

# NEW SPOTLIGHT

FORTNIGHTLY

Vol.: 11, No.-20, May 04 2018  
(Baishakh.21.2075) Price: NRs. 100

**Editor and Publisher**  
Keshab Poudel

**Associate Editor**  
Abijit Sharma

**Reporter**  
Dipesh Adhikari

**Photographer**  
Sandesh Manandhar

**Contributor**  
Sabine Pretsch

**Cover Design/Layout**  
Laxman Gautam, 9860795564

**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



Despite several efforts, the unification process of Nepal's two leading communist parties is yet to materialize. As the process of unification gets stalled, rumors about political instability are already out. Although there is no immediate threat to the current government, one cannot rule out the possibility of a new coalition, given the current nature of hung parliament. As political instability is the routine reality of Nepali politics, we have decided to look at Nepal's legal transformation as a cover story of this week. As the government announced the visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Nepal in the coming week, we have also looked into the significance and importance of his visit. At a time when Nepal is integrating with global institutions, lawyers and legal professionals are required to deal with international legal issues. After opening up of Nepalese markets for foreign direct investment, many international investors in the areas of hydropower, cements and other service sector are coming. The role of well organized private law firm is important in that respect. Given this, we have decided to cover Nepal's legal system through the experiences of senior advocate Gandhi Pandit as our cover story this week. As three years have already passed since the great earthquake badly devastated Nepal, we also cover the earthquake recovery projects implemented by LWF-Nepal in support from Islamic Relief Worldwide and BATAS Foundation. Along with these, there are regular columns and features as part of this issue.

**Keshab Poudel**  
Editor

## CONTENT

### POLITICS

Divided We Stand 3

### NEWSNOTES

4

### BUSINESS BRIEF

6

### VIEWPOINT

Dr. Tilak Rawal 8

### ARTICLE

Hemang Dixit 11

### PM NARENDRA MODI'S NEPAL VISIT

A Hat Trick 12

### FORUM

Dr. AB Thapa 15

### COMMENTRY

Yubaraj Ghimire 17

### ENVIRONMENT

Batu Uprety 18

### ARTICLE

Deepak Raj Joshi 24

### HOTEL YAK & YETI

Celebrating Austrian Expedition 25

### TRENDS

Shradha Gyawali 26

### ENVIRONMENT

Gehendra B. Gurung 33

### SPONSOR

35

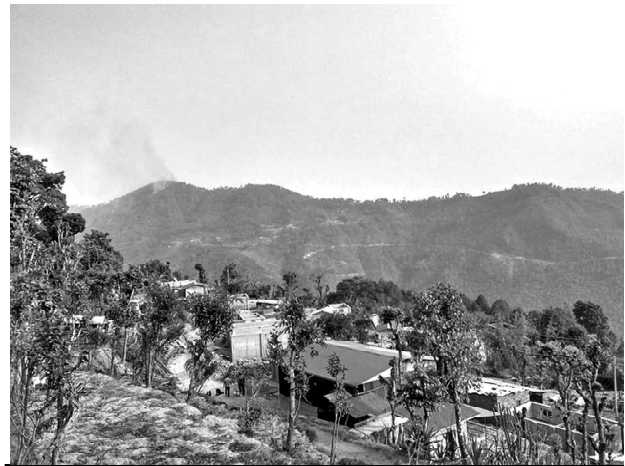
### PERSPECTIVES

Greta Rana 36



COVER STORY: GANDHI PANDIT: Legal Eagle

19



JICA : Earthquake Recovery

10



DEVELOPMENT : Earthquake recover in Rasuwa

27

## POLITICS

# Divided We Stand

*Despite commanding two thirds of majority, the ruling communist allies are facing uncertainties about how to bridge their political differences and go ahead with their announced merger*

By A CORRESPONDENT

At a time when there is a growing dispute involving CPN-UML and Maoist Center over the unification of the two communist parties, the government has recommended to the president to summon the budget session of the federal parliament on May 6.

Although CPN-UML and Maoist Center leaders are bargaining on the terms and conditions of power sharing following the unification, the government does not have to worry about its stability.

deadline specified in the constitution.

As the government is preparing the budget, CPN (Maoist Center) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal has asked UML Chairman KP Sharma Oli to choose between premiership and party leadership.

During a meeting held with PM Oli at his residence in Baluwatar, Dahal told Oli that the latter should be ready to hand over party leadership to him if he intends to remain at the helm of the

Dahal's demand marks a major shift in stance of the party, which had agreed to follow a joint leadership. On February 19, Oli and Dahal had struck a seven-point framework agreement to follow a shared leadership. The deal was silent on premiership even as some Maoist leaders claim that Oli and Dahal had reached an understanding to rotate the government leadership between them.

Leaders said that other disputed issues were also discussed during the meeting. They said that other issues would be resolved once a deal is negotiated on power sharing between the two leaders.

As the government is preparing the new budget with ambitious slogans, there arise many contradictions of stand. This is creating more confusion over whether this coalition will continue.

Although Nepali Congress leaders are divided over their internal matters, there is a unanimous voice to dislodge this government. According to sources close to Nepali Congress, their party is ready to support Maoist Chair Prachanda as prime minister in case the differences widen.

Given the present parliamentary strength, no party has a majority and backing of NC and Madheshi will provide enough strength to Prachanda to claim the new government.

CPN-UML and Maoist Center continue to use their bargaining tool for some time to come. If they fail to unify, which is unlikely any time soon, one cannot rule out the possibility of collapse of the government due to their contradiction.



PM Oli (right) and Prachanda

Given Nepal's own political courses, that have seen the cracking of a majority government of single party, nothing can be ruled out. This is highly important session as it will discuss and endorse policy and programs of the government and announce the budget for the next fiscal year including the budget distribution to the state and local levels.

The government should present the budget for the next fiscal year in parliament on May 29, which is the

government.

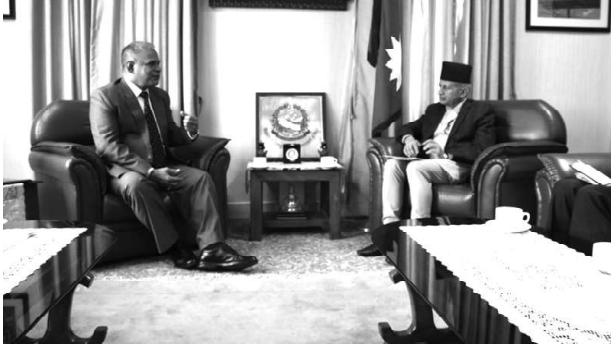
According to leaders briefed on the discussion, Dahal said that the unification was possible only if UML agrees, in writing, to hand over one of the two posts to his party.

They said that Dahal is ready to show flexibility on modality as long as the power sharing is equal and dignified. One such modality, Maoist leaders said, can be allocating two posts between two leaders for 2.5 years each.

## NEWSNOTES

### SAARC Secretary General Calls On Minister Gyawali

Amjad Hussain B. Sial, Secretary General of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), called on Minister for Foreign Affairs Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, felicitated him for his assumption of the office and expressed good wishes for his success.



He also briefed the Foreign Minister on the status of the ongoing activities of the SAARC process, including four ministerial meetings that have been held in a year and the forthcoming meeting of the Finance Ministers.

The Minister expressed the confidence that the long diplomatic experience and active role being played by the Secretary General would be instrumental in carrying forward the SAARC process.

According to a press release by the Secretary General of SAARC, the Minister stated that SAARC should be instrumental in economic integration of South Asia through meaningful connectivity and trade among the Member States of SAARC.

### Speakers Highlight Role Of Begum Hazrat Mahal

A wreath laying ceremony was held to commemorate the death of Begum Hazrat Mahal, who rebelled against the British rule in India, at her tomb in the courtyard of Jame Masjid.

Begum Hazrat Mahal of Awadh (now Uttar Pradesh) is noted in history as a queen who herself participated in the war against colonial British East India Company and later started underground Indian Rebellion of 1857. Begum, however, had to take refuge in Nepal after her husband



was exiled to Calcutta and her son was dethroned. She later died in Kathmandu and was buried in the courtyard of Jame Masjid.

Indian Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, after laying

the wreath at the tomb, talked about the support from Nepal during India's independence movement.

### British Embassy In Kathmandu Hosts Reception

To celebrate the 92nd Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, the British Ambassador to Nepal Richard Morris hosted a reception.

Chief Guest of the reception was defense minister Ishwor Pokharel. Former ministers, leaders of various political parties, members of parliament, high government and security officials, heads of the diplomatic missions based in Kathmandu and British nationals living in Nepal were present.

Addressing the program, British Ambassador to Nepal Morris highlighted the important role played by Nepalese women in the social and economic transformation.

### Japanese Ambassador Opens Eye Hospital In Bhojpur

Ambassador of Japan to Nepal Masashi Ogawa inaugurated an eye hospital in Bhojpur Municipality, Bhojpur District, with Prof. Dr. Tirtha Prasad Mishra, Chairman of the Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh (NNJS). Along with Ambassador Ogawa, the Ambassador of Nepal to Myanmar, Bhim Udas, attended the ceremony.

The Government of Japan extended financial assistance of US Dollars 90,909 (NPR approximately 9.8 million) to the Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh under the Grant



Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP).

According to a press release issued by Embassy of Japan, this grant assistance supported the construction of the eye hospital that will offer ophthalmological services to the people living in rural areas. Until today, ophthalmological health care is concentrated in the capital and patients are obliged to go to Kathmandu for their treatment. The newly constructed eye hospital will contribute to the health of the remote hilly area.

### Chinese Ambassador Yu Hong Attends the Opening Ceremony

Ambassador to Nepal Yu Hong and Minister of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation of Nepal Rabindra Adhikari attended a ceremony and delivered speeches at a function organized by the Embassy of China in Nepal at Nepal Tourism Board.

Deepak Joshi, CEO of NTB, Dr. Harish Shah, President of NCCEC and other representatives were present at the opening Ceremony of the 3rd Chinese Language Training Course for Nepali Tourism Professionals.



Ambassador Yu expressed that the Chinese side was ready to work with the Nepali side to strengthen cooperation in various fields under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Ambassador Yu encouraged the trainees to study hard and serve as a bridge in promoting mutual understanding and friendship of two countries in the future.

## Ground Breaking Ceremony Of Nuwakot District Hospital

KOICA, in coordination with Trisuli Hospital, Nuwakot, organized the ground breaking ceremony of the Trisuli Hospital on 24 April 2018. The building is being supported by the Korean government. Korean Ambassador to Nepal Park Young-sik and State Minister for Health and Population Padma Kumari Aryal jointly conducted the ground breaking ceremony at the hospital construction site.

The ceremony was briefly addressed by various high level dignitaries including UNDP Deputy Country Director, Mayor of Bidur Municipality, Central district Officer, Medical Superintendent and Chairman of Trisuli Hospital.

The brief ceremony was accompanied by authorities of local government agencies of Nuwakot, implementing



partners (GNI, GIZ) and local beneficiaries.

Apart from the post-disaster reconstruction program in Nuwakot, KOICA has been supporting the Government of Nepal in the area of Health, Education and Agriculture and Capacity building of Human resources.

## UNICEF Official Ndiaye Hands Over Health Posts

UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Fatoumata Ndiaye handed over a health post building in Malu, Dolakha District, on the day after the three-year anniversary of the earthquake that struck Nepal on 25 April 2018. Ndiaye handed over the keys of the new facility to Deependra Khadka, Health Post In-Charge,

This health post is the 43rd of 74 such facilities that UNICEF is supporting to build after the devastating earthquakes in 2015. The earthquakes destroyed altogether 446 health facilities and administrative buildings and damaged 765 more.

"These health facilities are an example of UNICEF's commitment towards enhancing the health and wellbeing of children and women in Nepal," said Ndiaye.



## Earthquake Nepal: Third Year Commemoration

With support from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) organized a seminar- "From Build Back Better to Disaster Risk Reduction: Government Responsibilities and the Role of Mutual Help" to commemorate the 3rd anniversary of the Nepal Earthquake. About 150 participants representing the government, development partners, civil society, academia and media actively took part in the discussions.

According to a press release issued by JICA, the seminar highlighted the last three years of progress and achievements in reconstruction and recovery based on the principle of Build Back Better (BBB). Yuba Raj Bhusal, Chief Executive Officer of the NRA, in his keynote speech, explained that the Government of Nepal has been making utmost efforts to expedite the reconstruction process and shared the government is setting the target to complete all housing reconstruction by July 2019.

Jun Sakuma, Chief Representative of JICA Nepal, emphasized that disaster risk reduction is an integral part of social and economic development, and it is an essential investment if we want development to be sustainable in the long term. He concluded the seminar by reaffirming JICA's commitment to continue its support to the Government of Nepal and its people for accelerating reconstruction and recovery while further enhancing DRR to attain the resilient Nepal.

At the seminar venue, 26 photos were displayed to show a diverse range of reconstruction and recovery assistance provided by the Government of Japan and JICA, such as housing and school reconstruction, cultural heritage rehabilitation, reconstruction of public infrastructure, and livelihood improvement for affected farmers. Included in the photo exhibition was a photo of



the Dhamodaya Secondary School in Mirkot, Gorkha. ■

## BUSINESS BRIEF

### Nepal, Qatar Chambers Of Commerce Sign MOU

Distinuguished honorary vice president of Nepal Chamber of Commerce Bhashkar Raj Rajkarnicar and



board member of Qatar Chamber Khalid Jabar Sultan Tawar Al-kuwari have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to strengthen mutual cooperation between the two chambers amid a function in Qatar.

Speaking at the program, Rajkarnicar said that Nepal had immense opportunities for investment in tourism, agriculture and hydropower.

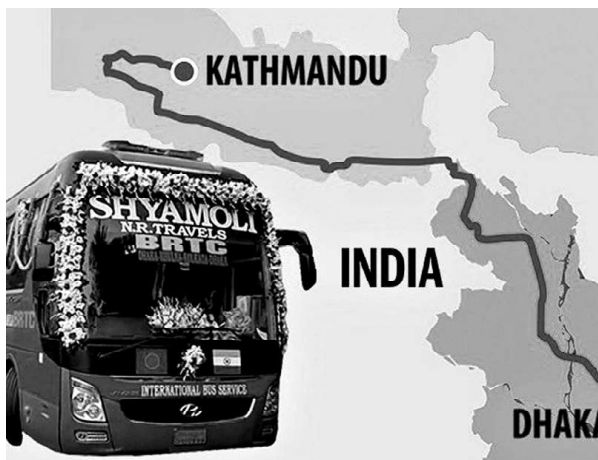
Board member of Qatar Chameber Al-kuwari said that Qatar Chamber was ready to play a role to promote investment in Nepal. He also inquired about the investment potential in Nepal.

### Trial Run Boosts Tri-Nation Bus, Cargo Services Plan

Two buses with delegates from Nepal, India and Bangladesh on board arrived in Kathmandu from the capital of Bangladesh, Dhaka, as part of a trial run ahead of starting passenger and cargo services among the three countries.

The two buses covered the distance of 1,197 km--488 km in Bangladesh, 50 km in India, and 699 km in Nepal.

The trial run is an important step towards the Motor Vehicle Agreement (MVA) endorsed by Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIM). Bhutan pulled out in April 2017 after its government failed to ratify the agreement.



The parties signed the MVA agreement in June 2015. They had planned to start the service within a year.

The respective parliaments of Bangladesh, India and

Nepal endorsed the agreement, but Bhutan did not. Bhutan has said its next government, after the 2018 elections, may take it up.

The MVA allows member states to operate their cargo and passenger services in each other's territories without having to clear customs formalities at the border check posts.

The Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport Senior Divisional Engineer Govinda Prasad Kharel said, based on the report of the bus's journey from Dhaka to Kathmandu, the three parties would sign a protocol paving the way for commercial bus and cargo services.

New Delhi is likely to host the agreement signing. The transport secretaries of the three countries will sign the protocol.

"These services would help foster friendly ties, extend people-to-people exchanges, promote religious pilgrimage, tourism, business and investment prospects," said Kharel, who travelled in the bus from Dhaka to Kathmandu.

