



MOFA BULLETIN

Current Affairs

June - July, 2019 | Vol 4, Issue 1



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. Kumar Raj Kharel, Joint Secretary
Mr. Bishnu Prasad Gautam, Under Secretary
Mr. Arjun Ghimire, Section Officer

Inside this Issue

- A. Bilateral Affairs
- B. Multilateral Affairs
- C. Regional Affairs
- D. Non Resident Nepalis,
Passport and Consular
Matters

A. BILATERAL AFFAIRS

1. THE PRIME MINISTER VISITS UK AND FRANCE

The Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli paid separate bilateral visits to the United Kingdom, and France on 10-12 June and 12-14 June respectively.

During his visit to the UK, he held a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Ms. Theresa May on 11 June and discussed matters of bilateral cooperation between the two countries. The two Prime Ministers noted the progress made vis-à-vis shared objectives, and committed to continued dialogue on issues of mutual interests.



Prime Minister Oli with British Prime Minister May at the latter's office

The two Prime Ministers discussed the ways to strengthen trade and investment relationship between Nepal and the UK, in line with Nepal's 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali' agenda. They

agreed to continue discussions on Gurkha issues in future.

Prime Minister Oli appreciated the UK's support and cooperation extended to Nepal. The Prime Minister May congratulated Nepal on the recent political transformation and expressed commitment to continue supporting Nepal in its prosperity agenda.

The two sides also recognized each other's strong leadership on international issues including on climate change and agreed to work together, both bilaterally and multilaterally.

While in the UK, Prime Minister Oli addressed a special ceremony organized by the Oxford Union at the University of Oxford on 10 June. In his address, he highlighted Nepal's successful peace process and shared his thoughts on democracy, development and the Government's ongoing efforts to achieve prosperity and progress.

The Prime Minister addressed a gathering of the members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords at the British Parliament Building in Westminster on 11 June. The event was hosted by the All Party Parliamentary Group for Nepal (APPG) and the British Group Inter-Parliamentary Union (BGIPU). In the afternoon on the same day, he addressed the business leaders at a programme organized by the Confederation of British Industries (CBI).

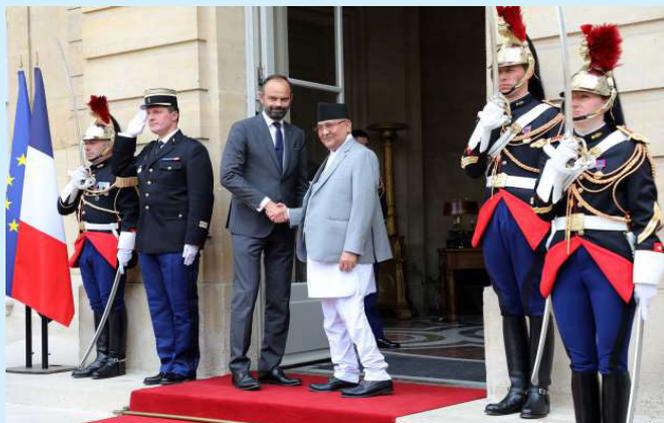
The Prime Minister visited the Headquarters of the British Gurkhas at Sandhurst on 11 June.

The Prime Minister also had a meeting with the Leader of the Opposition in the British Parliament Mr. Jeremy Corbyn. Both leaders discussed the issues of bilateral interests and deliberated on ways to enhance Nepal-UK cooperation in various areas.

On the occasion of Prime Minister Oli's visit to the UK, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the UK, Mr. Jeremy Hunt MP, released a Joint Communiqué.

Prime Minister Oli's visit to France began on 12 June. He had a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of the French Republic Mr. Edouard Philippe on 13 June. The two leaders expressed their happiness on the excellent state of relationship between Nepal and France, which share the fundamental values of democracy and human rights.

While Prime Minister Oli commended the continued progress and prosperity achieved by France, the French Prime Minister congratulated Nepal on its historic political transformation and the institutionalization of political gains through the democratic constitution.



