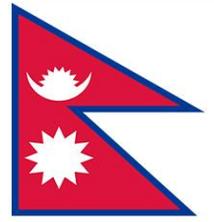




# MOFA BULLETIN

## *Current Affairs*



**August-September 2017**

**Vol 2, Issue 2**



**Ministry of Foreign Affairs**  
**Policy, Planning, Development Diplomacy**  
**and Nepali Diaspora Division**  
Singha Durbar, Kathmandu, Nepal  
Tel. 4200182-185, Fax: 4200061, 4200160  
e-mail: [ppdo@mofa.gov.np](mailto:ppdo@mofa.gov.np)  
Website: <https://www.mofa.gov.np/>

**Chief Patron:**

Hon'ble Krishna Bahadur Mahara,  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for  
Foreign Affairs

**Patron:**

Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi  
Foreign Secretary

**Editorial Team**

Mr. Krishna Prasad Dhakal, Joint Secretary  
Dr. Damaru Ballabha Paudel, Under Secretary  
Ms. Indira Gohiwar Aryal, Section Officer

**Inside This Issue**

- A. Bilateral Affairs
- B. Multilateral Affairs
- C. Regional Affairs
- E., Passport and Consular Matters

**A. Bilateral Affairs**

*1. The Prime Minister Visits India*

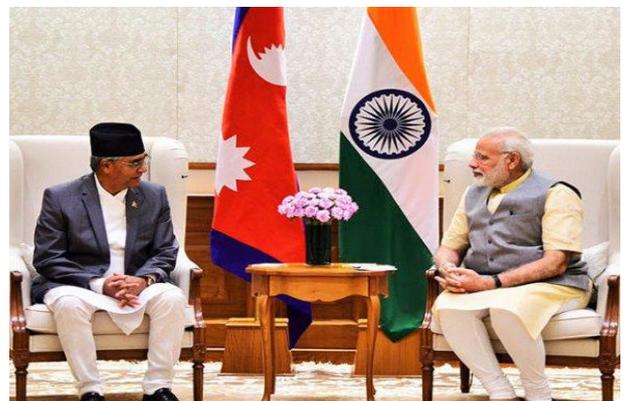
Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba accompanied by his spouse Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba, paid a State Visit to India on 23-27 August at the invitation of the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi. The Nepali delegation included Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Minister for Finance Mr. Gyanendra Bahadur Karki, Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Mr. Jitendra Narayan Dev, Minister for Commerce Mr. Meen Bahadur Bishwakarma, Members of Legislature-Parliament and other Senior Officials.



*Minister of External Affairs of India, Smt. Sushma Swaraj receiving Prime Minister of Nepal at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi*

During the visit, the two Prime Ministers held comprehensive talks on all aspects of bilateral

relationships. They expressed satisfaction over the excellent state of India-Nepal relations that are deep, comprehensive and multi-faceted. They pledged to pursue new opportunities to further deepen bilateral relations for the benefit of the people of both countries reaffirming their commitment to work towards strengthening bilateral relations on the basis of mutual trust, goodwill, mutual benefit, with due regard to each other's aspirations, sensitivities and interests.



*The Prime Minister of Nepal with the Prime Minister of India*

The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the functioning of the 'Oversight Mechanism' established in 2016, and the progress made through the mechanism in resolving bottlenecks and speeding up implementation of ongoing projects under bilateral cooperation. They also recognized the need for early completion of two ongoing cross-border rail-link projects: (a) Jayanagar-

Bijalpur-Bardibas and (b) Jogbani-Biratnagar rail-links. The two Prime Ministers also noted with satisfaction that the railway lines from Jayanagar to Janakpur and from Jogbani to Biratnagar Custom Yard are expected to be completed by 2018.



*Bilateral Meeting held between Nepali and Indian Delegation*

While emphasizing the need for channelizing more direct investments from India into Nepal, The Prime Minister of Nepal shared information about the recent steps taken by the Government of Nepal to spur economic reforms with the aim of enhancing investors' confidence.

Both Prime Ministers agreed on early conclusion of the Letters of Exchange for transit of bulk cargo to Nepal using multi-modal transport, movement of traffic in transit via Nepal and amendment to Rail Services Agreement. Both sides agreed to take steps for early upgradation and operationalization of the agreed trade points namely Dhangadhi-Gauriphanta, Guleria-Murthia, Jatahi-Pipraun and Pashupatinagar-Sukhiapokhri. The two sides also agreed to examine expeditiously the impacts of recently introduced Goods and Service Tax in India on bilateral and transit trade. Both sides agreed to organize the next meeting of the Inter-Governmental Committee on trade, transit and control of unauthorized trade at the Secretary level by the end of 2017, to discuss all trade and transit related issues with an objective to facilitate bilateral and transit trade.

