



Deepak Kumar Adhikari

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Deepak Kumar Adhikari is an original researcher. He has special interest in the study of religion, culture, tradition and philosophy, and has a keen interest in research. He has kept himself engaged in several bilateral initiatives aimed at consolidating Nepal-Bharat relations by developing environments for better understanding and dialogue.

Deepak Kumar Adhikari has, in tandem with the organizational works, developed cordial relations with all political organizations, national institutions, government machineries, academicians, diplomats, intellectuals, opinion makers, media, etc. in all social and national walks of life.

Since 2012, Deepak Kumar Adhikari has been committed, as a founder-director, to the activities of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal, a leading research institution for the long-term development of the society.



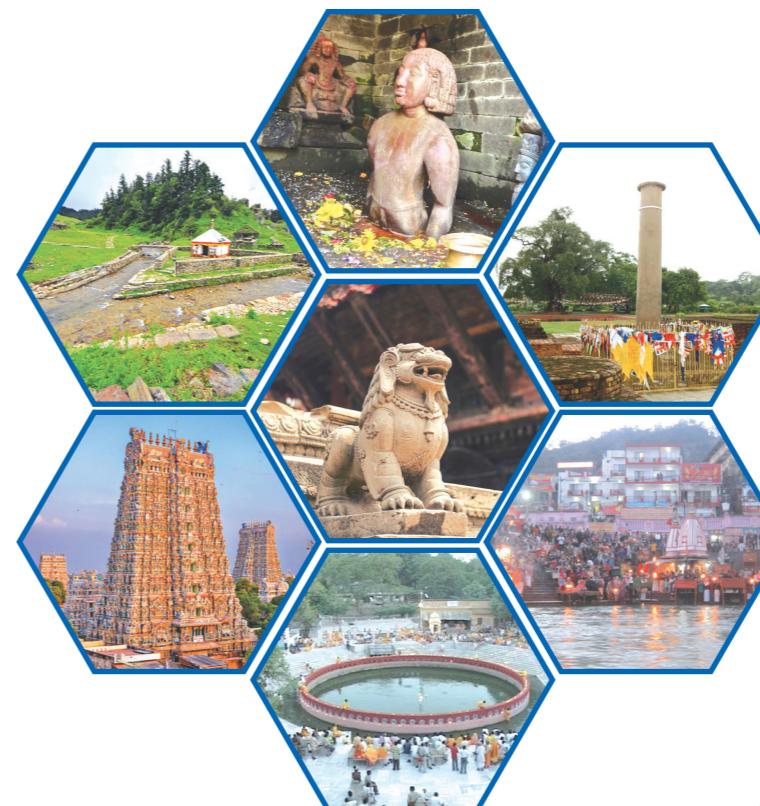
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BHARAT - NEPAL RELATIONS : SOCIO - CULTURAL AND CIVILIZATION LINKAGES Deepak Kumar Adhikari

BHARAT - NEPAL RELATIONS

Socio - Cultural and Civilization Linkages



Editor
Deepak Kumar Adhikari

**“Loss of Culture
Loss of Identity”**

Bharat-Nepal Relations

Socio-Cultural and Civilization Linkages
(A Report of a Seminar)

A Two-day Bilateral Seminar
on
6th-7th February 2017

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)
Azad Bhawan, New Delhi

Jointly organized by
Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad-Bharat (ARSP)
Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan-Nepal (NeNAP)

A Two-day Bilateral Seminar
on
Bharat-Nepal Relations
Socio-Cultural and Civilization Linkages
(A seminar report)

Editor
Deepak Kumar Adhikari

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Acknowledgments

Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal (NeNAP) and Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP)-Bharat jointly organized a two-day seminar on **Bharat-Nepal Relations: Socio-Cultural and Civilization Linkages** in association with Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) at Azad Bhawan, New Delhi on 6th-7th February 2017. This book is the collection of the speeches and papers presented in the seminar. The speeches in Nepali and Hindi were first transcribed and then translated into English and paper presentations were reproduced with necessary editing. However, special attention has been taken to keep the ideas and thoughts of the speakers intact.

Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal, expresses deep gratitude to Dr. Dipesh Kumar KC for transcribing audio records in English, Dr. Prem Raj Neupane for transcribing audio records in Nepali and Hindi, Dr. Tikaram Poudel for translating some Hindi and Nepali texts into English then edited. We also appreciate all the above scholars for taking this task of listening to multi-lingual audio and video records and transcribing them carefully into written texts, which is an extremely arduous and challenging task. We, the Pratishtan family and the publishers, acknowledge the contributions of these scholars to this Herculean task of transcription and translation in spite of their busy academic schedules and family responsibilities for this achievement.

The Pratishtan also acknowledges the contributions of Shri Santosh Acharya, Chief Administrative Officer of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal, to bringing this publication to its present form. He did the proof-reading of the entire document, set up its layout and selected the photographs.

In fact, this book is the outcome of the collective efforts of three organizations Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal, Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad-Bharat, and Indian Council for Cultural Relations. We extend our thanks to His Excellency the former Ambassador of India to Nepal, Shri Ranjit Rae, and to His Excellency the former Ambassador of Nepal to India, Shri Deep Kumar Upadhyay, Joint Secretary Northern (JS North) Division, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), India, Shri Sudhakar Dalela. We are thankful to the Chairman of ICCR, Prof Lokesh Chandra and the Director General (DG) of ICCR, Shri Amarendra Khatuwa for providing the venue and

being a co-host of the seminar. We extend our gratitude to Shri Shyam Parande, General Secretary of ARSP and the entire team of ARSP, Delhi.

While organizing this seminar, His Excellency Shri Ranjit Rae was the Indian Ambassador to Nepal. Now at the time of its publication, His Excellency Shri Manjeev Singh Puri is in his place. Pratishthan thanks both of them for their valuable help and support in publishing this document. Former Indian Ambassador to Nepal Shri Ranjit Rae was present in the seminar and, we are grateful to his inspiration. At the time of publication, we appreciate the good wishes of the present Ambassador of India to Nepal His Excellency Shri Manjeev Singh Puri.

We express our sincere thanks to His Excellency Shri Deep Kumar Upadhyay, former Ambassador of Nepal to India for his support in publishing several of our publications. Shri Deep Kumar Upadhyay was present in the seminar and, we are grateful to his inspiration. His positive gesture of encouragement always led us towards creative activities.

Without the blessing and support of many eminent scholars, this book would not have come to this form. We express our gratitude to the ministers, members of parliament of India, former ambassadors of Nepal and Bharat, vice-chancellors, Professor s, doctors, engineers, writers, columnists, journalists, editors, singers, lyricists, social activists, and leaders of different socio-religious organizations and all the distinguished speakers and participants hailing from all walks of life from Nepal and India, whose presence made the seminar a glorious success.

We thank Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad-Bharat for its crucial assistance. Finally, we acknowledge the inputs and assistance of all our volunteers and well-wishers in making this event and this publication a historic achievement.

Deepak Kumar Adhikari
Director, NeNAP
Kathmandu, Nepal

Preface

The Nepal and Bharat relations are beyond the conceptualization of modern way of bilateral relations of two countries. The geographical closeness with 1850 km long open border and the ethnic, religious and linguistic affinity between the people of these two countries make Nepal-Bharat relations a unique one in the world.

The Nepal and Bharat relations have been intimate since time immemorial. It is crucially significant in the geo-political, economic and security dynamics of Asia, and to some extent, of the world. The Nepal-Bharat relations have been founded on the basis of strong familial, socio-cultural and civilization ties, not simply on politics, diplomacy, economy and social interactions. The Nepal-Bharat relations have evolved from the same ancestral roots sharing the ethos of common traditions and cultural heritage of the *Ramayan*, the *Mahabharat* and Gautam Buddha.

In the recent past, Nepal politically underwent major changes as she moved from constitutional monarchy to democratic republic with a federal system. In this emerging scenario, Nepal-Bharat relations need to be reassessed to give continuity to the centuries old relations intact.

The Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP) organized a seminar on “India-Nepal Relations: Consolidation and Exploration of Prospects for Extended Cooperation” at Constitution Club, New Delhi on 14th and 15th December 2012.

Back home, the NeNAP again organized a similar seminar on the 30th of July 2013 at Amritbhog Complex, Kathmandu.

Our third seminar on Nepal-Bharat bilateral relation on “Republic of Nepal: Emerging Hopes and Scope” was organized in Kathmandu on the 24th of August 2013.

Our fourth seminar was on “Samvidhanma Dharma” (Dharma in Constitution) on 7th July 2015.

Our fifth seminar on “India-Nepal Relations: Changing Context, Emerging Situations” was organized in collaboration with Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP) and India Policy Foundation (IPF) on 26th and 27th of March 2016 in Madhyanchal Bhawan, Vasantkunj, New Delhi.

Our sixth seminar was on “Nepal and India: Exploring New Vistas”. This seminar was jointly organized by three organizations: India Foundation, New Delhi, Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal and Nepal Centre for Contemporary Studies (NCCS). The seminar coincided with the state visit of His Excellency Shri Pranab Mukherjee, the President of India to Nepal.

By bringing together people from diverse fields and disciplines—from diplomacy to politics, from art and culture to trade and commerce, from defense to history, from social sciences to media, the organizers were making an attempt to symbolically suggest, work has to be done in all the vital aspects of bilateral relations that define Nepal-Bharat relations.

However, in spite of such striking commonalities, there have been times of misunderstandings and disputes when people-to-people relations have gone awry. In all situations, that is unfortunate. It is highly important that such mutual disputes be removed through objective analysis of the cases, followed by intimate interaction. These seminars are a move in this direction. We are convinced that the mutual understanding and trust between the two nations should be accepted as a mutual necessity and not a compulsion, as often explained. Strong trust and mutual cooperation in security affairs are mutually beneficial for the overall prosperity of the two nations.

The concept of this series of seminars, organized by Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal, Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad-Bharat, and India Policy Foundation (IPF), New Delhi, was developed after the discussions in a seminar in Delhi on 26 and 27 March 2016 and the seminar organized by Neeti Anusandhan Pratisthan, Nepal, Nepal Center for Contemporary Studies, and India Foundation, New Delhi, during the visit of His Excellency President of the Republic of

India to Nepal on 2-3 November 2016. Both the Embassies of India and Nepal and members of civil societies including the participants and speakers suggested that the issues require in-depth discussions from the experts in the respective fields and recommended the respective governments to hone the initiative. The participants and speakers felt that one and a half hour time duration to discuss a particular issue was not sufficient and recommended for an in-depth discussion from respective experts on the issues. Consequently, the six issues of the series of seminars were finalized based on the discussions in two seminars previously conducted in Delhi and Kathmandu. Of these six series of seminars, three would be held in Nepal and the remaining three in India. It was decided that each issue would be discussed in two-day seminar each.

This is our first series of seminar under the theme **Bharat-Nepal Relations: Socio-Cultural and Civilization Linkages** jointly organized by NeNAP and ARSP in association with Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) at Azad Bhawan, New Delhi on 6-7 February 2017. And this first seminar focused on Bharat-Nepal Relations: Socio-Cultural and Civilization Linkages. Other proposed seminars would deal with the issues of trade and development cooperation, defense and security matters, political and diplomatic relations as well as media and educational linkages in order to have a holistic discussion on all aspects of Nepal-Bharat relations. We hope that these deliberations will contribute to enhanced understanding at the people-to-people level.

The main ethos of the seminar is to develop a better understanding of our socio-cultural and civilization linkages and tie-up. The main purpose of this seminar is to launch an introductory step towards addressing the above mentioned subjects and redefine them. We do not, however, claim that this is a panacea for everything.

Introducing the Organizers

Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal (NeNAP) established in 2015, was founded by a group of independent thinkers and researchers to enhance the age-old bilateral relationship between Nepal and Bharat.

Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP), Bharat was founded in 1978 as a non-political and not-for-profit organization with the objective of promoting international cooperation by strengthening people-to-people relations across the world. The ARSP consistently strives for nurturing cordial relations with civil society organizations and people of Nepal.

Over the years, the ARSP has launched a number of sustained initiatives and organized a series of activities to promote interactions and connectivity with the Diaspora which among other things, include People of Indian Origin (PIO) Parliamentarians Conference, Know Your Roots Program, seminars and symposia on wide ranging issues of concern to the Diaspora. ARSP has constantly interacted with leadership and the people of countries like South Africa, Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana, Suriname, Fiji, Malaysia, Nepal and Bhutan. It acted as a voice for the Diaspora and a vehicle of communication with the government of India for articulating the Diaspora concerns.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) is an autonomous organization of the Government of India, involved in India's external cultural relations through cultural exchange with other countries and their people. It was founded on 9 April 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of independent India.

The Council addresses its mandate of cultural diplomacy through a broad range of activities such as scholarships, cultural programs, etc. In addition to organizing cultural festivals in India and overseas, the ICCR financially supports a number of cultural institutions across India, and sponsors individual performers in dance, music, photography, theatre, and the visual arts. It also administers the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding established by the Government of India in 1965.

Shyam Parande
General Secretary, ARSP
New Delhi, India

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October 26, 2017

MESSAGE

At the outset, I would like to congratulate Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal (NeNAP) and Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP)-Bharat for jointly organizing a 2-day seminar on India-Nepal relations in New Delhi on 6-7 February 2017.

It gives me a great pleasure to know that, through the seminar, the organizers were able to bring together Nepali and Indian scholars. India and Nepal have shared a unique and special relationship since the time immemorial. The historical linkages that bind the people of these countries together have been a subject of academic interest in both these nations.

I am happy to know that Foundation like Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal have been playing a crucial role in bringing such scholars together and providing a sound platform for exchange of views, ideas and possibilities to further enhance these bilateral ties. Such efforts would go a long way in fostering and furthering the age old linkage existing between India and Nepal.

I compliment NeNAP on the role that it plays in strengthening our bilateral ties. I wish the Pratishtan good luck for its future endeavors and hope that it would continue to provide platforms that bring the people of India and Nepal together.

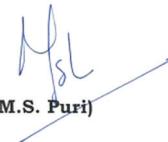

(M.S. Puri)

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Introduction of the Speakers

Shri Gopal Arora

Shri Gopal Arora is the Assistant Professor of Delhi University and Shriram College of Commerce, North Delhi, India. He is also a secretary of Antar-Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP).

Shri Shyam Parande

Shri Shyam Parande is a well-known social worker. He is currently working as an International Coordinator of Sewa International Bharat and Secretary General of Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP). He is also the Zonal Coordinator of International Centre for Cultural Studies.

Smt. Nalini Gyawali

Mrs. Nalini Gyawali is a prominent social activist of Nepal. She is actively involved in promoting socio-cultural events in Nepal. A particular area where Mrs. Gyawali has worked tirelessly is to promote better Indo-Nepal relations in all facets be it economic, political or socio-cultural. She is Convener of the Nepal Chapter of the Overseas Friends of BJP and General Secretary of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP) an important think tank of Nepal. She has contributed to Indo- Nepal relations by organizing various events and encouraging the scholars to participate in such events.

Prof. Dr. Kul Prasad Koirala

Under the influence of the late B.P. Koirala of Nepal, Professor Dr. Kul Prasad Koirala, having been directly involved in the Democratic movement of Nepal, was taken to jail in multiple occasions. Due to Prof. Koirala's invaluable contribution to

the democracy of Nepal, it wouldn't be an overstatement for his name to be declared as synonymous to 'democracy'. Prof. Koirala whose life and contributions to the nation are exemplary and inspirational, has been a Professor of Nepali literature, philology and linguistics in Tribhuvan University for 35 years. As a highly dignified academician, Professor Koirala's knowledge of the Eastern and Western literature and tenets run parallel. He is the symbol of the study of Vedic and modern Nepali literature alike. He has published 17 books and over a hundred research articles in his academic life. He is currently serving as the Vice Chancellor of Nepal Sanskrit University, Nepal.

Shri Sudhakar Dalela

Shri Sudhakar Dalela is the Joint Secretary of Minister of External Affairs, Northern Division (JS North-MEA). He is also a Counselor, Embassy of India and Meera Gandhi visiting The Mansion.

Ambassador Deep K. Upadhyay

Shri Deep Kumar Upadhyay is a leader of Nepali Congress, and former Minister for Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation and former Ambassador of Nepal to India.

Ambassador Virendra Gupta

Ambassador Shri Gupta retired from the government service two years ago after spending over 37 years with the Indian Foreign Service. During his diplomatic career, which started with the tenure at the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu, he held the position of India's High Commissioner in Tanzania, Trinidad & Tobago and South Africa. He also served as Deputy Director

of India's largest security studies think tank The Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses (IDSA) and as Director General of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). He is currently associated with a number of NGOs and think tanks and takes active interest in international relations and public policy issues. As the President of the Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP), he particularly focuses on Indian Diaspora and neighborhood issues.

Shri Tarun Vijay

Shri Tarun Vijay is an Indian author, social worker and journalist. He was the editor of *Panchajanya*, a Hindi weekly from 1986 to 2008. He also writes for the Daily Pioneer. He is currently working as the Director of the Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee Research Foundation (DSMRF). He was also elected member of Rajya Sabha that ended in July 2016 and worked as the president of Parliamentary Group on India-China Friendship. He is also a member of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defense and Parliamentary Consultative Committee for External Affairs. He is also a member of Board of Governors, Parliamentary Network on World Bank and IMF.

Ambassador Anup Mudgal

Ambassador Anup Mudgal is a member of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and retired in May, 2016 as India's High Commissioner to Mauritius. As part of his diplomatic career spanning for thirty two years, he served thrice at the Head Quarters of the Ministry of External Affairs handling relations with

India's neighborhood; ASEAN region; Russian Federation and some countries of Central and Eastern Europe as well issues relating to Human Resource Development. As part of his eight assignments abroad, Amb. Mudgal served in different capacities at the Indian Missions in Mexico (including NAFTA matters), Peru, former Yugoslavia, Belgium (EU matters), Germany, Austria (work relating to: IAEA, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOOSA, UNCITRAL), and Mauritius (including IORA).

Ambassador Jagdishwar Goburdhun Ambassador Jagdishwar Goburdhun is the high Commissioner of Mauritius in India. Jagdishwar Goburdhun, had been involved with the Seva Shivir, under the leadership of late Swami Krishnanand Saraswati; he later joined politics with the MSM and became Minister of Health, following which he was actively championing the cause of small planters.

Dr. Jagman Gurung

Dr. Jagman Gurung is the Director of the Sanskritik Adhyayan Kendra, Nepal Sanskrit University and a cultural academician too.

Prof. Dr. BC Upreti

Professor Dr. Bhuwan Chandra Upreti is a member of Prime Minister's Eminent Persons Group (EPG) Government of India. He is a Senior Fellow of Vivekananda International Foundation.

Prof. Dr. Triratna Manandhar

Professor Triratna Manandhar is the retired Professor of History at Tribhuvan University. He was also the former Vice-Chancellor of Lumbini Buddhist University. He has published 18 books on history and culture.

More than 150 papers have been published in different national and international journals and magazines. He has actively participated in international conferences held in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, China, Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. He has conducted research at the International Institute for Asian Studies, the Netherlands.

Dr. Ramesh K. Dhungel Dr. Ramesh Kumar Dhungel is a leading cultural historian of Nepal associated with TU, LBU (Nepal) and SOAS, University of London (UK). He is currently working as Lead Professor of Human Civilizations and World Cultures, Westcliffe University, CA, USA (Nepal Program). Dr. Dhungel was Honorable Member of State Restructuring High Level Commission of Government of Nepal (2011-12).

Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit (M.D.) is a Consultant Physician. He is an Ex-Director of B.P. Koirala Institute of Health Science (BPKIHS), Dharan, Nepal and also a former Chairman of B.P. Koirala Memorial Cancer Hospital Project, Bharatpur, Nepal. Dr Dixit is the former consultant visiting Physician of Bir Hospital, Kathmandu. He is Ex-senate Member of Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, coordinator of Civil Society for Peace & Development (CISOPED) and also the active member of “Nagarik Andolan” of Nepal.

Dr. Anand Singh

Dr. Anand Singh is an Associate Professor and Dean of School of Buddhist Studies and Civilization at Gautam Buddha University, India. His research area is on Buddhism based in Archaeological & Epigraphic Studies, Environmentalism in Buddhism, Sacred Geography of Buddhism. He was Dean of Student Affairs and Research and Planning.

Acharya Norbu Shrepa

Acharya Norbu Sherpa is the Vice-President of Nepal Buddhist Federation. He completed his education from Sampurnanda Sanskrit University, Kashi, India and now he is running the Manjushree Community School.

Prof. Dr. Rajesh Kharat

At present, Chairperson of Centre for South Asian Studies, School of International Studies, JNU New Delhi. He also served as Chief Advisor, to the Equal Opportunity office of JNU. He has authored of Five Books and more than Thirty Research Articles on the contemporary issues of South Asian region, particularly, Himalayan region. Before joining JNU he served at Dept. of Civics and Politics, University of Mumbai, Mumbai for more than 17 years.

Prof. Dr. Kashinath Nyaupane Having learn the entirety of Indian philosophy from the great scholar Swami Yogindrananda in Varanasi for twelve years, Professor Dr. Kashinath Nyaupane's knowledge of the Indian philosophy is unparalleled. He has committed his life to the advancement of the schools of philosophy such as Mimamsa, Vedanta,

Nyaya, Jaina, Baudhāyaṇī, Carvaka and so on. He is currently the Head of the Buddhist Studies Department, Director of the Foreign Affairs Council as well as the Executive Director of the Research Center of Nepal Sanskrit University.

He has been working on *Satasahasrika Prajnaparamita* for the last five years, collecting and editing the manuscripts that had been scattered all over the world and locked up in archives and University libraries, and is going to publish it in 20 volumes by 2018.

Dr. Nihar Ranjan Nayak

Dr. Nihar Ranjan Nayak completed his PhD in International Politics from Jawaharlal Nehru University. He was a Visiting Fellow to PRIO, Oslo, from June 6 to July 7, 2006 and July 2007. He did a special course on Peace Research in International Summer School from Oslo University in 2007. He has been visiting Faculty to the Center for the Study of Nepal, Faculty of Social Science, and Banaras Hindu University in 2011. He has been Guest Faculty to Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie since September 2006.

Shri Balbir Punj

Shri Balbir Punj is a journalist and columnist from India. He is a member of the Rajya Sabha representing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). On 31 March 2013, he was promoted as one of the Vice Presidents of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He has written columns in the National Hindi daily

Punjab Kesari and Indian weekly magazine Outlook. Currently he writes a regular column for the daily newspaper The Pioneer.

Shri Kamal Rijal

Shri Kamal Rijal is the senior journalist, columnist and former Chief Editor of Gorkhapatra.

Dr. Vasudha Pandey

Associate Professor Dr. Vasuda Pandey, a Historian is the faculty Member and Associate Professor of Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi, Department of History. She had her PhD from University.

Shri Phupu Chhembe Sherpa

Shri Phupu Chhembe Sherpa Bikkhu Thubten Jikdol is the President of the International Buddhist Federations, Nepal Chapter.

Prof. Dr. BM Dhakal

Professor Beni Madhav Dhakal is one of the great scholars of Sanskrit literature from Nepal. He has contributed to the translation of various Hindu canons into Nepali. He has translated numerous Puranas into Nepali. He is the author of the Mahakavya (epic), the only epic in Sanskrit from a Nepali author. Having published more than 50 books in Sanskrit, Hindi and Nepali and above 200 research articles, he is a prominent name in the Nepali academia. He served as a Professor in Nepal for 34 years and as an academician in Haridwar and Rishikesh in India for seven years. He is currently serving in his second consecutive term as the Chairperson of Service Commission in Nepal Sanskrit University.

Dr. Chandra Kumar Sherma

Mundumveed Dr. Chandra Kumar is the Founder General Secretary of Kirat Dharma

tatha Sahitya Utthan and Founder President of Kirat Yakthung Papohang Sherma and Mahaguru Falgunda Memorial Foundation, Nepal.

Shri Nityananda Tajpuriya

Shri Nityananda Tajpuriya is the General Secretary of Adivashi Janajati Mahasangha (NEFIN).

Ambassdor Shiv Shankar Mukherjee

Ambassador Shiv Shankar Mukherjee retired recently from a distinguished career with the Indian Foreign Service that culminated in his posting as High Commissioner to the United Kingdom in 2008. He came to London following four years as Indian Ambassador to Nepal, where he was credited with skillful handling of the crisis in Kathmandu that led to the deposing of King Gyanendra and the holding of elections for a new Constituent Assembly.

His nearly 40-year career included service in Damascus, Lusaka, Washington, Brussels, Cairo (as Ambassador), Pretoria and Windhoek (as High Commissioner). He has also served as the spokesperson for the Indian Foreign Ministry and as director general of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Contributing to the world of higher education is a top priority for him following his retirement, including his work with SOAS. Though he now lives in New Delhi, he has visited the School on numerous occasions and gave strong support to its recent UK-India Higher Education Partnership Program, in which he facilitated the active participation of 15 vice chancellors

of Indian universities. Presently, he is the Director of Indian Defense and Strategic Analysis (IDSA).

Prof. Dr. Ram D. Rakesh Dr. Ram Dayal Rakesh is the Professor at the Central Department of Hindi, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Nepal.

Ambassador Amarendra Khatua Ambassador Amarendra Khatua, Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer and renowned poet. Amarendra Khatua took over as secretary to government of India and Director General, Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) from Monday (19th Sep. 2016). Mr. Khatua was India's envoy to Argentina. He is a career diplomat. He did his graduation from Delhi University in 1978. He is a poet and has written several poems both in Odia and English.

Ambassador KV Rajan Ambassador KV Rajan is a former member of the Indian Foreign Service. He has served in senior diplomatic assignments including in the rank of Ambassador in a number of countries including France , USA, UK, Zambia, Algeria and Nepal (where he was Ambassador from 1995 to 2000). He has also held senior positions in the External Affairs Ministry including as Secretary (East) and Advisor to the Minister; led the Indian delegation, including as the Prime Minister's Special Envoy, to various international conferences and summit meetings; was co-Chairman of the India-Iran Joint Committee on the Iran-Pak-India Gas Pipeline, Member of the Oil Diplomacy Group set up by the Minister of

Petroleum and Natural Gas, Chief Executive of the Trade Fair Authority of India (now India Trade Promotion Organization). He is widely traveled and is a specialist on South Asian, European, American and African issues. He is presently a Member of the National Security Advisory Board, Government of India.

Dr. Rashmi S. Chari

Dr. Rashmi S Chari is a Panelist and a member of Educational Research & Innovations Committee (ERIC) of Ministry of HRD. Rashmi S Chari has been actively involved in the field of education for the last 31 years. She is currently Member of Educational Research & Innovations Committee (ERIC) of Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India. She has consistently supported the initiatives of the Apex Educational bodies as a resource person and Advisor to the Apex Educational Institutions of India in NCERT and CBSE on Teacher Education, Educational Management, Early Childhood Care and Education and National Policy of Education. In the last two decades she has organized and conducted a number of conferences and workshops for teachers, principals and directors of prominent schools in India and Nepal. She has extensively researched Human values in Education and has developed a curriculum for teacher education for MHRD.

Deepak Kumar Adhikari

Shri Deepak Kumar Adhikari, Director of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP), Rastriya Saha-Samparka Pramukh of the Hindu Swayamsevak

Sangh (HSS) Nepal and a member of the Advisory Board of the World Organisation of Students and Youth (WOSY), is a social worker, who has for the past several decades engaged himself in pure social work at various capacities. In the past twenty years of his full-time social service, he spent much of his time giving visionary leadership to Pragyik Vidyarthi Parishad (PVP), Nepal and developing a strong organizational foundation for it, working as its National Organizing Secretary. Since 2012, Deepak Kumar Adhikari has been committed, as a founder-director, to the activities of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal, and a leading research institution for long-term development of the society.

Ambassador Ranjit Rae

Ambassador Ranjit Rae is a former Ambassador of India to Nepal. Shri Rae dedicated most of his life in the service of the nation. He joined Indian Foreign Service in 1980 and served as an Indian diplomat as well as Ambassador of India to different countries. As a Joint Secretary of Northern Division, Minister of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India, Shri Rae played an important role in enhancing the relationship between India with Nepal. He exhibited excellent performance and earned great fame both within the country and abroad. He came to Nepal as Ambassador of India in 2013 and completed his in February 2017.

Prof. Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya

Prof. Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya is the Vice-Chancellor of Lumbini Buddhist University and Professor of Buddhist

Studies at Tribhuvan University, was trained by Most Venerable Badri Ratna Bajracharya in the traditional rituals and performing arts of Newar Buddhist storytelling. He was a Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence in the Art History Department at Virginia Commonwealth University and previously visited Toronto as a speaker in the Numata Buddhist Studies series. Dr. Bajracharya is also a Professor at the Department of Buddhist Study in Tribhuvan University.

Prof. Lokesh Chandra

Professor Lokesh Chandra is a prominent scholar of the Vedic period, Buddhism and the Indian arts. He was the president of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) during 2014-2017. He is also the Director of the International Academy of Indian Cultural. He wrote the books *Buddhist Iconography*, *Tibetan-sanskrit dictionary*, *transcendental art of Tibet*, *Dictionary of Buddhist Iconography and Tibetan art*. In 2006 he was recognized with India's Padma Bhushan award.

Dr. Sharada Poudel

Dr. Sharada Poudel is a great scholar of Philosophy, especially Buddhism. She did her research on the commentary by Kamalasila on Vajracchedika Prajnaparamita, and thus is the first PhD graduate of Lumbini Buddhist University. Currently, she is a faculty of Lumbini Buddhist University in Lumbini, Nepal. She has been decorated with numerous awards and felicitations due to her excellence in the field of Indian Philosophy. She has published three books and more than 20 research articles so far.

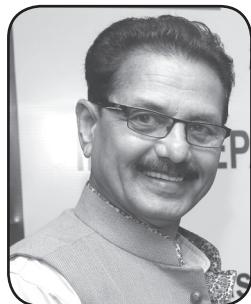


Shri Gopal Arora

Good Morning! Welcome to the inaugural section of this session on “Bharat-Nepal Relations: Socio-Cultural and Civilization Linkages”. May I request our dignitaries to come and occupy the place on the dais! I have the pleasure of inviting His Excellency Ambassador of Nepal to India Shri Deep Kumar Upadhyayji, Vice-Chancellor of Nepal Sanskrit University Professor Dr. Kul Prasad Koirala, ARSP present President Ambassador Virendra Gupta, JS North Ministry of External Affairs Shri Sudharkar Dalelaji, and Secretary General of ARSP Shri Shyam Parandeji, and Secretary General of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal Smt. Nalini Gyawaliji. It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to this program which is the first of this series of six seminars that Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad-Bharat and Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal are proposing to organize on different aspects of Indo-Nepal relationships. ARSP and NeNAP have been organizing and taking initiatives since last year. In March last year we organized a two-day conference on “Indo-Nepal relations: Changing Contexts Emerging Scenario”. Subsequently, ARSP organized a series of programs for the high level parliament delegates that visited India in July 2016. We organized an interactive program with the members of parliament in the parliament house at New Delhi and then, we organized a program with Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) on developmental cooperation in India and Nepal in India Habitat Center. We also organized a

program with South Asian University on “Cooperation in the Field of Education”. Friends, the relationships between the two sovereign nations are important aspects. They are more important for the two sovereign nations India and Nepal, which are closely connected. Go beyond the normal diplomatic relations; go to the historical, cultural and civilization linkages. They start even much before the Buddha. Sita was from Janakpur; Ram was from Ayodhya. Gautam Buddha was born in Lumbini; he attained enlightenment in Sarnath.

Thank you very much!



Shri Shyam Parande

Good morning and Namaste! You all are welcome to the series of this important seminar.

Respected dignitaries on the Dais, the chairperson of this program respected Ambassador Virendra Guptaji, His Excellency the Ambassador of Nepal to India Shri Deep Kumar Upadhyay, Vice-Chancellor of the famous Sanskrit University of Nepal Professor Dr. Kul Prasad Koiralaji, Shri Sudhakar Dalelaji of Nepal desk under the Minister of External Affairs (MEA), which is called JS North, the General Secretary of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal, Smt. Nalini Gyawaliji, my friend Aroraji and all the dignitaries present here.

The relation of India and Nepal is such that we can find many similarities among two countries and very little differences. We have organized this series of six seminars. The topics have been finalized. Before that Professor Gopal Arora gave a reference to the most meaningful seminar in Delhi in March 2016 and it had these six sub-themes that we decided those six themes for independent conferences. During that seminar our attention and imagination was caught by what the participants said during their presentations. Then, we decided that all these themes required deeper discussion. And all these six seminars were not to be meant for the sake of seminar, just simply presenting papers but needed to be implemented. What could be done next was the question on our mind? With determination in our mind, we have moved further for holding this series.

Whatever the political situations we have on both sides, political statements emerge and media reverberates with noises. Every nose adds to confusion and adds to differences also. However, beyond that, how we can reach the general society, which we have been talking about? We all will have to put in our efforts towards this. We discussed these six topics and to start with cultural, social and civilization. The purpose and the focus of these six seminars would be to evolve better understanding in keeping the two nations together. Whatever the political situations are; whatever the global situations are; these two societies stood together; the upheavals caused on both sides have left short term effects till now. And we have experienced that these societies go in hand in hand. This is where culture, society and religion matters. Therefore, we decided on this theme to launch the six conferences series.

I give an outline of the topics in brief that are coming up. We want that both the nations participate in development. India and Nepal should move ahead together. Both moved together through the civilizations. These nations are together in religion and action. They are together in development. We want to discuss developmental issues and trade between the two countries to move ahead. Let trade cooperation reach to a great height. Let both the nations be self-reliant. We all need to think in this direction. That is different from the present perspective. Third is defense, security and strategic relations. Security of both the countries is some way interrelated and needs to properly evolved and networked. Fourth is education. Students from Nepal come to India in a large number. We need to do different things in India and Nepal for educational cooperation. We need to consider moving ahead together. The fifth is the media. In modern times media has its own significance and we need to discuss media related issues. We need to understand the necessity observing the sensitivities on both sides of the border. To strengthen the relationship among the two countries the media of both the nations need to present the issues appropriately and that leads to the removal of all confusions. We can see the responsible role of the media and we discuss this issue as well.

And there is a more important issue at the end i.e. the political and diplomatic relations. I am emphasizing on this issue that needs serious deliberations. A mature diplomatic and political relation is essential for a long-lasting relationship.

