

Territory dispute between Nepal and India

Both claim Kalapani as part of their countries' territory

Kathmandu: India's new political map has stirred controversy in Nepal, with both New Delhi and Kathmandu laying claim to a region, known as Kalapani, as part of their countries' territory.

Members of the opposition parties protested in the capital Kathmandu as well as other parts of the country, accusing India of "illegally occupying" its land.

Kalapani is the land of Nepal and our party stands firm on this conviction. India is continuously trying to settle this issue but we won't go back in our claim.

"The Nepal government firmly believes that the Kalapani is a part of Nepal," Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement. However, a spokesman of India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) claimed the region was part of India.

"Our map accurately depicts the sovereign territory of India. The new map in no manner has revised our boundary with Nepal," said MEA spokesman Raveesh Kumar.

Kalapani, which borders the Indian state of Uttarakhand, is also included in Nepal's official map. Uttarakhand shares an 80km long porous border with Nepal and a 344km border with China.

India's Ministry of Home Affairs published an updated map after stripping the Indian-administered Kashmir's special status and splitting the Himalayan region into



two federally administered territories in August.

Kathmandu and New Delhi have held a series of talks to resolve the boundary dispute, but Kalapani and the Susta area in southern Nepal remain two major sticking points in negotiations.

Nepal also lays claim to Lipulekh Pass close to Kalapani with a T-junction on the trading route between India and China since 2015.

India and Nepal share an 1,800km (1,118 miles) open border, with thousands of people from both countries crossing the frontier for work and travel.

Relations between the two countries were strained after Nepal blamed India for imposing a border blockade in 2015, which crippled supplies to the landlocked nation.

Our map is accurate: India

Kathmandu: India has said the new political map of the country did not revise anything as far as the border with Nepal is concerned. The response came after Nepal's foreign ministry complained that the map depicted Nepali territory of Kalapani as part of the Indian state of Uttarakhand.

"Our map accurately depicts the sovereign territory of India. The new map has in no manner revised our boundary with Nepal. The boundary delineation exercise with Nepal is ongoing under the existing mechanism. We reiterate our commitment to find a solution through dialogue in the spirit of our close and friendly bilateral relations," said Raveesh Kumar, Official Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs.

The latest political map of India reiterated the Indian claims on the region that Nepal says belongs to its westernmost part. India claims the historic region as part of the state of Uttarakhand.

Kalapani an integral part: Nepal

Kathmandu: Nepal has objected to the inclusion of Kalapani within Indian territory. Nepal government made it clear that Kalapani is an integral part of the country.

However, the Nepal government made it clear that Kalapani is an integral part of the country and that talks are still on between New Delhi and Kathmandu over this "unresolved" area. The country's foreign ministry said, "The Nepal government firmly believes that the Kalapani is a part of Nepal."

The press statement stated that foreign secretaries of both countries have been assigned the responsibility to resolve the remaining border-related issues between India and Nepal.

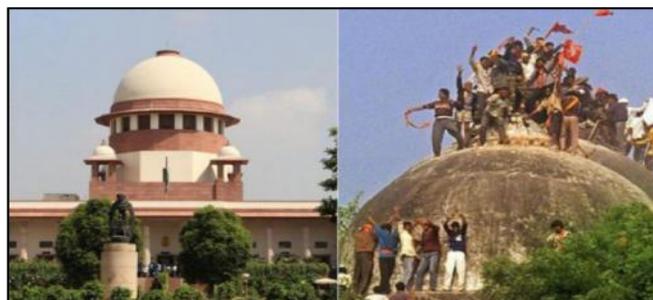
"The remaining issues related to the border should be resolved in bilateral consensus and any unilateral actions will be unacceptable to the Nepal government," said the press statement.

"The Nepal government is committed to protecting the country's external borders and it is determined on its principled position that such border disputes with the neighboring countries should be resolved through diplomatic channels after assessing the historical documents, facts, and evidence," added the press statement issued by Nepal's foreign ministry.

Indian SC's verdict on Ayodhya case

Ram temple at disputed site, alternative land for mosque

New Delhi: India's Supreme Court ruled in favor of a Hindu temple on a disputed religious ground and ordered that alternative land be given to Muslims to build a mosque. The dispute over land ownership has been one of the country's most contentious issues. The 16th-century Babri Masjid mosque in northern Indian town of Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh state was destroyed by Hindu hard-liners in



December 1992, sparking massive Hindu-Muslim violence that left 2,000 people dead.

Five Supreme Court justices said in a unanimous judgment that 5 acres (2.02 hectares) of land will be allotted to the Muslim community at a prominent place for building a mosque. The disputed land will be given to a board of trustees for the construction of a temple for Hindu

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Editorial

Development of Madhesh

Over the past few months, high-profile leaders have shown a heightened level of interest in Madhes development. Prime Minister KP Oli declaring that efforts are underway to make Madhes shine bright in the near future.

Sharing the platform with Oli, NCP Chairperson Pushpa Kamal Dahal assured the audience that there will be big changes in the sector of infrastructure development of Madhes in the next four years. Oli later added that the government's focus on Madhes has been strengthened by CK Raut joining the mainstream politics.

