

Why Upendra Yadav sticking in power?

Socialist dissatisfied with govt but not decided to walk out

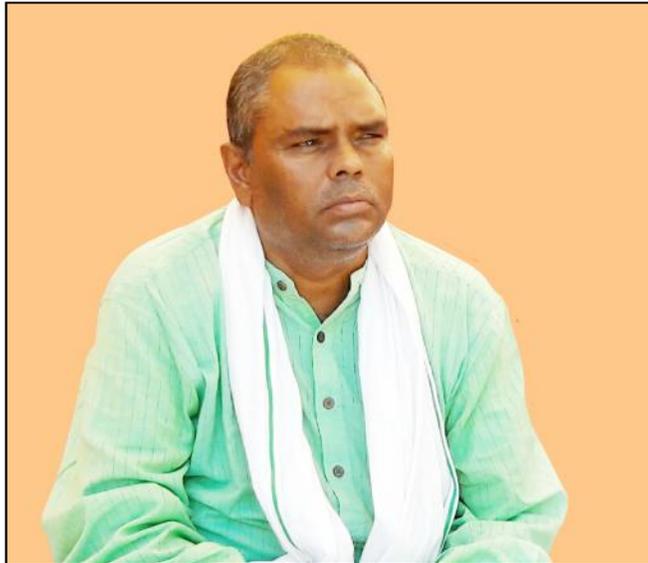
Kathmandu: By-elections in all the nine wards in Province-2 have established the dominance of Socialist Party under the leadership of Minister of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Upendra Yadav.

The Party has emerged victorious in four of nine wards while RJP and Nepal Congress have won two each. Nepal Communist Party won a ward. But Janamat Party under the leadership of CK Raut who came to mainstream politics only this year has not received competitive votes.

It was said that CK Raut's party had extended its remarkable influence in Tarai but its brightest result was just securing 223 votes in Balawa-2 in Mahottari district.

NCP, the incumbent party in federal government, has been able to win only Kalyanpur Municipality-12 in Siraha district.

CPN (UML) and CPN (Maoist Centre) had merged to become NCP but that merger did not give them enough impetus to



Many think that transferring Yadav to the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs that is considered comparatively a low-profile portfolio, amounted to humiliation of DPM Yadav.

win more seats in the Tarai. When Prime Minister KP Oli changed the portfolio of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Health and

Population Upendra Yadav without informing him, the latter was attending a health-related international programme in New Delhi. PM

Oli also sacked his party leader and State Minister for Health and Population Dr. Surendra Kumar Yadav without taking consent from the coalition partner, Samajbadi Party Nepal. The Samajbadi Party jointly co-chaired by Yadav and Dr. Baburam Bhattarai is a junior coalition partner of the current government and Yadav himself is leading the party in the government.

Many think that transferring Yadav to the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs that is considered comparatively a low-profile portfolio, amounted to humiliation of DPM Yadav. Some others claim that the move signified a red signal for Yadav to quit the government. According to some party insiders, after returning from New Delhi, DPM Yadav had also reached a conclusion to withdraw from the government but he decided to stick to it after weighing the pros and

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Pakistani girls sold as brides to China



Lahore: 629 girls and women from across Pakistan who were sold as brides to Chinese men and taken to China. The list, obtained by The Associated Press, was compiled by

Pakistani investigators determined to break up trafficking networks exploiting the country's poor and vulnerable. The list gives the most concrete figure yet for the number of women caught up in the trafficking schemes since 2018.

But since the time it was put together in June, investigators' aggressive drive against the networks has largely ground to a halt. Officials with knowledge of the investigations

say that is because of pressure from government officials fearful of hurting Pakistan's lucrative ties to Beijing.

The biggest case against traffickers has fallen apart. In October, a court in Faisalabad acquitted 31 Chinese nationals charged in connection with trafficking. Several of the women who had initially been interviewed by police refused to testify because they were either threatened or bribed into silence, according to a court official and a police investigator familiar with the

case. The two spoke on condition of anonymity because they feared retribution for speaking out.

At the same time, the government has sought to curtail investigations, putting "immense pressure" on officials from the Federal Investigation Agency pursuing trafficking networks, said Saleem Iqbal, a Christian activist who has helped parents rescue several young girls from China and prevented others from being sent there.

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Editorial

Message of by-polls

The by-elections, held to pick the representatives for the vacant posts in the House of Representatives, State Assembly and local units on Nov 30, have sent strong message to the major and minor political parties. Of the total 52 posts, the ruling Communist Party of Nepal secured 31, opposition Nepali Congress (NC) 13, Socialist Party 4, Ratsriya Janata Party (RJP) 3, Rastriya Janamorchha (left alliance) 1 and independent (CPN rebel) 1.

The outcomes are clearly the writing on the wall for the CPN. CPN lost elections to the post of Ward Chairs in Bharatapur of Chitwan and Dang which are supposed to be dominated by the party chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda and Chief Minister Shankar Pokharel respectively. The polls took place in the

Since this was the first election for the Janamat Party, the election had offered a good opportunity for political recognition. The future of CK Raut can't be predicted right now.

aftermath of the unification of erstwhile CPN-UML and CPN-Maoist Centre. The arithmetic of results of last elections was in the favour of the CPN but it was not the case during the by-polls.

