

4-year of constitution

Constitution needs a major surgery to make it functional

Kathmandu: Although the Nepali Congress and Nepal Communist Party along with some fringe parties, are celebrating September 20 as a historic day, which saw the promulgation of the new constitution, Madhesi and Janajati parties call it a black day.

Except Socialist Party, who is in the government, RJP-Nepal, Janajati and Tharu parties, have announced to a program to burn the copies of the constitution.

Promulgated with the support of over 90 percent members of the Constitutional Assembly, the new constitution is a legally strong document. However, it does not have the corresponding level of legitimacy as a large number of people are opposing it as a document enforced by three parties.

Madhesi, Janajati and women activists see the constitution as a discriminatory document. Madhesi and Janajatis are demanding amendment to 52 articles of the constitution, including changes in the



One of the main objections in the constitution is the issue of citizenship. Women activists are saying that it has many discriminatory provisions denying the right of the mother.

provincial boundaries, to make it acceptable.

“The constitution is acceptable only if the three parties agree to amend 52 articles. Otherwise, we will go for a struggle to scrap this constitution. It is up to the three

so-called main parties to decide,” threatened Socialist Party Chairperson Upendra Yadav. “This constitution needs a major surgery to make it functional.”

However, three main parties are pushing for the

implementation of the constitution. “There is no need of amendment and what is needed is to implement it,” said Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. “This is one of the best constitutions of the world.”

One of the main objections in the constitution is the issue of citizenship. Women activists are saying that it has many discriminatory provisions denying the right of the mother.

Article 11(6) states that a foreign woman married to a Nepali citizen may acquire naturalized citizenship of Nepal as provided for in a federal law. Madhesi parties want acquisition of naturalized citizenship to be automatic on application.

A person, born in Nepal to a Nepali citizen mother, who has domicile in Nepal and whose father is not identified, shall be granted citizenship of Nepal by descent. However, in case his/her father is proved to be a foreign citizen the citizenship of such a person

Continue in page 4...

South Asia’s first cross-border oil pipeline

Kathmandu: The leaders of India and Nepal have inaugurated South Asia’s first cross-country oil pipeline, allowing Nepal to receive an uninterrupted supply of oil from its large southern neighbor.

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi hit the switch simultaneously on Tuesday from their offices in New Delhi and Kathmandu to open the 69-kilometre pipeline, which will bring gasoline, diesel fuel and kerosene across the border to Nepal.

The two leaders hailed the pipeline as another step in the friendship

- *The cost of the pipeline was entirely borne by the Indian oil Corporation*
- *KP Oli said it is one of the best examples of connectivity.*
- *Narendra Modi called this project a symbol of India-Nepal’s bilateral relations*

between the two countries. “This is the first cross-border petroleum pipeline in South Asia, which has also been completed in a record time,” Modi said, adding that it was finished

in almost half the expected time. Modi said that with this pipeline two million metric tonnes of clean petroleum products will be available to the people of Nepal at very

affordable rates.

Prime Minister Oli announced that the government would reduce the price of gasoline and diesel by two rupees (\$0.023). “It will not only save time, reduce cost, lessen road traffic and reduce air pollution in transporting petroleum products from India to Nepal, but will also open avenues in Nepal for expanding similar pipelines across the country,” Oli said.

Tanker trucks have been used to transport the oil products from storage facilities in India to Nepal through crowded border points. The

Continue in page 4...



Editorial

Kathmandu closer to New Delhi

Nepal and India inaugurated a cross-border oil pipeline, which will transport fuel to the landlocked country. The move seeks to bind Kathmandu closer to New Delhi, economically and strategically.

The 69km pipeline will transport fuel from the Barauni refinery in Bihar to Amlekhgunj in south-east Nepal and is the first cross-border petroleum products pipeline in South Asia. It was inaugurated by Prime Minister KP Shamra Oli along with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi via video conferencing.

crore, in collaboration with Nepal Oil Corp. Ltd (NOCL).

Reiterating India's commitment to Nepal's development, Modi said the bilateral projects conceived by the two countries are progressing well and he hoped to jointly inaugurate them with his Nepal counterpart in the coming days. People to people ties were the foundation of the bilateral relationship, Modi said. "By reducing the price of fuel and transferring the benefits to consumers in Nepal, you have already conveyed to the people of

This is a very, very important development. The pipeline connects India seamlessly to Nepal underlining the fact that geography favours India-Nepal relations naturally.

