

Nepal border agreement with China sparks fears among Tibetans

Kathmandu: A treaty signed by China and Nepal in October 2019 that manages border controls between the two countries poses significant threats to Tibetans fleeing their homeland to escape Chinese rule, Tibetan advocacy groups and other sources say.

The agreement on a Border Management System, signed during Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit last year to Nepal, commits both countries to hand back, within seven days of being detained, persons found crossing the border illegally, the Washington-based International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) said in a report this week.

"This could result in Tibetans who try to escape to freedom being sent back to the



repressive rule of the Chinese Communist Party," ICT said. Meanwhile, a Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance on Criminal Matters signed in October may expose Tibetans living in Nepal to danger for exercising their freedoms, already sharply restricted in Nepal, to express their distinct cultural identity or voice political views opposed by China, ICT

said. "Given China's influence on the less-developed Nepal and the obvious power imbalance between the two countries, there are worries that Nepal may disregard legal protections for Tibetans while responding to Chinese requests under this treaty," the rights group said. Details of the two agreements were recently brought to light when Nepal's foreign minister

Pradeep Gyawali offered written clarifications on their provisions to members of the country's parliament, ICT said.

Meanwhile, many fear that China and Nepal, which shares a long border with Tibet, may soon sign a treaty on extradition, further endangering Tibetans currently living in Nepal, sources say.

"We are very worried' Speaking to RFA's Tibetan Service, Kapil Shrestha—a human rights activist and political science professor at Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu—said that Nepal has been "tremendously influenced by Chinese pressure and policies" in recent years.

"We are very

worried," Shrestha said. "Nepal's government has enacted very undemocratic and draconian measures in curbing Nepal's media and human rights in general," he said, adding that the possible extradition of "so-called offenders" from Nepal to China would target the Tibetan community in particular.

"Although the general agreements may not cite an extradition clause, if we look at all of the agreements' provisions in detail, there are reasons for concern," added Nepalese social and political activist Arun Subedi, speaking to RFA.

Also speaking to RFA, Gajendra Prasad—the Nepalese journalist who broke the story of the

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Province 2 govt unveils achievements of 2 yrs

Janakpurdhham: Province 2 Chief Minister Lalbabu Raut claimed that the province government has obtained success in safeguarding federal system.

The chief minister said this at a press conference organized to share government's achievements in the first two years since its formation. He further asserted whether or not the federalism would get success in Nepal was directly associated to the



success and failure of province-2. "The province government is successful in protecting federal system despite

several problems, non-cooperation and crisis", he noted. Chief Minister Raut informed that the province assembly has so far endorsed 23 laws including

Province Police Act and Public Service Commission while 80 laws are in preparation stage and 22 laws are under consideration in the Legislative Committee.

The provincial government has further emphasized on developing new structures and renovating available structures, he shared. The province civil service bill has been already developed and

is under consideration in province assembly and 'Educate daughters; save daughters' campaign has gained popularity with results in the areas of women empowerment and social reforms, he added.

Under the campaign, bicycles have been so far handed to 14,000 girl students and a process has been initiated to distribute bicycles to additional 14,000, he informed. The chief

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Editorial

Corona havoc in Nepal

As the number of coronaviruses identified in the Chinese mainland and other parts of the world is rising, Nepal's health-care system is facing a burden to cope. Let's read about CoronaVirus in Nepal, the full history and update news till today's date. Worldwide, the number of Novel coronavirus cases has surpassed that of the similar Sars epidemic which spread to over two dozen countries in 2003. But the current virus' mortality rate is much lower, meaning it isn't as dangerous as that. Well, we (Nepal) are not facing any corona patients or treatments that may feel worry for others to breathe. But lacking tourists from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan is a major issue.

Even flights from such places are denied in taking passengers from one place to another. Nearly, 20 international flights are waiting for order to take off in such countries which have more corona effects, mostly in China, Hong Kong, Singapore etc. When we talk about Nepal and coronavirus, then only one case was found but soon quarantined. And no death issue or cases are there to viral havoc of the Novel Coronavirus in Nepal. We are ready to

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Let's continue the trekking adventure and other exciting adventures in Nepal in the best season which is February and March. All the fairs are still the same, no hike in fares for anyone. Let's call us on your service by booking the small and big tour packages with your families to explore Nepal and its natural beauties.