On the occasion of B.P. Koirala India-Nepal Foundation completing 25 years of its establishment in December 2016, the two

Prime Ministers appreciated the contribution made by the Foundation in bolstering people-to-people ties and acknowledged the immense goodwill the Foundation has generated at people's level through its activities.



*Prime Ministers of Nepal and India witnessing the exchange of documents*

The two Prime Ministers witnessed the exchange of the following documents on August 24:

- i) MoU on Modalities for Utilization of India's Housing Grant Component to support Reconstruction of 50,000 Houses
- ii) MoU on Implementation of the Grant Component of India's Post-Earthquake Reconstruction Package in the Education Sector in Nepal
- iii) MoU on Implementation of the Grant Component of India's Post-Earthquake Reconstruction Package in Cultural Heritage Sector in Nepal
- iv) MoU on Implementation of the Grant Component of India's Post-Earthquake Reconstruction Package in the Health Sector in Nepal
- v) Cooperation Agreement between Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and Nepal Bureau of Standards and Metrology
- vi) MoU on Drug Demand Reduction and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemical and Related Matters
- vii) MoU for construction of Mechi bridge
- viii) MoU between Institute of Chartered Accountants of India and Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nepal.

During the visit, the Prime Minister paid separate calls on Shri Ram Nath Kovind, President and Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India. Senior Cabinet members of the Government of India including Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Shri Arun Jaitley and the President of Indian National Congress Smt. Sonia Gandhi, former Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh and INC leader Shri Karan Singh called on the Prime Minister. An official banquet was hosted by the Prime Minister of India in honour of the visiting dignitary and his delegation.

During his stay, Prime Minister Deuba interacted with Indian business community at a function jointly hosted by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). The Prime Minister also addressed a civic reception function organized by India Foundation, a think-tank, in New Delhi.



*The Prime Minister addressing a civic reception function*

## **2. The Fourth Meeting of Nepal-India Boundary Working Group (BWG) Concluded**

The fourth meeting of Nepal - India Boundary Working Group (BWG) concluded with signing of an agreed minute in Dehradun, India on 30 August. The meeting reviewed the progress made in the past three years in the boundary related field works as per the mandate of the BWG that include construction, restoration and repair of boundary pillars, as well as works related to the clearance of No Man's Land and GPS observation of boundary

pillars. The meeting agreed to continue the remaining boundary field works so as to complete them in the next five years and to mobilize one additional joint field team in order to expedite the remaining works.



*The fourth meeting of Nepal- India Boundary Working Group*

The meeting decided that the activities of the next field season shall commence from 1<sup>st</sup> of November. The Nepali and Indian delegation in the meeting was led by Mr. Ganesh Prasad Bhatta, Director General of Survey Department and Maj. Gen. V.P. Srivastava, Surveyor General of India respectively. The next meeting of the BWG is scheduled to be held in Kathmandu in August 2018 after the completion of the upcoming field works.

## **3. Mr. Wang Yang visits Nepal**

Mr. Wang Yang, Vice Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China paid an official visit to Nepal on 14-17 August. During the visit, an official meeting was held between Nepal and China on 15<sup>th</sup> August where Nepali delegation was led by Mr. Bijaya Kumar Gachhadar, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Local Development and Federal Affairs comprising Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Ministers of Health, Finance, Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Physical Infrastructure and Transport, Commerce, Ambassador of Nepal to China, Secretaries of different ministries and senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal and the Chinese delegation was led by the Mr. Yang comprising Deputy Secretary General of the State Council, Vice Ministers of the National Development and Reform Commission and Ministry of Commerce; Assistant Minister of

Foreign Affairs, Chinese Ambassador to Nepal, senior officials of the State Council and the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

Both sides reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and cooperation. The meeting was followed by the signing of bilateral agreements on economic cooperation. Dr. Shanta Raj Subedi, Secretary, Ministry of Finance of the Government of Nepal and Mr. Yu Jianhua, Vice Minister and Deputy International Trade Representative of the Ministry of Commerce of China signed the following documents on behalf of their respective governments:-

- i) Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation
- ii) Framework Agreement on Promotion of Investment and Economic Cooperation
- iii) Letters of Exchange for Oil and Gas Resources Exploration in Nepal.

During the visit, Vice Premier Mr. Wang Yang also paid courtesy calls on the President Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari and the Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba.