"Officials from India and Bangladesh expressed satisfaction over the road widening. This further boosts prospects of vehicular movement between the three nations soon," Kharel said.

Under the MVA, the three countries will sign bilateral and trilateral agreements to enable seamless connectivity for passenger and cargo movements. The member states have identified 30 transport connectivity projects, estimated at over \$8 billion, to upgrade the remaining sections of trade and transport corridors.

The concept of BBIM started after Pakistan rejected the SAARC Motor Vehicle Agreement. Later, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India and Nepal signed a sub-regional agreement. The BBIN gathered momentum after the 18th SAARC summit held in Kathmandu in 2014.

### Twelve Commercial Banks Earn Net Profits Of Over Rs 1B Each In Q3

A dozen commercial banks earned net profits of more than a billion rupees over the third quarter of the current fiscal year.

The unaudited financial results published by 18 out of 28 commercial banks in the country show that most of them registered growth in their net profit in the review period of FY2017/18 compared to the corresponding period last year.

The financial results compiled by Nepal Bankers Association (NBA) show that the combined net profit of these 18 commercial banks jumped by 17.07 percent to Rs 24.07 billion over the third quarter of the current fiscal year from a total of Rs 20.56 billion in the same period of the last fiscal year.

Almost all the commercial banks registered growth in profit. Nepal Investment Bank Ltd topped the list in terms of profit, earning a net profit of Rs 2.84 billion. Nabil Bank Ltd was in the second position with a net profit of Rs 2.57 billion.

Similarly, Everest Bank Ltd, Himalayan Bank Ltd, Standard Chartered Bank Nepal Ltd, Global IME Bank Ltd, NMB Bank Ltd and Nepal SBI Bank Ltd posted impressive profit growths in the review period. Prime Commercial Bank Ltd, Siddhartha Bank Ltd, Sanima Bank Ltd and Citizens Bank International Ltd are other commercial banks, which entered into the 'billion club' in the third quarter for the first time by earning a net profit over Rs 1 billion.

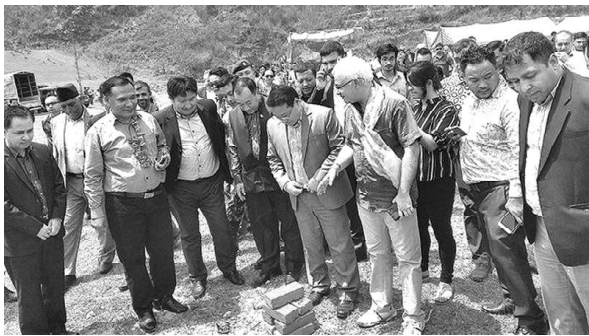
However, profit growth rate of commercial banks has

remained low compared to the annual profit growth of the banking industry. The net profit of all 28 commercial banks had jumped by a whopping 26.34 percent, or Rs 9.42 billion, in the last fiscal year 2016/17 to a total of Rs 45.18 billion compared to FY2015/16.

### **Nepal's Largest Ever Solar Power Project Begins In Nuwakot**

Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Barsha Man Pun has laid the foundation stone for the construction of 25MW solar plant at Devighat Hydropower Station in Nuwakot. The government has targeted to complete the project within a year. Once complete, it will become Nepal's largest solar power plant at a single location.

Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) said once the plant starts producing power, hydro projects such as Kulekhani, Kali Gandaki A, Mid Marshyangdi, Marshyangdi and Chilime will not need to operate during the daytime, saving the reservoir water for later use. The power produced by the solar plant will be fed directly into the national grid to supply it to the Kathmandu Valley during the day time. "The solar energy will help to balance the power distribution during peak hours,"



the NEA said.

On the occasion, Minister Pun said that the government has targeted to build solar plants with a total installed capacity of 500 MW within the next five years.

### **Honda Celebrates 50 Years In Nepal**

Syakar Trading Company Pvt Ltd, the authorized distributor for Honda two-wheelers in Nepal, and Jyoti Group recently celebrated 50 years of Honda in Nepal.

To celebrate 50 years of Honda in Nepal, the company has come up with '50 Din ma 50 Tola Sun' scheme for its customers, according to a statement issued by the company.

"On purchase of any Honda motorbikes or scooters, customers will get a chance to win 50 tola of gold in 50 days," the company said in the statement, adding that customers can also avail cash discounts ranging from Rs 4,000 up to Rs 100,000.



### **Himalaya Airlines Grant For Children's Organization**

As part of its corporate social responsibility program on the occasion of its 3rd anniversary, Himalaya Airlines has handed over kitchen utilities along with a year's supply of notebooks for the children of Prayas Nepal, on the Nepali New Year's Day, on April 14.



The organization had requested for these supplies for the academic session of 2018/19. The contribution was well appreciated by the organization. The handover ceremony was followed by a lively interaction between the airline company and the children.

### **Nepal Needs Gender Responsive Risk Reduction Policies: Experts**

Neelu Thapa, Programme Coordinator, SAWTEE, said that women are left more vulnerable after the 2015 Gorkha earthquake due to loss of livelihoods and increased risk to sexual and reproductive well-being.

Presenting a paper, Thapa pointed out that government and National Reconstruction Authority's attempt at making the reconstruction policies gender-responsive has helped promoting opportunities for women but women still find accessing relief and reconstruction efforts difficult due to social, cultural and political biases.

According to the paper, 56 per cent of fatalities were women. The findings include two-thirds of the existing basic emergency obstetric and neonatal care sites or birthing centres in the affected areas were damaged; in the year following the earthquake 23,000 cases of trafficking or attempts to traffic were reported; more than 40,000 women were considered to be in danger of sexual violence; estimated loss to women's livelihood due to earthquake was approximately NPR 15 billion, among others.

Commenting on the presentation, experts expressed the views that a need for gender-responsive disaster risk reduction and recovery policies was stressed as existing gender disparities put women in disadvantage to withstand disasters and their impacts.

Chandni Joshi, Chairman of Homenet South Asia, Nirmala Dhungana, President, Women for Human Rights and Bhubaneswari Parajuli, Gender, Social and Environment Management Specialist, National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) pointed out that reconstruction could be an opportunity to bridge social and technical aspects by incorporating gender concerns in the policies. ■

# Politics And Our Economy

Prime Minister Oli's visit to India this time, soon after assuming power, remained relatively less controversial as he was well received and also given a warm send off, maintaining perfect decorum and profusely extending hospitality to our head of government and his entourage. Several crucial agreements were signed and the joint communiqué also appeared on time, unlike in the past when Oli's visit, during his first stint as Prime Minister, became conspicuous by the non-appearance of the communiqué, ostensibly as a result of the reluctance of government of India to let its head sign it. Therefore, there is no sense in refuting Oli's observations that the visit was successful in making bilateral relations harmonious. He is also reported to have told the Indian side that the starting point of Nepal's foreign relations was the friendship based on openness, mutual respect, non-interference, mutual benefits, and respect of sovereignty, freedom, legitimate mutual interests and dignity. He also believes that both sides would work to ensure swift implementation of bilateral projects that were under way and the new agreements that were signed during the visit including Kathmandu- Raxual railway, inland waterways giving Nepal access to sea, and partnership in the field of agriculture modernization. It may be mentioned that the twelve-point joint communiqué, issued by the two prime ministers, focuses on expanding connectivity to enhance people to people linkages and promote economic growth and development of the two countries. In addition to agreeing with Oli's claim on the visit, let us also hope that the observation of the Nepali members of the Eminent Persons Group on Nepal India Relations that the recent visit of PM Oli has helped resolve long-standing bilateral issues with the southern neighbor is not far from reality.

The happiness/satisfaction that emanated from the visit, however, could not be further energized on return as Oli faced Prachanda and found him seeking clarity on responsibilities of dual leadership, methods of electing leaders in the unity convention and policies and ideology of the merged outfit. Prachanda's often repeated saying that party unification would take place on the basis of the principle of equality and raising of contentious issues by him were enough to let anyone guess that the unification of the two parties would not happen on April 22 as said earlier. Expectedly, it did not happen on the day of Lenin's birth anniversary and establishment of Nepal Communist Party. However, despite serious unity-related reservations on both sides, Oli and Prachanda have assured their followers that their parties would surely unite. They have blamed the delay on the time



BY DR. TILAK RAWAL

**A mid-way involving concession from both sides will have to be worked out if the idea is to save the party from further degradation. Deuba will have to appreciate the demand of the changing time, while those wishing to see him out at the earliest should not forget that he is the strongman of the party till date and can afford to take negative remarks about him as nothing more than tantrums of the disgruntled leaders.**

needed to resolve technical and policy issues. Despite these intermittent hiccups, Oli should not forget to deliver the goods without much delay because people know that he does not have the luxury of time, confession made by him earlier probably on account of his poor health, and are not in a position to be satisfied with mere assurances. In the meantime, it would be unfair not to make a mention of the Oli-led government's praise-worthy decision to ban the transport committees or associations for ending syndicates in the sector. Different associations and people at large have long been demanding an end to all kinds of syndicates, cartels and queues in transport sector. Increasingly

isolated, the transport entrepreneurs, who had unveiled a series of protests against the decision to ban transport associations, seem to be quietly backtracking on the protest as some of the associations have made the move to register as companies. People expect these kinds of bold decisions from a powerful government to end exploitation of the mass by a few. Oli has bagged some political capital for him and his party. His address to the nation on the occasion of New Year 2075 from Rara lake

in Mugu, expressing his commitment to working with honesty for fulfilling people's aspirations, although failed to impress people meaningfully, was definitely worthy of paying some attention to.

Much more serious look the wrangling in the major opposition party NC the central committee meeting of which, held basically to

review the electoral debacle, is continuing for days in which party leaders are seen divided in two distinct groups, trading accusations. Many senior leaders blamed Deuba for the disappointing electoral performance and demanded that the party's general convention be held at the earliest to effect meaningful changes in its functioning. NC leader Prakash Man Singh took the lead in attacking Deuba and was followed by other leaders such as Krishna Prasad Sitaula and K.B. Gurung. Gurung went to the extent of withdrawing the proposal he had filed in the party's general convention to make Deuba NC president. He conceded that it was his mistake to propose Deuba's name for NC president in the thirteenth general convention. Alleging that Deuba had ruined the party by his misdeeds, he demanded that conventions of all party committees and general convention be held within six months to elect a new leadership. Sitaula, another NC leader who was himself a

candidate for the post of party president and had ultimately helped Deuba get elected, also announced that the support extended to Deuba was withdrawn. Further, seven young leaders of NC presented a document in the committee, which demands early holding of the general convention to choose a new leader who should be able to run the party effectively in the changed context so that NC regains its lost position in the election to be held after five years. Despite counterattack by Deuba's followers that it would be unfair to put the entire blame on the leadership as different factors came into play during the election, NC leadership is having a tough time and will have to act sensibly so that he finds a reasonable time period to work for the party in the changed context. Those blaming Deuba for the humiliating defeat and seeking change in leadership should also not forget that confrontational approach would not help them much as Deuba still enjoys a comfortable majority in the party and the group opposing him has yet to decide on a person to challenge the current leadership even if the special general convention of the party is held soon. It may also not be forgotten that Deuba, despite several deficiencies, has remained a fighter ever since his student days and is a skillful manipulator and is not likely to relinquish responsibility soon as wished by many NC leaders. A mid-way involving concession from both sides will have to be worked out if the idea is to save the party from further degradation. Deuba will have to appreciate the demand of the changing time, while those wishing to see him out at the earliest should not forget that he is the strongman of the party till date and can afford to take negative remarks about him as nothing more than tantrums of the disgruntled leaders. Contrary to general expectation, the dispute between the two factions over whether the poll performance report should mention that the leadership's weaknesses and violation of party statute were also behind the loss in provincial and parliamentary elections is not likely to create much problem as the party has decided to assume collective responsibility rather than blaming the leadership alone for the debacle. Deuba appears a winner in this context as he and his followers in the central committee were resisting attempts by rival groups to put the entire blame on him alone.

Prime Minister Oli, however, has very little to worry about the problems within NC as long as the much talked about unification between the two left parties does not fall apart. He should also have been little bit encouraged by the recent revelation of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) that each Nepali will have an average of Rs.106, 333(US \$1004 as per April 25 exchange rate) in the current fiscal year. The attributing factors according to the Bureau include vibrant activities in reconstruction, the boom in service sector and more electricity generated, which together would help GDP of Nepal increase by 5.89 percent, against the base price of 2001, in the current fiscal year. This increment can help Nepal graduate to the level of a developing country in the next three years. A welcome contrast to the bleak picture of the economy painted by finance minister Khatiwada on March 30, these revelations also show that the said increment is also due to the growth in production of goods and services

and a slower population growth of below 2 percent. In GDP estimates, both the party (CBS and Khatiwada) are alike because recent estimate of 5.89 percent can be comfortably rounded up to minister's revised estimate of 6 percent growth. There is no need for the author of the white paper to be disappointed much, looking at these CBS estimates because he can easily turn to other agencies such as Nepal Rashtira Bank (NRB), which shows Nepal's trade deficit swelling to Rs.713.93 billion and the country's balance of payment position remaining negative at Rs. 24 billion, to draw some solace from. However, little difficult would be to digest his "empty coffers" remarks when one remembers our government's unspent money (Rs.277billion) lying idle at NRB. All said and done, it would be unfair to seriously blame the minister for painting a bleak picture at a time when concerted efforts are warranted to create wealth on a massive scale and redistribute the generated wealth targeting some exploited regions and people of the country in a socialistic fashion. Without worrying about bigger things, our finance minister will have to make sure that the reduced capital expenditure (from Rs.335 billion to Rs. 234.62 billion) is spent meaningfully in the remaining period of this fiscal year, which is not easy because the amount to be spent in less than three months is about equal to what has been spent in the past nine months. Let us hope that Oli's visit to India, immediately followed by our foreign minister's visit to China and Modi's almost certain visit to Nepal in May would pave way for execution of at least one mega project involving India, China and Nepal. Oli must have gathered by now that Modi of India and Xi of China have just agreed in China to do development projects together in Afghanistan. All we need to do is to urge the two

economic powers to replicate in Nepal what they intend to try in war-torn Afghanistan. China has been requested to construct the much-talked-about cross-border railway between the two countries and several new agreements related to railways, inland water-ways, etc were made during Oli's recent visit to India. In

**It is encouraging that the cooperation seen between the two Asian giants in issues related to world climate change and global financial governance is being extended to encompass implementation of country-specific projects, throwing a signal that the two countries are now no more mutually exclusive. Opportunities are in the offing for us to extract benefit without being accused of taking sides and changing positions, Oli jee.**

addition, several projects with full commitment of India will need speedy expedition. It looks like India and China have begun to develop an understanding to jointly cooperate with assistance-seeking countries in carrying out development works/projects, which could be taken as mutual recognition by the two of their growing economic might and political clout and the need to work together to further their influence globally. It is encouraging that the cooperation seen between the two Asian giants in issues related to world climate change and global financial governance is being extended to encompass implementation of country-specific projects, throwing a signal that the two countries are now no more mutually exclusive. Opportunities are in the offing for us to extract benefit without being accused of taking sides and changing positions, Oli jee.

*(Dr. Rawal is a former governor of NRB) ■*

JICA

# Earthquake Recovery

*Implementation of Community Mobilization Program (CMP) by JICA has helped accelerate the reconstruction of private houses in Sindhupalchowk*

By A CORRESPONDENT

For a majority of earthquake victims of Sindhupalchowk district, living in a permanent shelter looked like a dream. With the lack of masons and increase in the cost of construction materials, building houses was a mere dream.

As the pace of reconstruction had not made any progress, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) came in with a new program. With the implementation of Community Mobilization Program (CMP), the reconstruction process has seen sudden changes.

After the implementation of CMP, along with the declining the cost of

cost would have soared.

"The 47 families of Bauhinia ordered construction materials in bulk, which helped lower the transportation cost as well as the price of the building materials," said Shrestha.

With the increase in the cost of construction materials jumping to many folds and reconstruction of houses getting costly, many victims were unable to reconstruct the houses with the grant money provided by National Reconstruction Authority.