French Prime Minister Philippe welcomes Prime Minister Oli to his office

The two Prime Ministers underscored the importance of expanding and deepening bilateral cooperation in the field of trade, investment and technology to contribute to the realization of Nepal's national aspiration of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'.

The two Prime Ministers also shared the commitment to multilateralism, regional integration and peaceful resolution of conflict. Highlighting that both countries are major contributors to

United Nations peacekeeping operations, they expressed their commitment to work together for the maintenance of international peace and security under the auspices of the United Nations.

The two Prime Ministers decided to conduct consultations, on a regular basis, between the two Foreign Ministries. They underlined the significance of exchanging high-level visits in further cementing friendly ties and promoting collaborative partnerships in mutually beneficial areas.

Earlier on 12 June, the Prime Minister addressed a programme which was attended by representatives from the French Business Community. The programme was organized by the Federation of National Chambers of Industries and Commerce of France (MEDEF) at MEDEF Headquarters in Paris. Following the event, he had separate meetings with the representatives of the selected French Companies. In both interaction programme and separate meetings, the Prime Minister highlighted on investment opportunities available in Nepal and invited the French Companies to invest in Nepal.

On 14 June, the Prime Minister addressed a tourism promotion program organized in the French City of Chamonix-Mont Blanc as part of the celebrations of the 70th Anniversary of Nepal-France diplomatic relations. The Prime Minister drew comparisons to the relations between France and Nepal with the heights of Mont Blanc, highest peak in Europe and the Mount Everest, the highest peak in the world.

While expressing deep concerns over the impacts of climate change to the mountain ecology, the Prime Minister highlighted the contributions of the mountainous countries towards controlling global warming. He underlined the ways to enhance Nepal-France cooperation in tourism in the context of Visit Nepal 2020 Campaign.



Prime Minister Oli with Europe-based Ambassadors and senior Government officials in Geneva

On 15 June, he took briefings from Europe-based Nepali Ambassadors/Heads of Mission at a programme organized in Geneva, Switzerland. The Ambassadors/Heads of Mission made brief presentation on the ongoing activities and highlighted major achievements, challenges and future courses of action of their respective Embassies/Missions. The Prime Minister instructed the Ambassadors/Heads of Mission to streamline their activities towards contributing to the overarching agenda of 'prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'.

The Prime Minister also visited CERN (Conseil Européen Pour la Recherche Nucleaire), a European Centre for Nuclear Research and High-Energy Particle Physics Laboratory in Geneva in the afternoon on 15 June. He was received by the Head of International Relations Department, scientists & research scholars and senior management of the CERN. The Prime Minister was briefed about the research works undertaken by various departments of the Institution before inspecting Atlas Laboratory at the CERN.

During all these engagements in the visit, the Prime Minister was accompanied by his spouse Mrs. Radhika Shakya, Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, advisors to the Prime Minister and senior Government officials.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS CHINA

Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali visited the People's Republic of China from 30 June to 5 July. During his visit, Minister Gyawali met with his Chinese counterpart Mr. Wang Yi, State Councilor and Minister for Foreign Affairs in Beijing on 3 July and participated in the 13th World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of the New Champions (also known as Summer Davos) in Dalian on 1-2 July. During the meeting with Wang Yi, Minister Gyawali extended congratulations to China on the 70th anniversary of the founding of PRC, and said that President Bidya Devi Bhandari's State Visit to China this year had opened new vistas of opportunities for comprehensive and practical partnership between Nepal and China and underscored the importance of high-level visits in cementing ties. Minister Gyawali also met with Song Tao, Minister, International Department of Communist Party of China.



Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali with Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi

3. PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION VISITS CHINA

A Parliamentary Delegation led by the Chairperson of the International Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives Mrs. Pabitra Nirola Kharel visited China in July. During the visit, Mrs. Kharel had a meeting with Mr. Chen Guomin, Vice-Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of National People's Congress of China and exchanged ideas on various matters of mutual interest.

