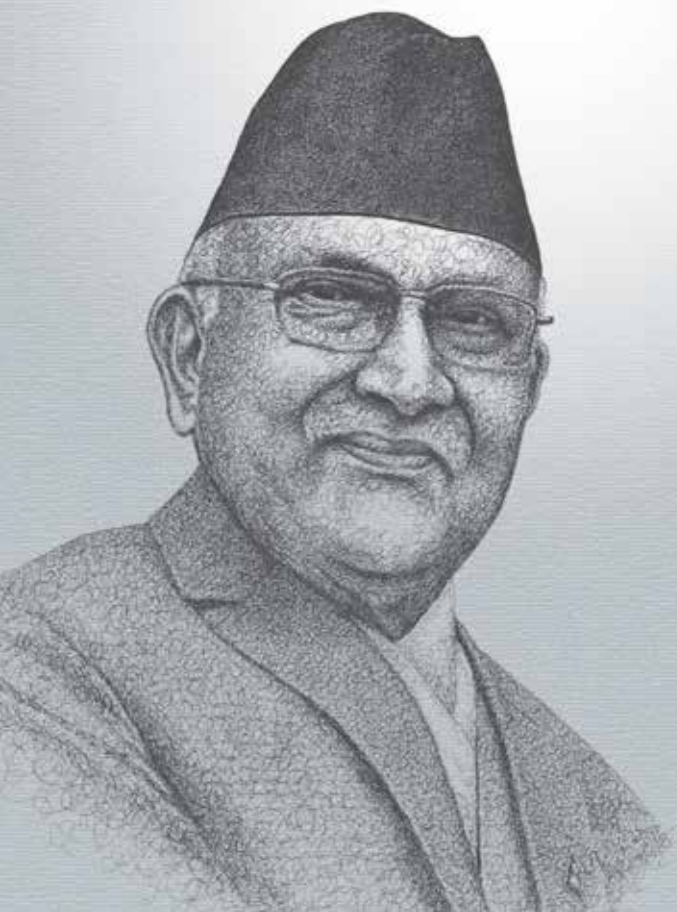
My Vision

Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali



My Vision: Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali

Selected Speeches of **K P Sharma Oli**
(Vol. II)

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Abbreviations

ACD	Asian Cooperation Dialogue
BBIN	Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CA	Constituent Assembly
CPN	Communist Party of Nepal
CPC	Communist Party of China
DFQF	Duty Free Quota Free
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EPG-NRI	Eminent Persons Group – Nepal India Relations
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FPTP	First Past the Post
GBPU	Govind Ballabh Pant University
IT	Information Technology
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LLDCs	Landlocked Developing Countries
MIRD	Master's Programme in International Relations and Diplomacy
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NRNs	Non-Resident Nepalis
PR	Proportional Representation
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAFTA	South Asian Free Trade Area
SATIS	SAARC Agreement on Trade in Service
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UML	Unified Marxist–Leninist
UN	United Nations

K P Sharma Oli

The Democratic Revolutionary

"Yes, Nepal can prosper, and it must. We have a reliable trust of people. We have knowledge and capacity, honesty and integrity. We are psychologically strong and have built self-confidence that 'we can'. We should not be derided by efforts to frustrate our dreams, to shatter our confidence, to paint a gloomy picture of our future, and, thus, to instill an inferiority complex in us. Happy and prosperous Nepal is possible and it is in the making now."

Mr. K P Sharma Oli, the Prime Minister of Nepal, took the oath of office on 15 February 2018, after being elected for the second time to the post. Currently the Chairman of Nepal Communist Party, the largest political party of Nepal, Mr. Oli has been for decades a torchbearer of democracy, peace and human rights. His life has been full of struggles, dedication and relinquishment for the cause of democracy and people's rights. A leader with enormous courage and self-dignity, he has always placed people's interest at the center of his political and social activities.

Promulgation of the democratic constitution amidst challenging situation at home and adverse external environment was not an easy task. He indomitably resisted all attempts to undermine constitution writing process and stood firmly for an independent democratic exercise of Nepali people.

He was elected as a member of the Constituent Assembly in November 2013 from his constituency in Jhapa. Mr. Oli played a leading role in promulgating the constitution, which has consolidated Nepal as a democratic polity based on human rights, inclusiveness, and rule of law. Promulgation of the democratic constitution amidst challenging situation at home and adverse external environment was not an easy task. He indomitably resisted all attempts to undermine constitution writing process and stood firmly for an independent democratic exercise of Nepali people. After the promulgation of the constitution, he was elected as the Prime Minister in October 2015 for the first time. During his first tenure, he made significant contributions to implement the constitution and lay the foundation of economic transformation to ensure sustainable development and prosperity for the country and the people.

Mr. Oli's role has been instrumental from the genesis to the conclusion of the peace process in Nepal. He is one of the architects of the 12-point agreement, a milestone in Nepali peace process and democratic transformation, which was

For his pro-democratic political activities, he was arrested and jailed for 14 consecutive years including 4 years in solitary confinement.

reached between the alliance of parliamentary parties and then underground Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) in 2005. He was convinced that this was the only option left to bring the armed conflict to an end and begin the peace process in the country. He made consistent efforts to successfully conclude the peace process.

Born in Terhathum district of Nepal in 1952, Nepal, Mr. Oli began his political career in 1966 and became a full-time political activist in 1968. As an active member of the party, his efforts were directed towards establishing democracy in the country by freeing it from the autocratic clutches of Panchayat Regime. For his pro-democratic political activities, he was arrested and jailed for 14 consecutive years including 4 years in solitary confinement. However, this did not silence his political conviction; rather made him strong and determined in his pursuit of political freedom and liberation from authoritarianism. A victim of torture and human rights abuse, he has been a strong crusader of democracy and human rights. After being released from the prison, he was assigned the responsibilities of the Central

An able organizer, skillful communicator, and dedicated leader, Mr. Oli has served his party in different periods of time in different capacities including Politburo Member, Chief of the Department of International Affairs, Department of Publicity, Department of Parliamentary Affairs, and Department of Party School.

Committee Member of the then CPN (M-L) in 1987 where he was in-charge of the Lumbini zone till 1990.

In the first parliamentary elections held in 1991 after the restoration of democracy in Nepal, he was elected as the Member of the House of Representatives, the lower house of the parliament. Similarly, he was re-elected to the seat in 1994 and 1999. Mr. Oli served as the Minister for Home Affairs in the government, the first ever government led by the popularly elected Communist Party, from 1994 to 1995. Likewise, he also served as the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs from April 2006 to March 2007. While in office, he led the efforts to consolidate the rule of law, democracy, and human rights.

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He also played an instrumental role in the unification of Communist Party of Nepal (UML) and Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre), two left parties which were also the coalition members of the left alliance in the elections.

Department of Parliamentary Affairs from 1995 to 2008, Mr. Oli contributed to the internal democratization of the party and played a leading role in the democratic struggle at the national level. He played a prominent role during the People's Movement of 2006 that was launched to end the direct rule of the King and to establish Nepal as a democratic republic.

In July 2014, Mr. Oli was elected as the President of the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) by the 9th National Congress. Under his leadership, he led his party and the left-alliance to the victory in the provincial and parliamentary elections held in 2017. He also played an instrumental role in the unification of Communist Party of Nepal (UML) and Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre), two left parties which were also the coalition members of the left alliance in the elections.

Apart from his mother tongue, Nepali, Mr. Oli is conversant in several languages including English and Hindi. He is married to Mrs. Radhika Shakya. He is fond of reading the

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works on philosophy, political economy, literature, arts and culture. He has also been active in social works and loves to play various sports including table-tennis.

A dreamer of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali', Mr Oli, in this book, speaks his vision on various issues and calls the citizens to move ahead at lightening speed to build a new era of Nepal in which the people live a happy and prosperous life free from poverty, discriminations and oppression, among others. He asks, "Does Nepal prosper?", and says, "Yes, Nepal can prosper, and it must. We have a reliable trust of people. We have knowledge and capacity, honesty and integrity. We are psychologically strong and have built self-confidence that 'we can'. We should not be derided by efforts to frustrate our dreams, to shatter our confidence, to paint a gloomy picture of our future, and, thus, to instill an inferiority complex in us. Happy and prosperous Nepal is possible and it is in the making now."

The book compiles his never-ceasing determination to 'sow, nurture and cultivate' dreams – the dreams of hopes,

The book compiles his never-ceasing determination to 'sow, nurture and cultivate' dreams – the dreams of hopes, struggles and prosperity – and provide them with content to make them invincible.

struggles and prosperity – and provide them with content to make them invincible. He lives in today's reality and prescribes innovative ideas to address the reality of the day.

The contents selected for this compilation are from April to November 2018. They include speeches, statements and messages by the Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli in different national and international forums and platforms. Texts and contents have been edited to a slight extent for this volume to layout and design them in the shape of this book.

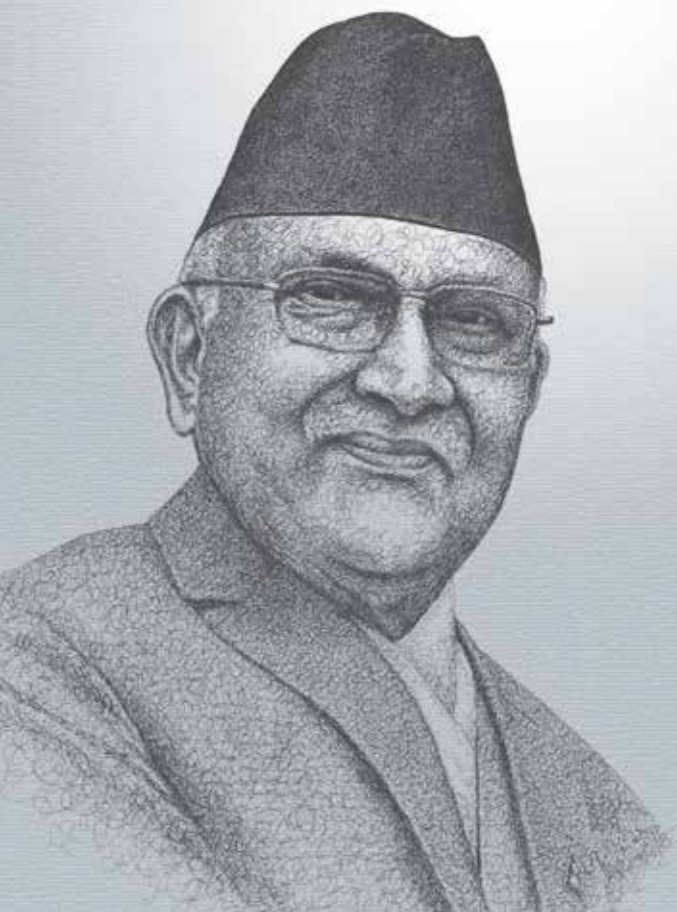
Editing Team

November 2018

पन्न कृषि एवं प्रौद्योगिक विश्वविद्यालय, पन्तनगर

INAUGURATION
PROGRAM

Development and Prosperity



Nepal can prosper and it must

Rara Lake, Karnali Province*

By the time we are in next new elections after five years, you would feel that you had cast your ballot in right box five years back! We will change the face of our nation and the change will be in right direction. I request you all to be assured of it and to extend your support to the government for the realization of happiness and prosperity.

On this first morning of the New Year, I am delighted to address you from the lap of Rara, a unique creation of nature. Rara is a unique symbol in itself, a symbol of natural beauty and treasure, a symbol of possibilities and a symbol of future. We have limitless natural and cultural heritages, numerous social and biological diversities, and hardworking and proud people. These are all we need for prosperity. I am

* Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli addressed the nation on the occasion of Nepali New Year 2075 from the lap of Rara Lake, Karnali Province, Nepal, 14 April 2018.

There is a reason to begin this New Year from the Karnali Province. It is to explain where we are standing now, what is our destination and how we reach there. Our resolve of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali' can be realized only after the entire country, including Karnali, becomes prosperous.

also aware of the other side of the reality. We do not have quality schools for children, and roads and bridges to go there and return home. We do not have sufficient human and physical resources to support in childbirth and save women from pregnancy-related deaths. We have Karnali and other rivers flowing, but the villages are dark, devoid of electricity, and agricultural lands stand barren. Despite abundant possibilities, the Karnali Province is at the bottom of human development index waiting for a massive social and economic transformation.

There is a reason to begin this New Year from the Karnali Province. It is to explain where we are standing now, what is our destination and how we reach there. Our resolve of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali' can be realized only after the entire country, including Karnali, becomes prosperous.

I am proud of standing before you as the Prime Minister of my second term. I have taken my responsibilities with a solemn sense of seriousness. Borne to a low middle class family of Terhathum district, I have come to where I am now facing different curves and bends in life. The journey of my life is in fact the result of the people's insurmountable

The journey of my life is in fact the result of the people's insurmountable willpower to transform the state and society. It is the power of a democratic system to enable an ordinary citizen to be the chief executive of the state. It is the rational decision of the nation to protect its independence and dignity despite all adversities.

willpower to transform the state and society. It is the power of a democratic system to enable an ordinary citizen to be the chief executive of the state. It is the rational decision of the nation to protect its independence and dignity despite all adversities. As such, I would like to reaffirm my utmost regard and unflinching commitment to sovereignty of Nepali people, the soil of independent Nepal and democracy. I would like to pay my heartiest tribute to respected elders and martyrs.

In the elections held in the face of confusion, instability and violence in November last year, you have given an unqualified trust to our party and in favour of the left-democratic electoral alliance. I have taken this trust as an energetic guide to our onward actions towards prosperity. I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude to all the voters for this trust. I would like to thank our Party, CPN (UML), and the CPN (Maoist Centre) for proposing me as Prime Minister, and all parties and members of parliament for supporting the proposal. I would also not let this opportunity pass without thanking national and international friends and colleagues for their best wishes.

Some of you went to the poling station on stretchers, some others with walking sticks. I also saw voters queuing up for their turn while still in mourning. The ballot paper you dropped in the box was not just a paper. It was a key to open the door to a new era.

The election day last November was not kind to many of you. It was numbing cold in some areas, and marred by violence in others. But you dared it. The picture of the queue of voters with their babies on the back is still in my eyes. Some of you went to the poling station on stretchers, some others with walking sticks. I also saw voters queuing up for their turn while still in mourning. The ballot paper you dropped in the box was not just a paper. It was a key to open the door to a new era:

- an era where there will be no discrimination and inequality among citizens,
- an era of social justice and democracy,
- an era of equal dignity, security, opportunity and rights for all,
- an era of good governance and prosperity,
- an era in which the people will live a happy life in a prosperous country,

I solemnly promise I will not let your expectations expressed through the election falter. I will not let you down at any cost.

"Does Nepal prosper? Does this government fulfill our dreams?" I have time and again answered in the affirmative to these fundamental questions. I repeat again Nepal should prosper. It must.

The year 2074 (BS) remained quite critical. It was the year of an important political achievement. This year saw the political transition, and gave the nation a pro-people, pro-development, progressive, democratic and patriotic government. With the conclusion of elections at all levels, the constitution pursued its path of implementation. A new phase of political stability began in the country. Efforts at foiling elections and creating constitutional vacuum in the country failed. So did the design to push Nepal into endless instability. With the success of elections, Nepal has established a new standard in the exercise of democracy. We had problems facing us, and we had the responsibility to address those problems. Now the people have given us authority to deal with those problems. The gap between the arithmetic of parliament and people's expectations in the past has been bridged this time. Once again, I would like to offer my sincere gratitude to you for this epochal responsibility to build the foundation for this nation's prosperity.

"Does Nepal prosper? Does this government fulfill our dreams?" I have time and again answered in the affirmative to these fundamental questions. I repeat again Nepal should prosper. It must. Everything has its time and limitations,

Time has returned back to us again to nurture the seedling we had planted then, to realize the dream we had, and to implement the concepts we had drafted. We have been united. We have a reliable trust of people.

including that of human knowledge and capacity. What is timeless and limitless, however, is honesty and integrity. Those with honesty and integrity do not require to be tested.

Some three years ago, in my final address to parliament as Prime Minister, I had said: "This is not the end of time. The process is ongoing and we are around." Time has returned back to us again to nurture the seedling we had planted then, to realize the dream we had, and to implement the concepts we had drafted. We have been united. We have a reliable trust of people. We have popularly elected representatives at local, provincial and federal levels, with new energy and readiness to deliver. We have international friends waiting to support Nepal. Now, without any pretense and delay, we will move ahead at lightning speed.