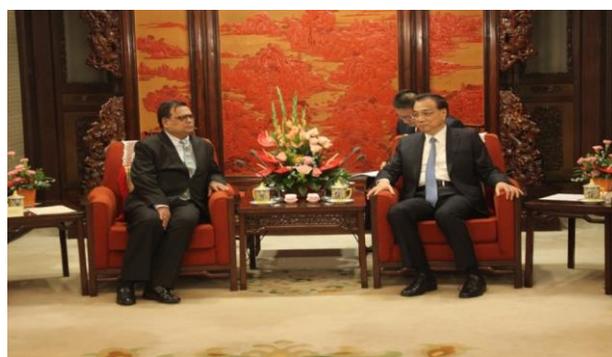
*The Prime Minister of Nepal with Mr. Wang Yang*

#### ***4. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Visits China***

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs (DPM/FM) of Nepal Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara visited the People's Republic of China on 6-11 September.

During the visit, The DPM/FM called on Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, at Zhongnanhai, Beijing on 7 September. During the meeting, Mr. Mahara conveyed the greetings of Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur

Deuba to the Premier Mr. Li. stressing on the fact that Nepal and China have been working closely to capitalize the opportunities created by the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). He expressed his conviction that the initiative would enhance mutual co-operation in the fields of developing cross-border connectivity, building physical infrastructure, promoting trade, tourism, investment and people-to-people relations. DPM/FM Mahara said that he had come up with a common consensus among major political leaders in the government and in the opposition to carry forward railway connectivity as a national priority project. Both sides agreed to take necessary measures to carry out technical study of the project. Both sides also agreed to continue the exchange of high-level visits between the two countries.

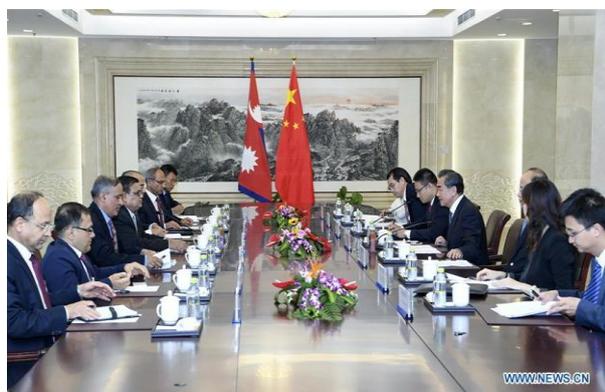


*Courtesy call on Chinese Premier Mr. Li Keqiang by DPM/FM*

The DPM/FM also called on Mr. Yang Jiechi, State Councilor of the People's Republic of China, at Zhongnanhai, Beijing on 7 September. In the meeting, DPM/FM Mahara said that the Government of Nepal has accorded high importance to the implementation of MoU on BRI signed between the two countries. State Councilor Yang said that the two countries should elevate their relations to a new height with a long-term vision and implement projects under the BRI for mutual benefit.

DPM/FM Mahara held bilateral talks with his counterpart Mr. Yi, at latter's office 7 September. During the talks, the two sides expressed happiness over the excellent state of bilateral relations between Nepal and China, and exchanged views on strengthening further co-operation. The two sides agreed to

implement the agreements and understandings concluded in the past and convene the meetings of bilateral mechanisms. DPM/FM Mahara expressed Nepal's support to China's Belt and Road Initiative, and said that Nepal stands to benefit from it. He also appreciated China's continued development assistance and support for post-earthquake reconstruction activities. DPM/FM Mahara expressed his happiness over the upgradation of the Kerung-Rasuwadhi border point as an international port, and hoped that the Tatopani border point would resume operations soon. A joint Press Conference was held following the bilateral talks. Chinese Foreign Minister Mr. Yi hosted a luncheon in honor of DPM/FM Mahara.



*Bilateral talks held between Nepal and China in Beijing*

A Memorandum of Understanding on Energy Co-operation between the Ministry of Energy of the Government of Nepal and the National Energy Administration of the People's Republic of China was initialed at the Embassy of Nepal, Beijing on 7 September. The MoU was initialed by Mr. Sushil K Lamsal, Deputy Chief of Mission/Minister, Embassy of Nepal on behalf of the Ministry of Energy of Nepal and by Mr. He Yang, Deputy Director General, on behalf of the National Energy Administration of China. This MoU aims at expanding co-operation between the two countries in the development of power generation projects and joint investment in power grid including feasibility study in cross-border power grid interconnection, among others.