After suffering isolation from rest of the country and consequential low realization of Madhes' economic potential, this surprising turnaround to a pro-Madhesh profile of the government is encouraging and welcome. It is expected that economic outcomes of government's pro-Madhesh

After suffering isolation from rest of the country and consequential low realization of Madhes' economic potential, this surprising turnaround to a pro-Madhesh profile of the government is encouraging and welcome.

stance will be applauded by Madhesi people and be reflected in local and national polls that might favor the left-leaning parties, displacing Madhesi and Congress parties that have had stronghold in the region for as long as democratic politics has existed. However, the next steps of moving Madhes economy forward are going to be challenging, in terms of planning the region's development and accessing the resources needed to implement such a plan. PM Oli has mentioned that the government will build an international airport in the region, improve road connectivity with Kathmandu and expand regional rail link to provide market access to India for trade as well as tourism.

There is a hope that these initiatives could give life to a hitherto moribund economy but much more needs to be done to start the process of a broad-based growth that benefits the population by expanding employment opportunities and diversifying income sources. This can happen only if the development plan gets designed in a way that local resources are used to fuel growth and improve market access.

If Prime Minister Oli and Chairman Dahal are truly concerned about Madhesi welfare, they will have to think of taming Koshi floods and putting in place a mechanism to harness this water source to its full potential. Then Madhesh can develop quickly and the whole region will shine bright. Canals and reservoirs will make the region look beautiful and attractive to tourists, much beyond anyone's imagination.

We have not asked Nepal to be against any country -4

That's the point: supporting a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific is not for or against any country. It is for a set of principles, the same principles that enabled China's rise and India's rise and Bangladesh's rise and Nepal's rise as well. Shouldn't we preserve those principles and ensure that everyone has a chance to benefit from them?

The vision of a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific seeks to build protections against any country that violates those principles.

We have not asked Nepal to be against any country. We ask Nepal to be pro-Nepal. We ask Nepal to guard your sovereignty fiercely, including by protecting the principles that protect Nepal, by strengthening the freedom, the openness, and the security that have allowed this region to prosper.

One thing we should all be able to agree on is the rule-of-law and the importance of maintaining the free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific Region that has prevailed for generations now. We have not asked Nepal to be pro-America, though we welcome the friendship and goodwill!

One last point before I close and listen to your questions and comments. I have told you this is my dream job, but let me share with you a concern. My concern is that, despite the long record of U.S. partnership and the evidence of decades that demonstrates our good faith, our progress and partnership will be harmed, bogged down by suspicion and distracted by misinformation.

There are real, consequential decisions to be made and there are commitments to be honored, that have now been complicated by misinformation. The most timely example of an important decision pending is the MCC Compact, which has been in the news recently.

Let's be clear on the origins of this extraordinary partnership: Nepal asked the United States to develop an MCC Compact. In keeping with that spirit of local buy-in, of Nepali buy-in, we worked with Nepalis, including the government, private sector, and civil society, to identify what projects would help harness the power of the private sector.

For generations, Nepal has talked about developing its renewable hydroelectrical power. A simple fact has stood in the way: you cannot develop a resource like hydropower unless you have a market that will pay for it. That is why the MCC project focuses on constructing the lines that will

bring Nepal's power to the markets where there are consumers ready to pay Nepal good money for it.

It is a simple fact of geography and economics that means India. And hopefully that will include Bangladesh, though, again, a simple fact of geography, if Nepal wants to sell power to Bangladesh, it will require an agreement with India. Some might prefer to find conspiracy hiding behind every door, but sometimes the answer really is just simple geography, the simple economics of making this project work, and a discussion-based in fact.

I've been asked why the MCC compact requires parliament's ratification? The easy answer is that the MCC requires parliamentary ratification in every country where they operate.

This is not a special condition for Nepal. But let me flip that question on its head: why is getting parliamentary ratification considered a problem? Remember one of the principles from when MCC was created? Local buy-in.

The idea was that, rather than having programs designed in foreign capitals and imposed on local populations, MCC would develop projects that the partner country proposed and vetted. And parliament is the representative of the people. Ratification is how we ensure that the Nepali people want us to spend this \$500 million in Nepal. Imagine if we did NOT ask for ratification? People would say: why are you forcing this project on us? If we did not ask for ratification, parliamentarians would shout, "but we should have a chance to review it!"

And they would be right! Ratification means obviously that this is a sovereign issue, of course, and Nepal's government is free to chart its own course, and buy-in is critical.

So, MCC is an important decision, but it is not the only one. Let me give you one more example, which is smaller but illustrates the decisions that Nepal has to make.

I humbly offer to you my belief that pulling back from Nepal's partnership with the United States would be a loss for Nepal, for Nepalis, and for the United States as well. I believe it would not be in Nepal's interest, nor in keeping with Nepal's historical values, including the principle of amity to all, enmity to none. Diminishing Nepal's historic partnership with the United States would not make Nepalis more prosperous and it would



Randy W. Berry
US Ambassador to Nepal

not make Nepal more secure, more sovereign, or more resilient—those are our goals. The record of our partnership is a record of mutual benefit and mutual trust.

