



MOFA BULLETIN

Current Affairs

13 February-15 July 2020 | Volume 4, Issue 5



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Singha Durbar, Kathmandu

www.mofa.gov.np

A. BILATERAL AFFAIRS	2
B. REGIONAL AND MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS	6
C. POLICY RELATED AFFAIRS	13
D. PROTOCOL AFFAIRS	14
E. SERVICE DELIVERY	15

A. BILATERAL AFFAIRS

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN PRESIDENTS OF NEPAL AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

President of Nepal Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari held a telephone conversation with President of the People's Republic of China Mr. Xi Jinping on 27 April 2020. The two Presidents shared views on the ongoing global fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts across the world. They also appreciated initiatives pursued by the governments in containing and controlling the COVID-19 in both countries. The President of

Nepal extended appreciation to the Government and people of China for the assistance of medical logistics provided to Nepal in the fight against the pandemic.

The President of China thanked the Government and people of Nepal for the solidarity and support extended to the Government and people of China during the coronavirus epidemic. He also appreciated sentiments expressed by the Government

and People of Nepal on the occasion of the observance of National Day of Mourning in China in memory of those who lost their lives while fighting the novel coronavirus. The two Presidents further expressed satisfaction on the excellent state of bilateral relations and agreed to further strengthen these relations in the coming days through the implementation of understandings and agreements reached during high-level visits.

PRIME MINISTER HOLDS TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH HIS COUNTERPARTS

Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli held a telephone conversation with the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, on 10 April 2020. The two Prime Ministers discussed about the fight against Covid-19 and agreed to intensify cooperation to deal with the pandemic. In the context of lockdown in both the countries, the two Prime Ministers agreed to look after the welfare and

medical care of the people of the two countries living in each other's territory. Prime Minister Oli thanked to the Government, people and the Prime Minister of India for the supply of essential medicines and medical logistics to Nepal.

The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction on the smooth supply of essential goods across the border and underlined the need for

ensuring its continuity as before the pandemic.

The Prime Minister of Nepal also held similar telephone conversations separately with the Prime Minister of Bahrain, the Crown Prince of the United Arab Emirates, the Prime Minister of Kuwait, the Deputy Prime Minister of Oman, the Prime Minister of Qatar, the President of Israel, and the Prime Minister of Israel.

NEPAL AND ISRAEL CELEBRATE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Nepal and the State of Israel celebrated the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations on 1 June 2020.

On the occasion, Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli held a telephone conversation with Israeli Prime Minister

Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu and exchanged greetings and best wishes. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction on the state of bilateral relations that grew and consolidated in the past 60 years and agreed to further strengthen it in future.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali and Foreign Minister of Israel Mr. Gabi Ashkenazi also exchanged the messages of greetings on that day to mark the special occasion of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Nepal and Israel.

FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali paid an official visit to Bangladesh on 17-19 February 2020 at the invitation of Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh. The two Ministers held an official bilateral meeting that deliberated on various matters of mutual interests such as the expansion of bilateral trade through the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers, simplification of administrative procedures, development of multi-modal transport and connectivity networks, improved transit facilities and promotion of investment.

During the visit, the Foreign Minister met with Mr. Tipu Munshi, Minister of Commerce of Bangladesh and discussed the ways and means to increase bilateral trade, including through expanding Nepal's export to Bangladesh and increasing connectivity between the two countries.



Foreign Minister Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali with Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 18 February 2020

Foreign Minister Gyawali also paid courtesy calls on President of Bangladesh Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Ms. Sheikh Hasina. During the calls on, he emphasized the need to further strengthen the relations between Nepal and Bangladesh for the benefit of the peoples of both countries.

During the visit, Foreign Minister Gyawali also visited the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum and paid tribute to the Father of Nation of

Bangladesh Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and extended congratulations and best wishes to the Government and people of Bangladesh on the occasion of his birth centenary.

The Foreign Minister was accompanied by Foreign Secretary Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi and other senior officials of the Government of Nepal.