The cultural relations of Nepal and India have been since time immemorial. We do not need any example to be retold. However, if we see the parts of it, that is the sub-part of it. Cultural proximity can be experienced at subtle strata also, considering the forms and formats of pilgrimages that have been undertaken since times immemorial; pilgrimage to Pashupatinath in Kathmandu ends in Varanasi with Darshan of Baba Vishwanath. Similarly, we have Buddha Circuit that is well connected; Lumbini yatra is never complete without visit to Boddha Gaya. The pilgrimage that begins in the north gets completed when you offer water in the Rameshwaram i.e., the south. And the people of South India had a wish to pray at the Pashupati Temple at least once in their lifetime; they want to offer water to Lord Pashupati. This is the relationship between the peoples of the two nations and you can understand it in your own ways. There is the role of the Kirats as well. The indigenous societies of Nepal and India are interrelated to each other. Both these groups are found across the borders of India and Nepal. There is good understanding. The people of Bharat and Nepal are all having the same cultural roots and bond. Irrespective of any Geographical location and boundary. There is much discussion on the such issues. And all those issues are on the table to be discussed; we would consider in days to come.

How we move ahead together is determined by our cultural, social and civilization foundations. Role of social and cultural organizations are most vital in such situations, I feel. Social organizations on both the sides of the border need to consider this fact together. The incitements that are tossed up by vested interests have to be opposed peacefully and properly. We need to consider how we can bind the societies together and keep them intact. In Nepal religious conversions are a serious issue that is being propagated through foreign funded NGOs. The conversions have reached even the Nepal-China border, not to miss that this is happening along the Nepal-India border also. The divisive role of the Church has to be understood in proper perspective and says to stop such conversions evolved.

These are the issues on cards and social organizations from both the sides have come together to consider and find solutions for the challenges and problems. There is a great role of culture, civilization

and society to bind together these cultural cousins and each section of the society that carries it out. Women are the best preservers of the cultural civilization. We need to make special efforts for involving more women in this dialogue for better cultural interaction among the two societies. Cultural heritage of both the countries would be well preserved and advanced if we work on this aspect of relationship properly.

Like this, we would be debating on all these issues today and tomorrow. The active participation of delegates from both the countries will be highly appreciated. We welcome your ideas although all of you may not get opportunity to speak. We request you all to submit the papers: the papers that will be presented and the papers that will not be presented, for the benefit of publication. We shall try to publish all those papers possibly.

At the end of six seminars, we will have well-documented journals which can be presented to the governments of both the countries, with well defined concrete suggestions. So that the governments may pick or choose, issues for implementation if they consider these useful. Let's move to that direction. In that way these six seminars will be completed and they will be fruitful. I thank you all for your participation and expecting better deliberations. Once again, thank you all.



Smt. Nalini Gyawali

Respected guests on the stage, Chief Guest Professor Dr. Kul Prasad Koirala, the Vice-Chancellor of Nepal Sanskrit University, His Excellency Ambassador of Nepal to India Shri Deep Kumar Upadhyay, the Chairman of International Cooperation Council Shri Virendra Gupta, the General Secretary of International Cooperation Council Shri Shyam Parande and Shri Sudhakar and all the ladies and gentlemen present in this program here today!

We all are present here for an occasion. This occasion is very important to discuss the relations between India and Nepal. We believe that we will certainly be able to make our centuries old relations stronger. I thank everyone present here including the Chief Guest of the program. Similarly, I also thank the organizers Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal, and Indian Council for International Cooperation. I also thank ICCR. I thank the Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs, Government of India, Smt. Sushma Swaraj for making all the facilities of ICCR available for us. I thank you all.

Thank you very much!



Professor Dr. Kul Prasad Koirala

Ambassador of Nepal to India Shri Deep Kumar Upadhyay, Indian Council for International Cooperation and the officials of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal and all the official.

On behalf of the family of Nepal Sanskrit University, I bow to all the academic friends attending this program.

Shri Shyam Parande indeed mentioned the six topics for discussion. With these six topics the political confusion, I hope, will be eradicated. Politics is indeed a narrow system. If we look at the etymology of the word '*rajneeti*', the word for politics in Indic languages, it is derived from two roots '*raj*' and '*neeti*', which get compounded to have '*rajneeti*' or 'politics'. *Rajneeti* i.e., 'politics' in English means the *neeti* that is the best and full of light. It is the most effective among the *neetis*. It is the name of a very psychedelic *neeti*. In this age of today, I see, politics has become a profession. Politicians have been doing anything for their personal benefits. They spend most of their time for personal gains. Shri Deep Kumar, who is also a former member of parliament from Nepali Congress, is also here. Shri Gupta, who is the Chairperson today, is also here. Both of them have done lots of diplomatic politics and they are here to play the role of Chairperson of this program. My intention is not to criticize any *neeti* or any activities. What I want to say is that humanity is the greatest of all *neetis* and that includes everyone. Through humanity we can become one in world heritage. In it too the relation of India and Nepal is like the relation of the nail and the flesh. Without the

flesh, the nail cannot survive. The nail at the top of the finger is not secured unless there is the flesh. The India-Nepal relation is of this kind. There are similarities among the castes of Nepal and India. Both Nepal and India are countries, where people live on the foundations of Vedic Arya Sanatana Dharma. The civilization since the time of the *Rigveda* is the civilization of the people of India and Nepal. A few hundred or a few thousand years ago with the Shaligrams and the books of *Vedas*, we climbed up the lap of the Himalayas towards the Gandharva to protect our religion.

That is why we have same Gotras and Prawars. We too have same traditions. Therefore, Nepal and India are two nations politically but they are not two nations in terms of language, culture, religion and feelings. These two nations are made from the same society; we also know that there was a special relation between India and Nepal during the Treta Yug. Sita was married to the prince of Awadh. In the same tradition in the Dwapar Yug, there was such a relationship that Bhim and Arjun went to China and brought the shilajit, woolen blankets and the herb *chiraito* of Nepal for the Rajarshi Yagya. And seeing that the northern region was under their control, Bhim and Arjun had a bath in the Teesta and returned to Indraprastha. We have this kind of relationship between India and Nepal since the time of Treta Yug. The India-Nepal relation is important from the perspectives of culture, religion and holy places. For the Indians, they would not have salvation without having a prayer at the Pashupatinath Temple. And for the people of Nepal, they feel the doors of heaven would not open if they do not worship Vishwanath, Dwarka Puri, Kedarnath and Badrinath, and the journey of life is not complete without having a bath at the Ganga. This is the widespread belief and determination of the people of Nepal.

However, there is a situation. India is a very large country. Here emerged many civilizations and there have been several religious, cultural and political conflicts. In Nepal too there have been a few conflicts but Nepal has been able to address these conflicts. The people are scattered. The civilization is scattered. The culture is distracted. In such a situation, the people of Nepal are looking towards the south. The reason is here is Baba Ramdev. The reason is here is Shankaracharya. We are grateful for the movement that Swarupananda Saraswati

initiated against cow slaughter. Today hundreds of cows have been slaughtered unnoticed in western Nepal. The people of Nepal take the cow slaughter as equal to the murder of one's mother. Most probably the followers of Aryan religion in India also take it in similar way. So I say that sometimes the political relations come up in the front. And sometimes it gets subsided. Therefore, political relations sometimes get worse and some other times get better. It is unending and eternal process.

What is eternal is the culture. The eternal is the language. The eternal language is related to religion and humanity. Therefore, in terms of humanity there is no discrimination between the people of Nepal and India. Religion is modeled according to the land as we dress up according to the land, depending on the climate. I live in Nepal. It is cold there and I dress up accordingly. You live in India, it is plain and you have direct sunlight leading to a hot climate. Consequently, you wear different types of costumes. Therefore, the geographical differences are responsible in linguistic and behavioral differences. To provide the evidence of this context, I want to draw your attention to the anecdote related with the Yagya for acquiring son of King Dasharath and the Sage Rishyasringa. When King Dasharath searched the sage for the Yagya, the Sage Rishyasringa was meditating in the Himalayas. The king sent his people to bring the sage back. When the people reached there, they found that the sage was in meditation without having bath and having washed his clothes. And the people thought how this sage could do the Yagya as he himself is not clean. If his own thoughts were not pure, how he would do the Yagya.

They thought if there was something wrong with the king but when they reached the hills they started having a bath only once in a day i.e., in the morning. They washed the clothes they wore at night. When they were moving through the plains, they started having bath twice everyday i.e., once in the morning and in the evening. When they reached Ayodhya they started prayers three times a day. They began to pray in the morning with a bath, to pray with a bath in the mid-day and to pray with a bath in the evening. Later they were sent to reach the sage to the Himalayas and they asked the sage why he had not have bath while meditation. Then the sage said that the religion of the body was the greatest. If you had a bath here, you would be

sick for six months and if you did not have a bath there, you would be sick there. Therefore, you have to do accordingly as the saying go in our time: when in Rome, do as the Romans do. This is an anecdote from the *Valmeeki Ramayana*. In this way, we have religion and dress according to the land. What I want to say is that India and Nepal are one in terms of religion, culture and humanity and traditions. An artificial line divides these two nations today. This artificial line is a political one. Politicians did not make this relationship. Nature made the relations. The sages made the relations. Our ancestors established and nurtured the relations. Therefore, we have to move on the foot prints of our ancestors. We need to treat the political fever with the *chiraito* and make them cool down. Making these requests I stop my words. Jai Nepal.

Thank you so much!



Shri Sudhakar Dalela

Good morning president of the ARSP Virendra Gupta, distinguished Ambassador of Nepal to India, Naliniji, Dr. Koirala and Arorajil!

First of all, let me thank ARSP, Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal, and ICCR for inviting me to this important event. I think as many speakers have mentioned, the relations of Nepal and India are special, unique and they encompass every aspect of cooperation that we can think in terms of many activities, whether it is trade and economic, defense and security, technology, development, cooperation, and cultural exchanges.

One of the most crucial elements of this cooperation, in my view, is the connectivity between our people; people to people connectivity is the most crucial aspect of Nepal and India friendship and partnership. I am pleased to say that we have a very strong tradition of high level political exchanges. We also have a very wide ray of mechanism to deal with these issues with the objectives of strengthening the relations we go forward. We have had a number of high-level visits in last two or three years. In 2014, the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi visited Nepal twice. The Prime Minister of Nepal visited India last year in February as well as in September. In November 2016 the President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee, visited Nepal.

These high level exchanges really summarize the nature of our partnership and friendship. It is important that the leadership from

both the sides adhere to the partnership and maturing relationship for the benefit of two peoples. On behalf of government of India, I would like to mention that we are very committed to the strengthening and expanding this partnership in all areas, including defense and security, or say, people to people contacts and other different aspects of our cooperation.

As I mentioned earlier the crucial element of our partnership is people to people connection and in this context the dialogue has been kept alive by ARSP and Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal. I am very pleased to know that you intend to organize these six workshops and seminars both in India and in Nepal. These workshops and seminars bring the scholars from different walks of life i.e., civil society, academics, business, diplomacy, etc both from India and Nepal. We understand that people in general are extremely important. We, Government of India, look forward to receiving good inputs and, I am sure, these inputs will be useful for the both of the governments to make this partnership closer and making the friendship stronger. I think with these comments I would like to, once again, congratulate the ARSP and NeNAP for planning this workshops and I wish them all success for this workshop.

Thank you very much!



Ambassador Deep Kumar Upadhyay

Distinguished personnel on the dais, Nalinji, Shyam Parandeji, His Excellency Chairperson Virendra Guptaji, Professor Koirala, Dalela Sahab and other dignitaries! I would like to welcome all the distinguished delegates, friends from the media both from Nepal and India here.

I am thankful to the organizers for organizing such thought-provoking, positive seminars. This is the first seminar of the six series of the seminar. Morning shows the day; that is why the selection of the participation from Nepal reflects this. I would like to thank the organizers for selecting distinguished scholars from Nepal and, I know, this is not an easy task.

In India, everyone is busy, but they are participating despite their business. So I thank the delegates for participating and thinking about Nepal-India relationship. It is my personal keen interest. I want to know how the relationship between Nepal and India can move in a successful manner and we can go ahead. For this, Track-II seminars are crucial. I would like to thank the speakers Shyam Parande, Professor Koirala and Dalelaji who spoke very well. The only truth between India-Nepal relations is that, it is guided by history, civilization, culture and religion.

The political relationship may change time to time. No matter, due to this heart to heart type of connection, we all belong to the same

Rishi-Munis as Prof. Koirala expressed in an impressive way. I don't like to enter this issue. I think this is a very true factor that we have religious and cultural bondages.

Nepal has three geographical regions: the Himalayan region is the high mountainous area which is thinly populated, then the Hilly region and the flat region in the south that we call Terai. This southern region is directly connected with the borders of the Northern India. Regarding connectivity, on three sides of India, i.e. east, west and south, a very easy terrain we have. We have the issues of the railway, the roads, and the connectivity. Especially after the series of high level visits from both the countries in the recent years, as Dalelaji also mentioned, these issues are getting adequate address and we expect positive outcome soon. That's why it is improving day by day. It is coming to the surface with a solid foundation.

There has been some kinds of problems in our relations at times, regarding our old agreements. All the bilateral mechanisms are there and high-level policy-level exchanges are there and these types of Track-2 interactions are also happening here. That's why now it is the right time that Nepal and India should both work for the peace, stability and prosperity of the people. This should be our focal agenda.

Shyam Parandeji just mentioned here that there is a little confusion in both the sides because of negative news from some media in India and Nepal. But it is the responsibility of both the people to clarify all these issues just as nobody can change geography

Speakers speaking before us explained the fact that our relations cannot be compared with any other countries and any other civilizations. That is why, we have open border. Our own type of relation is incomparable. Still someone commented that Nepal is turning towards other sides. I very humbly say, no.

We should be proud of our relations because every engagement between Nepal and India is in such a manner that it cannot be compared, cannot be described negatively and in another way. We should be proud of this fact. In the same way stands Nepal. We are

in transitional phase; until and unless there is permanent peace and stability and economic progress, the sensitivity syndrome will be there in Nepal. Being a sovereign country it is the duty of the Nepalese people and the government of Nepal to take their own decisions. We must be responsible for our decisions. That means we take the decision and we cannot blame others. We should look forward.

When the massive earthquake hit Nepali in 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modiji, the government of India and the people of India helped Nepal just in a way that it was a case of their own family and all the family members got involved to rescue and to face the challenges jointly. I was the witness. We should salute; we should admire such supports.

Also at present all of us know there was a hard time for Nepal regarding power crisis and load-shedding. Now, people are happy. All the business people and industries, even the common people are happy because there is almost no load-shedding at this time. Anyway, our Electricity Authority is good enough to manage the internal domestic transmission system to control the leakages in the system. These are two things they made and our power ministry did a brilliant work. As a matter of fact, if power was not evacuated from Indian side to our territory it would not be possible to end the load-shedding in Nepal which is the other truth. We tried our best to evacuate power from Far-West Uttarakhand to Bengal point. It was possible that the power was evacuated according to the request of the Government of Nepal.

Government of India was kind enough and I would like to thank Dalela Sahab and the Government of India. That is why it was possible. Otherwise, our first transmission line between Dhalkebar and Muzaffarpur—though it had a capacity of 440KV that means around 1200 MW—could be transmitted from this single point. But due to some policy lapses on our part, our proper substation of 440KV was not there.

There was only 130 KV. Now we are going to complete a 220 KV substation there. Still we are trying to make 120 MW of additional

power import from India. Only then our NEA will be able to declare there will be no load-shedding in Nepal. This is the fact and the positive way we can think about.

However, some kinds of the problems are there which all of us know. Due to the privilege of the media, some reports are presented negatively and some reports are presented positively. We should be fair enough to evaluate on our own.

It, however, is true that there are some genuine problems in trade. One example is the case of jute products. Now there are some kinds of additional duties like anti-dumping duties on jute. And, there also are some kinds of new service-tax for the third country good movement through Kolkata port. Currency issue is one of them. We are in very close contact with the Government of India and are requesting to nullify all these issues because all these trade issues are against the treaty between Nepal and India; it is against the WTO, against SAAFTA too. But there is also a problem from our side, the officers normally cite us. Look, we should be good enough to highlight the truth. Sometimes there is the problem of ginger export and other items against the natural production of Nepal many times more. The export is from Nepal side. We should be very much careful about that. We should be good enough to promote Nepali products in Indian market. I think there is no hindrance to any Indian export items going to Nepal. That is why the percentage of import from India has been now around 70 percent. Previously, it was from the third country because of the compatibility of price and the easy access. These are the two factors behind such activities.

Regarding defense, security, education, media responsibility, political and diplomatic relationship, I hope these things will be well discussed in this seminar. I think education as an issue will be discussed as ICCR is also a part of this program. I am glad that number of scholarships for Nepali students from the Government of India has been increased tremendously. However, we are not fully able to utilize the scholarship scheme because of the issues in the selection process of the scholarship. If the people belonging to the rural areas

of Nepal studied in the public school are given the scholarship then the scholarship will be 100 percent utilized. If the needy people do not get the scholarship then those who get scholarship may change their educational institutions and it will not be utilized. These kinds of the problem I have found. That is why time has come that we should evaluate all these sectors. We should have positive thoughts. If we realize the truth we should find out the problems and solve it.

Chairperson Sir,

To solve these problems we need to work with our full strength. We need to reach the fact and search for the solution. If the issue is identified, we can properly solve it. Indian cooperation was important at the time of the earthquake. Regarding the economic cooperation, construction of the postal-road has been launched. Similarly, other projects have been properly forwarded. The focal attention from both the governments is on identifying the problems and solving in mutual understating and co-operation. It is our responsibility to contribute to this positive approach to serve the people of both the countries. Though we have Mountains and Hills to the north, Terai/Madhes is the meeting point of the people and the culture of India and Nepal on the southern side of Nepal. Due to the establishment of the East-West Highway the areas close to the Highway developed rapidly. However, the area close to the Northern India where the project of the postal-road construction was delayed remained far behind in terms of development. The lack of awareness pushed the border society farther behind. If there is a negative perception in behaving with the people residing in the border areas, this is superficial and wrong. People from other parts of Nepal have intimate relationship with their countrymen living in Terai, and also with the people of India. We should trust our hearts to hearts relation, and should not hurt the sentiments of the people from both the countries. Nepal should not hurt the people of India and we hope India will not hurt the people of Nepal. We should consider this issue seriously.

For 13 months I am here in India. That is why I humbly request that let's allow no negative feelings to mar our relations. Obviously,

Nepal has confronted conflicts and we are trying to identify the causes of the conflict. Peace, prosperity, progress of Nepal is important that we can get benefited from the peace and economic progress of India. For that we should minimize the trade gap between Nepal and India. There are nominal products of Nepal that have issues with regard to the export in India. Problems of this kinds cause hindrances and create the situations for the unhealthy competition among the traders. We request the Government of India to solve these problems as soon as possible.

Currency issue is another problem. Many Nepali people have saved Indian currency and now they are in trouble after demonetization. I have heard the request of the Nepali people and I have assured them that there will be a solution and I am trying my best to solve this problem by negotiating with the Indian government to exchange the Indian currency in Nepal. We will solve this problem diplomatically so that India will also benefit.

I wish the seminar all success and I will try my best to be present in the sessions following this.

Bharat-Nepal relation is more than the relationship between a particular person, a political party and a political leader. The relationship is of hearts to hearts and the persons like you can strengthen the relationship between two sides.

Thank you very much!



Ambassador Virendra Gupta

Ambassador of Nepal to India Shri Deep Kumar Upadhyay, Prof. Kul Prasad Koirala, the Secretary of Indian Council for International Cooperation, Shri Shyam Parande, Smt. Nalini Gyawali, the Secretary General of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal with which we are organizing this program, Shri Arora!

You all are welcome. Especially I want to welcome you all as you accepted our invitation and came here. We have a delegation of more than thirty participants from Nepal. To participate in this seminar and discuss different issues, several members of ARSP have come here. I welcome all the participants present here.

The spirit of the seminar is well expressed in the words of Prof Koirala when he said we are politically different nations. We have been different nations for thousands of years but culturally and in terms of civilization we are one. This provides us a foundation. Moving on this foundation we can make our relations stronger. Ambassador Dalela is representing the Foreign Ministry and we also have the Ambassador of Nepal to India. Both of them said that the relations in terms of governments are getting better. Shri Dalela has assured us that the government of India is acting to make the relations stronger and Ambassador Upadhyay has said that problems occur but many results are being found. It is an over-side mechanism. And whatever the way out has been found, the relationships are getting better. As you all know that our Prime Minister Shri Modi gives a lot of priority to this relationship. A few days after taking over as the Prime minister of

India, he went to Nepal. If we think there has been no official visit to Nepal for years, it is a very awkward situation. We are neighbors but we do not visit each other. Why do our prime ministers and presidents not visit Nepal? Indian Prime Minister, Shri Modi, rectified this misconception and immediately he went there.

I also had an opportunity to listen to the new prime minister of Nepal, Shri Prachanda a couple of times. I personally understand his thoughts and positivity towards our relationship. In this way we can move ahead our relations. In that case it provides a good environment. Shri Shyam Parande mentioned the context how we conceptualized this series of seminar in his introductory remarks. We gave particular attention to the complex relations between India and Nepal. The relationship is of necessity. It has several dimensions. We think of the different dimensions of the different seminars. But he mentioned it is necessary to make business partnership. He also mentioned that sometimes there happen to be misunderstandings. Some problems surface every now and then. It is natural. Both the nations have democracy and freedom of speech. We do not want everyone speak the same language, as we all know, it is not possible. But something else is there i.e., politics. We all agree that the political system today is better but we often face ups and downs. This political problem sometimes becomes a big issue. When the political relations go up and down, we have ways to bring them to the right track. We began to address our people because our people are supreme. Particularly in SAARC, we are committed to democracy. So I think people come together. We have the best way to move forward.

The idea of this seminar is to link the academics, to link the political personalities, to link the organizations of the civil societies to create a better understanding on the issues. Many speakers stated that the Bharat-Nepal relations are unique because we are neighbors. We have the border that stretches for thousands of kilometers. We have always had cordial relations for thousands of years. During the reign of Kirats in Nepal, they had relations with Emperor Ashok. Later we had relations in the mythological era. We need to move ahead preserving these heritages; it is necessary to understand. This relation is like the relation between brothers and we know such relations are very sensitive. Because of its sensitive nature, we need to deal it in proper

manner; it requires to be dealt with maturity. There is responsibility from both sides.

India is a large nation. If India is like an elder brother, you can imagine the responsibility of an elder brother at home to maintain the relationship. I also believe that, in Bharat-Nepal relations, India should show greatness. We need to understand that Nepal needs economic development. For quite a many years the economic development almost stopped in Nepal. There was a situation of civil war. To go ahead with the developmental projects, Nepal needs a lot of funding. Only India cannot provide the entire funding; the funding should also come from other sources.

We should keep this kind of mental maturity that Nepal should expand relations with other countries. We can put forward the economic development in Nepal in many different ways. We can also have many different benefits. So many things we can do for mutual benefit. There will be economic development in Nepal; there will be the development in infrastructure and Nepal will produce electricity. It is weird that Nepal imports electricity from us and that is ironical. We all know that Nepal has more potentiality of producing hydroelectricity than India has. Nepal can sell it to India, Bangladesh and many other countries. We do not need to have trouble with it. That will enhance economic development and it will lead to prosperity. Increase in production will lead Nepal to prosperity. The increase in per capita income in Nepal will be beneficial to India as well. Such a situation will provide an opportunity for Indian investors. Everything has multiple dimensions. If Indian businessmen have the opportunity of investment and they keep on getting the returns of the capital, prosperity comes in Nepal.

Please understand that the main purpose of this seminar is to enhance understanding. People need to understand the mutual benefits. How do mutual benefits work? As I said we need to work carefully for the economic insecurities in Nepal. Nepal also needs to seriously consider the issues of securities and insecurities of India and need to be discussed how India can play a role. I am happy that a lot of works have already been going on in this regard.

India and Nepal have very long border. We do not need any passport and visa. Any citizen of Nepal can come to India and any Indian can go to Nepal. Our enemies want to get advantage of this open border. In this regard, if the government of Nepal does not cooperate with us, there will be a feeling of insecurity in our heart. Such a feeling of insecurity creates negativity in our relations. We need to seriously think on issues like this. This is axiomatic. Mutual benefits are key factors to develop relations.

I have been in a diplomatic career for about 38 years and, at the end of my career, I understand that our ambassadors and diplomatic personnel are just not the salesmen of our nation because this policy is not far sighted as such policies are not beneficial for long term relationship. It will be beneficial only when our diplomats begin to think that their policies will be beneficial for both the countries. If it is beneficial for both nations, the relationship gets better. Nepal has economic necessity.

Nepal has an aspiration i.e., naturally she will have developments; there will be facilities for education like in other developed countries. We like that Nepal should develop human resource. In all these issues we can consider what India can do and what Nepal can do for the security issues of India. There will be discussions on these issues in this seminar and five more series of seminars. I believe that these series of seminars will enhance our thoughts, maturity and understanding. This is our model of seminar to connect people, more than that, we connected people from government and senior government officials are connected. The ministers of the government are connected. And we have people, who have strong positions in the establishment of the governments of both India and Nepal. This is our unique model in the sense that we need to understand the dialogue that people speak in track one. And after that we go for track two, track three and so on. We believe this has to play an important role to play in understanding the points of track one and people to people dialogue.

It will be a moment of happiness for us if the dialogue of these series of seminars have some positive impact in the governments of India and Nepal. Thank you very much!



Ambassador Anup Mudgal

Good morning, I welcome you all to this session.

As the master of the ceremony said, I retired from the Indian Foreign Service recently and my last assignment was as the High Commissioner of India in Mauritius. I feel honored to have this opportunity to chair this important session. During the opening ceremony, we all listened to the speakers both with care and affection. The discussion in the opening session showed us the way to take ahead the discourse with clarity and coherence. The topic of the current session is: "Religious and Cultural Linkages of India and Nepal".

Recalling the speeches this morning, our bilateral relationship is very special, and unique. Whatever expression we use, this is a relationship among brothers, the relationship of blood. It is also often characterized as *Roti-Beti ka Rista*. Among all the aspects of our relations, there is a common thread that connects all of us and we shall talk about this thread in this session- the Socio-cultural and Civilization Linkages.

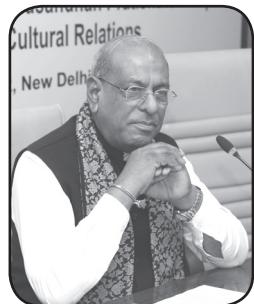
I do not consider myself as an expert on these issues. However, as a diplomat I have definitely witnessed and felt very closely the way this unique people to people connection works.

To discuss all these issues today, we have with us some well-known experts. Dr. Jagaman Gurung, the director of Cultural Study Center of Nepal Sanskrit University to introduce the theme as the keynote speaker and I am sure he will fill the gap that we have been

feeling. We also have Professor Bhuban Chandra Upadhyay, former Director of Jaipur University and currently senior fellow at the ICCR; he is also a member of Bharat-Nepal Eminent Persons Group. He is closely associated with the issues that we are trying to address today. Listening to him will provide us with an opportunity to understand various new dimensions of this fascinating subject. Prof Triratna Manandhar, an eminent expert in the field, has very kindly agreed to be the discussant of our session. He is a former Vice Chancellor of the Lumbini Buddhist University, Nepal, a former Dean at the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, a Member of the Academic Council and Head of the Central Department of History, Tribhuvan University, Nepal. We would not have a better authority to steer our discussion today than these scholars.

Not taking any further time, I invite Ambassador Jagadishwar Goburdhan, High Commissioner of Mauritius to India and Nepal to be the first speaker of this session.

Thank you very much!



Ambassador Jagadishwar Goburdhun

Shall I speak in Hindi or in English? I cannot speak in Nepali. It is a great pleasure for me as you asked me to speak in Hindi. What happens in India is that here people speak much in English. I feel comfortable speaking in Hindi. I feel bad when people come to India and speak in English and I have to speak in Hindi.

First of all many thanks to all! I got the invitation because I have been related to International Cooperation Council for about fifty years. I have been in politics for about forty years. I served as a health minister for eight or nine years for my country.

Mauritius is an exemplary nation now. The international community regards Mauritius as a developed nation today. Mauritius is number one country among fifty nations in every aspect. The democracy of Mauritius is number one in economic, social, cultural and religious terms; particularly, there is a great demand in cultural aspects. And it is the skills that a small nation, Mauritius, gave a great leader. Mauritius received respect from all. It is said that when Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi visited Mauritius, she said India is a small nation. We said that we live in Africa and India is our homeland. I had great opportunity to work on that. Now I am High Commissioner here. I feel great that I serve not only India but also Nepal. I do not consider Nepal a different nation culturally. Officially that is a different matter. India is different; Nepal is different; Mauritius is different. Each of them has single vote in the United Nations.

Whenever I get invitation I do not ignore. When I hear the name of Nepal, I just say 'yes'. We had Mukesh Agrawal; earlier we had

Baleshwor Agrawal. I had very good relation with them. They did very good jobs for Mauritius; they legalized Ayurveda.

In 1990 there was a world conference in Mauritius. I was the health minister then. I had lots of relations with this organization. My guru was Krishnananda and I visited his ashram quite often. We did a lot of works and I consider him my own relative. I do not care protocol. But it is my religion, observing the protocol to all the High Commissioners of India and the Professor s of different universities and the chief of this organization I greet with Namaskar and Pranam.

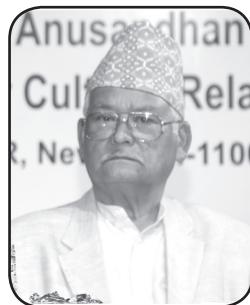
The Hindus are majority in Nepal, in Mauritius and in India. Nepal is a model nation when we talk of Hinduism. My religion is just to respect humanity. We should not discriminate people in terms religious beliefs. I was a health minister. I never looked at people from religious perspective; everyone is a human for me first. Whatever religious belief a person has, if he gets sick, we have to treat him/her. Even our enemies get sick, we have to treat them. This is my perspective of working.

You all are doing very good work. This is how you are establishing relations. While I was coming, I thought what relations Mauritius has with Nepal; why we worry much about each other and how much respect we have for each other. A lot of work had to be done on Mauritius and Nepal relations but why we have not been able to do in terms of cultural and social relations. It is a matter of happiness that last year, while I was talking to the representative of Nepal, the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of Nepal sent a letter requesting the Government of Mauritius to have an honorary consular in Mauritius. I also want a consular of Mauritius in Nepal. A few officials want to be the consular of Mauritius in Nepal. I also promise that, I also want, there should be a friendship society, a relation of friendship. Like the one we have India Mauritius Friendship Society, Nepal Mauritius Friendship Society. I also request you and see so that we can make a friendship society, if you like it. With that we can do a lot of things. I do not believe that we have cultural relationship only to talk with each other. It is a relationship from both sides, not just for talking. I believe in action and I know we have the relation of blood with Nepal. Some of your ancestors might have gone to Mauritius from Nepal and you might have not known this fact.

Our ancestors from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand went to Mauritius and about 150 years ago people from Nepal also were taken to Mauritius by Britishers as intensive labors. Among the immigrant Indian society, there are also people from Nepali origin. I want to connect them. It is my duty, without taking much time, in December we are having a conference on Immigrant Indians, particularly focusing on the people whose ancestors went there as labors. Banaras is the pilgrimage for all 300 million people of Indian origin residing outside India. For all of them Banaras is a holy place and pilgrimage to the Kashi. This November this pilgrimage is taking place from Mauritius to Banaras. On November 2, we will bring all the people from the world to Banaras. There will be direct ticket from Mauritius. There will be pilgrimage as well as the searching and locating their ancestors in India. The study is full of pain and suffering. More than 180 years ago six or seven generations reached Mauritius via Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago but we do not know from which village they moved. How can we undo these stories of pain and sufferings? How to collect information? They want to know where their ancestors went from; they want to search them out. That needs to be done and they, the civil society, alone cannot do. The central government and the state government did it. Now it is good that Bhojpuri Academy has been constructed in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Now there is consciousness. The Chief Minister has constructed the Bhojpuri Academy. This academy can do now many types of works.

Here is no doubt that the central government is doing all its effort to establish relations. Non-residential Indians have been respected. What the prime ministers of India in the past did not do has been done now. Now we have been made permanent; earlier it was only for 20 years. I am an overseas citizen. I have two passports. I am working here as the High Commissioner of Mauritius but I can construct a house here in India. The Prime Minister gave this status. *Basudhaiva kutumbakam* is just not said in our *Vedas*; our prime minister practically implemented it. This has not been done in any other countries in the world to connect their immigrants. Now we have to search our families. We have the blessings of the government.

Thank you very much!



Dr. Jagman Gurung

Honorable Chairman and distinguish participants!

The title of my paper is “Nepal-India Cultural Inter-relationship”. Nepal and India are two independent countries and with their own individual nationalities and sovereignty but the two countries share striking religious and cultural inter-relationship, both visible and invisible cultural heritage including religion, philosophy, literature, civilization, culture, arts and architecture. Scholars developing Bharatbarsa since the ancient times have continued to do so till today and they have made this interrelationship more pronounced. South Asia is also called Indian sub-continent and this includes the land area starting from the Himalayas right up to Ocean to the south of India. *Brihat Vishnupurana* mentions the Indian sub-continent boundary this way: “*Uttarama yatsamundrasa yakshya himadai daxinam*,” meaning, this land lies to the north of the Ocean and to the south of the Himalayas.

Among five ranges in the wider Himalayas that spread through the Sindhu River to the Bramhmaputra, Nepal's territory was between Kamarup in Assam and *Kamatripura*. *Amarkosha* names its territory between Vidyanchala Himalayas as Aryabardan; that is why while taking the *sankalpa* or the divine vow, before initiating a ritual in Hindu and Aryan culture, we mention this territorial expansion. Nepali Hindus take this territory of Nepal that lies in the Himalayas region of the sub-continent as holy.

The holy land between the Ganga and the Jamuna Rivers in Aryavarta has been considered fertile especially the lands lying between Seti-Gandaki and Kali-Gandaki in Nepal, lying in the Himalayan region. This land is regarded as holy. The territorial make up the Indian sub-continent is a down-facing triangle, which is a symbol of holy *bagena* in tantra or tantric studies. *Bagena* represents creation and conceptions.

Kamakripitra in Assam lies in the north-eastern part, Purnagiri Peetha in the south and Shreepeetha in Kashmir in the north-west. The navel point in this triangle is Bindabasini in Bindyachal, which is the navel point of the whole of the Indian sub-continental, and this is called Bindabasini. Kathmandu is the capital of Nepal but the country's geographical center is the Pipaltar in Shyamnagar Village in Tanahau District. Bindyabasini Tritha in Brindajal in India on the bank of the Ganga has been the center of the entire Indian sub-continent while the only one Bindyabasini Tirthra in Nepal is in Pokhara, the valley in the lap of Mt. Machhapuchure Himalayan peak. It is flanked by Seti-Gandaki. Indian Bindyabasini and Nepal's Bindyabasini are in almost similar latitudes.

