

# International Seminar on Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region





2081 Bhadra 28-30 (13-15 September 2024)

Kathmandu, Nepal

(A Report of an International Seminar)



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**A Report  
of  
An International Seminar  
on  
Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region**

Held  
on  
2081 Bhadra 28-30 (13-15 September 2024)  
Kathmandu, Nepal

Organised  
by  
Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP)  
Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)  
National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC)  
Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS), TU  
Climate Alliance of Himalayan Communities (CAHC)  
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)  
Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Shillong

Copies: 1000

Edition: First, 2082 (2025)

Distributor

Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP)

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Printed at

Nepal Printing Support, Anamnagar # 01-5706821

## Acknowledgement

A three-day international seminar on "Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region" was organised in Kathmandu on 2081 Bhadra 28-30 (13-15 September 2024). The concept of the seminar was developed in the initiation of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP) and later it was joined by four institutions of Nepal; National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS)-Tribhuvan University, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Nepal, Climate Alliance of Himalayan Communities (CAHC) and two institutions from India; The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Shillong.

A three-day international seminar on Changing Environment in the Himalayan region, with participation of intellectuals from Nepal, India, Bangladesh and Myanmar. The seminar deeply analysed the ongoing environmental changes in the Himalayas and their overall impacts. The seminar emphasized on the need for strategic actions and concluded that it is a must to address these challenges. We express our gratitude to all organizations and their leaders in Nepal and India for supporting NeNAP's commitment to organizing such programs and making it a reality.

The Himalayan region, considered a sacred place mostly for Hindus and Buddhists has left a deep imprint and profound impact on the human civilization of the South Asian and the regions surrounding the Himalayas. Therefore, the environmental changes occurring in the Himalayan region have become a matter of great concern for the future of human life. In this context, Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal believes that this international seminar organized with the active involvement of institutions from Nepal and India will serve as a guiding framework for future strategies.

In the preparation of the book with a brief glimpse of the inauguration and closing ceremonies of the seminar, we as an institution sincerely express our gratitude to Rajshree Mishra for her assistance in audio transcribe, as well as to Mr. Deepak Kumar Adhikari, and Dr. Premraj Neupane for their contributions in editing the book. Finally, we express our heartfelt gratitude to all the officials and volunteers of the co-organizers, the officials, executive committee members and volunteers of NeNAP as well as the officials of NTNC who helped to make the inaugural programme grand.

Keshav Raj Panthee, PhD  
Director, Research and Publications  
Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP)

# Concept of the Seminar

## Background

The "Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region" presents numerous global challenges that impact various issues across high mountain countries. Climate change and glacial melt in the Himalayas are affecting the flow of major rivers, and increasing the frequency and severity of natural disasters such as glacial lake outburst floods, landslides, and flash floods. Another challenge faced by the global community is biodiversity loss. Habitat loss and changing ecosystems are putting pressure on wildlife, leading to declines in biodiversity. Furthermore, these environmental changes are negatively impacting food security, livestock, health, and the overall well-being of local communities.

South Asia, home to a significant portion of the Himalayan range with its breathtaking natural beauty, is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The region relies heavily on the Himalayas for water resources, agriculture, and livelihoods. As climate change accelerates glacial melt, the resulting risks to water security, agriculture, and biodiversity become increasingly severe. This situation urgently calls for continuing collaboration among South Asian countries to develop and implement effective adaptation strategies.

The Himalayan glaciers act as a critical water source for major rivers that support millions of people downstream. However, with glaciers receding at an unprecedented rate, water availability during dry seasons is becoming unpredictable, jeopardizing both agriculture and drinking water supplies. The agricultural sector, a backbone of the South Asian economy, faces growing uncertainty as altered precipitation patterns and increased frequency of extreme weather events disrupt traditional farming practices.

Transboundary water issues are growing in severity, with significant negative impacts on livelihoods and human welfare. There is an urgent need for continued dialogue to raise awareness and ongoing discussions to develop effective policy frameworks.

Additionally, the rich biodiversity of the Himalayas is under threat. Habitat loss due to changing temperatures and erratic weather patterns endangers numerous plant and animal species unique to this region. Protecting this biodiversity is crucial not only for ecological balance but also for the sustenance of communities that depend on these resources for their livelihoods.

Given these challenges, it is imperative for countries in the region to engage in continuous dialogue and cooperative efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Effective policy frameworks, backed by scientific research and local knowledge, are essential to enhance resilience and ensure sustainable development. Collaborative initiatives can lead to innovative solutions, such as integrated water resource management and climate-resilient agricultural practices, which are vital for securing the future of South Asia's environment and its people.

As governments, the UN, and other organizations actively work together to anticipate these challenges, the Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal (NeNAP) in collaboration with Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University (TU) (CNAS-TU), Climate Alliance of Himalayan Communities (CAHC) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is organizing a three-day seminar with multifaceted objectives aimed at benefiting both participants and the organizing body.

The seminar will highlight the importance of transboundary cooperation among South Asian countries to manage shared natural resources and address common challenges. It will also emphasize the role of international organizations, such as the UN, in supporting regional efforts to enhance resilience and sustainable development.

By bringing together experts, policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders, this seminar aims to foster a comprehensive understanding of climate change impacts in the Himalayas and promote collective action to mitigate these effects. This seminar is not only a learning opportunity but also a call to action for all stakeholders involved in safeguarding the future of the Himalayan region and its communities.

The seminar will focus on knowledge sharing and the dissemination of information. Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal (NeNAP) and the all collaborating organizations intend to provide a platform for experts to share their latest research, findings, and insights on the changing environment in the Himalayan region, highlighting recent developments in the field. The organizers aim to update participants and facilitate the exchange of information, enabling them to learn from each other's experiences and perspectives. This platform will help participants develop new skills and improve existing ones. It will provide opportunities for participants to network with peers, industry leaders, and potential collaborators, fostering professional relationships that can be beneficial in the long term.

Additionally, the seminar encourages dialogue, collaboration, and debate on critical issues related to the changing environment in the Himalayan Region, allowing for a diverse range of viewpoints to be considered. Moreover, it aims to promote collaborative initiatives and partnerships that can lead to innovative solutions and advancements in the field. Raising awareness, policy advocacy, and exploring problem-solving approaches fulfill educational purposes and contribute to enhancing knowledge and fostering professional growth. These efforts also promote collaboration and innovation within the field of Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region.

### **Seminar Themes**

The core themes of the "Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region" seminar are diverse and address various critical issues facing the region. Here are the primary themes:

- ❑ Climate Change and Glacial Melt: Impacts on Natural Resources (Water, Forest and Minerals) and Sustainable Management
- ❑ Biodiversity Loss and Conservation Challenges
- ❑ Sustainable Development, Agriculture and Livelihoods
- ❑ Transboundary Water Resources, Management and Cooperation
- ❑ Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience
- ❑ Policy Frameworks for Sustainable Development, Livelihoods and Regional Cooperation
- ❑ Indigenous Knowledge and Community Resilience/Community and Cultural Perspectives

These themes highlight a comprehensive approach to addressing the complex and interrelated challenges posed by climate change and environmental degradation in the Himalayan Region, emphasizing the need for collaborative, multi-disciplinary efforts to ensure a sustainable future.

A comprehensive three-day seminar will bring together subject matter experts, academicians, journalists, research scholars, practitioners, and representatives from both government and non-government organizations. Participants will engage in meaningful communication and education with one another. There will be representation from South Asia and other parts of the world to elaborate on the emerging issues related to the Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region.

## **Structure of the Seminar**

Day 1: Inaugural Session

Day 2: Technical Session

Day 3: Technical Session and Valedictory Session

## **The Organizers**

### **Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP)**

Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP) is an independent interdisciplinary research organization dedicated to fostering socio-economic and sustainable development in Nepalese society. It aims to contribute nation building by addressing the contemporary socio-economic issues with the engagement of think-tanks from various branches of knowledge: Education, Economics, Regional Development, International Relations, Trade, Information Technology and Security. As a leading research institution, NeNAP offers holistic solutions to multifaceted social problems by providing research-based inputs and necessary support to various stakeholders, including government institutions. Its primary focus lies in domestic, bilateral, and multilateral policies, providing policy recommendations for government frameworks and implementation.

NeNAP, as a prominent research institute for Nepal's Track II policy, conducts national and international dialogues, seminars, and political programs. Additionally, it conducts research and publishes literature on a wide range of topics, including social, educational, economic, environmental, security, cultural, artistic, philosophical, and domestic issues. NeNAP also addresses bilateral and multilateral affairs, external relations, and international policies. Furthermore, it actively encourages youth and the general public to preserve Nepal's socio-cultural heritage and uphold value-based social life.

### **Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)**

Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) was established in the year of 1969 by the Government of India to promote research in social sciences in the country. ICSSR provide grants for projects, fellowships, international collaboration, organizing seminar/conference, capacity building, survey, publications etc. to promote research in social sciences in India. ICSSR has developed ICSSR Data Service to serve as a national data service for promoting powerful research environment through sharing and reuse of data among social science community in India. Documentation center of ICSSR - National Social Science Documentation Centre (NASSDOC) - provides library and information support services to researchers in social sciences.

### **National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC)**

The National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), established in 1982 by a Legislative Act, is an autonomous and not-for-profit organization mandated to work in the field of nature conservation in Nepal. Over the past decades, NTNC has successfully undertaken more than three hundred small and large projects on nature and biodiversity conservation, clean energy and climate change, as well as cultural heritage protection, ecotourism, and sustainable development through active engagement of local communities. NTNC works closely with the Government of Nepal in the management of protected areas by directly managing three mountain protected areas and assisting the government in all the low land parks. Our research outcomes have been especially instrumental in evidence-based decision making at the policy level. The Trust's experience over the years has shown that conservation efforts in low income economies, such as Nepal, cannot be successful, much less sustainable, unless the needs and welfare of the local people are addressed. Holistic and integrated conservation and development program with active people's participation aimed at promoting local guardianship have been the focus of our activities.

### **Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS)**

Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS) established as Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies in 1972 and converted into CNAS in 1977, is one of the four research centers of Tribhuvan University.