4. JAPANESE PARLIAMENTARY VICE MINISTER VISITS NEPAL

Japanese Parliamentary Vice Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism visited Nepal from 29 June to 1 July. During the visit, the Vice Minister met with Padma Kumari Aryal, Minister for Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation and exchanged views on various aspects of Nepal-Japan relations in general, and practical cooperation in the area of land management between two countries, in particular.

5. CHAIRMAN OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND RESOURCES CONSERVATION COMMITTEE OF CHINA VISITS NEPAL

Mr. Gao Huchen, Chairman of Environmental Protection and Resources Conservation Committee of the National People's Congress of China visited Nepal leading a 6-member delegation on 22-25 July. During the visit, he met with Mr. Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Speaker of the House of Representatives and Mr. Shakti Bahadur Basnet, Minister for

Forests and Environment, and exchanged views on further strengthening multidimensional relationship between the two countries. The two meetings focused on exchanges and cooperation in the areas of mutual interest between the two parliaments, and in the area of environment protection, respectively.

6. NEPAL AND GERMANY ESTABLISH BILATERAL CONSULTATION MECHANISM, HOLD ITS FIRST MEETING

Foreign Secretary Mr. Shankar Das Bairagi and Commissioner for South Asia at the German Federal Foreign Office Mr. Markus Potzel led their respective delegations to the first political consultations between Nepal and Germany held in Kathmandu on 16 July. The consultations took place during Mr. Markus Potzel's visit to Nepal from 16 to 18 July.

The two sides stressed the need for intensifying trade and foreign direct investment linkages, and welcomed efforts to promote the German private sector's investments in Nepal. The German side welcomed efforts to foster an open investment climate in Nepal and pledged support in ongoing reform measures. The two sides also reviewed the international and regional situation. They agreed on the need to strengthen rules-based multilateralism and regional cooperation. The two sides acknowledged climate change as one of the most serious existential threats to humanity and agreed to promote collaboration, both at bilateral and multilateral levels.



Nepali and German delegations during the bilateral consultations

Following the Consultations, a Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) on the Establishment of Bilateral Consultation Mechanism between the Foreign Ministries of the two countries was signed.

Mr. Ghanshyam Bhandari, Joint Secretary/Head of Europe America Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Markus Potzel, Commissioner for South Asia at the German Federal Foreign Office signed the JDI on behalf of their respective Ministries.

The JDI stipulates that the Foreign Ministry consultations would be held annually, alternatively in Kathmandu and Berlin at mutually convenient dates.

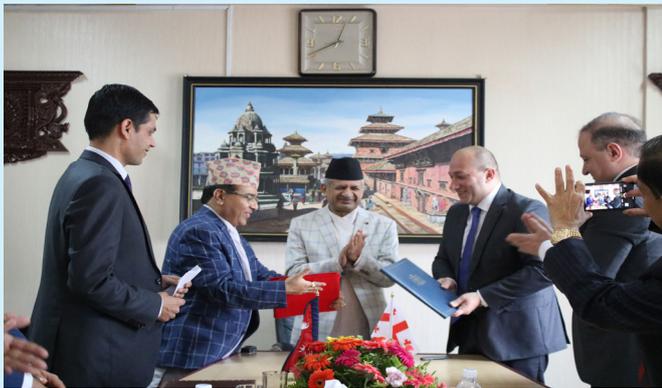


Signing of the JDI on Nepal-Germany Bilateral Consultation Mechanism

7. FIRST NEPAL-GEORGIA BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS HELD IN KATHMANDU

The First Nepal-Georgia Bilateral Consultations were held on 22 July at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kathmandu. Foreign Secretary Mr. Shankar Das Bairagi and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia Mr. Alexander Khvtisiashvili led their respective delegations to the Consultations.

During the Consultations, the two sides reviewed diverse aspects of bilateral relations and exchanged views on further promoting cooperation between the two countries at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.



Signing Ceremony of the Agreement on Visa Waiver

On the occasion, the Agreement on Visa Waiver for Holders of Diplomatic, Official or Service Passports was signed. Foreign Secretary Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia Mr. Alexander Khvtisiashvili signed the Agreement on behalf of their respective Governments.