Now NCP needs to work extra hard to maintain its credibility and popularity while the Nepali Congress needs to transform itself if it wants to maintain its relevance, leaders from both parties told the Post. When the 2017 elections were held, the Nepal Communist Party had not yet been formed and the UML and the Maoists both contested the elections separately, though as an alliance. These by-elections are the first polls that the newly unified Nepal Communist Party is contesting. Since the by-elections are being conducted after the unification of the two communist parties, they must own more seats. But they were unable to retain all their seats, which means that the performance of the government is not satisfactory.

Although the Nepal Communist Party and the Nepali Congress continued to dominate the elections, the smaller, regional parties managed to carve out niches for themselves. However, these parties did not manage to achieve a significant hold in the system, which, analysts say, shows that the country is increasingly heading towards a two-party system.

On the implications of the recent by-election results for the Madhes-based parties, the by-election results for the core Madhes region had heralded a message for both the parties to forge unity as soon as possible. However, for the Janamat Party, led by Dr. CK Raut, it was a new experience. Since this was the first election for the Janamat Party, the election had offered a good opportunity for political recognition. The future of CK Raut can't be predicted right now. Raut has joined politics giving up his well-established career, he will not abandon it. But if he does not get success in electoral politics, he could join another big party.

India needs to change neighborhood policy

Rajiv Ranjan

India being alienated by some neighbors is not only due to China's rise, but also because of New Delhi's handling of ties.

The emergence of China is challenging some of the existing norms of the international system. These norms found place in the system during and immediately after the Cold War. US political scientist Francis Fukuyama has been forced to modify his theory of "end of history." South Asia is adapting to the new reality. But India is looking backward.

The countries on the Indian subcontinent are looking at China not only as a facilitator of infrastructure development and economic partnership but more as a security provider and source of political stability in the region. Much of Indian strategic thinking revolves around winning back estranged neighbors without seriously pondering over the causes of the estrangement.

India being alienated by some neighbors is not only due to China's rise, but also because of New Delhi's handling of ties. Instead of engaging in counterbalancing Beijing, New Delhi must rethink its neighborhood policy, not lose the geostrategic advantage in the region and trusted partners, so as to fulfill the common aspiration of an economically prosperous and peaceful region.

In the political sphere, New Delhi must learn from Beijing the art of engaging in dialogue and partnership with the government of a country, rather than a party. A simple study of India's neighborhood policy reveals that New Delhi is more comfortable with a particular party and when the opposition forms the government in a neighboring country, India finds itself in an embarrassing situation. For example, the victory of Gotabaya Rajapaksa in Sri Lanka's presidential election on November 16 has made the Indian

establishment cautious as his party is believed to tilt toward China. In Bangladesh, India is at ease with Sheikh Hasina's Awami League while being hostile to the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party.

Entrusting all its support and confidence in one party or person is not a guarantee of their favorable treatment or policies toward New Delhi. India's military intervention to protect Maumoon Abdul Gayoom of Maldives did not oblige him from favoring China. Thereby, India must respect the mandate of the people and build a sustainable partnership with the government of a neighbor. The smaller neighbors are interested in forging a security partnership with China based on their security assessments. New Delhi needs to deeply contemplate over changed strategic thinking of neighbors to reset its policy directions and priorities. No amount of economic assistance or aid, which is mostly considered by Indian neighbors as alms, can persuade them to trust the Indian establishment.

Infrastructure development and economic connectivity are new tools in diplomacy. South Asian countries are deprived of good infrastructure and economic growth. Under the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, Beijing is helping them build new highways, railways and other infrastructure necessary for economic growth. New Delhi, too, is bargaining with Beijing to attract investments. But at the same time, New Delhi's push for the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and the Indo-Pacific Strategy are putting these small countries in dilemma to choose from multiple options.

Therefore, these countries are now taking a leaf out of India's foreign policy during the Cold War, which advocated nonalignment but hedging to maximize national interests. New Delhi must not push these countries to choose sides but let them decide what is right for their people and country.

New Delhi's dwindling commitment to South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in the backdrop of a tense relationship with Pakistan further eroded the credibility of India as a genuine and responsible actor in the region.

Thereby, rejuvenating SAARC will go a long way in restoring faith and confidence in the regional leadership of India.

People-to-people exchanges as well as cultural and geographical proximity have their own disadvantages. Speaking the same language quickly disseminates hate messages across the border, instilling and deepening existing hatred. Therefore, political leaders and media must desist from provocative statements. In case of China-India tensions, some messages are lost because of the language barrier. Translations have a minimal impact unless they are not issued in a common language, English.

In a nutshell, India's neighborhood policy should be independent of any power game in the region to win over its neighbors but to formulate a common strategy under SAARC to bring shared prosperity in the region.