There are two peaks in Bradrinath in India named as Narayan Narayan. The two peaks of Machhapuchure mountain range in Nepal also symbolize Narayan Narayan. The first verse of *Kumarsambhava* epic written by Kalidas, the great Sanskrit poet, says that on the northern side of the Indian sub-continent lies the abode of the king of gods in mountain called the Himalayas. Mount Kailash, which is traditionally considered the purest mountain on earth and the holy Manasarovar are in Tibet. The second purest mountain is Gaurishankar and another virtuous water body is Chhorolpa, both lying in Nepal. The highest mountain in the world, Sagarmatha or Mount Everest, also lies in Nepal. The Gayatri mantra that commands the highest position of the Vedic religion is actually the sun. Therefore, creation of world started after sunrise and destruction after sunset. That is why the world is believed to be created as soon as the sun is evidenced on the top of Mount Sagarmatha. In other words, the creation of the world starts from Nepal.

Some of the purest mountain peaks like Dhaulagiri, Nilgiri, Annapurna, Ganesh Himal, Kumbhakarna, Mahalangur and Kanchanjanga are in Nepal. World renowned Yoni Peetha (shrine) is in Assam and is renowned as Kamarupa Kamapeetha. The second most renowned Yoni Peetha is Guheswori Peetha in Nepal. Nepal is a country taken as the Sartha Peetha, due to the presence of Guheswori Peetha. Nepal Peeth is one of the four preeminent Sartha Peetha. While worshipping these four peethas in the down-facing triangle, Waranarsi Peetha is worship in the middle and center. The correct procedure is to worship Kamakhya Peetha in the front facing angle, Nepal Peetha at right angle while Pandrawardan Peetha of Bengal in left angle. Nepali Hindus chant the names of rivers in India like the Ganga, the Jamuna, the Godavari, the Saraswati, the Narmada, the Sindhu and the Kaveri while bathing.

The Karnali River that starts from the Manasarovar flows through Lord Rama's birth place at Ayodhya and merges with the Ganga. The confluence of the Sapta-Gandaki and the Ganga is renowned as Harichhetra. For the worship and management of Cocamokha Swami and Setobraha Swami in Cokhatirtha at the conference of Sapta-Gandaki a landed guthi was kept at Purnihibihar at the time of Emperor Buddha Gupta. The Saraswoti River used to flow in India but she is hidden now. The Bagmati River in Nepal is another name of the Saraswoti and she merges with the Ganga after developing the Bagmati civilization and culture.

Godavari Tirthas are both in Nepal and India. Singasthafer are organized in both the Tirthas. Amarawati developed in the valley created by Krishna and Kaveri rivers in south India. Many Vaishnavi Tithras are on the banks of the Kali Gandaki River in Nepal. The lowest and shortest roots connecting India with China, namely the Silk Road, run through the Kali-Gandaki corridor and the Banalinga Narbeswara Rivers in India.

Thank you very much!



Professor Dr. Bhuwan Chandra Upreti

Nepal has its own contributions to the culture and civilization of South Asia. There is no doubt about that. For instance, in the context of development of Buddhism, the questions of Tantrism and Bajrayana arise. Nepal has her own contributions to those areas, but then the religion brings two countries quite together. Yes, geographically it plays a role. The geographical feature too has contributed to the development of religions in Nepal, specifically in a very different way. There is as you know a co-operative framework of religion. You look at Buddhism and Hinduism, Hinduism and Islam. They have different histories in Nepal. It's an entirely different history because all the religions of Nepal have lived together for centuries in such a harmonic way that never happened in India for different reasons. Looking at this issue from this perspective, Nepal has a unique history of religions showing religious harmony and solidarity. It is also a fact that all the major religions prevalent in today's Nepal have their roots in the soils that lie in the territory of modern India. Nepal developed a unique religious tolerance; however, India could not. In this regard, Indian religious gurus can take lessons from Nepal.

Look at the epics! When we talk about the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana*, the *Vedas*, the *Puranas* or some other *Ritis*, they have their importance for the Nepalese as much as we have for the Indians. So, we share all those. Whether it is in reality or anything else, there are similar contexts in India and Nepal in those issues.

Another aspect, which is very important, is the social formation. You know the religion has to play a very important role in that context. In fact, Hinduism saved the modern Nepalese society and social formation. I will give you some references. Hinduism has contributed to the emergence of Nepalese society. King Jayasthiti Malla, a Malla king who ruled Nepal in the 14th century, was the first person to be a hardcore Hindu King of Nepal. He ruled between 1382 and 1395 and it is said that he invited five Brahmins from India and asked them to organize the Nepali society on the basis of Manusmriti. This is the first instance where Nepalese society was attempted to be organized like in India.

Then Ram Shah of Gorkha ruled Gorkha principality during 1606 and 63. He was the first person to talk about four *varnas* (races) and 36 *jaats* (castes). It was not Prithvi Narayan Shah. Generally people say that it was Prithvi Narayan Shah but as far as my understanding goes, it was Ram Shah who first tried to organize the Nepali society particularly not in Nepal as such but in the Gorkha state where he ruled. This was similar to *Chaturbrana Byavastha* in India. Similarly, Prithvi Narayan Shah, after the formation of kingdom of Nepal in 1769, introduced the Hindu way of *Chaturbarna Byavastha* or the classification of the Nepalese society in an organized or systematic way. Later, on Jung Bahadur Rana promulgated the Muluki Ain (General Code) in 1856, in which, he also tried to classify the society in the same way. He also followed the same principle which king Prithvi Narayan Shah had followed. But he included more castes.

At that time, there was a lot of migration taking place in Terai. So, he also classified these castes into different categories. So, the point I'm trying to emphasize is that Hinduism became a basis for socioeconomic and political transformation in Nepal because it was used not only to make social categories; it was also used to define the hierarchical social order.

It was during the reign of King Prithvi Narayan Shah and he introduced this Hindu way social structure. So, there is a very close civilization linkage. The emergence of modern society in Nepal was made possible by Hindu civilization in India; so there are very close contexts. In the same way, the question of upper class superiority, particular dominance of the upper caste got underway. They were

formed later, when social transformation began to take place in accordance with the Hindu religion.

Then look at the languages we speak! I was referring to the language in the bonding. You talk about Khaskura which has its origin in India. The kingdom of Chauhan's of Chittor was the place wherefrom the Khaskura actually came into Nepal and became the national language of Nepal during the rule of Prithvi Narayan Shah. The Devanagari script is common. Even the phonetics is similar. The scripts are almost similar. Talk about Hindi or talk about Maithali literature produced in Maithali. The cultural connection is obvious, though there may be slight variations here and there.

You can take up a lot of examples where you find that it is very difficult to distinguish between the two people in terms of language, religion, culture, philosophy, ideology, and ways of living, festivals, scripts, sculpture, art, drama or dance. There are huge similarities between the two countries. And one has drawn from each other in a big way.

Then comes the question of kingship! The emergence of Hindu kingship in Nepal started with Prithvi Narayan Shah, who founded the Hindu monarchy system in Nepal. He took help from the Hindu philosophy of kingship in India. He declared that the king would be the representative of Lord Vishnu and made his subjects follow the same social hierarchy. The upper class dominance continued.

The modern political system in Nepal also has its civilization linkages with India. There is a great contribution of the Indian civilization or Hindu civilization, society, culture and pattern of living to the formation of modern social values in Nepal in many different ways.

Now the last two points I would like to explain. Samuel P. Huntington, a Harvard political scientist, in his famous book *The Clash of Civilizations and Remaking the World Order* (1996) argues that, because of the rising of political interests, there is a rise in conflicts among civilizations, and some civilizations will collapse and there will be more conflict between civilizations. My argument is that if we look from this perspective, there is no chance of clash between

India and Nepal. I don't see it, because there has been a confluence of civilizations.

In the whole of South Asia, there are confluentes of the same civilization root. A big group of scholars from Nepal is here, and they would agree with me that Nepal has such religious tolerance flexibility. Hardly anyone would find instance of religious conflict in Nepal. So, the idea floated by Huntington does not apply to this region because this region is the superb example of religious tolerance and principle of coexistence and that is a unique civilization linkage, colloquially defined as *roti-betika sambandh*—the relations of daughters and breads.

We share many things but, the reality I find somewhere is that, our common past is disappearing. Are we forgetting that civilization context? As a student of political science, I feel the need to retrieve that common way of praying that emerged between India and Nepal in the ancient times. It is stuck somewhere in our mind that probably we move farther away from the common civilization and cultural contexts.

As a student of political science, I understand that the issue of identity that is rising at the moment is crucial. I am also aware of the concept of sovereignty. The concept of nationalism too is important, but then, all these are political ideas and strategic issues, having some ramifications in security issues.

Yes, but when we have not been able to deal with these issues either through diplomacy or through political negotiation. What are the alternatives? How can we find space to talk about people to people relation? I have spent more than 35 years trying to understand Nepal but then what I realized today is that, probably, these civilization spaces are transgressed by politics. We are facing political crisis today. Political business and political realities have taken over the civilization context. The whole of the civilization context, therefore, is in peril.

The last point is that we must explore how we can reconnect with our common past. This is the major challenge. Can we go beyond the political realities, the conflicts, the complexes, and try to look back to the civilization context which has an answer to build, to reshape the relation between the countries? Thank you very much!





Ambassador Anup Mudgal

Thank you very much Professor Upreti. I'm sure we all enjoyed your presentation, the way you took us back to our civilization roots!

If only I could be a bit over-simplistic in my own way! I think what we need to understand is that, we have not been brought together; we have always been together. We were here, we are here and we shall always be here sharing the same space, and when we share the same space, we share history, culture, roots and our journey into future. We also share opportunities and challenges, which offer common path to progress and property for all of us. As we heard Professor Upreti talking about civilizational roots in the sub-continent, I think, people in this land are by nature not scared of different viewpoints. That's the beautiful strength of our people, which has historically evolved in the sub-continent; we are not averse to different viewpoints. And when you are not averse to different viewpoints, then in my view, there is no challenge which we cannot address together.

I think, with this observation I will now invite the discussant to carry the discourse further. The time now is all yours. You can please guide us through this discussion on this topic. Thank you.



Professor Dr. Triratna Manandhar

Honorable Chairperson, distinguished speakers Dr. Jagman Gurung, an expert of cultural studies from Nepal, and Professor Bhulan Upreti, whom I know as a Professor ! Professor Upreti and I met once or twice in some international conferences on historical studies. He is a person, as he himself said, engaged in writing about Nepal and Nepalese people for more than three decades.

The papers presented by both the distinguished speakers before me are very encouraging which could guide India and Nepal in future relationship in the cultural context and which will definitely overrule the political context under which the two states may appear to be standing in uneasy positions for some period in the history of both the countries.

Now regarding the boundary of Indian sub-continent and the place of Nepal, the examples Dr. Jagaman Gurung mentioned in the scriptures, including peaks, similar sages, similar mountains, similar temples and similar Yoni Peethas are very important. Similarly, he also mentioned the great rivers which are actually the joint property of both the countries. Similarly, he also mentioned some places which may be considered as unions. There also are different groups like the Bahais, Hindus and Buddhists. One more thing that I would love to mention is the striking similarity between Tirupati Balaji and Bajalu.

Actually, it is a very good hypothesis presented by him and there is a need of a kind of detailed study about this hypothesis propounded by Dr. Jangman Gurung. But I think he missed in his paper the fact that the civilization of Nepal was started by Lord Krishna, because according to our chronicles, when Nepal Valley was a big lake when Danasur the son of Banasur was hiding, Krishna and this son Pradyumna followed him in order to kill him. Krishna drained the water that filled the Kathmandu Valley from Chovar Hills and made the valley habitable. So, the lake is also considered as the fountain of the birth of civilization in Nepal.

Now regarding BC Upreti's paper there is one India-Nepal civilization linkage. He is right in saying that civilization is a connecting factor to unite the people of India and Nepal. He is quite right to say that the main factors that unite the people of both India and Nepal are religion, geography and society. He made a reference to kings Jayasthiti Malla, Ram Shah and Prithvi Narayan Shah and even the civil code of Jung Bahadur Rana promulgated in 1854 to illustrate the real harmony that prevailed in Nepal from ancient times. Hiuen Tsang, a Chinese traveler who came to Nepal in 7th century, mentions that Hindu and Buddhist temples stood side by side in Nepal and people worshiped both with equal respect. Professor Upreti, contrary to the belief of Huntington, stands for religious harmony between India and Nepal and he believes it works like a confluence between civilizations of the two countries. Similarly he also exposed his anxiety about the people of Nepal and India for forgetting the past and he emphasized that it must not be revoked.

I remember one thing and Professor Upreti is quite correct in saying that civilization is confronted by politics. Some 40 years back, a French Professor said, if you want to study history and culture of a country, beware of political science. Actually these politicians make the situation worse and it is the responsibility of the people who believe in civilization and religion to save the country against such malice. I congratulate both the paper presenters for different opinions. There may be comments on those papers from the members of the audience too. But now since I belong to the department of history and since it

is a conference devoted to Nepal and India's cultural, social religious links, let me speak a few words about the contributions of the first Indian nationals in developing the scientific writing of history and culture in Nepal.

Now up to the end of 19th century, the historiography of Nepal was based only on the experiences of some British writers and also on the basis of some Nepalese chronicles which we call *Bamshawali*, but the first man who started writing the scientific history of Nepal was a man from Gujarat and his name was Bhagawan Lal Indrajee. It was Bhagawan Lal Indrajee, who collected 27 inscriptions from Nepal and published it in 1884. Out of those 27 inscriptions, the first one was from the Licchavi period and it threw sufficient light on the history of ancient Nepal. The inscription discovered by Bhagwan Lal Indrajee was later on used by an Italian scholar whose name was Gnoli. After several years, it was Dhanabajra Bajracharya who compiled all the inscriptions of ancient period ranging more than 250 years, from which, he prepared a scientific history of Nepal. So, Bhagwan Lal Indraji was the first international historian, who in the last quarter of the 19th century rendered the invaluable service in writing the scientific history of Nepal and its culture too.

Then the second one is Rajendra Lal Mitra. Now we should take a name of Brian Hodgson, a British resident in Nepal. Hodgson who remained in Nepal for more than two decades collected many valuable documents from Nepal and he deposited it in the archive office in India and Britain. The documents he deposited in Asiatic Society in Bengal were used by this man Rajendra Lal Mitra, who was from West Bengal. He published very comprehensive catalogues of Hindu and Buddhist sculptures and his work was followed by another person Hari Prasad Shastri. He visited Nepal two times, one in 1898 and another one in 1905 and produced comprehensive two volumes as the catalogues of Buddhist literature in Durbar library which later on became a part of the National Archive of Nepal. So, he was the person who published these two volumes which are in fact works of Rajendra Lal Mitra and Hari Prasad Shastri. They were guiding lines to trace the cultural history of Nepal by the future historians.

Then the last person whom I want to mention is Purna Chandra Mukherjee. He carried out a detailed excavation of the Lumbini and Kapilvastu areas and proved that Tilourakot of Nepal was actually the capital city of Kapilvastu. There were some debates about the actual locations of ancient Kapilvastu. Some Indian scholars had the opinion that Piparhawa and Ganawariya were parts of ancient Kapilvastu. No doubt they are also correct. The area of Piparhawa and Ganawariya were also the parts of greater Kapilvastu but the capital city of Kapilvastu actually was Tilourakot which was proved by the work of Purna Chandra Mukherjee in the beginning of the 20th century that is in 1901. So these were the four pioneering Indian nationals who helped in the preparation of the scientific history and culture of Nepal in the beginning of 20th century or by the end of 19th century. With these remarks I want to conclude my presentation.

Thank you very much!



Ambassador Anup Mudgal

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to welcome Shri Tarun Vijay who has just joined us. He was originally Chair of the session. Sir, this session has been very interesting. We have had presentations by three distinguished participants. Now we look forward for your comments. Shri Tarun Vijay is a former member of the Rajya Sabha, and a very distinguished writer and author. He has written around 20 books on different subjects and over 2000 articles in different newspapers. You are a very well-known philosopher, thinker and writer and I have known you for many years though you may not recognize me. Friends, please welcome him to this conference. Now, we would have great pleasures and honor of listening to Shri Tarun Vijay a well known authority on the theme of our session.

Thank you very much!



Shri Tarun Vijay

Thank you Sir! My sincere apologies, for being late. I never intended to be late, but there were some serious emergencies that I had to attend. And so I apologize to all my respected panelists and colleagues. I had been looking forward to sharing my views.

I was also in Kathmandu for several seminars. I get a bit emotional while talking about literature, especially civilization linkages. Nepal has been a source of inspiration for all of us not only for the reason that Sita Mata from Nepal married Ram and became the mother to us. Usually and we don't use the name Ram Sita, it's always Sita-Ram, Sita placed first, and only then Ram. So, we are always grateful to Nepal that comes first and then we have our Ram. That is the relation between the two people, two societies and two lands.

Nepal represents the best of the Hindu thoughts and Dharmik tradition. Not only a pride and a great Dharmik tradition, we also see in Nepal the spirit of freedom and a deep faithfulness that we expect in winners, courage and the war-cry. 'Aayo Gorkhali' is something that fills your heart with the delight and confidence and the victory is yours once the Gorkhali comes. The Gorkhalis come from basic Sanskrit word; if you are a Gorakccha, you are a Gorakscha of Dharma, gau, protector of Dharma, protector of scriptures! Gau and then only you can become a Gorkha. No other community in India or the world could have been named like this. There are a hundred other examples which form the thread of a fabric in India-Nepal relation. This civilizational background goes back to more than time of Lord Krishna.

I was very much impressed by the paper of Dr. Triratna, who gave a very vivid description and suddenly I felt which I was feeling since long time that ancient thread binders, that's our relations, are strong. But, what about the present? Have we been able to transfer the Dharmik and civilization threads to the younger generation? Have we been able to transfer that oral tradition's knowledge and scholarship and oral history? Whatever history we have is the history mostly written by foreigners, but there is a tradition of unwritten or oral history too. We need to collect that oral history so that it can be preserved for you.

We shared a lot of common things like the ones mentioned in this paper. We talked about Dharma. The presenter said to me, "Tarunji, you have to create an atmosphere where younger generation knows our civilization." We know each other well; otherwise we will be not being thinking about this very vital aspect of civilization affinity.

Long ago, many Nepali students used to come to Banaras and Calcutta and Dehradun and other places for studies and for making their careers. Today, they go to the UK, the USA, and Australia etc. The destinations have changed. The same is true for India. So both have distanced from each other. We are from where they will get the feeling that it's not that hard and be it has to be Hindu and Buddha both walk together, talk together, dream together and create a future together in Nepal which is still true which may not be strongly present in other parts of the world. But it's true in Nepal; you don't have that kind of segregation that we see in other areas. You don't feel that like in Indian younger generation, why should we go to Bagmati on last rites? What is the meaning of *shraddha* and *tarpan*? What binds? How does Pashupatinath bind India and Nepal together? The priest reads Sangerinath, Sadan and Nabodit. What is the relationship between Pashupatinath and Kedarnath? Without Kedarnath there is no Pasupatinath and without Pasupatinath you cannot visualize Kedarnath. It is bound together intrinsically and no power on earth can have doubt on it. I mean it's only Nepalese in India who never ask a question when they get a job here; when they buy a piece of land here; when they marry a girl here; and when they enjoy festivals here, it is only the Nepalese. This only happens between India and Nepal; such a mutual coexistence is not found in any other countries in the

world. What binds us together and this relation cannot be defined in diplomatic or political or economic terms. Compulsorily, India and Nepal relations have to be expressed and defined in terms of Dharma, in terms of Sanatan Dharma, civilization in continuity, people to people contact through Dharma only. No Pooja either in Nepal or India is complete without the *Sankalpa* mantra. No matter whether the Pooja is of *Janma* or marriage or *Grihapravesh*, *Mrityu Sanskar* or *Antayesthi Sanskar*. The Pooja begins with the mantra *Jambo Deepe*, and it comes to *Bharat Khande Nepal Deshe*. So, the world between both the countries is the same. So, the *Sanskars* of both the people and both societies are shared world views. There are very sacred scripts in Devanagari because the script binds us together. I have been going to Nepal since last 25 years almost as frequently as possible and the very first impression was when I visited there, I was there in a huge temple country not in the huge temple city and one of the reasons was because one treats my Devanagari script for Hindi or Marathi. It rings the temple bells when you see that script. And that you have preserved so well you have even given on a very smaller lighter note. Even the registration numbers of your cars have Devanagari script. We can't do it and can't think of having that done here in India. Because once you see the Devanagari script you connect yourself to thousands of years old civilization. That's a thing we see in our neighborhood. Every single country has the tradition of ancient times but in many countries they have vanished.

Protocols and practices are still in practice in our norms inside our names or in rituals like *Grihapravesh*. Same is true for language. Even the constitutional framework and protocols are thousands of years old civilization flow. Language brings the entire memory. Language is not only a collaboration of alphabets. That is the reason when Sir Vidya Sagar wrote about transformation being occurred in India. He said technology brought English in this region but English has not come alone. English has brought with it the memories of British, Western past struggle, history, values, poets, emperors, warriors and conquests. Language doesn't come alone. When you are using your language, you are connecting with Vikramaditya, Prithvi Narayan Shah, Sushodiyas and ancient traditions, and that memory is intertwined in each and every letter of the alphabet. But when you

choose a different language to express your being spirit, that memory of a different language overwhelms us. We must be very cautious and methodical in transferring our memory to our next generation so that the nation survives.

Our nation has a soul like human beings do. It has a spirit. We must work to establish the chairs of Dharma and civilization flow of Nepal and India. In Kathmandu and in India we must make sure that the contemporary dynamics of Dharma and its changing contours are researched and published in a book form. Let there be a reason in this conference. We may have joint writers from Nepal and India to write about the contemporary dynamics of Dharma and civilization. These were a lot of books written by great scholars in past but that was past. What about 2017 and 2050? Think what kind of Dharma, traditions, rituals, societal festivals you are going to transfer to the generations which will be there in 2050? However you are going to address the concerns of the questions, doubts about what we have been practicing since ages. I think this is very important and with these words I am going to say thanks to you and my heartfelt gratitude to you sir. Prithvi Narayan Shah did lots of things for Hindu people, Hindu Dharma and Hindu civilization. He should be declared the Hindu Adhivasi of the entire Bharat and Nepal Khanda. We considered that he protected our Dharma.

I would have been happy sitting there but with my apologies. I thank you very much.

Thank you very much!



Dr. Ramesh Kumar Dhungel

Good afternoon and welcome you all to the session!!

Our session now is “Preserving Socio-cultural Ethos and Tradition”. We did at least touch this subject already under the discussion relating to ‘Cultural Links between India and Nepal’.

We must understand that culture and tradition essentially include both intangible and tangible heritages of human activities. From the very beginning of the opening session of this seminar this morning, we have been continuously talking about people-to-people relations between Nepal and India. Our deliberations now in this session will focus on how we maintain such a long tradition of bilateral cultural transactions or activities because preserving of cultures and traditions of the continent is the main topic of discussion of this session.

Preservation of those cultural heritages, which are not tangible such as temples or monasteries, is also equally important because such heritages are related to our common social and religious activities. There must not be any confusion that by preserving our common traditional or local cultures we will also be enhancing and maintaining the essence of our righteous past and civilization value system. While discussing this important topic, it is important to understand that such activities must be done through our own internal or regional efforts and not by foreign guidance, influence and control.

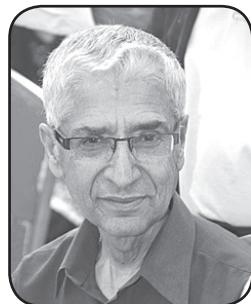
There are areas where we have done great jobs in modern context. We have produced doctors, some of whom would also be speaking later in this session. We have produced engineers and various kinds of other experts with the help of imported techniques and methods. However, sometimes, knowingly or unknowingly, we have also imported and are still bringing in unnecessary things, which are not being very friendly to our cultures and society. Through such imports our own history and traditions are recklessly being misinterpreted and badly challenged. We import such unfriendly foreign stuffs without knowing their fundamental base and purpose and through which our society and age-old traditional values are being directly or indirectly being afflicted. Our cultural and social strength is passing though the aggressive goal of dogmatic Christian agenda of dominating precious human cultures of our part of the world. This type of hegemonic cultural politics was surfaced in our continent through Christian traders, missionaries and the agents of imperial powers of Europe grown under the umbrella of industrial modernity.

Nepal is a place where age-old human traditions have been preserved in its own distinct manner. Whether we talk about Vedic Hindu, Tantric Buddhist or various kinds of local traditions and practices, it is believed that Nepali cultural diversity is one of the best-preserved examples in the world. Thus, preservation of local religious and temporal cultures and traditions of Nepal must be the common agenda of Nepal and India. This is why we are gathered here to discuss how we can preserve and enhance our own common social and cultural set up of our “*swadharma sanskriti*” in this age of continuous but very forceful pressure of Eurocentric modernity and its pop-cultures intermingled with “western” belief systems including the so-called modernized, reformed or Protestant Christianity. Through this Eurocentric modernity and the force of so-called “refined” or “scientific” Christianity almost entire South Asia was once colonized and the local traditional cultural system was badly booted down.

Since we are already behind the time allocated for our session, we now begin with the presentation and discussion of the session. We have four presenters today in this session. First we have Dr. Sundar

Mani Dixit, who is a medical doctor and social activist from Nepal. While being a professional medical doctor of modern science, he is intensely involved with maintaining the value system of Hindu tradition and cultures. I was delighted many times listening to his presentations concerning this subject. So, our first speaker is Dr. Dixit. And, then, we have Acharya Norbu Sherpa, who is the Vice-Chairperson of Buddhist Federation of Nepal. Mr Sherpa will talk on Buddhist religious situation in Nepal. And, we have Professor Rajesh Kharat, Associate Professor of Jawaharlal Nehru University and finally Dr. Kashinath Neupane from Nepal Sanskrit University, and we have discussant of the session Nihar Nayak. We first call upon the presenters of the session for their presentations and open the floor for a vibrant discussion and before the conclusion of the session the discussant will sum up with the deliberations of the session. And, finally, the session will be ended with a concluding statement from the chair.

Thank you very much!



Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit

Thank you very much for that introduction. You gave me ten minutes for my talk when those before me have spoken for much longer. You people call us all the way from Kathmandu to take part in as important a topic as Nepal-Bharat relationships and then you tell us to do it in just a few minutes! How is this possible? No, this is not possible and it does not do justice to the gravity of the subject. Is this gathering just for social pleasantries of eating and exchanging chit-chat or are we gathered here for some real serious discussions on the issue? In fact, why are we gathered here at all? Everyone from ages past, diplomats, politicians, ministers, prime-ministers, presidents and others have never tired of highlighting our strong ties. Our "Roti-Beti", "Cultural-Religious" and "Ancestral" relationships are all put up as unshakable bonds. Then if this is real why is there a need to have repeated seminars, governmental meetings and many other such exchanges to reinforce the same connections? Why at the slightest winds of change do our relationships which should be as natural and as simple and gentle as the flow of the Ganges or the Bagmati rivers experience turbulence? Obviously something is wrong somewhere; something is not right with our "friendly" connections which appear to be put on for the benefit of such and political occasions only. So

let us scientifically dissect and analyze seriously, how this superficial sloganeering, which have their truths, can be made more concrete and really unshakable. Let us do this seriously. But then in this august gathering I am an ordinary doctor and the least fit to talk on such a big topic. However, as a common man let me have my say, and you hear me with attention.

When dealing with "Nepal Bharat Sadbhav" I am reminded of a dialogue between Bhagwan Shree Ram and Hanumanji. Bhagwan Ram one day asked Hanumanji, "Hanuman, how do you look upon me?" At this Hanuman replied, "Prabhu! When we are just as we are now, I see you as my lord and master and I your servant. When I go a bit deeper into my being, I see you as the Whole and myself as a part of you. However at the very depth of my spirit I see that you and I are just one and only one. In this context let us honestly ask ourselves this same question. How does a Nepalese view India and how does an Indian view Nepal? Let us answer this seriously, without any pretense. Without fawning upon or fearing each other. Since I am a Nepali I will provide my side and someone from India can present their side later.

So how does a Nepalese view India? Or more appropriately to this occasion, how should a Nepalese answer to this question? First, I would say, on the world stage where we are two independent nations, both equal members of the United Nations, and separate from each other, we are close friends. As such our workings and doings should always be for the mutual benefit of each of us, locally and on the world stage. We should not do anything anywhere to even harm the smallest bit of the others' genuinely beneficial interests. Our nations' policies in this regard should be clear and not influenced by internal or external forces. Our friendship must be to the depths and long term and not superficial and for immediate gains only.

Secondly, regionally we are the closet of neighbors bonded by the same tectonic plates that came together millions of years ago; that have made us one family of the subcontinent. India is much larger geographically than Nepal and in other subsidiary ways but nevertheless of the same sub-continental family. India is the elder brother and Nepal the younger. In this relationship, Nepal must respect and honor the elder and India must always love and support the younger. It does not suit our traditional common culture of the joint family system to consistently go fault-finding of elders of the family. Nor does it do any honor to the family for the elder and it may affect the growth of the younger negatively. As family we must be so close that nothing can shake our relationship, neither external nor internal. In Nepal and India we have the saying “भाइकूटे गँवार लूटे”. If brothers fight outsiders gain!

Now, thirdly, to the most important of considerations, at the very depths of our relationships bonded by thousands of highly evolved rishis of the past have given us their "Gotra", the common lineage. Here lies our *Adhyatmik* spiritual based relationship. Here there is no India, no Nepal. Here are only we the One. Here where an Indian ends and a Nepalese begins or vice versa the barriers fizzle out. You and I are one. You are I and I am you!

I own India as much as India owns me. This is what the foundations of the Vedas, Upanishads, Purans and scores of sacred "Tirthas" have laid out for our common bonding. If I own India and India owns me who is the greater gainer? It is I because India is in all respects bigger, richer, stronger and more influential in the world.

Some persons may say "What is this out-dated concept of religious beliefs doing in this day of "Modern Relationships?" But this is just the point I am making. There is no stronger bonding than this the third factor in our relationships. When all other aspects of

any particular time negatively impact our bonds, those aspects like economics, trade, politics, security etc, then it will always be this most important third principle that will always steady the rocking of the boat in the turbulence. This third principle is based on the **Sanatan Dharma**, based on the oneness of the Omkar Family. This is the one principle, the firmest base that we have for our mutual well being.

Our oneness of this unassailable fact has one very material proof, if any proof were required our open border. Though occasionally criticized depending on political expediency particularly from the Nepalese side, my side, this is the perfect proof of our oneness. This border which has never been closed for our populations in living memory is the material proof of our mutual commitment to the expectations of our seers, the Rishis, our venerable ancestors of old. Their expectation that their children no matter placed on which side of the border will behave and be one family always.

With all this has been said and done is the talk of "Dharma", a really important one. Is the open border just an anomaly having nothing to do with dharma? Is this concept a cooked up fantasy? So quoting this in support of the third principle, is it appropriate? Shree Aurobindo, the seer, coming out of jail in his now famous "Uttarpada" speech, talking about India's problems said, "India's main problem today is not political. It is the cowardliness of its spirit." And this cowardliness comes when the "Sanatan Dharma", its strength giving support to the nation is put aside, and considered inconsequential. It is true that the problems of India and Nepal are religious because various external and internal agents are undermining the religions of our soil, the very religious fabrics that have given us in Nepal, the strength to withstand even the might of the British Empire. This real danger is confronting us just now. The danger of sidelining of "Dharma" is clearly spelled out for us in the saying “धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः” "Protect religion and it will protect you". This must not be forgotten.

These three principles, I call "The Hanumanic Principles", if kept uppermost in our minds and in all our mutual dealings, will help us always tide over any small or big problems that we may be faced with in future. These three principles if sincerely kept in mind and applied to all our dealings will help solve all problems. I would say these "Hanumanic Principles" are scientifically based guidelines because these are unshakable truths, and science respects and is itself based on truths. So let us place our relationship on these firm three realities of the "Hanumanic Principles" and reset our connectivity. Let us forgo all slogans or rhetoric that are personal, opportunistic and for transient gains.

We in India and Nepal have some more and very important twin responsibilities where both have to work together for the benefit of the world and also our two nations. This I say only because of the firm foundations of our respective countries on the eternal religion of our common heritage and our consequent oneness. We have to save the world from its impending doom from global warming and its consequences, from terrorism and wars, and from weakening of democratic institutions. We can fight all these with our peaceful weapons of the teachings and dicta of our Vedas, Upanishads, the Buddhist, Jain, and Sikh scriptures. We have to advertise and strengthen the fundamentals of the Nature Worshipers of our lands, so closely allied to the teachings of the Vedas and Upanishads because that fundamentally protects the environment. We have to emphasize on the world stage the great sayings of "बसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्", "देहु शान्ति, पृथ्वी शान्ति, वनस्पतेय शान्ति, अन्तरिक्ष शान्तिः....." By these and other sayings of our dharma, we must protect the social and climatic environment, which is in great danger today. The advice of the religions of the Omkar Family provides the basis for the protection of Mother Nature and harmonious living. We both the peoples of Nepal and India worship

rivers, mountains, trees, plants, animals, aquatics, amphibians, the ocean, the sun, the moon. Indeed for us everything all around is a manifestation of the "VIRAT" swaroop, the universal manifestation, of that Infinite God that the whole worlds have been worshipping. If this had happened and if the dicta of "अपरिग्रह" (not accumulating excess) had been embraced by the world, then we would not have taken from Nature more than what we could give back. There would have been much lessening of conflicts if we had followed the advice given in "अहिंसा परमो धर्म" and "सर्वेसु शान्तिर्भवतु" and "सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः" Our Rishis and Sages have given the way for the well being of everyone and of every living and non living entity the Supreme power created with or for us.

We must save democracy because it encourages free and healthy thinking and individual freedoms with their responsibilities. We can easily understand if we look around and see these being trampled upon in the world. Besides our **Sanatan Dharma** no other religion allows freedom of worship. In essence there is autocratic rule in all other major religions of the world besides the Sanatan Dharma. I as a Hindu may worship in a mosque (if allowed) or in a church; I may call on "Allah" or on "Christ". Yet I would still be a good Hindu, no one has the authority to excommunicate me or issue a "FATWA" against me just for these religious diversions. Whereas a Christian going against the Pope or a Muslim going against the command of the authorities of Mohammedanism would immediately be excommunicated for challenging the "Truths" of the Bible or of orders passed by Mullahs which may have nothing to do with pure Koranic laws and teachings. Where individual freedom of the right to worship the Infinite God is restricted, how can any other freedom be looked upon with grace? What does this signal for true political democracy surviving in related countries?