Development of a nation requires strong self-confidence. A nation cannot progress without the confidence of a bright future and without the resolve in the people to build their nation by themselves. A nation cannot prosper without insuperable courage to fight obstacles of any height and magnitude. A psychologically weak nation cannot rise to challenges. We should therefore focus our attention on

Nepal always maintained its independence resisting the global colonial empire. Our struggles of the past and their political achievements have drawn the attention of the world. How can a nation with such a valorous history remain backward?

building self-confidence that 'we can.' We should not be derided by efforts to frustrate our dreams, to shatter our confidence, to paint a gloomy picture of our future, and, thus, to instill an inferiority complex in us.

Nepal is one of the ancient nations in the world. Gautam Buddha, who was born in Nepal, had advocated the eternal message of world peace, compassion and non-violence thousands of years ago. Hundreds of years ago, Nepal had earned fame for its art, culture and civilization. Kathmandu valley was a business centre of China and India. It used to also serve them as a cultural bridge. Nepal always maintained its independence resisting the global colonial empire. Our struggles of the past and their political achievements have drawn the attention of the world. How can a nation with such a valorous history remain backward?

Nepal's future is bright. Feudalism that used to push Nepal backwards has now been history. Worldviews promoting dependence have weakened. Divisive forces are cornered. The view of politics as the ladder to power to serve vested interests has been defeated. 'Development' and 'prosperity'

Time has changed. So has been our responsibility. Our bravery that defeated autocracy and dictatorship will now be directed against poverty, unemployment, backwardness, discrimination and underdevelopment.

are no more an issue of abstract ideological discussions or an imaginary tale of distant future.

Time has changed. So has been our responsibility. Our bravery that defeated autocracy and dictatorship will now be directed against poverty, unemployment, backwardness, discrimination and underdevelopment.

Protection of sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence, national interest and dignity is the main responsibility of the government. We will maintain strong relations with our neighbours, all friendly nations and international community keeping national interests at the centre. The basis of our international relations will be the principles of sovereign equality, non-interference, mutual benefit and mutual respect and trust. I think none of us should allow the inferiority complex that equates patriotism with hollow nationalism to grow within us. The relations between and among nations are determined on the basis of sovereign equality, and not by the size of geography, population and economy.

By comprehensive democracy, we mean that it is the state of governance that safeguards people's economic rights, ensures social justice, and it does not only serve to formality and lip service.

Democracy is not just the name of a governance system. For us, who have struggled for decades to achieve it, democracy is a way and value of life. I don't want to speak here about the 15-year imprisonment and more than five decades of my productive time that I have spent in the struggle for democracy. I would however like to recall the unique governance system that our forefathers had adopted well before the values and tenets of democracy were established. In examples of democracy being our intrinsic values and not something lent to us by others, I often talk of the Shakya republic and the practice of selecting a king through a public race of *Ligligkot*. These two examples showcase our history of leadership selection on the basis of competition and merit, which we, at least the party that I preside over now, draw inspiration from. Our party has, as you all know, adopted a system of merit-based competition, both theoretically and practically, to select its organizational leadership.

I have said time and again that the democracy we have been talking about is not only the democracy that guarantees civil and political freedom. We have been talking about a comprehensive democracy. By comprehensive democracy, we mean that it is the state of governance that safeguards

Citizen's participation will be made effective in policy making process. State will be made responsive to its citizens in a manner that they feel they have a say in governance and the State is dedicated to the service of the people.

people's economic rights, ensures social justice, and it does not only serve to formality and lip service. Democracy without social justice is incomplete and empty. Therefore, we will make arrangement of necessary laws and policies, structures and resources within stipulated timeframe and implement the provisions enshrined in the constitution. We will work to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor.

Programmes of this government will be guided by the principles of democracy, human rights and pluralism. The government will invest all its efforts through its programmes to strengthen and consolidate the foundation of federal democratic republicanism from the lowermost to the top. The province and local levels will be capitated and made self-reliant. All round development of federal, provincial and local levels will be guaranteed on the basis of cooperation, coordination and harmony. Citizen's participation will be made effective in policy making process. State will be made responsive to its citizens in a manner that they feel they have a say in governance and the State is dedicated to the service of the people.

We will pursue the development policy based on equity and justice. We will materialise our resolve to develop socialism oriented state system. For this, we will fight to end all forms of social oppressions and economic exploitations.

We will pursue the development policy based on equity and justice. We will materialise our resolve to develop socialism oriented state system. For this, we will fight to end all forms of social oppressions and economic exploitations. We will target absolute poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and lack of essential services including health, transportation, electricity, drinking water in our actions. We will ensure basic health services, transport facilities, electricity and drinking water for all. National campaign will be launched effectively to bring the people to the reach of basic facilities within certain timeframe. We will ensure the right to education for all children, and, for this, we are launching school enrolment campaign from today.

Multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-religious social construct is both our characteristic and social heritage. Our social identity is based on diversity, pluralism, social respect and cultural co-existence. It is on the fortress of these characteristics and identities stands our national unity! But attempts are being made to hostile it and inject mistrust, hatred and antagonism among these social groups, and divert national priority. Such attempts will not be accepted by the Nepalis anymore. We will fight it and we will foil it.

Right to live without fear, and right to freedom of profession and business, among others, are the fundamental rights of the citizens. Sovereignty is guaranteed for the people now. The Constitution has institutionalised all rights of the Nepali citizens.

The government will stand firm to maintain peace, and build robust national unity based on social cohesion and respect.

Right to live without fear, and right to freedom of profession and business, among others, are the fundamental rights of the citizens. Sovereignty is guaranteed for the people now. The Constitution has institutionalised all rights of the Nepali citizens. A clear and effective system is in place to achieve change through legal and peaceful means. In the face of these achievements and constitutional provisions, if someone tries to test hostility, advocates violence, attempts to give a political colour to the interest driven criminal activities, serves terror to the people, and deters professional environment of the country, we will not let them off scot-free. The government will stand firm and bring all those to book who involve in unlawful happenings.

Corruption slays society. The current government will take stern and uncompromising actions against corruption. For this, necessary amendments to the laws will be made and strong institutional arrangements will be put in place. We will not accept any pretence in this connection. Those who are corrupt will have no room to hide. Corruption is not

Now we master the importance of time; lubricate the wheels of development and run to catch the pace of time so that we can develop national economy at the fullest speed possible.

only the money received illicitly and unethically. It is also the attitude and mentality we display with others. May the loss of money caused through bribery be reclaimed. But the damage of social respect and values wrought by corruption, the harm it causes to democracy and the moral character it slaughters of an individual or an institution cannot be recovered.

Economic prosperity is our national responsibility. It is our commitment and we put it at the heart of our actions. We let a long golden time go unproductive in the past. Now we master the importance of time; lubricate the wheels of development and run to catch the pace of time so that we can develop national economy at the fullest speed possible. We have the responsibility to graduate Nepal to the middle-income country by 2022. We have to fulfil our commitments to realise 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) and 169 SDGs targets by 2030. Some may think that this ambition of the government is exceedingly ambitious to realise. But, no country has made a stride without making ambition, shouldering risks, and adopting new policies, developing new structures and changing its working style.

We never say we can walk alone on the path of development. We bring in the strength of our neighbours, international friends, investors and financial institutions, and work together for the national interest.

So, we say 'No' to 'business as usual' now. We have to take smarter and swifter actions, otherwise, we cannot realise our resolve of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'. The government is determined to speed up the development course in a planned way. For this, it will put all its strength to the maximum utilisation of natural and human resources, financial capital and skills available at home. We will bring the private sector on board and work together with them as an ally to develop national economy. We will guarantee them the investment friendly environment, favourable labour relations, and security to their investment and profit. We will give due priority to the public-private-partnership.

The government has fully understood the scope of cooperatives for the maximum mobilisation of resources. The cooperatives should play the role of a driver of change and modernisation of production arrangements and production relations. We will develop cooperatives in a manner that they can be the mainstay of socialism oriented national economy.

We never say we can walk alone on the path of development. We bring in the strength of our neighbours, international friends, investors and financial institutions, and work

We will make a right balance between the domestic and international investment and guarantee security for all. We will give emphasis to the development of necessary special economic zone and special industrial zone for industrial development.

together for the national interest. Therefore, I call the investors at home and abroad --- please invest in Nepal without hesitation but considering the sensitivity of environment, workers' welfare and transparent tax system, and participate in the grand campaign for building prosperous Nepal. The government is aware of your genuine concerns related to investment and profit.

You will not have to face unnecessary legal and administrative hassles anymore. You will not have to feed commission and pay additional service facility to make an investment. We will end all hiccups detrimental to investment and security. We will make the existing systems easy and smooth, friendly to investment and profit. We will make a right balance between the domestic and international investment and guarantee security for all. We will give emphasis to the development of necessary special economic zone and special industrial zone for industrial development.

Some cast doubt on our determination to realise 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'. They say it is impossible because they substantiate their argument with, what they say, lack of means and resources. But I have been repeatedly telling

We have active labour force between the age of 16 and 59 years. How can we fall short of resources since we have such a productive labour!

them that no countries in the world have made a road to development only after amassing enough money and wealth. They have been rich and wealthy only after they are developed. We have such a fertile land. We are rich in biodiversity. We find minerals under our soil and life above it. We are the citizens of the country that is full of herbs and aromatic plants, rich in water resources, cultural diversities and has plentiful sources for renewable energy. So, there is no reason for our motherland to continue to be poor and underdeveloped.

For those who say we don't have resources for development and prosperity, I ask them to listen to the statistics what they are telling them! We have active labour force between the age of 16 and 59 years. How can we fall short of resources since we have such a productive labour! Yes, there are some managerial weaknesses. We have defect in our frame of reference. We have lack of confidence. There is a lack in system. But these are not the ones that cannot be mended. The devil is not in the mess, but in our ineptness! We are awake to it and we will end the state of lawlessness. We will effectively implement the rule of law. We will destroy the anarchy being escalated under the veil of democracy

We will respect the principles of separation of power, independence of judiciary, and the concept of check and balance. We will reinforce the rule of law and guarantee that everyone is equal before the law.

and shatter the fun and floric of hooligans surviving in the fodder of 'fake rulers'. Now we will bring the day where the people standing in a 'line' also feel that their turn will come and they can also reach to the front row of the 'line'! This government will work with all its might to materialise it and revive the confidence of people to the democratic systems and procedures.

We will respect the principles of separation of power, independence of judiciary, and the concept of check and balance. We will reinforce the rule of law and guarantee that everyone is equal before the law. We will not tolerate the deviation being seen in the State's respected organisations and institutions, and loss of trust of the people to these organisations and institutions. The government will pay full attention to strengthen the dignity of these institutions, and revive the faith of people in them.

History has taught us that the State's sovereignty and dignity will fall at risk if we are not economically strong. Therefore, the government will be fully focused on making the country economically self-reliant. We will make it through the diversification of trade, mutual interdependence

Agriculture is the major source of livelihood of two-third Nepalis. But this sector still remains traditional, uncommercialized and unproductive. This is one of the major challenges I should say.

and economic development in a planned way. We will pursue the policy that guides us to end feudalism and exploitation, increase production and productive power, strengthen distributions based on equity and social justice, brace economic prosperity, end poverty, unemployment, inequality and external dependence, and create foundation for socialism oriented national industrial economic revolution.

In conclusion, we will adopt the following five bases for the actions of our priority:

- Nationality
- Democracy
- Social justice, equality, social cohesion and national unity
- Peace and stability
- Development and prosperity.

Agriculture is the major source of livelihood of two-third Nepalis. But this sector still remains traditional, uncommercialized and unproductive. This is one of the major challenges I should say. While the fragmentation of

We will bring in the forthcoming government's policies and programmes the details about the priority of government in agricultural sector.

land is posing a threat to its modernisation and increase in production and productivity, problem of market management, encroachment of productive land and climate change have added an extra challenge in agricultural sector.

We will bring in the forthcoming government's policies and programmes the details about the priority of government in agricultural sector. But still our focus will continue to be:

- Upgrading Nepal to agriculturally strong country from agricultural country
- Limiting the population dependent on agriculture to 25% in next five years
- Increasing agricultural productivity by four times more as compared to now in next five years
- Limiting the contribution of agricultural sector in the GDP to 20-25%. Currently it contributes about 33% in the GDP.
- Implementing the programmes that modernise and professionalise the agricultural sector, establish agriculture as dignified profession and uphold the dignity of farmers.

Tourism industry is the spine of our development and prosperity. So, we will give special priority to the development of tourism infrastructure, and protection and publicity of tourism heritage and destination.

On top of it, the forthcoming policies and programmes of the government will put in detail the framework of irrigation and energy development, and modern transportation and infrastructure development including railways and waterways.

We are going to mark an auspicious beginning of the Tourism Year for Karnali Province after a while. Tourism industry is the spine of our development and prosperity. So, we will give special priority to the development of tourism infrastructure, and protection and publicity of tourism heritage and destination. We will protect and expand tourism market and safeguard pristine beauty.

Education will be linked with economic development and prosperity. For this, education system will be restructured in a manner that it develops competent human resource, and makes the youths capable, competitive and self-reliant. I have taken a decision on the first day I assumed the office of Prime Minister to establish at least one technical and vocational training centre in each Rural/Municipality. We will pursue the policy of 70:30 ratio respectively in technical and general education to make our education system

In the land where the word 'school' was invented and its essence and practice was designed, how can its people be deprived of education? It cannot be tolerated any more.

practical and vocational so that it contributes to create job and employment.

At a time when rest of the world was languishing in darkness and had no clue even if an alphabet exists on earth, in that time our forebears were doing research on flora and fauna, geography and astronomy. They were crafting arts, culture and literature. Building on it, they accumulated knowledge, and advanced and expanded it to other parts of the world. But, today, the progenies of such intellectually rich forebears are illiterate and uneducated! How can it be so? How can we stand by it?

In the land where the word 'school' was invented and its essence and practice was designed, how can its people be deprived of education? It cannot be tolerated any more. I quote Mahananda Sapkota, the famous Nepali poet who launched a crusade for education --- 'if this is the law of destiny, the era of such law is over now!'

I reiterate once again --- our children will go to school now. The children of sages and thinkers who expanded knowledge from this land to the rest of the world will have

Health does not only mean the availability of hospital and toilet but also the accessibility of citizens to clean environment, pure drinking water, and the way they live their life. We will do everything possible to protect the life of our citizens.

access to education. No child will remain out of school now. We will end such compulsion where our children have to quit school because of economic scarcity.

Education system will be made competitive, qualitative and practical to human life and society. Citizens graduated through this system will have easy and simple life. They will be useful and wise for the society; therefore, education should be affordable and within the reach of all. Education is for development. So well planned human resource with required competencies will be prepared for the development of the nation. A detailed and well costed education programme will be prepared in near future and an education policy will be pursued accordingly.

Our citizens are victims of communicable and non-communicable diseases. We are mindful that pollution and stale foods are providing the source for the diseases. It is the State's responsibility to save people from such endemics. Health does not only mean the availability of hospital and toilet but also the accessibility of citizens to clean environment, pure drinking water, and the way they

The air in Nepal is lifesaving oxygen – and water – lifesaving drop in truer sense! Our health seeking behaviour was not allopathy focused. It however was organic! We will resuscitate this tradition, and add extra amount of resource to guarantee the fundamental right to health of all citizens.

live their life. We will do everything possible to protect the life of our citizens.

Let's be reminded – the snow melts and flows down by washing off the dirt in herbs' roots --- useful source of organic herbal medicine. The water couples with minerals and becomes mineral water. The water, this way, qualifies for medicinal worth. But the irony is that the citizens of the land where each drop of water is full of mineral and each plant is valuable for organic herbal medicine are sick and frail! They are languishing and losing their life because of the lack of their access to medicine. How can it be so? We have to bring this situation to an end. And, for this we will roll out the policy of 'making Nepal, an organic Nepal' soon.

The air in Nepal is lifesaving oxygen – and water – lifesaving drop in truer sense! Our health seeking behaviour was not allopathy focused. It however was organic! We will resuscitate this tradition, and add extra amount of resource to guarantee the fundamental right to health of all citizens. We will bring this constitutional provision into effective implementation in coordination with local government and community. All citizens will be brought to the access

Free health service will be provided to the children, senior citizens and people below the poverty line. Health education will be discouraged to use it as a medium of profitmaking.

of compulsory health insurance scheme. Free health service will be provided to the children, senior citizens and people below the poverty line. Health education will be discouraged to use it as a medium of profitmaking.

I am cognizant of the problem being faced by earthquake, flood and landslides affected people, and of those who are homeless. Their right to housing will be guaranteed for all and the post-earthquake reconstruction will be expedited.

