Nepal Council of World Affairs



Annual Journal 2010-2011

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Published by

The Nepal Council of World Affairs NCWA Building, Harihar Bhawan

Pulchowk, Lalitpur

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Website: www.ncwa.org.np

May 2011

Price: Rs. 200.00 NC in Nepal

: Rs 150.00 IC in India

: US\$ 8.00 in SAARC region : US\$ 10.00 in others countries

Computer setting

Yuba Raj Adhikari (NCWA) 9841 111200

Cover Design

Jyoti Khatiwada 9841 612726

Printed in Nepal at

Heidel Press Pvt. Ltd. Dillibazar, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel.: 977-1- 4439812, 2002346

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-Editorial Board

Foreign Policy of Nepal and NCWA

- Madhav Kumar Nepal*

It is a pleasure for me to be invited to speak at a program organized to mark the 63rd anniversary of the establishment of Nepal Council of World Affairs this evening. I also recall my participation and fruitful interaction during the anniversary function last year. The fact that Council has had a fairly long existence as a public forum for undertaking and promoting debates, discussion and interactions on topical issues of national and global interests in the realm of foreign affairs deserves recognition and appreciation. Men of letters, thinkers and policy makers have been associated with this organization in its formative years and beyond. I have no doubt that informed debates and discussion of all kind on various aspects of our external relations and foreign policy issues would provide valuable inputs to the Government in formulating policies, programmes and in conducting external relations and diplomacy more efficiently and with optimum results. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued engagement and contributions in this important field.

The interim Constitution of Nepal lays down the broad parameters within which we conduct our foreign relations. And these include the principles of the United Nations Charter, nonalignment, the principles of Panchasheel, international law, and the norms of world peace. 'Friendship with all; enmity towards none', and 'live with dignity and let live' are two fundamental perspectives which provide us a sustained basis for conducting a harmonious and mutually cooperative relationship with all.

Foreign policy of any country truly represents its core national interests and is rightly taken as a judicious mix of continuity and change. As a country with a long and unbroken history of political independence and national sovereignty, Nepal's foreign policy largely reflects continuum and encompasses a fine blend of principle and pragmatism with a view to protecting and promoting our national interests in the changed political contest in an increasingly competitive

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^{*} Mr. Nepal is Former Prime Minister of Nepal. He addressed the Council on June 28, 2010

and globalizing world of the twenty-first century.

The international milieu in which we encounter the rest of the world at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels in conducting our foreign relations has changed much in the recent decades. And we all know that globalization has further accelerated this process. Interdependence has been the hallmark of today's international relations. Unilateralism has no takers as a pragmatic policy. Sates continue to be the prime actors but not sole determinants of the course and direction of international relations today. Irreversible as the process of globalization is, we have to keep adapting ourselves to this new global reality and make all efforts to make globalization beneficial to countries like ours. In an intertwining world of 'sovereign' states, we can neither conceive of a state of complete anarchy nor can we afford to live in a mythical state of 'splendid isolation'. Interdependence is, indeed, the key word. It is the true spirit of international cooperation which tightens the bond of interdependence among states and makes it a distinguishing feature of international relations in the early twenty-first century.

Nepal has come a long way since shaking off its isolationist policy six decades ago. We joined the United Nations as early as 1955 and started contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security through participation in the UN peacekeeping operations almost immediately after that. We are one of the 25 founding members of the Non-aligned movement which now brings into its fold 118 countries and 17 observers from across the world. We are in the WTO, a global institution dedicated to the promotion of a fair, non-discriminatory, and rule-based system of international trade. We have expanded our bilateral relations by establishing diplomatic ties with more and more countries around the world. As a result, we now have diplomatic relations established with 131 countries from all continents. And, the process continues. We are equally concerned about global issues with overarching implications for all such as climate change, environmental degradation, food security, energy crisis, HIV/AIDS, transnational crimes, human rights, etc.

Now let me briefly touch upon the three levels of our external relations that, as I have mentioned above, set the international milieu for us.

i. Bilateral level: Our bilateral relations have been developing and expanding gradually over the years. At the forefront of our relationship are our immediate neighbors India and China-with whom we have very close and cordial relationship based on mutual respect, goodwill, and cooperation. Last year, I had the opportunity to pay official visit s to India in August 2009 and China in December 2009 and hold fruitful interactions on our bilateral relations that are base on high degrees of mutual co-operation. With all other countries in the neighborhood and beyond, Nepal maintains very friendly and cooperative relationships. We also have close ties with our bilateral donors and development partners.

- ii. Regional level: Next to our bilateral-level relations comes our commitment to regional cooperation the most salient expression of which is found in our hosting the headquarters of SAARC in Kathmandu and our continued engagement with all SAARC programs and activities in having organized Sixteen summits in its quarter of a century long existence, plays a significant role in promoting mutual trust and confidence amongst the leaders of South Asia leading ultimately towards an atmosphere conducive to more substantive cooperation and economic integration of the South Asian region. It may be recalled that the focus of the Sixteenth SAARC Summit held in Thimphu in April this year was on climate change, a problem which has emerged as a matter of overriding concern for the countries of South Asia. We are also a member of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) which has identified more than a dozen areas of cooperation in various fields of common interests ranging from agriculture to climate change and the like. We are also keenly interested in the activities of several other regional groupings, such as the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).
- iii.Multilateral Level: at the multilateral level, the United Nations is the most important international organization dedicated to the cause of global peace, security and development. The Charter of the United Nations embodies certain universal values and principles governing international relations in modern times. While giving cognizance to sovereign equality of all Member States and non-interference as cardinal principles of international relations, the UN Charter outlaws the use of force and lays stress on the peaceful settlement of all disputes. Nepal has an abiding faith in the principles enshrined in the UN Charter and continues to actively engage in the activities of the United Nations. Our long and continued participation in the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission around the world has helped to build a very positive image of Nepal in the UN and the international community. Today, we are the fifth largest troop contributing country and the role played by our

solders in various UN peacekeeping missions around the world has earned a wide acclaim. Apart from peacekeeping, Nepal's effective participation in the UN General Assembly last year has succeeded in bringing positive international recognition to the roles played by Nepal in the field of climate change and improvements in the health sector.

As one of the founder member of the Non-aligned Movement, Nepal continues to believe in the contemporary relevance of the movement even in the post-Cold War international environment. Its growing membership clearly suggests that Movement is active and it can serve the interests of its members.

We are now carrying the onerous responsibility of LDC Chairmanship as well, both in the UN and outside. The forthcoming fourth LDC Conference, which is scheduled for the first half of 2011 in Turkey, will be held under Nepal's Chairmanship. This is both a challenge and an opportunity for Nepal to project and promote its international image in a positive light and draw the attention of the international community to the problems and challenges faced by the LDCs.

In recent years, the scope of international relations has widened has widened significantly as it also includes the issues of climate change, environmental degradation, HIV/AIDS, transnational crimes, poverty, protection and promotion of human rights, etc. the issue of climate change has certainly topped the international agenda today, but the concerns of the least developed and developing countries like Nepal have yet to find proper recognition and concomitant international commitment to make available adequate resource and technological knowhow to enable them to better adapt themselves to the new situation accordingly.

The issue of global warming poses a serious threat to our fragile national ecosystem and the livelihoods of our people. We have highlighted this in the international forums including the UN Climate Conference held in Copenhagen in last year. Bu holding one of our Cabinet meetings at the Everest Base Camp in Kalapatthar (5,542m) and issuing the Sagarmatha Declaration on Climate Change just before the Copenhagen Summit in December 2009, we have sensitized this issue both nationally and internationally. Our high-level participation in the Copenhagen Summit in December 2009 together with the hosting of events such as the Summiteers' Summit in Copenhagen during the Conference have been able to highlight the issue of climate change and its impacts much more effectively. We are also planning to host a ministerial-level conference of

mountainous developing countries in Kathmandu in September this year with a view to assessing the impacts of global warming and identifying the ways and means to deal with them in an urgent and effective manner.

If these are some of the challenges that lie ahead of us, it is the quality and competence of our diplomatic machinery that need to be properly motivated, strengthened and geared towards the goal of meeting these challenges.

In recent years, we have felt the need for expanding our diplomatic presence in countries and continents where Nepali expatriate communities are growing and prospects for mutually beneficial relations and cooperation are clearly discernible. Protecting the interests and welfare of Nepalese workers abroad and providing all kinds of consular service to them have emerged as a new and very important dimension of our diplomatic mission's work today. Given the increasing inflow of remittance and its crucial role in fighting poverty and uplifting general well-being of the common people of Nepal, we have to do our best to facilitate this process. Manpower agencies which are in the business of supplying Nepalese workers abroad need to be equally scrupulous and accountable in handling them and ensuring contractual obligations. This, I am sure, would certainly help to significantly reduce the plights of the Nepalese workers abroad. We have recognized the important role the NRNs can play in Nepal's socio-economic development through partnerships and investment. An act has already been enacted to this effect and the issuance of ID card through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and our diplomatic missions abroad has also begun.

Economic diplomacy has been at the forefront of our Missions' activities abroad. Promoting trade and tourism and inviting foreign investments and technology transfer are our main priorities. Since the last few years, the Government has started allocating some budgetary resources to the Nepalese diplomatic mission abroad for undertaking promotional activities related to economic diplomacy.

It is important that our diplomatic missions are mad more resourceful and better equipped to undertake these responsibilities more effectively. With the instrumental needs identified and put in place, we also need to create a conductive political and policy framework to enable the institutions to start delivering results. In the changed international context, reinforcing and further strengthening the institutional base of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a specialized agency to deal with matters related to the effective execution of

Nepal's foreign policy and diplomacy will be given due priority.

Foreign policy is rightly considered to be an extension of the domestic policy of a State in our contemporary world. Therefore, when domestic policy falters, foreign policy and diplomacy naturally get affected by it. The link between the two is so close that it is almost impossible to segregate and keep them apart. In our case, unfortunately, the failure to carry forward the peace process to a positive conclusion largely because of the intransigence and lack of political will on the part of a section of our political forces has led to unnecessary prolongation of the peace process, and has delayed the drafting of the new constitution. In our view, this is a betrayal of the people's mandate at home, and also a cause of disappointment to our development partners and well-wishers abroad.

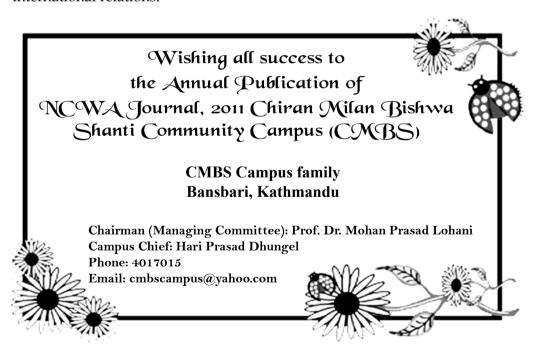
As I said before, the people of Nepal charted a new political course in 1951 by ending the century-old Rana autocracy. The democracy that followed the political change was, however, short-lived and we joined together to launch the people's movement to restore parliamentary democracy in 1990. The same spirit of unison and cohesion on the part of the political parties marked the people's movement of 2006 that was historic in the sense that in inaugurated a radical systemic change with a republican political order making the people fully sovereign to decide their own destiny. This unique achievement along with Comprehensive Peace Accord, promulgation of the Interim Constitution and successful conclusion of the Constituent Assembly elections have been watershed events in Nepal's political history. While such solid political accomplishments of our people have truly enhanced the prestige of our country in the international arena, they also eloquently reflect the extent of the success a country can achieve in the context of the unity of purpose and broad agreement on the part of political parties. We should never lose sight of the fact that the people of Nepal have aspired for a rapid social and economic transformation in an institutionalized political setting of pluralistic democratic framework. It is, therefore, essential that all political forces that have served as co-partners in the historic movement, should eschew petty partisan interests to work for the betterment of the country and end the prevailing state of political transition before long.

As Prime Minister, I have all along laid stress on political consensus in resolving all outstanding national issues in a democratic sprit of dialogue, understanding and accommodation. My entire political life is an open book and I believe in pragmatism and compromise for promoting enduring peace, unity and stability

and for accelerating rapid national development. I have always tried to put the nation first, before everything else. I would like to stress on a consensus among the major political party leaders to ensure speedy positive conclusion of the peace process and timely drafting of the new democratic constitution of Nepal. Therefore, I call upon all the political leaders to be honest and accountable to the people and rise to the historic occasion of transforming our motherland into a modern, just, peaceful, and prosperous New Nepal.

We are proud inheritors of the legacy of independence and self-judgment even during the difficult periods of our history. Let us not allow history any chance to be unkind to us in the future; nor should we let our present undermine our own competence and capabilities in resolving national problems by ourselves as responsible leaders of this great nation. Time is still on our side, and we can still make history!

With these concluding words, I would like to extend my best wishes to the Council for a bright and more productive future. I have every hope that it will transform into a leading and lively think-tank dedicated to the study and research of all topical issues and matters pertaining to our foreign policy and international relations.



On the occasion

the 64th Anniversary of the Nepal Council of World Affairs We offer our heartiest felicitations and best wishes for all success



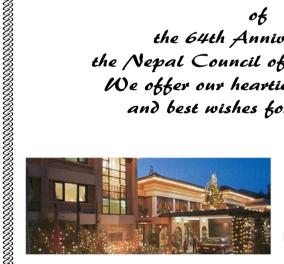
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Foreign Policy of Nepal

- Ms Sujata Koirala*

The Nepal Council of World Affairs is a non-governmental and non-profit making organization dedicated to study and deliberations on matters pertaining to foreign policy and international relations since its inception. Leading public figures, experts, intellectuals, academics and professionals have intimately been associated with this organization and have over the years contributed a lot in providing valuable feedback in the formulation and execution of Nepal's foreign policy.

Nepal seeks to cultivate mutually beneficial relations with all countries of the world. Promotion of multi-dimensional relation with immediate neighbours, India and China, has always constituted a basic cornerstone of our foreign policy. This has become all the more important when these two countries have emerged as global economic powerhouse with impressive rates of growth. The basic postulates of our foreign policy are based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, non-alignment and Panchasheel, international laws and the norms of world peace. As the fifth largest troop contributing country to UN peacekeeping operations, Nepal has accorded highest priority in maintaining of peace and security in various parts of the world.

Nepal has undergone profound changes in its political landscape in the last four years. Taking the ongoing peace process to its logical conclusion and drafting of a new constitution are crucial to institutionalize the marvelous political gains made by our people. In the changed political context, social and economic transformation of the country assumes top priority considering people's rising aspirations to improve the quality of life and sustain political achievements on an enduring basis.

Ms. Koirala is Former Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Nepal. She delivered the speech on the 63rd Anniversary of NCWA, on June 28, 2010.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has given priority in promoting economic diplomacy in recent years. The establishment of new missions and reorganization of the Ministry and missions have been made to revitalize and re-orient foreign policy towards economic diplomacy. Aid, trade, investment, tourism and labour have become major components of our economic diplomacy and a high-level monitoring committee headed by the Foreign Minister is in place to activate economic diplomacy in our national interest. The non-Resident Nepalese community with its growing international network has emerged as an indispensable factor in our resolve to further consolidate economic diplomacy for rapid social and economic transformation.

I am reminded to the important role played by senior statesman and my august father late Girija Prasad Koirala in according due importance to the development of professionalism in Nepal's Foreign Service. As the second elected Prime Minister in Nepal's history and holding the portfolio of foreign affairs for a long time, he stressed the need for establishing a separate foreign service and for greater involvement of career diplomats in ambassadorial assignments in tune with international practice. He was also instrumental in establishing the Institute of Foreign Affairs to be developed as an active think-tank dedicated to the study and research on relevant aspects of foreign affairs and diplomacy. I am happy to note that foreign service has become more inclusive and gender-friendly in recent times and increasing number of career people are heading our diplomatic missions with dedication and efficiency.