The World Health Organization has announced a global health emergency following the outbreak of deadly coronavirus. At a time when there is a growing concern that Nepal is ill prepared to spot and control the disease, bringing back more than 200 Chinese students from Nepal would heighten the health risk to returners and the general population. Nepal lacks sufficient infrastructure and resources to combat the virus, if it reaches Nepal it can cause an epidemic. Nepal lacks a proper digital thermometer except in TIA. Likewise, Nepal lacks sufficient guards for physicians, medical staff and others involved in the treatment of coronavirus. The hospitals unprepared for treatment of patients with coronavirus.

Why are Sindhis angry with Imran Khan?

Gas and power crises are not the only contentious issue which is enraging the province. There have been wide-spread protests against the state agencies for abducting nationalist leaders and activists in the past several months.

Millions of people, living in Pakistan's second largest province, Sindh, are angry with the Imran Khan government over severe gas and power shortages which has disrupted industries and transportation, forcing workers to stay at home and homes to go without cooking gas. Protest rallies were taken out in major cities of the province demanding an immediate end to the squeeze in gas supplies imposed by the federal government.

The public uproar has been so serious that Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah early this month wrote a protest letter to Prime Minister Imran Khan pointing out that not only were the people of Sindh overcharged for the gas, they were being denied their constitutional share of the gas supply.

The Sindh Minister for Human Settlements and Special Development Ghulam Murtaza Baloch came out even more scathingly against the federal government for its "wrong policies and incompetency". He said due to unbearable gas shortage and load-shedding, industries were forced to shut down and investors were backing out from investing in the province. The result, he pointed out, has been persistent poverty and unemployment, forcing many to commit suicides. Gas and power crises are not the only contentious issue which is enraging the province. There have been wide-spread protests against the state agencies for

abducting nationalist leaders and activists in the past several months. For the past few years, the state agencies, especially the ones controlled by the military, have been coming down heavily on groups and people protesting against the government's patently bias treatment of Sindhi demands for equitable share in resources and justice. In last December, rallies were taken out in many parts of Sindh over the disappearance of Sindhi nationalist leaders.

According to the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, 1,577 cases were registered in Sindh till September 2019. Most of the disappeared belong to political parties, religious and human rights groups. Early last year, protests had broken out in Sindh over the federal government's proposal to take over the administration of Karachi, citing failing infrastructure and law and order situation. All these protests are signs of growing dissent within Sindh against the federal government. A former diplomat, M Alam Brohi, writing in the Daily Times on January 15 this year, in fact put it more bluntly: Sindh has been at loggerheads with the Federation since the inception of the country. In his detailed article, he pointed out that when it came to sharing of water or other resources, Sindh always lost to Punjab because of its "sheer power and

force in the federal bureaucracy and the security establishment". He said the province also lost out in its share of jobs in the federal ministries, corporations, gas and oil resources and federally-funded projects. On top of it, he said, "the nationalist Sindhis protesting instances of such injustice have been facing the brunt of the coercive power of the state." The diplomat pointed out that the grievances of Sindh were ignored by successive governments. The differences between the government of Sindh and the Imran Khan government have been even more pronounced, challenging the federal structure of the country, he wrote. This challenge has become real with the gas and power crisis haunting Sindh. Sindh is the largest producer of natural gas in the country and seeks an equitable share in the supplies as well as a fair price. The Chief Minister, in his letter to the Prime Minister, pointed out that Sindh currently received on an average 900-1000 mmcf of natural gas against its constitutional right of 2500-2600 mmcf. He said "it defied even common sense that the people of Sindh were deprived of its constitutional share of 2600 mmcf at Rs520.54 per MMBTU and were being asked to buy it at Rs1,690 per MMBTU.

The RJP should not repeat the mistakes made by Socialist Party

➤ *The Socialist Party Chairperson Upendra Yadav had complained that RJP was behind the unity issue. Is RJP not uniting now?*

• RJP-Nepal was and still is in favor of uniting with the Samajwadi Party. But before unification we need to organize our home.