I hope, in the end, that our record of mutual benefit and trust will prevail. Misinformation and suspicion damage our ability to deliver real results for that the Nepal people deserve. That is the kind of partnership, built on trust, that the United States has always pursued.

I remain hopeful, even confident, that these concerns will prove unfounded. I am, after all, fortunate enough to spend every day doing my dream job. A great American diplomat was once asked whether she was an optimist or a pessimist for the future. Her response: I am an optimist who worries a lot. I have shared with you my worry, but let me reassure you I am an optimist. I have faith that the bedrock of the U.S.-Nepal relationship, which stretches back more than seventy years and is broad and deep today, is strong enough to withstand those who seek to cast doubt and suspicions on it.

What Nepalis have seen with their own eyes, what they experienced in their own lives, will mean more than whispered conspiracies. I hope that I can contribute my own part to add to the continuation of our more than seventy years of partnership, to strengthen the foundation to last for the next seventy years!

Thank you for giving me your patient attention today. I look forward to listening to your thoughts and questions—and especially any recommendations.

(Remarks by US Ambassador to Nepal Randy W. Berry at an interaction organized by the Institute for Strategic and Socio-Economic Research in Kathmandu on Sep 27, 2019)

End

Government is not serious on country's territory

*If Prime Minister has the courage then removes us.
Then we think about what we do.*

• **How much pressure does the Samajwadi Party have to leave the government?**

The issue of exclusion from the government has not yet been discussed in the party. However, our belief is that neither the Prime Minister, the government and nor CPN has been serious about the issue that the government has agreed with us in the past. The government is indifferent to the obligation to assume the citizenship of the constitution. This is the majority government. It doesn't matter if we are in government or not. We have gone to the government only for two thirds to amend the constitution. If the government does not amend the constitution, then we have no justification for staying. The matter is being discussed within the party.

• **So the Socialist Party has reached the point of departure from the government?**

No decision has been made on this issue. The Socialist Party is serious about building an equitable country.

• **You said that the government did not look serious on the party's agreement. Is it still justified to stay in government?**

We are committed to the mandate given to us by the people. This obligation belongs to everyone, not just us. We believe that the constitution guarantees the rights of all. Therefore, the government should continue to exert pressure rather than leave it. We make the people aware that this government is not serious about the people. As this government has

given the majority of the people, according to what has worked. We need to move forward now to realize that.

• **But, this government has not given much importance to the Socialist Party?**

Sometimes we have to look at the positive, not the negative. In this government, the Socialist Party is not sitting in the government just hoisting flag. Even when we are in government these days, people are aware of the government's desire and character for Madhes. It is not important whether the government has given importance to Upendra Yadav while we are in government. Communists are still playing in Madhes.

Not all the people of Madhes are in favor of the Socialist or the RJP. People now understand why the Communist view of Madhesi, why they do not want to give Madhes rights. Without the Madhes, the dream that Prime Minister KP Oli has dreamed of creating a prosperous nation cannot be fulfilled. We are also saying among the masses that the attitude of the Communists towards the Madhes is still negative. Federalism is not their agenda, they are trying to end it.

• **You are opposing to the government sitting in government. Do you also have a discussion about why the Prime Minister is angry?**

Due to the Madhesi Party, federalism has been established in this country. Due to Madhes and Maoists, a republic has been established in

the country today. Republic, federalism and proportional inclusion is the cause of the Madhesh Movement. Federalism was not on the UML and Congress agenda. So they have not yet been able to accept union with the spirit. As a result, their attitude towards Madhesh is still negative.

Even if we do not amend the constitution by taking two thirds, the people will show the result tomorrow. We have also gone to the government to make it clear to the people.

• **There is also talk of the Prime Minister warning to withdraw from the government while you are criticizing the government?**

Some leaders of the CPN have strongly criticized the government. In democracy, criticism should not be taken negatively. NCP leaders, including Madhav Nepal, are protesting against the functioning of this government. Even when we are in government, if the activities of this government are wrong then we have a role to play in the right direction. We alert the government to the public. That is why we oppose wrongdoing. As far as the government is concerned, we can say that the Prime Minister to expel us. If Prime Minister has the courage then removes us. Then we think about what we do.

• **The Socialist Party is a constituent party of this government, but you were not asked about the decision of the heads of state?**

The government has not had any discussion with the Socialists Party on this issue. This government has reached the pinnacle of



Renu Yadav

Deputy Chairperson, RJP-Nepal

totalitarianism in this regard. The matter had to be discussed with the ruling party.

• **It means, the decision of the government not be discussed with the ruling Socialist?**

This government should consult not only the parties but also the parties and the opposition.

In the House, there are role of opposition and ruling. However, this government has been proposing to bring 10/15 bills at a time and passed with the majority in arrogance manner. Neither did the opposition's role in this. The overwhelming majority have shown that the country is in our hands. We are doing so in the House. But they are not listening to us.

• **Where unity talk reached between Socialist and RJP?**

We are very close to unity. Both parties have realized that there is no alternative to unity because this country now needs alternative powers to get rid of it. Not everyone has the option of coming together above their personal interests. As

there are six presidium members in RJP, something has to be settled. We must do our homework to accomplish this campaign of unity. By the first week of December, many things of unity can be settled.