While I am addressing the nation from this beautiful place of Karnali province, I am being reminded the incidents of violence against women being perpetuated in the name of customs and traditions. Strong actions will be taken to end violence and discriminations against women.

We will put a total ban on practicing child marriage and polygamy. Practice of untouchability and caste-based discriminations will be completely eradicated.

Special programme will be launched to uplift the people of Karnali and other remote zones to the level of national GDP.

The government will work to maintain moral ethics and transparency. I will focus on them as the Prime Minister of the country.

Poverty, scarcity and under development rampant in terai-*Madhes* will be addressed.

We know --- examples of best practices should be set from the top. The government will work to maintain moral ethics and transparency. I will focus on them as the Prime Minister of the country. We are lucky to get a chance to born in Nepal. We have got this life as a beautiful gift of nature, and have been able to reach in the leadership role of political and administrative sector. I urge all my cabinet ministers, members of parliaments and government officials to the best utilization of this opportunity for the common good of the people. Always remember the people going through pain and suffering in the village when we design policy and programme. Always remember the aspiration of brothers and sisters toiling hard in gulf and other countries when we take any decision. Always be mindful of the fact that happiness and luxury earned through corruption and irregularities are short-lived and ephemeral, and the legal and moral punishment for such malpractice is painful and enduring.

Competition in elections is an inevitable characteristic of democracy. Such competitions are held to earn legitimate franchise from the people to run the state. But with the elections are over and mandates are received from the people, the place of competition now should be replaced with the aura of coordination for country's development.

Nepali politics has reached to this point going through a series of obstructions, success and failures, and unity and divisions. The country was forced to endure several pains bestowed upon it by feudalism, dictatorial governance practice, conflict, instability, period of transition and corruption, among others. Now the time has come to write a new page of our history. With your unprecedented love and support I, my government and the left alliance have got the chance to lead on writing the new page! Time has called us to march forward in full speed to bring about change, stability and prosperity in the country taking into consideration the fast-changing world and our geopolitical milieu.

Competition in elections is an inevitable characteristic of democracy. Such competitions are held to earn legitimate franchise from the people to run the state. But with the elections are over and mandates are received from the people, the place of competition now should be replaced with the aura of coordination for country's development. Majority provided to us by the people is not for displaying haughtiness and exercising hegemony. Nor the mandate given to the parties in opposition is for endless obstruction, protest and practicing sour relationship with parties in

I confidently put before you that the government will make strong stride in tackling problems and yielding better results within five years now. We will not let you down and leave no room for you to withdraw your trust bestowed upon us.

government. I humbly invite the political parties active in the country to join hand with the government and work together on common issues of democracy, prosperity and national benefit.

I confidently put before you that the government will make strong stride in tackling problems and yielding better results within five years now. We will not let you down and leave no room for you to withdraw your trust bestowed upon us. By the time we are in next new elections after five years, you would feel that you had cast your ballot in right box five years back! We will change the face of our nation and the change will be in right direction. I request you all to be assured of it and to extend your support to the government for the realization of happiness and prosperity.

Let's be united to take the country to the path of development. May this New Year bring a good health and success to all us. ●

विश्वविद्यालय, पन्चन
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Human minds have infinite potentials

Govind Ballabh Pant University, Pantnagar, India*

They imagined. They envisioned. And, they innovated. Their wisdom has survived the test of time. Our region conceived many geniuses who inspired the human civilization and guided the evolution of humanity from darkness to light.

I begin my remarks by thanking the University for conferring this honorary Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree on me. I accept this honour with profound gratitude.

I express my sincere thanks to Professor A.K. Mishra for inviting me to this gathering at the University that has heralded a revolution in agricultural education, research and innovation and been a center of excellence leading a period

* Speech at the Govind Ballabh Pant University (GBPU) of Agriculture and Technology while receiving the honorary Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Pantnagar, India, 8 April 2018.

We may have to wage austere struggle to not let such endemic untimely claim again the mothers of infants who still need her tender love and warmth, but I can say with full conviction that we can create the world where both rich and poor can live their lives healthy and fare better.

of renaissance in agricultural education in India. I feel profoundly impressed to be here with you and address a rich cross-section of scholars, agricultural scientists, professors and students.

As I speak to you today, I want to start with a story. It is a story of a boychild who was three years old. He had just started to learn Nepali alphabets - *ka kha ga* and was full of curiosity to make sense of the world around him. Out of inquisitiveness, he used to ask his mother many questions regarding every new thing he encountered with. Sometimes he got answers, sometimes he did not. Folklores and stories were what he used to listen from his mother at times in response to his keenness to learn new things. His mother was his inspiration.

But an unexpected turn of event met the life of the child. He was blighted by fate. He lost is mother when he was still infant. Epidemic of smallpox took her life putting an end to the affection and inspiration of the child.

At that moment, the child could not make much sense of the turn of event. He was still infant and innocent to know the cause of death. The boy simply heard that it was the will of the God who took his mother's life at His choosing. The

Education which does not only inculcate information in mind but also cultivates wisdom and spurs innovation; can rekindle the spirit, inform the intellect, and shape the minds of human beings.

child was told that the disease was due to a 'bad curse' and it was beyond the human capability to cure it.

'But why?' Another question lingered in the child's mind.

After six decades of the incident, the same boy who is now grown up to a fully matured man and is standing before you as the Prime Minister of Nepal can tell you that there are ways to fight an end to human misery; there are ways to make our people's lives better, healthier and wealthier. We may have to wage austere struggle to not let such endemic untimely claim again the mothers of infants who still need her tender love and warmth, but I can say with full conviction that we can create the world where both rich and poor can live their lives healthy and fare better. We do not let any endemic defeat human potentials in any pretext anymore. I feel my mother would be overwhelmed if she were still alive and with me at this moment seeing all this happening!

And, I have a firm belief that it is education that can help end human suffering and can serve as a vehicle of transformation. Education which does not only inculcate information in mind but also cultivates wisdom and spurs innovation; can rekindle the spirit, inform the intellect, and shape the minds of human beings.

Equally rich is the nature's potential to nurture and nourish new possibilities, and propel the raft of prosperity. It is the educated mind that unleashes the very potential of nature and harnesses the resourcefulness of nature.

The mind of a human being has infinite potentials. It is the human mind where the faculties of infinite imagination, innovation and invention are castled. Education is the key that unleashes the potentials of human brain to its fullest and opens up new vistas of brilliance.

Equally rich is the nature's potential to nurture and nourish new possibilities, and propel the raft of prosperity. It is the educated mind that unleashes the very potential of nature and harnesses the resourcefulness of nature.

Every individual has distinct interest and capacity. They have unique aptitude and ability. The onus lies in the state to confer the individuals with suitable opportunity to build on those skills and maximize on their full utilization. It is the responsibility of the government to assess the availability of human resources and harness the talents that its people have.

It is also the responsibility of the individuals to use their knowledge at the benefit of the society and the nation at large. Undoubtedly, education makes an individual a better person. However, its scope doesn't end there. Education is the wheel of nation-building process and it should contribute to this end.

Every individual has distinct interest and capacity. They have unique aptitude and ability. The onus lies in the state to confer the individuals with suitable opportunity to build on those skills and maximize on their full utilization.

The heritage of wisdom and knowledge that our countries carry is enormous. Our progenitors were pioneers in education and innovation. They were the key figures in art, culture and literature.. Their diligence and dedication conceived an unshakable foundation of our civilization – one infused with innovation, creative ingenuity, and inspiring inventions. It is our region which cultivated the learned *rishis* and *munis*, saints and sages, great philosophers, and truth-seekers who sparked human civilization from Asia to the rest.

Our ancestors have given the world the profound wisdom of *Vedas* and *Upanishads*, *yoga* and *Ayurveda*, grammar, and linguistics. They have gifted the world with mathematics and algebra. They have taught the eternal teachings of *ahimsa* (non-violence) to the humanity. There is hardly any discipline or stream of knowledge that has not been covered for innovation by our ancestors. Literally speaking, they tasted and experimented every leaf of plants to prove its usefulness to mankind. We are simply carrying forward the legacy of research and innovation in different fields.

They imagined. They envisioned. And, they innovated. Their wisdom has survived the test of time. Our region conceived

The world we live in today is a better place, but this should not lull us into any complacency. There is much to be done to make the world realize its potential, to harness the potential of human ingenuity. There are many maladies to cure, hurdles to cross, and deeds to be done.

many geniuses who inspired the human civilization and guided the evolution of humanity from darkness to light.

In the annals of the evolution of knowledge and innovation, the name of our forebearers stands out bright and illustrious. The duty falls upon us to hoist the torch high and carry its beacon forward.

It is our responsibility now to keep the heritage of that knowledge alive and move ahead; to explore and advance the genetic memory that we have inherited from our ancestors.

In our time, the world has seen a tectonic shift in technological change and innovation. Astounding strides have been made in the industrial development. The incidence of poverty has decreased significantly. The indicators of human development are getting better. The death from communicable disease and epidemics have decreased. School enrollment has gone up. The opportunities in front of us are manifold.

However, challenges abound. The world we live in today is a better place, but this should not lull us into any complacency. There is much to be done to make the world realize its

Almost 65% of our population depends on agriculture and its contribution to the GDP is 33%. Promoting sustainable and high yielding agriculture remains a top priority of national development agenda.

potential, to harness the potential of human ingenuity. There are many maladies to cure, hurdles to cross, and deeds to be done.

The responsibility lies with us to ensure that the fruit of development is shared by all, and roots of development are sustainable and inclusive to break the development bottlenecks by investing in infrastructure.

While we focus our priority to address these issues, we should redouble our efforts to invest in technical education. Our educational institutions have to serve as a hub to produce more innovators, inventors, and entrepreneurs.

Like education, agriculture remains a key pillar of our economy. It is the major source of income and employment. As elsewhere in our region, it plays a fundamental role in ensuring food and nutrition security in Nepal. Almost 65% of our population depends on agriculture and its contribution to the GDP is 33%. Promoting sustainable and high yielding agriculture remains a top priority of national development agenda.

The government is determined to transform the agriculture by utilising the technical progress, while also making the

Education and extension system is essential to enhance agricultural production and productivity based on science-based agricultural growth driven by vibrant, efficient and effective national agricultural research.

best use of traditional knowledge and genetic resources. Education and extension system is essential to enhance agricultural production and productivity based on science-based agricultural growth driven by vibrant, efficient and effective national agricultural research.

Educational institutions, like GBPU university, can best serve this purpose by capitalizing on technological progress while preserving the genetic memory. Things look different for different people. The importance of genetic memory lies in the capacity of an individual to distinguish things on the basis of merit or value. Take a simple example of the root of a tree. Some will consider it simply as a root without any value but others might look at it differently as something having very important medicinal value in it. Genetic memory thus remains at the core of creativity and innovation.

A close collaboration between Nepal and India can facilitate the agricultural development by the expansion of the market. We can work in the areas of improved seeds, irrigation, soil improvement, mechanization, and agricultural crop diversification.

As the Prime Minister, I have the opportunity and commitment to lead a new era of stability in Nepal with

Take a simple example of the root of a tree. Some will consider it simply as a root without any value but others might look at it differently as something having very important medicinal value in it. Genetic memory thus remains at the core of creativity and innovation.

added responsibility. The responsibility that keeps economic transformation at its core and unleashes the potential of human mind and natural resourcefulness. Therefore, I put stress on the need of promoting enhanced collaboration between the Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology and the universities in Nepal for research and studies on issues that are common to us. I hope we can materialize it in an enhanced level of cooperation between our two friendly countries and we can benefit from each other's progress. ●

ty in Prosperity
何铭亭
He Tiing

Revolutionary spirit and ideals do not fade away

Central Party School of the Communist Party of China, Beijing*

The idea that can change the world today is not completely different from the one that changed the world in the past. It is a constant process of modification, adjustments and re-adjustments. Our unique and distinct models of socialism are examples of such innovations and adjustments.

I will cover in my speech today the four main aspects of governance and prosperity where the political parties will have important roles to play. The aspects I dwell upon include the role of party school in generating innovative ideas; role of political parties in ensuring governance and achieving prosperity; our own experiences in pioneering revolution and championing the cause of prosperity; and socialist movement in

* Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli addressed the Programme Organised by Central Party School of the Communist Party of China in Beijing, 21 June 2018.

Building socialism does not happen automatically; rather, it is a planned, organized and envisioned mission. And to fulfill this objective, a right philosophical outlook and devotion is mandatory. A party school plays a critical role in this regard.

the global context. I will also briefly speak on the fundamental pillars of Nepal-China friendship and cooperation.

1. Party School: A Centre of Innovative Ideas

A party school carries a special meaning in the context of the communist movement. It is a center from where new and innovative ideas blossom, a new generation of socialist workers are groomed and a new synergy emerges through a perfect blending of ideological awareness and collective wisdom. Building socialism does not happen automatically; rather, it is a planned, organized and envisioned mission. And to fulfill this objective, a right philosophical outlook and devotion is mandatory. A party school plays a critical role in this regard.

I would like to commend the Central Party School of Communist Party of China (CPC) for its role in orienting and shaping the minds of China's emerging leaders. The contribution it has made in generating new ideas and policy suggestions has been significant. The CPC is strong because its 90 million party members are strong both ideologically and organizationally.

The history of the political parties so far has basically been the history of struggles and revolutions. The objective is clear: to materialize the long-cherished desire of people for good governance and prosperity.

I am confident that the School will continue to make further strides in advancing the cause of ideological innovations, trainings and nurturing new regiment of cadres, to arm them with clear socialist outlook and integrity, and to respond to the new challenges that may arise in future.

2. Political Parties: Vital Instruments to Promote Good Governance and Prosperity

The emergence of political parties was the outcome of the democratic revolution against feudalism during the 18th and 19th centuries.

The course that parties had to travel was not easy. They had to fight protracted struggles against various forms of authoritarian regimes to attain political freedoms. The history of the political parties so far has basically been the history of struggles and revolutions. The objective is clear: to materialize the long-cherished desire of people for good governance and prosperity.

The government is not an end in itself. For us, the representatives of the working class, the communists, socialists or leftists in whatever form, the government is only a means for serving the people, to transform society for

Political parties hold the key to development, prosperity and good governance. They are the lead actors. They do not only steer the present political course of a country but also shape its future directions.

betterment of the people, and to deliver good governance to them.

Political parties hold the key to development, prosperity and good governance. They are the lead actors. They do not only steer the present political course of a country but also shape its future directions.

There can be no other fitting example than China itself to understand the dynamics and interrelationship between a political party, governance and prosperity. The vision and the leadership of the Communist Party of China have been crucial in transforming the development landscape of the country.

We are happy to see China's unprecedented growth and development over the years. We are observing closely the progress made within the framework of 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' under the leadership of President Xi Jinping. I believe that your two centennial goals have laid a strong foundation to achieve the 'Chinese Dream of Rejuvenation.' And, the realization of such a dream will have a huge significance for the socialist movements worldwide.

Chinese determination is inspiring. It has defeated the allegation levelled against communist parties by bourgeois forces that they can only make revolution, but cannot deliver development, or socialism and prosperity cannot move in harmonious way.

The strong emphasis put on purity of party by comrade Xi Jinping in reinforcing his unwavering determination to fighting against 'tigers' and 'flies', and his strict instruction to the cadres to serve the people with integrity reflect the CPC's clear vision on party's role in governance.

Chinese determination is inspiring. It has defeated the allegation levelled against communist parties by bourgeois forces that they can only make revolution, but cannot deliver development, or socialism and prosperity cannot move in harmonious way.

CPC has made history by leading the revolution and materializing the long cherished dream of the people for prosperity. It is an inspiring movement for working class everywhere.

3. Nepali Communist Movement: Pioneering Revolution and Prosperity

Nepali people's political struggle and movement has a long and glorious tradition. In early days, it emerged as a patriotic movement for country's unification and against the British imperialist aggression. Prior to taking a clear political course, the movement took forms of social reforms

Nepal Communist Party played an important role in overthrowing the Rana regime; led strong peasant movements; opposed foreign interference; and struggled for people's rights in 1950s.

and 'humanist' struggles against conservatism, superstition and discrimination. Later, it gradually grew stronger as a democratic movement against the autocratic Rana regime. Nepali communist movement was born under the legacy of all these streams.

Nepal Communist Party was established as a representative body of the working class in 1949 with clear objectives to end feudalism and establish people's democracy under the guideline of Marxism and Leninism; protect national independence, oppose imperialist and hegemonic interference; and to build an equitable, just and prosperous socialist society.