In the past, when the Samajwadi Party was in government, there was a slight obstacle to unity. In the past, unity was not only an obstacle to power, but also other things. In the past, unity was not only an obstacle to power, but also other things. It is being analyzed that RJP is now close to the NCP. However, the RJP does not have special closeness with NCP. It was only after the National Assembly elections that RJP cooperated with the NCP. That co-operation is long-term and the situation is not immediately clear in the coming days.

For the unity our presidium members are still positive. The two parties are jointly running the government in Province 2. Unity has also been important in the context of public mandate. So it is completely wrong that RJP is backed from the unity.

➤ *Upendra Yadav complained that RJP leaders have been in a state of division since the exit of the Socialist Party from government and the meeting was also closed.*

• He may have said this about someone. He has been meeting with our Chairpersons. While being the Socialist Party in government and being outside, the situation certainly different. There was a barrier between one party staying within the government and the other party sitting in opposition.

It is believed that both sides should move forward by not only pronouncing the Madhes issue, but also by making guidelines, drawing a road map.

➤ *Both parties are out of government now, but RJP seems close to the NCP. What is the obstacle to unity now?*

• Earlier, there was a slight obstacle to unity while in the Socialist Party in the government. In the past, unity was not only an obstacle due to power, but also other things. It was not until the departure of the Socialist Party to come from government that the unity was announced. The things that were left to be matched must be adjusted to the current perspective. As far as the RJP is now close to the NCP is being analyzed. We have also close with the opposition. However, the RJP does not have special closeness with NCP. It was only after the National Assembly elections that RJP cooperated with the NCP. That co-operation is long-term and the

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➤ *However, now RJP seems to be developing a friendly relationship with the NCP. RJP remained a supporter in the election of the Speaker?*

• There are no pros and cons in the post of Speaker. All we together supported the Speaker to make the Parliament fair and effective. When the main opposition was not against the Speaker candidate, we only accept and sign their request

rather than opposing and voted. It is clear that we have done this for the sake of the Speaker only, not to go to government or to get a post. We have not vowed not go to the government. But, at the same time, it should also be clear that we are taking matters as our priority.

➤ *There is also talk that RJP is bargaining with NCP for the post of Deputy Speaker and also to join the government.*

• We have not made promises not go to the government but at the same time it should also be clear that we are taking matters as our priority, with equal priority. The release of lawmaker Resham Chowdhury, release of other cadres and addressing of the Madhesh issue are our priorities. We have not omitted the four key points of the constitution amendment that we had given by then Foreign Minister Kamal Thapa when Oli become the Prime Minister. We are still firm on those stances. We could not leave that issue because

we are in this position today at the center and in the state with people's confidence. So we are not too distracted by that issue. Our presidium members are clear that we should never go to the government unless these issues are resolved. If any one goes to government without fulfilling these demands, then it is his personal interest. But that is not an institutional decision of the party.

➤ *But top leaders of RJP is continuously discussing with the Prime Minister?*



Sarvendra Nath Sukla

Senior Deputy President, RJP-Nepal

• There has been no discussion of the ruling party or the Prime Minister on participation in the government so far. In some media, it was reported that there was discussion between our presidium members with Prime Minister but it was baseless. The leaders of our presidium members have not even had a telephone conversation with the Prime Minister. During the National Assembly elections, the two sides met and discussed and after that there was neither meeting nor phone conversation.

But, in status quo, joining to the government is contrary to public sentiment and the party loses its base. Thus RJP would not repeat the same mistake that the Socialist Party done while joining the government. Most of the party's supporters and cadres now think that the issue should be addressed first, that they should not join the government on the one hand. Leadership is firmly in it too.

➤ *It is also reported that two leaders of the RJP were visiting India after the meeting with Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. What's the reality behind it?*

• Two leaders of our party have visited to neighboring India for a private visit to the family. There is no point going to family on a political trip. There may certainly some political meetings during their visit. But it was completely wrong that they visited India with agenda or under Prime Minister's instruction.