FOREIGN MINISTER PARTICIPATES IN HIGH LEVEL VIDEO CONFERENCE ON BELT AND ROAD INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Minister for Foreign Affairs participated in High-level 'Video Conference on Belt and Road International

Co-operation: Combating COVID-19 with Solidarity' chaired by Mr. Wang Yi, State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's

Republic of China. The Foreign Minister delivered a statement on 18 June 2020.

Foreign Minister Gyawali,

in his statement, underlined the importance of mutual support, collective efforts and cooperation from multilateral institutions as vital in combating the COVID-19 pandemic. He appreciated the role of the

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in high-quality development in the partner countries and underscored the importance of the new initiative of Health Silk Road under the BRI.

Foreign Ministers and other

relevant Ministers from 26 countries along with Director General of the World Health Organization WHO and Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme participated in the conference.

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOLDS TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH HIS COUNTERPARTS

Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali held several high-level telephone conversations, including at the level of Foreign Ministers, in the major foreign employment destination countries following the onset of the pandemic. Through the telephone conversations, the Foreign Minister expressed solidarity and sympathies with his counterparts in the respective countries in the fight against COVID-19 and requested them to ensure safety and security of Nepali nationals during this difficult time. The Foreign Minister held telephone

conversations, including with Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India, Mr. Wang Yi, State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Michael R. Pompeo, Secretary of State of the United States of America, Mr. François-Philippe Champagne, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada, Mr. Lord Ahmed, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, Ms. Arancha Gonzalez, Minister for External Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of Spain, Ms. Marise Payne,

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, and Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia.

During these high-level engagements, besides taking stock on matters of bilateral relations and exchanging views, Foreign Minister Gyawali underscored the need to forge economic partnerships to address the post-epidemic challenges. He also thanked all the governments for providing various kinds of support to Nepal in her effort to combat COVID-19, including medicines, logistics, test kits, among others.

PROGRESS MONITORING THROUGH VIDEO CONFERENCES

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs held regular video conferences with the embassies of Nepal located in Bangkok, Canberra, Kuala Lumpur, Yangon, and the countries in the Middle East and Africa region to discuss issues, including the situation of Nepali nationals and the effect of COVID-19 in those countries. The Heads of missions in the respective countries apprised the Foreign Minister about the COVID situation, initiatives taken by the host countries as well

as the work, priority and the activities of the Embassies.

Foreign Minister Mr. Gyawali instructed the Ambassadors to work hard to provide all possible support and facilitation for the Nepali nationals in their respective host countries in the current difficult situation, and strengthen bilateral relations to achieve Nepal's diplomatic goals..

The Foreign Minister also informed the Ambassadors

about postponement of Visit Nepal Year 2020 and Sagarmatha Sambaad due to the pandemic, and instructed the Embassies to continue regular reporting on the unfolding COVID situation and measures taken by the host country governments, take initiatives to protect the interests of Nepali nationals, including their employment and extend necessary support and care to them in the face of adversity.

FOURTH MEETING OF NEPAL-PAKISTAN BILATERAL POLITICAL CONSULTATION MECHANISM

The fourth meeting of Nepal-Pakistan Bilateral Political Consultation Mechanism was held on 25 February 2020 in Islamabad. The meeting was co-chaired by Foreign Secretary of Nepal Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi and Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Mr. Sohail Mahmood. The meeting reviewed the status of bilateral co-operation and agreed to further enhance the relationship between the two countries in the areas of trade, tourism, education, sports, culture and people-to-people relations. Cooperation on matters of common interest in regional and international forums also featured during the discussion.

During this visit, Foreign Secretary Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi paid a courtesy call on Foreign Minister of Pakistan Mr. Makhdoom



Foreign Secretary Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi with Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Mr. Sohail Mahmood at the 4th Meeting of Nepal-Pakistan Bilateral Political Consultation Mechanism, Islamabad, 25 February 2020

Shah Mahmood Qureshi. During the meeting, the Foreign Secretary emphasized the importance of further strengthening the bilateral relations for mutual benefit.