• **In the new map released by the Government of India, there is talk of some parts of Nepal being overthrown, what is the Socialist's view on it?**

Nepal's foreign policy is weak. The foreign minister would have to discuss Nepal's territory extensively on this issue. Where is Nepal's borders and how much has it been mixed? If there is a Nepali territory in the map of India then there should be discussion from the government level. The territory of Nepal should not be taken by any neighboring country.

• **After all, the government is not clear yet?**

It's not. No homework was seen on its border. There is no seriousness to the country. In such serious matters, the high level meetings of both the countries would have to be settled. Then the government is not interested.

Rethink about Chure exploitation: Ex-President Dr. Yadav



Janakpurdham: Former President Dr. Ram Baran Yadav has pointed out the need to rethink the plan for the construction of folk highway through Chure.

At a dialogue 'Chure Ko Chintan (Contemplation on Chure)' organized as part of Nepal Literature Festival at Janakpurdham, he called for all sides to pay attention on the imminent ecological crisis stemming from perpetual Chure erosion.

The ongoing construction of highway through Chure and excessive use of machines such as excavators have resulted in drying up of water sources and disappearance of animals from their habitats, the ex-President claimed.

He also suggested implementing he development plans keeping in mind the sensitivity of the areas bearing 60 percent of total population and pocket area of grains of Nepal.

He also demanded immediate actions to stop activities leaving Terai-Madhes in inundation. "It is unfortunate to construct airport in Nijgadh without carrying out scientific study", he said, underlining the need to reassess the plan of building airport by chopping off standing green trees.

The ex-President also urged the government to rethink on the expansion of railway by ruining forest area.

He also went on saying that there was a need for formulating separate Act in line with the Master Plan outlined by experts; team for the conservation of Chure region, including rivers.

Likewise, former Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal also echoed the former President's remarks noting that the myopic planning has heralded crisis in Chure. He highlighted the need of framing master plan of the entire country.

The complication has been resulted due to unrealistic thinking in regard to the construction of several highways, he said, adding, "Only three highways are enough for our country, making plans ignoring this reality would create problem".

He also highlighted the need to put in place the plan for constructing Nijgadh Airport without causing effects to main forest.

The former Prime Minister also called for attention from all sides to conserve the Chure and demanded systemic changes for this.

Indian SC's ...

god Ram.

Hindu supporters and activists celebrated the ruling on the court lawns, blowing bugles and chanting "Jai Shree Ram," or hailing god Ram. An attorney representing the Muslims deplored the ruling. "We are not satisfied with the verdict and it's not up our expectation," said Zafaryab Jilani, who is representing the Muslim community's Babri Action committee.

"These 5 acres of land don't mean anything to us," he said. "We are examining the verdict and whatever legal course is open for us."

He hinted at filing a review petition in the Supreme Court challenging Saturday's verdict. At the same time, he appealed to members of all communities to maintain peace.

Vishnu Shankar Jain, an attorney who represented the Hindu community, said the journey over several years had been a struggle.

"It was a huge legal battle and we are happy that we convinced the Supreme Court. It's a historic moment for Hindus," he said.

Raj Nath Singh, India's defense minister, appealed to all to "accept the court verdict and maintain peace."

In Islamabad, Pakistan's foreign minister, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, criticized the verdict, saying it was indicative of the "hate based mindset" of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.

"This is nothing but Modi's government continued policies of cultivating seeds of hatred and promoting differences between the communities and religious segments of the population to achieve its designs," he said.

Hindu hard-liners say they want to build a new temple to god Ram on the site, which they revere as his birthplace. They say the mosque was built after a temple dedicated to the

Hindu god was destroyed by Muslim invaders.

After the demolition of the mosque, Hindus and Muslims took the issue to a lower court, which in 2010 ruled that the disputed land should be divided into three parts — two for Hindus and one for Muslims.

That was challenged in the Supreme Court by both communities. The five judges started daily proceedings in August after mediation failed to find a compromise.

Modi had promised to build the temple in 2014 elections that brought him to power. But he later decided to wait for the court verdict despite pressure from millions of Hindu hard-liners who asked his government to bring legislation to build the temple. Authorities increased security in Ayodhya, 550 kilometers (350 miles) east of New Delhi, and deployed more than 5,000 paramilitary forces to prevent any attacks by Hindu activists on Muslims, who comprise 6% of the town's more than 55,500 people. The strict measures included a ban on the assembly of more than four people at one place.

The town looked deserted with authorities turning back thousands of Hindu pilgrims who were congregating for a religious event on Tuesday. Security forces also established a strong presence around the religious site and were not allowing anyone to visit.

People traveling in cars and buses to Ayodhya were being thoroughly checked at security barriers as commandos took up positions in bunkers across the town. Police have arrested nearly 500 people for posting provocative messages on social media in the state. Police also have detained 5,000 people with criminal backgrounds across the state to prevent them from creating trouble after the court verdict, according to Uttar Pradesh state government spokesman Awanish Awasthi.