However for our philosophical, Dharmik thoughts prevail for the good of the world and we must strengthen these in our own countries. If we are religiously weakened and if our populations begin to doubt and discard these ancient beneficial teachings by switching to other religions, we will not be able to maintain the path of the “श्रेयस”, the "beneficial" that our ancestors handed over to us from generations.

What is clear at the present moment is that missionaries of the various Christian religious denominations from both the west and the east with their powerful dollar coffers are playing havoc amongst the poor and backwards. Allowing such dollar conversions in our countries will have and have had terrible consequences socially, religiously and politically. Politics can be and are being swayed by such activities as well by unscrupulous politicians who are selling their age old traditional cultural-religious treasures for dollars and acting in tandem with the missionaries. And these agents are aiding to convert these uneducated and poor of our lands. Our government and, I dare say, yours as well, over the years, has turned a blind eye to such blatant acts of usurping of the peoples traditional treasures by these missionaries because many in government are already beneficiaries to such missionary financial largess.

In our country Buddhist scriptures have been burned, their Gumbas in remote areas have been pulled down at the instigation of dollar power. Our government hides behind the screen of secularism in allowing such, but when Hindus raise their voice it is silenced. Secularism seems to be only a weapon for the suppression of the teachings of the Omkar Family. The missionaries can teach what they want, teach children that the Hindus worship Devils, yet that is alright! The Muslims in their Muslim controlled schools "Madrasas" can openly teach their religion without obstruction but

in our government owned schools or private schools education based on the glorious teachings of our Dharma is discouraged. Our children are encouraged to celebrate Christmas and Valentine Day, but if its Ramnavami or Jamashtami or Buddha Poornima schools do not encourage celebrations. They do not even give the children a glimpse of the glorious lives of Bhagwan Ram or Shree Krishna or Lord Buddha on such occasions. Just for the record teachings of our Dharma in school curricula were ousted by the monarchy itself when we were a Hindu Rashtra. This was when crown prince Birendra was placed in charge of “**नयाँ शिक्षानीति**” (New Education Policy). Here we see the benefit of “Hindu Rastra”!

This situation will not make our nations capable of proclaiming our glorious traditions. Our nations immediately put a stop to these blatant unscrupulous conversions. By creating students capable of counteracting false propaganda, the education policies need to address the past mistakes in the school curricula. We must remind our teachers and our children the fundamental and universal truths of our religions, the religions of our soil, of their great personalities, of the moral, ethical and spiritual truths contained in our scriptures.

In this, India has to help Nepal. If our government remains uncommitted even at this dangerous onslaught and remains silent and ineffective India must help our people to counteract this nation destroying evil. We have not the financial capacity to counter the millions of dollars pouring into Nepal for these nefarious acts but India is rich and getting economically stronger and so must any how help us. For Nepal becoming Christianized or going Muslim-majority will not be beneficial for India as well, given our free border where not only the good but also evil can easily cross over. How will India face our ancient fathers - if it does not respond?

If help comes from any source anywhere from Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs or even from sense-of-spirituality-oriented Christians or Christian countries, there are groups of people in Nepal even now sincerely trying to preserve our culture and religions and these groups of people could be much more effective with better funding. I do not talk of the two tongued politicians, who talk of the welfare of our religions but in secret they are doing something else. I am well aware of the fact that such funds should not go to these, never!

I am talking of the good work of the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh Nepal, the Pragyik Vidyarthi Parishad, Nepal, the Janjati Kalyan Ashram, the Ekal Vidyalaya Programme and of various Buddhist Youth Organizations and others of Jain organizations. These organizations are successfully running today but they could do much more if they could get financial help. There is no sense in appealing to any biased government of our country because they are essentially politically propagated against our Dharma. This is extremely unjust and lacks even political farsightedness. So Nepal must appeal to the world at large for help and India being so influential worldwide must help us. After all if UNESCO is doing very much to preserve the DEAD monuments and locations, should not we demand more funds to preserve a living breathing culture, philosophy and religion for future generations?

Finally in summing up I am sure all here will appreciate the need to actively pursue the preservation and strengthening of our traditional religions of the soil not only for our mutual relationship and our systems of life and living but also of our security. The onslaughts against our Dharma and to our ways of life are too serious to be sidelined for monetary or other personal gains. Nepal being much weaker, poorer and more vulnerable needs all the help in this regard from the world and in particular from India our friend, neighbor,

elder brother and one who has always been and will be spiritually one with us.

We have to preserve our Hindutwa, Buddhatwa and all the Omkar Family Tattwas for the protection of a world sliding towards destruction environmentally, conflict-wise, socially and morally and by increasing extremist related violence. And to do this firstly in our own two countries we must do all in our power to stop the downward slide of the very principles and teachings that are thus needed to protect the world. By preserving and strengthening our religions of the soil. This can be done only by our religious leaders and Hindu Swoyam Sevaks going to the villages, remote and backward regions to teach people the truths and to counteract false missionary propaganda and the government must make sure of providing health education and food to all its populations, then the missionary weaponry will be neutralized.

For the strengthening of "Bharat-Nepal Sadbhav", however, Hanumanji's Quote which I have altered to fit our relationship, and which I have called the "Hanumanic Principles" will certainly help us truly understand each other, to be sensitive to each other's concerns, and to be of help to one another at all times in the future. The three principles as enunciated are rock solid in their basics and will be unshakable enough to steady any rocking of our boats of state in future. The open border remaining open will remain as a testimony to our eternal relationship at the more material level and its closure may mean our loss of faith in our common heritage and lineage.

Thank you very much!



Acharya Norbu Sherpa

Namaskar. The Chair of this session, and all the scholars and friends from different regions attending this session!

The topic of this presentation is: "The Status, Commonalities and Challenges of Budhism, Hinduism and Kirat Religion: The Possibilities of Coordination." When I was told to present this paper I was told that there is no restriction of language. I was told that I could present either in English or in Hindi or in Nepali, so I prepared it in Nepali. I am presenting it in Nepali. It is a very short presentation; I can read it in less than ten minutes. I will complete it within the time given to me.

Although Nepal is a landlocked country with multiple languages, scripts, ethnicities, cultures, etc. she has been an independent nation since time immemorial. Geographically, Nepal is divided into the Himalayan, the Hilly and the Terai regions. From the perspective of spirituality, Nepal is the land of great philosophers and eugenics like Lord Krakuchchhabd, Kanakmuni, Shakyamuni Buddha, Ved Vyas, Balmiki and Mahaguru Phalgunanda, etc., who were born in Nepal. In ancient times there were Buddhists, Hindus and Kirats as the inhabitants of Nepal. According to the census of 2068 BS the population of Nepal was 26,494,504. Among them we have the speakers of 123 languages and 10 religious groups. These ten religions are Hindu, Budhism, Islam, Kirats, Prakriti, Christianity, Bon, Jain, Bahai and Shikh. There are some differences in the census of 2068 and 2058. According to the 2068 census, Hindus were 81.3% but in

2058 census Hindus were 80%. In ten years, the population of Hindus increased by one percent. The census of 2068 showed nine percent Buddhist population but it was 10.74% in 2058. The data tells us that the population of Buddhists decreased. The population of Christians increased but the population of other religious groups decreased.

Hindu, Buddhism and Kirat religions are based on eastern philosophy. There could be differences in terms of the world and creatures, the main objective of these three religions is to relieve the pains and sufferings of all the living beings and help them to attain salvation. All these religions have common beliefs in the consequences of one's actions in life, rebirth and the concept of salvation.

The age of today is an age of science and technology. In the name of modern education, the way the western education system is rapidly hegemonizing our education system of community and institutional schools, our eastern education system that emphasized environmental friendly, useful to human values, spiritual gurukul is endangered. We have been unable to preserve and develop our languages, religions, and cultures in our own country. The so called intellectuals inspired from western education system have been influencing the policies and decision making against the eastern religion and culture. On the other hand taking advantages of poverty and illiteracy, mass religious conversion has been taking place tempting disadvantageous people of economic gains. This is also one of the challenges of India today.

The religious belief systems, cultures and philosophies originated in India were welcomed by international communities and still many countries of the world have high regards to religions, cultures and philosophies of India. However, in the land of origin these religious belief systems, cultures and philosophies have been ignored. Although there has been lack of adequate coordination among the followers of these religions, there has been strong religious tolerance among them. Sometimes problems surfaced because of the extreme ideologies of some selfish people, who used religion for the political gains. The followers of all religious beliefs need to pay attention to mitigate issues like this. The coordination and cooperation are needed among the followers of Hinduism, Buddhism and Kirat religion living in India and Nepal.

In the changing scenario of the world, it is felt that followers of eastern religious systems require creating a common forum to make a common concept of these religious systems. Although these three religions i.e., Hinduism, Buddhism and Kirat religion are based on the eastern religious philosophy, they have their own unique religious belief systems, philosophies, and indigenous identity, it is imperative to coordinate to develop the places of archaeological sites relevant to all these religions. Besides Hinduism, Buddhism and Kirat, it is the demand of the time to coordinate to bring the followers of Bon, Jon, Sikh, etc. to a single forum. It is evident from the historical facts that India had been a guru of the entire humanity since ancient time. To give continuity to the guru status, it is a necessity of today that the followers of Hinduism, Buddhism and Kirat religion need to move ahead without any kind of biasness accepting the existence of each other at proper place and proper time from both governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Our identity is the civilization based on the oriental religious philosophy and culture. We need to centrally focus our attention on how we plan to move ahead in future rather than to ponder upon what happened in the past. Establishing the oriental religious philosophy, culture, education, languages and civilization in the international communities, we need to coordinate to move ahead so that we can live a life of dignity, help those who are in need of help. It will be appropriate to have a collective opinion and specify a common goal.

Let everyone be blessed. Victory to the world! Thank you all.

Thank you very much!



Professor Dr. Rajesh Kharat

Thank you very much and thank you to this organization.

Let me introduce myself. Though I am teaching at JNU but then looking at the paper in technical session, I'm not a student of social anthropology or cultural studies. I am a student of international relation but then I have been visiting Nepal regularly since I am also teaching courses in Nepal for the students of JNU for last four to five years and based on that experience and frequent visits to Nepal, I thought I can develop my interest and present some points on this issue. One incident I would like to highlight here. Although I'm teaching in Delhi, basically I'm from Maharashtra (Pune) where we speak Marathi language and then I found we have so many people in Pune who had relationship with Nepal for last 300 years. Those people and their relatives are still in Kathmandu and the present generation of Pune people, is working in engineering department at present. So when we have relationship lasting over 300 years. Then why these kinds of problems are there? These problems are more political rather than economic. So I thought I can bring some link towards this relationship because not only were those people related to Peshwas, it is not before Peshwas that many people from Maharashtra or Pune had gone to Nepal. We can find similar titles are Maharashtra and Pune, and Nepal particularly in Pahad region not the Madhes region. In the Pahadi area, where I can find very similar titles, it is very difficult to

identify either it is a Maharashtrian or Pune or Nepali when we meet in Delhi or some other parts of the world for international seminars abroad. So I think this is one point.

Second point: when Prime Minister Modiji was taking oath as the Prime Minister, I was in Nepal and I saw more joy and happiness in Nepal than in India. I could also see what's happening in India. He touched the steps of parliament and people were mesmerized by his act. However, in Nepal everywhere his posters were there. In Kathmandu, wherever you go his photos were garlanded just like in the south where milk is offered to the photograph of Rajnikant. That kind of gestures were expressed by our Nepali brothers in Kathmandu and some other areas and that provoked me to draw your attention towards the social and cultural relations of India- Nepal.

I'm just raising a few questions. When we have this much love and respect for India, why are there problems? I was traveling just to see the places in lower Mustang. I came to Pokhara and saw more churches than temples and Buddhists monasteries and that actually surprised me. Why these things, because from 1962 to recent times, Nepal was a Hindu state. The moment it has become a secular state, I think there was an inhibition within India, within Indian political circles. I could see same feelings among the interest groups or political groups or cultural organizations. They have decided to have some meetings, some discussion about what is happening between India and Nepal relationship.

I think there was a program in 2013. The program was organized by Bharat Nepal Sahayog Manch. I saw its booklet. All the political parties were trying to bring India and Nepal together. So despite that why there are problems. Second issue, which I would like to draw your attention to, is Nepal's sudden decision of becoming a secular state. I'm not going there because you all are from Nepal and you know much better than me. Some INGOS tried to dictate the terms. Nepali policy makers know it. One of my students is working in this area; he is doing his PhD on the roles of International NGOs in Nepal and the way democratic consolidation is taking place.

During the election, there were a few interviews. Carter Center was dictating the terms whether the elections process was over or not, whether it was clear. So, that kind of situation is there in Nepal.

What about India? India is next to you just like an elder brother as you said, not as a big brother but a protector. So in that case, why Jimmy Carter Foundation or their representatives say that everything is fine and now you can declare election results. Why did it say, the election was peacefully done and green signals could to be given by the INGOs?

Third issue: when PM Modiji went to Kathmandu, he was given such a heartfelt welcome, where I think except King of Nepal nobody has gone to that place because that was Monday. He was wearing that saffron dress. But then what's wrong during the second time? What was wrong? There were a black flag shown to him during his trip to Janakpur and all visits by him were canceled due to some hitch. I think we should address that hitch. I found that when he was delivering a lecture in the Constituent Assembly, he did not lose a single opportunity to mention the *Vedas*, *Upanisads* and the example of the mythologies. I think it has failed to address culture as an instrument of diplomacy in Nepal. I think they haven't done enough job and enough work to bring India and Nepal together based on ethnicity, cultural trace, language etc.

The fourth issue is when the people of Nepal think themselves as Hindu. Being a Hindu state as soft corner for Nepal, what's wrong with Madhesis, they are also Hindu? Pahadis are Hindus. Majority of people in India are Hindus. Then where have we gone wrong? Why did this Madhesi blockade take place? I think that this is about religion, tradition, and culture. We have not preserved enough. This is something.

Fifth, I also visited Kapilvastu in Lumbini. In all these places, I have seen most of the South-East and East Asian countries like Vietnam, Japan and Korea have built all the Buddhist temples very clean, neat like they are in their own country not in India and Nepal whatever they are doing in Kapilvastu.

People are loitering around Kapilbastu, where the Lord Buddha was born and brought up. Only particular area is protected to develop that area for Buddhism. You don't find *chaiwala* there. You have to come to the border for that. So these are the few issues that have raised my concerns. That is why I thought this is a good opportunity to raise these issues. We have hopes for discussion that many people come from Nepal who can enlighten us with their views. And with these words I thank you for inviting me here.

Thank you very much!



Professor Dr. Kashinath Nyaupane

A critical edition of Satasahasrika Prajnaparamita

Respected chair of this session, scholars from India and Nepal, ladies and gentlemen! As we talk about Indo-Nepal relations, we turn a blind eye on some matters of great importance. We do not talk about the matter that is the real jewel among others. Thus, I would like to draw attention towards the important matters that haven't got any attention yet.

Buddha belongs to both Nepal and India, but we never think about it. The Nepalese claim that Buddha was born in Nepal, whereas the Indians say that Buddha was from India. None of these are true, because Buddha belonged to both the countries equally. The man-made division of border does not matter in such cases, because Buddha is a wealth to the entire humanity. Buddha was indeed born in Nepal. He got his enlightenment in India. He spread peace and knowledge in both Nepal and India.

When honorable PM of India, Mr. Modi, addressed the parliament of Nepal, he said 'I am in the land of Buddha.' And when he went to Japan and addressed the Japanese parliament, he said 'I am from the land of Buddha.' While these sentences may seem contradictory, they actually are not. When an Indian goes to Nepal, he goes to the land of Buddha. When he goes out of India and Nepal, he goes away from the land of Buddha. This shows that Buddha is the common ground of both our lands.

I remember, in a short story from the *Mahabharata*, the Pandavas were in a jungle. During one incident in the forest, Yuddhishthira addresses his brothers and said 'If we Pandavas and Kauravas turn on each other, they will be hundred and we will be five. If we fight together, we will be one hundred and five'. This story is quite applicable to the Nepal-India relations.

Buddhism is what unites India and Nepal. So, I would like to talk about an important yet unknown and neglected subject within Buddhism.

Introduction to *Satasahasrika Prajnaparamita*

As it is known, Lord Buddha was born 2500 years ago as a prince of the Sakya dynasty in the heart of Nepal- *Lumbini*. But what the world doesn't know is that all the teachings of Buddha for last 2500 years have been preserved in this little landlocked country called Nepal. The essence of all the teachings of Buddha throughout his life have been safely contained in a huge book called *Satasahasrika Prajnaparamita*.

Etymologically, *Prajnaparamita* combines the word *Prajna*, which means 'Wisdom', with *Paramita*, which means 'Perfection', giving the meaning of 'Perfection of Wisdom'. *Prajnaparamita* has been personified to denote the Great Goddess, but it also refers to a set of *sutras*. The *Prajnaparamita Sutras* are a collection of the teachings of Buddha, composed by his disciples between 100 BC and 600 AD. The sutras come in different lengths, and the longest among them is *Satasahasrika Prajnapramita*. There are others, of course, like *Panchasat Prajnapramita*, containing 50 thousand verses; *Pancavimsatisahasrika Prajnapramita*, containing 25 thousand verses; *Pancadasasahasrika Prajanapamita*, containing 15 thousand; and the very famous one, *Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita*, with 8 thousand verses. The shortest version, and probably the most famous one, is the *Heart Sutra*, whereas the largest one is *Satasahasrika Prajnaparamita*.

Satasahasrika Prajnaparamita means "A collection of hundred thousand verses on the perfection of wisdom." Although it says 'one hundred thousand', it contains 'one hundred and twenty five thousand' verses. In fact, it is the largest book in Sanskrit literature. *Mahabharata* comes close, with a hundred thousand verses. But *Satasahasrika* has been scattered around the world in the form of manuscripts, and has not been published yet.

Originally, the manuscripts of *Satasahasrika* were written in Nepal. This can be proved easily, as all the manuscripts contain mostly three scripts: *Ranjana*, *Bhojumul* and *Prachalit*. These scripts are only used in few places of Nepal. Therefore, there is no doubt that these manuscripts were originally written in Nepal. In fact, 90% of the Buddhist manuscripts today are originally from Nepal, only a few are from India.

Xuangzang and his great work

In the 6th century, great monk *Xuanzang*, from China, had translated *Satasahasrika Prajnaparamita* into Chinese, and published it in 18 volumes. Again, in the 8th century, the same book was translated into Tibetan, in Kathmandu. But unfortunately, both of them lacked the original Sanskrit texts.

The Hugdson Collection

In 1833 AD, Brian Hugdson was appointed as a British ambassador to Kathmandu. In Kathmandu, he found Buddhist manuscripts lying wasted. So, he collected 381 big packages of those manuscripts and gifted those to people from all over the world. Lying within those manuscripts was *Satasahasrika Prajnaparamita*. These manuscripts, today, are preserved in different universities and archives of the world, namely Oxford University, Cambridge University, Kyoto University, Tokyo University, Beijing University, Asiatic Society, and India House Library etc. And some of them are in Kathmandu too. One of the manuscripts in Nepal is written in gold-ink on a copper plate, which is also the oldest manuscript available, copied in the 13th century.

Previous attempts of publication

Pandit Pratap Chandra Ghosh started editing the manuscripts in the early 20th century. He published the first two volumes by 1905 AD from Royal Asiatic Society of Calcutta. After that, he aborted the project, and hence, it ended.

So, the next time someone worked on *Satasahasrika Prajnaparamita*, it was a hundred years later, in 2009. Takayasu Kimura, a Japanese scholar, published exactly what Pratap Ghosh had published a century ago, except, in Romanized version. In this way, the entirety of this great book could not be published.

My mission

Seeing that the greatest work on Buddhist Sanskrit Literature still remains unpublished and has been neglected by many, I decided to work on this project. I started my mission to collect, edit and publish all the manuscripts of *Satasahasrika* 20 years ago.

I have collected 16 different manuscripts, from all over the world, including Oxford University, Cambridge University, Kyoto University, Peking University, Tokyo University, National Archives of Nepal, and Royal Asiatic Society of Calcutta, India House Library and so on.

When I was searching for a manuscript in Asiatic Society, Calcutta, they did not have anything about 'Satasahasrika' in their catalogues. And when I asked them about it, they said that they do not have the manuscript. I requested them to let me search for it in their archives. While looking for it, I found other lost manuscripts as well, which now they have included in their catalogues. After searching for three days, I found three copies of the manuscript. I knew that the manuscript was there, but apparently, the management there did not know about it. In this way, *Satasahasrika* has been forgotten and neglected by many. I want to bring it back to glory, and make it available to all the scholars around the world.

While searching for manuscripts, I got the information that there are many important manuscripts in Tibet. I visited many monasteries and stupas in Tibet, and finally after searching for one month, I found a manuscript of *Satasahasrika*, and other important manuscripts as well.

For last three years, under my leadership, five scholars have been working on the edition of *Satasahasrika Prajnaparamita*. The project has now reached its final stage, and shall be ready to publish very soon. The complete book, containing 250 thousand lines (125 thousand verses) where each line contains 32 Devanagari syllables, shall be published for the first time. It shall be published in 20 volumes, each volume containing about 500-600 pages.

Thank you very much!



Dr. Nihar Ranjan Nayak

Thank you Chair! Good afternoon everybody!

I congratulate all four presenters of this session. The papers were excellent and brilliant. If I summarize the three presentations, they concentrated on the issues of Indo-Nepal relations from different perspectives and tried to explore the root causes of the challenges our cultures are facing today. The last paper was different but very interesting and Shri Nyaupane is doing a brilliant job. He has already started preserving Buddhist *Satahasahsrika Prajnaparamita* and he is trying to disseminate the importance of *Prajnaparamita* to the study of South Asian cultures. He is already in action and we have to congratulate and support him. It is high time to focus on the ancient books and get them published.

I liked Shri Dixit over fighting for time. Asking time is the way he started his talk that was very interesting. I respect him since he is the citizen of a nation that all our sages looked for in all difficult time since time immemorial. Sir I compliment you for this. Your argument of Dharma to preserve our cultural diversities and relationship is extremely important. Three things you talked about: love, tolerance and respect. What I feel at the moment is that our relationship is dominated by political issues. Political leaders have hijacked all these issues. Here is what we should think for the welfare of each other. The recent blockade was a big blow to the bilateral relations. How can I, being a Hindu, put my fellow believer in trouble? They have suffered for six months. I was worried about that. What kind of preservation

we are doing in Nepal? We should be sensitive to all those issues. There was an excellent presentation on ecology and democracy. Hinduism can give solution; no other religion can do that. One thing I want to say is that Nepal is in transition. Shri Sherpa wrote brilliantly about increase of Christian population and other religions are facing a lot of challenges.

There are external elements, who want to continue conflict in Nepal. These external elements want to take advantage of that transition. They tried that during 10 years of Maoist insurgency. Most of the rebel groups reportedly got sympathy from Western missionaries. Another thing is that there are certain people in Madhes and they have been trying to start another round of insurgency and violence and, I am sure, they are connected with European agents, particularly arm dealers. They want to divide the people for another conflict. The law and order will be in bad condition and politics will be dominating all these issues. They can take advantage of that. There are several groups still working on that and if they become successful then Nepal will be in trouble. That will affect India and Nepal relationship as well.

I agree with Professor Kharat that there are INGOs operating in Nepal with very calculative designs. When Prime Minister Modiji visited to Nepal second time and wanted to visit religious places, the situations was not favorable and there were reports of conspiracy particularly by some Western missionaries. There were reports that the Home Minister of Nepal at that time Shri Bam Dev Gautam got instructions not to allow Indian Prime Minister Modi to visit the cultural and religious sites of Nepal.

That is why Mr. Bamdev did not allow Prime Minister Modiji to visit Janakpur, Lumbini and Muktinath. We shouldn't basically be trapped on those Western and Chinese design. Other than political issues we should also focus on cultural issues pertaining to social and ancient religion. I complement Dr. Nyaupane, for his research on this issue.

Thank you very much!

Question-Answer and Comments

Alok Goswami What Kind of changes do you see after Nepal became a secular state from a Hindu state?

Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit I tell you frankly that we Hindus, like Budhanikantha, were sleeping unconcerned when the hidden movement of the Christian Missionaries was going on. Our ruling kingship was not concerned at all. Let me tell you when I felt and saw this activity openly going on in my neighborhood I wrote a 6-7 pages long letter addressed to the king telling him of what was going on and how this could be a danger to the Hindu nation and to the monarchy itself. I delivered this to the King's secretary Ranjan Raj Khanal on the 8th or 9th day of Navaratri probably in 2030 B.S. I was shocked when he told me that the king would not be concerned with such "light" matters and that he would have to see if at all he could find the right moment for delivering this document. When I realized he would not do it I got it to the palace through other means. When I did get a reply it was extremely disheartening. I was told each religion must see to its welfare on its own and that the king would not do anything in the matter. Can you imagine a king who had got world-wide benefits as a Hindu Samrat, and was looked upon by all the Hindus of the world as a protector of the Dharma giving such a negative reply? Well the results we have seen; if you do not protect the Dharma it will not protect you! So out went monarchy. And with it also the Hindu Rastra because Hindus foolishly believed that Hinduism was somehow within the framework of monarchy instead of considering monarchy as being just something within the vast borders of the Hindu religion. We

never understood the fact that the Hindu religion was completely independent of the monarchy. This fact, in our lethargy, we Hindus completely ignored. So as in Russia where along with the Czars the Catholic Faith was ousted by the Communists, in Nepal along with the monarchy out went the Hindu Rastra by the "Peoples' movement" of 2062-2063 BS. It was and is Hindutwa that we must preserve and strengthen now and always for the Hindu Rasthra too closely linked to kingship is now but a dream.

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You might say the change is positive?

Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit

The step is positive in the sense that people are now aware of the danger that they were facing which they did not know about. But the only problem is Nepal is on sale! Frankly, I say Nepal is on sale today! What I mean is that every politician can be bought. NGOs/INGOs are flooding. For example: missionaries go up to the remote parts of Taplejung area. Nobody knows about that and the local administration or the police know that the people in remote villages are being converted. What do they do? All they do is the bribe the policeman with \$100. These simple ordinary people are bribed, politicians are bribed. Our main politicians who wrote the constitution are Christians. They are clandestine Christians very frankly to say. On the calendar, Christmas day was written that the holiday for the Christians only, for Eid holiday for Muslims, etc. This year on the Christmas day, there was much shouting from the Christian community and the Christmas holiday was declared, why? The reason was simple that nobody wanted to be identified as a Christian. We all know it but nobody speaks out. That is the

problem. Arbindo said, "We are coward!" We came to realize the problem but we are still cowards. Thank you!!

Sanskrit Scholar My questions are to Dr. Kasinathji. You talked about *Pragya Paramita*. I wanted to know whether the entire manuscript has been found or still something is missing. You said that it is being published. Is it being published with the translation or just the script? What is the subject matter?

Dr. Kasinath Nyaupane Thank you for the question, ma'am. Indeed, I have all of the manuscripts. Some manuscripts are half and some are full pages but I got all manuscripts from the givers. Some manuscripts are incomplete, some are entire, and they're all in different conditions, but I've collected copies of all of them from different institutions and archives. In Nepal, some manuscripts are still preserved in traditional households of the Buddhist Newar communities such as Shakya and Bajracharya. Most of the manuscripts have been safely preserved in National Archives. The Asiatic Society of Bengal has an entire manuscript of *Satasahasrika*, which is available by paying Rs. 60 per page, and it has 1500 pages. Some others are in universities of the world such as Cambridge University, and they have made them available online for free. Having collected all of these manuscripts, I started editing it myself and then later included other scholars. Now, the work is almost done. Some volumes will be published very soon.

RD Gupta Nepal and India have many similarities. We are brothers. The problem is: how can we go ahead? Past is past and we had to move ahead. We have to

do right work. First, we have to unite the Hindus and stop the conversion.

Sandeep Paudel How do you connect your generation and our generation?

Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit The whole system in Nepal was destroyed by the time Hindu Rastra was there. The Crown Prince Birendra was instrumental to destroy our education system in Nepal. Today, our schools and colleges have nothing to do with the Dharma. First thing is to bring our education system back to the track, back to the Dharma. That is what we have to pressurize the government. As we have these gatherings, I am 76 and all of you are over 50. We must have such gatherings in schools and colleges. There are some initiations. We have brought the chiefs of youth organizations affiliated to all the political parties and felicitated them. We have to involve them in such activities but we are not doing this.

First, I have to teach my son so that my son will teach his next generation. It is true that our culture is being destroyed so somewhere the spark has come out. Organizations like this must now learn to take the youths. I know Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS) Nepal is doing a great job. They are organizing big gatherings of students where they discuss our Hindu culture. We got to connect. It is still difficult but it has to come from the heart.

In Bali, Indonesia, there is a Hindu culture in the Muslim country. They are putting full effort to preserve the Hindu's Bali culture. This is important. Our government believes that secularism destroys the Hinduism. Thank you!

Dr. Niranjan Kumar During the reign of Prithvi Narayan Shah, there were no churches and mosques in Nepal. British

could not reach there. What is the reason behind that? We preserved our religion and culture at that time but we could not do so despite we are economically stronger at present.

At that time, Nepal and the present India were economically prosperous and militarily powerful. Prithvi Narayan Shah threw out the missionaries. That was the strength we had. No British government could say take them in. Now, today, see where Nepal is in comparison to the rest of the world and India. We are becoming much weaker and we are not advanced. Advancement with the tradition is important. We are not advanced at all and our traditions are destroyed. That is why Prithvi Narayan Shah was stronger than we are now.

Thank you!



Dr. Ramesh Kumar Dhungel

Thank you very much for your wonderful presentations and comments. Now, we are just very close to the conclusion of this session.

Through the discussions of today's previous sessions it appears that unlike in history, the Indo-Nepal relation today, is in turbulence. This is what we are trying to find out. We came to the conclusion of our research and understanding today that we have not been able to instantly sort out. Consequently, these problems still exist and they are haunting us in the forms of disturbing agents in our relationships. We have admitted that, even the past, the relationship between these two neighbors was not always sound. We find that there were some ups and downs in different periods especially between the political dynasties or authorities. However, so far as the relationship between peoples of two countries is concerned, we have found abundance of evidence to show the proofs of uninterrupted history of flourishing socio-religious and cultural ties. Unlike socio-cultural sector, the political dynasties or authorities of both countries, time and again, had to face various kinds of problems in their relationships. Many times, the rulers of Nepal were overthrown and replaced by new one through direct and indirect interventions from India. The earliest ruling dynasties such as the Kiratas were overthrown by the Varmas and the Varmas were overthrown by the Licchavis and the Licchavis by the Mallas and the Mallas by the Karnatas. Among these dynasties,

except the Kiratas, all entered Nepal's territory from Indian plains. Besides this, Nepal was also attacked or dominated in different occasions by the Abhir Guptas, Tugloqs, Mougals and the British rulers of India. In ancient time, during the reign of the Licchavis, the Abhir Guptas of India were able to consolidate the power of Nepal's court and made the ruling dynasty and the entire court of the main Licchavi family compelled to take political asylum in Tibet. This was the first historic case in the history of Nepal. The Nepali authority took political asylum or appealed for help for the survival and attempted to regain the power with the help of northern neighbor. It was also the same century that Nepal had taken side of Tibet and China in order to tame the ruler of the state of Kannauj in northern India.

Thus, while talking about Indo-Nepal relations, we have to be very much careful in our analysis by delving into and understanding the details of very uncommon ups and downs in history. Even though the two sovereign independent neighbors, India and Nepal are tied with a very special relationship surprisingly by maintaining a borderless socio-cultural contact, it is also true that we don't have always a smooth and sound history of relationship. I just pointed out some examples of our relations' distant historical past. Now, I must bring some other examples of recent problems surfaced in our relationship.

Whenever Nepal would be facing its own internal problems the history shows that much pressure and stress come from the south and such situation creates different kinds of unwanted and compelling further problems in the relationship. Situation of distrust and suspicion would also emerge. Then Nepal being a smaller neighbor would not have other alternative than turning its eyes for help toward its neighbor in the north. When we talk about the history of our relationship, we must not forget to pay special attention, be careful about all these ups and downs and the causes behind each of historical incidents. Shri Niharji just mentioned that the border blockade of 2015 is neither an incident occurred due to any formal governmental decision nor it had a cultural linkage between the peoples of India and Nepal. It suddenly occurred as a worse incident in the history of Indo-Nepal relations. We don't know why it a thorough and serious study

has not been done in order to bring the truth and the culprits involved behind this incident. There might be some internal weaknesses in Nepal in this incident but this inhuman problem would have been sorted out if Indian authorities had taken a serious step. That was not the time to blame each other and wait by pointing out causes because Nepal was deeply afflicted by the devastating earthquake; a big number of Nepalis were not in a state of regular mental functioning. It was a worse and torturous incident for Nepalis. Both sides must understand that whenever Nepal feels serious challenge or uneasiness or troublesome situation caused by its southern neighbor then both the people and authorities of Nepal would turn their eyes towards its northern neighbor for hope of help and safety. In such condition, sometimes, Nepal even extends its hand for getting direct help from China and that would not be pleasing action to India. However, we must at least understand that for Nepal, as history tells us that such situation would never be a choice of its own but a very uneasy compulsion for its safety and survival.

Modern Nepal's founder King Prithvi Narayan Shah's role in patronizing local religious traditions and cultures of the continent has become a milestone even in the history of the region. He was a devout and profound strong ruler and a uniquely benevolent dictator motivated for preserving common local cultures and traditions of Nepal and the Indian subcontinent alike. Prithvi Narayan's official directives, commonly known in Nepali history writings as *Divya Upadesh*, has a clear statement of his understanding of the importance of preserving local traditions of the people of diverse ethnic origin. This is a record text of his official oral speech instantly transcribed by a skilled high official of Nepal's court. This text includes the description of Prithvi Narayan's ancestry, his experience of the process of the making of modern Nepal and the directives for maintaining Nepal as a strong independent kingdom. In his directives he has pointed out that 'India (Hindustan) was being suppressed by European colonizer's cultures and the heads of Indian people are being under the boots of those non-Hindustani or European Christians. Prithvi Narayan's idea of preserving local traditions and cultures was to keep our society out

of touch or influencing activities of European Christians, the direct and indirect agents of modern industrial imperial hegemony. He was deeply concerned not only for the preservation and maintenance of Vedic Sanatana and Buddhist religion and culture but also for various other local practices and beliefs. For this purpose, Prithvi Narayan Shah directed the people of different cultural backgrounds for keeping up with the religious cultures and traditions practiced locally by their ancestors (*aaphnaa-aaphnaakulaa-dharma nachhodnu*).

