



**Nepal-Bharat Sahayog Manch**  
Kathmandu



**NEPAL-BHARAT RELATIONS:  
CONSOLIDATION AND EXPLORATION  
OF PROSPECTS FOR EXTENDED COOPERATION**



**Nepal-Bharat Sahayog Manch**  
Kathmandu

**A two-day seminar on**  
**NEPAL-BHARAT RELATIONS: CONSOLIDATION**  
**AND EXPLORATION OF PROSPECTS FOR**  
**EXTENDED COOPERATION**  
**(A Report)**

**14 and 15 December 2012**  
**New Delhi**

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**Nepal-Bharat Sahayog Manch**  
**Kathmandu, Nepal**

**Nepal-India Relations: Consolidation, and Exploration  
of Prospects for Extended Cooperation**

**(A Seminar Report)**

**Editor : Mahesh Paudyal**

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## Introduction

The changes that are taking place in present-day Nepal are phenomenal, both in pace and in magnitude. Nepal has, in a way, defiled the universal expectation of gradualism, according to which, big changes come slowly and last longer while the abrupt ones come, show off, and collapse. Nepal has been declared a secular state, and the declaration seems to be inspired less by the people's expectation and the make-up of Nepal's populace, but more by an urge to win approval of certain international actors, especially religious missionaries. Simultaneously, Nepal was declared a republic, a radical departure from its earlier status of a Hindu monarchy. Whether or not this was a people's choice is a question that has come up as an issue of debate lately. After five years of practice as a republic, and multiple failure of the state to assure its citizen that the changes were for good time, is forcing the citizens to question the very legitimacy of choosing to be a republic.

With these changes, Nepal is open to new ideas and influences from around the world, but no one can guarantee that those ideas and influences will *necessarily* benefit Nepal and safeguard the interest of the Nepalese. In that case, the first country to bear the consequences of political instability in Nepal will be India, for many, many reasons.

It has been seen and asserted globally that restlessness—both economic and political—in a nation inevitably affects its neighbors. The turbulence in Mexico has always been a matter of concern for the US. As long as Chechnya and Georgia remain volatile, Russia will have to remain prepared for anything. The Middle East crisis, which fundamentally is between Palestine and

Israel, has engulfed neighbors, and in west Asia and eastern Europe, and extended to Egypt in Africa.

With equally veracity, it can be ascertained that mutual and collective prosperity of neighboring nations benefit one another. The Scandinavian nations, for example, are seldom in the news for a bad cause; if they are mentioned, it is for high economic growth, stable growth rate, high index of education and human resource development, extremely stable economy, and peace. The entire region, with Norway, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, all clustering in vicinity, is an exemplary case .

The visible external powers that have an intimate bearing with every minor change in Nepal are India, China and the international community, led by the United States of America. These major power blocks have their own long-term agendas and programs to deliver in Nepal and certain economic and strategic goals to achieve.

Apart from the Indian, Chinese and the Western blocks, the Islamic block with Eastern Europe and Middle East as its pivot, has lately extended its influence into Nepal, thanks to the green signal for such penetration from the government's side sent out by declaration that Nepal is now a secular state. The Islamic block had, until recent times, a very limited presence in Kathmandu, but it is not difficult to predict that soon, the state of affair is going to change. As long as these penetrating powers contribute to the development and prosperity of Nepal and the Nepalese, there is no reason to panic. However, as history suggests, these powers are notorious for possessing hidden, vested agendas of number game and religious conversion. With the Middle East emerging as the most sought-for employment destination for the

Nepalese, Turkey's recent interest to get involved in Nepal's socio-economic development programs should be analyzed as something strategically crucial. The presence of a sizable Islamic population in the country makes the border porous for such Islamic power blocks to begin penetrating deep into Nepal and exerting their influence. Since Islamism is not something innately Nepalese, its foreignness must be understood with care. More, the amazing cohesion of all Islamists in the world and their ever expanding religious agendas can have a tremendous impact on Nepal's socio-political equation.

Government of India alone cannot do much in Nepal. The policy thrust thus far had been to rely on state machinery to collect information and feed the decision-making bodies for policy directions in Nepal. This model has failed miserably. There is a growing mistrust between the two peoples, and India is losing fast its cultural, religious and economic influences in Nepal. There has been a lacuna in India's foreign policy towards the Himalayan states; the third country resettlement of Bhutanese refugees is a case in point!

This situation needs a reverse. India's modus operandi in Nepal needs overhauling. Market based initiatives with partnership between the Indian and the Nepalese people should be the thrust and direction of the future.

There are areas of co-operation in cultural tourism, elderly care homes, and tapping the micro climatic variations in the middle hills of Nepal to produce medicinal herbs, off-seasons vegetables and fruits. Any people-to-people cooperation to tap these potentials will increase interdependency and benefit both India and Nepal. The need of the hour is professionals with high caliber management

training to pool resources and organize activities, and not the usual bureaucrats talking tough from their office desks in Kathmandu or Delhi.

India-Nepal relation does not merely remain a bilateral case, given the fact that India is now a regional power, and overarches with all its neighbors in the continent. South Asian countries share common geographical, historical and developmental heritage. United, they can benefit enormously; divided, they are sure to lose enormously. Unfortunately, they have lost opportunities to benefit since the days of decolonization and are still losing in want of unity and solidarity. They need a turning point to convert the opportunities into their advantage. The regional governments and incumbent regional institutions have failed to achieve the goal of bringing the South Asian countries together and work for their profit. The main reason underlying it is the anachronistic outlook they have inherited from their imperial days. There is a lurking mistrust in terms of security perception, political intention, economic sharing and social belief. These things need to be changed into a spirit of mutual trust of good neighborliness and working together for collective welfare. It is high time to change the direction in this region in line with the regional transformation achieved in other parts of the world to get collectively benefited from inevitable globalization.

Despite having a commonality in their natural, historical and cultural heritage, South Asian countries are traditionally found acting against each other's interests, instead of helping each other for mutual benefit. In contrast to this region, countries in Europe have changed the course of action for several decades and are working in close cooperation for regional development despite their historical animosity and competition resulting in frequent wars

including the two great wars in the twentieth century. Exceptional cases of low economic performance by Italy and Greece are there, but apart from that, the European nations have benefitted by coalescing themselves into the European Union. The concept of SAARC was/is excellent, but the performance so far has been a dismal one, because more than cohesion, animosity marks the relation between nations, India and Pakistan being a classic example case. The South Asian countries need to learn lesson of regional collaboration for transformation from poverty to prosperity from the European Union.

There is no doubt the South Asian countries woke up late in this realization of this phenomenon and created institutions for regional development but the spirit of cooperation has been missing. The basic weakness lies in their outlook, which is overshadowed by mutual distrust. To develop mutual trust and work for regional benefit, initiative should start from informal citizen groups. A new strategy should be developed to bring them together and work for regional unity leading to regional prosperity. The strategy should emphasize the natural resources they have commonly inherited and the potentiality lying therein for enormous benefit to the people of the region.

There are many phenomena common to all the countries in this region e.g. practice of democracy in various forms, cultural richness and diversity, high population density, strong educational base and elevated political and social awareness. A new outlook can be developed on issues of regional security, economic development and equal welfare to all people of the region. A strong initiative, therefore, should be taken for bringing the South Asian nations closer to address the common problems of poverty, pestilence, illiteracy, ill health, insecurity, terrorism, corruption etc.

It is necessary to review the perception of different countries on the issues of common concern and to identify misconceptions that are hitherto hampering them from acting together for collective security and welfare.

It has lately been evident how the South Asian region is suffering from widespread terrorism. India, Pakistan and Afghanistan appear as the center of this menace. However, it has its spill-over effect all over the region. There is a common interest of all the countries of this region to fight against this problem but they are far from cooperating in this mission. It is one area that needs to be openly discussed and an agreeable solution is to be sought before it is too late. Even in the most volatile and instable region of the Middle East, the new Egyptian President, Morsi has come out with an idea of forming a consortium of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Iran not only to address the Syrian crisis immediately but also to secure permanent peace and security in the Middle East. Even the United States, the main external player in the region, has taken the new idea in good spirit. It should be recalled that Mr. Holbrook, the US special envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan under President Obama prescribed a regionalization of the terrorist problem in this region for a permanent solution by sidelining the external forces like the US just as a helping hand.

With this broad mission in mind, it was proposed that the beginning should be made from a bilateral meeting between Nepal and India. Discussion should focus on all dimensions of relations between these two countries. It should take into account the historic ties, political relations, security perceptions, cultural homogeneity, and economic potentiality.

To discuss all these issues, a meeting was held in New Delhi for two days on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2013 in Constitution Club of India, New Delhi. 33 delegates from Nepal and many eminent personalities from India participated the seminar. There were 5 sessions in two days, focusing on political, economic, cultural and security aspects. The sessions are given in the next page.

The write-ups in the subsequent chapters present in detail the transcribed form of speeches delivered by the experts who spoke on the issues mentioned above.

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Day 1 (14<sup>th</sup> December 2012)

Theme I: **Changing Political Landscape of Nepal:  
Challenges and Opportunities**

Theme II: **Shifting Paradigms: A Geopolitical  
Perspective**

Day 2 (15<sup>th</sup> December 2012)

Theme I: **Economic Ties between Nepal and Bharat:  
Towards Furthering Closer Relationship**

Theme II: **Natural Resources and Development**

Theme III: **Role of Media in Strengthening  
Indo-Nepal Relations**

**Valedictory Session**

# Inaugural Session

## (14 December 2012)

### On the dais:

- **Chief Guest: Shri Rajnath Singh**, Former President of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Former Chief Minister UP and Member of Parliament
- **Guest: Shri Anil Kumar Jha**, Minister–Ministry of Industry, Government of Nepal and President, Sanghiya Sadbhawana Party
- **Guest: Shri Bhagat Singh Khusiyari**, National Vice-President of BJP and Former Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, and Member of Rajya Sabha
- **Guest: Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani**, Former Finance and Foreign Minister, Govt. of Nepal, and Eminent Economist
- **Guest: Shri Suresh Malla**, Former Minister, Physical Planning
- **Convener: Shri Deepak Kumar Adhikari**, Convener Nepal-Bharat Sahayog Manch (NBSM)

## **Key-Note Address**

**Deepak Kumar Adhikari**

**Convener of the Seminar and NBSM**

Sayahog Manch, the organizer of this two-day seminar on Nepal-Bharat Relation, has a background and an ideological inception. The word 'Sahayog' has a special meaning. Our ancestors established our relations many eras ago, and so, it is not recent. It is eternal as well as historical. Our ancestors have been one. Our relations, similarly are timeless.

If our relations are so close, equally close should our creations be. Are our relations just political, economic or diplomatic? No, they are not limited to them; it is cultural too. The crux of our relation should, above all, be cultural, and this should inspire us to help one another. We need to help one another at times of crisis. The Manch has been founded to facilitate the same.

It has come to its present form as a result of the contribution of many people. We thought that the people, who have role in decision-making, should come together, discuss, and find avenues for correction, contemplation and consolidation. So we have organized this two-day seminar.

When I came to Delhi two months ago to explore the possibility of this seminar, everyone I met gave me good support and constructive suggestions; they volunteered with enthusiasm to help. Many NGOs first procure money, and then plan their programs. In our case, we first planned, and money followed. When I say this, people do not believe. Their outright question is : who gave you money? When I came to Delhi with the idea, I just had a

ticket from Raxaul to Delhi. Help flowed voluntarily. We are doing it today. It's social contribution that made the idea of Sahayog Manch a reality.

Mutual cooperation between nations exist; but we think to take the relations even further. Men come and go, governments may come and go, but culture always remains, and social helps continue. We felt that we need to have social organizations that take the relations forward. Sahayo Manch is an outcome of such contemplations.

In Nepal, we are facing constitutional and political crisis. 65 years ago, India too had similar situations. Since 1950, Nepal's six generations have been struggling for democratic values. Political changes have continued; economic and trade relations have continued too. But relations between Bharat and Nepal, at people's level, should not only continue, but grow stronger in the days to come. Geographically, we cannot live without one another's help. It is not an obligation; it is a need. When we have needs, we need to help one another in crisis. We need mutual help, and attitudes of giving. This idea should go to people's level. Tanks and bombs can break, but cultures connect. As for example, if mere nationalism was a connector, USSR should not have fragmented into 16 nations. It broke, because the constituent nations had different cultures.

But in Nepal and India, we have different and individual political sovereignty, but a unified and common cultural background binds us together. Respecting sovereignty of both, we need to think how we can contribute to the health and development of both the nations. Respecting nationalism of both, health, education, and aspiration of the youth, we need to be promoted in relation with development.

India is developing. Nepal too has a powerful aspiration. We need to sit together, rising above all prejudices. And this will lead to peace, fraternity, friendly relational, security, progress and prosperity. About these relations, I won't go long, but at times, the relations have exhibited problems, and I believe, this seminar will help us move towards a solution. This is just an introductory stone. Stepping upon this, we can think how we can take our relations further. We, through dialogue, can take the discussion to people's level, make it creative. Social organizations are working in this line; they are active. A sod of soil, and a leaf-plate were friends. After a while, they contemplated on making relations closer; they became 'mits'—friends, ritually declared as close as brothers. In the discussion they resolved to help one another. The sod said, it had only rain to fear. The plate said, "Don't worry; I will cover." The plate said, "I have only one concern: the wind blows me away." The sod said, "I will sit upon you." This is the nature of Indo-Nepal relation.

We will have five sessions, where political, and economic issues and those related with the media will be discussed. I cannot introduce all, but Yuvaraj Ghimire, Hukum Dev Narayan Yadav, Radha Mohan, and many eminent people are here. In the coming sessions, we will deliberate in detail. Let me tell you, Civilizational Harmony has invited us for high-tea at Indian Institute of Law, after the end of our sessions here on the 15<sup>th</sup> for all dignitaries from Nepal.

Invitees and participants are enthusiastic to discuss on the topics I have highlighted. Many have, from the beginning, extended help and blessings. I thank all from my heart, though I know the mere word 'thank' is not enough. Still I use the word. We will rise above minor, trivial issues, and discuss seriously so that we chart out a way for solution. Thank you so much!

**Bhagat Singh Khusiyari**  
**National Vice-President of BJP and Former**  
**Chief Minister, Uttarakhand**

I would be happy if Mahesh Paudyal was speaking Nepali instead of English. Let me share an experience. When I first visited Nepal when kingship was in the final stage, I was asked whether I would prefer Hindi or English in a press conference. I asked them to ask me questions in Nepali. In one point I was stuck a little; the press club chairman explained me. In the rest, I got along comfortably. I mean, Nepali and Hindi do not have a lot of differences. So, when I consider whether I am an Indian or a Nepali, I never feel any difference. With water from Mahakali I irrigate my field; you also do. With Karnali and Koshi, we do the same.

What is happening in politic at temporary phase of Nepal? If we read history of Nepal and India, we will see heights like Mount Everest and nadirs like the sea. You have seen kingship; we also saw. You also were dependent; we too were. In totality, we have a different and eternal element that binds us; it is probably the fact that we have the same culture, the same nature.

When the Nepalese say you are our neighbor, I feel bad. Your neighbor is China; how are we your ‘neighbor’? We are a family. Yours and our nature and culture, blood group, basic mantras are one. You might also say “Jumbo Deepe Bharat Khande...Nepal Deshe...Ayodhya Deshe etc.” That is a connection; two bodies, single soul. We have such a relation.

People might try to jeopardize the relation, but they will fail. Those groups that talk anti-India things have become two factions, as I have heard. If they continue, they will split into three

factions. The reason is that when you talk anti-India, you talk against yourself. If I talk against Nepal or act against Nepal, it will basically be against India, not Nepal. So, today, through this seminar, the help we are envisioning, naturally, historically, culturally, geographically should come up. That day, when we talk about dividing Nepal and Bharat, that will mean we are making the Himalayas into two, and that day, an apocalypse will come. So, through literature, education, development, politics, we should try to uphold our eternal unity. Without Pashupatinath, we cannot think of Kedarnath. Without Janakpuri, Alakhpuri cannot be thought of. So, we all should uphold those eternal values, which could be geographical, natural, economic, and cultural.

Today, as I often read and hear about developing Nepal, it pains me. I try to see how we can assist. But like a ‘dealing brother’ we must help. Nepal is laboring through birth of a great order; so, it has pain. I believe that all dignitaries from Nepal, from Bharatbarsha (not ‘Bharat’), should work together. For me, Bharabarsha is the region where rain from the same ocean reaches.

Some people call us ‘Indian Subcontinent’. What is that subcontinent? It is Bharatbarsha! It might have consisted of one or more countries politically, but it has remained culturally one. And pain in one part inflicts pain in other parts as well. If there is pain in the belly, the head aches too. When Nepal is in difficulty, India should understand. If there are problems in relations, we must think in line of solving them.

I wish this seminar all success!

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**Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani**  
**Former Finance and Foreign Minister of Nepal**  
**and Vice-President of Rashtriya Janashakti Party**

Thank you for asking me to take part in this conference. As we all know, India and Nepal are close friends. Our open border, constant economic interaction, and deep cultural link are some of the core elements of this relationship. In the future, we have to strengthen these core elements, while taking into perspective our respective national interests. We, in Nepal, think that a prosperous, democratic and stable India is an opportunity for peace, progress and democracy of ours. We see a growing India as a great opportunity for the prosperity of Nepal. Similarly, a strong and democratic Nepal would also be in the best interest of India. So as close friends and neighbors, we must continuously define a common space for cooperation for the benefit of the people of both our nations. In this process, there may be issues where our perspectives might differ. But if we keep our central objective of peace, prosperity and stability in both the countries as our primary concerns, problems will be solved. In this process, Nepal has been sensitive with India's national interest, while India, as an aspiring super power, should show the magnanimity befitting a great culture, while dealing with its neighbors like Nepal.

I hope this seminar exposes all the issues, opportunities and problems, which, as friends, we must be open to discuss and remain sensitive for our hopes and aspirations, as we march ahead together. We, at present in Nepal, are encountering serious political problems; our political transition doesn't seem to be ending. It seems to be continuing forever. We the Nepalese should ourselves find the solution. However, as good friends, we might need the good will of India. Thank you very much.

**Anil Kumar Jha**  
**Minister of Industry, Nepal and**  
**President Sanghiya Sadbhawana Party**

I thank the Manch, which brought together eminent people of both the nations, from all walks of life, for new initiatives and extension of relation, and brought a new vitalization to strengthen our relation and make them stronger and meaningful. Our seniors and experts of various walks are discussing about development, natural resource, economic prosperity, political situation and security, so that we can make India and Nepal even more secure. I believe, relevant ideas will come forth.

My previous speaker said, Nepal is passing through a long transition. I don't think our problems in India and Nepal are same. India got independence in 1947, and is constantly evolving into a great nation. In Nepal, in 1950, we first attained democracy, and this small, fragmented achievement is moving forward. We moved from centralized to federal structure, *praja* became *lok*, many changes came about, but like India, we could not take it forth. For India, there was only one agenda, to oust the foreign rulers. You did it, took the situation under your own control. In Nepal, internal rule continued; its own citizens ruled, but modes kept changing. So, instead of caring for other issues, we are caught up in political quagmire. Even children discuss politics; people everyday ask who the next prime minister is going to be. For the last 60 years, the only agenda is to streamline politics, and so, we could not care for other issues. Naturally, if one is concentrates and another falters, the walker will reach far off, and the one who engages in petty issues lags behind.

As far as Nepal-Bharat relation is concerned, we can talk on several issues. Our relations were existent before modern India or Nepal came into existence. I don't want to talk on that; I agree with previous speakers and Dr. Lohani. How can we, through these realities, strengthen our relations?

Nepal must benefit from India's rapid progress, this is a crucial issues. Three years back, I was talking about our relations in a Patna seminar. I said that a Nepalese, say my mother has parents from Motihari, India, and her home is on the bank of Bagmati River in Nepal—the river that comes to India, to Sitamadi, to Mujaffarpur, joining the the Gandak, and Ganga on the way. There is a dam across both sides, and so my mother never wishes the dam to break, because on Nepal's side, her sister lives, and in India's side, her home, home of the in-laws of my brother stand. If the dam breaks towards West, I have my home. After 20 years, the Koshi dam broke. A woman flowed, and when came to senses, she was asking what was the situation of her parents' home in India. This is our relation in a nutshell.

We cannot see our relations discreetly. But naturally, in modern age, as India is progressing, its friends and enemies are increasing. Nepal is sensitive to the fact that India should not feel any threat from Nepal. The two need unconditional support, which has been going on. But since India is larger in population and development, and have stabilized its systems, we have more expectations. If we are richer in anything, India might expect more.

Nepal and India can mutually benefit working together. We need to remember, there are many areas to work together. Economic and natural resources, dam, and water resource are some to mention. Arya Sankriti—the Aryan culture we mutually inherit—

we take along, but on the way, there may be demons. Hanuman was obstructed by many Surasas and demons, but his mission was determined; so he gained success. We also, on our way to working together, might face Surasas, but we can defeat and carry along our mission of benefitting the people. I expect this, and believe Nepal will from its side work like that. Nepal and its people expect the same from India.

Seminars like this should take place, not just once but many times. A new horizon of relation will open up. I believe, the seminar will strengthen our relations. Thank you, Namaskar.

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**Raj Nath Singh**  
**Former President of BJP and Former**  
**Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh**

I congratulate Deepak Adhiakri, who organized this international seminar from the side of Nepal Bharat Sahayog Manch.

As far as the question of Nepal-Bharat relations is concerned, all the former speakers talked about the intimacy of relations. Nepal-Bharat relations are not a few years old; they are historical. I have read, when India gained Independence in 1947, if anyone enjoyed the gain, it were the Nepalese. From this we can judge how deep Nepal-Bharat relations are. Some say, India and Nepal are big and small brothers; some say, they are members of the same family, they cannot be separated. Khosiyaraji, Prakashji, Anil Jhaji said, our relations are natural, cultural, historical and geographical. Our border of around 1750 kilometer is open, which we cannot find in any two countries of the world. Not only that, our relations are so deep, we can hardly imagine. Gorkhas of Nepal protect our border; we trust them. In 1962 war between India and China, when Gorkhas charged with the slogan ‘Aayo Gorkhali’, the Chinese would dart away with fear. In security, we trust the Nepalese more than anyone else. Not only that, any Nepali one who works at home, is the most trusted one. In business enterprises too, the utmost trust, security-wise, is upon the Nepalis. If in security, there is any nation to be trusted, it is Nepal.

Our relations are so deep, that no power can snap it. In Asian region, there are some countries that want to weaken our relations; but they cannot. Our relations are historical, natural, geographical, and the strongest of all—to connect us—is culture.

The biggest pain I got about Nepal was then, when Nepal's constitution was amended and its Hindu status, known over the world, was converted into secular. When Koirala Sab the then Prime Minister had come to Delhi, I had expressed my dissent. Are you ashamed of being a Hindu? Hindu is not a state or a religious; it is a way of life. The Indians have had a way of life, and so have the Nepalese. Yet, though the constitution is amended, life styles continue. Still, if Nepal reconsiders this mistake, I will be happy. You might add epithets, 'equality for all religions'.

We as Hindus never discriminate. Hinduvta's basis is '*yat pinde tat bbrahmande*'—what is in an atom is in the universe, what is in me is in you. This is Hindutva. We have no dissent with other religions. India is secular, because we have Hindu majority here. Look at different countries in the world. Where a religious group, other than Hindu, dominates, there have been wars, and expansionist movements. India is the only nation in the world that has never attempted to raid on any other nation, because it has Hindu majority. In case of Nepal, if Nepal doesn't remain a Hindu state, its identity and culture will end, and in that case, if any one wants, Indo-Nepal relations can be weakened. I heartily urge you to reconsider that.

Some forces are raising voices to end 1950 Indo-Nepal treaty. It is your internal matter; I don't have to say. We respect your sovereignty, independence, and freedom. India shall never meddle into your affairs. But if Nepal's people feel that 1950 treaty should be reviewed, we can do, but the revision should make the relations better. Why only 1950? All former agreements can be reviewed if you feel; we welcome. But the review should not make our relations weaker. We want Nepal to emerge as a peaceful state in the world. A developed state we want to see. It is not only the

dream of Nepal, peaceful and developed Nepal is also a dream of we the Indians and if the dream is to come true, you and we should work together.

I am speaking not with brain, but with heart. Language! Knowledge of English is not in itself a great thing, nor is it wrong to speak in English when needed. This type of crisis is already coming up in India, I don't want the same to happen in Nepal. But knowledge of mother tongue is a must. Make it arranged as a compulsory thing in school, at least up to the high school, so that students have a love for their own language. Language influences thinking and behavior of the people, and shapes our identity, as do our dresses. Else, we will become like snapped kites, whose direction will be lost.

In other countries, people praise India's culture. I will give just an example to illustrate this, instead of making the discussion long. Lisa Miller, is a columnist. She writes for the *Newsweek*. My boy took out one of her writings of 2009, and I saw. She has written that the world is coming towards yoga and *pranayam*, that non-veg should be banned and veg food should be taken. Naturopathy and many other things other things are mentioned. See, these American citizen say, it seems we all are becoming Hindus. They give the name Hindu to all—Hindus, Christians, Muslims and all—taking up such a way of life. Indian and Nepali culture, which are one, are sending attraction all the world over. And why we hate the word?

Six years ago, when democracy was knocking on the doors of Nepal, we all welcomed. Government of India too welcomed. But we were believing that Nepal would have political stability, but we have not seen that happening. The crisis is deepening. The

constitution could not be written. As a neighbor, we are also pained, and this, in a way, is a ‘diplomatic failure’ on the part of the Government of India. It’s not a matter of interference, but India must have constructively contributed to bringing political stability in Nepal. India Government did not do it when there was time, and so, political instability came about in Nepal. It is unfortunate for all of us. We, the Indians, wish the crisis be solved.

The Himalayas form a natural frontier of India and Nepal. If the Himalayas are broken—you have to decide. China is our neighbor; good relations with it are our desires too. But security-wise, it is for you to decide, who is the most trustworthy ally you have? You know our history; you also know Chinese history. It is for you to decide; India should not interfere.

There should come forth no crisis in Indo-Nepal relations. There are certain forces trying to create anti-Indian environment in Nepal, and anti-Nepal environment in India. Government of Nepal should make sure that no one dares that in Nepal, and so must the government of India inside its territory.

As I said, we want stability, peace and development of Nepal. At times, I have met with your prime ministers in relation with our relations. Bhagatda (Bhagat Singh Khusiyari), I and some other, we met our prime minister and urged him to talk with Nepali prime minister to forge a solution to the crisis of Nepal. But our government did not take the diplomatic initiative. So, the crisis has come forth.

Our relations should go on consolidating, becoming more intimate. I pray to God for this, and end up my speech with the belief that India-Nepal relations will become even more close.

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**Suresh Malla**  
**Former Minister of Physical and Planning and**  
**Senior Leader of Nepali Congress**

I have my agreement with what the former speakers have said about Indo-Nepal relation; yet I want to add a few things. Our relations, above nation-nation, are natural. Politically too, during India's freedom movement, our leaders like BP Koirala, Matrika Prasad Koirala, Ganeshman Singh, Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, Manmohan Adhikari fought for India's freedom, and as Raj Nath Singh ji said, the Nepalese celebrated India's independence. In Nepal, when as we were fighting for independence even before 1950, Indian friends helped us. As in the last days of Panchayat, Chandra Sekhaji had gone there with his forces, and helped. Culturally too, Sita is from Nepal, and Lord Ram from Ayodhya, India. About Chardham, the four greatest Hindu pilgrimage centers—Kedarnath, Bardinath, Muktinath and Pashupati—deleting one will make it impossible. If anything wrong goes in Mumbai, we are pained. Similarly, if things go wrong in Nepal, Indians should be pained too.

Nepal is passing through crisis. We have no political stability; constitution doesn't seem coming shortly. You should be concerned; we are naturally concerned. You need to be alert too.

I have been asked to be brief; I will not say anything more. Wishing the seminar a great success, I wind up. Jay Nepal, Jay Bharat.

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## Day I, Session I

# Changing Political Landscape: Challenges and Opportunities

### Experts:

1. **Shreekrishna Aniruddh Gautam**, Former Prime Minister's (PM) Advisor and Political Analyst
2. **Dr. Bhimarjun Acharya**, Constitution Expert and Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of Nepal
3. **Shri Sunil Ambekar**  
National Organizing Secretary Akhil Bharatiya Vidyathi Parishad (ABVP)
4. **Prof. Dr. Ramesh Kumar Dhungel**  
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**Shreekrishna Aniruddh Gautam**  
**Advisor to the Former Prime Minister of Nepal**  
**and Political Analyst**

The change of Nepal is not a meager one, nor a small one. Since it is colossal, we are today discussing Nepal in the capital of India. Nepal crossing its boundary and discussing in India means, Nepal is passing through an epochal change.

The issue of the most important concern is Nepal's New Constitutional Project, which was aborted in 4 years. Why was the constitution not written? There may be some reasons. But for the present discussion, I have identified some issues, which I shall hint at.

It is a seven-decade long endeavor of Nepal to stabilize its own model of politics, for a new, own, political system to lead free, prosperous and dignified life and so far we are in the run. Till now, we are on the way; we have not been able to make a constitution written by the people. People everywhere crave for recognition, along with other livelihood goods and secured life conditions for themselves and their posterity; this is a universal craving and that craving we too have. Designing a political system involves a great deal of patience and readiness to read true aspiration of the people. Nepal is not an exception to it, and cannot be. It has some specific problems at the heart of its life that need to be addressed, while taking this land of rich heritage and bountiful natural beauty to ignite and move forward.

To move ahead, we need to make such a political system which will not only showcase, but also ignite its ancient civilization, natural beauty and bountiful natural riches. Unless this glows, and

its beauty, its heritage through political system and social cultural system become pronounced, faces of the Nepalese will not glow.

It is amazing to consider the chronology of change in Nepal. 1950-51: change/end of Rana oligarchy, 1960: royal take-over, 60s and 70s: arms uprising by Nepali Congress and some communist parties against Panchayat system, 1976: call for national unity and reconciliation by B.P. Koirala, 1980: national referendum, 1984: Satyagraha by Nepali Congress to end Panchayat, 1990: people's uprising for multi-party democracy, from 1996: Moist Rebellion from the remote areas of Nepal. Now the Maoists are the mainstream parties; they got the largest share of cake in the just dissolved CA of Nepal. In 2001, as great setback to the Identity of Nepal, there was Royal Massacre. In 2002 and 2005, again Royal take-over by the brother of the late king followed. In 2006 people's movement for Lokatantra came forth, 2007: Uprising for federal system, 2008: CA election and establishment of Republic, and 2012, as this gathering knows, failed to deliver the constitution, and we are now discussion that topic, because we failed to deliver the constitution.

There are some former CA members here, and they will take part in the discussion and say why it failed. I am not the correct person to tell that; yet, I will tell my view on why the CA failed, what things were impractical, and what were its hurdles.

Political constitutional impasse is the habit of Nepal; we have lived through such impasse. Nepal lived three constitutions since 1050-51 change: 1959, democratic constitution, 1962 handpicked party-less Panchayat regime under obsolete monarchy, 1990 multi-party democracy with King as the constitutional head. Cost? Constant political constitutional instability, has become a

habit of Nepal, to pay for political and constitutional instability. Political upheavals and volatility continued; social discrimination and economic backwardness went on and did not allow lives to settle and move; politics could not address the grievance of the people at large for want of proper polity approach and leadership; resources could not be mobilized for want of consent from social and political actors; leadership's courage to act was compromised.