While in Pakistan, Foreign Secretary Mr. Bairagi also addressed an interaction

programme on the theme of 'Investment Opportunities in Nepal' organized by the Embassy of Nepal in Islamabad and highlighted the various steps taken by the Government of Nepal to attract foreign investment in Nepal.

FIFTH NEPAL-BANGLADESH COMMERCE SECRETARY-LEVEL MEETING

The fifth Nepal-Bangladesh Commerce Secretary-level meeting was held in Dhaka on 3-4 March 2020. Nepali delegation was led by Mr. Baikuntha Aryal, Secretary,

Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies. The two-day meeting discussed about promoting trade and investment, starting direct bus services and direct flights

between regional capitals of the two countries, cargo movement and the possibility of connecting the two countries by waterways.

VIDEO CONSULTATION AT JOINT SECRETARY-DIRECTOR GENERAL LEVEL BETWEEN NEPAL AND CHINA

Video Consultation was held between the Foreign Ministries of Nepal and the People's Republic of China at the level of Joint Secretary-Director General on 3 June 2020. Nepali delegation was led by Mr. Kali Prasad Pokharel, Joint Secretary/Head of North East Asia Division. Chinese delegation was headed by Mr. Wu Jianghao, Director

General of the Department of Asian Affairs.

During the virtual meeting, Head of the North East Asia Division highlighted the friendly relationship existing between the two countries, COVID-19 response and cooperation, bilateral cooperation projects, progress on the reconstruction

projects, the celebration of the 65th Anniversary of diplomatic relations between Nepal and China, among others. Director General Mr. Wu shared various issues of mutual interest and concern, including cooperation on epidemic prevention and control.

B. REGIONAL AND MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS

PRESIDENT SENDS VIDEO MESSAGE TO THE GLOBAL VACCINE SUMMIT 2020

President Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari sent a video message to the virtual Global Vaccine Summit 2020 hosted by Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Mr. Boris Johnson, in association with the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) on 4 June 2020. The purpose of

the video conference was to garner support for vaccines.

The President, in her message, stressed the need for ensuring equitable access of vaccine to all and called upon the international community to come forward with renewed commitments for this noble cause. Highlighting

the achievements made by Nepal through the immunization programme, she expressed solidarity to all global initiatives for shared happiness and wellbeing. She also extended best wishes to the scientists involved in the development of vaccine against COVID-19.

NEPAL ENDORSES THE “WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE: WORLD LEADERS’ CALL TO ACTION ON COVID-19”

President Mrs. Bidhya Devi Bhandari endorsed “Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: World Leaders’ Call to Action on COVID-19” on 14 May 2020, joining the group of Head of States and Governments

endorsing the Call. The President’s endorsement reflected Nepal’s support to the campaign, recognizing the role of water, sanitation and hygiene in preventing the spread of COVID-19. The

endorsement called on the global leaders for the joint and coordinated efforts in making water, sanitation and hygiene available to everyone, eliminating inequalities and leaving no one behind.

VIDEO CONFERENCE OF SAARC LEADERS



Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli at the Video Conference of the SAARC Leaders (Front Centre), DPM and Minister of Defence Mr. Ishwar Pokhrel (Right), Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali (Left), 15 March 2020

Mr. K P Sharma Oli, Prime Minister of Nepal participated in the video conference organized by

the Leaders of the SAARC Member States on 15 March 2020 to collectively devise a regional strategy to contain

the COVID-19 pandemic in South Asia. Participating SAARC leaders shared views on the respective country's experience in handling the public health emergency of the COVID-19.

The discussion also featured the impact of COVID-19 in South Asia, sharing the best practices and collaborative approach to be adopted regionally to minimize the adverse impact of COVID-19 pandemic. The Leaders discussed long-term economic consequences of the pandemic in the region.

Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli shared several measures

adopted by Nepal and his personal engagement in overseeing the national efforts against COVID-19. He noted the importance of the collective wisdom of South Asian countries to devise a sound and effective strategy to combat the virus.