Nepal-India border in western region closed amidst Ayodhya verdict



Nepalgunj: The Nepal-India border at Banke and Bardiya districts was closed after the Supreme Court of India delivered a historic judgment on the Ayodhya land dispute.

The border has been closed for various security reasons.

According to Jamunaha-based Area Police Office (APO), the border has been closed since Saturday morning at the request of Indian authorities.

The information on when the border might re-open isn't available yet but if peace continues, the border will open in the evening, asserted Sub-inspector Madhav Rijal at the APO.

Chief District Officer of Banke, Kumar Bahadur Khadka, said there has been no formal notice regarding the closure of the border. Indian Police have stated that the border was sealed for security reasons.

The Indian side has only allowed ambulances to enter its territory during the closure. Many Nepalis, who arrived at the border after the closure, have been stranded for being stopped from entering India at Banke and Bardiya region.

Local people facing difficult due to incomplete bridge

Sarlahi: Locals of southern Rautahat district have been facing difficulties due to lack of a bridge over the Bagmati River.

The locals are compelled to commute through boats due to absence of a bridge. Since the boats are less in number, they always become overloaded, said Sushil Jha, a local.

Construction of a bridge, which was supposed to connect Khaibra village of Ramnagar Municipality and Durga Bhagwati Rural Municipality has not been completed even in five years. Crossing the river through boat costs Rs. 50 per cycle and Rs. 200 per motorcycle, said the locals.

When the flow of river is high, it is



difficult to operate even the boats, they said. Krishna Prasad Burma, chairman of Ram Nagar Rural Municipality said, "The locals have been at risk, due to absence of bridge."

Likewise, construction of bridge at Samanpur Ghat, Rautahat has been stopped. The bridge was supposed to connect Barahathawa Municipality to Gadhimai Municipality. Both the bridges are time and again being destroyed by floods.

Goddess Sita's birthplace waits with bated breath for Supreme Court verdict on Ayodhya

Kathmandu: Janakpur, a centre for religious and cultural tourism in Nepal, is considered to be the birthplace of Lord Ram's wife Sita. Residents of this city want a grand temple constructed at Ayodhya on the lines of Janakpur dham. Goddess Sita's birthplace waits with bated breath for Supreme Court verdict on Ayodhya

At a time the whole of India is waiting eagerly for the Supreme Court verdict on Ayodhya, this city in neighbouring Nepal is no less restless. Janakpur, a centre for religious and cultural tourism in Nepal, is considered to be the birthplace of Lord Ram's wife Sita.

The Supreme Court concluded hearings in the Ayodhya case and reserved its judgment. Residents of Janakpur are unhappy with the fact that the city's son-in-law is being made to stay in a tent for decades and could not even have a temple dedicated to him.

"Goddess Sita was on exile along with Lord Ram for 14 years. And now, she is being made to stay in a tent along with her husband," grieved a local. Legend has it that Sita was the daughter of King Janak after whom the city of Janakpur was named. Residents of this city want a grand temple constructed at Ayodhya on the lines of Janakpur dham.



Ram Roshandas, the mahant at Janakpur dham, told India Today that the city considers Lord Ram as its son-in-law. "Till the time he doesn't get a proper place to stay, how can we be happy? For hundreds of years, people have been following the principles of Lord Ram. It is sad to see that he is still made to stay in a tent," Roshandas says.

"People of Janakpur are sad because Sita, who was brought up in a palace here, has no place to stay in Ayodhya today. We heartily hope that the Supreme Court of India rules in favour of a temple," Roshandas further said.

Janakpur is the place where Sita was born and brought up. It was here, according to legend, that the swayamvar for Sita was held and she met Lord Ram. This place is located barely 20 kilometres from the Bihar border and 60 kilometres from Sitamarhi, where she went

inside the earth according to popular belief.

Not only common people, but politicians in Janakpur are also hoping that the Supreme Court of India gives its verdict in favour of Ram mandir. In fact, all through the hearing process, devotees have been thronging Janakpur dham in greater numbers.

One such devotee, Radha Koirala, who had come from Kathmandu, says there should be a Ram temple in Ayodhya. "I hope that the way we come to Janakpur to catch a glimpse of Goddess Sita, we should also be able to visit Lord Ram in Ayodhya," she said.

"I feel a grand Ram temple at Ayodhya will also strengthen Indo-Nepal ties. Nepal is tied to India through society and culture. Janakpur being his in-laws' place, a temple for Lord Ram in Ayodhya will reflect the trust between people of the two nations," Koirala added.

Rajeev Jha, a resident of Janakpur, says whenever someone from Ayodhya visits the city, the person is accorded a warm welcome.

Ram Roshandas said if the Supreme Court verdict comes before the auspicious 'vivaah panchami', then Janakpur dham will organise it in a grand way. 'Vivaah panchami' is celebrated every year in this city, and in a grand way every fifth year. Incidentally, this time, it is supposed to be celebrated on a grand scale on December 21.

Roshandas hopes that if the Supreme Court verdict is in favour of a Ram temple, then many big personalities from India will also visit Janakpur. Anticipating such an event, Janakpur is being draped in saffron.

