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Ministry of Foreign Affairs
**Policy, Planning, Development Diplomacy
and Nepali Diaspora Division**

Singha Durbar, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel. 4200182-185, Fax: 4200061, 4200160

Email: ppdo@mofa.gov.np

Website: <https://www.mofa.gov.np>

Chief Patron:

Hon'ble Pradeep Kumar Gyawali
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Patron:

Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi, Foreign Secretary

Editorial Team

Mr. Kali Prasad Pokhrel, Joint Secretary
Mr. Moti Bahadur Shrees, Under Secretary
Mr. Arjun Ghimire, Section Officer

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A. BILATERAL AFFAIRS

1. AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS NEPAL

Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria Dr. Karin Kneissl had an official visit to Nepal on 21-23 February leading a 13-member Austrian delegation at the invitation of Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali.

The visit of Minister Kneissl took place when the two countries have been marking 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations this year. The delegation of Minister Kneissl included Austrian Ambassador to Nepal Ms. Brigitte Oppinger-Walchshofer, Director General at the Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria Dr. Alexander Marschik and other senior officials from the Ministry and the Austrian Embassy in New Delhi.

During her visit, Minister Kneissl had delegation-level official talks with Minister Gyawali on 22 February. During the talks, the two leaders reviewed the status of Nepal-Austria relations and explored ways to further strengthen the bilateral cooperation.



Delegation level talks between Minister Gyawali and Minister Kneissl

They agreed to work closely at bilateral and multilateral levels in order to further promote bilateral relations and take them to newer heights. The two sides dwelt on the issues such as trade, investment, technology transfer, sustainable development, environmental protection, clean energy and counter terrorism, among others.

Following the talks, Minister Kneissl called on Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli the same day. She also addressed a talk programme on “60 Years of Nepal-Austria Partnership: Energy, Regional and Global Trends” hosted in Kathmandu by the Institute of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2. UNION MINISTER FOR INVESTMENT AND FOREIGN ECONOMIC RELATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR VISITS NEPAL

Mr. U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar visited Nepal on 29-30 March to participate in the Nepal Investment Summit 2019. Mr. U Thaung Tun called on Mrs. Bidhya Devi Bhandari, Mr. K P Sharma Oli, Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Mr. Barshaman Pun, Mr. Raghubir Mahaseth and Mr. Yubaraj Khatiwada. During the calls, various issues of bilateral interest were discussed and thematic discussions on relevant sectors were held.



The President during call on by Union Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

3. FOREIGN SECRETARY OF INDIA VISITS NEPAL

Foreign Secretary of India Mr. Vijay Gokhale visited Nepal on 28-29 March. He held a bilateral meeting with Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi, Foreign Secretary of Nepal, on 28 March. The two Foreign Secretaries reviewed the status of implementation of the various projects including those pertaining to agriculture, connectivity, railway, waterways and other infrastructures. While expressing satisfaction on the progress made in many areas of cooperation in the past one year, both sides agreed to expedite progress on early resolution of pending issues.

Mr. Gokhale paid calls on Mr. K P Sharma Oli, Prime Minister, and Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Minister for Foreign Affairs. During the calls on, matters of mutual interest were discussed.



Secretaries of Nepal and India during a Bilateral Meeting

4. COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF NEPAL-INDIA TREATY OF TRADE

The Second Round of Discussions for the Comprehensive Review of Nepal-India Treaty of Trade was held in Pokhara on 7-8 February. The Nepali delegation was led by Mr. Rabi Shanker Sainju, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies of the Government of Nepal. The Indian delegation was led by Mr. Bhupinder S Bhalla, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, Government of India. It was agreed that both sides would prepare and share a concept note on each specific proposal regarding modification of the Treaty along with the draft text for such modification.



Second Meeting of Comprehensive Review of Nepal-India Treaty of Trade

5. THIRD MEETING OF NEPAL-INDIA TEAM OF EXPERTS

The Third Meeting of the Team of Experts/Officials (ToE) from the Government of Nepal and the Government of India for resolving the issues related to the draft Detailed Project Report (DPR) of Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project was held in Kathmandu on 27-28 February. The Teams of Nepal and India were led by Mr. Devendra Karki, Secretary, Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS), Government of Nepal and Shri S. Masood Husain, Chairman, Central Water Commission (CWC), Government of India respectively.