➤ *There is a lot of debate about the MCC too. What is the official opinion of your party?*

• I have also studied deeply about MCC. In my view, the project chosen by Nepal, if the US gives it and asks it to be passed by Parliament for that day, is not something to be taken otherwise. There is nothing anti-national in the MCC.

➤ *There is also condition to take consent of India for MCC?*

• If we build transmission in India, we must take its consent. It is not anti-national to ask for agreement where the transmission line is to be built. But it is wrong to take Indian consent to build such transmission line in Nepal. The leaders of the ruling party are unclear about the MCC.

Nepal border agreement...

signed treaties in the online news web portal Khaburhub—said that Nepal's new Border Management System would not likely affect the lives of Tibetan refugees in Nepal right away. "But it is sure to limit their activities in the days to come," he said. Many Tibetans living in Nepal already fear monitoring by police, with some approached by RFA's Tibetan Service for comment agreeing to speak only on condition of anonymity. One, a resident of Kathmandu calling herself Tenzin (not her real name), said that she used to believe that Tibetans living in Nepal would be safe as long as they stayed away from political activities. But during Chinese president Xi's visit to Nepal last year, "I felt what it is really like to have no country of your own," she said. "The Nepalese police would stop by [Tibetans'] houses and shops and probe into things," she said. "And anyone found in possession of things bearing symbols of Tibet, such as Tibetan flags or clothing, would be arrested." "The Chinese government has constantly insisted that Nepal recognize Tibetans as Chinese citizens, thus pressuring the Nepalese government to refuse to issue legal documents to Tibetans

showing them as refugees," added Sangpo, a local Tibetan assembly chairman and resident of Pokhara, Nepal, since 1959. Many have no papers. Around 3,000 to 4,000 Tibetans now live in Nepal without legal papers, sources told RFA, speaking on condition they not be named. The number of Tibetans escaping into Nepal from China has meanwhile plunged in the last 30 years, from a high of around 3,000 crossing the border each year from 1985-86 to 2008, to smaller numbers each year after tighter border controls were imposed following widespread protests in Tibet in 2008, sources said.

Between 2008 and 2012, around 600 Tibetans successfully escaped into Nepal. Between 2012 and 2018, about 100 crossed the border, and only 19 Tibetans crossed into Nepal last year, sources said.

The U.N., European Union, and United States have urged Nepal's government to protect the rights of Tibetans living in Nepal and of refugees fleeing across the mountains from Tibet, with a spokesman from

the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva calling "on all States to adhere to the globally recognized principle of non-refoulement that prohibits countries from expelling or returning people to a territory where their life of freedom would be threatened." The U.S. Congress's Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission meanwhile said in a Nov. 20, 2019 letter to Nepal's ambassador to the United States that extradition, while a legitimate tool of international law enforcement, "should not be used to send people to a country where they would be at risk of serious human rights abuses." "Recognizing the [People's Republic of China's] long-standing repression of Tibetans within its borders, we feel that an extradition treaty would be used by that government to persecute Tibetans living in Nepal," the Lantos Commission said. "The United States views the safety and human rights of Tibetan refugees in Nepal as an issue of great importance," added the U.S. State Department in response to an RFA request for comment.

Mounting pressure from China Meanwhile, "under mounting pressure from China," Nepal has blocked U.S. moves to bring Tibetan refugees to the United States under the terms of the Tibetan Refugee Assistance Act introduced by Congress in 2006, ICT vice-president Bhuchung Tsering said, speaking to RFA. "In order for Tibetan refugees living in Nepal to qualify to leave for the USA, they need an authorization letter and exit permit from the Nepalese government, and these have been denied to them," Tsering said. Nepal cites its growing economic ties with Beijing, with promises of millions of dollars of Chinese investment in Nepalese development projects, in cracking down on Tibetan activities in the country, including elections in the refugee community and birthday celebrations for exiled spiritual leader the Dalai Lama. Xi Jinping's Oct. 12-13 visit was the first to Nepal by a Chinese president since 1996, and followed a day-long visit by the Chinese leader to India that saw at least 15 members of a Tibetan exile organization detained for planning protests.