It will be incorrect to say, Nepal doesn't have leadership. Nepal does have leadership, but leadership had to compromise at every step to get move on. The missing foresight—I may have a very different view, please forgive me if am overreaching for someone's sentiment here or there—led the nation to quagmire. According to my observation, as many people in Nepal observe, monarchy was a barrier to progress, as that did not allow democracy to root-in. Political parties had been trained to resist oppressive regimes, but wanted foresight to drive the nation foreword when in power. The parliament became hostage to government change. Missing a vibrant civil society grown up from its own roots, ideological fight continued due to hard life conditions in remote rural areas; poverty and insensitive state administrative machinery for common good could not be worked out.

Now, I will discuss something on federalism. Since I have been working on federalism, I can tell what the debate going on in Nepal on the issue is. If crisis is handled with higher goals in mind, response arises from within as to how to bring the ongoing situation at play as a capital. While interacting with the situation, the mind acts in symphony with the heart, while maintaining a pace with changing time to move forward. And let's move forward from here.

A new avatar federalism is the demand. The demand was much hyped. What the people needed was not discussed; yet the issue was hyped beyond necessity.

I am of the stand that Nepal needs federalism, but we never discussed what kind of it; we never debated massively across the country on this issue that would change the very structure of Nepal, that would reach to everyone's home, that would divide even the territory of home. We did not reach out to homes that were to be divided, that were to be structured, whose lived had to be divided, in which provinces they would have to identify themselves. This is the prime concern of very individual, but its discussion did not reached out to the people. Extra-state funding was used to provoke sentiments than to research and advocate solutions.

Nepal doesn't have uninterrupted consistent identity clusters; however it has two exceptions. Mixed, interspersed, and overlapping cultural groups are settled everywhere except in Karnali region of far west and in Mithila belt in Tarai between Bamati and Koshi. Nepal everywhere else is multicultural with a very few exceptions, as I mentioned above. Khas-Arya are the dominant community followed by Madhesi caste and Hill Janajati groups; Hinduism is dominant religion comprising above 80% of population. Much of a territory, wherever one carves, makes up a mini Nepal.

The Khas Arya, or the hill Brahmin, Chhetri, Dalits, Sanyasis, Thakuri, that belong to Khas-Arya according to Hindu Varna order form the highest population, followed by others. I have always been telling that one's place of dwelling should be considered his her place of origin, and the principle should be

that, no settler should be considered an outsider in a pradesh. Equal native rights should be given to all settlers; nomenclature of each pradesh should reflect the shared identity of its residents. When you come to provincialization, if you even do with cultural territory, 2 consistent provinces come in Tarai, and 5 in the hills. And, the Khas-Arya community has its presence from east to west, and also stretches south from north. It appears extending from west to east. I have been saying that for federalization, *recognition*, *representation* and *equalizations* should be the three mantras. And in case of Nepal, cultural identity should be represented in the state structure, or, representation should be ensured from every identity group. There is great inequality in Nepal in terms of ethnicity of identity or in terms of territory. The Bahuns and Chhetris have been the most forward group, but the place of their origin, Karnali, is the most backward. This issue must be considered.

Settlement behavior pattern in Nepal is shared and interactive; south-north is economically highly dependent in comparison to east-west. The Mithila belt remains less interactive with north, east-west-south interaction is rampant. Farther the west, lesser is the economic interaction with the east; far-west and Karnali interact more with India than with Kathmandu. More people from this region work in Delhi, and Mumbai etc. than in Kathmandu. So, their economic interaction is westward, but social interaction is eastward. This is the social behavior pattern of Nepal. The socio-economic interaction links settlers with place of earlier settlement. So, what next?

The new constitution can make the country move ahead with ensured democratic order, institutionalized stable republic, organized, accommodative federal state structure. New leadership can take the nation into confidence, towards harnessing resources,

creating wealth and delivering services. New hope in the youth is a dire necessity. Our youth is delinking itself from politics and that is a dangerous sign, not only in Nepal, but also in India and other countries of the world. New hope in the youth that politics can do good as a vehicle of progress, bringing an end to proxy relation with immediate neighbor is a must. This is just a prerequisite to create a stable Nepal, a functioning and progressing Nepal.

You cannot, however, depend only on Nepal. If your relation with immediate neighbors are not smooth, and not properly working, that reflects your anxiety into our territory. Beijing's anxiety for Tibet is reflected into Kathmandu. Delhi's anxiety also gets reflected in Kathmandu. We must have some type of relationship, that should not be proxy, but an open relation. And to address what the people or systems want with each other, we must consider rethinking, revisiting India-Nepal relations.

Four forms of government we are discussing:

1. Presidential form, as in US, however elected by popular vote
2. Mixed, as in France, system with more power vested in prime minister's office
3. Prime Minister by national popular vote, and ceremonial president as head
4. Parliamentary federation, as in practiced in India, Canada and Australia

People think that Presidential form may ensure stability, but would be inflexible. Fear: having a single wing defense establishment, it may incite dictatorship in case of constitutional failure. We have a single wing defense in Nepal, unlike three wings

in India as Naval, Field and Air-force. If mixed form may provide space to both presidency and parliamentary executive, it is prone to increased conflict among parties, as we have experienced what conflicts are going on within parties even today. We can just imagine what will happen when this executive powers are divided between the two. It will also be prone to increase conflict between parties, within parties and inside defense forces. Parliamentary form may provide accommodative space for the electorate, but and would be flexible enough to run the state of affairs, but the fear is that it might badly want political stability giving passage to anarchy and corrupt practices. In addition, Nepal has combined electoral system, plural as in India—plural with proportional representation arrangement—that further complicates winning a parliamentary majority, as it happened in last CA, to form and run the government. A prime minister by national popular vote with a fixed term mandate may ensure stable governance. In that case, the executive will be separate with a legislature and presidency will be ceremonial as the symbol of national unity represented from diverse communities. I slightly incline to this. However, there are people who doubt this to be a proper form of government that has not been in practice elsewhere except in Israel for a brief period. Japan since 1948 has been debating to shift from PM by parliament to PM by direct vote. Pre-election projection of PM candidate has been in practice, like Atal Behari Vajpayee of the BJP in India, Tony Blair of Labour Party in England, and in Nepal Man Mohan Adhikari of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP)—UML, Krishna Prasad Bhattarai of the Nepali Congress (NC).

Can PM by the national popular vote ensure stability? This will be debated. Accountability, delivery, and check and balance can be maintained; it will help maintain and keep dignity and integrity of the legislative body. Presidency or other institutions

too will have their independent functional positions. But, the crux of the problem is brining an agreement on the form of government, type of federalism, electoral system. Need, therefore, is that of informed debates, mediations, negotiations, reconciliation and compromise right now. A fresh start, democratic system, republic state, federal organization, fixed term stability is the search. Public accountability and delivery, work as link between people and political system are other necessities.

Some advice (brief) to political parties here or there everywhere: political parties should act as instrument and not as arbiters, and they should allow fresh blood to flow into the nerves of the system. Jai Nepal !

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**Dr. Bhimarjun Acharya**  
**Advocate, Supreme Court of Nepal**

As some of my Nepali friends know very well, I have a strong reservation on the issue of federalism in Nepal. My very strong feeling is that very total idea of federalism is designed to destroy the value system of Nepal, as it was talked in this morning session, by Raj Nath Singh as he was talking about Hinduism and Hindu value system etc. So, the very total design that has been put forward in Nepali politics and Nepali society is to destroy the Nepali value to destroy Nepali *sanatani* dharma. From day 1 I have strong reservation against any idea of federalism.

I am a scholar of constitutional law, and have a lot of finding in this issue; I can prove you, federalism in the context of Nepal is the complete antithesis of the inclusive state; hundred percent. There is no nexus or relation of federalism with the rights of the Madhesi people; there is no rights and nexus of federalism with Janajati people and Dalit people. There is an euphoria: why the Maoists have been demanding federal system based on ethnicity?

Some people allege, I am working on federalism. I think this needs a little correction; I am not working on federalism. I am working in my country for the prosperity for democracy, democratic stability in Nepal. I talk and I write my article and books for this cause. Today, I am speaking on political, constitutional crisis in Nepal, that we have been witnessing. So, today, what I see is that why is there a deadlock in Nepal today, this time?

From my perspectives, there are two core reasons behind these crisis and and deadlock. One reason is that, our interim constitution, to some extent, has failed to foresee the situation:

what next if the Constituent Assembly (CA) was dissolved without promulgating the constitution? Our founding fathers, who drafted the interim constitution never thought or imagined to what extent our leaders would be cheaters to Nepali people, and so, there is a gap in the constitution. No provision has been mentioned in the constitution about this situation as to what will happen after the demise of the CA, in case it is unable to promulgate the constitution. This is one reason of the deadlock behind political and constitutional crisis in Nepal.

Another reason, as I have a very open, and critical opinion, is that it is very much a 'created' situation in Nepal, because some political parties have been beneficiaries of this deadlock, of this crisis. That's why they want deadlock; they want crisis. It is very much created, very much designed. Otherwise, I can show you nowhere in the world, the CA was given the total time period of 4 years. That was maximum time allocated to any CA. Unfortunately, our CA could not give the constitution; our leaders and political parties never tried to give the constitution through the CA. This is a fact; so, the situation is very much indented, as I say. I don't say all parties, but some of the political parties in Nepal have been the beneficiaries of this crisis. That's why they want this type of crisis, this type of deadlock to last long in Nepal. These are the two major reasons.

Today, as you know, there are 3 core critical issues of the day. With the demise of the CA, the issues have become even more important. I have used the word 'demise'; I never use the word dissolution etc. about the CA, because it was very much a demise, very much systematic as I say, because in order to have political turmoil and political instability in the country, which is a threat to all south Asian countries including India, it was forged. I

don't know why the Hindu leadership working in India has a different position in this issue, because as I say, the total idea, the total process as we have been doing in Nepal may, in the future, bring a lot of problems, a lot of challenges. That is why, with the demise of the CA, the country faces three major critical, political, constitutional crisis. As I said, it is very much intentionally created. The issues are:

1. The formation of government; this is a debatable issue in Nepal. There are lots of problems in the constitution, as well as in the political area, regarding how to form the new government in place of Baburam Bhattarai led government?
2. Another critical issue is the appointment of people in constitutional bodies, including the Supreme Court. I think you have heard, in present day, there are only 7 justices in Nepal, all other vacated, and other major posts too are vacated now.
3. New election, or the revival of the demised constitutional assembly are the choices at hand

These are the core issues in the debate of the day.

So, with regard to the formation of consensus government, there are two contradictory schools, contradictory views. The view of one pole, particularly of those who belong to Bhattarai government says, continuation of the present government is the best alternative, and other parties like NC and CMP UML should join. Their view is expressed by the people who are affiliated to the present government. Another view is the formation of new consensus government. This view is put forward by opposition parties, particularly NC and NCP (UML)

Government allies believe that the President has no power to call the political parties to select the PM candidate, for the formation of the consensus government under article 38 (1), in the absence of the parliament. This is the view put forward by the government allies. The president believes that the president has every power to invoke 38.1 that talks about the formation of consensus government even in the absence of elected parliament. These are the two schools. If you see the constitutional basis, I don't see any problem in the constitution with regard to the formation of the government. We have two separate provisions, 38.1, and 38.2. The two provision are very much independent and separate. 38.1 talks of the PM to be selected by political consensus, and that council of minister should be formed under the chairmanship of that PM. and 30.2 very clearly says that if consensus cannot be raised as per 38.1, then the PM would be elected by the majority of the legislature parliament. These two provisions give the message and meaning that they are independent and separate. That's why, we don't need that there should be the presence of parliament in order to form a new government. So long as there is article 38.1 in the constitution, as I said, it has a very independent philosophy and value; that's why, by virtue of 38.1, any time, a new government can be formed, if there is a consensus among the political parties. This doesn't mean that unless there is the existence of parliament, this article can be invoked.

The selection of the PM by house is one school, made in the constitution, and selection of PM by political consensus is another provision of the constitution. Therefore, constitutionally, there is no obstacle in forming a new government or forming a consensus government in the absence of parliament.

Obviously, there could be some optimum limitation and score of article 38.1. The maximum scope by virtue of this article 38.1 would be that a new government could be formed by virtue of the article even in the absence of a parliament, and similarly, a call can, by virtue of 38.1, be made by the president, as the head of the state, to political parties to select the PM by a political consensus. A merit of this article is that a consensus government can be made on any individual for the PM candidate, either from political parties or from outside political parties. I think, you have followed the news that this is a debatable issue in Nepal— a person who doesn't belong to any party, can be a PM candidate in the present contest. In fact, since there is no parliament in existence right now, any person to be elected as PM will not be a member of parliament. That means, the constitution has the basis for every Nepali citizen to be eligible for the post of PM in the absence of the parliament. So, the president, if he wishes, has the every choice, every and every freedom, power to choose a PM from political parties, or from outside from the parties. So, there is no any constitutional barrier and obstacle in this regard. So, with regard to the extension of the deadline or time given to the parties, we have some of the constitutional convention, as some media have made the confusion, that the president has for the first time used this provision. That is not true. Article 38.1 has been used 3 times earlier, and in every government formation, he has used, and unfortunately, it has no result, as is now, which too is not likely to give any product, any result. But with regard to the extension of timeline given to the political parties, who have some sort of constitution convention which has been established previously. Of course, there are some limitations in the exercise of this article 38.1. That could be in the absence of parliament, if the consensus has not be raised by the virtue of 38.1, you cannot invoke article

38.2. That is true and that is the limitation of 38.1 Otherwise, there is no any other constitutional obstacle in order to form the new fresh government even in the absence of parliament.

In Nepal, another debatable issue is with regard to the powers of the president. Some people and some parties believe that the president should be active, and he should come forward to deal with the deadlock, deal with crisis. Another school believes, the president has limited role and is ceremonial, and cannot do anything. These two schools are prevailing in the country. But as a constitutional lawyer, what I say is over the whole world, three theories with regard to president's powers work. One theory is popularly known as 'constitutional theory', that says, the president must be prepared to justify all his actions, on the basis of the either enumeratory or implied power of the constitution. This is the belief of the government allies in Nepal. They say, the president has a very limited role in the constitution; so, he can't even take the initiation of the formation of a new government. Another theory is very interesting, it is called 'stewardship theory'. It was advocated by president Roosevelt, the 26<sup>th</sup> US president. His opinion is that the president, as the steward of the people, is under the duty to do anything that the need of the nation demand, unless his action is forbidden by the constitution and the law. The third theory, known as, 'prerogative theory', is argued and supported by jurists like John Locke and others. They believe that the president has the power to act, according to discretion for the public good, without the prescription of the law, and sometimes, against the law. These are the three divergent theories which support or negate the power of president.

These theories are equally applicable in the case of Nepal. I am not of the opinion that the president should come forward and do something; this is not allowed by the constitution. But, what I mean is that if the nation demand, if the time and the cause demand, the president I think, I can use these theories against any idea of revival of the CA.

The issue of the revival of CA is hundred percent unconstitutional, immoral, illegal and regressive. I don't know why some people and political parties have been demanding for the revival of the CA. This is totally a wrong idea. No solution, no result will be given or achieved after the revival of CA. I never imagine and never support such an idea, it is totally an unconstitutional idea, a regressive idea.

Fresh election is the only option, only choice in Nepal. There are a few of the issues and debatable questions, though. If fresh election is the only option, what could be the legal and constitutional basis? Some school of thought believe that so long as there is amendment in the interim Constitution, we don't hold new election. That again is a wrong idea. There is not a single phrase, a line embodied in the interim constitution, which is a barrier to the holding of an election because, this is a very clear constitutional principle that if any clause, any provision particularly designed in the constitution has been used or unfortunately been misused, or has been somehow ineffective, at that time, that provision, *ipso facto* becomes ineffective. This is the rule of the constitution.

There are some provisions like article 62 63, 64, preamble etc. which were designed to support the CA election we held in 2008. But after 28 May 2012, we don't have CA. This means,

those provisions embodied in interim constitution in regard with CA have *ipso facto* become ineffective, so that you don't need any sort of amendment of the constitution. To hold election freshly, you only need a law, and I have recommended that in the absence of the parliament, you can promulgate ordinances, and that will be the best way to hold fresh election, and you don't need to demand any amendment of the interim constitution.

Some people demand the amendment, because, their intention is to revive the dead CA, and through it, they want to make ethnic states in Nepal, as you know. This is very much designed; that's why I have no faith or support for such ideas. Fresh election is the final destination, final option, and the election can be held without amending any provision of the constitution. You simply need election law and that law can be promulgated through ordinances. So, there is a provision of the power to promulgate ordinances, and the president has been given high power in this regard.

Interestingly, I want to draw your attention to one word in our constitution. There are certain criteria for the ordinance to be promulgated. One is, if the parliament is not in session. Second is, interestingly if the president is 'satisfied' that circumstances exist which render it necessary to some immediate action. I don't know why the term 'satisfied' was put in the constitution.

When there was race for presidential poll, a different person was projected for the post. Clearly, Prachanda was projected. Fortunately or unfortunately, he did not become the president, and Dr. Ram Baran Yadav became the president. For that purpose, the term 'satisfied' was mentioned, You don't find such a term even in 1990 constitution. With regard to promulgating the

ordinances, the president has high authority in this regard, because unless the president becomes satisfied with the idea of the ordinance, he cannot do that. The three criteria should be met in one: no session of the parliament, second, satisfaction of the president, and the recommendation of the council of ministers. These are the three prerequisites for the president to promulgate an ordinance.

My last point is with regards to the appointment to the constitutional posts. There is a constitutional obstacle, according to article 155, which necessitates the recommendation of the constitutional council, and a parliamentary hearing. As, we have no parliament now, this point is a barrier to the appointment of constitutional bodies. The only solution is the exercise of article 158, which enables the president to remove obstacles. I think, this will be the final option.

My final recommendations are as follows:

1. All parties' government for new election. Why I am talking about it is that, personally, this is not my issue or worry why there is Baburam or Sushil Koirala in the chair of the prime minister, but the question is that we are going to hold the election, and there is a question of credibility in the election. For example, if there is no consensus among the parties in government and governance, the very impact will be made on the coming election. That's why in order to secure legitimacy and credibility of the election, I think, you need some consensus in the formation of the government. I am not strict whether you can reshuffle this present government and there could be members from CPN or NC and other parties, or you form a new government. This is your idea, or idea of political parties. But my say and my view is,

so long as there is consensus among the parties, regarding the governance of the state or in the government formation, negative impact will be in the election, and there will be a question of credibility in the election, and so, it is very important.

2. Once the consensus is made on the government, they will have a consensus on election, and they can declare a date for new elections, because, Baishash election, as pronounced by Baburam Bhattarai, is completely impossible.
3. I strongly recommend that the new election should be for the parliament, and not for the CA in Nepal. This is very important for me, because, three generations in Nepal have passed trying the CA. It's too much. Nepali leaders don't have the capacity to manage all these things. So, simply, you can have a full term parliament election, as it was done in South Africa in 1994. The record is that, there are hardly 2 or 3 countries in the world where constitution was written by elected CA. It is a very complicated job. People in Nepal were made hundred percent fool; they are made highly ambitious that once there is a CA, everything will be resolved and the fate of Nepal will be revived etc. This is a stupid thing. That's why, a full term parliament election will be a very practicable idea. This is my idea. The parliament can be given two mandates: one legislature, and one Constituent Assembly.

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**Sunil Ambekar**  
**National Organizing Secretary, ABVP**

At the initiative of Nepal-Bharat Sahayog Manch, an important subject has come up for discussion. We have come together for the same. It is a very good and positive initiative. Here, we shall definitely discuss problems, but that will be for finding solution, as to how we can carve a way out, and so, I congratulate this step, considering it salutary.

About politics in Nepal, my fellow speakers and political players and experts and some observers, in a good combination, are present here. So, I am of the opinion that those who are here, or those who could not come in spite of having their support, and those who are closely following our talks here, are all important stake holders, and they will definitely decide the direction of Nepal, and Nepal-Bharat relation. They have the capacity to decide the path. So, these talks are very important.

About the trend of politics in Nepal, as we have been noticing today, I cannot claim anything; you are expert commentators, because, those who are doing it, are better speakers. Yet, I would love to express some of my opinions.

India has democracy, and because we have it, it has its merits, and demerits and limitations, and what the future expects us to improve, we are experiencing every day. Naturally, to India and to everyone else who is curious to experiment democracy, these experiences have been useful, and will continue to be useful.

It is natural that some people are worried as to what is going on in Nepal. Since it is a phase of transition, it is natural. But, I consider it a good omen too. In the past, in decisions about

nation's future, people didn't use to have their participation, but today, everyone is taking interest and participating, and so, it is a very good omen. It is important for the experts, leaders and chief actors to take this interest into the correct direction.

In India, many talks are going on, and all blames are directed at political system and politicians. I consider it wrong. Political system is not all in all. Experts of different fields, from education, judiciary, to all institution of the society, have great roles to play, responsibility to bear and great contributions to make. A nation doesn't go wrong, simply because politics goes wrong. If it's only politics that is wrong, people can correct all its systems it in a minute. If politics is going wrong, and with it all other systems are going wrong, we must know, besides politics, many things are going wrong. If we study nations across the globe, the same thing comes up. So, in Nepal, if people blame only politics, I am not convinced. It is not just politics that has gone wrong. We need to review if there are problems and limitations in other systems. It might not have been a mistake, but there might be limitations, weaknesses. One needs to think of rectifying them; only then politics can be righted.

As we were discussing Nepal-Bharat Sahayog Manch, we framed the idea that the problem doesn't limit to politics, and Nepal-Bharat relations should not be limited to political relations, and so, people from other walks of life should come together too.

I remember that in 2003, a high level talk was going on here in Delhi, and former prime minister of India Atal Behari Vajpeee said, that in the days to come, our democracy will need to be more accommodative, more inclusive, because all sections of the society—be it economically forward or backward, ethnically

and geographically, all sections shall demand its representation. If we the people who run the nation make it move forth, if we can develop accommodative systems; it will take us towards strength, and if we cannot address that aspiration, and suppress it, we will go towards disintegration and conflict. I feel, the voices rising in Nepal have similar demands, in fact. Someone talks about federalism. People say, “Make it federal, but give it us too in terms of language, ethnicity, region etc. We are in the hill, or in that corner of the forest; give it on this basis. Our old history is like that, give us on that basis.”

This aspiration has come up with a powerful voice. In the beginning, people worry as to what might happen; but I believe that if we take up our larger identity that is inclusive, all these things will accommodate in this. None of these demands is anti-national; nor is it anti-Nepal. They are demands of aspirations within Nepal. If we take up the issue in this way, we can counsel all, convince all, and a way-out can be sought. It is not the passion, it is a talk of learned people as to what will the form of federal structure and constitution be in future. 99 percent of common people are not going to read the constitution; they have faith in their experts, leaders, courts, media personnel etc. I think, the role of this section, in whom people have faith, is to see that each clause, each column has intensive discussion. This is their responsibility. So, there is need for right place, right participation and right representation.

People do not just need political representation; they also need cultural representation. Their cultural aspirations should be represented too. They want their representation in economy and politics. The demand of representation is not only political; it is a

demand of representation at all levels. So, it has to be addressed from a multi-dimensional perspective.

I want to add, that at the political level, it is important to decide what will the nature of politics be. It is an important issue. All the important people of Nepal need to think about it. The issue is equally pertinent to India, and to all democracies of the world. Issues keep coming up, floating out. So, the issue I am projecting doesn't belong to Nepal in isolation; it has a wider perspective.

Politics cannot run, simply by being fashionable. In politics too, some fashions are creeping; a fashion show might take place fashionably, but politics should not go that way. Say, for example, if people honk the slogan of secularism fashionably, that is a wrong choice. If, with it, we abandon our culture, identity, and feel inferior about them, it should not be tolerated. In the real sense, the real-sense secularism is a very good concept, a great need for a peaceful world. But, if we take it fashionably, we won't be serious. But if we take it seriously, it will be good.

We need to think, in what way, our secularism shall move forth. It is not only for politics to decide; our courts, our all types of people need to decide what kind of secularism we are going for. We say—it's a political issue—that in Nepal, as a sovereign nation, there are many aspirations, and all should respect it. That is a spirit of democracy.

A talk about Nepal-Bharat relation too is going on. In this respect too, a fashionable thing is happening. It is the idea that since monarchy has ended and we are in a new age, all nations of the world are equal for us. This is a fashionable thinking. This is a

good idea in principle—*bashudaina kutumbakam*—as even claimed by *Vedas* that all are equal; but politics doesn't hinge on that. Nation's interest is the basic principle for foreign policy. That is the basic: national interest. So, where does national interest lie? It cannot lie in fashionable ways. We need to seriously think, that if national interest is in the forefront who is our friend, and who shall be an enemy in future, whose attitude is favorable to us, and whose detrimental. So, I think, these fashionable things should end.

The third point is about federal structure and democracy. Everyone talks about democracy; in India too people do. People should talk about it, fine! But people should go for it with a spirit. Parties need to be democratic; all institutions should be democratic, it is a spirit. Our media too needs to be democratic; only then, the idea can be implemented.

One more fashion continues: we are open, we are secular, and everyone can come here, from anywhere in the world. In India too, people think, anyone from anywhere in the world can come in. It is an old Hindu way of thinking that all can come. But we need to see who is coming. If it's a mission that is coming, we need to watch what it is doing. Where there is politics, rules will be there, but nation's interest cannot be supplanted by anything. We need to openly speak out. If the missions are wrong, they are wrong; if they are doing wrong, they are doing wrong. We must express. If politics behaves in this way, many things will be cleared, and a real consensus will come out.

In democracy, consensus doesn't come out in a day. In regards with Nepal-Bharat relation, some issues must be thought in this way, that in the Himalayan Belt, if Nepal moves potentially

towards the solution of its problems, no international players can make Nepal their operational base. If you give space, it will be occupied, not always by good people or good powers. It is a competition; one who can enter and operates. In this regard, we need to be very, very cautious and an unconditional commitment to think with such a spirit should evolve.

I want to add a few more points. One thing, that is experienced is that, in politics there is often instability. Governments come, and go; parties become majority or minority. That continues. But what is stable, is the institution, which run without political bias. They do their task. So, in democracy it is important that we must respect and establish the institutions: judiciary, courts, media, army, police, who need to be independent, will full respect. If we can respect them and give importance, I feel, all political turmoil and instability will end with time. But, it can recur, twice, thrice, or many more times. So, we need a comprehensive thinking about the importance of the institutions and how politics will take direction. That will decide the future.

My last point is that, we need to think what the basis of politics in the days to come will be. As an issue floated in the morning session, now, for youths and all countries of the world—US, China, India, or African Nations or in Nepal, where I have been many times, or meet Nepalese students in India, or those in Nepal—there is a great aspiration, to move ahead, to see prosperity and development. People think, that though we might have been born in an underdeveloped or developing nation, we want to die in a developed nation. The newer generation thinks, it wants to live, and lead in the developed countries. Such an aspiration is there in India, and Nepal as well, and I can see a potential of great cooperation in that direction. This needs to be addressed. Politics

should be directed towards that. Since I am associated with students and youth organization, I can claim this is the most powerful aspiration of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. One who makes this aspiration the basis of politics will move ahead.

Lastly, my remark on the constitution. It is wrong to lay the condition that democracy shall come only if the constitution comes. Whatever shape democracy has taken, is with us. The parliament will come, and will go. Issues, on which consensus is framed, will be parts of the constitution and the issue will go on. If, in a day, you placed a condition that it should come forth in two or four years, it's wrong. If we say, it did not happen in two years, let it go on, for ten years, or even fifteen years. What is required is that, let the legislature come, and let it constantly try to forge consensus. If any constitution or system is forced against the will of the people, that, as a foreign material, will be thrown away by the public. So, respecting people's aspiration, modifications will go on taking place. This is a very important issue. So, I feel, there should be no condition, and no one should force that unless the constitution comes, there will be no stability. If stability comes before the constitution, we must welcome it.

Many more issues might still be important, but I want to end here. Thank you!

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**Prof. Dr. Ramesh Kumar Dhungel**  
**Former Director, CNAS, and Former Member**  
**State-Restructuring High Level Commission, Nepal**

It is a great pleasure, we started a real thing. As Sunilji said, it is real. He had asked me if I wanted to go first, but I urged him to lead me. If I had done it before him, I would have missed some crucial points. He has given me some sutras; I have points in difference, but these sutras, if I explain, will make my presentation better. But before explaining these sutras, I would rather go with a little bit of historicity, because, our title is Nepal-Bharat Relation.

Let me start very briefly with this point, because I am by training a cultural historian back in Nepal, and a time came I was in the restructuring committee also, and I was fighting within that nine-member committee, and I produced, with two of my friends, a different report, to the government of Nepal. The committee were strictly divided into two groups, as you may all know. But going with historicity—since this morning, we have been talking about that—respectable politicians from India, very warmly appreciated Nepal's constitution as well as these ancient traditions. One thing is missing, however.

I run an institution called College of Buddhism and Himalayan Studies, which is the first of its kinds to be established in Nepal. I am the chair of that institution, as I have also been trained in Tibetan language. When I was at TU, I just had a vision to understand what Laddakh is, what Kashmir is, what Khasa is, what Yache is, what Khache is, or what Tibetan Buddhism is. I know these things have something to do with the emergence of Buddhism in India. These were the questions I had from my student time. What I find here is, when Buddha started his march for his

learning about the reality of life, he didn't know where he actually was. He was wondering within the dense forest between now what we call two nations according to modern Eurocentric nationalism. And over the question where Buddha was born or enlightened, we sometimes fight. I feel shy sometimes, because Buddha didn't himself know where he was. He was enlightened in Bodh Gaya; he stated his march from Kapilvastu, or Lumbini. And we the Nepalese, within this modern boundary, should know, these lands have fallen into Nepalese territory, but those days, these boundaries did not exist.

Culturally, we are tied with that part also. Our connection is not just with sources of river like Kailash Man Sarovar only. That relates with Tibetan Empire. That time, Tibet was an empire. They loved that philosophy that was emerging in India, right at the centre of India. We also had a time when India lost everything, in that particular part, in Buddhist philosophy. It was attacked, and nothing was there, only remains. And Tibet was able to save something.

It was in Nepal that much of that philosophy was saved. This is the fate we have gone through. But we forget sometime. I would like to bring those things in our mind and refresh.

We didn't have any boundary between India and Nepal, if we talk culturally. Nor was there any boundary between Tibet and Nepal. Buddhist ascetic like Atisha Dipankar from Bihar visited and gave life in Tibet for the establishment, and to fight against Mughal Tartar invaders. But in Nepal, what are we talking about?

The Mughals-Mughals should be united, Khas should be ousted? What is this? And, not understanding the history of the

past, this is the problem we are having these days. We talk about Laddakh, we talk about Ditti, we talk about Lahore, we talk about Kashmir (Khas-mir) or even Kasgar, there we find India, and Buddha, and the prominent role Nepal has played in history. We need to recall that thing. When Bodh Gaya was just unknown and it was filled with frauds, Bhikshu Amritananda of Nepal came and found some of the places that were attacked by Muslim rulers. A gentleman Nepali scholar played an important role to find it out. The history of Brian Hudson and people highlights this fact.