"We are distributing saffron colour to residents free of cost so that they can paint the city in this colour," said Janakpur municipality mayor Lalkishore Shah.

China also encroached upon Nepali land

Kathmandu: At a time when protests have been witnessed in Nepal's different cities, including Kathmandu against the latest political map unveiled by the Government of India placing Nepali territory inside Indian borders, it has been revealed that China, too, has encroached upon around 36 hectares of Nepali land.

According to data of the survey department, Nepali lands have been encroached upon in Nepal's four districts including Sankhuwasabha, Rasuwa, Sindhupalchowk and Humla districts.

A data from the department of the survey revealed that around six hectares of land in the Bhagdare River in the Humla district and four hectares of land in Karnali district have been encroached upon. The land now falls in Tibet's Furang area. Similarly, around six hectares of Nepali land in Sanjen River and Jambhu Khola of Rasuwa, have fallen into Kerung of Tibet. The Chinese side has also encroached more than 10 hectares of land in Sindhupalchowk district's Bhotekoshi and Kharanekhola area. The land has now fallen in Nyalam area of Tibet. Likewise, according to the ministry data, 9 hectares of Nepal's land has been encroached in the Sankhuwasabha district because of the road expansion in China's Tibet. Some places near the Arun Khola, Kamu Khola and Sumjung now also fallen into Tibet's Tingisyan. According to the ministry, Nepal would lose several hundred hectares of land.

It should be noted that in 2015, the survey department had conducted a survey about the flow of the rivers at the Nepal-China border. The report prepared by the department of survey also said that Nepal would lose thousands of hectares of land.

Bangladeshi President arriving tomorrow

Kathmandu: Bangladesh President Mohammad Abdul Hamid will be arriving in Kathmandu on November 12 on a three-day official visit.

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli briefed the cabinet colleagues regarding the upcoming visit of the Bangladesh President to Nepal.

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen and high-ranking officials of the various government agencies of Bangladesh will accompany the president during the visit.

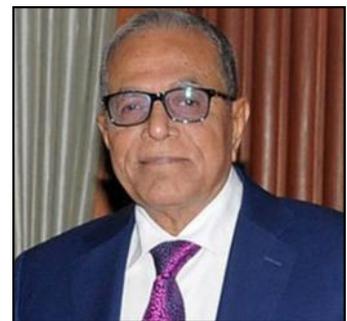
An official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that preparations for the visit are underway.

However, the two foreign ministries have yet to make an official announcement in this connection.

Earlier last week, www.thedailystar.net, a Bangladeshi news portal, had reported that the two sides will hold talks on the Preferential Trade Agreement and BBIN (Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal) Motor Vehicles Agreement during Hamid's Nepal visit. It had reported that Hamid will visit Nepal from November 11 to 14.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and PM Oli had discussed the planned visit of Bangladesh President to Nepal when they met on the sidelines of the 18th NAM Summit in Azerbaijan on October 26.

Hasina had urged Oli to give final shape to PTA with Nepal during Hamid's visit to Nepal; another Bangladeshi news portal www.dhakatribune.com reported citing the Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque as saying.



Upendra Yadav: Whether leave or remain in government



Kathmandu: Socialist Party Nepal Chairman Upendra Yadav is facing growing resistance within the party over his 'dubious stance' as the party fails to decide whether it should leave or remain in the government.

Since joining the government in June last year, SPN, which holds two ministerial portfolios in the government, has repeatedly warned of severing ties with the government, but stopped short of taking any concrete step.

"The party would walk out of the government if there is no

constitutional amendment," Yadav, who holds a deputy prime minister and health minister portfolio in the government, told cadres during a function held in Siraha on October 28 without giving any timeframe.

Yadav's repeated warnings of protest, as well as his failure to deliver as deputy prime minister and health minister, have made him a subject of frequent insults from Prime Minister KP Oli.

But several SPN leaders, especially those unhappy with the party's participation in the government, have long doubted Yadav's commitment to walk out of government and describe his occasional warnings to resume anti-constitution protests as grandstanding. Some even doubt his plans to merge the party with the Rastriya Janata Party Nepal in order to strengthen the identity movement.

"What is stopping the party from walking out of the government and starting fresh struggle for the constitution amendment?" Renu

Kumari Yadav, a leader close to him, asked Yadav during a recent meeting in Province 2. Echoing Yadav, other leaders present at the meeting had warned Chairman Yadav about the danger of keeping the party at the crossroads.

Leaders said that Yadav looks increasingly isolated in the party due to his indecision over whether to continue in the government or quit and unify with the Rastriya Janata Party Nepal (RJPN).

Besides Renu Kumari Yadav, several other party seniors including Baburam Bhattarai, Ashok Rai and Rajendra Shrestha have been arguing in favor of resuming protest by pulling out of the government.

Bhattarai, despite the merger between the then Naya Shakti and the Federal Socialist Forum Nepal, still sits in the opposition bench in parliament and is one of the most vocal critics of the government.