The aim is to cement India-Nepal ties in the face of major inroads made by China into the Himalayan nation, and seeks to repair the trust deficit between the two countries due to an economic blockade seemingly imposed by India in 2015 to persuade Nepal to change some provisions in its new constitution.

Actually, this is a very, very important development. The pipeline connects India seamlessly to Nepal underlining the fact that geography favours India-Nepal relations naturally. The pipeline will also boost mutual trust and confidence between the two countries. The Motihari-Amlekhgunj oil pipeline project was first proposed in 1996. The project was put back on the agenda during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Kathmandu in 2014. The two governments had signed an agreement to execute the project in August 2015. Construction had begun in April 2018. Construction of the pipeline was undertaken by Indian Oil Corp. Ltd (IOCL), India's largest refiner, with an investment of over 1324

Nepal that this pipeline is for their benefit," Modi said referring to a fuel price cut by the Nepalese government.

Meanwhile, terming the Nepal-India energy cooperation project as a symbol of intimacy, Indian Prime Minister Modi hoped that it would help enhance the energy security of the region and substantially reduce fuel transportation costs. He also reiterated the Indian commitment to Nepal's development. Mentioning that the Nepal-Indian relationship would continue to be enhanced in the days ahead, he said that bilateral projects conceived by the two countries were progressing well and he hoped to jointly inaugurate them with his Nepali counterpart in the future. As invited by Prime Minister Oli, Modi assured that he would visit Nepal soon. Nepal imports around 70 per cent of the total fuel consumed through the Raxaul depot of the IOC. Thus, the project is a testimony of consolidation of the bilateral ties between the two neighbours.

'Balance of power' a strategic trap for India

The US Indo-Pacific Strategy is sure to continue this mentality. There is something in common between the Indo-Pacific Strategy and India's concerns about China's rise.

Ding Gang

While scholars in the US and India generally believe that a full alliance between the two sides is unlikely, the two countries can still reach a general consensus on balancing the rise of China, since it is in their common interest.

In an article titled "The India Dividend: New Delhi Remains Washington's Best Hope in Asia," which was published in the September/October edition of Foreign Affairs magazine, authors Robert D. Blackwill, a Henry A. Kissinger senior fellow for US foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations, and Ashley J. Tellis, senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, noted that for the US-Indian partnership to bear fruit, both sides must recognize that their primary shared interest is to balance a rising China – and not expect a close alliance or alignment on all major policy issues.

The Indian government hasn't explicitly announced it was adopting such a strategy to balance the rise of China, but there are indications that India and the US are moving forward on this path. The balance of power theory in international relations suggests that if a country wants to prevent itself from being dominated by others, it must have the power or a reliable system to counterbalance others. The theory emphasizes vigilance and containment between different countries.

In reality, balance of power is usually utilized by a certain powerful country to make coalitions or military

alliances to counter its rivals – the balance of power during the Cold War is a classical example. Additionally, such a balance is likely to develop into hostility.

Amid the rise of China in recent years, some Americans have brought up again the balance of power theory. Washington's strategic choice on China has also turned from balancing to containing China. The US Indo-Pacific Strategy is sure to continue this mentality. There is something in common between the Indo-Pacific Strategy and India's concerns about China's rise.

China and India have had disputes in the past and still have border issues to settle. Additionally, China has maintained a close relationship with Pakistan, India's traditional rival. New Delhi wishes to safeguard its interests in a relatively balanced regional situation through a balance of power with Beijing. This is understandable.

However, the balance of power which India hopes for is different from that upheld by the US. The US' so-called balance of power is aimed at keeping its dominance in the Asia-Pacific region and containing China. After World War II, some Asia-Pacific countries have indeed enjoyed relative stability under the US-dominated order. But the structure of the region is changing. The rise of China is only a part of the changes. India and Southeast Asian countries are also rising, and they are accelerating the process.

Another major change is constantly upgrading regional cooperation. New Delhi is strengthening its

cooperation with its neighbors, and it has thus developed the Look East policy.

China's cooperation with neighboring countries, including India, has also seen unprecedented strengthening. Amid such changes, there is no foundation for the outdated balance of power theory. No force is able to stop the Chinese economy from developing. China's rising strength will certainly change the structure of the Asia-Pacific region, and cannot be balanced by either outside forces or military powers. Regional countries need to build a new order. Balancing China will jeopardize India's own interests. Since China's development is unstoppable and is in line with the general development of the region, carrying out containment against China is highly likely to lead to the loss of opportunities for cooperation with China.