The Video Conference, hosted by the Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra

Modi, was attended by the President of Afghanistan Mr. Ashraf Ghani; President of the Maldives Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih; President of Sri Lanka Mr. Gotabaya Rajapaksa; Prime Minister of Bangladesh Ms. Sheikh Hasina; Prime Minister of Bhutan Dr. Lotay Tshering; Prime Minister of Nepal Mr. K P Sharma Oli; Minister of State for Health of Pakistan

Mr. Zafar Mirza; and Secretary General of SAARC Mr. Esala R. Weerakoon.

Following the video conference, a SAARC COVID-19 Emergency Fund was established in order to combat the pandemic in South Asia. All the SAARC Member States have pledged their contribution to the fund voluntarily.

PRIME MINISTER ISSUES BIMSTEC DAY MESSAGE

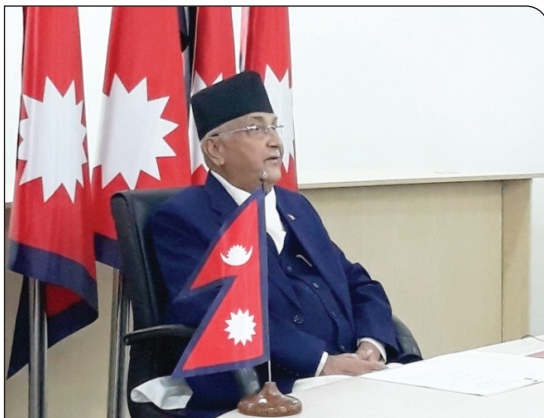
Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli extended warm greetings and best wishes to all the people and the Member States on the occasion of the 23rd BIMSTEC Day. Highlighting the potential of the BIMSTEC Region, the Prime Minister urged the Member States to work together to achieve economic growth, social progress,

sustainable development and prosperity. The Prime Minister called on the member states to stand united in order to build a better resilience while combating an invisible enemy, COVID-19, across the region.

Likewise, Foreign Minister Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, in a separate message, extended

greetings and best wishes to all the Member States on the occasion of the 23rd BIMSTEC Day. He expressed Nepal's commitment to work together with the Member States to enhance connectivity, development of green energy, increased intra-regional trade, investment, and tourism.

PRIME MINISTER ADDRESSES VIRTUAL SUMMIT OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT



Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli delivering the statement during the Virtual Summit of NAM on COVID-19, 4 May 2020

Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli addressed "the Virtual Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement on the

COVID-19" on 4 May 2020, held under the theme of "United against COVID-19".

Stressing that the human

health must be our topmost priority, the Prime Minister shared with the NAM Member States the measures

taken by the Government of Nepal to respond to the crisis. He also underlined the unprecedented economic impact on remittances and tourism and the hardship that people face, in particular the small enterprises, peasants and daily wage earners.

The Prime Minister highlighted Nepal's determination to face the challenge, and called for robust global response to such

a crisis of large proportion, including the indispensable role of the United Nations and its specialized agency, World Health Organization.

The Prime Minister further underlined the importance of the NAM to support multilateralism and global cooperation to defeat COVID-19; consolidate the voice of the poorest and most vulnerable; scale up South-South Cooperation by way of

sharing experience, transfer of technology, medical logistics and equipment; and coordinate and advocate for a robust recovery package from the international community.

The Prime Minister welcomed the proposal to establish the NAM Task Force to work out a database that would accommodate the requirements of NAM Member States.

PRIME MINISTER ADDRESSES GLOBAL SUMMIT ON COVID-19 AND THE WORLD OF WORK

Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli addressed the virtual "Global Summit on COVID-19 and the World of Work: Building a Better Future of Work" convened by the International Labour Organization (ILO) on 8 July 2020.

While stressing on the protection of the most vulnerable migrant workers, both in informal sectors formal sectors, the Prime Minister stated that health care is vital to minimize the

impact of COVID-19 and that the impact of COVID 19 is unevenly high in the LDCs and low-income countries.