It is dedicated for research activity in the area of humanities and social sciences. The major objectives of the center are to: plan and conduct research on the problems of national integration and the impact of modernization; promote and undertake studies on current development issues, ethnic diversities, tradition, and change in political values, and cultural studies of Nepal and other Asian countries; undertake issue-specific research on environment studies, gender studies, population studies, and migration studies, applied linguistic and socio-linguistic studies; encourage academic exchanges with other research organizations both within and outside Nepal; act as a venue for contact, affiliation, and coordination of research activities of Nepalese and foreign scholars working on Nepalese studies; maintain a comprehensive bibliographic database of Nepal and SAARC and South Asia; organize national as well as international seminars on current political and security issues; and disseminate research works on Nepal through publications.

### **Climate Alliance of Himalayan Communities (CAHC)**

Himalayan communities are organized through the civil society organization "Climate Alliance of Himalayan Communities" (CAHC) which acts as a common platform for the members of Himalayan communities across Nepal. CAHC is a legally registered organization with the appropriate authorities of the Government of Nepal. Its executive board comprises community leaders from most of the mountain districts that were affected by the 2015 earthquake. Each executive committee member has created a sub-committee of 15-25 community leaders in their respective areas. In the wake of the earthquake, CAHC is quickly expanding its network of community leaders in some of the unrepresented districts.

### **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**

International Union for Conservation of Nature is a membership Union of government and civil society organizations. It works to advance sustainable development and create a just world that values and conserves nature. Created in 1948, IUCN is now the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge, resources and reach of our more than 1,400 member organizations and 16,000 experts. This diversity and expertise makes IUCN the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.



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# **Inaugural Function**

## **Dr. Naresh Subedi**

This seminar is jointly organised by Neeti Anusandhsan Pratishtan, Nepal (NeNAP), Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Shillong, National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS)-Tribhuvan University, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Nepal, Climate Alliance of Himalayan Communities (CAHC). The National Trust for Nature Conservation is one of the largest conservation organizations in Nepal. It works for people, nature, and wildlife. Our mission is to balance the needs of people, development, and wildlife. We also manage the pre-protected areas of Nepal in the mountains that cover around 33 percent of the protected area system of Nepal. Our focus is on enhancing scientific knowledge and increasing the resonance of nature and communities to cope with the changing climatic conditions in the Himalayas. The Himalayas are home to over 2 billion people. Our collective actions are required to cope with the people's planetary crisis in this region. In this seminar, we will be sharing knowledge and experience on several climatic areas, including climate change and glacier melt, forest and biodiversity, sustainable development goals and disaster management, water resource management and indigenous people, and so on. Finally, I would like to thank the Honorable Minister of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba for giving us this valuable time and all the guests and participants for joining this event. I wish you a great stay in Kathmandu and I wish for the success of this seminar. Thank you.

***Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region: An International Seminar***

The international seminar on the “Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region” addresses a range of global challenges affecting both high mountain countries and the broader international community. The seminar will explore the impact of glacial melt in the Hindu Kush Himalayas on major Asian rivers such as the Ganges, Brahmaputra, Yangtze, Yellow, Mekong, and Indus. Furthermore, Lake Manasarovar, the source of several major rivers in Asia, is significantly impacted by the changing environmental conditions in the Himalayan region. This phenomenon leads to significant changes in water supply, increased flooding risks, agricultural challenges, and sea level rise. It also causes ecosystem disruptions and heightened competition for resources, all of which have profound and far-reaching consequences for daily life in the region.

The seminar will focus on the sustainable management of natural resources, including water, forests, and minerals. It will also reach inside into issues such as biodiversity loss and conservation challenges. Additional discussions will cover eco-tourism, sustainable development, the management and cooperation of transboundary water resources, as well as disaster risk reduction, resilience, and regional cooperation.

Economic and health impacts, including strains on local economies and health issues arising from environmental changes, will be presented during this international seminar. Additionally, the seminar will explore the role of indigenous knowledge, community resilience, and cultural perspectives in addressing the evolving environmental landscape in the Himalayas.

Addressing these transnational challenges requires a multifaceted approach. This includes developing comprehensive policy frameworks, fostering ongoing dialogue, advancing human resource development, and securing financial investment. Enforcing environmental assessment policies before investing in infrastructure in these vulnerable mountainous areas is crucial. Legal reforms, along with heightened awareness and advocacy among national and international stakeholders, are also essential components of this approach.

The cultural and societal impacts in the Himalayas are closely tied to environmental changes, which disrupt traditional ways of life and lead to cultural erosion and social challenges. Migration pressures resulting from these shifts can cause overcrowding in urban areas and exacerbate socio-economic issues.

The Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Social Science Research, National Trust for Nature Conservation, Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University, Climate Alliance of Himalayan Communities, International Union for Conservation of Nature, and Indian Institute of Management, Shillong, is organizing a three-day seminar to address these issues. This seminar aims to provide actionable insights into environmental challenges, develop comprehensive policy recommendations, and enhance stakeholder collaboration. It will also focus on integrating indigenous knowledge into environmental management and outline a roadmap for future dialogue, human resource development, and financial investment to support sustainable practices and infrastructure development.

A global approach to climate action is essential to tackle these challenges. This includes efforts to reduce emissions, adapt to environmental changes, and support vulnerable communities. International cooperation, alongside effective local and national strategies, is key to managing the intricate and interconnected effects of climate change in the Himalayas. Regional and global stakeholders, especially Nepal and India, play a vital role in overcoming these challenges in South Asia.

As we face the complexities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the increasing natural calamities and humanitarian crises highlight the urgent need to deepen our understanding and respect for the environment. Reflecting on our rich cultural heritage, we find timeless wisdom on living harmoniously with nature and honoring the biodiversity that sustains us. This profound connection to our past guides us towards a more sustainable and respectful relationship with our environment.

*समुद्रवसने देवि पर्वतस्तनमण्डले ।* Every day, when we wake up, we offer our prayers to the Earth, asking for forgiveness for stepping upon it and expressing our gratitude for providing a foundation that upholds human dignity.

Our values and traditions are deeply intertwined with the spiritual significance of the Himalayas, which we revere as the sacred abode of gods and goddesses. These majestic mountains are not merely physical landscapes but are imbued with a divine presence, bridging the earthly and spiritual realms. Each morning, before the first rays of sunlight touch the peaks, we offer our prayers and express our gratitude to the Himalayas. This ritual underscores our profound respect for the natural world and its central role in our spiritual and daily lives. देवतात्मा हिमालय, हिमवतखण्ड, भारतवर्ष, केदारखण्ड are often considered spiritual souls, embodying a profound connection between the earthly and the divine. They inspire a deep sense of peace and reflection, reminding us of the eternal and sublime forces that shape our world.

Similarly, the Himalayas and the oceans are cherished as guardians of the earth, their majestic presence serving as a reminder of the delicate balance that sustains life. We honor these natural elements not only for their physical grandeur but also for their spiritual significance as protectors and nurturers of life. Our ancient traditions teach us to view these elements with deep admiration and respect, recognizing that our well-being is closely linked to their health. This deep connection, reflected in ancient texts, rituals, and mythology, illustrates a harmonious relationship between the ocean and the mountains as symbols of the divine and the natural order. By reconnecting with these time-honored practices and beliefs, we rediscover the profound wisdom embedded in our cultural heritage. These teachings guide us to honor biodiversity, embrace environmental stewardship, and maintain a harmonious relationship with the natural world. Embracing these ancient values provides a beacon of hope as we face contemporary environmental and humanitarian challenges, reaffirming our commitment to preserving the sacred balance of our planet.

The Bhagavad Gita beautifully highlights the interconnectedness of all life and the importance of living in harmony with our environment. By embracing our role as stewards of the earth, we align with the Gita's teachings on respect, balance, and responsibility, as emphasized in Chapters 12 and 13. *अद्वेषता सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।*

Our traditional values also underscore the significance of respecting culture and local communities. This involves cherishing and honoring local traditions, customs, and rituals as vital elements of a community's identity and heritage. Engaging with local communities with an open heart, appreciating their wisdom and perspectives, and supporting the preservation of cultural practices are essential. Promoting practices that sustain both cultural heritage and environmental resources ensures their longevity for future generations. Upholding these values fosters mutual respect and collaboration, which are crucial for preserving and celebrating our diverse cultures and communities.

Mountains, towering at the highest points on Earth, are profound symbols of cultural and civilizational significance. They are revered not only for their majestic natural beauty but also for their deep spiritual and cultural importance. These mountains are more than geographical landmarks; they embody cultural pride and spiritual significance, reflecting the enduring relationship between humanity and the sublime forces of nature.

It has become a global icon for mountaineers and adventurers who seek to conquer its challenging slopes, symbolizing human courage, perseverance, and determination.

Thank you for your invaluable contributions to our discussions during this regional seminar. I hope we can carry the momentum from this conference into our upcoming international seminar on the changing environment in the Himalayan regions. I like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the organizers for giving me the opportunity to speak on this special occasion. As global citizens, we take great pride in saying that Mount Everest is the crowning jewel of our shared world, symbolizing the unity and spirit of the global community.

In conclusion, I find profound meaning in Rig Veda 10.121.4, *यस्येमे हिमवन्तो महित्वा यस्य समुद्रं रसया सहाहुः । यस्येमाः प्रदिशोः यस्य बाहूः कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेमः ॥* This deeply resonates with me, highlighting the sacredness of nature—mountains, rivers, and the ocean. This verse envisions snow-capped mountains as being worshiped by the rivers and the ocean, symbolizing their sacred relationship with the universe. It serves as a powerful reminder for us to revere and honor these natural wonders. We are privileged to be surrounded by such beauty, yet it is not our right to harm or exploit it. May we cherish and protect these gifts with profound gratitude and respect. Thank you!

The last facial extend of Himalayas pans across eight countries of the Asian continents and is a source for ten major river systems providing water for drinking, irrigation and power for over 2 billion people in Asia which is nearly 20 percent of the world population today. The area that encompasses Hindukush Himalaya, mountain range and the Tibetan plateaus is popularly known as the third pole and as we all know it contains the largest reserves of fresh water outside the north pole and south pole .

