

## FSFN and RJPN finally to form government in Province 2

### Raut to become first CM

#### TVM Desk

Kathmandu: After ending over two-month long political speculation, the Federal Socialist Forum Nepal (FSFN) and Rastriya Janata Party Nepal (RJPN) have inked a deal to form a coalition government in Province 2.

The meeting between the top leaders of the two parties held in Kathmandu agreed to forge the alliance “to honor the spirit of Madhes movement and verdict given by voters of Province 2 in favor of Madhes government.

According to the agreement, FSFN will have chief minister, deputy speaker and Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law, Ministry of Financial Affairs and Planning, Ministry of Land Management and Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Similarly, RJPN will have Speaker, Ministry of Physical



Mahantha Thakur



Upendra Yadav

Infrastructure, Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment.

FSFN Chairman Upendra Yadav and RJP presidium coordinator Mahantha Thakur have signed in the agreement letter following the agreement. As per poll result, the largest party in Province 2 and Parliamentary Party leader of the FSFN Mohammad Lalbabu Raut is set to become the chief minister of Province 2.

“The deck is clear for me to become the chief minister,” Raut said after

the meeting.

Chairman Upendra Yadav, party Vice-chair and PP leader Raut and General Secretary Ram Sahay Yadav were present in the meeting from the SSF-N side. From the RJP-N, leaders of the presidium Mahantha Thakur, Rajendra Mahato and Mahendra Raya Yadav attended the discussion. The SSF-N with 29 members and the RJP-N with 25 jointly have a majority in the 107-member provincial assembly. The two parties can form the provincial government

without the help of the left alliance or the Nepali Congress. However, SSF-N Chairman Yadav said they would make efforts to include either the left alliance or the NC in the government.

The agreement means Province 2 will be the only province to have government outside the left alliance. UML and CPN (Maoist Center) have already reached an agreement to form government in four and two provinces respectively.

The agreement was expected as the two parties had jointly contested the federal and parliamentary polls in Province 2 with the promise to form ‘Madhes Sarkar’ if elected to power. The two parties had respectively won 29 and 25 seats in the provincial assembly of Province 2 which saw a triangular fight between Nepali Congress and the left alliance and the alliance of Madhes-

based parties.

Before starting the negotiation, both FSFN and RJPN separately held negotiations with the left alliance hoping for a better deal. But leaders said they eventually decided to turn the poll alliance into a coalition government amid pressure from cadres and civil society members on the ground. Many had warned the two parties against forming a coalition with the left alliance for “petty gains” saying that such a move would draw backlash from the voters and erode the goodwill earned during the popular uprising, Lalbabu Raut said.

The two parties among other things represent the same constituencies and share same view on key political issues including constitution amendment.

## Nepali actors to get training in Pune

Kathmandu: In a first-ever initiative, the Government of India is sponsoring a 20-day course from 12 February to 03 March at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) at Pune for 20 leading Nepali actors and actresses. The participants, hailing from different regions of Nepal, have been shortlisted on the basis of their performances and accomplishments in films and theatre.

During the course, the



participants would receive rigorous training in acting through teaching of Rasa Theory, Sense memory, improvisation, scene-work and lip sync playback. The FTII, Pune has specially designed the curriculum based on the needs and requirements of the participating actors and actresses.

Apart from their training at FTII, Pune, the participants would also get an opportunity

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# Editorial

## Message of first provincial assembly meeting

February 4 was a historic day for Madhes. The provincial assembly's first meeting of Province 2 was a revolutionary and historic opportunity for which Madhes had made movements three times. The federal structure was possible because of the three times of Madhes movements for federalism, identity, and inclusion, and federalism is in effect. As Madhes was mother of federalism in Nepal, so the moment of implementation of federalism was actually golden. After the one decade of Madhes movement, the federal rule has been implemented in the country.

All provincial assemblies meetings including Province 2 have been completed. Now all the provincial assemblies are involved in the process of making a provincial government. In this regard, the process of forming a new government has also started in Province 2. It cannot be asked about the structure of the future government and its action plan. However, the successfully completion of first meeting has given some message and on the basis of the same message, the new government to make its work and action plan.

The lack of development of physical infrastructure with the human development index has been backward. Last time political change has made many possibilities of development. So, on a matter of development, if all join hands, this Province can become a model, a beautiful and prosperous state.