So we have a very glorious wonderful past, between Nepal and India; we have four peethas; Muktinath is in Nepal, Badrinath in India. Pashupati Nath is in Nepal, Kedarnath in India. Kashmir is there in Khas-region; Khas-griha, Kha. Nehru came from Kashmir, and Khas went to Manasarobar to establish the Yache kingdom and they came back through Puran and Googe, and entered Jumla. Some Khasas came to the centre of Indian politics. Look at the situation. But we travel all around history of only one thousand years or so. This is an interesting part of history.

But regarding what we have lost, I sometime quote Girija Babu's recent book, edited by Jagat Nepal. Coming to the point Sunilji just highlighted, politics should not be superficial; if it is related to national building or nation, it must be very serious, very seriously done, and Girija Babu, our most respected leader, in that book, (this is not my view), says, he realized later—but it was too late—that it was a mistake on the part of the NC to abolish the 2047 constitution. Look at his. He is not with us today. He was talking about freedom of religion, not 'secularization' of the nation. He says in the book, that he was made confused or something like that in the issue of secularism.

Freedom of religion is completely different than what we call secularism. And, look at the data these days. Almost 82 percent of the people there are Hindus, and very unfortunately, Buddhists are declining. How come that happens? New coming religious groups' percentiles have been raised little bit. We are bound to accept these data, but look at what is happening. We have to be very much serious about this thing.

India has to be serious as a good friend of Nepal, culturally bound with these kinds of glorious past. It doesn't matter whether it is related to Pashupatinath or Buddha. GP Koirala was hopeful of having the post of the first president of Nepal, after this change, but again, consensus was betrayed right there.

I have always been against federalism. When I was appointed a member of the state restructuring committee, a shouting was going on in Nepal: 'One who is against federalism has been appointed.' Who appointment me? Pashupati Nath. Lord Pashupati Nath instructed Sushil Koirala to appoint me. This was the situation.

We can spend days and days talking about these kind of things. In Universities in Nepal or here, scholars have been focusing on Buddhism, focusing on politics, focusing on Hinduism, concerning India and Nepal. We have immense things to discuss. Talking about *rashtravad*—though I am not a political science students, we have friends here from JNU and some other universities—I find, there are two types of nationalisms in the world. One is modern day Euro-centric nationalism, has now become ethno-centric, and the other civic form of nationalism.

Friends, you have encountered already in the past that after India won freedom movement, immediately 14/15 states were

made. That time, the same serious question was here. I went through the constitution process from Ambedkar's time, when I was appointed a member of the restructuring committee. In one of the oldest forms of publication of the constitution, I read that if secularism is declared you cannot put much emphasis on ethnocentric thing. And I repeated that many times when we were discussing on the table. So, you encountered that problem already, and we are encountering that problem now. Being a part of that restructuring thing, I have hundred percent resentment on ethno-based federalism; it is impossible, and no one can bring it in our country. It is not possible at all. If we try to implement, that will only bring destruction of the nation. No doubt at all. That's why I said, no ethno-based federalism; federalism can be implemented, still I believe in that, with *madhyam marga*, as Buddha says. Not explicit one!

Why do we bring federalism in a country? Because, we have problems in security, regional security, existence, economy, problem, and so on, and to solve these problems we want to bring federalism, and these are the very simplest things to discuss. But Nepal didn't have those kinds of problems, which book on federalism discusses. We are not about to be disintegrated; we are not being attacked from India and China. There was no military preparation in India or China to attack Nepal, but we had gone through those types of attacks already, and we tackled and our ancestors tackled and we find them in the pages of history. So, we didn't have those problems. So, why to discuss those issues?

When I was first appointed a member of the committee, as a members I said, let's start the talk. Because there was no exercise before the announcement, let's start form the exercise. Announcement of federalism itself needed a long exercise and

homework, but the announcement was made abruptly. Again, coming back to Sunilji's sutra; it was a superficial action, a fashionable thing. It became a fashion without proper homework. If we had had homework, the situation would not have been like this. We are in zero situation today. This is the problem, and what happened is Girija Prasad died, and Constituent Assembly also died. You know, this is also a very remarkable, a very interesting thing.

Talking about Indian role in Nepal, the 1950 treaty has been called 'agreement', but I don't think that was an 'agreement'. That was more of a consensus and not an agreement. India had a role there, and the role became somehow positive in Nepal. But the role played by India, has been challenged now.

To establish consensus in Nepal, India has played crucial roles at different times in history. This time is the time that role has been challenged, and people are betraying the very consensus itself. So, in this morning's inaugural session, the political leaders mentioned that diplomatic failure of India is also a fact. What happened to that consensus, why is not functioning? We must think seriously about these things.

As respected Rajnath Singh Ji mentioned, Nepal has become 'kati huwi patang' or 'changa chet' as we say in Nepali. We are facing the situation of *changa chet*, without understanding what I belong to. What ethnic group Nehruji belonged to, what ethnic group a Limbu belongs to, what is the meaning of that thing, and who is a Khasa and who is just coming in directly from Benaras? There is no historical, ethnographic studies being done in Nepal. I believe in inclusiveness, but the thing is we need to deal with the term 'tribe' first. What is the meaning of tribe? Can those who

were rulers for 9 hundred years in Nepal be described as a tribe? If we talk about the Newars, for 900 years, they were the rulers in Nepal. And most of the industries they owned. Look at this!

We talk about subjectivity, ethnic thing, cultural thing, and also bring up issues sometime with confusion, objectify together, and there is a mixing. The Shah rulers ruled for 240 years, and Malla rulers were therefore 500 years or over. Mallas fall under tribe, and Kusundas from the jungle fall under tribe. Look at what social scientists are doing in Nepal. This is an arbitrary thing. Not scientific, not objective. It is just willfulness, whatever you like, you do. So, I have started writing about ethno-history also, these days, and also about yesterday's thing.

I had contributed one article before coming here, and there was a press release about Tamang. I had claimed, I had not found a place called Tamsaling, and a press release came against it, and no paper was distributed in region virtually demarcated as Tamsaling. But I have not found Tamsaling and that is a fact.

Finally, my Indian friends! We have had a wonderful history, a glorious past. If the Himalayas get dirty or stinky, there will be no chance that you will be safe. That dirt will come down to the south too. Thank you very much!

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## Scholarly opinions

**N.N. Jha**

**Former Lieutenant General of  
Anadman and Nocobar Island**

As far as federalism is concerned, I agree with you, that for a small country like Nepal, federalism is not advisable. But there is a certain area that you might keep in mind. In Tarai area, where there has been a sense of slight alienation from the mainstream of Nepal, and its people feel they have been discriminated, and they have not been treated as honorable Nepal citizen and so on. I can give any number of examples. But somehow, you have to take care of their aspiration, if you have federal states.

In Indian constitution to which you referred, the word 'federal' has not been used. India is a union of states, and the description has been 'federal in structure, unity in spirit'. It is a mixture of the two.

You need to take care of the aspiration or reported grievances of Madhesh. One reason why the Madhesis are supporting the Maoists led government is because the Maoists promised them a federal state; one or two doesn't matter, one or the other. This is a very unhappy development as I see, and you must make sure that this is not repeated in the long run.

As far as our friend Bhimarjun Acharya's position is concerned, what is not clear to my mind is, under what constitution would all these actions will be taken? There is no constituent assembly now, and I don't think the interim constitution has any validity. Interim mean interim, it expires after some time. What would have been better is for the president, as head of a state—

since he is the ultimate repository of the democratic stat—to appoint a non-political people to form a non-political government, form a constitution and hold elections thereafter. You need election, there is no doubt. In any case, if you don't have any constitution, you cannot hold election either.

The CA even if it is revised, cannot go on and on and on.

**Harendra Pratap**  
**MLC, Bihar Legislative Council (BJP)**

Let me ask some questions on the basis of experiences in India. Nepal, has been, for hundreds of years, running on the basis unity and integrity. India, on the basis of unity and integrity, was not one, before 1947. After analyzing this, please answer some of my questions.

After independence, India's unity and integrity became India's characteristic, but in your case, you got it in legacy. Whatever happened, whatever confusion came during the freedom movement, have been affecting India even today.

India was not divided on religions basis, but two-nation theory. There are two nationalities here: Muslim and India. Immediately after freedom, where Christianity was high, if Hindu and Muslim can be two states, so, why not in Mizoram and Nagaland? We had a slogan: "Hindu, Muslim, Sikh Ishai!" But, out of four, Hindu, Muslims got a nation in partition, and India, largely was left to the Hindus. A third voice came with the armed conflict in Mizoram and Nagaland: why don't the Christians have their own nation? The Sikhs, we considered to have less wit, in 1980 took arms in Punjab, demanding a separate state.

So, the impact of one mistake has been costing the nation till today. Mizoram and Nagaland are being attached on military basis. Kashmir is attached through military power.

After independence, India wrote its constitution, and in 1956 saw the restructuring of its states, 9 years after independence. What was the basis of this restructuring? Communication and administration. Language, to some extent was prioritized. Afterwards, for administrative advantage, larger states were divided into small ones. Punjab, for example, was divided into Himachal, Punjab and Haryana; Maharashtar was divided into Maharashtra and Gujarat.

I was in Nepal in May last. I met many friends. I asked a question, regarding the demand of ethnic states: have you learnt from India? How are you dividing states? In the same village, if there are four ethnic groups, what will you do? You might say, for 1 percent of a group, you will allow autonomy. So, not only a state, the issue of autonomy rises from within. What chapter are you opening? Are you capable of controlling all these things?

If India, that seemed capable, is finding it so difficult to tackle the situation, can you there in Nepal do it? You are on the reverse count. Instead of unity and integrity, you are calculating points of disintegration.

First you need to decide your common identity. Is individual or ethnic identity superior to national unity and integrity? Have you sought for solution anywhere?

Take India for instance. When Mizoram was formed, the Mizos were 60 %, while others were minority settlers. But today, the remaining tribes have been driven out. In Mizoram election, I

was there. I was surprised, the Nepali speaking people are not living in Mizoram anymore. More than 10, 000 Nepali speaking people are living in Tripura; they are not allowed to live in Mizoram.

Just two states are there in India, formed on ethnic grounds: Mizoram, after the Mizo, and Nagaland after the Naga. When Nagaland was made, 50% people were others. Bangalis were there, Kukis, Manipuris, Nepalis etc. but today, Nagas are telling, no one will live there, and Nagas, in a large scale, burn down the houses of Kukis, and India is facing problems in controlling. To how many places will the army go and contain, when such problems prop up at other places?

Inside Nepal, have you studied the future of ethnic group? For four days, since 26 May, we were in Nepal, and I had sensed, the constitution was not coming. To many friends, I said, if only the people knew of the conspiracy!

What should the priority be? First any nation should have its own priority, and there should be no compromise in it. No compromise on unity and integrity of my country. Number one.

Number two should be administration—kingship or democracy or anything. Many types of ruling systems, are there but, there are many differences in this regard too. A discussion on administration, judiciary, how much power will the president have etc. should start. All these are future issues.

First make the constitution; implement it. After the people come together, these smaller issues will be solved. So, I am afraid, that from where India's woes began, Nepal is opening its chapters from there. What is the solution you have at hand?

**Dr. Dwarika Nath Dhungel**  
**Former Secretary and**  
**Water Resource Expert, Nepal**

First of all, I would like to congratulate the speakers, especially the Indian speakers, and based on those things, let me make certain observations, which might be useful for the organizers and our Indian scholars and researchers.

The fact is, Nepal is in a difficult situation. The situation is in a state of flux; nobody knows where we are going. There is a problem of impunity, lack of rule of law, and the state of a situation where the state or the government doesn't exist in the real life of the people. Having said that, we have here strong views of three scholars. We had heard those views in Nepal also. Again, we heard those views here. Thank you for putting your views. But the problems lie where they are.

I have been working in bilateral avenues for some time. I know some Indian scholars, researchers and institutes who are working in Nepal. Let me suggest, please, I would like to hear from Indian friends, scholars, the following:

1. What have you got to say, in terms of the development and fallout effect of 12 point agreement, which was made in New Delhi? The fallout effect in the economic, political, social and other sectors, leading to a number of issue?. And we have opened—I would say Nepal has opened —Pandora's Box, knowingly or unknowingly, and all of us are responsible, living around this table, influencing the decisions in Kathmandu and other places. I would like to draw the attention to this issue. Inability of of the constituent assembly to draw the constitution

is another. The president is in a state of dilemma, and all institutions are weak. You name any institutions, and they are weak. The president is in a state of indecision, as he has been put pressure from different sources, to do this, and that. But he has not been able to do anything except giving more and more time, and leaving the country in a very uncertain situation. On these issues, I would like to be enlightened when I go back home. My friends will be asking: 'What did you discuss; what did you learn in India? I want to be able to tell what we discussed in terms of helping the country to come out of the present problem.

**Abhinav Kumar Thakur**  
**Madhubani, (Presently, National Law**  
**University Orissa)**

(To Bhimarjun Acharya): Sir, you made the point on the relevance of the law, and you gave the legal situation of Nepal. At the same time you talked about constitutional crisis, and you went to explain how it is related to political crisis. I would like to thank my brother Atul Kumar Thakur, who keeps writing about political situation of Nepal.

You cited example of South Africa, and said when there is a crisis of CA and Parliament, you would go for fresh assembly, rather than revival of the CA. We have seen the kind of constitution adopted by India. If we make a comparative study of the constitutions of the world, you will find India's constitution being one of the best constitution, which talks about many things. So, why not to follow and go to the footsteps of India? At the same time, when we have been talking about cultural, political, social

and all types of relation including ancient tie-up between India and Nepal, I think, in this plethora, we should discuss the revival of the late CA, instead of going for fresh elections. I think, you should not say that the steps for revival of CA should be denied; you should try it, and I think, through that you can attain the aspiration of the citizens.

**Lila Raj Baral, from Kalikot**

(To Shreekrishna Aniruddh Gautam): Taking about mobilization of Far East and Karnali you mentioned facts about old dates; I think you need to update yourself. The region's interaction with Kathmadu has increased, and with India decreased. Towards east, going to gulf and returning has increasing, but in the West, going out has increased.

(To Bhimarjun Acharya): I could not understand what solution you are suggesting.

**Dr. Bhimarjun Acharya**  
**Advocate, Supreme Court of Nepal**

Thank you for your valid questions and observation. In response to the questions, I don't see Nepal has no constitution; we have a valid constitution. Interim Constitution 2007 is valid; it is very much functioning. My critical idea is on some provisions. I can give dozens of examples, where interim constitution has worked for 25 years. Take the example of Kenya; the interim constitution worked for more than 20 years. It is a valid, accepted constitutional principle that when you have an interim constitution, you need the new one to replace the old one. So, we have a constitution, and we have a government governed by interim constitution. Say for example, I am a lawyer, and every day, I go to my Supreme

Court, and I plead on behalf of my litigant, or my party, responding to the interim constitution. So, it is not the case that we have no law or constitution.

New election can be held on the basis of article 88 of the interim constitution, which has the power to promulgate ordinances which can make election laws. I hundred percent agree with Harendraji; this is my real concern too. Interest-based politics is totally different from Identity politics. In Nepal, people, especially the ethnic groups, are taking about identity politics, which is very much dangerous, in writing the constitution, even to address the issue of the people who are marginalized. I agree with your observation, as you talked about India's experiences. This is my concern too, back in Nepal.

Talking about Tarai Madhesi people, I am very clear, power can be devolved to that region and more power can be allocated to Madhesi people by using Formative Action Tool etc. But I think, federalism and ethnic federalism are not going to do these things. This is my reservation.

On Abhinav Kumar's question, many times we used your experiences: what you did in writing the constitution in 1946-47. I think that is one example for Nepal. What I can never believe is, revival of CA will be a solution to Nepal's problem. I totally reject this kind of thing. My final answer, my final saying is that election is the last resort to deal with all these crisis and deadlock, and that can be done on the basis of interim constitution 2007. This is my point.

On Lila Raj Baral's question, I am clear, that in the three issues: government formation, election, and constitutional bodies, government can be formed, the parties need to know. There is a bar for election, and for constitutional appointment, but as the CA is inactive, some problems have come, which can also be

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## Day I, Session II

### Shifting Paradigm: A Geopolitical Perspective

#### Experts

1. **Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani**, Former Finance Minister of Nepal
2. **Shri Jitendar Sonal**, Leader Tarai Madhes Loktantric Party, former member to the former CA
3. **Shri Shasank**, Former Foreign Secretary, Government of India
4. **Shri N.N..Jha**, former Lieutenant Governor of Andaman and Nicobar
5. **Dr. Chandan Mitra**, Eminent Journalist, Editor, *The Pioneer*, and Member of Indian Parliament (Rajya Sabha)

**Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani**  
**Former Finance Minister of Nepal**

We have in the world, at present over 200 different nations, over 200 sets of national interest. Each country, big or small, has its own sets of national interest that it would like to promote, and in our part of the world, and here, the diversity among nations is impressive. To the north and south and east of Nepal are two great nations that are on their way to becoming super powers in the next 30 years or so. Similarly, in South Asia as a region, we have India, one of the largest and the most promising countries in the world, and also Maldives, one of the smallest. In between, we have large-size nations like Pakistan and Bangladesh, and middle and small size nations like Nepal and Bhutan. All these countries want to promote what they consider at any point in time their national interest. This process is characterized by a determination to assert one's independence in decision-making, while being aware simultaneously of the imperative to accept interdependence, and even at times, dependence including in some cases the dictates and jurisdiction of international agencies.

We have this experience. Many times in our home country, from a geo-political perspective, South Asia is a conflict zone, not a peace zone, characterized by a continued tension between India and Pakistan. Similarly, the relationship between India and China is at the same time collaborative and competitive. There have been past turns, adverse and difficult. We in Nepal are part of this conflict zone, situated as we are between India and China. We share a 1750 kilometer border with India, and 1400 kilometers with China.

In terms of geographical, cultural and economic orientations, our links with India is deep and intensive. At the

same time, China, a growing international power bordering Nepal, has also historical links with Nepal and growing economic presence as well. For Nepal, China in the north is a geo-political reality of great significance.

Nepal's geo-strategic situation was keenly understood by King Prithvi Narayan Shah, who united all the hill kingdoms over 120 years ago, and created a unified and centralized state. Shah described Nepal as a 'yam between two stones', and reminded his people that the British ruler in the south was clever and cunning. At the same time he also pointed out that it was important to keep link with the Chinese emperor.

The yam metaphor has remained a powerful concept in the respect of Nepal's relation with neighboring countries ever since. After Shah, Jung Bahadur probably was the most important foreign-policy strategists of Nepal. As was practiced in his days, he killed all his political opponent, and assumed the role of prime minister in 1846. He did make two strategic decisions. First, he decided to align with the interest of the British in India, as it was the rising power and China was a declining power. The yam between the two stones decided to latch on with the rising power in the south. Second, Jung Bahadur decided to keep Nepal isolated from the outside world and rule the country as a personal fiefdom of the Rana clan. These two characteristics continued until the end of British rule in India.

In the meantime the regime signed a trade treaty with the British in 1923, and allowed the recruitment of Nepali young men to fight for the empire. Nepal then had a ceremonial king and an executive prime minister with absolute power, whom British

allowed to rule freely as a sovereign and independent nation as long as Nepal followed the strategic interest of their plan. That was the situation.

After India's independence and restoration of democracy of some sort in Nepal, there have been many ups and downs in the relation between the two countries. Basically, I feel that we in Nepal have not been able to articulate in depth the content of our national interest as it relates to India. This has given rise to one-sided treaties, like the Koshi and the Gandak treaties, and even attempts to establish military check-posts inside Nepal in the name of security. Naturally, it has created a legacy of suspicion, and this is most evident when it comes to the use of Himalayan water resources for the benefit of both the nations.

Similarly, India's involvement and interest in the national politics of Nepal, latest being the 12 point agreement between the Maoist and the non-maoist parties in India, has created a somewhat ambivalent attitude between the two countries. It has allowed Nepali politicians to cover their own weakness, and at times blame India—sometimes needlessly—for not being able to solve their own internal problems. This has also unnecessarily given rise occasionally to what I would call the viceroy's syndrome, a legacy of the past. Perhaps this is a built-in feature of the relation between a small and a big neighbor. The responsibility of establishing a mature relationship between two countries, that take into consideration, what I would call, a 'shared concern' and 'shared prosperity' paradigm, in a geo-strategic setting that takes into cognizance the emergence of China as a rising international power, is now essential.

While discussing shared concern and shared prosperity paradigms between Nepal and India, we must be clear as to what our national interests are. Operationally, I would define national interest as consisting of three core elements: political, economic and security factors. All these three are linked with the notion of the shared concern and shared prosperity.

Politically, Nepal—even under the British empire, and its overwhelming influence—has remained independent all throughout history. This is a legacy and a precious gift that we would like to preserve and pass on to the future generation. From the point of view of Nepal, this is an objective that should be a shared concern of both India and Nepal. A sovereign, politically strong and democratic Nepal is in our mutual national interest; it fulfills Nepal's fundamental political interest and at the same time it strengthens the security environment of India. The conclusion is based on the logical and valid assumption that a strong politically stable and democratic Nepal is in the best national interest, and that means significantly, the security interest of India in the Himalayas.

This statement, I think, is consistent with both realist and idealist conception of relation between our two nations. The second component of our shared concern should be the security of both India and Nepal, since we share 1750 kilometers of open border that has over the years remained an example of people-to-people relation between the countries. Both the countries should make sure that the border is not used by undesirable elements for violence, terrorism and economic distortion of both the nation.

When we are in the government and I was the Foreign Minister, we tried to follow this logic to its logical implementation,

without a hurt to the national interest of both the countries, without in any way restricting the free movement that has been a hallmark of our relationship. The Indian side, I remember then, appreciated this logic, and a formal document to take this process forward was signed, and I know because I signed it, in the mid 1990s, we formed a committee consisting of home secretaries of both the countries to come up with a model, but I am sorry to say that after a few official meetings, nothing much has been done. but I think, all governments in Nepal, including the present one led by the Maoist party have made it a policy to ensure that Nepal is not used as a place of activities harmful to India. This has been a consistent policy of all the governments irrespective of which political color they belong. This again is an issue of shared concerns.

Nepali politicians, whichever party they belong to know that a secured, prosperous and democratic India is a guarantee for peaceful, prosperous and democratic Nepal. We know that, in the line of this thought, India also should do its best, to control elements, either political or criminal that try to operate in Nepal from Indian soil, taking advantage of our open border. At times, this has been violated. This is an element of shared concern for both our nations.

Similarly, if there are other issues of security concern to India, as friends, we must be ready to discuss with mutual trust and confidence, and Nepal should try to be as helpful as possible, remaining within the parameter of a sovereign, independent and a democratic state that is accountable to its citizens.

On the economic issue that constitutes a vital component of national interest of any country, we have a vast area to tackle, that are of shared concern as well as shared prosperity.

Geographically, Nepal is India-locked in the east, west and south, and China-locked in the north. We are locked by two giants. The great Himalayas from where major river system vital for Gangetic civilization originate, lie in Nepal.

When India was a slow-grown, license-Raj economy, Nepal followed the same growth trajectory for the simple reason that as long as India, specifically UP and Bihar, remain growth laggards, Nepal's economy cannot expand rapidly. This is I what would call 'economics of neighborhood' which influences the growth of a small nation over time, especially if is it landlocked like Nepal. Happily, the situation is changing rapidly. If I say, India attained political independent in 1947, and economic independence in 1991, people do not agree. Especially the idea of economic independence, they don't accept. But the fact remains that India is now a private sector economy that has achieved a high growth rate, with the private sector contributing as much as 26 % of the annual investment in the economic system, and India's investment in GDP is around 35 %, showing that the public sector invested in terms of total investment is declining. Even at a time, when the world economy is in turmoil, India's economic growth rate is expected to be close to 6%, which many nations, including Nepal, will be more than satisfied to achieve.

Better still, states like, Bihar that were considered the members of so called 'bimaru' (sick) states, have transformed into roaring tigers, with growth rate approaching 10% average. This is all a good news for Nepal, and it means we can be a part of this prosperity, which is a part of the shared prosperity paradigm. But this requires a change in the mindset of both the nations so that the shared prosperity is viewed not only as viable but also essential

for the national interest of both the countries. It also means the following things:

1. Nepal has to have its political house in order; so far this has not been possible. We seem to be in a state of semi-permanent political transition, not able to promulgate a constitution, which in essence, is also an economic roadmap for the future. As you are probably aware, we have been unable to agree on a consensus prime minister, who can lead the country to a new democratic election. This has discouraged both national and foreign entrepreneurs from investments in Nepal.
2. Created supply bottlenecks have encouraged corruption and led to a steady erosion of bureaucratic competence and planning and delivering services to the people. In the meantime, the trade balance between India and Nepal continues to deteriorate in a alarming manner. Trade deficit is not necessarily a bad thing, but if it leads primarily to increased consumption instead of investment, it can create problem in the future. Its management needs a new realism and initiative on Nepal side and a new orientation on the side of India, and current bottlenecks in trade and investment—there are many, studies have confirmed that—will be solved. These bottlenecks need to be addressed as vital issues of shared concerns for shared prosperity. I can't see this happening so far.
3. In fact, we do need to think of the kind of economic interaction that we would like to see between India and Nepal in the next 25 years for now; what kind of economic model that we will adopt between two countries. Every five years we have a treaty or something else. This requires a dynamic approach that links the industrial development of smaller countries like Nepal with

the growth structure of India and that could include product fragmentation, industrial relocation, something akin to the famous 'flying geese model', that was first articulated in the case of east Asian economy. In 1996, I remember, as I was the foreign minister, we did sign a trade treaty with India, that was theoretically based on this logic, and that led to a significant increase in India's investment in Nepal, and also a major expansion of Nepal's export to India. Now, that is all history. It need not be this way, if we care for promoting the national interest of both the countries. Why did we fail to sustain the content and spirit of 1996 treaty that was geared towards a free-trade regime? This is a question that needs to be explored.

4. The other major issue of concern, as it relates to economic interest of both the nations, is the utilization of water resources for the benefit of the people of both the nations. There are over 440 million people living in the Indo-Gangetic plain in India. As the Indian economy continues to grow at the rate of 7 to 8 percent in the 20 years of so, and if India is to be a developed country, the requirement of water for irrigation, industry and so on will increase significantly, and data tells us that over 50 percent of the water flow of the Ganga in the lean season come from the rivers that now flow from Nepal. India needs regulated flow of irrigation, which is vital to sustain growth, and this requires cooperation with Nepal, that will have to be different from what we saw in 1950 and 1960 in Koshi and Gandak projects. On the other hand, Nepal's hope for achieving prosperity crucially depends on how it is able to exploit its hydro resources for agriculture and industry. A new model that serves the interest of both the nation has to be worked out so that the people of both the nation feels that there is equity and justice in the use of

these vital resources, Both Nepal and India have not been able to produce this model so far, Nepal has also not been able to rid of the hangover of the water resources agreement with India of 1950s. This has to change. We must able articulate our perspective on the use of water resources for the benefit of people from both the sides.

5. Similarly, there is a need on the Indian side to come up with a cooperation framework that takes into consideration international practice as well. So far this has not happened, and there is a general tendency to blame each other for the lack of progress. I think legislature, politicians intellectual in states like Bihar and UP must be seriously involved in the analysis of the problem so as to work out alternative strategies for suggestion to our respective governments. A vigorous second-track interaction on this issue is a must. Mere reliance on bureaucracies of both the nations to come up with mutually beneficial solution has not worked so far. Ultimately, we must learn to transform water into increasing worth and income for people of both countries. So far, again, this has not happened.
6. To further our economic interest within the framework of shared concern and shared prosperity paradigm, perhaps it is time to think of a land-link between India and China, for trade purpose, via Nepal. The dynamism of both Chinese and Indian economy has led to dramatic increase in trade between the two giants. Now I think 75 billion, expected to reach 100 billion in 2015. There has been a significant increase in trade. In future, in India there is a look-east-and north-east policy, while in China, the focus is increasingly on west, and south west. With increased economic interaction between the two regions of the two great nations, we will need a land route, and this brings Nepal in the

picture. In this context, a trans-Himalayan Railway, operated by the private sector of all the three countries, connecting all-weather dry ports now being planned in Nepal-China border, with the dry ports in Indo Nepal border in Beergunj could be the beginning of a new era of economic interaction in the region. The new link will be a part of integrated development of agriculture, industry and tourism in Nepal. This will indeed be a shared prosperity.

Finally, we are aware of the fact that between Nepal and India, there is an invisible cultural link, all the way from the misty height of the Himalayan, we consider as the abode of Lord Shiva, to the vastness of Indian Ocean or the southern tip of the sub continent. But if history is any guide, we must remember that cultural closeness is no guarantee of political amity or peace between nations. Our cherished cultural bonds will be strengthened if we are able to follow the true implication of the shared concerns and shared prosperity paradigm. Ultimately, this is the best way to promote the national interest of both our nations in the future. Thank you!

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**Jeetandra Sonal**  
**Leader Tarai Madhes Loktantrik Party**  
**and Member to the Former CA**

I will start my viewpoints with a saying from Kabir, which fits with the present political condition of Nepal. In day-to-day speaking, we say, '*ek saadhe sab sadhe, sab sadhe sab jaye!*' In regards to India and Nepal, we discussed in the inaugural session, and even talked about China. The three regions, in the same decade, fought for freedom. Here in India, 1947 brought the result; in Nepal 1950, and China, in the same time.

As Dr. Lohani said, as giants, India and China are showing their economic and all-round development each day, and we are, every day— after 1950 till today, after 65 years—are fighting for the 7<sup>th</sup> constitution. I feel that whatever topic you give: geopolitical situation, or economic condition, cultural position, or anything, but unless the core issue is not addressed, Nepal's condition will not be dealt with.

King Prithvinath said, '*Nepal is dui dhungabich ko tarul ho,*' articulating the yam metaphore, that Nepali is a yam between two stones. People say today, Nepal is a small stone between two large boulders. So, is our condition like that of yam, as said by a great personality of Nepal. Today, I feel, the condition is that '*ek saadhe sab sadhe*' I feel, that is the main law of Nepal. Unless a constitution of the ownership of everyone is arranged for, through which all problems will be solved, Nepal will continue to dilute into different problems.

A recent report says, Nepal is the 34<sup>th</sup> of the world, and 3<sup>rd</sup> in Asia in corruption, and is getting counted for its instability. And

the same will continue. And in that case, all our prosperity, democracy, solution to problems, promotion of rich culture, will slip away from us. I think, we need to think intensively on this issue.

In the past session, we were talking about nationalism. I want to touch the issue, because, I feel, unless you know about the reality of Nepal, you cannot just discuss in Delhi or elsewhere; you cannot solve the problem, either. Nepal is like a cucumber, like an orange. At gunpoint, you cannot carve nationalism and unity. As long as the steering of nationalism and unity is with a person, or with a particular community, the nation can neither have a strong nationalism, nor will the idea of ownership and belongingness be established. In a country of 2 cores 68 lakh people, unless everyone feels that this is my nation, the region is ours, and its constitution and law we should make for us, till then, nothing will be established in that nation.