When the reconstruction process was not taking pace, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) came up with a package to support the locals. As per their need, JICA provided mobile (trained) masons to help masons and laborers to rebuild by abiding by the safe building norms. According to JICA, it has mobilized 548 mobile masons to assist in constructing safe houses.

Masons are mobilized under the Community Mobilization Program of JICA, under which they provide orientation to the community-based reconstruction committee.

"The reconstruction committees are active in expediting the reconstruction works as they meet frequently and discuss the issues they are facing and sort them out," said Tomoki Miyano, team leader of Emergency Housing Reconstruction Project (EHRP).

Along with the availability of engineers and trained mobile

masons, locals of Bojhini tole have started to construct similar houses and most of them will be completed by next month. The construction cost of one-and-a-half storied (wall raised from ground floor for roofing and store purpose in upper floor) concrete house costs around Rs 600,000.

During construction, the entire community came together, with families helping one another in the building process. Consequently, Bojhini tole - which is around five kilometers away from the highway that links district headquarter of Chautara and is connected with the highway by fair-weather road - will soon

be able to boast of an integrated settlement of 47 similar-looking individual houses.

Under a reconstruction and recovery program, JICA pledged to contribute USD 240 million. According to JICA, fifty percent has already been disbursed.

Under the housing reconstruction, JICA provided USD 5.5 million technical cooperation targeting 47 Village Development Committees of Gorkha and Sindhupalchowk district with 54,443 beneficiaries.

The JICA introduced the Community Mobilization Program (CMP) sought to promote group-based reconstruction with masons assigned to the community.

Under this program, JICA provided training to 4400 masons, 900 engineers and 6500 house owners. JICA also supported 542 Community Based Reconstruction Committees and 548 mobile masons.

At a time when the earthquake reconstruction is not making a heady progress in other parts of the country, under JICA's CMP programs locals of Bojhini tole in Chautara Sangamchowk Municipality 13 of Sindhupalchowk have done some exemplary work.

The earthquake damaged 1,788 houses in Bojhini tole which was a part of Thulo Sirubari Village Development Committee., before the introduction CMP, only 13 per cent of the houses were under construction. With the implementation of CMP 94.5 per cent or 827 houses are under construction and the families that have lived in temporary shelters for nearly three years now were excited about shifting to their new houses just in five months between November 2017 to April 2018.

Although reconstruction of houses gathered momentum in Sindhupalchowk after the NRA fixed the deadline of mid-July (later extended to mid-January, 2019) for grant distribution citing that the grant distribution to the quake victims could not go on for an indefinite period, CMP helped to accelerate the reconstruction.

Out of 14 districts, Sindhupalchowk was one of the districts worst affected by the devastating earthquake of April 25, 2015. With their commitments, locals of Bojhini tole have done something exemplary. According to experts, this can be replicated in other places where reconstruction of private houses is yet to gather pace. ■



*Newly made shelter in Bojhini, Sindhupalchowk*

construction materials, the availability of masons has increased.

With the community's involvement through CMP, the cost of private housing reconstruction has gone down. Dhana Bahadur Shrestha, a local of Bojhini tole in Chautara Sangamchowk Municipality 13 of Sindhupalchowk, has found a way to reconstruct a cheaper house.

"We have adopted optimum ways to lower the cost. The construction materials iron, cement, bricks, boulders have been carried in trucks from the market jointly by some families. If we had ferried construction materials individually, the

# Gang Rapes And Politics

Just prior to the Oscar awards of 2017, Harvey Weinstein, a famous film producer of Hollywood was dismissed from his own company following sexual abuse allegations. A 'MeToo' campaign then followed in which over a hundred women came forward and accused him. Three New York journalists involved in unearthing the story have been awarded the Pulitzer Prize.

In 2012 a physiotherapy student in New Delhi was gang raped and killed. Six culprits including a juvenile were arrested. One committed suicide in jail, the juvenile was imprisoned for four years whilst others are serving life sentences. As Indian laws do not permit a victim's identity to be revealed, the girl has been referred to in news reports as Nirbhaya or 'fearless'.

In mid April, a BJP lawmaker in Unnao in Uttar Pradesh was arrested for the rape of a teenager in January 2017. The police had been inactive and only acted when the victim attempted to set herself on fire in front of the state leader's house.

A Bakerwal community Muslim girl of eight was sedated and held in a village temple for five days. During this period she was gang raped and finally bludgeoned to death with the intention of frightening her people out from that area. The temple custodian, three of his relatives plus four policemen await trial in this connection. Some lawyers and two BJP Ministers in the Jammu & Kashmir government took part in a rally to obstruct the legal process. The ministers have now been made to resign.

In Surat an eleven year old girl, possibly from Odisha or Bengal was raped and tortured for a week before being killed. She had 86 stab wounds on her body.

Candle light vigils and protest gatherings have been held in many cities in India in protests at these and the many previous atrocities against girls in the country. Big demonstration was held in Bandra, Mumbai demanding death penalty for rapists. Some, as they do not advocate the rule of 'Eye for an Eye', feel that death penalty is the answer. They say that the rapist is then more likely to kill the woman out of fear of her testimony against him. On the other hand many are adamant that the death penalty should be the norm for rapists of minors. Bowing down to such demands, the President of India has in April 2018 given his consent to an ordinance proposing this.

The type of behaviour that is taking place in India is not much different to what is possibly occurring here in Nepal too. Gang rape occurred in Durbar Marg, the centre of the capital some four months ago. Paedophilia occurs in some areas of our cities. Our media is not as competent, widespread nor effective as that in India to publicise these matters. The Maina Sunwar case resurfaces as news from time to time. Acid throwing in the faces of girls by rejected suitors or gang rapes are being copied in our land. Nepali girls, usually collecting firewood in the woods or grazing cattle are periodically found dead.



BY HEMANG DIXIT

It should be made obligatory that further investigation and compulsory post-mortems be the norm in every such case and findings made public. The findings should not be swept under the carpet. A recent disconcerting news is of Nepali troops serving with the UN in South Sudan, being charged for teenage rape.

The trafficking of girls to the 'Red Light' areas of various Indian cities has been going on for ages. It was because of poverty and illiteracy that our Nepali girls ended up in such dire straits. Sadly this is a grave world-wide problem against which not much has been done. What must be appreciated is the attempt by the

Government media -Nepal Radio and Television to publicise this fact so that innocent Nepali girls are not hoodwinked and sold to the many 'Madams', possibly even of Nepali origin continuing in the oldest profession of sex workers. Kudos must also be given to Maiti Nepal for their tremendous work in the country. With the seven Pradesh and one central government, one hopes that action will increase eight fold against this heinous crime. Hopefully there will be no political blessings to the perpetrators.

Thankfully there is now more awareness about the ethical issues and corruption originating from politicians and even monarchs during their tenures. Such articles have occasionally appeared in Nepali newspapers. Action against such elite offenders is taking place in many countries:

President Zuma of South Africa and President Mugabe of Zimbabwe were made to step down for corruption. King Juan Carlos of Spain was made to abdicate in 2014 for offering a two million Euro bribe.

Alberto Fujimori, a three time president of Peru was convicted of human rights abuses and sentenced to twenty-five years in prison but was pardoned after ten years. President Lula de Silva, a very popular president of Brazil was jailed for twelve years for corruption. This action was politically motivated to prevent him from standing for president again. Dilma Rousseff, previous president of Brazil was suspended after four years and later sentenced.

Guen-hye Park was the first elected woman president of South Korea and served for four years. She was arrested on corruption charges and given a 24 year sentence. Whilst Ehud Olmert, a former Israeli PM had been jailed, the current PM Netanyahu is being investigated for corruption.

In the SAARC region PM Khalida Zia of Bangladesh has been jailed whilst PM Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan had to step down and serve a lifetime ban in politics.

The possibility always exists for ones downfall to be followed by the gnashing of teeth and great sorrow. The status quo is the overall desire with a few prepared to scratch the surface and explore. Sadly most of us are not of the temperament to 'Rock the Boat'.

*The author writes fiction under the name of Mani Dixit.  
Website: [www.hdixit.org.np](http://www.hdixit.org.np). Twitter: @manidixithd ■*





PM NARENDRA MODI'S NEPAL VISIT

# A Hat Trick

*Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister to pay the third visit to Nepal in his three years of a five-year tenure*

By KESHAB POUDEL

Officially Narendra Modi is the Prime Minister of India, as a person, he is a devout Hindu, having an affection towards the Hindu shrines and religious places of Nepal.

Since his election as the prime minister, PM Modi has been attaching a high importance to the civilization commonalities between Nepal and India.

He worshipped at the Pashupatinath temple with full devotion to the gods as a Hindu and called on Nepalese leaders to come closer with India for all round development. Modi addressed Nepal's Constituent Assembly urging Nepalese political leaders to write a constitution integrating and uniting Nepal. He called for a constitution to unite Nepal on religious, social, ethnic grounds.

Nepalese intellectuals even

made PM Modi's individual respect to his faith as a mockery portraying his personal visit to Pashupati Temple in humorists' manner. Despite enough good gestures, Nepal-India relations were in the lowest level in the last few years.

As western political leaders attach a great affection and personal touch to Vatican and western civilization and political leaders from Islamic countries show individual attachment with Mecca and Islamic civilization, Modi's affection and great attachment to Nepal's Hindu civilization is natural.

During his first state visit to Nepal, Indian Prime Minister Modi offered a special worship to the Pashupatinath Temple, one of the most scared temples of Hindus all over the world, like Mecca and Vatican.

However, Nepalese political leaders and intellectuals, who have accepted all hegemonic conditions of previous Indian establishment unconditionally, did not reciprocate to the softer stand of Modi. Worse, Nepalese political leaders treated Modi's advice to promulgate the constitution recognizing Nepal's religious, cultural and geographical importance as an interference in Nepal's internal affairs.

Those Nepalese political leaders, who oppose PM Modi's move terming it as interference of Nepal's internal affairs, hailed Indian bureaucrats and political leaders, who interfered and intervened in their own internal political affairs under disguise of 12-point agreement, as great friends of Nepal.

Rejecting good gesture of PM Modi, Nepalese leaders harped on



anti-Indian slogans, which extended up to blockade. Against the advises of PM Modi, Nepal promulgated a constitution, which has not only brought Communists in power but also eroded Nepal's state authority.

Working to bring India and Nepal closer, PM Modi is now paying the second official visit and third visit to Nepal. This time he will pay homage to Janaki Temple of Janakpurdham, birthplace of Sita or the house of father in law of Rama. However, there are more signs of hostility coming from a group of people.

As announced, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi will arrive for a two-day state visit to Nepal on May 11. Along with official talks and formal programs, Prime Minister Modi is likely to offer special prayer at Janaki Temple.

Since his early days, PM Modi has called on Nepal, India's neighbor, with a message to come closer. Nepal shares civilizational links with India. However, Nepalese leaders were unable to respond to the prime minister of the world's emerging third largest economy with a positive gesture. Similarly, Indian PM's own establishment is also unable to translate his commitments to reality.

He walked the street of Kathmandu, even breaking his high security barriers and people embraced him as a brother of same faith. When earthquakes devastated Nepal badly, Nepalese prime minister late Sushil Koirala was on the air flying over the space of Indonesia.

As Nepalese were hard hit by earthquake, Modi sent all necessary equipment, rescue team and other materials to save the Nepalese. Indian rescue teams worked side by side with Nepalese security forces rescuing people and provided much needed support.

After earthquake, everything has gone the opposite way. Instead of writing an inclusive constitution to unite all Nepalese, Nepalese political leaders promulgated the constitution, fabricating Nepal into seven provinces.

Instead of strengthening Nepal's unity, the constitution promulgated

by Constituent Assembly provided so much authority to different tiers of government giving local and provincial government power equally.

Although PM Modi in his first official visit highlighted Nepal as a country of three regions, stressing for Nepal's unity, the divisive policy followed by his predecessors to divide Nepal on the basis of regions, Madheshi and Pahadi, who share same religion and culture, continues.

Although PM Modi has shown his respect to Nepal's religion and culture indicating to make Nepal as an old state with its own century old identity, Nepal's Constituent Assembly promulgated a constitution which disregards all its traditions and civilization continuity with India.

In the name of Madheshi, Modi's predecessors have created a division of Madheshi Hindu and Pahadi Hindu, dividing the people of same civilization into two folds. Modi's views to see single Hindu Civilization in Nepal is yet to materialize. Despite PM Modi's such a positive message, India's old policy towards Nepal is yet to see any changes.

Former foreign minister

national interests if its foreign policies with India and China are guided by a sense of fear and threat. "We often say balanced relations with both neighbors. We cannot achieve what we want if we only think about pleasing them. We should learn not to make any compromise on issues related to our sovereignty," he said.

He said this addressing the talk program organized on the theme of Nepal-India Relations: Evolved Dynamics. The former foreign minister said our politicians and bureaucrats are largely to be blamed for the unwarranted foreign interference in Nepal.

As Nepal is passing through a period of major political transition with central, province and local levels seeking their political space and resources, Indian PM Modi's visit to Nepal is significant.

With his hectic visit of China and several rounds of formal and informal meetings with Chinese leaders, PM Modi's message and gesture in his visit will be very important to observe.

Former foreign and finance minister Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat argued that the relations between India and Nepal should embrace new realities in both the countries.



Indian PM Modi in Pashupatinath Temple

File Photo

Mahendra Bahadur Pandey argued that Nepal cannot promote its

"Government should stand tough in promoting national interests and

## NEIGHBOURS

has to clearly articulate its position on issues of mutual interests. There is no need for Nepal to make compromise on issues concerning national interests in its dealings with any of the neighbors," he said, while complaining that Prime Minister K P Oli had failed to raise the issues of Nepal's immediate concerns. "There is a kind of inherent bias against Nepal in Indian media. This somehow provides reflection of the South Block."

### Whistled Against Visit

As PM Modi is coming in Nepal's southern plain with gesture of friendship, two prominent Madheshis have already whistled, terming the visit against the interest of Madhesh and Madheshi people.

It showed that the seed of dissension sowed by Modi's predecessors continue in Nepal. The dissensions expressed by

Madheshi leaders are indications how it is growing.

Sitaram Agrahari, former editor of leading Nepali daily Gorkhapatra, termed Indian PM Modi's visit to Janakpurdham will not bring anything to Madheshi people. Agrahari writes in his Facebook wall that New Delhi is pleasing PM Oli and ruler of Kathmandu rather than raising the voice of Madheshi.

Similarly, former minister and leader of Madhesh based party Jaya Prakash Ananda Gupta sees the preparations and high significance given by the present Madheshi government is unusual. In his Facebook wall, Ananda expressed his reservation on Modi's visit to Janakpurdham.

Even a radical underground group exploded a bomb at a hydroelectricity project office in Nepal, weeks before its scheduled inauguration by Modi.

"Just a month after hosting K P Oli on his first visit abroad, the ties between Nepal and India are warming. Modi will visit Kathmandu this year for the BIMSTEC Summit," writes Indian media.

Indian media also writes that the visit is planned as following PM Oli has responded positively to the Indian gesture. The date, proposed by the Indian side, was endorsed by Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli.