### **5. Inauguration of Consulate General of Nepal in Guangzhou**

Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

inaugurated the newly established Consulate General of Nepal in Guangzhou on 10 September. He also addressed the business community and met with the provincial leaders in Guangzhou.



*DPM/FM Mr. Mahara at the Inauguration Ceremony of the newly established Consulate General in Guangzhou*

### **6. Japan Extends Grant Aid for the Implementation of the School Sector Development Program**

The Government of Japan has extended grant assistance of up to three hundred million Japanese Yen (¥300,000,000), equivalent to two hundred eighty million Nepali Rupees (NRs.280,000,000) to the Government of Nepal for the School Sector Development Program (SSDP). The Exchange of Notes and Grant Agreement in this regard had been signed between the Government of Nepal and the Government of Japan on August 15.

In addition to this support, Japan has been assisting Nepal through various programs in education to support Nepal's efforts to attain sustainable socio-economic growth. The Government of Japan has been implementing the Emergency School Reconstruction Project for rebuilding and retrofitting schools in the districts severely affected by the 2015 earthquake. The Japanese side has said that the objectives envisaged by the program will be achieved, and contribute towards further strengthening the existing relationship of friendship and cooperation between the peoples of Japan and Nepal.

### **7. A Consultation Meeting**

A consultation meeting between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Korea was held

on 20 September. Mr. Ganesh Prasad Dhakal, Joint Secretary/Chief of the Northeast Asia Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal and Mr. Ryu Jeong-hyun, Director General for South Asia and Pacific Affairs Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea led their respective delegation to the meeting. The main agenda of the meeting were the upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> Bilateral Consultation Meeting, High-Level Bilateral Exchanges, Economic Relations and Cooperation, Official Development Assistance, Employment Permit System, Cultural Cooperation and People-to-People Exchanges among others.



*Delegates of Nepal and the Republic of Korea during the consultation meeting*

### **8. Nepal and Morocco Establish Consultation Mechanism**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco entered into the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Consultations and Cooperation on 3 August. The MoU was signed by Foreign Secretary Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi and Mr. Mohamed Maliki, Ambassador of Morocco to Nepal on behalf of the Governments of Nepal and Morocco respectively at a ceremony held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singhdurbar, Kathmandu. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara witnessed the signing ceremony.

The MoU establishes a consultation mechanism at the level of Foreign Secretary or Director General to be convened annually in Nepal and Morocco alternatively to facilitate exchange of visits as well as to conduct consultations between the two countries in all areas of mutual interests.



*DPM/FM Mahara witnessing the signing ceremony*

### **9. Prime Minister's Visit to Muscat**

The Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba paid an Official Visit to the Sultanate of Oman on 25 -28 September. The Prime Minister was warmly welcomed by His Highness Sayyid Fahad Mahmood Al-Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers of Government of Sultanate of Oman, at the Muscat International Airport on 25 September.

The Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba had a bilateral meeting with His Highness Sayyid Fahad Mahmood Al-Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers of the Government of Sultanate of Oman at the Diwan of Royal Court, Muscat, on 26<sup>th</sup> of September. Matters of mutual benefits and interests as well as the ways and means of expanding Nepal-Oman cooperation were discussed during the meeting with particular focus on foreign employment, trade, tourism and investment.

In the bilateral meeting, the Prime Minister was accompanied by DPM/FM Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Minister for Labour and Employment Mr. Farmullah Mansoor, Minister for Women Children and Social Welfare, Ms. Asha Koirala, Foreign Secretary Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi, Foreign Affairs Advisors to the Prime Minister Dr. Dinesh Bhattarai, Ambassador of Nepal to the Sultanate of Oman Ms. Sarmila Parajuli Dhakal, and other senior officials. On the Omani side, His Highness Sayyid Fahad Mahmood Al-Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers was accompanied by Dr. Ali Masoud Ali Al Sunaidy, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Sheikh Abdullah Nasser Al Bakri, Minister of Manpower, Dr. Madiha Ahmed Al-Sheibaniya, Minister of Education, and other senior officials.



*The Prime Minister and His Highness Sayyid Fahad Mahmood Al-Said holding official talks in Diwan*

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed at Muscat, on 27<sup>th</sup> of September, on establishing a bilateral consultation mechanism between the Foreign Ministries of Nepal and the Sultanate of Oman. Nepali Ambassador Ms. Sarmila Parajuli Dhakal and Mr. Shiekh Hilah Marhoon Al-Mammari, Head of West Asia Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman signed the MoU on behalf of the respective governments. DPM/FM Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara witnessed the signing ceremony.