What is the reason you experimented with 6 constitutions, while India has the same constitution, and China did the same with constitution of both poles, one with capitalistic democracy, and the other with communism, and both are surviving? But we are fighting in every ten years, for a new constitution. Unless you consider this, and analyze and research minutely, whatever you say, every ten years we will repeat the same thing after. 2007, 2017, 2036, 2046, 2051, 62-63 April Movement came in series, and the blood-spill is still fresh. The Madhes Uprising came up, which was genuinely addressed by Shreekrishna Aniruddh Gautam for federalism. If the same situation continues, whatever geopolitical situation exists, 1750 kilometer long open border with India on 3 sides and China to the north—our condition doesn't seem to be solving.

In the coming 15 to 20 years, Nepal is not getting its constitution with a wrong mindset. 80% population are in favor of federalism, give us 3 R's: give us right, representation, and recognition, but you reject it and say, federalism is bad for the nation. And the same mindset goes to the election.

In a way, we talk of democratic system and consensus. The interim constitution guides us that the political system will go according to consensus, but pardon me, one element, is standing against CA, after election. For 4 months, no another government was formed based on the commitment to the consensus provision, which was later amended to allow majority government. This might have made it clear, that after four months, when amendment was agreed upon, a new government was made.

If you decided that the nation will to on the basis of majority, what is the consensus you are talking about? Secondly, once again, I want to quote saying, *“roye thathe basab thathey phulaye galu, dono bata naboye bhawalu”*. If in one hand you say, 601 people are white elephants that eat up allowances, and when those 601 people ended up, why do you say, there is constitutional crisis?

Girija Prasad Koirala was a man; he was an individual. In the nation, when the system had derailed, he had said, to bring politics to bring back to track, the only provision we had, was we needed to revive the parliament. The parliament was revived, and the derailed politics came on the tract. If we agree this, and provoke and say the revived parliament was a white elephant that eats up everything and need to be ended, why do you cry when election commission is finishing, judiciary is ending? If you cry, fill it up. Or, go for election.

The majority government has declared elections; you are not coming into that for election. You don't accept its leadership for election. And again, you demand a government of consensus. Why? So, I feel, the political situation of Nepal in geopolitical situation, if we study minutely will reveal such crisis.

In April Movement, a number of people participated, and got martyrdom. I salute them. If you accept the April Movement, and the movement who saw double participation and double martyrdom for federalism as compared with the 2005-06 people's movement, and if you say, that federalism is created, planned and useless, this means you are betraying the aspiration of those people, and also the interim constitution, and you are hammering the same, I feel, because of prejudiced mindsets.

For four years, we sat in the CA and witnessed, there was a group that was constantly exercising to bring the nation to ground zero. Else, except on restructuring, other matters were agreed upon, and we could not accept the agreements. I state again, that for two years there had been no election. I had a supplementary question, that interim constitution doesn't envision any type of election to the CA. Only when the Supreme Court ordered for a re-election to the CA, we were agreeing upon the election. Else, no provision or article of our interim constitution allows any election, and the only election it envision is the election of parliament only after making CA. It doesn't envision any situation of the lack of parliament. It doesn't envision a single ordinance, as we cannot do so as long as the parliament exists. When Madhav Nepal was ruling, they made the parliament defunct, and brought budget through ordinances, and after six months, the proceeding of the parliament was resumed.

Unless we have a central law, unless the voice of the street is addressed, our identity and rights are granted and our access in the mainstream of the nation is ensured and allowed, ensuring our representation in all the walks of nation life, be it people from easy and remote locations, from Dalits, from Madhesh, unless we plant a sense of belongingness in all, changes remain a far cry. For this, our mechanism is federalism, and until we address this, whatever we do, is destined to fail in giving stability.

The best thing, as Sunil Ambekar was saying, institution without prejudice. If you see there, all the intuitions there are biased. Beat of all, the judiciary or courts are among the most corrupt institutions in Nepal. We cannot touch upon all the matters, but if we study the verdicts of the four years, you will feel, nothing is as biased and conservative as their decisions. This is the situation, owing to which, we are not getting stability.

Unless we have a central law, nothing will happen. I have a strong reservation against the assertion that the interim constitution can go for 25 years. It might have lasted in Kenya, but the longer we prolong, worse will our state be. The sooner we frame a federal republican democratic constitution the better. If we play with it more and prolong it more, we will end up, and a third position will come up. So, I reassert, *ek saade, sab sadhe, sab saadhe sab jaye*. If you experiment with fifties of things, you will end up nowhere.

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# Opinions

## Dr. Bhimarjun Acharya to Jeetendra Sonal

It is unwise for Jeetendraji, who was, until recent times in such a responsible position enjoying state allowances, to say, judiciary is the most corrupt institution in the nation. Talking about Madhes, there are 4 full-fledged justices in Supreme Court, out of 15. After the adoption of 1990 constitution, each and every issue you raised has been pronounced by Supreme Court. If you blame such an institution as corrupt in a forum as important as this, it doesn't suit you. Federalism might have been a mindset; but my position against it calls for an intellectual debate. I claim, what you are seeking is not attainable through the channel of federalism. For an advocate, federal state is a heavenly state, where there are cases everywhere and tensions everywhere. As a lawyer, I don't oppose federalism; it is a paradise. I am one who has not taken a penny from the state fund; my finding about federalism is just an academic finding, which is also in favor of the Madhes. You were in the CA, you must have written the constitution. Why didn't you write it?

**Dr. Chandan Mitra**  
**Editor *The Pioneer***  
**and Rajya Sabha Member (BJP)**

I was listening to Sonalji with care, and I feel, he has expressed the pain of his mind in front of all of us. One thing he said is true, that unless there is stability, one can hardly think about things ahead. What constitution you will make—federal or otherwise—depends on Nepali people; we don't want to comment on that. You have to decide on your future; we can, from outside,

wish you all the best, and if needs for help are felt, Indian citizens and political parties will be with you. I am a BJP member in the Rajya Sabha, and have been a journalist. I have been following developments in Nepal. In my mind, developments of Nepal have given us worries and pains, but we are not pessimistic. Turmoil and ups and downs come; they are natural, they are inevitable at times, and the same is happening. I feel that with time, it will settle down, and you will be able to carve for yourselves a bright future, you will be successful.

As far as geostrategic situation is concerned, the first thing we need to accept is that the subcontinent is the world's most dangerous place. The play of big powers and the growth of terrorism have completely altered the scenario and the power-balance in the region. Non-state actors are the major factors today in determining relations between countries, and there is no state control over many of these elements. You know, I am talking about insurgents, terrorists, jihadists and other people who are trying to destabilize the entire region, some with the support of powers in this region, some with outside support, but whatever it is, this is the most serious challenge. We have to look to a situation of post-2014. Within 2014, European and US forces will withdraw from Afghanistan, and the future of Afghanistan will be crucial in this region because Afghanistan has been one-point focus in the region for a long time now. Because Afghanistan suffers from chronic instability, it has lurched from one extreme to another and attempted middle-of-the-road solution, and nothing seems to work. What happens in Afghanistan after the American forces leave completely, or leave a token presence and go, is something that should concern all of us here. Irrespective of what shape Nepal's internal politics and dynamics takes, I think whichever government

in whatever complexion is in office in Nepal, it will have to pay a serious look at the situation that has developed and will accelerate further after 2014. It is very likely that terrorism will get a new fillip. Whatever the nature of government that stays in Afghanistan after 2014, terrorism will be there definitely. As a result, we all must plan, because if terrorism, takes the entire region into its grip, the stability of the entire region and the economic growth, as Mr. Lohani was talking about, will become irrelevant, and economic growth will slow down, and our focus will turn towards internal insurgency and combating terror. In this India and Nepal, we need to work very closely together, which unfortunately has not really been the case so far. There have been political differences, ideological differences and security issues, which we have not been able to resolve. There was an attempt as all know, at one stage, to whip up anti-Indian sentiment in Nepal, but after the monarchy, I think, the situation is much more under control, and there is a realization across the border that India and Nepal have to work closely together, and encounter terrorism and insurgency.

There are other factors that affect us internally in this entire region: the issue of illegal infiltration and immigration. We have seen it in India. Nepal shares an open border. But even in case of closed border, there have been a lot of infiltration. An area which is contiguous to Nepal—you all know the small chicken's neck area in West Bengal and adjoining Bihar—it is a type of tri-junction of three countries: Nepal and Bangladesh and India. This is an area though which a lot of anti-social and criminal activities happened and illegal infiltration took place. This, in turn, has its link with terrorism, and acts as a sleeper's sense. This is a problem that Nepal has also faced, and we have faced too. I don't need to remind you the last incident of hijacking that happened relating

to India from Nepal's soil, where IC 814 was hijacked from Kathmandu. I think security systems have now been placed properly. But I think the danger, as Jeetendra Sonal ji was rightly pointing out, persists. As long as Nepal remains unstable, these kinds of dangers and may happen again and cannot be overlooked. It think therefore, we need to take stalk of the geostrategic situation and our preparedness to meet geostrategic challenges, along with the internal situations in Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and all the rest.

Unfortunately, however, a tragic gulf of perception has emerged in the past few decades between India and Nepal. There are economic reasons for it; there are political reasons for it. There have been attempts by certain regional powers to create and intensify the kind of gulf that exists. Obviously, I don't need to spell this out, but China has an interest in India and Nepal not cooperating or becoming any more closer than they are. In fact they will try to drive away, as they have tried and are continuing to try, even now. Pakistan, similarly, has used Nepal as a springboard for some activates in the past. There have been a crackdown, but you know, by misusing the open border, there have been activities propelled by Pakistan; there has been the issue of fake currency notes coming into India through Nepal at times, and these issues, I think India and Nepal need to resolve in a spirit of understanding and mutual trust. That mutual trust, in many cases, has been somewhat missing, and we have tried to approach matters in a kind of adversarial manner, in which, India has not treated Nepal with the degree of equality and respect it naturally expects and demands. I think, therefore, both countries have a responsibility, in view of the geostrategic challenges that have emerged in the very first part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and if the 21<sup>st</sup> century—we often

like to say—should be the Asian century, India should pull Nepal out of its present economic crisis. If India doesn't, then Nepal will be a country that will drag the subcontinent down. As we can see, other countries are progressing. Even Bangladesh has shown a very rapid growth. Sri Lanka has progressed. Pakistan has progressed, but unfortunately, Nepal and Afghanistan are two countries in the region that have not progressed significantly in the last few years. Basically what was mentioned is, India's economic growth and Nepal's economic growth are interlinked, and since they are interlinked our political approach has also to be synchronized.

There is a strong belief that Nepal is not allowing dams on various rivers emanating for the Ganga basin, and only if Nepal were to allow the construction of these dams, India can generate up to 50000 Megawatt of electricity, which will solve India's power crisis. This is not a one-sided issue. There is lack of dialogue, lack of people-to-people interaction. Many people of Nepal come to work in India. They are in India. But still, there is an absence of dialogue. This is very, very tragic. In order to meet these strategic challenges, the cooperation between political parties, parliamentarians, intellectuals, journalists and almost everybody else has to be far better.

Earlier during the monarchy period, there was really no dialogue; it was not encouraged. But now, in a democratic order, India is a vibrant, unruly democracy. Nepal is a democracy too, as is India. There is a better articulation among people, and the cultural bonds are linkages that have been talked about as very strong. I don't see where the problems are. These types of conference and seminars can go along to promote these types of dialogues, and foster understanding. We must be free and frank to

discuss what are our problems, and what we expect from Nepal. We must identify what are the stumbling blocks, but we must keep in mind that while you battle your internal issues without any foreign intervention, we must cooperate in international issues and international matters, because the challenge it poses harms all of us. Terrorism is a global challenge and unless we cooperate, we will become a victim of it!. With these words, I would like to leave these thoughts and ideas to you. Thank you!

**N.N. Jha**  
**Former Lieutenant Governor of Andaman  
and Nicobar Island and Pondicherry**

A little while ago, Mr. Prakash Chandra Lohani correctly mentioned, there have been periods of ups and down in Indo-Nepal relation. The periods I remember are those during the Panchayat and shortly thereafter. I recall, the Nepalese have a feeling at times against India, aroused by certain section. On the side of Nepali establishment altogether, the complaint of big brother attitude, the issue of India being a big country come up. They opine, you must help us more; why this is not there; why that is not here, and a lot of talks used to be over land-locked-ism those days. We used to draw a lot of adverse comments in Nepal. That, I think, was due to the fact that the trade and transit treaty that was signed those days was based on the fact that India itself was a closed economy. Nepal groups used to be coming and transiting good by trains or trucks through Indian territory, to Nepal. Some people really feel all goods were hijacked during the transit and a shortage was created in the market, as those goods were unavailable at times. This sort of things all the time, are a result of closed mind, and not a result of anti-Nepal sentiment in India.

In 1999, which is still about 6-7 years before the present set-up came into existence, I made my first trip to Nepal after 15 years since 1985, for a seminar which was purely bilateral, and the leftist, or pro-Maoist speakers, were preciously anti-Indian. I don't want to reproduce the stuff; I prefer to let them go by. For the first time I woke up to the changing realities that were, or might be, rising in Nepal.

Some people here raised the question: what should be said about the 12-point program? I am aware that the program was signed here in Delhi, as a result of the hard labor of the government of India, RAW, your local governments and senior leaders, who were here for 6 to 8 weeks. I have always felt that the 12-point program signed in Nov 2005 conferred a degree of respectability on the Maoists, which enabled them to come to power. What is the present position in Nepal? People of Nepal, unlike people in other countries in Asia, all love to talk, love democracy, want to talk and criticize, and we all welcome it. Nepalese people have fought for democracy, and have overthrown monarchy to establish democracy. Are you getting it?

The purpose of the Maoists, right from the time they came to power earlier, was to use the attributes, the bucks of democracy to set up people's democracy. Prachanda told me the same thing, when he was the Prime Minister. All his views are to establish people's democracy through the present democracy. This is a clear thing; you all are talking about it. How do you deal with this situation, is something only you can decide; the choice is yours. And I don't think the choice is Maoist's. I know you deserve it; you will secure it. One thing to do it is to make sure that all the democratic parties make sure—whenever next election comes—that the non-Maoist parties are united in the result.

The longer the present government led by Bhattarai remains in power—this is my personal and a firm opinion—the more will Maoist grip be consolidated in mid-hill and western Nepal where I am told, Nepali Congress, and other democratic campaigner cannot set foot. They will be beaten up and thrown out. So how do you do it? You have to have a government, which is not headed by the Maoist. Even if it is a coalition, home and defense ministries are not to be in their hands. There needs to be a cleaning-up of that area, and elections have to be free and fair. It cannot be held at gunpoint, that sort of thing you must keep in mind. How you do it, is your business. How to get the democratic parties together, I will suggest something. You must detach the Madhesi parties from supporting the Maoists. Otherwise, the game will be out. This will be important because their numbers will also count. And what they tell me is, other parties like NC, UML do not believe in any rights for Madhesi, only the communists, the Moist have promised them a Madhes Pradesh, one or two of them. This may be so at now on paper, but I am certain, if the Maoist were to come to power on their own in 2013 or when you have election next, they will make sure that none of these promises are kept. Leave aside the freedom you are enjoying now, other promises to Madhesi parties will not be kept. You have to get them over. If I recall correctly in 2007 or 08, there was an understanding between late GP Koirala and the Madhesi partiers that 49% of the parliament would be set aside for representation from Madhes area. The population of Madhes is more than 49% percent, and they have equal voice with everybody else in the new parliament of whatever number you like.

The other point I want to mention is what India expects from Nepal expect, as a partner. A person of no less rank than the

first prime minister—Mr. Jawahar Lal Nehru—once delivered a record saying that India’s northern security borders lie at the Himalayas. That means, Nepal is vital to India’s security interest. I am not suggesting you to go by dictate; you do what you like in your internal affair: what form of government you like. But you will understand that first and foremost, something that makes an action vital, will be taken with due regard and respect, as a close and old friend. I don’t think, once again under communist government, we can achieve this.

The Chinese influence in Nepal is increasing. Every week some senior VVIP’s are visiting; some very senior VVIP’s there are threatening India of this or that. It doesn’t scare us at all, though it worries us. But the Maoists are slowly building up their infrastructure. They first try to control the Rashtriya Bank, and then are trying the army. They had almost secured it, but the intervention of the president in 2008 saved.

Apart from Chinese presence, there is an important thing, which you must also have noticed. There are as many as 50 China Culture Centers being established in Nepal, along Indo-Nepal border, and one of them is right at the chicken neck. What is the purpose of those centers? It is not difficult to imagine or guess what they will be used for, especially at the open border. This was decided during the time of the Maoist, when Prachanda was the Prime Minister in 2006. I don’t think we can put up with this development; please understand our concern, and when the next government comes, it has to remove these things. There was an assurance given by your prime minister way back in 1966, which was a verbal assurance and a well-kept promise, that within 50 kilometers from the Indian border through UP Bihar up to the foothill, no presence of any Chinese personal, or Chinese parties

will be allowed. Only once it was thought to be violated, when east-west highway was proposed, which we took up upon ourselves. But now, it is being faulted as I see it openly. Therefore, I tell to friends from Nepal, to do something to alter this. We know what matters consolidate our relations. Please keep in mind also, that when the Maoist parties were out of power, there were three secret meetings in Nepal, to make CCOMPOSA (Coordinating Committee of Maoist Party in South Asia), and the statements they issued, and the text they released were precisely against India. Please recognize the terrestrial threat. All these things are being argues, because I want to be frank and share my views with you, and since I am not in the government or anywhere else, I can be quite frank. Thank you very much.

**Shri Sashank**  
**Former Foreign Secretary of India**

I am grateful to you for inviting me to this meeting of friends of India in Nepal and of Nepal in India. I like to brief always and will make two points. Outsiders are asking the Indians to articulate their views of South Asia, out of India's position in future. Many of the international estimates show that if India continues to grow at 6 percent, it might be the third largest economy in the next 30 or 35 years, and they all want to know what is India's perspective. What I heard just now is that, I find that in the neighboring Nepal, where we have many students studying from India, and in India, where there are many students from Nepal, the perception is colored more by the past than by the future. I would request you to kindly keep in mind as to where we are supposed to be in future. Are we going to be a part of that growing economy—the growth engine for the world economy—for the new

financial architecture that are being planned for the world or Asia? Or, are we going with Nepal-China relation, independent of the rising economy in India, or the other way round? Our PM has been saying that both China and India can grow together. So, our neighboring countries have to see how they can become valuable partners in that type of growth paradigm.

The second issue I would like to raise is China's rapid growth rate from economic side, which is also leading to muscle-flexing on the strategic and security side. We have 4000 kilometers border with China and will be remaining under pressure from Chinese, but there are other countries which are constantly worried with Chinese encroach, Chinese muscle-flexing. In many ways, the Chinese have changed their position. They are no longer talking about their rise; they are taking of peaceful relations in Asia, but we have seen in the latest meetings in Asia, firstly, that countries like Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia and Myanmar, are worried about the Chinese decision, to port their ships, somehow block their entry into some of the areas that are disputed. These countries want to sort out the issues under the principle set up by LOC Convention. Japan and Korea, we have seen are putting their some planes together. Myanmar, some time ago, requested the Chinese not to go ahead with some of planes to build bridges or dams over their rives, because they thought it would put them into a situation that will be unhappy for them.

The third aspect in this context of China's rise, is American. They have not decided their new policy on trans-Pacific partnership, or their turn towards Asia. How do we react to that? India will be most uncomfortable if it treats India as a base of their missiles and forces to be stationed here. I am sure that if America approaches Nepal, they will also feel uncomfortable to give them

these types of facilities. They should not be in the long term interest of what we are telling our neighbors. We are telling, to Chinese in particularly, that we want to have a peaceful relation and we feel that India and China, and other countries in South Asia and Asia, can work together, and I think a framework already exist, there are lot of agreements that have been reached at the framework at regional and sub-regional organizations, Can we go ahead the implement them? Can you have a type of domestic consensus in your country in this direction. I think this is very important, as Mr. Jha had made, friends of Nepal have to articulate themselves that should not be divided, because, otherwise you will waste all your energy in sorting out the issue generally, the problem remain that many of you must have studied in the Indian university and the dialogue in the Indian universities remains against the against the establishment, against the past, against injustice done to us by the....that doesn't work out not be in the case of Nepal, therefore you have to think of new ideas, but keeping in mind the future. We are all with you. I am sure, young people of India, which are more than 50 % of our population, below 25 years of age, they will very much like to build excellent relation with Nepal, forgetting about we might be thinking of in history and past, but how do we work together in future, and kindly think of that. Thank you!

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## Comments and Opinions

**Tirtha Koirala**  
**Editor, *Kantipur Television***

We failed to make the constitution. Basically I want to go on that part. Why did we fail, with the constituent assembly? Because constituent assembly was not the demand of the people's movement, and that was not the agenda of the Maoist either, nor of Nepali Congress, UML and other parties. That was the agreement and the common agenda of those parties that figured later. That was a kind of obligation. Since came as a obligation, it failed.

About CA not a single party was clear in the beginning. And now every party is blaming other parties. Going for CA election once again might not be successful. Even now, the parties are not clear, because, we failed three times— first in 2 years phase, and one another one year, and another one year. This proves, that the CA the has failed in Nepal. The fact needs to be felt by all parties and India. It will be wrong for Nepal to think of CA elections again.

Talking about federalism, it is a demand, but how are we managing it, needs a serious homework. Resource management is a crucial issue. India has big mechanism to manage all those things, but we don't have those kinds of institutions. We have all those in fragments.

At present, the parties, are fragmented in themselves. The existing institution are becoming vacant. We have no constitution, and the government in ad-hoc. Constitutional bodies are going to

be evacuated. Even the interim constitution is defunct; it is not functional. Constitutionally, Nepal has nothing right now.

Talking about consensus in Nepal though Sonalji said many things had been settled, but I feel, parties are not even clear about what kind of republic we are going for, and what structure of administration we will have, how the courts will be, what kind of federalisms will be ours etc. Nothing was clear. Issues of language, religion, culture too we are not clear.

What is the issue of national identity? What will be our national identities, and what not? Parties are not yet clear about these things. For the past 15 years, elections to local bodies have not been done. The local bodies are not functioning as well, and corruption is rampant. We are 3<sup>rd</sup> in South Asia in terms of corruption, and this is a reality.

The main agenda of 2006 movement was different. Was it reinstatement of parliament, or republic? Or federalism? After that, was secularism the agenda?

India has been talking, two pillar system for Nepal. What is the two pillar system? Has India itself failed in that or not? All need to think. I feel that. Thank you.

**Ramashray Upadhyaya**  
**South Asia Analysis Group**

When the card about this seminar came to me, I saw Nepal-Bharat Sahayog Manch. But so far, how a cooperation can be established, no speaker has talked. How will the cooperation take place? Two things have come up. Chandan Mishra says, mutual trust is missing. This is a very serious thing. When in 1950

Tribhuvan Bikram talked with Nehru, I was a student was 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Since then, India has never had expansionist policy towards Nepal. India has never believed in expansionism, especially after 1947.

In one side, we talked about Bharat-Nepal. We have accepted Nepal as a free and sovereign state and shall always do so. Yet, a speaker from Nepal mentioned the word 'mindset'. The word is correct; there is a mindset that has come up in Nepal, that India is a big brother, and is pressuring us. There is a vision of doubt about India, that all of their movements are doubted. On the other hand when Nepal's people establish any relation with Chinese, and if India reacts, they say, India is interfering in their internal affairs. See, in relation with two big powers, as you say, Nepal is in between. One more speaker said, Nepal is a conflicting region, between India and China. That's true. Nepalese people should decide, as to who is their true friend, and true well-wisher.

The cooperation between India and Nepal should first be defined. We are open. 1750 kilometer of our border is open. To the Nepalese people who come to India, we don't consider foreigner. They are from Nepal, from our culture, and so our brothers. We have all relations. We have no such relation with China, but, when they penetrated the Himalayan and made a road from Lhasa to Kathmandu, India was naturally alarmed. As NN Jha says, 45 or 56 Chinese culture centers are coming up in Nepal. What will come in those centers, you can think. So, through this Manch, I would desire, that first missing trust should be established, and trust be established.

I just put my few words and ask my question about what we feel and think in Nepal about this shifting paradigm. After the presidential election in American, the very first visit of Obama to Myanmar sent a clear message that strategically middle east or gulf has no more space in future politics, and westerners are feeling threat from both Asian giants, India and China. It is quite natural that they will put thrust to involve both of them, and here the value of Nepal appears. For preparation, Westerns are investing frequently in the religious sector of Nepal. Statistics show that 1.4 percent of Christians live in Nepal by population, whereas the Christian Community claims for 2.4 million for them. The reality of geopolitical perspective is a factor to be accepted by the regional forces.

In Nepal the 240 old Shah dynasty is ousted from the ruling chair, and so, the transitional phase is prolonging. In the past, power players played China card or India card time and again, but time has come to change these types of foolishness. Security concern of India, or the same for china in Nepal is natural, but without a stable government in Singh Durbar, this cannot be achieved, as the political forces are not behaving naturally, but are showing lust for power, and they will go nowhere.

A hungry person can tolerate his hunger, but the same person cannot see his children without food or clothes. As Nepal is practically tilted towards southern side, it is a must for our friends in India to ensure our prosperity. As Honorable Raj Nath Singhji said, India needs not to dictate, but to cooperate in finding solution and establish harmony. Please use your diplomatic power to find solution and stability in the Himalayan nation but not in the manner

used in the past, like in cases of engineering the 12-point agreement or, in the issue of the retired General Rukmangat Katwal. Please try to hurl the vices out of Kathmandu, and try to find the formula or solution.

### **Dr. Nirmal Mani Adhikari**

Many Confucian centers have been opened in Tarai. They were opened during the Maoist government. The fact should be noted that the Maoists were protected by the Indian state, and it has become an open secret. The Indians helped them rise to power. So the act of the Indian establishment has harmed India itself. From your perspectives and from that of others who are not in power in India, how is India going to make itself credible for this?

### **N.N. Jha**

I myself regretted the fact that Indian establishment in 2005 facilitated the signing of the 12-point agreement that conferred a sense of respectability upon the Maoists. I myself regretted that. But now, how you handle this in Nepal is your business. But I reminded you of a 1966 agreement that no Chinese presence will be ensured within 50 kilometers of the Indian border. No one can say don't have them in Nepal, but we say, don't have them close to Indian border. Some are within 3 kilometers or 2 kilometers from the Indian border. One or two are right at the place where the Chicken Neck ends.

## Dr. Ramesh Kumar Dungal

I have comments and questions to NN Jha and Sasankji. Sasankji, former foreign secretary, just rightly pointed out a new thing. I have mentioned in my article, “Understanding Nepali History in the Context of Changing Political Situation of Nepal,” a contribution to *Nepalese Studies*, volume 37, number 2, 2010, which is available on the Internet. In it, I have discussed about the concept of nationalism, in colonized countries and the concept of the colonized and non-colonized. Even at the time of Panchayat regime in Nepal, we had a description of *swadhinata*, *rastbhranirman*, and also *rashtriyata*. That was rightly borrowed from India, because people were educated in Nepal. Nepal’s history is completely different.

And, here, talking about Tarai, NN Jhaji raised a question, regarding the alienation. We have another theory these days, namely, the ‘Theory of Alienation’ itself. Cultural alienation theory says, alienation is not always from the centre; it could also be from the culture itself, leading to self-alienation by the community, not always by the centre.

Looking at the situation of Tarai, is this alliance with the Maoist related to the people’s problem in Tarai? I think, that alliance is somewhat faulty; there should be a total alliance of all the parties. Which direction is that going to? What promise have the Maoists given? Have they given any promise in Tarai? I have not seen that.

About 2 pillar system, there are a few points. Federalism, Republic and Secularism, were not promised during the time India was making consensus or helping to make consensus. These were inserted later on. And, what is happening there? What has happened to the two pillar system? Was there any discussion with people

about the changes? No discussion was ever made. Look at ILO 169, which is a very important thing for countries like India and Nepal. Colonized countries have different provisions. 169 is related to colonized countries, but Nepal was never colonized. And who is now raising the question, blaming India as expansionist? My question is, the education these people are getting is mixed with colonized concept or anti-colonized concept, and there lies the fault. Thank you very much.

### **A Participant**

There is no doubt that China is becoming a global superpower. In the later part, we talked about China. That ultimately means China is a superpower. Why is India reluctant to accept the fact that of China is going to become a super power? China has got more than 1 trillion dollar debt of American, and American had to go and convince the Chinese, that they were not going to default, when they were not able to raise. They had to personally go, that ultimately means that we are trying to deviate the fact.

Why is this happening with Indian diplomats? At a time when Indian companies are signing multibillion dollar deal with Chinese companies, why are Indian diplomats having so much problem when we are signing contracts worth multi-million dollars with China? India and China are advocate of WTO; they want to promote free trades of goods and services. Why, as I can't understand, are we unable to trade with anybody? I am a Nepali; I really want to trade with whom I want. I cannot guarantee I want to trade with only you guys. If I want, I can trade with South Africa. Why are the Indians reluctant to accept that China is dominating the global market, and you mean, we must stop dealing with Chinese as far possible?

**N.N. Jha**

As far as China is concerned, our policy is to keep engaged with them, not to confront or contain them. But this doesn't mean that we can ignore that danger. The expansionist we can see is visible, as evidenced recently in South China Sea and elsewhere. Secondly, hefty trade doesn't necessarily mean cordial relation. America and China have huge trade; America and Japan have huge trade too and ours with China too is big. So, the question is, trade is not a guarantors of good relation. Why are you so keen on Chinese expanse? Why not remain totally free of everyone?

**Shri Sasank**

We in India would not say anything; this is for Nepal's right. Don't bring China only for Indian Market. You bring China for Nepal's market. That is alright. And you know that what Pakistan is doing, and what Myanmar did. Myanmar changed its relation with China to some extent. Pakistan said, no we won't change. It is for Nepal to decide. India is only saying that the whole orientation is shifting within Asia; outside people want to have better articulation. So, you decide how you want to articulate your position.

**Shreekrishna Aniruddh Gautam**

Don't be that reluctant. This type of gathering is not just about China and Pakistan. Look at our concerns also. We love India; that is very true. But we don't hate China. We cannot isolate ourselves from China, as we share our northern border with it. This is a fact. India shares larger part of border with China than we do. You must look at the fact that India shares a larger border.

You have disputes, border fighting everywhere. You claim some part of Arunachal, and they claim some part of Arunachal. You claim some part of Laddakh, they claim some part of Laddakh. This is the situation. India should be clear what kind of relation it wants with China. We have had an ancient relations with Tibet. This is not a new creation, or new generation creation. It is an age-old relation. Tibet is now part of China.

India has been doing great deal of trade with China, despite security irritations. That young man just put here rightly. I have a suggestion to Indian friends: why doesn't India take initiative so that three-nation sit together to define a new generation relation in the region? Why don't you take an initiative that Nepal, India and China sit and sort out the difference? Just this much.