(The author is executive director at Center for South Asian Studies, Institute of Global Studies, Shanghai University)

No practice of federalism in RJP-Nepal

• **How do you see the outcome of the by-elections?**

➤ From Narayangarh to the West, where we were not participated in the local elections, we won in the by-elections. In this way, the by-elections have been fruitful for us.

• **But in many places even in Province 2, the RJP-Nepal lost many seats, why?**

➤ In particular, we have been fighting for the rights of the deprived communities. Since BS 2047, sometime the result of election in favor while sometime it is in against. Losing some seats does not mean going back from the battlefield.

• **In the last election your party boycotted the election in Province 5. But this time your party has won in the election of ward chief of Shivraj Rural Municipality. This result contradicts the allegation that RJP-Nepal is confined to Province 2?**

are suffering the consequences. What we cannot deny is true.

• **The date of the general convention that RJP-Nepal has set in the past has passed, again the date of the general convention is not fixed but it was that preparations are underway. What's the preparation?**

➤ The general convention is being prepared in a very slow pace. Even I felt that presidium members are also not more active. This has negatively impacted the party. We also felt that the party neglected in the West and the Far West. Therefore, we are planning to move forward by organizing a separate delegation meeting from Nawalparasi to Kanchanpur. Leaders of the RJP in this area are leading the movement, which also warms the chairpersonship and leads the fight for power.

• **Is the leadership**

now. But to address the interests of the people and the country, the general convention is a necessity now.

• **You are representing from Kapilvastu district, what is the preparation for the general convention of RJP-Nepal in Kapilvastu?**

➤ The way our party operates has made it difficult for people to work. We ignore the leader who thinks, that his idea of keeping him out of the party as the base is weak, and his idea of keeping the leader of the party strong inside the party, does not match with the party. When given the opportunity, they attack the views of the party, which is why I have found it necessary to work in the general cadre. RJP is not a party to the ideology of joining the party to get the opportunity. It is a party that moves forward by building strong



Narsingh Chaudhary
Senior Deputy Chairperson,
RJP-Nepal

constitution was drafted from the Constituent Assembly. The party writes the federalism in its statute but it does not create a federal structure within the party. In this way, our words and actions seem to be different, which is causing us harm.

• **RJP-Nepal is known as the federalist party but do you know that the party cannot practice federalism?**

➤ That's what I'm saying. We talk about inclusiveness, federalism, reservation, so let's not forget to look at the internal practice within our party while saying that this should happen in different bodies of states. While raising the issue of federalism and inclusion within our party, geographical inclusion should be focused not only on racial inclusion.

• **The issue of unity between RJP-Nepal and Socialist Party has been going on for a long time; informal talks are also taking place. What is the process of unity? What first party unity or the general convention?**

➤ There should be unity and it is also people's voice. As per

agreement both parties are running government jointly in Province 2. Unity is also an essential requirement for building an alternative political power in the country. It is a matter of urgency that both should be done.

• **While India releasing a new map, it is being disputed that Nepal's territory is covered. There is no very clear statement of RJP-Nepal, what is the party's view on this?**

➤ The government did not take our opinion on that matter. The common countryman wants to protect his territory. If there is a situation of losing our land, the party decides how to proceed. This Kalapani, Lipulek is a controversy for a long time, since this topic has been raised from time to time for some reason, so I don't think there is any truth to it.

• **How do you see the relationship between Nepal and India in the present?**

➤ In such a situation, as India is growing in the world, Nepal should be able to take advantage by improving relations with India. There is a need for a change in the perception to see India.

-RJP-Nepal has not been fully united yet.

-The general convention is being prepared in a very slow pace.

-The presidium members are also not more active for general convention.

-The rotational system harms the party.

-Unity is also an essential requirement for building an alternative political power in the country.

-Nepal should be able to take advantage by improving relations with India.

➤ We have been able to make our presence felt when we have the opportunity. People also use their vote when they have the opportunity. The demarcation of the provinces, along with the federalism in the constitution, implies that there is presence of RJP only in Province 2. Our presence in Province 1 and 5 was weakened due to the harassment in demarcation. The time has come in these provinces to adopt a new strategy of struggle. Our demands could not be addressed through the old style.

• **Is this the weakness of party's presidium member?**

➤ RJP-Nepal has not been fully united yet. We

line especially neglecting the general assembly?

➤ Once there was a program to hold elections from the lower level of the party to the upper level. When the issue of unification with the Socialist Party came forward, the issue of general convention within this party did not take priority. Therefore, there is a need to move forward by discussing policy-level.

• **Did the presidium members try to continue the rotational system?**

➤ The ideology of the party is the same. While we have personal interests, the rotational system has continued till

organizations with ideas in mind.

• **Can't RJP to hold general convention within this year?**

➤ It is doubtful that the preparations, as it is now, will be a suitable for general convention. We have to create pressure on presidium member. Inadequate preparation would not make it possible to go to the convention. We are convinced that the party will make a big leap if it goes for the convention and removes this rotational system and to adopt a single leadership. Since BS 2047 we have been thinking that we should take this country into federal structure. Accordingly, the

Why Upendra ...

cons of it.