For the development of Province 2, political commitment, coordination between the Center and the state government, and authority of the budget spent for development is necessary.

Speaking in the first meeting, most of the provincial assembly members promised to make Province 2 a beautiful city with an integrated. Speaking about a plan to change the face of the residents of the state, the members also agreed to cooperate with the parties. They said that Province 2 is rich in natural resources, energy, tourism, and culture as well as nature is excellent. They want to make the most beautiful, conscious and peaceful state.

There is no doubt that if there is only one of the above mentioned statements that stated can become a rich, advanced, developed, and model state. But for this there has been a need for political commitment, honesty and will power. So, wherever the state is prosperous is the responsibility of everyone stays in power or in opposition.

For that, everyone should proceed together. Parliamentary practice is in its place but joining hands needed among all.

To make infrastructure according to development, all the states should move forward. It is not necessary to put any party cap in it. Now, while the leaders of the state are determined to make the main agenda of the prosperity and development of the state, the people are expecting a rapid wave of development.

Province 2 has adequate potential for agriculture, tourism, education and industry. Now the federalism in the country should be planned by the provincial assembly to plan the development of the state. If the soil is well-planned, this state is healthy.

## Swaraj's visit: One trip, two views

Yubaraj Ghimire

*Almost every high-level visit to Kathmandu from Delhi and vice versa has political significance. Swaraj's visit is no exception. Mending relations with Oli, may provide an opportunity for Modi to visit Nepal, the third time since he became the prime minister and the first after the blockade.*

Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj spent less than 24 hours in Nepal. Most of it was expended on assuring political actors — in the government and the Opposition — that India has no interest in Nepal other than see it turn politically stable and prosperous. But, clearly, the perceptions about her visit are different in Nepal and India. That a senior minister visited Kathmandu, without even waiting for the formation of the new government, shows some urgency in New Delhi to mend fences. India has also reached out to K P Oli, leader of the Left Alliance and chairman of the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist, who it believes has pushed Nepal closer to China, especially in the past three years.

The Nepali side believes that Swaraj's was more of a political visit. The Nepali Congress, which heads the caretaker government, feels undermined that Narendra Modi directly dealt with Oli and dispatched Swaraj ostensibly to "congratulate Oli personally, and invite him to Delhi at the earliest as Nepal's New Prime Minister".

But politics and diplomacy may not appear as straight as they seem. India knows that Nepal is geographically and traditionally too important for it to lose to China and that it will have to deal with Nepal no matter the political set up there. Nepal's political instability is far from over. The instability and lack of ownership of the constitution is largely due to the denial of space to traditional political forces, a factor that external actors including India refuse to acknowledge. During the past 12 years, India and other external actors aligned with forces that raised arms against the state to push for a radical change in politics in preference to an evolutionary process

accepted in other democracies. With the influence of traditional forces waning, the rise of communists is only natural. India will have to accept the mandate of the Nepalese people and deal with the left leadership.

Almost every high-level visit to Kathmandu from Delhi and vice versa has political significance. Swaraj's visit is no exception. Mending relations with Oli, who may take over as prime minister in March, may provide an opportunity for Modi to visit Nepal, the third time since he became the prime minister and the first after the

tussle in Nepal and the former king seems to rally forces in Nepal and India on the issue, even a decade after the abolition of monarchy.

In a video clip widely circulated on social media, Maoist Chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal asserts that communists and Christians are the same as both fight feudal oppressors. This has given credence to allegations of the protagonists of "Hindu Kingdom" that Nepal's transition to a secular republic was an agenda "funded and influenced" by external forces including



blockade. If Modi travels to Kathmandu, say ahead of the Chinese premier, Xi Jinping, it could be interpreted as Delhi restablishing its sphere of influence in Nepal. But there could be many a slip between the cup and the lips. Oli will need to strike a delicate and pragmatic balance between his perceived anti-India, pro-China image and relations with India. After all, Oli is not the sole political actor in Nepal.