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## Day II, Session I

# Natural Resources and Development

## Experts

1. **Dr. Chandra Mani Adhikari**  
Former Chairman, National Council for Economic Research, Nepal
2. **Shri Nitin Gadkari**  
President, Bharatiya Janata Party
3. **Shri Anil Kumar Jha**  
Minister of Industry Government of Nepal
4. **Shri Vijay Jolly**  
Leader, BJP
5. **Dr. Dwarika Nath Dhungel**  
Former Secretary to the Government of Nepal, and Water Resource Expert

**Dr. Chandra Mani Adhikari**  
**Former Chairman, National Council for**  
**Economic Research, Nepal**

I thank the organizers of this grand, international seminar on India-Nepal relation. I would like to thank Deepak Adhikariji and Sunil Ambekarji, for their great efforts, that have made the seminar going with great success.

Regarding my introduction first of all, I would like to correct an information. I am not the adviser of the government anymore. In the past, I was the chairman of the National Council for Economic Research, Nepal. My topic is directly related to the model of federalism, where fiscal matter and economic matter interlink.

How we can manage and make the state sustainable while restructuring New Nepal? From the beginning of the seminar, we have been talking about the model we need to go for while restructuring Nepal. We are contemplating as to how we can restructure that. That can give us benefits of restricting. We are also discussing issues that are being raised by different section of the society.

My topic will concentrate on economic and fiscal matters of federalism, as well as on natural resources. For more than 65 years, India is running under federal system. Many people, including Indian and other scholars say, India is semi-federal. Whatever the name is, what we can learn from India regarding economic and fiscal matters, is basically a method with which can manage the natural resources especially rivers, and water resources. In a federal system, water sharing, preserving and utilization of water resources

is a vital issue. Within India, over Kaveri River, there is a big dispute between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. In Nepal, we have 6000 rivers. The river is our major natural resource. How we can use, how we can preserve it is a matter of great concern, because, we have to make mega and large scale hydro power projects there. There may be some disputes, disagreements between the state, when we run our country under federal system. Then, how can we manage those resources?

Regarding federalism in Nepal, two schools of thoughts are in people's mind. Some people are against it while some say, federalism is the last destination. There is some confusion among people. Some misunderstanding also can be spotted at points. I think, federalism is a means, not an end. So, I don't like to protest it, or blindly support it. We should have optimum solution.

Federalism needs a grand, and competent management system and technical expertise to manage it. It is like an atomic energy centre. If we manage the atomic energy station properly, we can get enormous energy; if we cannot manage it properly, we cannot handle it, it may lead to accidents. So, we should have an optimum model of federalism. Political people and intellectuals should have a clear view regarding the model of federalism as to what type of model is optimum and how we can moderate the model of federalism. We need to think of ways to manage and address the issue of equalization, inclusion, geographical balances, natural resources, resource gap, revenue gap and so on. We also need to know which model of federalism we are going for: US model, Swiss Model, or any mother model.

About federalism in our cases, two models are being suggested. Some are demanding ethnic federalism, and some for

non-ethnic one. This is a big issue, and this needs to be considered. According to size, geographical area, or resources, how can we allot economic and revenue rights to different levels of sub national government, and how can we divide and manage the country into different states and provinces? On this, one vital to be careful of is that federalization should be based on decentralization. If we just talk about rights to drop from centre to the state and transfer to local people and government, it can be like *asman se gira, khajoor par latka*. It will be dangerous a model, if we cannot provide rights to the people.

We have to handle the issue of decentralization very carefully. For the past 65 years, we have been talking about making a democratic constitution. Everyone is are trying to begin from the beginning. People in the countryside sit around fire, and the pundit or the elder starts a story, and every time a new listener joins, the story starts anew. The whole winter goes, but the story never completes. This is happening in our country. We have to stop and institutionalize all these things.

My concern, is basically the economic prosperity. Without it, we cannot conserve our political achievements. We have made a big political achievement promising drastic changes, but if we do not restructure the country in a proper modality, we will not be able to preserve our right. We may have to lose our achievements again, and struggle for rights again and again.

Economic sustainability depends on the size of government and rights to the shared with sub-national government, and the division of present and future potentialities of resources. Federalism is a very technical political system, and to make it successful every individual and family should have the behavior of a federal subject;

else we cannot make it successful. In India, there are many conflicts. Taking clues, we must reconcile between rights of fiscal commission and finance commission at central and local levels. So, I request all the distinguished people from India to share their experience and learning regarding the assignment of economic and revenue right between centre and state and about arrangement of natural resource rights. The institutional arrangement or revenue rights, economic rights and international borrowings are vital components.

When we go for federal system from the present one, it is very vital to be careful about safe landing. In the transitional phase, there may be a huge revenue gap, due to the capacity aspect of the sub-national government to collect the revenue. In one side, management cost will increase, while the revenue will not increase in proportion to the management cost. So, we have to address this issue carefully. Other things like natural resources, right to natural resources, local community rights, local level government rights, state rights etc. need to be carefully arranged for.

Two years back, an incident took place in Manang. From Gorkha District, some people went to Manang to collect *yarcha gunmba*, but the Manangis killed seven of them. In another incident, people of Melamchi said that they cannot provide water resources to others, keeping their land barren. So, they put an impediment to the project that was aiming at giving water to Kathmandu Valley. We should educate people regarding the pros and cons of federalism.

Federalism has some advantages and some disadvantages. When any new system comes, we should address the challenges first of all. We all know that about water resources, not details

studies has been done by the government so far. A historical data we can produce, and claim, we have 83 thousand megawatt of water electrify potential and the business feasibility is 42000 megawatt. While constructing a large hydro power project, one side of the project may be in one location of the state, and power house may be located in another, and the tunnel may be located in a third state. If we are unable to arrange these rights, we will be unable to make large and mega project.

Finally, this issue is also related with climate change. Our Nepali is geographically strewn in three parts: mountain, hill and Tarai, but all these parts have a relationship. If the people of mountain do some undue works, the proper victims will be the people from mountains and the Tarai. Regarding this situation and scenario, my humble request to the Indian scholars, who are closely working in these issues in India, is that, kindly suggest us what will be better, to manage all these things in future. Thank you very much.

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**Nitin Gadkari**  
**National President, BJP**

Today's subject is one of the important subject, related with development and natural resources. It is one of the my very favorite subjects, because when I was a minster, I constructed a lot of infrastructure, and that's why, I am very much interested in this subject. I feel that Ethics, Economy, Ecology and Environment are four important things for every country. For development, we need to find out what our strengths and weaknesses are.

I feel that the politics of 21st century is the politics for progress and development. And the highest priority, as far as India is concerned is the eradication of poverty. If this is the highest priority, we have to increase per capital income, GDP, happy human index, agricultural growth rate, and increase good infrastructure in the country.

Two important sectors related with development are industry and agriculture. They are very important as far as eradication of poverty is concerned. If we want to increase employment potential, we cannot achieve it without good industry and agriculture. For industry, four things are very essential: water, power, transport and communication.

Yesterday, I was in Nagaland, and in Arunachal Pradesh. Somehow, our case is that we are a rich nation with poor population. The basic problem is that wrong economic policies and bad and corrupt governance is the reason for our backwardness. First of all, what I feel is that the politicians and the society need a strong political will for development. I always use one sentence that if there is a will there is a way, and if there is no will, there will be

only surveys, discussions, seminars, committees, subcommittees and research groups. For development, more than technology and resources, a strong political will is more important.

I will share my experience. When I was a minister, I constructed Bombay-Puna Express Highway, 55 flyovers in Mumbai, and Warli-Bandra Ceiling Project. The government gave me only 10 crore rupees; I arranged 4000 crores from capital market, and completed the work of 8000 cores in 2.5 years, That experience taught me a lot about infrastructure.

Now, as far as Nepal is concerned, first of all, I will request all political leaders of Nepal that they first should have a strong political will for development. Because these are the basic issues. One month before, I had had a meeting with a former president of Bangladesh. Many times I also discuss with Pakistani people. We all are facing the problems of poverty, unemployment, price rice. These are our basic issues. Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and India have all got potentials; we are rich nation, but the tragedy is we are with a poor population. My faith is that we can solve this problem.

Industry and agriculture are important sectors, and for industry if you want to go for in Nepal, you have to create infrastructure, particularly water, road, transport and communication. For agriculture, you need irrigation, seeds and fertilizer, capital with low interest, agro-processing industries, and at the same time people employing cold storage for fruits and vegetable and we can add more.

Another important thing related with Nepal is tourism. 49% of capital investment it makes in tourism has to be used for employment generation. Nepal has a lot of potential in tourism.

Hotels, motels, and many other things can foster. If 49% of the capital investment is used for employment, it result will appear as increased per capita income and GDP.

You have to understand your strength. We are natural friends, we are very much committed to progress and development of Nepal. One thing I will request is first of all. If you want development, political leaders and society in Nepal need development-oriented approach. They should have a positive will for development.

In our party, we have a 'Good Governance Cell'. Good economic governance with the help of E-governance and development is the goal of the cell. One of our states had 2.4 percent agriculture growth rate, but because of persuasion and good policy, the growth rate went to 18 percent and changed the scenario of the state. Nothing is impossible. 'The world impossible means 'I'm Possible!'" I feel that Nepal has a lot of strength.

In government system, there are a lot of problems we are facing because of hassles in policy-making and legislation. The lapses and loopholes are used by the opposition parties, judiciary and militants. The controversy and complication create more problems. So, we need full transparency, full clarity, time-bound and result-oriented decision-making process, positive approach, team spirit and commitment for development.

Whether it is in India or Nepal, we should support good development activities of any government. Technology and capital is a secondary thing. With a good policy and good, strong political will, you can achieve your goal.

As far as Nepal is concerned, when I met its prime minister once upon a time, I suggested him one thing. Nepal has a potential of 80000 megawatt of hydro power. Now the thermal power cost per megawatt comes to 6 crores. The capital cost per megawatt for nuclear power is 15 crores, and the power will come to 12 to 15 rupees per unit. If solar power comes at 6 crore per megawatt, which was 14 to 15 crore in India when started. Wind Power, in collaboration with a German Company, has a technology in sea shore. In 30 nautical mile in the sea, they have created a windmill, having capacity of 6 megawatts, and so, naturally the green power is the best available source for us now.

There is a win-win situation. India is facing a lot of power shortage. I am not suggesting you to sell power to India; you can sell to Nepal, you can sell to anybody, but considering the transmission line, it is easy to sell to India. So first of all, only this power generation will eradicate all poverty of Nepal. That much potential you have. But whether you want to use or not, and make unanimity in that policies is an important thing. The capital per megawatt is at least 7 crore for hydropower; when you start more projects, the cost becomes less. So, you have the potential. As far as Indo-Nepal border is concerned, you can invite a global tender. You can invite a tender in such a way that it will give all power free of charge to Nepal for its people and industry.

I am also from power industry; I know, many things about it. So this hydropower, which you can sell by making transmission line, will give you tremendous revenue, and Nepal will become one of the strong economies of the world. This is your strength. If you want to sell power to China, that is your right. You can sell to Bangladesh, no problem. Wherever you get the rate, you can sell.

You cannot sell it to USA, you need transmission line. So, basically, there are lots of problems.

When I constructed Mumbai-Poona Express Highway, there were 125 writ petitions in the high court. Once I discussed with Amitabh Buchhan and Nana Chuda, saying I was very much fed up and did not want to construct the highway anymore as there were so many writs, as no one is supporting me. Both said, they would support me.

Now the problem is that, if you don't want to start any work, there is no problem. But if you start, many will come to urge you to stop. These types of negative mentalities are creating a lot of problem. So, I am telling you, create an atmosphere for development. The result will be that it will eradicate poverty from Nepal, as it will generate employment opportunity, and create good economic growth. So, hydro project is the first good thing about you.

Tourism is second. I don't know many things about Nepal, I have not visited. But from information, power and tourism are the two strength; others might be there. For power generation, go for global tender. You don't need any investment. First of all, any government, belonging to any political party, needs to be a successful planner. *Jiska raja byapari, uski janata bhikhari*. The government is supposed to control policies; it is are not supposed to run business. To any government, even if you give gold mind, they will show that it runs in loss. Governments cannot do it; governments are supposed to control policies, and current policy is important for the country.

I suggest you three things. First, politics of development and progress is the politics of 21<sup>st</sup> century. Secondly, good economic governance with the help of e-governance and development will be our mission. And the third thing you have to identify what your strengths and weaknesses are. If the strengths are tourism and power sector, you have to go for that, making a policy for that. You need a democratic government with full transparency, global tender system, technical pre-qualification, and economic pre-polling issues. It is not a difficult task.

When I was a minister, I had a budget of something like 1900 crores, and 50,000 workers with 15000 government workers in the department, but when I formed MSRDC as a corporation, I complete the work of 8000 crores with the help of only 49 people. Only 49! So, we need to change our mindsets, and it is easily available. The first express highway, a national highway of public-private partnership, from Thane to Bibandi was constructed by me, and after that in India, a lot of highways are going on. You have to tell people, that if you want good service, you have to pay more. If they want all charges free of cost, it is not possible.

In a welfare state, in a democratic system, a government is committed to the cause of the poor people. Our duty is to take from the rich and give to the poor. That is the principle of our governance. If there are poor people in Nepal, give them power free of cost. In our area, lots of people are farmers. Many are committing suicides. I suggested my government in Karnataka to give free power to the farmers, because they are committing suicide. Our government in Karnataka is giving free of charge, zero percent interest loan to the farmers. Giving anything free is not good, but the situation is so bad, that the survival of these farmers is important; we must help them.

In Madhya Pradesh and Chhatisgarh, we are giving loan in zero percent interest to farmers, with a very subsidized rate of electricity. It is not a difficult problem. In Madhya Pradesh, there is a power project run by Reliance. By taking the coal, they are giving power to the government, 2000 megawatt at 1 rupee 19 paise per unit. In Delhi, the commercial power rate is 6.5 or 7 rupees. So, take the money from industry or from the commercial people, and give it to the poor people at reasonable price, or free. It is easily possible.

Nepal can give power to the poor people, at a reasonable rate, or even free of charge. That is not a big problem. This is your strength, and I feel if you need any type of help, there are a lot of people to help you. Political atmosphere in the country is so rampant that everywhere there is politics. As far as development is concerned, we need a untied approach of all political parties, because this is an issue related with development.

Suppose we want to eradicate poverty in India. This is not an agenda of BJP or INC, but this an agenda of the country. We may have differences in political policies, but as far was the welfare of the poor is concerned, there is no problem. My feeling and request is to find out capital investment, for the strength you have, for resource you have. I don't know about mineral wealth, gas, or anything in Nepal. But I feel that first of all, try from Nepali industrialists and try to exploit it. If it is not possible, let us make a global tender and do it. Today you have to increase the process of development in a high speed. Otherwise, for a single project—as we have ourselves experiences—the project cost goes increasing every time we delay. Everywhere now there is a discussion, because the mines are not making minerals from the mines; the government

is cancelling the mines. But I don't know why. The government is responsible. It is not giving permission for three or four years.

Red-tapism is also another problem. Transparent policy, time-bound result-oriented approach, positive and constructive thinking, commitment for development of the country or of the society by and large, are the basis requirements. If this political atmosphere is there, nothing is impossible.

Lastly, I suggest one good thing to you. In BJP we are preparing an 'India Vision Document 2025'. More than 250 experts are working on it. We have 59 sectors, from education to culture, industry to agriculture, nuclear power to green power, irrigation to drinking water. All problem, we are considering, and thinking as to how we can make a vision to solve them.

I always say one thing: you can always donate an eye, but you cannot donate vision. The lack of vision is the important thing. You have to create a vision of development in the mind of the people and the politicians, and I think, by doing that you can achieve your goal. As far as BJP is concerned or India is concerned, you are our brothers; you are like our own family. Your culture, your heritage, your history is ours too. I am very much proud of it. I want to go to Pashupati Nath Mandir. For your progress and development, my government, party, experts and everyone is ready to help.

I am not a politician. Because I am a president, I am counted among politicians. I am a management student, doing a lot of developmental works in rural areas. It is very difficult to convince the people of Delhi; they don't know many things. They know only politics, so there are a lot of problems. But I feel, basically,

politics is an instrument for socio-economic transformation. I seldom come to Delhi as I am a grass-root worker. I have worked in my village, my district, for the poor people. Our basic thinking of Pandit Din Dayal Upadhyaya, which is also the socio-economic ideology of our party says, 'Antiyoda' the progress of the last man in the society, who is socially, economically, educationally backward. We are committed for them. We are to help them, and we are to eradicate poverty. My party is giving highest priority to economic agenda.

So I request politicians in Nepal, to make a vision document for Nepal vision 2025. To make a good democratic system, take good things from democratic systems from all over the world, form a good constitution, go ahead, ensure good development, good progress, eradicate poverty, increase employment potential, increase per capita income, GDP, happy human index, good health and education services. Make your country strong. From the side of BJP and from myself, I wish you best luck for your great future. Thank you very much.

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**Anil Kumar Jha**  
**Minister of Industry**  
**Government of Nepal**

First of all, I would like to thank Nitinji, for his excellent remarks regarding the Indo-Nepal relation and especially on the industrial developments and natural resources linked with the development. I also applaud him for his very satirical statements on politicians.

What we all are doing in South Asia and especially in Nepal and India need to be considered seriously. We all know that Nepal and India have been enjoying an excellent relation, which we all mentioned in yesterday's and today's sessions. We have had a long history of mutual trust, goodwill and understanding. Both the countries are very close neighbors since the historical inception of Nepal and India. Some unique features we have: we have open border, free movement of people, deep-rooted people-to-people contact and exchange, common languages, socio-cultural and religious relations, common rivers, common climate and a common tradition etc. We have good understanding between the leadership of both the countries and frequent exchange of our views with each other take place. India's contribution is highest in Nepal's socio-economic, infrastructure, health, education, rural, community and human resources development.

Nepal liberalized its itself economy with a wide range of economic reforms in early 90s and adopting a liberalized policy in all almost all sectors of investment. Private sectors of both Nepal and India have been enjoying very cordial relationship among them; they are working together for win-win, not only in bilateral matters, but also in other international arenas.

Especially about our natural resources, Nepal is well-known worldwide, because of the beauty of its territory, and the magnificent Himalayan mountainous range, parks and reserves. In order to protect the flora and fauna of the country, a number of natural reserves and protected parks have been create.

Three different intervention sectors can be distinguished as national parks, natural reserves and conservation areas. Conservation areas are dedicated to the growth and protection of high altitude medicinal plants, aromatic flowers, orchids, rhododendrons and other types of precious herbs.

Some potential tourism products in Nepal are adventure tourism, natural tourism or eco-tourism, culture tourism, health tourism, and convention tourism.

About hydro power, Nepal has a huge potential. In fact, the perennial nature of Nepali rivers and the steep gradient of the country's topography provide ideal conditions for the development of some of world's largest hydro-electric projects in Nepal. Nepal's hydropower potential has been estimated, as mentioned earlier, to be 83000 megawatt, and its economically viable potential is about 42,000 megawatt. However, the present situation is that Nepal has developed less than 1000 megawatt of hydropower. Therefore, there is a bulk of economically feasible power generation which has not been developed, utilized, or even realized so far. Besides this other multipurpose, secondary and tertiary benefits like irrigation have not been realized from the development of our rivers.

In mining and mineral sector, there are ample opportunities for investors to invest in the commercially viable mineral

commodities, available in Nepal. Altogether 63 types of minerals have been identified as viable in Nepal. In metallic mineral groups there are 21 commodities. Chemical fertilizer, insulator, ceramics, refractory mineral group is 23, gem mineral group 6, construction group 9, and in fuel mineral and geo thermal group 4 types of minerals are there. Agro-based forestry and non-timber forest products are cardamom, ginger, honey, lentil, tea, medicinal herbs and essential oils, handmade paper, and paper products, mountain goat, pashmina products, wool products.

Now, I want to make some points regarding the development through investment in Nepal. We all know, Nepal is naturally beautiful and having a diversity in culture, hard-working people and unique geo-topography, Nepal provides ample opportunities and potential for investment. Nepal is a fertile land for investment, and there are fundamentally some reasons for this. One, it is located between two emerging economic powers, India and China. With preferential access to their market, we have huge potential of growth. Our untapped natural resources, liberal rules for investment including foreign investment, easy in repatriation of forest, availability of cheap labor with good skill, cheap communication charges, homely environment to stay, warm hospitality and friendly people, open and market-oriented trade policy, business visa to investors or to the representatives of the company, and to the dependent of them, residential visa for the investors making an investment more than USD 1 lakh or equivalent, member of SAARC (We are members of SAARC, SAFTA, WTO, BEMISTIC, MIGA, and ICSIDC,) one stop services facility, investor's identity card system, double-taxation avoidance agreement, DTA with India and major economies, bilateral investment protection and promotion agreement with

India, France, Germany, Mauritius and Finland, simplified exit procedures, if needed CAZ, EPZ system, provision of board of investment to settle investment issues and problems are some of them. We also have tax incentives facilities, income tax rebut, concessional rates of custom duty, excise duty and refund, duty drawback, bounded warehouse facilities, opening of foreign exchange accounts, visa facilities etc. We also have the following potential sectors of investment: energy, hydro power, alternative sources of energy like solar, windmill, biogas etc. Mineral-based cement industry, natural gas, petroleum, precious stones, health tourism, tourism in high altitude, bungee jumping, tracking etc are other lucrative areas. In IC, ICT, BPO, higher education, health sector, hospital and diagnostic centers there is a lot of probability and possibility. We all have agro-forest based manufacturing, herbs plantation and processing, dairy processing, and the lastly, the infrastructure development, construction of airports, railways, road and public transpiration system. So, Nepal has large potential of investment, and we have the natural resources etc

Now, consiering the time constraint, I want to clarify one or two things, in regard with the issues mentioned by Chandramani Adhikariji regarding federalism and development. First of all, I would like to clarify you all that people in Nepal are in favor of a federal, republican democratic Nepal. It is not a matter of fiscal federation, rather; it is against discrimination, exploitation, marginalization of a particular sector of the society by the rest of the sectors of society. It is a search for honor, self-respect, identity, access, representation and ownership in the state. Of course, there are special rights on natural resources and exploitation of taxes they give to the central government; that's why Nepali society demands the federalism not due to see whether it is fiscally viable

or not, but to eradicate the discrimination and exploitation of a large sector of the society by centralized mono-lingual, mono-cultural small group of the country. And, that's why, Chandramaniji, and all of you! I would like to request you that federalism in Nepal is not for becoming rich, but for equality, and once we have the federal system in Nepal, and then we will ask Chandrmaniji and Dhungelji and all friends, how the federal states will survive. The politicians will design, and the experts will have to see how that will survive. Once our duty finishes, your duty will start, and that will be better, I think.

Though I didn't want to talk on this, but as a politic activists since unlike Gadkariji, I have come from activism to industry, I am learning as a industry minister. About federalism in Nepal, we will discuss there; it is our domestic issue, we will settle there.

Finally, the concern of India and its leaders, that I have been listening to since yesterday, are genuine. Our cultural diversity, instead of being protected, is facing attacks by many foreign agencies, and the government of Nepal is aware. But as you know, during transition, many people try to take undue advantage. You also had such transition; you used to settle issues in one hand, and in another, people would raise disturbance. Some of them were so series that and India had to be divided. When a form of rule changes, those of the previous rule try to attack, and the politicians, and the responsible citizens need to look about that.

People in Nepal want a good relation with India. They want to have good relation with leaders, diplomats, and receive help from them. Nepal wants to see India as a secured, prosperous world power and hope from India, that it gives all possible supports, because, we have 1850 kilometers border with it, and our cultures,

our languages, our civilizations are all one. The extension of relation from Lumbini to Sarnath or Bodhgaya, or four dhams: Badri, Kedar, Mukti or Pashupatinath, or from Janakpur to Ayodhya, or Swargadwari to Kanyakumari cannot be forgotten. Mistakes take place from all sides; we can solve them any moment. When there is a lot of love and sense of belongingness, we don't use the less respecting pronoun 'tum' instead of more formal 'aap'. A mother gives birth to us; we call her 'tum', when we call our father father 'aa'. Sometimes to our own people if we say, 'tum', we must not mind.

I thank Gadkariji, and BJP. You had sent friends in our general conference. You had sent Jolly sahib, and he had rendered great help. So, though I am a minister, I took leave for this conference. In future too let's keep relations intact, all all level: party-to-party, government-to-government, people-to-people. Thank you very much.

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## Vijay Jolly, Leader, BJP

Friends, first of all, on your coming to the pure land of India, I welcome you all from the side of Overseas Wing of BJP, and greet you all. Honorable Nitin Gardaki, placed before us, a concrete vision about development of Nepal. Whether Anil Jhaji has called or Mahatoji, or Madhav Nepalji or the Maoists, I shall tell it through you, that BJP has always been in favor of a friendly relation with neighboring countries. A peaceful neighbor is in the best interest of BJP, and we want a strong, stable, prosperous, healthy, peaceful Nepal. In development, we want to see Nepal coming up, and for that great project, if BJP's nine government working in the country are ready to help. In 2014, the BJP government that is coming up in the centre, will render all help. We want to assure you of that.

In repeated talks, our relations have been getting stronger. 55 Lakh and more people of Nepali origin, are our people. Adhikariji is in Nepali Mission, in touch with Nepali diplomats, Nepal Society, and Nepali intellectuals. Young friends like Sunil Ambekarji are working to make relations stronger. The way they have collaborated with Deepak Adhikariji to found Bhara-Nepal Sahayog Manc and to organized this conference is salutary. Yuvaraj Ghimire and other famous journalists, intellectuals are here. Chanda ji and Suresh Malla who were ministers, and representatives from Madhes-based and other parties too are here. Whose name should I take? I respect you all.

The BJP is always in favor of the fact that our dialogue continues with you, and we want to be your allies and contribute and cooperate you in all you do. I thank Deepak Adhikari. When this program was being planned, I was privileged to meet and

talk with him. Nepal coordinator of the Overseas Wing, Ninali Rawali deserved thanks; she played a crucial role in making this program a great success. I greet her. Jai Hind. Jai Nepal-Bharat Sahayog Manch.

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**Dr. Dwarika Nath Dhungel**  
**Former Secretary, Government of Nepal, and**  
**Expert of Water Resources**

First of all, I would like to thank organizers for giving me this opportunity, and I wish that efforts they have started bear fruit.

I am really in a perplexed situation now, after hearing Mr. Gadkar ji, and our Minister Anil Jhaji. What should I talk, what should I say? I had prepared a paper, which talks about the relationship between Nepal and India on water resources. I would like to mention here, that I was given a topic to speak on natural resources. Natural resources covers a number of things. I am going to request my colleague Devesh Jha also to speak, taking some of my time, so that he will be able to share his views on natural resources. If anybody is interested, he or she can add.

The theme of this seminar is “Nepal-Bharat Relations: Consolidation and Exploration of Prospects for Extended Cooperation.” When I was approached, I had told the organizers that I am was not the person to be invited; there were other people. May be I wrote a book, with a colleague on water resource published by a European publisher in 2009; and because of that, I have been invited. I was really reluctant to come, because I am not an expert of this regard.

Honorable chair person and distinguished ladies and gentlemen! I would like to mention very clearly that in this part of the world, it is not only power that is going to be scarce in the days to come; it is water that is going to be even more scarcer. In this regard, even one of your good think tanks—Strategic Foresight

Group—based in Mumbai has come out with a beautiful book on water problem of South Asia. I would be happy to share those things with you after my presentation. So, having participated in that dialogue, I had written something on Nepal-India water resource relation. I request our colleagues, here in Delhi, who are in a position to influence, not to think only of power. Power we will decide, within ourselves, but in terms of relation, we need to think in the field of water for the benefit of both the countries so that we will be benefitting mutually.

Whatever is given to us by nature should be utilized by us in a beneficial manner. We also need to leave something for our posterity. Just to give you a few figures, Nepal in terms of water resources, is the water tank of the Ganga Basin. Please remember, Nepal is the water tank of Ganga Basin, because, despite the fact that Nepal occupies only 13 % of Ganga casement area, it contributes about, during the lean flow, 75 % of the flow in the Ganges, from the rivers flowing from Nepal. Having said that let me also mention—I feel happy to mention—that people-to-people relationship from the point of view of water is quite intimate. The Ganges in Kashi, and Bagmati in Pashupati Nath are the two rivers for whom we have reverence since time immemorial. But even from the point of view of official relation, our relation growth is almost 138 years old. The first correspondence, officially, and the agreement for water relationship goes back to 1878 AD. Since then, we have had treaties and understandings with India for almost all the major rivers. For example we have the treaty of 1930 and 1954 on Koshi, treaty of 1959 on Gandak, and the treaty of 1996 on Mahakali or Saradi on your side. In addition, if you refer to the understandings reached during the visits of the ministers and prime ministers, practically, all rivers are covered for cooperation, but in

terms of institutional arrangements, we have created nothing. Think of any institution from minister level commission to the technical level commission. There are 9 various committees formed to deal with the issue of water between the two countries. Achievement? I am sorry to say, you are not satisfied, we are not satisfied. I am saying on the basis of the records of the minutes. The last meeting we had on water resource relation was last year, in 2011, and if somebody goes to see, the minutes are available on the website. If somebody does minute analysis, we are both unsatisfied. Something is wrong with us. We have some problems. If you need some of our technicians, they will come out. They will say, you have not done this this, and this. Same is the case with professionals coming from Delhi. So, you are not satisfied.

It is not only professional or policy makers that are not satisfied. Even the experts Ramaswamy Aiyar, Ugin Mehali, Jagat Mehta your former foreign secretary, known in the field of water resources relations between countries of this region, are not satisfied. So, something is wrong somewhere. So, something is wrong. But this doesn't mean that we don't need to cooperate; we have to cooperate for the benefit of our two countries.

Last year also, I came here to make a presentation to your prestigious institution called IDSA (Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis). I was brought there to share my views with regard to the relation between India and Nepal water resources. I had suggested them—I suggest it now too, taking clues from Gadkari's presentation—that if your party is thinking about working out a region, in that context, please go through all the treaties and understanding which you have made with us; do some objective analysis as to learn what has been done as promised, and what has not been done. Analyze why if not done yet,, and how to go about,

prepare a working paper from your side. But that working paper should be real professional working paper doing objective analysis.

Because I had the opportunity to be a part of several dialogues at both government and public level, I am suggesting you. Try to do some objective analysis and also be more transparent. I suggest both the governments that in dealing with water resources, there is a need a change the mindsets. Think of water now, think of water, not of power alone.

In the context of Nepal, new dimensions have emerged during the years: they are federalism and climate change. I think those things should also be taken into account. I think, what is needed is, we have to accept the fact that water is getting scarce day by day, and it should be used accordingly. Develop a feeling of mutual trust and faith between both Nepal and India for sincere cooperation in the sector, and change the mindsets. Behave more transparently and move forward in such a way that we can utilize nature's generosity for the benefit of the people of both the countries. There is a price tagged in the value added water; that needs to be taken into account.

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## Day II, Session II

# **Economic Ties between Bharat and Nepal: Towards Furthering Closer Relationship**

### **Experts**

- 1. Shri Ashok Vaidhya**  
Industrialist, and Vice President, Federation of  
Commerce and Industries, Birgunj
- 2. Prof. Dr. Anand Kumar**  
Professor of Sociology, JNU
- 3. Shri Harendra Pratap**  
MLC, Bihar (BJP)
- 4. Dr. Nirmal Mani Adhikari**  
Professor of Mass Communication, Kathmandu  
University

**Ashok Vaidhya**  
**Industrialist, and Vice-President, Federation of**  
**Commerce and Industries, Birgunj**

I have been asked to speak on India-Nepal economic relation, and I thank you for that. I am neither an economist, nor am I highly qualified, but, my 35-year old experience in trade and industry, will perhaps enable me to talk something about Nepal-Bharat relation. For me, it's like showing a *diya* to the sun, to speak in front of the scholars in front of me. Still, let me make attempts.