The global community is currently trying to understand the nexus between climate change and the mountain vulnerability. Alarming bells are already ringing on the fate of Himalayan biodiversity and the services that it provides. Recent scientific understanding laid by the inter-governmental panel on climate change IPCC is that global change is happening and presents challenges for local ecosystems. These include the prospect of more severe weather, longer droughts, higher temperatures, heat waves, changes in local biodiversity and reduce surface water quantity and quality. These changes will have impact on everything from natural landscape to human health and socio economic conditions of our people. Our mountains are home to some of the most threatened species as well as for us people who are highly dependent on biological resources.

The eastern himalayas where I come from extend from central Nepal to north west China, a total area of nearly 5,25,000 sq.km . The region expands wide spectrum of ecological zones and contains parts of 3 global biodiversity hotspots. The region from Hindu Kush to Malacca Strait is known globally as the most diverse ecosystem in the world. The region's complex topography and extreme altitudinal gradience from less than 300 m to more than 8000 m higher over few 100 km have contributed to the highly varied vegetation patterns and also has given rise to genetic differences among population there by contributing to the exceptionally rich array of biodiversity. The himalayan region including the Tibetan plateaus has shown consistent warning traits during the past 100 years. Let's understand in detail about the climatic characteristics of the eastern himalayan. Because of observations and insufficient theoretical attention given to this region, climate change will have a range of direct and indirect impacts on both environment and the people of eastern Himalayan region.

Climate change will have a significant effect in all natural ecosystem but the impacts will be far greater on already stressed ecosystems of eastern himalayas. The region is particularly vulnerable to climate change due to its ecological fragility and economic marginality both. Although habitat loss has so far primarily threatened the low land areas. High land species

in intact habitats are now facing the additional threat of warming temperature which increasingly pushes them towards the mountain tops. What will happen to those species that are already in mountain tops? That's a big challenge. In addition to conserving the habitats, it is now becoming important to manage the likely vulnerable habitats. Problems associated with modernization like green gas emission, air pollution, land use conversion, deforestation and land degradations are already into mountain regions. The out migration of the human resource has decreased economic activities in the rural mountain areas. Thus, landscapes and communities in the mountain regions are being simultaneously affected by rapid environmental and socio-economic threats.

A major area of serious impact is the agricultural production i.e the direct or indirect source of livelihood of the 70 percent of the region's population. The management of climate hazards and climate change impacts in agricultural sector will be critical for the viability of the local communities. The positive impact of climate change such as longer growing seasons and faster growing rates at higher altitudes may be upset by negative factors which are changes in established reproductive patterns, migration routes, the ecosystem relationships and not least the water availability. Indirect effects will include potentially detrimental changes in diseaseous pests and weeds, the effects of which has not been yet quantified.

There is a growing recognition that overall goal of environment and development are not in conflict but are indeed same viz. improvement of the human quality of life or welfare of the present and future generations. Putting people first and enabling them to meet their needs can be taken to reduce the degradation and to maintain the potential for sustainable development at the higher levels of productivity. The focus must be on the needs, capabilities, priorities and involvement of the people who are supposed to benefit from this development. At the end, I would say further strategic approach is needed for detailed research on different ecosystems that survives in this vision and functions to estimate the potential impact of climate change in this region.

As institute, IIM Shillong is committed towards the sustainability of this region and therefore, we thought this apt for us to be a part of this effort and we'd be able to provide the ongoing support to this effect.

Thank you once again to the organisers for allowing me to share my thoughts on this very important subject.

The Himalayas, contrary to popular belief, are not a homogenous geographical feature. They encompass diverse terrains—plateaus, high mountains, valleys, and the lower Himalayan ranges—each representing distinct ecologies, resources, and political identities.

This mountain range, home to one of the world's oldest civilizations, is also currently at the heart of two of the fastest-growing economies: India and China. Politically, the region is highly diverse. In my view, when we talk about the Himalayas, we must include the Karakoram, Hindu Kush, and related ranges. The political geography of the Himalayas spans the Central Asian Republics, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, the Tibetan Plateau and regions of China, Myanmar, and beyond.

What happens in the Himalayas affects not only these countries but also regions far beyond. The range stands at the intersection of South Asia and China. Historically, the Himalayas were seen as natural barriers—impregnable fortresses—and thus, the flora and fauna remained largely undisturbed. This may be one reason why three of the most important religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism—revere the Himalayas.

The region is home to numerous indigenous cultures, languages, dialects, and ethnicities. It hosts a unique ecology that has long sustained rich biodiversity, which in turn has supported human civilizations.

Naturally rich in resources, the region has seen a growing scramble in recent years to harness them. The Himalayas are the source of ten of Asia's largest and longest rivers, including the Irrawaddy, Brahmaputra, Ganges, Indus, Salween, Yangtze, Yellow, Mekong, Amu Darya, and others. These rivers provide water, food, and energy to nearly 4 billion people across South Asia—nearly 40–50% of the global population.

However, unregulated exploitation of these transboundary resources to meet industrial, agricultural, and urban demands threatens to disrupt the fragile environmental equilibrium. It also risks exacerbating social, economic, and geopolitical tensions.

Technological advancements have breached natural barriers that once protected the region. The Himalayas are no longer an impregnable frontier. Trains now reach Lhasa, and future networks aim to link cities like Kathmandu and Gilgit. New highways are under construction, and old ones are being expanded. Airstrips have been built, and aircraft now take off daily from remote locations.

As connectivity improves, populations in the region are increasingly exposed to external influences. Traditional paradigms that emphasized nature preservation are being challenged by consumerist ideologies promoting unrestrained resource exploitation.

Can any one country address these challenges alone? We are sovereign states, but deeply interconnected. What happens in Nepal affects India; what happens in India affects Bangladesh; and what happens in China affects Nepal, India, and Bangladesh. Climate change—rising temperatures, receding glaciers, snowline shifts, and frequent glacial lake outburst floods—is already impacting all Himalayan states.

The time has come for the Himalayan community to unite and create mechanisms to address shared challenges. We cannot act in isolation. A collaborative system is necessary—perhaps a Himalayan Region Association, with a permanent secretariat based in one of the Himalayan countries.

To conclude, these are my personal views, expressed in the brief time I had. They do not represent any organization with which I am affiliated. Thank you.

Over the years, I have travelled widely, not only listening to but also presenting perspectives on climate change and its profound impact on the Hindu Kush Himalayan region. Much of what I had intended to say has already been covered by previous speakers, so I would like to offer a few additional reflections on why our environment is changing.

We often repeat the same points like a mantra: glaciers are melting faster, floods and disasters are increasing, global temperatures are rising. Yet, we seldom pause to ask: Why is this happening? How much of this can be attributed to global warming alone, and how much stems from our own actions — or inactions? We are quick to point fingers at forces beyond our control, yet we repeatedly make avoidable mistakes, often knowingly.

Science and indigenous knowledge together have given us ample evidence that we must act decisively to halt environmental degradation and reduce climate-induced disasters. But instead of taking actions, we are always ready with the same set of excuses. We do not lack information — we fail to provide access to it. Let us commit to sharing information widely and using it wisely. We do not lack innovation or technology — yet rather than applying what we have, we chase the next breakthrough, waiting for artificial intelligence to deliver solutions that may not even be practical.

Another common excuse is inadequate policy. In fact, our Hindu Kush Himalayan region has some of the most progressive policies on the environment, climate change, and natural resources. I am sure the policymakers here will agree: we do not suffer from poor policy, but from poor implementation. When it comes to investment, while we wait for large-scale funding from abroad, we overlook what we already have at our local, provincial, and regional levels. We must recognise and use our existing resources more efficiently.

Development agencies continue to extend strong support to Nepal. Her Excellency, the Hon'ble Foreign Minister, knows well that Nepal is an attractive destination for investors and has the potential to mobilise even greater external resources. And when we speak of limited human capacity, I can say with confidence that some of the best minds come from this region. We simply need to create enabling conditions for our own scientists and experts to stay and serve here.

Finally, we must acknowledge one of our biggest challenges: lack of coordination. We need genuine cooperation at all levels. Even within a single country, institutions working

on the same issue often fail to collaborate. Take the water sector, which is fragmented into countless sub-sectors with siloed mandates that rarely align. Yet the challenges we face — climate change, air pollution, biodiversity loss — know no borders. Likewise, science and technology should not be constrained by boundaries. We must therefore strengthen collaboration at every level: local, national, regional, and global.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) provides a unique platform for countries in this region to come together. We convene scientists, policymakers, practitioners, communities, and journalists to tackle exactly these issues — and we will continue to do so, sparing no effort to foster deeper cooperation and collaboration among our member countries.

In closing, I extend my sincere thanks to the organisers for this opportunity to share my thoughts, and to Her Excellency Dr. Arzu Deuba Rana for honouring us with her presence today.

Thank you!

## **Professor Dr. Dhananjay Singh**

The Himalayas are replete with diverse weather systems which have undergone changes in the geological past in sync with the evolving natural topography. A scientific understanding of the environmental dynamics of the region requires well calibrated research-based data. The recent advancements in the field of technology are going to play a pivotal role in gathering empirical data about the environmental conditions and its human and social interface. In this context, the social science research community needs to assess the socio-economic impact of environmental concerns in the Himalayas. Climate crisis and sustainable development are two critical areas that require multi-disciplinary engagement and scholarly attention.

The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils (AASREC), the two research bodies that I represent, are actively engaged in different kinds of research on the environmental crises and sustainability. These studies are aimed at developing a robust and reliable network of data sharing in Asia. We are committed to engage in collaborative research in the fields of social and human sciences. As the Member Secretary of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), I look forward to partnership with similar councils and research organisations in Nepal.

It is pleasure to share that ICSSR and AASREC are going to co-organise a Conference on “Social Science Research in the Indo-Pacific for Sustainable Futures” next year in New Delhi. The brainstorming on the theme of environmental challenges in the Himalayan region may be taken further there. We expect that the related issues of economic and financial impact of the changing environment, especially felt in the tourism sector, shall be critically engaged with in this seminar. I look forward to witness innovative and scholarly knowledge sharing and dissemination of experience and research-based ideas in this seminar.

Thank you.

Distinguished Guests,

I am truly honoured today.

I have spent my life advocating for Himalayan communities and the impact Climate Change has had on us. The recognition of my work at this inaugural international seminar in the presence of our highly esteemed guests here today is truly humbling.

On behalf of the organization I represent and myself, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the International Conference organizer Neeti, Aanusandhan and Partishthan and Chief Guest Hon'ble Minister for Foreign Affairs for bestowing this honour on to me today.

Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region - this is the title for our seminar.

Why do we focus on the Himalayan region in particular? It is because the Himalayas is the most vulnerable landscape in the world to the effects of Climate Change: The ice is melting. The snowlines of mountains are receding. Flash floods, avalanches, landslides and forest fires have become much more common and intense.

I am certain all these issues will be discussed in depth over the next 2 days. However, would any of these natural devastating changes to our environment grab our attention if it did not affect someone? What is the social impact? Who are the people whose homes are being washed away? Are they at fault?

I am here today to put a face to these people. I am one of these people. I am part of the Himalayan Communities whose lives has forever changed. I was born in the shadow of Mount Everest in the Khumbu Region of Nepal. I have been a witness to the vast changes to the lives and livelihood of our people as well as our environment over the last six decades.

As a young boy (in the 1960s) I used to play with my friends beneath the shadow of Mount Everest as our yaks grazed just above a place called Chukhung. Today my playground is the largest threat to our people: the Imja Lake. Infront of my very eyes my playground turned into a small pond and now it is a massive lake 3.5 kilometres long, more than 1.5 kilometre wide and 149 meters deep. Imja is only one of many glacial lakes that has formed across the Himalayan mountains in my lifetime.

Let's note that all of the Himalayas are sitting on one of the most unstable and seismically active ecological landscape with earthquakes a regular phenomenon; one can only imagine the danger under which much of the mountain communities in the Himalayas live with literally millions of tons of water held back by fragile moraine walls that can break even with a small avalanche or earthquake. Indeed, many such tragic events have already taken place in the Himalayas that seldom gets reported in the international press.

Last year, the tragic Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) that hit the village of Thame in August after two relatively unknown and unmonitored glacial lakes burst its banks. Homes of many of the world's most renowned climbers were washed away, a school torn down and the destruction of a crucial hydropower station that lights up the entire Everest region.

Downstream the floods destroyed bridges, agriculture lands and drinking water systems undoing decades of development efforts.

I have had the unfortunate experience of witnessing many GLOFs with the ones in 1977 and 1985 sadly even taking human lives. I have been working in the mountaineering, tourism and environment sector over the last five decades. I know that much of the mountainous jobs are geographically and ecologically fragile therefore making the people living in the Himalayas the most climate vulnerable group. We see massive amount of emigration to lower-lands or foreign-lands because of all these problems threatening the preservation of our culture – our very identity.

The Himalayas and the Himalayan communities are the most vulnerable to the impact of climate change, global warming and natural hazards. Mountaineering and adventure tourism plays a vital role in contributing to adaptations and resilience building of Himalayan communities to climate change occurring in the region. Global climate change is impacting Nepal disproportionately compare to its size and its own meager contribution of the global green house gases. The Himalayas face increasing temperature at more than double the rate of global average temperature rise. Himalayan glaciers are melting rapidly and retreating at an average rate of 30m meters every year and most of them forming into dangerous huge glacial lakes held back by frail moraine walls. The threat of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) is very real to us, the mountain Communities in the Himalayas and could take place at any time any moment, allowing terrifying vertical Tsunamis to race down high mountain valleys -drowning, destroying and sweeping away everything

in its path –building momentum and destructive power, knocking down community after community like dominoes until they reach sea level. Being dense settlement on the river banks, civilization is prone to the impact of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods. Being a sensitive and an urgent issue, we have been seeking help from the government and international communities.

The mountain communities have the least contribution to climate change and yet face the harshest consequences.

The climate is changing faster than our ecosystems and our people’s ability to adapt. If something major is not done soon, the millennium old heritage from which the whole world could have benefitted would be totally lost.

During my lifetime, I have seen the Everest region undergo astonishing change which worries me deeply as a native and environmental activist.

Climate Change is a global issue and therefore requires a global response. The efforts of all the nations is required to ensure the safety of humanity and the environment. I am certain this international seminar is another step in the right direction.

Finally, once again I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to all my well-wishers, friends and family members whose support has been the foundation for receiving this tremendous honour. I have the firm belief that this genuine support and cooperation will continue in the future as well.

Thank you.

Ang Tshering Sherpa

Chairman, Climate Alliance of Himalayan Communities (CAHC),

Honorary Member of International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation(UIAA),

IP President of Asian Mountaineering and Climbing Federation(UAAA)

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## Honourable Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba

Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region is indeed a subject of great importance and concern. Slightly more than a decade ago, when I was invited to speak at a conference in Germany, I think that was the first time I had seriously paid attention to the issue of climate change. I remember borrowing a book from the ICIMOD library, reading the book page to page, and touring Europe on a train then. I found the book a bit imaginative and scary. I did not think those would come to fruition. I thought those were theories some scientists had put forward, but I found the book very interesting. Looking back, it's scary that everything I read in that book is coming true. The predictions are turning out accurate. They said that until the year 2030, we may have too much water; around 2050, we will have too little water, and all the buzz will be around water. Unfortunately, those things look like they are coming true. Sometimes I wonder ... are we going to be the last generation of human civilization to know life as it has been for most of us here? People above 30 years old here lived an innocent life. We took seasons, days and nights for granted. We took everything for granted. Dust was just a speck of dust. It was not going to kill us. The cough was just a sign of cold for some time. Things now have changed to such an extent.

A friend of mine from long ago who is not a Nepali citizen, I asked her about her children's plan. And she told me something I had never heard before. She said her children do not want to marry or have offspring because the world is very scary, and they would want to be responsible before bringing in the next generation. That stunned me. Maybe now is the time we start seriously thinking about what the next generation thinks about their inheritance. When I was in my early 30s, I joined IUCN and read all these books which said we should inherit the earth for the next generation. Have we retreated to Mother Earth the way we own? The previous speaker talked about how we are over-exploiting all the natural resources.

I question whether the greed of a few really made everyone pay. Our honoured guest spoke about what he has seen in his lifetime. It is indeed scary. I would hate to live in that situation about a lake created in a lifetime that may burst anytime. Has the situation of the Himalayas and the caregiver of our slopes contributed to this? Or are we paying the price for what some other people are doing? As our livelihoods and lifestyles change, we can no longer take the ranges for granted. As I sit here today, half of my concentration is on my constituency in the Far West because it has been raining hard since last night. We do not know how many houses will be swept away by landslides. How many paddy fields are going to be destroyed by floods? This is the insecurity of our lives now. Furthermore, it is the creation of human greed.

The seminar's timing is pretty accurate. I feel the changes we see and the prices we pay for our security, livelihoods, and health. We of the South in this region have not been vocal enough. In our usual ways, we believe a lot in Karma. I still believe these things will get better because we are good people. There's a Nepali saying that says “डोकामा दूध दूएर अडिदैने”. So, we have to do something to ensure the milk stays in the container. I am happy that we are sharing the evidence in a larger space. I was an evaluator for ICIMOD in 2011, and one of my observations then was that we have these wonderful institutes, but where is the information going? Do people in the Himalayan region know how climate change impacts them? What is the point of presenting evidence if we cannot talk and raise a voice about it?

So the kind of discussions that will be generated by this seminar in these two days is going to add to the global discussion and voice about how these things are impacting the lives of people living in the Himalayan region and how it is going to be even more dangerous as years pass by. How are we going to respond to it as people? All these issues, especially the issues of women and children, are doubly impacted when we talk about climate change and its negative impacts.

I wish all distinguished speakers, scientific minds and researchers who come up with actual points good luck and a great stay here in Nepal. Our Prime Minister will host the Sagarmatha dialogue in Nepal to raise the visibility of this issue soon and take the points raised here forward. I am delighted to see this kind of synergy where different institutes of the region with different kinds of research and study come and put their minds together on a very valid subject.

Thank you.

**Dr. Mrigendra Bahadur Karki**

In that context, our part of the world and the Western world have very different departing philosophies. They begin with matter, consequently posit from *wh-questions*, and we dig out and engage our non-material matter, starting from *Ka-Prashna*. My point is that the communities that have been invaded from time immemorial in this region. We must develop our ontology, epistemology, methodology, methods, and theory to bring this world to a new generation. I am optimistic that not only in the name of the seminar, but we can come up with concrete best practices so that the latest generation can learn from the outcome of this seminar. Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

## **Concluding Session**

Thank you everyone. Once again on behalf of all the organisers of the International Seminar on Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region, I'd like to welcome you on this valedictory session and appreciate your gracious presence this evening.

Distinguished guests, speakers, organisers and participants, it is with a sense of gratitude and respect I stand before you today as we come to the close of this incredible three-day International Seminar on Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region. On behalf of all the organisers, Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal, National Trust for Nature Conservation, India Foundation, Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Climate Alliance of Himalayan Communities, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your invaluable contributions.

Over the course of these three days, we have engaged in a rich range of discussions across the audience and in space in the Himalayan Region and have seen the ideas that will help save the future. This seminar was not just an event, it was a platform for deep learning, collaboration and the building of community united by a shared function for the Himalayan ecosystem. Our seminar covered a wide range of critical themes and I am immensely proud of how you have approached each one with the seriousness and dedication that is yours. You have deliberated on climate change and the profound impact it has on natural resources like water, forests, minerals, reminding us of the call you need for sustainable management practices.

The session on biodiversity, loss and conservation challenges has shown us the stark reality of the spaces, the glaciation on the Himalayas and reinforced the need for a stronger conservation force. Our discussion on sustainable development, agriculture and livelihoods has opened new perspectives on how we can further economic growth in a way that supports both the environment and the people who rely on it. The theme on climate boundary, water resources and cooperation, aligning the significance of collective action, demonstrating the regional cooperation is not only possible but essential for equitable resource management. In addressing disaster risk reduction and resilience, we were reminded of the ultimate duty of the region and the steps we must take to bring more resilience to our region. Our exploration of policy, framework for sustainable development and regional cooperation shed light on the importance of aligning policies

to the realities on the ground while fostering cooperation across borders. And finally, our discussion on indigenous knowledge and community resilience has formed the wisdom of those who have lived harmoniously with nature for centuries, urging us to integrate that knowledge into future solutions. From this review to presentation, we have learned not only from experts but from one hand holders, creating a strong network of professionals, activists and scholars who are committed to the well-being of the Himalayan Region. As we conclude, I hope each of us takes away more than just knowledge but also a renewed sense of hope and resiliency. The challenges we face are enormous but true to the capacity for innovation, collaboration and resilience. The conversations we have had here have continued, translating into actions that will drive real change for our region and its people. As we part away today, let us remember that this is not just the end, the drive is the beginning of the important work we need to do. Our collective effort will shape the future of the Malays and by working together, we can ensure that the region thrives for generations to come. Thank you once again and safe travel to all. Let us carry forward the spirit of collaboration and the commitment to the Himalaya and our environment. Thank you.