The Prime Minister informed about the efforts made by the Government of Nepal to the prevention and mitigation of the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. During his address, the Prime Minister also highlighted the immediate and medium-term measures taken for the protection of workers in formal and informal sectors

and creation of sustainable employment opportunities..

The Global summit brought together over 50 Heads of State and Government, prominent leaders of employers' organizations and trade unions as well as heads of international organizations to discuss the impact of COVID-19 in employment and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of workers around the world.

PRIME MINISTER PARTICIPATES IN HIGH-LEVEL EVENT ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE ERA OF COVID-19 AND BEYOND

Prime Minister Mr. K P Sharma Oli addressed the "High-Level Event on Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond" held in New York on 28 May 2020 in a virtual format. The Prime Minister highlighted that the severest brunt of the pandemic is upon the developing countries,

especially the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS as these countries need to confront it with inadequate resources, limited social protection and under-developed health infrastructures.

The Prime Minister underscored the importance of avoiding the collective

amnesia and investing in the social sector with strong social security measures for a better future. He further expressed Nepal's commitment to forge partnership and hold social dialogue at the national level to show greater solidarity to address the situation globally.

FOREIGN MINISTER ADDRESSES 43RD SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali led Nepali delegation to the 43rd Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva and addressed the High-level Segment of the Council on 25 February 2020.

The Foreign Minister mentioned, in his statement, that the world is commemorating the year 2020 as the year of 100 years of Multilateralism; 75th Anniversary of the United Nations; and 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as they all valued global determination to maintaining world peace, protecting human rights and fundamental freedom, and embracing socio-economic progress.

In his address, the Foreign Minister highlighted the provisions enshrined in the Constitution of Nepal, which includes the commitment



Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali (First Right) and the Members of the Nepali Delegation at the 43rd Session of UN Human Rights Council, Geneva, 25 February 2020

of the state for the rights of child and rights of persons with disabilities. The Foreign Minister also requested for valuable support of the UN member states to Nepal's candidature for the membership of the Human Rights Council for the second term 2021 to 2023.

On the sidelines, the Foreign

Minister held bilateral meetings with Special Representative for Human Rights of the European Union, Mr. Eamon Gilmore; DPM and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland Mr. Simon Coveney; Foreign Minister of Latvia Mr. Edgars Rinkevics; and UN High Commissioner of Human Rights Ms. Michelle Blachelet.

FOREIGN MINISTER PARTICIPATES IN VIRTUAL MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON DIGITAL RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali addressed the virtual Ministerial Conference on the Digital Response to COVID-19 organized by Estonia and Singapore, the Co-chairs of the Group of Friends on e-Governance and Cyber-security, on 1 July 2020. The Conference discussed how countries can emerge better-equipped in the face of the COVID-19 crisis by using innovative digital solutions.

The Foreign Minister shared Nepal's vision of

transforming the country into a knowledge-based society as well as the ongoing application of online resources in prevention and control of the pandemic. Stating that LDCs have been the hardest-hit by the digital divide, misinformation and cyber-attacks, he called for capacity strengthening of these countries. He also expressed the commitment of Nepal to work with the international community to ensure secure, sustainable and equitable digital accessibility.

VIDEO CONFERENCE OF SAARC HEALTH MINISTERS AND HEALTH OFFICIALS



State Minister for Health Mr. Nabaraj Raut (Second from Left) with the Nepali delegation at the SAARC Health Ministers' Video Conference, 23 April 2020

Nepal participated in the SAARC Health Ministers' Video Conference held on 23 April 2020. Hosted by Pakistan, the SAARC Health Ministers' conference discussed the country perspectives and measures

adopted by the member states to mitigate impacts of Covid-19. State Minister for Health Mr. Nabaraj Raut shared the perspectives and measures taken by the Government of Nepal in response to COVID-19. The

Health Ministers reiterated the need of regional and international cooperation as well as the collaborative approach in combating the Covid-19 pandemic. The meeting was also attended by the senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Health and Population of Nepal.