Province 2 govt...

minister further claimed they have increased insurance amount to Rs 300,000 so as to protect the lives of daughters by elevating public awareness that giving birth to a girl child is not a curse but a blessing, Raut said in the press conference.

The chief minister cleanliness campaign has become effective for conserving environment, he said, adding the construction of road and bridge and people's residence programme have been carried out in coordination with local levels.

Various programmes such as income generation of martyrs' families, agro production incentives and distribution of tractors and solar pipes for the improvement of livelihood of farmers have been put in place, it was shared.

Among other initiatives undertaken are training to students on self-defense, upgradation of Janakpur zonal hospital to state hospital, installation of modern equipments, beautification of cultural heritages in different places and protection and promotion of national forests in the province boundary.

He also shared that the provincial government has provided employment to families of the martyrs of Madhes unrest, constructed martyrs' monuments and parks, rendered relief to the injured of the Madhes uprising. "As the government was formed for five years there is no likelihood of change in guard during the period", he claimed.

India ready to resolve border issue with Nepal: BJP leader Upadhyaya



Kathmandu: Leader of India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party Dr. Dinesh Upadhyaya has said that India was always ready to settle border issues with Nepal.

Speaking at an interaction organized in Kathmandu, Upadhyaya stressed the need of holding a high-level talk between the countries to resolve the border issue.

"If India easily resolves the border dispute with Bangladesh,

there can't be an issue in resolving the dispute with Nepal as Nepal is a close neighbor," he added. He said that Nepal and India have mutual cordial relations.

"Nepal-India relations are not like India's relation with China, Pakistan or Bangladesh. Nepal and India are siblings. Nepal and India have ties of food and family," Upadhyaya asserted.

Province 1 Government unveils its 'achievements'

Ithari: The historic Government of Province 1 was formed on 15 February 2018. Exactly after two years of its formation, Province 1 Government has unveiled its 'achievements' made during this period.

Organising a formal function at the premises of Office of the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers in Biratnagar today morning, State Chief Somnath Adhikari 'Pyasi', unveiled 'achievements' of the provincial government.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister (CM) Sherdhan Rai said the government struggled from its nascent stage to generate some visible outcomes during two years.

CM Rai put declaration of province Capital, establishment of Manmohan Technical University, ending of milk holiday, scientists' conference, formation of much-needed 39 laws,



construction of infrastructures, among others, as visible results of state government.

"27-kilometer-long road has been blacktopped, 129-kilometer-long road has been graveled, 10 motorable bridges have been constructed and 15 suspension bridges have been accomplished", said CM Rai in his speech.

He added, "62 multi-year

roadways in each constituency of the province, 87 Chief Minister Rural Roads, 126 motorable bridges and 114 suspension bridges are being constructed."

Likewise, CM Rai said 110 drinking water projects had been completed.

CM Rai also said that 171 homes were built for poor and marginalized citizens of the province.

CM Rai said the Provincial

Government is giving final touch to a 10-year master plan for road networks, small irrigation, town development, tourism development.

"Last year we just had 5 percentage of capital spending", CM Rai said, "This year, we have spent 25 percentage of our capital budget being largest capital budget spending state in the nation."

When asked about about 2-years of Provincial Government, opposition leader of the province Rajib Koirala said province government, now, must focus on speedy developments.

"Two years for the government is enough to prepare its required laws and infrastructures", said Koirala, speaking over phone. "Now, the government must fulfill people's expectations in the state."

21 local government representatives from Nuwakot visiting India

Kathmandu: As part of Government of India's post-earthquake-reconstruction efforts in Nepal, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is organizing an exposure visit of 21 elected local government representatives from Nuwakot district of Nepal to India from February 10 to 14.

Mayors/deputy mayors of two municipalities and chairs/vice-chairs of eight rural municipalities with the chairperson of District Coordination Committee, Nuwakot and an official from Federation of Nepalese Journalists are part of the visiting delegation, according to a press release issued by Indian Embassy in Kathmandu.