सभी को नमस्ते ।

भगवान् बुद्ध एवं पशुपतिनाथ की धरती पर आने का सौभाग्य मुझे पहली बार प्राप्त हुआ । तो मेरा अनुभव दो aspects पर है । पहला aspect यहाँ की hospitality, यहाँ का glass coaster पर लिखा था "Nepali's hospitality at its best." so it was best. दूसरा aspect, Himalayan Region में Changing Environment पर चर्चा ।

हम इंडिया में students को development के तहत campus में activism करते हैं । और पंचमहाभूतों पर काम करते हैं । जिसमें हम अलग-अलग अभियान 'Sunday for Society' और 'Plastic-free Campus' चलाते हैं । Acceptance के साथ साथ criticism भी हमको मिलता है । लेकिन क्या है climate change ? ये बहुत slow process है । जैसा हमें एक पेपर में एक विषय ध्यान में आया कि शिलांग में कभी पंखों की भी आवश्यकता नहीं पड़ती थी, लेकिन आज ए.सी. लगाने की आवश्यकता है । एक पेपर में ऐसा ध्यान में आया कि जब पूरे glaciers melt हो जाएंगे तो पहाड़ सिर्फ एक काले पत्थर के समान हो जाएगा । वो हमें देखने को भी मिला, ओम पर्वत जब मेल्ट हुआ । एक पेपर में हमें देखने को मिला कि किस प्रकार से पहाड़ के लोग sustainable living जीते हैं । एक पेपर में हमें एक विषय ध्यान में आया कि किस प्रकार से पूर्व में चिपको आन्दोलन, खेजड़ली मूवमेंट जैसे मूवमेंट भी हुए हैं ।

इस सभागार में मुझे लगता है मैं सबसे छोटी हूँ, और जब हम अपने फील्ड में काम करते हैं, तो कभी-कभी मन हताश होता है कि हम ठीक कर रहे हैं या नहीं । लेकिन आज यहां इतने प्रबुद्ध लोग ऐसे विषय पर Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region और climate change पर बात कर रहे हैं, तो आज मुझे लग रहा है कि हमारा जो विषय है वह minor issue नहीं है, वह सबसे major issue है ।

इस पूरे तीन दिन के सेमिनार में हमें आगे कैसे काम करना है, Students for Development (SFD) के तहत climate change के लिए हमें किस प्रकार से युवा विद्यार्थियों और जनमानस के बीच काम करना है, इसकी एक व्यापक अवधारणा हमारे बीच आ चुकी है । तो हमें आशा है कि हम सब साथ में और अच्छे से काम कर सकते हैं और करेंगे ।

धन्यवाद ।

**Aung Ye Tun**  
*Myanmar*

I am deeply honoured to stand here as a volunteer from Myanmar and thank you for the speech. This seminar has been a distinctive journey of learning and collaboration, and I am truly grateful for this opportunity. Firstly, and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the organisers of this seminar. Your dedication and excellent learning have made this event a strong success. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the distinguished chair, the speakers, and the people present. Your expertise and willingness to share your experience have enriched our understanding and inspired us to think more critically and creatively. On a personal note, this seminar has been particularly meaningful to me, you, and all of you. I am eager to implement the knowledge from the seminar in my work back in Myanmar. I thank you once again and thank everyone who has contributed to the success of this seminar. I hope to see you again at future events everywhere around the world. Thank you so much.

**Dr. Md. Golam Mahboob**

*Bangladesh*

Good afternoon. This is Dr. Mohammad Golam Mahboob, principal scientist of the Bangladesh Educational Research Council. Actually, it was really an amazing experience being here. So, Bangladesh is actually situated at the foot of the Himalayan region. We do not have, we are almost a flat land country, right? But whatever activities are happening in the Himalayan regions, we are getting the results. Just not for their own boundary. So, we are thinking of sharing the entire region. So, we learned a lot from the interdisciplinary talks because I rarely have access to this kind of research. And I have the, I am taking a lot of messages from here, particularly the thinking, the solving our own way, solving our own problem, not like the people are doing on the other side of the world. So, we should take all the experiences from science and other perspectives, but we have to adopt them in our own way. In particular, I remember one word: when Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzin Sherpa reached the summit of Mount Everest, Sir Edmund Hillary raised his hand to indicate he had reached the summit, and at the same time, Tenzin Sherpa was seeking forgiveness from Mount Everest. So, he made a mistake. So, our thinking is actually like that. So, in this region, actually, our way of thinking is really different from the other places in the world. So, we should make a bridge between these two approaches and find the solution our own way. And when I came here, given Bangladesh's recent history, you know, all our participants were worried. So, how are the people of Bangladesh, and how are my family and other things going on? So, I assured them that things are okay, that things are getting better, and that our people have support for whatever happened, because we are really moving towards democracy right now. Earlier, whatever people were seeing from the outside was not true either, because it was not the real picture. And on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August, I was forced to stand on the street with our secretary and everyone else to support the government, because we could do nothing. So, it was like that. But the next day, on the 5<sup>th</sup>, the situation changed. So, what I am telling you is that we all people could not do. So, the young people in Bangladesh who are going to school and to university are changing things. So, in this kind of discussion, I think we also need to bring the young people, the access to this kind of discussion, and their thinking. Because we always blame our young people for being deeply immersed in their mobile phones, but actually, it may not be true. Because you will have to find a way to help them bring the thought and experience, because they are actually thinking about their future. So, we should also bring them into all of these kinds of discussions. Anyway, thank you very much again for giving me a chance to tell something here. I was not prepared, but thank you very much anyway. See you again in some other videos. I will welcome you to visit Bangladesh.

## Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Ningombom

Good evening everyone.

Namaskar.

It is truly an honour to be here and participate in this important international seminar on “Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region.” Coming from a region that is both ecologically sensitive and deeply rooted in community values, we at IIM Shillong are pleased to be part of this collective deliberation on climate change and mitigation strategies.

As you all know, IIM Shillong is a management institution, and our core expertise lies in managing uncertainty and navigating complex, dynamic environments—be it in business, governance, or societal change. Located in the heart of the Northeast, we are the only IIM in the region, and we view this not just as a distinction, but as a responsibility to serve and uplift our surroundings.

The Himalayan region, a part of which touches our home state, is integral to our identity and future. Therefore, we strongly believe this seminar is a significant step forward. It provides a platform for academic engagement, policy recommendations, collaborative research, and meaningful dialogue.

At IIM Shillong, we are committed to fostering knowledge exchange and building strong regional and international partnerships—especially with our counterparts in Nepal and across the Himalayan belt. In this spirit, I am pleased to propose a few specific commitments from our side:

1. **Capacity Building and Exchange Programmes:** We invite students, policy-makers, and thought leaders from Nepal to visit our campus and participate in capacity-building programmes focused on governance, leadership, and sustainable development. Through our Management Development Programmes (MDPs), we hope to facilitate regional dialogue and collective learning.
2. **Academic Collaborations:** We are eager to promote joint research, faculty and student exchanges, and thematic workshops that address pressing challenges of the Himalayan region. Our focus is on generating actionable insights and sustainable solutions through academic excellence.
3. **Future Seminars on Himalayan Themes:** While this seminar focuses on climate change, we believe that the Himalayan region offers much more to explore—be it its economy, culture, or civilisational heritage. We propose to co-host future seminars—possibly in collaboration with institutions like NEHU—on these broader themes, either at IIM Shillong or elsewhere in the Northeast.

In closing, let us continue to engage through academic platforms and knowledge-sharing initiatives that deepen our understanding and contribute to the sustainable development of Northeast India and the broader Himalayan region. Thank you.

## Honourable Yankila Sherpa

This seminar has come at a crucial time when the world is facing these problems of climate change and its impact. Here, we are addressing the Himalayan region and I having come from the Kanchanjunga area of the Himalayan belt. Hence I have experienced the impact of climate change more than many people living in the big cities like Kathmandu.

The deliberations made by various scholars in the session were very impactful. Today We are concerned about the situation of people in the Himalayas and the impact of climate change and natural calamities is having on the lives of the people of the Himalayan belt. The impact is more than ever before. Climate change and the disasters that it results are bound to happen in future also. But the after effects are being faced mainly by people living in mountains and specially women.

In Bangladesh when bigs occurred, many died and most of them were women. In a survey that studied why there were more women who died, it said women were not prepared. My presentation today was on disaster preparedness which is something that countries are not talking very seriously. Our government provided disaster management and preparedness training in most areas and the maximum number of attendants were men. The floods, landslides, glacial out bursts , and the resulting calamities have affected women terribly not only in Nepal but other countries as well. Comparatively women have more responsibility in handling such situations than man do. Specially in the mountain areas, women are poorer and have responsibilities about family as a whole not just about livelihoods. In many of our rural and mountain areas men have either migrated to city areas or have already left the country or migrated to other countries. Often when floods and disasters take place in different hilly regions of Nepal, it has been reported that people do not know whom to contact when power gets cut. If disasters happen during day time, there is less chance of much death casualties but natural disasters and the resulting casualties sends a strong negative message to the international tourism market of Nepal. Now that glacial lakes in different Himalayan regions are at the peak point of outburst is already a big threat for Nepal's tourism and economy as tourism is the main source of livelihood of the Nepalese people living in the high Himalayan regions of Nepal .

This is sending out negative message to the International crowd. The meteorology and weather forecast department should use latest technologies so that people are informed well in time about weather conditions in time. Trainings must be provided to educate people at all levels of society. This is a very important and useful seminar today. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to make a presentation in the valedictory session of this important seminar. Thank you.