He had made a strict announcement against any religious conversion in the country. Thus, the act of conversion into Christianity became a serious crime in Nepal. He thought that religious conversion into Christianity was the hidden means of seizing power of non-Christian nations. He had also announced that the newly made and carved out country, Nepal was the true and safe haven for Vedic-Sanatan, Buddhism and all sorts of age-old local traditional cultures and religious practices and Hindustan was not the safest place any more for such local traditions because it was occupied or disturbed by Christian colonizing foreign elements. Thus, he claimed that he was clear. By realizing that there was no more pure and safe Hindustan of local religious practices, he knew that Nepal was the pure land for preserving such cultures and traditions of Hindustan as well. From this historical evidence, we can safely narrate that Nepal became the umbrella for the protection and preservation of various precious human cultures and traditions of the entire continent including the region between Himalaya and the Indian Ocean. We can thus safely tell the world that, because of the greatness of Prithvi Narayan Shah, quite many local practices of the continent were saved, preserved and patronized. Having described the historical past, I call King Prithvi Narayan Shah the founder of Modern Nepal and an anti-European Imperial Super Hero of South Asia.

Before the foundation of modern Nepal by Prithvi Narayan Shah, there were some other rulers such as the Sens of Palpa, Makwanpur, Chaudandi and Bijayapur and the Mallas of Parvat and Kathmandu Valley. They also preserved and enhanced the Vedic Hindu Sanatana traditions in Nepal. The Sen Rulers of Nepal even claimed to introduce

themselves as *Hindupati Maharajaa*. The Sen Rulers appeared in Nepal in around sixteenth century and that was the time almost all of India was under the control or at least, under the influence of Islamic rulers. Similarly, by that time, the European Christian missionaries, traders and other agents of different imperial powers of Europe were also circling the Indian sub-continent through maritime routes. Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish were in competition in earlier days. Later, by seventeenth century, French and British also came in the row of competition and finally the British became the winner in this race of colonizing almost all of South Asia.

The European traders, Christian missionaries and other agents slowly created a favorable situation to establish the British rule in India. At that juncture of Christian foreign rule in India, it was very natural that local traditions and belief system of the continent were recklessly dominated if not completely suppressed by Christian activities and there was a serious need of patronizing local traditions in the region. That was the reason the Sen rulers followed the policy of protecting Vedic Hindu Sanatana traditions by declaring themselves *Hindupatimaharajadhiraj* or preserver of local religious traditions, especially of Hindu. This appeared to be one of the important cultural and political moves in the history of our subcontinent. Later, King Pritivi Narayan Shah took the important responsibility with pride but he never called himself the protector of only Hindu. He also included all other religions and cultural practices under the list of royal patronization. It was under this policy, he declared dozens of Buddhist monasteries as royal protected cultural institutions.

Foreign interventions and invasions and influences cannot always totally and easily destroy local cultures if there are inherent broader qualities within such cultures. They can be maintained through oral traditions and practices if the people looked at them with continuous social inspirations from such traditions. In such cases, people may try saving their practices by migrating to other safer places. A total loss of all the traditions that people practice would usually be the most humiliating thing for the psychology of existing identity so that they rather take risk of hardship or even the life in order to protect

the culture and the tradition. Cultural history of India and Nepal is a good example of such a human phenomenon. Whenever Hindustan was attacked or was under the threat of religious and culture seizure by foreign powers, Nepal seem to have played very important role by always welcoming Hindustani cultures and traditions along with their leading gurus, families and the heritage such as rare manuscripts of religious and cultural values. Nepal, thus, was a safe haven for those seeking protection and the very survival of their traditions, knowledge and wisdoms, and the value system.

King Prithvi Narayan Shah rightly implemented the policy of protecting the age-old traditions and cultural values of the continent in Nepal. He even told the public that he came to understand the importance of Nepal while undertaking the project of making Nepal a strong independent nation of diverse local and indigenous cultures. That was the reason why Prithvi Narayan Shah had publicly announced his cultural policy of protecting regional and local practices in his newly built nation of *swadharma-sanskriti*. Consequently, when the Muslims and Christians attacked and destroyed or in many cases, put India under hard pressure against its indigenous local religious beliefs and cultures, Nepal became a safe home for those fled from Indian plains. Important manuscripts of religious tenets and the texts of various ancient sciences and technical knowledge were very recklessly burnt down and destroyed everywhere in Indian Territory.

At that time, Nepal was able to protect quite many of such manuscript books of religious, temporal and technical values. It is important to note that a serious hard working nineteenth century British diplomat, Brian H. Hodgson, collected hundreds of preserved manuscript books of Hindu, Buddhist tenets and other local religious and cultural practices and deposited them in different libraries in Europe. Later, those texts became the source of academic works with pioneering value. French scholar A. Bournouff and Brian Hodgson jointly published the first book in European language on the study of Buddhism. The manuscript books collected from Nepal thus became the source of “rediscovery of Buddhism” as it is openly claimed as to be the pioneering academic work to the modern world. We must

understand now that such works were possible only because all manuscript texts of tenets were well preserved in Nepal and the copies of those were collected and brought from Nepal to Europe. History shows that whenever critical antagonistic situation appears in India, great Indian scholars and their followers saved their life and important tenets by sneaking through the dense jungle of the Terai and reached the valleys and mountains of Nepal. They were always welcomed or given asylum there by both the rulers and people of Nepal alike.

Coming to the point that India in traditional socio-cultural wealth was the dominating leader in history not only in the Himalayan region but also in the entire Trans -Himalayan regions. From Nepal Sidhartha went to India, if we think of the modern territory, and he became Budhha there. Buddhism entered Ancient Nepal from India and India was also the leading source for taking Buddhism to Tibet. It may be a fable-like story if we discuss the reality of ancient cultural geography of South Asia or Indian sub-continent.

In ancient times, entire Himalyan region and Tibet were included under the cultural geography of *Jambudwipa*. These days, we have become over dependent to Eurocentric hegemony of knowledge industry. For example, even after the independence of India, Indian authorities keep forgetting the national and cultural importance of India's own Saka Era. Indian officials even did not care about using the historic and cultural Bikrama Era. Shame on all of us, because we rather prefer to use the Eurocentric Gregorian calendar in place of such a culture of our own! That's why compared to the glorious past of Indian history India's leaderships of later periods were unable to maintain the leadership that India took with pride and she is still a loser in terms of maintaining her distinct status. Thus, if we do our best or put our best effort jointly like Nepal and India were collaborating in history, we may be able to revive that prestigious leading position back again.

In this context, we must note it down that the precious contributions made by leading Indian Buddhist scholars and Acharyas such as *Santarakshita*, *Padhmasambhava*, *Kamalasila*, *Atisa Deepamkara*, *Vanaratna* etc. were unparalleled for extending Indian knowledge and science-based philosophical glory up to Tibet. All

these listed Indian scholars traveled to most remote and difficult places of Tibet only with the commitment and dedication for the protection and promotion of Buddhism in Tibet. This was absolutely a matter of Indian glory of the past! What is happening these days in India? Buddhist followers are declined to almost 2-3 per cent and only old remains of Buddhist sites are there in India where the great Buddha Dharma emerged and developed? It was just destroyed, but thank god, there were some corners like Nepal and Tibet, which were able to preserve those manuscripts of philosophies and religious tenets for future generations.

These are the things to which we must pay special attention with much care. I believe that was the reason why present prime minister of India wanted to go for pilgrimage to Mukhtinath during his state visit to Nepal but something unwanted and unfriendly situations suddenly occurred and unfortunately the proposed pilgrimage was suddenly canceled. We know that Mukhtinath is a common pilgrimage site for all, Hindu, Buddhist and shamanistic practitioners and it is a pride tradition of Nepal because very unique spiritual centers such as Muktinath are vividly running from ancient times to this date! Thus, when we sit together to discuss these kinds of cultural matters, we have to be always very much careful. Critical analysis and discussion of this type is essential in order to maintain and enhance such a unique situation of relationships between India and Nepal. By doing so we would always be able to bring back the past glory of Nepal and India in the field of religious and cultural knowledge and wisdom.

Having said this, I would like to express my thankfulness to all scholar friends, paper presenters, discussants and participants of the session. I also congratulate and thank the organizing institutions and their authorities for successfully holding this conference. Similarly I also thank you for giving me this opportunity to chair the session.

Thank you very much again!



Dr. Anand Singh

Good morning everybody! Respected Chairperson, dignitaries from from Nepal and India, officers of the consulates and other members!

First, I just start my deliberations by thanking the predecessors, who invited me and gave me ideas on the issue. I have to speak on the Buddhist pilgrimage in Bharat-Nepal civilization linkages. So, before I start my deliberations, what I found is that how Buddhist pilgrimage helped India and Nepal since very early age not only for interaction between the people of India and Nepal but also to boost some very important socio-cultural and civilizational aspects of both the countries. And yet, a very important point is that when we talk about the pilgrimages in Nepal, we talk about the certain pilgrimages only. Basically, we talk about Lumbini and sacred complex of Lumbini only. But the very important aspect of the pilgrimages in Nepal is that it starts from the northern side, and that is also ending base that comes from Tibet region (Himalayan Region). But it plays and is also playing a very important role in modern time both Nepal as well as in the Buddhist prospects of India.

When we talk about the pilgrimages in Nepal especially for Buddhism, it started since the age of the Buddha itself, as Buddha himself told that whether it is a monk or just a lay follower, every Buddhist must visit four places and in the four places Lumbini, Nepal is the first. After that a Buddhist must visit the place where he attended Nirvana i.e., Bodhgaya. Third place of sacred to a Buddhist to visit is

Sarnath, where the Budhha gave his first sermons and fourth place to visit was the place where Budhha took the Maha Parinirvana. In this regard the Budhhist pilgrimage was set by the Buddha himself.

On the basis of it, the sacred complex of the Lumbini was finally developed. It was almost an official linkage in the 3rd century B.C. when Ashoka personally not only visited Lumbini but also visited the inner part of Nepal. When you look into it, you will find that it was not only the pilgrimage of the Lumbini but he also interacted with the people of Nepal. He founded a town near Kathmandu that is Lalitpur Patan. One of his princesses Charumati got married in Nepal with a Chatriya prince and so this is very important. That pilgrimage started by Ashoka also established the matrimonial relations in the peripheral kingdoms of India and Nepal. This tradition of matrimonial relations is very important socio-cultural aspect of Indo-Nepal relations and this tradition is still running for more than two thousand years. Basically we officially know that Ashoka finally conceived the idea of the future civilizational links between these two regions developed and continued. On the basis of that model we founded the sacred complex of Lumbini. I am talking about the idea of the sacred complex. It means not only Lumbini. It has some adjoining regions also like the whole territory that just covers almost 100 of kilometers. So that was the idea started by Ashoka and it just continued even today. In the later evidence, we found that the Licchavi had great relations in Nepal and in the Bihar region. We found that they developed such pilgrimage linkages. We also found the references of some Chinese travelers like Fa-Hien and Huen-Tsang, who mentioned that India and Nepal have great connectivity. One of the very important reasons of this connectivity was the birth place of the Buddha, Lumbini. So this is very important that we are getting the idea how the southern movement of pilgrimage was just taking shape in Nepal region.

One of the very fascinating aspects that we found about the Buddhist pilgrimages in Nepal is that we got other dimensions of the pilgrimages taking shape. Buddhism developed and involved other countries in the 7th century when Tibet as a state was developed. A reference was made that, first, a Tibetan king married two princesses, one from Nepal and other from China. Both were Buddhists. Because of that pilgrimage linkages of India started and then penetrated to

Nepal and from Nepal to Tibet. Since then, it just further accelerated to China. So new form of pilgrimage complex was formed since 7th century onwards and it accelerated also from southwards and in it at least three missionaries played very important roles.

An important anecdote in Tibet and China region comes from 7th century. It was built by the Padam Shambhav. He is considered to be an incarnation. He had basically learned the idea about Buddhism in the Nalanda region and hopefully also in the Orrisa region. Then, he moved to the Himalayan region. He also visited Nepal and Tibet. This tradition continued in the 9th and 10th century. The great figure was a teacher who established a number of pilgrimage centers in Nepal. That was Atisha and that trend further continued in 10th, 11th century by Marpa. So there are very important aspects and that Buddhism and Buddhist pilgrimages were totally different from Lumbini sacred complex area, and we found that because of such efforts number of new pilgrimage centers emerged in Nepal. I'm giving such names that would shed light on some places which are still very popular like Humla, Dolpa, Mustang area, Neshang, Nupti Lang in Solukhumbu. These are still important Budhhist centers of the pilgrimage, but often ignored by popular media. A number of monastery systems were developed. One of the very famous monasteries was the Swayambhu Monastery that unfortunately collapsed in the recent earthquake. It was a depository of one of the richest treasures of this whole region. It was important not only for Buddhism, but also for the Hindu Sanskriti. Unfortunately, the Earthquake of April 2015 collapsed it. I don't know whether the literature is safe. Hopefully it was preserved by the Nepal government.

This is a very important aspect that started taking shape through literature. And because of this new access, introductions of Bajrayana Buddhism and Tantrayana were established. These centers started a new form of pilgrimages. The pilgrimage was not only related to Buddhism but these centers also became the pilgrimage center of Hinduism also. And especially of one sect, that is Saiva sect. You found that when you talk about God Lokeshwor, you also talk about the people of Nepal especially Himalayan region. They call it as a form of Ovolokedoshowora. When you call up the Nepali people of plain region they call it Shiva. So this is very important harmonious idea

and that was a very important contribution of Nepal's to religious pilgrimages. We found another very important aspect in the later phase.

Nepal's pilgrimage centers have just preserved very important ideas. I'm giving you one very important idea. We still just failed to find linkage. We talk about the Ratha Yatra, first noted by Fa-hian in 5th century AD in north face region. It was noted in the 12th century by the Dhamma Swami in Nepal. Parallel evidence of the 13th century you found in the Puri temple in Orissa. The idea is different. When you talk about the Rath Yatra of Nepal, we find that the Buddha was sitting on the chariot. So basically and ritual practice of Rath Yatra of Nepal region and Puri are almost same. So there are some possible linkages that two countries were reciprocal. How it developed is still a matter of deliberation. That account was given by a 12th century traveler Dharma Swami. He just took pain, came from Tibet, learned in different monasteries of India. He visited Nepal and then finally he found a number of fascinating aspects and gave a very vivid account of the role played by these pilgrims in assimilating practice and idea of co-existence between the people of India and Nepal. The political scenario of India was not good because the Islamic invasion was going on. In such an age of depression, you find the idea how these religious (Hindu and Buddhist priest) practices were putting together all their efforts to mobilize their people in an integrated mode.

And when you talk about recent learning about both Lumbini sacred complex and the hill Buddhism efforts were made to unite them in 20th century. In Kathmandu valley, we find that lots of efforts were put especially to combine the Newar Buddhism. You find Newar Buddhism and Mahayana tradition. It was Kathmandu that has been playing very important role for pilgrimages of Buddhism not only in India but also in the whole in South Asia. Such deliberation was quoted in the whole of South-East Asia and East Asia. Those are the majority countries. In 20th and 21st century, Nepal's pilgrimage was playing a very important role in unifying people of Asia which is an important contribution. Another very important contribution is that we lost majority of manuscripts in India both related to the Brahminical or Hindus religion or Buddhist religion. We found that these manuscripts are either translated in Tibet or presented in Tibetan or either in

Sanskrit language. All these manuscripts are recently discovered or being discovered in Nepal. It is a great fascinating aspect that Nepal is contributing to Sanskrit literature of India. We found that from all forgotten language of that time. Let me give you an example, *Jatak Mala Fardik* was one of the very important literary works of India. Its original manuscript was not available in India. Its Tibetan full version of whole story was discovered in Tibet and recently in 1970's we got the full Sanskrit manuscript in one monastery of Nepal. So this is a very important aspect and we found very important literature rich in nature that is related to three dimensions- first Buddhism, second Shyrism and third medical. All of them are greatest discoveries in Nepal over 20 to 30 years and this process is still going on and a number of scholars are engaged in that all over the world to digitalizes them and put forward for the translations. Another dimension is that we don't know how sculptures started taking shape in the Kathmandu Valley.

The Kathmandu Valley in the modern sense makes one of the best centers for Buddhist studies. Hopefully, this tradition what we just perceived started from Bengal and Orissa regions and came to the Kathmandu Valley. Basically, it was through the pilgrimage routes with some pilgrims. It is because of the dominance of monastery. In the 16th century, there were more than 300 monasteries in Nepal. Some people started working there and they got acculturated to local tradition. They developed their own techniques and it gives one of the best branch images of the Bortek Nepal for its contribution. These are a few outlines that I just deliberated to show how pilgrimages not only developed the idea; it also continued our social and cultural ideas between people of India and Nepal. When no agency was working, initially agency worked but in the age of Muslim invasion there was no such agency. Even the higher level was pressurized but the people of both the regions made eternal friendship and eternal cultural continuity. Buddhism played a great role for the preservation of our heritage and our culture since very early age. Thank you.

Thank you very much!



Shri Kamal Rijal

Bharatvarsha and Pilgrimage Tourism

*Gaayanti devaah kila geetakani dhanystu ye Bharatabhoomibhage
Swargaapavargasya phaalarjanaaya bhawanti bhooyah purushah suratwat
(Garud Purana, 1.6)*

In other words India is such a holy land; even gods praise this land in heaven. The sage Vyas said that the sky, the bright sun, the moon, the directions, the wind, the water, the soil, the trees, the vegetation, the man, the birds, the insects of India all are pilgrimage (Srimadbhagawat 11.2.41) In another context in Bhagawat, the sage Vyas said, 'the inhabitants of India are very lucky to have been born in India as they have got the pilgrimage like the real body of the God Himself (Srimadbhagawat 5.19.21). In Matsyapurana (101.5) the god of wind says there are 3.5 crore pilgrimages on the earth. According to Barahapuran (159.7-11) the number of pilgrimage sites is 66 Arab. Similarly the pilgrimage tourism is also a very old tradition. There has been a tradition among the people of this region that they should go for pilgrimage at least once in their life time. People go for pilgrimage even getting loan from the money lenders. There is a legend that Lord Shiva asked his sons Ganesh and Kumar to go for the pilgrimage around the world. He promised his sons that whoever returns first would be rewarded with the boons. In that case Kumar went for the world pilgrimage whereas Ganesh went round his parents considering them equal to the pilgrimage of the world. The anecdote of Shrawan Kumar putting his visually impaired parents on his shoulders to take

them to the pilgrimage is heard in every household in India. In this paper I attempt to present the Indian traditions of pilgrimage and pilgrimage tourism and some of the observed practices that have been found useful throughout the ages.

Introduction to Bharatvarsha (India)

The ancient name of Bharatvarsha (India) is Ajhanavarsha. Vyasa in *Srimadbhagawat* presents an anecdote that the God Rishava with his power of yoga caused rain and protected the reproduction in the kingdom of Ajhanav varsha (*Srimadbhagawat* 5.4.3). This Rishava is the same god, whom the Jains have been respecting and honoring him as Tirthangkar. Scholars believe his birthplace to be somewhere close to present Ayodhya and his place of Nirvana is Kailash Manasarovara (*Kalyan Tirthangkar* p. 674). That Ajhanava Varsha had the tradition of calling Bharat after the rule of Bharat, the son of Rishava, had the tradition of calling (*Bhagawat* 5.4.9). Ajhanava Varsha was previously called Brahmavarta. According to Vyasa, there was the rule of Swayambhu Manu in this region. He ruled from the capital called Bahirsmati. In the same region Lord Baraha released the earth from all troubles the hair that fell while falling the water from the body grew Kush and Kansh. Later Manu made his capital in the same place. The bush of Kush was destroyed and a city was built in the place so the city was called Bahirsmatipur (*Bhagawat* 3.22.28-29). The descendants of Manu, King Prithuki rule is also considered Brahmavarta. He had the initiation of hundred Ashwamedh yagya in this region. (*Bhagawat* 4.19.1). This is the same region that we call Aryavarta today. It is called Aryavarta because it is the land of Arya but Aryavarta is not limited to this region as Aryavarta is explained as the land between the Vindhya and the Himalayas is called the Aryavarta.

There is no agreement among scholars whether Aryans came out of India or they were origin of India. Some scholars think that they came out from India. According to them the ancestors of Aryans used to go round in the green pastures of East, Mid and South-Eastern Europe and middle Asian region and used to speak different languages about 4000 years ago (H G Wells, *History of the World* translated into Nepali by Narayan Giri p. 79). According to them, different groups of Aryan speakers began to enter India from the North-western regions

before 2000 BCE (*ibid* p. 117), however, the Aryan scriptures do not accept this theory of Aryan immigration. They consider that India has been the homeland of Aryan people and from India they spread science and knowledge to the world (*Kalyan Vedakthangka* p. 601).

It is not always easy to conclude about the exact geographical details of ancient India. It requires a different level of research. In any case it is clear that during the age of the Mahabharata the borders of India spread to Gandhar (Afghanistan) and Kamboz (Iran) to the west, Kuru (Uzbekistan) and some region of Russia to the north. To the north it covered Kailash Manasarovar and Brhamadesh. Similarly it spread close to the bank of the Brahmaputra, ancient Yavadweep or Java and Bali of Indonesia to the east and it spread to Singhaldweep (Srilanka) and to its close areas to the south.

According to Kalyan Tirthangka, there are remains of an extremely ancient Hindu Temple in Cambodia. In the sanctum of this temple there is a statue of Indra embossed on an airavat elephant. Very close to it there are remains of the statues of different Hindu gods and goddesses. There is an inscription as well. The inscription tells the history of the temple and describes the contemporary king's devotion to the Lord Shiva. Similarly there is a Hindu temple and Gurudwara in the city center of Abbas in Iran. Along with the Shivalinga, there are the statues of Krishna, Yogmaya, Hanuman, etc. In the same way there are temples of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva in Yavadweep (Java). On the walls of the temple there are idols of Lord Rama and Krishna showing different acts of their life. The people of Bali in Indonesia are still Hindus. They adore Lord Shankar (Shiva).

We also find the idols of Lord Shiva embossed on Nandi in some places of Egypt. There has been a Shivalinga of 1200 feet tall in the city of Babylon in Turkistan. There is a Shivalinga in the Muslim holy city of Mecca and it is known that is called Maccashwor Mahadev (*Kalyan Tirthangka* pp. 589-590). The main concern of the present paper is to explore the pilgrimage sites of modern Indian subcontinent; therefore, in the remaining part of the paper I consider these issues. The discussion so far is expected to outline the ancient heritage of India in terms of pilgrimage.

(Source: *Kalyan Tirthangka*, Geeta Press, Gorakhpur)

The definition of Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage means journey to holy region or holy place. More particularly the place or a river, a pond, a math, a temple, an ashram, a monastery, a stupa, etc. where we reach and feel the peace of mind and we feel of salvation is called pilgrimage. According to grammarians the etymology of Sanskrit word 'tirtha' i.e., pilgrimage is a place where the people, who want salvation, live. Some people find its etymology in Sanskrit words *tiryate anen* 'those who get salvation' and some other in Sanskrit words *tarati papadikam yasmat* 'from where you get free from sins'.

The Importance of Pilgrimage

All our holy texts such as Vedas and Puranas have special place for pilgrimage. Rigveda, the oldest written document of the world, also has a special treatment on pilgrimage.

*Imaam me Gange Yamune Saraswati Sutudri stomam sachata purushanya
Asiknya marudbridhe bitastayaarjeekiye shrinuhya sushomaya.*

The sage in *Rigveda* prays that the rivers such as Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Shuturdi, Parushni, Asikni, etc. are the pilgrimage; let them listen to our prayers and bestow welfare on us (*Rigveda* 10.75.5). Besides this *Rigveda* mentions pilgrimage in many different contexts and places.

*Ye tirthani pracharanti srikahasta nishangina
Tesha gu sahasrayojaneava dhagvani tanmasi.*

This is the 61st mantra from the 16th chapter of *Yajurveda*. In this mantra the Sages such as Permeshthi are saying that let God Rudra, who is ornamented with different weapons and visiting different pilgrimage sights, protect us from all evils.

Similarly in *Atharvaveda* (18.4.7), the Sage Atharva says those people who visit the sights of pilgrimage can have salvation easily in all types of difficulties of life. The *Samaveda* also discusses the importance of pilgrimage. History and Puran are rich in the discussion of pilgrimage.

The Tradition of Pilgrimage

We have a very ancient tradition of pilgrimage. This tradition began in the Treta Yug with Lord Rama. There is a context in *Vrihad Dharmapuram* that, during his exile, Lord Rama established 108 pilgrimage shrines and there are details of these pilgrimage shrines in *Skandapuram*, *Padmapuram*, *Agnipuram*, *Garudapuram* and *Vayupuram*. Similarly there is a context in *Shivapuram* that Rama established Rameshwor Jyotirlinga.

Matsyapuram (Chapter 190) and *Kurmapuram Brhamisamhita* (Chapter 40) give the details of the Ayodhya pilgrimage was established on the bank of the Narmada (*Kalyan Tirthangka* pp 800-801). In *Srimadbhagawat*, the Sage Vyasa gives the details of pilgrimage trips of Lord Krishna, Balaram, Vidur and Uddhava with high priority. (*Tirthayatra Samsmaran*, Madhusudan Subedi)

Kinds of Pilgrimage

Different Puranic scriptures give the details of different kinds of pilgrimage. Among them Janggam pilgrimage, Manas pilgrimage, Sthabar pilgrimage are the most important ones. Janggam pilgrimage refers to the moving pilgrimage. Such pilgrimages are learned people who know and understand Vedas and other Shastras, sages and saints and great personalities. Truth, forgiveness, kindness, the control of sense organs, soft speaking, knowledge, meditations, etc. are the examples of Manas pilgrimage and religious and holy places, maths, temples, oceans, rivers, water ponds, holy places and dhams come under Sthabar pilgrimage.

Nitya pilgrimage, Bhawadiya pilgrimage, Santa pilgrimage, Bikalpayukta pilgrimage, Ardhalupta pilgrimage, Lupta pilgrimage, etc. are also found to be different kinds of pilgrimage. Among them Nitya pilgrimage are considered timeless, sanatan and eternal such as the Muktikshetra, the Kashikshetra, the Kailash Manasarovar, the Pashupatkshetra, the Ganga, the Yamuna, the Gandaki, etc.

Bhagawadiya pilgrimage refers to the birthplace of great men, the place of action of gods or the places where gods appeared such as Ayodhya, Mathura, Vrindaban, Lumbini, Janakpur, etc.

Great men, yogi, *sanyasi* come under Santa pilgrimage. Shivapuri Baba, Khaptad Swami, Swami Vivekananda, Tulasidas are examples of Santa pilgrimage. Sometimes a pilgrimage with the same name is found in different places; such pilgrimages are called *bikalpayukta* pilgrimage. A pilgrimage with indirect and invisible name, place, and signs is called *Ardhalupta* pilgrimage. The residual pilgrimages are called *Lupta* pilgrimage. Some of the subclassifications of pilgrimage are desciple pilgrimage, teacher pilgrimage, mother pilgrimage, husband pilgrimage and wife pilgrimage (*Tirtha Paryatan*, Yuvaraj Sharma Gautam p 35).

Introduction to Some Pilgrimages of India and Nepal

No pilgrimage is small or great; all pilgrimage sites are equally important. On the basis of the attraction of the people, some pilgrimages of India and Nepal are presented below.

Nepal

1. Khaptad Kshetra

This region is a complete holy pilgrimage area. This region has a lot of temples of gods and goddesses and full of Parthiva pilgrimage. Among them Ugratara, Melauli Bhagawati, Shaileshwori, Khaptad Lek, Chandannath, Baijanath Bageshwori, Swargadwari are of great importance.

2. Mukti Kshetra

This region is a complete pilgrimage site. There are different temples of gods and goddesses and many holy rivers. Among them Baudhanath, Damodar Kunda, Muktinath, Krishna Gandaki, Galeshwor Ashram, Ruruskshetra, Tansen Bhagawati, Maulakali, Devaghatdham, Valmiki Ashram, Tal Barahi, Lamjung Kali, Gorakh Kali, Manakamana, Tripura Sundari, Gosai Kunda, etc are of great importance.

3. Janakpur Kshetra

There are a lot of place of gods and pilgrimage sites. Among them Gadhima, Janakpur Dham, Chandeshowri, Jaleshowr Mahadeva, Palanchok Bhagawati, Kalinchok Bhagawati are considered the most important ones.

4. Baraha Kshetra

This is the district of Sunsari in Eastern Nepal. Chhinamasta Bhagawati, Halesi Mahadeva, Chatara, the place of Baraha origin, Pindeshowr, Dantakali, Budhasubba, Maipokhari, Arjundhara, Pathibhara, etc. are important.

5. Pashupat Kshetra

This is one of the important pilgrimages of Hindus as it is the playground of Lord Shiva. There are hundreds of Shivalingas and Sidhhapiths. There are 166 pilgrimage sites within Bagmati pilgrimage. Among them Lord Pashupatinath, 64 Siddha Jyotirlinga, four Ganeshas, four Narayans, Ghuyashwori, Budhaneelakantha, Swayambhu-Boudhanath, Dakshinkali, Batuk-Bhairava, Bagalamukhi, Doleshowr Mahadeva, etc. attract a lot of pilgrims everywhere for around the globe (Tirtha Paryatan, Yuvaraj Sharma Gautam).

India

Entire India is a special pilgrimage. Every mountain, hill, river, math and temple is a pilgrimage. Some of the pilgrimage sites are described below:

1. Eastern Region

The pilgrimage sites of this region are Hariharakshetra, Sitamadhi, Gaya, Vaidhyanath Jyotirlinga, the Kali of Kolkata, Gangasagar, Tarakeshwor, the Goddess of Kamakhya, Brahmaputra, the Sun Temple of Kornark, Jagannathdham, Govardhanpith, etc. are specially important.

2. Western Region

The major pilgrimage sites of the western region are Dwarkadham, Gupta Prayag, Prabhsh region, Somanath Jyotirlinga, the Narmada River, Sharadapith, etc.

3. Northern Region

Among the pilgrimage sites of this region, Kailash Manasarovar, Purnagiri, Amarnath, Yamunotri, Gangotri, Badrinath, Kedarnath, Jyotirmath, Haridwar, Hrishikesh, Kurukshestra, Hastinapur, Mathura, Vrindaban, Naimisharanya, Prayagraj, Vindhya, Ayodhya, Gorakhnath, Kashi Vishwanath, Ganga Bhagirathi, Sarnath, etc are of great importance.

4. Southern Region

This region also has many pilgrimage sites. Among them Kiskindha, Gokarna, Shringeri Pith, Kamkoti Pith, Mallikarjun Jyotirlinga, Tirupati Balaji, Shri Benkateshwor temple, Kanchi, Kamakshi, Rameshworam, Kanyakumari and Puttaparti have special attraction for the devotees.

5. Central Region

The pilgrimage sites of this region are Ujjain, Omkareshwor Jyotirlinga, Amaleshwor Jyotirlinga, Tryambakeshwor Jyotirlinga, Siradi Saibaba, Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga, Ghushneshwor Jyotirlinga, Nagesh Jyotirlinga, Pushkartirtha, etc. (*Kalyan Tirthangka*).

The Formula of Unity:

*Bhagirathah sa rajarshi ninye bhoowana pawanim
Yatra swapitrinam deha bhasmibhootah sma sherate.
(Shrimadbhagawat 9.9.10)*

Undoubtedly, the pilgrimage sites are not only our common heritage but also the force of our unity. The great King Bhagirath brought the rivers from the heaven for the salvation of his ancestors and bridged the people of two countries with unity weaving the garland of goodwill. The efforts of King Bhagirath are still intact and it is our duty to protect this relation of thousands of years. Some mothers from rural Nepal until recently used to chant *Kashi Kashi hara hara Gange Bhagirathi* while they wash their faces as soon as they got up early in the morning. In those days lack of transportation in rural Nepal, they had no opportunities to go to Kashi, neither they had ever been to the Ganga. Those who reached there were a few fortunate ones. Since traveling was not easy and safe, those, who wanted to go to Kashi, used to give all the advice to the members of the family as their return was not certain. Those who were lucky used to return home from the pilgrimage after months; many of them did not return. In such odd situations the feeling of these mothers had for the pilgrimage can be easily imagined.

Even today our purohitis do not begin any religious performance without invoking the Ganga, the Yamuna, the Kaverey, the Godawari, the Saraswati, the Narmada, the Sindhu, etc. Similarly at the time of

death there is common belief that if we chant Ayodhya, Mathura, Haridwar, Kashi, Awantika, and Dwarwati the dead soul will be free from the cycle of birth and death. The great respect and honor that the people of India have for the pilgrimage sites of Nepal such as the Pashupatinath, the Janakpurdham, and the Janaki Temple is beyond description.

There are certainly situations of difficult times in our relations in political levels. However, such political situations never affected the relations that we have among the people of India and Nepal. One of the reasons for this is our common pilgrimage sites. Last year when India imposed economic blockade on Nepal the tankers could not move across the border. Even in such situations the wedding procession from Ayodhya came to Janakpur. The wedding of Ram and Janaki was performed without any disturbance. Neither the pilgrims from India stopped visiting the Pashupatinath, nor did the pilgrims from Nepal stop worshiping Chardham in India.

There is diversity in the objectives of pilgrimage tourism today. Earlier pilgrimage was done with the sole objective of attaining salvation and today it has been used for economic gain. Today pilgrimage is looked at as the activities for religion economy, work and salvation. Earlier economic aspect of pilgrimage was not considered important but today concerned government authorities are giving priorities to its economic aspects. Today the religious pilgrimage has been integrated with the economic activities. I present some of the important formulas related to this below:

The Corridor of Jyotirlinga

Jyotirlinga comes under the prime lingas of Lord Shiva. This is self-originated Shivalinga to satisfy the desires of devotees. According to Shivapurana, Somanath, Mallikarjun, Mahakaleshwor, Omkareshwor, Kedarnath, Bhimshangkar, Vishwanath, Tryambakeshwor, Vaidyanath, Nageshwor, Rameshwor and Ghushmeshwor are 12 Jyotirlingas. These are located in different parts of India. On the other hand, the two Jyotirlingas Doleshwora Mahadeva the source of Kedarnath and the origin of the Jyotirlinga at the Pashupatinath are located in Nepal. It is established religious belief that without worshipping these two Jyotirlingas, one cannot have the religious

after effect of Jyotirlinga darshan. Therefore, establishing a tradition of arranging the darshan of all these Jyotirlingas in package deal will enhance religious pilgrimage and it will prove a great effort for economic development of the region.