Nepal, as you all know, is a land-locked country. More than 70% of the total import is from India. Talking of economy, maximum trade is with India, and everything in economy is going in favor of India. Because of a huge trade deficit, the currency 100 to 160 is going to become 100 to 168.

In 1996, when IK Gujaral signed a Nepal-India agreement, many Indian industries came into Nepal, and trade deficit increased. In four years, India changed something, and the deficit increased, and many Nepali industries had to be closed. Some Indian investment fell too. If we are to decrease this trade deficit, government of India needs to amend something in the treaty, in relation with global trends. I will place before you some data for clarity.

India exports to Nepal, products worth 2,80,000 million rupees, when Nepal exports good worth 45,800 million rupees. This is more than 6 times deficit. If we see the latest data, when Nepal's people come to India for treatment, they spend 25 % of the total country's economy; more than 10% of the total budget is spent in India as educational expense. Tourism is no exception.

From India, 2 lakh tourists go to Nepal every year, when from Nepal, more than 6 lakh tourists come to India. There is no data about expense in marriages etc. In railway's material transit, there is a trade of millions from Nepal. In east central railway along Raxaul, there is maximum income.

I am saying some sweet and acrid things. In our inaugural session, Raj Nath Singhji and Kushiyariji talked about unbroken relation of Nepal and India. Whenever I come to programs, the talks of such relations sound good, and in economy, the same is not reflected. In Indo-Nepal relation, economy is the most important. Along Raxaul, there is so much of transit of goods. Around 6 percent additional penalty Nepali businessmen pay, and this slides down to Nepali people. If the same is evaluated, crores of rupees every month, goes as damage.

Today, inside the border, in my opinion, at Jogbani border, a road has been made, while all other roads are bad. In the trade of millions of tons, at least the roads should be good. In our relations, I want to mention those points where there are hurdles. In a way, we say, Nepal is listed as a poor nation; but in all exports of India to Nepal, there is service tax. This is a true and acrid fact. You will be astonished that there is higher education tax levied by India to Nepal. The question is not of tax, but if India is giving a lot of support to Nepal, the case should have been different.

Many students of Nepal come to India to study, but at the same time, you charge higher education tax. So, people ask me if India is taking higher education from us, and is returning our money as support. This is a serious matter. In one way, we talk about most favored nation. History confirms that whenever a notification comes from India, it nowhere mentions a clause like 'except for

Nepal?. There is no exemption in anything for the most favored nation. You dump all nations under such notifications.

All of our industries use raw material from India. Sometimes, you block clinker export, or lentil export or rice export. All know, in an open border of 1700 kilometers, materials anyhow need to go and since two countries cannot live without one another. It will be best for India to keep Nepal out of such notifications, as such notifications change after a month of two.

To make strong economic relation, there is a need of special desk between India and Nepal, for dealing with any economic problem and notification. For the last ten years, I have come here in many delegations. I was in Sher Bahadur Deuba's delegation. I came with Prachanda and Madhav Nepal too, but, if I tell you the data—some are lying as they are— there have been no improvements. So, a Nepal-Bharat cell is necessary.

I am placing these facts so that we strike at the real issues, so that we can find out what we can do to enhance the economic relations. We have one geographical and cultural relations; both the countries can develop common grounds for tourism. In Nepal too, there is a good trade of tourism. India has its own. If the two work together and advertisement, both can take a great benefit.

Today, in Nepal, there is 42000 megawatt hydro-power potential, but only 650 megawatt is being produced. If Indian investment is increased, and more power is generated, both the countries can benefit.

Minerals have not yet been explored optimally; they like untapped. There is high potential of minerals in Nepal. Inside Europe, limestone mines are depleting. The Europeans are going

to import cement from India. In the days to come, I think, if we concentrate on minerals jointly by the two countries, we can export cement to India from Nepal. About herbs, we have high potential. Inside Nepal, railway has a high potential of extension. Today, a large problem of traffic exists in Nepal, and a huge sum of Nepal's budget goes to petroleum. If inside Nepal, India extends railway with Nepalese support, then, a big economic benefit can be ensured to both the nations.

Along with it, for such joint ventures, peace in Nepal is necessary and efforts are being made, as you all know, to ensure the same. Since Nepal lacks political stability, many of Indian projects have been halted, and this is an impediment to economic development. Two days before, I read in a newspaper, that pipeline between Amlekhgunj and Raxaul is being laid. Let me tell you, the project is not going to be viable in Nepal. It will take a lot of time, as that needs land annexation. The old Raxaul-Amlekhgung railway line, that was in use, can be used for the time with some reconstruction. This will be done in time, and in less cost.

In the end, I won't say many things. There are experts; they will place their ideas. As a most favored nation, how we can minimize trade deficit, we need to think. With these works, I wind up, thanking you all, and wishing that Indo-Nepal friendship remain immortal.

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**Prof. Dr. Anand Kumar**  
**Professor Department of Sociology, JNU**

For me, it is a happy surprise that in this conference hall in Delhi, importantly, we are discussing Nepal-India relation. Often, when Indian friends come together, they speak in English, and the helter is in the officers of the two countries as to who is to be invited, who talks, who doesn't. When non-governmental talks are organized, they come up during crisis; either India or Nepal calls for its, saying that the relations are going wrong, and need to be saved. But, in this way, with elaborate arrangement, this seminar is unique and different. I met Adhikakriji two months back. Today, in such a peaceful and well-managed way, we are discussing so openly. This is neither in the nature of the Indians, or in that of the Nepalese. I congratulate you; you are taking this incredible initiative, which is unlike our nature.

In relation with economics, social and political facets of our relation, we have the challenge to see them discretely. Only then, we will be inspired to change our behavior, considering how much we are harming, and how much benefiting, what we should do, and what not.

I have my own consciousness, my information about Nepal. Banaras has been an unprecedented centre during Nepal's people's movement during my student life. We, for the first time, organized an unprecedented student movement, when BP Koirala came to Banaras after being released from Jail in 1967-68 and was welcomed by Nepal Vidhyarthi Sangh. Since then, till today, there have been many come and go to many in Kashi, Delhi, and Kathmandu. Many events have been arranged. One in jail those days is a PM. A PM of those days is in jail.

In India, those who criticize government policy in the parliament are government's spokesman, and use the carbon copy of the earlier policies. Students have become teachers, and teachers have become chancellors. But as time changed, things deteriorated.

I myself have been on the point that India-Nepal relation is neither at the hands of Indian officers and leaders, nor under tradesmen of India. It has three reasons. First, is historical. See the policy makers of India; I can say without any grudge, and say with guilt that they are mistreating the nations under their control, be it Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka or Bhutan, in response to the way the outer world treats them. But, in order to deliver India from this, Nepal cannot do anything alone; nor can Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan etc.

SAARC was organized, but it became a headache for India. SAARC criticizes India more than the way India is criticized in the UN. India can neither accept, nor dispense with SAARC. We need a third way.

You mentioned Gujral Saab. Before Gujral Saab tried, many years ago, NGO's of India had tried, and it had been said, apart from the British tradition, India needs a Himalayan policy to consolidate with responsibility the relations with its brother nation in the Himalayan. For, India has an indispensable relation with the Himalayas. But now, you can never implement such a dream; you consider the Himalayas your *zamindari*.

Smaller a nation, more pronounced and sensitive is its nationality. It is its treasure. The Indians have many more things, apart from nationality, to live with, in the world. But for Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Burma, Afghanistan, their nationality is a great

treasure, and it was the nature of the British to neglect that, because they used to neglect Indian nationality too. The Indian officials today should rise above that nature of the British. We need to see, how Indian moves support economic nationalism, cultural nationalism and political nationalism. How much it supports. Any program in support will be accepted, no matter whether the Maoists or royalists are in the government. This regional hegemony is our guilt, which is true for all big nations, not just India. Some

Nepali friends think, if the steering of Nepal goes into Chinese hand, everything will be righted; they should learn lessons from Tibet's case. With Tibet as an independent nation, Nepal and China's agreement was better, but slowly, a big nation ate up a smaller nation, as a big fish devours a smaller one. Today, when Tibet's plea is not being listened to in any formal forum. Same is the way people might think about India in relation with Nepal.

My former speaker made by task quite easy by foregrounding facts about relations between India and Nepal, characterized by specialty and uniqueness. The relation of culture and civilization are flowers of paper; they are neither worth keeping, nor worth discarding. When Nepali people come for pilgrimage, education, health, business or job, they know, how police, leadership or the society treats them.

Another problem, which once again, needs to transcend the sphere of politics, is the question of cultural hegemony. Nepal, like India, is trying to become self-criticism as India is doing. In India, on the question of caste, communalism or secularism, or of women's role and condition, many courageous movements are going on internally, and we don't need to be criticized by foreign, Christian missionaries. India's new daughters are appealing with

courage for reformation in certain questions. The Dalits do need anyone's certificate; they are voluntarily rising up with power of vote to reform certain caste issues of India, to remake Indian social structure in a democratic way. But, when issues of Nepal come up, I don't know why they think Nepal as a thing kept at home. In Nepal, if you cannot assist the movement of reformation and justice, why do you stand with the adversarial powers? Be it in the name of stability, it is good to make relation with them. In case you choose to go with the 250 people in the parliament, which is like weighing toads—and in that case, you cannot do anything including hydro electric project—some people will come up and criticize you as expansionist. Some say, a leader sold a river. This is what the opposition too will. The people in the power will not have the courage to take one-sided decision and sign agreements, because, as you said, all delegation of PMs signed beautiful agreements, but during enactment, things went wrong. Again, another PM and his delegation came, reminded people in the South Block, but things never got corrected.

Among Indian policy makers, there is a concept of cultural hegemony. As in a family, when a smaller brothers, sisters, daughter-in-laws, daughters, talk with those who have family feuds, why should you grudge? We are angry when Nepal talks with China the giant in the neighborhood. You are asking, why Baburam or Prachanda after becoming Prime Ministers go to Beijing instead of Delhi? Who are you to ask, and to define relations? You say, it's a matter of tradition. You need to analyze the outcome of such tradition.

The gaps of mistrust are getting deeper. Give opportunities to change them. If you cannot, allow people from Nepal to change it. Have some trust in your own allies, if there are cultural relations.

There is no doubt about cultural relations. No one can snap the ties between Pashupati Nath and Kashi Vishwanath; the relation between Nepali, Hindi, Maithili and Sanskrit. No one can cut them. Nepali and Chinese can never be sister languages. Yet, give some autonomy; else, how much harm it brings, you might have reckoned from the fallouts so far.

The third thing I have to say is about China. In all of its policies of economic reformation, India has no estimation of China's challenge. India was defeated by China in 1962. So, be its smallest issue where China is likely to benefit, India is worried, and airs its concern not only with Nepal, but also with America, accusing them of making China stronger. China and India relation will take time to improve. You need to take that sensitivity into account. Be it your economic planning. You talk about railways: you make railway with Indian money, and Chinese soldiers will use it. You must know that in the present century, no one will fight field wars. Whenever China builds roads, bridges or anything etc., that becomes a string theory in India's analysis. It is viewed as China's policy to cover from Kashmir to Andaman with soldier, naval fleet and territorial both. China's presence in Kashmir, Laddakh and Tibet, up to islands in Indonesia, for security agencies is the same thing. When China makes a road in Nepal, we see it with the same mistrust. I think, the spectacles are wrong. But unless the spectacles are upon our eyes, hundreds of your interpretation will do no good. We need to seek domains of win-win, acceptable to both.

Another sector, as you suggested is education. In today's India, education and health are being commercialized; this is a bad news for India but good for Nepal. Nepal's businessmen, if

they invest in India with a joint proposal, can gain a lot. There's a university, *Sikkim Manipal University*! Manipal is in Karnataka, and Sikkim in the lap of the Himalayas; the two states made the university, and it is franchising everyone, including Nepal. The same can take place with other universities on the condition that Nepal's investors want to invest in education and health. For treatment, there is no need to come to Apollo; Apollo might want to extend its branches in Birgunj and Bhairahwa; if it sees profit. Capital will go there, where there is a chance of gain. I don't know what is the policy of Nepal the state, but its people should take this as an open door.

At present we are standing at such a juncture, where as you said it so well, that in terms of health, education or religious tourism, Nepal is in the loss. Getting it right is like straightening a dog's tail. You attempt to correct the policies, and it coils back and we keep trying.

When India-educated people became foreign ministers in Nepal, we said, increase money for BP Koirala Foundation, build some hostels at Benaras, Gorakhpur, Lukhnow, Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta where Nepalese students come, and start some fellowship. We need to do something. India's business community should feel ashamed; they have been living there since decades; but how much have they built might be a case of shame; they might have built some *dharmasala*, or extended a room in a temple.

After many years of wait, today, the citizen power of Nepal is so courageous that it can criticize its own government, and government of India; from this critique, I am hoping for a good outcome, in the form of an agenda for Nepal-Bharat partnership. Let it not be decided by South Block, or royal palace, or

parliaments; let it be decided by people; let it be a people's agenda. There are eight or nine aspects: agriculture, industry, commerce, energy, environment, education, health, cultural relations and so on. If you consider these aspects, some can become dreams of India and Nepal—dreams of the common people, and dreams of the women.

I am here to give you three good news. I don't mean you will do anything new; but three movements in South Asia, where walls of nationalities will not bar, can become common. One is women's movement. Women of India and Nepal have established a strong sisterhood, without waiting for males to be with them. Because their crisis is common, and is a fallout of the unity of global women's movement. Women of India and Nepal are understanding one another's language, one another's grievance.

Another issue is the movement of human right. You might like or not, all government—be it in Nepal and India—are always guilty of human right violation, and the critics always put them into difficulty. Those, whose rights have been denied, remain neglected. In this, human right activist of India and Nepal are not nationalist; people like Kuldin Nayyar, J.C. Sacchar and forums like PUCL, have no problem criticizing India. Similarly, some people have come up in Nepal too. The economic ramification of human right is an important aspect, and a strong voice and solidarity has come up, and media solidarity is very important and freedom of press is a part of human right.

One of our friends, a journalist is sitting here. I won't mention his name. Time to time, he has been writing about follies of India and Nepal. He was even arrested by Nepal government, and India government doesn't like him, but we need more of such

people, who with courage, stand with truth and help our society, and expose the follies.

The third one is environmental movement. When the critics criticize India's government for performing wrongs in Uttarakhand, Arunachal and Laddkah, the Indian environmentalists accept it as a criticism of friends, not of India. They do know why capitalism is not functioning well. Often, international companies and local industrialist want to eat up all jungles, mountains, rivers and trees, and convert into cash, and deposit not in India, but in Swiss Bank. So, ecological solidarity and ecological democracy are necessary. Nepal is more aware, because, Nepal is on the loss due of Indian and Chinese mistakes. Such a unity about rivers, water management, mountains, or forest, or herbal agriculture for Ayurveda to hydro power as basis of economic development can become more easier due to environmental solidarity.

The unity of women, human right and environmental unity need to be accepted in our contemplation. If this two-day seminar frames a single agenda, with eight to ten aspects, I can assure, that it will be an incredible task.

In India, people are so impatient with the present government, and a new government is coming; but they don't have any estimation of Nepal, because they don't have estimation of India even. They are leaders of their own region. Two parties, Congress and BJP, are not in position to contest for more than 150 seats; they neither have courage, nor the necessary will. How could they understand the Himalayas, when they don't understand their own nation? If a compound, composite Himalayan policy comes up as a result of this seminar, which will have Nepali majority,

such a policy will be in favor of Nepal, and will incorporate the Laddakh alongside the concerns of Bhutan, Tibbet, Sikkim, Arunachal, Uttarakhand Jammu Kashmir and Himachal. Whatever you say, be convinced that if you sit in a corner, nothing will ever happen.

Wherever you organize such a seminar, concerns like the one aired by Nepal today will be aired by everybody. Be it in Himachal, Uttarakhand or Arunachal, same concern will come against Delhi, as is Nepal's language, Nepal's concern. Economic relation, exploitation of natural resources, education and health dependence, as between Kathmandu and Delhi, is also true for Simla and Delhi, Nainital, Dehrudoon with Delhi. There is no comprehensibility of vision; it is going on in the fashion of a cosmopolitan civilization. That is bringing harm to our Himalayan belt.

Many new things have figured up in the discussion. If people from ministries were here, they would learn more things. I suggest that this attempt, this program, brings up a Delhi Declaration, which will air people's agenda, setting goals to attain in six months or six years.

Lastly let me say, Indian media, Indian political establishment, and business establishment have gone into ignorance. Everything is being run by our bureaucracy and security. India's international politics and security is their only concern. So, Nepal or Bhutan or Sri Lanka are never taken into account in issues other than these. In other issues, we are all falling apart. In one way, we are saying, we are becoming global power; on the other, we say, now, such globalization has no future, because this is a jobless growth; it is exclusive. As a result, when India is failing

to contain itself, the voice from the neighbor will set it beyond priority number 4 or 5.

We need to make a citizen's agenda; I am confident that it will work. I have been in touch with friends in Nepal for many years. Their good will is beyond doubt. Yours and ours common citizen's agenda, if brought on the foreground, can revitalize the relations. If we can make such an agenda, that will be a great news for all.

I thank you for coming to Delhi, in spite of your busy schedules. Thank you very much.

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**Harendra Pratap**  
**MLC, Bihar (BJP)**

In around 1989, when I was in Nepal for the first time, I had a different way of viewing Nepal. Why to go to Nepal? Because, there, foreign goods are available for cheap price. That was a simplistic thinking: we can go to Kathmandu and buy foreign goods. The second reason was, Nepal's people came here in India, and about them, we thought they were just ABCD's: *Ardali*, *Bera*, *Chaukidar* and *Darwan*. We thought them fit only for such jobs. By these aspect of Nepal inside India, I too was bound. Later I realized how guilty India was, about such misconceptions.

That time, due of political developments, there was an economic sanction. With me was Sarju Rayji, and we were in Nepal. We wanted to know Nepal from every angle. Salt was available 40 rupees a kilo in the mountains; we said, if economic section was a result of the hurting of a person's ego, the nation is going against us, and what are we to do?

India, if it has done wrong, has faulted in two more areas. We remember Sitaji before Ram; Nepal comes before India. When I had told the same thing, our Ambassador had gone angry with me. Who is he to decided Nepal-India relation? What is his competency? Today too at Puri, when all ornaments of Bhagawan Jagannath are changed, an Indian cannot do; only Nepal's king or prime minister can do that. In every 12 years, when we perform *jalabisekh* at Rameshwaram, an Indian has no right; only the king of Nepal has the right for that.

I am deeply pained by the way India looks down upon Nepal. 83% assistance India gives, is getting down; I say, making it zero. Rulers of India are guilty of serious mistakes.

You could start a medical college in Nepal, and people would treat themselves there. Could not India think that? When there was controlled economy, no Nepal was considered. Higher education, health, and education for the people of Nepal were never discussed. People from Nepal needed to come to Benaras for education. I can see, India's best institutions are being established there, where the rich ones can send their kids. Dehradun is chosen, or Darjeeling, because the climate is best for their children coming out of AC, who cannot tolerate hot weather.

I have been visiting Sikkim for the past many years. Can't we establish such institutions in Nepal? Why should Nepali students come to India? What's wrong for us in making Nepal self-reliant? Is it a crime? We are getting along, making Nepal dependent. If your vision is wrong that way, and if any foreign power comes and plays there, why do you cry? They will play, because, you never saw Nepal in such a way that it should develop, become self-reliant and respectful. India has never thought about this in its policy.

I have seen one more thing. When a movement was going on about Sikkim— I visit Sikkim almost every year—a cartoon had been drawn, depicting India as a serpent with Sikkim in its belly, and its head towards Nepal. India can never be a serpent anymore; because no party is getting majority in India, as Anandji said, unlike in 1984 when, by mistake, a party got majority.

We say to the Indian administration that for people in Nepal, you need to come up with such a concept of development exclusively for Nepal. When development is considered, we say, India and Nepal have a high 42000 megawatt hydro power potential. I say, don't let that happen, for that will heavily destroy

the Himalayas. 4 or 5 mgwt projects can be constructed, but if you take up big project, you will play with the Himalayas, leading to its destruction that will ultimately fall upon you. I saw that in 2007, big projects were being built upon Tista with commissions among pleaders and dealers. Tista broke it, and Sikkim was cut off from India.

The Himalayas are soft mountains; we can make use of its resources, through smaller megawatt plants. Since it is a volcano prone area, big projects cannot sustain. I saw the Sikkimese people cry. There is a hill called Jangu, which is a protected area. Taking money, they gave their land to the government. The restricted region of the hill started seeing the inception of big dams, and upon the entire hill, the type of sliding of land started. People are terrorized, and they have no place to go. You might go and see that they are on strike in Gangtok and Darjeeling. What are you doing?

For the development of its economy today's Nepal can have a development model based on eco-friendly contemplation. I agree, that its economy is very deplorable. Sikkim has been annexed, but you know, inside India, current growth was highest for Sikkim. Bihar ranked at number 3 with 21.9 percent growth rate. But Sikkim got at 30%; they have banned organic farming.

Inside Delhi, there is so much of disease. If you bring organic material, they will buy, because they have money but no organic good. With natural manure, or any type of organic production, there is an immense market.

A friend brought potatoes from Nalanda. They were so big, but as you cut, they were rotten inside. Organic farming is the first priority. Second, Nepal's medical science is failing. When CP

Thakur was the minister, I was, by mistake, taken into one of his committees. Once I asked the director Agrawal of AIMS, which medicine has no side effect.

He was an honest man; he said, there was no such medicine. This science, this technology, is killing us. Ayurvedic medicine is in high demand. Many multinational companies are selling tonics in the name of Himalayan herbs. They sell beauty cream, and we never know whether it is from the Himalayan. Can we open research centre of Ayurveda or Naturopathy in Nepal? I say, we need to make a different thinking about a different medical science in Nepal.

About employment, I say, 75% of the people of Nepal are dependent on agriculture, but the jhum cultivation has no surety; we can think and change this economy. Today, if, bamboo use is made high, it can make a difference. Go into Delhi's market; bamboo products come from Assam. Bamboo chairs, dining table etc. and sold, and the demand is going up. It is quite costly. It comes from Assam and Manipur and is difficult to import. From Nepal, it can directly come to UP or Uttaranchal; it will benefit both the countries.

One economy is never a follower of another. If you follow US economy, you will die and India is dying. First, it followed Soviet and died. One's economy should be based on needs, climate, interest and nature. Allow people to raise self-economy. When God made you, he has managed your resource, but he will not search and put it into your mouth. What resource do you have?

In Kathmandu at a University, I said, whatever resources you have, make a data of them and based on it, identify what industry you can raise. It is not necessary that the industry at one

place, runs here too. Considering the need, raw material and the employment it generates, we can make a new model of Nepal's economy. I stress on three sectors: IT, industries, and tourism.

IT has a boom now; the best climate for IT sector as is Bangalore. For Nepal every village and town can become like Bangalore. Climatically, Bangalore was considered best for IT. Think whether you can make Nepal a hub of IT, and can harness its merit. We can export people not as labor, but as intellectuals. So, let's think of IT.

Second, in industries. Find the needs, and establish an industry that addresses it. Cotton potential is huge. Today also, Nepal's clothes are coming, but giving it an urbanized look, we can develop cotton economy. So far, we never thought about expanding it. So, an industry-based sector that can be considered—small it might be—giving employment to people.

The third one is tourism. I might give a different view. Tourism, the name itself, is a very dangerous poison. I have seen Goa! Yes, if it is cultural tourism it is good. Come, worship Lord Pashupatinath. But, if you come and want to make it a Goa beach, that will strike our civilization.

The way they look at our mothers and sisters! Block them. They come sick; we treat them. If you want to take benefit—as Ramdevji started and I also went with Saligramji to see it work—make places here where people come and gain health.

In our economy and culture, anyone's hegemony is not accepted. I have been shouting for a long time. The road at Birgunj is difficult to commute; why such sin? Be it a road at Birgunj, Biratnagar or Uttar Pradesh, give good roads to Nepal. If India

doesn't improve, I say, India can never improve. The SSB is making road. If people of Nepal do not guarantee India's security, your army cannot do it either.

Due to the smuggling of fake currency, India's economy is crumbling. You are unaware of it. What kind of an economist are you? You must have seen that if Nepal became self-reliant, it would benefit you; you would gain more. Today, in India's economy, one of the biggest risk is fake currency. You have banned 1000 rupee notes; how much will you ban? How many SSB jawans will you employ?

There are other relation; we need to make them more intimate. I was surprised by a Poona-based man, who was India's Ambassador to Nepal, during monarchy. I asked him whether he had met people. He asked me in turn, why he should meet them. Big brother attitude India has always had, owing to which, serious crisis is in front of India, more than to Nepal. This could have been wisely averted.

In 1996, democracy was questioned. I read that the Maoist had been raised against democracy. I learned it from books. Why have we been failing to give democracy, when it is succeeding all over?

An economically strong, democratically strong Nepal is more a need of India, than of Nepal, and I want to appeal you to raise the issue there. We are raising here too.

That time, when this controversy came, VP Singh was the Prime Minister in Delhi. When Gen SK Sinha was sent, he was in Gorkha regiment for 40 years; he tried a lot to solve the enmity. Who will be India's Ambassador to Nepal, let not the bureaucracy

decide. The biggest problem is, they go and rob money through RAW. If there is a seminar in Nepal, just think, how they behave. What is the vision? There is no vision.

People sitting here think that once they give money, everything will be set right. No, you need to eradicate the fear in the mind of the people of Nepal. Give them self-reliance; give them self-respect to stand up with dignity. They are not just ABCD's; they are sources of merit all over the world. You need to ascertain that, so that their self-respect rises. I pray for the same. I am not an economist, I am an activist in the social sector, and I shared my experiences with you. Thank you.

**Dr. Nirmal Mani Adhikari**  
**Asst. Professor of Mass Communication**  
**Kathmandu University**

Former speakers have shed light on practical aspects, geopolitical aspect, as well as ecological aspects of India-Nepal relation. I would like to draw your attention to some fundamental questions. I am remembering reading the *Veda*. In 'Satpath Brahman,' there is an instance: the dialogue between Sharma and Panis. Panis were foreign merchants; they came to the land of Arya, and since they were new and the Arya people did not know about the Panis they deputed Sharma to know about them. Sharma was analogous to the present day Public Relation Officer, or some business negotiator. This shows that we have the culture of this trade, transit, transaction since *Vedic* civilization.

And if we come to *Arthasartha*, there are instances not only of economic transaction elsewhere, but of economic transaction between Nepal and the present day India. Just like Individuals, nations also are considered individuals. As in law, there is the concept of natural and legal person, in Hinduism also, there is a concept of natural nation and individual nation. A nation is also an individual. Just like any individual, a nation also has four *purusarthas* of life: *dharmā*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*. Just like any natural individual has three dimension of like *adhyatmik*, *aadidaivik*, *adibhautik*, nations also have them. By this, what I am trying to shed light on is, we have very rich philosophy as well as practice of trade and transit.

But the present day trade, present day economy is modeled on west-centric economy, and this symbolizes a paradox in relation between Nepal and India. On the one hand, we are talking about our rich civilization, common grounds on account of culture, or let us say cultural nationalism. But, on the other, we are not aware, that there is any Vedic Hindu mode of economic dealing. If there is, only then, it will be realistic to talk about all these cultural relationship in the economic affairs. Otherwise, it will be mere hypocrisy.

In my point of view, Nepal and India have to decide whether we are able to manage our economic relationship according to our cultural principles. Dr. Lohani talked about economics of neighborhood; I would like to extend that. Do we have economy of cultural nationalism? If yes, then, it is good to talk about all these close relationships and special ties between Nepal and India. If not, if we are just thinking about money or profit, and if we are just thinking about security, we must leave this hypocrisy, and we must deal as partners in business just like

India and China. There can be business even in hostile situations. So, from my point of view, since so many things have been dealt with, we need to be freed from this hypocrisy. What do we need to do? Is it pure business or chronic capitalism? This term is used quite often these days. If we are doing that, let's do it in its new avatar. On one hand, we are doing business, pure business, pure capitalistic business as defined by WTO, western countries, world bank and IMF. On the other hand, we are dragging our cultural relations in this, and by doing this, we will be polluting this. This is the only point I wanted to draw your attention to. Thank you!

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## Day II, Session III

# Role of Media in Strengthening Indo-Nepal Relations

## Experts

1. **Shri Yubaraj Ghimire**, Senior Journalist, Nepal
2. **Shri K.G. Suresh**, Director and Chief Editor Global Foundation For Civilizational Harmony (GFCH), (India)
3. **Shri Hukum Dev Narayan Yadav**, MP (BJP) and Former Union Minister
4. **Shri Puran P. Bista**, Editor, *The Republica*
5. **Shri Tirtha Koirala**, Editor, *Kantipur Television*
6. **Shri Suresh Malla**, Former Minister of Physical Planning, Nepal

**Yubaraj Ghimire,**  
**Senior Journalist , Nepal**

In the beginning I thank Nepal Bharat Sahayog Manch for holding discussion on this great forum. For audience from both the nations, I will speak in English, putting my perspectives from Nepal's side.

First of all, I am not going to say what should be the role of media, but it is necessary that correct information should be disseminated. For opinions and perspectives to evolve in a mutual context, the media should be a means. It is difficult for me to talk more because I don't represent any mainstream media in India or Nepal. I know my limitation, but it is an important subject. Perceptions are built and strengthened at times, on the basis of what the media says, that on the basis of what is right.

When talking in the current context, I find that coverage of Indian affairs in Nepali media is more than the coverage of Nepali affair in Indian media. Until 1980 very senior journalists from Indian papers were posted in Nepal. They, on returning to India, would take over their editors. They would be recognized and respected as alternative source of information, as the authentic voice on India-Nepal relations. That is not the case now. Those mainstream media are not represented now by such people, or we don't have people of that stature, and we don't have the critical view on our relations, and the policies that are pursued. Now, it is only the government agency that represents the overall concept of India-Nepal relations, and the media is the extension of those views.

We don't have a critical analysis of relations, and as a result, we come to see the failure of those policies only after seeing their impact, which is very late at that point of time to address.

Nepal's current problem is, we are in a prolonged constitution-making, a transition; but we don't see this transition coming to an end, because there is a one-dimensional approach being applied by so-called actors in Nepal. I understand that the problem of identity is very, very important, but for those who want the issue to be raised, identity has become the only important thing. Nothing else in the constitution seems to bother them. Those who are for federalism, forget any other component; they hijack the process, they don't like the constitution-making if the issue is not addressed. So, there is no give-and-take, no compromise. Although the policy they adopted was that of consensus, I think, that was a dangerous thing, because consensus means stopping all dissent. We never took these issues to the people; we never discussed them. The media never highlighted the issues, though it was a very important thing in India-Nepal relation at that time.