सबैलाई शुभ सन्ध्या । Namaste and good evening to all of you. सेमिनारको यो समापन सत्रमा मञ्चमा उपस्थित नीति अनुसन्धान प्रतिष्ठानका महासचिव श्री दिपेन्द्र कुमार भट्ट जी, माननीय मुख्य अतिथि वन तथा वातावरण मन्त्रालयका राज्य मन्त्री श्री रूपा वि.क. जी र अन्य सबै हस्तिहरू जो मञ्चमा हुनुहुन्छ । नेपाली भाषा, हिन्दी भाषा, संस्कृत भाषा, सबैको संस्कृत जननी हुनाले हिन्दी और नेपाली में कोइ मूलभूत अन्तर नहीं है । थोडा ध्यान देंगे तो आप नेपाली भी समझेंगे और हिन्दी भी समझेंगे । मेरी व्यक्तिगत मान्यता यह है कि जब हम नेपाल और भारत के लोग साथ बैठते हैं तो अंग्रेजी कि आवश्यकता नहीं है । एक कहावत है जो मैं हमेशा कहता हूँ । जब हृदय आपस में मिल जाते हैं तो जीभ की कोई भूमिका नहीं होती । If heart meets, tongue has no role. नीति अनुसन्धान प्रतिष्ठान, नेपाल हमारी संस्था है, वो अभी शिशु अवस्था में है । लेकिन खुशी इस बात की है कि आइ छिरिड जैसे टावरिंग पर्सनलिटी का हमें छत्रछाया मिली । उन्होंने जो उद्घाटन सत्र में सम्मान के लिए अवसर आयोजक संस्था को दिया, उनके सम्मान प्राप्त करने से हमारी सभी संस्थाओं की गरिमा को और सम्मान मिला है । करते रहने से परिणाम आता है । Institute of Management (IIM), Shilong के साथ भी उन्होंने कुछ आग्रह किया है । Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Motihari के साथ भी हमारा एक सम्झौता हुआ है । गच्छन् पिपिलिका याति योजनानां शतैरपि (यदि चीटी भी चलती रहती है तो हजार योजन पार कर सकती है ।) अगच्छन् वैनतेयोऽपि पदमेकं न गच्छति (सबसे तेज उड़ने वाला गरूड यदि चला नहीं तो एक कदम भी आगे नहीं बढ़ सकता है ।) इसलिए हमें कार्य करते रहना चाहिए, परिणाम अवश्य मिलेगा । इसको मैं अपने लिए एक गुह्य मन्त्र मानता हूँ । नीति की बात करें तो कई सरकारी संस्थाओं के साथ कोलैबोरेशन का अवसर भी प्राप्त हुआ है । National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) नेपाल का ट्रस्ट है । Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) भारत सरकार का शिक्षा मन्त्रालय का है जिन्होंने भारत से आने वाले सभी हस्तिओं की व्यवस्था में एक महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है । भारत के कई केन्द्रीय विश्वविद्यालयों के सम्माननीय Vice chancellors भी यहाँ उपस्थित हैं । India Foundation, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MPIDSA), Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), और Bangladesh, Myanmar और नेपाल के प्रोमिनेन्ट लोगों और संस्थाओं का यह एक संयुक्त प्रयास है । जब हम इस विषय पर विचार कर रहे थे, तब इतना ज्यादा climate पर विचार नहीं था । मात्र पर्यावरण हमारा नहीं था । इसमें सामाजिक पक्ष भी है, राजनीतिक भी है, सांस्कृतिक भी है और इसके साथ-साथ तकनीक यानि टेक्नोलोजी और जियोपोलिटिक्स भी है । वास्तव में हम changing geopolitics करना चाह रहे थे लेकिन to not make it more political, हमने इसको थोडा सरल किया है । पर्यावरण पर ज्यादा चर्चा करना चाहिए, अच्छी बात है लेकिन इसका पर्यावरण मात्र हिस्सा नहीं व्यापक हिस्सा है । क्योंकि जैसे मैं धर्म-संस्कृति की बात कर रहा था, काफी लोग कहते हैं कि धर्म और संस्कृति अलग अलग चीज होती है । मैं मानता हूँ धर्म और संस्कृति एक सिक्के के दो पहलू हैं । धर्म है तो संस्कृति है और संस्कृति है तो धर्म है । ये retrospect नहीं prospect बात है । हम राम और कृष्ण जी की कथा क्यों पढाते हैं ? राम तो फिर जन्म नहीं लेंगे पर आज समाज में राम जैसे चरित्र वृद्धि चाहिए कि नहीं ? उन्होंने महिलाओं के प्रति सम्मान का विषय पर संकल्प लिया था । महिलाओं की सहभागिता के बारे में बात करें तो हमारे घर की निर्णय प्रक्रिया

से शुरू होती है। *यत्र नार्यस्तु पूज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवताः । यत्रै तास्तु न पूज्यन्ते सर्वास्तत्राफलाः क्रियाः ॥* (यदि किसी भी कार्यक्रम में महिलाओं का सम्मान नहीं हुआ, तो वो सारे कार्यक्रम सफल नहीं माने जाएंगे। उससे फल प्राप्त नहीं होगी।) *मातृवत् परदारेषु, परद्रव्येषु लोष्ठवत् । आत्मवत् सर्वभूतेषु, यः पश्यति सः पण्डितः ॥* (माता समान उनका सम्मान होना चाहिए।) मात्र नेपाल और भारत की नहीं मैं म्यान्मां और बाङ्गलादेश की भी बात कर रहा हूँ। हम सबको इतिहास समझना चाहिए। इस तरह हम देश की आत्मा को समझेंगे और हमारा व्यवहार भी देश के अनुकूल होगा। हमारे यहाँ जन्मदिन में वृक्षरोपण होता था। पश्चिमी देशके लोग फू करके दीप बुझाके जन्म दिन इसलिए मनाते हैं कि क्योंकि भूत जो है, वो रोशनी में नहीं आ सकता। वो अन्धेरे में आएगा। इसलिए वे लोग दीप को बुझाते हैं। केक भी नरम रहता है क्योंकि भूत सोलीड चीजें नहीं चपा/खा सकता। उसके दाँत नहीं होते। हमें आधुनिकता के तरफ बढ़ना चाहिए लेकिन इन सारी चीजों को समझकर बढ़ना चाहिए। धर्म-संस्कृति के बारे में लिखा है कि चावल ही खाऊँगा लेकिन चावल नहीं उगता। धान नहीं खाया जा सकता लेकिन धान उगेगा। अन्तर मात्र भूस का है और वो भी चाहिए। *तुषेणापि परित्यक्ता न प्ररोहन्ति तण्डुलाः ।* (तुषेण यानि भूस को निकाल के फेंक दिए तो चावल नहीं उगता है।) तो धर्म-संस्कृति ऐसी चीज है। इसलिए कहते हैं कि *संहतिः श्रेयसी पुंसां स्वकुलैरल्पकैरपि । तुषेणापि परित्यक्ता न प्ररोहन्ति तण्डुलाः ॥* (मनुष्य के लिए श्रेयस्कर है कि आप संगठित रहिए। राष्ट्र के आत्मा के अनुसार आचरण करिए।) आज acidic rain और oceanic pollution है। इस का असर बाङ्गलादेश को होगा ही क्योंकि सारा जल इकठ्ठा होके वहीं जा रह है। हिमालय में रहने वालों का व्यवहार प्रकृति अनुकूल और उनका भी सामञ्जस्य महत्वपूर्ण है। हमारे यहाँ कहा गया है *यस्येमे हिमवन्तो महित्वा ।* यानि हिमालय के प्रति जो हमारा सम्मान है। सेमिनार के दौरान जब हम मिलना शुरू किए, तो हमको काफी ज्ञान मिला है। आज trekking के नाम पर cultural pollution है। जब हम पर्यावरण मन्त्रालय में joint secretary से मिलने गए तो उन्होंने एक बात कही जो मैं यहाँ साझा करना उचित समझता हूँ। सगरमाथा आरोहण में जितने लोगों को नेपाल सरकार अनुमति देती है, ६० करोड उनका आय होता है। लेकिन garbage management पर १८ करोड खर्च होता है। पर्यावरण का क्षयीकरण तो हो रहा है धीरे धीरे। कहते हैं कि व्यक्ति को मनुष्य अनुरूप व्यवहार करना चाहिए। मनुष्य अनुरूप यानि पर्यावरण के साथ हमारा दृष्टिकोण क्या है? महिलाओं के साथ क्या है? पशुपक्षियों के साथ क्या है? उद्घाटन में कहे थे *अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च । निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥* यह biodiversity की concept अंग्रेजी में अभी आया है। हमारे भगवद्गीता अनुसार living things and non-living things also, उनके साथ आप करुणा का व्यवहार कीजिए। तो कहीं भी शोषण नहीं रहेगा। श्री कृष्ण जी ने अर्जुन से कहा कि देखो अर्जुन *द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन् दैव आसुर एव च ।* यानि तुम मनुष्य की तरह व्यवहार करो, यदि तुम असुर जैसा व्यवहार करोगे तो असुर प्रवृत्ति से चलोगे जो कि यह पर्यावरण की रक्षा न करना, महिलाओं व पशुपक्षी का सम्मान न करना, वह समाज का उदण्ड व्यक्ति होता है। यह बातें हम सब भूल रहे हैं। आज सेमिनार में विषय पर आ रहा है पर हमारे पाठ्यक्रम में यह सारा इनकॉरपोरेट किया जा रहा है क्या? हम समाज के चिन्तक और प्रोफेशर को इस बारे में सोचना चाहिए। एक प्रोफेशर एक जेनरेशन को बदलता है। एक डॉक्टर तो एक टाइम में एक ही बिमारी को ठीक करता है। एक इन्जनीयर एक ही पुल वह प्रोजेक्ट पर काम कर सकता है। इसलिए शिक्षकों की भूमिका समाज में बहुत महत्वपूर्ण है।