The ToE agreed to finalize the work done by the technical sub-groups in the second Team of Experts meeting. The meeting also discussed on the remaining sections of the DPR, namely benefit assessment and project optimization, cost estimation and phasing of expenditure, and economic and financial evaluation of the project so as to complete the task assigned by the Pancheshwar Development Authority.



Meeting of Nepal-India Team of Experts

6. FIRST MEETING OF THE JOINT PROJECT MONITORING COMMITTEE ON INDIA ASSISTED RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN THE HOUSING SECTOR

The First meeting of the Joint Project Monitoring Committee (JPMC) was held in Kathmandu on 11 March to review and monitor the project activities under the Government of India's post-earthquake reconstruction grant assistance, particularly in the Housing Sector. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Arjun Kumar Karki, Secretary, National Reconstruction Authority, Government of Nepal.

The Indian delegation was led by Mr. Sudhakar Dalela, Joint Secretary (North), Ministry of External Affairs of India. The JPMC noted with satisfaction the progress made in the housing sector so far. Discussion was also held on the other three sectors namely Education, Health and Cultural Heritage. The two sides agreed to take collective steps to expedite progress in all sectors.



Meeting of Joint Project Monitoring Committee

7. VISIT OF THE TECHNICAL SCOPING MISSION AND SECOND MEETING ON INLAND WATERWAYS CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN NEPAL AND INDIA

A Technical Scoping Mission (TSM) comprising Indian officials visited sites near Balmikinagar Barrage on Narayani (Gandak) river and Koshi Barrage on Koshi River in Nepal for on-site assessments on 3-6 March.

The Second meeting on Inland Waterways Connectivity between Nepal and India was held in Kathmandu on 7-8 March to discuss the process and modalities for cooperation based on the assessment and inputs from TSM. The Nepali delegation was led by Mr. Madhav Belbase, Joint Secretary, Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS), Government of Nepal and the Indian delegation was led by Mr. Pravir Pandey, Vice-Chairman, Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), Ministry of Shipping, Government of India. The meeting discussed on, among other things, the outcome of first and second TSM, the process and modalities for Inland Waterways Development between Nepal and India, and Inland Waterways for Transit Transport Diversification.



Joint Site Visit by Technical Scoping Mission



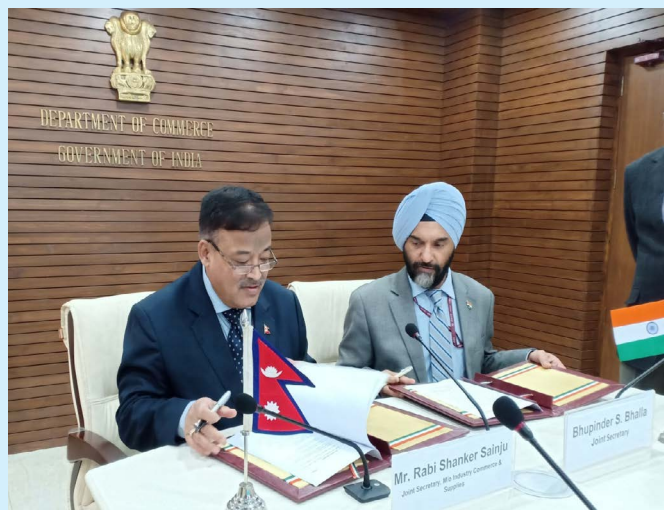
Second Meeting on Inland Waterways Connectivity between Nepal and India

The meeting decided that as further technical detailing would be required, the development of waterways in Nepal should be considered in three phases (short term – 1 to 2 years, medium term – 2 to 3 years and long term – 3 to 5 years). The detailed contours of the three phases should be prepared through the technical assistance of a multilateral funding agency which has the necessary experience of developing inland waterways.