Three weeks after his trip to Lucknow and meeting with UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the former king, Gyanendra Shah, will be a special guest in Odisha on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the advent of Nischalananda Saraswati as Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Puri Mutt. The issue of secular Nepal vs Hindu kingdom continues to be a part of the ongoing political

western donors. The former king misses no occasion to blame outsiders for destroying Nepal's indigenous culture, history and civilisation. Dahal's response to the former king is: So what's wrong with it. There is an influential opinion in India that wants Nepal's secular and republican status reviewed. For instance, Yogi Adityanath, who has been vilified by a section of the Indian establishment including the Indian embassy in Kathmandu and the likes of the organisers of the Puri event. Whether Swaraj discussed the contentious issues in the Nepali Constitution during her meeting with Oli or the two only talked about burying the past and moving ahead together is not clear as yet.

*This article first appeared in The Indian Express.*

## Good governance and development are in priority

**This state is neglected from the state, harassed, discriminated with its inhabitants. This state should be developed as a model state. All of us should move with the help of everyone so to make this state a model state, we should all move together. Developing this state is a major challenge to us.**

Ñ *Are you sure you want to be the Chief Minister of Province 2?*

❖ From Federal Socialist Forum Nepal, I have been appointed as the parliamentary party leader of Province 2 and as the biggest party in this Province state so this type of estimation is normal.

Ñ *What is the discussion with RJP-Nepal being discussed about making government?*

government in Province 2.

Ñ *What issues are the discussions mainly discussed between the Forum and the RJP-Nepal?*

❖ There is also a discussion on how to develop Province 2, how to make the government in Province 2 according to the people's mandate, how to face challenges in this province and among others.

Ñ *If you become the Chief Minister of the state, what will be the first priority?*

a model state. All of us should move with the help of everyone so to make this state a model state, we should all move together. Developing this state is a major challenge to us. The parties who have fought for the federalism given by the Madhesh movement to this country and the federalism have got the opportunity to rule here. So we should proceed to establish this state as a model.

Ñ *What are the challenges of the State 2?*

We have several challenges to fight. This Province has made resources-less after entering into the federalism. People from Province 2 have been made harassed. There is not lack of infrastructure but also problems in health, education, unemployment and poorness. So this province was deprived knowingly.

❖ We made the election alliance during the parliamentary and provincial assembly elections.

Of course, the people's mandate should also be the RJP-Nepal and the Forum to make joint government. We are discussing about the formation of

❖ Our first priority is good governance and then development. Peace and stability will be in our priority.

Ñ *How to identify the province 2?*

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**Md. Lalbabu Raut**

**Deputy Chairperson, Federal Socialist Forum and Parliamentary Party leader of Province 2**

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Ñ *What are the sources of possibilities here?*

❖ The industries and the factories should be operated here. All the activities here are, it is important to take care of everyone to make it effective. If these actions are done, the young people will definitely get employment opportunities.

Ñ *The movement is going on in your home district with the subject of the capital of Province 2, how do you resolve it?*

❖ Nepal government has now set a temporary capital. There is a provision in the constitution of the permanent capital. The majority of the two third of the provincial assembly has the constitutional provision to set a permanent capital. Talking to

everyone for the permanent capital should be kept in accordance with the situation in which place everyone is easy.

Ñ *What is the current destination of the Province 2?*

❖ The destination is the only what we are trying to do. It is our place and we should have an environment that everyone should make together. We want good governance here. We are an integral part of this country and let's realize the people here that we do not have discrimination.

Ñ *This state is weak in education, development, roads, health. How to make it model state?*

❖ First of all, we need good governance. The state has also discriminated here. There are bureaucrats assigned by the state here. The good governance should be maintained here.

## Indian Cultural Centre showcases Odissi dance recitals

Kathmandu: Indian Cultural Centre, Embassy of India has showcased Odissi dance recitals in Kathmandu to celebrate the 70 years of



diplomatic ties between India and Nepal and the Maha Shivaratri festival.

The event featured a most versatile 10-member Odissi dance troupe led by Dr. Sujata Mishra from Odissa, India. A noted Odissi dance exponent and choreographer, Dr Mishra has been contributing and invigorating Odissi dance form for the last four decades.

At the same event, the students and artistes of Indian Cultural Centre-Kathmandu performed various Folk dance forms.

Veteran Nepali actress Mithila Sharma graced the event as the chief guest and inaugurated the function together with Ambassador of India to Nepal Shri Manjeev Singh Puri.

