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Language, Education and Culture

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The educational system of a nation and its educational policies determine the status of the existing languages of the nation. Nepal is the home for 129 languages belonging to Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burman, Dravidian and Austro-Asiatic families and Kusunda, a language isolate. There is much discontent among the scholars from particularly minority communities that the biased language and educational policies of the state have been responsible for the endangerment of several indigenous languages of Nepal. Previously Nepali was the most preferred language for educational discourse, governance, trade, etc. However, the status of Nepali is gradually being overtaken by English and many people see English as a threat to the Nepali language as well as our diverse cultural heritage that has preserved our multi-linguistic, multi-cultural and multi-religious tradition of our society.

However, as one of the oldest and vibrant civilizations of the world, the rulers of Nepal patronized different indigenous knowledge system in different periods in the history. The Kirants ruled the Kathmandu Valley for more than one thousand years before the dawn of the Christian era. Legends say that Arjun, the legendary hero of the Mahabharata, happened to have visited the Kathmandu Valley and the Kirant warriors defeated him. This indicates that Kirants developed high level of skills of warfare. A sixth century poet Bharavi dramatized the defeat of Arjun by Kirants in the classical work called Kiratarjuniyam (Nepal National Education Plan Commission, 1956).

During the Licchavi era, people of Nepal came in contact with flourishing Sanskrit civilization of Indo-Gangetic regions. Under the patronage of Licchavi rulers, Vedic astrology flourished and began to guide the life of common people. Contact with Vedic tradition of scholarship developed intellectual discourse in royal courts, temples and monasteries. Anuparama's *Dvaipayanaśāstra* (Acharya D., 2007) can be taken as the outcome of this intellectual discourse. During Licchavi era, Nepal developed high level of knowledge in medical science under the patronage of Buddhism. In the 7th century, Ansuvarman's daughter, who married a Tibetan prince, sent her doctor to Lhasa, where he wrote the account of the spread of Buddhism in Tibet. The contribution of Chakrapani, as a commentator of *Shushruta*, a Sanskrit text on medicine, to the development of ancient Vedic system of medical science is well-known among Indologists.

The medieval Nepal developed high level of indigenous knowledge and skills that people of Nepal as reflected in art, literature, architecture, historical monuments including the carvings on the walls and pillars of temples. The architectural knowledge and skills developed in Nepal for centuries, particularly the pagoda architectural construction specifically designed for Hindu temples and stupas for Buddhist religious sites were acknowledged far and wide. The architectural feats of Nepali engineers reached the peak when artists such as Araniko, an artist with great gift of imagination from the Valley of Kathmandu, went to Tibet and China and constructed stupas there (Acharya, 1960). In late medieval period, people of the Kathmandu Valley developed a very sophisticated

water supply system with the construction of the *Rajkulo* that fed the *dhungedhara* (stone sprouts), the *jahrus* (drinking water fountains) and ponds and royal bath with fresh water.

All the achievements discussed above were possible through highly developed educational system. This system of educational system developed under the patronage of certain rulers in their courts or *gurukula* or monasteries. Only few privileged had the access to education in this system leaving the mass illiterate. Historical evidences indicate that the civilization and cultural awareness of Nepal have developed with the influence of Vedic traditions of the south and Tibetan traditions of the north through the ages giving a unique status to the civilization and culture of Nepal. Both Hindu and Buddhist ideologies got high place in the educational system of Nepal prior to the advent of western educational system with establishment of Durbar High School in 1854.

The establishment of Durbar High School was not intended to impart education for the welfare for the general public. When Junga Bahadur Rana visited Europe including Britain, he found English education instrumental to prove his family superior to the general public. Therefore, this school was primarily meant for the children of Ranas to prepare the boys to rule people with as much brutality as possible. The impact of the Rana rulers, majority of the graduates of Durbar High School, has been well-known and recorded history of Nepal. With the education imparted through Durbar High School came the western ideology of colonialism that annihilated indigenous knowledge system and cultural heritage. About seven decade

later of the establishment of Durbar High School, the Ranas established Tri-Chandra College because they realized that a large number of young people went to India for higher education and got involved in Indian National Movement. The Ranas took it as a threat to their own regime at home because of their pro-British policies. To stop the exodus of Nepali youths to India and stop them to get exposed with the anti-British ideology, the Ranas established Tri-Chandra College and affiliated to Patna University. The Ranas were successful to certain extent but they could control for long because of the global trends. By 1950, the Ranas had to step down as they could not resist the public movement.

The end of the Rana Regime is considered the beginning of a new era in socio-economic as well as educational aspects of Nepal. A high level educational commission was formed to recommend the government to modernize the national education system. The committee submitted its report, popularly known as Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC) or Wood's Commission, in mid-1950s and this begins the era of western modern education in Nepal. Prior to 1950s, Nepal had three major types of educational systems: *gurukula*, Buddhist system in monasteries and English system of education imported from India. The commission recommended for the value based education system to prepare human resource for the nation and gradually the *gurukula* and monasteries education systems were overtaken by newly introduced western education system. Instead of promoting the indigenous knowledge system such as indigenous art, architecture, farming, engineering and sustainable way of living that developed in thousands of years, this education system advocated for preparing human resource

required for the in line with the colonial system of education. The recommendations of this commission have become the foundations for the subsequent educational policy documents of Nepal.