Contrary to expectations of stepping down from the government, the meeting announced a delegation team to hold talks with the government. Yadav expressed dissatisfaction with Cabinet reshuffle during his absence but he did not agree with many office-bearers to quit the government. When most of the office bearers said that Samajwadi Party has to quit the government with immediate effects Yadav flared up, "RJP will join the government immediately after we part ways. What will we do then?" Uneasy silence descended in

the meeting afterwards.

Yadav had asked Co-Chairman Baburam Bhattarai and some other leaders in Samajwadi Party to quit the government because the PM had reshuffled the Cabinet without consulting him first. But he took a U-turn all of a sudden. When asked about this volte-face one Socialist Party leader said, "He is utterly dissatisfied with the government but he said that more deliberation is required before quitting the government."

Source says that Yadav sees the possibility of RJP joining the government once Socialist Party leaves the government. He also fears that NCP can build a new government in

coalition with RJP in Province 2 bypassing Socialist Party. The federal government can also raise the specter of Gaur massacre after Socialist Party quits the government. Yadav is implicated in that massacre. Some days ago Minister of Defence Ishwar Pokharel had told the reporters at Biratnagar Airport that investigation on Gaur massacre can be reopened. On March 21, 2007 the then Madheshi Janaadhikar Forum and the then CPN (Maoist) had tried to organize separate programmes on a single stage. This caused dispute between the parties and Forum activists attacked Maoists. Twenty-seven Maoists were killed on the spot while one died during treatment.

Many people were injured.

Yadav was the head of Forum at that time. He is under constant fear of being convicted of the massacre.

Five days after the Cabinet reshuffle Yadav went to the new ministry. Assuming his duties in the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Yadav said that the PM does not need to consult with anyone to reassign ministries.

Talking with reporters at the time of taking up the post he said, "There is no need of consultation. It's a simple matter and PM has that power. The party has not decided to walk out of the government over this trifle."

Pakistani girls...

"Some (FIA officials) were even transferred," Iqbal said in an interview. "When we talk to Pakistani rulers, they don't pay any attention." Asked about the complaints, Pakistan's interior and foreign ministries refused to comment. Several senior officials familiar with the events said investigations into trafficking have slowed, the investigators are frustrated, and Pakistani media have been pushed to curb their reporting on trafficking. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they feared reprisals.

"No one is doing anything to help these girls," one of the officials said. "The whole racket is continuing, and it is growing. Why? Because they know they can get away with it. The authorities won't follow through, everyone is being pressured to not investigate. Trafficking is increasing now." He said he was speaking out "because I have to live with myself. Where is our humanity?"

China's Foreign Ministry said it was unaware of the list. "The two governments of China and Pakistan support the formation of happy families between their people on a voluntary basis in keeping with laws and regulations, while at the same time having zero tolerance for and resolutely fighting against any person engaging in illegal cross-border marriage behavior," the ministry said in a statement faxed Monday to AP's Beijing bureau.

An AP investigation earlier this year revealed how Pakistan's Christian minority has become a new target of brokers who pay impoverished parents to marry off their daughters, some of them teenagers, to Chinese husbands who return with them to their homeland. Many of the brides are then isolated and abused or forced

into prostitution in China, often contacting home and pleading to be brought back. The AP spoke to police and court officials and more than a dozen brides — some of whom made it back to Pakistan, others who remained trapped in China — as well as remorseful parents, neighbors, relatives and human rights workers.

Christians are targeted because they are one of the poorest communities in Muslim-majority Pakistan. The trafficking rings are made up of Chinese and Pakistani middlemen and include Christian ministers, mostly from small evangelical churches, who get bribes to urge their flock to sell their daughters. Investigators have also turned up at least one Muslim cleric running a marriage bureau from his madrassa, or religious school. Investigators put together the list of 629 women from Pakistan's integrated border management system, which digitally records travel documents at the country's airports. The information includes the brides' national identity numbers, their Chinese husbands' names and the dates of their marriages.

All but a handful of the marriages took place in 2018 and up to April 2019. One of the senior officials said it was believed all 629 were sold to grooms by their families. It is not known how many more women and girls were trafficked since the list was put together. But the official said, "the lucrative trade continues." He spoke to the AP in an interview conducted hundreds of kilometers from his place of work to protect his identity. "The Chinese and Pakistani brokers make between 4 million and 10 million rupees (\$25,000 and \$65,000) from the groom, but only about 200,000 rupees (\$1,500), is given to the family," he said.

The official, with years of experience

studying human trafficking in Pakistan, said many of the women who spoke to investigators told of forced fertility treatments, physical and sexual abuse and, in some cases, forced prostitution. Although no evidence has emerged, at least one investigation report contains allegations of organs being harvested from some of the women sent to China.

In September, Pakistan's investigation agency sent a report it labeled "fake Chinese marriages cases" to Prime Minister Imran Khan. The report, a copy of which was attained by the AP, provided details of cases registered against 52 Chinese nationals and 20 of their Pakistani associates in two cities in eastern Punjab province — Faisalabad, Lahore — as well as in the capital Islamabad. The Chinese suspects included the 31 later acquitted in court.