"Both appointment and dismissal of provincial assembly governors are actually

against the spirit of federalism, and are symbol of partisan rubberstamping. The incumbent government's monopoly, unitary and despotic character has been rejustified. Let all the federal democratic forces reflect on it. Let us all fighting for the cause of people's war, Madhes, Janajati, Tharu and Dalit unite!" Bhattarai tweeted after the Oli government sacked the governors on November 3.

Amid lack of progress in the ongoing talks to produce breakthrough in the merger process, RJPN leaders also appear increasingly skeptical of Yadav's commitment to merger. An RJPN leader said that Yadav was engaging some leaders of his party in 'sham talks' because he did not want to see others leading the protests in his absence.

"He (Yadav) still considers himself as messiah of Madhes and doesn't want us while he is enjoying his share in the government," said an RJPN leader who has been vocal against the idea of merger with the SPN.

Nepal-Bharat Maitri Dharmashala to open for pilgrimages

Kathmandu: The Pashupati Area Development Trust (PADT) is going to open Nepal-Bharat Maitri Dharmashala for pilgrimages after completing the upgrading work.

The PADT has been exerting pressure on the contractor to bring the Dharmashala into operation by November 17. But the contractor said that it would be ready for operation by December 1, according to the PADT.

The Dharmashala was handed over to the PADT on August 31, 2018. It was constructed within the framework of a Memorandum of Understanding signed between



India and the PADT.

The PADT had opened tender for upgrading Nepal-Bharat Maitri Dharmashala on May 13. A hotel entrepreneur had won the tender at the cost of Rs. 10 million.

The three storied Dharmashala has 82 rooms with 392 beds, and it is equipped with all modern facilities.

After upgrading it, big family rooms were separated into small

size family rooms with the facility of bathroom, single rooms and double rooms with attached bathrooms.

To provide facility for the elder citizens, short-distance lift system has also been managed in it while we have added hot water facility for the visitors, said Prem Hari Dhungana, treasurer of PADT. Facility of suit room has already been in the Dharmashala. The minimum charge of Dharmashala for a family room is Rs. 350, he said.

The building was built with the Indian assistance of about Rs. 220 million. The project has started in September 2016 in an area of 10,625 square metres of land.

New governors take oath of office and secrecy

Kathmandu: The newly appointed governors of all seven provinces have taken the oath of office and secrecy.

President Bidya Devi Bhandari administered the oath of office and secrecy to the new governors at Sital Niwas amid a special function. President Bhandari, in a surprise move, upon the recommendation of the government, had sacked all seven governors appointed by the previous government led by Sher Bahadur Deuba on Sunday.

A day after sacking the governors, a cabinet meeting, shortly after the



ruling Nepal Communist Party finalized new names, had recommended the President to appoint the new governors.

Bhandari appointed Somnath Adhikari as the governor of Province 1, Tilak Pariyar as the governor of Province 2, Bishnu Prasain as the governor of Province 3, Amik Sherchan as the governor of Gandaki Province, Dharmanath Yadav as the governor of Province 5, Govinda Kalauni as the governor of Karnali Province, and Sharmila Tripathi and the governor of Sudur Paschim Province.

India to support the construction of polytechnic in Hetauda

Kathmandu: Chief Minister of Province 3 Dormani Paudel has performed the ground breaking ceremony for establishment of a flagship Nepal-Bharat Maitri Polytechnic at Hetauda in Makwanpur district of Nepal in the presence of Chargé d' Affaires, Embassy of India Dr Ajay Kumar.

The event was also graced by Yubraj Dulal, Minister for Social Development, Province-3 Kailash Dungal, Minister of Financial Affairs, Province-3, Pushpa Raman Wagle, Member-Secretary, CTEVT and over 600 residents and students from Hetauda. The Nepal-Bharat Maitri



Polytechnic at Hetauda is a state-of-the-art infrastructure project in the area of vocational training and is being built under the India-Nepal Development Partnership with Government of India's grant of INRs 38.53 crores. The Polytechnic is being built in an area of over 32 acres by M/s

Nirman Consultants Pvt. Ltd as the Project Management Consultant (PMC) and M/s Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd (TCIL) as the project contractor.

The total built up area of the Polytechnic project would be 19,200 square meters. The facility will include an administrative

block, academic block, auditorium, library, workshop, multipurpose hall, separate hostels for boys and girls, principal and staff residences and amenities for sports and communities. The project is expected to be completed in two years.

The ground breaking ceremony for construction of the Nepal-Bharat Maitri Polytechnic at Hetauda is another testimony of friendly relations between India and Nepal and also India's commitment to work with Nepal to complement efforts of Government of Nepal to strengthen infrastructure in the vocational and skill development sector in Nepal.

Election office set up in Sarlahi



Sarlahi: Office of the election officer has been established in Haripurwa, Sarlahi for the by-election scheduled for November 30.

As per an agreement reached in an all-party meeting, the election officer's office was established within the Municipality Office, located in Haripurwa Bazaar. After the demise of ward chair Ishaq Ansari last year, the position of the ward chair in Haripurwa Municipality-1 has remained vacant.

"The by election is going to be held to elect a new ward chair," said Krishna Ram Koirala, Chief election officer. As soon as the office opens, all the required works for the by-election would be done, he added.

The election schedule obtained from election commission has been displayed in the election officer's office, said Koirala. Also two voting centres have been established, he added.