The NNEPC (1956) has often been criticized for its biased attitudes towards minority languages of Nepal and promoting the Nepali language, the language of elite and ruling class. The criticism comes particularly from linguistic and cultural activists of minority and ethnic communities with the argument that government policy documents such as the NNEPC (1956) suppressed the languages and cultural practices and value systems of indigenous ethnic communities, consequently majority of these languages are at the verge of extinction. Some of the statements of the NNEPC (1956) are biased with regard to the multicultural ethos of Nepal. The NNEPC document intended to vanish the 'local dialects... from the school and playground as early as possible in the life of the child' (96). The intention was to promote the Nepali language, 'if the younger generation is taught to use Nepali as the basic language, then other languages will gradually disappear, and greater national strength and unity will result' (97). In 1950s multilingualism was considered as threat to the western concept of nation state and this ideology was imported and applied to multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic society of Nepal. The ideas of H. Wood, the advisor to the Commission, that, two hundred years ago, the United States had multiple languages and English was given prominence as

	Kathmandu Valley	West Nepal	East Nepal	Terai	Average
Primary School					
Local	71%	48%	75%	79%*	68%
National	38%	44%	13%	16%	28%
English	12%	17%	75%**	4%	27%
Middle School					
Local	18%	22%	25%	51%*	29%
National	81%	69%	50%	50%	63%
English	26%	25%	12%	16%	20%
High School					
Local	20%	22%	5%	54%*	25%
National	68%	67%	75%	45%	64%
English	52%	35%	73%**	26%	46%

language of the medium of instruction and 'today there was no problem of language there' expressed in an interview and published in the *Gorkhapatra* in 1954 are indicative (Wienberg, 2013). With regard to the medium of instruction, the Commission conducted a survey. The result of the survey is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Desired medium of instruction (NNEPC, 1956:53).

The survey indicates that 68% desired to impart primary education in the local language; 63% and 64% considered the medium of instruction should be national language i.e., Nepali in middle and high school. However, the Commission recommended Nepali to be the medium of instruction from early on. Although the NNEPC (1956) did not recommended English to be the medium of instruction, it states that people have a craze for English in Nepal.

This craze of Nepali people for English is increasing over the period in last seven decades. The Nepal Education System Plan (NESP) (1971) recommended teaching of English from class four onwards. The National Education Commission (NEC) (1992) recommended to provide primary education in the mother tongue of children

and allowed the local bodies to decide the languages to be taught. The NEC also opened private sectors to run educational institutions. The private sectors came to invest on education with aggressive marketing policies with the competency in English as the optimum outcome. Almost three decades later today English dominates as medium of instruction, not only in institutional schools, i.e., boarding schools in local speech, but also public funded community, so called government schools and institutes of higher learning alike. More and more community schools are shifting to English as a medium of instruction from the Nepali or other indigenous languages. Thapa (2018) argued that the authorities of community schools are compelled to shift the medium of instruction to English because members of public equate English with quality education.

In the context of Nepal, the choice of a language for the medium of instruction in educational institutes has been determined by the whims of political ideology since the establishment of Durbar High School in 1854 rather than theoretical foundations. Cha and Ham (2008) offers three theoretical answers that legitimize a foreign language to be the language of medium of instruction

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in the educational system of a nation — functionalism, institutionalism and global educational models. Functionalism serves to legitimize a foreign language to the language of medium of instruction of the educational system of a nation if that language has substantive social needs and fits in the local environment. The criterion of institutionalism refers to the institutionalization of the language in the local environment because of political, economic and cultural history of the nation. Global educational models refer to the economic network of the nation with

other partner nations and the language as a medium of instruction in those countries. Transnational cultural values and norms also determine the language of educational instruction in many nations.

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Strengthening Nepal's Democracy

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Nepal's struggle for democracy has spanned for more than seven decades. After restoration of democracy in Nepal as a result of popular movement in 1990, we have been exercising different forms of democracy. First, it was democracy with constitutional monarchy and now we have democracy in federal republic set up. However, some political leaders and intellectuals alike have been saying that Nepal's democracy still has many challenges and threats. In the highly globalized World in which Nepal is also embedded, the functioning of any political system depends not only on domestic factors but on external factors as well. This ns to promote the true values of democracy are the need of the time.

Experts highlight the high rate of literacy, majority of middle class and institutions that promote free thinking are consolidation of democracy. Though literacy is more than 65% the proportion of people completing graduate and post graduate level is very low. Hence, the proportion of critical mass necessary for consolidation of democracy is relatively low. Experts almost unanimously agree that consolidation of democracy also requires a high proportion if not absolute majority of middle class. According to a report titled 'Multidimensional Poverty Index, Analysis Towards Action' prepared jointly by National Planning Commission of Nepal and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, University of Oxford, 28.6% of Nepal's population are multidimensional poor. According to the same report, these groups of people suffer not only from malnutrition but also receive less than five years of schooling. The rates of unemployment are also very high. Though official government statistics say that unemployment in Nepal is around 3% some reliable international agencies have speculated that unemployment in Nepal could be around 40%. Such a high rate of unemployment among youths can always be an obstacle for the creation of a constructive social and political system. Such a high rate of unemployment can be dangerous even to authoritarian regimes depending heavily on repressive ways and indoctrination. In democracy, some radical groups may always try to misuse unemployed youths by using the environment of freedom of speech and expression available to them. Nepal has experienced many such phenomena in the past and in the present as well.

Moreover, Nepal has not been able to establish robust institutions that strengthen democracy in long run. There are regular elections and organs of the state such as executive, legislative,

judiciary but these alone are not sufficient to deepen the democracy. Democratic political system has to function in such a way that it caters to the need of every section of the population. Nepal is in fact need of some strong instruments of knowledge production that are dedicated to strengthen democracy. For democracy to be strong there is necessity of large number of people who truly believe in democracy. Thus democratic institutions need to focus on creating a sizable number of people who believe in democracy.

Our culture and traditions in many ways are beneficial to humanity but we also have century's long traditions that do not favor democratic ways. Authoritarian regimes and caste system have socialized us to a more vertical world view. Patriarchy and deterministic way of thinking also promote vertical world view and entitlements based on birth. These aspects of our traditions socialize people to vertical world view that is largely against more hierarchical world view favorable for democracy. Nepal has long history of authoritarian rules and many people still believe that we need strong leaders rather than a vibrant and dynamic system. Such people for obvious reasons do not have faith on democratic system.