Nepal Communist Party played an important role in overthrowing the Rana regime; led strong peasant movements; opposed foreign interference; and struggled for people's rights in 1950s. It experienced painful series of division and disintegration in 1960s. The Jhapa uprising ensued in early 1970s proclaimed a bold rebellion against monarchy and laid a foundation for building and unifying the communist party on the basis of a new ideology. From the 1980s, a serious ideological discussion began on inventing a unique path of Nepali socialist movement. As a result, we propounded our distinct and innovative way for

The idea of People's Multiparty Democracy contributed enormously to popularize the communist movement. The credit for this goes indeed to the thoughts propounded by Madan Bhandari.

Nepali revolution under the leadership of comrade Madan Bhandari.

International communist movement was facing an upheaval at the time when the ideology of People's Multiparty Democracy was being propounded in Nepal. Communist parties pursuing armed rebellion had been facing severe setbacks. Apparently, the movement was facing new questions and challenges. Deviation and defection from Marxism would not have been the answers to those questions. Neither would the problem have been solved by dogmatic recitation of the classical texts of Marxism. Based on the assumption of innovative use of Marxism, we focused on the distinctive attributes of Nepali society and practiced Marxism accordingly.

This left an extraordinary mark in our society. The communist movement in Nepal was gaining popularity. Nepali communists emerged as the largest party in 1994/95 elections to run the government which was very successful, although its tenure was short. The idea of People's Multiparty Democracy contributed enormously to popularize the communist movement. The credit for this goes indeed to the thoughts propounded by Madan Bhandari.

Now, the government has concentrated all its efforts on economic development with the resolve of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali.'

At present, Nepal Communist Party enjoys almost two-thirds majority in federal parliament, six of the seven provinces and majority of local governments. The Party has been established as a party with a strong political base of over 53% of popular votes. The people have given us the mandate to run the government for political stability and economic prosperity. Now, the government has concentrated all its efforts on economic development with the resolve of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali.'

Our destination is clear: development of socialism with typical Nepali attributes. Our priorities are clear: enhancement of nationalism, institutional development of democracy, strengthening of national unity on the basis of social harmony, achievement of social justice and equality by ending all forms of discrimination, inequality and suppression and attainment of economic development and prosperity within a short period of time. We put emphasis on good governance encompassing such components as accountability, transparency, building national economy and eradication of corruption as its key features.

Our policies and programmes are aimed at preparing the foundation for socialism. Our vision is to establish people's government through peaceful means of democratic

The identity politics is apparently seen as undermining the fundamental goals of ideologies. Ethos of class struggle is being undercut by racial, cultural and ethnic issues.

competition. Given these contexts of our two countries, I believe that we have our own unique ways of pursuing socialism. However, our goals, objectives and strategies have many similarities. The development aspirations that we strive to fulfill are guided by similar vision. And, more importantly, we are guided by the common spirit to uplift the disadvantaged, oppressed and poor people.

4. Socialist Movement in the Global Context

The contemporary world is characterized by conflicts, contradictions and paradoxes. The world today is witnessing inward-looking tendencies. The identity politics is apparently seen as undermining the fundamental goals of ideologies. Ethos of class struggle is being undercut by racial, cultural and ethnic issues.

Amidst these global realities, communist/socialist movements around the world have evolved through different forms and structures. Not all of them are at the same stage of revolution. Some have completed the socialist revolution while others have made political gains but are yet to achieve economic goals. Some revolutions are in the phase of mobilizing people in order to materialize the dream of socialism.

As Chairman Mao once said that the comrades who were not defeated by the enemies with guns could be defeated by sugar-coated bullets of luxury, inertia, corruption and arrogance. I believe both Nepali and Chinese versions of socialism have internalized this spirit.

Therefore, it is obvious that the role of political parties also changes according to the stage and the form of a 'revolution'. We must understand that no political party can advance the socialist cause, if it is detached from the political realities of a country.

It is in line with this notion that we have taken recourse to competitive multiparty system in Nepal. We have localized and contextualized Marxism and socialism as per our unique and distinct needs and challenges.

Some of the fundamentals we have adhered to can be summed up as follows:

First, we have been careful in ensuring that the real revolutionary spirit and ideal does not fade away. We are aware of the danger of complacency and deviation that might arise in party workers along with our success in party politics. As Chairman Mao once said that the comrades who were not defeated by the enemies with guns could be defeated by sugar-coated bullets of luxury, inertia, corruption and arrogance. I believe both Nepali and Chinese versions of socialism have internalized this spirit.

We should take care of bridging the gap between the veteran generation seasoned in revolution and the vibrant youth generation.

Second, we are mindful of the fact that capitalism and bourgeois culture can derail our movement through a discourse of capitalism-guided progress of society. We have witnessed that capitalism can enrich upper strata of society, and neoliberalism can facilitate class-transformation of a handful of people, but it cannot provide the answer to the quest for just, equitable and people-centric development. Real progress that people can feel is only possible in socialism.

Third, there is a constant need of educating, orienting and guiding the party cadres and workers so that they do not deviate from the original principles, ideals and visions. Our focus should be on the younger generation, which has enormous vigor, energy and innovative strength. But, the influence of global capitalism, which is spreading offensively intends to inject in youths the culture of individualism, consumerism and alienation from the social responsibilities. We should take care of bridging the gap between the veteran generation seasoned in revolution and the vibrant youth generation.

Fourth, protection, promotion and innovative implementation of Marxism is vital. We must always be open to new ideas and thoughts. This is where innovation and

No political party can sustain and contribute to the social progress if it misses the vital links with the people it serves.

creativity prosper. Chinese comrades very often talk about the three major ideological junctures in the Party's history: i) seventh national congress of the CPC and adoption of Mao Zedong Thought that led the creative innovation of Marxism in China; ii) policy of openness and modernization by Deng Xiaoping that heralded a new era of development in China; and, iii) the vision of 'Socialism with Chinese Characteristics' and Xi Jinping Thought for a New Era.

In Nepal, we also have similar experiences and benchmarks of ideological innovations. The Jhapa uprising of 1970s opened new paths to reorganize and revitalize the then fragmented and divided communist movement; provided foundation for the rise of peoples' leader comrade Madan Bhandari and his new ideological innovation 'People's Multiparty Democracy'; and, created bases for the historical unification of the Community Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist and Leninist) and Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre).

Lastly, and more importantly, no political party can sustain and contribute to the social progress if it misses the vital links with the people. It is only with the support of the masses that political parties can succeed in transforming society and delivering good governance. This is manifested well in the success of Communist Party of China and its contributions

The role of a communist party is unique and special. It has led the revolution to a success and will pioneer the socio-economic transformation and prosperity in respective countries.

to the country's phenomenal development and prosperity. We too are making every effort to reach out to the people to hear their voices and put ourselves under the scrutiny of the people.

We have adopted competitive multiparty system of governance with constitutional supremacy, periodic elections, human rights, check and balance as well as separation of powers, and independent judiciary, among others. Such appropriation in our communist movement is to address the heterogeneous and diverse socio-cultural edifice of Nepali society. We respect diversity and plurality but remain committed to the thrust of Marxism.

The role of a communist party is unique and special. It has led the revolution to a success and will pioneer the socio-economic transformation and prosperity in respective countries. That's why, the leading role of the communist party is necessary for prosperity and governance. We believe such a role can be obtained through competition and initiation.

The Chinese Government and people have always supported Nepali people in fulfilling their aspirations for peace, progress and prosperity both in normal times as well as during crisis. We are appreciative of such support and cooperation.

Nepal-China Relations: Heralding A New Era

Nepal-China relations began with traders' caravans crossing the current borders millennia ago. Although diplomatic relations between our two countries were established as recently as in 1955, the time-tested, friendly and cooperative relations have been the hallmarks of our bilateral relations. The narratives of people crossing the Himalayas for progress, wealth and prosperity still abound in Nepal. The travelogues of Faxian, Buddhabhadra and Xuan Zan as well as the stories of Bhrikuti and Araniko support this historical interface between our two peoples not only at political and economic spheres but more also at social and cultural domains.

Such engagements from time immemorial have nurtured mutual understanding and respect. They have also helped us know each other's needs and interests. This, in turn, has inculcated in us the values of peace and harmony in a diverse society. Lord Buddha's teachings on peace and harmony have profoundly guided the socio-cultural ethos of our peoples.

Panchasheel – the five principles of peaceful co-existence - guide our friendly and cordial relations. We take pride in pursuing these principles for achieving peace and progress in a harmonious way.

The ideas and education it provides have been useful in building socialism and promoting its linkages with the common people. This is where we see the relationship between Communist Party of China and the country's remarkable progress and development.

The Chinese Government and people have always supported Nepali people in fulfilling their aspirations for peace, progress and prosperity both in normal times as well as during crisis. We are appreciative of such support and cooperation.

I acknowledge the tremendous contribution made by the Central Party School of the Communist Party of China towards promoting socialist goals and principles. The ideas and education it provides have been useful in building socialism and promoting its linkages with the common people. This is where we see the relationship between Communist Party of China and the country's remarkable progress and development.

There can be no single formula for political parties to follow. For them to champion as the agents of development and good governance, they must internalize the revolutionary spirit with a sole objective of serving the common people and their aspirations. The idea that can change the world today is not completely different from the one that changed the world in the past. It is a constant process of modification, adjustments and re-adjustments. Our unique and distinct models of socialism are examples of such innovations and adjustments. ●

Development should be backed by knowledge and innovation

NRN Knowledge Convention, Kathmandu*

Technology is like a double-edge sword. It can make your life comfortable and happy if you are able to define your objective and apply it to reach there. But if you lack a clear objective and let technology define your aims and objectives it may produce entirely different outcome.

I am happy to be here with you and share my thoughts on Expanding Nepal's Knowledge Pool through Diaspora.

There is a special reason to be happy and that is: we are assembled here to deliberate on a subject matter that lies at the core of human progress and prosperity. I admit that this is the first time

* Speech at the First NRN Knowledge Convention on 'Expanding Nepal's Knowledge Pool through Diaspora', Kathmandu, Nepal, 12 October 2018.

The Nepali diaspora has become truly global. I would like to appreciate the significant role the Non-Resident Nepali Association has been playing in uniting the Nepalis scattered all over the world and mobilizing their resources for development of the motherland.

we have exhibited seriousness towards a matter, which can be a game changer in defining our development landscape.

So, the organizers, including Non-Resident Nepalis (NRNs), Nepal's educational and research institutions, private sector and other stakeholders deserve our special thanks for taking this laudable initiative. With the presence of so many learned and eminent personalities from across the world, I am assured of rich and substantive outcome of the two-day deliberations. I wish the international participants a pleasant stay in Nepal and the Convention a grand success.

The Nepali diaspora has become truly global. I would like to appreciate the significant role the Non-Resident Nepali Association has been playing in uniting the Nepalis scattered all over the world and mobilizing their resources for development of the motherland. I believe that the physical distance cannot diminish the sense of belongingness and affinity towards one's own country. Rather, it becomes more pronounced when you live overseas. I would like to admire your continued respect and love towards the motherland.

Non-Resident Nepalis have contributed to expanding Nepal's unique culture and identity through lingua franca, Nepali food and lifestyles.

NRNs have contributed to expanding Nepal's unique culture and identity through lingua franca, Nepali food and lifestyles.

I appreciate your affiliation towards Nepali culture and your active role in making it global. I am of the view that the Nepali diaspora serves as honorary Nepali ambassadors in promoting rich Nepali culture, values and traditions all over the world. It fulfils a useful purpose: it helps you recognize as a strong identity-bearer of the country and helps promote country's image in the world. You are doing more than this. The role you have been playing in making foreign employment safe and dignified cannot be ignored.

I value your effort in bringing investment, promoting and exploring markets for Nepali goods and services; and lobbying in the interests of Nepal and Nepalis in the countries you currently reside.

While you play important roles in various fields, it is equally important to focus on building your own strengths. Unity and solidarity among Nepali diaspora will help to galvanize more support for the development of the motherland and, at

In recognition of your contribution to the motherland, our constitution has guaranteed you a NRN citizenship with economic, social and cultural rights. The Government will make necessary legal arrangements to implement this provision of the constitution.

the same time, elevate your stature in the countries you live. We would like to see your profile enhanced and influence expanded.

The overwhelming support and cooperation of Nepali diaspora abroad, in the aftermath of natural disasters such as earthquake, flood, and landslides in Nepal shows their deep empathy towards their sisters and brothers in Nepal. NRN's involvement in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction is praiseworthy. The reconstruction of houses in the remote Larpak village, the epicentre of 2015 earthquake, is a telling example of your commitment and delivery.

With this sense of connection and dedication, I believe NRN will enhance its contribution to socio-economic development of Nepal in the days ahead. In recognition of your contribution to the motherland, our constitution has guaranteed you a NRN citizenship with economic, social and cultural rights. The Government will make necessary legal arrangements to implement this provision of the constitution.

Natural beauty of Nepal is matchless. We equally have unique art and culture which are incomparable. We have a distinct identity in the global community as peace-loving, honest and hardworking people. These are the real assets of Nepal.

Nepal is known in the world as the country of *Sagarmatha*, the highest peak in the world, and the birthplace of Buddha, the apostle of peace.

Natural beauty of Nepal is matchless. We equally have unique art and culture which are incomparable. We have a distinct identity in the global community as peace-loving, honest and hardworking people. These are the real assets of Nepal. We have to build on these solid assets to make Nepal strong on economic front and a model country on social front with social justice and harmony as its key features.

This cannot be achieved easily. We should desist ourselves from viewing things in simplistic terms. A combination of clear visions, determined commitments, rightly-aligned resources, non-fatigable efforts, expeditious steps and concrete deliverables will make this possible.

When we talk about development, we are far behind many countries. Neither we have time to wait, nor do we have time to engage in endless debate about the course of development. Neither we have luxury to wait for others to come

Nepal has ushered in an era of political stability with the promulgation of the constitution and the successful completion of elections of federal, provincial and local levels.

and teach us how to move forward, nor do we have time to blame each other and repent for past inactions and mistakes.

Time is of essence. Change is the only constant. Therefore, we have to move now and move at a faster pace. I trust, we are capable of undertaking this journey, though arduous one.

Our political struggle has emboldened us and taught useful lessons to reach the target at any cost despite all odds and challenges. Nepal has ushered in an era of political stability with the promulgation of the constitution and the successful completion of elections of federal, provincial and local levels.

Our constitution is outstanding from the perspective of democracy, human rights, social justice and inclusion. We have paid heavy price to reach this stage. I believe that Nepali people will not have to fight for political rights any more. Political issues have been settled and we have emerged as a progressive state with a renewed confidence and vigour.

After the consolidation of ground-breaking political achievements, Nepal is now at an important juncture of

For achieving any goal, we should be able to dream it first. That is why the vision of my government is guided by the long-term goal of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali.'

undertaking socio-economic transformation. This is not a choice but a compulsion, as people of Nepal can, no longer, afford to be equated with poverty, hunger and backwardness. They have suffered a lot and now deserve a dignified life.

For achieving any goal, we should be able to dream it first. That is why the vision of my government is guided by the long-term goal of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali.'

To achieve this goal, we will have to ensure decent and fruitful employment for our active population. We need to modernize our agriculture, utilize energy sectors, especially hydropower. We should focus on developing infrastructure, tourism sectors and creating skilled human resources.

As a matter of fact, the environment for investment is getting better in Nepal. The government is committed to improve the climate for investment and business. I would like to stress the fact that policy stability comes with political stability. We guarantee protection to investment, both domestic and foreign. NRN community can play a catalytic role in attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Nepal.

Knowledge has a practical value; it should not be seen as the mere collection of quotations. I firmly believe that the base for leading a country on the path of progress lies in creating a knowledge-based society.

They are already making a good progress but much can be done together.

The investment made by multinational and joint-venture companies in Nepal has provided a high return. There are plenty of sectors for investment. At this juncture, I feel that the government, the private sector and the NRN should synergize their efforts in bringing visible prosperity in the life of ordinary people.

I am of the view that, among several necessary factors contributing to prosperity, knowledge is one of them. If development is the outcome, knowledge is the seed.

Knowledge is the collective aggregation of experience. It is the result of innovation and experiment. Knowledge is stored as memory of experiences. Memory power is like a bank that gives shape to knowledge. Knowledge has a practical value; it should not be seen as the mere collection of quotations. I firmly believe that the base for leading a country on the path of progress lies in creating a knowledge-based society.

Constant innovation, invention and research lay foundation for virtuous cycle of knowledge creation. Knowledge creation is vital for the greater well-being of entire humanity.

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We are the descendants of knowledgeable ancestors. The world of our forefathers was a different world, full of knowledge, innovation and invention. There was nothing that was not tested.