Indian culture and its performing art forms have

enjoyed love and appreciation across Nepal over the centuries. The backbone of this special and privileged partnership is the friendship and understanding

between peoples of the two countries. It is this cultural bondage that has built solid bridges of friendship and understanding between our two nations. The affection of Nepali people towards India is immensely treasured in India.

To this end, this dance performance by the Odissi Dance troupe from India is an effort of the Indian Cultural Centre, Embassy of India aimed at further cementing our age-old bilateral relations, shared sensibilities, affinities and common cultural values. The visit of the 10-member Odissi troupe led by Dr. Sujata Mishra was supported by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), New Delhi. This event would contribute in enhancing people to people contacts in days ahead.

## UP CM Yogi to make efforts improving Nepal-India road links

Dhangadhi:Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has said that he would make efforts to upgrade all roads linking India with Nepal to four lanes.

Inaugurating International Bird Festival in India's Dudhuwa National Park, which borders Nepal, Adityanath said expansion of road networks would help to facilitate the movement of people of both countries.

Stating that any harm done to the environment would have an adverse impact on the wildlife, Adityanath

stressed on the need to work together for the protection of the environment and wildlife. He said Dudhuwa National Park was the largest national park home to many wild animals and more than 400 species of the birds.

Noting that Dudhuwa had immense potential for tourism, Adityanath urged everyone to create environment for tourists to visit the place. At the programme, Forest Minister Danda Singh Chauhan of Uttar Pradesh said Dudhuwa National Park was important not only for India but also for Nepal.

## Nepali actors to get...

to interact with the leading Bollywood celebrities. The course also entails contemporary dance workshops, yoga classes as well as an exposure visit to an ongoing shooting location at Mumbai. The course provides an excellent opportunity to the participating actors and actresses to further hone their acting skills and capabilities. Through this unique opportunity, the ties between the film fraternities of India and Nepal will be further strengthened. The FTII is an autonomous institute under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of the Government of India.

## Indian Army Chief arriving Nepal

Kathmandu: The Chief of Indian Army, Bipin Rawat is coming to Nepal on the occasion of Nepal's Army Day.

During his stay, Rawat will also meet with top leaders of the country to discuss on current political situation.

"This is the first time that the Chief of Indian Army is coming to mark the country's Army Day," Nayanraj Dahal, spokesperson of Nepal Army said.



## No Madheshi recommended in Upper House

Kathmandu: The Cabinet has recommended the three names of three National Assembly members to the president.

Of the 59 NA members, three are recommended by the government, while 56 are elected by an electoral college comprising provincial assembly members and chiefs and deputy chiefs of local government bodies.

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba recommended Gopal Basnet, Chandani Joshi and Krishna Prasad Paudel to President Bidhya Devi Bhandari.

While Basnet and Paudel are active members of the Nepali Congress, Joshi is an NC supporter.

Basnet, who hails from Birtamod, Jhapa, is former secretary of the party's district committee. He is considered to be close to NC President and PM Deuba, and is former district president of erstwhile Nepali Congress-Democratic formed under Deuba's leadership.

Paudel is chief secretary of the NC central office. He was

appointed to the post after Deuba was elected party president. Originally from Syangja district, Paudel was actively involved in NC-affiliated teachers' association and trade union.

Rights activist Joshi is former director for South Asia at United Nations Development Fund for Women.

Meanwhile, UML condemned the decision taken by the caretaker government that did not have the people's mandate. According to Rastriya Janata Party-Nepal leader Keshav Jha, the Federal Socialist Forum-Nepal and RJP-N had reached an understanding with the Nepali Congress negotiators when they were discussing National Assembly seat sharing that the government would recommend one member each from the NC, FSF-N and RJP-N to the Upper House. Jha condemned the government for choosing all three members unilaterally. Jha said the government's decision could adversely affect NC's ties with the Madhes-based parties.

## EC allocates UML 41 PR seats in lower house



Kathmandu: The Election Commission finally announced the Proportional Representation seats won by the parties in the House of Representatives more than two months since the federal and provincial elections were held.

Only five parties—the CPN-UML, the Nepali Congress, the CPN (Maoist Centre) [together with the Samajwadi Janata Party and Janajagaran Party, Nepal], the Rastriya Janata Party-Nepal and the Federal Socialist Forum Nepal have got PR seats at the Lower House as the other 44 parties did not meet the 3 percent vote threshold.