During their visit to India, the delegation will visit CSIR-Central Building



Research Institute (CBRI), Roorkee, to observe the Shake Table Testing Facility and different labs such as Structural Engineering lab, Fire lab, Technology Demonstration lab and Rural Park.

The delegation will visit CURE India to learn participatory process for

sustainable urban development and livelihood integration. At Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), the delegation will attend the presentation on post-earthquake conservation and restoration works by INTACH together with a

guided tour at the INTACH Heritage Academy.

The Government of India is collaborating with Government of Nepal on post-earthquake reconstruction of 23,088 houses in Nuwakot district of Nepal, according to the embassy. To complement the Government of Nepal's owner driven reconstruction approach, UNOPS is providing socio-technical facilitation to home owners to rebuild their resilient homes.

"The visit will provide an avenue for building capacities of key local stakeholders for ensuring earthquake resilient reconstruction by raising community awareness about disaster management, recovery and resilience," the embassy stated in the press release.

Prime Minister lists achievements including 'two-year stability'

Kathmandu: Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has apprised the House of Representatives (HoR) of the achievements of his government in the last two years.

The meeting was presided over by the newly appointed Speaker of the House, Agni Prasad Sapkota.

"Our federal democratic republic is taking shape," said the Prime Minister as he started sharing the undertakings and achievements of the government during the last two years of its tenure. "We've made our presence felt not only in national politics but also in major international forums, representing Nepal in arenas it had never found space before."

He focused on various aspects of development during his



speech, including fiscal federalism, civil servants' adjustment, establishment of new laws and amendment of old ones, social security, media council bill, implementation of constitution, economic growth of the nation, poverty rate, employment opportunities, infrastructure development,

among others.

An intriguing point listed by the PM as a solid achievement of the government was completion of two-year tenure. "The Nepal Communist Party has completed 731 days of governance which in itself is a rare feat given that Nepal has not seen such a stable government in years. For a

government to reach the two-year milestone is an achievement," he said at the beginning of his speech.

In addition to talking about government undertakings, PM Oli also spoke on several relevant issues engaging the government in recent times. He claimed that the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact programme would be endorsed soon and ultimately passed by the Parliament. Oli also talked about the longstanding Kalapani border issue. Addressing criticisms on government's incompetence to resolve the issue, he said, "Nepal will not let go of its rightful land. The government is trying its best to bring back its land through diplomatic discussions. We're working to bring back the land; redrawing the map is not a big deal at all."

Daughter education insurance campaign' bearing fruit in Siraha



Siraha: The 'Daughter Education Insurance Scheme' under the 'Beti Padhau, Beti Bachau' (educate daughter, save daughter) Program is paying off in the Siraha district. The campaign under the 'Beti Padhau, Beti Bachau', aimed at ending discrimination between sons and daughters and increase daughters' access to education, has been implemented in all eight districts of the State 2.

The government has open a fixed deposit bank account in the name of each daughter

entitled to the insurance scheme. A total of 2,403 daughters have registered under the campaign in 11 local levels out of 17 in Siraha district so far, according to Tikaram Bishwokarma, the district coordinator of the social security committee, Siraha. He said that the figure has stood at higher 490 in Siraha municipality, and lower 90 in Bishnupur rural municipality.

The State-2 government has also announced to provide insurance service to daughters born before January 15, 2019.

Call to check import of pesticide-mixed food items along Nepal-India border



Birgunj: Import of pesticide-contaminated vegetables and other food items continues unabated through the Nepal-India border in Parsa district, for slack monitoring.

Speakers at an interaction organised here by the Department of Food Technology and Quality Control (DFTQC) here have stressed the need of implementing laws relating to hygiene along the Nepal India borders so as to check import of excessive pesticide-laced products.

On the occasion, President of the Birgunj Chamber of Commerce

and Industry Gopal Kediya emphasised that the concerned authority should focus on checking vegetables and other products laced with excessive pesticide being imported from neighbouring India having their impacts on people's health.

Similarly, Director General of the DFTQC Dr Matina Joshi said effective implementation of laws related to food security, consumer's health and products had been emphasised since Nepal became a member of the World Trade Organisation.