India should think this through. It is impossible for regional countries to jointly contain China's rise with the US while strengthening cooperation with China at the same time. Such a strategy might work at the very beginning, but at critical moments, relevant parties will have to make a choice. The strategy of the balance of power is generated from the diplomacy of Western countries. It reflects Western countries' understanding of foreign relations in the process of their expansion in the past. In today's globalized world, Asian countries are supposed to have better choices. This is a test for not only for India, but also China. Both need work together to walk out of this strategic trap.

Source: Global Times

Even province government is celebrating Constitution Day but no very excitement

➤ *In the past years, you have been silent by not celebrating the Constitution Day. This year, province 2 government decided to celebrate the Constitution Day, what is the preparation?*

• I swear by touching the provision of this constitution. After taking a post as per the constitution, a person becomes a part of the state after taking office. However, we strongly disagree on the specific points of constitution but that need to be amended. This constitution could not end the centuries of discrimination, proportional representation is not guaranteed, laws have not brought of strengthening federalism, discrimination points have been raised with Madhesi, Dalit, indigenous, Janajati,

question that we have sworn in accordance with the constitution and on the other hand we demand that the constitution be amended.

➤ *Do you not have the morals to oppose the Constitution Day, to celebrate as the Black Day?*

• State law is governed by legal and doctrinal arrangements. We are also self operational. But the needs of the people, for which we have been struggling for a long time, have not yet been decided by the state party. This constitution was meant to be amended to make it constitutionally acceptable and everybody felt obligated, but it could not. Half the population of the country is yet to accept

you organizing?

• I don't know much about this question, I'm not even interested. Senior members of the state -government have made elaborate programs. We are legally obliged to attend Constitution Day. However, we have not given much interest in its preparation. However, we are in favor in the matter of amendment and that the rights should be recorded. We do not have the psychology to swear by the same constitution in the government and to oppose the same constitution. It is my understanding that the Nepalese people should be in this Constitution.

The province government has announced that it is celebrating Constitution Day but it does not seem very exciting.

Due to our circumstances and time, the state



Yogendra Raya Yadav

Minister of State for Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives

❖ *Legally we are part of the government, so it is not appropriate to say that we should not celebrate when the state government announces to celebrate the Constitution Day.*

❖ *It does not mean that the entire constitution should be abolished.*

❖ *Not only the Madhesi people but also the indigenous people of the hills and mountains, the Janajati community have not accepted the constitution.*

Muslim citizens living in the hope of citizenship.

The intention of the Socialist Party, jointly led by Dr. Baburam Bhattarai and Upendra Yadav, does not mean that the entire constitution should be abolished. However, our demand remains that the issues for which Madhesi people have received martyrdom, protested, but their demands have not been addressed.

Legally we are part of the government, so it is not appropriate to say that we should not celebrate when the state government announces to celebrate the Constitution Day. On the one hand, there is a

this constitution. Not only the Madhesi people but also the indigenous people of the hills and mountains, the Janajati community have not accepted the constitution.

Either to celebrate black day or white day, the dissatisfaction continues and the constitution amendment is hoping for a bigger piece of land and numbers.

➤ *For the first time since the promulgation of this constitution, the government of Province 2 is planning to celebrate Constitution Day for the first time, what programs have*

government has declared Constitution Day. The current 38 parts and 9 annexes of the constitution have not addressed our demand. If the faults cannot be addressed in the constitution, I think it will do so for a long time. The Constitution is not as unchangeable as the Bible, the Ramayana. The constitution is a changing document. If the constitution is to be amended, it will solve the big problem of this country.

➤ *There is joint government of Socialist Party and RJP-Nepal in Province 2. But ministers from Socialist Party are*

celebrating the Constitution Day while ministers from RJP-Nepal to mark as black day, is it not contradiction?

• Do not seek answer of RJP from me. I do not know about internal rift of RJP. There is joint government of Socialist and RJP in Province 2. We usually do minimal activities together. Of course, there are two separate parties that have their own freedoms. We are obliged to assimilate and that is also a requirement. Beyond that, we can do things independently. In the past, RJP has gone to power, federal and state lawmakers have sworn in by adopting the same constitution.

The state government is also involved in the government by adopting parts and constitutions of the same constitution. On the one hand, those who swear by this constitution, on the other hand, there are widespread opposition to this constitution.

➤ *Regarding the nomination of the*

province, there is very difficulty to the government. According to the report of Dialogue Suggestions Commission made by the government could not reach consensus, why?