In November 2005, India mediated—if not prepared—the 12-point agreement, to which, the major political parties were the signatories. And what was said there, among other things, was that we shall end the absolute monarchy, and that there would be a powerful movement in Nepal. It was a vague thing. What did the end of absolute monarchy mean? We did not know whether constitutional monarchy would be accepted, or, altogether abolished. But who interpreted that solely? It was the Maoist party. Of course, the Nepali Congress and UML blindly supported that. But whenever I wrote these things, all my friends in Nepal were supportive of it. They called me and said I was giving a different perspective, but my friends from India posted in Nepal asked me

why I wrote such a thing. This was a reaction I expected from government agencies.

Where in any other countries of the world, have the peace process been moving so fast? If you move so fast, there always is a tendency to go off the track. That is what has happened in Nepal. Unfortunately for the last 6 six years, as we have seen, the civil society and media are becoming so intolerant to dissenting views. They are in one way or the other aligned to political parties, who have monopoly control over the political process and constitution writing. In the past four years or six, they did not take a critical view on what was happening or not happening, and the process has become more of a casualty now. I think, Indian media is more guided by Indian establishment. That is not the case with Nepali media now.

When the CA was elected in 2008, it was also a parliament. It needed to have a government to which oath of office had been duly administered. The government did not even take an oath of office; it just conducted the business. I am not saying whether monarchy should have continued or not; it has its own fall out. And such a government that did not take oath announced, at 11.28 in the night, slightly before midnight, a resolution to abrogate the monarchy, and within two minutes, without any discussion, declared the proposal passed.

When the Constitution norms and practices become casualties, you cannot have a democratic constitution. There have been these kinds of aberrations one after another. In fact, the aberrations are a rule now, and any aberration to the norm is explained as an 'exception' in the case of Nepal. So, what role the media can play in constitutional making is a sovereign exercise.

But in Nepal's case what the media did not take into account was, the process itself was something not owned by the people, or people's representative. In the constitution-making too, the issues discussed by thematic committee were not discussed with the people, not even once. So, there are major oversights. When political parties and leaders take absolute liberty to do anything without any accountability and get with it, democracy is aborted. My fear in Nepal's case is that, democracy is aborted.

India wants a stable Nepal, as said in 12 pt agreement, for peace, democracy and economic prosperity. Of course, I don't doubt the Indian sense, but my question is, as the architect or mediator of that process, did India fulfill the moral obligation, when the Maoists, instead of being transformed into a peaceful and democratic political party, dictated the whole political agenda, and other parties almost surrendered to them? In the whole process, these issues of republic, secularism or federalism were not taken to the parties. I am not saying whether that was good or bad, but this is for the people to decide. How does a pro-monarchy party becomes a pro-republic party overnight? How a unitary party suddenly becomes federal, without discussing whether federalism is viable and is a good system? People need to be convinced. It cannot be decided by the whims of one party one group, two parties two groups. Third is secularism. We have not discussed the relation between a state a religion.

I quote a leader. You all know, BP Koirala, a great visionary. He was once interviewed by a magazine *Samayik Varta*, edited by a senior and respected socialist leader in 1978 April. BP was asked, "BP you come here; talk about socialism and talk about democracy, but you never talk about secularism. Why?" His answer was, that was not an issue for Nepal, because Nepal's society was most

secular, and there was so much tolerance among religions and ethnic groups. Caste bonds were very loose, inter caste marriages were accepted there.

In reading yesterday's problem, BP may be right or wrong, but he at least made his point clear. Our leaders have not made their positions clear; they are trying to push the nation into a very radical agenda. A radical agenda is very easy to be raised, but when they are not delivered, it is very easy to inject hopes that we all will be ruling this country.

You threw monarchy, but now there are many feudatories of immunity that are above the rich of the law. They enjoy total immunity in the context of Nepal.

One major spirit of the 12-point agreement was peace, democracy and economic prosperity. I think it is time to revisit the fall out of what Nepal has got into, after that. I see that the role of Indian media and Indian media being guided by perception. Instead of being guided that way, let's get into the ground reality. I am happy that the former president of BJP yesterday said—this is not my comment; I am just quoting—that there was a diplomatic failure on the part of India. If there was such a failure, what happened in 2006 and after, was jointly endorsed or separately endorsed by BJP in the opposition. I think revision is very, very necessary.

In Nepal, what is happening right now is, the interim constitution doesn't exist. The Maoists are raising questions about the president's office. The prime minister is care taker, but the prime minister continues because the parties have not been able to elect his successor. The interim constitution is responsible only the parliament. We don't have the parliament now. Consensus

virtually means four parties, and the interim constitution says, if the president is satisfied over the monopoly of the four parties who rule/ruled, he can endorse. In that case, they can have monopoly over political process.

If only the four parties are to be given the responsibility to form and run the government without any accountability, that will be a travesty of democracy, because the president cannot condone the failure of the parties and that will be an antithesis of democracy. Normlessness rules there. Absence of constitutionalism has already questioned the country's legitimacy or the governments' legitimacy at home and abroad. There is no accountability, and because you have compromised on all the established process of forming a constitution, chances of a constitution like a constitution coming there are nil. So, this might bring a disaster there, and might defeat the declared purpose of the 12 point program.

My last point is on a major perception Mr. N.N. Jha expressed yesterday, that India regrets having supported the Maoist. There are books, there are chapters written that Indian government in 2002 decided to support the Maoist activities when they were still in the list of terrorists, and in 2005, when the 12-point was signed, they mediated the treaty. I think this will be cited as a bad diplomacy, like the 1987 case with Sri Lanka, which might be still hounding India. This is not expected of a great democracy: Gandhi's India. There are other cases too. Though we are putting the blame upon bureaucracy, the ultimate accountability lies with the political establishment. I hope, the political establishment will be sensitive and very respectful and will sensitively analyze the existing bad situation in Nepal, and may be revisit the policies which influence the happenings in Nepal. I have no problem in saying that India, as a legitimate factor, may be in internal affairs of Nepal in many

cases, but whenever it is a legitimate actor, it also has to own the responsibility for success or failure. That's where the spirit of democracy lies and gets consolidated. Thank you!

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**K.G. Suresh**  
**Director and Chief Editor (GFCH), India**

In fact, when this conference was being planned, and Deepakji came to me for an informal discussion, I said that any conference on India-Nepal relation would be incomplete, if the media's role is not discussed. So, I insisted Deepakji that it should be there. I am thankful to him that he organized this, and brought luminaries from the field from Nepal to discuss its important aspects.

I still remember that immediately after Royal massacre, I was asked to rush to Kathmandu as a PTI correspondent. That was my first exposure with politics, economics, and everything about Nepal. It taught me so much, even about my own country, and the attitude of my own people. I consider it a landmark in my media career. I assure you.

I still remember, Yugarajji was arrested, and we went to the jail to report; you were inside the jail, and I was outside reporting. I am glad to meet him after so many days. There is nothing like Indian media going by the perception of Indian establishment; to be, I wonder if the Indian establishment has any perception for the simple reason that we were never given any kind of briefing. In fact, I was there for almost two months, and I, as a representative of India's largest wire agency, tried to meet the ambassador. He just did not have time, even for five minutes. I wanted to know his perspectives; so, we had no perspective as such.

Most often, we are not guided by perspectives; we are unguided missiles. I can assure you, that no journalist of India can

think ill of Nepal. There may be a lack of understanding, that is what I felt. Come to think of it. Whenever you depute a journalist to a foreign country, usually, it is a a senior journalist accredited with a PIB, having years of experience with foreign affairs. But I remember that young journalists, who were maybe out of media schools, were flown in, because you don't need a visa or passport to come to Nepal.

We just landed there. Of course, I was quite senior at that time, but many friends from television were young. Some Indian televisions were banned, because of reporting the post-Massacre events.

The visiting Indian journalists didn't require visa; they felt they were not landing in a foreign country. They felt they would do the kind of similar reporting they do in India. There was nothing deliberate in that; it was spontaneous. They were reporting like in India. They were not trained; they were not told that they were going to a foreign country with foreign sensibilities.

I teach at a couple of universities also. In India, we have a contempt right from our films to our historical perspectives. We have contempt for the royalty, generally. We have always projected them as exploiters and things like that. But there, in that country, at that particular point of time, the king, whose family was massacred, was considered an avatar of Lord Vishnu, and suddenly you landed up and started taking names: Birendra, Gyanendra, Paras, and publicly holding mike in front of market place. So some of them ended being beaten up by shoes. I don't blame them. Neither do I blame the people who beat them up.

The people who were reporting too did not know the dynamics there. They were not aware, just the seriousness of the issue involved. They were too young to understand. Maybe, they should have been briefed, and that is what I continuously feel, because when they landed there, they suddenly started reporting in the way they would represent any murder issue, or a sensational crime in India. As a result of that a lot of bad blood was created.

I remember some of the statements still. Actually, sometimes, when you love someone too much, you start encroaching the private parts of that person. I think that explains India-Nepal relation to a great extent. You love them so much that you own them without realizing that they are a different, sovereign country. You own them so much that you think they are a part of us. No, they are not. Emotionally, spiritually and culturally they are a part of us, but they are a sovereign nation, whose sovereignty and independence has to be respected. We have to give that respect to them.

But sometimes we are besieged more by the feeling that they are ours. I say, there is some lack of training in that, because when we talk, we have the same kind of view about Nepal as we have about India. Not only about Nepal, when we see the glorious map of ancient India, and when we look at Singapura and Swarnadeepa, we have the same nostalgic feeling: 'Oh, they were all our part!' But today, you call it imperialism or hegemony or whatever you describe it as, but the fact is, it is a long-standing nostalgia that comes to you: 'Oh, they are culturally same to us, we are all one and the same.'

But I think this feeling is somewhere creating a misunderstanding, because fraternity is fine, but nobody should

feel that they are being patronized. If you give someone a feeling that I am being patronized, that is where problems start. I think, it is time for Indian media to understand this. I am not talking about the establishment here. I have always felt that our foreign policies have been focused on Pakistan and China, as though others do not matter.

We were taken by surprise, not only in Nepal, but also in Maldive. We were not aware what had actually happened in Maldives. This importance should be given to all countries, as they are equal. Of course the issue with Pakistan and China is understandable, because we have had a historic background of conflicts with them, as against the fraternal relation we have had with other countries.

Now, I just want to say a couple of things, which I feel, Yuvarajjni has already gone into, namely the constitutional aspect and communism. There is a lot of sentiment in India also. A lot of Indians felt bad when the parliament in Nepal declared it a secular state. They were not much bothered with monarchy remaining intact or now, but when we refer to the the secular aspect, I think a lot of Indians were pained. The Indians used to always feel proud of Nepal being a Hindu state. They would always feel, as they spoke to people of other communities that when they had 48 countries or 50 countries of their religion, and we had one Hindu nation, and that as Nepal. Nepal was the only Hindu nation in the world. They had pride; it is a fact. It's about a common man I am talking about, not an intellectual. Somewhere, the decision to go secular was, as they felt, a little upsetting. I don't know; it is for Nepal to take a decision at the end of the day. It is for the people of Nepal to decide. But, somewhere, that kind of feeling was there.

I still remember, there is always a communication gap between us. I am from small state of Kerala, and we have a historic linkage with Pashupati Temple. Lambadaris from my state are priests in that temple, and we always have had a historic relation. It is not just people in the north; people right from north to south, have historic relation with Nepal, and we have that kind of affair. It is not just the northern Bihar or UP; it is across the whole country. But unfortunately, what is happening is, only the negative things are being reported.

I don't really know how the Nepali media is reporting India, but what I saw is that, the tabloids were playing mischief. I remember one statement by Bal Thakre that was totally distorted and played up. This happens in many countries; I am not blaming the media alone. I believe that many for the aspects Yuvarajji mentioned here, there should be more, increased interaction between the journalists of two countries. There are people like Yubaraj, whom we consider more Indian. Again we are owning him. For many years he was in Delhi. Many of us did not know that he was from Nepal; we thought he was one of Nepali origin settled in India. Only later we came to know. This kind of increased interaction, particularly with younger generation is essential.

After I returned from Kathmandu, we started a Indo-Nepal Young Journalists' Forum, but somehow it did not work out. But we need it. A forum created just in Delhi is not going to solve the problem. If you have media representative organization there, and we have here, let us have fraternal ties, exchange program and visits. These can be organized by friendly organizations; we can travel into neighboring countries. We can meet the policy makers, meet people with different sets of opinions.

In fact, today, we have organized a small civic reception for you the Nepali delegation, at Indian Law Institution. We have deliberately invited vice chancellors of some universities. We don't want to make it a political kind of thing, because at the end of the day, we believe that our relation are too deep to be left to politicians; they are too deep and need to be preserved and people-to-people relation needs to be strengthened. We have university vice-chancellors who are going to talk how the relation can be strengthened between students and educators.

Professor Kutiyala of Makahnalal Chaturvedy is coming from Bhopal. A journalism student from Nepal, he was, was doing a thesis with him. He was wondering if we could have invited him too.

There is a lot of work to be done, There needs to be an acceleration of this relationship. I think only that will lead to a better understanding. We can talk and talk about the problems. There are a number of problem. I can identify tens of them. But let's look at solutions.

Let's do something concrete, and that is why, there has to be, apart from the talk, some concrete step. It is necessary for better understanding. I would suggest, let the government take their own decisions, but apart from that, we can just influence. I can say that universities, intellectual bodies, media organizations, should get together. Let's bridge this communication gap. Let there be more seminars and workshops in both the countries in different parts of the region, not just in Delhi and Kathmandu.

I am looking across Nepal and across India, where in small towns, perceptions need to be changed. I basically came here to

listen. I just want to assure you one thing. Friends of Nepal! India or for that matter the people or print journalist, can never think ill of Nepal. We can only be well-wishers. We are always well-wishers. We want to be good friends with you; we are brothers. This is not just a rhetoric; not merely a dialogue. I can assure you, there are many issues, and there are issues which need to be addressed. Those issues are there between real brothers. We keep listening to them and reading about them, but we can improve and there is immense scope and a vast potential between the two country.

The younger youths of countries hold the ray of hope, and we should harness this strength. Their minds should not be misled, and people who are in the middle ages and seniors should play a proactive role to ensure that the youths develop a very good understanding among each other. I assure you from the side of the Global Foundation and from India Media Centre, that we will do our best to improve this relation and take it to a new level in the new century. Thank you so much!

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**Hukum Dev Narayan Yadav**  
**Member of Parliament (BJP)**

I am thankful to Deepakji. He had been to my home, and asked me to come here.

I am from a place that borders India and Nepal, where people have one foot in India and one in Nepal, a region in Madhubani. It cannot be said whether it is India's part of Nepal's, and the relation is very intimate. There are relations. People come and go, as it happens between family relations. Madhubani people have the same relation with Nepal—a close relation.

In my introduction, it was told I had been a minister, but for a long time, I was a Gram Pradhan, and later, I was in ministries. But basically I am a villager, and a farmer. Upon me, the city culture has not had any impact. The culture I have is a village culture.

During the talks, when the issue of intellectuals and common people come up, I class myself among those common peoples, and not among intellectuals, though I know, the simple is also, at times, highly intellectual, because someone who is simple, with simple thoughts and behaviors, and who is very simple in harmony can make relations strong. When the feelings are not '*sama*' or equal, relations cannot be strong. In Sanskrit, the word '*sambandh*' has a high meaning; *sama* makes *bandh* possible. *Sama* means a bond of equality. I hold as much as you do. If one presses hard and the other is loose, the loose one will be pressed down. The one pressing hard will be pleased either. There is no question that the one who is pressed will be happy. So *sambhandh* means, equal holding of one another.

The bond of equality has family bonds, like that of a father and a son; a husband and a wife; a brother and a sister. All these relations are bound by equality for one another, with commitments for one another, be it internal, external, physical, spiritual, cultural, religious and others. All these bonds, if are marked by equality, can become *sambandh*; if there is an imbalance, it is not a *sambandh*.

The intellectuals—*buddhi jibi*—normally have a high level of contemplation. The laities think from below, as the rustic simple people have a deep attachment with soil, civilization, tradition and ancestors. In any country, if the village is deserted, the culture gets deserted. If the farmer is wiped out, the culture will die out. Culture and civilization, if they have any heritage, are in the village, and the one who preserves them is the farmer who loves his soil, loves his animals, loves nature. If we ever think of relations, we need to think about this.

For media, the media establishment too must think. Thinking just about the fact that Nepal has monarchy or democracy or the Maoists or Congress, they must not have unilateral way of thinking. When political ill-will, prejudice, favoritism strikes, the media can never be free. Many medias are like this; how can they function independently? It means, in relations with any caste, religion, group, sex, color, or form, if they have any type of pre-conception that this will be like this only, because, his ancestors were like that, and so, he will be like that. How can that happen? Abdul Kalam, born to a simple family, can become India's president, and can carve his name as an express man. Karpuri Thakur, in Bihar, in all these years, geared politics, and gave people a surprise. He has no high caste, people, power; he is a powerless man. Narendra Modi, born to a simple family, is showing miracles in Gurajat. There are some people feeling 'O, how high such a

small, low-born man is rising!' For, those who are weak, and poor, are often considered low-class; this conception should be changed.

Lord Shri Ram was for 14 years in forest. Look at his form, his food, his living, his wear, behavior, thinking, and interaction. All simple! He looked hundred percent *jungali*. If he had not made himself a *jungali*, he would never have defeated Ravana. Did anyone from his home, family and relations go? No, not a single one. No platoon went from Raja Janak, nor from Raja Dasarath from Ayodhya. Ram's platoon consisted of those folks, with folk language, folk wear, folk food, art, culture, behavior, thinking, and action—those folks, whom people called 'no human' but monkeys.

Today also, people have contempt. Coincidentally, media has such people too. When they see people like me, they ask, 'Who is this; what is his lineage?' Today, when they see out grand-grandparents, grandparents, grandmothers, they say "O, this is from high family," no matter how worse the person is. If the family is high, people think, the person is high. But in my view, those who are writing and consider themselves intellectuals, they need to think neutrally, not relatively, because, only then, they can find the reality.

Similarly, there is *duragraba* or contempt in politics. Why should I take anyone's name. I can take Narendra Modi as an example, and many have *duragraba* for many people. They declare someone to be this kind or that kind. Though Modi has many merits, specialty, ability, qualification, experience, diligence or anything; all those abilities get nullified, because some media people and intellectuals are prejudiced against him, and with feeling of just ill contempt, they declare him bad, and are not ready to endorse

any of his merits. However sweet a fruit it is, they declare it sour without tasting; they sit afar and declare this is like this and that is like that. This is a preconceived notion .

In favoritism *anugraha*, they take money or wealth from government or from its communication wings, get their advertisements printed— considering little whether the advertisement is good or bad, real, or unreal, false or true, harmful or harmless, socially pure or impure. No, there is no consideration. Only that, if it is full page, black and white or color, they get a sum.

Today, as there are elections in Gujarat, there are many propaganda on the TV. If you ask the TV professionals, they say, they have nothing to do with the good or bad quality of the advertisement; they have their bearing with advertisement. This is favoritism, and those raising in favoritism can never have independent thinking. Those with favoritism, are like Karna in Mahabharata. A warrior of such repute, Karna, whose thousands of praises by Krishna, were pressed under the favor of Duryodhana; so all his merits were crippled. Anyone going for *anugraha*, will have his merit crippled. What can he write in that case? This idea media people should think about. This point I have placed before you.

One thing in discussion is critical: the idea of critically-appreciative and introspective. Write critically; don't write abusively. They write abusively, and say, they are writing critically. You are eating *samosa*, but you call it cutlet. How should I explain that? You are abusing, but calling it criticism. The two have a lot of difference. Those who make critical comments, need a lot of vision and knowledge of the subject matter. Dr. Lohiya used to

say, a divided mind cannot think of the whole; if we lock some of the windows of mind and open the rest, air will suffocate; if bad air goes, bad air will remain within us. So, open all the windows. Good air will move in. If good air comes, take long breaths. If bad air comes, let it pass. Only then, you can get into new thinking. This is the fundamental nuance of running a media.

May it be criticism or abuse, see both merits and demerits. Sometimes, while writing, do introspect yourself and think where you are: *darshan karna chabe to darpan mage rahibe, darpan me laga kai to daras kaha se paye?*

In relation of India and Nepal, if they are two nations geographically, border-wise, they have their independent sovereign rules, have flags, have political systems, and everything. They have different regimes too, but above all, they have cultural relations, or spiritual or religious ties, which are above and aloof from political relations. If people of Janakpur come to Ayodhya, and a *sadhu* from Janakpur meets one at Ayodhya, they call names for each other, as though they were from one family. They say, “You are from Ram’s Land; we from Sita’s.” Today also, if the relation of Ram and Sita is existing, and is eternally living, and until Ram and Sita live in names and until Janak and Janakpur remain, the spiritual, cultural and religious relations will prevail and no political relation can stop that.

Political relation cannot alter cultural and spiritual relations. This is a fact. Yet, by cultural and religious relations, political and geographical relations should not be influenced; we should be quite alert about that.

Many of my relations are inside Nepal. Nepal’s people come to mine and I walk into Nepal quite freely. We have family bonds.

In Madhubani, the two countries have plane lands, equal. Their water comes to our fields. Consider that if Nepal's water flows into my nation, will I go with a stick to fight and should 'Why do you release water into my field?' Without water from Nepal, we cannot survive. If water is more, there is flood; if there is little, we have drought. But coincidentally, all source of water is in Nepal. What are we do to about it? Like China, we cannot raise a tall wall at the border to bar water. Without water we cannot live. From high to low, as water flows. According to contour map, if we analyze, this establishes a relation. As far as water reaches, that long will our relations extend. Water from Himalayas of Nepal, reach up to Kanyakumari; then we say, from Nepal to Kanyakumari we are all connected by the same cultural base, have the same root.

But if we say, our own political system should come to Nepal, that will be wrong. You have adopted a new political system; you are experimenting, and testing, supervising. But I would say to the Hindustani media or Nepali media as we say in the village: '*saamme khale harre, aur sabera puchhe doctor ko ki mera pet kyo thik nahi hua?*' In that case, nothing is going to happen.

In India too, for 60 years, we experimented with parliamentary democracy, supervised and fought with it. Still we say, our democracy has not matured, for it needs many corrections. With what has begun in Nepal, people are experimenting. Accept it with patience. All wish for the success of the experiment. More corrections come up with time.

In both these countries, the media should work with feelings of equality. This is what I want to say by and large. As you wanted me to talk about *sambandh*, I started with the idea that when we

come with the feeling of equality, only then *sambandh* is possible. Let India and Nepal remain in equality; let us have social, cultural equality.

But in the middle of these developments, a word has crept in. It comes up in any seminar. In my life of 73/74 year, since the time in 1959 when I became gram *pradhan*, all through my moves since 1959 to the present fighting for assembly and parliament, I have seen that when ten twenty people sit, if no other word comes up, one word that compulsorily comes up is ‘secularism’, O, how pervasive it is! Why didn’t, in *Durga Saptasati*, Sage Markandeya write: ‘*Ya devi Sarba bhutsu secularena saksrita*’ ?

Be it in the media or anywhere else, it comes up. Till today, I have not been able to understand it. I also keep thinking; I have been a socialist, influenced by Ram Manohan Lohiya. To the socialists, people allege to be secularists. Jay Prakash, Acharya Narendra Dev, BP Koirala were all together, students of the same school. All had good relations with Chandrasekhar as well, and with their families and other leaders, I was connected too. But when ‘secularism’ comes up, I always make a search. I am in a type of research; when a word comes I ask for its abstract and concrete meaning: what is its form? What do you make people so impatient for? Probably, secularism is so abstract that those who want to get hold of it, are not finding it, and are groping in darkness to catch it in vain. It’s plain and simple, as Gandhi and Lohiya said—and I also accept— that when the word ‘secular’ was written in the constitution, it was debated. Some people said, it is non-alliance to dharma, but I say, it is non-alliance to creed. No one can have non-alliance to dharma. If anyone is devoid of dharma or righteousness—as we believe in Indian cultural—the creation ends. All have their own dharmas; all have their own unbroken,

disciplines. The sun has its own rule, the moon has its own. We call it 'duty'. We don't care by what name you call it; but I say, this is the dharma of the sun, of the moon. Dharma means unshaken faith, a discipline that guides an individual. It is with everyone. How can anyone be devoid of that? We breathe, nature has its own ways. The *Rig Veda* has its mantras about this. Non-alliance with sects is a fact; it is necessary for the state not to be in any religion. A king may have his religion, but the state doesn't have any religion. The thinking that if the state is secular, the king needs not be religious is wrong. A non-religious king will be bad. A king has his religion, but a state doesn't. The two things should be seen separately.

We say *sarba dharma sama bhav*. We mean, as Dr. Lohiya said in the parliament—I had quoted that in the parliament yesterday—that in Hindustan, in the past 1500 years, we never learnt to be in *swami bhav*; we have culturally learnt to be a 'das'. In *swami bhav*, people think, when it comes to relation between two parties, they will take up good things of one another. And the moment I say, you take my good things and bow down to me, then you are exercising a *das bhav*, and no matter how many times you are born and you die, we should never accept this *das bhav*. *Swami bhav*, inspires that a good virtue in any culture of the world, should be adopted by others. Vivekananda, in Chicago said, "Westerners! You say unite all religions; we also say the same but differently. Throw off your flags into the ocean; sit and take up good things from all, and make one religion for the world, and I will accept. But if you say, unite all and throw flags and come under my flag, I say, not once, but till the last moment of my life, that I shall denounce the idea." *Sarba dharma sama bhav* is what is non-alliance to sects, and in media the debate has been long. Some people have been making the discussion rife, lately.

I also have my own contemplations, my own culturing. My culturing and my contemplations are based on my own tradition that I inherit. If you wake up, chant *Mahamrityunjaya* with hands raised to the sun in standing postio: ‘*triyambakam yaja mabe,*’ and if anyone tells you a mad man that stares at the sun which is but a ball of fire, then you should say, ‘For you it is fire ball; for me it is a store of infinite rays, and the emanating rays and their light give soul to the creation and nature, and so, I worship it, and so, I am expressing gratitude to it, and so, this is our faith, and all religions have their own faith, you go with your faith, I go with my faith.’

But *sahib* what is secularism? If you say, Hinduism is communalism, and the rest is all secularism, I have always been opposite to the idea. You remain what you are; I will be what I am.

Once I was in a foreign country; roaming around in a *dhobi*. My PA had a pair of pants stitched, but I didn’t wear them. My wife’s brother puts it today. My PA said, “Sir, everyone is looking at you and laughing.” I said, “I too am looking at them and laughing. It’s a deal of equality. For them, I am fool; for me, they are fools. A deal of equality, once again.” Why should we be inflicted with inferiority? This is inferiority; we should not be afflicted by the idea. We are Hindus; you might be a Muslim, a Christian, a Sikh or of any faith on earth. I salute you and your religion, but you should have a relation of equality with us. Talk of your good, and tell, whatever is good in any region. I am ready to take it up. The condition is that, if you are ready to accept the goodness I have. But, I you tell me with contempt, that I have nothing good, I will say, no one is as loathsome as you are. Why should I say with a *das bhav*, that I should bow to you and be a servant? this is the main maxim.

The media has a great role to play to make this idea a reality. They must have a liberal idea of this. The media personnel from India and Nepal should adopt a comprehensive outlook. Whatever is happening in Nepal, we cannot call it wrong, outright. If anything wrong goes there, we should see what went wrong, and try to deliver the nation from it, instead of aggravating it. And if, any Indian due to ill-will, contempt or favoritism, does anything wrong, the Nepalese should be aware of that. Only then, we will be able to maintain a good relation. Only because of such a relation, we are sitting here and holding this seminar today. I thank you all. All of you from Nepal have come; Deepakji has brought you all. You must have experienced certain inconvenience; yet, you must be clear that the homeliness you are experiencing in India, you would never experienced in America. Thank you!

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**Puran P. Bista**  
**Editor, *The Republica***

I am delighted to be here in New Delhi, at Constitution Club of India. I am also delighted to have been welcomed by Nepal Bharat Sahayog Manch. Special thanks to Sunil Ambekar and Deepak Adhikari, who worked for months to bring the people from both the countries together, and I think, they have done a very remarkable job. We discussed about political development of Nepal, following the dissolution of the CA, and how we can strengthen and foster Nepal-India Relations.

In fact, this is my second visit, to Delhi. First, I visited as a mass communication student in 1992, and this is also a great opportunity that I have been asked to share my understanding of how we, as journalists or media men of both the countries, can help strengthen our bilateral ties and foster our century-old relations. Media maintains to narrate a particular incident or share information.

One of our friends Suresh said highlighted problems he saw with reporting when he visited Nepal, for his first assignment after the massacre of royal palace in Kathmandu. That was way back some eleven years ago. I also had encountered a couple of incidents in Kathmandu. It is related with what actually happens and how we often report.

In Bangladesh, I had a friend, who teaches Economics in the University of Dhaka. He asked me how the ‘viceroy’ in my Kathmandu was. I never knew this; but today, as Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani, whom I mention, too talked about viceroy syndrome I am tempted to narrate how the viceroy office functions in Kathmandu.

Once I wrote an article about Laxmanpur Barrage. Yubaraj Ghimire was the editor. The barrage was built by India in 2005. This barrage is within 8 kilometers of international border, where India should not have built as per the bilateral understanding. According to Nepali newspapers, every monsoon, this barrage inundates hundreds of acres of land on the Nepalese side and destroys standing crops worth million of rupees everywhere. The barrage was built by British Raj during the 1890s, and 1950 treaty of peace and friendship clearly tells that all treaties signed prior to 1950, will automatically be annulled. But a state government, under the federation of India rebuilt the barrage. This is what I wrote in the article with proper references and quotations. I guess, and have experienced, that the government of India doesn't take such treaties seriously.

The treaty was signed between Indian Ambassador Mr. Chandrasekharan Prasad Narayan Singh, and Nepali Prime Minister Mohan Samsher Junga Bahadur Rana, in presence of India's first Prime Minister Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. The day they signed an agreement, the status of Nepal's Prime Minister was reduced to the status of an Indian Ambassador. Since then successive ambassador of India to Nepal have acted as viceroys, re-enacting the British Raj in India.

My reading of the 1950 treaty tells me clearly that it no longer carries any validity, though some of us still consider it a key binding factor of our bilateral relation. Rather, there are other key factors like common culture, language, script and open border which have helped us establish strong bonds between people of Nepal and India.

When my article about Laxmipur Barrage appeared on *The Kathmandu Post*, Yubaraj Ghimire was the editor. He knew pretty

well about the incident. An official from the Indian Embassy asked Mr. Ghimire to send me to the Embassy. I duly met the official at the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu. We had an hour-long discussion; he offered me a cup of tea but I rejected, because I did not like the way he tried to coarase me. After a long, heated discussion, he showed me a document signed by the chief engineer of Rupandehi District. He justified me saying that the barrage was built or rebuilt on the basis of that document. I wanted a photocopy of it, but he refused to give me, as he knew that he had the document signed through a different means. Perhaps the officials at the Embassy bribed the engineer for his signature.

Another experience I have clarifies my reading of how Indian journalists cover Nepal. Of course, if we compare the history of press of India and Nepal, we are still babies. India's history is 240/50 years, but ours is just 18 or 25 years old or so. But my understanding is that, it is a very bitter experience, but some enjoy covering Nepal's series of unfolding political events in a distorted way. How the unfolding political events have taken place since 1990s have been quite often misreported.