Following the Consultations, the visiting Deputy Minister Mr. Khvtisiashvili called on Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali. Matters of mutual interest and ways to strengthen the bilateral relations between the two countries were discussed during the meeting.

The Georgian delegation consisted of Ambassador of Georgia to Nepal Mr. Archil Dzuliashvili, Director of the Department of Asia and Pacific of the Georgian Foreign Ministry Mr. David Kereselidze, Senior Counsellor at the Georgian Embassy in New Delhi Ms. Nana Gaprindashvili as well as the Honorary Consul of Georgia in Kathmandu Mr. Shiv Ratan Sharda. The Nepali delegation included senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation.

8. NEPAL AND FINLAND ESTABLISH BILATERAL CONSULTATION MECHANISM

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) establishing the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism between Foreign Ministries of Nepal and Finland was signed in Kathmandu on 21 June.

Joint Secretary and Head of Europe America Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal Mr. Ghanshyam Bhandari and Ambassador of Finland to Nepal Mr. Pertti Anttinen signed the MoU on behalf of their respective Ministries.



Signing Ceremony of the MoU Establishing Nepal-Finland Bilateral Consultation Mechanism

9. MEETING THROUGH VIDEO CONFERENCE BETWEEN THE FOREIGN SECRETARIES OF NEPAL AND INDIA

The Foreign Secretary of Nepal, Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi, and Foreign Secretary of India, Mr. Vijay Gokhale held meeting over the video conference for the fifth time on 11 July. During the meeting, they reviewed the status of progress on the matters agreed since the exchanges of high-level visits in 2018. They also exchanged views on a wide range of issues of mutual interest between Nepal and India.

10. SEVENTH MEETING OF NEPAL-INDIA OVERSIGHT MECHANISM

The Seventh Meeting of Nepal-India Oversight Mechanism was held in Kathmandu on 7 July to review the progress of the projects under bilateral cooperation. The meeting was co-chaired by Foreign Secretary Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi and Ambassador of India to Nepal Mr. Manjeev Singh Puri.

The bilateral projects under review were in the areas of cross-border rails, terai roads, petroleum pipelines, roads, integrated check posts, bridges, energy, irrigation, inundation, agriculture, post-earthquake reconstruction, among others. Both sides agreed to expedite works of the projects so that the projects could be completed within the scheduled timeline.

As per the MoU, Nepal and Finland will hold regular consultations alternatively in Kathmandu and Helsinki in order to review bilateral relations

and identify new areas of cooperation between the two countries, as well as exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest.

11. THIRD MEETING OF COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF NEPAL-INDIA RAIL SERVICES AGREEMENT (RSA)

The Third Comprehensive Review Meeting of Nepal-India Rail Services Agreement was held in New Delhi on 6-7 June. The Nepali delegation was led by Mr. Navaraj Dhakal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, Government of Nepal and the Indian delegation was led by Mr. Manoj Kumar Srivastava, Executive Director/Traffic Transportation, Ministry of Railways, Government of India. During the meeting, both sides agreed to make necessary amendments in the Rail Services Agreement for which Nepali side would share a draft LoE, incorporating discussions held so far. Indian side also agreed in principle to permit the Nepal Railway Company to operate its own rail/wagon for cargo movement between Kolkata/Haldia in India and Birgunj and Biratnagar in Nepal.

12. TENTH MEETING OF NEPAL-INDIA SURVEY OFFICIALS COMMITTEE (SOC)

The Tenth Meeting of Nepal-India Boundary Survey Officials Committee (SOC) was held in Kathmandu on 26-28 June. The Nepali delegation was led by Ms. Karuna K.C., Deputy Director General, Department of Survey and the Indian delegation was led by Mr. Rajendra Kumar Meena, Director, Uttarakhand and West Uttar Pradesh Geospatial Data Centre, Survey of India. Various technical issues on boundary related works between Nepal and India were discussed during the meeting.