Nepal is the current chair of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) Group. We have better opportunities in pursuing a new and enhanced development agenda for the benefit of the LDCs particularly in light of the forthcoming conference in Turkey next year. We should focus our attention in setting LDC's common agenda while furthering Nepal's agenda. Nepal has been urging for more effective partnership between LDCs and their development partners in order to achieve development and poverty reduction goals set by the Millennium Summit.

Problems associated with climate change are a matter of great concern to us. Nepal brought the issues of fragile Himalayan ecosystem to the global attention during the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference last year. We have made commitments to expand protected areas from current 20% to 25% and increase forest cover age up to 40% of the total land in the country. The agenda for the Copenhagen Summit was set by our decision to hold the historic meeting of

the Council of Ministers at Kalapatthar, near the base camp of Mt. Everest, and issue an Everest Declaration stressing critical importance of saving Himalays that have been the source of life for a billion people in the region.

Nepal believes in general and completes disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction including biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological weapons in a time bound manner. As a party to relevant treaty and convention, Nepal has been persistently advocating promotion of disarmament and welcomes any development on disarmament (conventional and nuclear) both at bilateral and multilateral levels.

Nepal has been a party to a large number of conventions/protocols including some core international human rights instruments. The interim Constitution of Nepal has reaffirmed Nepal's commitment to human rights by guaranteeing fundamental political, social, cultural and economic rights to all citizens.

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Nepal - Sri Lanka Relations

Thosapala Hewage*

Relationship between Nepal and Sri Lanka is centuries old and is said to have started from Rama-Sita period. Ramayana, an epic of Hindus mentions early period of our relationship.

Originally, the relationship between Nepal and Sri Lanka was based on Buddhism. According to Mahavansa Lord Buddha had visited Sri Lanka three times; to Mahiyanganain 580 BC, to Nagadeepa in 583 BC and to Kelaniya in 590 BC. This shows that the relations between people of Nepal and Sri Lanka continue from the time of Lord Buddha. Bhikku Mahinda and Prince Sangamitta the son and the daughter of Emperor Ashoka visited Sri Lanka to propagate Buddhism.

People of Sri Lanka consider Nepal as heaven as a very special place to visit as it is the birthplace of Lord Gautama Buddha. This is a holy land for Buddhists and every Buddhist once in their lifetime wants to pay a visit to Lumbini, a sacred place of Buddhist worldwide. These pilgrims as cultural emissaries from a friendly country have significantly contributed in promoting and enriching cultural and religious ties between the two countries. The noble teachings of Lord Buddha have remained a constant source of inspiration to the Buddhist community in both Nepal and Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka's association with Lumbini Development Trust has led it to construct an attractive Pilgrim Rest in Lumbini further deepening and promoting cultural understanding between both countries. Lumbini Development Trust also has given a plot of land to construct a Monastery in a Sri Lankan way. The reconstruction of the work of this monastery is nearing completion.

Nepal and Sri Lanka established diplomatic relations in 1957. The high level visits started after the visit of late King Mahendra to Sri Lanka. After that, we have seen several state visits by the leaders of both countries. Sri Lanka and

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^{*} Speech by Thosapala Hewage, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Nepal, on January 21, 2011.

Nepal have always enjoyed a very close and warm relationship. With the opening of Resident Missions in Nepal and Colombo in 1993 and 1995 respectively, the relationship between the two countries has been expanded to many area of cooperation. The high level visits undertaken since 1957 by the leaders of the two countries have significantly contributed to the promotion of the links. Interaction between the two countries at bilateral and regional level under the umbrella of South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has further enhanced the relations. The SAARC priority is the promotion of regional welfare and prosperity through collective effort is beyond dispute. The SAARC has brought Nepal and Sri Lanka closer together to work in concert with other member countries for a common objective which is the wellbeing of the people in the region.

Hon. Rohitha Bogollagama, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka paid a visit to Nepal at the invitation of Hon. Foreign Minister of Nepal, His Excellency Sahana Pradhan. The visit coincides with the 50th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and Nepal, which fell on 1 July 2007. The high level visits further enhanced our close relations between the two countries.

His Excellency Mahinda Rajapakse the President of Sri Lanka visited Nepal at the invitation of the Rt. Hon. Ram Bara Yadev the President of Nepal from 02-03 March 2009. This visit was hailed as a landmark in Nepal as it was the first visit by a Head of State since Nepal's political transformation as a Republic form of government. During this visit two important agreements between two countries were signed. One was the Air Service Agreement which facilitates direct flights between Colombo – Kathmandu and vice versa. The other one on the establishment of a Joint Commission between two countries which covers Trade, Finance, Agriculture, Industry, Development of Infrastructure, Science & Technology, Environment, Tourism, Education and Health, Culture and Sports.

Sri Lankan President, His Excellency Mahinda Rajapakse continued his official visit to Nepal during 29th to 31st October, 2009 to complete his tour to Lumbini. During this visit he brought Lord Buddha's relic and placed them in stupa under construction at the Sri Lanka Monastery in Lumbini. The President also gifted NRs. 75,000/= (about US \$ 1,000) to Lumbini Development Trust for the overall development activities of Lumbini.

The two countries have already taken important steps in economic and tourism sectors with an aim to increase the volume of bilateral trade, investment and tourism. For instance, the Government of Sri Lanka and the Government of Nepal have signed an Air Service Agreement on 23rd January 2009. I think direct Air-Link will improve Nepal-Sri Lanka ties immensely and it will be a win-win situation for both countries.

Trade and Investment Relations

The trade between the two countries remains as minimal at present. Sri Lanka and Nepal had signed a Trade Agreement in 1979 and naturally it is now outdated with the fast changes that have taken place in global and regional trade and investment regimes. In 1999 Nepal's Foreign Minister Hon. Ram Sharan Mahat and Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Hon. Laxman Kadirgamar signed and agreement on removing double taxation in the area of Trade and Investment. The agreement has a provision that existing taxation laws would be applicable in both countries. As for the income tax, a person was required to pay it only in one country. This was expected to contribute to augment trade and investment.

Sri Lanka's trade with Nepal is marginal by any standard. Total export to Nepal in 2007 stood at US \$ 0.18 Mn and imports to the value of US \$ 0.07Mn in the same year. The trade turn over thus remain US \$0.25 Mn with favourable balance of tradeoff US \$ 0.11 Mn in 2007. Sri Lanka's exports comprise of black tea, green tea, betel nuts, crude palm oil, articles of plastics, rubber tiers for motor cars, buses, lorries etc. There is a vast potential market for Sri Lankan commodities such as fish, edible fruits, nuts, meat, sea foods, tobacco etc. which need to be taped. Sri Lanka imports silk fabrics, cotton shirts and grains (lentils).

The role of private sector is crucial in expanding and promoting trade and economic relations between the two countries. Business communities from both countries must come forward, exchange trade delegations and organize trade fairs at regular intervals for the benefit of both countries.

There are severe constraints to expand trade between the two countries basically due to high cost of transportation and trade treaty signed between India and Nepal which gives the two countries duty free access to each others markets. Further Nepal is a landlocked country and her imports are mainly from India, China and Bangladesh overland.

Tourism and Hospitality Services Relations

The scope for Nepal – Sri Lanka joint ventures in the service sector such as hotel and tourism industries is no doubt promising. Promoting tourism between Sri Lanka and Nepal is intertwined with the linking two capitals. Sri Lanka known as a pearl of Indian Ocean and Nepal, the land of Mount Everest, the highest peak in the world, could benefit mutually from cooperation in the tourism sector by linking Kathmandu and Colombo by air. What is important is to promote both the destinations jointly. In this connection the signing of the Air Service Agreement between Sri Lanka and Nepal can be treated as a landmark. Nepal has world heritage sites apart from Himalayan tranquility. Lumbini would be the foremost interest to Sri Lanka. Apart from the present projects to develop Lumbini area, the Lumbini Development Trust should work closely with Sri Lanka government to promote Lumbini not only as a religious place but also as a tourist destination.

Analyzing the Sri Lankan tourists who visited Nepal in 2007, the largest number, 45,000 were pilgrims. Majority of them had arrived via surface road and stayed only a half a day in Nepal as Indian tour operators took them back the same day after their visit to Lumbini. Nepal tourism authorities should take this factor into consideration when developing their future plans and provide suitable facilities for such tourists to stay longer in Nepal.

Cultural, Religious and Education Relations

Sri Lanka and Nepal people have lot to share with each other in terms of the rich cultural heritage that we continue to enjoy. Both countries have signed an Agreement on Cultural Cooperation in 1999 during the state visit of Her Excellency Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga. This Agreement covers art, culture and sports activities between Nepal and Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka has expressed its desire to patronize the study and research of History, Buddhist religion, culture, arts, and other related areas of study. Sri Lanka also showed interest in assisting the excavation of Kapilavastu and the development of Lumbini. Contents of this agreement also have been in co-operated into the Joint Commission which was signed on 03rd March, 2009 during Sri Lanka President's visit to Nepal.

Prior to establishment of Diplomatic relations, the ties between the two countries were guided by religious similarities. In 1940, Ven. Bhikku Amriananda of Nepal received his ordination in Sri Lanka by the late Ven. Vajranana Mahanayake Maha Thero of Vajraramaya, Colombo. In 1946, a goodwill Mission led by Ven. Naradha Maha Thero of Vajiraramaya visited Nepal and met the then Prime Minister Shumsere Jung Bahadur Rana.

One of the most important contributions made by Sri Lanka was to assist Nepal to reintroduce the Theravada Buddhist education. This had commenced since 1940s, as an initiative undertaken by the like-minded Buddhist scholars and philanthropists such as Venerable Narada, Piyadassi, Kotugoda Dhammaasa, Madihe Pannaseehe etc. in Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan monks have provided a great help in bringing the relics of Lord Buddha and a branch of Sri Maha Bodhiya and preserving them in holy places like Lumbini and Anandakuti Vihar.

Many young Nepali Buddhist novices had undergone training in Theravada Buddhism at various Centers of learning in Sri Lanka since 1930s. At the moment, around 200 Nepali monks hare being trained. Many have obtained their bachelors degrees and few had continued up to MA, M. Phil and Ph. D degrees. While Colombo Plan provided scholarships for some monks the government of Sri Lanka provided and still providing scholarships for those pursuing higher education. Monasteries of Sri Lanka have become free shelters for the Nepali monks during their study.

At present more than 200 students have been studying MBBS Degree in private Medical Colleges in Nepal. An agreement was signed between two countries on 20th April, 2007 on exempting visa fees for the students who visit each other's country for the purpose of study.

The Way forward

Healthy bilateral relations means paradigm shift in diplomacy and it needs to be in harmony with existing realities. This requires thinking pragmatically.

Based on the historical as well as pre-historic evidence, Sri Lanka can formulate a cohesive strategic alliance with Nepal. This invariably include concept of holistic human security. Such an alliance is pragmatic and way forward in bringing prosperity and sustainability to the people of South Asia. This will no

doubt ignite the hearts and minds of rest of South Asia. We in Kathmandu feel such an approach will be the best of gift for the people in both countries.

Further more there is ample scope for co-operation between Nepal and Sri Lanka both at bilateral and regional levels. These potentials have not been fully tapped. Bilateral co-operation appears to have moved forward a little in the areas of education, culture, agriculture and economy. As Nepal and Sri Lanka are both members of SAARC, BIMSTEC and Colombo Plan the possibility of co-operation at regional level is growing. As both countries are adopting liberal economic policies, stressing Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and encouraging foreign direct investment, the strong co-operation in these areas in the future will be possible.

There is tremendous goodwill in Sri Lanka towards Nepal and for its people. The same is reciprocated in Nepal too. Similarly century old relationship which buttressed though high level State visits from time to time by both countries remained close, cordial, friendly and warm ever since. I wish this friendship should further develop from strength to strength in the future.

Institutionalizing Regional Cooperation Through SAARC

- Prof. Dr. Mohan Lohani*

This is the Silver Jubilee Year of SAARC, and during the last 25 years of its establishment the Association has proved to be an effective and dynamic forum for debating and discussing all issues relating to regional cooperation. The initial years of SAARC (1985-1992) were the years of exploration and consolidation. From the symbolic phase, SAARC has already moved to a substantive phase characterized by important agreements such as South Asia Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA) and South Asia as a Free Trade Area (SAFTA).

The South Asian leaders have underscored, at each summit, the relevance and importance of SAARC which has already witnessed 16 Summits. What is remarkable about all these Summits is the firm political commitment of the leaders to redoubling collective efforts in order to accomplish the objectives enshrined in the SAARC Charter. SAARC has evolved over the years, and the Thimpu Summit last year emphasized the need to develop a 'Vision Statement'. In this context, the agreement to form a 'South Asia Forum' for the exchange of ideas on South Asia and its future development is extremely encouraging and a positive step forward to give concrete shape to the forward looking goals of the Association. It may be pertinent to quote the following paragraph of the Thimpu Declaration in which the composition and objectives of the Forum have been set forth:

"The Forum will consist of eminent personalities of diverse background including from all SAARC Member States. The Forum would provide inputs, based on a comprehensive understanding, for charting out the future course of SAARC in the medium and long run and recommend, if required, the necessary improvements in the existing mechanisms."

It has been further realized that the proposed South Asia Forum will enlist

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the support and cooperation of all stakeholders in the public and the private sector. The Forum is envisaged to seek and garner 'multiple inputs' not only from governments but also from all sections with a view to shaping the future course of the Association. Despite important milestones achieved by SAARC during the last 25 years, there is a general feeling among experts and members of civil society organizations that SAARC still lacks the vitality and vision to evolve into a South Asian Community. That the potential exists in the region for the generation of friendship, goodwill and trust through interactions between the peoples, which are essential to promoting community culture and fostering harmonious relations at the community level, cannot be disputed. Prime Minister Man Mohan Singh of India highlighted the significance and relevance of 'Connectivity' at all levels in the region at the 14th Summit held in New Delhi three years ago. The leaders at the 16th Summit reiterated the 'Centrality of Connectivity' to further deepen and consolidate regional integration.

It is heartening to note that recognizing the need to make collaborative efforts to achieve greater intra-regional connectivity, the Thimpu Summit endorsed the recommendation to declare 2010-2020 as the 'Decade of Intra-regional Connectivity in SAARC'. Moreover, the convening of an Inter-Governmental Meeting is expected to recommend specific measures to 'enhance multi-modal connectivity including air, sea and surface transport.'

Widespread poverty continues to be the most formidable developmental challenge for the region. It has been recognized that South Asia's poor constitute a huge and potential resource provided their basic needs relating to health, education, employment and shelter are met in order to enable them to form their own organization. Several studies undertaken on the SAARC initiative on poverty alleviation have urged the member states to overcome the challenge posed by poverty through the implementation of proper development strategies at macro and micro levels.

The Centrality of India in SAARC is by now an accepted reality. American President Obama during his recent visit to India described India as an important country which is not just a 'rising power' but a country which has already risen or emerged on the world stage. India can certainly play a crucial and vital role in further promoting regional cooperation within the SAARC framework. It is generally admitted that regional cooperation in South Asia cannot make progress in achieving 'its objectives unless serious efforts and made to promote mutual trust, understanding and goodwill by adopting such measures as fostering good neighborly relations, relieving tensions and building confidence. India's contribution will help SAARC evolve into a dynamic and

resilient regional association capable of coping with multiple challenges facing all countries, including SAARC member states, in the Second Decade of the Third Millennium. Needless to point out, the region with its abundant human and natural resources as well as its colossal market has the potential to emerge as an economic powerhouse, given the political will to intensify cooperation in the core areas affecting the lives of the people.