Moreover, democratic polity has to be truly people centric in that all facilities provided by the state should be available to people of all sections of society. Democracy should ensure fundamental rights of food, shelter, education, health and dignified life to people irrespective of their caste, creed, political ideology and entitlements. Thus democratic order does not come easily and spontaneously. We have to invest time and resources. There are multiple factors that need to be taken care of in order to sustain democratic political order.

Many political parties and groups in Nepal have been part of democratic process but unwillingly. Their political philosophies and doctrines are inherently opposed to democracy. Some of them have emerged as powerful political forces. It is also necessary to socialize these political parties in democratic process and Nepal's experience has shown that democratizing such political groups is very long and difficult process which requires investment of a lot of time and resources.

In this globalized World sustainability of democracy also depends on support from democratic forces and countries in other parts of the World. Nepal should try to enhance its engagement with external factors that promote democracy and democratic values.

(Tiwari is Managing Editor of 'Nepali Journal of Contemporary Studies')

A Brief Overview on Nepalese Economic Growth

Keshav Raj Panthee

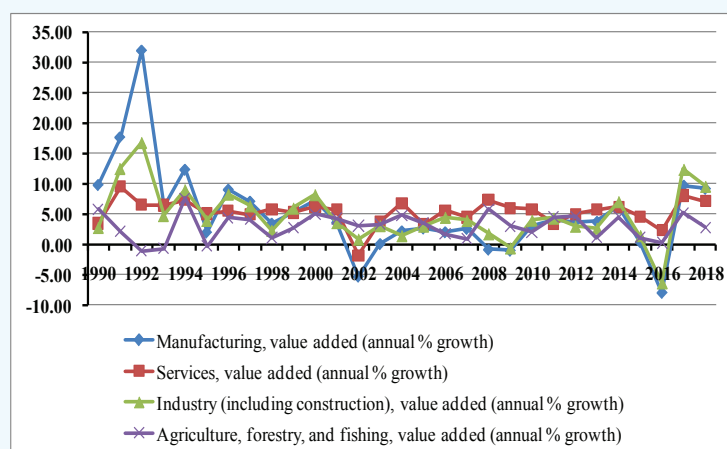
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As the population of a nation increases, the economic growth of the nation is expected to meet the demands of growing population. Similarly, as a member of interconnected world (global village), country further wants to increase production even for fulfilling the outer-world demand. Hence, countries try to achieve desirable level of growth with the twin objectives: getting revenue from abroad and stabilizing economy by accelerating economic activities inside the country. Thus, countries have shifted their focus on growth from domestic demand led growth to export led and tourism led growth. Since a decade before, growth with sustainable development has been prioritized. In this context, this paper has mainly tried to connect Nepalese economic growth with some development metrics and tested the level of impact of growth on development.

What is growing?

Though economic growth (measured by Gross Domestic Product) is not a sufficient condition for development of a country yet development cannot be imagined without growth. Development, either in short run or long run, is more or less influenced by the level of economic growth of a country. But what matters is: what is growing? Here growth rate of major sectors is over viewed.

Figure 1: Annual Growth Rate of Major Economic Sectors



Source: World Development Indicators (WDI); accessed on 03/21/2020

If we observe the major economic sectors of the economy, average annual growth rate for manufacturing value added, services, industry and agriculture, forestry and fishing for the period 1990 to 2018 is 5.16%, 5.38%, 4.85% and 3.02% respectively. If we exclude five years from 1990, the average annual growth for manufacturing value added drops down to 2.98% only. It means our growth is mainly driven by service sector. Figure 1 also indicates that except service sector the performance of all other three sectors is not satisfactory. Such a weak performance of industry and manufacturing sector compel us to think about sustainable growth. Slow growth of these sectors has become one of the major constraints for growth in Nepal. This makes us to rethink and analyze our growth composition deeply.

Growth Consequences for the Society

Average annual GDP growth rate and GDP per capita growth rate (based on WDI data) for the last 29 years are limited to 4.52% and 3.01% respectively. Are such growth rates contributing much to the well-being of Nepalese people? One of the parameters to measure it is Human Development Index (HDI). According to Human Development Report (HDR) 2019, HDI value of Nepal for 2018 is 0.579 (147th position among the 189 countries). It led Nepal in the basket of medium human development category.

The trend of HDI value and its components along with annual GDP growth rate is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Trend of HDI and GDP Growth Rate

Year	Life expectancy at birth	Expected years of schooling	Mean years of schooling	GNI per capita (2011 PPP\$)	HDI value	GDP* Growth Annual (%)
1990	54.4	7.5	2.0	1,192	0.380	4.64
1995	58.6	8.1	2.2	1,342	0.411	3.47
2000	62.3	9.0	2.4	1,532	0.446	6.20
2005	65.3	9.6	2.8	1,682	0.474	3.48
2010	67.6	12.0	3.3	2,002	0.527	4.82
2015	69.5	12.2	4.7	2,496	0.568	3.32
2016	69.8	12.2	4.9	2,486	0.572	0.59
2017	70.2	12.2	4.7	2,639	0.574	8.22
2018	70.5	12.2	4.9	2,748	0.579	6.66

*based on constant 2010 U.S. dollars

Source: Human Development Report 2019 (Briefing note for Nepal) and WDI

Nepal's level of human development is in upward trend. It has increased 1.5 times between 1990 and 2018 (0.380 to 0.579). Life expectancy at birth has reached to 70.5 years from 54.4 years in 1990. Expected years of schooling have increased from 7.5 years in 1990 to 12.2 years in last 4 years. Similarly, GNI per capita has doubled during the same period whereas GDP growth rate has increased by 1.4 times. There is fluctuation in growth rates whereas HDI is continuously increasing during the selected years. The nature of data indicates that there is no co-movement of GDP growth rate and HDI value. This does not provide strong evidence for economic growth supporting HDI in Nepal.

Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) data on Real GDP growth rate and inflation rate indicates that inflation in Nepal is not significantly explained by economic growth of Nepal. During last 29 years, growth rate has remained below the inflation rate except different five years. Mixed result (positive and negative relation) is found between growth rate and inflation rate. Inflation, one of the tools to measure cost of living is not much guided by economic growth in Nepal.

Do Leaders Matter for Growth?

Today, advanced as well as growing economies are found following tourism-led growth strategy. It has led tourism industry as one of the largest industries in the world. Similarly, through

product and geographical based export diversification, developed and less developed countries are promoting export-led growth strategy. Likewise, now a days' growth is also analyzed from the perspective of sustainable development. Nepal also seems following export and tourism led growth strategies and trying to link with sustainable development. To promote such strategies it has been liberalizing its economy mainly since 1990s. But, Nepalese growth has not taken speed besides having several opportunities. Besides having different fiscal and monetary measures as well as regional and international integration our growth is not at appreciable level in comparison to other countries. Do leaders matter for this?

After people's movement-I in 1990, except Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, (1991-1994 and 2006-2008) and current Prime Minister K.P. Oli (2018-till now) no any political leader is able to lead the nation even for two years (author's calculation based on <https://www.opmcm.gov.np/former-pm/>). During the period of 29 year (1990 to 2018) political party led government has changed for 22 times. In such scenario how could we expect for sustainable growth and effectiveness of governments' growth driven economic strategies taken in different year? Indeed, leaders significantly matter for growth and development. Success of major Asian economies and powerful western economies has justified this fact.

Conclusion

The above mentioned few facts indicate that economic growth is not significantly contributing for the level of development of Nepal in real terms. It does not totally mean that it is contributing nothing. But spillover effect of economic growth to the real life of people is less realized. As we are still at the phase of development and far behind than the similar and other advanced countries, we cannot ignore rapid economic growth. But, in the present time growth around the world has become a huge problem in terms of carbon emission and climate change. Along with sustainable growth the concept of green growth and de-growth is getting attention amidst the intellectuals of the world. It indicates that growth should not always be considered good. So, keeping all these issues in mind, government as well as private sector should move ahead and take initiatives for achieving economic growth that could raise the living standard of Nepalese people in real terms.

Transforming Educational Activities during the COVID-19 pandemic

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The outbreak of the Covid-19 and lockdown at the national level has led to global educational crisis. As of today, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected more than 1.6 billion students and youth across 191 countries constituting 91.3% of the world's enrolled students.[1] The COVID-19 pandemic has brought two major challenges —loss in learning and economic crisis. The pandemic led to increase in dropouts, and higher education disparity and the economic crisis further worsen the demand for the supply of education causing long term loss of potential skilled human capital.[2] Thus, to mitigate the damages and to facilitate learning with the help of technology, it is a high time we shift to open and distance learning through mobile, internet, radio, and television. In Nepal, 8 million students have been severely affected leading to the closures of schools, colleges and universities [3]. Unequal access to digital tools, electricity cutoff, connectivity and lack of infrastructure has brought unseen challenges for governments, educational institutions, parents and teachers to engage students in distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Nepal Telecom (2019) 63% of Nepal's population has access to internet out of which 79% of them are reliant on mobile phone. These facilities are also mostly limited to urban areas, where access to technology also depends and vary across households [3]. Many students do not have access to proper online learning platforms, reading materials, internet connectivity, smart phones or a laptop, adequate instructors, and supportive parents. Since, it is impossible to ascertain when this unprecedented crisis will be over,

it is important we look for intermediate solution.

Re-imagining education in this changed scenario has become crucial yet a challenging task. We need to come up with a comprehensive learning method that will not only minimize the loss from the crisis but will also ensure accessibility throughout the country irrespective of the household. The Ministry of Education, Science & Technology (MOEST), Educational administrators and policy makers should come up with a clear road map leading a new guideline for mode of instructions and learning that assure the objective and prepares for emergencies, and make the system more resilient.

The Government of Nepal has already taken precautionary measures by re-scheduling and scrapping nationwide examination. National closure of all educational institutions is already in practice. Furthermore, Nepal Teachers' Association (NTA) has implemented the 'Every Home a School' campaign but it has not provided any productive results [4]. They need to create awareness among teachers, parents and families for their active role, participation and promote for the success of this campaign. Social platforms and digital technology should also be used to provide tips and advice on how better to support students. Contacting students and their parents by using available means of communication via mobile, internet, radio or television will play a key role in supporting this endeavor. Countries across the world have already begun optimizing their digital platforms: Classes in China, Italy, France, Germany and Saudi Arabia have moved online; mobile phones or television are being used in Vietnam and Mongolia to reduce the time lost by students. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs via online medium to assure that

lesson plans, videos, tutorials, and other resources can be made available. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST), Nepal has launched an e-learning portal of digital textbooks and learning materials for class 1 to 10 but many people are unaware of its effectiveness [5]. Likewise, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu University and other 10 Universities have been facilitating virtual/online classes in various departments.

The support of parents and teachers on the engagement of children particularly secondary school students is very important. Some learning activities should be ascertaining like yoga and exercises, indoor games, household tasks, watching motivational films, and writing. Nepal television has been broadcasting the courses for the students of class 9 and 10. Government has recently initiated to broadcast the course for class 1 to 10 through radio, television, and online portal where NTV plus broadcast for class 1 to 8, Dish home, Net TV, Max TV broadcast for class 9 and 10, and around 300 local level FM radio also broadcast the classes [6]. Working with Nepal Telecom to apply minimum-rate policies that can facilitate learning material to be downloaded and low cost call can help to contact directly where there is no or slow internet access which is prevalent mostly in remote areas. Ministry of Education should bring telecom companies on the table ensuring affordable and high speed internet access.