13. 16TH MEETING OF NEPAL-INDIA JOINT TEAM OF EXPERTS ON SAPTA KOSHI HIGH DAM MULTIPURPOSE PROJECT AND SUN KOSHI STORAGE-CUM-DIVERSION SCHEME

The 16th Meeting of Nepal-India Joint Team of Experts (JTE) on Sapta Koshi High Dam Multipurpose Project and Sun Koshi Storage-cum-Diversion Scheme was held in New Delhi on 25-26 July. The Nepali team was led by Mr. Madhu Prasad Bhetuwal, Director General, Department of Electricity Development and the Indian team

was led by Mr. R.K. Sinha, Member, Central Water Commission of India. The JTE took stock of progress made so far regarding the project and noted with concern over the slow progress of field works and various studies related to the Project. As the present tenure of the JPO-SKSKI is till 31st August, 2019, the JTE decided that the office will continue the ongoing activities until the next meeting of Joint Committee on Water Resources (JCWR).

B. MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS

1. NEPAL PARTICIPATES IN THE 108TH SESSION (CENTENARY) OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE

The Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli addressed the centenary session of the International Labor Conference in Geneva on 10 June. Addressing the session, the Prime Minister called the Preambular pledges of the ILO's Constitution as the 'moral minimum' and urged international community to demonstrate its renewed commitment to meet and rise above these minimum labour standards. While visualizing Nepal's agenda for decent work under the theme of 'skilled workers, prosperous Nepal and happy Nepali', he elaborated that democracy without economic rights and social justice remains incomplete.



Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli addressing the ILO Centenary Conference

The Prime Minister also signed the ILO's "Golden Book" appreciating the ILO's contribution over the last hundred years for a just and equitable social order.

The Prime Minister together with the ILO's Director

General Mr. Guy Ryder witnessed the handing over ceremony of the ILO flag that was hoisted at the summit of Mount Everest.

On the margins of the Session, the Prime Minister also held a bilateral meeting with Madame Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway and Mr. Fuat Oktay, Vice President of the Republic of Turkey. In addition, the Prime Minister also met with Mr. Alain Berset, Swiss Federal Councillor and Head of Federal Department of Home Affairs at Palais des Nations in Geneva.

Matters of mutual interest including the ways and means of enhancing the bilateral relations were discussed during the meetings.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Gokarna Raj Bista, Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security, Chief Political Advisor to the Prime Minister, Mr. Bishnu Rimal, Foreign Affairs Advisor to the Prime Minister, Dr. Rajan Bhattarai, and Foreign Secretary, Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi during the visit.

Mr. Gokarna Raj Bista, Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security, also addressed the International Labour Conference on 13 June. He appreciated the role of ILO for setting standards on good labour relations and decent employment, protection of the rights and interests of workers, social security and for promoting social dialogue among employers, workers and governments. He also shed light on various policy-related, institutional and practical measures of Government of Nepal for protecting rights and interests of workers, for creating decent work environment and for promoting healthy labour relations.

During the visit, Minister Bista signed an MoU with Mr. Soodesh Satkam Callichurn, Minister for Industrial Relations, Employment and Training of Mauritius, for allowing Nepali workers to work in the field of agriculture, hotel, hospitality and manufacturing fields in Mauritius. He also signed a new labour agreement with Mr. Nasser bin Thani Al-Hamli, his counterpart from UAE. Likewise, the Minister held discussions with Ms. Zehra Zumrut Selcuk, Minister for Family, Labour and

Social Services of Turkey on concluding a labour agreement between Nepal and Turkey. He also met Mr. Mohammed Camille Abousleiman, Minister for Labour of Lebanon and discussed issues related to bilateral relations, particularly on strengthening labour relations between Nepal and Lebanon.

2. NEPAL PARTICIPATES IN THE 13TH WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEW CHAMPIONS

Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali participated in the 13th World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting of the New Champions (AMNC) held in Dalian of China from 1 to 3 July. This year's Annual Meeting of the New Champions was held under the theme of 'Leadership 4.0: Succeeding in a New Era of Globalization'.