The prominent political parties are now selecting candidates for the election. Chief election officer Koirala, Siya Ram Raya, Mayor of Haripurwa Municipality and Chief District Officer Mohan Bahadur G.C. had inspected the election area.

Mohammed Day observed

Nepalgunj: Muslims organised a programme on the occasion of birth anniversary (Mohammed Day) of Prophet of Muslim religion, Hazrat Mohammad Paigambar Sallah Alaiwasallam.

Muslims from different places of Banke district gathered at Nepalgunj and went through different places of the city playing musical instruments and carrying flags.

Prophet Muhammad's birthday is commemorated by Muslims during the month of Rabi' al-awwal, the third month of the Muslim calendar. People from Muslim religion from different places of Nepal as well as of the world have been observing the 1438th Mohammad Day by organising various programmes, said Islamic Guru, Maulana Abdul Jabbar Manjari.

Hazrat Mohammad was born in Mecca of Saudi Arabia on the month of Rabi' al-awwal and died at Madian of Saudi Arabia at the age of 63.

Rashmi Shah wins US Early Career Public Achievement Award

Kathmandu: Nepali woman Rashmi Shah has bagged Early Career Public Achievement Medal provided by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Originally from Dhanusha, NASA honored Shah with the coveted award for her contribution in the research on the wetland, snow depth, and sea-level and how their inter-change will impact the global warming and climate change. Shah had received her Ph.D degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics from Purdue University in 2014.



She is currently working as a Research Technologist at NASA Jet Propulsion and Laboratory (JPL), a federally funded research and development center.

RJP-Nepal to form electoral alliance with Socialist Party



Kathmandu: RJP-Nepal has decided to form an electoral alliance with Socialist Party Nepal for the by-elections scheduled for November 30.

A meeting of RJP Presidium held under the chairmanship of Coordinator Mahanta Thakur decided to that effect. The meeting decided to field candidates for the by-elections after holding talks with Socialist Party.

The by-elections are taking place for a total of 52 seats including a member of the House of Representatives, three provincial members, a mayor, three chiefs and a deputy chief of rural municipalities and 43 ward chairs in 37 districts on November 30.

The Election Commission of Nepal has set 10 am to 1 pm on November 7 for filing nominations of the candidacies.

PM Oli to hold talks with Modi over Kalapani

Kathmandu: Former Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers have suggested Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli to hold talks with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi to resolve existing border disputes including Kalapani. Speaking at an all-party meeting convened by PM Oli at his official residence Baluwatar evening, the former prime ministers and foreign ministers urged Oli to take diplomatic measures to resolve border disputes with the southern neighbor.

The meeting was the prime minister's effort to build a national political consensus against India's continued encroachment upon sovereign Nepali territories including Kalapani and Susta.

During meeting, Former Prime Minister Dr Baburam Bhattarai suggested the prime minister to hold talks with Indian Prime Minister Modi to resolve Kalapani dispute. He also suggested setting up a political



commission under PM Oli to hold negotiations with Indian government. "All political parties need to build a national consensus over Kalapani dispute," he said.

On the occasion, former foreign Minister Kamal Thapa said that all sides should come together the Indian border encroachment. He said that Indian paramilitary forces should immediately go back from the sovereign Nepali territory in Kalapani.

"Kalapani, Lipulek and Limpiyadhura are Nepali territories," he said.

Another former foreign minister Prakash Chandra Lohani suggested the government to take diplomatic

initiatives to safeguard country's territorial integrity based on historical facts and evidences.

At the outset, Minister for Foreign Affairs Pradeep Kumar Gyawali said that Indian move has hurt the Nepali people's sentiments.

Nepal and India during the third meeting of their Joint Commission held in 2014 had agreed to direct the Foreign Secretaries to work on the outstanding boundary issues, including Kalapani and Susta, with technical inputs from the Boundary Working Group. The Nepali side has been repeatedly expressing its desire to resolve all outstanding boundary issues including Kalapani, Lipulekh and Susta.

Tunnel works for Kathmandu-Tarai Fast Track to be started soon



Kathmandu: The Nepal Army has stated that construction works of bridges and tunnels in the Kathmandu-Tarai Fast Track will be started within the current fiscal year.

As special type of bridges and tunnels has to be constructed in the Fast Track, construction responsibility will be given to the international construction companies. However, general type of bridges will be constructed by local construction companies.

The process of selection of the international companies will be started from 13 November. The Nepal Army, which is constructing the Fast Track, is going to publish pre-

qualification notice for the international companies.

According to Bigyandev Pandey, spokesman, NA, by 1 January, 2020, the process of short-listing of the internal bidders will be started.

Short-listing will be made from those international construction companies selected from the pre-qualified bidding for the construction works. Pandey said that by mid-July, 2020 construction contract process will be completed.

However, for general type of bridges, the selection process of the construction companies will be completed by mid-March, 2020.

Out of 87 bridges, 16 special type of bridges and three tunnels have to be constructed. International construction companies will be selected for those difficult type of bridges and tunnels. The remaining bridges will be constructed by local construction companies, Pandey said.



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