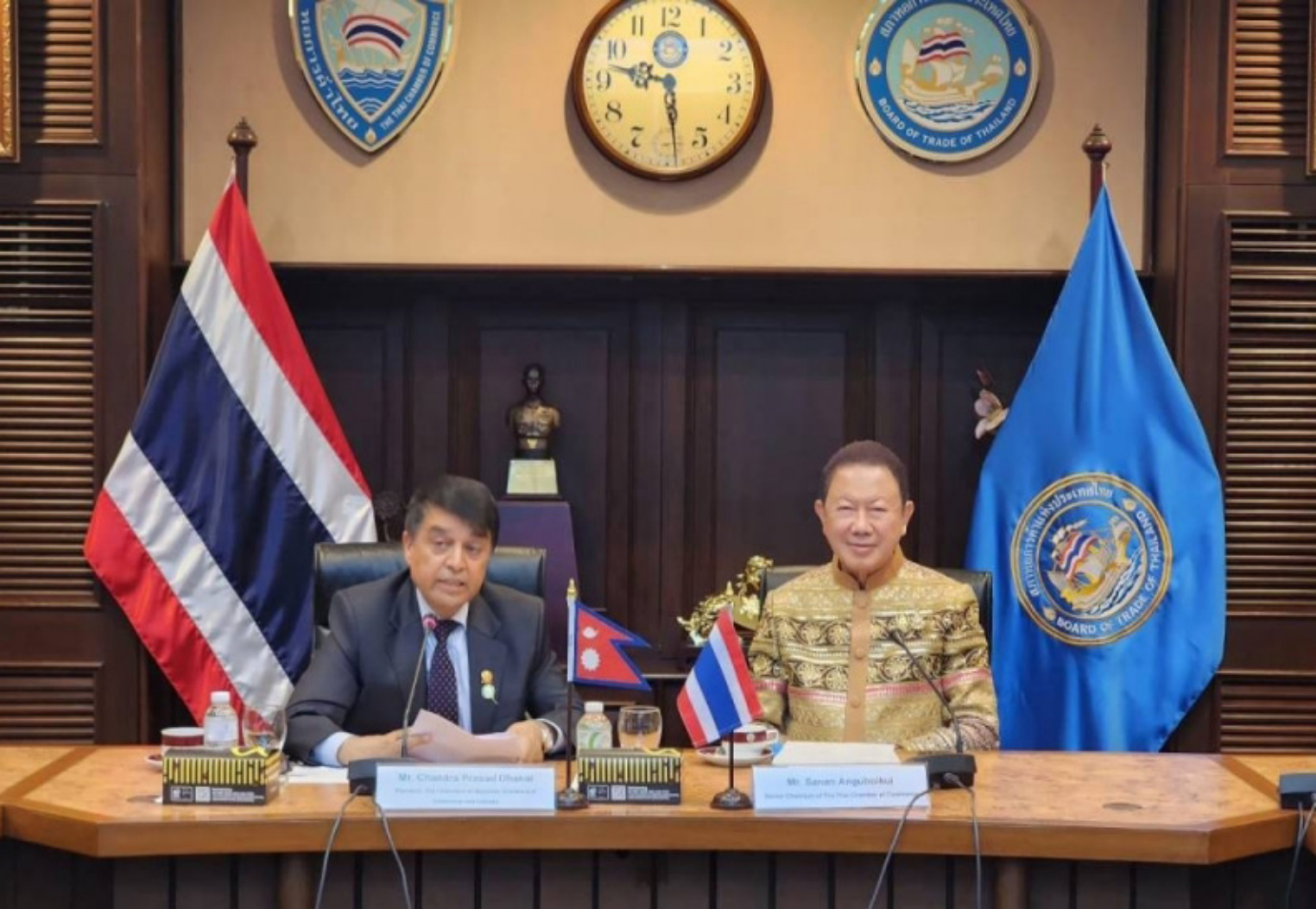
“When science stops, philosophy pauses, faith begins” is a popular adage. The adage, ingrained in the minds of all those who think (hence those who exist, to recall Descartes), resonates well in the current time, where a faith-based alternative proposal is gaining momentum. Logically, therefore, those who opt to follow a path, without leaving the country, that they believe can ultimately save them, cannot be alienated for merely enjoying their inherent and fundamental rights to think and to make a