On 1 July, Minister addressed the 'Informal Gathering of World Economic Leaders: Finding a New Footing for the Global Economy,' where he stressed the need for international cooperation and collaboration for promotion of fair, transparent and rules-based global order. He added that equitable distribution of means, resources and opportunities among all countries was essential for the new footing in global economy. In the afternoon, he participated in the session on 'Shaping the G20 Agenda for 2020.' Speaking on the occasion, he underlined the importance of adequate representation of the voices of the least developed countries like Nepal in the G20 forums.

On 2 July, the Minister for Foreign Affairs addressed two sessions. The first session was on 'Climate Change: The Next Financial Crisis?' In the session, he underscored the need for an enhanced level of international cooperation in tackling the adverse impacts of climate change. He highlighted the important contributions of Nepal's mountains, rivers and forests in maintaining the ecological system, and said that Nepal's carbon emission is negligible but the 'brunt' we have been bearing is disproportionate. 'It is in this light that climate justice must be promoted and that access to technology must be made easy and affordable', he said.



Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali addressing the session on Climate Change: the Next Financial Crisis?

After the session on climate change, the Minister attended the opening plenary, which featured addresses by Mr. Li Keqiang, the Premier of China, and Professor Klaus Schwab, the Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum. He also participated, as a panelist, in the session on ‘Geopolitical Shifts’. While referring to rising geopolitical complexities and uncertainties, he underscored the need for promoting greater mutual trust and understanding among nations, as well as deeper levels of co-operation and collaborative efforts, for ensuring sustainable world peace.

Minister for Foreign Affairs also had a meeting with WEF President Mr. Borge Brende on 2 July. Ways to enhance further cooperation between Nepal and World Economic Forum, especially in the areas of research and capacity building, were discussed in the meeting.

3. NEPAL PARTICIPATES IN THE 41ST SESSION OF FAO CONFERENCE



State Minister Mrs. Ram Kumari Chaudhary addressing the session on Migration, Agriculture and Rural Development

Mrs. Ram Kumari Chaudhary, State Minister for the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development led Nepali delegation to the 41st Session of FAO Conference that was held in Rome, Italy on 22-29 June. While addressing the session on Migration, Agriculture and Rural Development, State Minister said “Nepal is committed to promoting rural agriculture and empowering the small farmers to mitigate the negative impacts of unemployment and migration. These include addressing the gender gap, extreme urbanization and low agricultural productivity.” She highlighted the national policies and programs that Nepal has made so far for the sustainable agriculture development.

On 25 June, as a panelist, State Minister participated on a side event of the conference entitled “On the road to Zero Hunger in Asia and the Pacific”. She also had a meeting with newly elected Director General of FAO Dr. Qu Dongyu. Longstanding partnership between Nepal and FAO was discussed during the meeting.

4. NEPAL PARTICIPATES IN THE ECOSOC HIGH LEVEL PANEL ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Prof. Dr. Puspa Raj Kadel, Vice-Chairman of the National Planning Commission of Nepal, participated in the 2019 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, convened under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) from 9 to 18 July in New York. The Vice-Chairman delivered the national statement highlighting the status in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Government’s plans ahead for accelerating its implementation. He focused on Goals 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17 that were reviewed this year. The Nepali delegation also spoke separately on those goals reviewed this year and shared Nepal’s perspective with a particular focus on impacts of climate change on mountains; the role of ‘Sagarmatha Dialogue’ in churning ideas around pressing global issues; education for all; inclusion; Nepal’s peace process as well as financing for SDGs.

5. NEPAL PARTICIPATES IN THE 25TH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY

Mr. Bharat Raj Paudyal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated in the 25th Session of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) that was held in Jamaica from 22 to 26 July. While addressing the Special Session of the Assembly held to mark the 25 years of ISA, Mr. Paudyal said that exploitation of the resources from the common heritage of mankind should accrue equal benefit to all nations and the process leading to the exploitation should be fair and transparent. He also underscored the need to heed the scientific evidences regarding the environmental impact of deep sea exploitation and building of capacity in the ISA to administer this complex scientific and administrative operation.