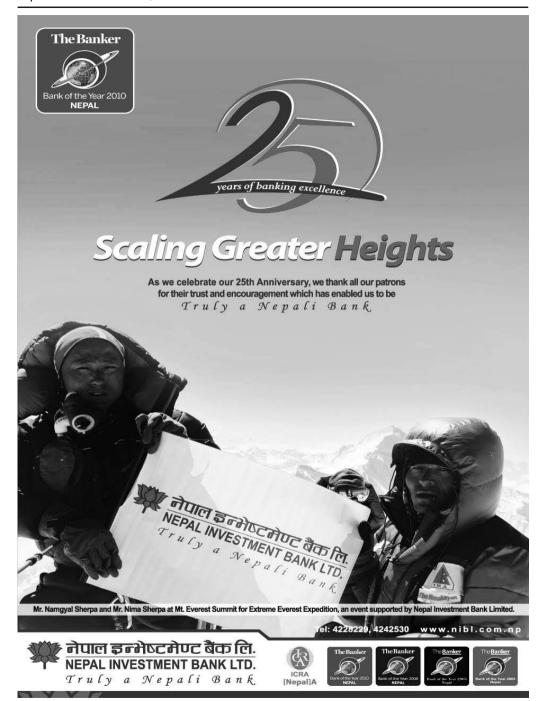


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Opportunities and Challenges for Promotion of Trade and Investment within SAARC Region

Rama Bashyal (Ph D)*

Regional Background

With an average of 6.0 percent economic growth rate over the years and US\$ 954 GDP per capita, the SAARC region has some unique features which make it distinct from other regions of the world. It is the largest regional grouping in terms of population i.e.1719.1 million (UNDP, 2010) and many other tremendous potentials for development. It comprises 3.4 percent of total land area and only 2.14 percent of world's income. In contrast, incomes in the high income countries of the world, where 15.8 percent of the world population live, account for 80.5 percent of world's income. There are also wide variations in the per capita GDP and population indicators within the countries. The GDP per capita of Maldives, Bhutan and Sri Lanka are higher than in other countries of the region ranging between US \$438 in Nepal to US\$ 4,135 in Maldives (UNDP, 2010).

The current paper reveals some possible opportunities and challenges for promotion and expansion of Nepal's trade and investment through regional cooperation within and beyond SAARC countries. As trade and investment are interrelated subjects, the paper also focuses on Nepal's international trade and foreign direct investment (FDI) in industries. In recent years, most South Asian nations are practicing more liberal and outward looking economic policies rather than inward looking and import substituting economic policies. The largest economy-India, which is transforming from regional economy to a global giant, is achieving nearly two-digit annual growth.

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The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (3.2% population growth rate with 366 US\$ per capita income), has got formal entry in the Association as the eighth member in the Fourteenth New Delhi Summit held on 2007. The entry of Afghanistan into the family of SAARC nations has added a new dimension to the ongoing discourse to SAARC and its future though some critiques questioned about the abnormal conditions prevailing in the country.

We have to learn many things from Bhutan (with 6.0 percent GDP growth rate). Tourism and hydropower projects contribute a lot in Bhutan's economic development. The global financial crisis and economic downturn also have had a limited impact on Bhutan as the economy is driven largely by construction of hydropower stations and power production export to India. Tourism has also provided the impetus for the development of the service sector, including hotels, restaurants, transportation and communication.

Pakistan was a very poor and predominantly agricultural country with 53 percent contribution to GDP when it gained independence in 1947. Today agriculture accounts for 19.3 percent of GDP and employs about 44 percent of the labour force. Pakistan is in a rank of medium human development position with per capita income of almost US\$991 and 6.5 percent economic growth rate (Economic Survey of Pakistan, 2006-2007). (http://www.wds.worldbank.org).

Case of Nepal

Nepal is the poorest country in Asia and even the poorest among South Asian nations with the lowest annual per capita income of 438 US\$. The population at present is 29.9 million with 1.7 percent annual growth rate. About 78 percent of the total population depend on agriculture; around 2.0 percent depend on manufacturing industry; and rest of the people in service and business. Agriculture sector contributes 38 percent of GDP while the service sector contributes 40 percent of GDP. The contribution of manufacturing sector is merely confined to 10 percent. Nepal's GDP growth rate remained below 5.0 percent during the last decade.

International Trade

The Economic Survey 2008/09 reveals that Nepal's volume of foreign trade is in declining trend as it grew by 24.2 percent in the first eight months of FY2008/09, while it grew by 37.1 percent during the same period of previous year. This is

the reason that Nepal has failed to get advantage from world's high economic growth rate. Nepal's trade deficit with SAARC countries can be understood when we look at the figure of export and import in the region which is Rs.45.01 and Rs.215.50 billion respectively for the FY2009/10 reaching the trade deficit of Rs.170.49 billion.

Opportunities

SAPTA/SAFTA

There are various stages of regional integration; and the first tier arrangement is the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangements (SAPTA) that was signed in 1997 and the operation of this trading arrangement heralded as the beginning of a new and significant process of regional cooperation. In this arrangement, trading partners grant partial non-discriminatory tariff reductions to each other. In order to move speedily towards SAARC Free Trading Arrangements (SAFTA) from SAPTA, another negotiation took place following the principles of eliminating trade barriers.

Transit Facilities

An agreement between India and Nepal was signed on 1997 to provide an additional route from Kakarvita, Panipokhari, Nepal to Banglabandha, Bangladesh via Phulbari, India. According to the Nepal-India Transit Treaty signed on 5 January 1999, India provides port facilities at Kolkata and Haldia for the country's trade with overseas countries. Besides, India has agreed in principle to provide transit facilities through its Khandala and Mumbai port. Latest Treaty between the two countries was signed in 2009.

Dry ports have also come into operation in Birgunj, Biratnagar and Bhairahawa to facilitate import and export transaction. Birgunj dry port is directly linked with broad gauge railway to Kolkata so that cargoes from Kolkata arrive directly to Birgunj dry port reducing the cost of transportation and delivery time of goods to Nepal. The construction of dry port in additional two places also is getting started, i.e. one Larcha of Sidhupalchowk district under the financial support of the government of the People's Republic of China. After completion of this port, the government of Nepal has planned to construct another such port in Rasuwa district.

A transit agreement has been signed between Nepal and Bangladesh to conduct third country trade through Bangladesh ports and its other territories. Accordingly, Nepal has been allowed to use six entry/exit and transhipment points for the movement of traffic-in transit for her bilateral trade with Bangladesh and the third country trade via Bangladesh. These are Khulna-Chalna Port, Chitagong Port, Biral, Banglabandh, Chilhat and Benapole Port.

Other Possible Opportunities

It would be benificial for the region, if the member states aim at exploring some other possible initiatives like cross boarder infrastructural linkages for the expansion of regional markets beyond the SAARC region. The two major projects, viz. (i) the reopening of trade route to China through Nathu la Pass in Sikkim (2006)**, and (ii) participation in Kunming initiatives are the cross boarder infrastructural linkages for the expansion of regional markets. The reopening of the traditional trade route between Tibet and Sikkim in India could bring a significant change in India's economic exchanges with South Asian countries. The Kunming initiative is another potential area, where India's north, east and Bangladesh could be integrated to trade with Myanmar and China. With the reopening of this road built by the US forces during the II World War, it connects Assam in India (61 km.) with Kunming (632 km in China) via Myanmar and other neighbouring countries.

Power exchange and cross boarder gas trading are some other possibilities for economic gains through regional cooperation. Several studies have concluded that South Asia could gain economic, social and technical benefits through utilising the natural resources like hydro power. Besides electricity, the other areas identified for regional cooperation in South Asia are: (i) trans-boundary natural gas trading, (ii) trade in refined petroleum products, and (iii) cooperation in oil and gas exploration.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Every single country in the contemporary world is seeking to maximise foreign direct investment (FDI) with a view to boost the economy at different levels. After the balance of payment crisis of mid-1980s, Nepal shifted towards liberal

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^{**} Memorandum between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Expanding Boarder Trade signed at Beijing.

economic and trade policy since early 1990s. A number of policy measures were adopted such as liberalisation of various sectors for foreign investment opening of other sectors of economy by allowing wider participation of the private sector. Hydropower, non-timber forest based high value products, development of education, health related facilities and information technologies are some new areas opened for foreign investment. The new Industrial and foreign investment policy-2010 provides various tax and non-tax incentives to the investors.

Foreign Investment and Technology Transfer Act 1992 and Industrial Enterprise Act 1992 are the two major legal provisions provided by the government of Nepal to deal with industrial sector. Besides, one-window policy for simplification of export procedures, special economic zones and availability of cheap labour and simplified visa provision for foreign investor are some of the attractions to the potential investors in Nepal.

As a result of these efforts and policy measures, some joint venture companies were established in Nepal particularly after the 1990s. Dabur Nepal Private Limited established as an agro-processing industry in Nepal. As an investment in hydropower, Bhote Koshi Power Company Private Limited was set up in 1996 among the Soaltee Group of Nepal, International Finance Corporation, a division of the World Bank and others. In the same way Dynasty Aviation and Air Dynasty Heli Services Private Limited were registered with the Nepali authorities in 1993 as FDI under tourism sector. Manipal college of Medical Sciences, based in Pokhara, Kaski district is another example of FDI in health services. Thus, agro-processing, hydropower, tourism, health services are the major areas of priorities in Nepal for foreign investment. But the investors are always worried about the bureaucratic delays and inefficiency in implementing the policies committed by the government. In total, 1,898 projects have been approved for foreign investment for more than 65 countries from beginning to July 2010.

Challenges

Nepal suffers from variety of problems regarding industrial development and foreign investment attraction. The success of SAFTA agreement is not been visualised as still the figure of intra-regional trade out of the total international trade of the region is very low (less than 5.0 percent).

Trade dependency with India and mounting trade deficit including market access barriers in the Indian market is the major problem. Such as imposition

of arbitrary duties and non-transparent application of duties by Indian customs and other essential facilities like quarantine inspection and food-testing facilities for Nepali exports to India at border crossings as non-tariff barriers. A study made by Nepal Trade Integration Strategy (NTIS) 2010 has remarked that the importance of non-tariff barriers is increasing relatively to tariff barriers for Nepali exports. For example, the European Union and Norway have banned the imports of Nepali honey since 2002/03 citing lack of monitoring programmes for pesticides and other residues in Nepal.

The productive capacity of industries as well as agricultural sector is very limited thereby importing varied magnitude of goods ranging from rice to heavy equipment, industrial raw materials, finished and manufacturing goods of high value addition. Moreover, Nepal's industries in recent days are dying mainly because of continued political deadlock, labour unrest and inadequate rules concerning labor relations, unskilled workforce and power shortages. Lack of transport infrastructures, poor implementation of trade facilitation measures and unavailability of direct access to seaports are still some of the major problems that discourage FDI in Nepal.

Conclusion

The Nepal Trade Integration Strategy has identified some export potentials as 12 goods and seven services sectors that Nepal should focus on for export promotion. The identified products include seven agro-products, viz. large cardamom, ginger, honey, lentils, tea, instant noodles and medical herbs. Regarding for services sectors-tourism, remittances, information technology, health services, education services, engineering services and hydro-electricity are export potentials identified for Nepal. Besides, the strategy has identified top 10 markets for the 17 goods and services mostly in outside South Asia and only 13 for South Asian countries. Hopefully, this strategy can help for improving country's trade diversification. Nepal is now in the political transition and is in a position of stillness for writing a new constitution after the political movement of 2006. The investment climate was totally disturbed during the period of 1996 to 2006. Settlement of the political problems and bringing back the peace and stability are the prime concerns for Nepal to move ahead in the path of economic progress.

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NCWA Election of 2010

Buddhi N. Shrestha*

Introduction

Nepal Council of World Affairs (NCWA) was established in the beginning as 'Nepal Council of Asian Affairs' on February 18, 1948. The Council was reorganized as 'Nepal Council of Asian and World Affairs' on October 25, 1954. On September 16, 1958, it was renamed NCWA to make consistency with the name of similar institutions of other countries', especially the neighbourly and friendly nations. The NCWA is a non-governmental, non-profit making and non-party organization with a commitment to foreign policy deliberations and other key issues of global concerns. It was established under the patronage of King Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah Dev. Similarly, King Mahendra, Birendra and Gyanendra had granted patronage to the council, as Heads of the State. The then King Birendra Bikram Shah Dev, addressing the council on July 26, 1973 had remarked 'World peace will be maintained through contacts and negotiation. An adventure to peace committed in genuine spirit has always been close to our heart and we welcome it as a step in the right direction.' Such address by the Head of the State is the dignity of the council.

As a matter of fact, the council has played a vital role since its establishment, to maintain and expand Nepal's relationship with other countries, especially the Asian countries. So, it was inaugurated in the name of Nepal Council of Asian Affairs' in 1948 at Nepal Bank Ltd Building. Most of the founder members were from the diplomatic and foreign affairs circle having good knowledge and interest in Nepal's foreign policy in the context of country's sovereignty and national integrity. Following position holders and members were elected unopposed in the first general Executive Committee:

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^{*} Mr. Shrestha is a Executive Member, NCWA

| Maj. Gen. Bijaya SJB Rana | President |
|---|-------------------------|
| Lt. Col. Khadga Narsing Rana | Vice-President |
| Sardar Narendramani Aacharya Dixit Honorary | Secretary and Treasurer |
| Lt. Col Saubhagya Jung Thapa | Executive Member |
| Sardar Gunjaman Singh | Executive Member |
| Sardar Manik Lal | Executive Member |
| Sardar Nagendraman Singh | Executive Member |
| Dr. Siddhimani Aacharya Dixit | Executive Member |
| Pandit Lekhanath Poudyal | Executive Member |
| Meer Subba Janak Raj Shrestha | Executive Member |
| Kumar Das Shrestha | Secretary |

First, General Assembly Meeting was held on Saturday, November 14, 1953. Thirty general members were present during the Assembly. In the course of time, three of the founders Executive Committee Members were elected as the President of Council. They were Narendramani Aacharya Dixit, Dr. Siddhimani Aacharya Dixit and Kumar Das Shrestha as Second, Third and Seventh Presidents. Other past presidents are Subarna SJB Rana, Soorya Prasad Upadhyay, Prof. Rishikesh Shah, Dr. Bhekh Bahadur Thapa, Prof. Surendra Bahadur Shrestha, Prof. Dr. Soorya Lal Amatya, Prof. Dr. Lok Raj Baral, Prof, Bashudev Chandra Malla, Prof. Dr. Mohan Prasad Lohani, Birendra B Shrestha, Sworga Man Singh Shrestha, Prof. Dr. Panna Kaji Amatya, Keshav Raj Jha and Prof. Pradeep K Khadka till this date. Tika Jung Thapa is the present President of the Council.

Membership and Management

Those who have obtained at least graduate degree can apply for the membership of NCWA with the recommendation of five council members. If the application is approved and accepted by the Executive Committee, they will be entitled to obtain the membership, after the payment of membership fees.

The NCWA has at present 211 life members and about 166 ordinary members representing broad sections of Nepalese professionals including academicians, diplomats, bureaucrats, researchers, journalists, lawyers, scientists, engineers, and businesses managers.

The NCWA is managed by an Executive Committee (EC) whose members are directly elected by majority votes of the members. They include President, Vice-president, Secretary General, Secretary, Treasurer and six Executive Members. Rules and regulations for the membership, daily administration and other activities are conducted by the EC. NCWA has its own building and the Secretariat to conduct day to day affairs.

The EC team is elected for a term of three years. Members of EC are eligible for two consecutive terms only. The EC meets at least twelve times a year. The President chairs the EC meeting and the Secretary General implements the decision of the meeting. The general body meeting of NCWA will be held once in a year and the quorum for the meeting is the presence of 33 percent of the total members. A special general meeting of NCWA could be called by the EC at the request of one fourth of total members.