In food insecure districts of Nepal, mid-day meal programs to children with the nutritious meal of the day have been mostly

affected by the pandemic. It is not easy, but our country should find a way to deliver those meals using the school buildings in an organized way. If it is needed, the governing bodies should distribute directly to the families, or transfer equivalent cash to compensate the parents. While working on it, parents and family should be made aware about the current situation and ways of maintaining the engagement and enrolment of students in learning from home activities. As an alternative model, Government has initiated of providing printed materials to those without access to technology and offline materials to those with access to computer. [6]. Government of Nepal should coordinate effectively at all government levels; province, district, and local to actively launch and promote all these initiated campaigns.

Starting the school year late or interrupting completely has disrupted the lives of many students and their parents, and teachers. This leads to the adjustments of academic calendar, prioritizing students preparing for examinations, and continuing with e-learning. The reopening of educational institutions should be gradual, as educational authorities and policy makers should enhance preparedness while dealing with the pandemic. Various countries have been enforcing and supporting preventive actions across institutions (Afghanistan), establishing guideline for institutional handling of illnesses and potential cases (Egypt, Russia, Belarus) and limiting physical contact by reducing social and extra-curricular activities (Singapore, Russia) [6]. Some countries also have enforced

selective closing of schools by choosing to isolate treatment areas. In half of the cases, they have localized approaches as an interim measure and gradually have expanded geographically (Brazil, India, Canada, Australia) [7] which ensures that students get an opportunity to learn in a safe environment.

It would be great if you write a concluding paragraph summarizing the main aspects of the discussion and highlighting the contribution of the paper.

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Changing Priorities in Foreign Policy of Nepal

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Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli accused Indian establishment of conspiring for his removal from the office. On the occasion of birth anniversary function of former general secretary of the then UML late Madan Bhandari he bitterly responded about the ongoing meet of NCP permanent committee. He argues that all it was made

due to his efforts on making agreements with Chinese counterparts. Everyone was taken aback when Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli made these remarks.

Previously when he visited India and had meeting with high level political leaders/intellectuals in India, had a cordial relations. Personally too, PM Oli had his first kidney transplant in India with the support of Indian establishment. However, recently Nepal-

India relations are taking a different turn and intellectuals feel that PM Oli's remarks are responsible for these new developments.

The recent tension in Nepal-India relation began when Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh tweeted about the inaugural event of Kailash-Mansarovar road vial Lipulekh, a road linking to China boarder near Kalapani. Nepal claimed India constructed road through the land of Nepal

and streets of Kathmandu valley witnessed violent protests. Media, main opposition party NC's student wing Nepal student union and civil society started making atmosphere tense.

On May 15, 2020 Indian Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Mukund Naravane remarked that Nepal might be raising the issue of road construction via Lipulekh to Mansarovar by Indian authorities at the "behest of someone else". Talking in a webinar, General Naravane, without naming China, said, "There is reason to believe that they might have raised this issue at the behest of someone else and that is very much possible." The road constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is on the west side of Kali River. So, I do not know what exactly they are agitating about," he added.

Narvane's statement escalated protests against India in the streets of Kathmandu. Indian media speculated this 'behest of someone' to be China. Based on such speculations, Indian media repeatedly claimed the role of China for the recent development on Nepal-India relations. Coincidentally, in the meantime, Sino-India territorial conflict escalated in Laddakh. Many Indian media started looking at Sino-India conflict and Nepal-India border issues strategic and parallel development and they put forward the government of Nepal led by Nepal Communist Party as the hard-core evidence for it. On the other hand, Nepalese media found it to be humiliating.

India claimed that the road, Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated, had a long history of trade between India and China since British Raj in India. On 15 May 2015, India and China issued a joint statement stating the expansion of border trade through Lipu-Lekh pass. Clause (28) of the statement clause states, "The two sides recognized that enhancing border areas cooperation through border trade, pilgrimage by people of the two countries and other exchanges can effectively promote mutual trust, and agreed to further broaden this cooperation so as to transform the border into a bridge of cooperation and exchanges. The two sides agreed to hold negotiation on augmenting the list of traded commodities, and expand border trade at Nathu-La, Qiangla/Lipu-Lekh Pass and Shipki-La."

When China and India reached an agreement to build bilateral trade corridors through Lipu-Lekh via the Indian state of Uttarakhand in 2015, Nepal took up the issue with both countries. The Government of Nepal wrote to both New Delhi and Beijing about the agreement, but neither New Delhi nor Beijing responded the concerns of Nepal. India started the construction of the road via Lipulekh, the disputed region, quite a long time ago in 2008, the construction ended on April 17, 2020.

On 10th May 2020 Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', the leader of Nepal Communist Party responding in parliamentary committee argued the issue to be settled with a trilateral talk with Nepal, China and India as there was an agreement held between China and India previously. Immediately Chinese authorities rejected it outright. They called the Nepalese diplomat at Beijing and communicated that it was a bilateral issue between Nepal and India. Further, in an interview with the official media of Government of Nepal, the Chinese ambassador to Nepal made the stand of China clear on this issue.

A cabinet meeting directed the concerned minister to submit a full size map of Nepal including the claimed territory. However, Nepal and India have prepared 182 sheets of boundary maps earlier in 2007 besides Kalapani and Susta and as per the agreed boundary maps, Nepal and India have begun the demarcation of the border, which was likely to be completed in 2022. Within days all the documents made clear and endorsed by the cabinet. Then questions about the national stamp arouse and need for constitutional amendment was sought. That was too is done in a week.

The Council of Ministers of Nepal had announced the new map on 20 May 2020 and two days later it was placed in the Parliament. On 13 June 2020, the motion was put forth for voting in the lower house of Nepal's Parliament by the government of Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. Voting was unanimous with ayes being 258 with no nays. On 18 June 2020, the Upper House too unanimously passed the Bill after which the President of Nepal Bidhya Devi Bhandari signed the Bill.

Indian media had a lot of speculation regarding this sudden development in Nepal. There are imaginary theories about China

favor policy of Nepal. There was arguments for present situation about its connection with the twelve point's agreement made with Indian assistance whereas for some it is due the blockade of 2015. Some even rumored that, if the situation got worse, there could be blockade and these rumors spread widely through social media in Nepal.