The report said police discovered two illegal marriage bureaus in Lahore, including one operated from an Islamic center and madrassa — the first known report of poor Muslims also being targeted by brokers. The Muslim cleric involved fled police.

After the acquittals, there are other cases before the courts involving arrested Pakistani and at least another 21 Chinese suspects, according to the report sent to the prime minister in September. But the Chinese defendants in the cases were all granted bail and left the country, say activists and a court official. Activists and human rights workers say Pakistan has sought to keep the trafficking of brides quiet so as not to jeopardise Pakistan's increasingly close economic relationship with China.

China has been a steadfast ally of Pakistan for decades, particularly in its testy relationship with India. China has provided Islamabad with military assistance, including pre-tested nuclear devices and nuclear-capable

missiles.

Today, Pakistan is receiving massive aid under China's Belt and Road Initiative, a global endeavor aimed at reconstituting the Silk Road and linking China to all corners of Asia. Under the \$75 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project, Beijing has promised Islamabad a sprawling package of infrastructure development, from road construction and power plants to agriculture.

The demand for foreign brides in China is rooted in that country's population, where there are roughly 34 million more men than women — a result of the one-child policy that ended in 2015 after 35 years, along with an overwhelming preference for boys that led to abortions of girl children and female infanticide.

A report released this month by Human Rights Watch, documenting trafficking in brides from Myanmar to China, said the practice is spreading. It said Pakistan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, North Korea and Vietnam have "all become source countries for a brutal business."

"One of the things that is very striking about this issue is how fast the list is growing of countries that are known to be source countries in the bride trafficking business," Heather Barr, the HRW report's author, told AP. Omar Warriach, Amnesty International's campaigns director for South Asia, said Pakistan "must not let its close relationship with China become a reason to turn a blind eye to human rights abuses against its own citizens" — either in abuses of women sold as brides or separation of Pakistani women from husbands from China's Muslim Uighur population sent to "re-education camps" to turn them away from Islam.

"It is horrifying that women are being treated this way without any concern being shown by the authorities in either country. And it's shocking that it's happening on this scale," he said.

India provides Anti-Money Laundering Training to 21 Nepali officers

Kathmandu: The third group of 21 officers of the Government of Nepal has started their 6-day training on 'Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism' at the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics (NACIN), Faridabad on 2 December 2019.

This is a special tailor-made course designed at the request of the Government of Nepal for a total of 60 officers. It is an example of the Government of India's commitment to enhance the capacities of various agencies of the Government of Nepal.



The course is fully supported by the Government of India under the Ministry of External Affairs' Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation

(ITEC) Program. The training will enhance the capabilities of participating officers to effectively deal with the matters pertaining to Anti-Money

Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism.

According to a press release issued Embassy of India Kathmandu, the two batches of Nepali officers had already successfully completed their training modules in India. The NACIN is a premier training institute of Government of India in the field of financial investigations and anti-money laundering matters with state-of-the-art learning facilities.

It is an accredited Regional Training Centre of World Customs Organisation for the Asia/Pacific Region and also works in collaboration with other international organizations like UNEP, UNODC, SASEC, etc.

Final results of by-election



Kathmandu: The entire results of the November 30 by-election for the House of Representatives (HoR) member, State Assembly (SA) members and local representatives have been declared. The election was held for 52 posts at the three-levels and the results gave an inclusive colour, the Election Commission said. The major ruling Nepal Communist Party (NCP) has secured its victory in 30 seats while the Nepali Congress (NC) secured 13 seats followed by four seats of the Socialist Party and three by Rastriya Janata Party Nepal (RJPN). One independent candidate also clinched a victory in the by-election.

The NCP wins one HoR seat, one SA seat, three rural municipality chair seats, one vice chair and 24 ward

chairs.

The NC won the one SA seat, the sub-metropolis mayoral post and 11 ward chairs.

The Socialist Party candidates secured three ward chair posts and the RJPN enjoyed its victory in three ward chair posts.

Rastriya Janamorchha Party won the SA election in Baglung with the support of NCP while the independent candidate secured the ward chair post in Pyuthan.

The NCP repeats its win in the Kaski constituency-2 the NC added one more SA seat from Bhaktapur- 1(a) and the mayoral post from Dharan sub-metropolis to its name.

The by-election brought seven women, seven people from the Madhesi community, 18 from indigenous nationalities and one from the minority community.

Prabhu Sah demands Gadhimai Temple be included in list of WHS

Kathmandu: NCP Province 2 Committee Chief Prabhu Sah on Tuesday demanded that Bara-based Gadhimai Temple should be included in the list of the UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS).

Talking to journalists in the capital, he urged the government to forward a process to list the Gadhimai area in the WHS list as the temple has drawn the world attention with thousands of tourists thronging the religious site.

"We all know that the Gadhimai Temple is one of the historic sites with religious importance. Its historical mythology has drawn the world's attention during the ongoing mega religious fair. It will help expand Madhes's glory if it is listed in the WHS," he said.