Election scenario-2010

Last election of the council was held on December 11, 2010.

Election Committee

There is a provision in the Article 5.1 (C) of the NCWA constitution (statute) to hold election of EC in every three years. The 'Election Committee' was formed on November 11, 2010 and it consisted of Coordinator Mr. Chandra Kanta Gyawali and two Members Mr. Paban Raj Supari and Ms. Anjan Shakya.



Chandra Kanta Gyawali at the center

Election schedule

The election committee published the voters' list on November 28, 2010. Voters' list consisted of the names of life members and renewed ordinary members. There were 369 voters in total as mentioned in the published list. The committee published schedule of election on November 11, 2010 for President, Vice-president, Secretary General, Secretary, Treasurer and six Executive Committee Members. The schedule was as follows:

- Form distribution for candidates (September 2, 2010)
- Submission and registration of form (December 2, 11.00 AM to 2.00 PM)
- Withdrawal of candidacy (December 6, 11.00 am to 4.00 PM)
- Election date (December 11, 2010, voting from 11.00 AM to 3.00 PM)
- Result announcement (December 11, 2010)

Candidates

The candidates to the Executive Committee require to complete one year as a general member as mentioned in Article 5.2 (A) of the constitution. According to Article 5.1(E), those who have served for two terms are not eligible to contest continuously for the third term. Article 5.1 (C) reminds that candidates for position (President, Vice-President, Secretary General, Secretary and Treasurer) must have served at least one term as Executive Committee Member.

As per regulations, candidates for different posts filed their nominations as follows:

President = 3 candidates

Vice-President = 1 candidate

Secretary General = 2 candidates

Secretary = 2 candidates

Treasurer = 2 candidates

Members = 17 candidates

Two of the candidates for Executive Committee Members withdrew their candidature on December 6. So, there were fifteen candidates contesting for six posts. In the case of other posts, none of the candidates withdrew their names.

Election canvassing and publicity

A quick verbal sample survey, indicate most of the candidates sent E-mails asking for vote. The next medium adopted was telephone calls and the third means was mobile SMS. Most interestingly, one of the presidential candidates sent SMS three to four times a period of one week. The SMS text read "he is the

candidate for the consolidation and transparency in NCWA" and if he wins the election, everybody's view will be incorporated in the meetings.

On the other hand, one EC Member candidate made telephone calls two times to each and every voter. As a result, he won the election and secured the sixth position. Next to him, the unsuccessful one obtained only nine votes less. Had the sixth position candidate not telephoned twice to all 369 voters, probably he would not be a successful candidate.

During the polling day, most of the candidates had not deputed volunteers to request for votes. But one presidential candidate and two candidates for member had deployed volunteers for canvassing and distributing small leaflet as pamphlets. Rest of the candidates were canvassing themselves.

volunteers for canvassing and distributing small leaflet as pamphlets. Rest of the candidates were canvassing themselves.

On the polling day, presidential candidate, who sent SMS, stood just outside the gate of polling premises saying 'Please one vote for me to uplift the NCWA.' In response, one voter asked him 'Are you the guy who sent SMS four times?' In reply he nodded, yes certainly, I am. It was also interesting to see that when one voter would enter into the gate, four to five candidates would rush to him

Looking from the veranda too, it looked like a horse trading. Many small groups of people, all over the ground were talking, laughing, relaxing and joking with candidates. The polling day was really colorful and the candidates were busy running from one end to greet to the voters with polite Namaskar and shaking hand vigorously to ensure vote.

asking for vote. Sometimes, a voter would be encircled by so many candidates

Polling of votes

at a time.

Polling period was allotted from 11.00 AM to 3.00 PM on December 2010 (Saturday). The last vote was cast by Deependra Purush Dhakal at exactly 3.00 PM. He rushed to the polling room just one minute before closing the door. When Dhakal got downstairs after casting his vote, some of the candidates were joking that Dhakal's ballot will be the deciding vote for the candidates in case of tie.



Deependra P Dhakal (second from left), just after the polling of last minute vote

268 members, out of 369 general and life members were present for polling. Shankar Sharma, Ambassador to the USA and Bhoj Raj Pokhrel, Member of UN Arbitration Committee on Sudan Referendum, also exercised their voting

rights, as they were in Kathmandu for some days. It shows that NCWA members show keen interest in the council activities. After the polling, counting of votes was started at 4.00 PM the same day. The number of votes obtained by various candidates as serially numbered by the election committee is given below:

President:

| candidate 1 = 169 | candidate 2 = 33 | candidate 3 = 61 | Total = 263 |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| | | | |

Vice-President:

uncontested (only one candidate)

Secretary General:

| candidate 1 = 122 | candidate 2 = 141 | Total = 263 |
|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Secretary: | | |
| candidate 1 = 127 | candidate 2 = 135 | Total = 262 |
| Treasurer: | | |
| candidate $1 = 138$ | candidate $2 = 125$ | Total = 263 |
| | | |

Members:

| candidate 1 = 216 | candidate 2 = 106 | candidate 3 = 199 |
|--------------------|--------------------|--|
| candidate 4 = 173 | candidate 5 = 94 | candidate 6 = 99 |
| candidate 7 = 81 | candidate 8 = 100 | candidate 9 = 109 |
| candidate 10 = 39 | candidate 11 = 104 | candidate 12 = 44 |
| candidate 13 = 121 | candidate 14 = 116 | candidate 15 = 19 Total = 1,620 |

Election analysis

Some of the voters did not cast all their votes as many as they had rights to cast. For example, two voters did not cast their votes to any of the presidential candidates. Either they were not determined to whom they should vote or they were be unhappy all three candidates, or they decided to stay neutral. One member voted for three candidates inviting the nullification for all votes.

The Vice-President, elected un-opposed and uncontested. Three voters did not cast their votes for any of the candidates for secretary general. It was blank on ballot paper. On the other hand, one voter marked for both the candidates. One voter marked with cross sign on the marking column of the ballot paper. The marking sign was wrong.

For the post of Secretary, there were two candidates, one lady and the other was a gentleman. During the poll, two votes had been blank, three votes were ticked for both candidates; one voter did double tick. The lady candidate won the election possibly with public sympathy. Regarding the post of Treasurer, both the candidates were ladies. Four of the voters did not exercise their rights for the treasurer. One voter voted for one candidate with double tick invaliding the cast vote.

For the Executive Committee Members, there were six posts. But there were fifteen candidates in the election fray. Desperately, there was no lady candidate for these posts. One member voted for only one candidate, as it may be called as the 'dropping vote.' Besides, two members voted for only 3 candidates, four members voted for five candidates. However, they had the voting rights to vote for six candidates. On the other side, one voter cast his votes to all fifteen candidates.

Regarding participation, out of 369 total membership renewed and life members, only 268 members were present for voting. This shows that 72.6 percent of the entitled members participated in the election.

Election result

Executive Committee Members candidate serial number 1, 3 and 4 secured the three highest and popular votes as 81, 74 and 65 percent respectively among all candidates of all posts. Similarly, elected presidential candidate with serial



number one obtained fourth highest number of votes as 63 percent. So far as the other posts are concerned, successful Secretary General candidate serial number 2, Treasurer candidate number 1 and Secretary candidate number 2 secured 53, 51 and 50 percentages respectively of the total cast votes.

Regarding three more successful candidates for Executive Committee Members, serial number 13, 14 and 9 obtained 45, 43 and 41 percentage respectively of the total votes. It shows that the highest and the lowest percentage of votes has been obtained by the Executive Committee Members.

Picture of newly elected team members

All the members of new executive committee position holders and members are multi-disciplinary professionals and they have images in their own field. Some of them belong respectable high ranking government officials, such as local development planners and foreign policy affairs. The others are academicians, university teachers, educationists, Supreme Court senior advocate, engineers, surveyor-border researcher, international consultants working in bilateral and multilateral sectors. Most of them have gained many years of working experiences in the government ministries, departments, corporations, universities, colleges and private sector institutions. All of them are associated with various social organizations, institutions, society, alumni, rotary club and professional associations. They are the position holders in their organizations as well.

Nepal Council of World Affairs (NCWA) is a reputed organization of the nation to discuss and disseminate information on current affairs of national and international importance. It contributes to peace by promoting mutual cooperation among the nations of the world.

As regards NCWA election- 2010, it was held in a cordial manner and congenial atmosphere. All the procedures of election went very smoothly. Publicizing the voters list and withdrawn of candidacy, and counting of votes went without any obstruction. Everything was fair and everybody was free and frank. The

candidates who lost the election, congratulated and embraced their rival contestants.

Handing over and taking over function was arranged on January 8, 2011 amidst a small function. Most of the former and present Executive Committee Members and some former Presidents were present during that function. Former Secretary General formally handed over the minute book to newly elected Secretary General. Election Committee Co-ordinator Chandra Kanta Gyawali provided certificates to the elected members. Newly elected President (as past and present) thanked the last committee members for their co-operation; and welcomed and congratulated new comers. He presented his future program in a very nutshell to pull on the council. During the function, two of the Past Presidents congratulated new Executive Committee Members, stating that the council activities should expand with new initiations and programmes. They further expressed that council should march ahead with the context of changing scenario to maintain relationship with various nations, especially the neighbouring countries. Secretary General thanked all the members of council requesting for their full support to the newly elected Executive Committee.

On the occasion

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the 64th Anniversary of the Repal Council of World Affairs We offer our heartiest felicitations and best wishes for all success

Ram Lal Shrestha

Founder President ICTC Group



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Nepal and the World Affairs

Binod P Bista*

It is an acknowledged fact that no nation has ever lived longer in isolation. Even in the primitive times lacking modern means of travel and transport, nations were linked with each other by trading of goods and later services that each country produced. This activity, often resulting in misunderstanding as well as conflicts, necessitated in establishing a protocol and rules guiding trade between two nations and more. Also unchecked ambitions of some rulers of bigger and stronger countries gave rise to occupation of territories of their neighbors and beyond. Smaller countries came together to protect their territorial integrity and sovereignty and thus resistance against the stronger nations evolved. Sometimes continued suppression of a minority within a nation by its majority gave rise to exodus of the suppressed to the neighboring country. It also forced the neighbor to open up dialogue with the suppressor failing which it would take up arms in confrontation.

So, by default or by design the nations picked up the art of dialogue and negotiation always keeping their national interest uppermost in mind. As opposed to current popular campaign of a "win-win situation" the smarter country won and the less smart lost in the bargain eventually. In spite of all the efforts put up by the interlocutors and leaders who preferred peace to war it always did not succeed and the countries entered into war, sometimes on flimsiest of reasons.

The scene has changed today. There is hardly any attempt by a country to occupy physical space of another country or attack with no occupation in mind except in isolated cases such as ejection of Saddam Hussain from Kuwait by the international community. Suppression of its people in an unprecedented manner by the Libyan dictator has also attracted the attention of the Security Council, which has not only ordered a 'no fly zone' over Libya but also sanctioned it to

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Mr. Bista is a Member, NCWA

protect the Libyan people (civilians) 'by any means' and subsequently Libya is under intense armed attack by a group of western countries. Although there are several countries and regions, including our own, where border disputes are yet to be settled it is hardly likely that these countries would go to war anytime soon. Modern way of settlement of disputes by pacific means is a much preferred way by neighbors as well as the international community as opposed to coerced settlement through the use of force.

The United Nations has become a bastion of humanity for peaceful settlement of disputes. Sometimes it does involve itself such as in the present case against Libya in sanctioning armed intervention against a nation with a view to quickly settling the dispute that otherwise would have caused enormous loss to humanity. When all nations, including the permanent members of the Security Council, agree to such an action it is considered to be mostly justifiable and fair. However, when unilateral action is taken by a superpower or a group of countries then such actions are hardly justifiable in the eyes of the world, much less by the country that is affected. The example is the second attack against Iraq in 2003 (first one immediately after Kuwait occupation was approved by the UN) by the United States and some of its allies without the approval of the Security Council.

Against this background what Nepal, a small and poor nation situated between two giant neighbors, China and India, can do to contribute to the global peace and security? With the current situation of uncertainty and confusion of all times it is unthinkable that Nepal can take up any meaningful role to lead the world as reflected in the lost elections on her bid to become the president of the General Assembly. Nepal does not have enough leverage to play a role of a mediator between India and China in the settlement of their border dispute since Nepal is overwhelmingly inclined towards India. Although a founder member of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) it lacks adequate financial and commercial strength to play any outstanding role in leading SAARC. A new member of BIMST-EC, primarily an economic community of coastal states, Nepal in the true sense is a misfit in that community despite silly explanations given such as expanding trade through coastal states and so on. In the international arena Nepal is simply a member of the United Nations, grouped with the countries of LDCs, fighting for its rightful place within the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement without whose support the LDCs can hardly achieve anything much less by Nepal.

Does it mean that Nepal sits quiet and stands more like an observer than an active member of the groupings and associations that she belongs to? Certainly not! Nepal needs to take stock of her comparative advantages based on her credibility and resources and act accordingly with purpose. Nepal is known to the world as a small country having a wealth of bio diversity—a boon to the humanity. Nepal has also retained its credibility as a land of Gurkhas where the soldiers are famous for their honesty, loyalty and picture perfect discipline. Nepalese soldiers have been constantly engaged in the Peace-Keeping Missions ordered by the United Nations all over the world. Currently with the conflicts emerging on different planes within nations civil police monitors and other police personnel have joined in UN efforts to keep peace. Nepal is also rich in water resources that has been providing livelihood to millions of people in Nepal and India. It is universally clear that owing to several reasons people in the latter part of the Third Millennium will face serious shortage of fresh water, which could arouse conflict in several regions leading to possible war. Judicious use of Nepal's water resources is not only essential for the sustenance of livelihood for the people of Nepal and India but also other people in the region such as Bangladesh. This issue is so important that it can neither be ignored nor taken lightly if regional as well as global peace is to be maintained in the years ahead.

Since foreign policy, usually termed as an extension of domestic policy and very rightly so, necessitates a review of domestic affairs before jumping into it, Nepal first needs to put its house in order before she thinks of engaging in leadership role either within the region or internationally. It would be virtually impossible even to attract the attention of the international community except in the negative sense if Nepal did not have a constitution together with the completion of the peace process. It is obvious that a country in internal conflict lacks a proper goal acceptable to its people. Any policy of the incumbent government is liable to serious challenge by the opposition then the chances of survival of those policies, within the country and outside, will be extremely difficult. Take the case of the present government which, though formed with the support of one of the major parties' in conflict, may not be able to fulfill the aspirations of the majority as one of the credible parties (Nepali Congress) is yet to come to terms with the Maoist majority party. Can the nation continue with this stalemate that serves nobody's purpose except to further denigrate its people? Certainly not!

What might be the starting point for Nepal that is still mired in internal dissentions and extremities? Lasting stability, peace and security in Nepal is only possible with considerable understanding and support of its contiguous neighbors. Nepal's immediate neighbors, China and India, take this nation as a soft belly in their security structure and are ever ready to fill the gap if left open by Nepal. Nepal must be aware that an external threat, if any to Nepal, is likely to come from this issue surpassing all others. It is therefore in the interest of Nepal as well as its neighbors that they create an atmosphere of trust and understanding between and among them. Nepal's first step to foreign relations, and naturally so, must be anything but maintaining best of relations in all spheres with its immediate neighbors. Regardless of the government in power and notwithstanding the state of country's political transformation as well as transition Nepal cannot afford to either ignore or confront its neighbors without facing an all-out disaster. Nepal must find a way to promote and consolidate its relations with her neighbors free of any encroachment to her independence and sovereignty. Anything less would be a grave betrayal to the sacrifices and hard work of Nepal's illustrious ancestors who chose hard life for independence.