As announced by the EC, the CPN-UML received 41 seats, followed by the NC's 40, the Maoist Centre's 17, and six each of the RJP-N and the SSF-N among the 110 seats for proportional representation in the House of Representatives.

The election body also wrote to these five parties, asking them to submit by February 12 their list of candidates to be elected by ensuring

representation of at least 33 percent women in the bicameral federal parliament. The parties will have to send at least 84 women to the Upper House, with the UML requiring to elect at least 37 women. The NC should forward 20 names of women, the Maoist Centre 16, the RJP-N 6 and the SSF-N 5. The number of women elected under the first-past-the-post (FPTP) category is just five—two from the UML and three from the Maoist Centre. The parties will get two more days to correct the lists if they fail to meet the constitutional and legal requirements.

Once the election body declares winners after examining the eligibility of candidates submitted by the parties, the Lower House becomes complete. The process to form a new government will follow. As many as 165 lawmakers have already been elected under the FPTP system. Once the additional 110 members are elected proportionally, the Lower House will have its full strength of 275 members.

## Development projects of Rs 3 billion in Nepalgunj

Nepalgunj: A blacktopped road and surface drain are to be constructed here with the assistance of Asian Development Bank.

The Urban Development and Building Construction Division Office will construct 35-km blacktopped road and surface drain under the Regional Urban Development Project.

For this, the ADB has provided loan assistance of around Rs 1.5 billion. Project Chief Sunil Kumar Thakur shared that a target has been set to complete the construction within 20 months from the date of signing the project agreement.

Under the project, the surface drainage is being constructed on both sides of the road from Belaspur to Khajura, Nepalgunj. Likewise, the interior road of Nepalgunj will be constructed and repaired and income generating programme for disadvantaged sections will also be conducted for the backward and disadvantaged community.

## Federalism finally in action

Kathmandu : With the convening of the first meeting of five of the seven provincial assemblies, federalism has finally come into effect. When many people are still opposing federalism, a few years ago implementation of federalism looked almost impossible. Moreover, federating an ancient unified country like Nepal was against the international practices of federalism.

Similarly, many people think federalism was not a home-grown demand; it was imposed by external forces, which the leaders agreed to accept for some unknown reasons. Now when all seven provinces have elected assemblies, convened their first meeting, and they are going to form new provincial governments and elect speakers and deputy speakers soon, opposition of the federalism looks irrelevant.

Still there are others, who argue that Nepal cannot sustain federalism as managing a federal system is expensive. They may be true to some extent as many of the federal units may not be able to collect revenues enough to meet even the administrative costs of the concerned provinces, not to talk about revenue to invest in development activities.

In a country, where only a negligible number of industries and factories are in operation, generating revenues surely looks impossible. Hence, the first priority of the new provincial governments should be to explore the potential natural resources in the provinces and set up industries exploiting them so as to increase productivity and provide jobs to the people.

Fortunately, the assembly members of Province No 2, the most backward province in terms of all development indicators, during the first meeting of the assembly, committed to working for the development of the province and making the province most prosperous one in the country. The assembly members also argued that the poorest province

could be turned into the richest one by exploiting water resources, herbs, mines and tourism. Similar were the views of the assembly members of remaining all six provinces, boasting about the availability of water resources in the province.

Indeed, all seven provinces are rich in water resources, which can be exploited in generating power and irrigating the fertile lands. Likewise, Province 2 is rich in natural resources and have suitable climate for agriculture and several cash crops like rice, wheat, sugarcane. Livestock could be another source to make this province sustainable.

Tourism, if diversified and developed by building all required infrastructures, could be major source of earnings for all seven provinces. What is required to exploit these innumerable potentialities is the unity among the political parties with far-sighted, competent and honest leaders in the leadership of the provincial governments.

A competent leader makes a big difference in a province and an organisation. It is evident from Gujarat of India, which made a tremendous progress when Narendra Modi, now the Indian Prime Minister, led the provincial government in the state for 12 and a half years from 2001. In home front, Kulman Ghising ended the impossible like problem of power outage once he was appointed managing director of Nepal Electricity Authority.

If the left alliance, which is going to form government in six of the seven provinces, and the alliance of the Federal Socialist Forum-Nepal and the Rastriya Janata Party - Nepal that is forming government in Province 2, choose Kulman like competent leaders to lead the first provincial governments, all provinces will be able to prepare a solid ground for their prosperity and sustainability of the provinces in the first five years.