choice. They cannot be chastised for seeking what they see as a guarantee for their personal and social security and economic opportunity, and the only possibility for them to upgrade livelihood - something the issuers of the multiple ideological promissory notes in the past could not honor. Rather, their choice should be revered amid the dreadful wave of emigration causing ancestral lands to be barren, societies to be without a youth force, basic civility to be bereft of culture, and senior lineage forced to forego their descendants forever.

Clearly, the science of politics has stopped, as the method of calculation based on it has been wrecked due to multiple horizontal as well as vertical hybridization of ideologies and affiliations blurring the electorates’ vision in making a political choice. Philosophy has paused, as the thinkers have started pre-negotiating their comments and opinions to monopsonistic merchants of power, that too in an environment where their views have only an ‘advisory’ not ‘recommendatory’ status; opinions and views thus completely lacking in influence and limited to agenda item for week-end living-room gossips and iPhone entertainment. The gaps in the labyrinth of prevailing confusion are being filled now by ‘faith’ a notion that needs no testing. A sort of individually perceived truth, engraved deeply in the heart and mind of the believers, who remain undeterred and leave themselves free from all views, vents, and vibes of the faithless ones.

Certainly, it is possible to gain a few leagues by inculcating an illusion amongst the many who cannot lead and only need to be led. But, even there, the distance must be clear and must have a limit. The followers cannot continue to permanently remain as a class-organization-in-waiting. There comes a time when they would want to see what was being proposed and verify the exactitude of what has been delivered. In simple terms, they would want to ensure that despite the dicey setting, a functional equilibrium acceptable to all (citizens, civil society, and varying claimant groups) has been established; a daunting task in a context where demands have been aplenty and imbued with hidden meanings!

*The author can be contacted via [Kshitiz@juno.com](mailto:Kshitiz@juno.com)*



## NEPAL-THAILAND

# Joint Business Council

*FNCCI President Chandra Prasad Dhakal Takes Lead in Establishing Nepal-Thailand Joint Business Council*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, the President of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), has shown exceptional leadership in strengthening international business relationships, particularly with Thailand. Under his guidance, FNCCI has expanded its involvement beyond national boundaries, in line with his vision to promote Nepal's economic ties with other nations.

In a strategic move to boost bilateral trade, Dhakal initiated the

formation of a Joint Business Council (JBC) between Nepal and Thailand. This council is designed to facilitate Thai investments in Nepal, focusing on trade, tourism, and cultural exchanges. The establishment of this council is expected to significantly enhance Nepal's trade connections with Thailand, a country with great potential for expanding business and tourism partnerships.

President Dhakal facilitated a crucial meeting between prominent business figures from Thailand and

Nepal, along with Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. During this meeting, PM Oli invited Thai investors to explore investment opportunities in various sectors across Nepal.

During PM Oli's trip to Thailand, two significant memoranda of understanding (MoUs) will be signed, with a focus on tourism and cultural cooperation between the two nations. Additionally, a six-point agreement will be signed in the presence of both Prime Ministers, aimed at strengthening collaboration in the non-govern-

mental sector.

The establishment of the Nepal-Thailand Joint Business Council is a significant milestone in enhancing bilateral economic relations, with FNCCI and the Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade of Thailand working together to finalize the council's structure.

During a crucial meeting between FNCCI President Chandra Prasad Dhakal and Sanan Angubolkul, President of the Board of Trade of Thailand, along with senior officials from both nations, the FNCCI proposed the creation of a Joint Business Council (JBC) to strengthen business connections and promote long-term cooperation.