Stating that the tourism sector has made an important contribution to the country's economic progress, Sah said there was possibility of attracting more tourists in Madhes by promoting its multi-



culture, multi-tradition and historic treasure.

"If we list Gadhimai in WHS, a foundation to attract more tourists will be laid," he said. He also urged the government to list the Janaki Temple of Janakpur in the WHS as well. He showed his disappointment no temple was listed in the WHS from the Province 2.

Operation of Dhalkebar substation likely from January

Kathmandu: A 400/200-kVA high-voltage Dhalkebar substation is scheduled to start operations from January.

Once the substation comes into operation, it will be able to transmit cross-border electricity as well as strengthen the domestic distribution system. The gas insulated substation (GIS) is the only substation that is being built with the sole investment of the government. GIS is a high voltage substation in which the major structures are contained in a sealed environment with sulphur hexafluoride gas as the insulating medium.

According to Kul Man Ghising, managing director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), after the completion of the substation, it will be able to export and import up to 1,000 megawatts of electricity to and from India.

As per him, this substation will be the sole hub of the country's East-West electricity transmission and will be the biggest ever substation to carry out power trade with India. "The substation will help to transmit generated electricity from 456-megawatt Upper Tamakoshi and other major hydropower projects that are connected to the New-Khimti Substation."

Major parties eyeing for Speaker's post

Kathmandu: Four political parties representing at the Federal House of Representatives have been eyeing for the post of the Speaker.

The post has remained vacant after former Speaker Krishna Bahadur Mahara tendered his resignation following a sexual harassment allegation against him.

He had quit the post after he was accused of sexually abusing a staff of the Parliament Secretariat. Later he was arrested and now doing his time in Dillibazaar prison. Interestingly, the ruling parties- Nepal Communist Party (NPC) and Samajwadi Party- are separately claiming the post. Opposition parties- Nepali Congress (NC) and Rastriya Janata Party Nepal (RJPN) have also their claim for the post.

Speaking at an interaction organised by the Reporters Club on Thursday, NCP Parliamentary Party chief whip Dev Prasad Gurung said his party had claimed for the



Speaker's post on the basis of structure and composition of the political parties.

He, however, said no discussion was held in the NCP Parliamentary Party about the party candidate for the Speaker. "But, our top leaders have held informal talks on the issue," Gurung said.

Gurung said his party would respect the constitutional provision of electing the Speaker and Deputy Speaker from two separate political parties.

He underlined the urgency of nominating the Speaker as the Constitution did not envisage

vacant post of the Speaker.

Gurung underlined the need for summoning the Parliament session at the earliest, and said the Houses would be summoned after Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's discharge from the Hospital. He said, "The PM will call a Cabinet meeting to recommend the President to summon the winter House session."

Ruling Samajwadi Party parliamentary party chief whip Uma Shankar Aragriya said his party had their claim for the Speaker.

"The speaker should be elected

from the Madhesi and Aadiwasi communities. The post should be offered to our party," he said.

He also stressed the need for summoning the parliament session.

Nabindra Raj Joshi, leader of the Nepali Congress, said his party would claim the Speaker's post. "As the main opposition party, we have our claim for the post," he said.

Joshi said the ruling NCP was violating the Constitution by electing the Speaker and Deputy Speaker from the same party though the Constitution has clearly provisioned that the Speaker and Deputy Speaker should be from two different parties.

He said the government was not serious to summon the House session.

RJP leader Laxman Lal Karna also said the speaker should be elected by garnering consensus, stating that his party had also its claim for the post.

He also said that the House session should be called at the earliest.

'By-elections results increased confidence'



Kathmandu: The main opposition Nepali Congress (NC) has said that the results of the recently held by-election have increased the party's organizational self-confidence and encouraged it to move ahead with goals of winning the next elections. Voters have endorsed the NC as a responsible and decent opposition by giving it more votes comparatively despite many upheavals, said NC's spokesperson Bishwo Prakash Sharma at a press conference organized here at NC's central office.

"We have got a message from the by-poll that there is a

need to review our weak performance in some polling locations. The difference in the number of votes in the recently held by-poll between the NC and ruling Nepal Communist Party has decreased as compared to the previous election," he said.

In another context, he said the people's mandate through the by-election has given a message that the incumbent government should correct itself. He referred to their "appeal" to the

voters that their votes could help correct the government although the by-election was not meant to form or change a government. The NC thanked all voters who participated in the by-election and voted for the NC and those who won the by-poll. It also thanked employees of the Election Commission, civil servants, security personnel and media-persons for their contribution to the by-election.

NC to review by-poll in CWC

Kathmandu: The Nepali Congress has scheduled its Central Working Committee meeting for December 12.

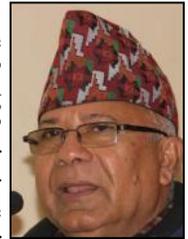
NC chief secretary Krishna Prasad Paudel informed that the agendas of the meeting were review of the recently held by-election, internal organisation strength and current political affairs.

Paudel said the meeting was called at the party central office Sanepa of Lalitpur at 1.00 PM. NC office-bearers, Central Working Committee members and invitee members were invited.