Over the course of history, we lost glory established by our ancestors. Those who were in the darkness of ignorance when our part of the world was enlightened by the light of knowledge have surpassed us with the world entering into the modern times. It is now incumbent upon us to rejuvenate that glorious history through the revival of knowledge. Our posterity deserves an uninterrupted legacy of rich knowledge and traditions and we must ensure this.

Inspiration for innovation, invention and research promotes peace and prosperity perpetually. Keeping this in view, we have accorded top priority to innovative approach in all sphere of our national life.

Progress cannot be achieved without technology. Access to affordable and reliable technology is a must for all countries to gain benefits from globalization.

Change and transformation is driven by technology. We have seen unstoppable force of technology that has vastly changed the world in which we live today. However, not all countries and people have benefited from technological advancement. Progress cannot be achieved without technology. Access to affordable and reliable technology is a must for all countries to gain benefits from globalization.

While technology serves as hardware, human character is equally important as software. Technology is like a double-edge sword. It can make your life comfortable and happy if you are able to define your objective and apply it to reach there. But if you lack a clear objective and let technology define your aims and objectives, it will produce entirely different outcome.

Cognizant of the importance of research and innovation, the government has set up a Policy and Research Academy as a think-tank institution which will provide important inputs for undertaking necessary policy reforms. This Academy will make fact-based, evidence-based and research-based recommendations to the government for sound policy formulation.

I believe the Association will continue to engage in innovation and research, and make their valuable findings available to the government. I assure you that the Government of Nepal always stands ready for necessary support in this regard.

The government has recently setup an advisory council for better business environment with the inclusion of leaders of NRN Association. I believe the Association will continue to engage in innovation and research, and make their valuable findings available to the government. I assure you that the Government of Nepal always stands ready for necessary support in this regard.

I hope this Convention would help us to internalize within ourselves, to utilize our rich knowledge and further to create new knowledge. I anticipate that we will be able to reverse the situation of brain drain of our dynamic minds and through churning of our intellect we will be able to produce the butter of knowledge; which we can share among all. ●

Innovative application of Marxism leads us to socialism

Madan Bhandari School of Asia, Kathmandu*

It is the responsibility of socialists in any country to identify the characteristics of the social and national context in light of the universal Marxist principles, and to formulate and develop unique principles of revolution and socialism based on those features.

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the Madan Bhandari School of Asia in Kathmandu. I am happy to see you all coming to the school from different parts of the world. I hope you will enjoy the academic discourse here and will actively and constructively contribute to make it more fruitful and memorable. Your valuable contributions will help the School attain its goal to educate the cadres in the true spirit of Marxism and Leninism, and to share the lofty values and rich experiences of Nepal's unique socialist movement.

* Prime Minister and President of Nepal Communist Party K P Sharma Oli delivered the speech at the Madan Bhandari School of Asia, Kathmandu, Nepal, 20 November 2018.

Late Madan Bhandari's contributions continue to be of great value and relevance to political, economic and social transformation in Nepal, and everywhere.

I appreciate the organizers who, by taking this new initiative, have honored *Jananeta* (People's Leader) Madan Bhandari for his original and landmark contributions to Nepal's socialist movement. Late Madan Bhandari's contributions continue to be of great value and relevance to political, economic and social transformation in Nepal, and everywhere.

At a time when the international socialist movement was facing a set-back towards the end of the last century, the revolutionary programme of Madan Bhandari gave the right direction to Nepal's democratic and progressive movement for political rights and freedoms. The programme showed a beacon of light to the movements for equality and justice across the world. He propagated that the movements for achieving the rights of the people move with times through reinvention and renewal process, and that through this process the movements fulfill the people's aspirations for a progressive, prosperous and egalitarian society.

I understand that building internationalism and promoting greater trust and understanding through academic exchange is an important objective of this school. This is a praiseworthy and highly desirable objective for the school that brings people together from different parts of the world in pursuit of better understanding and appreciation of socialism. A regular,

A regular, unrestricted and meaningful exchange of ideas is crucial for deeper understanding of social phenomena through the approach of Marxism-Leninism, and to empowering comrades to fight challenges posed by unequal distribution of income, wealth and opportunities.

unrestricted and meaningful exchange of ideas is crucial for deeper understanding of social phenomena through the approach of Marxism-Leninism, and to empowering comrades to fight challenges posed by unequal distribution of income, wealth and opportunities.

I firmly believe that the teaching and learning of the unique experience of Nepal's socialist movement, enriched by the contributions of Madan Bhandari, will be useful not only for developing country like Nepal but also for other countries having similar socio-economic characteristics to understand and address the challenges they face.

I am glad to learn that there are around fifty participants in this School, now, coming from Brazil, South Africa, and Tunisia, The Philippines, East Timor, Thailand, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Tanzania. I am happy to know that academic courses the School offers do not include only the theoretical teaching and training but also outdoor activities and practical exercise. I feel this helps students to enrich camaraderie and partnership among themselves and assist each other in mitigating the contradictions between theory and practice. It will help look for collective solutions to the problems that we face today.

Marx's philosophy of dialectical materialism paved the way for scientific understanding of the structure, characteristics, and nuances of animate and inanimate phenomena, which otherwise looked difficult to understand in the absence of an objective framework.

We strongly believe that Marxism and Leninism are essential pillars of scientific socialism. Marx's philosophy of dialectical materialism paved the way for scientific understanding of the structure, characteristics, and nuances of animate and inanimate phenomena, which otherwise looked difficult to understand in the absence of an objective framework. Historical materialism opened up new horizons for the interpretation, possibilities and understanding about social reality.

The theory of scientific socialism provided the working class with a strong confidence for victory and a clear direction for future. We believe that dialectical materialism and historical materialism provide useful lenses for objective analyses of objective realities, and they inform and complement the unique pathways of a society based on their specific and contextual nature.

Following the development of Marxist-Leninist analytical paradigms and organizational tools for political mobilization, the working class seized state power for the first time in Russia in the early twentieth century in the world history. In addition to fulfilling the basic physical needs of human

We believe that dialectical materialism and historical materialism provide useful lenses for objective analyses of objective realities, and they inform and complement the unique pathways of a society based on their specific and contextual nature.

beings, the gains induced by socialist policies in the fields of education, health, sports, entertainment, and human dignity and rights were considerable. In the wake of successful socialist movements everywhere, many non-socialist regimes were compelled to take corrective and reformative steps in their regime for the welfare of the working class people. It is clear, therefore, that the impacts of people's movements are multiple and durable, if not always too obvious.

Nevertheless, we recognize that Marxism and Leninism can not be a readymade solution to every problem, nor is it a fixed formula for all times and places. Rather, it is a scientific methodology to understand, interpret and transform societies. Every nation has diverse characteristics owing to its unique path of historical development, socio-economic structure, level of class struggle and cultural traditions. These differences also make the revolution of a country, and its path towards socialism unique and special. Therefore, it is the responsibility of socialists in any country to identify the characteristics of the social and national context in light of the universal Marxist principles, and to formulate and develop unique principles of revolution and socialism based on those principles.

These values are not essentially capitalist in nature as they are sometimes confused with. The values of competition and democracy of the people are, in fact, the achievements of many political struggles waged by the people of Nepal for a long period of time.

Our political objectives in Nepal have been guided by this overarching pragmatic vision. We explore our own socialist model of socio-economic development in the country. We do not imitate any model of revolution, movement, change or transformation. Likewise, we do not prescribe any model to others. We have made an innovative application of Marxism in Nepal.

Indeed, a progressive socialist movement can only be developed endogenously and be adapted to the unique socio-economic and political features of a society.

We have always stood firm for constitutional democracy of the people within a competitive and pluralistic polity. The features of a constitutional democracy such as competitive multiparty system of governance, supremacy of the constitution, rule of law, periodic elections, human rights, separation of powers and checks and balances, and independent judiciary were developed during the course of anti-feudal revolution. These values are not essentially capitalist in nature as they are sometimes confused with. The values of competition and democracy of the people are, in fact, the achievements of many political struggles waged by the people of Nepal for a long period of time.

In our view, the constitution and law exert control over regressive forces, and support change and transformation for the welfare of the people by taking society forward through well-established mechanisms for political control by the masses.

The principles of people-centered state and a system of governance informed by competitive democracy are coherent and pro-people, since these ideas put the people at the front and center of all political objectives. These principles also help constantly re-invent, re-energize and re-vitalize the political parties and their activities. This is evident if seen in light of form-substance and reality-appearance dichotomy of Marxist philosophy. It is in this sense, we believe that we have made an innovative application of Marxism in Nepal.

As long as society remains class-based and diverse, it is natural for multiparty system to exist commensurate with this social character. Therefore, we have adopted a policy of establishing supremacy through competition. In our view, the constitution and law exert control over regressive forces, and support change and transformation for the welfare of the people by taking society forward through well-established mechanisms for political control by the masses.

Use of force, resistance and struggle were natural when colonization was in its heyday in the world. Nations were suppressed, and people's rights and desires of independence were ruthlessly subdued by foreign powers. People were exploited under the brutal rule of authoritarian regimes.

The twenty-first century has made it possible to transform society in a peaceful and democratic manner. Undeniably, violence cannot be a matter of choice when opportunities for using peaceful and legitimate means are available.

However, violence is neither a mandatory means nor a subject matter underpinning ideology for revolution.

Today, both time and context have changed fundamentally and we need to recognize the changing nature of social phenomena. Colonial era has ended and totalitarian regimes have fallen. The twenty-first century has made it possible to transform society in a peaceful and democratic manner. Undeniably, violence cannot be a matter of choice when opportunities for using peaceful and legitimate means are available. This is a valuable lesson we have learned from the millennia-old wisdom of our ancestors who contemplated the nature of reality and phenomena from an objective point of view, and left behind for us the adage अहिंसा परमो धर्मः (Non-violence is the supreme nature of being). By inculcating the ancient wisdom of our own land, I believe, we have applied non-violence for attaining political objectives in Nepal.

In order to attain the objective of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali', we have adopted useful and relevant ideologies, and used historical experiences in our context. We have discarded unnecessary ones. As said by Late Madan Bhandari, ideology should serve the needs of the people, but and not the people who should serve the needs of an ideology. Nepal's progressive movement represents the aspirations of

At the global level, we stand for an equitable and just international order based on sovereign equality. We believe that the global political and economic order should prioritize the interests of developing countries and their peoples.

the common people by placing their interests at the center-stage. We have not only focused on political goals, but also emphasized the founding of a society based on high moral and cultural values.

On the foreign policy front, our policy is guided by the rich experiences and pragmatic approaches of our statesmen and leaders of more than two and a half centuries. We pursue a foreign policy of maintaining close, productive and dignified relations with our neighbours and all friendly countries on the basis of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference and mutual respect and benefits. At the global level, we stand for an equitable and just international order based on sovereign equality. We believe that the global political and economic order should prioritize the interests of developing countries and their peoples. Just as we have fought for justice, equality and fair opportunities at the domestic level, our goals at the international stage are similarly shaped by our pursuit for a just, fair and equitable international political and economic order.

This year marks the beginning of the seventieth year of the founding of Nepal Communist Party. As we look back to the past seven decades, there are many achievements that we can be proud of. Today, we are the largest political party

The young population of the country is full of energy and valor. They inherit the legacy of brave, learned and innovative ancestors. Proper utilization of this richness of the country will rescue the nation from the gorge of poor economy.

with a clear majority and solid people's mandate. We have been successful in being a leading force of Nepali democratic movement and a major force for social change.

We have accomplished most of the historical political responsibilities entrusted to us by the people of Nepal. The system of governance has been transformed into a federal democratic republic, with the constitutional guarantees of political, social and economic rights. Yet, we still have many urgent responsibilities to fulfill, and many promises to keep. Most important of all, we have the responsibility to attain rapid economic prosperity within a short period of time with the consolidation of political gains achieved so far. Nepal is endowed with precious gifts of nature. It has incredible cultural heritage. The young population of the country is full of energy and valor. They inherit the legacy of brave, learned and innovative ancestors. Proper utilization of this richness of the country will rescue the nation from the gorge of poor economy.

Today, we are in the struggle against poverty, deprivation and backwardness. I firmly believe that, as in democratic movements, we will succeed in our movement for social transformation and economic prosperity. I am confident that we will be able to tell our future generations that Nepal's

I am confident that we will be able to tell our future generations that Nepal's progressive movement has proved its relevance by building a prosperous Nepal; and has successfully fulfilled the responsibility placed on our shoulders by history.

progressive movement has proved its relevance by building a prosperous Nepal; and has successfully fulfilled the responsibility placed on our shoulders by history.

Our people want to earn socio-economic transformation quickly. The role of state structures is of crucial significance in this regard. Equally important is the role of political parties as they constantly aggregate people's aspirations and get the aspirations endorsed by the electorates for its implementation and execution. In this respect, inculcating democratic ethos, values and norms, and striving for constant renewal and reforms in the party is fundamental to achieve a dynamic and ever-relevant progressive movement. It is equally important that we analyze the lessons of history to synthesize a new model of socialism to fulfill the aspirations of the people. This is an important responsibility for us to shoulder.

I believe that Late Madan Bhandari's vision and ideological contributions to the socialist movement will help us in identifying and developing new programmes and activities for fulfilling the people's aspirations. I hope that this School will play a vital role in this regard. ●

BRI offers us a unique opportunity for prosperity

Tribhuwan University, Kathmandu*

Connectivity remains at the core of prosperity. The connectivity of infrastructures can unleash multiplier effects in economy. Connectivity also provides us with opportunities for trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people relations.

I am pleased to be with you this morning in this International Conference on Belt and Road Initiative: Opportunities and Implications for Nepal and the Region.

It is a timely platform for deliberation on this bold and ambitious Initiative among the

* Address to the International Conference on Belt and Road Initiative: Opportunities and Implications for Nepal and the Region organized by Master's Programme in International Relations and Diplomacy (MIRD), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal, 12 September 2018.

The Belt and Road Initiative is a visionary undertaking of President Xi Jinping launched in 2013. It is an important step that aims at promoting connectivity and cooperation among the countries in the region and beyond.

scholars, experts, diplomats, students and interested people of this region.

I believe this conference will contribute to further crystalize our understanding on scope and opportunities of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and yield pragmatic suggestions to translate it into reality. I hope this programme will be a forum to share and learn from experiences.

With the successful consolidation of political transformation of historic proportions, Nepal is at an important juncture of undertaking socio-economic transformation now. Our key agenda is socio-economic development. However, Nepal's development needs are manifold while the resources remain untapped and underutilized. The financing gap is conspicuous.

We believe that the unprecedented economic transformation that is taking place in China and India offers huge opportunities for Nepal. As a country situated between the two economic powers, Nepal cannot remain poor. We must climb the ladder of development and at a faster pace possible. Onus lies on us to complement our national efforts by ensuring mutually beneficial cooperation with our neighbours.

We believe that BRI can support countries like Nepal to grow and prosper at a greater speed by ensuring equitable benefits for us. It can serve as an important catalyst to realize Nepal's prosperity agenda.

The Belt and Road Initiative is a visionary undertaking of President Xi Jinping launched in 2013. It is an important step that aims at promoting connectivity and cooperation among the countries in the region and beyond.

BRI connects nearly two-thirds of world population which account for one-third of global GDP and trade. The transformative scale and scope of this initiative has opened up plethora of opportunities to integrate the economies, connect the markets and invest in infrastructures.

As President Xi has outlined, BRI lays out a mutually beneficial framework to build the 'community of common interest' and 'community of common destiny.'

We believe that BRI can support countries like Nepal to grow and prosper at a greater speed by ensuring equitable benefits for us. It can serve as an important catalyst to realize Nepal's prosperity agenda. As a framework to spur investment and enhance connectivity, BRI can be instrumental in addressing our development bottlenecks; mobilizing finance to our development needs, and ensuring win-win cooperation.

While the resource gap looms large at global level, BRI can also be instrumental in implementing the Sustainable

Nepal and China have committed to enhance connectivity encompassing vital components including ports, roads, railways, aviation and communications within the overarching framework of trans-Himalayan Multi-Dimensional Connectivity Network.

Development Goals (SDGs). This way, it will serve the global goods in the interest of humanity.

While the increasing protectionist tendencies are eroding the rule-based multilateral trading system, BRI can be an option for openness and shared benefits. At a time when the locus of economic development shifts to Asia, BRI can be an engine for a new wave of globalization to make it inclusive, just and humane.

The economic growth and development of China is one of the inspiring success stories of our time. In the four decades of reforms and opening, China has maintained an annual average economic growth rate of 9 %. During this period, China's share in the world economy has increased from 2.7 % to 16 %; its GDP per capita has increased from USD 1,000 to USD 8,000.