As Indian Prime Minister Modi has been calling Nepal to walk side by side with India to achieve higher economic growth and share prosperity, how Nepal will respond to PM Modi is yet to be seen. How Indian establishment will follow PM Modi's vision to translate into reality will also important. If Nepal responds to Indian PM's call positively and Indian officialdom support this move, this will open an all-round economic development in Nepal. ■

## गर्मी मौसममा हुनसक्ने आगलागीका घटनाहरू र सोबाट हुनसक्ने जनधनको क्षति न्यूनीकरण गर्न निम्नानुसार गर्ने गरौं ।

- सलाई, लाइटरजस्ता आगो बाल्ने सामग्रीहरू बालबालिका तथा मानसिक सन्तुलन ठीक नभएका व्यक्तिहरूले नभेट्ने ठाउँमा राखौं ।
- खाना पकाइसकेपछि आगो राम्रोसँग निभाऔं, खाना पकाउने ग्याँस प्रयागकर्ताले चुलो, रेगुलेटर तथा लाइटर आदि समय समयमा निरीक्षण गरौं ।
- चुरोट बिँडीजस्ता वस्तुहरू प्रयोगपश्चात् जथाभावी नफालौं र आगो राम्रो सँग निभाऔं ।
- पेट्रोल, डिजेल, ग्याँस स्टेशनको वरिपरि सलाई, लाइटरजस्ता सामग्रीको बेचबिखन तथा प्रयोग नगरौं ।
- आगलागीका घटना भएमा दमकल, सुरक्षाकर्मी र सञ्चारमाध्यममा खबर गरौं ।
- सम्भव भएसम्म घर तथा कार्यालयमा अग्नी नियन्त्रक उपकरण राखौं ।
- आगलागीका घटना घटेमा महिला, बालबालिका, वृद्धवृद्धा तथा अशक्तहरूको सुरक्षामा विशेष ध्यान दिऔं ।
- आगलागीको घटना कुनै पनि बेला घट्ने भएको हुँदा पानीका स्रोतहरू चालू अवस्थामा राखौं ।



नेपाल सरकार

सञ्चार तथा सूचना प्रविधि मन्त्रालय  
सूचना विभाग

# Sea Vessels In Nepali River Ports

The greatest advantage of the Kosi Canal Waterway would be its suitability for operation of relatively big river vessels that can connect future river port in Nepal with other neighbouring coastal seaports also located far away from the Haldia seaport, which is at the terminus of the Hooghly river. This type of sea-river shipping is prevalent in Europe and other countries. The load for transportation must be at least about 1000 ton. The strong advantage of sea-river shipping is found in its unique connectivity.

Seaport transshipment is not required for sea-river vessels to be able to connect the hinterland with overseas destinations. This results in lower transport costs and reduced risk of damage on account of the absence of additional transshipment. In our case the storage of goods at Haldia or Calcutta port could be avoided. Few cases of sea-river vessels operation in Europe are as follows.



BY DR. AB THAPA

Moreover, there might have already been significant improvement in navigability of the Ganges river right up to the mouth of the Kosi navigation canal into the Ganges due to increase in water depths after the completion of the Farakka Barrage. The Farakka Barrage reservoir backwater must have extended further upstream along the Ganges far beyond the mouth of the Kosi River.

## Layout of the Kosi Navigation Canal

According to 1997 Kosi Study Agreement signed between Nepal and Indian Government a detailed study of the Kosi High Dam would be carried out along with detailed study of the navigation canal linking Chatra with the Ganges that would provide our country direct waterway access to seaport. Needless to say the proposed waterway could also be used for river-sea vessels operation.

The Kosi Navigation Canal would be linked with

Country	Canal/ River	Draught	Air Draught	Tonnage
Finland	Saima canal	4.3 m	24.5 m	Tonnage 2,000/2500
France	Rhone	3 m	5.1 m	Tonnage 1,000/1,500
Netherlands	Juliana Canal	3 m	6.8 m	Tonnage 1,000/1,500
Germany	Upper Rhine Canal	2.5 m	6.8 m	Tonnage 1,000/1,500

## Advantages of Kosi Canal Waterway

The use of the Kosi canal for navigation instead of the natural river course would allow Nepal to develop this very important waterway on a par with the waterways that exist in Europe and America that would be suitable for operation of river/sea vessels. Some of the major advantages of the canal waterway linking Chatra with Kursella where Kosi merges with the Ganges are described below:

**Short Distance** - The navigation canal would follow the shortest route to the Ganges river. The length of the Kosi navigation canal from the Indo-Nepal border near Birpur to the Ganges is expected to be only about 150 km, whereas the length of the river route to cover the same stretch is about 270 km.

**Decrease in Water Losses** - Withdrawal of water from the river for irrigation or other purposes would have to be significantly restricted to maintain adequate depths if the natural river channel is to be used for navigation. In case of the navigation canal, the water requirement to maintain adequate depths would be very small. The problem of water losses in the operation of the navigation canal would not even arise if such canal is to be used as a conveyance system to deliver water for irrigation purposes.

**Increased Water Depths** - The entry point of the Kosi navigation canal into the Ganges is near the extreme tail end of this river. As a result, the Ganges river channel is sure to be quite deep on this stretch, allowing the operation of relatively large river vessels.

the India's National Waterway No.1. This canal waterway should be planned on par with the capacities adopted for the lower reach of the Ganges. The proposed Kosi navigation canal can be divided into two reaches. They are the 45 km long upper reach between Chatra and Birpur (near Indo-Nepal border) and the 150 km long lower reach between Birpur and Kursella on the Ganges. The Upper Reach Canal will be entirely in Nepalese territory.

## Upper Reach Kosi Canal Proposed by India

It has been proposed in the Kosi High Dam Project Report prepared by the Government of India that a north-south canal will be built from Chatra to the Birpur area to deliver clear water from the Kosi storage reservoir for irrigating land in India to the east of the Kosi river. This canal would be 130m wide. There is a drop of about 40 metres between Chatra and Birpur. It is proposed in the Indian report that three powerhouses would be built along the proposed canal to utilize the topographical gradient for the generation of electricity. The capacity of each such power station is expected to be about 100 MW.

The canal proposed to be built for delivering water from Chatra to Birpur for irrigation and power generation could also be used for navigation purposes. The proposed irrigation canal is sufficiently wide for use as a navigation canal. However, the canal would require significant improvements. A navigation canal requires that adequate water depths be maintained in the canal at all places and at all times. Similarly, it would also be necessary to take into account matters related to free board, and the protection of the bank and the

## FORUM

bottom of the proposed canal. The canal would be needing navigation locks for negotiating the fall across the powerhouses. There should be three navigation locks parallel to the powerhouse in the upper reach canal between Chatra and Birpur.

### Lower Reach Kosi Canal

The Lower Reach Kosi canal would be completely in the Indian territory. The north-south slope of the land in this reach of the Kosi canal would be less steep compared to the slope of the land in the upper reach. Nonetheless there is a drop of about 40m in a north-south direction within a distance of 150 km. It might be necessary to provide 3 to 4 locks to negotiate this drop. These drops could also be used for power generation. Similarly, the navigation channel running to the Ganges could be used for delivering water for irrigation.

### Size of Navigation Canal and Locks

The dimension of various structures of the Kosi navigation canal should be adopted based on the size of the Farakka locks and navigation channel. The dimensions of the navigation structures should be adequate for the operation of barges of 1,500 ton capacity.

The Indian Government proposed irrigation cum power canal between Chatra and Birpur is 130 meters wide. The width of the proposed Kosi canal exceeds the minimum size required for its use as a navigation canal. However, the width of the lower reach Kosi canal could be reduced if it is to serve exclusively for navigation. We might adopt the width of this canal somewhere in the range between 80 m and 100 m. It was the minimum width for I and II classes (topmost) navigation channels in the former USSR.. The minimum water depth in the Farakka canal is 4 meters. The same navigation depth could be adopted for the Kosi navigation canal. Farakka lock has two chambers, each 25.15 meters wide and 187.7 meters long. This dimension could also be adopted for the Kosi navigation locks. The minimum depth of water at the sill might be taken to be 3.5 meters. Such lock size would permit passage of barges upto 1,500 tons or more in capacity. It would also be necessary to adopt the filling time of the lock chambers that would determine the ultimate capacity of the waterway.

### Implementation of Kosi Canal Waterway Project

Kosi Canal Waterway Project, which has great economic as well as political significance for our landlocked country, should be treated as inseparable component of the Kosi High Dam Project whenever it is decided to implement this mammoth dam project to save the life and properties of millions in North Bihar from long feared devastation resulting due to permanent change in Kosi river course during very high floods in near future as predicted by many internationally renowned experts on Kosi.

To realize the full extent of damages resulting from the future floods of the Kosi, a river known as the "Sorrow of Bihar", we should look at the experience of China's Yellow River, which is also known as the "Sorrow of China".

According to the article "YELLOW RIVER: NATION'S SORROW" by XIONG LEI published in CHINA DAILY on October 16, 1998, keeping the Yellow River at bay has saved the country US\$ 50 billion as a result of construction of large storage dams.

### German Assistance

Very recently India's transport minister Nitin Gadkari has visited the USA and European countries to get information on inland

waterways that could be useful for India's extensive waterway development plan. At present even France, a country pioneer in the field of canal waterways in Europe, has requested Germany to help to modernize some of its outdated navigation canals. Thus Germany could be the most appropriate country to provide technical assistance in conducting detailed study of the Kosi Canal Waterway. ■



On the auspicious occasion of celebrating the 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of Nepal Rastra Bank, we firmly commit in maintaining macroeconomic and financial stability which will contribute to attaining sustainable, inclusive and broad-based economic growth in country.

**Nepal Rastra Bank**

# Secularism And Its Discontents

*It is crucial for secularists in Nepal to define it.*

Four years ago, a question put to Sushma Swaraj suggested that both India and Nepal should be "Hindu states". "I have taken oath as a minister under the Constitution of secular India, and this issue is not open for discussion", she said during her speech at a programme organised by a sister organisation of the RSS. No other BJP minister or leader would, perhaps, have reacted in the manner Swaraj did in defence of secularism.

But privately, senior Nepali leaders, mostly from the government, are invariably advised by BJP leaders that Nepal should be a "Hindu country". Apparently, Nepali Congress chairman, Sher Bahadur Deuba, had assured Indian authorities before the constitution was promulgated in September 2015 he will make every effort not to have the word "secularism" inserted in the constitution. Deuba was more candid than other leaders who, either through words or gestures, tried to indicate to BJP leaders that they were not averse to the suggestion.

Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal gifted Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh an idol of Ganesha during a visit to Delhi when the constitution was not yet written. In fact, Singh was the first BJP leader to tell then PM G P Koirala in June 2006, a month after Nepal transformed from a Hindu kingdom to a secular state, that the decision merited reconsideration.

The Nepali leaders and major parties chose a path that could be termed a fraud both on the constitution as well as secularism. The constitution says that Nepal shall be a secular country but remains silent on the state's commitment to neutrality or equal treatment toward all faiths. More ridiculously, it says protecting "sanatana dharma" shall be the duty of the state.

A subversion of key or guiding principles of the constitution, and ignored established norms and practices, had been a regular feature while drafting it, almost always with the "consensus" of key political parties. Let the end justify the means, was their approach. When they found that the public opinion was overwhelmingly opposed to "secularism", they chose not to make it part of the process. For them, giving the constitution a progressive look by any means was more important. The constituent assembly chose to solicit advice from western International NGOs on "progressive contents" instead of its members, whose role was limited to raising hands in "ayes" for each provision - none of them debated - for final approval. There was clearly little worry over possible future questions of the legality and ownership of the constitution.

Doubts and speculation over some "deals" each time a high-level political visit takes place from Kathmandu to Delhi, do not end with it. The recent visit (April 6-8) by Prime Minister K P Oli was no exception. Did Indian authorities, especially given a 90-minute one-on-one meeting on the first day between Oli and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, "privately" give particular advice on secularism this time



BY YUBARAJ GHIMIRE

as well?

One of the first tasks that the Oli government undertook upon his return from Delhi was to begin work on a legislation seeking to annul the permit given to any INGOs found working in favour of "religious conversion". Nepal has 249 INGOs, with some of them accused of working on "conversion". India is not the only country that has a view on Nepal's secularism. A British ambassador, through an open letter to all the members of the constituent assembly, had asked the "right to conversion" be incorporated as a fundamental right in the constitution as

"secularism will have no meaning without the right to conversion". The European Union's view more or less conforms to the British ambassador's.

The controversy triggered by "secularism" is an outcome of an over-enthusiastic subversion of established democratic and constitutional processes. Nepal was declared a "secular country" in May 2006 by a "decree" of the presiding officer of the House, mainly on the calculation that "Hindu Nepal" was the strength of monarchy and without taking away that identity, the monarchy could not be abolished. External stakeholders were party to prescribing that short-cut to secularism, something that has now become the major bone of contention in Nepal. As Swaraj had pointed out, the Government of India, with a secular Constitution, can not officially advise its neighbour to shed secularism.

It is not just the common people who wanted a direct, participatory role in settling the issue. Even a large section of the votaries of the present constitution now want a review of the particular provision, in response to the open role that some EU countries and western INGOs have been playing on the issue.

It is crucial for the truly committed secularists in Nepal to have the courage and honesty to define the meaning of secularism in the constitution, incorporating its universal contents. But if the Oli government's proposed legislation on conversion is an outcome of the PM's deepening ties with the BJP leadership in Delhi, it could be at the cost of his earlier commitment to "secularism".

*Courtesy : Indian Express* ■

3GB @ RS 200 6.5 paisa/MB Only

6.5GB @ Rs 300 4.5 paisa/MB Only

NIGHT DATA PACKAGE Lowest data rates ever

To subscribe dial \*1415#

www.nrc.net.np  
facebook.com/NepalTelecom.NT  
twitter.com/ndol\_nc

# Turning Points

The Government has brought back the environmental administration and climate change negotiations prior to 1992, and 2007. In 1991, the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation was renamed as the Ministry of Forests and Environment. The environment was later linked with population in 1995, science and technology in 2005, again population in 2015, and with forests in 2018, without major changes in functions and responsibilities. Over two decades of dedicated efforts in building and enhancing institutional and individual capacity are likely in peril.

The 'Oli administration' has stopped the decade-long process of enhancing the country's capacity in climate change negotiations. It stopped inclusion of knowledge-based and 'positioned' professionals in its team to attend the Bonn session of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Kyoto Protocol (KP) and Paris Agreement (PA) in April-May 2018. The Government should include at least four Nepali professionals in its team to attend this Bonn session. One is advisor to the chair (currently Ethiopia) of the LDC Coordination Group and is supporting the chair right from 2013. Another person was entrusted to negotiate with the developed countries in agenda items Nairobi Work Programme and agriculture on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (a negotiating group of 133 countries). The third one is continuously following the climate finance. The fourth one is the current chair of the LDC Expert Group (LEG) with mandated responsibility to present its work in the plenary session, and negotiate with the developed countries to support LDCs in climate change adaptation.

The 48th meetings of the Subsidiary Bodies for Implementation (SBI 48), and for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 48) and resumed 1st session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA 1-5) met in Bonn, Germany on 30 April and will end on 10 May 2018. It will finalise guidelines to implement the Paris Agreement and convene a process on 'Talanoa Dialogue'. The SBI 48 and SBSTA 48 have over 20 and 15 agenda items respectively. In SBs agenda, Nepal's interest will be, inter alia, on national communications, nationally determined contributions, clean development mechanism (CDM), mitigation actions in forest sector, agriculture, LDC matters, national adaptation plans (NAPs), climate finance, capacity building, gender, and Nairobi Work Programme. Under APA 1-5, Parties will focus on guidance to mitigation, adaptation communication, transparency framework for action and support, global stocktaking, and procedures for PA implementation. A number of official and unofficial parallel meetings will be held to complete the tasks in 10 days. In addition, Nepal should attend the meetings of the LDC Coordination Group and G77 and China two times a day. In side-events where Nepal may share its good practices, LAPAs implementation and NAP



BY BATU UPRETY

formulation process, including REDD and renewable energy. Nepal is missing these opportunities this time.

The Government initiated a process to include relevant professionals in negotiating sessions of the UNFCCC and KP in 2007, and expanded the team since 2009 to develop the country capacity. The Government decided to form a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder 'core negotiating team' in 2012. This convinced the LDCs to understand Nepal's seriousness in climate change negotiation. It helped Nepal to lead the negotiation process on behalf of 48 LDCs in 2013 and 2014. This provided a basis to learn from, and contribute to, the negotiation process.

Between 2008 and April 2018, Nepal functioned as a rapporteur to the SBSTA, member(s), vice-chair and chair(s) of the LEG, chair of the LDC Coordination Group, chair of the Adaptation Fund Board, and member of the WIM on Loss and Damage, representing Asia Group, LDC Group, and Group of G77 & China. This also provided Nepal multiple opportunities to develop country capacity and access climate finance as well.