C. REGIONAL AFFAIRS

1. FOURTH MEETING OF SAARC AGRICULTURE MINISTERS PRECEDED BY SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING

The Fourth Meeting of SAARC Agriculture Ministers preceded by Senior Officials' Meeting was held in Thimphu, Bhutan from 24 to 27 June. The Nepali delegation was led by Mr. Chakrapani Khanal, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Development. The Ministerial Meeting adopted Thimphu Statement on Agriculture and Rural Development. The meeting agreed to promote cooperation in agriculture and its allied sectors, promote climate resilient strategies, strengthen cooperation to expand agro-processing, operationalize SAARC Food Bank, SAARC Seed Bank and promote agricultural research among others.

2. FOURTH MEETING OF SAARC COUNCIL OF EXPERTS OF ENERGY REGULATORS

The Fourth Meeting of SAARC Council of Experts of Energy Regulators was held on 10-11 June in Male, Maldives. In the meeting, the head of delegation of each member country made their country presentations in which they briefed the meeting on the overview of their respective power sectors, existing frameworks, cross-border interconnections, power sector reforms, electricity import/export projects and future plan of

action. The meeting also considered the Status of Implementation of the Recommendations finalized during the Second Meeting of SAARC Council of Experts of Energy Regulators (Electricity).

3. SAARC-ADB FOURTH SPECIAL MEETING ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION STUDY (PHASE-II)

SAARC-ADB Fourth Special Meeting on Regional Economic Integration Study (Phase-II) was organized on 24-25 June in Kathmandu. The head of delegation from each Member State made presentations/statements on the implementation status of the seven identified prioritized recommendations of the SAARC-ADB Regional Economic Integration Study (Phase-II) at the national level. Besides, the experts from the member states also made presentations highlighting the Role of Trade in Services for moving towards South Asian Economic Union (SAEU) including status of SAARC Agreement on Trade in Services (SATIS).

4. FIRST MEETING OF SAARC INTER-GOVERNMENTAL EXPERT GROUP (IGEG) ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION

The First meeting of SAARC Inter-Governmental Expert Group on Poverty Alleviation was hosted by Nepal on 4-5 July. Matters related to contextualization of the 2030 Development Agenda, matters related to the SAARC Plan of Action on Poverty Alleviation (PAPA)-2004, and matters related to publication of Regional Poverty Profile 2011-14 were discussed in the meeting. Achievements of SAARC Development Goals (SDGs) were also considered in the meeting.

5. SEVENTH MEETING OF THE SAARC CHIEF VETERINARY OFFICERS' (CVOS) FORUM

On 23-24 July, the Seventh Meeting of the SAARC Chief Veterinary Officers' (CVOs) Forum was held in Islamabad, Pakistan. The meeting reviewed the status of implementation of the decisions taken at the previous meeting, discussed major issues and challenges confronting the member states of SAARC in livestock, including Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) in the region, considered important developments and made recommendations in the areas of Animal Health and Diseases.

6. FIRST BIMSTEC MINISTERIAL MEETING ON AGRICULTURE AND THE FIRST BIMSTEC MEETING ON THE SENIOR OFFICIALS ON AGRICULTURE

The First BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and the First BIMSTEC Meeting on the Senior Officials on Agriculture was held in Nay-Pyi-Taw, Myanmar on 11-12 July. Mr. Bhim Udas, Ambassador of Nepal to Myanmar participated in the meeting representing Nepal. The Ministerial Meeting was concluded by adopting a Joint Statement on Agriculture and Rural Development. The delegation of the member states shared their experiences and discussed the common agendas of agriculture which can be carried out collectively. The Member States agreed to promote cooperation in climate-smart farming and various other matters of common concern in agriculture and rural development.