President Dhakal stressed that the council would serve as a dedicated platform for continuous dialogue, partnership, and exploration of new business prospects. "Nepal offers abundant untapped potential and numerous investment opportunities. The establishment of the Joint Business Council will boost our bilateral ties and drive economic growth in both countries," he remarked.

Dhakal reiterated FNCCI's dedication to facilitating Thai investment in Nepal, pointing out recent changes to key laws aimed at fostering a more investment-friendly climate.

He also highlighted the government's assurance of investment security, providing further confidence to potential investors.

He emphasized the growth potential in key sectors of Nepal, such as tourism, energy, agriculture, information technology, and construction. Dhakal encouraged Thai businesses to explore opportunities for joint ventures in these industries and invited Thai business leaders to visit Nepal to assess the possibilities firsthand. He also called on the President of the Thai Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade to support the implementation of an on-arrival visa process for Nepali nationals.

Anjan Shrestha, Senior Vice President of FNCCI, expressed confidence in the Joint Business Council's ability to drive economic development in both countries. He assured that FNCCI would collaborate closely with the Nepali government to simplify the investment process for foreign investors.

An agreement has been made to establish the Joint Business Council (JBC), with FNCCI Director General Gokarna Raj Awasthi and Vibeke Lyssand Leirvag, President of the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce in Thailand, tasked with the next steps. This follows the formation of the Ne-

pal-Qatar Joint Business Council on April 24, 2024, with the first meeting at the presidential level held in Doha on October 2, 2024.

Sanan Angubolkul, President of the Thai Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade, expressed full support for FNCCI's proposals and confirmed readiness to collaborate. He also committed to working with the Thai government to streamline the visa process for Nepali citizens upon arrival.

The meeting was attended by FNCCI Vice Presidents Hemraj Dhakal and Jyotsna Shrestha, Executive Committee member Pashupati Dev Pandey, and representatives from the Thai Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade of Thailand.

Earlier in the week, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Bangkok between FNCCI and the Thai Chamber of Commerce in the presence of Prime Minister Oli and Thai Prime Minister Phetongtran Shinawatra to strengthen trade and business ties.

During his tenure as President of FNCCI, Dhakal has successfully inked numerous bilateral agreements with various nations to promote investment in Nepal. These efforts have positioned FNCCI as a key player in driving development.



# Trump's Tariffs And The Dawn Of Multipolarity: Implications For Nepal



BY: ZAKIR KIBRIA

On April 2, 2025, U.S. President Donald Trump declared a “Liberation Day” by imposing sweeping tariffs—a 10% baseline levy on all imports and “reciprocal” tariffs exceeding 50% on key trading partners like China (34%), the EU (20%), and India (26%). While Nepal faces a lower 10% baseline tariff, the ripple effects of this protectionist shift threaten to destabilise its fragile economy, which relies heavily on remittances, tourism, and cross-border trade with India and China. This essay examines the geopolitical and economic ramifications of Trump’s policies for Nepal, emphasising pathways for resilience in a fragmenting global order.

## The Tariff Plan: Mechanics and Nepal’s Position

Trump’s two-tiered tariff regime includes:

- 1 A universal 10% tax on all imports, effective April 5.
- 2 Reciprocal tariffs on 60 nations, calculated as half the rate the U.S. claims these countries impose on American goods .

## Nepal’s Tariff Exposure:

Nepal faces a 10% baseline tariff on exports to the U.S., as the White House claims Nepal imposes a 10% average duty on U.S. goods . While this rate is lower than those applied to India (26%) or Bangladesh (37%), Nepal’s niche exports—such as hand-knotted carpets, pashmina, and garments—could still suffer reduced competitiveness in the U.S. market, which accounted for \$112 million in exports in 2024 .