## President hands over integrated model settlement to beneficiaries

Rautahat: President Bidya Devi Bhandari has handed over the key to the Santapur integrated model Dalit settlement to Satya Narayan

Madan Krishna Shrestha and Haribansha Acharya also openly praised the integrated model settlement. Foundation chair Sitaram



Majhi, the Model Settlement Construction Committee president, at a function. The settlement has been constructed by the Dhurmus Suntali Foundation at Santapur, Chandrapur Municipality Ward No 8. Addressing the settlement handover ceremony, President Bhandari praised the artists duo Sitaram Kattel (Dhurmus) and Kunjana Ghimire (Suntali) of carrying out outstanding work on community development. "Dhurmus-Suntali have done the work which is normally done by the State. This is indeed an incomparable work," the Head-of-the-State said. She stressed that the government should make the optimum use of the means and resources available at its disposal given the great potentials the province has for development. Executive Director of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) Yubaraj Bhusal said the work of the Dhurmus-Suntali Foundation was exemplary for the development of a prosperous Nepal. Senior comedy artists

Kattel (Dhurmus) said that the integrated settlement was a result of the contribution made by all the helping hands. Forty-seven houses have been constructed at the settlement at the initiatives of Kattel and Ghimire. These houses would be handed over to the underprivileged families from the dalit community who are affected by floods. The foundation stone for the settlement was laid on September 20, 2017. Besides the 47 residential houses, the settlement has a community building, a temple, a club block and a view tower. Massive flooding last August inundated the dalits' houses at Santapur. The integrated settlement is constructed at a cost of approximately Rs 52.4 million. Kattel himself used to be present at the construction site and oversaw the construction of the integrated settlement. According to him, the integrated settlement is disabled-friendly, child-friendly and environment-friendly. This is the fourth such project of the Dhurmus-Suntali Foundation.

## EC writes to parties to send PR list for HoR by today

Kathmandu: The Election Commission has written to the parties to send the names for House of Representatives (HoR) elected through the proportional representation (PR) system by Monday evening.

CPN-UML has been allocated 41 HoR seats through the PR system, Nepali Congress (NC) 40, CPN (Maoist Center) 17, and Rastriya Janata Party Nepal (RJP) and Federal Socialist Forum Nepal (FSFN) six each. The HoR will have 275 members including the 165 elected through the first-past-the-post system and 110 to be elected through the PR system. The EC has written to UML to send at least 37 women out of the 41 seats allocated to it. The

constitution has a mandatory provision requiring all the parties to have at least one-third (33.33%) women in the federal parliament including the HoR and National Assembly. The EC has calculated the number of women and other clusters the parties must send after analyzing the composition of federal lawmakers following the National Assembly election.

Nepali Congress (NC), similarly, must send 20 women out of 40, Maoist Center 16 out of 17, RJP six out of six, and FSFN five out of six. RJP will not comply with the mandatory one-third provision even after sending all-woman list.

## Only 21 of 174 assigned employees report for work in Province 2

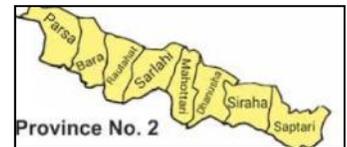
Janakpur: The works of the province legislature and executive bodies have been affected as not all the civil servants assigned to these bodies have reported for work in Province-2.

Although the government has assigned 174 employees to the Office of the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers in Province-2, only 21 have reported for work so far. The government had directed the employees to go to their work stations 15 days back.

Only 21 government employees including the Chief Secretary have reported for work so far, said Chief Secretary, Rajeshwar Man Singh. He said they have not been able to carry out the works at the province government secretariat smoothly and in a systematic manner as all the assigned employees have not reported for work.

There are 27 employees posts assigned to the province secretariat. However, only seven are managing the secretariat at present.

Likewise, only eight out of the 21 assigned employees have reported for work at the Office of the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers, only four out of 23 assigned employees have reported for work at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law, only two out of the 18



assigned employees have reported for work at the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Planning, and only two employees out of the 24 assigned employees have reported for work at the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Development.

Similarly, only four out of the 29 employees assigned to the Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment and only one out of the 29 employees assigned to the Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives have reported for work.