The Corridor of Chardham

Dham refers to the special holy place or pilgrimage sight. The journey of Chardham is considered special in pilgrimage. The Chardham are the Jagannath Dham, Dwarka Dham, Badrinath Dham and Rameshworam Dham. These dhams are located in the east, west, north and south of India respectively. Similarly there are also Chardham in Nepal; they are the MuktiKshetra, the PashupatKshetra, the RuruKshetra and the Barahakshetra. Therefore if we establish the tradition of the darshan of the Chardhams of India and Nepal, it will be a new beginning for the relations of the people of India and Nepal.

The Corridor of Shaktipith

The Shaktipith is a special pilgrimage site. Shaktipith is a place where the organs of Satidevi, the daughter of Daksha Prajapati, fell off. According to Tantra Chudamani, in the places where the organs of Satidevi fell off, there originated one each Shakti and Bahirava. There are 52 such places. The Guhyashwori, in Nepal, is one of them; some other are located in present day India. Initiating a tradition of encouraging people to have darshan of these Shaktipeethas will have a completely different positive effect on the religious, social and economic aspects of people.

The Buddhist Corridor

Lumbini, Bodh Gaya, Saranath and Kushinagar have been world famous pilgrimage sites for Buddhists. Lumbini is in Nepal. The Buddha was born here. The Buddha got his enlightenment on Bodh Gaya; he began his preaching in Sarnath; he got Nirvana in Kushinagar. Except Lumbini all these places are in present day India. Making a package for the darshan of all these pilgrimage sites will be a beginning of a new importance. Further this can be extended to the Baudhanath of Kathmandu. If we include the Manasarovar in the package, the journey of a pilgrim covers three modern nations.

The Jain Corridor

In Jainism there has been a great respect for pilgrimage since ancient time. Particularly, they consider places associated with Kavalka's great men as pilgrimage places. So far they have 24 Tirthangkars. The birth places of great men, the places where they got enlightenment and the achievement of Kaivalya are the places of pilgrimage for the followers of Jainism. All 24 Tirthangkars were born and achieved Kaivalya in different places of India but 19th Tirthangkar Mallinath and 21st Tirthangkar Naminath were born in Mithila region as stated in Jain Holy Scriptures. Therefore, Jains also share common pilgrimage sites both in India and Nepal. In this way we can make a common program for the visits of these places.

Conclusion

Nature has certainly given us many things. The sacrifice, *tapasya* and contribution of our ancestors made these achievements lively and our relations stronger forever. In several epochs of time in the past, there had been difficult turns in the relations of both India and Nepal; however, there had not been any difficulties in the people to people relations. The main basis of it is pilgrimage. Therefore, it is imperative to strengthen this unity further. If we cannot strengthen it, we should not weaken it. To happen that, regular visits and the programs of this sort make a difference. For now with deep desires I take leave of you. Thank you all.

Thank you very much!



Professor Dr. Vasudha Pande

Namaste all the presenters!

I am working on a research project on Nepal and traveling to Nepal. I have worked on a research about the Far-Western region of Nepal and Kumau region of Uttarakhanda India. I am trying to deliberate the fact related to these issues. Environmental history is beyond the political boundary that I have read and written in this issue. From the Kali Gandaki, the Yamuna and the Ganga, the regions have deep interrelationships. Kingdoms were established and fell in those regions, nature remained there. I am trying to speak in those areas where there were trade and pilgrim circuits.

As soon as we go through transnational context you actually look at least three national sovereign territories. We look at India and Nepal. We have to look at Western Tibet. Again I'm saying Western Tibet and Western Nepal within the nation states with different territorial unit which have different cultures and historical contexts. So what I'm building up wards is very interesting kind of history of what we would today call the 'Manas Kshetra'. There is a Sanskrit text which has also been published as *Manav Khand* published by Acharya Gopal Pandeyji. Have you heard about Banaras being a route of all pilgrim places? He was from Kumaon but manuscripts he published were written in Sanskrit and it is published from Chaukhamba, Varanasi. You can imagine there is an interesting way in which all these things get integrated. But if you start the story of relationship among three territorial units which we can today call Uttara Khand, Western Tibet

and Western Nepal. We find that they go far back in history. As a matter of fact, now archaeologists are feeling that there was a trade route. Probably now China is joining this research project. We find that trade route from Mustang up there up to Malari and Chinese location and then we have up to Himachal Pradesh.

So, all these were connected in trade routes much before many of us can imagine. The archaeological remains do not tell us about religious communities. But there were trans- Himalayan connection and this trans-Himalayan connection seems to have developed very interestingly. Again Dr. Ashok Singhji mentioned meteorological connection in the use of gold, a very important commodity, which is being probably mined at Chuta. Gold mask from Malari and gold mask from Himachal are parts of our tradition.

They are very interesting and these help very highly developed metallurgical tradition. Please remember, these are very important and concerning the whole debate in ancient Indian history about iron-age. If we really look at these archaeological sites, we may be able to push some of these back. Oleni in Uttara Khand in 800B.C was already established as a site for mining. So, we must try to understand that there is shared historical thing which also means that there were pastoral communities, among which steady connections were developing. We can find Kunindas very much there across all these regions. We do not have much evidence of Kuninda coins from Nepal but from Far Western Nepal we do have some traces of Almoda coins. So, if you look into this trade route emerging, very interestingly you will find Trans-Himalayan and Mid-Himalayan and it is in Mid-Himalayan, very initially, where the Kunindas lived. We have development of trade circuit and we have evidence.

People have written their names from 2nd century. The pilgrim circuits were a part of trade. We don't know but I suspect whatever has been mentioned is very interesting. The Pashupat Kshetra connects the central Himalayan route and Trans-Himalayan route and there is a route to Terai. I would like to remind many of you that Terai route was the most difficult because Terai was very malarial and very difficult to cross. People crossed it only at certain times of the year. But the Pashupat route also went to Kedar and Jageshwor in Uttarakhanda

with its very important story of Jyotirlinga. The other part of it is that it has very important temple constructed between 7th and 11th centuries. Interestingly, we connect this to Pashupat Kshetra as Dr. Anand Singh focused earlier. We had Tibetan empire and it played important role in the history and emergence of Himalayan states. However, many of us missed it in earlier collections. Looking at the emergence of several Himalayan kingdoms, they emerged at the time when Tibetan Kingdom was breaking up. New kingdoms came up. The Katyuri Kingdom came up. The other Kingdoms that came up in Himachal region were also right at the point of the trade roots.

Therefore these linkages between Tibet, Nepal and India were very significance. This is the reason for emphasizing the Kaligandaki, the Karnali and the Mahakali. People believed that Ganga came from Tibet, from the Himalayas. But it was only later that the British discovered it. So, a very interesting network developed after the collapse of Tibetan Empire. And let me remind you the most important regional kingdom probably is not only the one of Katyur in Joshimath but one which is Trans-Himalayan Empire of the Khasa Kingdom.

The Khasa kingdom actually crosses Tibet Woge Puran and Jumla. It controls Jumla Valley and this Kingdom had gold and kanakpartras, telling us the stories that these Khasa kings were the patrons of both Buddhism and Hinduism. We have a very interesting connection between copper plated inscriptions that refer to Muktinath and Badrinath Sahaya. We have very interesting historical linkages as evidenced from these copper plate inscriptions. Dr. Surya Mani Adhikari wrote a book on the Khasa Kingdom that was initially discovered by a Italian traveler Lucchi and described the kingdom based on the Buddhist genealogy. We have *kanakpatras* and Tibetan genealogy telling us the stories of Buddhist practices of 12th century. This connection is very important. Let me remind you that George Abraham Grierson called Central Pahadi is actually Khaskura which emerged in the Khasa kingdom. Kumaoni, Garwali and many other languages are actually a break way or a part of it.

And the emergence of these copper plates where Kumaoni has been treasured should also be linked to Khasa Kingdom. There is a

link between the trade networks development and the Nath Panthis. This is the reason we have the place names Badrinath, Kedarnath, Muktinath in this reason, a manifestation of the Nath Panthi tradition. This tradition of Nath Panthi has been extremely important across these regions of the Buddha and the Himalayas. And I'm talking primarily about Central and Western Himalayas. I'm talking about the Kali Gandaki region. The Nath Panthi also needed trade circuits as well as pilgrimage circuits. The Nath Panthi was replaced by very interesting people called the Gosais. They are Islam Sanyasis who displaced the Nath Panthis and they took over the trade circuits.

So when the East India Company arrived, it had to deal with the Gosais and the Gorkha Kingdom. Many of you know about King Prithvi Narayan Shah, who was on a continuous battle with the Gosais because he wanted to take the other people besides the Gosais who had monopolized trade also through their religious control. In this way, Prithvi Narayan Shah had bigger problem with the Gosais and with the East India Company. Later on the Gorkha Kingdom came all the way to Himanchal and the Gorkha Kingdom was very much interested in Tibet. It lost the battle with Tibet, of course, but was still interested in Tibet. They hit Tibet continuously. When we start looking at this aspect of history, we understand these connections and the pilgrim circuit. My point is the emergence of Manas Khand. It is very difficult to understand and we cannot figure out many of its parts at the present state of research.

That is why we need to make collaboration. For Nepal's knowledge of Far-Western Nepal, collaboration with Uttara Khand is required because when we go to that Manas Khand circuit, we are supposed to go Far-Western Nepal, the land of Jwala Devi and Vaidyanath. There are three Vaijanaths in the Himalayas. One is in Kumaon, the second is in Himanchal Pradesh and the third is in Western Nepal. It is the interesting network again; these three facts of Vaijnath again link to the Nath Panthi. We need to understand this Manas Khand, the region of sacred pilgrimage. We have to understand and work it out bringing the expertise exclusively of the India-Tibet phenomena or India-China phenomena or Nepal-China phenomena.

We may be able to have such a circuit that brings these three nations together because the Karnali was an important point even for the earlier pilgrims. I think one of the important sages of the 21st century belonged to the Chinmayananda Mission and he actually went to the Karnali route. This further evidenced the importance of the Karnali route. The connection along with the Karnali route to Kailash Mansarovar may be very interesting to complete the circuit. According to this, the circuit is different and maybe we could follow this.

I think what we need to explore is not only the idea of common pilgrimage site but also the different pilgrimage sites. Somebody mentioned Jain, Buddhist, Hindus, etc. I think the Bon tradition is equally important to explore. Zangzung, which is supposed to have been earlier an imaginary Kingdom, is now very clearly located somewhere in the Western Tibet and understanding of this culture helps us understand the Western Tibet and Western Nepal and Uttara Khand. Again I argue that Zangzung could actually include both these territories. Hence, the Bon tradition is very important part of this religious tradition. Remember the Bon practitioners were in Kailash and were defeated by the Milarapa. The Milarapa quite late controlled and defeated the Bon practitioners. So, what we find, therefore, is let us discuss these issues related to the common culture. We need to connect the circuits of the common culture. We have common culture, common history but we should make a circuit to interconnect them. For that purpose, we should join hands and work together. It initiates to increase trade and pilgrimages. We should fill the vacuum of our old tradition and make them alive which should be our effort.

My heartfelt greetings to all the people present here. I apologize for not being able to bring with my presentation. I had a bandage on my hand till a little earlier as I got fracture in my hand. The doctor removed the plaster just yesterday. I have been doing research on the issues of Kumaon, Uttarakhand and Nepal for many years now.

I work on the issues of Far Western Nepal. I want to put some facts related to this in this session. Some years ago, I attempted to write an environmental history. As you understand the nature of a trans-national enterprise, writing an environmental history requires going

beyond the present political borders since natural and administrative borders are never the same.

While conducting the research, I read quite a lot of things. I now understand that the region from the Kali Gandaki to the Karnali and the region of the Ganga and the Yamuna have been connected with one another for centuries. There has been a deep relationship between them. In spite of different types of kingdoms that existed, the relations among the people remained undisturbed. I want to talk on these issues.

While discussing these issues I will pick up the discussion on pilgrimage. There are trade circuits and pilgrim circuits. Both these overlap in one way and the other.

Let's try to understand all these things. Thank you very much!

Thank you very much!



Phupu Chhembe Sherpa (Bikkhu Thubten Jikdol)

Thank you all

First of all I request you all to accept my broken Hindi. Please permit me to do so. Particularly my name has been included in the discussion panel today. I feel proud in one sense and, in the meantime, I too feel uncomfortable. Just this morning, came to know that I have been included. So I have not prepared properly because I came to know that I am presenting only after I arrived here this morning. I thank the organizers for this opportunity.

We have discussed many issues of the relations between India and Nepal and argued to strengthen it. More particularly today, in this session, we are concentrating on the pilgrimage of Nepal and India. Several scholars have discussed varied areas of pilgrimage in terms of Bharat-Nepal relations. I am not repeating what has been already discussed.

We all know that Bharat-Nepal relations are cordial in terms of religious, cultural and political perspectives. This relation is of special type from the perspectives of pilgrimage for Hindus and Buddhists. Visiting different places of both these countries has been a tradition for centuries and we believe this will continue in the days to come. It does not have any limitation. I believe this will continue till the human civilizations, culture and religious remain part of the world. The political borders of the two nations cannot stop this flow of people.

Spiritualism knows no bounds; people go across the borders to achieve their desire. Therefore, the pilgrims move across the borders because there is Dharma in both sides of the border i.e., in India and in Nepal. Buddhists believe that India is the land of Aryas because many of the Aryas of Buddhism got enlightened here in India.

Getting enlightened here in India, they spread Buddhism all over the world. The Buddhist scholars Acharya Padmasambhava, Shantarakshit and Deepankar moved to Tibet via Nepal and preached and established Buddhism there. We also know that the guru of Buddhism all over the world also came from here. Therefore all our pilgrimage sites connect us spiritually, not only in economic terms but also in spiritual terms.

What happens today is that we focus on economic aspects whenever we talk of pilgrimage and ignore the spiritual aspect. This is the concern of today i.e., there should be spirituality in every pilgrim site, whether that is Hinduism or Buddhism or any other religion.

If we relate the spirituality of these pilgrimage sites with economic aspects, there is a possibility of decreasing importance of these pilgrimage sites in course of time. This aspect of our pilgrimage needs proper attention; such aspect needs to be incorporated in the policies of the government. If the importance of spirituality of our pilgrimage sites gets diminished, the regularity of visiting these pilgrimage sites will be disturbed.

To save the importance of our pilgrimage that we got on inheritance from our ancestors, we need a balanced approach. As Kamal Rijal, one of the speakers of this session mentioned that earlier people used to visit the pilgrimage sites for the spiritual attainment, but this trend is changing. Today more and more people visit these sites as tourists and they go there for fun. There is less faith and more entertainment in these visitors. A pilgrimage site must have more faith than entertainment. This needs to be balanced. If we do not pay attention to issues of this sort, the day is not far that our next generation will not find any difference between a pilgrimage site and a place for entertainment.

This kind of connectivity will be long lasting and fruitful. We all go for pilgrimage and believe in certain religion because we always strive for peace and relief from all kinds of pains and suffering, not for entertainment. We need to keep these things in mind.

Going to a religious pilgrimage reduces our evil doings and we long for peace. Otherwise, going round the pilgrimage sites may enable us to understand the history of place. For example, if one goes to the land of gold and comes back observing the gold; it cannot bring anything to him/her. But one needs to bring the gold home. In this way we need to make appropriate policies in the government level, more particularly in tourism sectors. This is how I have experienced. There are many pilgrimage sites in Nepal as well. The tourists come with their guides but these guides do not have knowledge of pilgrimage sites. And the tourists are not told the importance of the religiosity of the sites and this creates more confusion to the visitors. What can be done to the tourist guides?

We need to educate the tourist guides. We need to have certain appropriate programs in our universities where our tourist guides can get appropriate trainings. This can be a cure to the current misleading situations. A tourist guide is more of a professional perspective rather than giving exact information as they lack in-depth knowledge of the religious sites. If we do not seek to solve issues like this, the tourists will go back home with miss-information and they will make a completely different image about our culture.

We need connectivity in this regard. One way of connectivity can be established through studies. The other way of doing it is connecting through roads and air. We need to develop infrastructure in both countries since we can be physically present there if we do not have good roads to reach there. More particularly in Nepal the pilgrimage sites that we have discussed are not easily accessible.

Road connectivity is not good, save the air connectivity. As we know in 21st century people do not have enough time because all these modern things made us too much busy. Basic facilities are expected. Therefore, we need to develop the infrastructure of our pilgrimage sites accordingly.

If we have easy accessibility to all our pilgrimage sites both through roads and air, more people will visit them. Such an effort helps people understand their own heritage and, if we move ahead with such objectives, we will be able to achieve our goal of preserving our religious heritage and in course of time all our problems of borders will be automatically solved.

There are problems in Nepal too. For example, if the tourists find adequate facilities for stay in these pilgrimage sites and better connectivity, they will stay longer and have visit more pilgrimage sites. This will lead to the mutual benefit for both countries. Better connectivity enhances the visit of tourists, therefore, we have to concentrate on enhancing the easy connectivity of road and air transports.

Now we need to shift our attention to solve the problems of Hindus and Buddhists for visiting the pilgrimage sites. The Hindus, the Buddhists, the Kirats, etc. belong to these religions by birth but most of them do not understand what exactly it means for them to be a Hindu or a Buddhist or a Kirat. In other words, we need to understand the traits of these religions. Such a practice helps us achieve our goal. As I told you in the beginning I did not have time for preparation; whatever I said, I said with the heart. I bring an end to my speech here.

Thank you very much!

Question-Answer and Comments

Shri Balbir Punj Fupu told us that he said with his heart and I believe his words will reach to hearts. The session is almost towards conclusion. It is time to ask a few questions, not more than that. I pray you all to speak short. It is better if you ask questions. If you feel something needs to be the part of the ongoing discourse, please go ahead. I also request you not to repeat, what has been already discussed.

Shri Alok Goswami I want the answer of my question from Shri Rijal. He discussed pilgrimage and connectivity of pilgrims. I remember what Shri Ramesh said that we move from south to north. During the war of Baburam, Maoists dominated there; it may be possible that there was China factor, wing e journalist, as well. What do you think you are doing to face the magazines that come from the north? Does something come against these news items in your papers? Do you write articles against those?

Q My question is to Dr. Anand Singh. It is related to pilgrimage In Malla period there were 84 Sidhas and among them 24th Sidhas were Santa Kukripad. How can we get reference to him?

Shri Anamika I am an Indian. I am studying ten Mahavidhya. I feel there is a great contribution of ten Mahavidhya to the culture of Nepal. I feel you need to raise awareness about it, for example, it is related to places like Kamakhya. Intensive studies are needed on ten Mahavidhya. Thank you.

Shri Kamal Rijal At the moment with regard to north south connectivity, as a journalist, I can say that I served as a chief editor of the *Gorkhapatra Daily* for some time and I am still a columnist. My area is spiritual philosophy.

Spirituality gave me birth and identity. Therefore, I cannot forget it. Money, heart, my actions all are dedicated to it. As a journalist and a student of spirituality, I appeal to all that what politicians speak and how much of it is implemented, I cannot say but as a journalist I always try to connect south with the north and so on. It is still on and go on working on it to make it complete.

There was a question on ten Mahavidhya. I feel they come under Shaktipeeth. I understand but your suggestion is good enough to consider. I have considered it I will try to incorporate it in my forthcoming writings.

Thank you!



Shri Balbir Punj

We listened to the speeches of five scholars. We also had the opportunity to listen to the question-answer session. While listening to these scholars we have been to Mauritius because Jagdishwar Goburdhun took all of us to Mauritius. Ananda Singh filled the ocean of two thousand years' history into a *gagar*. Kamal Rijal took us to all the pilgrimage sites of Nepal and India. He also told us the importance of these pilgrimage sites. Through the intellectual speech of Dr. Basudha Pandey, we understood the cultural relations of Tibet, Nepal and Uttarakhanda and we also became aware how history relates to these regions. I am not a scholar. Listening to all these speeches and questions and answers, I have understood a few things.

We know that history and traditions connect us. We have many relations such as the relations of the Muktinath, the Badrinath and the Pashupatinath. Kamal Rijal presented it very well. We know that history connects us but the present is breaking this relationship in this way or the other. The need of present necessity is save us from the present trends of breaking the relations, of separating us. We need to preserve the traditions of our relations and keep these relations strong. We are talking of being one of entire humanity; we can implement this in the Hindu-Buddhist cultural region from Afghanistan, from Nepal, from Sri Lanka and to Malaysia, Vietnam, and many other countries that come under this region. Our intention is not to make new obstacles among these countries.

Second I already mentioned that culture connects us and politics breaks us. All the conflicts of the world have their roots in politics. Some imperialist powers, willing to change the political geography of the region, use all the instruments such as money, punishment and discrimination and create disturbance in our daily life.

We have different political parties both in India and Nepal. They have their own ideological and political agenda. These political ideologies and agenda do not hesitate to destroy the worldwide culture that originated and developed through thousands of years. This culture of ours taught us to love mankind and humanity and this petty politics attempts to destroy it. We need to be careful with such people.

Wherever there were conflicts in Bharat-Nepal relations, the causes of all these conflicts were political. I have seen that in general public there is a very good relations. People of India have great respect to the people of Nepal and same is true with the people of Nepal. All the roots of the problems were political. And in the entire world there are no countries where the citizens of one country fight for unity and integrity of another country and they are ready to give their life. In such a situation what we need to consider is that we should identify the regions that are important from historical and cultural perspectives, for example, the place of faith for every Indian or more particularly for every Hindu. Similarly the places of faith in India that every Nepali wants to visit need to be identified. These places need to be incorporated in the curricula of educational system. We need to raise awareness of social, cultural and religious organizations. This is our first step. If I have to go to Nepal, I need to know the first five or ten or fifteen sites that I have to visit there. I need to be clear beforehand which pilgrimage sites I have to visit there as a Hindu or as a Buddhist. The same applies to the people of Nepal as well.

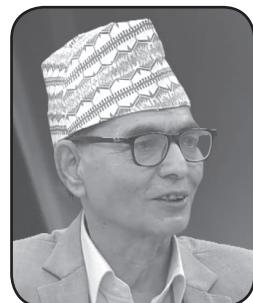
We need to make a study group that can begin a discourse with India as well as with Nepal. The group needs to identify what facilities are not available. A question was raised that tourists are not taken beyond Lumbini and perhaps it is the conspiracy of Indian tour operators or something else. Tour operators work just for money and nothing else. For them country and culture come next. The tourist of

today has very less time; now-a-days we have weekend tourists. They attend the office on Friday and they have to return their offices on Monday. In between these they have to go the places they like. In such a situation we have to develop such circuits that can be covered in two days. We need to be able to tell our clients that if they have holiday for two days or four days or eight days, etc.

We also need to make available the facilities appropriate to the tourists. As Phupu was talking that our facilities need to match the faiths. If there are no facilities, the faith becomes secondary. To enliven the faith we need to improve our facilities. If we pay attention to these things I do not think that our people would not feel different since we have common history and cultural heritage. This is our present situation. In spite of all these common traits in India and Nepal, why they cannot live like the United States of America and Canada.

We need to drive away the politics and mark and identify the imperialist powers. Do not allow them to have a role of monkeys between two cats, let the cats be cats, do not change them to monkeys. India and Nepal will remain united.

Thank you very much!



Professor Dr. Beni Madhav Dhakal

Please accept my namaskar. I greet all the respected personalities from Nepal Sanskrit University present here. Once again I greet with namaskar to you all.

*Mangalam Bhagawan Vishnu, mangalam Garudadhwaja
 Mangalam Pundarikaksha, mangalaya tano Hari*

Bhawatu sabba mangalam.

This is our principle. Our principle is the welfare of everyone.

*Sarve bhawantu sukhinah, sarve santu niramaya
 Sarve bhadrani pashyantu, ma kaschit dukhabhagjana.*

Let everyone be happy. Let everyone be free from sufferings. Let no one has to see the grief. Let everyone be happy in the world. This is our prime principle. This is Vedic doctrine. In this background, India and Nepal have been like brothers. Although we have different political limitations and different political perspectives, we are internally one i.e., from the perspective of the soul and form the perspective of pilgrimage and worshiping gods and fasting; all our cultural activities are same. We have been following this doctrine from time immemorial through presentations, ideologies and expressions.

Within this culture we created: “*Chaturvarnaya mayaa shristam gunakarma vibhagashah.*” By that we mean we created four divisions of our society based on our actions. This is what Lord Krishna said in the *Bhagawat Gita*? They are Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra and the fifth division.

Karpatri Maharaj, who was a great saint, discussed these things in detail in his work *Chaturvanya Vimarsha*. No one is great and small. One who teaches is a Brahman. He studies and teaches Vedas and other Shastras. The one who protects the nation is a Kshatriya. A Vaishya gets engaged in trades. A Shudra serves the people and the nation with his art and skills. And people who are not included in these four groups i.e., people living in other parts of the world were called the fifth group.

Our scriptures, say our acharyas, our Bhagawat incarnations, our rishis, our meditation gurus and saints did austerities and contributed to the world. Their contribution was beyond a nation, beyond India but to all the creatures, to all the people of the world. For them everyone was equal; no one was small or great.

As time passed people became professional. They kept on believing the scriptures. They were also filled with pride. They got frenzy and some of them considered powerful and began to suppress the powerless. In this way some distortions were felt in our society. Such distortions were felt in Nepal as well as in India. Consequently a feeling of great and small gradually arose.

Today we have here scholars discussing these topics through their presentations. To begin the discourse I want to say that Sanskrit is our bridge to all gaps. Any countries like Nepal and India with the majority of Hindu population, the Sanskrit language connects them all together. Our culture stands on the basis of the Sanskrit language. The Sanskrit language is the foundation of our culture.

If we do not preserve our culture in India and Nepal, we will not be able to make our relations bright. I just finished reading the section on *Himawatkhanda* in the *Skandapuram*. This section deals with the description of the Himalayan regions from the Manasarovar to the Kamakhya. A large section of the scripture has significant discussion on Kirat people. There are 60 Jyotirlingas and all the devotees are Kirats.

Kirats are the devotees of Lord Shiva. They worship Lord Shiva to fulfil their personal desires. There is a detail description of it in the *Himawatkhanda*. Therefore, there is no difference between the Kirats, the devotees of the Lord Shiva and the Hindus. Therefore, Lord Shankar established himself as a Kirateshwor in Mrigasthali in Kathmandu. In Mrigasthali we can see the Lord Kirateshwor.

Because of this culture we are living; we see everyone equal. There is no difference between Hindus and Kirats and Budhists.

Let everyone be blessed. This is the preaching of Lord Budha. We say let everyone be happy. We also pray to god to take us to light from the darkness and from death to the *amrit*. Our culture lies in the traditions of our scriptures. You all know; I just give you the details. Swami said that the guru of great saint Sangkaracharya, Guru Karpatri Maharaj discussed that our culture consists of five things in his *Chaturvanya* system. A culture needs these five things to be reflected. They are language, literature, philosophy, art and history.

Our culture gets expressed through these five things. On the basis of these things we understand our language. We have our languages developed from Sanskrit, Nepali is one of them. All these are languages developed from Sanskrit. We all read the literature written in these languages. We all read the works of Shangkaracharya and we study the philosophy together.

Our culture is one because we have the same Rishi, ancestors, and gotra; we have same centers of pilgrimage and we have same way of fasting. We too have same history if you look at from the perspectives of the art. In our rituals we find the Manu Maharaj. We have same stories of creation, the primary creation and the Brahma.

We all vow to gods before starting a ritual saying:

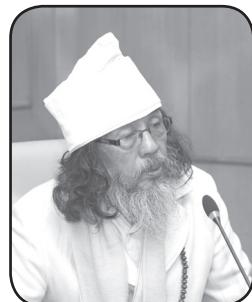
“Hari Om tatsat, Vishnu, Vishnu, iti.”

This shows we have the same history. What you have in the *Purans* and the *Mahabharata*, we too have the same. Therefore we are the same, not different. We find the uniqueness of our similarity in art, whether in vastu or in designing the structures of temples;

you find commonalities in the Vishwanath, in the Muktinath, in the Pashupatinath. We worship same gods in our temples; we have the same idols of our gods. We have common history.

Because of these reasons we are same. Whenever we feel differences, they are because of practical reasons, because of political reasons. We do not need to be disturbed. To understand the central feelings of the people of the nation, we need to control the temporary emotions and we need to keep ourselves away from the enmity and suspicions. Both the governments need to make appropriate arrangements. I say that we have single cultural heritage and we all are one. Following this tradition I humbly request Chandrakumar Sherma, the first speaker of this session.

Thank you very much!



Dr. Chandra Kumar Sherma 'Mundhumveed'

If you are not physically well, you may feel yourself in a hurry. I greet you all. Sevaro!

There are no two religions. Here we have been told Kirat religion, philosophy and culture. I wrote this speech in eight pages. As writing one aspect of Kirat religion does not give complete picture so I have included the five page article of Kamala Angdembe on "Woman in Kirat Religion: Importance and Rites". These 13 pages give you a brief account of Kirat religion. Fortunately the Chairperson of the session, Beni Madhava Dhakal, is also a Nepali speaker and I hope he will translate what I am speaking to Indian friends, who do not understand Nepali. I speak Hindi a little, but it is not good enough to make a speech. I wish you would not mind speaking in Nepali.

There are 12 religious philosophies in the world. Beyond these 12 religious philosophies we also have Selfish, Non-animism and Spirituality. Among them Jain, Bahai and Budhism have politics; the trends of politics are not easy. And there is no politics in other three religions. Another aspect of religion is spirituality. We have different names of religions but we have one soul. The followers of spirituality believe in the existence of the soul. There are no sects in spirituality but there are in religion. There are many interpretations of religion and different sects but the gist of all is same. The main objective of politics and salvation in religion is to attain the ultimate rule. No religion wants to die out.

The ultimate rule refers to the repetition of life after the doomsday of the earth in one Arab and fifty crore years later. We call that Prameshwor and Paramatma. The objective of all religion is to attain salvation. Salvation refers to be free from sexuality, anger, greed and emotions. Love needs to overcome emotions. Once we get salvation we reach to the immortal land, in heaven or the land of Baikuntha. These two things are basic in religion.

If politics enters religion, it becomes impure like little bit of pollution in pure *amrit* makes the entire *amrit* completely impure. The knowledge of gods i.e., religion needs to guide politics. This is a just directive for the way ahead. The state is not the ruler. We are in the year 5118 of the Kaliyuga. We are in the year 1,955,805,011 of the creation. We are in opposite direction. Politics has guided religion. Politics is not to dictate whether religion is direct or indirect or a sect is direct or indirect but religious leaders should direct. Just to name a person born on Monday, one cannot call 'sombare'; it is to be left to the astrologer. Technically experts of the respective areas need to work. Religious leaders cannot give decision at the Supreme Court. I got distracted but here is a feeling that politics is directing religion. This is a weird tradition. I had great expectations from political leaders. During the period of the making of constitution, I expected a conference of world religions. I have studied more than 150 research works on secular and non-secular systems. I have studied philosophers and religious leaders of the world. I also have a copy of the decision of Indian Supreme Court on secularism. Religion is not to be decided by politicians. One has the situation of not knowing but he can learn from the people who are learned.

There is an evil intention with the ideology that the world was created by woman and woman will bring an end to it and directing religion with politics is an evil idea of bringing the world to an end. This is the concern of all who are the followers of spiritualism.

I reached to the state of spiritualism at the age of 45. What I felt till yesterday has not come today in practice. I have seen practitioners of literature, classical knowledge, poets, poet laureates, high intellectuals, powerful Professor s, doctors, Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of universities but spirituality is a different philosophy from all.

In spiritualism the soul gets connected to the Supreme soul. Spiritualism is the name in which the soul gets merged in the Supreme soul. Religion may come to an end; politics may come to an end; the countries may come to an end but the soul is immortal. There is no air above 1500 kilometers. That soul is with the body in the form of air till that height. We call that the beat of the heart. That heart-beat goes away as if in an aeroplane; after that it goes to the vacuum and nobody has been able to tell where it goes and how far it goes. That distance in the language of *Mundhum* is called *Sambohang*.

There is a *Sanjing Mundum* to deal with the soul, the Supreme Soul, human salvation, political science and digital science. Unfortunately, we have not been able to translate it into Nepali or into English. It is time to attract the concern of experts to explore the great knowledge of Kirat. We have the works of Phalgunanda, Yallihang, Lomohang, Kanehang and Shrijangam. The study of *Mundhum* leads to the right path for the people who have lost their ways in time, space and conditions. I have brought it to give to the organizers.

I have got with me the copy of my work so that you can read it. I have not entered the subject of it yet. A part of it reads:

*Tatwakunda smarambha samshetranka Shive Kiran Deshe yegyo Vindyasya pratisthite
Kashmirattu samarbhyaya Kamaroopantapashme Bhota Deshe tu Manis...*

While studying linguistics, I have not found any language that is comparable to Sanskrit. *Mundhum* is somehow very close to Sanskrit. The *Mundhum* says Mennmamang, Mendhamamang, Nishemang, Shekhamang, Kunumang, Anumang and Nageranewang. After going to America I am going to explain these little words. That will be enough for the world.

I have heard a lot of things from India and Nepal. We have a well-known saying: if you lost justice, go to Gorkha and if you lost knowledge, go to Kashi. Without coming to India, we do not get anything. We have not seen any prime minister without paying a vow to India. To bring an end to Panchayat regime, to bring republic and democracy in Nepal, India did everything. All the parents are here, what I need to say here. This is the truth. Please do not take it to be bitter. I also did my doctorate from India and a large country has its own way, different from our small ones.

Here is system; we do not have any system. Knowledge makes weapons. The nations run on the basis of knowledge and weapons but we have the system of partnership and our political science came to an end.

I was born 67 seven years ago and I do not believe that my nation will have prosperity in the next 67 years. Now I am the secretary general of South Asian Jyotish Organization, I have no position; I am just a human witness.

Now see the unfortunate thing. The country is like that. There is a saying in Nepal; a carnival seen in Hadigaon is seen nowhere else. Therefore, I do not want to discredit the leaders of Nepal. I hope they would keep it a secret even if they heard it. We are people that give speech for five hours and end the short speech. I have been fortunate to complete the imprisonment of 30 months in five hours.

I wrote a book on the glossary of Kirat. I have written three or four books so far. All are related to *Kirat Mundhum*. The religion of Kirat is fourth in the state ranking; but still very young. We have not yet hypothesized the Mundhum University. We teach up to class ten at Larumba Gurukul. The state has not given anything so far. However, we receive a little grant from district education committee annually. The scholars who are highly respected for your knowledge, the knowledge of Brahma, of yoga, of gods and politics and the fourth knowledge are requested to consider the importance of *Mundhum* as it has a lot of things to tell on matters such as Selfism, Non-selfism and Spirituality.