'Nepal, India to resolve Kalapani issue'

Kathmandu: Minister for Foreign Affairs Pradeep Kumar Gyawali said that Nepal is in communication with the Indian government for a dialogue and settlement of the border issue of

Kalapani through diplomatic channels. Addressing the 72nd Anniversary Program of Nepal Council of World Affairs (NCWA) in the capital, he said that the governments of Nepal and India

were trying to find suitable date to hold discussion to solve the Kalapani issue. The governments of both the countries were anticipating mutually convenient dates for the meeting.

Minister Gyawali said that the leaders on both sides had displayed clear vision, commitment and required political will to take the relationship to a higher plane of trust, cooperation and friendship.

US President Trump to visit India

New Delhi: The US president is set to meet with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi later this month. He is expected to make stops in New Delhi and Modi's home state, Gujarat. US President Donald Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi attend Howdy, Modi! at NRG Stadium in Houston, Texas, The White House announced on Monday that US President Donald Trump will visit India from February 24 to 25 to meet with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Trump and First Lady Melania Trump will make the trip to "strengthen the United States-India strategic partnership," according to a White House statement. In what will be his first visit to India since he took office, Trump will make stops in the capital New Delhi and the



western state of Gujarat. Gujarat is the home state of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and was also the home of the civil rights leader, Mahatma Gandhi. The White House said that Trump and Modi talked on the telephone over the weekend. The two leaders have maintained a

close relationship, with Modi visiting the US in September and hosting Trump at a rally in Houston, Texas called "Howdy Modi!" During the first White House meeting in June 2017, Modi hugged Trump several times following a joint news conference in the Rose Garden.

The two countries have faced recent economic tensions, including India's imposition of retaliatory trade tariffs against the US after Washington removed it from a program that allowed duty-free entry of up to \$5.6 billion (€1.1 billion) of annual exports to the US. However, the US sees India as a strategic ally, particularly in regard to countering China's influence within Asia, and has heavily invested in the world's largest democracy both militarily and economically. Earlier this week, India's new US envoy, Taranjit Singh Sandhu, touted cooperation between the two countries and announced that the US is India's preferred trade partner in its journey to become a \$5 trillion (€4.6 trillion) economy by 2024. "The relation between our governments has found a new momentum, getting its energy from the warm friendship between our leaders," he said.

Constitution not reflected people's feeling: Upendra Yadav

Janakpur: Socialist Party chair Upendra Yadav said the constitution has not reflected the feeling of Nepali people.

He said this in his address to a workshop 'Essence of amendment to constitution in current context' organized by Nepal Federation of Intellectual Professionals at Janakpur. The former deputy prime minister noted that the constitution was promulgated to institutionalize federal democratic republic in the country.

Though the statute has spectacular provisions on fundamental rights, inclusion, equality and civic freedom, its implementation



aspect is complicated, Yadav added. The constitution has not bestowed prime minister with special right to dissolve parliament in parliamentary system, he said, arguing that the constitution therefore has no parliamentary

characteristics and supremacy. Also speaking on the occasion, Rastriya Janata Party's senior vice-chair Brikhesh Chandra Lal stressed the need to amend the constitution for equality, inclusion in state operation and equal opportunity. He also spoke the need for Rastriya Janata

Party and Samajbadi Party to work together to chart concrete strategy for constitution amendment.

Socialist Party's co-chair Rajendra Shrestha insisted the need of power for change and called upon cadres to strengthen party organization for power consolidation.

Socialist Party's vice-chair Renu Yadav also argued for amendment to the constitution in terms of naturalized citizenship, inclusive representation in each sector and devolution of federal power to state and local levels.

Socialist Party's Province 2 chair and Minister for Financial Affairs and Planning Bijaya Yadav said the federalism through constitution was just a show piece.

Parties divided on name of Province 2

Janakpur: Parties in the Province 2 Assembly have failed to reach consensus on the new name of the party also, apparently because the ruling parties remained adamant. During a meeting convened by Speaker Saroj Kumar Yadav today, representatives of the two opposition parties—Nepal Communist Party and Nepali

Congress—said they were ready to incorporate the term 'Madhes' in the names they proposed earlier.