After being a Party to the UNFCCC in 1994, Nepal's effective participation was noted in overcoming 2005 Montreal decision on biomass methodology. Nepal registered two biogas projects as CDM in 2005 but methodology was scratched in the same year. Nepal's concerted effort worked well to revive methodology in Bali in 2007 and opened avenues to engage in carbon trade. From 2008, Nepal has attended the Conference of the Parties (CoPs) at political or diplomatic levels. In 2009, the then Prime Minister launched the Mountain Initiatives in Copenhagen where 4 ministers and over 85 persons attended as government delegate. In 2009, Nepal also organized a regional conference on 'Kathmandu to Copenhagen' and hold cabinet meeting at Kalapatthar, base camp of Mount Everest. The 2012 decision on 'core negotiating team' and inclusion of 'professionals' in the Nepal delegation made our efforts effective in climate change process. In 2015, Nepal organized cycle rally in Paris. These were some of the 'turning points' to showcase impacts of climate change and national initiatives.

Between 2007 and 2016, Nepal secured climate finance for adaptation, resilience and REDD projects. Secured funding of few projects is still on the way to Kathmandu due to 'unwillingness' of few 'positioned' officials. This has greatly affected climate vulnerable poor communities to adapt to, and build resilience to, climate change impacts.

'Back' of Secretary B.N. Oli from high-level segment of CoP 23 in 2017, 'unwillingness' of senior bureaucrats in bringing early 'accessed and secured' climate finance, and non-inclusion of 'professionals & seasoned negotiators' in this April-May Bonn session can be marked as the 'black spots' in the history of climate change initiatives in Nepal. The Government is encouraged to include professionals, to the earliest possible, in its delegation team even using the 2012 decisions. ■

● ● ●

**The SBI 48 and SBSTA 48 have over 20 and 15 agenda items respectively. In SBs agenda, Nepal's interest will be, inter alia, on national communications, nationally determined contributions, clean development mechanism (CDM), mitigation actions in forest sector, agriculture, LDC matters, national adaptation plans (NAPs), climate finance, capacity building, gender, and Nairobi Work Programme.**

● ● ●

GANDHI PANDIT

# Legal Eagle

*At a time when Nepal's legal system is undergoing a transformation, integrating itself globally, senior advocate Gandhi Pandit, who has a long family background, has come up with a new vision, establishing Gandhi & Law Associates to cater to the need of local and international clients*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Encountering his father late Bam Dev Pandit, who was a judge during the Rana period, dealing with legal issues, a number of times, Gandhi Pandit aspired to be a lawyer from his early childhood. Pandit, the founder of Gandhi & Law Associates, who had a family background where his grand-father had also been in the legal fraternity, ended up his completing Bachelor's in Law from the Tribhuvan University.

To fulfill his ambition to be a national and international lawyer, Gandhi also completed his Master's from Delhi and later went to study in Columbia University in the City of New York.

As Nepal is gradually integrating with the global economic systems, senior advocate Gandhi, with his academic background, is witnessing that his hard work and commitment have

been paying.

Founding Gandhi & Associates in 1997, the firm has successfully established itself as a major legal

in a short period of time.

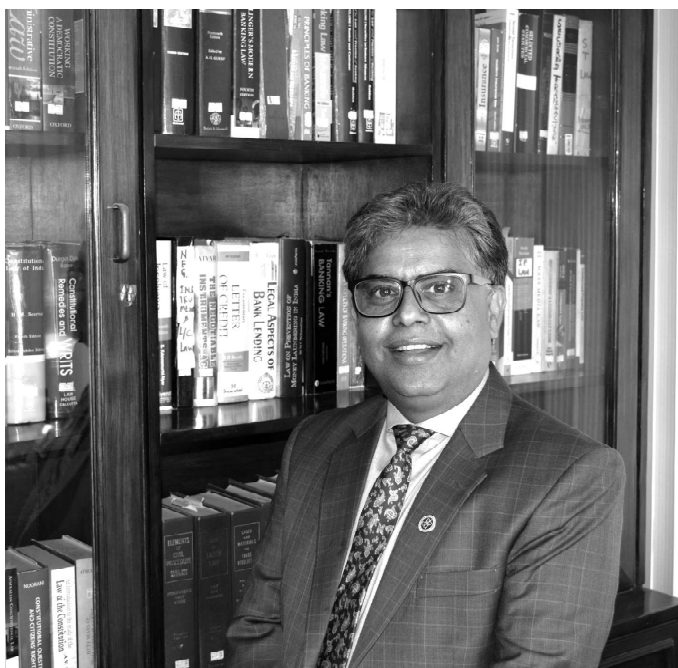
Starting with three employees, Gandhi and Associates has transformed itself into a leading professional law firm with the

capability to provide all kinds of legal services and consultancy to international investors and companies interested in Nepal.

As Nepal gets globalised, Gandhi and Law Associates looks up to becoming an established and professional law firm of global standards. With a mix of people, from seasoned and experienced to young and dynamic, in the staff, Gandhi and Associates has started to provide all kinds of legal services.

Most of the clients of Gandhi and Associates are foreign investors with their

portfolio management of up to 2.5 billion dollars.



solution provider and a pioneer in the corporate legal picture in Nepal



# Nepal's Top Lawyer Decries Corruption And Nepotism's Effects On Investment

Entering Ghandi & Associates, one of Nepal's most decorated law firms, feels like entering an establishment you'd expect to find in London or New York - impressive large, modern and chic. Ghandi Pandit, the organisation founder and head, has an office filled with legal literature and rich leather, which gives clients a feeling of security, he claims. From his work in the west he knows that foreign clients expect a certain level of professionalism to feel comfortable investing their money.

Pandit believes that Kathmandu's rival law firms don't manage to radiate the same standard and this can lead to clients not wanting to place their trust or, more importantly, money with them.

Pandit has managed to assemble an impressive team behind him. This includes Rajendra Kishore Kshatri, Nepal's former Chief Secretary of Government, Raju Man Singh Malla, former secretary at the Ministry of Law, and senior advocate Shailendra Kumar Dahal who's president of the Supreme Court Bar Association and two young lawyers Shikhar Pandit and Avash Pandit.



BY ALEX BUSHNELL

litigation and arbitration cases, to drafting legislation for the government. Pandit himself specialises in corporate and commercial law, and has even been recognised as a senior advocate by the Supreme Court. He speaks extensively with us about foreign investment (FDI) and explains that Nepal can be an exciting place for it.

FDI is a focal-point for Nepal right now. Hari Bhakta Sharma, president of the Confederation of Nepalese Industries, told Republica that due to the Government's slim resources, private and foreign ventures are vital for maintaining economic growth. Pandit mirrors these sentiments, stressing how much Nepal has to give.

Nepal Rastra Bank has indicated that this is happening, albeit slowly. Since 2008 foreign investment has increased from \$2.8million to \$57million, which is a fraction of what Nepal needs. Reports from the World Bank and National Planning Committee highlight Nepal's financial trouble by stressing infrastructure needs \$2billion extra spending per year. Even if all of Nepal's foreign investment was focused here, the impact would be minimal.

That being said, FDI more than doubled in 2017 from 2016, and Santander Bank reports that 348 foreign venture projects happened in Nepal last year. The US Embassy also issued a report showing the international spread of the country's investors, with a top five of China, Switzerland, the UK, Singapore and South Korea. Pandit asserts that foreign investment is definitely making its way into Nepal but there are serious hurdles for it.

The first issue he speaks about is the lack of qualified lawyers. After studying in the US he returned to Nepal and worked with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on projects for legal reform to help with investment.

"It's good to have a good law" Pandit says "but law has no impact if that law is not known ... not interpreted well ... not implemented ... lawyers and judges need to be trained ... but in Nepal they are not."



They have offices located in Kathmandu, Pokhara, and Butwal with over five-hundred clients including the World Bank, Essar and IDBI.

Pandit is a Columbia Law graduate himself, as well as being involved in the founding of the National Judicial Academy.

His team covers everything from licensing, through





corruption in Nepal make it an unattractive place to invest in in comparison to its cheaper, more transparent South-Asian neighbours.

The other concern of Pandit's is Nepal's dogged nepotism. He explains the presence of a "political bubble" in Nepal that excludes highly qualified individuals, such as himself, in favour of unqualified peoples. He claims the situation is comparable to politicians giving their friends jobs as doctors, "they're t h a t unqualified!" Ghandi

He explains how most experienced lawyers stay out of Nepal for two reasons Corruption and Nepotism.

Pandit declares politicians "want FDI but can't help but eat more [corrupt money]." This scares off foreign investors and capable lawyers he claims.

This won't be a surprise to many as it's already widely acknowledged as a serious issue, with Nepal ranking 122nd in the latest world corruption perception index. The country finds itself wallowing in the bottom third, closely accompanied by the likes of Kazakhstan and Liberia. The former's economy minister is currently standing on trial for charges of embezzlement and bribery; crimes widely believed to be common within their political system. The latter's corruption has been described as "endemic" by the World Bank.

A recent report by the World Economic Forum (WEF) mimics Pandit's concerns, claiming widespread judicial corruption.

The report finds that judges frequently take bribes from individuals or companies for favourable rulings. It also finds that commercial disputes often drag on years due to the lack of a coherent legal framework, competent judiciary or qualified lawyers - all things Pand it highlights as issues for investors.

The WEF report also finds bribes are usually necessary to secure basic utilities for projects. These are known as facilitation payments and despite being illegal, are very common. This means that officials require off-the-book money to activate items such as electricity and water. Similarly, bribes are often expected to obtain construction permits which can become a legal headache for investors.

A report by GAN Integrity says the realities of

& Associates is involved in the legislative process but not enough, he exclaims.

The ADB has also commented on this, highlighting Nepotism's adverse effect on development projects. It declares that as of a year ago, 65% of finances available for Nepal's development programmes were not being spent. That's \$1.3billion of undistributed funds. Their report stresses that a major cause of this is poor management, with politician's "nearest and dearest" being given roles they should not fill.

Pandit maintains that this discourages qualified lawyers from practicing in Nepal because the legal system becomes incoherent and difficult. He finishes by pointing out that this turns away foreign investors.

Pandit's words are not all doom and gloom though. He says that the current potential for political stability could be a god-send for investment. He explains that from 1996 to 2006 the deterioration of Nepal's political situation made any ventures incredibly risky. He argues that the new reality of the UML and CPN(M) government makes Nepal a far more inviting place for investors than ever before.

Despite this one positive, there are many issues going forward for Nepal's relationship with foreign ventures. Pandit affirms that much needs to be done to solve these problems but also claims that "in Nepal it's very easy to point out problems but far harder to give solutions." However, there's one thing that's certain - Ghandi & Associates will be integral to any positive resolution.

*(Alex is an intern from England)*

# Ghandi & Associates' Coveted Founder Speaks About His Past And Nepal's Future

## **When did you know that you wanted to be a lawyer?**

It's not that I wanted to be a lawyer, it's that I would always argue with my friends and teachers in school. In light of this, I was advised to become a lawyer whilst in High School. My father was a judge and wanted this too but I had other ideas.

His phone rings. He apologises, answers, then bursts out two short sentences before hanging up.

I came to Kathmandu in 1975 intent on not studying law. At first I tried to study medicine as well as a few other things but wasn't successful, so ended up biting the bullet and applying to Law school but I failed with this too. I went to the school's office to find out why I hadn't passed and was told that I'd answered the test using old criteria. My school was teaching old laws and subsequently caused me to fail.

I told them this was an injustice and that I should be given another a chance. They discussed the matter amongst themselves and agreed that I should be permitted to Kathmandu Law School.

## **Your ability to join the law school is what made you want to be a lawyer?**

Well at first my motive was to be a judge. I took a judicial exam in 1979 but couldn't make it. I returned to my law firm and applied to become a teacher of law in 1981, with which I was successful. The beauty of teaching was that I could run my own office at the same time, and within a few years I'd become very popular in the market. I was part of the Bar Association and was heavily working with the Unions.

At that time the US government had a programme where they wanted one lawyer from the Nepali Bar Association to study state-side for a few months.

The Association recommended five candidates to the US embassy and from these they selected me. This opportunity allowed me to go to Madison, Wisconsin for three months training before returning to Nepal.

## **How did this benefit you?**

Well, on my way home I decided to drop into New York City to see some friends I had studying there. I asked one of them to take me to Colombia Law as I was interested in seeing the place with its libraries and prestigious facilities.

Whilst there we bumped into my friend's law professor. He asked me all about why I was in America and not Nepal, and I told him of my achievements. "Why don't you want to study in Colombia?" He replied.

"What person wouldn't want to study in Colombia? I don't have the money," I said.

"Don't worry about that. I'll give you fifty per cent off if you can get the rest. What do you think about that?" I thought 'oh my god, yes' but when I returned to Nepal the country was going through great revolutionary change with the monarchy. I was confused about whether to go back or not. If I went to the US I could miss a good opportunity here.

## **So you were interested in going into politics?**

Yes, I was very politically active and an activist.

I knew that I would have the money to go if I sold all my things but still wasn't sure what to do. I decided to seek the advice of the Nepali Congress party leaders to see if they could help me make a decision. Most of them told me that I couldn't miss this opportunity but Koirala had other ideas. He argued that Nepal needed people like me "in a time like this." I really didn't know what to do. I was so confused.

I decided to consult my wife and was successfully persuaded to go - that was the best decision of my life. In America I made connections that aided my career here, as well my children's. It was because of the links I made there that could get my sons internships at firms in Europe.

## **When you first went to America, what were the most striking differences between their legal system and Nepal's?**

The lawyers there were educated, articulate, and fiercely competitive. The judges were non-corrupt, academic and had etiquette.

The system was strong and robust. Everything, and everyone, was apolitical and commanding.

Nepal is the opposite. Judges here have no legal exposure and do not welcome newcomers nor the well educated. This results in a system where unqualified people are in charge of the laws.

## **Would you describe it as an "old boys club"?**

Yes, yes, yes.

If someone comes to Nepal with a billion dollars of investment, they'll be putt off by the judges.

I worked with ADB to help draft laws for investment to rectify this issue, which was positive. It's good to have good policies but it has no impact if the law is not known, not interpreted well, nor implemented. Lawyers and judges need to be trained for this and at the time there was nothing to facilitate this. So, how do you do that?

I suggested they have a training institute and became an adviser on their \$4million project. I worked as a domestic consultant for them for four years, training attorneys and private bar candidates.

Tell me about your own law firm.

Whilst my two boys were studying in the UK, we had about six lawyers in my office. By the time they came back we were having to expand to our current four-floor building so as to accommodate our forty-member law team.

## **So that's forty members of staff?**

No, forty lawyers. This makes us the largest firm in the country. Our competitors only have ten to twelve, maximum. We're still building more, and handle investment issues, legal mantras...anything really.

## **How have you applied the things you learnt in the west?**

Well, first thing's first, we needed an office and secretaries. Believe it or not, this was a new idea for Nepal as lawyers had previously been handling their own clerical work.

Next, I went about hiring interns for our own mutual



benefit. I was the first to use computers and the internet too, which helped us with contracts, cases, filing, etc. etc. We added items to our office to build confidence with our clients. Small things, like a dialling system, appointment taking and a cafeteria - they all go a long way towards building a convincing product.

**Do you think all of this has helped you with foreign investors?**

Absolutely. The first thing that foreign investors want to know is whether a firm can understand their needs. We need to be punctual and professional to accommodate this. When they come to my office they can feel comfortable, as if they're in an international firm. They need to feel assured that their presence in Nepal won't mean losing quality with lawyers.

**How have you seen foreign investment change over time?**

It's had many ups and downs.

In 1990, new economic policies were implemented, which brought privatisation and a wave of investment. Sadly, this changed after 1997 as the political situation deteriorated. Investment stopped coming in and the government couldn't enforce policies effectively. Things have stabilised now but these days corruption is the issue. People contact politicians and judges to have cases swing in their favour. There's dirty deals and money cut, and this is a real problem for Nepal.

**And this scares away potential foreign investors?**

Yes, very much. There's no transparency and politicians are greedy.

Imagine you're eating in a restaurant. You've just started your meal, the food is so tasty, you don't want to stop but you're full. You can't eat anymore!

This is Nepal and foreign investment. Politicians want to eat foreign investment but their stomachs are full with corruption.

Being an investor here isn't easy. It's like being lured into a room with the promise of food only to find out you've

been trapped. The door's locked and there's no food inside. You don't want to stay but you can't leave! The laws change here, the system is corrupt and clients get upset.