China has uplifted 800 million people out of poverty and the country has emerged as the second largest economy in the world. The country has also been an important player in innovation and technological revolution. All these impressive figures and progress of China have astonished the world.

Nepal used to be an important thoroughfare in the historic Silk Route. It was a vibrant trade entrepot that connected China with the region of South Asia. Given its location and amicable relationship with its neighbours, Nepal can contribute as a connecting hub in the region.

This year marked the 40th anniversary of the reform and opening up of China. The tremendous progress made by China in the last forty years of reform and opening-up is the testimony to the wisdom of its great leader Deng Xiaoping, who has said, "Development is the absolute principle."

The drive of opening up and reform in China was a milestone. In a sense, the process of reform and opening up has been complemented by the BRI at regional and global level. When this Initiative is implemented fully, the BRI has the potential to become another milestone in Chinese history – a force of development and a source of innovation.

Connectivity remains at the core of prosperity. The connectivity of infrastructures can unleash multiplier effects in economy. Connectivity also provides us with opportunities for trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people relations. Enhanced cooperation in these sectors will create jobs for the people, multiply economic opportunities and boost productivity of the entire economy.

Cognizant of this, Nepal and China have committed to enhance connectivity encompassing vital components including ports, roads, railways, aviation and communications within the overarching framework of trans-Himalayan Multi-

Trans-Himalayan Railway will be a game changer in our development journey. Our two countries have already signed an MoU on Cooperation in the Railway Project. Pre-feasibility study has already been completed.

Dimensional Connectivity Network. We believe that these are vital components for sustainable regional cooperation.

Nepal used to be an important thoroughfare in the historic Silk Route. It was a vibrant trade *entrepot* that connected China with the region of South Asia. Given its location and amicable relationship with its neighbours, Nepal can contribute as a connecting hub in the region.

Nepal will have much to offer as a vibrant bridge:

- a bridge which is not only physical or geographical; but also, cultural and civilizational.
- a bridge that connects not only markets and economies; but also people and minds.

For a landlocked country like Nepal, the importance of connectivity is paramount for ensuring access to the global value chains.

Few days ago, Nepal and China finalised the text of Protocol to Agreement on Transit Transport. This Agreement provides Nepal's access to all the Chinese sea ports. This is an important milestone towards Nepal's transformation from a landlocked country to a land-linked country.

Nepal and India are committed to further intensifying cross-border connectivity. They include connectivity of railways, highways, transmission line and gas pipeline. Likewise, Nepal has signed a power trading agreement with Bangladesh too.

Also, we concluded another MoU for building cross-border transmission line with China this year. Trans-Himalayan Railway will be a game changer in our development journey. Our two countries have already signed an MoU on Cooperation in the Railway Project. Pre-feasibility study has already been completed.

These countries have started discussions on various BRI related projects. Connectivity remained the core area of my discussions with President Xi and other State Leaders in China on my both visits.

Similarly, Nepal and India are committed to further intensifying cross-border connectivity. They include connectivity of railways, highways, transmission line and gas pipeline. Likewise, Nepal has signed a power trading agreement with Bangladesh too.

The regional organisations such as SAARC and BIMSTEC are also important platform for multidimensional regional connectivity. We must make these regional organizations fully functional and result oriented. Connectivity was the most important topic of our deliberations during the Fourth BIMSTEC Summit. We have signed an MoU on Energy Grid

Each country has its unique realities and requirements. "One-size-fits-all" approach cannot cater to diverse development needs of different countries and regions. The development path of any country is dictated by the ground realities and socio-economic context.

Interconnection. It demonstrates our keen desire to promote cooperation in the vital sector of power.

Once we develop adequate connectivity, the land-linked Nepal can also be 'the land that links'.

Each country has its unique realities and requirements. "One-size-fits-all" approach cannot cater to diverse development needs of different countries and regions. The development path of any country is dictated by the ground realities and socio-economic context.

I would like to dispel apprehensions, if any, by stating that the government will be solely guided by the national interest in selecting or accepting projects and programmes under any bilateral, regional or multilateral mechanisms. We will not be swayed away by any opinion or views that are not objective and grounded on realities.

Nepal's priority is to liberate the people from the inhumane trap of underdevelopment, and to break the vicious cycle of poverty. Unhealthy mix of inertia and cynicism, unfortunately, will only perpetuate such trap. If we fail to take the call of the time, it will be the biggest crime against the generations to come. To realize our agenda of prosperity, we

Nepal's priority is to liberate the people from the inhumane trap of underdevelopment and to break the vicious cycle of poverty. Unhealthy mix of inertia and cynicism, unfortunately, will only perpetuate such trap.

will pursue the avenues of cooperation with our neighbours in conformity with our national interest and priorities.

Nepal and China are close friends and good neighbours. They share a historical friendship which has always remained cordial and trouble-free. Guided by the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, our two countries are determined to take our relationship to a newer height for our mutual satisfaction. BRI offers a unique opportunity for both of our countries to explore and exploit vast potentials of development for a shared prosperity. ●

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Investment in children for a better tomorrow is a must

Asia-Pacific Regional Conference, Kathmandu*

For the holistic development of a child, she/he requires proper food, nutrition, health care, education and protection. It becomes our responsibility to ensure these basic services to all children to ensure their optimal development.

I am going to share my thoughts on the topic of today's conference on Early Childhood Care and Education and its importance to the countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Capable human resource is critical for the development of a country. Development of such human resource depends on proper care and education we impart on the children of the day.

* Statement at the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Third Asia-Pacific Regional Policy Forum on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Kathmandu, Nepal, 5 June 2018.

Today's children will contribute for the good of a country in future. In Nepal too, we have accorded high priority to this sector to ultimately achieve the goal of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'.

As the famous adage goes "Today's children are the stars of tomorrow", so is my credence. The experience from the world demonstrates that the countries that have accorded higher priority on early childhood development (ECD) and child care have been able to achieve prosperity. Today's children will contribute for the good of a country in future. In Nepal too, we have accorded high priority to this sector to ultimately achieve the goal of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'.

As shown by researches, children's life beginning from the period of conception to the eight years of age is crucial for their development. It is because almost 90% of human brain is developed by the age of five. For the holistic development of a child, she/he requires proper food, nutrition, health care, education and protection. It becomes our responsibility to ensure these basic services to all children for their optimal development.

Issues related to children are interconnected and cross-cutting. They require proper coordination among the various entities and their plans and programmes. They all must be geared to attain optimal level of achievements and effectiveness in the interventions meant for the development of the children.

In line to the goal and our international commitment to "quality education for all", the Government of Nepal has been promoting ECD through various policy and programmatic interventions.

I recall the World Conference on "Education for All" held in Thailand on 5-9 March 1990. It recognised early childhood care as a major goal to be achieved. In line to the goal and our international commitment to "Quality Education for All", the Government of Nepal has been promoting ECD through various policy and programmatic interventions.

This year the government has initiated a massive enrollment campaign to ensure that all school going children are admitted to schools and are retained there to complete the minimum required level. Under the campaign of "Enrollment of One Child is My Social Responsibility", prominent personalities of national lives and social organisations have provided guardianship to the children coming from economically poor background. I myself actively involved in this campaign. We have given prominence to the right of every child to have education opportunity. Through this campaign, the government entities are active in ensuring school enrollment of about five-hundred thousand children within this year. These many children of school going age are out of school currently.

This campaign will continue throughout the year to ensure that every child is enrolled in a school. For that, we have made basic education mandatory and free for all. To compliment the

For the Government of Nepal, early childhood development is a constitutionally mandated priority. Nepal's constitution has guaranteed holistic early childhood development for all children as their fundamental right.

school enrolment campaign and iron out some policy obstacles to this end, the Parliament has recently unanimously adopted government's policy and programme. It has further eased the process to this effect. Also the government's commitment to upgrade all schools to child-friendly schools has also been endorsed by both the Houses of the Parliament.

For the Government of Nepal, early childhood development is a constitutionally mandated priority. Nepal's constitution has guaranteed holistic early childhood development for all children as their fundamental right. We have aligned our legal arrangements with that of constitutional provision and made one-year pre-primary education free, and basic education compulsory. Therefore, early childhood development remains at the centre of the government's priority.

The Government of Nepal in collaboration with various national and international development partners has been continuously promoting ECD programmes that include safe motherhood, golden thousand days, multi-sectoral nutrition plan and so forth. These programmes are targeted at pregnant women and children under the age of two years. We have set goals to reduce number of stunted children and significantly improve nourishment and nutrition level among all children. The government has formulated multi-sectoral nutrition plan

Nearly one million children are benefitting from early childhood education and development programmes through more than 36 thousand ECD centres across the country.

with a view to reduce number of underweight and obese children.

Nearly one million children are benefitting from early childhood education and development programmes through more than 36 thousand ECD centres across the country. These children get opportunity for holistic development and are prepared for school through these centres. Currently, 84% of the children below 5 years of age have received opportunity of early childhood development and education. Due to the success of ECD programmes, net enrolment rate of the children between 1 and 5 years has reached 97%. Programmes such as day lunch for the EDC children, provision of adequate number of teachers in such centres, and building of infrastructures have supported these efforts. Enhancement of quality of these centres has remained our priority now.

ECD has already been coupled with basic education and mainstreamed in the education system. We have now the challenge of enhancing quality of ECD centres and implementation of programmes targeted at the children below 4 years of age. All the stakeholders involved in this important sector have the responsibility to expand their activities, enhance quality of their programmes and improve delivery.

I reiterate Nepal's commitment to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, in particular its target 4.2, by 2030. For this to be realised, the current ECD programmes will receive further prominence in the future plans of the government.

I am happy to share that Nepal had achieved a number of child-related millennium development goals, including the child mortality and girl enrolment to school rate. Our journey to the implementation of the SDGs is built on those achievements.

Nepal is now moving on a trajectory of prosperity and development. The goal is to lead the country to a path of sustainable development. We understand that quality early childhood development will play critical role to attain this national mission.

The government has solemnly promised that no child will be deprived of holistic early childhood development. This can only help realize ECD as basic rights of children as guaranteed by the constitution. Therefore, we have chosen to implement ECD as a national campaign so that no child of this age group is deprived of this opportunity.

Coordination and building synergy among the government and non-government stakeholders is important to achieve the results in this front. I am confident that the National Planning Commission, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and other concerned ministries, international development partners, and civil society organisations will

I have the confidence that the stakeholders involved in this conference will have an opportunity to exchange their experiences and make the event a success for the holistic development of children in the Asia-Pacific region.

continue their efforts to achieve further effectiveness in this sector.

I reiterate Nepal's commitment to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, in particular its target 4.2, by 2030. For this to realise, the current ECD programmes will receive further prominence in the future plans of the government. We will further develop necessary infrastructures in this sector. Recently approved multi-sectoral nutrition plans will be implemented in coordination with all relevant federal ministries to muster progress to this direction.

I am happy to see that this regional conference on ECD is taking place in Nepal. I believe the conference will make a useful contribution to the holistic development of children. I have the confidence that the stakeholders involved in this conference will have an opportunity to exchange their experiences and make the event a success for the holistic development of children in the Asia-Pacific region. I hope the research-based presentations, exchange of best practices, and opportunity to network with each other will encourage government, international organisations, civil society and individuals to take a consolidated step for the cause of early childhood development. ●

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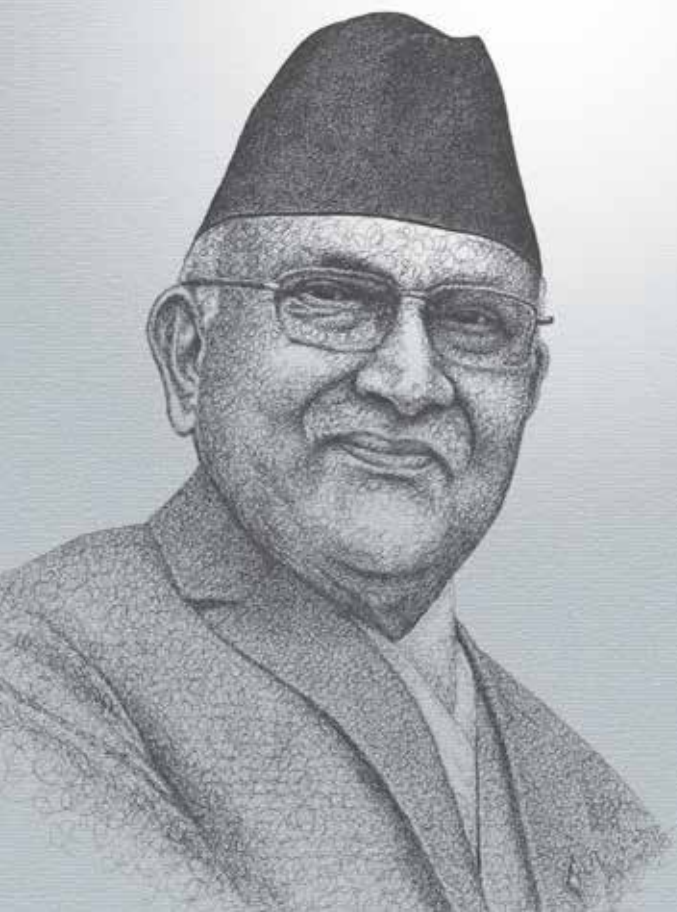
Peace and Democracy



Capitalism cannot be an alternative to socialism

Kathmandu, Nepal*

Capitalism can prolong its existence by finding a provisional solution to its crisis, but it does not have a sustainable remedy. This very internal crisis of capitalism will inevitably destroy it sooner or later. Though humanity will undoubtedly reach the destination of socialism, the crisis of capitalism itself is not an assurance of automatic victory for socialism.

We had worked out a plan for a grand celebration of Karl Marx's bicentennial birth anniversary some time ago. We wanted to do it in a relax environment inviting comrades from abroad well in advance by providing them enough time for preparation. But because of our very

* Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli addressed the International Seminar on Marxism and Socialism organized by Nepal Communist Party to mark the birth bicentenary of Karl Marx in Kathmandu, Nepal, 30 May 2018.

At a time when the world socialist movement is undergoing through various practices and experiments, ups and downs, successes and setbacks, the rising tide of the success of communist party in Nepal sprinkles the world socialist movement the hope that revolutionary changes are possible by peaceful means.

important national priorities such as elections, formation of government, and party unification, we had to compromise our plan and host this event in relatively a short time. We understand the inconvenience caused due to this for the comrades coming from abroad. Nevertheless, the interest and enthusiasm displayed by the comrades to participate in this event acknowledges the importance of this Seminar. It has instilled in us the confidence to convey the message to the world that Karl Marx is alive in our time too and he continues to beacon us with his ideals.

Karl Marx's birth bicentenary is a very appropriate occasion for us to seriously deliberate on his life and ideas that have made unmatchable contributions to humanity; to reinforce our unwavering commitment to socialism, and to learn from each other's experiences. Hosting this event in Nepal has a special significance in such time when the leftist parties here have become dominant force by winning almost two-thirds majority popular votes in recent elections. At a time when the world socialist movement is undergoing through various practices and experiments, ups and downs, successes and setbacks, the rising tide of the success of communist party in Nepal sprinkles the world socialist movement the hope that revolutionary changes are possible by peaceful means. I am

Lord Buddha said twenty-five hundred years ago: there is suffering in the world; there are reasons for this suffering; emancipation from such suffering is possible; and there are ways to end this suffering.

confident that this Seminar will be instrumental in achieving further ideological clarity on socialism that befits the specialty of the twenty-first century, and in injecting dynamism to our incessant journey towards socialism.

Karl Marx is the most influential intellectual figure of our time. His life was a turning point in human history from where a new epoch began. Lord Buddha said twenty-five hundred years ago: there is suffering in the world; there are reasons for this suffering; emancipation from such suffering is possible; and there are ways to end the suffering. The working class of our time got swamped in suffering because they did not know the reasons of their misery, nor did they know the ways to end it. Some thinkers imagined an ideal world of socialism, but it remained a mere dream due to the lack of a scientific perspective to reach there. Karl Marx brought forth such a 'beacon' that helped the working class understand themselves, the reasons of their suffering, and the ways to end suffering. After that, the proletariats, who were previously living with delusion, had their efforts of being proactive, organized and revolutionized in the right direction. Marx's philosophy of dialectical materialism paved the way for scientific understanding of structure and nuances of human life and the world, which otherwise looked enigmatic

The theory of scientific socialism provided the working class with a clear direction for future and a strong confidence for victory.

in the absence of right approaches. Historical materialism opened new horizons of the interpretation, understanding and possibilities about social reality. The philosophy that was understood merely as a means to explain and understand the world became a tool to change it. The theory of scientific socialism provided the working class with a clear direction for future and a strong confidence for victory.