NC president Sher Bahadur Deuba was preparing to form the party departments and ad-hoc committees of the sister organisations. Deuba is likely to forward these issues in the meeting. He was trying to form 42 departments breaching the party statute's provision of 28 departments.

Nepal special envoy to resolve border dispute

Kathmandu: Prime Minister KP Oli is mulling to send NCP senior leader and former Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal as his special envoy to India to resolve the border disputed sparked by the latest political map published by India on November 2. Nepal is making preparations to leave for the southern neighbor as a special emissary of Prime Minister KP Oli. Former Prime Minister Nepal, at the NCP secretariat meeting, said Prime Minister Oli proposed him to this effect. The date will be fixed once the Nepal government receives response from India, Annapurna daily reported. It has not been finalized as India has not responded to the diplomatic note forwarded by the Government of Nepal earlier.



NEA aims to cutback electricity loss to 10.97 percent in Province 2

Janakpur: With an aim to lessen electricity loss to 10.97 percent in Province 2, Nepal Electricity Authority and heads of distribution centers of Province 2 signed a performance agreement. Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority Kul Man Ghising signed the performance agreement with head of Province 2 Manoj Kumar Singh and Deputy Executive Director Harraj Neupane signed performance agreement with other heads of distribution centers in presence of MD Ghising.

During the program MD Ghising said that NEA is planning to hundred percent electrification in province 2 increasing per person electricity consumption 700 unit, He also said that NEA is working to promote 3 phase meter to increase individual consumption of electricity. He has made it clear that NEA's



responsibility is to work to implement government's announcement to increase per individual electricity consumption to 700 units. MD Ghising also directed heads of distribution centers to work not to exceed the load of transformer 50 percent improving the distribution centers. MD Ghising also urged heads of distribution center to perform as per the agreement.

During the program, heads of distribution centers complained that electricity

thefts have been receiving political patronage. They said that politicians have been backing the theft and defending whenever centers take actions.

According to NEA, the performance will be evaluated in every four months with concerned heads of the centers.

Nepal Electricity Authority has targeted to reduce electricity loss to 10.97 form current loss of 19.61 percent. There 23 distribution centers in 8 districts of Province 2.

The distribution centers formerly under Janakpur like Solukhumbu,

Khotang, Okhaldhunga, Udayapur and Sindhuli are rehabilitated in concerned provinces. Similarly, the distributions center of Parsa, Bara and Rautahat district which were previously under Hetauda are now rehabilitated under Province 2. Under the Province 2, there are 824,000 consumers. The electricity loss in Province 2 was 47 percent in 2016 and it was reduced to 23 percent last year. Province 2 contributes 23 percent of Nepal Electricity's total income.

Under the agreement, NEA has target to reduce electrify loss of Yadukaha Distribution center from 47.46 to 25 percent. Similarly, performance agreement has signed to reduce electricity loss of Kalaiya from 44.70 to 25 percent. There is target to reduce 44.18 to 19.77 percent in Siraha.

Nepal Electricity has set a target to reduce the electricity to 8.50 percent. Currently electricity loss is 11.28 percent.

Nepal-India joint military exercise begins in Rupandehi



Kathmandu: A Joint Military Exercise between Nepal and India commenced at the Nepal Army Battle School in Rupandehi with an aim to enhance interoperability at military level in jungle warfare, anti-terrorism combat as well as disaster response activities according to Indian Defense Ministry. This is the 14th edition of joint military exercise Surya Kiran which is conducted alternatively in India and Nepal. Both armies will share their experiences in countering such situations and also refined the drill and procedures for joint operations in jungle, mountainous terrain will be conducted.

The aim of the exercise is to conduct a battalion level combined training between the Nepalese and the Indian Army with a scope to enhance interoperability at military level in jungle warfare, anti-terrorism combat, humanitarian assistance as well as disaster relief operations, medial, environmental and aviation related activities.

Kendriya Vidyalaya celebrates 46th annual day

Kathmandu: Ambassador of India to Nepal Manjeev Singh Puri said that he was greatly impressed with the progress of the Vidyalaya on all fronts.

Addressing 46th annual day of, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Embassy of India Kathmandu, ambassador Puri highlighted the important contribution made by Vidyalaya.

As a chief guest of the program, ambassador Puri also felicitated the students and teachers for excellence in scholastic and co-scholastic spheres. He congratulated KV KTM team for their concerted efforts which manifested in the vidyalaya reaching unprecedented heights as a centre of quality education as well as its pivotal role in fostering and reinforcing Indo - Nepal Ties.

A cultural event, organized at Nepal Academy Hall, Kamaladi, Kathmandu, was graced by ambassador Puri. Lighting of the Ceremonial Lamp marked the auspicious beginning to the colorful extravaganza. The Principal In-Charge expressed deep gratitude to the Chief Guest



and all other guests who envisaged and steered the vidyalaya on the path of spectacular success.

The colorful program comprised of some scintillating dance performances, vocal recitals, educative skit and instrumental music played by the School Band..