7. FIRST MEETING OF THE BIMSTEC SUB-GROUP ON THE COOPERATION ON COUNTERING RADICALIZATION AND TERRORISM

The First Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on the Cooperation on Countering Radicalization and Terrorism was held in New Delhi, India on 11 June. The head of delegation of each Member State made their country presentation on the status and efforts in Counter Radicalization and Terrorism. The head of Nepali delegation, Mr. Ram Krishna Subedi, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, presented the context and status of Nepal in countering radicalization and terrorism and emphasized on the collective efforts and enhanced cooperation among the Member States to counter radicalization and terrorism in the region.

8. SECOND MEETING OF THE TRACK 1.5 BIMSTEC SECURITY DIALOGUE FORUM

The Second Meeting of the Track 1.5 BIMSTEC Security Dialogue Forum was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 30-31 July. The Nepalese delegation was led by Mr. Ram Krishna Subedi, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Track 1.5 Security Dialogue Forum focused on enhancing cooperation among the Member States to address and mitigate various security challenges such as terrorism and violent extremism, maritime security,

illicit trade and trafficking in arms, narcotics drugs and human trafficking, money laundering, financing terrorism, cyber security, forced displacement and disaster management. The Meeting also highlighted the role of non-governmental sectors in dealing with these challenges.

9. HIGH-LEVEL WORKING GROUP (HLWG) MEETING OF ASIA COOPERATION DIALOGUE

A High-Level Working Group (HLWG) Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 18-19 July. Mr. Yagya Bahadur Hamal, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated in the Meeting. The HLWG meeting recommended the criteria for appointment of Secretary General of ACD and ways for strengthening the ACD Secretariat.

D. NON RESIDENT NEPALI, PASSPORT AND CONSULAR MATTERS

1. NON RESIDENT NEPALI (NRN) RELATED SERVICES

S. N.	Services (Only from the Ministry)	Number
1	Issuance of NRN Cards	18
2	Processing of Land Purchase Approval to NRN	2

2. PASSPORT SERVICES

S. N.	Activities	Number	Remarks
1	Applications received	88,755	Excluding Live Enrollment Counters
2	Passports issued	87,376	From Districts, Missions and the Department
3	Total Number of passports issued (According to document type)	85,685	Ordinary
		89	Diplomatic
		369	Official
		1,205	Gratis
		28	Travel Document (TD)
		87,376	Total

4	Emails responded including social networks	2,584	
5	Grievance handled	2,966	
6	Lost passport registered in the Interpol	5,280	
7	Official errors	245	
8	Null and Void Passports	5	
9	Feedback Forms Collected	1,143	
10	Revenue collected (From the Department only)	30,66,74,501/-	

3. CONSULAR SERVICES

S. N.	Details of Services	Number
A	Consular and Legal Counseling Section	
1	Recommendation for Medical treatment, religious tour and others	4
2	Recommendation related to Indian education	484
3	Recommendation for Indian pension	1
4	Recommendation for issuing Nepalese driving license	168
5	Recommendation to Indian Embassy for character verification	83
6	Recommendation for procurement of chemicals & explosives	29
7	Recommendation to Indian Embassy for issuing vehicle permit	5
8	Correspondence regarding the citizenship renouncement	7
9	Correspondence regarding the Power of Attorney	80

10	Correspondence regarding authenticity of documents issued by the Government of Nepal	17
11	POA, VOR, H-Form Request (Malaysia), and correspondence to the District Administration Office for compensation to Nepalese citizens	148
12	Correspondence concerning search and rescue of Nepalese nationals	248
13	Correspondence with regards to repatriation of dead body of Nepalese nationals abroad	57
14	Number of draft received for the compensation from Malaysia	14
15	Handover of compensation amount from Malaysia to the concerned family	24
16	Correspondence to the government agencies in Nepal	325
B	Visa and Exemption Section	
1	Issuance of diplomatic/official/gratis visa	498
2	Issuance of diplomatic/official ID Card	65
3	Issuance of SAARC visa stickers	30
4	Number of recommendation for exemption	671
5	Number of visa recommendation to the foreign missions on GON's nominations	335
C	Attestation section	
1	Number of attested documents	39,071
Total		42,364