The Chinese are the smartest businessmen in the world. They can operate in Pakistan and Africa - even the moon - but they know that Nepal is impossible. One of the biggest hydropower companies in China decided to try a project in Nepal just to see how difficult it would be. Money was no issue for them - it was just a test. It should have taken five years but ended up taking ten because of problems with policy, corruption and instability.

**Do you see this policy situation changing?**

Politicians can't do everything by themselves. What was Obama's biggest challenge when he became president? Building a team of people with knowledge, expertise and the capability to deliver.

It's the exact same here with our politicians. They need to find the best people to help with policy - technocrats, lawyers etc.

The problem is that politicians need allies to get elected and when they enter office they give positions to these people. This kind of system works in a really bad way and means people like myself don't get used appropriately. It's akin to a party politician being used as a doctor. You don't need someone who's got a degree practicing medicine, you need someone with experience in hospitals with patients! It's nepotism.

**How does this nepotism effect the legal framework?**

There's no accountability in the system and cases become obsolete. Policies become convoluted and a political bubble appears.

This must make your job a nightmare.

No, no, no. This makes my job great because quality people can't stay here. No quality people, no competition!

Pandit laughs. ■

# Is Representative Democracy Democratic?

Nepal is experiencing crises, setbacks, and advances in the democratization of institutionalized power, in which the forms of representative democracy and participatory democracy are inscribed. Representative democracy is considered an indirect democracy in which the people do not govern because it is the citizens who elect the representatives who govern and represent them. The representatives decide the policies and legislative acts of the people. However, this type of democracy is directly and specifically linked to participatory democracy, which then leads us to generate real representative democracy. This representative democracy leads to participatory democracy.

Everything that is directed against that system will be unjust, create terror, destabilizing, revolutionary, detestable and undemocratic. The parties that represent 55% of the voters will continually give legitimacy to the system because, winners or losers, they all take out a succulent piece of the pie of power.

After all, representative democracy is nothing more than the well-planned and disguised dictatorship of the representatives. It is easier to consider legitimate resistance against a dictatorship than against a supposed democracy. Representative democracy is the disguise of the dictatorship of the private interests of the representatives. It is of utmost importance to remove that disguise among all.

It has a deficiency that would be caused by the lack of sufficient receptivity on the part of the representatives. There is a need to reinforce the line of communication between citizens and their representatives, as this communication is an essential pillar of democracy. Nationalism and the democratic system are two different realities. One is based on the passionate defense of one's own and the other on the rational negotiation of differences.

It is very difficult for nationalism to understand the relationship between democracy and the constitution since it considers that the Fundamental Rule can do nothing when it comes to containing the will of the nation unequivocally expressed by any procedures that may take place.

Our democracy is caught between nationalism and federalism. On the other hand, populism and nationalism threaten democracy. Our representative democracy no longer represents the people. In reality, democracy in Nepal does not exist, neither as a value, nor as a spirit, or as a social necessity. BP Koirala was correct in his time but his ideology was never evolved. It is high time we ditch representative democracy and move forward to direct democracy.

Undoubtedly, democracy is the best model of political organization humanity has found. However, as it was introduced within the context of capitalist productive relations, it lives in permanent crisis. By their own internal logic, such relations produce social inequalities and exclusions that corrode the very idea of democracy. If participatory democracy gains ground, the institutions of representative government could lose part of their power in favor of the new participatory sphere.

Based on a reflection on the limitations faced by democracy in the context of current globalization, we have to analyze the possibilities of a new relationship between people, collectives and state institutions. This serious evil affects not only the democracy in our country but also many other latitudes, where the possibility to recycle the groups and interests of society could be sacrificed. This possibility is the basis of democracy itself.



BY DEEPAK RAJ JOSHI

The question of the viability of democracy becomes very complex when the structures of power and domination cannot be given the minimum example of probity, good sense and balance in decisions. This puts the long-term objectives before the conjuncture. These objectives allow building a fair society, with development options for citizens.

Do we have a healthier democracy in Nepal because its citizens are ready to mobilize for what they believe is right? Or is it because of their concerns and interests? Or is politics on the street a signal of everything that does not work

well?

Freedom and democracy cannot just be an ideological duty. Those who care for democracy and freedom should not use democracy and freedom to divert discredited policies. Democracy and freedom are not a gerontocratic system. It is a system of constant change of people in power. It is a system in which people need to offer alternatives, future, new look and new people.

It has not become a government of the people and for the people, but a tool by which power dominates the people. It can be said that democratic institutions, such as elections, serve as a mechanism to ensure the persistence of the authoritarian system and the effectiveness of its action on society. In principle, the separation of power between the judiciary (the court), the legislature (parliament), and the administration (government) is a fundamental principle of democracy.

In Nepal, we hardly see the separation between these three powers. People live in poverty and enormous oppression. Journalists and politicians talk about democracy. The true form of government is, of course, completely oligarchic. The most basic physical problem of democracy is that no one is ever responsible. Voters make their choice but their choice is limited in advance. Their choices remain secret and they will not face the consequences of their choice alone. A voter travels in wagons to vote and everyone blames each other for the outcome. It encourages corrupt voting behavior by destroying accountability. The cost of any measure is shared by society as a whole, which encourages the more wealthy to vote for the absurd costs that can be transferred to others. The other burden will only become heavier.

No matter what people vote for, how smart they are, or whether they are good humans or not, they will eventually become accustomed to ineffectiveness and consider life as a gamble rather than a meaningful achievement of the goals. They give up the information and rely on opinions, and then exclude all competing views. Because honesty is a bad investment, they become passive-aggressive manipulators, which tell us about corruption and fish voters with guilt, sense of humor, shame, pity, and fear.

Our representative democracy no longer represents the people. We are facing a serious problem when it comes to leadership. Personalities play an important role in every aspect of our lives. It is more than obvious that there is a lack of strong personality in politics. A strong personality is required to develop strong and diverse political leaders.

Freedom and democracy cannot be an ideological duty. In reality, democracy in Nepal does not exist as a value, or a spirit, and neither as a social necessity.

*(Deepak Raj Joshi (The author is a lecturer and IT consultant. He also writes fiction under the name of Kapeed Joshi. He can be reached by email at [info@dipakjoshi.com.np](mailto:info@dipakjoshi.com.np).) ■*

Hotel Yak &amp; Yeti

# Celebrating Austrian Expedition

*Hotel Yak & Yeti organized a felicitation program for the Austrian Everest Expedition Team 1978*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although several expedition teams attempted to climb Mt Everest and many mountaineers have shown the courage to reach the top of the world, the story of Mt. Everest Expedition of 1978 by Austrian climber was historic.

With a team of very courageous climbers, Austrians made virtually impossible things possible by climbing the mountain without using oxygen.

During the felicitation program and the reception hosted by General Manager, Monika Petra Scheiblauber of Hotel Yak & Yeti and her team, the historical climbers shared their extraordinary experiences and expressed their heartfelt connection with Nepal. Many climbers amongst the team have visited Nepal several times. Their inspiring stories and love for the country made the event a real celebration.

The purpose of the event was to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Hotel Yak & Yeti and to honor the Austrian Everest Expedition Team of 1978 on their 40th Jubilee. There were 12 mountaineers in the team.

The President of Nepal Mountaineering Association, Santa Bir Lama and Sudan Subedi from Nepal Tourism Board expressed their appreciations and congratulations to both Hotel Yak & Yeti as well as the expedition team.

Historical mountaineers include Wolfgang Nairz, Reinhold Messner, Prof. Dr. Oswald Ölz, Prof. Peter Habeler, Prof. Dr. Raimund Magreiter, Robert Schauer, Hanns Schell and Helmuth Hagner.

Wolfgang Nairz was the expedition leader on Manaslu South Face 1972, Makalu South Face 1974, Everest 1978, Ama Dablam 1979 and

1985, Cho Oyu 1982, Dhaulagiri 1984 and Makalu 1986. He is the chairman of the Nepal Hilfe Tirol with a number of important projects in Nepal to support the people of Nepal to get education and better lives.

Some of the projects he is involved in are Stove project, School in Bhotenamlang/ Sindhupalchok, Sherpa Project: Lodge management training in the Austrian Alps and mountain hut, training for doctors to

first Austrian to climb the Seven Summits. He also climbed Shisha Pangma and the Glacier Dome.

Prof. Peter Habeler climbed several times with R. Messner and besides Everest was also on the summit of Kangchendzönga, Cho Oyu, Gasherbrum and Nanga Parbat.

Prof. Dr. Raimund Magreiter climbed a lot of high mountains in the Andes and Hindukush and he was the first Surgeon to carry out a heart



get specialists, Eye Camp in remote areas. He is also an author of 11 books- 3 about Nepal and also as a keynote speaker.

Reinhold Messner is the world's most famous mountaineer. He has climbed at first all 800 m peaks without use of oxygen. He is also a great friend of Nepal and has donated a big amount for the rebuilding of Kunde Hospital. He established and led the most important Mountain Museums in South Tyrol/Italy. Messner is well known also as an author and a lecturer.

Prof. Dr. Oswald Ölz is also expert in high altitude medicine and was the

transplant in Europe.

Robert Schauer is one of the most successful climbers of Austria. (3 times Everest, Nanga Parbat and others). He has organized for more than 20 years, one of the biggest International Mountain Film Festivals in Graz/Austria.

Hanns Schell organized expeditions in the early 70s, he has summited Karakorum, Hindukush and Nanga Parbat.

Helmuth Hagner as mountain guide was teacher in the mountain guide training of Austria and member of Makalu Expedition 1974, Everest 1978 and others. ■

# Path To Success

I have always wished to have a conversation with a successful woman and pick her brain. Take all her tips for success and apply them to my career goals. I know I would love to because it's these successful women that have gone through everything that we are currently going through. And it didn't stop them! So, here are a couple of things these successful women have learned and conquered that we are still trying to get past.



BY SHRADHA GYAWALI

**You will never be ready:** Trust me, I know what it's like never feeling ready enough or good enough to achieve all the things that I want to achieve. I always used to put myself down and think I can't do this because I don't know this. But if there's one piece of amazing advice I can give you is to always just do it and learn as you go. You will never be ready enough and that's because fear is holding you back. When in truth you can do anything you set your mind to. Just remember, there's nothing you can't do! And use that focus and ambition to live your dream. Don't be the one thing holding yourself back!

**There will always be obstacles and challenges:** No matter what you do, or how hard you work, there will always be challenges to overcome. But that's what makes you successful, that's what will make you an entrepreneur, by overcoming these challenges and not letting them break you. You have to stay smart, keep your cool, re-strategize and keep moving forward towards the goals that you have set and things that you want to achieve.

**Everyone will not agree with your vision:** Sadly, not everyone in this world is going to believe in you or your vision, and there are going to be people who will tell you that you cannot do it. But, don't allow someone else's estimation of you be your estimation of yourself. Instead, let it inspire you and push you forward. Successful women won't take no for an answer - that's how they became successful! And you shouldn't either!

**Accept Failures:** Just remember that you can do it and these challenges are just in place to test you. Anyone can fail, anyone can make mistakes. But it's how you react to these failures that will set you apart from the rest. It's ok to fail because there is an opportunity to learn and an

opportunity to grow after each failure. Don't let them bring you down, just keep pushing your way through them.

**Don't let fear get in your way:** It's natural to fear something - it means that you care. But it's an emotion that shouldn't let you hold yourself back. And it's something you will encounter throughout your life so you need to know how to put it away and not be ruled by it. Everything new is feared but we also have the ability to conquer our fear and

move past it therefore lets defeat fear and move on towards success.

You are in charge and when it comes to your dreams nothing should ever get in the way. Feel it, embrace it, and instead, let it move you into the unknown because you'll never know what will happen and what's waiting for you next. ■



## EARTHQUAKE RECOVERY IN RASUWA

# Reviving Livelihood with Disaster Resilient Shelter and Infrastructure in Rasuwa

Almost after three years, most of the regions devastated by the earthquake of 2015 are yet to recover fully. The communities of formerly Ramche VDC currently ward No. 1 of Kalika Rural Municipality and formerly Yarsa VDC now ward nos.1, 2 and 6 of Naukunda Rural Municipality of Rasuwa are almost back to normal with the earthquake-resilient shelters, infrastructure and livelihood under Build Back Better (BBB) approach thanks to The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Nepal, its implementing partner BATAS Foundation and financial support from Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) and Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC).

The following are case studies showcase the changes brought about in the communities.

## Toilets Change Lifestyles and Sanitation Behavior

The earthquake devastated the life of 50 years old Kaisya Tamang, a resident in Kalika Rural Municipality 1, Ramche of Rasuwa district. Her house was demolished and property destroyed. The recovery program implemented by The Luther World Federation (LWF) Nepal in partnership with BATAS Foundation



and financial support from Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) and Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) brought a drastic change in her life of frustration and anger.

An inclusive toilet ended the long pain of Tamang, a person with disability, of going for open defecation. Unlike other persons, she needs an open space to sit and stand.

Living with her son, Tamang, has built a house on her own. The decision to choose her as a beneficiary

for the toilet made her happy.

"Two months ago, when the local community told me that these 3 institutions decided to build inclusive toilet, it was one of the happiest day in my life. With the inclusive and disabled-friendly toilet at home, I don't have to use the open space to support me," said Tamang.

Tamang shares that Ramche village used to adopt various traditional practices such as traditional healers, open defecation, simply cleaning dishes and keeping them in sun light after meal, no water for dehydration patient, eating vegetables and fruits without washing and no hand washing before meal.

As the village was declared open defecation-free last month, the construction of toilet turned as a boon, said Tamang. Not only Tamang, every household has a toilet and some of them are inclusive and they are properly used. The local translates the messages of using toilet and other hygiene behaviors to the neighboring village as well during their personal visits. The paths and school premises are free from feces and bad odor.

Household cleanliness such as solid waste management, proper dish washing, converting food and water are being practiced in every house. The children are neat and clean, concerned for their personal cleanliness and they do regular hand washing. One of the things the toilet introduced is the level of awareness among the people on water-borne diseases like stomach ache, dysentery, and diarrhea.

"Construction of toilet has changed our life. There is no more disease," said Tamang. "Although earthquake destroyed our property and made us homeless, the toilet gives us new healthy life."

"Along with the construction of the toilets, the people from BATAS also taught us the way to remain healthy by washing hand washing with soap before meal and after using the toilet," said Tamang.

## Foot-Trail Helps Farmers to Increase Connection

Although Guranse Village is just 2 kilometers from Ramche bazaar and it is known as a pocket area of vegetable production, the earthen road, lack of irrigation and inadequate knowhow on modern agriculture method remain as a stumbling block.

Connected to Nepal's different cities through Pasanglhamu Highway, the residents in Guranse of Kalika Rural Municipality-1 have everything to make money. However, the steep earthen trail, a small stream,



## DEVELOPMENT

lack of irrigation and modern agriculture method always stood as a barrier for economic prosperity for 150 households.

Implemented by LWF Nepal in partnership Batas Foundation and supported by IRW and DEC, they also constructed water intake to store the water to use for irrigation purpose. Under the livelihood recovery program, these organizations have been providing the



local farmers with seeds of vegetables, plastic sheets, bamboos to build tunnel to grow vegetables.

Taking adequate mitigation to protect the trail from flood and landslide with Gabion wall, the construction of 1,600 meter Ramche-Guranse foot trail of Kalika Rural Municipality-1 is going to be a game changer to develop the hill as a pocket for vegetable production.

During the rainy season, the link between Guranse and Ramche was usually cut off due to flood in the stream and it was always risky to walk. With the construction of concrete steps along with stone wall, people of Guranse will heave a sigh of relief. "The foot trail has already reduced our travel time between Ramche bazaar and Guranse," said 78 years old Nema Wangdi. "With the steps, I found much easier to go down and climb up. It took me just one and a half hours to make a trip."

Planting vegetables in his 15 ropani of land, Nima saved Rs 60,000 last year. "With the all-weather concrete trail before us, it saves our time and energy," said Nima.

The trail has also certain peculiar character. Following the guidelines of Build Back Better (BBB), adequate mitigation measures were taken during the construction period. As the project was selected with the decision and demand of elected representative of ward 1 and community users group, local people are actively taking part in the construction.