Therefore, the state has declared Mahaguru Phalgunanda a national hero recognizing his contributions to the world peace and unity. His birthday i.e., Kartik 25 has been declared a national holiday. His incarnation is Atmananda Lingden. He is a seer. He is my illiterate guru. He taught me for 21 years.

Thank you with praying to the Supreme lord, I want to end my speech here.

Thank you very much!



Shri Nityananda Tajpuriya

Thank you Chairperson, Professor Beni Madhava Dhakalji, respected scholars, honorable personalities, ladies and gentlemen and the friends from the media. On behalf of Federation of Indigenous Nationalities, Nepal, I extend my greetings to you all. Namaste!

I am speaking in Hindi. If there are mistakes, please correct while listening to me. I request you all. I have been given the topic: Challenges Faced by Tribal and Other Communities in the Context of Nepal.

I begin with the introduction to Federation of Indigenous Nationalities, Nepal. Federation of Indigenous Nationalities, Nepal was established under the Federation of Indigenous Nationalities, Nepal Act 2058. This is the umbrella organization for 56 Indigenous nationalities of Nepal. The constitution of Nepal has defined and established Nepal as a multilingual, multicultural, multi-religious nation.

Today the Indigenous ethnic groups of Nepal are facing a lot of problems. Very recently Nepal has promulgated the constitution of democratic republic of Nepal. I take you a little ahead of that.

Nepal is a signatory of United Nations ILO 1979 and UNDRDP since 2007. Our demand is related to the right of Indigenous people related to their land as granted in ILO Convention, Article 169. These are related to the health of Indigenous people. We want the inherent rights of Indigenous people to be constitutionally addressed. We want

these rights to be addressed constitutionally. We had an opportunity to constitutionalize these rights and to prove the constitution of Nepal multi-dimensional. In the first meeting the journalists from abroad were also present.

There were people of different dresses and religions. However, what the first constituent assembly failed to do was to address in favor of the Indigenous people who were ruled by the unitary system of rule in Nepal. In the unitary system of rule we were treated as second class citizens. We were always taken as second class citizens. Here is an example:

Nepal has 37.3 % Indigenous people. I am not talking of other communities. These communities have been discriminated for long. This is written in Nepal and the writer is Krishna Chandra Aryal. It was written in the context of Gorkha Bhasa in 1874 BS.

So far the Gorkha Bhasa has not been a ubiquitous language and Newar, Bhote, Magar, Gurung, Limbu, Sunuwar, Danuwar, Tharu languages of uncivilized people have not left their places of origin. If the Gorkha Bhasa is not able to dominate all the languages of uncivilized communities, we cannot expect Gorkha Bhasa to be of any value. To think like that is to make castle in air.

The meaning thereby is that Nepal was ruled with the principle of one language, one dress, one king and one nation. We the Indigenous people were called the people of forests and we were called uncivilized.

We were defined as second class citizens from the perspective of one class and single aspect. From such condition we have traveled from the Rana regime to the regime of Panchayat, from the kings to the present democratic establishment. During this period, many communities have not been free from discrimination. For example Meche is an Indigenous community in Nepal but they are called Bodo in Assam. The Rajbanshi community of Jhapa and Morang of Nepal has relations with Kuchbihar. There is the relation of daughter and bread. There are Gangai and Tajpuria communities. The Santhal community has cultural proximity with the people of Jharkhanda. There are many communities that are found across the border and the recently promulgated constitution of Nepal discriminates these communities.

Our expectation is that Nepal is a multi-cultural, multilingual and multi-religious nation. So, such discriminations on the basis of language, culture and religion must come to an end. If this discrimination continues, the nation cannot go ahead. We do not have too many demands. Today we have a Madhesi community and the leaders of this community, not the common people, have disagreement with the present constitution. We Indigenous people say that the Government of Nepal has ratified the ILO 196 of the United Nations and we want the Government of Nepal to implement it through constitutional process. Since Nepal has ratified the UNDP, we ask to implement the inherent rights of Indigenous people by enacting appropriate laws. Unfortunately, these voices have been attempted to suppress and the Government of Nepal has not done anything else. Therefore, our primary demand is that the Government of Nepal should ensure the right of identity of every Indigenous community.

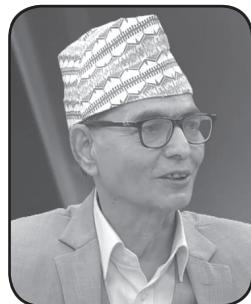
With regard to the question of federation, Nepal had never been a federal state before and now we have seven federal states. We have disagreement with this. In the Interim Constitution of Nepal, which was the root of the Constitution, there was special provision to address the identities of Indigenous communities, Madhesis, Muslims, oppressed and marginalized communities and the provinces to be named and demarcated addressing the rights of these communities. However, in spite of 417 Indigenous members in the caucus, the first Constituent Assembly was intentionally dissolved. Consequently, in the second Constituent Assembly the presence of the members from the Indigenous communities was less. In the first meeting of the second CA, it was told that the second CA would take the ownership of the achievement of the first CA. Ignoring all these, the constitution was promulgated, discriminating the Indigenous communities.

This constitution is certainly ubiquitous for some communities and some class but it is not acceptable to majority of communities. The Indigenous communities, Madhesis, oppressed and marginalized communities do not accept the recently promulgated constitution of Nepal. We want the mainstream politics to have the policy of coexistence of all communities. We also want the inclusive representation. Finally, what I want to say is that the Indigenous

communities have their own languages, scripts, customs, traditions and cultures but, because of the policy of exclusion of Nepali elites, the foreign INGOs have been supporting religious conversion. We the people of Indigenous communities do not like this. What we want is that the Government of Nepal should have appropriate policies to preserve our religions, cultures, scripts and language. We want that we should have adequate data about our languages, cultures, religions and the Government should have constitutional policies to preserve and develop them. Taking advantage of this situation, the foreign INGOs and donor agencies have targeted these marginalized communities.

Because of these reasons our cultures and religions are endangered. This issue needs to be addressed coordinating with ICCR and the relations that we have with the traditions and cultures of common people need to be strengthened. I, on behalf of Federation of Indigenous Nationalities, Nepal, also want to thank International Cooperation Council and Neeti Anusandhan Pratishtan, Nepal for providing me an opportunity to share my ideas. I want to stop my words.

Thank you very much!



Professor Dr. Beni Madhav Dhakal

Thank you Shri Tajpuria!

You have raised the issue of religious conversion. This is not the issue of Nepal only but it is a serious issue in India as well. Taking advantage of poverty and other social ills these people donate and work for religious conversion. You have very intellectually raised this social problem of Nepal. To address the issues that you have raised and Shri Sharma discussed, I invite Shri Shiva Shankar Mukherjee, the former Ambassador of India to Nepal.



Ambassador Shiv Shankar Mukherjee

Thank you Mr. Chairperson! Friends I am going to speak short considering the time factor. I am not going to say anything on the background of the context as you all are learned. Whatever is happening in Nepal need to be happened; whatever I am going to say in these few minutes, is not because of my scholarship, but because of my experience. I was in Nepal for four years and in these four years Nepal emerged as a new Nepal. Nepal brought an end to the 250 years old monarchy and made itself a republic. I always tell my scholar friends here in India about the experience of Nepal. I was in Africa for 12 years; I spent 40 years in Foreign Service in developing countries. The 2005 and 2006 movements in Nepal were 100% people movements. There was no breaking and no political partitions. Since it was a 100% people movement, republicanism landed in Nepal without any serious violence. After that there were many disappointments. In spite of all these there were people like me who lived in Nepal and were optimistic and interacting with the politics there. We were hopeful that it would happen. We were hopeful that the issues would be addressed and change would take place in the society.

We also understood that the change would not take place in a day or two. The things that were there for centuries would take time to lead them to the right direction as it was not easy as people would expect. This is because we know Nepal is an extremely diverse country with the features of multi-lingual process and multiculturalism as Shri Tajpuriya just said. I do not want to dwell in all these; I want to come

back to the present directly. I understand the importance of historical aspect but in these four or five minutes that is not my priority. The priority is the challenges faced by the tribal and that is a very complex issue. But separating that complexity I come to the main concern here.

The issue is that in majority of countries there are communities, classes and groups that are oppressed in the society. These communities are suppressed. The aborigines are oppressed in Australia. Before coming to Nepal I was in South Africa for four years. There a person with white skin is superior and you are inferior if you have black skin, not only in practice but also by law. You live there like a slave. The law is only for the white. Now that has changed.

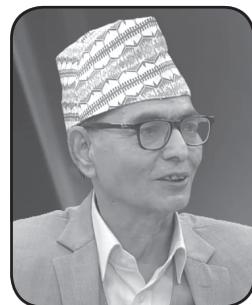
Whoever the Indigenous communities or Dalit of Madhesi communities are there in Nepal have always been given lower roles and they were oppressed. The reasons you all know. When the Constituent Assembly (CA) was formed in 2008, I left Nepal. After the election of first CA, as you all know the reasons, the politics came in between and there were delays. Even today the constitution expected by the population of Nepal, the dream of Nepal, has not been fulfilled. I do not want to go into the blames but go straight to the topic of today. If we have a democratic constitution, it should be inclusive. The constitution that is not inclusive cannot be a democratic. If one section of the society takes it to be authoritarian or dictator, it can be true. There are countries like that in the world. I have no doubt that Nepal wants to be recognized as a democratic nation. I was in Nepal during the movement and I know Nepalese people want a change and the constitution to be amended but the blames of politicians to each other have stopped it. It is not easy task to be performed. This is something which is first the egg or the chicken? This is going on for 70 years in India and I believe it will go on for 700 years. Again the case of egg and chicken! Make the constitution, make it fast and amend it whenever needed. The other group says make the constitution perfect because there should not be amendments after that.

We know it very well. We have been oppressed for centuries. Our issues have got connected with politics and rulers in the form of chicken and egg. Politics has been played. In between, there are Indigenous communities as the discussion is going on here. The discussion that is going on here; there are different reasons with the

case of Madhes communities. It is just not the case of rights; it is more than that. This we can see in many other countries of the world. We are observing it in America. We need to accept identity politics. If you want to move ahead with a constitution that guarantees you the right of equality before the law, democracy is meaningful. This also applies to Nepal. I told this when I was in Nepal as an Indian diplomat and again tell this in my retirement. This is straightforward.

Whatever is needed for amendment, I feel, that is to be done. If there is a line of rock, then it will be difficult to change. If there is no amendment in the constitution, as you said, there will be no addition in the constitution; in that case Nepal cannot move ahead. This is really true. We cannot say anything. The minorities should feel that they are not lagging behind. If they are lagging behind in reality but they are equal in terms of constitution they will have opportunities. There is a saying in English that the world owes nobody a living but the world owes an opportunity to make a living. So, the opportunity must be equal for all. There are genuine complains and fears in these minorities. If the constitution doesn't address them, they have right to protest. I'm saying this extremely frankly in this gathering. We have extremely liberal constitution in this country and yet we face this problem because society doesn't instantly cure itself simply because you pass a good law. Society takes time to adjust but the law at least must be just right from the beginning I have said this many times in Nepal. I must say one thing, in a meeting I had with Girija Babu. This was just before Feb 28, 2008, the year I left for Nepal before the election. He agreed. That was just after first Madhesi agitation after monarchy was abolished. I focus only on the constitution. The constitution will be the basis for future of Nepal's democracy. If the constitution is unjust, the future of Nepal is going to full of trouble; even with the best of constitution, society takes time to advance itself. The prejudices of centuries do not go away in one night. But the catalyst, the 1st step towards addressing these prejudices is a constitution that addresses them for the best minds of the country. The kinds of feelings that were shown in Andolan of 2005. Thank you very much.

Thank you very much!



Professor Dr. Beni Madhav Dhakal

Both the speakers said nice things and they brought the issues to the floor and the states need to address these issues. People live in harmony; the law determines the way. The lawmakers are political forces; they have to ensure equal rights for Indigenous people and the communities who are oppressed and marginalized. I believe that the organizers would take these discussions to the respective lawmakers. The organizers have given me this opportunity; I am thankful for that to them.

I just talked of Himawatkhanda. From there the Goddess Bagmati sprouts and gets merged with the Ganga in Bihar. The Bagmati is also called the Saraswati. I want to close with the words of Jaya Shankar Prasad, a great poet of Hindi, on the Himawatkhanda. It is said in the Himawatkhanda that:

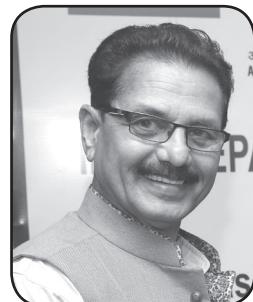
*Himadri: tunga sikharaat prodbhuta Bagmati Nadi
Bhagirathya: satagunam pavitram tajjalam smritim.*

This is the sloka from the *Himawatkhanda* and the great Indian poet, Jaya Shankar Prasad said:

*Swayam prabha samujjwala swatantra pukarati
Amantrya veera Buddha ho, pagira ho jayo bano
Prasasta punya, punya ho, badhe chalo, badhe chalo.*

And we moved ahead. I believe that we will have our sessions better. I thank the organizers, the scholars and all the participants here and I end my speech here.

Thank you very much!



Shri Shyam Parande

The role of these two civil society organizations is: how can women keep the two societies together with culture and civilization? Let's see towards the north and south of Nepal. It comes to our attention that there is a country to the north of Nepal. There is a civil society organization but that does not run in its own but the government runs it. There is a single political party and that runs everything. India and Nepal share the civilization. Like in India, Nepal also has many political parties; there is competition in both the countries. This is there in our countries.

As you said the civil society organizations come up spontaneously. One comes with the political agenda and the other with NGO. Our society is based on religion and we have different idealisms. We move ahead on the basis of those idealisms. We need such organizations that can guide our society for long term mission, not for days or months or for few years. This is a matter of many years; with this objective we are here. We need such civil society organizations both sides. They can move ahead cooperating with each other. They can take advantage whenever and wherever possible. We can contribute wherever we want whether that is a small forum or large one or between the nations or in international levels. If we bring such organizations together, we will have better roles. Political ups and downs take place everywhere. These can happen in India and these can also happen in Nepal. These keep on going somewhere in the corners of the world. These things

happen more in other countries. Civil society organizations can deal such states of crises since they can identify rules for them. A good network of social organizations can help us do what we want to do. This could be the possible role of civil society organizations. Money comes from abroad and our society gets polarized. INGOs come with their own agenda. They play with every nation and region.

Next we see towards the Himalayas, towards the sufferings and we also know the role of women. The people who have come from Nepal should be seen and should also see towards us. In the north they are running big projects. Sewa International draws our attention. We are on pressure. There are more women than men. Women have good participation in development activities. Women have a role; they assert. Similar kinds of things happen in Nepal. It happens but it needs to be visible. They need to be visible here in this hall. The role of women is to take care of the family; they also earn bread for the family. It is more visible in these societies. It is seen in entire Himalayan region. They have roles in decision making. If we look at it carefully, we understand that it is an inseparable part of the Himalayan culture. Women played the role of cultural civilization. We need to move ahead understanding this role of women. We want to give credit to this role of women. We need to put it forward. We believe that, if women stand properly, the culture and civilization go properly. Thank you very much!

Question-Answer and Comments

Dr. Ram Dayal Rakesh We are talking about the local organizations of both countries, about the roles of women. A few things, on which our society is based, are very important. More particularly there is a big problem in the moral education since there is no adequate self-study materials on children literature and moral education and you need to work adequately in this regard. The NGOs such as a Room to Read that work on children education are completely activity based. Similarly we have traditional occupations and occupations based on one's caste are disappearing in Nepalese context, I cannot say about India. Those family occupations were bread earning for the entire family and we are not able to give the new occupations since their family occupations are dying out. Consequently they are compelled to work for someone else. This is the same case in the region of north India in states like Uttar Pradesh or Bihar or in the Terai or hills of Nepal. The way the people in these regions use the local natural resources are not available to them anymore. The traditional system has been displaced. The local economy is based on that; the self-confidence is based on that. And these things help make the nations strong. In such a situation how can we work keeping women in the center? Thank you.

Ambassador Amarendra Khatua As far as India and Nepal's cultural links and civilizational links are concerned, two-three things must be kept in mind. With globalization, any civilizational links between neighbours need to be studied, nurtured and attended carefully. To nurture this we have to develop different kinds of models. We cannot take people to

people contact just for granted. For that we have to have institutional linkages, new models through which we can promote this relationship. We must continuously review this. As far as we are concerned in the ICCR, we believe with the assistance of our ambassador Northern division and various Non-governmental organizations we have planned four-five things:

To organize seminars and conferences is not routine in nature. Say for example: we can talk about Hinduism and Buddhism and bring it in the context of the Bharat-Nepal religious and cultural linkages. But we also must talk about monuments. Studying history with the participation of the historians from both the countries is crucial. Signing memorandum of understanding between the organizations will continue the study. Conferences disseminate the research outputs and generate greater feelings of belongingness. Such academic pursuits will lead us to look at the issues critically. This is the need of the time because many things between India and Nepal are just taken for granted.

Then we are talking about students. At the moment we have 114 scholarships i.e., Jubilee Scholarships and General Scholarships. Beside that we have 10 to 15 thousands students. Using these students as ambassadors of goodwill to promote cultural linkages between India and Nepal is very important. For these individual organizations, NGOs, academicians and universities have greater roles. On this also we need seminars and conferences. How to nurture in a manner that these students who are constituency of goodwill can be kept in contact between the two government

organizations, etc. From ICCR's side also, we believe selective publication activities must be encouraged. We have lots of generic publications between Bharat-Nepal relations, civilization linkages, etc. Say, for example, small things I will talk about hill farming in India and Nepal. These are very important subjects but there are not comparative studies published in these kinds of areas. Similarly, we do not have publications in English as well as translations in different international languages on various religious links, monuments, temples, movements, etc. From ICCR side, we will be happy to collaborate with Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad to identify the books and translate them into other international languages to take to different audience globally. This is just a starting point. Wherever we can help to promote Bharat-Nepal relationship, Bharat-Nepal civilization links, we will be at your disposal.

Thank you!



Ambassador Virendra Gupta

Amaredra Khatuwa gave you a brief overview of cultural relations between India and Nepal and we are very assured by his commitment to support these exchanges cultural cooperation. I am sure that you would spread these words around if there are credible program that would receive support of the ICCR. One of the things that he mentioned I would like to highlight, in fact, we have a very large foreign student programs in ICCR. It actually acts as a kind of a coordinator for foreign students. That is a very important area of work.

India's cooperation to Nepal in human resources development I remember when I served in Nepal in 1975. At that time, they wanted very many facilities for higher education in Nepal and almost everyone aspiring to be part in the higher education had to come to India. Things have moved forward that there are now several institutions of the higher education based in Nepal itself. But I think ICCR is doing a great service in supporting and providing scholarship to a large number of Nepalese students. So with these few words we are extremely grateful to ICCR and ambassador Amaredra Khatuwa for their support not only for the cultural relations but specific terms for us for organizing these activities for the series of six and seven hours.

Thank you very much!



Ambassador KV Rajan

Ambassador Ranjit Rae and dear friends,

First of all, my congratulations to ICCR and ARSP for this seminar! The initiative reminds us of the cultural and civilization links between two countries with very unique relationships in the world. We have been listening to the speakers since yesterday. I am a well-wisher of Nepal and I am very optimist about Nepal. But I have to confess that I am quite worried about Nepal itself and the relations between India and Nepal. In spite of the entire ancient civilizational, historical, religious, cultural link between India and Nepal, we are having problems.

Yesterday, we happened to attend in the interaction with his holiness the Dalai Lama. He was talking that India is going to very relevant for the future of the world despite all the bad news that we see and read about what is happening in different countries conflicts, tensions, terrorism, and so on. He said that he is hopeful and we cannot underestimate the seriousness of these problems or he did not know India itself has huge challenges and she is trying to desperately to resolve these issues. But he said India is a nation with the civilization that goes back to thousands of years and that is in the memory of its 1.3 billion people. It is true that occasionally there are problems; governments come and go; leaders come and go; there are aberrations, tensions, distortions when India stands for the idea of India. But he

said that the idea of India and India's relevance to the world will continue in the world because the vast majority of the people in India would continue to live by these traditions and civilizational values. He kept saying more than once that India does not belong to particular leader, particular government or some politicians, etc.

India belongs to the people of India and it is also true to China, it is true to the US and that is why he is optimistic. I would like to see the current concern about Nepal and Bharat-Nepal relation. India and Nepal are linked undoubtedly in terms of the shared civilization ethos, history, etc. You know the fact that Lord Ram went from Ayodhya which is now in India to Janakpur which is now in present day Nepal to seek a bride and the whole history of the Ramayan. In fact, Buddha was born in Nepal and gained enlightenment in India.

The importance of culture and open border system of these two countries is the symbol of brotherhood. I mean all these links and memories constitute a permanent underpinnings of the relationships between India and Nepal. I think Shri Pun said, in one of the earlier sessions today, that these things cannot be taken for granted because while the past keeps urging both countries to ever closer together. The present sometimes has a tendency to pull them apart. So this is where I think civil society really comes in and the issues that, for example, I think sitting in Delhi, Nepal faces the issues of identity, your sovereignty of governance of development these are common issues of South Asia. But these are issues and challenges so important particularly in Nepal. They are beyond any one government to resolve.

It is very necessary for governments throughout South Asia. Democracy is under challenge everywhere in South Asia. It has not found fertile soils anywhere in South Asia. If civil society which really means people of course but it particularly encloses women, the private sector for example the media, good NGOs. Unless all these four forces come together with the government we have and enlighten the responsible civil society to support the aspirations of the people. I don't think the governments by themselves would be able to achieve the potential that Nepal has to attend, the heights which were promised to you. We live in an age where we use to talk about the

democracy is being a government of the people, for the, and by the people. Today it is very much happening; thanks to social media and so on. You find increasingly that people are dictating the course of events in respecting what leaders say.

That is true of the Brexit phenomenon, Trump victory and whatever happening in the world. My hope is that the ancient civilization strengthens the relations between India and Nepal and it gets stronger with the modern tools of technology that empowers people, particularly women. To make civilization a live force into today's Bharat-Nepal Relation would probably be the best hope for Nepal as well as for India. This was just by the way of few thoughts to start this discussion.

Thank you very much!



Dr. Rashmi S Chari

In this session, I am going to go long back far in the history in the early twentieth century. I hope the thoughts and facts that I would share with you will really add to what all you know about Nepal because not many records of that period are available. What I am going to share with you has been gleaned from number of informal records. Sometimes in life, words are not enough to express the length, breadth and depth of relationships, especially when the relationships span over the century involving generations of the people who have loved and served with equal passion both these great nations. India and Nepal have their own professional, social and personal capacity. Since times immemorial, India and Nepal have not only shared common bonds of religious, cultural and linguistic heritage but also they have faced similar challenges such as illiteracy, poverty, caste system, gender and equality, trafficking of girls and children, violence against women, and human rights violation. These common problems of ours have resulted in a unique understanding, empathy and solidarity between the people of these two great nations with common civilization moorings.

I would like to address a small yet crucial period in history when the seeds of the Bharat-Nepal cooperation and collaboration through the efforts of civil society organization had shown. This is the first half of the twentieth century when India was struggling for the independence and Nepal was struggling for her own issues of values such as liberty, justice and democracy as the country was under the

infamous Rana rule. The Rana Regime reduced King Mahendra of Shah Dynasty to a mere title with no political authority. In the early twentieth century, India was fueled with the patriotic fever to fight against the oppression of foreign rulers. People were coming together to set up civil society organizations with special agenda.

Like many Asian countries, however, Nepal never experienced foreign domination or colonial rule but experienced severe curtailing of fundamental rights under the Rana regime. Ranas restricted the civil liberty and freedom of expressions, especially political rights. Political opposition to the oppressive Rana regime was slowly gaining ground. This movement also contributed to the freedom struggle in India. The people began to express their political and social rights and gradually the movement got momentum and finally democratic ideals were established in 1950. For all practical purposes India became the window to the world to the people of this land-locked Himalayan Kingdom in the early twentieth century. India was also one-point destination for all the needs for the Nepalese who had resources and desires to venture out Nepal. Not formal records of these spirits are available so I am sharing with you some insights about the prevailing conditions in Nepal in early twentieth century that I have collected from informal sources such as family stories and anecdotes.

As my late grandfather Dr. Gokul Chandra Shastri lived in Nepal since the early part of the twentieth century till his death in 1972. His role as a social reformer through the Arya Samaj movement and his later contribution to the foundation of the present education system of Nepal through his mentoring and guidance of King Mahendra and later his son Crown Prince Birendra is an example of the monumental contributions that civilians and civil society organization can make. As you all know Arya Samaj was started as a great movement of social and religious reform in India by Swami Dayanand Saraswoti in the later part of the nineteenth century. Around 1920s Bhai Parmanadji, one of the senior functionaries of the Arya Samaj and the founder of the Gada Party in India disputed a group of young college graduates with strong missionaries and commitment to the motherland to counter the threat of post by the Christian missionaries to the culture and heritage of the ancient Hindu Kingdom. This young group of social activists traveled for number of days by roads, rails, horseback,

and even on foot to reach Kathmandu. Slowly but steadily, they established the contact with the local people, religious institutions and also helpless monarch suppressed by his autocratic ministers.

While the ruling Rana elite and their courtiers were living in affluence and had access to higher education, the common people of Nepal were illiterate and living a very miserable life. With the help of the local supports, they started working at the grassroots. However, they very soon realized that, for the effective and sustainable change, they had to take the then King Mahendra into confidence. Their agenda of social reforms through the palace focused on the basic issues of education, emancipation of people from religious superstitions and preserving the common Vedic culture and heritage. They relentlessly worked in the inaccessible hilly terrain, hot Terai region awakening the mass through the people to people contact and giving Vedic interpretations to the traditions of the society that would motivate the people to give up their superstitious beliefs in the caste based social system. As the years passed, the remaining groups of social missionaries returned to India, my grandfather chose Nepal as his karmabhumi and stayed there to complete the unfinished agendas. The other young missionaries of this august group i.e., the leader of the erstwhile Jana Sangh, Prof. Ved Vyashi, President of the College Managing Committee, Lala Firoz Chand , eminent author and biographers returned to India.

Because of the lack of documentation, not many records are available in Nepal; this group of volunteers worked tirelessly to develop and maintain the channels of communication between the highest socio-religious organizations in India and the King of Nepal. In those days, Nepal did not have any institutions for formal system of education. Consequently, the people of Nepal came to Banaras and Patna for schooling as well as higher education. The King was urged to set up schools and colleges in Nepal to educate the masses. My grandfather joined the first school in Nepal, Durbar High School, as a teacher. Later he joined the first college of Nepal i.e., Tri Chandra College, as a Professor and head of the department of history. Dr. Gokul Chandra Shastri urged King Mahendra to start colleges and schools for girls. The uniforms for the students were made compulsory for the students of the first girl school and college of the country

i.e., Padma Kanya School and Padma Kanya College in Kathmandu. The introduction of the uniforms to the students was based on the idea that the girls of the common families would not feel uncomfortable as majority of the students were from the affluent families of Ranas.

One of the few social organizations that reached Nepal facing all the hurdles of a tough terrain and long travel was Rastriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS). Their emissaries like Mananiya Chamal Lal regularly visited Nepal and closely worked with Dr. Gokul Chand Shastri through many informal meetings. The agenda used to be social reforms through preservation of Hindus and Buddhist cultural identity. The interaction aimed at creating awareness among the people regarding ill-effects of gambling, alcohol, bigamy and superstitions that created gender divide in the society. They also advocated for the Rajdharma and the welfare of the masses through education, equality, employment and upliftment of the status of women and disadvantaged groups of the society.

Another organization that actively worked in Nepal was Hindustan Samachar that was started in 1948 by Late SS Sapte, Late Baleshworji Agrawal. The founder of Antar Rashtriya Sahayog Parishad (ARSP) visited Nepal several times as a young correspondent of Hindustan Samachar and met my grandfather Dr. Gokul Chandra Shastri to understand the Nepalese society. This collaboration initiated the process aimed at the freedom of press and expression. The Hindustan Samachar continued its work in Nepal through the number of its well-known journalists such as Shree Arvinda Ghosh and Shyam Khosla who were also the members of ARSP. Over the decade, till his demise in 1972, Dr. Gokul Chandra Shastri continued to work on his agenda of social reforms. He maintained spotlessly clean image of high personal integrity. His commitment to Bharat-Nepal relation continues after his death as the office of Nepal Arya Samaj is still functioning from his house in Baneshwore Heights where he spent his entire life. My own seven year tenure as the founder principal of DAV Kathmandu gave me innumerable opportunities to promote modern education, scientific temperament along with a shared heritage of Vedic values system in my students and through them influence their families and communities. We strive for creating a learning community free from biases, negativity and insecurities that often plagued Bharat-Nepal

relations and made sure that children of both nationalities learn in environment of mutual trusts and respects. The civil right movements in India found its reflections not only in Nepal but in entire SAARC region. This makes us think that we have a greater responsibility to think regionally while acting locally. When the governments of both the countries worked together to frame bilateral policies and agendas, they need to be sensitive to the close ties between the people of these great nations share. They also need to facilitate these connections to promote civil society organizations such as ARSP, The Hindu Swayamsewak Sangh (HSS), Nepal and many new Indian NGOs who now work with Nepal in the area of mutual cooperation such as education, health, disaster management, and media literacy, etc.

I would like to end on a personal note. Friends, every time I go to Nepal I find the same love, affection and care as from friends, colleagues and thousands of my students. Beautiful line of Jo Christopher always flashes in my mind, he said and I quote here: Home is where you live everything you love and never question that will be there when you returned. That is the croaks of relationship between scores of Nepalese and Indians over many generations. Every time Nepali and Indian cross over the border to enter the country they find the same warmth and friendship waiting for them. Long live the friendship and the love between these two great nations and I end with Jay Hind and Jay Nepal!!!

We have to keep on learning new things acquiring new skills. We cannot keep on hanging to what we were and we have to evolve. Isn't it? We have to adapt to the changing scenario and you are talking about value education.



Ambassador KV Rajan

Thank you very much Dr. Rashmi for reminding us the role of civil society and individual leaders like your late grandfather in bringing the social reforms and highlighting the need for education, women's upliftment, etc. and also contributing to more stable course of India and Nepal relations, in fact, even in today's situations I wonder sometimes whether the civil society cannot play a conscious and deliberate role in moderating the forces that sometimes threaten the relationship. Particularly, the confusion between the assertion of nationality and national interest there are two different things and the debate is constantly going on and sometimes the over-assertion of nationality for whatever reasons can actually undermine the national interest.

My own experience in Nepal was that very often, civil society could play a very mature and useful role. For example, some individual political figures decided to organize a major agitation against India. I remember, we had a team in national school of drama Delhi and they were training young Nepalese actors, and playwrights in doing some of the plays in Nepali.



Professor Dr. Ram Dayal Rakesh

Mr. Chairman, Former Ambassador Shri KV Rajan, is a very dynamic diplomat. He is still doing his best to establish a good relation between India and Nepal. The present Ambassador of India to Nepal, Shri Ranjit Rae, is also doing his best to normalize the relation between India and Nepal. I think very soon the relation between India and Nepal will be normal because the present prime minister of India Shri Narendra Modi's slogan is "never fail". So I think this is a very relevant topic that we are discussing in this session. I congratulate you all!

Really speaking, the civil society has a vital role to play. Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit is present here in this session. He is torch-bearer of the civil society in Nepal. I think the civil society can play pivotal role to normalize the relation between the two countries. I would like to quote Encyclopedia Britannica, "the state is a body of politics organized for supreme civil state and government. The practical organization is the basis for civil government, hence the supreme civil power and government vested in a country of nation". I mean to say that when the politics of a country is derailed, the civil society compels the government to follow the right path. The duty of the civil society is to bring the government or politics on the right track. This thing is very crystal clear; you all know it. I have nothing to add at this point. But Dr. Rashmi Chari, she is the worthy granddaughter of worthy Grandfather Professor Dr. Gokul Chandra Shastri. I do not see Professor Dr. Triratna Manandhar, he is the Professor

of history and I thought he might have been a student of Professor Dr. Gokul Chandra Shastri.

I also knew him very intimately. I was in the Department of Hindi literature but I used to meet him time and again. I also used to know Ram Chandra Malhotra former secretary, now late Ram Chandra Malhotra. They contributed a lot in the development of the Tribhuvan University. I think Tribhuvan University was initiated by Professor Dr. Gokul Chandra Shastri. He advised King Mahendra to establish Tribhuvan University. So, Nepal is undoubtedly obliged to Professor Dr. Gokul Chandra Shastri. What I want to clarify is that Dr. Rashmi S Chari is the light between Nepal and India. She is a bridge a cultural bridge between India and Nepal. She has thrown light on this aspect and I'm also congratulating her from the bottom of my heart. She has highlighted the role of a civil society in the present context.

I think she is the authority, a well-known scholar of history and she also knows the role of civil society in any nation. So, as you know, I'm not an authority in history of civil society. But I'm associated with many civil societies in Nepal and I wrote an article in the Public Hindi monthly magazine and I also quoted Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit. I think civil society rights and human rights are interrelated in many respects. When human rights are violated in a country, the country will never prosper. I can say this because I have also worked in the National Human Rights Commission as a commissioner. So, I know something about human rights. Human rights are still violated in Nepal.

Mohana Ansari, one of the commissioners, spoke about the violation of human rights in the Madhes movement in the International Human Rights Council in Zeneva. The prime minister called her to give clarification why she had expressed such feeling against the government. Mohana Ansari wrote an article in the Kathmandu Post daily to clarify her statement that she was not only member of high commission but also a citizen of Nepal, so this was her right to speak against government if it was necessary. She was very bold and she defended the violation of human rights in the Madhes movement. As we know that two Madhes movements took place in Nepal and I have

nothing to do with this politics because I'm not a politician, not a political scientist or a political commentator.

But, I know the politics of Nepal a little bit. I am not going to talk about present politics of Nepal and I am not supposed to speak about political situation of Nepal in this session. But I'm bound to speak that constitution of Nepal is very controversial. This constitution is written by the majority of the members of the parliament. But it is not acceptable to the people of Terai/Madhes. The preamble of the constitution is controversial. I have read the constitution of India and the United States of America. The preamble of the Indian constitution states that we are the citizens of Indian Republic; it is not written the Indian people. It is written as the citizens of republic of India. Likewise, in the preamble of US it is written as we the people of Democratic Republic of the United States of America.