The conclusion of the MoU aims at enhancing bilateral cooperation in different sectors including economic, cultural, technological, scientific and educational relations.



*DPM/FM Mahara witnessing the signing ceremony*

### ***10. Nepal and the US Sign MCC Compact for Nepal***

The Government of Nepal and the United States of America signed the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact of \$630 million during a signing ceremony held at the US Department of State in Washington DC on 14 September. On behalf of the Government of Nepal, the compact agreement was signed by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Gyanendra Bahadur Karki and MCC CEO Mr. Jonathan Nash represented the US

Government. The agreement aims at investing in energy and transportation sectors including through the construction of about 300 km electricity transmission lines and the maintenance of roads in various parts of the country.

### ***11. Chief Justice Visits the Russian Federation and the UK***

A four member delegation led by Chief Justice, Mr. Gopal Parajuli visited the Russian Federation on 23-25 September at the invitation of the Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vyacheslav M. Lebedev. During the visit, the Nepali delegation met with Mr. Vyacheslav M. Lebedev and the Director General of the Judicial Department Mr. Alexandar V. Gusev and discussed the matters of mutual interests including the possible cooperation between the Judiciaries of both countries.

The delegation also visited the United Kingdom from 27 September to 3 October. During his visit, Mr Parajuli held a meeting with the President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom, Ms. Baroness Hale of Richmond DBE and also had an official meeting with the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, Sir Ian Burnett at his office. Discussions pertaining to legal system and constitutional development of both countries were held during the meetings.

### ***12. Nepal and the CERN conclude the International Cooperation Agreement***

An International Cooperation Agreement concerning scientific and technical cooperation in high-energy physics and related areas was signed between the Government of Nepal and the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva on 19 September. Mr. Deepak Dhital, Ambassador of Nepal to Switzerland/Permanent Representative to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva signed the agreement on behalf of the Government of Nepal and Dr. Fabiola Gianotti, Director General of CERN signed on behalf of the CERN. The agreement is expected to contribute towards an enhanced collaboration and cooperation between the

Government of Nepal and the CERN on scientific and technical research areas.

### *13. Presentation of Credentials*

Ambassador of Nepal to the Republic of Poland, Mr. Ramesh Prasad Khanal presented his Letters of Credence, to Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland on 27 September at the Presidential Palace of Poland in Warsaw. Ambassador of Nepal to the United Kingdom, Dr. Durga Bahadur Subedi presented his Letters of Credence to the Secretary General of International Maritime Organization (IMO), Mr. Kitack Lim at the IMO Head Office in London on 31 August. Dr. Subedi also presented his credentials to the International Coffee Organization (ICO) as Nepal's Permanent Representative to Mr. Jose Sette, Executive Director of ICO.

### *14. Nepal Expresses Heartfelt Condolences*

The Government of Nepal expressed deep sorrow and extended sincere condolences to the Government and people of Mexico over the loss of lives and properties caused by the earthquake that struck Mexico on 19 September.

## **B. Multilateral Affairs**

### *1. Nepal's Participation at the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly*

The Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba led the high level Nepali delegation to the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The high level Nepali delegation to the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session comprised among others, of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Minister for Women, Children and Social Welfare Mrs. Asha Koirala; Foreign Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr. Dinesh Bhattarai; Foreign Secretary Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi; Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations in New York, Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai, Head of the UN Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Joint Secretary Mr. Bharat Raj Paudyal and other senior officials of the Government of Nepal.

The Prime Minister Deuba addressed the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York on 23 September. In his address, the Prime Minister highlighted Nepal's perspectives on several pressing issues of global importance. Pointing towards the multiple transnational challenges including terrorism, climate change, food insecurity and mass migration, the Prime Minister said that such challenges are the litmus tests for the leadership of nations.

He called for the support of the international community to Nepal's candidature to the Human Rights Council for 2018 to 2020. The Prime Minister stressed on the need for addressing genuine concerns for security, development and wellbeing of small nations.

He also shared Nepal's successful peace process and the aspirations of the people for economic prosperity. On the occasion, the Prime Minister mentioned about the recently concluded local level elections and the ongoing preparations for holding elections for the provincial and federal parliaments later this year.



*The Prime Minister addressing the 72<sup>nd</sup> session of the UNGA*

The Prime Minister addressed the World Leaders Forum of Columbia University on 21 September. The Prime Minister shared Nepal's journey to inclusive democracy and development at the Forum. He shared that Nepal pursues political pluralism at home and multipolarity in international relations, adding that it was critical to the building of trust and confidence for peace, progress and prosperity. The Prime Minister also fielded a wide range of questions from the audience.