With resting places built for the porters at 2 places, the foot trail is likely to make a difference in Guranse village. It also comes as a relief to 300 students of Temrang Primary School.

Along with Wangdi, the foot trail is likely to help over 150 households in the areas which grow

vegetables. 57-year-old Menjin Yalmo Tamang is one of the beneficiaries of the foot trail and irrigation scheme. Tamang, an earthquake victim, received materials for construction of tunnel, vegetable seeds and fertilizers.

"My vegetable is at harvesting phase. I think I will make Rs. 50, 000.00 per session," said Tamang. "With the completion of all-weather trail and irrigation scheme, the vegetable farming is going to help us to improve our livelihood."

Her confidence level is high because the project also took them for observation trip to Trishuli bazaar. "We met some vegetable vendors of Trishuli and they had shown interest to come to our village to buy the vegetables in bulk," said Tamang.

## Drinking Water Supply Reduces the Burden

Women of Palep Village of Kalika Rural Municipality-1 used to spend 2 hours to fetch a bucket of water. Following the earthquake, the situation further deteriorated with the disappearance of water sources. They were compelled to spend hours to get a bucket of water. After the demolition of home by earthquake, Yodarshe Tamang Ghalan, 51, Chair of Palep Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Group of Kalika Municipality-1, has been living in temporary shelter as the construction of new house is about to complete. He is happier with the construction of 15,000 liter-water tank by the support LWF Nepal in partnership Batas Foundation and financial support by IRW and DEC. The completion of the water tank and water distribution system has reduced the drudgery of women.

"Now we are distributing drinking water to 90 houses. Under this project, we installed 15 water taps and rehabilitated 8 old taps, which had dried after the earthquake," said Ghalan.

With the availability of water, all the households have built the toilets. Along with toilets, people have also started using surplus water to grow vegetables in their garden. Learning from the past, this water tank is





round and built considering proper mitigation and protection.

2,500 meters below the Pasanglhamu Highway, it normally takes 3 hours to reach the Grang bazaar and farmers like Ghalan are planning to grow vegetables to sell in the market.

Due to water scarcity, farmers of Palep are planting traditional crops like tomato, wheat and corn. "Given the availability of water at source, what I can say is that we would have some sort of water for the irrigation as well. This means we can grow cauliflower, cabbage and garlic," said Ghalan.

The water scheme was identified and constructed with the participation of chairperson and members of Kalika Rural Municipality and as per the demand of the local community. The scheme is earthquake-resilient.

"We constructed the tank and distribution system with constant monitoring and guidelines given by the technicians from Batas Foundation. We chose a very sound place for water tank, and distribution pipes are buried well," said Ghalan.

Although the past 2 years were painful for the residents in Palep as they used to spend 2 to 3 hours to fetch drinking water, the construction of drinking water project not only ended the burden of women, but it also created the opportunity to grow vegetables.

## Grocery Sustains Livelihood of a Single Woman

The 2015 Earthquake brought a number of miseries in the life of 33 years old Poda Kamisya Tamang of Thandur village of Naukunda Rural Municipality. Mother of 3 children, Tamang not only lost her house, but also lost her husband, the bread earner of the family.

For a few months, Tamang and her 4 children survived on the food distributed by various organizations under the relief package. Living in a temporary shelter for years, depending on the food provided by siblings, Tamang, a single woman, faced many hardships.

Given her socio-economic conditions, the community and the local level government agency recommended her name as an eligible affected person to receive Rs 20,000 to start a grocery. The support was provided by LWF Nepal in partnership with Batas Foundation supported by IRW and DEC.

With the seed money, she opened a grocery in the village 2 years ago. "Since there is no one to take care of me and my family after earthquake, I have been living close to my brother and mother. The support provided by BATAS not only revived my hope but also saved my 4 small children as well," said Tamang.

Selling rice, potato, noodles and other household products, Tamang is earning Rs 500.00 a day, enough to raise her family and send children to school. "I sell different products worth Rs 3000 a day. Since last one year, I have added Rs 20,000 to my asset in the shop," said Tamang.

Given no competitor nearby, Tamang has a monopoly business. "Mine is the first of its kind grocery.

I have been selling most essential daily use



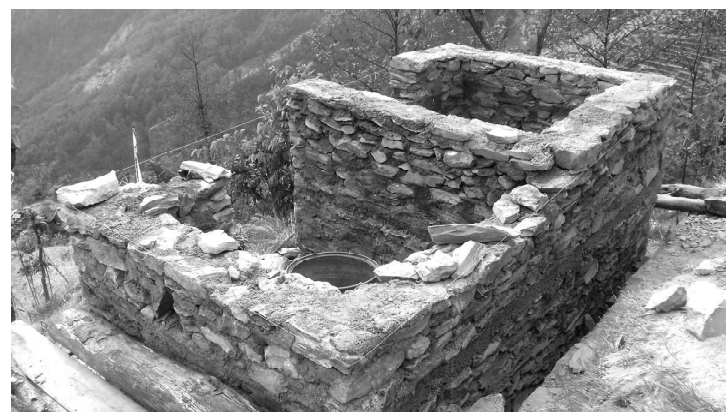
commodities," said Tamang,

As 2 of her children go to school and other 2 are about to join, Tamang is now considering to expand her shop. Given my last 2 years' experience, what I can say is that this grocery is going to be a bread maker of my children as well," said Tamang. She is also growing vegetables in her garden.

"With a good daily profit margin, my grocery business is growing. First one year after the earthquake was painful and full of trauma and uncertainty. The second two years were of hope and economic sustainability," said Tamang. "I have already recovered from my pain and agony of earthquake. With the grocery generating profits, I don't have to worry about the future."

Tamang has shown the way to run sustained livelihood program. Similarly, these successful experiences have also proved that the joint actions taken by local body, community and civil society organizations can bring substantial change in the livelihood of the poor people.

## Combined Strength of Community, INGOs and Elected Local Level have Drastic Impacts



## DEVELOPMENT

After their micro-hydro plant, water intake and other infrastructure for drinking water were swept away by dry landslide of earthquake, residents in Thangdur Village of Naukunda Rural Municipality were compelled to walk almost 3 hours to fetch a bucket of drinking water.

With no water sources available nearby to meet the demand of water, the local community faced the difficulty to provide enough water to cattle. Many even sold livestock because of unavailability of water nearby.

Under a small support from BATAS foundation, the implementing partner organization of LWF Nepal. Udeng Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Group restored the old pipeline and built a water tank with a capacity of supplying water to 40 households.

Although the rehabilitation of old pipeline solved the problems of 40 households, a large numbers of people living around the village didn't have any access to drinking water. Since the water source is far away at an altitude of 3,000 meters above the sea level, the estimated cost of the project was Rs 7.8 million which LWF's partners alone could not afford.

Knowing that the community and donor partners were facing budget deficit, newly elected chairman of Naukunda Rural Municipality Norbu Syangbo Ghale agreed to contribute Rs 3.1 million to a Rs 4.5 million fund promised by LWF Nepal in partnership BATAS Foundation and supported by IRW and DEC. The community users group agreed to contribute labor equivalent to Rs 600, 000.

With a capacity to supply drinking water to 136 households, Udeng Drinking Water Project has almost been completed now. Learning from the previous experiences of landslide and earthquake, proper mitigation measures have been adopted in the project.

Along with building an earthquake-resilient drinking water tank, the project developer also used new method in water distribution pipe deep along the steep of rocky mountain to protect the pipeline from natural disasters like landslide and earthquake.

"Our drinking water project is the first of its kind constructed with the collaboration and cooperation among NGOs/INGOs, local elected body and community users group," said Prem Bahadur Tamang, chairman of Tokma Muhan Thangdur Drinking Water Project Users Group.

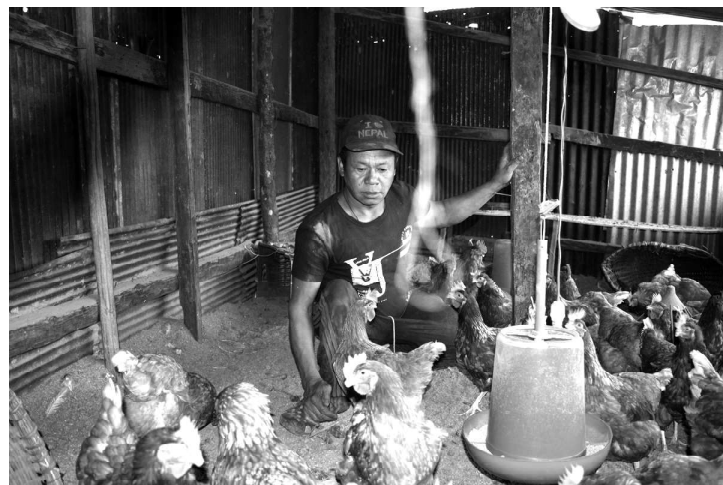
"As you know most of us are farmers, we cannot live without livestock. Animals also need water. This project is going to revive the entire community giving them water to recover their livelihood. Learning from the past, the newly built infrastructure can withstand earthquake and landslide. We have built them so strong that it will resist major disasters."

Chairman of Naukunda Rural Municipality ward no.1 sees this drinking water project as a model project in Nepal. "This drinking water project has shown that civil society, community and the local government can work to serve the interest of people," said Ghale.

As the project is close to completion, Tokma Muhan Drinking Water Project will revive the livelihood of the people in a sustained way.

## Poultry Transforms the Life of People with Disability

Nima Dawa Tamang, 42, a father of 3 children is a person with physical disability. Living in a financially



difficult situation with no source of income, Nima's luck turned when he entered into poultry business. Nima, resident in Arukharka Village of Naukunda Rural Municipality, has been earning Rs 12,000 monthly.

Like all his neighbors, the 2015 earthquake had badly damaged the means of livelihood of Nima. He lost his house and some cattle in the earthquake.

Living in a painful situation with fading hope, Nima was nominated by the community for poultry farming under a livelihood program implemented by LWF Nepal in partnership BATAS Foundation and supported by IRW and DEC.

Under the project, Nima received 46 layer chicks and feeder and other necessary means equivalent to Rs 38,000.

Along with providing materials and chicks, the project implemented by LWF Nepal in partnership BATAS Foundation supported by IRW and DEC also linked Nima with District Livestock Office for necessary technical support. Nima's day of generating income started after 6 months when the chicken started laying eggs.

"In early days, I was a bit worried about the market for the eggs. As soon as my chicken started laying eggs, the demand was so high that I was not able to meet all the demands," said Nima. "On average, I have been selling 35 eggs at the rate of Rs15 per egg, making a net profit of Rs10,000 a month," said Nima, who is spends Rs 1,200 per month on feed.

If things go as normal, Nima is planning to add 50 more chicks. "We can reach Kalika bazaar in 2 to 3 hours. I don't need to worry about the market," said Nima.

Nima sustains his family from the profit. "I have to expand my poultry farm. Thanks to LWF and its partner BATAS Foundation, I have found a new way to make me self-reliant," said Nima.

Although the earthquake damaged his property and house, the recovery project showed him a sustainable way of life for the future.

Given access to veterinary service and market at home, he wants to continue rearing chickens. "Although we used to rear the local variety of chicken, they are not much commercially viable. The layers have changed my economic and social status," said Nima.

## Living in Safe Shelter Ends Worry

Although many of her neighbors in the community are yet to complete the reconstruction of their houses, 30 years old Batuli BK, a resident in Langhu village of Naukunda Rural Municipality of Rasuwa, has been living in her one room earthquake-resilient shelter with a confidence.

The reconstruction of her house has a history of conflict with her neighbors who vehemently opposed LWF Nepal and its partner's package of building the earthquake-resilient house. "When I signed an agreement with LWF Nepal and its partner BATAS Foundation for the reconstruction of houses, my neighbors, who are seeking cash from the



government, threatened to kick out from the community," said BK.

At a time when large a number of people, who criticized her for accepting the scheme, have been leaving in temporary shelters and constructing smaller house to secure NRA's housing grant, BK, a Dalit, has reason to rejoice with her decision.

"I have taken a right decision. Had I followed a rumor about the government distributing money, I would still have to live in a temporary shelter. I know that Rs 300,000 is too small to reconstruct the house. This was the reason I signed the agreement for the reconstruction of house implemented by LWF Nepal in partnership BATAS Foundation and supported by IRW and DEC," said BK.

All the 151 houses reconstructed under the shelter program strictly followed the government

norms and used all the quality materials. Built under a supervision of qualified engineers and technical staff following the Build Back Better (BBB) approach, the 151 houses completed nearly a year ago stand with a distinct identity.

"Although my house is just one room and I am facing space constraints, I am confident that my house will withstand earthquakes like that of 2015. All the construction materials they used are high quality," said BK.

BK's house also includes a toilet. This is additional benefit for earthquake-affected people. "Construction of toilet in my house also ends the open defecation," said BK.

At a time when people who ran after the rumor of getting Rs 800,000 cash for reconstruction are regretting their decision, BK finds herself living in a safe earthquake-resilient shelter.

Before the reconstruction of houses, the implementing partners also made a land hazard survey whether they could build the houses in old sites. As all the houses were reconstructed with the expert analysis of the land's condition, the houses reconstructed by LWF Nepal are much safe and resilient.

"Looking at the current pace of reconstructed house made by individuals, I feel more comfortable and safe. I am pretty sure that my house will not collapse even bigger earthquake than the previous one strikes," said BK.

## Mobile Shop Transforms Pasang's Economic Status

When earthquake demolished his house and destroyed his property, there was a pressure to 26-year-old Pasang Tamang, a resident in Ramche, Kalika Rural Municipality of Rasuwa district. Growing pressure in the family and lack of employment opportunity back home, Pasang was about to leave Nepal for employment abroad.

His entire previous plan has changed following the meeting with LWF Nepal and its implementing partner BATAS Foundation. Under a scheme of LWF, Pasang selected by local community group and elected leaders of ward to take part in 3 months or 390 days mobile repair training in Trishuli.



## DEVELOPMENT

Along with paying training and residential cost, LWF Nepal's partner BATAS Foundation also provided necessary equipment worth Rs 40,000. With this, Pasang, who has 2 children, is now operating a mobile repairing center at Ramche.

"Given the last one month's income, I am confident to say that I can earn more money here than going abroad. At a time when everyone has a mobile set, there is a good market for mobile repair," said Tamang, whose training is accredited by the Centre for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT).

According to Tamang, he is making Rs 1,500-2,000 daily and his net profit is around Rs1000. "The money is enough to maintain my family of three. I am also planning to expand my shop," said Tamang.

Having his interest in electronics and electricals from childhood, Tamang decided to grab the opportunity provided by BATAS Foundation, an implementing partner of LWF Nepal supported by IRW and DEC.

"I am very much thankful to those organizations which supported in stemming the out migration of youth for employment. In my opinion, I have moved from darkness to light," said Tamang.

Ramche having a population of 5,000 and lying on the high way, Tamang hopes to create a good market for his job. As each individual has a couple of cell phone handsets, I will find enough work to make me busy," said Tamang.

"I have bitter memories of earthquake and its devastation. However, the earthquake also created opportunities in our village including employment," said Tamang.

### Farming Garlic as Climate-Resilient Crop

As the harvest of traditional crops like potato, wheat and corn is gradually declining, the subsistence-based farmers of Arukharka village of Naukunda Rural Municipality are planting garlic with a hope to harvest more and commercialize it to convert into cash.

Implemented by LWF Nepal through its local implementing partner, BATAS Foundation, and supported by IRW and DEC, the garlic farming is being done in large scale in Arukharka and other villages of Rasuwa district.

Along with the overuse of land, the fluctuation in the temperature and rain pattern have been affecting the production of traditional crops resulting into declined productivity every year.

"Looking at the declining of traditional products, my father is hinting towards the abnormal rain and raising temperature, I have decided to plant garlic," said Aitram Thing, 27, of Arukharka. "Although we are still not certain about the productivity and market, garlic has been found suitable climatically to our region," said Thing.

For the farmers in the region, the declining production of potato, corn,

wheat and millet is a major concern. In this scenario, garlic is taken as an alternative for traditional subsistence-based farming.