## Key Vulnerabilities:

- Remittances: Over 28% of Nepal’s GDP comes from remittances, largely from Gulf nations. If U.S. energy tariffs pressure Gulf economies to curtail hiring, Nepal’s remittance inflows could decline sharply .
- Import Inflation: Nepal sources 65% of its goods from India and China. Tariff-driven supply chain disruptions

could raise prices for essentials like fuel, medicine, and machinery .

- Tourism: A global recession triggered by trade wars may reduce foreign tourist arrivals, which rebounded to 1.2 million in 2024 post-pandemic .

## Global Reactions and Nepal’s Strategic Dilemma

**Retaliatory Measures:** Major economies like the EU, China, and Canada have pledged counter-tariffs, risking a \$900 billion drop in global trade by 2025. Nepal, however, lacks the economic heft to retaliate and must navigate this turbulence through diplomacy and regional alliances.

**Institutional Erosion:** The WTO warned that Trump’s policies violate global trade rules, but U.S. dominance limits the body’s enforcement power. For Nepal, this underscores the urgency of diversifying beyond Western-centric frameworks.

## Nepal in the Crosshairs: Sectoral Impacts

### 1 Textiles and Carpets:

- The U.S. is Nepal’s third-largest carpet buyer (\$48 million in 2024). A 10% tariff could force Nepali exporters to absorb costs or lose market share to Pakistani and Iranian rivals .
- Opportunity: Leverage Nepal’s “ethical manufacturing” branding to appeal to conscious consumers in Europe and Asia .

### 2 Agriculture:

- Tariffs on Indian exports (e.g., rice, machinery) may disrupt Nepal’s supply chains, raising input costs for farmers.
- Mitigation: Accelerate partnerships with Bangladesh under BBIN (Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal) to access alternative markets .



## ARTICLE

reforms to protect least-developed countries (LDCs) from unilateral tariffs .

### Case Study: Nepal's Carpet Industry

Nepal's carpet sector employs over 1.2 million workers, mostly women. A 10% U.S. tariff could erase \$5 million in annual profits, jeopardizing livelihoods. To adapt:

- Shift to Premium Markets: Target EU luxury buyers by certifying carpets as “child-labor-free” and eco-friendly.
- Domestic Innovation: Use AI-driven looms to reduce production costs by 15% .

### Crisis as Catalyst for Self-Reliance

Trump's tariffs are a wake-up call for Nepal to reduce dependency on volatile global markets and embrace its role in a multipolar Asia. By prioritising regional integration, digital sovereignty, and climate-smart trade, Nepal can transform this challenge into an opportunity for equitable growth. As the adage goes, “Aama le bhane jasto garne, aaphno lagi garne” (Act in your own interest, as your mother advises).

***\*Zakir Kibria is a writer and nicotine fugitive. Entrepreneur |Policy Analyst|***

Chronicler of Entropy | Cognitive Dissident. “Empires decay. Pragmatism

survives. Stay sarcastic.” Email: zk@krishikaaj.com

### References

“Multimedia:

- Al Jazeera Documentary (2025). The New Silk Roads: Nepal's Crossroads.
- Podcast: The Kathmandu Post's “Trade Winds: Nepal in a Tariff War.”

### You may add the following:

1 For a deep dive into Nepal's geopolitical balancing: documentaries with analyses of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its impacts on South Asia. USilk (2019): [http://english.scio.gov.cn/beltandroad/2019-01/31/content\\_74429431.htm](http://english.scio.gov.cn/beltandroad/2019-01/31/content_74429431.htm)

2 Reference to the podcast is a mistake. Here is the verified link to The Kathmandu Post's 2024 analysis on trade deficits. “Economic Management Deficit” Link: <https://kathmandu-post.com/columns/2024/12/03/economic-management-deficit>

### Further Reading

- Reports:
  - Nepal's Trade Vulnerability Index 2025 (South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics & Environment).
  - Hydropower and Geopolitics in the Himalayas (International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development).
- Multimedia:
  - Al Jazeera Documentary (2025). The New Silk Roads: Nepal's Crossroads.
  - Podcast: The Kathmandu Post's “Trade Winds: Nepal in a Tariff War.”