• It is a debate of logic without meaning. Some parties have filed proposals called Janakpur Capital and Mithila Name. In my understanding this is not the reality. There is a unanimous opinion of RJP and Socialist on the issue of Madhesh name and Janakpur capital. According to the sentiments excavated by the Madhesh movement, the name of Province 2 must be Madhesh. If someone tries to challenge it, that is not acceptable. Knowing that political themes have cultural significance, why link them with Sita and Mithila, their place is higher than politics. We do not understand why the great warriors of religions and cultures are trying to bring them into conflict by linking them to political issues.

Pipeline is the best example of connectivity: Oli



Kathmandu: Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has said Nepal has attached high importance to its relations with India.

After inaugurating the project on Motihari-Amlekhgunj interstate petroleum products pipeline from Singha Durbar via video conference, PM Oli viewed that new vigor, dynamism and direction was needed to further elevate Nepal-India relations to a new height.

With the enforcement of the cross border pipeline project, not only time but also the cost would be saved on the transport of petroleum product, he said, adding that it helps reducing air pollution as well.

"The pipeline project has brought a positive effect on Nepali consumers. Nepal Oil Corporation has slashed the price of petroleum products by two rupees per liter today itself," he reminded.

The PM expressed gratitude to the Indian government for its cooperation and assistance to complete the project. "The petroleum products pipeline

between Nepal and India is the best example of connectivity between the two countries. For this, I thank Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Indian government," he observed. According to him, Nepal-India cooperation is not only limited to some projects as the agreements have been made in various areas of bilateral assistance as on railway, roadway, hydropower, and integrated customs office. He further argued that favorable atmosphere was created to further strengthen the bilateral cooperation for mutual benefit. "The relations between Nepal and India are so deep that these can be expanded at any time," the PM mentioned.

Moreover, the PM said, "Nepal has now encouraging atmosphere with growing economic growth rate, dynamism and able human resources for development and prosperity." The government with the two-thirds majority was making headway to political stability. During the address, PM Oli also invited his Indian counterpart to visit Nepal.

'Unity among parties necessary for institutionalization of federalism'



Biratnagar: Nepali Congress (NC) Vice-President Bijaya Kumar

Gachchhadar has underscored the need for all the political parties in the country to be united for institutionalizing federalism established on people's power.

Briefly talking to media persons at Biratnagar airport, Vice President Gachchhadar said federalism should not be at risk due to the differences among the political parties.

Stating that the NC's second phase of nationwide campaign was aimed at further strengthening the party, Gachchhadar suggested the incumbent government that it ran the State affairs in consideration of the people's expectation. He argued that the present government was not able to address people's problems posed by the SaptaKoshi River.

4-year of ...

shall be converted into naturalized citizenship.

For the children born from the foreign mother, the citizenship clause says if a foreign woman married to a Nepali citizen so wishes, she may acquire naturalized citizenship of Nepal as provided for by the federal law. Notwithstanding anything contained elsewhere in this article, in case of a person born to a Nepali woman citizen married to a foreign citizen, who has permanent domicile in Nepal and has not acquired citizenship of a foreign country, he/she may acquire naturalized citizenship of Nepal.

Following the promulgation of the new constitution, Madhesi, Muslims, dalits indigenous communities like Janajati, Tharu and women raised the question in 11-point demands. Madhesi and Janajati even blocked the border for almost five months.

They are set to continue their ongoing protests until the demands on citizenship provisions, delimitation of electoral constituencies and proportionate inclusion are met and the provincial boundaries are changed. The 11-point demands include proportionate representation and delimitation of electoral constituencies based on the population, but the bill itself is unclear, vague and incomplete.

In Article 21 of the Interim Constitution, it was mentioned that various groups would have "the right to participate in state structures on the basis of principles of proportional inclusion." In the new Constitution (Article 42), the word "proportional" has been dropped.

Article 283 of the Constitution states that only citizens by descent will be entitled to hold the posts of President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, Chief Justice, Speaker of Parliament, Chairperson of National Assembly, Head of Province, Chief Minister, Speaker of Provincial Assembly and Chief of Security Bodies. This clause is seen as discriminatory for the large number of Madhesi who have acquired citizenship by birth or naturalization.

Article 86 of the new Constitution states that National Assembly will comprise 8 members from each of 7 States and 3 nominated members. Madhesi parties want representation in National Assembly to be based on population of the Provinces.

Article 154 of the Interim Constitution provided for delineation of electoral constituencies every 10 years. This has been increased to 20 years in Article 281 of the new Constitution. Echoing the Madhesi parties, India wants this restored to 10 years.