On the initiative of implementing partner, garlic farmers have established direct link with District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) and dealers in Trishuli.

"DADO's officials are regularly monitoring our fields along with implementing LWF Nepal, BATAS Foundation, and IRW, said Thing who has planted 50kg of garlic.

LWF Nepal provided seeds, fertilizes and other necessary things worth Rs 50,000. "If the production went well and we found the market, we will expand the areas of garlic farming next year. Looking at my own crop, what I can say is that I can make more money from garlic than the traditional crops," said Thing.

According to Thing, he is expecting to produce 350kg from 50kg seeds. As harvest is ready by June, Thing is curiously watching the green harvest of garlic in and around his field. As per the current market, dry garlic sells Rs 250 per kilogram.

Along with Thing 10 other farmers have also planted garlic, making the entire areas as a pocket of garlic farming in Rasuwa district. Thing says that the farmers of this area are expected to produce about 6 tons of garlic in coming season.

"After inspecting our field and crop, DADO's technical officers told us that the growth of crop is quite encouraging. They also suggested the technique to grow more garlic from a plant," said Thing.

Besides earthquake, Rasuwa district is prone to climate change as the rising temperature will likely affect the traditional crops. Although it is a very time-consuming to grow garlic, Thing believes that this is the right time to move for new climate-resilient crops for economic prosperity. ■



# CLIMATE CHANGE

## From NAPA To NAP

Climate change no longer needs defining and clarifying. Yet there are ambiguities among many of us regarding what it actually is. Many of us are not so convinced when we say an increase of 10C in global (or national) average temperature. We do not usually believe that it affects us because we have diurnal difference of more than 100C between minimum and maximum temperatures, and difference of over 300C between winter minimum and summer maximum. In extreme cases, we have several 0C differences. So we question ourselves as to why we are so used to panicking about just 10C temperature change in our atmosphere. But the difference that we have in our heads is the daily or seasonal variation or variations in events, and the climate change also looks at average of these variations. Naturally the average climate values and the average of the variations should not change significantly over the years, thus the annual average values or the average of the variations of temperature should remain the same over the years despite their diurnal and seasonal variations. In case of precipitation, the seasonal change, the change in form and characteristics of precipitation also matter.

We believe that when statistics tell us that there is a significant difference between two numbers, no matter what the difference is, it indicates that there are certain disturbances and such differences will also bring certain impacts around as a consequence.

Nepal's climate data analysis carried out by Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DHM) in 2017 indicates that even a change of 0.0560C per year in the maximum temperature over 43 years (1971 - 2014) is highly significant. So by this standard a change of 10C is highly significant, which will have high impacts on environment and living system. Nonetheless there is still global belief that if there is a 1.50C increase over 100 years of time, perhaps we can cope with it, but if it happens in a short period of time, the impacts of it could be beyond our capacity to cope.

The analysis of DHM is based on observed temperature data of 1971-2014. This shows over the last 43 years of time, with 0.0560C per year, there is already an increase of 2.410C in Nepal's average maximum temperature. Unfortunately the report did not provide information on the average temperature, but the increasing trend of the minimum temperature over the same period is not significant, it is smaller than that of maximum, pulling down the mean average below 2.410C, which could be still within our coping capacity.

However, we have already observed the impacts of such temperature increase on the physical and social environments. The very obvious impact we have seen is receding of snow lines and declining of snow and glacier masses, increase in number and size of lakes formed from the snow and glacier melt water. A thumb rule of relationship between temperature and elevation in Nepal is that in each



BY GEHENDRA B. GURUNG

1,000m increase in elevation, there is a drop of temperature by 50C. So a 10C average rise in temperature will recede the snow lines by around 200m vertically back with thinning in the depth of the snow and the glacier deposition. We have also observed increased number of intensive flood events, extended Monsoon season in recent years, and erratic rainfall events that affect agriculture, the main livelihood of two thirds of Nepal's population. These events have affected the poorest the most who depend on natural environment for their livelihood and have poor coping capacity.

The UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) brought the concept of NAPA (National Adaptation Programmes of Action) in 2001 specifically to support the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to address their urgent and immediate needs to cope with impacts of climate change. With the support from the UNFCCC mechanisms and several other funding agencies, the LDCs, including Nepal, have prepared NAPA and are in the implementation process. NAPA is basically a response and coping approach based adaptation. Its actions are designed based on observed impacts of climate variabilities and changes. It enhances the autonomous adaptation process, which is more or less a natural process. So the NAPA focuses on restoring the damages or impacts already being brought about by climate change and find alternatives if they cannot be coped. For example, if there is a drought because of erratic rainfall or drying up of water sources, NAPA helps to find out alternative mechanisms to cope with the problem. Similarly, if there is damage due to flood, NAPA helps to build mechanisms to prevent from further damage of such floods, etc. So NAPA designs its action plans based on observed impacts of the events, it does not design its actions based on the anticipated impacts of climate change that is going to happen in the coming future.

In view of continuous increase in global temperature and erratic events of climate variables which have been anticipated to occur for next several decades, action plans under NAPA are not sufficient.

Realising the inadequacy of NAPA to take action now to address the needs for the anticipated events of climate change in the future, which did not exist in the past several thousand years, the UNFCCC came with the concept of NAP (National Adaptation Plan) in Cancun in 2010 for a planned adaptation. But still many of us think they are the same or similar, and when we discuss NAP, the discussions do not get differentiated from NAPA. There is a need of understanding the objectives of NAP first, which is to act now for reducing potential adverse consequences of climate change in the coming future, which is completely different from NAPA that takes the actions primarily based on the observed or past events. In short, NAP is a forward looking action. NAP

## ENVIRONMENT

theoretically does not prepare plan to build irrigation canal to address the drought faced last year hoping the same will happen, this will be done by NAPA, but NAP asks to take actions now to address the impacts of anticipated drought in the coming years, which might not necessarily be similar to that which had occurred in the past.

In this context implementation of NAP needs more science based future climate information and its impacts in addition to observed information. NAPA has refereed that Nepal's temperature might increase by 1.2 - 1.4 °C by 2030, 1.7 - 2.8°C by 2050/2060 and 3.0 - 4.7°C by 2090/2100 compared to pre-2000 baseline and based on different models. The development sectors (sustainable development goals) should be able to understand what will be the impacts of these increases in temperature on the respective sectors by 2030, 2060, etc. Based on knowledge and information they will be able to design and implement action plans now to avert and minimise the adverse impacts. However, there is an uncertainty on the magnitude of change in climate, which results in uncertainties in the impacts as well. This needs periodic assessment and use of best science to minimise the uncertainties- both climate change and its impacts that helps identifying and choosing the most appropriate measures now.

The core element of NAP is to integrate climate change into Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through strategies, policies, plans and actions. Climate change is not a separate issue from other development issues, rather it amplifies the existing issues that demands additional resources and capacities. Understanding the future climate scenario, its potential impacts on respective sectors and the right technologies and approaches to adopt now by development sectors help minimise and avert the potential future impacts on the particular sector.

In order to ensure integration of climate change in development and enhance the capacity, the existing provisions for NAPA can serve as the foundation for NAP, despite the fact that it is not sufficient. Institutional mechanisms are required to ensure climate change integration in development at palika (municipalities), province and federal levels. These institutions should be permanent as climate change is going to affect next several decades. There exist some institutional mechanisms at the federal level at present in Nepal, such as Climate Change Council under the chair of Prime Minister and Multi-stakeholders Climate Change Initiative Coordination Committee (MCCICC). But these mechanisms are yet to function effectively. Two actions might be required to make them functional and effective 1) they need to be legally recognised by defining their roles, responsibilities and authorities in relevant acts, rules, regulations and legal documents, and 2) they need to have linkages with federal and palika governments. It is not necessary that there should be a separate institutional mechanism for climate change from federal to province and then to palika levels, but the institutional mechanism for climate change can also be integrated with other existing mechanisms given the functions can be delivered effectively instead of creating several such parallel organisation mechanisms for different issues.

Technical skills need to be built in the respective sectors for those who will be affected by climate change and who need to take actions. For example, water resources will be highly prone to be affected by climate change. Therefore the human resource working in water resource should know how the water resource will be affected by change in climate, when and where it will be affected and what will be the magnitude of the effects. Based on these scenarios, they need knowledge, skill, technologies, capacity and resources to use before the impacts are felt or realised to avert or minimise the impacts. The sectors will require additional resources in addition to what they possess or have access now. Such additional resources need to be allocated to the respective sectors, basically the financial resources.

Monitoring is essential to ensure integration of climate change in development sectors with the additional resources being allocated so that they do not just address the issues based on the past events, but also address the issue based on the future events that are anticipated scientifically through integration of climate change scenarios.

Clear policies, strategies and legal mechanisms are needed to ensure that development sectors integrate climate change into their development programmes and ensure resources and capacity required to address the future potential impacts of climate change.

The existing uncertainties can be amplified by future developments in social, economic, cultural and political sectors. NAP needs periodic information on the best future scenarios of these sectors to make it more effective. Such information needs to be ensured at federal, province and palika (municipal) levels for effective development planning and implementation. A strong climate science will help minimise uncertainty in future climate predictions or scenarios. A federal level climate science mechanism under the relevant ministry needs to be established, its capacity needs to be enhanced and institutional mechanism should be established to ensure this federal level institution or organisation

has access to province and palikas to ensure that province and palika level governments have access to such climate information and use it.

Nepal has already initiated NAP. It is a process to ensure climate change integration in overall sustainable development goals. The process needs to produce policies, strategies and legal instruments to ensure resources and capacity to address the potential impacts of climate change effectively in the coming decades. The time is appropriate for enhancing NAP for Nepal at the moment when the country is under restructuring process and undergoing reviewing, development and formulation of strategies, policies and legal documents for a prosperous Nepal. The process should not be delayed as the impacts of climate change do not wait NAP to be prepared and implemented. So, the sooner we integrate climate change adaptation in development, the better we will be to avert or reduce the adverse impacts of climate change on our sustainable development goals.

(Gurung is the head of DRR and climate change programme in Practical Action South Asia office in Nepal. He has been involving in actions on the ground in DRR and climate change and sharing the learning at the policy level.) ■

● ● ●  
**NAPA has refereed that  
Nepal's temperature might  
increase by 1.2 - 1.4 °C by  
2030, 1.7 - 2.8°C by 2050/  
2060 and 3.0 - 4.7°C by  
2090/2100 compared to pre-  
2000 baseline and based on  
different models.**  
● ● ●

# Press Release On The Creation Of The National Association Of International Information Security

Faced with mounting threats in the information space, civil society continues to look for the most effective ways to counter these challenges, using various forms of consolidated efforts by professionals. The non-governmental sector is ready to contribute to international information security and make the information space a secure environment.

In line with this trend, the National Association of International Information Security was set up in Russia on April 10, 2018.

Its constituent founders are Lomonosov Moscow State University, the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (University) of the Russian Foreign Ministry, the Diplomatic Academy of the Foreign Ministry, the Academy of National Economy and Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation, the Institute for Modern Security Challenges (a subsidiary of the Norilsk Nickel mining and metallurgical company) and the editorial board of *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn* (International Life) magazine.

Vladislav Sherstyuk, Director of the Information Security Institute at Lomonosov University, was elected association president, while Anatoly Smirnov, president of the National Institute for Global Security Research, became the General Director.

The association's presidium comprises leading researchers and specialists, and well-known experts in international

information security.

The main goal of the association is to assist in the implementation of state policy in promoting international information security and advance Russian initiatives in this area.

In addition, the association intends to participate in keeping civil society institutions in Russia and abroad informed and explaining to them the basic provisions of the Government's policy in this field.

The association is planning to focus on making analytical work in this area more effective and working out corresponding recommendations for all bodies and organisations concerned.

The association will coordinate research at scientific centres and universities by dividing it into the scientific, humanitarian and technical aspects of ensuring international information security.

It views cooperation with similar associations of researchers and experts abroad, both in a bilateral format and within the framework of various international platforms and forums, as one of its key areas of activity.

As envisioned by its founders, the association will help bolster national security in the information space.

The results of this effort will be used by the authorities and organisations involved in the implementation of state policy in the area of international information security.

*Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*



# Are We OTT?

Growing up I remember there were things that were taboo- these were use of four letter words and direct reference to sexuality and sex in the public domain. Much was implied that wasn't overtly spoken. In the Monica Lewinsky time, arguments used to be how Americans went OTT (Over the Top) about such things and why couldn't they keep it under wraps? Implicit in such arguments were the question of why couldn't it have been dealt with as Europeans would have? That would have been either to turn a blind eye or to simply give a standing order that the man at the top should not be assigned any female assistants under a certain age and certainly not any good-looking ones.

That, of course, dealt with it for that particular period of time. As time went on, however, things became complicated. There were so many people 'coming out of the closet' about their sexuality that it became increasingly difficult to decide who was influencing whom and with what devices?

Women wanted equal rights and a much bigger share of the pie. They inched ever closer to all this not through debate and brains but through pills, birth control pills! These little wonders put women in control in a way they had never been before. Of course one pill led to another and now there's a whole variety of pills that control conception even after the fact.

Now we are into the age of name and shame. 'So and so groped 70 or so starlets and should be named and shamed' and indeed a whole list of furtively groping male predators have fallen from their pedestals over the past year. Now every woman is 'me tooing' and I wonder how many of us are still shocked or how many have intimate secrets' fatigue after hearing about it all.

Societies have gone from the sublime to the ridiculous. We seem to have jumped from hiding sexual indiscretions to letting it all 'hang out' in more ways than one. Television shows are a case in point. When the first soap operas (so named because the soap powder companies were the first to commission such dramas as part of their sales' technique) were performed the fruitier parts of the story were simply brushed over, sexual assault implied but never described or explicitly referred to, and things more or less followed the melodramatic line one finds in 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles' or 'The Mill on the Floss'. In the 50s of the last century our cards were played close to our chests and we weren't supposed to speak of certain things. Hawthorne's 'The Scarlet Letter' punched close to the bone on puritanical hypocrisy and today we openly discuss sexual misdemeanors of the religious community, as if they were new things!

But then, there's nothing new under the sun and



BY GRETA RANA

those who study the great works of literature, in the old world and the new, will perhaps be able to bring to mind the tale of Eloise and Abelard and the wretchedness carnal lust of the forbidden kind brought to the protagonists.

These were the stories we were prevented from reading and definitely from watching explicitly dramatised versions on television. Hence we made sure we knew the details of them and shared them with our colleagues.

Nowadays, what's left to share?

Now sitcoms discuss sexual liaisons openly and whether they are 'straight' or 'gay' we laugh at their difficulties and antics. Going forward, as they say nowadays, I think we were definitely moving over the top (OTT) by giving TMI (too much information) about private matters. But then is anything private any more? The answer is no, of course not. The only way we can have any privacy is to keep everything to ourselves.

The 21st century has already gone OTT thanks to Twitter and Facebook. We can hardly turn back the clock but we can change direction, do an about turn and determine not to join the mobs waiting to feed on every morsel of the clandestine that is pushed around the grapevine.

The Grapevine is as old as human history. It served as the alternative news medium on sensitive affairs. It has always been a feed for the old gossip cliques in town or village and, as such, served as a safety valve, passing on the shocking news of secret love affairs and same sex unions before they became too hot to handle and before the protagonists visited the 'innocent' public with proof of their misdemeanors.

And this is why I ask sincerely 'are we OTT?' Did we need all this 'spilling out' of the nooks and crannies of human exploration in pursuit of intimacy? Maybe not, but as it so happens, it fills the newspapers; it gives the TV channels something to talk about; even if they do so at boring length three-four times over.

After all, in this century, if we are to believe all the stupendous claims, we will be able to replace every important part of our bodies and live continually.....what a bore perhaps. Unless there's some juicy gossip stuff to keep us entertained we'll try and sleep away the rest of the millennium. On the other hand, it could just so happen that we'll be invaded by the alien species, we so believed in as children, and they will enslave us as a substandard set of creatures that only find interest in the sexuality of others. In an age perhaps when we will be able to choose and change sexuality as the mood takes us. What price the clandestine then? ■