Whereas the NCP had proposed 'Janaki' and the NC 'Mithila-Bhojpur' earlier, the parties said they could accept 'Janaki Madhes' and 'Mithila Madhes' respectively as the ruling Samajwadi Party and Rastriya



Janata Party Nepal were obsessed with the term 'Madhes'. Yet, the ruling side did not accept either the NCP or the NC's proposals and

demanded that the province be named 'Madhes' only. The speaker will continue the meeting on Monday also.

Industrial census to take place in Nepalgunj



Nepalgunj: An industrial census and survey will be carried out in Nepalgunj from the fourth week of February. The census is believed to be helpful to the government to formulate industrial policies. It would further create opportunities and help resolve challenges relating to industry sector, said Dan Bahadur Airee, chief of the Statistics Office, Nepalgunj. The census will include around 500 industrial enterprises of various nature based in Banke district and four people will be deputed as enumerators, he said. The questionnaire to be raised

during the census will relate to introduction of industry, its registration authority, details of employees, income sources, details of moveable and immovable properties and challenges facing industrialists, it has been said.

This information was shared at an interaction organised by the Statistics Office here today. The interaction was attended by former president of the Nepalgunj Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Nanda Lal Baishya and general secretary Chiranjivi Oli among others.

Survey of East-West railway completes up to Bardibas

Saptari: Survey, design and environment impact assessment (EIA) of the Mechi-Mahakali Electrified Railway in Inaruwa- Bardibas section have been completed. Manjul Krishna Manandhar, chief of Fulbright Consultancy, said that the detail survey, design works and EIA of 139.42km long section of 945km Mechi-Mahakali Electrified Railway in Inaruwa – Bardibas section have been completed. Fulbright Consultancy has given the authority of EIA of the Inaruwa – Bardibas section of Mechi – Mahakali Electrified Railway from the Department of Railway, Railway and Metro Development Project. He said that the detailed survey and design of the rail project in six of seven sections had already been completed so far. The cost of the national pride project is estimated to be Rs. 96.84 billion. In State 2, the railway line will start from Bardibas of Mahottari and passes through Mithila Municipality of Dhanusha, Chhireswornath, Dhanushagram, Ganeshnathcharnath, Sahid Municipalit, Karjanaha of Siraha, Mirchiya, Goolbazaar,



Dhangadimai and Lahan. Similarly, it will pass through Surunga of Saptari, Sambhunath, Rajbiraj Municipality, Rupani, Mahadeva and Tirahut Gaunpalika. Manandhar said that there would be 14 stations out of which 10 would be used for passengers and four will be signal stations, he added. Similarly, there will be two stations to stop logistic trains. The project would require 814.22 hectares of land out of which 741.67 hectares of land are to be acquired from individual owners. Manandhar said that the proposal of compensation amount for private land that needs to be acquired for construction of railway line had also been proposed to the project.

Parent worship ceremony honours 501 parents

Janakpurdham: As many as 501 parents were worshipped by their children here today at the Parent Worship Ceremony organised by Radhakrishna Yoga Service Centre. The event was organised to promote the identity of culture and oriental values.

Before this, the Centre conducted training on Saraswati Mudra, ideal living, psychology, anatomy, methods of increasing mental power, healthy diet and speech science yoga under its 'ideal culture' camp. Chief of State 2 Tilak Pariyar inaugurated the programme. On the occasion, he said on the one hand material comfort seems to have increased along with the development of science and



technology while on the other hand the tendency to forget the useful cultural practices has grown on the other, expressing dismay

over the tendency to neglect parents as they became older.

State 2 chief Pariyar expressed that people seem

to be forgetting their cultural, family and social ethos while becoming entrapped in the 'glitzy' Western values that emphasized more on material well-being and instant pleasure.

State Assembly members Ram Saroj Yadav and Parameshwor Saha said service to the parents itself was worship to god. They argued that criminal tendency and family discord has increased as people began neglecting oriental culture and values. Centre's yoga guru Binaya Bhai stressed the need of propagating this type of awareness campaign at every household to resurrect the value of indigenous culture and lifestyle.