South Asia's ...

trucks are believed to be one of the main reasons for clogging up the already narrow border checkpoints between Nepal and India.

Nepal imports all of its oil products from India. The state-owned India Oil Corporation sells the products to Nepal Oil Corporation, also government-owned. Disturbances in the border area have in the past led to disruptions of the supply.

Ethnic protests in southern Nepal in 2015 against the country's new constitution led to the closure of the border for months, leading to severe shortages of oil in Nepal. Oil tankers were not allowed to pass through the border points and highways in southern Nepal were blocked by protesters demanding changes in the constitution. People were forced to travel on bus roofs and cut down trees to cook food, and schools had to close. It was also at the time when Nepal was just recovering from a devastating earthquake that damaged an estimated one million structures and people were trying to rebuild their homes.

The protest and the closure of the border by the Madhesi ethnic group also put a strain on relations between Nepal and India, which supported the ethnic group. The protests fizzled out after a few months, but it took years for the two countries to mend their ties.

Modi and Oli have made efforts to strengthen ties between the two countries. Oli invited Modi to visit Nepal during Tuesday's ceremony, and Modi accepted. The Indian prime minister last visited Nepal in 2018. "This will, without any doubt, enhance interconnectedness and interdependence between our two countries," Oli said. "It is one of the best examples of connectivity in terms of trade and transit and infrastructure."

Three agreements signed between Nepal, China

Kathmandu: Nepal and China have signed three agreements on mutual cooperation and partnership. The delegation from the two countries led by respective Foreign Ministers signed two letters of exchange and a Memorandum of Understanding.

Finance Secretary, Rajan Khanal, and China's International Development Cooperation Agency's Vice Chairman, Deng Boking, signed the letter of exchange on reconstruction of emergency shelters and Manang hospital in the presence of Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi, and Foreign Minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali.

For the emergency shelter,



China would provide 9.5 million Yuan and 220 million Yuan for reconstruction of the Manang Hospital.

Secretary at the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Maheshwor Dahal, and Chinese Ambassador to Nepal, Hou Yanqi, signed the MoU relating to volunteer Chinese teachers programme.

During the meeting, both sides

had reviewed the treaties and agreements reached between the two countries in the past and underscored effective and prompt implementation of them as well as the China-supported projects in Nepal.

One of the Nepalis officials taking part in the consultation shared that the Chinese side had taken the issues broached by Nepal during the meeting and the resolutions of the meeting in the

positive. The bilateral talk also dwelt on issues of bilateral interest as well as regional and international affairs besides deliberating on how Nepal could be benefited by the physical and economic development attained by China, which is a reliable development partner to Nepal.

The Foreign Ministers from the both countries also discussed issues ranging from reducing trade deficit between China and Nepal to diversification of Nepal's trade as well as the agreement reached for forming Trans-Himalayan Multi-dimensional Connectivity Network between the two countries. The issues also included construction of railways and mutual contacts as well as on transport and transit agreements.

Disputes deepening in Province 2 NCP

Janakpur: A fight has broken out during an oath-taking ceremony of Nepal Communist Party in Province 2. Around a dozen leaders and cadres have been injured in the incident while

2 chief Prabhu Sah was adamant that the ceremony be held on Tuesday. Sources say that Sah and a few others tried to forcefully hold the ceremony, after which the confrontation took place. Sah was ejected



one person is believed be critical as he was hit on the head by an object.

Police say that the fight broke out between cadres and leaders of NCP before the oath-taking ceremony could begin.

NCP's chairmen and the general secretary at the central level had asked the provincial leaders to postpone the ceremony; however, the NCP Province

from the venue.

The Sah-led group then started to create commotion by anti-party chants and started to break chairs and tables.

Police were called to take control of the fight. Sources add that the police used batons to control the crowd and in the process hit Saptari NCP leader Dev Nath Yadav on the head. Similarly, Madhu Sudhan Yadav has also been injured in the clash with the police.

Modi promised to visit Nepal again

Kathmandu: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed his happiness over the inaugural of the cross border petroleum products pipeline. "I am very happy that the bilateral project has been completed in the joint effort of both countries," he said.

After inaugurating the project on Motihari-Amlekhgunj interstate petroleum products pipeline from Haidrabad House in New Delhi via video conference he asked the petroleum pipeline is the first cross border pipeline in South Asia.