On the sidelines of the UNGA, the Prime Minister held a meeting with Mr. Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General on 23 September.



*The Prime Minister with the UN Secretary-General*

During the meeting, the Secretary-General congratulated on completing local body elections in Nepal, while also expressing satisfaction over the latest developments in Nepal. He also appreciated Nepal's contribution to peacekeeping. The Prime Minister, while congratulating Mr. Guterres on his appointment, reiterated Nepal's commitment to peacekeeping and requested the United Nations for making best use of Nepal's Birendra Peace Operations Training Centre. He drew the attention of the Secretary-General to the need for placing the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) issues at the centre of the work of the United Nations. During the Meeting, the Secretary-General expressed condolences on the loss of lives and property caused by recent floods in Nepal.

Also on the sidelines, the Prime Minister held separate bilateral meetings with the Heads of State/Government of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Estonia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Matters of common bilateral and international interests figured during those meetings.

Similarly, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs (DPM/FM), Krishna Bahadur Mahara attended various high-level events and held bilateral meetings. The DPM/FM signed on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at a signature ceremony held at the UN Headquarter on 20

September. After ratification by the Parliament, Nepal will become a party to the Treaty. The DPM/FM attended the High-level meeting on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse hosted by the UN Secretary-General on 18 September and expressed Nepal's commitment to the Voluntary Compact against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

The DPM/FM attended Ministerial Meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Group of 77 and China and LLDCs. In those meetings, he highlighted Nepal's policies on the respective issues. Similarly at the High-level Open Debate on Reform of UN Peacekeeping organized by the UN Security Council on 20 September, the DPM/FM reiterated the commitment of Nepal to support reforms in peace operations, while calling for ensuring the safety and security of the peacekeepers.

The DPM/FM Mr. Mahara held separate bilateral meetings with his counterparts from Oman, Norway, Indonesia, and Bahrain on the sidelines of the General Assembly and discussed various aspects of mutual interests. Similarly, he was paid courtesy calls by the State Minister of the United Kingdom and the Acting Deputy Secretary of State of the United States.

The DPM/FM had a meeting with Mr. Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator, and exchanged views on UNDP cooperation to socio-economic development of Nepal. He also had separate meetings with Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs of UN, Mr. Atul Khare, Under - Secretary General for Field Support and Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and discussed various matters of Nepal-UN cooperation.

The Minister for Women, Children and Social Welfare Ms. Asha Koirala represented Nepal at the Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) held on 21 September. Speaking in the meeting, she highlighted the need for enhanced cooperation in Asia to unleash the full potential of the largest

continent for the benefit of Asian countries and for the world at large. The Minister also represented Nepal in the annual meeting of LDCs on 23 September where she stressed on the need to implement the Vienna Programme of Action in synergy with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adding that countries like Nepal face a resource gap in its implementation. The meeting also included a signing ceremony in which the United Nations and the Republic of Turkey signed the agreements concerning (i) the establishment of the technology bank for LDCs, and (ii) financial and in-kind support for the technology bank for LDCs.

## *2. Briefing by the Americas-based Heads of Missions*

The Americas-based heads of Nepali Diplomatic Missions; Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations, Mr. Arjun Kumar Karki, Ambassador of Nepal to the United States, Mr. Tara Prasad Pokharel, Ambassador of Nepal to Brazil, Mr. Kali Prasad Pokharel, Ambassador of Nepal to Canada; and Mr. Madhu Kumar Marasini, Consul General of Nepal in New York, on 22 September, briefed the Prime Minister about their respective mission's priorities, achievements, constraints, potentials and plans for future towards strengthening bilateral and multilateral relations with respective countries/organizations. The Prime Minister gave directions to the ministry and the missions. He instructed Mission Heads to work with high degree of professionalism and dedication for protecting and promoting national interests of Nepal. The DPM/FM also instructed the Mission Heads to work diligently to enhance the image of the country. The success story of Nepal's peace process and conflict management is the the unique and home-grown asset of Nepal, he added. Foreign Secretary and other high level officials were also present on the briefing session.

## *3. Establishment of Diplomatic Relations*

Nepal and Niger established diplomatic relations on September 20. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of

Nepal Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Cooperation and African Integration of Niger, Mr. Ibrahim Yacoubou signed the Memorandum to this effect at the Permanent Mission of Nepal in New York. With this the number of countries with which Nepal has established diplomatic relations has now reached 151.