According to a press release issued by Kendriya Vidyalaya, to conclude the cultural bonanza, a power-packed Rangilo Dance was performed by the students which set the stage ablaze. A Vote of Thanks was proposed to bring an official end to the program followed by Nepali and Indian National Anthem sung in unison.

No need to internationalize Kalapani issue: Prachanda



Dhangadi: Nepal Communist Party (NCP) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' has spoken for the need to resolve the border issues with India including Kalapani through political and diplomatic means.

At a press conference organized the Press Organization, Nepal, leader Dahal clarified that he had not made any statement that meant 'internationalization' of Kalapani related issue. Instead, he had meant that if the 'issue' was internationalized, it would be further complicated.

Stating that the government of Nepal had already sent the Indian government a letter concerning the same issue as per the suggestions furnished by the all-party meeting, Dahal shared that the Indian side had not responded on the same matter yet.

Furthermore, the former Prime Minister said that the

government of Nepal had already made its statement clear about Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura and reiterated, "Limpiyadhura is the main source of Mahakali River. Mahakali is a border river between Nepal and India and there is no doubt about it."

On a different note, he explained that his impending China visit was put off for the time being since it was 'inappropriate' for him, also the chairperson of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP), taking a foreign tour when another chairperson was taken ill.

Dahal and Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli are the

Chairpersons of the NCP. The latter was today afternoon discharged from the Maharajgunj-based Manmohan Cardiothoracic Vascular and Transplant Centre, Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital after being admitted there on November 26.

Dahal, talking to the media persons, viewed that in the wake of declaration of federal democratic republic and three-tier election, his party upheld the principle which focused on prosperity and advancement of the people that were overlooked by the State in the past.

It is expected that the government's performance would scale up following the reshuffling of the cabinet.

Preparation starts for NA elections

Kathmandu: After holding the by-elections successful, the Election Commission (EC) is gearing up to hold election of the National Assembly (NA), the upper house of the bicameral federal parliament, which will soon be bidding farewell to one third of its members in accordance with the constitutional provision. The two-year tenure of 19 lawmakers of the 59-member strong NA is expiring on March 3. The existing laws mandate election of the upper house members 35 days before the expiry of the tenure of serving members. Eighteen of the vacant seats would be filled up through election, while one member would be appointed by the president upon the recommendation of the cabinet. The EC has already received request from the federal parliament to start preparation for elections. Last week, the EC held an internal meeting to review the by-elections, and to



discuss about making necessary arrangements for the NA election. EC officials said that the election body is preparing to discuss with political parties.

"Internal preparations are underway. The date, however, would be decided after consultation with the government," said Election Commissioner Ishowri Paudel. Major political parties are also

quietly holding internal negotiations to decide the candidates for the upper house. Last month, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli had offered Nepal Communist Party senior leader Bamdev Gautam to be NA member, signaling his possible induction in the cabinet.

PM Oli is also consulting with party leaders over possible replacement for Finance

Minister Yuba Raj Khatiwada who will also be stepping down after expiry of his two-year tenure. If Oli decides to retain him in the cabinet, Khatiwada will have to be reelected to the NA.

Other NA lawmakers facing the end of their two-year tenure include Sarita Prasain, Surendra Raj Pandey, Haricharan Siwakoti, Ramprit Paswan, Binda Devi Ale, Brishesh Chandra Lal, Badri Prasad Pandey, Balaram Baskota, Mina Buda, Mukta Kumari Yadav, Youtol Tamang, Ramesh Prasad Yadav, Durga Prasad Upadhyay, Dhan Kumari Khatiwada, Kamala Kumari Ale, Kali Bahadur Malla and Khem Raj Nepal. Their tenure was decided through lucky draw. As per Article 86 (3) of the constitution, only one third (ie 20) of NA members get to serve full term of six years. The remaining one third (20) NA members will be stepping down upon completion of their tenure in four years.

Nepal-India agree to extend tenure of Pancheshwar 'team of experts'

Kathmandu: High-level officials from Nepal and India have agreed to extend the tenure of the team of experts of the Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project (PMP) by one year.

A meeting of the Nepali and Indian officials of Pancheshwar Development Authority (PDA), the project developer, which was held in New Delhi last week (November 27 and 28), has extended its tenure to December 2020. Dinesh Kumar Ghimire, secretary at

the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, who had led the Nepali delegation, informed that the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga

Rejuvenation (MoWRRDGR) of India has agreed to extend the deadline and finalise the detailed project report (DPR) of the project as soon as possible.

On May 9, during the meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narendra

Modi, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli had raised concerns regarding the development of the project.

According to Ghimire, finalising the DPR of the multipurpose project along with downstream benefits and further geological investigations were also discussed during the meeting. The DPR of the project has already been prepared by Water and Power Consultancy Services (WAPCOS) Ltd, an undertaking of the Indian

government. But, both the governments are yet to endorse it.

The Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project was conceived under the Mahakali Treaty between Nepal and India in 1996. Apart from generating electricity, the project will provide irrigation facility to 0.13 million hectares of land in Nepal and 0.24 million hectares of land in India, in addition to other incidental benefits, including flood protection.