Stating that India and Nepal had centuries-old family and cultural ties at the people-to-people level, PM Modi reaffirmed India's support in Nepal's development endeavors. "The people-to-people relations between the two countries were a basis of the bilateral ties between India and Nepal," he underscored.

Modi reminisced that he was



regularly in talks with the top political leadership in Nepal and recalled that he had met with Nepal's Prime Minister Oli four times in the last one and half years. He also mentioned the partnership forged between the two countries in new sectors benefiting both countries. Accepting the invitation extended by PM Oli for Nepal visit, he pledged to visit Nepal in an appropriate time.

'Imbalance between the center and state'

Kathmandu: The Chief Minister of province 2, Lal Babu Raut spoke about the current progress made by the state. At an interaction program organized in Kathmandu, the CM spoke on the need for more coordination and support from the Centre. The CM said that "the nation after going through federalism was moving toward the path of progress and development, yet due to limited resources the implementation of programs and policies were moving at snail's pace with no help from the center. Although even with many hurdles he is personally satisfied with the current progress made by his state in areas of incorporating rights to marginalized communities, Dalits, the indigenous and securing women rights.

The CM felt a strong need to specify the roles and responsibilities of the Centre and the state demarcating them in order to avoid imbrications. He spoke about the current structure of bureaucracy which needed a fundamental change to represent more people from the backward and marginalized communities. Although the budget provided from the Centre was not significant enough, he said that a lot of pro poor policies were being framed in order to significantly make a visible change toward the lives of people who are living in absolute poverty.



The CM spoke about his government which had actively reached out to the grassroots, and various municipalities and local level governance made sincere efforts in order to provide equitable opportunities to the people of the state.

The CM spoke about the recent state laws being passed in order to create more jobs at the state level commission and public service that would enable more people to join government service. In the interaction program, he also requested the media to go to the villages and localities of province 2 and see the changes that have been made possible under his leadership. He said "various measures were taken and still underway to

develop schools, health posts, and framing policies that would enable the state to be futuristically progressive.

Talking about the imbalance between the governance of the center and state, the CM gave an example of the ongoing Sagarnath Forestry

Development Project that has the state and the center in dispute. The CM said "the mindset of the people in power is still the same towards the oppressed, and we should not give this a political color, rather we should unite as one nation and bring about a solution that would be amicable to both. In order to see a peaceful and developed Nepal, you cannot ignore the people of Madhes".

The CM spoke regarding various constitutional remedies that are available in order to further increase goodwill and strengthen the relationship between the Centre and state however the latter was not providing adequate support. "We are here because of what is enshrined as rights given to us by the Constitution, but our people have not been adequately represented and thus in order to secure the rights for marginalized, oppressed communities and women, we have to make stronger laws and a constitutional amendment is required".

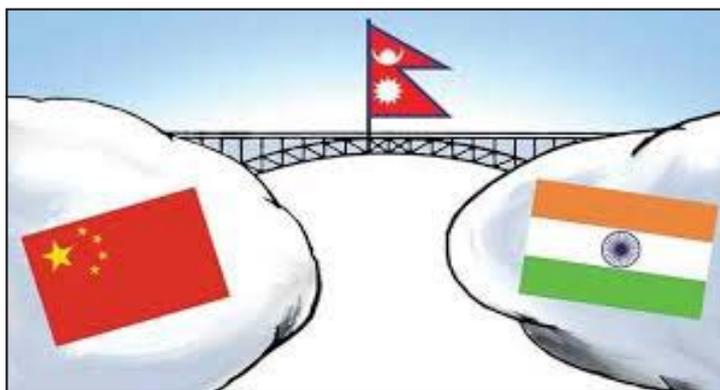
The CM said that his state had taken out policies that would provide a scholarship of Nrs 500 per month for female students of grade 1 to 8 of marginalized groups. He also said that 14000 cycles were distributed as part of the state governments program in 8 districts. It is also planning to bring more progressive changes that would create opportunities for those that have been denied for over all these years. With more power given to women, the CM felt a necessity to increase the reservation up to 50% in public service commissions and was hopeful that in the coming days more women will hold positions in top ranks in the government and bureaucracy. The CM was also in favor of unification between the Samajwadi Party and the Rashtriya Janata Party led by Raj Kishore Yadav.

Nepal-India-China Expo in February

Kathmandu: Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Nepal Chapter in collaboration with Visit Nepal Year 2020 and Nepal Tourism Board is organising Nepal-India-China Expo (NICE) in Kathmandu from February 21 to 24, 2020.