Strategic regional enterprises or organization of India and China such as BIMSTEC of India led group and BRI of Chinese initiation often put Nepal in difficult situations as both the powers wanted to secure relationship with Nepal. In addition to these regional powers, Nepal also has to face the interests of the western powers, for example, the issue of MCC at present. To fulfill their interest, these powers manipulate Nepali politics by offering huge amount of financing in infrastructure and, in return, they want to secure their presence in the region.

On January 11, 2019, Phill Davidson, the commander of US Indo Pacific command visited Nepal. After his visit a report published on the strategic defense planning of America for Nepal. The document highlights the future plans including counter terrorism, defense professionalism, ground force capacity, peacekeeping operations etc. The document also clarifies regular visits of high level Defense personnel. From events of this sort, it is evident that western powers understand the geo-political position of Nepal.

The INGO/NGOs also manipulates the politics and policy making in different ways by manipulating the leadership. Leaders of different political parties are directly involved with western funding through NGO. Most of them are operated by their spouse or nearby relatives. In the early days of multi-party parliamentary system when India tried to engage in various hydro-power projects like Arun valley and Pancheshwar, there were demonstrations, debates started to disrupt and whole scenario was arranged by NGOs which was operated by these leader's relatives.

As NGOs are badly damaged their image due to corruption, western forces are directly engaging with political parties. EU and US sponsored politicians are acting as per guidelines. Nepali Congress leadership is more openly with western whereas there

is a vertical line seems with Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) in the ruling party. PM Oli, defense Minister Ishwor Pokharel, foreign minister Pradip Gyawali and finance minister Dr. Yuba Raj Khatriwada with their supporters are in the favor of it. On the other side former PM Jhala Nath Khanal, former defense minister Bhim Rawal with internal support of Prachanda kitchen cabinet are among the opponent. Meanwhile Kathmandu based US Embassy is the first diplomatic mission publishing constitutionally amended map of Nepal on its official Face book page could explain very much.

Nepal's PM Oli is continually trying to provoke India as he commented in parliament on national emblem of India, used cheap words, amended map and recently on July 13th he claimed about the birthplace of Lord Rama saying Ayodhya is in Nepal. And now he again teasing the law of citizenship. All of sudden parliamentary committee became active to clear the amendments in law for citizenship act. They focused on the issue of naturalized act in which a woman of foreign national married to the Nepali citizen can get naturalized citizenship after seven years only. Previously it could be available just after starting the process of leaving her native country's citizenship.

Right now Nepal has a population of approximately 30 million and nearly 21.2 million have already got the citizenship certificates with only 325 thousands are having naturalized citizenship which clearly shows that there could be no chance of any adverse impact due to it.

Obviously most of naturalized citizenship holders are from India, but the geography of marital migration is not only from southern plains as it is claimed. Nepalese peoples are married in India from east in Darjeeling, Assam and Kumaon, Garhwal at western side equally. There is a misconception that moreover Madhesi are only marrying Indian brides. Actually it would be better to understand and accept that almost every family in Nepal has an Indian bride in their house. All this hue and cry is made to increase the anti-Indian feelings only.

K.P. Sharma Oli and his kitchen cabinet are trying to create a bitter environment so that distancing theory of western forces

can be implemented. The current scenario is the continuation of strategic activation after abrogation of article 370 last year. On 5 August 2019, the Government of India revoked the special status granted under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution to Jammu and Kashmir. On 9th, 10th and 11th August there was demonstrations in UK, US and Canada simultaneously. Common Nepalese citizens were silent on abrogation of article 370 of Indian Constitution but a group of intellectuals and politicians, who claim themselves as champions of secular, federal and republic Nepal, have been expressing dissenting voices against PM Modi Government's decision.

Former prime minister Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, prolific writers and champions of identity politics like CK. Lal, Hari Roka and Rajendra Maharjan or prominent civil society leader Dr. Devendra Raj Pandey have expressed dissenting voices in twitter or media against abrogation of article 370. Senior journalist Kishor Nepal too expressed his views on tweet. All of them are well known for their links with westerns like DFID, USAID and Norwegian funds.

An article in Kantipur on August 14 written by CK Lal was critical of BJP hitting Modi government claimed pursuing religious agenda like in Germany, during the Nazi period. In another article in Kantipur on August 14, former sympathizer of communist party Rajendra Maharjan even compared BJP as a Nazi party and Prime Minister Narendra Modi as Hitler in the context of abrogating the article 370. Dr Baburam Bhattarai twitted saying that progressive force should not be late to understand the rise of rightists, religious fundamentalist single cast Fascists and Nazi & apos;s new faces in globally, in neighborhood and our own country.

In media sector, The Kathmandu Post, Kantipur and Nepali Times in their editorial questioned the abrogation of article 370. In its editorial The Kathmandu Post writes of Draconian measures in Jammu & Kashmir. Nepali Times, Nepali English weekly, in its editorial writes the other factor that should engage the minds of Nepal's rulers is that a BJP government that could overturn India's own Constitution on Kashmir for populism could attempt a reversal of Nepal's secular constitution.

Later on November 2, 2019 India published its new map after Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh were created by splitting the former state of Jammu and Kashmir. The map also showed the region of Kalapani as part of the Indian Territory which was claimed disputed area by Nepal. A press meet was called by foreign minister Pradip Gyawali on Nov. 3 at Hotel Merriot in Kathmandu where he ignored to reply a query regarding this.

Even on 25th Nov 2019, in an interview with Bhushan Dahal's talk show 'fireside' of Kantipur TV PM Oli said that he never read anything about the claimed territory belongs to Nepal. However he argued about the location of river Kali. But then suddenly it became a national issue and leaders of different political parties started making opinions on Kalapani.