## **C. Regional Affairs**

### *1. Informal Meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers*

The Informal Meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers was held on the sidelines of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York on 21 September. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara, in his capacity as the Chair of the SAARC Council of Ministers, presided over the meeting. The meeting reviewed progress achieved on the implementation of the decisions of the SAARC Council of Ministers and its preceding meetings held in Pokhara in March 2016 as well as the progress made on regional cooperation since the last informal meeting. The leaders expressed their commitment to further strengthening regional cooperation under SAARC.

### *2. Eighth Meeting of SAARC Technical Committee on Women, Youth and Children*

The Eighth Meeting of the SAARC Technical Committee on Women, Youth and Children was held in Islamabad on 30-31 August. The Committee endorsed the Report of the Regional Consultative Meeting to Review Achievements and Progress on SAARC Regional Strategic Framework for Protection, Care and Support of Children Affected by HIV and AIDS. The meeting also deliberated the matters relating to:

- (i) Finalization of SAARC Youth Charter and Development of SAARC Youth Action Plan.
- (ii) SAARC Youth Volunteers' Programme

- (iii) SAARC Youth Camps
- (iv) Commemoration of the World Youth Skills Day and
- (v) Social Protection for the elderly, women, children, differently-abled persons, unemployed persons, and persons working at hazardous sites.

### 3. Eleventh Meeting of the Governing Board of the SAC

The Eleventh Meeting of the Governing Board (GB) of SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) was held in Dhaka from 25-27 September. The meeting considered the director's report which included, inter alia, the status of implementation of the decision taken in the 10<sup>th</sup> GB Meeting, review of budget and program for the year 2017, and proposed budget for the year 2018. The GB also approved the regular and need-based programs of the Center for the year 2018.

### 4. Fifteenth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting and Eighteenth Senior Official Meeting (SOM)



*The Fifteenth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting*

The Fifteenth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting was held in Kathmandu on 10-11 August. The meeting was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Nepal. In his inaugural address, the Prime Minister underlined the importance of regional cooperation under BIMSTEC and expressed Nepal's commitment to making BIMSTEC result-oriented. The visiting Foreign/External Affairs Ministers of the BIMSTEC Member States also paid a collective courtesy call on the Prime Minister and shared their views on enhancing effectiveness of BIMSTEC.

The meeting was chaired by DPM/FM Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara and attended by Ministers of Foreign/External Affairs of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India; State Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and Myanmar; and Deputy Foreign Minister of Thailand.

The meeting reviewed the progress made since the last Ministerial Meeting held in Nay Pi Taw on 03 March 2014. The meeting adopted the Ministerial Joint Statement, in which Ministers agreed to work expeditiously for early conclusion of BIMSTEC Agreements related to Trade, Custom, Energy, Transportation, Terrorism and Transnational Crimes and Technology. The meeting also stressed on the need of effective implementation of BIMSTEC Poverty Plan of Action and early establishment of different BIMSTEC Centers.

The Ministerial Meeting endorsed the appointment of Mr. Shahidul Islam as the second Secretary General of BIMSTEC. The Secretary General assumed his duty on 14 September.

The meeting welcomed Nepal's offer to host 4<sup>th</sup> BIMSTEC Summit, 16<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting and 19<sup>th</sup> SOM. Nepal also offered to convene Third BIMSTEC Energy Ministers' Meeting and organize Expert Group Meetings on Poverty Alleviation and on Mountain Economy.

The President of FNCCI as representative of Nepali private sector to the BIMSTEC Business Forum made a brief presentation in the meeting, highlighting the need for trade and investment promotion for enhanced economic cooperation and business-to-business relations in the region.

The Ministerial Meeting was preceded by Senior Officials Meeting which was chaired by Foreign Secretary Mr. Shankar Das Bairagi and attended by Foreign Secretaries/Senior Officials of the Member States. The meeting made important deliberations on the 14 priority areas of cooperation, finalized the draft Ministerial Joint Statement and submitted its

report with recommendations to the Ministerial Meeting.



Senior Officials of BIMSTEC Member States at SOM

### 5. Track 1.5 Security Dialogue Forum

First Track 1.5 BIMSTEC Security Dialogue Forum was held in New Delhi, India on 22 September. The Forum held discussions on counter terrorism and cooperation in transnational crimes, violent extremism and radicalization, maritime security cooperation, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), cyber security, co-operation in space and space technology and non-traditional security challenges.

The Nepali delegation led by Joint Secretary of Ministry of Defense made a presentation on "Promoting Regional Development for Peace", highlighting the importance of working together for regional development to achieve sustainable peace in the region. DIGs of Nepal Police and APF and Director of National Investigation Department were the members of the Nepali delegation.