We American people have not been written in the preamble of constitution of US but in constitution of Nepal it is written we Nepali people. That is wrong; it should be written as we the people of Democratic Republic of Nepal because constitution is made for the people of the country. So I think the constitution of Nepal is very much controversial and still the movement is going on. The Madhesi people, the indigenous people, the Dalit people and the people who are in minority are all opposing this constitution. And it is known all over the world. So I have the courage to speak this bitter truth in this session. I was expecting Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit would speak on the role of civil society. Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit is not a medical doctor only but also a political surgeon.

He always tries to correct the politics of Nepal but he is not successful. I don't know what the reasons are. The government doesn't understand his thoughts, feelings and opinions. I must congratulate Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit because he spoke very boldly, fearlessly yesterday and I think he is the authority to speak on this subject. I am also a Madhesi; I belong to Terai/Madhes from Sarlahi district, Janakpur Zone. But I'm silent now I don't speak about politics of Nepal.

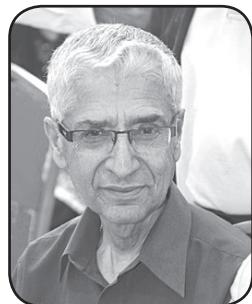
I wrote a book “Murder of Madhes” one decade before. I was victimized. My house was robbed at midnight. Then I became careful because my life is important. My health is not good and I fear to go to jail. I’m not in good health. Health is wealth; my health is very dear to me, dearer than the politics of the country. So I’m not supposed to speak very much about current political situation of the country. But one thing is very important to indicate as this type of seminar is helpful to improve the socio-cultural relation between India and Nepal. I want to quote Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, whose writing has shown India and Nepal together.

We cannot forget history or change the geography. We are very near to India and this is a geographical situation that nobody can change. No super power has the power to build new Himalayas between India and Nepal. So we have open border and the open border is a blessing for us. It is not a curse but a blessing from every sense for us. I know there are some problems of open border, terrorists, smugglers, and criminals entering India through Nepal open border. You might have heard yesterday one criminal was arrested. He is responsible for Kanpur railway event.

Both the countries are facing this type of challenges. I think the concern of India in Nepal is security. Otherwise we have very cordial relation between India and Nepal. Furthermore, I want to add one quotation from Shriman Narayan, former ambassador of India to Nepal. He says the relationship between India and Nepal is not merely a case of friendship. It is in truth brotherly bond of affection. Thousands of years ago King Janak’s daughter Sita was married to prince Ram Chandra. Lord Buddha though born in Nepal moved to India to spread his message of middle path. One of the daughters of King Ashoka went to Nepal to preach Buddhism. She married a Chettriya prince and settled down near Kathmandu. So, in the ultimate analysis lasting friendship between the two nations must rest on the solid foundations of common purpose and objective. Quite often I have been told by friends in Kathmandu, that Nepal’s co-operation should not be taken for granted. It ought to be carefully nurtured and cultivated. Nepal instead of taking India for granted should always

remember that real understanding between countries must inevitably function as two way traffic. Unilateral ties are likely to be snapped and torn under circumstances of stress and strain. These are the hard relations of world history over ages and we cannot afford to overlook or bypass them.

Thank you very much!



Dr. Sundar Mani Dixit

You forget to mention Shukra Raj Shastri, the most famous Arya Samajist of Nepal. I have a very interesting story for you concerning him. During Maharaja Chandra Shumsher's time the Arya Samajists were not considered true Hindus and were considered that they were responsible to destroy the traditional ritualistic Hindu religion as practiced in Nepal. So when Chandra Shumsher decided to punish Shukra Raj Shastri he meted out a very strange punishment. This famous Arya Samajist in total opposition to idol worship was made to go to the Pashupatinath Temple daily and bring the Prasad of Bhagwan Shiva to Singhadurbar for Maharaj Chandra Shumsher. This was the wisdom of Chandra Shumsher who was the most successful Rana ruler after Maharaj Jung Bahadur.

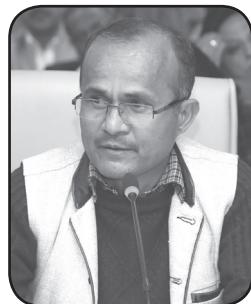
Thank you very much!



Ambassador Virendra Gupta

Welcome all of you in the Valedictory Session

In the discourse of two days, what is not striking is the positive environment. And I think that is reflective of the current state of relationship. There are ups and downs naturally in any relationship. Particularly between the two brothers but I think what is important is the dominant narrative as we have found in these seven hours of conversation. It is extremely positive and encouraging. We would start with a brief report on the proceeding of the very technical session and before I request Shri Deepak Kumar Adhikari of our partner organization Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP) of Nepal, I would like to welcome the president of the ICCR Professor Lokesh Chandraji. The ICCR is extremely supportive to us in many activities. It organizes many programs. For me coming to the ICCR is like home coming because I did have the opportunity to serve the ICCR for almost one and a half years and that was thoroughly enjoyable and important part of my diplomatic career. I would also like to welcome Ambassador Ranjit Rae, my former colleague. He is the Indian ambassador in Kathmandu now. I have been getting very positive feedback about our ambassador there and I am sure about a lot of credit for the present ambassador. Thank you very much!



Deepak Kumar Adhikari

Namaskar!

His Excellency Ambassador of India to Nepal Shri Ranjit Rae, the chairman of the ICCR, Dr Lokesh Chandraji, the Chairman of the International Cooperation Council Ambassador Virendraji and dignitaries including the Vice-Chancellor and other scholars from Nepal and all the friends from India, ladies and gentlemen present in the closing session of this two-day seminar.

In the inauguration, Shri Shyamji presented the series of the seminars in brief.

Including the opening ceremony and closing ceremony, we have technically five sessions. We discussed multiple issues. More particularly we concentrated on the religious, social and civilizational aspects of Bharat-Nepal relations. The academics and other participants, who were present here, took part in the lively discussion. As in the opening ceremony yesterday we had His Excellency Ambassador of Nepal to India, Shri Deep Kumar Upadhyay. The Vice-Chancellor of Nepal Sanskrit University addressed the opening session. After that, the first session concentrated on the religious and cultural relations. The session was graced by Tarun Vijay, honorable member of Rajya Sabha, Dr. Jagaman Gurung, a profound scholar from Nepal and Professor Bhuwan Chandra Upadhyay from Rajasthan University. Professor Upadhyay is an honorable member of Eminent

Persons Group (EPG) Government of India. We also had the former Vice-Chancellor of Lumbini University, Professor Triratna Manandhar. We had the opportunity to be part of this mega-discourse on Bharat-Nepal relations.

After that we had another session on the preservation of our religious and social heritages. We had lively discussions on this issue as well. In the session Dr. Ramesh Dhungel, Rajesh Kharat, Acharya Norbu Sherpa and IDSA scholar Shri Nihar Nayak were the main speakers. There was lively question answer session as well. We had a lot of information in the session. Except those who asked questions, all were academicians and they all answered the questions from the floor connecting the relevant information.

This morning we began with the discussion on cultural connectivity in India and Nepal. We discussed the pilgrimage tourism of India and Nepal. Shri Balbir Punj chaired the session. In that session, Dr Ananda Singh, senior journalist Shri Kamal Rijal, Dr. Vasudha Pande, Phupu Chhembe Sherpa, the former Chairperson of Thubten Jikdol Boudha Mahasangha and current Chairperson of International Boudha Mahasangha, Nepal Chapter, were the speakers. They provided us valuable information in the session.

The scholars had the opinion that we can make a religious circuit connecting India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Tibet. The fifth session concentrated on the challenges of Indigenous communities and other minority groups. The session focused on challenges from the perspectives of religion and culture of these communities. We had lively discussion on overcoming the issues of these communities.

Shiv Shankar Mukherjee, former ambassador of India to Nepal was one of the speakers in the session and Professor Dr. Beni Madhav Dhakal, the chairman of service commission, Nepal Sanskrit University, chaired the session. Dr. Chandra Kumar Sherma, the follower of Phalgunanda, a profound astrologer, looked into the issues from the perspectives of Indigenous communities. He is a scholar of Mundhum, the holy scripture of Kirats, who are the worshipers of the Mother Nature. He works for the preservation of Kirat religion and culture. We are proud to have such a great scholar astrologer as one of the speakers in the session.

The General Secretary of the Federation of Indigenous Nationalities, Nepal Shri Nityananda Tajpuriya addressed the issues of Indigenous communities that need to be addressed at the earliest. He concentrated on how we can go ahead institutionalizing the achievements of democratic process in Nepal.

Finally, a little ago the session that came to an end was chaired by former ambassador of India to Nepal, Shri KV Rajan and Sundar Mani Dixit put some questions. Dr. Rashmi Chari, as one of the speakers, raised the issue of the role of women in social organizations. Professor Dr. Ram Dayal Rakesh also raised some issues.

Shri Shyam Parande brought the issue of women in social organizations and their role in the national development. Considering the discussion from the opening ceremony to the closing ceremony of this seminar we have planned a road-map for the future. People say in many places that both organizers Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal and International Cooperation Council are think tanks. But we believe in actions. Scholars from all aspects of life came up with different issues and hope this discussion leads us to move ahead in future. We will bring these discussions in published forms as well. I tried to present the issues of the discussion in brief. I believe you will all have an opportunity to read these discussions once they will be published.

Thank you very much!



Ambassador Ranjit Rae

Respected Professor Lokesh Chandra, President of ICCR, Chairperson of this program and the Chairman of International Cooperation Council, Ambassador Virendra Gupta, His Excellency Ambassador of Nepal to India Shri Deep Kumar Upadhyay, Shri Shyam Parande, all the present academicians, intellectuals, and the representatives of civil society from India and Nepal

I thank Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal and International Cooperation Council for starting this series of seminars to discuss multi-dimensional Bharat-Nepal relations, analyze issues and come up with recommendations and suggestions to help both governments in further strengthening bilateral cooperation.

A few months ago, there was a big seminar in which quite a lot of issues were discussed and it was agreed that individual subjects need further discussion. I think this is the first topic-the cultural dimension-among the selected six topics. I expect some concrete recommendations would emerge from the discussions and these would be useful to both governments. I feel that the civil society has an important role to play in strengthening the relations of the two nations, more importantly in the case of Nepal and India.

The second thing I want to stress is that the relations between India and Nepal are not limited to the governments. Our relations are natural, geographical, religious and cultural factors. The rivulets and rivers, the Himalayas and the mountains that fostered the culture of

Nepal; they also nurtured and nourished the cultural heritage of India. Our relations were in existence before nation states were created, before we created borders. We say there are two bodies and one soul. This is a relationship of intimacy. These relations were neither created by governments nor can they break them. What I mean to say is that, whenever we see the relationship, we focus on the political relations. We talk of this and that problem and we have to come with solutions. But we should not forget that our relations are based on solid and strong foundations. We have to keep these things in our heart because it is very important thing.

The third thing that I want to say is that, in spite of strong relationship and perhaps because of this close relationship from time to time there are misunderstandings. This is natural. It does not mean that the relations are bad. Both the governments should sit together and sort out the problems and in such cases the civil society has important role to play. With regard to our cultural relations, people say from ancient times that it has been there since the *Treta Yug*. The challenge is to strengthen these relations in the present context. The Government of India has given priority to neighbors and specially Nepal during the last two and half years and has taken many initiatives. The visit of Indian Prime Minister was such an initiative. We have signed several cultural agreements such as the agreements between Kathmandu and Banaras, between Lumbini and Bodhgaya, between Ayodhya and Janakpur, etc. These are not just paper agreements. The relation of Janakpur and Ayodhya is the relation of Awadh and Mithila. This is a great and strong cultural relation as former ambassador Rajan also mentioned it. We must now implement these agreements. We look forward to your suggestions. What can we do to strengthen the relations of Awadh and Mithila, between Kathmandu and Banaras? What can we do to develop Buddhist circuit? How can we work together?

To enhance people to people relations and tourism we have started bus service. We have several bus services that connect different cities of India and Nepal. We have been developing infrastructure along the border; our intention is to enhance economic activities. We have several projects related to road connectivity and rail connectivity as well. As his Excellency Deep Kumarji mentioned we have projects of

electrical grid connectivity, I feel we are strengthening our relations at the people to people level. Relations are getting stronger. Every Indian wishes to visit Nepal. Even today Nepal gets highest number of tourists from India. We expect more tourists from India to Nepal as there is the possibility of religious tourism to places such as Janakpur, Pashupatinath, and Muktinath. Similarly we have the opportunities for adventure tourism. But more needs to be done. We need to have proper analysis and understand what we can do to strengthen tourism. We need to understand what the governments can do. Some steps have been taken and I think the potential for people to people relations have not been fully exploited.

One or two more things I want to mention about economic contacts. If there is poverty and instability, there will be obstacles in enhancing relationships. Fast and speedy development is the basis of people to people relationship; it is the foundation for stronger relations.

Therefore, along with culture and people to people relations, we keep development as our priority. We want the Bharat-Nepal relations in the 21st century be based on rapid economic development. We should move ahead together. We have to work hard, shoulder to shoulder for mutual prosperity. Our only objective in Nepal, our only interest is that there should be stability, peace and development. We also understand that India benefits in the development of Nepal. If there is no peace and development in Nepal, it will have negative impact on India. This is our objective. If you read the print and digital media in Kathmandu, you can find many different things, speculations about what India wants. India wants only stability in Nepal; we do not have any other interest. What we understand is that, if India has to have fast development, there should be peace in the neighborhood. If there is no peace in the neighborhood, the resources of India get diverted for other things and our attention gets diverted from the development projects. Therefore we want stability and peace in Nepal. Our slogan is the development for all. We move ahead in this principle.

Thank you very much.



Professor Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya

Good afternoon everybody, Professor Lokesh Chandraji, the great Buddhist scholar from India; I hope as Nepalese delegation may know him about his contribution to Buddhist texts and Buddhism; similarly, Respected Virendra Guptaji, Antar Rastriya Sahayog Parishad, Chairman well-known figures as both of you are; your Excellency KV Rajan and Ranjit Rae and all the dignitaries, respected Professors, Your Excellency Deep Kumarji, Professors and former Vice Chancellors from Nepal and other dignitaries from Nepal and the dignitaries from India as well!

I love India. You may ask me why? I spent my youth life from 1990-1997 in India as a student of Delhi University. I earned my higher education degrees namely, MA, M Phil and PhD in Buddhist Studies from Delhi University. So I feel pride whenever I come to India. Now I'm Vice Chancellor of the Lumbini Buddhist University in Nepal. So really, it's my pleasure to be here once again. So I would like to thank the organizers very much. The organizers have given me this opportunity to be here among the dignified Professors and Excellencies and all of you. Also I congratulate both the organizations for organizing such a nice seminar though it is only for two days. It is not a big gathering but a very selective gathering and the themes have been given in such a time when we need to talk about this, it is very much contextual. So this seminar is not for the sake of a seminar, I think it is for action. The whole theme of this conference concentrates

on the relationship between India and Nepal and I'm not a student of political science nor am I a student of history. I'm just an ordinary man, simply a student of Buddhist Studies. If I have to say something about relationship between Nepal and India, I will definitely stand on the Buddhist perspective, being a Bajracharya from the Nalanda tradition, a Tantrik Buddhist practitioner. In Nepal, we are also called Purohit. Some people called us Tantrik priest. So I will say with the stand of that Buddhist perspective especially the Tantrik Buddhism perspective, or say Bajrayana Buddhist perspective. Here, I noticed after listening to all the speakers and also commentators ultimately, we are trying to establish a theory that relationship of Nepal and India is actually

*“annoyanugata Nepala-Bharata sambandha,
parasparamugata Nepala-Bharata sambandha,
atyantanugata Nepala-bharata sambandha”//*

This is the theory that is going to be established at the end of this seminar. However, despite some hindrances in the past, the relation between Nepal and India is “saswat” eternal in terms of harmony. So it will be the remark of this whole conference.

Now I would like to highlight the relationship between Nepal and India, standing upon the Buddhist perspective, especially standing on the Bajrayana tradition. In Bajrayana tradition, it talks about Jambu-dwipa and no mention like Bharat-Varsha or Bharat.

There is special map of the Jambu-dwipa based on Buddhist tantra. The Bajrayana tradition figured out the Jambu-dwipa. The shape of Jambu-dwipa is a triangular and it is said that the soil of the Jambu-dwipa is reddish color. The Jambu dwipa consists of 24 peetha (sites) called as the Chaturvinsati Peethas. I would like to request all the scholars to note down these names as many people don't know about this. Most of them now are in India and only one is in Nepal. So I would like to name the peethas here, the first eight are Pullilamalaya, Jalandhara, Wondiyana, Arabudha, Godawari, Rameshwori, Devikota, Malava respectively. And next eight are Kamarupa, Wadra, Trishakuni, Koshala, Kallinga, Lampaka, Kanchi and Himalaya. Yet

another eight are Pretpuri, Guyhadevata, Sworastra, Suvarna-dwipa, Nagar, Sindhu, Mallau and Kulata. So there are 24 peethadishas or sites in Jambu-dwipa. The 24 sites of Jambu-dwipa again are categorized under 10 different areas namely, the peetha, upa-peetha, kshetra upa-kshetra, chhandoха, upa-chhandoха, melapaka upa-melapaka, samsana and upa-samsana.

The first four sites, the Pullilamalaya, Jalandhara, Wondiyana and Arabudha categorized under the peetha and the next four sites namely, Godawari, Rameshwori, Devikota and Malava considered as the upa-peetha. The next two sites, Kamarupa, and Wadra under kshetra and Trishakuni and Koshala under upa-kshetra; Kallinga and Lampaka under the Chhandoха; Kanchi and Himalaya under upa-chhandoха. Here, the Himalaya denotes Nepal, which is under upa-chhandoха within Jambu-dwipa. Again Pretpuri and Guyhadevta regarded under the Melapaka; and Saurastra, and Suvarna-dwipa under upa-melapaka; the Nagar and Sindhu under Samsana; Mallau and Kulata under upa-samsan. The 24 peethas are again categorized into three-Zones as the chakras (circles). The first eight sites are considered as the Chitta(mind)-Chakra, and the next following eight sites are considered as the Vak(speech)-Chakra, and the last eight sites are considered as the Kaya(body)-chakra. This is the picture based on Bajrayana tradition that includes India and Nepal.

Now coming to Nepal, I have already mentioned here, Nepal is considered as the Himalaya (Peetha) under the upa-chhandoха (site), so that is Nepal. Here again, we see Nepal. So Nepal is a small part of Jambu-dwipa but in Nepal, what we do and how we practice is, we visualize the entire Jambu-dwipa, the entire 24 peethas within Nepal within the Himalayas. So in this way you will see the entire 24 Peethas located in Jambu-dwipa and in microform. We visualize these within Nepal, within the Himalayas. So this way, we will see the big Jambu-dwipa of which we are a small part within the small part of Nepal, there is a big Jambud-wipa. We, the Bajracharyas when we have to be an accomplished Bajracharya we have to go to all the sites and we have to listen and get any initiation from our master. Once we take the whole round of those sites, we shall be regarded as

of a higher level Bajracharyas than ordinary Bajracharyas. Otherwise there are many Bajracharyas by tradition and by the surname but there are Bajracharya, who have become Bajracharya by roaming and by obtaining initiation in respective sites from master. So, my bottom line is that to let you know that within small Nepal, we accommodate all parts of Jambu-dwipa. So this Bajracharya tradition, you know, reflects the relation between big India and small Nepal. So the relation here we talked about is the relation between two countries in terms of politics, economics, socio-culture and other so many aspects. But we also talked in terms of Buddhism and partly in terms of Bajrayana practice of Nepal.

This (the above mentioned tradition) would be one of the relevant and important components to bring these two countries together. People to people and the nation to nation that are separated in the certain terms of condition, but in certain aspect, we are one. We have to go hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, should go further for the better lives of mankind and the entire humanity, so the study of map of the Jambu-dwipa and map of Nepal Mandal are necessary.

It shows close relationship between the two countries. This relationship is not just geographical. It is also spiritual. We have to inspire both Nepalese and Indian governments to realize this fact. Our relationship cannot break simply because of conflicts here and there. We have to think very seriously and sincerely, and should think of going ahead to bring together and enhance our relationship for the future and betterment of both the countries. I would like to say and you will agree with me that the relation is indescribable. It cannot be broken because of individual political interest and so I hope you agree with me. Now finally, I would like to conclude my speech highlighting three points.

Some people say, relationship between India and Nepal is like big brother and small brother respectively. Some people take it lightly, but to my mind, it should not be understood as a relation between Bada Bhai and Chhota Bhai – elder and small brothers. If it is like Bada Bhai and Chhota Bhai there conflict may arise in many ways. If they

are two good friends such conflict cannot take place. So, we should treat each other as a friend. Of course, one friend will be poor and the other will be rich no doubt, but we should consider each other as very good friends and it will really enhance our relationship. People may not feel inferiority complex. We are friends. This I would like to highlight here.

Another thing is, we also need to look at relationship between these two countries with new dimensions. For example, the same thing may appear now, looking as a friend rather than as big and small brothers. We have to look upon and review our relationship. The most challenging part is that we understand our relationship but how would the future generation understand this relationship? So now this is our duty to impart knowledge to new generation that they must also understand our relationship.

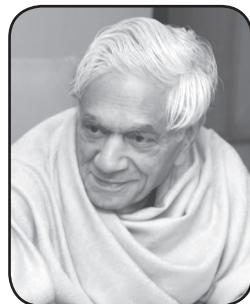
In the past most Nepalese got education in India, but now new generation goes to other countries too. Now we have to impart knowledge to let them understand the relationship between the two countries. This is a challenging part for those Nepalese who are not much familiar with India or have never been to India. So they may have some sort of different ideas about India. So now it is the responsibility of government and the people of both the countries. We should think of and try to bring them and try to impart the knowledge about our historical, cultural, political relationship and so on, so that the relationship between two countries becomes intelligible to the new generation. This is my point.

Thank you very much!



Shri Shyam Parande

I thank Professor Bajracharya. You talked about inseparable relationship between our two nations and people. I think we should not be much bothered about semantics whether we describe the relationship as friends or between two brothers siblings and I think a reference is made to familiar relationship between siblings. It is referred to in similar context. I believe relationship between two brothers is far stronger than between two friends, because relationship between brothers is not measured in terms of resources. Friendship is made between people who are almost equal level so I personally would describe it as a relationship between two brothers in extremely positive sense which imparts the obligation on both to drive it further. I thank you, Sir, for drawing attention to very important dimension of our relationship that is the Buddhist connection and I thank you for participating in this session. With this we have come to the penultimate stage of our valedictory session. We have great pleasure in inviting chief guest Professor Lokesh Chandra, who is well known authority in Buddhism. Professor Lokesh Chandra has done a lot of work in India and Nepal on cultural aspects, and he is the President of Indian Council for Cultural Relations at the moment.



Professor Lokesh Chandra

The frequency of the relation has to enhance so that we can really work out positive program both in culture and politics. The modern development is a very important part of relationship, not just cultural dimension. The development is, I think, important as it is concerned with day to day life. So there is a need for enhancement of interaction between countries. They are sharing development. It is an important aspect and the seminar we held should also address the areas that two countries need to share. The culture is one but there is unknown fear that dominates our present. I think we can ensure our relationship. So with these words I would like to thank all my friends from Nepal who have given us very insightful view of our relationship. The foundation and new super structure have emerged. Also I feel that we have to enhance relationship into a dynamic one, not just historical one. We have to change it in such a way that it must contribute to our way of living. Thank you.

Thank you very much!



Ambassador Virendra Gupta

I thank Professor Lokesh Chandra for his sentiments. He rightly said that we have to build our relations respecting the emotional aspects of our brotherly connection between the people of our two nations. We know that we have historical relations but the common people find it difficult to relate them relating to history. I was in South Africa and we would talk about Gandhiji and we tried to connect the visions of Gandhiji with Nelson Mandela. The young people would ask about present times. That is fine, everyone would ask about present times. The important question is: what are we doing now? Fortunately, we had a lot to show among India and South Africa and Nepal. We have to think of connectivity and we need to come together; what can be done together? I want to inform you that in our next seminar we are coming together with friends from both India and Nepal.

The seminar would take place in Birgunj, Nepal. The seminar would focus on trade and economic development issues. The seminar would cover whole spectrum of economic development including infrastructure development, hydro-electricity production, creating jobs in Nepal, exporting electricity to other countries particularly to Bangladesh and entire economic development for the prosperity and stability in Nepal. Peace and prosperity in Nepal would be beneficial for the people of Nepal and India as well. With these few words I

would like to thank Prof. Chandra for coming to our seminar and supporting us with his positive gestures. Now we almost came to the end of our program. Now we have a program of the vote of thanks. It's extremely important because we must document our appreciation and gratitude for all the participants, scholars and our friends who have made this program a great success. May I request Smt. Rajaniji to do that?

Thank you very much!



Dr. Sharada Poudel

Bharat-Nepal Relations: Congruences of Hinduism and Buddhism

Since the beginning of evolution, organisms have struggled for existence. And as all other beings, humans have suffered, in their endless loop of life, misery and death. Through ages, humans have been longing for the cessation of their miseries, for salvation. They have lived their life in accordance to their philosophy of life, attempting to ensure success and to reduce pain.

During this very attempt of reduction of sorrow came the great sages and philosophers we talk about. Each of them, in their own way, tried to give meaning to life, tried to bring the humans out of their misery. In this process, the profound philosophies, ways of thinking, religions and so on evolved. They kept humanity in check, and somehow brought light in the dark process of life. In the great sub-continent of India, different schools of philosophy got established, mainly divided into the Orthodox and the Heterodox. Simultaneously, with philosophies, came religion. Buddhism and Hinduism, the greatest of religions in the Indian sub-continent, based on their respective philosophies, gradually developed. Buddhism and Hinduism both were established in the same region, and culturally influencing each other, they developed simultaneously.

The congruences between these two religions are discussed as follows:

Similar opinions on mortality and suffering

All philosophers had good intentions, mainly of removing misery. Buddha himself, the greatest among the Nepalese and Indian thinkers, set forward the four noble truths for the accomplishment of this cause. They are as follows:

- There is suffering.
- There is a cause of suffering.
- There is cessation of suffering.
- There are ways of cessation of suffering.

Suffering here denotes all sorts of earthly sorrow, such as death, ailment, famine, separation from the beloved, union with the disliked ones, and so on. And the ultimate cause of all sorts of suffering is ignorance. Ignorance gives birth to eleven other elements, and ultimately, the humans are stuck in the eternal loop of birth and death. But Buddha did not stop there; he found that there are, in fact, ways to stop suffering. He collectively mentioned them in the eight fold paths.

The Hindu thinkers have had a similar way of thinking. The commentary on Patanjali's Yogasutra gives the explanation about liberation in four points.

- There is a mortal world.
- There is a cause of the existence of the world.
- There is liberation from the mortal world.
- There is the way of the liberation from the mortal world.

Similarity in Yogic thinking

In Guhyasamaja Tantra, the six-fold yogas have been explained. They are:

Pratyahara	Dhyana	Pranayama
Dharana	Anusmriti	Samadhi

In Yogasutra, the eight-fold Yoga has been listed in the following way:

Yama	Niyama	Asana	Pranayama
Pratyahara	Dharana	Dhyana	Samadhi

The paths are quite similar. But the Yogasutra gives us eight paths whereas the Guhyasamaja gives six. This is because the first two paths of Yogasutra- 'Yama' and 'Niyama' are already included in Pancasheel of Buddhism. Therefore, despite the difference in number, their essence is actually the same. And this similarity between Hinduism and Buddhism is just the beginning.

Karma, Trshna and Nirvana

The syncretism between these two religions is quite evident. Furthermore, both of them believe in reincarnation. In Mahayana Buddhism, it is believed that Buddha has incarnated into this world from the Tushita loka, a special world of the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Mahasattvas. According to Jataka Katha, Buddha was reborn many times and finally got birth as Shakyamuni. In the Tibetan tradition of Mahayana, the Dalai Lamas, Panchen Lama, Karmapa, Rinponche etc. All have been reincarnating regularly. Similarly, in Hinduism, the regular reincarnation of gods and goddesses is quite famous. Rebirth is also accepted by Hinduism and Buddhism both.

They believe that we all are inside this eternal cycle of mortality, and there are ways of breaking the circle of life and death and attaining salvation. Both religions also espouse the role of karma in binding people to the earth in a cycle of birth and death. Trshna, the excessive attachment with the mortal world, is widely accepted as the ultimate cause of birth and death, and is considered the greatest obstacle to Moksha or Nirvana.

Both the Hindu and the Buddhist religions emphasize the idea that life is an illusion. The idea that world is an eternal mirage is found in both Hindu and Buddhist ideologies. Buddha has termed this as 'Mirga Trishna'. When a thirsty deer sees water -created by refraction of sun's rays- in a desert, he runs towards it until he dies, but the distance between him and the water never decreases. This is what has been happening to human beings in this world. The root cause of Tanha or Trshna is Avidya or ignorance. So, both the religions believe that ignorance has been the main cause of suffering in this world, either directly or indirectly.

Both Buddhism and Hinduism teach the principle of compassion and non-violence to all sentient forms of life. Hinduism and Buddhism both believe in action, the result of the action and the consumption of the result of the action (Karma, Karmaphala, Karmaphala Bhoga).

Syncretism in Religious Beliefs and Cultural Practices

Having similar roots, these two have grown side by side, like brother and sister. They have had great influences on each other. Buddha was born into a Hindu family, and brought up as a Hindu. The practices of Yoga, meditation, and recitation of Sanskrit Mantras are found in both of these religions. The use of statues, idols and pictures as artifacts to worship in both religions is apparent.

Guhyeshwari is a major goddess in Hinduism, it is known. But it is also said that Guhyeshwari is a major goddess in Vajrayana. Therefore, the goddess is equally respected in both the religions. The concept of many gods and goddesses is found in both of them. In Hinduism, there are ten great goddesses, called the Mahavidya. Among the ten goddesses, the second is Tara. Tara is also one of the greatest goddesses in Buddhism. The concept of Tara actually entered Hinduism from Buddhism.

Pilgrimage and holy sites

These two religions, Hinduism and Buddhism, further strengthened the Bharat-Nepal relations. As both religions originated in the Indian subcontinent, they proved to be a common ground for both these nations. Indian pilgrims come to Nepal to find peace in the forests of Lumbini while the Nepalese visit Sarnath to attain further knowledge. Nepalese find salvation in the holy water of the Ganga in the sacred city of Varanasi. Hindus from all over India renew their faiths in the premises of the Pashupatinath.

It is well known that Bodh-Gaya is one of the four greatest holy places for the Buddhists, since Buddha attained enlightenment there. But Bodh-Gaya is not only limited to Buddhist pilgrims. According the Hindu tenets, it is mandatory to provide offerings, mainly water and rice balls to the ancestors in Bodh-Gaya for rescuing their souls from bad conditions. Every year, thousands of Hindus visit Gaya for this cause.

One day every year, the priest put the crown of Buddha in the head of Lord Pashupatinath in the temple of the Pashupatinath. This tradition has been going on since an unknown period of time, and it shows the respect of Hindus towards Buddha. From the perspective of Hindus, both Buddha and Pashupatinath are equally worshiped. Likewise, in the temple of Muktinath, there are priests of both Buddhist and Hindu religions. Believers of both religions come to worship in the temple.

Similarly, the statues of Pancha Buddha in Swayambhunath Stupa are worshiped as the five forms of Lord Vishnu. It is one of the most respected religious sites of Buddhists as well as Hindus. Manjushree is worshiped as Goddess Saraswati by all Hindus.

Buddha and Vishnu

According to Srimad Bhagvada Purana, Buddha is worshiped as one of the ten major incarnations of Lord Vishnu. It is said that seeing all the violence and war in the world, Vishnu incarnated himself into a royal family as Sarvartha Siddha in the Gautama lineage, and thus became Buddha to spread peace and non-violence in the world. Jayadeva, one of the greatest poets in Sanskrit literature, in his great work 'Geeta Govinda' has included Buddha in the 'Stotra of the ten incarnations of Buddha' as follows:

*Nindasi yagyawidher ahha shutijaatam
Sadayahridaya darshita pashughatam
Keshav hrit buddhasarira, jaya Jagadish Hare.*

(“Moved by deep compassion, you condemn the Vedic way that ordains animal slaughter in the rites of sacrifice. You take form as the enlightened Buddha, Krishna. Triumph, Hari, Lord of the world!”)

Jayadeva, here, has pointed out a serious matter. A Hindu cannot bear the criticism of the Veda. But although Buddha completely criticized the Vedas, the Hindus still regard him as an incarnation of Vishnu who is the protector of the Vedas. This is quite ironical. Keeping this in mind, Jayadeva still proclaimed Buddha as the ninth avatar of Lord Vishnu.

Despite the fact that most of the teachings of Buddha refute Hinduism, the Hindus still consider him an incarnation of Lord

Vishnu, one of the supreme Hindu gods. Hindus very well know that if they did not diplomatically do so, a religious war might have been started. So, this shows their sense of responsibility.

Some Buddhists cannot tolerate the Hindus calling Buddha an incarnation of Vishnu. And they have perfectly good reasons for that, for the day the Buddhists accept Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu, Buddhism will dissolve into Hinduism. So, it is unacceptable from the Buddhist point of view. Even I do not accept it, because there is no evidence. If Buddha was in fact an avatar of Vishnu, the doctrines of Hinduism should have been in Buddhism as well.

Aatman and Anaatman

The greatest difference between these two is the concept of 'aatman' as in 'soul'. The Buddhists have never accepted the concept of existence of soul whereas the Hindus never abandoned the concept of the existence of soul. Be it on the existence or the non-existence, both of them have been dealing with the soul. So, as far as the differences may be, Hinduism and Buddhism are still revolving around the same center. When Nagarjuna realized this, he tried to divert Buddhism out of the topic of soul and non-soul.

He said, "Therefore, Buddha has not spoken anything about aatman or anaatman. When one accepts the existence of soul, it becomes Sashvatavada, and when one rejects it becomes Ucchedavada". Sashvatavada refers to the theory of Brahma, meaning everything is eternal whereas Ucchedavada refers to the theory of charvaka that means nothing exists.

Conclusion

If the doctrines are evaluated, we may find many great differences between the two. There is no doubt that these two have their vast differences, in opinions and actions. But within those differences, the common ground is what binds us all together, and brings harmony and peace. The religious syncretism is what maintains the amity between two individuals, two societies, even two countries.

These noble religions are the closest religions in the world, with so many similarities, be it ways of thinking, style of argument, the

Metaphysics, cultural and social practices or religious beliefs. Both of these religions find their disciples in the same society, and have the same sponsors. The vast influences on each other are quite obvious.

Lumbini is where everyone finds peace, a Hindu or a Buddhist, an Indian or a Nepalese alike. No matter what culture or country you belong to, you will find peace in Lumbini. Therefore, Hinduism and Buddhism, like India and Nepal, are at the present time, united.

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Thank you so much!











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