I often read the *Times of India*, the largest English Daily of the world. I also read *Indian Express*, and *Hindu*, and I read *Hindustan Times*. But when I browse through the stories about Nepal, my understanding of reading of Indian newspaper which publish stories about Nepal, is quite different.

Some prominent journalists, who visit Nepal, do not meet editors or any journalists in Kathmandu. This is a big problem. Indian journalists, who have covered Nepal's Maoist insurgency and other incidents have not been to Thawang, which was the hot bed of Maoist insurgency, and which was and is s till very active.

But, the western journalists, if you compare them with the Indians either meet Nepali journalist, or take them to the mid-west and different part of Nepal, and reported from the ground. 90% of them who have visited Nepal do so. But this is not the case with the Indians, and I have not come across that type of insightful stories about Nepal in Indian newspaper.

The reason, as my experience or reading tell is that some Indian journalists arrive in Kathmandu, and directly visit the Indian Embassy. As Sureshji said, he could not meet the Ambassador at that time. He must be very busy; yet, the official of the Embassy, who is responsible for media-related works, briefs the visiting Indian journalist. The briefing helps them understand about Nepal's political happening from the perspective of the briefing Indian Embassy official, and they file a series of stories from there. They don't meet people or anyone.

The second story I want to narrate is like this: I read an interview of the then king Zingme Sigme Wangchuk of Bhutan in *The Times of India*. It was published in the back page of the paper, I guess in 1998. He was invited as Chief Guest to the Republic Day Celebration in India. This guy said, one lakh refugees in various camps in the eastern part of Nepal, were migrants from north-east India and they were not refugees or Bhutanese nationals. I still have the cutting; I can show if you would like to read. The journalist who interviewed him, did not seek any evidence from the king. Rather, he justified in the interview that the refugee problem was a creation of Nepal, and Nepal should be responsible for the resettlement of the refugees.

At one time, I also worked in the Pune-based office of *The Time of India* after I finished my masters from Pune University; I

never thought such an interview would ever appear in such a paper as *The Times of India*, that claims to be the largest English daily of the world. I still wonder, how many Indian journalists know that the Bhutan evicted 1 lakh plus its population, who were or are still languishing in camps in eastern Nepal. To me, this population is not a small figure. This was a direct result of ethnic cleansing. I still believe, and am confident that they were not migrants from north-east India; they were people evicted by King Jigme Wangchuk, who was the king.

How some Indian media highlighted the hijacking of Indian plane from Kathmandu! If you had experienced sitting in Kathmandu, you would know, it was terrible. The media reported that a man, who was sitting as a passenger supplied arms and helped them enter the plane, but that was not the case. The case was something else; and if you see the happenings in Kathmandu, how America, China or India are involved in so many nasty or ugly activities in Kathmandu, they are the one who teach how to sell passports, provide citizenship, smuggle Tibetan refugees and take them to America.

I read one incident in *India Today* about how Hermis Tharakan, who was the chief of raw in Kathmandu, became the chief of RAW in Delhi, as Anand was the Chief. Anand went to Kathmandu, spent a couple of days in Pokhara and landed in America; he had information about Maoist insurgency, and CIA was involved. If you read, there are a number of cases, which Indian media did not report, or Nepali media also went unreported.

If we see the Nepali media, we don't have professionalism, because there are a couple of media houses that regularly pay

monthly salary, which hardly helps the journalists meet monthly expenses. In Nepal, still professionalism doesn't exist. At this juncture, how can we promote India-Nepal relation, though we still provide much space, as Yubaraj Ghimire said? We have a special one page about India and China in *Republica*, and I edit the page. Most of the stories, I reproduce from Indian newspapers; so, we provide a good space for India.

The way we all have access to media in today's world has also changed dramatically over the last 20 years. We now expect that the latest of information comes at the tip of our fingers. We can file stories from wherever we go, we can file whichever story we want to file. The Internet—the incredible connective power—has created opportunity in a vast and growing scale, unlocking potentials, revolutionizing access to information, and transforming our daily life. The explosion of social media has also changed the way we journalists can group; other groups also gather and share information and ideas. Such new media can also play a very crucial role in times of crisis, to promote Nepal-India relations in the days ahead.

I still believe that fundamentally, we cannot remain away or alienated from India. Nor can India remain alienated from Nepal. There have been many examples of the media playing an active role in promoting Nepal-India relations by airing issues of common concerns. In the case of Koshi Dam burst that displaced 3 million people from both sides of the border, journalists from India highlighted the case from both the sides and forced the governments of both the countries to speed up rescue operation and provide food, shelter and medicine to the affected people. Media, in fact, is a driver of our bilateral relation; wherever it wants to take the relation, it can.

Indian investors in Nepal can establish themselves only if there is political stability and a free and strong media, as they can have unhindered access to reliable and credible sources of information, which in turn, will allow them to make informed decisions. We cannot overlook this aspect at this point of time. This important role comes along with some responsibilities also. We must work in an ethical and responsible way. Media organizations and journalists must be accountable for the output and so, it is vital that the boundaries that we work within are clear and unambiguous.

My suggestion would be, let there be a good platform where we can once a year or twice, come and share our knowledge, ideas and area of interest so that our efforts benefit the people of both the counties. This one is a good beginning.

Before I conclude my speech, I must again congratulate and thank Deepakji and Sunilji Ambekar who have really worked very hard to bring us over here and organize this remarkable gathering. Thank you very much!

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**Tirtha Koirala**  
**Editor, *Kantipur Television***

As far as the media and Nepal and India considered, we the media personnel of both the countries are very sensitive, but the sensitivity is self-centered, not centered on one another. We in Nepal are more nationalistic than necessary. Same is true about Indian journalists. But, when we become so, we don't understand one another's pain. The same is true for India and Nepal.

With some news in the Indian media, Nepali people are sad; some stories of Nepalese media have hurt Indians and we have got acrid reactions often. Plainly, anti-Nepal and anti-Indian mindsets seem to guide our media. What we need to consider is that more than conflict resolution, conflict escalating and negative coverage is more, based more on logics, than on facts.

Hearsay journalism is rampant. Puranji briefly touched the issue. Nepali journalists do not follow political developments of India. Similarly Nepal's media has no entry into India, and how can Indian Journalist write, I don't know. The briefing itself is wrong.

More than belief, there are doubts. Journalists from both sides have high expectation, and there is a clash of expectation between the two countries. At places, Bharat and Nepal relations show superiority and inferiority dynamics; leaders, basically from Nepal, in their relation with India, make media the tools to go to power. The Indian and Nepali media should know this fact.

The issues covered so far reveal that in Nepali media, whatever is covered is SSB activity, tortures they inflict upon Nepal, border encroachment, Nepali people or people of Nepali origin

facing problem, at times, blockage of goods, and projects driven by India not completed in time, etc. and most of the time, they doubt India's hand in political conspiracy, seemingly guided by conspiracy theory, and some activities validating the same. Most of all, the activities of Indian Embassy in Kathmandu find covered. Lumbini issue figures quite often. Border dams, as Puranji also said, too appear quite frequently.

What do we see in Indian media? Fake currency: as if printed and distributed by Nepalese, ISI activities, pro-China activity increment, and Indian investment and citizen security, and Tarai people's abuse by Kathmandu etc.

On security issues, we are sensitive. Nepal, is a small country, and we don't want to hurt our neighbors; we think that way. What politicians think I don't know; you are in more touch. What they say, how they cry, how they sing, you know better. Here, the problem lies in the fact that media's role should have been critical, but so far, it has not been optimally critical. We should go for positive critique, both in Nepal and India, and should be fact-based and not logic-based. Incident/accident should not be left aside; plans, visions, projections, too should be tackled, hoping to make them positively communicated.

Society, culture, economy, religion, tourism, and other common issues should be identified. What are Nepal issues, what are India issues, what is the conflict issue? We need to identify. Similarity and consensus wherever we can get, should be pursued. But the media seems failing. Instead of highlighting pro and anti of anything, we should go into 'between-the-line'; that will be more practical I think. Well, the two nations, are brothers, but in bargaining, we should go for positive bargaining.

We say that the role of media is information, education, entrainment and promotion, but in all these, we have been doing negative things through wrong information, wrong education, entertainment with wrong things, and promoting wrong things that will hamper the bilateral relation. So, the immediate thing we can do is that media-to-media bilateral exchange should be increased, party-to-party positive relation should be energized, and government to government or people to people relation, in all walks of life, should be highlighted with positive thinking in a positive way. That is in the welfare of everyone. Thank you!

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**Suresh Malla**  
**Former Minister of Physical and Planning, Nepal**

By discipline, I am not a journalist, but Deepakji allocated this topic, and I will speak something. India-Nepal relation is quite old. We are friends, brothers, relatives, and everything, and are dependent on each other. In the media's role, if the media tie up our relation and make it relation, they can do it, but if they misreport, if they mis-write, the relation can be destroyed. So then, I feel that the media people are the architect of social harmony, friendship and co-existence.

I think that the media have their main role in building the relation with two countries. If the media distort a coverage, it will not be good for the both nations; it will harm the society. If distorted and improper coverage appears, it will also give bad result. I don't know whether I should tell here or not, but I feel most India media report Bollywood trivialities with great spotlight, but whenever they have to write something about the Nepalese, by they make stereotypical description as Gorkhas, and show them as watchmen and others of low social profile. It's like *gharwali-baharwali* sentiment. This types of media and things, will betray relation with two countries.

We should have serious thinking about the cultural commonality of both the counties that have the same cultural roots. We depend on these cultures and many things between us are similar. What we face in both the counties, reach out to people of both counties. How to build up people-to-people relation culturally, socially, economically should be prioritized.

I think, there are three types of people in the society: those who make things, those who watch things, and those wonder about what has happened. On such things, media people should be very serious. If the media people are not serious about these things, they will not report properly; they will not mention facts, and will not analyze what will happen to the society after their report appear. They need to foresee where the society will go and what reaction will come from it as a result of a certain reporting.

So, media people should be most serious and most concerned. I request the media people to try to make a good relation and tighten up the ties of good relation between the two counties. Thank you very much!

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## Valedictory Session

**Sunil Ambekar**  
**National Organizing Secretary, ABVP**

Today, most importantly, everyone present with us, especially, Bhagatda (Bhagat Singh Khusiyarai), who was the CM of Uttaranchal, and in public life, he has had a great place, and as he was with us yesterday too, and he talked about Nepal and Bharat relation, and his relation with Nepal in detail; I would not comment on that. In these two days, we have discussed on myriads of topic, and this is a special thing to mention that in Delhi, where we are, that too in December, we have many seminars, discussions and conference, but only those seminars and conferences are successful where people come with hearty readiness, but if the participant feels that we have problems to solve, such committed participants have come in this seminar. Be it from India, or Nepal, the people all. Nepali delegates had to struggled through the way, coming from home to Delhi, is a big exercise, and all the people came here, and I feel it is a sincere effort, yesterday I was thinking...somebody asked me when this Manch was inception, but since I was opportune to be with its inception, I said, many people first make organization and seminar and later start activities; but here since the activities have been going on for long informally, we felt the need for a formalized forum to produce something concrete and to move along, so. People think that for an organization, the longer its formation process, and regular, and natural, more is the chance of the work getting a long, natural and productive life. I feel, the process that has got along, with great enthusiasm everyone is participating, and the process will continue. Since yesterday, many things have come up; many issues where many opinions were floated, and when we sit together, we have

complaints and grudges. I was telling to a friend, that we started these efforts, to find solutions. In the middle, you and me continues, and that will continue, but the process has started for 'we', what can 'we' together do. I think, in order to move in this direction, these two days have been very appropriate. There are many issues, as in history, sometimes about history, people say, we need to talk of issues ahead, history has been too much. That is a reality, though we need to know history; we need its information, else we can make great errors. We need right knowledge and information of history; so, when we talk of future, it is essential to talk of history. I keep meeting people, India's students and Nepal too; often they ask why need so much of discussion; sometimes, I feel, that we know history of proximity more than other histories; I was in China a few days back. I told them, see, in the history of 50 to 60 years, there have been many tensions; but if you start back to 2500 or 3000 years of, we find a history of harmony and cooperation; we need to know this. About Nepal too, I want to say, that in the past 30 or 50 (or 100 for that matter, or British period, yet not 200 years or more) we have faced tension. Before that, a long history of positive relation exists, from which we can learn many things. So, history discussion, historical facts, are necessary, and yes, in them, who went wrong is necessary; but it is not necessary to input emotions; if emotions come, many things like anger come, so we need to cut emotions; emotions come when we discuss event; but when we discuss our part sans emotions, we can make objective inferences. This is what I wanted to say, in relation with historical discussion.

One good thing I felt was yesterday, we talked about politics and geo-political issues, and today, we talked about economical development and dimension of development for future, natural

resources, power, hydro power, water, and we also talked that we must see beyond power; we must also talk about water. Win-win situation too was suggested. Many positive suggestions too came forth. Hukum Devji rightly said, water, from where it started, to its end, it is a single flow, and this is worth contemplating. I found the idea very striking, and many other ideas were exiting.

There are many dimensions of economic progress. About commerce we discussed in the morning. We said, of all the treaties and agreements, PM from here and there went, but how many of them were followed, how strong did commerce become, all these are issues that demand a serious contemplation. Global economy: what are its pros and cons are other issues; about Bharat and Nepal, not only politically, but also in trade, we can have agreements and trade relations; in the days to come, we need to think about such new avenues, and I am hopeful, Sayago Manch will play its role in its different dimensions. There also are already established forums in both the countries, and they can be of help.

About media, in India, anti-corruption movement is going on. I say, there is a type of competitions; Judiciary says we are the only honest, and the rest politics, bureaucrats and media are all thieves, when election comes, the election commission claims everyone else is thief, the media personnel say the same thing; in films too we see, they have a list as to who is a thief, and in the list, be it in Bollyhood. There is a competition going on; if the specter comes in the field of politicians, they say, not only we, you are also thieves. Intellectuals, at times, think, we are thinking, and others are not thinking, and there is such a completion, but we need to think in a balanced way; we need media, court, judiciary, leaders, and we cannot move by dispensing any. If you say all leaders are thieves and you burnt the parliament, where will you

bring the options from: sky? patal? All is what we have made; some people are biases. Yesterday, someone has said, judiciary is bias; it is possible that judiciary or media has become biased at times, but that is talk of a particular context; we cannot reject the system; we need to think how we can balance. We are honest, others are thieves; this formula doesn't work. Good and bad are there inside all. If I talk that say I am honest hundred percent, I am telling lies. All have good and bad qualities; in relation to Nepal Bharat, the same is true. If one party claims it is right and the other wrong, that will not be an honest thinking. About cooperation, we need analysis not of the other party, but of oneself; this I think will make a good environment for cooperation, and give rise to a good thought. This is a good initiative; here are many scholars; they have labored through an important time of their life, some through study, some through politics, some through media, and through all means. All of us are not just speakers; all are people who put sincere effort. So, I feel, this conference is very important, and it will definitely expedite the work. Lastly, I suggest, to make the discussion even more intense in India and Nepal, the discussion should go to more places with more people, and your cooperation will be important, because all will not go to all places, but if any one of you goes, the spirit of the discussion will reach all places, we need to follow up; Deepak ji was alone when he started; but today, I feel, many are there, and in fact, the cooperation will move head.

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**Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani**  
**Former Finance Minister, Govt. of Nepal**

Actually, this two-day seminar has been most interesting, useful and in fact, a learning experience for me. In the last two days, we discussed different facets of our relationship with an openness that I have seldom found in formal government-to-government meeting and diplomatic meetings, in fact. Normally, when you go to government to government and diplomatic meeting, things are very formal, and you never discuss in the open mind. There is always something you leave behind. But here, I have found, we are open in our interaction, and in fact, I was most impressed by the remark of the leadership of BJP. Sentiments that were expressed were full for good wish and good will for Nepal, and in them was a willingness, openness for analysis, introspection and in fact call for self-criticism.

In this meeting, we talked about geostrategic context of our relation, and explored ways and means to link us together as independent nations, on the basis of mutual respect and shared prosperity. I agree here with Hukum Dev Narayan Yadavji. After hearing him, I have come to realize why he wins elections; I think, once in a while, after a couple of months, we will also have elections in Nepal, and after I heard him, I was thinking, maybe I should come and he his discipline and learn his techniques of how to win elections. I agree with Yadavji, that our ties should be beneficial to both of us, and not lead to problems to anyone of us. That's very important.

Here, let me just add that cultural ties bind us together; that is true, but in the ultimate analysis, it must be used for improving the economic prosperity and the well-being of the people

of both countries. Then only the cultural ties will have meaning; then only will it gain strength; that is the important thing.

Here, we also discussed about the need to utilize the Indian trade expansion and use of the Himalayan water resource for the benefit of both the countries. In both these areas, we have not made much progress. In fact, there have been some misunderstanding along the way; but I was happy to see that participants from both Nepal and India, were willing to examine their own styles and behaviors, sometime even critically, and were willing to learn from the past. This has started a new structure of interaction that takes the interest of the people of both the countries. I think, we need this attitude, because we need to undertake many enterprises in the years to come.

Now, hearing people speak on our relationship, I feel that there is a new level of understanding among the top leadership of BJP to promote a new era of confidence and trust between the two nations. Specially, I applaud, MP Yadavji's conviction that relationship between nations, like our two nations, must not be based on '*swami*' and '*das*' mentality; that is very important. He was insisting on that. But, it must be based on the idea that we both have self-respect for each other, and we will never be victims of what is known as, I used his word, *binata*: inferiority complex. I think, this is such a powerful sentiment; I appreciate this sentiment. And apart from coming to learn how to tackle people, I have also learnt these types of sentiments from him.

On the whole, I think, we have agreed upon a few propositions that have emerged from this discussion. First, a stable, prosperous and democratic Nepal is in the best national interest of India. This should be the guiding principle in our relation in the

future. Have we been true to this concept? Let's examine. This is the concept that should guide our relations. Second, we must learn to respect each other, and not assume a paternalistic role, again. Here also, I take my cue from Yadavji, and he is quite right. A relation that is based on paternalistic structure may seem it provides peace, but it generates automatic resentment. We must not be a victim of that type of relation. Third, we must also respect each others' sensitivity and concern, and work together to solve our mutual problems.

In water resources, Dwarikaji was also trying to say a few things, but maybe he did not have time. Here, there is a perennial concern of dam construction along Indo-Nepal border. Normally, you are not allowed to construct a dam on the border; if you want to construct, it should be eight kilometers inside your territory; but perennially, we have this problem. The dams inundate Nepali territory and this creates problems between the two nations. These are the kind of thing we must take seriously; we have not been able to solve this.

Also, as Puranji raised the issue, why are Nepalese newspapers never allowed in India; I have failed to understand. You might ask you were also a minister, what did you do? Did you raise the issue? Let me say, I raised this issue. In one of the meetings, I raised it with the Indian officials when I was a minister. I said, "Look! *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times* are well-respected, recognized international newspaper in Nepal. There are so many Nepalese living in India, billions of them, but why don't you allow free access of Nepali newspaper in India?" They said they have never done that, and but in fact, papers are not allowed to go. These are certain things that create irritation.

In media side, what is interesting is there seems to be unannounced willingness to dramatize the negative elements in both the countries. And that's also true in Nepalese context; the Nepali media also have that problem. For example, I think, one of our participants in the morning was mentioning the cartoon of an *ajagar*—a python—swallowing Sikkim, and then turning its head towards Nepal. I think, that is a kind of negative dramatization. That disturbs relationship among nations. I agree that while criticism and analysis are necessary, we must highlight the positive aspects of our relationship also. That is missing. Maybe I won't say missing, but we are not giving enough attention to that particular aspect. I think, that is a very important point. Now, of course, problems of this nature are there in both sides, but instead of proving that one party is right and the other wrong, it is necessary to solve the problem so that people of both the countries benefit. It is in this new attitude of problem-solving that works for the benefit of both countries; this is what is needed for the future. And I think, this meeting will help us walk in this direction.

I am also encouraged to find that the BJP has a vision, in its dealing with Nepal, that it is sensitive, understanding, and imaginative. This is something that has encouraged me to think.

Let me finally tell you that India is not just a great nation, it is also a great civilization. And, we in Nepal, if I may say so, are also the source of two great religions of the world: Buddhism and Hinduism. The great Hindu sages, when they wanted to contemplate on the intricacies of life and living, where did they go? They got to the Himalayas; that's where they got the inspiration and insight. So, we in Nepal are, in a way, a source of two great religions of the world.

It's not just Pashupatinath or Muktinath, Lord Rama himself was the son of India and Nepal. Aren't I right? Buddha, who spent his whole life teaching people the ways to be free from pain, the way to be happy, was born in Nepal, and spent more than two decades of his life, in his palace in Kapilvastu, which is in Nepal. So, we are in a way, one of the main sources of south Asian civilization. Ultimately, we are seven different countries in South Asia, that will remain independent, but ultimately, I think, we have to realize that we are a part of the South Asian civilization, which I believe, will ultimately define a new identity, not just Indian, Nepali, Afghani or Pakistani, but a South Asian Identity like you have a European Identity. Ultimately, in future—it may take time—such a type of vision should be sought for.

Finally, let me thank Deepakji for his organizing skill, for his vision, and his ability to bring all kinds of people together, and for making this program a success in an international capital like New Delhi. This requires a lot of imagination, and if I may say, courage and political skill, the skill to deal with people, the skill to inspire them that they work for the common goal. I applause this success, and I suggest that next time when we have a seminar like this, let it be in Kathmandu, and not in New Delhi.

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**Bhagat Singh Khusiyari**  
**National Vice-President – BJP, Member of**  
**Rajya Sabha and Former Chief Minister, Uttarakhand**

Don't expect that I will give such a 'valedictory' speech. Because, Sunilji has done that, and the little that was left, Lohaniji complemented. So, for me, there is nothing left to speak.

Talking a lot has no benefit, in fact. Talk little, and if a good thing comes out, that is the best. I congratulate you all, especially delegates from Nepal. In fact, last year in Dehradun, a friend of mine, Dr. MP Johsi, a scholar of history, coordinated a three-day seminar on Uttarakhand and Nepal's literature; many friends from Nepal had come, many from JNU and other places had turned up. It was a good initiative, and my interest was to hold it at other places too, but couldn't. But when Deepakji said that we should organize this program here in Delhi, I was impressed. Just now, Lohnaiji said, Deepakji had skills, and I feel, in all these programs, Deepak is not alone, but many of you—moons and stars—are with him, and when there are so many moons and stars, India and Nepal relations, even if there is any acridity, misapprehension or misunderstanding, I feel, can be solved through such discussions.

The first major work is to say no, we don't have misunderstanding. All of them have gone away, and in totality, we want a single thing: that a single country, where Bikram Sambat is in use is Nepal. When I go there and understand that, and when I come to think about Hindustan, my heads fall with shame. We have gone for AD dates, but in Nepali, they go after gate and Bikram Sambat and *paatro*—the traditional Hindu calendar. I feel,

if anyone has kept it alive the antique cultural nation I am talking about and the heritage I am talking about till today, it is my own brother, my own friend Nepal.

Naturally, in today's program, in this seminar, you discussed on many issues; in future you will talk more. I am neither summing them up, nor repeating. But, with people in Nepal and India, I will say one thing. Mahabharat mentions that on being asked, '*kalo ya rajyasya karanam; raja ya kalashya karana*' we normally say, time is supreme. But Bhisma said, '*rajawa kalasya karanam*,' i.e. whatever the form or rule or ruler or administration, so will time go forth. When I went to Nepal for the first time—that time monarchy was falling, but had not fallen—I had been asked by the media what I thought about monarchy. I said I did not care about monarchy. I had said, the best form of government was democracy: monarchical democracy as in Britain, or democracy like in India and America, and then I told them “don't ask me what it is.” The best form for today is democracy.

I feel good, when I go to Nepal. On meeting its present or past PMs—of any party—I tell them only one thing, that our talks will continue. We often mistakenly feel that cultural relations apart, the most dominant one is politics. For example, Bollyhood is dominant; more dominant than Bollyhood is politics; but people say, as I don't want politics.

When I went to Nepal some time back, I asked some people whether they knew Hindi. They said “Yes; we watch Hindi films.” So, Bollyhood is dominant even in Nepal. Politics too is quite dominant, and so for me, today, the most important concern for BJP, especially for all of our nationalist friends who are concerned with nation, culture and civilizations, as Lohani ji said, those

people, media personnel, professors, intellectual, leaders in my other parties, in all places, is that if they have more concern after India, we have concern about Tibet. It is under occupation; we can't do anything. Many are immolating, and often we feel, in case of Nepal—our neighbor, our brother, like a family, one—that if anything goes wrong there, we are pained. If a thorn gets into the foot, the experience goes to the head. So, we must feel the pain about Nepal.

In my own country too, there are problems, but here politics is established, democracy is structured and development is continuing. We have many weakness, granted. In all fields, there is a lack of security and self-confidence and self-reliance among people, but the most serious issue of concern should be, in Nepal, a stable government should come, and the stable government should take over. Leaders can fail, but the mass, that makes the leaders, can never fail. I will give you an example. In 1975, Indiraji, including BJP, said she was Durga Ma. She divided Pakistan into two, and made Bangladesh. She forced emergency, and after emergency, the Congress was washed out from north India, this means the mass had so much of power, more power can be with the people of Nepal, and how can we communicate the actuality to the mass; you were talking about media; for me, media can play the biggest and the best role in it. Today you have program, tomorrow another program might come up. Such, mutual awareness works, awakening works, if we continue such works, I fully believe that this awakening of mass, I am not talking of this or that party, this awakening of mass, demanding stability, and if for that stability, if you raise such an awareness, I think, problems will be solved. Before 4 years, when I was in Nepa, Mr. GP Koirala—he was alive then—had asked me about my opinion on the integration of

the Maoist. I said it would happen, if all want it. It is an easy talk, why to linger? All say, democracy is needed; Prachanda, Baburam also say. All they had to do was decide the integration of 19000 people, or a manage a gob for them. It was an easy task. I said to all of your leaders, that two to three thousand people, who are fit, would go into the army. We are not afraid; I am not afraid; they are also our own people, we must think, they too are my own soul; they must have chosen a wrong path. Today, the problem is being solved. Today, all of you must be in pain, that what will happen next. It's not a difficult work. Once, if you all, on returning, say only one thing: see, if we are to stand for democracy, we need to listen to all and finalize. If you do such a thing, definitely, good politics will return, and if good politics comes, all our problems will be solved. So, I individually feel that stability, peace and progress should come in Nepal.

When I was in Nepal last time, they said, India had captured this land here, and that land there. I said, it was a two-minute work; we could sit and resolve and finalize.

Nepal cannot speak against China, because the two do not have 'relations' beyond formal. For economic progress, we might take something, and establish a relation. Else, your relations are with India; so, you will quarrel with India. You might quarrel and we don't feel bad. If you say bad, I don't feel bad; if you show a black flag, I don't feel bad either. To whom will you show, if not to us? When as a child, something went wrong with me, I would fight with my mother. So, due to this, if four people show black flags, and the Indians think that it is anti-Indian sentiment, it is wrong. For me, often, I am in confusion whether I am in Nepal or India. I feel, I am in India itself, even if I am in Nepal.

o, in sum, for the initiative and deliberation you took here, the need for positive thinking comes up. As Dr. Lohani was telling, we must move along that road. Not I but we; we all are there to correct Nepal. In that spirit, if all of us move head, I think—I say this with confidence—that all India will stand with Nepal at the moment. All the citizens of India are with Nepal.

People ask me in Nepal about 1950 treaty: “What do you say?” What should I say? If we need correction, come let’s sit together, and even if you plead for more privilege, I am ready. We need to sit and decide. The reasons, which can bring us together, should be taken up, but it must be something that can help Nepal. Think! Don’t think much about India; peace is vital for both. So, all of us should be clear.

A reporter asked me downstairs, “Sab, Raj Nath Singh talked about a Hindu nation.” I asked her whether it was a bad idea. We are not declaring it. Till today, Nepal has maintained this identity of being a Hindu state. What does a Hindu say? You all are educated; Nepal too has mantras that are chanted. From Sankrit roots, Hindi and Nepali languages have come. Both the languages have the same mother. After all, the mantras we say, “Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti!” connect us culturally.

When intellectuals talk about environment, I say: “why don’t you go to the *Vedas* and read ‘*Om, dhyo shanti, rantarikshyagan shanti, prithvi shanti, rapa .....banaspataya shanti?*’ For everything Nepal and India have a common philosophical foundation. Does the world elsewhere have? I have read Socrates, Confucius and all, but what we have, no one has. If there is one thing we don’t have, it is the political structure, stability and liberalism, in whose absence, we fell, all our avenues are closed. Still I feel, we can

think in correct directions, and can make genuine attempts to address our problems. Then, I am sure, we all will join hands for construction of a good Nepal.

In South African, Gandhiji started a Satyagraha and said, “Hoga na!” Today also, they regard Gandhi, and the whole world agrees. Why? The aim of our culture is *bishwa bandhutwa*. Simply because I don’t have a *sikha*, aren’t I a Hindu? *Janen?* No; I don’t put it either, and yet, I am a Hindu. What is the issue? *Atmadarshan*, or the attainment of self-actualization is the need, and this is same as as Raj Nath Singh was saying, the acceptance of the idea of ‘*yat pinde tat, brahmande*’.

Accepting to be a Hindu doesn’t mean we need to support the king again. It rather means, we must regard our ideals, and on the background of those ideals, we can make a great temple, a great Nepal, and if we all attempt in the direction, I am sure, we can go home with a commitment that we can make a good Nepal, and we should improve our relation. We must meet more often and hold more meetings. As Dr. Lohani was saying, let another of such program be held in Kathmandu. Let some people from India attend, along with those in Nepal, from different universities, media, from different parts and spheres of life, and then people will think, yes, relations will improve. This is just the beginning. As Dr. Lohani said, it is a very good and successful beginning, and after such beginning, we will drink sweet tea and go, so that future talks will be sweet too.

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## Conclusion

The two day seminar on Nepal-Bharat Relations ended with extremely positive vibes. Four major areas of concern basically came forth: political stability in Nepal, economic cooperation at regional level, better media-media cooperation, and consolidation of cultural relations. Needs for more committed and honest political tie-up between India and Nepal were felt, and the speakers were unanimous in the idea that if need be, existing treaties between India and Nepal should be revised to ensure that no grudge exists thereafter. An inter-regional economic tie-up was another major thing felt, and the need to take into India's and China's rising economic strength were consciously put forward. There was a tacit agreement that big brother or small brother attitude was good for no nation, and so, a relation of better cordiality was sought for.

Among the impediments identified by the seminar were unequal trade treaties, political interference, unequal distribution of natural resources and lack of trust. Security of each other from each other's space was aired very articulately, and issues of fake currencies were raised too. The concern of India in the face of growing Chinese cultural expansion through Nepal too figured in the seminar.

The Indian leadership appeared apologetic about the imbalance in past treaties and some political and economic blunders that led to misunderstandings at times. The Nepali scholars expressed the commitment that since India was their closest neighbor geographically as well as culturally, they would do their

best to inspire all future decisions so that Indo-Nepal relations continue to move along an ever-consolidating path.

One collective attitude of the seminar was that, such discussions and deliberations should continue, with better frequency, in both the countries, to which, the organizers expressed optimistic resolution.

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