The meeting also decided to establish a Joint Technical Committee (JTC) to expedite technical process and modalities on inland waterways connectivity between Nepal and India. The JTC would function under the overall guidance of IWAI and WECS, Nepal.

8. JOINT SECRETARY LEVEL MEETING TO DISCUSS VARIOUS LETTERS OF EXCHANGE RELATING TO NEPAL-INDIA TREATY OF TRADE AND TRANSIT

A meeting to discuss various Letters of Exchange (existing and proposed) for amendment in the Treaty of Transit between Nepal and India was held in New Delhi, India on 18-19 March. The Nepali delegation was led by Mr. Rabi Shanker Sainju, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, Government of Nepal and the Indian delegation was led by Mr. Bhupinder S Bhalla, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, Government of India.



Nepali and Indian side during the meeting

During the Meeting, the Nepali side shared with India four draft Letters of Exchange (LoEs) for amendment in the Treaty of Transit as well as India-Nepal Treaty of Trade. The Indian side agreed to examine the drafts and revert at the earliest.

9. MEETING TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF REALLOCATION OF USD 650 MILLION LOC BY INDIA FOR EAST-WEST RAILWAY PROJECT

A Joint Secretary Level Meeting to discuss the possibility of reallocation of USD 650 Million LOC by India for East-West Railway Project was held at the Ministry of Finance on 26 March. The Nepali delegation was led by Mr. Shree Krishna Nepal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Finance and the Indian delegation was led by Mr. M. K. Srivastava, Executive Director TT/F Railway Board of India. The meeting discussed on the technical aspects of the East-West Railway Project and agreed that the Railway authorities of both countries should sit together to better understand the technical matters. These might further be discussed during the next regular LOC review meeting.

10. AGREEMENT BETWEEN NEPAL AND BANGLADESH FOR AVOIDANCE OF DOUBLE TAXATION

The Agreement between the Government of Nepal and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income was signed on 5 March at a special ceremony held at the Ministry of Finance. Mr. Lal Shanker Ghimire, Secretary (Revenue), Ministry of Finance and Mr. Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, Senior Secretary, Internal Resources Division, Ministry of Finance and Chairman of National Board of Revenue of Bangladesh signed the Agreement on behalf of their respective governments.

The Agreement which aims at eliminating the double taxation, is expected to pave the way for further

expansion of trade and economic relations between Nepal and Bangladesh and also attract investments in Nepal from Bangladesh.

11. CONDOLENCE MESSAGE SENT

Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari, President of Nepal, sent a message of condolences to Md. Abdul Hamid, President of Bangladesh, on the loss of lives due to a massive fire that broke out in Chawk bazar area of Dhaka on 20 February.

12. NEPAL-FINLAND BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS HELD

Bilateral Discussions between the Foreign Ministries of Nepal and Finland were held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kathmandu on 20 February.

Delivering his opening remarks in the Discussions, Foreign Secretary Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi expressed satisfaction over the existing state of Nepal-Finland relations and underscored the need for enhancing economic engagements in the days ahead.

Following the opening remarks by the Foreign Secretary, Head of the Europe America Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal Mr. Ghanshyam Bhandari and Director General of the Department for Americas and Asia at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland Ambassador Mr. Kimmo Lahdevirta led their respective delegations to the Discussions.



Nepali and Finnish delegations with the Foreign Secretary before the Bilateral Discussions

The Finnish side congratulated Nepal on the overall political achievements made in recent times including the successful elections in 2017 and assured continuity of their support to Nepal's development endeavours. The Nepali side appreciated the Finnish cooperation, particularly in the areas of education, water and sanitation, and gender equality and inclusion.

During the meeting, the two sides took stock of existing bilateral relations and exchanged views on further promoting cooperation in the areas of trade, investment and tourism, among others. They also discussed regional and international issues of mutual interests.

The Finnish delegation consisted of the Ambassador of Finland to Nepal Mr. Pertti Anttinen and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland as well as the Embassy of Finland in Kathmandu. The Nepali delegation included officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Finance.