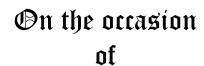
In the process of strengthening relations with India and China, there would emerge several opportunities for a role for Nepal in the regional area. In order to play an effective role in the regional as well as international field, Nepal must be able to create a unique model either for governance, economic policies and programs or social development field. For example, if Nepal were to acquire superb expertise in the field of water resources management including hydropower generation this alone would define a distinct role for her. Such an expertise would be useful not only in the regional context but also internationally.

However, Nepal's expertise in the UN Peace Keeping Missions is an acknowledged accomplishment. Without getting bugged down into controversies, some inherent and others created by the opponents of the Nepal army, it would do well for it to pursue higher standards of service and performance. Together with the army other government institutions need to be created or strengthened to support its effectiveness in Peace Keeping operations. Since there is also growing involvement of civil police in such operations there may be a need to jointly train these distinct forces and prepare them to take up assignments of various degrees as required.

Unless the people of Nepal are unified as people of one nation, leaving aside their communal, language or ethnic interests for the larger national interest, there would be a serious question hanging in the air all the time whether Nepal will remain independent and sovereign for long. This is as good a time as any, especially when all major political parties are urging each other for national consensus on matters relating to peace process and constitution making, they should also take up the initiative to identify and agree on the major agendas that adequately preserve and protect Nepal's national interest. There must be no politicking on matters concerned with national interest. The ultimate result of such actions on national interest would obviously be to take Nepal on a path of progress and prosperity under a democratic system of governance that alone can ensure a life of dignity and respect to all Nepalese, at home and abroad.

It may not be out of place to discuss in brief the role assigned to Nepal Council of World Affairs in supporting Nepal government's drive to restore Nepal's prestige and honor in the days ahead. Two of the major objectives taken up by NCWA have to do with "contribution to peace by promoting mutual cooperation among the nations of the world" and "contribution to human welfare and development by creating awareness". Nepal has an excellent track record of serving in the UN Peace Keeping missions of today and she was also involved extensively during the pre Christ era by being the messenger of peace and 'nirbana' as propagated by Lord Budhha. In fact she has the distinctive honor of being the birthplace of the prince of peace. Nepal can contribute immensely to the welfare and development of humanity by creating a model of a small nation realizing the dream of millions by achieving 'unity in diversity'. Respect for each other regardless of physical or economic strata, education can be a hallmark of a new Nepal.

NCWA can provide meaningful support in both areas by delving deeper into the understanding and dissemination of issues integral to peace and development.



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Nepal Japan Relations

- Komal Bagale*

The relations between Nepal and Japan are very warm and cordial. Both the countries have been enjoying excellent relations at the government as well as people's levels. Diplomatic relations between Nepal and Japan were established on September 1, 1956. A permanent Nepalese Embassy was opened in Tokyo in July 1965 and Mr. Bharat Raj Rajbhandari was appointed as the Ambassador of Nepal to Japan. Similarly, the Government of Japan opened its permanent Japanese Embassy in Katmandu in February 1968. H.E. Mr. Hidemichi Kira was appointed Ambassador of Japan to Nepal. Before the opening of the chancelleries in Katmandu and Tokyo, the Nepalese Ambassador in New Delhi was concurrently Ambassador to Japan and Japanese Ambassador in New Delhi was concurrently appointed Ambassador to Nepal.

The relationship has been further consolidated by the exchange visit of the high level delegations from time to time. Their Imperial Highness Crown Prince Akihito and Crown Prince Michiko visited Nepal in 1960 and in 1975, which are considered to be the landmarks in the relations between the two countries. Similarly, former kings of Nepal, Maheindra and Birendra and other heads of state and heads of government of Nepal visited Japan from time to time.

In 2006, Nepal celebrated amid various programmes to mark the 50th year the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Nepal-Japan diplomatic relations, the Council organized a talk programme on "Nepal-Japan Relations". On this occasion, H.E. Mr.Tsutomu Hiraoka, Japanese Ambassador to Nepal, addressed the Council and said, "Relations between Japan and Nepal could be said as relations based on goodwill and mutual respect".

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Nepal and Japan share similar views and common interest on various regional and global issues. Both the countries lie in the Asian Region. Though geographically, Japan is far from Nepal, both the countries share common socio-cultural and religious values. Nepal and Japan are peace loving countries since Japan is a Buddhist country and Nepal is the land of Buddha. Nepal is a land locked country, while Japan is a sea locked country. Japan is highly industrial and developed country, whereas Nepal is a developing country which has vast potential for natural resources. As a good friend, Nepal could learn and benefit from Japan especially in technological know-how. Japan is a reliable partner for socio-economic development and one of the largest donor countries of Nepal.

Reverend Ekai Kawaguchi, a Buddhist Monk was the first Japanese national to visit Nepal in 1899. Main purpose of his visit to Nepal was to pursue research and studies in Tibetan Buddhism. During his stay in Nepal, he explored some sacred Buddhist places and collected the holy manuscripts. He visited Nepal several times and was well known expert on Nepal. He had designed a development plan about Nepal and met the hen Prime Minister Chandra Shumsher Rana with some suggestions. Government of Nepal published the postal stamp with the portrait of Kawaguchi to commemorate the first visit of Japanese national to Nepal.

The Government of Nepal sent a group of seven young students to Japan in 1902 for higher studies. They returned to Nepal in 1905 and played a significant role in the technological development of Nepal.

Japanese Government offers various scholarship programmes for Nepalese students, which has contributed in producing high skilled manpower in Nepal. Many students who return with degree from Japan have been engaged actively in various technical and non technical fields. Considering the excellent performance of Nepali students in Japanese universities, we hope the government of Japan will provide more scholarship for Nepali students, who want to pursue higher education in Japan.

In the recent years, Japan has become a popular destination for Nepalese students to get higher education from recognized the world class universities and colleges. It is estimated that about twenty thousand Nepalese are living in Japan, most of them are students studying in various universities of Japan.

Nepal is a very popular destination for the Japanese tourist. Nepal is known as the land of Buddha, and Mt. Everest. Most of the Japanese tourists coming to Nepal prefer to go to Lumbini, the birth place of Buddha, listed in World

Heritage Sites. The Government of Japan has provided financial support to the master plan of Lumbini Development Project and for the construction of International Buddhist Library and Cultural Centre. A Japanese sculptor, Kenji Tonge has contributed to prepare a master plan of Lumbini as proposed by the then Secretary General of UN U Thant.

President of Nepal Dr. Ram Baran Yadav conferred the first Gautam Buddha International Peace award on D. Tomihisa Taue and Dr. Tadatoshi Akiba, Mayors of Nagasaki and Hiroshima respectively, for their contribution to the "Mayor for Peace Movement and Nuclear free World" at a special function to mark the 2555th birthday of Buddha held on May 17, 2011, in Lumbini. The award was instituted by the Government of Nepal in 2010 to promote international peace.

Nepal is known as a mountainous country in the world. Eight out of fourteen highest mountain peaks, including Mt. Everest lie in Nepal. We have been receiving lots of Japanese mountaineering expedition teams in Nepal. A Japanese woman, Ms. Junko Tabei, was the first woman to scale Mt. Everest on May 16, 1975.

Japanese language and skill can play a vital role to attract more Japanese tourists in Nepal. The Japanese Embassy in Nepal has been organizing various activities including cultural promotional programmes from time to time. With the support of Japanese Government, a Department of Japanese Language has been set up at the College of International Language to promote Japanese language and culture in Nepal. The college is contributing to the promotion of Nepal-Japan relations at the people to people level.

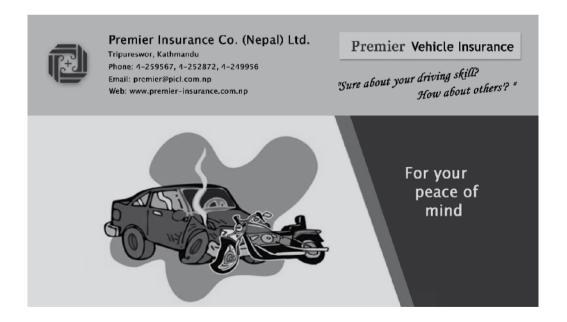
Japan is one of the largest donor countries in Nepal's socio-economic development since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. We have been receiving grants, loans and other technical assistance from the Japanese government. Out of the total grants, more than 20% goes to social sector, about 26% to agriculture, and the rest 55% to infrastructural development.

Japan is a highly earthquake prone country. The country is considered to be best prepared for earthquake in the world. This year on March 11, a massive earthquake measuring 9.0 on rector scale hit Honshu, the largest island of Japan. This was the strongest earthquake recorded in Japan's history.

A devastating tsunami in the coast of north east Japan in the aftermath of the earthquake claimed thousands of innocent lives and caused wide spread loss of property. Houses were washed away by the tsunami in Sendai, Mihagi prefectures in eastern Japan, this was broadcast live by the Japanese national television NHK and other international televisions like BBC and CNN. The death toll reached fourteen thousand and the same numbers of people are still missing. In 1995 a quake that stroke the western city of Kobe killed more than 6,400 people.

Japan is also facing its Nuclear Plant disaster in Fukusima. The country is struggling to protect the earthquake damaged nuclear plants. Tens of thousands of people from the area of Fukusima have been evacuated from their homes.

The Government of Nepal handed over five thousand pieces of blankets through Nepalese Embassy in Tokyo as a token of sympathy to the Japanese people victimized by the earthquake and tsunami. Earlier, the government of Nepal decided to send a team of fifteen member's security personnel to Japan to assist in the ongoing rescue efforts. Prime Minister Jhala Nath Khanal met the Japanese Ambassador to Nepal, H.E. Mr. Tatsuo Mizuno at the Japanese Embassy and expressed his deep sorrow over the loss of lives and property caused by the tsunami.



Missing Justice in Reality!

-Prabhu Ray Yadav*

Background

Since the beginning of the Land Lord (Jamindari Pratha) system and the enforcement of Land Reform Act, 2021 BS, land dispute has been an issue of tremendous importance not only in the terai area but also in the various parts of Nepal. Land everywhere mainly belongs to either a man or any institution. Landowners seek the favor of social jury or court to own and impose their own desire on it. But people have made land a disputed issue. For examples, Kasmir in India, the Nepalese - Indian borders, the South Sea in China and others are very close to what I intend to explain, disputes. Few cases of land dispute, which remained out of the land revenue registration office, were only in the grip of the court.

People, first, sought the solution of the disputed land in society. It was like a stage of drama where different class of actors and actresses lived in. They were professionally barber, washerman, shoemaker, farmer, gardener, ploughman, tailor, smith, porter, butcher, and all groups of people from greedy and sinner to unselfish and saint. They all needed the social jury in times of confrontation.

Traditional Justice System

The social juries had nomenclatures such as *Panch* aur *Parmeshwar*. They were all in all for villagers from all walks of life. The decisions made by them were fully respected by all people in the society. They never dared a wrong judgment by dint of their social coherent vision. The jury would reach the disputed land where both rival persons put their evidence to the jury to end their conflicts

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forever. They were illiterate but their judgments were far sighted. They respected others and believed that even a tiny mistake might become a blunder. It is of course true that a small event is at times the root of all conflicts. We come across such cases in one's memoir and somewhere else.

Once a great Indian thinker and philosopher named Rabindranath Tagore practiced penance for the elimination of poverty and misconduct from the country in his Shanti Niketan, an ashram at Bolpur station. He spoke in anguish," I'm dying." Sarojoni Naidu, his colleague, replied, "Well done, I will meet you in heaven." He exclaimed that he would learn a lesson from her. What she told him was that she would see him in heaven as he would sacrifice himself for the nation through his penance.

Jury's effort to enhance justice

The jury would walk hours of distance in search of the elimination of various conflicts from the society. They neither escaped from social challenges nor were they afraid of night and its darkness. There was no fear of dark night to lead the society forward like the Rabbi of Nemirov's penitential prayers, as mentioned in the biblical myth where he heartily served the poor people and enlightened them without having any sinister interest. In the Jamindari Pratha, they easily and transparently could mete out the right justice and gave them (both rival persons) clear judgments on the spot of conflict. They even delved out who and where the real guilty and victim got involved in the dispute. Both the victim and the guilty persons, simultaneously, tried to be transparent in the presence of the jury.

Nowadays, the system of judgment is less transparent. Most of the cases keep shuttling back and forth from one court to another.. Hardly can we find a pious jury to give a fair decision in the society. People are afraid of the courts' haphazard decision. Most of the decisions remain hidden in the court's file. Which is most pious and apt to serve the nation's needs is difficult to suggest. Land dispute cases keep terminating due to different measurements for example; there is Dhur, Katha, Biga and Lagi measuring system in practice. Judges are rarely aware of such measuring system. Some of them know little about such measuring system. For this reason, the victim suffers more in the court today than he did in the past in the village.

Delaying justice is denying justice

Sometimes, the decision of a court differs a lot in measurement. Meanwhile, what is real on the ground is quite different from the court's decision. Delaying the decision is another injustice in the verdict of both court and social jury. For instance, there might be several evidences like my villager named Krishna Prasad Yadav. He filed a case against his neighbors Ramesh Prasad Yadav and Ram Prasad Ray yadav. They had captured two Kathas of land of Krishna and built wall and house on his land. The district court gave decision to abolish both house and wall. His rivals submitted a writ petition to the appellate court where the district court decision was changed. This change in decision becomes a concomitant subject due to vicious judgment in the court But Krishna, the victim person did not approach the Supreme Court because six years had already passed from district to appellate court. Now, the law suit is in Rautahat district court. There is no sign yet that a transparent decision would be made with the result that the victimized persons are becoming more and more victim than before.

Analysis of a court verdict

Likewise, another dispute, for example, relates to how three women Deepiya Devi, Manchunia Devi and their mother-in-law, Ramaratiya Devi are suffering on the charge of being witches. They belong to VDC Pipariya Dostiya ward no.1, district Rautahat. The villagers looked on helplessly while the rivals made the women drink feces forcibly on the charge of being witches. The social juries didn't give fair judgment and instead showed their vicious nature towards the women. These victimized women, in search of justice, filed their case in the Rautahat district court last year.

Their rivals charged the women and their family members with murder in a witch case in the same court. But there is no tangible evidence of the murder case. The women's rivals have just filled it only to escape from the punishment of the court. But the sufferer women have furnished abundant evidence and proof such as daily newspapers, radio news, hospital report, and the Kantipur visual and on the spot report with the help of Rautahat media person named Sivpuri.

The Rautahat district judge, (named Medani Prasad Paudel, bench no.3,) has given verdict to punish the women's rivals with five thousand rupees. The

justice meted out is comparably not satisfactory. Despite abundant evidence, the court did neither give fair judgment nor did it pay attention to woman's Rights. The women victims had never expected that justice would be mocked at more in the court than in the village. The question arises whether the court is a fair place of judgment. But the judges have transformed the court into a place of robbery. These poor women are apparently discarded from both society and court. Are the illiterate and poor women not the representatives of the nation? How can a poor and often innocent man or woman be safe in society? Has anyone mused about terai where fair justice is abused in the court?

The question is why the Rautahat district judge is not fair to give a right judgment to Manchunia and others on time. She keeps on saying, "There is no value of time in the court and it is a bit shameful to say that the court at present is like a theatrical stage in which the judges of court delay, differentiate and manipulate both in action and judgment". The perennial question is why judges are scheming in justice. Still, there is increased rivalry more in court and society and the victimized person continues to suffer.

Conclusion

Among the Asian countries, Nepalese are suffering from various shortcomings in the civil society, administration, and government. The innocent people do not have faith in court decision. They do not want discriminated justice. Discrimination in justice is as serious as the scandal of political leaders.

These days, the drawbacks mentioned above are the main obstacles before the nation. Fewer cases are fair. Its impact is getting worse in society. In the above monomania, one does not know whether there is a differentia between natural and artificial justification. Is this not essential to sweep away the various disputes of misconduct with a fair decision in both court and society? If it is, we must have to eradicate these stains first and give full vent to the pious decision for the advent of new Nepal.