### 6. ACD Foreign Ministers' Informal Meeting

Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in New York on 21 September on the sidelines of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UNGA. The Nepali delegation was led by Ms. Asha Koirala, Minister for Women, Children and Social Welfare.

In her statement, Minister underlined the importance of intra-regional connectivity, energy cooperation, investment and technological cooperation for shared prosperity in the region. She also highlighted the need for collective efforts in achieving SDGs and to

make six priority pillars more result-oriented. The Minister further informed that Nepal, as a co-prime mover is working out to organize events under this pillar and reiterated Nepal's commitment to furthering ACD co-operation.

The Secretary General presented ACD report including the activities completed during 2016-2017. The six prime movers of ACD, namely UAE, Pakistan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Thailand presented a progress report on their respective priority pillar of cooperation under ACD.

The meeting welcomed Iran's offer to convene the 16<sup>th</sup> ACD Ministerial Meeting and 3<sup>rd</sup> ACD Summit. ACD Chair was also handed over from UAE to Iran for the year 2017-2018.

## D. Passport and Consular Matters

### 1. Passport Services

#### 1.1 Discussion on Draft Passport Act

The Department of Passports held an intensive discussion on the proposed draft of Passport Act, 2074 on 30<sup>th</sup> August. Foreign Secretary Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi, Spokesperson/Joint Secretary Mr. Bharat Raj Poudyal and other joint secretaries from the Ministry; and Mr. Gahendra Rajbhandari, Director General of the Department of Consular Services were present on that occasion. The discussion led the finalization of the Draft Passport Act, following the exhaustive discussion and modification. The draft is subsequently forwarded to the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs for the consent.

#### 1.2 Service Delivery

The status of service delivery of the Department is presented in the following table.

S.N	Activities	Number	Remarks
1	E-mails responded	331	
2	Grievance handled	2921	
3	Applications received (including from District and Mission)	92583	Except the forms collected from live-enrollment counter

4	Passports dispatched (including to District and Mission)	82467	
5	Total number of passports issued	90157	
6	Lost passports registered in the Interpol	3799	
7	Official Error	349	
8	Null and Void passports	21	
9	Travel document issued	12	
10	Diplomatic Passports issued	92	
11	Official Passports issued	296	
12	Gratis Passports Issued	2777	
13	Feedback Forms Collected	696	
14	Revenue Collected	Rs. 33,59,22,000/-	

## 2. Consular Services

The issue-wise details of the services delivery of the Department of Consular Services during August -September are as follows:

S.N	Details of Services	Number
<b>A</b>	<b>Consular and Legal Counseling Section</b>	
1	Recommendation for Medical treatment, Religious tour, World cycling tour and other	10
2	Recommendation for Indian education certificate, nationality verification and those who are visiting India for study purpose	272
3	Recommendation for Indian pension	2
4	Recommendation for issuing Nepalese driving license on the basis of foreign driving license held by the Nepalese citizen.	578
5	Recommendation letter to Indian Embassy for character verification report to Nepalese citizens during their period of stay in India.	49
6	Recommendation for procurement of chemicals & explosives	7
7	Recommendation letter to Indian Embassy for issuing vehicle permit for vehicles to enter India.	4

8	Correspondence to the concerned authorities of Nepal regarding the citizenship renouncement of Nepalese citizens as per their application submitted to the Nepalese missions abroad	39
9	Correspondence letter regarding authenticity of Power of Attorney issued by Nepalese missions abroad	138
10	Correspondence to the concerned authorities of Nepal regarding authenticity of documents issued by the Government of Nepal	16
11	POA, VOR, H-Form Request (Malaysia), and correspondence to the District Administration Office for compensation to Nepalese citizens died abroad.	56
12	Correspondence concerning search and rescue of Nepalese nationals to the Nepalese Missions abroad	116
13	Correspondence with regards to repatriation of dead body of Nepalese nationals abroad	51
14	Correspondence to the government agencies in Nepal	82
15	Number of draft received for the compensation from Malaysia.	14
16	Handover of compensation amount from Malaysia to the concerned family	14
<b>B</b>	<b>Visa and Exemption Section</b>	
1	Issuance of diplomatic/official/gratis visa	432
2	Issuance of diplomatic/official ID Card	116
3	Issuance of SAARC Visa stickers	41
4	Number of recommendation for exemption	606
5	Number of visa recommendation to the foreign missions on GON's nominations	406
<b>C</b>	<b>Attestation section</b>	
1	Number of attested documents	36102
<b>Total</b>		<b>39151</b>