Similarly a program arranged in Pakistan embassy to show staggered on it attended by several leaders including the then chairman of Federal Socialist Forum, Upendra Yadav (footnote). On November 4, 2019 the Kathmandu Post featured a story claiming Lipu-lekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani as part of Nepalese territory. On November 6, 2019, Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kathmandu released a statement saying Kalapani is a part of Nepalese territory. The press release came on Ministry's letterhead with an unauthorized signature. On Nov 7, 2019, a group of students affiliated to Nepali Congress protested shouting anti India slogans in front of Indian Embassy.

Actually after the 1990 movement in Nepal western forces are eagerly waiting to put forth their agenda for secularism but due to the continuation of monarchy it was unacceptable. Finally they got the chance for this after 2006 when re-established parliament passed a bill for secularism even not a single political leader is ready to accept the ownership for this till now. Nepalese peoples never accepted that and it is remaining a big question for society.

The final judgment in the Ayodhya dispute was declared by the Supreme Court of India on 9 November 2019 ordered the disputed land (2.77 acres) to be handed over to a trust (to be created by Government of India) to build the Ram Janmabhoomi (revered as the birthplace of Hindu deity, Ram) temple. As the Supreme Court of India verdicts in favor of Ram Mandir, there was

a chance to get igniting a momentum for Hindu state in Nepal.

China knows that the construction of road to Kailash Mansarovar not only boosts the pilgrim tourism in the region but also accessibility to the region will offer a high turnover in economic activities along with huge India-China trade. Moreover, China sees the road instrumental to reach its goods to large Indian market. Financial issues determine modern bilateral issues. When India started the construction of road to Kailash Mansarovar, China knew that the

road opens South Asian market to Chinese goods.

India has to compete with China, US, EU and Pakistan in Kathmandu to dilute their vested interests. US want to deploy its forces, EU has the responsibility for fulfillment of Vatican's wishes, Pakistan is interested in humiliation of India and for China, all is getting free of cost. It is necessary for western forces including US to make a big gap with an extremely bitter relationship between Nepal and India socially till BJP led govt. is in center so

that the chances of revocation for Hindu state Nepal may be pushed far. Regarding map issue Indian media is presenting itself with a theory of belief that every anti India movement is designed and directed by China which maybe one angle of the scene. But far behind it there is deep rooted mission for continuation of secularism because only that will be a solid base for reliably execution of strategic programs staying between majorly Hindu populated India and Buddhist populated Chinese territory Tibet.

A Two-day Seminar on “Research Collaboration in Education and Social Sciences”

**Organized by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), India
In collaboration with Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP), Nepal
06-07 February 2020
Conference Hall, ICSSR, New Delhi**



The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, India in collaboration with Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP) organized a two-day seminar on ‘Research Collaboration in Education and Social Sciences’ at the Conference Hall, ICSSR, and New Delhi, India on February 6-7, 2020. Prof. Dr. VK

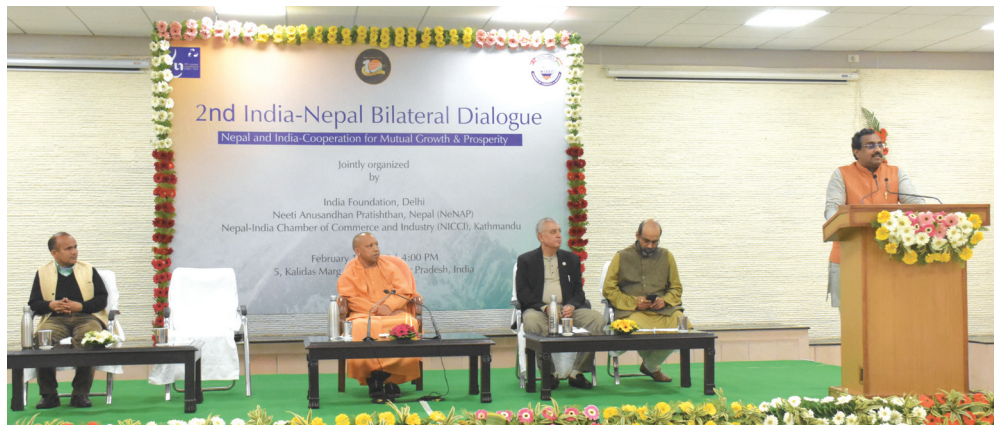
Malhotra, PhD, Member Secretary of the Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) New Delhi chaired the seminar. Scholars, educationists and social scientists from Nepal and India presented papers and took part in panel discussions. The main objectives of the seminar were to identify the areas of collaboration of research in

social science and education, prepare a modality for exchange programs between the institutes of Nepal and India.

In the inaugural session Prof. Dr. VK Malhotra welcomed the delegates and highlighted the role of educationists and social scientists in nation building. Dr. Deepak Kumar Adhikari, the Director of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP) focused on the relevance of the programs like this in strengthening Nepal-India relations. Addressing the seminar, Dr. Tikaram Poudel appealed the distinguished scholars to explore the innovative areas that strengthen Nepal-India relations. To strengthen the relations, Dr. Poudel reiterated the importance of empowerment of people and the role of education is instrumental. The seminar had eight presentations and one panel discussion that discussed issues in the areas of educational policies in Nepal and India, issues in research on education, language, culture and literature in Nepal and India and researching in social sciences.



Second Nepal-India Bilateral Dialogues



LUCKNOW: The second India-Nepal Bilateral Dialogues with the theme of Nepal and India-Cooperation for Mutual Growth & Prosperity held at Hyatt Hotel, Lucknow, India. India Foundation (IF) Delhi in collaboration with Neeti Anusandhan Prathishthan, Nepal (NeNAP), and Nepal-India Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NICCI), Kathmandu organized the program. The main objective of the program was to develop Nepal-India ties for mutual prosperity and growth.