13. AMBASSADORS OF SLOVAK REPUBLIC AND THE NETHERLANDS PRESENT THEIR CREDENTIALS

Non-resident Ambassador of Slovak Republic to Nepal Mr. Ivan Lancaric and Non-residential Ambassador of the Netherlands to Nepal Mr. Marten Cornelis Van Den Berg presented their credentials to President Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari amidst a special ceremony organized at the President's Office on 18 March. Following the presentation of their Letters of Credence, the Ambassadors paid courtesy calls on the President.

Both Ambassadors also paid separate courtesy calls on Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali the same day.

B. MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS

1. NEPAL PARTICIPATES IN THE 63RD SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON STATUS OF WOMEN

The President Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari led the Nepali delegation to the 63rd Session of the Commission on Status of Women (CSW-63) held in New York on 11-22 March. The delegation comprised of Ms. Tham Maya Thapa, Minister for Women, Children and Senior Citizen, Chairperson of the Women and Social Committee of the House of Representatives, Foreign Secretary, and other senior officials from the Office of the President, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizen.

The President addressed on the theme of “How Women Leaders Change the World” in the High-Level Event on Women in Power hosted by the President of the UN General Assembly (PGA) Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés on 12 March.



The President addressing the High-Level Event on Women in Power

Addressing the event, the President shared Nepal's initiatives, achievements, and lessons learned in the field of gender equality and her inspiring journey from a grass-root woman activist in a remote village to the first Women President of Nepal. The President stated that the constitutional and legal arrangements have increased participation of women in leadership positions in Nepal. The President said that ‘discrimination against women is a social construct, not a natural condition’.

On the sidelines, the President held a meeting with António Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 12 March. The significance of multilateralism was discussed and views on climate change, SDGs, peacekeeping were exchanged in the meeting. The President appreciated the Secretary-General for his reform agenda and for maintaining gender parity in all United Nations bodies.



The President meeting with the Secretary-General

The President also had a meeting with María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the UN General Assembly (PGA), and thanked her for organizing the event, ‘Women in Power’. The PGA expressed her gratitude to the President for her presence and for sharing an enlightening experience.

The President also met with the President of Estonia Kersti Kaljulaid, the President of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović and the president of The Elders and the former President of Ireland Mary Robinson. During these one-to-one bilateral meetings, the leaders discussed on women empowerment and leadership.

Similarly, Mrs. Tham Maya Thapa, Minister for Women, Children, and Senior Citizen attended the Opening of the Session of CSW-63. She delivered a national statement at the High-level Ministerial Dialogue highlighting Nepal's good practices in social protection. She also participated in the General Debate of the CSW-63 on 12 March. On the occasion, she reaffirmed Nepal's commitment to work closely with the international community in achieving Sustainable Development Goals in general and the goals related to social protection and empowerment of women and girls, in particular.

2. NEPAL PARTICIPATES IN THE PEACEKEEPING MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Mr. Ishwar Pokhrel led a Nepali delegation to the United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference on Uniformed Capabilities, Performance, and Protection held in New York on 29 March.

He addressed the conference reiterating Nepal's commitment to contributing up to 10,000 troops upon request from the United Nations. He also underscored that Nepal had already met the UN targets with regard to the participation of female peacekeepers as Staff Officers, Military Observers, and Individual Police Officers.

He had a meeting with the UN Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres on 28 March. He commended the efforts of the Secretary-General to further strengthen the spirit of multilateralism in tackling the global challenges. Mr. Guterres thanked Nepal for being a reliable partner of the UN in its efforts to maintaining international peace and security.

In the afternoon, he also held a meeting with the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix. The two sides discussed the issues related to the UN peacekeeping, including its critical role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts in the areas of its deployment in the meeting.

He also met with UN Under-Secretary General for Operational Support Mr. Atul Khare on 27 March. The two sides exchanged views on operational challenges faced by the UN peacekeepers and the management of major equipment for enhancing effectiveness of the peacekeeping.

3. NEPAL PARTICIPATES IN THE 40TH SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali led a Nepali delegation to the 40th Session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva scheduled on 25-28

February. Chairman of the Law, Justice, and Human Rights Committee of the House of Representatives and senior officials from the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs accompanied the Minister as the members of the delegation.