Organising a press conference in the capital, PATA informed that the event is the first of its kind to bring stakeholders of Nepal, India and China together.

NICE is a noble concept envisioned by PATA Nepal Chapter as the first tri-nation tourism expo, bringing



together tourism and hospitality stakeholders and organisations from public and private sectors of the three neighboring countries, said Sunil Sakya,

president of PATA Nepal.

"It will be a single platform to facilitate stakeholders of all three nations with unparalleled networking and business

opportunities, industry insights and inspiration," he said.

Nepal is rightly and geopolitically placed between the two giant economies and can contribute hugely to bridging tourism development potentials of these countries, he said.

The main objective of this expo was to bring together the two emerging giant economies and tourism powerhouses - India and China to foster the untapped tourism potentials and integrated business opportunities with Nepal as a facilitator, he said.

Tharus to celebrate the Constitution Day as a black day

Kathmandu: Indigenous, Madhesi, Dalits, Muslims, women, and differently individuals, ethnic minorities and other regional groups have vowed not to celebrate the constitution day and treat it as a “Black Day” in their lives.

Speaking at a press conference coordinator of the National Tharuwat Front Laxman Tharu stated that “our final fight now is with PM Oli’s majority government that has been using tactics of oppression. He said that the Oli government was oppressive towards people who were already marginalized in society.

In the press conference, it was also made clear that “the constitution is treacherous, murderous, and issued against the spirit of proportional inclusion. It has gone against the spirit of the thousands of Nepalese who have given their lives for

the cause of diversity, representation, and the end to discrimination toward minority communities. They will celebrate the Constitution Day as a black day until necessary steps were taken to amend the constitution and include their demands.

The press release of the United Indigenous community representing the minority community and marginalized groups stated that “the constitution was biased, not inclusive enough, and it goes directly against the aspirations of the common man and the sacrifices made by the community for the Republic”. They have decided to continue protesting and withdraw celebrations to mark it as a black day. The minority community has a history of oppression and seclusion through various measures, the United Press Conference representing the communities are demanding more inclusiveness, end to discrimination and equal



opportunities along with safeguarding a standard of living through representation and increased reservation in various government sectors and private enterprises.

They are fighting for equitable opportunity for the right to a decent living, frustrated by the

current scenario of rising prices, unaffordable living, and lack of opportunities for the minority community who are still compelled to menial work and labor. They want a constitutional amendment wherein their rights are duly secured and safeguarded.

‘Nepal’s foreign policy is not in the interests of India’

Kathmandu: Dr Nihar Nayek, researcher in the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, India, has remarked that Nepal’s foreign policy based on equidistance relations with neighbouring countries is not in the interests of India, although being a closest neighbour. In the past one and a half years, Nepal has been saying that its foreign policy is based on equidistance, balanced, inter-cooperation and indifference, she has not clarified further, he has remarked.

He was addressing a seminar on “Nepal’s Foreign Policy in the New Context” organised by Niti Anusthan Pratishthan Nepal and Institute of Crisis Management Studies in Kathmandu.

In his first tenure, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Nepal for four times, on the other hand, the possible visit of the Chinese President, that too will be for just nine hours, he has remarked. “Equidistance



should be applied in all areas,” he said.

While speaking at the same program Shrikrishna Anuruddh Gautam said that Nepal should first develop a clear mindset and follow the charter of what has been given in the constitution. He also added the importance of the geographical location of the country which was a key factor in determining what Nepal’s foreign policy should be.

Dr. Ram Thapaliya the Chair of ICMS said the leaders should work for the national

interest or as history has it they will be voted out of power. He also spoke on the importance of diplomatic relations and the effect of personal decisions that make an enormous impact on the outcome. Dr. Thapaliya said there was a strong need to specify the actual needs of the nation and frame policies accordingly.