दुनियाँ की हर चीज को हम स्वीकार करें। we are ready to accept new things from anywhere. हमारे यहाँ कहा है कि यह कुआँ हमारे दादा ने खोदा था तो चाहे नमकिन हो मैं यही पानी पिऊँगा। यह डरपोक लोग कहते हैं। *तातस्य कुपोऽयम् इति ब्रुवाणाः क्षारं जलं कापुरुषाः पिबन्ति*। कायर पुरुष जो परिवर्तन होना नहीं चाहता। परिवर्तन समाज की गतिशीलता है। यह स्वाभाविक है। सेमिनार का थिम पर्यटन, संस्कृति, आर्थिक, सामाजिक है। साथ ही इसका अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सम्बन्ध भी है। हमें बहुत खुशी है कि सेमिनार हमारे विचार अनुरूप ही आगे बढ़ा। आप सभी का यहाँ आना और विचार विमर्श मंथन होना और हमारा विचार है कि हम आगे इसका प्रकाशन भी करेंगे। *money is nothing but money has great role*. सम्पत्ति और सम्पदा दोनों चाहिए। Mahatma Gandhi Central University के logo में यही लिखा है कि 'हे सरस्वति माता हमें धन भी दीजिए और विद्या भी दीजिए।'

जब राष्ट्र का परिचय लोगों को नहीं बताया जाता, तब राष्ट्र में disaster होता है। क्योंकि नीति (पोलिसी) उस अनुकूल नहीं बनती है। इसलिए राष्ट्र की आत्मा को समझना चाहिए। अभी मैं नेपाल के बड़े प्रोफेसर, इन्जिनियर के साथ एक प्रसंग में बैठा था। किसी ने धर्म तो किसी ने संस्कृति की बातें की। तो मैंने पुछा कि नेपाल प्रहरी का उद्घोष वाक्य क्या है? कुछ को पता था और कुछ को नहीं, तो मैंने बताया *परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम्*। और उसी तरह नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंक का निशान छाप, नेपाली सेना, राष्ट्रीय सञ्चय कोष इस सब में *जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी* लिखा है। जीवन बीमा कम्पनी (एल.आइ.सी.) में *योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम्* लिखा है और नेपाल इन्जिनियरिंग काउन्सिल में *नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा* लिखा है। दूसरा विश्वविद्यालय का *धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्* लिखा है और दूसरा विश्वविद्यालय का *सा विद्या या विमुक्तये* लिखा है। और एक विश्वविद्यालय का यह है - *विद्यायाऽमृतमश्नुते*। तो मैंने बोला यह राष्ट्र क्या है? राष्ट्रको पहचानना चाहिए। जैसे मैं व्यक्ति स्वयं की बात करूँ तो अगर मैं अपने आत्मा को नहीं समझूँगा तो मेरे क्षमता और कमजोरी के बारे में मुझे पता नहीं चलेगा। यही राष्ट्र के लिए लागू होता है। तब ही राष्ट्र तरक्की करता है। नीति का गैप है और हमारा अच्छा नेटवर्किंग है। गत साल हमने २७ gold medalist को सम्मान किया। Tata Institute of Social Science से लेकर Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, National School of Drama, Film and Television Institution of India, Pune जैसे premium institute के २७ स्वर्ण पदक प्राप्त विद्वानों को हमें सम्मान करने का अवसर मिला था। प्रयास करते रहेंगे तो हमें लाभ जरूर मिलेगा। अच्छे काम करते रहना चाहिए। इमान्दारिता में कोई खोट नहीं होनी चाहिए। भगवान उसे जरूर आशीर्वाद देंगे। देते हैं। सभी को शुभकामनाएँ। धन्यवाद।

## **Professor Dr. Dhananjay Singh**

As Member Secretary, Indian Council of Social Science Research, I must say that I am proud and privileged to be here, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of this seminar, including researchers, faculty members, partner institutions, and young scholars. I welcome the suggestion of Dr. Deepak Kumar Adhikari ji that the conference proceedings should be published by a reputed publisher. I appreciate the participation of Prof. Sanjay Srivastava, Vice Chancellor, Mahatman Gandhi Central University of Bihar, Prof. P.S.Shukla, VC, North Eastern Hill University Shillong, and several senior scholars from India, including Prof. Rajnish Mishra from JNU. Young scholars from South Asian University, from Nepal and other countries, deserve special thanks for their research contributions. This was a wonderful collaboration of young scholars as well as senior social scientists.

Social Science research and research in human sciences play a significant role in shaping public and foreign policies of a country. One of the big takeaways from this seminar is the stress upon regional cooperation, i.e., cooperation among the stakeholders of the Himalayan region. The landscape of this region teaches us valuable lessons in sustainability and environmental conservation.

One of the crucial things to learn from the indigenous communities in the Himalayas is to live peacefully in harmony with nature. I have spent 19 years of my life in Arunachal Pradesh, which is a seat of Himalayan culture and way of life. I still derive inspiration and understanding of nature from my early life in the lap of Himalayas. In terms of research, there has been a great emphasis on the issues affecting the Himalayas and its ecosystem. Our culture and traditions are our strength and the contemporary issues related with environmental changes can be mitigated using this heritage. As social scientists, multilateral collaborative efforts between nations of this geographical region are the need of the hour.

Technology is making a great impact upon our lived experiences and the thrust on Artificial Intelligence is going to make a huge impact on the research ecosystem. I am sure that this three-day seminar is a beginning, and ICSSR would really like to collaborate further with NeNAP. Given the context and history of India and Nepal, I think it is important for researchers to work together in transdisciplinary fields. I have been here for three days and I don't find myself feeling that I am in a different country at all. I once again extend my warmest felicitations to all the participants. Best wishes and thank you.

धन्यवाद कार्यक्रम सञ्चालकज्यू। यस Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region सेमिनारको समापन समारोहका अध्यक्षज्यू, नेपाल तथा दक्षिण एशियाबाट यो सेमिनारमा महत्वपूर्ण कार्यपत्र प्रस्तुत गर्नुहुने प्रस्तोताज्यूहरू, विज्ञ रिसर्चरज्यूहरू, वागमती प्रदेशका प्रदेश सदस्य माननीय याङ्किला शेर्पाज्यू, लगायत मञ्चमा आसीन विशिष्ट अतिथिज्यूहरू, यहाँ बस्नुभएका मैले आदर-सम्मान गर्नुपर्ने सम्पूर्ण विशिष्ट व्यक्तित्वहरू सबैलाई एकमुष्टमा सम्बोधन गर्दै हार्दिक नमस्कार टर्न्याउन चाहन्छु।

विशेषगरी तीन दिनदेखि घनीभूत तरिकाले उच्चस्तरको International Seminar आयोजना हुनु नेपालको लागि गौरवको कुरा हो। हामीले नेपालको तर्फबाट गर्व महसुस गरेका छौं। जुनजुन शीर्षकमा यहाँ छलफल भइरहेको छ, अन्तरक्रिया भइरहेको छ, यो नितान्त नेपाल सरकारको वन तथा वातावरण मन्त्रालयसँग सम्बन्धित भएको हुँदा हामीलाई पनि समयमै जानकारी दिनुभएको भए त्यहाँबाट सचिव/सहसचिवज्यूको समेत यहाँ प्रतिनिधित्व गराउने थियौं। त्यो यहाँ मैले देखिन। यो हिमालयन क्षेत्रमा आएको वातावरणीय प्रभावले विश्वलाई चुनौती सिर्जना गरेको छ। अझ यसले South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) राष्ट्रका देशमा बढी प्रभाव पारेको छ। हामीले यसको अनुभव र महसुस गरेका छौं। त्यस प्रभावलाई मध्यनजर गरी यो Changing Environment in the Himalayan Region अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय सेमिनारमा सहभागी राष्ट्र लगायत अन्य राष्ट्रहरूमा पनि हिमालप्रतिको समुन्नत सकारात्मक परिवर्तन आएको मैले आशा लिएकी छु। यो भनेको नेपालको लागि मात्र होइन। वैश्विक रूपमा नै यसको प्रभाव छ र यसका लागि हामीले संयुक्त काम गर्नुपर्छ। We should walk together भन्ने जुन उद्देश्य छ त्यो लिएर यहाँ तपाईंहरूले एउटा विमर्शको शीर्षक बनाएर अगाडि बढिरहनु भएको छ भन्ने मैले बुझेकी छु। विशेषतः हिमालय धर्म, संस्कृति, प्रकृति, जलवायु परिवर्तन र वातावरणसँग जोडिएर आएको हुन्छ। विश्व वातावरण, तापक्रममा आएको परिवर्तन, यसबाट प्राकृतिक क्षेत्र र eco-system मा देखिएको असर, जैविक विविधतामा आएको ह्रास, संरक्षणमा देखिएको चुनौती र पर्वतीय ज्ञानको विषयलाई समेटेर यो सेमिनारमा गरिएको छलफलबारे हामीलाई ज्ञात भएको छ।

छलफलका क्षेत्रहरू धेरै नै छन्। वातावरण परिवर्तन, विश्वमा तापक्रम बढ्नु र यसले प्राकृतिक स्रोतको दीगो व्यवस्थापन, जैविक विविधता संरक्षणमा चुनौती, दीगो विकास, कृषि र जीविकोपार्जन, दुई वा धेरै देश बीचको सिमानाको जलीय स्रोत व्यवस्थापन र सहयोग, प्राकृतिक प्रकोप न्यूनीकरण र यसको सापेक्षिक क्षमता, क्षेत्रीय सहयोग, जीविकोपार्जन र दीगो विकासको लागि नीतिगत संरचना, समुदायमा सहनशीलता, ज्ञान र सांस्कृतिक समृद्धिभित्र रहेर यहाँ छलफलहरू भए भन्ने मैले बुझेकी छु। विश्वमा आज हिमालय समृद्धिको भावनालाई आत्मसात गर्दै हिन्दुकुश हिमालको धर्म-संस्कृतिलाई अनुभूति गर्नेतर्फ ध्यानाकर्षण भएको छ। यो कार्यक्रमले हामीलाई यस विषयमा जनचेतना जगाएको छ। भारत, नेपाल लगायत SAARC राष्ट्रहरूमा धर्मसँग सम्बन्ध स्थापित गरेर हिमालयलाई धार्मिक पर्यटनसँग जोड्ने प्रबल सम्भावना छ। शिवजी र कैलाश, हुनुमान र कैलाश, तपोवनभूमी र कैलाशको आभास यस क्षेत्रमा प्राप्त गर्न सकिन्छ। त्यसले गर्दा पश्चिमी राष्ट्रहरूबाट