The Minister attended the opening of the 40th Session of UN Human Rights Council on 25 February and addressed the high-level segment on 27 February.



The Minister for Foreign Affairs addressing the high-level segment of the 40th session of the UN Human Rights Council

Addressing the Session, the Minister reiterated Nepal's firm commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights at home, and to constructively engage with the international community to fulfill the mandate of the Human Rights Council as its member.

Stressing that peace and human rights cannot be achieved without attaining inclusive development, the Minister for Foreign Affairs underscored that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Global Compact on Migration provide wider platforms to advance inclusive human rights agenda everywhere. The Minister further stated that the Constitution of Nepal is founded on universally recognized human rights, fundamental freedoms, and such other principles as inclusive multiparty democratic polity, pluralism, the rule of law, representative and accountable government, social justice and independent judiciary.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs participated as a Panelist in a high-level panel on the question of death penalty. Speaking in the event, the Minister stated that

Nepal considers the right to life as sacred and inviolable, and a basis for all human rights, and affirmed Nepal's conscious choice to go for complete abolition of death penalty.



The Minister for Foreign Affairs addressing high-level panel on the question of death penalty

The Minister further said, “Our faith in personal liberty, integrity, and dignity of human life and respect of human rights lies at the core of our choice to go for complete abolition of death penalty. It is our conscious national choice, and reflection of the values we share in common.” The Minister reiterated Nepal’s firm position for the universal abolition of death penalty.

On the sidelines, the Minister held a bilateral meeting with Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar. The two Ministers discussed on further strengthening of bilateral cooperation as well as promoting investment and wellbeing of the Nepali nationals working in Qatar.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs also had a meeting with Mr. Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom. Matters of bilateral relations, economic cooperation and those pertaining to the agenda and priority of the Human Rights Council were discussed in the meeting.

The Minister also had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Dato’ Saifuddin bin Abdullah, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Malaysia. The two Ministers exchanged views on issues of bilateral interests, including the matters pertaining to Nepali workers in Malaysia and called for greater participation from Malaysia at Nepal Investment Summit. The Foreign Minister met with ILO Director-

General Mr. Guy Ryder and discussed the importance of decent work agenda and ILO centenary events.

The Minister had bilateral meetings with Ms. Epsy Campbell Barr, First Vice-President of Costa Rica and with Mr. Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation of Myanmar. Matters of bilateral interests, regional and multilateral cooperation were discussed in the meetings.

The Minister also held a meeting with Ms. Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Minister shared Nepal’s experience on successful peace process, democratic transition, legislative measures, and inclusive development approach. The Minister mentioned that Nepal has been addressing the remaining truth and reconciliation issues taking up the concerns of victims, Supreme Court verdict, reconciliation in the society and relevant international commitments.

Similarly, the Minister also had a meeting with Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organization. Enhancing partnership with the WHO on universal health coverage, maternal health as well as quality health services was discussed in the meeting.

4. NEPAL PARTICIPATES IN THE SECOND HIGH-LEVEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Leading the Nepali delegation, Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali participated in the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation held in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 20-22 March. Ambassador of Nepal to Brazil Mr. Tara Prasad Pokharel and official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs accompanied the Minister as members of the delegation.

The Minister delivered Nepal’s national statement at the plenary session of the Conference on the role of South-South Cooperation and the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Challenges and Opportunities on 20 March.

In his statement, the Minister stated that South-South Cooperation is more relevant now than ever before. He said “South-South Cooperation, as complementary to and not as a substitute for the North-South Cooperation, plays an important role for the effective and timely implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other internationally agreed development outcomes such as IPOA and VPOA.” He further highlighted what cooperation means to a landlocked LDC like Nepal that has just begun an economic transformation to sustain its successful

political gains that culminated in the democratic Constitution in 2015.