Marx's ideas tremendously influenced the world in 19th and 20th centuries. Marx has contributed primarily to philosophy, economics and politics but no particular discipline of social sciences remains untouched by Marxism. Along with the wider influence of Marxism, remarkable changes have occurred including in the areas of balance of power in the world, international relations, role of the State and Citizen-State relations, and social arrangements. The liberation struggle against economic exploitation and social oppression has become stronger. Significant achievements have been made in promoting rights of women, who constitute half of the society, as well as those of working class, oppressed communities, youths and children. Marxism is not only an influential intellectual movement; it is proven to be an ideological tool in people's struggle for justice, equality and freedom, and nations' movement for independence. That's

Marxism has become more relevant in the twenty-first century, which, despite modernization of and development in different social aspects, continues to be marked by deepening economic disparity, culmination of capitalist crisis and intensification of humanity's struggle for justice, equality, freedom and prosperity.

why Karl Marx was voted, in an independent survey, as 'the greatest thinker' to have influenced the second millennium. Marxism has become more relevant in the twenty-first century, which, despite modernization of and development in different social aspects, continues to be marked by deepening economic disparity, culmination of capitalist crisis and intensification of humanity's struggle for justice, equality, freedom and prosperity.

The October Socialist Revolution, which took place in Russia over a hundred years ago tried to materialize people's age-old aspirations for instating their own governance. The working class acquired the state power for the first time. In addition to the basic physical needs of human beings, the socialism-induced gains in the fields of education, health, sports, entertainment, and human dignity and rights were unmatchable. These human values were so invincible that capitalism, which saw nothing but profit, was compelled to take some reformative steps and confirm them through some gestures. This established the idea that seemingly indomitable capitalism could be defeated and that new social structure is possible in the interest of working class people. However, due to internal weaknesses and some external factors, the world's first socialist regime lasted only for 70 years. Truth

Truth may be suppressed but cannot always be negated. People's movements may be subdued at times but the impacts and possible resurgence of such movements cannot be blocked forever. The socialism 'sketched' through the October Revolution and its long-lasting impacts are equally relevant in today's world.

may be suppressed but cannot always be negated. People's movements may be subdued at times but the impacts and possible resurgence of such movements cannot be blocked forever. The socialism 'sketched' through the October Revolution and its long-lasting impacts are equally relevant in today's world.

The capitalists were euphoric with the dissolution of the USSR. Many capitalists think–tanks claimed the turn of the event as 'the demise of ideology', 'the end of history', and that Marxism and Socialism 'had become irrelevant'. But their superfluous and subjective conclusions were diffused by the success of socialist movements in many countries and by the global financial crisis that started in the last decade. Depression following that crisis shook the very foundation of unregulated market economy and neoliberalism. Global capitalism has not been able to recover from this shock even today despite spending billions of dollars from state coffers to bail out a few bankers, real state owners and a handful of elites at the cost of common workers' interests. Economic inequality has been so aggravated that 99% of the global income is owned by 1% population. Millions of workers have been forced to 'precariat' class due to the loss of labour security. Ideology and politics have been side-

The much-hyped notion that open market economy and neoliberalism have got final victory has been proved as a deception. Hence, indispensability of socialism has been further reinforced.

lined and this vacuum has paved the way for extremism and terrorism to further deepen the social divide. The much-hyped notion that open market economy and neoliberalism have got final victory has been proved as a deception. Hence, indispensability of socialism has been further reinforced.

Capitalism can prolong its existence by finding a provisional solution to its crisis, but it does not have a sustainable remedy. This very internal crisis of capitalism will inevitably destroy it sooner or later. Though the humanity will undoubtedly reach the destination of socialism, the crisis of capitalism itself is not an assurance of automatic victory for socialism. The former surely opens up doors of alternatives. But, success of socialism is founded on its own ideological, political, organizational and socio-cultural strengths. Socialist movement is moving forward through various forms and contours in today's world. Countries like China, Vietnam, Cuba and Laos are developing socialism that has its own unique features. In Nepal, we have been preparing a foundation of socialism by establishing people's government through peaceful means of democratic competition. In different countries, the Communist parties are carrying out struggles for socialism from both the parliament and the street. Various other social movements are also moving forward against economic

Marxism is not a ready-made solution to every problem, nor is it a fixed formula for all times and places. Rather, it is a scientific methodology to understand, interpret and transform societies.

exploitation and social oppression with a view to promote social justice, peace, environment protection as well as rights for all. Among these movements, labourers' struggle for decent work and women's struggle for equal rights are of special significance. All these developments are components of socialist movement in general.

Scientific socialism was not a mere fanciful creation of the brilliant minds of Marx and Engels. It was propounded at the foundation of the historical necessity of a scientific theory to solve complex contradictions prompted by capitalist production relations and liberate the working class. Marxist principles are equally relevant and appropriate even today.

But, Marxism is not a readymade solution to every problem, nor is it a fixed formula for all times and places. Rather, it is a scientific methodology to understand, interpret and transform societies. Every nation as well as society has its special and different characteristics owing to its historical development, socio-economic structure, level of class struggle and cultural traditions, among others. These differences also render the revolution of a country and its path towards socialism very unique and special. The very first responsibility of Communists, in every country, is to

The very first responsibility of Communists, in every country, is to identify the characteristics of the social and national context in light of the universal Marxist principles, and to formulate and develop unique principles of revolution and socialism based on those features.

identify the characteristics of the social and national context in light of the universal Marxist principles, and to formulate and develop unique principles of revolution and socialism based on those features. Failure to do so will force us either to dogmatism and mechanical imitation of Marxism or it will deviate us from basic principles of Marxism in an attempt to pursue 'pragmatism'. Both are detrimental to the socialist movement.

We do not imitate any model of revolution, movement, change or transformation. Likewise, we do not prescribe any model to others. Models of revolutions are context specific. We do not project our consciousness on others. However, we humble ourselves, understand context, and build and nurture revolution based on the context and the consciousness of the people.

At some time, it was considered that there was one communist centre of the world; and a single socialist model was deemed exemplary and ideal. Movements in many places confronted setbacks while trying to imitate the direction of such centre. The working class expresses solidarity with each other's movements, helps each other in need and wants to learn from

Today, time has changed; context is new; and approaches are different, that's why, new questions have arisen before the Movement. Marxists should have innovative vision and capabilities to address the questions of the day.

each other. However, a progressive and socialist movement can be developed only in an endogenous manner.

It has been 200 years since Marx was born and 170 years since the Communist Manifesto was published. In these years, fundamental changes have taken place across the world in relation to labour forms, labour relations, modes of exploitation, capitalism structure, relations among countries, science-technology and production system, trade, consumption and global polity. Today, time has changed; context is new; and approaches are different, that's why, new questions have arisen before the Movement. Marxists should have innovative vision and capabilities to address the questions of the day.

Despite globalization, the world economic structure has become more disparate due to unequal distribution of benefits and excessive centralization of wealth. Variations can be seen in revolutions and socialist movements in different countries depending on their conditions. The implementation of Marxism according to the ground realities has been widely realized.

Because of that bravery of our predecessors, Nepal has a proud identity of an ever-independent country that was never colonized. Prior to taking a clear political course, the movement took forms of social reforms and 'humanist' struggles against conservatism, superstition and discrimination.

Nepali people's political struggle and movement has a long and glorious tradition. In early days, it emerged as a patriotic movement for country's unification and against British imperialist aggression. Because of that bravery of our predecessors, Nepal has a proud identity of an ever-independent country that was never colonized. Prior to taking a clear political course, the movement took forms of social reforms and 'humanist' struggles against conservatism, superstition and discrimination. Rebellious pioneers like Yogmaya, Saint Sashidhar Swami, Jaya Prithvi Bahadur Singh, Lakhan Thapa and Krishnalal Adhikari were the spearheads of such movements. Later, it gradually grew stronger as a democratic movement against the autocratic Rana regime. The sacrifice of Gangalal, Dasharath Chand, Sukraraj Shastri and Dharmabhakta Mathema was a distinct example in that movement. Nepali communist movement was born under the legacy of all these streams.

Though Nepal started trading much earlier, the capitalist production process began in Nepal in 1930s. This gave a birth to two classes at the same time: the working class, and the capitalist class. Nepal Communist Party was established in 1949 as a representative of the working class. Around the same time, Nepali Congress party was founded as a representative

Nepali communists have proved themselves to be the good friends, true representatives and torch bearers of the working class people in fulfilling their aspirations.

of the capitalist class. Along with this, socialist and bourgeois democratic streams emerged as the representative ideologies of those two classes.

Nepal Communist Party had clear objectives to end feudalism and establish people's democracy as per the guidelines of Marxism and Leninism; protect national independence thereby opposing imperialistic and hegemonic interference; and to build an equitable, just and prosperous socialist society. Right from the beginning, Nepal Communist Party has been leading Nepal's democratic movement in a comprehensive manner against all forms and means of dictatorship. Nepali communists have proved themselves to be the good friends, true representatives and torch bearers of the working class people in fulfilling their aspirations.

Seventy-year long history of communist movement has experienced highs and lows. Nepal Communist Party, which played equally important role in overthrowing Rana regime, was initially suppressed and later banned by the then government led by Nepali Congress party. Despite these obstacles, the communist party led strong peasant movements; opposed foreign interference; and struggled for people's rights in 1950s. It experienced painful series of

After a long and extensive discussion, we propounded our distinct and innovative path for Nepali revolution under the leadership of comrade Madan Bhandari. The path is known as People's Multiparty Democracy.

division and disintegration in 1960s. This also weakened its resisting power. On this background, Jhapa uprising ensued in early 1970s that proclaimed a bold rebellion for people's republicanism against monarchy. It set a foundation for building a communist party on the basis of new ideology and unification of communist groups right from the grassroots level. It established new values of sacrifice, dedication and devotion through unprecedented awakening of young generation towards revolutionary ideology.

However, due to inability to embrace right perspectives and lack of adequate experiences, there were some missteps pertaining to ultra-leftism. But devoted revolutionaries corrected them through serious self-assessment. From 1980s, a serious ideological discussion on new interpretation of Nepal's history, analysis of social character, identification of principal contradiction and charting out of endogenous programmes and special path of Nepali socialist movement began in the party. After a long and extensive discussion, we propounded our distinct and innovative path for Nepali revolution under the leadership of comrade Madan Bhandari. The path is known as People's Multiparty Democracy.

Deviation and defection from Marxism would not have been the answers to those questions. Neither would the problem have been solved by dogmatic recitation of the classical texts.

Similarly, another group under Nepal's Communist Movement emerged first with the name of Central Nucleus, which later was named as Fourth Convention, *Mashal* and *Masal* before it was renamed as Nepal Communist Party (Unified Center). This also played an important role in the Movement. The same stream was later evolved to be Nepal Communist Party (Maoist).

International communist movement was facing an upheaval at the time when the ideology of People's Multiparty Democracy was being propounded. On the one hand, dissolution of the USSR, the first socialist regime in the world, and dislodgement of socialist governments in Eastern Europe were generating disillusionment; while on the other, communist parties pursuing armed rebellions in parts of the world were facing severe setbacks. Apparently, it looked as if the era of proletariats that began with the October Revolution came to an end. The movement was facing new questions and challenges.

Deviation and defection from Marxism would not have been the answers to those questions. Neither would the problems have been solved by dogmatic recitation of the classical texts. In fact, the crisis seen in the communist movement was not

This left an extraordinary mark in our society. Communist Movement in Nepal was caressing the peak of its popularity. This astonished the world.

because of the inherent weakness of Marxism, it was rather the result of some flaws in the modalities and practices adopted in its application. Based on the assumption of innovative use of Marxism, we focused on the distinctive attributes of Nepali society, and practiced Marxism accordingly. We introduced a slogan of our revolution and called all the revolutionaries to 'oppose liquidationism and dogmatism, and strive for innovative application and development of Marxism.'

This left an extraordinary mark in our society. Communist Movement in Nepal was caressing the peak of its popularity. This astonished the world. American magazine *Newsweek's* coverage on Madan Bhandari, under the title 'In Nepal, Karl Marx lives' was the manifestation of how the world was watching the development of communist movement in Nepal. In an independent survey, Madan Bhandari was voted as the 'Man of the Century' to have greatly influenced the Nepali society in the twentieth century. Nepali communist emerged as the largest party in 1994/95 to run the government and it was very successful though its tenure in the office was very short.

The idea of People's Multiparty Democracy has contributed enormously in popularizing the communist movement in

The credit for establishing widely accepted propositions including the innovative development of Marxism, democratization of the Communist Movement and transformation of society through peaceful and legitimate means goes indeed to the thoughts put forward by Madan Bhandari.

Nepal, establishing its legitimacy and steering the movement ahead amidst adverse circumstances on both domestic and international fronts. It has invalidated the capitalists' conventional allegations against Communist Party and the Movement. The credit for establishing widely accepted propositions including the innovative development of Marxism, democratization of the Communist Movement and transformation of society through peaceful and legitimate means goes indeed to the thoughts put forward by Madan Bhandari.

On the other hand, Maoist armed struggle began in February 1996. That decade-long struggle made important contributions to raise political awareness among the oppressed class, exhaust feudalism, establish constituent assembly and republicanism as the national agenda, and promote the issue of inclusion in politics. Serious discussions between Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist and Leninist) and Nepal Communist Party (Maoist) were held on various political issues. The discussions formed the basis of cooperation between the then seven mainstream parties and the Maoists. This cooperation drove the overall course leading to the historical political change in 2006. Peace process began in Nepal. The happy outcomes of this decade-

The Constitution has incorporated the values of social justice, fundamental freedoms and socialism-oriented vision, and the historical unification between two largest communist parties has resulted in the formation of a strongest communist political party – Nepal Communist Party - in Nepal.

long process are right in front of us which to highlight here are the new constitution, and the successful unification of the two largest communist parties in Nepal.

The Constitution has incorporated the values of social justice, fundamental freedoms and socialism-oriented development vision; and the historical unification of two largest communist parties has resulted in the formation of a strongest communist political party – Nepal Communist Party - in Nepal. The main political attributes of this party include ideological direction based on the ideals of Marxism and Leninism; programme guided by the people's democracy based on multiparty competition, and democratic values; and main responsibility directed towards socio-economic transformation by building a strong base for a stronger national economy with socialist orientation. The party adopts its political direction to achieve supremacy through peaceful democratic means.

At present, Nepal Communist Party enjoys almost two-thirds majority in federal parliament, leads governments in six out of the seven provinces and commands majority of the local governments. It has been established as a party with a wide base of over 53% of popular votes. People have given the party a mandate, through recent elections,

Diversity and plurality mark the identity of our geography and society. Peace, tolerance, and respect for the opinion and faiths of others are our defining features.

to run the government. People have a strong support to our agenda of political stability and economic prosperity. Now, the government has concentrated all its efforts on realizing our resolve of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'. Our goals are very clear: we will graduate our country from the LDC status by 2022, and transform the country to the status of a middle-income country by 2030. Our destination is direct and that is the development of socialism having typical Nepali attributes. Our priorities are comprehensive and they are the enhancement of nationalism, institutional development of democracy, strengthening of national unity on the basis of social harmony, realisation of social justice and equality by ending all forms of discrimination, inequality and suppression; and attainment of economic development and prosperity within a short period of time. For all this to make possible, our path towards economic development is explicit where the government will take effective and lead role by fostering economic policy that guarantees meaningful and robust participation of private sector, allows effective role of cooperatives and community sector, invites foreign investment to national priority areas, and architypes different models of public private partnerships. Our focus is on ensuring the rule of law, equal rights, opportunities, security and dignity for all Nepalis. We put emphasis on

There are different traditions of Nepali people's struggles. Nepal's Communist Movement has adopted the legacy of these historical traditions of our predecessors and has given socialist character to such traditions.

good governance with special focus on accountability, transparency, building national economy and eradication of corruption.

We, the Nepalis, have a glorious history of over three thousand years. Nepal is a multiethnic, multilingual and multicultural nation having the harmonious domicile of people belonging to diverse languages, cultures and religions. Diversity and plurality mark the identity of our geography and society. Peace, tolerance, and respect for the opinion and faiths of others are our defining features. Justice and democracy are our social characteristics. Ancient civilizations such as *Mithila, Shakya, Khas, Kirat and Bagmati* have contributed to form a distinctive Nepali identity. These social characteristics have been reflected in our ideology.

As I said above, there are different traditions of Nepali people's struggles. Nepal's Communist Movement has adopted the legacy of these historical traditions of our predecessors and has given socialist character to such traditions.