Prior to the SAARC Health Ministerial Meeting, SAARC Health Officials had held a video conference on 26 March 2020 to discuss and share the country-experience on combating the Covid-19. During the conference, the SAARC health officials discussed about setting up of an Integrated Disease Surveillance Portal and creating a common research platform for the region.

HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Nepal participated in the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development held in the virtual format on 7-16 July 2020 under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. This year's theme was 'Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the

decade of action and delivery for sustainable development'. Nepal presented its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the SDGs during the event, on 13 July 2020.

Nepali delegation was led by Vice-Chairman of the National Planning Commission Prof. Dr. Pushpa

Raj Kadel. Vice-Chairman Mr. Kadel presented Nepal's achievements, good practices and challenges during the Forum and shared information about coordinated efforts of the Government of Nepal for the implementation of SDGs at all levels- local, provincial and federal.

REGIONAL VIRTUAL MEETING ON EVACUATION AND REPATRIATION OF MIGRANTS IN TIMES OF COVID-19

A five-member Nepali delegation led by Mr. Bharat Raj Paudyal, Joint Secretary and Head of the United Nations, International Organizations and International Law Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated in “the Regional Virtual Meeting on

Evacuation and Repatriation of Migrants in Times of COVID-19” organized by the Government of India in technical support of the International Labour Organization on 09 July 2020.

The meeting was participated by Bangladesh, India, Nepal

and Sri Lanka. Challenges faced by the participant countries in coordinating return operations of migrant workers along with the best practices and experiences during the planning and execution of repatriations were discussed during the meeting.

20TH BIMSTEC SOM & 3RD BPWC MEETINGS



Third Meeting of the BIMSTEC Permanent Working Committee (BPWC) and 20th Session of the BIMSTEC Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) were respectively held on 1-2 and 3 March 2020 in Colombo.

The meetings discussed on the BIMSTEC Charter, Template of the Memorandum of Understanding of the BIMSTEC Centres/

Entities, Rationalization of sectors of BIMSTEC Cooperation, among others.

Joint Secretary and Head of Regional Organization Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. Ram Prasad Subedi and Under Secretary Ms. Pramita Adhikari represented Nepal.

VIDEO CONFERENCE OF SAARC TRADE OFFICIALS

SAARC Trade Officials held a Video Conference on 8 April 2020 to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on trade and explore ways to facilitate intra-regional trade in South

Asian Countries.

The discussion focused on using digital technology to fulfill trade procedures such as issuing digital Certificate

of Origin, and facilitating for the seamless flow of essential commodities and medical supplies during the lockdown period.

NEPAL SUPPORTS UNSG'S APPEAL FOR GLOBAL CEASEFIRE

Nepal expressed its support to the "Appeal for Global Ceasefire" made by the United Nations' Secretary General Mr. António Guterres on 23 March 2020, amidst the

global crisis of COVID-19 pandemic. The appeal was for an immediate ceasefire in all corners of the globe to reinforce diplomatic action, help create conditions for the

delivery of lifesaving aid and bring hope to places that are among the most vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NEPAL RATIFIES UN TIP (PALERMO) PROTOCOL

Nepal ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children (also known as Trafficking Protocol), supplementing the United Nations Conventions against Transnational Organized

Crime, 2000 (also known as Palermo Protocol) on 2 March 2020. An Instrument of Ratification to this effect has been sent for deposit.

The Palermo Protocol was adopted on 15 November 2000 and entered into force

on 25 December 2003. Nepal signed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime on 12 December 2002, and ratified it on 23 December 2011.

ELECTION OF NEPAL TO THE CHAIR OF THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL COMMITTEE OF THE 75TH UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations, Mr. Amrit Bahadur Rai has been unanimously elected to the Chair of the Economic and Financial Committee, also known as the Second Committee, of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) for its 75th Session in New York.