Not a single employee out of the 30 assigned employees has reported for work at the Ministry of Social Development.

The government has assigned 27 employees to the Province Assembly secretariat, Joint Secretary at the Province Assembly Secretariat Banshi Raj Poudel said. Some difficulties were faced in course of conducting the province assembly meeting on February 4 due to the shortage of employees, he said.

## Experts bat for nat'l security, 'neighborhood first' on foreign policy

Kathmandu: A team of experts has stressed national security and neighbourhood policy as top priority of Nepal's foreign policy. The experts were also for mainstreaming the economic diplomacy.

A High Level Task Force on Foreign Policy, comprised of foreign relations experts, professionals of international relations and security practitioners, urged the government to first prioritize 'neighbourhood with greater priority' - categorically mentioning India and China.

The team has also laid emphasis on the role of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in making foreign policy, greater engagements of Nepal's diplomatic missions abroad, Eminent Persons' Group and Nepal-India relations, relations with China and India, classification of countries and international bodies.

The task force suggested the Nepal Government that it reviewed seriously the current way of operating diplomacy, expressing grave concern over developing political consensus on foreign policy. Prescription is made for the ways and means of prudent handling of diplomacy, foreign policy on political transition, reorientation of nation's foreign policy in line with the new international environment.

In a move to well organize Nepal's foreign policy, the government had commissioned a task force headed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs last March.

As Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba currently holds the portfolio of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he had designated Professor Shreedhar Khatri, a veteran diplomat to lead the task force meant for preparation and submission of the report.

The report entitled 'Reorienting Nepal's Foreign Policy in a Rapidly Changing World' presented to the Prime Minister Thursday has encouraged the role of political leadership in diplomacy, their State and official visits, sectoral promotion including trade, foreign direct investment, promotion of tourism, on the plight of Nepali migrant workers and foreign policy from the security perspective, among others.

The report highlighting the importance of national interests has accorded the utmost urgency on protection of Nepal's security interests, safety of Nepali citizens abroad, protection of international peace and security, institutional improvement of foreign ministry, guidelines to Nepali missions abroad, coordination and monitoring of the activities of these entities.

Mobilization of non-government partners, Non-Resident Nepalis, private sector, actively contributing to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, security dimension of relations with Nepal's immediate neighbours, focus on border management, human security as foreign armies, establishing a coordinating mechanism, capacity building of security personnel to assist Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been given similar importance.

The report also accentuates on strengthening institutional mechanism, improving coordination between Ministry of Foreign Affairs and line ministries, between Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its Missions abroad, capacity building of foreign service officers, strengthening the Institute of Foreign Affairs and financing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the needs to the twenty-first century, among others.

Accepting the report, the Prime Minister assured that the suggestions and recommendations would be implemented honestly. He directed the Foreign Ministry to fully put into action the report. "Putting into practice of the report will enhance the national image in the international arena," the PM said.

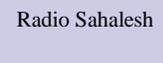
Speaking to the National News Agency (RSS), Foreign Relations Expert to the Prime Minister, Dr Dinesh Bhattarai, said the report was a comprehensive document on foreign policy, and building national consensus on foreign policy, safeguarding nation's national interest and recommendation relating to long, mid and short term ways of improving as well as conducting diplomacy were of paramount importance.

The other members of the task force include former ambassador Rishi Raj Adhikari, former secretary and Minister Bidyadhar Mallik, former vice chair of National Planning Commission Shankar Sharma, former member of National Planning Commission Posh Raj Pandey, labour migration expert Dr Ganesh Gurung, Former Foreign Secretary Madhu Raman Acharya, former ambassador Shambhuram Simkhada, former secretary Mohan Banjade, retired Lieutenant General Pawan Bahadur Pandey, and international relations experts Deepak Prakash Bhatta, Indra Kumari Adhikari, Rajendra Bahadur Shrestha, Nischal Nath Pandey.

Foreign Secretary Shankar Das Bairagi had acted as the Member-Secretary of the task force while Under Secretary Ram Babu Dhakal had discharged his duty as a facilitator.