The court is a mechanism to earn respect of the nation. Practically, it is a body that provides fair justice to all people in each and every sphere of the nation. The concerned authority is the only responsible person who can remove these pangs from both court and society to safeguard the sovereignty of justice in or out of terai.

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KARAKA KARAK

'Lipulekh' pass: Version of Republic of India*

Dr. Upendra Gautam**

The following, wholly based on the Republic of India's (ROI's) sources of information, narrates the Delhi's version of the 'Lipulekh Pass' in terms of military, territorial, pilgrimage and trade activities that have since been taking place around and through this Pass.

Military

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) was raised in October 1962 in the wake of the India-China War. The role being performed by ITBP is to: i) safeguard the security of borders of India and pr illegal activity; iii) provide security to sensitive installations, banks, persons of security risk; and iv) restore and preserve order in any area in the event of disturbance therein.

The ITBP has 29 battalions including four specialist battalions with over 30,000 personnel, three training institutions and six sector headquarters each headed by a Deputy Inspector General of Police. The ITBP personnel are deployed at high altitudes to guard the Indo-Tibetan Border, extending from Karakoram Pass in Ladakh (Jammu and Kashmir) to Lipulekh Pass.

On 21 October, 2002 the ITBP reported Chinese troop's movement as "perceived" violations of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Ladakh sector in Jammu and Kashmir. It had detected the "violation" during a sector relay long range patrol (LRP) on the Indo-China border of 2,115 km from Karakoram Pass to Lipulekh Pass. The LRP was conducted from 29 July to 14 October, 2002.

^{*} An unpublished essay 2006. The author thankfully acknowledges technical inputs provided by Mr. Praveen Ghimire, Civil Engineer currently on a working visit to the UK and Senior Engineer Mr. Ajaya L. Shrestha.

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In the backdrop, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported a range of confidence building measures that India and China agreed to avoid holding large-scale military exercises in close proximity to the LAC and to observe self-restraint if troops of the two countries come face-to-face on the border. While reaffirming their commitment to strictly respect and observe the LAC, the prime ministers of India and China on 11 April, 2005 decided to increase the number of border meetings each year, and to include Spanggur Gap in the Western Sector, Nathula Pass in Sikkim and Bum La in the Eastern Sector. They also agreed to expand the mechanism of border consultations to meeting points at Kibithu-Damai in Arunachal Pradesh and Lipulekh Pass/ Qiang La in the Middle Sector.

The ITBP has been asking the government for improved infrastructure in the frontier areas. Accordingly, on 30 December, 2003, Askot Musk Deer Sanctuary in Pithoragarh district of Uttaranchal was denotified. It was recommended that 111 villages should be taken out of the proposed sanctuary for the construction of a 75 km long road from Ghatiabagar to Lipulekh Pass on the China border. The road was conceived after the India-China War in 1962 but could not make any headway. An aerial survey was conducted in November 2003 by a team from India's Central Empowered Committee, state government officials, the army and Border Road Organization. Laying of the road and rail network across the border in Tibet by China and the growing Maoist activities in Nepal was reported to have prompted the Indian Defense Ministry to expedite the construction of the Ghatiabagar-Lipulekh Pass road. With this road, Indian army, ITBP personnel as well as the Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrims will not have to travel a distance of nearly a 100 km to reach the China border on a dangerous pathway all along the Kali River.

The ITBP as back as 21 October, 2002 had stressed the need for a "road network" on Indian side along the LAC with China and an air-wing for more effective surveillance as there have been cases of "perceived violation of LAC" from Chinese side. It had sent a very ambitious plan to the government about the required road network on the Indian side for better movement of forces as it had concluded that Chinese already had such a network in place. The ITBP Director General S.C. Chaube admitted that Tibet being a plateau, the movement from the Chinese side was much faster, and that Pangong, the highest lake, was one of the locations where the "perceived violation" had taken place more frequently.

Territory and pilgrimage

Uttaranchal, the 27th state of the ROI, was created on 9 November, 2000. The state was carved out of Uttar Pradesh (state). It covers 51,125 sq km and about 6.0 million people. The state's international borders are with China's Tibet Autonomous Region in the north and Nepal in the east.

Indian information sources include the Kali (Sharada) river, and the Lipulekh (5,434 m) and Limpiadhura (5,650 m) Passes in Uttaranchal. As a matter of fact, territory of the ROI, created only in 1947, seems historically more apparent than real whenever it is represented in a number. The number is variable even for publications of institutionalized repute and long standing background. For example, the Statesman's Year Book records an increase in India's territory from 1,138,414 square miles (sq mi) in 1953 to 1,262,257 sq mi in 1964. The Indian area "decreased" to 1,178,995 in 1972 but again "increased" to 1,222,238 sq mi in 2000 (see table below as well as the table in the Attachment-1 for further "historically" embedded ambiguities in the source books).

The ROI's historical ambiguity in its territorial area 1953-2000

(in square miles)

| 1953 | 1964 | 1972 | 1982 | 2000 |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1,138,414 | 1,262,257 | 1,178,995 | 1,222,719 | 1,222,243 |

Source: The Statesman's Year Book annual publications (see Attachement-1also)

Why an ambiguity is clearly maintained about the ROI's true territorial size is anyone's guess. This ambiguity is there despite the fact that, unlike in many countries, it is its Ministry of External Affairs (IMEA) that directly coordinates even pilgrimages like the one for Kailash Manasarovar along the traditional route across the Lipulekh Pass.

According to IMEA, all together it is a 10-day travel package for a pilgrim to reach Taklakot from Delhi. Distance between Delhi to Tawaghat is about 640 km. The pilgrims cover the distance up to Dharchula-Mangti, further up from Tawaghat, by bus. The route ahead is to be covered on foot or on pony or yak. From Dharchula-Mangti to the Lipulekh, they trek. About 20 km distance from the Lipulekh to Taklakot, they cover first 9 km by trek, while they travel remaining 11 km by bus. The Lipulekh Pass is the last point in Indian Territory and rest of the route lies in Tibet region of China.

The Indian pilgrims go the following route to reach Mt. Kailash: Delhi - > Kathgodam (Haldwani) -> Bhuwali, Almora, Someshwar -> Kausani -> Bageshwar -> Chaukori -> Didihat -> Ogla -> Askot -> Dharchula -> Tawaghat -> Pangu -> Narayan Ashram -> Sirkha -> Gala -> Malpa -> Budhi -> Garbyang -> Gunji -> Kalapani -> Navidang -> Lipulekh Pass -> Taklakot -> Gurla Pass -> Zaidi -> Parkha -> Tarchen -> Mt. Kailash.

IMEA, East Asia Division describes the pilgrimage package as follows.

The pilgrims reach Gunji on the sixth day of travel. Gunji is the first camp of their pilgrimage on the Indian side which is situated at about 3,500 m. The pilgrims are given a final medical examination before they are allowed to proceed further. From Gunji, the last Indian village en route, U.P. police relinquish charge of the pilgrimage group to the ITBP personnel.

On the seventh day, from Gunji, the ITBP team, and its doctors, guides the pilgrims up to the Tibetan border from where Chinese authorities take over. This trek along the Kali River is done in stages with the ITBP soldiers guiding the pilgrims every step on the way. The route through Gunji climbs higher and gradually, the vegetation changes. Beyond Gunji, the trek is comparatively easy and flat upto Kalapani (4,200 m). As the pilgrims near Kalapani, they pass a mountain in which 'Vyasa's cave' is located. According to Hindu legend, this is the cave where Sage Vyasa performed penance for years. A flag posted by the ITBP marks the entrance to the cave. The ITBP has built a hydel project over the Kali River, which supplies power for the Kalapani camp. The immigration checkpoint is at Kalapani, where the pilgrims' travel documents such as Passport are verified before they move towards the border.

Day 8 is to negotiate the stretch from Kalapani to Navidang (5,334 m), and it is an uphill climb. As pilgrims move to the upper reaches of the Himalaya, the Kali River is left far below. The 9-km stretch takes them above the tree line, and the stark face of the mountains confronts the pilgrims. At Navidang, the famous 'Om' *Parvat* (mountain) can be seen on a clear day. Snow fall on the natural curves in the black rock-face carves the fascinating 'Om' letter. During the flowering season, the route itself is like a carpet of flowers in shades of yellow, purple, pink and white. This stretch is subject to brisk winds and the pilgrims are advised to wear warm cloths and keep the head covered.

On Day-9 from Navidang to Lipulekh Pass, about 7 km, is the last stretch in India before pilgrims cross over to the Tibetan side. This is a treacherous walk at the best of times and more so if the weather conditions are not right at the narrow Pass, which is at 5,434 m. The crossing of the Pass is a finely timed affair with the group crossing into Tibet meeting the group that has completed its holy round (Parikrama) and is returning to India. The pilgrims leave the camp as early as 3 am so as to meet the returning group around 7 am at the Pass. The crossing must be completed between 7 am and 9 am, the time when the weather conditions are most favourable. Pilgrims must take care to avoid succumbing to high altitude tiredness, as the winds are bitter and the atmosphere is exceptional with little oxygen. Even a half-hour halt can be difficult to withstand. It is here that the pilgrims really need to cooperate with one another and ensure that each member crosses this difficult stretch through the ice and snow. The ITBP personnel assist the pilgrims, providing them both moral support and medical relief if needed. It is better for pilgrims to keep some small bits of camphor or salts handy as smelling it can help relieve the discomfort. At the Lipulekh Pass pilgrims leave India behind and begin their journey into Tibet. The guides provided by the Chinese Government meet pilgrims at the Pass.***

Distance from the Lipulekh Pass to Taklakot, about 19 km, is also covered on Day-9. The terrain here is very barren, with hardly any vegetation in sight. After pilgrims successfully cross the Lipulekh Pass, the Chinese authorities take over and the descent into Tibet begins. The time taken by this walk is about an hour and half after which ponies are available. After a journey of about 5 km on the ponies, one travels by buses to Taklakot. As there are no metalled roads here, the bus ride is a bone-rattling one through streams and rocky paths.

Day-9 and 10 are for Taklakot (Purang). It is an old trading town. It has several market places, Gumbas and Buddhist temples. The town has a strong Chinese military presence. The pilgrims are put up in a guest house with basic facilities. Hot water for bathing is available for about 2 hours, at a time that is informed to the pilgrims. Food is also served at set times, and normally includes rice, soup and boiled vegetables. The Chinese authorities check all travel documents including Passports and collect \$600 as pilgrimage fee. The pilgrims stay at Taklakot for two days to complete all the immigration and customs procedures. Currency exchange facility is available, and one US\$ will fetch Yuan 8.02. If

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^{***} Map is not included

pilgrims wish to buy eatables from the local market, they have to indicate their requirements to the Chinese Liaison Officer. Same is true of their requirement of porters and yaks for the Kailash Parikrama. The approximate cost in is Yuan 75 for a porter and Yuan 150 for a yak.

On the basis of above description, an Indian website <www.livingindia.com> has prepared a route map through the Lipulekh Pass.

However, India was not happy with the "Lipulekh route" alone. It has repeatedly requested China, according to PTI, for opening of an alternative route to Kailash-Mansarovar from Dhamchok area of Ladakh. China did not agree to the Indian request citing difficulties in opening new routes on the grounds that it would involve trekking over longer distance through difficult terrain. India had proposed opening of a new route from Hanle area in eastern Ladakh bordering Himachal Pradesh's Kinnaur region as an addition to the traditional pilgrim route across the Lipulekh Pass in Pithoragarh district. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh raised the issue with Premier Wen Jiabao during his visit to India in April 2005. Singh, while conducting a computerized draw on 6 May, 2005 at the IMEA for selection of that year's pilgrims to Kailash-Mansarover, informed that this time, the Chinese side had conveyed their willingness to provide greater facilitation to pilgrims from India.

Trade

A press information bureau, Government of India notification made on 14 July, 2004 highlighted the steps being taken to increase trade with China through land route. According this press note, border trade with China was resumed following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 'Resumption of Border Trade through the Lipulekh Pass' in December 1991. The Protocol for extension of border trade to the Shipkila Pass was signed in September 1993. Accordingly, border trade between India and China was being conducted through two routes i.e., Gunji in Pithoragarh District of Uttaranchal along with Gunji-Purang (Tibet) land route and village Namgya-Shipkila in Kinnaur District of Himachal Pradesh along the Namgya-Shipkila Shipki-Jijubu land route. During the visit of then Indian Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee to China in June 2003, the two sides agreed to open a third route in Sikkim from the Nathula Pass for border trade. Items such as agricultural implements, blankets, copper products, clothes, textiles, cycles, coffee, tea, barley, rice, flour, dry fruit,

dry and fresh vegetables, vegetable oil, sugar, tobacco, cigarettes, canned food, agro-chemical, local herbs, dyes, spices, watches, shoes, kerosene oil, stationery, utensils and wheat were allowed to be exported freely through the land route.

There was some delay in the implementation of the MOU for resumption of borders trade between India and China in December 1991, though it provided:

- that the border trade would be confined initially to Gunji in Pithoragarh district in India and Purang in the Tibet autonomous region of the people's Republic of China;
- ii. that the border trade may be extended to other points on India-China border after mutual consultations;
- iii. that Lipulekh could be the border Pass for entrance and exit of the traders, commodities and means of transport from the two sides. The traders would be provided with valid papers for, entrance and exit, subject to the supervision and control of the authorities concerned;
- iv. that the exchange of commodities and overland trade would be conducted in accordance with the laws, regulations and rules in force in either country;
- v. that the mode of transactions would be in freely convertible currency acceptable to both sides or in barter terms; and
- vi. that the Memorandum would be initially in force for a period of two years and would be automatically extended for subsequent periods of one year each unless either party decides for termination by giving notice in writing at least three months before the date of expiry.

Earlier on 2 September, 2003 the website <www.rediff.com> had reported that India and China have 'quietly' decided to open the border in the Ladakh area of Kashmir. According to the report, work on the proposed custom station in the Chumthang belt, the gateway to Tibet had begun, and this was to be the fourth trading station on the Sino-Indian border. The report further stated that the new route connected Damchok, the last habitation on the Indian side with the Tashigang belt of Tibet.

PTI also informed that the Indian government had requested China to allow Hindu pilgrims to use the Ladakh route to visit the Mansarovar in the Kailash Mountains, in the words of the Indian news agency, "currently under Chinese control." The Nyoma (Ladakh) route, considered a strategic one, did not allow

human movement. Its opening was to create opportunities for the north-Indian businessmen, particularly of the Punjab and Haryana, who were starved of an international market because of uncertain relations between India and Pakistan. Responding to the needs of the land trade, the Indian Customs Department opened its office in Ladakh last summer.

When the border trade started flowing, Embassy of India based in Washington DC informed that India-China border trade conducted in 1998 through Lipulekh Pass and Shipki La Pass stood at IRs 5.17 millions. The border trade had so far actually been across the Lipulekh Pass with Gunji as trade port in India and Purang as the trade port in China. The issue of extension of regular border trade to other points on India-China border is in various levels of bilateral negotiation, planning and implementation.

Post-script: road project on Indo-Nepal-China border

On March 5, 2007 Indian press reported: the Indian Supreme Court-appointed Central Empowered Committee has given clearance for the construction of 75.54 km-long Ghatiabagar-Lipulekh road through Askote Musk Deer Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttarakhand along India's borders with Nepal and China.

A Bench asked the Uttarakhand Government counsel to respond to the CEC's recommendations for construction of the strategically important road through the wildlife sanctuary.

According to the recommendation, if 155-acre forestland, presently used as ammunition dump in Raiwala Cantonment near Rajaji National Park, is handed over to the State Forest Department, net present value will be waived off.