The Minister for Foreign Affairs addressing the plenary session of the Conference on the role of South-South Cooperation and the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Challenges and Opportunities

The Minister for Foreign Affairs participated as a panelist to the event entitled Leveraging South-South and Triangular Cooperation to Advance Sustainable Development in Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs also participated in a High Level Dialogue with Asian Countries organized by the Argentinean Foreign Minister Mr. Jorge Faurie aimed at promoting relations and understanding between Argentina and the Asian countries on 21 March. On the occasions, the Minister highlighted the significance of South-South cooperation to further strengthen the bond between the Asian countries and Argentina.

Participating in the side event on Leveraging South-South and Triangular Cooperation to Advance Sustainable development in the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDs, the Minister underlined the special needs and developmental challenges of LLDCs and emphasized the significance of South-South and Triangular Cooperation to address those challenges.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs had a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister of Romania Ms. Ana Birchall. The discussions held during the meeting focused on further strengthening of the bilateral relations between

the two countries in mutually beneficial areas as well as multilateral forums including in the United Nations. He also held meeting with Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina Mr. Gustavo Zaluvinen.

5. THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADDRESSES THE 71ST ANNIVERSARY PROGRAMME OF NEPAL COUNCIL OF WORLD AFFAIRS

Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali addressed the 71st Anniversary Programme of Nepal Council of World Affairs held in Kathmandu on 18 February.

On the occasion, the Minister reiterated Nepal's commitment to bring economic transformation of the country to improve quality of life of the people and to ensure good governance. The Minister underlined regionalism as a vehicle for trade and economic growth and constructive multilateralism as an apparatus to serve nation's collective interests.

6. NEPAL PARTICIPATES IN THE SIXTH ASIA PACIFIC FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Nepal participated in the Sixth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development held in Bangkok scheduled on 27-29 March. Vice-Chairman of the National Planning Commission Prof. Dr. Puspa Raj Kadel led the Nepali delegation. The delegation comprised of Nepal's Ambassador to Thailand Dr. Khaga Nath Adhikari and Joint Secretary and head of UN and International Organization Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. Bharat Raj Paudyal, among others. The Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development is the most inclusive regional platform on sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

The Sixth Forum served as a preparatory event for the 2019 High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF) and engaged member States, United Nations bodies and other institutions, major groups and relevant stakeholders in highlighting regional and sub-regional perspectives on the 2019 theme of the HLPF, "Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality".

7. NEPAL ESTABLISHES DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH TOGO

Nepal and Togo established diplomatic relations on 23 March. The number of countries with which Nepal has established diplomatic relations has thus reached 164.

Togo became member of the United Nations on 20 September 1960 following its independence from France in 1960. Both Nepal and Togo are least developed countries and members of the Group of 77 as well as the Non-Aligned Movement.

C. REGIONAL AFFAIRS

1. THIRD MEETING OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY CHIEFS

The Third Annual Meeting of the BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs (NSC) was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 21 March. The Chief of Nepal Police, IGP Mr. Sarbendra Khanal, led the Nepali delegation to the meeting which comprised of Deputy Inspector General of Nepal Armed Police Force Mr. Khadka Bahadur Rai, Investigation Director of Nepal Investigation Department Mr. Laxman Gurung, Deputy Chief of Mission of Embassy of Nepal in Thailand Mr. Jung Bahadur Gurung and Section Officer from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. Somesh Thapa. The Meeting reinforced the commitments to strengthen cooperation among Member States to tackle serious issues in the BIMSTEC region like organized crime, terrorist activities and other transnational crimes.

The BIMSTEC Secretariat presented reports of various Meetings of different subgroups under CTTC that were held after the Second Meeting of NSC on 28 March 2018.



Head of Nepali Delegation (third from right) with other delegates

The Meeting extensively deliberated on how cooperation under Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) could be streamlined so as to promote peace and security in the region. It unanimously decided that from now onwards a preparatory meeting would be held at working group level before the annual meeting of the National Security Chiefs. The Meeting welcomed the offer of Government of Bangladesh to organize the Second Meeting of Track 1.5 Security Dialogue

forum this year. The offer of Government of India to organize the First Port Conclave, the Second Meeting of BIMSTEC Regional Think Tank on Regional Security, and the First Meeting of Himalayan Science Council was welcomed by the Meeting.