Opening the session Member of the House of Representatives (HoR) Raj Kishore Yadav of the Federal Parliament of Nepal Stated, “cultural linkages are similar of both nations, and in today’s policy makers have to be both serious and attentive in improving the way of life of the people understanding the developments in global level.” Member of the Board of Governors of India Foundation, Shourya Doval, said, “...there are many implications and apprehensions, and our outcome should have an impact on academics and policy formation.” Speaking at the program General Secretary of Neeti Anusandhan Prathishthan, Nepal

(NeNAP), Nalini Gyawali, said, “discussions on multifaceted issues were crucial and Nepal is serious in discussing and finding lasting solutions to team with Indian counterparts.”

The sessions discussed ancient civilizational linkages, revival of ancient bonds, and experiences of federal systems and inclusive democracy. Noted academicians from both Nepal and India Senior political leaders and diplomats from Nepal and parliamentarians both from regional and central Government of India participated in the panel discussion.

Noted academician Dr. Ramesh Kumar Dhungel, Executive Chairman at Lumbini College of Buddhism and Himalayan Studies Nepal, and Dr. Minendra Rijal were Chairs of two sessions. In a session chaired by S.D. Muni, Professor Emeritus Jawaharlal Nehru University, discussions evolved on inclusive democracy and the deep bond shared between the two nations through

civilizational linkages and pragmatic approaches required for adaptation in the coming years with great prospects given by the leap in information technology.

Addressing the valedictory session, the Honourable Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath, said, “The spiritual and cultural relations between India and Nepal are part of a common heritage. The Nepal-India Dialogue along with the cultural and spiritual heritage of both countries will also take the trade between the two countries to a new height.”



Also Speaking on the occasion was the National General Secretary of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and member Board of Governors of India Foundation (IF) Ram Madhav who laid stress “on the importance of age old socio-cultural ties between the two nations”. Similarly Dr. Shashank Koirala the General Secretary of the main opposition Nepali Congress Party also opined on continued people to people relations between the two nations.

The valedictory session of the program was conducted by Captain Alok Bansal, Director of the India Foundation, and the vote of thanks by Dr. Deepak Kumar Adhikari, Director of NeNAP. The valedictory session was held in the residence of Chief Minister, UP.

The bilateral dialogue is a continuation of the efforts made by both countries to increase areas of cooperation and continue maintaining favorable relations between its people.



Prospects of Nepal-India Economic Cooperation in Post-Covid 19 Period

Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP) organized the first webinar on Prospects of Nepal-India Economic Cooperation in Post-Covid 19 Period was held on June 23, 2020. Dr. Posh Raj Pandey, Chairman at South Asia Watch on Trade Economics and Environment, and also the former economic expert at the Prime Minister's advisory board of Nepal moderated the webinar.

Prof. Dr. Bishwambhar Pyakuryal argued, "reverses migration, and hit in remittance." He also observed a "decline in the global economy and the

global value chain." Journalist Pritam Ranjan Bose noted that, after the introduction of Goods and Sales Tax (GST) in India, the export of Nepal to Indian market by 66%.

Manjeev Singh Puri, Former Ambassador of India to Nepal, Prof Dr. VK Malhotra, Member Secretary of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Dr. Nihar Ranjan Nayak, Research Fellow at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses and Dr. Deepak Kumar Adhikari, Director of NeNAP also attended the webinar.



Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP)

International Webinar on
Prospects of Nepal-India Economic Cooperation in Post Covid 19

Moderator

Dr. Posh Raj Pandey, Chairman at South Asia Watch on Trade Economics and Environment (SAWTEE) and Former Economic expert in Prime Minister's Advisory Board

Speaker

Professor Dr. Bishwambhar Pyakurel, Economist
Former Ambassador of Nepal to Sri Lanka
Founding Chairman, Institutes for Strategic and Socio-economic Research (ISSR)

Pratim Ranjan Bose
Senior Journalist and Researcher

Date: Tuesday, 09th Asadh 2077 | 23rd June 2020

Time: 3:15 p.m. (Nepali Time) & 3:00 p.m. (Indian Time)

Changing Dynamics of China's Engagements in Nepal



Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP)

International Webinar on
Changing Dynamics of China's Engagement with Nepal

Moderator

Birat Krishna Thapa
Columnist & Political Analyst

Presenter

Shiva Prasad Tiwari, Researcher
Managing Editor of 'Nepali Journal of Contemporary Studies'

Commentators

Bhaskar Koirala, PhD Scholar of Peking University, Beijing, China
Journalist, Geopolitical Analyst, Director of Nepal Institute of International and Strategic Studies (NIIS)

Dr. Nihar Ranjan Nayak
Research Fellow, Institute for Defense and Strategic Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi

Trailokya Raj Aryal
Columnist & Political Analyst

Date: Wednesday, 10th Asadh 2077 | 24th June 2020,

Time: 3:15 p.m. (Nepali Time) & 3:00 p.m. (Indian Time)

Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal organized an International Webinar on "Changing Dynamics of China's Engagements in Nepal" on 24 June 2020. In his presentation, Mr. Shiva Prasad Tiwari highlighted that China's engagement in Nepal has been markedly growing after the end of monarchy in Nepal in May 2008. He also highlighted that deepening relations between Communist Party of China (CPC) and Nepal's ruling Nepal Communist Party has been important factor allowing for China's greater role in Nepal. Commenting on the presentation. Commenting on the Tiwari's paper, Dr. Nihar Ranjan Nayak argued to situate the roles of China in Nepal

in the context of China's search for greater role in international politics. Bhaskar Koirala argued that to understand China one has to read books and articles by authors from China because non-Chinese authors writing about China see China from different perspectives. Trailokya Raj Aryal thought that to understand Nepal-China relations, scholars from Nepal have to make a systematic study of China's foreign policy. Prof. Dr. Rajesh Kharat indicated that we have to understand Nepal-China relations structural, functional, institutional and operational levels. The webinar concluded with the vote of thank by Birat Krishna Thapa on the behalf of Neeti Anusandhan Pratishthan, Nepal (NeNAP).