The CEC also recommended the use of 106.505 hectare of the forestland falling within the Askote Wildlife Sanctuary for the construction of the road on payment of five per cent of NPV (net present value) of the project cost. However, it preferred construction of road on alternative recommendation involving handing over of the 155 acre of land around the National Park as it would be mutually beneficial to the Ministry of Defense and the State Forest Department.

Cultural Turn in International Relations: An Impetrative in New Foreign Policy

-Rajeev Kunwar*

The Substance of Cultural Turn in IR

International Relations (IR) in the 21st century has been accentuated, apart from an excessive intoxication with conventional power politics, by a cultural resurgence. It is not a cultural renaissance but an underlining need to invoke cultural specificity of the country. Nepal cannot remain aloof from this turning point in international history. The post-1990 international society is seeking solace from politicking life, and the countries of the world, especially the Oriental nations, are finding a refuge in the cultural realm wherein harmony, peace, order, continuity and stability supplement a traditional response to an uncertain trajectory of the national and international milieu. It is obvious that a cultural consciousness is reawakening in the East demanding recognition to diversity and multilateralism.

We celebrate throughout the year marking national days of cultural, religious and political importance and international days to observe human achievements, successes, efforts and solidarity. If youth in Nepal enjoy Christmas and Valentine days it is how the world has been compressed in space and time and has become one's oyster. Culture also exercises a subtle form of power that even makes powerful to behave with humility and compassion.

Culture, to many laypersons, have an inkling of religion at face value and is taken for granted in common parlance. Although it is intricately intertwined

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with spiritual and divine sphere, culture can be dissociated from the contours of faith and creed. It is a pattern of norms, values and mores set down by our ancestors and forerunners, and is passed down from generation to generation, in the course getting modified and bestowing a virtuous life to the posterity.

A cultural dimension of IR is concerned with cultural plurality in the globalised world. However "the spread of such well-known brands as Mc Donald, KFC, Nike, Microsoft, GE, Coca Cola, Marlboro and many others are making inroads by 'global soft power.'" Mc Donaldization bespeaks 'cultural imperialism.' It has been observed that the second largest export items of the United States are cultural products such as CNN and Fox news, TV programmes (reality shows), films and music. There are apprehension among those who oppose 'the juggernaut of globalization' moving "relentlessly towards an American style global culture" and intake habit of fast food items. This implies that "the production and distribution of goods and services are of a homogeneous type and quality" questionably international.

The English was spread as second language in countries like Russia and China where English language tuition is now one of the UK's major exports in services. On the contrary French President Chirac in 1996 viewed that the global spread of English is 'a major risk to humanity.' His anxiety was replacement of the main diplomatic language of the world in the 19th century into 'franglais.' Cultural imperialism has been especially conspicuous in France. So in order to preserve her purity in the face of impending challenges of Anglo-Saxon culture and language French government in 1994 introduced legislation aimed at stopping Americanization.

On the other hand cultural particularism also culminates the blindfolded vision of the world espousing only cultural supremacy instead of inculcating shared values and destiny of mankind. Many see that globalization is steamrolling the Rest by the West. The supporters of the theory of cultural convergence were at its height in American and European management research in the 1950s and 1960s taking the universalist standpoint.

The alternative view is that of the relativists acknowledging the phenomenon of increasing globalization. MNCs had to adopt the dictum 'think global, act local,' thus, following a policy of 'glocalisation' – a chemistry of global integration and local responsiveness. Cultural plurality is much in evidence in the development of international managers those operating in the UN, EU and

other international organizations. They have to adopt and operate in different business or administrative cultures yet at the same time retaining his/her own national cultural traits. Such managers require good interpersonal skills, cultural empathy and the ability to function discerning complex ambiguous, often uncertain, environments which are characterized by continuous change. This nurturing of 'intercultural competence' is essential as managers often are involved in working in multicultural teams.

After the dismantling of the Iron Curtain, a cultural space has preoccupied a thinking in IR which even the member-states of the European Union are emulating vis-à-vis Asian countries. European countries are very sensitive and concerned with regard to the protection, preservation and promotion of their culture, music, fine arts, haute couture and language which exhibit their conservative moorings amidst liberal ideology in polity. They convey this message to their erstwhile colonies, if they were existed in the dark human history and disseminate their richness and uniqueness to the nook and cranny of the world at large.

In the global civil society there is a desire to promote a dialogue of cultures and prevent a clash of civilizations. European Union celebrated European Year of Inter-Cultural Dialogue in 2008 in order to prioritize their staunch and indomitable political commitment to make inter-cultural issues centre point of the EU Foreign and Security Policy (EFSP) agenda. The frontiers of Europe interface with the Western and Muslim worlds. Particularly in the Balkan peninsula and ancient and medieval fault lines of the Roman Empire in the Western Europe and its contender the Ottoman Empire in the Eastern flank. Turkey is epithet attached with an area where there is an intercourse or *fuzone* of Western and Eastern cultures.

Inter-cultural dialogue embraces all cultures and none is homogeneous or monolithic. But the pressing issue for European countries is the management of Muslim populace and their subsequent integration in the host country. It has become principal issue in Europe and whole gamut of IR in the years to come. The EU regards there ought to be peaceful co-existence with and between the cultures and religion in the continental Europe. This may resolve amicably the conflict in the Middle East and North Africa or even the threat of terrorism/religious fundamentalism at European frontiers and beyond its borders. An inevitable hint of EFSP is that it has a long term aim to build an intellectual and cultural bridge across the Mediterranean to the Middle East and neighbouring

region. The Middle East is the place of origin of three great cultures and religions – the Christian, the Jewish and the Islamic. An understanding and goodwill among them can be an apt prescription or a normative approach to solve the tragedy and humanitarian problems of the region.

European Union envisages new style of foreign policy as this kind of thinking does not prop up easily to either practitioners or students of traditional foreign policy. They believe that inter-cultural dialogue implies the development of a new kind of foreign policy. EU has opened avenues for a platform to bring in it together civil society groups of different backgrounds to discuss "hard-edged and immediate issues" such as the integration of immigrants into their host societies.

They consider world citizens mutating with cosmopolitan characteristics feel discontentment with purely political aspects of IR. Cosmopolitans would like to spice up their life in current international order with invocation of cultural values and local knowledge. Rather they reconcile with communitarians in this respect. The domain of culture has entered into IR discourse in response to monotonous engagement with hard power (politics and military or strategic concerns). It is the low politics of economic welfare and culture power that matters most in the 21st century. Now visible differences in opinions and attitudes which are moulded by one's own culture in turn reinvigorate and enrich understanding of each other's perspectives and world views. Naturally scholars are contented to term soft power (culture) or low politics taking front seat in the international agenda of the states of the world. It is oft quoted to be a post-modernist era without experiencing actually modernity in transitional and traditional society.

Zeitgeist of New Foreign Policy: A Cultural Diplomacy in the Offing?

Politicos after 2006 were harping on new foreign policy formulated to grapple changes in IR especially labour issues, remittance economy, foreign direct investment, etc. Nepal is a country projected to be a meek state amongst society of states and cannot make a dent in international community as a cultural power in Asia and beyond. It can and has the potential to be a messenger of peace, freedom and durable development or a development with human face. How much we talk about new foreign policy it remains constant with delicate or minute change in approaches to manage international environment.

How cultural interest can be secured in barren and mundane activities of international relations? It is to enhance the dignity of the nation in international arena by preserving independence. The undercurrent of the spirit of time may not have changed from the equation of balance of power and prevailing pragmatism. Nepal could pursue defensive realism but our resources are in dire need to be utilized for expecting an outcome of augmenting cultural power instead of pursuing an unachievable strategic power. Guidelines of Nepalese state policy state that Nepal pursues a policy of making continuous efforts to institutionalize peace by promoting cooperative relations in the economic, social and other spheres on the basis of equality with neighbouring and all other countries. Among many factors that determine Nepalese foreign policy is socio cultural relations (religious, social actions, marriage relations and customs and traditions). Being an Asian country it has cultural affinity with India and China. It is where cultural edifice of arts, religion and architecture influenced her neighbours immensely. It is an old state with vibrant cultural practices.

Article III of Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961 outlines the functions of a diplomatic mission as promoting friendly relations between the sending state and the receiving state and developing their economic, *cultural* and scientific relations. Personnel of Nepalese diplomatic mission are lacking especially in cultural realm i.e. cultural attachés.

Zeitgeist of new era unfolding must emphasize the cultural richness. We need to avoid historic differences by advancing economic development, investment in infrastructure, promoting knowledge driven society and strengthening economic freedom and adopting policies that can give our regional powers – India, China, South Korea and Japan a stake in one Asian dream, our common future. The spirit of new foreign policy must peer into the future and think beyond the cocoon of nation-state. It is imperative to discard megalomaniac and ultra-nationalist attitudinal tendencies and embrace a common destiny and recognize the reality of interdependence in Asia.

It is a high time for Nepal being in the heart of Asia mired only with political aspects of IR to reflect, resuscitate and orient leadership in cultural diplomacy. Whereas our giant neighbours considered being representative of oldest civilizations are paragon of rich and variegated culture, if not delicate cuisine, in the tapestry of international diplomacy. A simple reason for not reenergizing our national spirit under cultural credos is attributed to the crunch and paucity of

monetary resources. There are civil society organizations which can be counted on fingers are working towards propagating cultural wealth and endowment of the country. They are acting inevitably as cultural sentinels and sending a message of culture of peace and freedom enjoyed by Nepal.

Nepal since time immemorial has been a cradle of two greatest religions of Asia – Hinduism and Buddhism. It was a great seat of learning and an abode of two major racial stocks of people – the Aryans and the Mongols. It is not cliché that communal harmony coexisted, remained and maintained in this state sequestered in the Himalayas. Today history has been twisted and criticized for not acknowledging diversity and pluralism that fall under rational arguments to ensue.

To Kishore Mahbubani, Asians need to enrich this world with fusion of civilizations rather than predominance of hubris of the Western society, mores, norms and values. The western civilization is not the only universal civilization and such conceited image should be given up.

The conduct of cultural diplomacy cannot be an exclusive preserve or domain of the executive at ministerial and ambassadorial levels which are shrouded in secrecy and without any parliamentary or public involvement. It has similarity in connotations of both new and open diplomacy. And it does not avoid or replace classic diplomacy in function. It rather fosters a strong sense of exchange and community in the international arena.

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Culture of Peace: A Viable Strategy for Human Co-existence

- Dambar Bir Thapa*

From the time of its birth in 1945 16th November one of the paramount tasks of Unesco has been not only to create a word public opinion in favour of complete disarmament, peaceful co-existence and the end of military confrontation posing threat to the very survival of human beings and this planet but also to instil into the mind of men feeling and a sense of love and respect for others and their rights and values. To bring science and technology into the service of mankind is one of the goals enshrined in many of the programmes launched by UNESCO over the last fifty-four years for the strengthening of the foundation of peace, which is envisaged to spring forth from the stream of mind. The ultimate aim of the programmes conducted by UNESCO, specially in the field of education, science, culture and communication through several committees, centres and organisational agencies formed in different parts of the world in relation to the different programmes concerned is to build peace among the people and perpetuate it in their mind so that factors contributing to consolidating social order and racial harmony can flourish and take a solid shape. To achieve the goal of establishing peace in the mind of men by fostering humanistic values and reinforcing the ideals of non-violence and tolerance has been a goal of supreme importance common to all national and international organisations committed to building a human society free of wars, non-violence and terrorism.

Since UNESCO launched its culture of peace programme in February 1994, people from all walks of life and from all countries are rallying to the challenge of moving from imposition to discussion, from monologue to dialogue from privilege to sharing, from force to reason, from plutocracy to democracy. "The concept of a culture of peace, base on the principles enshrined in Unesco constitution, has grown to rapidly.

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Culture of Peace Movement Its Origin:

The International Congress on "peace in the minds of men" held in Yamoussoukro, Cote d Ivoire in 1989 laid the foundation of the Global Movement of the culture of peace which has been today recognised world-wide as the viable strategy adopted by Unesco to realise its goal of constructing the defences of peace in the minds of men and women. In response to the commitment embodied in its historic declaration the Yamoussoukro Congress urged the UNESCO "to construct a new vision of peace by developing a peace culture based on the universal values of respect for rights and equality between men and women". UNESCO was called upon by the Congress to promote education and research on peace and to develop measures for the instruments relating to human rights, peace, environment and development. The Unesco Executive Board and 27th General Conference of UNESCO held discussion over the concept of a culture of peace, which was proposed in 1992. UNESCO held a couple of forums to promote the operational aspect of the concept of culture of peace mooted in the Yamoussoukro Congress.

It is on 20th November 1997 that the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the year 2000 as the *International Year for the Culture of Peace* in order to bring into the focus of the attention of the world the importance of the mission and vision incorporated in the culture of peace and foster the operative aspects of this national programmes of the culture of peace. The year 1998 in which United Nations declared the period from 2001 to 2010 as the *International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence* for the children of the world has been regarded as a major milestone in the advancement of the culture of peace movement worldwide.

A group of Nobel Peace Laureates drafted Manifesto 2000 for the culture of peace and non-violence. These Laureates met in Paris for the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and appealed to the leaders of the world to put their signature into this historic document as the token of their commitment to the ideal principles incorporated in the Manifesto 2000.

Definition Culture of Peace:

Formulated in February, 1994 as the programmes of Unesco the culture of peace may be defined as "all the values, attitudes and forms of behaviours, ways of

life and of acting that reflect, and are inspired by, respect for life and for human beings and their dignity and for all human rights, the rejection of violence in all its forms and commitments to the principle of freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance and understanding among the peoples and between groups and individuals".

It can be defined in a simple way as "peace in action influencing the acts, attitudes and behaviours of each individual". A Culture of Peace is above all, "a question of values, attitudes, individual and collective behaviour that give rise to and incarnate "the spirit of peace" says Riviere Françoise, Head of Culture of Peace Unit, UNESCO. A culture of peace is a process of building trust and co-operation between peoples. It means learning to use words instead of weapons to resolve conflicts. A culture of peace is the product of new spirit and implies global effort to bring positive change in thought and act of each individual. "Culture of peace represents an every day attitude of non-violent rebellion of peaceful dissent, of firm determination to defend human rights and human dignity". "Culture of Peace Movement remains always linked to the pursuit of social and economic justice for all"- Federico Mayor, former Director General.

"Each person can help build a culture of peace and non-violence by living in each moment joyfully and thankfully in deep consciousness of the sacredness of our lives the lives of all beings and creation" –Mairead Corrigan Muguire. Foremer Director General Mr. Koichiro Matsuura wishes to contribute to peace "through the consolidation of the concept of culture of peace"

Basic principles & objectives of Culture of Peace

From the introduction of the Book Unesco and a Culture of Peace ... "it is now recognized that we can and must transform the values, attitudes and behaviour of societies from culture of war to a new and evolving culture of peace, which is the subject of this monograph. Peace, once defined as the absence of war, has come to be seen as a much broader and more dynamic. It includes nonviolent relations between states, but also non-violent and cooperative relationships between individuals within states, between social groups, between states and their citizens and between humans and their physical environment." (Unesco and a culture of peace, page 10)

Through a culture of peace, a better quality of life for everyone is achievable based on endogenous, equitable and sustainable development" A culture of peace cannot be achieved without the support and active participation of the global

community. As a multidisciplinary and multi-dimensional project, it should be worldwide in scope and linked to all aspect of society.(MS. Mdeisea)

Culture of Peace consists of values, attitudes, behaviours and ways of life based on non-violence and respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of every person.

Power grows from participation, dialogue and co-operation but not from the barrel of gun in a system based on culture of peace.

It rejects war, violence and conflicts in all its forms.

It promotes transition from a culture of war and violence into a culture of peace and non-violence.