The Forth Annual Meeting of BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs will be held in Myanmar next year.

2. BIMSTEC EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON ENERGY

The BIMSTEC Expert Group Meeting on Energy was held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 28-29 March. A Three-Member Nepali delegation led by Mr. Sandeep Kumar Dev, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources attended the meeting.

The Meeting was the first of its type (Expert Group Meeting) organized in the energy sector as per the directives of the Fourth BIMSTEC Summit. Each Member State made a country presentation on the theme of “Exploring Ways and Means to Further Enhance Cooperation in Energy Sector among BIMSTEC Member States.”

The Meeting discussed on synchronizing the activities of different groups under Energy, one of the areas of cooperation. It was agreed that the Government of Nepal would soon communicate the schedule of the Third Ministerial Meeting and the Fifth Senior Officials’ Meeting on Energy through the BIMSTEC Secretariat. The meeting also decided the composition of Members of BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Coordination Committee (BGICC), to carry out BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection. The Government of India offered to convene the First Meeting of Governing Board of BIMSTEC Energy Centre after the list of Members of the Board is updated. The Meeting also finalized the Terms of Reference (TOR) of BGICC for the purpose of submission to the Fifth Meeting of Senior Officials’ on Energy.

D. NON RESIDENT NEPALIS, PASSPORT AND CONSULAR MATTERS

1. NON RESIDENT NEPALIS (NRN) RELATED SERVICES

During the period of two months, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs delivered the following numbers of services to Non Resident Nepali (NRN):

S. N.	Services(Only from the Ministry)	Number
1	Issuance of NRN Cards	9
2	Processing of Land Purchase Approval to NRN	8

2. PASSPORT SERVICES

The status of service delivery of the department of Passport during the period is presented below:

S. N.	Activities	Number	Remarks
1	Applications received	83937	Excluding Live Enrollment Counters
2	Passports Issued	82912	From Districts, Missions and the Department
3	Total Number of passports issued (According to Document Type)	82184	Ordinary
		134	Diplomatic
		193	Official
		370	Gratis
		31	Travel Document (TD)
		82912	Total
4	Emails responded including Social Networks	1951	
5	Grievance handled	2202	
6	Lost PP registered in the Interpol	3801	
7	Official Error	157	
8	Null and Void Passports	6	
9	Feedback Forms Collected	800	

10	Revenue Collected (From the Department only)	31,46,26,000/-
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3. CONSULAR SERVICES

The numerical details of the service delivery of the Department of Consular Services during the period are as follows:

S. N.	Details of Services	Number
A	Consular and Legal Counseling Section	
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	209
3	Recommendation for Indian pension	8
4	Recommendation for issuing Nepalese driving license on the basis of foreign driving license held by the Nepalese citizen.	204
5	Recommendation letter to Indian Embassy for character verification report to Nepalese citizens during their period of stay in India.	62
6	Recommendation for procurement of chemicals & explosives	18

7	Recommendation letter to Indian Embassy for issuing vehicle permit for vehicles to enter India.	6
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	25
9	Correspondence letter regarding authenticity of Power of Attorney issued by Nepalese missions abroad	93
10	Correspondence to the concerned authorities of Nepal regarding authenticity of documents issued by the Government of Nepal	14
11	POA, VOR, H-Form Request (Malaysia), and correspondence to the District Administration Office for compensation to Nepalese citizens died abroad.	151
12	Correspondence concerning search and rescue of Nepalese nationals to the Nepalese Missions abroad	151

13	Correspondence with regards to repatriation of dead body of Nepalese nationals abroad	43
14	Number of draft received for the compensation from Malaysia	31
15	Handover of compensation amount from Malaysia to the concerned family	8
B	Visa and Exemption Section	
1	Issuance of diplomatic/official/gratis visa	457
2	Issuance of diplomatic/official ID Card	51
3	Issuance of SAARC visa stickers	12
4	Number of recommendation for exemption	655
5	Number of visa recommendation to the foreign missions on GON's nominations	293
6	Other Correspondences and Recommendations	193
C	Attestation section	
1	Number of attested documents	34239
Total		36933