## Madheshvani Radio Program ( Sunday to Friday)

Devoted towards the National Integration, Nationality and Madheshbad

F.M	MHZ	Place	Time
 Radio Rajdhani	100.6	Kathmandu	10:40 P.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Sunrise	90.2	Jhapa (Birtamod)	6:30 P.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Red F.M	101	Morang (Biratnagar)	9:30 P.M Re-Broadcast 9:30 A.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Rubaru F.M	104.5	Banke	8:15 P.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Rudraksha	98.8	Mahottari (Jaleswor)	8:15 P.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Popular F.M.	95.2	Sunsari (Inaruwa)	9:00 P.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Jay Madhesh	93.5	Saptari (Dharampur)	5.20 P.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Janakpur	97	Dhanusha (Janakpurdham)	5.30 P.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Swarnim F.M	96.3	Sarlahi (Malangawa)	8.25 P.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Rautahat F.M	90.8	Rautahat (Gaur)	6.30 P.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Saugat	88.1	Siraha (Lahan)	7.30 A.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Dhadkan	89.6	Siraha	9:30 P.M Re-Broadcast 9:30 A.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Birgunj	99	Birgunj (Parsa)	9.15 P.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Safalta	103.4	Kaski (Pokhara)	7.15 P.M (Excluded Friday and Saturday)
 Radio Madhesh	89.3	Sarlahi (Malangawa)	9.15 A.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Madhesh Janaawaja	98.6	Rautahat	7.30 AM (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Madhesh Masala	106.4	Rautahat	7:30 P.M Re-Broadcast 7:30 A.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Aakashganga	107.6	Siraha	9:30 P.M Re-Broadcast 9:30 A.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Baadal	89	Bara	9:30 P.M Re-Broadcast 9:00 A.M (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Tilaurakot	107.6	Kapilbastu	7.30 PM (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Madi	107.6	Chitwan (Madi)	Every Wednesday 5.30 PM to 6 PM
 Radio Samarthyia	92.1	Kawasoti (Navalparasi)	7.00 PM (Excluded Saturday)
 Radio Sahalesh	88.8	Siraha	6:30 PM Re-Broadcast 7:30 A.M (Excluded Saturday)

## 'RJPN will not join Oli-led government'



Anil Jha

Kathmandu: Rastriya Janata Party Nepal Presidium Committee Member, Anil Jha has clarified that his party has not thought about joining the government led by CPN-UML Chair KP Oli.

"RJPN will not participate in Oli-led government. We have not held any discussions yet in this regard. Perhaps, no discussion will be held at all about joining Oli," said Jha at an interaction program in

Kathmandu. Jha expressed annoyance over UML's harsh comments regarding constitution amendment proposal, which failed to pass through the parliament due to non-cooperation from UML, and added, "Therefore, we are not participating in the UML-led government."

"We are eager to see how the new government receives the amendment proposal," he added.

"RJPN will remain in opposition and do what should be done," he furthered

Jha also said that RJPN and Federal Socialist Forum Nepal will form a coalition government in Province 2.

He said, "We are holding discussion with FSFN about making a joint government in Province 2. We held talks only two days ago. Another discussion will be held very soon."

## When new government?



Kathmandu: The process of forming a new government is likely to start next week when the Election Commission formally submits results of the parliamentary proportional representation elections to the president.

"We'll give political parties three days to come up with their lists. If they elect

representatives as per our guidelines and meet the PR cluster criteria, we can submit the report of the parliamentary elections, particularly results of the House of Representatives, immediately but if any party makes mistake, then we might need a few more days," Chief Election Commissioner Ayodhi Prasad Yadav said.

He said the EC expected to submit the parliamentary PR results to the president within five days.

Once the parliamentary PR results are out, political parties will have to elect their parliamentary party leader who normally is the candidate for the prime minister.

Senior Media Expert of Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba Govinda Pariyar said the PM had no plan to address the nation till the EC submitted the parliamentary PR election results to the president.

## Two Bands from India arrived

Kathmandu: Two Bands from the Indian Army, Pipes and Drums Band from 14 Gorkha House, Embassy of India with the two bands playing a variety of memorable



Training Centre and Military Band from 58 Gorkha Training Centre arrived in Nepal on the invitation of the Nepal Army to participate on the prestigious occasion of the Nepal Army Day.

A Sunset Concert on the verdant lawns of the India

tunes which included popular Nepali songs, Bollywood, Martial music and modern popular tunes from Hollywood as well.

The enthralled select gathering was extremely appreciative of the effort and wonderful skills of the musicians.

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