It enables different people of different faiths and cultures to live together.

It aims to establish a society characterised by tolerance, intercultural understanding, cultural diversity and solidarity.

It strives to transform violent competition into friendly and peaceful cooperation.

It commits itself to build a world acceptable to all.

It creates environment in which the Excluded, Isolated and Marginalized can have opportunity to enjoy a living consistent with human dignity envisaged in the UN charter.

It builds trust and co-operation between peoples, between societies and between nations.

It encourages using words instead of swords to resolve conflicts.

It aims to fight against social, political and economic injustice, discrimination, and exploitation.

It aims to eliminate poverty, hunger and diseases.

It promotes political and democratic culture and transparency.

It aims to maintain and promote security for all human beings.

Culture of Peace as a Process:

Culture of Peace is a process, which grows from within, but it cannot be imposed

from outside. It is a dynamic process growing out of the common values, beliefs, customs and actions of the people. This process develops itself differently in each different country of the world depending upon history, tradition and culture of the society and nations concerned. A culture of peace cannot be constructed in one year or two because it is a long-term process, which expands with the dynamics of the time and gets itself, embedded in the tongue, brain and heart of the men and women. It is a peaceful process of the transformation of the war values and violence prone behaviours and attitudes into the values; behaviour and attitudes based on culture of peace. Thus, under the auspices of the culture of peace programmes new values, attitudes and behaviours will emerge as revitalised, refined, renewed and reborn ideals positively influencing the course of society, As a process, culture of peace must take a deep root in the minds of human beings pervading their character, nature, behaviour and attitudes. Sharing and free flow of information is an important aspect of the process of the culture of peace. "The culture of peace is a process in which the energies of people are channelled into a common struggle for the benefit of all". In a culture of peace, power comes not from the barrel of a gun, but from the participation, dialogue and cooperation. It encourages a caring society that protect the rights of those who are weak, such as children, the handicapped, the elderly and socially disadvantaged.

In a Culture of dialogue and a respect for human rights replace violence; intercultural understating and solidarity replace enemy images; sharing and the reef lo of information replace secrecy and partnership and the full empowerment of women succeed male domination. Dialogue occupies an important place in a culture of peace and serves as a important instrument of strengthening the forces of peace and intercultural understanding essentially needed for a society without violence, armed conflict, racial discrimination and violation of human rights. Culture of peace is a process that grows out of the believes and actions of people and develops differently in each country and region, depending upon history, culture and tradition. Intercultural projects such as Silk Road Project and other projects like Buddhist Route, Steppe Route, Maritime Route, Nomad's Route, Breaking the Silence etc., all initiated by UNESCO also play vital role contributory to promoting culture of peace. Living Together in Peace and Unity in Cultural diversity is possible only in a culture of peace condition. The forces of globalization talking place in the world today can also add strength to the objectives of culture peace.

Women's contribution in the promotion of Culture of Peace:

Culture of peace is consistent with the women's movement theme that equality, development, and peace are inextricably linked. There can be no listing peace without development and no sustainable development without full equality between man and women. Women as peace makers have been contributing to the building of a culture of peace in their multidimensional involvement by weaving a cultural tapestry of peace, observing the seven principles norms, values of compassion, concretization, constructiveness, conciliation, communion, commitment and contemplation which are indispensable in building this culture of peace (Adenike Yesufu, Ph. D)

Women have been playing very vitally role in fostering culture of peace in order to maintain peace and security in the society and to promote development through women empowerment. Some important conferences and seminars on the role of women in advancing the cause of the culture of peace have taken place in some countries involving leading women of the world. Expert Group Meeting on 'Women's Contribution to a Culture of Peace' held in Manila on 25-28 April, 1995, Pan-African Women's Conference on a Culture Peace and regional conference on 'Asian Women for a Culture of Peace' held in Hanoi, Vietnam from 6-7, December 2000 are the landmark event which have contribute to highlighting the role women in building Culture of peace.

Culture of Peace as a viable strategy for human co-existence

The demise of cold war and the dissolution of superpower blocs following the advent of global change around 1990 have brought a new era in international relations positively affecting the role of United Nations in its efforts of promoting peace keeping, peacemaking and peace building missions. As UNESCO has seen in culture of peace programme an indispensable strategy in its global efforts to achieve the goals of world peace, social justice and ethnic harmony it has assumed a dynamic role in fulfilling its ethical mission by "constructing the defences of peace in the minds of men". Culture of peace aims at strengthening the foundation of peace and constructing the defences of peace in the minds of men and women through educating for peace, human rights and tolerance; consolidating democratic norms and values; eliminating all kinds of discriminations; preventing conflicts and violence; advancing post-conflict peace-building and promoting cultural pluralism and intercultural dialogue. It

is a viable factor, which builds ethnic cohesion and unity in diversity. One of the important goals enshrined in the culture of peace programme is to strengthen the culture of universal respect for human rights and human dignity which cements relation among the people. Culture of peace aims to create a world where, irrespective of caste, creed and colour human beings co-exist in peace and harmony as one global family with a sense of sharing and caring for one others. The goal of culture of peace programme ensures a historic transition from a culture of war, violence, imposition and discrimination to a culture of peace, non-violence, dialogue, tolerance and solidarity. Words not sword, constitute the basic principle of the culture of peace. Therefore culture of peace can be regarded as a viable strategy for human co-existence on this planet.

As a movement, it is like a great river, fed from diverse streams from every tradition, culture, language, religion and political perspective. Its goal is a world in which this rich diversity of cultures exists together in an atmosphere marked by understanding, tolerance and solidarity. (Evolving Concept of a Culture of peace) (Basic Principles).

The culture of peace represents an everyday attitude of non-violent rebellion, of peaceful dissent, of firm determination to defend human rights and human dignity. The goal of culture of peace, reflecting the movement which brings it about, is a world in which the rich diversity of cultures is cause for appreciation and cooperation. A culture of peace must be based on the universal values of respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights and equality between women and men.

Conclusion:

The Year 2000, ushering in a new era of the culture of peace holds landmark significance as far as the goal of peace building is concerned through a new culture capable of pervading the attitudes, behaviour, way of life and values of human beings. The proclamation of 2000 as the *International Year for the Culture of Peace* and of the period from 2001-2010 as the International Decade for the Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World by United Nations on July 24th 2003 is itself a big challenge posed to the organisations, global or regional or local, to their working for the world peace exclusively for collaborating in the advancement of the peace building task in the 21st century. Grounded in humanistic vision of supreme importance the culture of peace

programmes in the first ten years of the 21st century has laid the foundation for the construction of the pillars of peace, freedom, solidarity and democracy upon which, an international society envisaged in the constitution of UNESCO, can be built and can be promoted with all human beings living together in peace, prosperity and harmony and promoting respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, cultural diversity and intercultural understanding and should be acquired.

Peace is not only the absence of war and violence. It is a value which must permeate every day life. Each individual must cultivate peace, learn it and transform it into his/her daily life. To transform the conflicts of every day life into co-operation and to make peace and non-violence the integral part of daily life is to realise the goals incorporated in the culture of peace. Culture of Peace is a Global Movement launched as a viable strategy to transform the culture of war, violence, intolerance and authoritarianism into the culture of peace, non-violence, tolerance and democracy exerting pervasive influence on the human attitudes, behaviours and way of thinking and way of life. Education, science, culture and communication are widely recognised as the vital keys to achieving the goals of the culture of peace and shaping the future of human society envisioned by Unesco. Building a culture of peace means empowering people through their access to education, through the scientific and technological knowledge, through the strengthening of press freedom and through the promotion and protection of their cultural heritage and diversity. Educating for peace constitutes a vital factor for building a culture of peace. In the promotion of a culture of peace lies the bright future of human beings who can co-exist in friendship, harmony, prosperity and unity for many centuries to come. Unesco steps into 21st century with culture of peace as its strong and constructive strategy to realise its loftiest mission of constructing defences of peace in the minds of men and women leaving no room to war to reappear in future in human society. The ideals embodied in the culture of peace can serve as the guiding beacon for entire mankind for many-many years to come and perpetuate peaceful coexistence of mankind.

Clearly, one major theme in building a culture of peace lies in the dismantling of a culture of war. (Toh Swee-Hin)

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NCWA activities 2010-2011

- 1. The 63nd Anniversary of Council was held on June 28, 2010, at the Hotel Malla, Kahmandu. The chief guest of the programme Rt. Hon'ble Prime Minister Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal and Guest of Honour Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Hon'ble Ms. Sujata Koirala delivered their respective speeches on "Foreign Policy of Nepal". The Annual Journal 2009-2010 of NCWA was released by the Chief Guest on the occasion.
- 2. Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Council was held on September 20, 2010 (Bhadra 4, 2067) at Orchid Hotel, Tripureshwor. The meeting passed the annual budget and proposed programme for the fiscal year 2010/2011. It approved auditor's report and financial report for 2010/2011 and appointed auditor for the next fiscal year.
- 3. The Council organized a talk programme on "Extradition and the Rule of Law" on August 31, 2010 at NCWA Seminar Hall, Pulchowk. Mr. Dave Sadoff, American Bar Association, Nepal Country Director and an expert on international law, shed light on the said topic on the occasion.
- 4. The NCWA Executive Committee Election was held on December 11, 2010. The elected members included President, Mr. Tika Jung Thapa, Vice-President Mr. Hemanta Kharel (uncontested), Secretary General Prof. Dr. Shreedhar Gautam, Secretary Miss Jaya Sharma, and Treasure Dr. Rama Bashyal, Mr. Bishwa Kanta Mainali, Mr. Tej Prasad Gauchan, Mr. Buddhi Narayan Shrestha, Dr. Uma Kant Silwal, Dr. Rajendra Bahadur Shrestha, and Mr. Prabhu Roy Yadav were elected on the executive members. On Nov. 10, 2010 three members Election Committee was formed under the convenership of Mr. Chandra Kanta Gyawali, Member of NCWA, to hold election for Executive Committee for the next three years. Other Members of the Committee were Mr. Pawan Raj Supari and Ms. Anjana Shakya.

- 5. Hand over and take over function of NCWA was held on January 8, 2011, at Rice and Bowl, Tripureshwor, Kathmandu. Outgoing Secretary General Mr. Ramesh Singh of the Council handed over the Council's minute book to the incoming Secretary General Prof. Dr. Shreedhar Gautam on the occasion.
 - The Election Committee gave certificate to the newly elected executive members of the Council. Similarly, President of the Council Mr. Tika Jung Thapa gave away letter of appreciation to the members of the election committee for successfully conducting the election. Past presidents of the Council Prof. Dr. Soorya Lal Amatya, Mr. Keshav Raj Jha, Prof. Dr. Panna Kaji Amatya, and Prof. Dr. Pradeep Khadka, spoke on the occasion.
- 6. Nepal Council of World Affairs organized a talk programme on "Nepal-Sri Lanka Relations" on Friday, January 21, 2011 at its Seminar Hall, Pulchowk. H.E. Mr. Thosapala Hewage, Ambassador, of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to Nepal, spoke on the various aspects of Srilankan foreign policy, especially bilateral relations between the two countries.
- 7. A talk programme was organized by the Council on "Development impact of preventing diabetes, heart diseases, kidney, hypertension, through diet, exercise, and stress management: International best practices" on March 29, 2011, at NCWA Seminar Hall, Pulchowk. Dr. Rajendra Bahadur Shrestha, International Health Consultant and Executive Member, NCWA, spoke on the said topic.
- 8. On the eve of the 55th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Nepal and the Russian Federation, a talk programme on "the Foreign Policy of Russia in the context of Nepal-Russia Relations "was organized on April 28, 2011, jointly by Nepal Council of World Affairs, Russian Centre of Science and Culture and Institute of Foreign Affairs. The Chief Guest Hon'ble Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Deputy Prime Minister, and H.E. Mr. Sergey V. Velichkin, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Nepal spoke on the occasion. The function was chaired by Mr. Tika Jung Thapa, President, NCWA and Executive Director, IFA. Mr. Stanislav Simakov, Director of Russian Centre of Science and Culture and Mr. Hiranya Lal Shrestha, former Nepalese Ambassador to Russian Federation also spoke on Nepal Russia relations.

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Activities Photos



Ambassador of China, Sri Lanka, and other diplomats are seen in the front row on the occasion of the 63rd Anniversary of NCWA, on June 28, 2010

Chief Guest, Prime Minister
Mr. Madhav K. Nepal,
with President, Mr. Tika
Jung Thapa & Secretary
General, Mr. Ramesh Singh
on the occasion of the 63rd
Anniversary of NCWA on
June 28, 2010





Guest of honour, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Ms. Sujata Koirala, releasing the NCWA Annual Journal 2009-2010 at a function to mark the 63rd Anniversary Celebration on June 28, 2010



Chief Guest, Prime Minister Mr. Madhav K. Nepal, addressing the Council on the occasion to mark the 63rd Anniversary of NCWA, on June 28, 2010

Prime Minister Mr.
Madhav K. Nepal lighting
a traditional lamp to
inaugurate the 63rd
Anniversary of NCWA on
June 28, 2010





A section of Members participating in the Annual General Meeting on September 20, 2010.



Executive Committee Members in the Annual General Meeting on September 20, 2010.

Executive Committee Members in the Annual General Meeting on September 20, 2010.





Members of the Council looking for names in the voter's list in the NCWA Executive Member Election on December 11, 2010.



Past Presidents Prof. Panna Kaji Amatya and Prof. Surendra Bahadur Shrestha coming out after casting their votes in the Election on December 11, 1010

Candidates counting the vote after the Election on December 11, 1010





Members of the Council are seen at the NCWA premises on December 11, 1010



Convenor Mr. Chandra K. Gyawali reading general rules regarding valid and invalid ballot paper before counting of the votes on December 11, 1010

Counting of the votes secured by the candidates in the Election on December 11, 1010





Executive Members of NCWA, declared as elected, by the Election Committee after counting votes on December 11, 1010



Outgoing Secretary General, Mr. Ramesh Singh hands over NCWA minute to incoming Secretary General, Prof. Dr. Shreedhar Gautam at a handover and takeover function on January 8, 2011

Prof. Dr. Soorya Lal Amatya wishes for the successful tenure of the new Executive Committee at a hand over and take over function on January 8, 2011





President Mr. Tika Jung Thapa presents letter of appreciation to the convenor of Election Committee at a hand-over and take- over function on January 8, 2011



President Mr. Tika Jung Thapa gives his remarks at the handover and takeover function on January 8, 2011

A Group photo of newly elected Executive Committee member with Election Committee members and NCWA staff at the handover and takeover function on January 8, 2011





H.E. Mr. Thosapala Hewage with President, Mr. Tika Jung Thapa in the NCWA office on January 21, 2011



H.E. Mr. Thosapala Hewage , Ambassador of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka responding to the quries from the floor at a talk on "Nepal-Sri Lanka Relations" on January 21, 2011

H.E. Mr. Thosapala Hewage with President, Vice President and Secretary General of NCWA at a talk programme on "Nepal-Sri Lanka Relations on January 21, 2011





A section of audience at a talk on "Nepal-Sri Lanka Relations on January 21, 2011



Chief Guest, Deputy Prime Minister Hon'ble Krishna Bahadur Mahara, with President Mr. Tika Jung Thapa, Russian Ambassador H.E. Mr. Sergey V. Velichkin, Former Nepalese Ambassador Mr. Hiranya Lal Shrestha, Director, RCC, Mr. Stanislav Simakov and Vice President, NCWA, Mr. Hemanta Kharel on April 28, 2011

Chief Guest, Deputy PM Hon'ble Krishna Bahadur Mahara addressing the function organized to mark the 55th Anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between Nepal and Russian Federation on April 28, 2011.





A Section of participants at a talk on "The Foreign Policy of Russia in the context of Nepal Russia Relations" on April 28, 2011