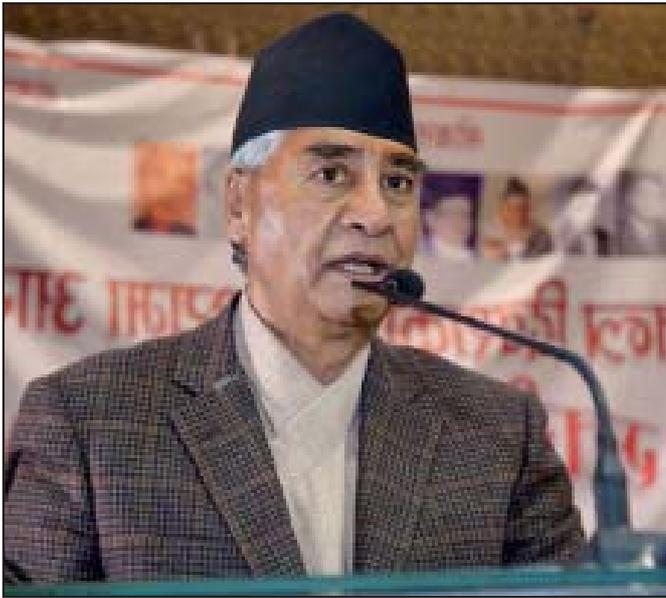
Finally speaking at the program Dr. Ajay Kumar the Deputy Chief of Mission from the Indian Embassy stated that it is better not to indulge in unnecessary criticisms and value time to get working toward equitable partnership and development. He

spoke of the newly inaugurated oil pipeline that had made it relatively easier for Nepal in terms of costs of transportation and at the same time being more efficient.

He said that further projects such as the Integrated Check Posts of Biratnagar, Bhairawa, and Nepalgunj would make an enormous impact on the way both countries do business.

The program was officiated by Deepak Adhikari the Director for NeNap, and the concluding remarks were made by Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Balananda Sharma the Principle of ICMS.

No possibility to reinstate monarchy, says Deuba



Dang: Nepali Congress (NC) President Sher Bahadur Deuba has claimed that there were not slightest possibilities for reinstatement of the monarchy in the country.

At a press conference organized by Nepal Press Union, Dang, Deuba reiterated that it was wrong to say that monarchy which was uprooted after a long struggle would come back again.

Deuba, also former Prime Minister, expressed his qualm about his name linked with Ncell tax evasion issue and wide-body aircraft scandal. "I have not heard the name of Ncell while I was the first person to raise issue surrounding wide-body aircraft and corruption," he clarified.

On a different note, Deuba said that Butwal was declared the temporary capital of State 5 since Dang did not have appropriate structures required for the same. "There are not good buildings in Dang. The Chief Minister of the state is from the district. One may ask him about this issue," he explained.

Deuba demanded action against the culprits of Banke incident where NC's Banke President and some cadres were recently beaten by an unidentified group of people during the second edition of NC's nation-wide campaign. "It is a grave incident. The culprits of this incident should be identified and be brought to justice at the earliest."

Dispute continues on naturalized citizenship

Kathmandu: The State Management committee in the Federal Parliament has failed to resolve the dispute in citizenship law amendment bill. The Committee has decided to resolve the dispute through the meeting of senior level leaders of the political parties.

The Nepali Congress MPs are demanding to continue the provision in the Nepali Citizenship Law 2063 while granting naturalized citizenship



to those foreign brides and grooms.

On the other hand, the ruling party has demanded to introduce the provision of at least seven years for receiving naturalized citizenship by those who marry Nepali citizens.

As per the provision in the 2063 law, foreigners got married to the Nepali citizens can start process to get Nepali citizenship immediately after the marriage.

No water for irrigation in Rautahat



Rautahat: Farmers in Gadhimai Municipality of Rautahat organised a demonstration demanding water for irrigation. Citing the fact that their paddy crops were dying due to lack of irrigation, irate farmers held their demonstration in their fields. "Fifteen years after the subsidiary canal of Bagmati Irrigation Project was built, the canal has yet to be put into operation. Our

paddy fields are parched for want of rain," said Rajdev Das, a farmer of Gadhimai-1, adding that paddy crops planted in some six bigha land were wasting away.

Another farmer Dipen Shrestha also lamented, "They took our land in the name of constructing irrigation canal. So far, they haven't given us any compensation. On the contrary, even though the canal is ready they don't release water for us," he said.

On his part, Bagmati Irrigation Project divisional engineer Akhalakh Siddhaki said the project had taken farmers' concerns seriously and was working towards addressing them.

US sought clarification from Nepal

Kathmandu: The US Embassy in Kathmandu has asked clarification from the Foreign Ministry on Nepal's commitment for Indo-Pacific Strategy after issuance of a statement by the Chinese Foreign Ministry following the visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi to Kathmandu.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry, explaining the meeting between NCP co-chairman Pushpakamal Dahal Prachanda and Minister Wang Yi, has stated that Nepal has not recognized the US-led Indo-Pacific Strategy.

Accordingly, Dahal has



retreated Nepal's stance on non-aligned foreign policy and opposes any attempt to stop China's development, including riots in Hong Kong.