### Hydropower and Energy:

- U.S. tariffs on Chinese solar panels could delay Nepal's renewable energy projects, which rely on Chinese technology.
- Solution: Collaborate with India under the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to fund cross-border energy grids .

### Multipolarity in Action: Pathways for Nepal

#### 2 Strengthen Regional Integration

- SAARC and BIMSTEC: Advocate for tariff harmonisation and fast-tracked transit agreements to reduce dependency on India-China trade routes .
- BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement: Operationalise this pact to boost intra-regional trade, currently a meagre 6% of Nepal's GDP .

#### Diversify Export Markets

- Target Non-Traditional Partners: Expand trade with ASEAN nations via air cargo corridors for niche products like tea and medicinal herbs.
- Digital Commerce: Invest in e-commerce platforms like Sastodeal to bypass traditional supply chains and reach global consumers directly.

#### 4 Leverage Climate Diplomacy

- At COP29, negotiate green technology transfers and carbon credit mechanisms to offset tariff losses. Nepal's hydropower potential (72 GW untapped) could attract EU and Gulf investments .

#### 5 Currency and Remittance Resilience

- Rupee-Ruble Trade: Explore bilateral agreements with Russia to facilitate remittances from Nepali workers in CIS countries.
- Digital Wallets: Partner with India's UPI and China's Alipay to reduce transaction costs for migrant workers .

#### 6 Advocate in Multilateral Forums

- Join African and Latin American blocs in demanding WTO

AMBASSADOR MAEDA TORU

# Warm Regards

*Ambassador Maeda Torum of Japan encouraged Nepali students who received the Japanese Government Scholarship to pursue higher education in Japan*

By KESHAB POUDEL

During a recent interaction with Nepali students, who are leaving Japan for further study, Maeda Torum, the Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, encouraged students to focus on their studies and acquire knowledge to contribute to Nepal's development.

Despite only being in Nepal for two months, Ambassador Maeda's deep understanding and connection to Nepal are evident.

As a seasoned diplomat from Japan, a key development partner of Nepal for the past 69 years, Ambassador Maeda advises Nepalese students to prioritize their studies and acquire valuable skills that can benefit Nepal.

In 2026, Japan and Nepal will mark the 70th anniversary of their diplomatic relations. Ambassador Maeda expressed eagerness to engage in discussions with various friends and friendship organizations from both countries to enhance our bond throughout the year.

He addressed Nepalese students who have been awarded scholarships to pursue higher education in Japan, emphasizing the long-standing people-to-people relations that have existed between our nations for over 124 years.

Ambassador Maeda underscored the significance of the scholarships in providing young



Nepali students with the opportunity to further their education.

124 years ago, when Nepal relied heavily on Britain for various needs, including higher education, the Nepalese rulers made the decision to send their first group of students to Japan for technical and higher education.

Ambassador Maeda hosted a farewell party at his Residence for Nepali students who were selected to study in Japan under the Japanese Government Scholarship provided by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science

and Technology of Japan. During the event, he personally interacted with each student and also engaged with the returning scholars who have been making significant contributions in various sectors in Nepal.

The Japanese Government offers this scholarship to international students seeking to pursue undergraduate, graduate, specialized training college programs, and teaching opportunities in Japan.

Japan began selecting Nepali students in 1957, just one year after establishing diplomatic re-



lations with Nepal. This spring, a total of six

Nepali students - three for master's programs, two for undergraduate studies, and one for specialized training college - will travel to Japan to pursue their degrees and specialized skills.

Ambassador Maeda congratulated the scholarship recipients and encouraged them to make the most of their learning opportunities in Japan. He also urged the students to explore Japanese culture, make friends, and contribute to Nepal's development and future Japan-Nepal relations.