हिमालय, धर्म, संस्कृति र प्राचीन ज्ञानलाई प्राथमिकतामा राखी हाम्रोतर्फ ध्यानाकर्षण गर्दै हिमाललाई संरक्षण र उचित व्यवस्थापन गर्न SAARC राष्ट्रबीच सहयोगको सम्बन्ध स्थापना गर्नुपर्ने समय आएको छ । यस छलफलबाट हिमालय संरक्षणको विषयको चुनौतीलाई सामना गर्न संयुक्त रूपमा project design गरी ऐक्यबद्धताका साथ कार्यान्वयन गर्नतर्फ म ध्यान दिन आवश्यक ठान्दछु । एवं प्रकारले तीन दिनभित्रको समयमा तपाईंहरूबीचमा जुन छलफल भयो र जे-जे कुराहरू यो सेमिनारले प्राप्त गरेको छ ती कुराहरूलाई वन तथा वातावरण मन्त्रालयमा दिनुहोला । यहाँबाट आएको निष्कर्षलाई हाम्रो टोलीमा चर्चा गरेर हामीले नेपाल सरकार वन तथा वातावरण मन्त्रालयको तर्फबाट के गर्न सक्छौं त्यसका लागि हामी प्रतिबद्धता गर्न चाहन्छौं । वास्तवमा हामीले पर्यावरणमाथि न्याय गर्नुपर्छ । पर्यावरण परिवर्तनको सिधै असर भनेको हिमाली क्षेत्रमा देखिएको छ । त्यहाँ बस्ने महिलाहरू तथा केटाकेटीले भोगेको समस्या समाधानका लागि पनि हामीले काम गर्नुपर्छ । नेपाल सरकारको तर्फबाट वन तथा वातावरण मन्त्रालय माफत हामी योगदान गर्न तयार छौं भन्दै दिग्गज उच्चस्तरको सहभागिता रहेको यस सेमिनारमा मलाई एउटा प्रमुख अतिथिको रूपमा मन्त्रालयको तर्फबाट प्रतिनिधित्व गर्ने मौका दिनुहुने NeNAP का निर्देशक डा. दीपक कुमार अधिकारीज्यू, महासचिवज्यू लगायत सम्पूर्ण उपस्थित हुनुभएका महानुभावहरू प्रति हार्दिक आभार प्रकट गर्दै बिदा हुन चाहन्छु । धन्यवाद ।

## **Dipendra Kumar Bhatta**

Namaste and good evening to everyone. As we conclude this three-day seminar, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the participants whose contributions and engagement made this event a success. We are deeply grateful to our distinguished guests, namely Dr. Khin Nini Thein and Aung Ye Tun from Myanmar, Dr. Md Golam Mahboob from Bangladesh, participants from various renowned institutes from India, like MAKAIAS, MPIDSA, RIS, India Foundation, IIM-Shillong, and vice chancellors from some of the central universities in India. Here, we make a special mention of ICSSR for their assistance in arranging, organising, and providing relevant support to ensure the success of this seminar. Our very own institutes in Nepal, such as NTNC, have very generously offered their premises for our Inaugural session. Similarly, IUCN, CNAS-Tribhuvan University, and CAHC. Another special mention to Mr. Ang Tshering Sherpa, whom I observed has religiously participated and graced the entire 3 days of the seminar. Last but not least, a big thank you to all those who have contributed, directly or indirectly, to the success of this seminar. We look forward to the culture of continued collaboration in the future, too. Thank you.

## **Honourable Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba**

Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba is a Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Government of Nepal. Dr. Rana Deuba has been a dedicated and passionate advocate for women's rights and empowerment in Nepal. As a member of Constituent Assembly (2008-2017), she successfully pursued issues related to women's rights, especially reproductive rights, equal citizenship rights & property rights, protection against violence against women, and women's equitable and equal political representation at all levels while writing the Constitution of Nepal.

She was a member of the Constitution Drafting Committee and served as Coordinator of the Women Parliamentarians Coordination Committee. Dr. Rana Deuba is a gender activist and social worker and has established a number of women and children related NGOs in Nepal, including Rural Women's Development and Unity Centre (RUWDUC), Saathi and Safe Motherhood Network Federation.

She has served on several national and international boards as office bearer and member. During her stint, she served as an elected Regional Councilor for South and East Asia for IUCN for two terms (2008-2016). She also served for two tenures (2013-2017) as Board Member of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute for Education on Peace and Sustainable Development. She was Governing Board Member of Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF), Nepal (2007-2011). She was the first elected woman President of Management Association of Nepal for two terms (2002 to 2006). She has also successfully served as the Chairperson and Board Member of White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood (elected for the term 2010-2014).

She holds a Ph.D. in Organizational Psychology from Panjab University, Department of Psychology, Chandigarh, India. Dr. Rana Deuba has written numerous research papers, articles and books, and has lectured in different research and academic organizations of the Government of Nepal.

## **Captain Dr. Alok Bansal**

Captain Alok Bansal is the Director of India Foundation & the Secretary General of Asian Eurasian Human Rights Forum (AEHRF). A seasoned strategic affairs analyst, he has previously served as the Executive Director of the National Maritime Foundation (NMF) and has held research positions at leading Indian think tanks including the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) and the Centre

for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS). He has authored/ edited 10 books. His work focuses on maritime security, South Asian geopolitics, and internal dynamics of Pakistan. A former naval officer, he served in the Indian Navy for 32 years and commanded two warships. A Ph.D. in international Affairs, he has been a visiting Professor at Jamia Millia Islamia.

### **Dr. Pema Gyamtsho**

Dr. Pema Gyamtsho is the Director General for ICIMOD, a regional knowledge-centre based in Kathmandu, Nepal. He is an agricultural scientist with experience in both the political arena – he was Bhutan’s first democratically elected Minister of Agriculture and Forest from 2013 to 2018 as well as the development sector, having worked with Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and ICIMOD earlier.

Pema holds an MSc in agriculture from Lincoln University, New Zealand, and a Ph.D. in natural sciences from the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, Switzerland.

### **Professor Dr. Dhananjay Singh**

Professor Dhananjay Singh is the member secretary of Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). He graduated in English from Government College, Itanagar, Arunachal University, in 1995, and did his MA in English from Arunachal University, Itanagar, in 1997. He was awarded the Gold Medal by the University for his excellent academic performance during his MA. He completed his M.Phil. and Ph.D. research in English from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, in 2003 and 2007 respectively. His research was in the domain of literary and cultural studies.

### **Atul Chandrakant Kulkarni**

Mr. Atul Chandrakant Kulkarni is the Member of the Board of Governors/Society of prestigious Indian Institute of Management, Shillong, Meghalaya, India. He is also a Former Advisor (International Projects) at Indian Ports Association, Gas Authority of India Limited.

### **Dr. Mrigendra Bahadur Karki**

Dr. Mrigendra Bahadur Karki is the Executive Director of the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS), Tribhuvan University. He earned his Ph.D. in Sociology from

Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan, with a dissertation titled “Activism in Nepal: Motivation, Networking, and Recruitment.” His primary research interests include activism, contentious politics, social movements, the sociology of international relations, and methodological approaches in the social sciences. Dr. Karki is the chief editor of Contributions to Nepalese Studies, the Strategic Studies Series (SSS), and the Nepal Adhyayan Journal. Additionally, he is a member of the Editorial Board for the Nepali Army’s publications, Unity Journal and Sipahi. Furthermore, he is the founding head of the Central Department of Social Work, Tribhuvan University. Dr. Karki actively participates in research governance within Tribhuvan University, serving as a member of the Ph.D. awarding research committees in the Institute of Medicine, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Faculty of Law. He imparts his expertise by teaching Philosophical Foundations of Social Sciences Research to MPhil-Ph.D. students at the Central Department of Sociology, Conflict, Peace, and Development Studies, and the Faculty of Law.

Currently, he is supervising five Ph.D. candidates. His research endeavors are evident through his leadership of two prominent research projects: Religion, Conflict, and National Security in Nepal and International Border of Nepal: A Sociological Study. Dr. Karki’s scholarly contributions are widely recognized. He co-authored Democracy and Ethnic Organization in Nepal and Surveying Activists in Nepal (with David N. Gellner, University of Oxford, Sage Publication). His recent academic article, Parliamentary Intervention and Bikas: Former President Bhandari’s Motion for Mahila Empowerment, appeared in State, Society, and Development: PMPD Perspectives.

### **Dr. Naresh Subedi**

Dr. Naresh Subedi is the member secretary of the Nepal Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC). Previously he worked as a program director at the Nepal Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC). Dr. Subedi, has a Ph.D. in rhinoceros from the University of Wildlife Science and Forest Research Institute, Dehradun, India. He has been working for a long time in the conservation program.

### **Dr. Ram Thapaliya**

Dr. Ram Thapaliya is faculty member of the Master’s Program in Conflict, Peace and Development Studies and Crisis Management Studies at Tribhuvan University,

Nepal. He holds a degree in International Law from Tribhuvan University, a Master's degree in International Relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University (USA) and has been awarded a Ph.D. in Crisis Management from Atlantic International University (USA). His research interests include the role of the military in South Asia, identity based conflicts and crisis management of both natural and human-made disasters.

### **Honourable Rupa B.K.**

Honourable Rupa B.K. is a Nepalese politician and currently serves as the Minister of State for Forests and Environment in the Government of Nepal. Minister of State B.K. has been actively involved in discussions and initiatives related to climate change and environmental conservation, particularly addressing issues like air pollution and human-wildlife conflict in Nepal and the South Asian region.

### **Honourable Yankila Sherpa**

Honourable Yankila Sherpa is a notable figure in Nepali politics. She is the founder and Managing Director of Snow Leopard Trek Pvt. Ltd, a trekking company. Additionally, she has held various leadership positions within organizations like the Federation of Woman Entrepreneurs of Nepal (FWEAN) and the Trekking Agents Association of Nepal (TAAN). Her work has been recognized with prestigious awards such as the Priyadarshani Award and the WWF's Abraham Conservation Award. She is a member of Parliament of Bagmati Pradesh, representing the Nepali Congress party.

### **Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Ningombam**

Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Ningombam is the Centre Head at Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Centre for Policy Research & Analysis, Indian Institute of Management Shillong, India.



## Glimpse of the Seminar



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