The Committee is one of

the six main committees of the UNGA. It deals with global financial and economic matters such as sustainable development, eradication of poverty, trade, financing for development, globalization, international financial systems, ICTs for development, climate change, disaster as well as issues facing the countries like LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

APPOINTMENT OF NEPALI MAJOR GENERAL AS THE HEAD OF MISSION AND FORCE COMMANDER OF UNDOF

The Secretary General of the United Nations Mr. António Guterres appointed Major General Mr. Ishwar Hamal of Nepal Army as the Head of Mission and Commander of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) on 24 February 2020.

C. POLICY RELATED AFFAIRS

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN OF THE MINISTRY

In coordination with the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared its Annual Action Plan incorporating the vision, annual programme and policies of the Government of Nepal for the fiscal year 2020-2021 (2077/78). Some

important activities in the action plan include rescue of Nepali nationals abroad impacted by COVID-19 pandemic, documentation of foreign policy, system installation and issuance of e-passports, and online consular services, among others.

POSTPONEMENT OF THE SAGARMATHA SAMBAAD

Government of Nepal decided to postpone the first episode of the Sagarmatha Sambaad 2020 scheduled for 2-4 April 2020 on the theme of “Climate Change, Mountains and

the Future of Humanity” due to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. The event will be held on another convenient date when the global pandemic comes under control.

BRAIN GAIN CENTRE

The Brain Gain Center (BGC), a Unit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, established with a view to recognizing and fostering contribution of diaspora Nepalis for Nepal’s social and economic progress, remained active to attract, register and engage the diaspora Nepali experts at the BGC portal.

As a web-based platform for expatriate Nepali intellectuals, experts, and

professionals to get connected with the relevant government agencies of Nepal in the development efforts of Nepal, the BGC unit has been coordinating efforts to realize the objective.

As of 15 July 2020, more than 930 Nepali diaspora experts have registered themselves in the portal. During the review period, BGC organized four webinars on various themes.

COVID-19 IMPACT STUDIES

In coordination with International Relations Committee of Parliament and the National Planning Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducted two studies on impacts of COVID-19 on Nepali economy and prioritized sectors

needing particular attention, including health, tourism, foreign employment, trade, investment and, particularly, the possible scenario of returnee migrants. The reports of the studies were shared with the relevant government agencies.

D. PROTOCOL MATTERS

APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADOR TO CHINA

Mr. Mahendra Bahadur Pandey, former Foreign Minister, was appointed on 01 March 2020 as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Nepal to the People's Republic of China (PRC), with concurrent accreditation to Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Mongolia.

CREDENTIAL CEREMONY



President Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari receiving credentials from Mr. Vinay Mohan Kwatra, Ambassador of the Republic of India to Nepal, 4 December 2019

The following Residential and Non-residential Ambassadors presented their letters of Credence to President Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari at Sheetal Niwas on 04 December 2019.

- I. Mr. Vinay Mohan Kwatra, Residential Ambassador of the Republic of India to Nepal.
- II. Mr. Thomas Selby Pillay, Ambassador of Republic of Seychelles to Nepal with residence in New Delhi.
- III. Mr. Federico Salas Lofte, Ambassador of Mexico to Nepal with residence in New Delhi.

ARRIVAL OF NEW SAARC SECRETARY GENERAL

The newly appointed Secretary General of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Mr. Esala Ruwan Weerakoon



President Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari receiving credentials from Mr. Thomas Selby Pillay, Ambassador of Republic of Seychelles to Nepal (Non-Residential), 4 December 2019

arrived in Nepal to assume his responsibility on 1 March 2020. Mr. Weerakoon succeeded Mr. Amjad Hussian B. Sial who completed his tenure as the Secretary General and left Nepal on 29 February 2020.

Earlier, Foreign Secretary Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi hosted a luncheon to bid farewell to the outgoing SAARC Secretary General Mr. Amjad Hussain B. Sial on 20 February 2020..



President Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari receiving credentials from Mr. Federico Salas Lofte, Ambassador of Mexico to Nepal (Non-Residential) 4 December 2019

E. SERVICE DELIVERY

RESCUE AND REPATRIATION OF NEPALI NATIONALS

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs remained in constant coordination with High-level Coordination Committee for the Prevention and Control of COVID-19 and the COVID Crisis Management Centre (CCMC). The Ministry facilitated the entry of foreign diplomats and other foreign nationals engaged in various projects and transport of essential medical supplies. .

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinated

the rescue and repatriation of Nepalis from abroad who were in distress due to the adverse situation created by COVID-19 pandemic.

Around 91,000 Nepalis were registered with the Nepali missions for repatriation and more than 28,000 Nepalis were repatriated until mid-July 2020. Among them, about 23,000 Nepalis returned from the major foreign employment destinations - the GCC countries and Malaysia.

COORDINATION IN REPATRIATION OF FOREIGN DIPLOMATS AND NATIONALS

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a focal point, coordinated with Ministry of Home Affairs and related agencies to transport foreign nationals stranded in various parts of Nepal to Kathmandu for repatriation to their respective home countries. The Ministry also

facilitated Kathmandu-based and accredited foreign missions in granting flight clearances and flight permits to chartered passengers and cargo flights in coordination with Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation.

LAUNCHING OF COVID-19 SOFTWARE

Considering the urgent need to assist Nepali citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs developed COVID-19 software to be used by Nepali missions abroad for collecting and sharing necessary information virtually among relevant agencies. The information so collected has been very useful in charting out rescue and

repatriation plans. COVID-19 Health Protocol was also prepared and observed in line with the guidelines and recommendations of the Ministry of Health and Population, and the World Health Organization to ensure a safe and healthy work environment at the Ministry and, agencies and Missions under it.

NON-RESIDENT NEPALI (NRN) RELATED SERVICES

S. N.	Services (Only from the Ministry)	Number
1	Issuance of NRN Cards	26
2	Processing of Land Purchase Approval to NRN	3

PASSPORT SERVICES

S. N.	Activities	Number	Remarks
1	Applications received	79,046	Excluding Live Enrollment Counters
2	Passports issued	77,851	From Districts, Missions and the Department

3	Total Number of passports issued (According to document type)	75,905	Ordinary
		188	Diplomatic
		311	Official
		1,430	Gratis
		17	Travel Document (TD)
		77,851	Total
4	Emails responded including social networks	2,649	
5	Grievance handled	3,034	
6	Lost passport registered in the Interpol	4,511	
7	Feedback Forms Collected	1,068	
8	Revenue collected (From the Department only)	32,71,14,049/-	

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 India education No Objection Certificate	333
3	Recommendation for Indian pension	2
4	Recommendation for issuing Nepali driving license	121
5	Recommendation to Indian Embassy for character verification	85
6	Recommendation for procurement of chemicals & explosives	28
7	Recommendation to Indian Embassy for issuing vehicle permit	7
8	Correspondence regarding the citizenship renouncement	15
9	Correspondence regarding Power of Attorney	68
10	Correspondence regarding authenticity of documents issued by the Government of Nepal	5
11	POA, VOR, H-Form Request (Malaysia), and correspondence to the District Administration Office for compensation to Nepali citizens	130
12	Correspondence concerning search and rescue of Nepali nationals	107
13	Correspondence with regards to repatriation of dead body of Nepali nationals abroad	39
14	Number of draft received for compensation from Malaysia	0
15	Handover of compensation amount from Malaysia to the concerned family	69
16	Correspondence to the government agencies in Nepal	310
B	Visa and Exemption	
1	Issuance of diplomatic/ official/gratis visa	563
2	Issuance of diplomatic/ official ID Card	135
3	Issuance of SAARC visa stickers	12
4	Number of recommendation for exemption	737
5	Number of visa recommendation to the foreign missions on GON's nominations	368
C	Attestation	
1	Number of attested documents	38,021
Total		41,159

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
Ms. Sabita Nakarmi, Section Officer
Mr. Til Bahadur Sunar, Section Officer

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

This Bulletin is also available at <https://www.mofa.gov.np/>