Dr. Sunil Babu Shrestha, the president of the Japanese Universities Alumni Association, Nepal (JUAAN), shared valuable insights with students about life and university experiences in Japan, drawing from his own personal experiences.

The Embassy is optimistic that these young scholars will play a crucial role in fostering stronger ties between Japan and Nepal, enhancing mutual understanding, friendship, and cooperation between the two nations.

Ambassador Maeda made

his first public appearance at a reception celebrating the Japanese Emperor's birthday in February, marking his inaugural event in Nepal following the presentation of his credentials in January. The historical relationship between Japan and Nepal dates back to the late 19th century, with the visit of Japanese Buddhist monk KAWAGICH Ekai to Nepal in 1899 en route to Tibet.

In 1902, the Nepali government sent eight students to Japan to study Japanese development and technology, establishing the foundation for a lasting relationship. Since 1969, Japan has been a key development partner for

Nepal, successfully implementing projects in infrastructure, disaster prevention, climate change, agriculture, healthcare, education, and capacity building.

The number of Nepali students in Japan has been rapidly increasing, with over 200,000 Nepali individuals residing in Japan as students, businesspeople, workers, and families. Many Nepalese students who have studied in Japan in fields such as medicine, engineering, economics, and science are making significant contributions to Nepal. Ambassador Maeda's suggestions to Nepali students are noteworthy in this context.



## क्षयरोगबाट बचाऔं र बचाऔं

- लगातार खोकी लाग्ने,
- खोकीमा रगत देखापर्ने,
- तौल घट्ने,
- फोक्सो दुख्ने वा असजिलो महसुस हुने जस्ता लक्षण क्षयरोगका लक्षण हुन सक्छन् ।

### क्षयरोगबाट बच्न:

- धूम्रपान तथा मद्यपान नगरौं,
- धुवाँ धुलोमा नबसौं,
- खोकदा हाछ्युँ गर्दा रुमालले नाकमुख छोपौं,
- बालबालिकालाई निश्चित समयमा बीसीजी खोप लगाऔं,
- क्षयरोग लागेका व्यक्तिभन्दा टाढै बसौं र रोगीको जुठो नखाऔं,
- क्षयरोगको शंकालागेमा चिकित्सकको सल्लाह लिऔं ।



नेपाल सरकार  
विज्ञापन बोर्ड

# For News, Views, Comments & Perspectives

## LOG IN

# spotlightnepal.com

### Latest Magazine



VOL. 14 No. 03, August 21, 2020 (Bhadra 05, 2077) Publisher: Keshab Prasad Poudel Online Register Number: DOI 584/074-75



VOL. 14 No. 02, August 07, 2020 (Shrawan 23, 2077) Publisher: Keshab Prasad Poudel Online Register Number: DOI 584/074-75



VOL. 14 No. 01, July 17, 2020 (Shrawan 02, 2077) Publisher: Keshab Prasad Poudel Online Register Number: DOI 584/074-75



VOL. 13 No. 18, June 19, 2020 (Asadh 5, 2077) Publisher: Keshab Prasad Poudel Online Register Number: DOI 584/074-75

**NEW SPOTLIGHT**  
NEWS MAGAZINE

Kathmandu, Ph.: +97 1 4430250  
Email: [spotlightnepal@gmail.com](mailto:spotlightnepal@gmail.com)

**NIMB**

**Green Future  
Savings Account**

**एक खाता एक रूख,  
दुवै भविष्यको लागि**

यस योजनाबाट संकलित  
निक्षेपलाई बैंकले दिगो र  
वातावरणमैत्री आयोजनामा  
लगानी गर्नेछ ।



\*पाईलट भाग्य हुनेछ



**NIMB**

नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेण्ट मेगा बैंक लि.  
NEPAL INVESTMENT MEGA BANK LTD.

+977-1-4545481, 9851147829, 9851145829  
info@nimb.com.np, helpdesk@nimb.com.np  
www.nimb.com.np

समृद्धिको पथमा सँगै अघि बढ्दै