It is true that the ideas such as competitive multiparty system of governance, constitutional supremacy, periodic elections, human rights, check and balance as well as separation of

We believe that as long as society remains class-based and diverse, it is natural for multiparty system to exist commensurate with this social character.

powers, and independent judiciary were developed during the course of anti-feudal revolution. However, these are not essentially capitalist in nature as some people tend to argue. These are in fact the achievements of humanity. Capitalism has been appropriating these issues to legitimize its rule and apparently show that it cares for people. When working class people, through their struggles, have handed a blow to the capitalist exploitations, capitalism has undermined these values, and even accepted the nonsensical assumption of 'by-birth supremacy'. Therefore, it is imperative that working class take recourse to these democratic values and principles. The content of any regime is determined by the class which the rulers represent and by those who control state machinery and economy. Governance system is merely the form. That is why our principles of people-centered state and governance system of competitive democracy are coherent. This is evident if seen in light of form-substance and reality-appearance dichotomy of Marxist philosophy.

We believe that as long as society remains class-based and diverse, it is natural for multiparty system to exist commensurate with this social character. Therefore, we have adopted a policy of establishing supremacy through competition. The Constitution and other laws have to control

Communists are those protagonists who represent people's interests. So, they must not follow and adopt practices, behaviour and methods that people do not like and accept.

and should continue to control those who attempt to reverse the course of change, create division and disintegration among people, and challenge to take society backwards. Communists are those protagonists who represent people's interests. So, they must not follow and adopt practices, behaviour and methods that people do not like and accept.

Use of force, resistance and struggle were natural when colonization was in its heyday in the world. Nations were suppressed. People's rights and desires of independence were ruthlessly subdued by foreign powers; and people were exploited under the brutal rule of authoritarian regimes. But, violence is neither a mandatory means nor should it be the subject matter of ideology for revolution. Today, time and context have changed. Colonial era has ended. Totalitarian regimes have fallen. The twenty first century has made it possible to transform society in a peaceful and democratic manner. Violence cannot be a matter of choice when opportunities for using peaceful and legitimate means and methods are available. In this context, it is not sufficient to fuss about waves of revolution by standing in the lagoon. It is, instead, necessary to establish the worth of revolution by going deep into the "sea of people" and fighting the regressive waves of a society.

As outlined by late Madan Bhandari, life is not for ideology, but ideology is for life. Nepali Communist Movement embraces this ideological conviction of late Bhandari and represents the aspirations of common people by placing their interests at the centre.

Therefore, we have embarked on an endogenous path towards peaceful attainment of socialism through the constitution written by ourselves and through legitimate means and people's mandate.

In order to realise the resolve of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali' we have adopted relevant and positive historical values and discarded unnecessary ones. As outlined by late Madan Bhandari, life is not for ideology, but ideology is for life. Nepali Communist Movement embraces this ideological conviction of late Bhandari and represents the aspirations of common people by placing their interests at the centre. We have not only focused on political arrangements, but also emphasized the founding of a society based on high moral and cultural values. We pursue a foreign policy of maintaining close relationship with neighbours and all friendly countries on the basis of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference and mutual respect and benefits. The size of countries can be different in terms of geography and population, but sovereignty and national esteem have the same value for all. That is why interference, dominance and undermining others can't be acceptable. We stand for the peaceful resolution of international disputes and believe that current global political and economic order should be

The size of countries can be different in terms of geography and population, but sovereignty and national esteem have the same value for all. That is why interference, dominance and undermining others can't be acceptable.

changed by prioritizing the interests of developing countries and their people.

This year marks the beginning of the seventieth year of Nepali Communist Movement. When we look back into these seven decades, there are a lot of achievements to be proud of. Today, we are the largest political party with clear majority in parliament. We have been successful in being a leading force of Nepali democratic movement and a major force of social change. We stand almost as the lone force in patriotic and nationalistic front.

We have accomplished most of the historical political responsibilities entrusted upon us by the time and the people. Three different authoritarian regimes have been dethroned. Federal democratic republic has been established and governance in line with the letter and spirit of the constitution has begun. Now we have the responsibility to attain economic prosperity in a short period of time, and sustain it by consolidating the political gains achieved so far. There is no reason for this country to remain poor economically. This is the country which is endowed with precious blessing of the nature. It is the land of incredible cultural heritage. It enjoys population dividends having

We have a firm belief that, as in democratic movements, we will be more effective champions in this movement for social transformation and economic prosperity.

young people with energy and valour, and has the legacy of brave, learned and innovative ancestors. The country has such a glorious history that it was disseminating peace, kindness and wisdom across the globe when some countries in the world were reeling under the medieval age, and some others were still not pregnant to born. Even then this country was able to function as an entrepot between India and China. But the bitter truth is that we are lagging behind in several development indices today. We are in the state of underdevelopment. Now is the time for Nepali communists to shoulder the responsibility entrusted upon us to change this condition. We communists who led the movement to overthrow the autocratic regimes in the past are now in a struggle against poverty, deprivation and backwardness. We have a firm belief that, as in democratic movements, we will be more effective champions in this movement for social transformation and economic prosperity. After thirty years now, Nepali Communist Movement will be hundred years old. By the time we will have elevated Nepal closer to the level of a developed country both in material and cultural terms. We will be able to tell our future generations that Nepali Communist Movement has proved its relevance by building a prosperous Nepal; and has successfully fulfilled the responsibility placed upon its shoulders by history.

The experience of application of Marxism in different countries shows that there is a need for the reinterpretation and redefining of Marxism.

In a special programme organized in Kolkata in 1994, and attended by Communist and Labour parties from across the globe, late Madan Bhandari said that capitalist system could not be an alternative to socialism as advocated by capitalists, even if Marxism confronted some occasional blows. The experience of application of Marxism in different countries shows that there is a need for the reinterpretation and redefining of Marxism. It is only through this process that we can realise freedom, liberation and progress of humanity; fight an end to social exploitation; and maximise on the development of production forces under Marxism. It is only by objectively understanding the trends of history and through the process of reflective thoroughness, we can cherish the ideals of Marxism and ensure its relevance in present day reality. A new thinking is required to successfully and effectively use Marxism in the contemporary world.

We are doing exactly the same in Nepal. We need global support and solidarity to materialise Marxism and socialism conforming the existing reality. ●

United Nations should reflect the mosaic of its members

United Nations General Assembly, New York*

This year, the UN has taken boldest of the reform initiatives in decades. The cross-pillar restructuring of the organization gives us an important opportunity to strengthen its development pillar and prove its efficiency in delivery. We believe that the repositioned UN development system will better deliver on 2030 Agenda.

As we commemorate the 100th birth anniversary of Nelson Mandela, I would like to pay my profound respect to him and for the cause he fought for. An iconic figure, he was a great human soul, and remains the source of inspiration for peace, justice, harmony, forgiveness and reconciliation.

* Address to the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, United States of America, 27 September 2018.

Despite the difficulties in the wake of devastating earthquakes, the political leaders rose to the occasion with a common resolve to promulgate the constitution in September 2015, thereby fulfilling the seven-decade long people's aspiration to write their own constitution.

This year we have lost an outstanding diplomat and visionary Secretary General Kofi Annan. I also pay sincere tributes for the tremendous contributions he made to promote peace, development and human rights in the world.

I bring greetings and best wishes from the Land of Buddha and Sagarmatha, also known as Mount Everest, for the success of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Since I addressed United Nations General Assembly in 2006, Nepal has undergone historic political transformation.

Through dialogue and deliberations, through mutual respect and accommodation, we steered a uniquely successful home-grown, nationally led and owned peace process:

> It was about peaceful transformation of an armed conflict;
>
> It was about restructuring of the state and promoting unity in diversity;
>
> It was about making Nepali people truly sovereign and as source of state power; and

The Constitution of Nepal does not only consolidate democratic polity under a federal republican order, but also embodies extensive rights and freedoms of the people.

> It was about institutionalizing and consolidating all those achievements in a democratic constitution enacted by the popularly elected Constituent Assembly.

Despite the difficulties in the wake of devastating earthquakes, the political leaders rose to the occasion with a common resolve to promulgate the constitution in September 2015, thereby fulfilling the seven-decade long people's aspiration to write their own constitution.

The Constitution of Nepal does not only consolidate democratic polity under a federal republican order, but also embodies extensive rights and freedoms of the people. Separation of power, checks and balances, the rule of law, independence of judiciary, periodic elections, inclusive and proportional representation are the defining features of the constitution.

Our vision is a comprehensive democracy which empowers Nepali people politically socially, economically and culturally. Implementation of the constitution was another paramount task before us. But we accomplished this historic task too last year through free, fair and impartial elections of federal, provincial and local levels with record turnout

Cognizant of the need for accelerating the process of development, my Government has set a vision of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'.

of votes and participation of the people from all sections of our society. Most importantly, the elections elected 41% of women representatives to elected bodies at all levels. We remain committed to bridging the gap of the remaining 9%.

The elections did not only ensure democratic rights of Nepali people in the widest possible manner, it has also given a strong government to the nation in many years. The government that I lead at the federal level has over three-fourth support of the parliament. Governments in the provinces also enjoy strong majority support. We have achieved much needed political stability through these landmark elections.

With these historic achievements, we have laid the foundation for creating an egalitarian and just society where all citizens are treated equally and they receive equal protection and opportunities. Social justice remains at the center of our polity. We are grateful for the support of the United Nations (UN) and the international community to our peace process.

Nepal's case is a unique example of peaceful and democratic transformation. It is a telling testimony that dialogue triumphs differences; and ballot triumphs bullets. We believe that what Nepal has achieved in conflict transformation can

Our foreign policy guides us to maintain amity with all and enmity with none. It has shaped our independent outlook on global issues which we consider on merit basis.

be an inspiring success story to learn from for many people longing for peace in different parts of the world. We are willing to share our experiences and provide our insights.

We have learned hard lessons in the arduous journey of democratic transition. With this learning, we have now emerged to a confident nation capable of sustaining political gains and undertaking a course of economic transformation. Cognizant of the need for accelerating the process of development, my Government has set a vision of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'.

We will realize this vision with the maximum utilization of natural resources and the optimal mobilization and management of human resources that we are endowed with. We count on continued goodwill, support and cooperation of the international community in our development endeavours.

Our foreign policy guides us to maintain amity with all and enmity with none. It has shaped our independent outlook on global issues which we consider on merit basis. We believe that regional and global efforts compliment our national development efforts.

In its third year, global efforts in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda appear too few and far insufficient. Needless to say, the least developed countries have been the battleground and it is where we can see whether the 2030 Agenda will be won or lost.

In line with our foreign policy priority to regional cooperation, we have recently hosted the fourth Summit meeting of BIMSTEC. We would like to see a revitalized SAARC as an important regional organization.

The world, today, is at an important juncture with a unique juxtaposition of perils and promises. Challenges ranging from poverty, terrorism, climate change, food insecurity, forced displacement and natural disasters to arms race continue to confront the global community. Intra-state conflicts have taken heavy toll on millions of lives. World hunger is rising after a prolonged decline for the first time in decades.

Peace remains obscure in many regions. Inequality within and among nations is increasing. Countries have failed to adopt sustainable production and consumption patterns.

In this context, the theme of the general debate "Making the United Nations relevant to all people: Global leadership and shared responsibilities for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies" resonates well the need of our time. Nepal supports the seven priority areas that you, Secretary General, eloquently outlined in your inaugural address to this Assembly earlier this week. I hope the current session

International support measures are failing to make a dent. Implementation of the internationally agreed commitments made in favour of LDCs is far below the expectation.

will seriously deliberate on these priority areas with seriousness and urgency they deserve. Here lies our political will and determination.

With this commitment, we must ensure that the voices of the people struggling for their rights, liberty, freedom and justice in various parts of the world including Syria, Yemen, Palestine, and many other places are heard and addressed.

The pursuit of making the UN relevant to all people is well captured in the philosophy of 'leaving no one behind'.

In its third year, global efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda appear too few and far insufficient. Needless to say, the least developed countries have been the battleground and it is where we can see whether the 2030 Agenda will be won or lost.

Development in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) appears dismal despite a record performance of global economy. International support measures are failing to make a dent. Implementation of the internationally agreed commitments made in favour of LDCs is far below the expectation. Reaching to those who are far behind the reach of development is not a luxury. It is not a charity either. It is an international

The impact of climate change burdens the poorest and the most vulnerable countries, like my own country Nepal, despite their negligible emission.

obligation, a duty and social responsibility to reach to them and rescue them from underdevelopment.

The impact of development and prosperity will be fully realized only when external support measures respect national ownership and leadership, are aligned with national priorities, come through national system, and when they help build productive capacity, create jobs and develop human resources. LDCs and LLDCs can be enabled to the path of sustainable development only by integrating them to the global value chains through their smooth access to market, removal of trade barriers imposed upon them, injecting finance and investment as per their local priorities, building capacity and transfer of technology at their benefit, and overcoming the infrastructural bottlenecks they are facing.

When it comes to climate change; the clock of caution is ticking loud. The impact of climate change burdens the poorest and the most vulnerable countries, like my own country Nepal, despite their negligible emission. We cannot remain a bystander when snow-clad mountains, known as water towers of the world, are receding and glaciers are retreating, erratic weather patterns are causing floods and inundation in the plains. It is an unpleasant irony that

The impacts of climate change on mountain and small island countries have been felt as an existential threat. The loss of lives, properties and bio-diversity, and increasing phenomenon of calamities are becoming untenable.

we have been victim of the catastrophes that we have not contributed for its causality.

The impacts of climate change on mountain and small island countries have been felt as an existential threat. The loss of lives, properties and bio-diversity, and increasing phenomenon of calamities are becoming untenable.

A matching and robust response is required. We cannot evade from the responsibility nor will there be any excuse for inaction. We must act decisively in ensuring climate justice that respects the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. To make this happen, international cooperation and collaboration for adaptation and mitigation is *sine qua non*. The Paris Agreement must be implemented in its entirety and good faith.

The health and wellbeing of our children and youths is an investment for future. Delivering quality education, imparting skills, and spurring innovation can make a virtuous composite to enable youths to be relevant and be able to contribute to society and nation building.

Technology has been a powerful agent of change and transformation. At the same time, technological revolution is disruptive.

We must support for the full development of their potentials, their creativity and energy to flourish. Inculcating entrepreneurial spirit and creating decent job opportunities for the youths can fuel economic development and help positively transform our societies.

At the same time, we must also inculcate in them with the civil and moral values so that they become a force for harmony and tolerance in society.

The frontiers of technologies are ever expanding and they have been major driving force for social transformation. But the digital dividend is unevenly distributed, while the digital divide is widening.

Technology has been a powerful agent of change and transformation. At the same time, technological revolution is disruptive. The developing countries, especially LDCs, are struggling to cope with the new modes of production and consumption. We must create an environment to ensure and easy access to affordable technology and free the barriers for their transfer. This will provide a level playing field to all countries to benefit and propel economic growth through new technologies.

The Security Council reform is long overdue. Any reform must reflect the current realities and ensure justice to historically under-represented and developing countries.

This year, the UN has taken boldest of the reform initiatives in decades. The cross-pillar restructuring of the organization gives us an important opportunity to strengthen its development pillar and prove its efficiency in delivery. We believe that the repositioned UN development system will better deliver on 2030 Agenda. Learning the new methods by a new generation of Country Teams is important to ensure the sound development system. But more than that, unlearning the old habits – that implored us to undertake this reform – is equally important. What matters also in the reform is the transformation of culture. The new culture must have accountability, transparency and national ownership at its core.

Nepal welcomes the reforms undertaken in peace and security architecture as well as management of the organization. UN should reflect the mosaic of its members, and achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness.

The Security Council reform is long overdue. Any reform must reflect the current realities and ensure justice to historically under-represented and developing countries.

Nepal reaffirms its principled stand for a general and complete disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction.

No region is immune from the menace of terrorism. Nepal strongly condemns all acts of terrorism, committed by whomsoever and for whatever purposes. Therefore, my country calls for an early conclusion of a comprehensive convention against terrorism.

In this context, we welcome the recent efforts made by the United States and two Koreas towards denuclearization, and peace and stability in the Korean peninsula.

Nepal welcomes the Secretary General's Agenda for Disarmament with a hope of renewed impetus to disarmament. Nepal commends the beginning of deliberations under the 'Kathmandu Process' for developing innovative confidence building measures in the Asia-Pacific region. No region is immune from the menace of terrorism. Nepal strongly condemns all acts of terrorism, committed by whomsoever and for whatever purposes. Therefore, my country calls for an early conclusion of a comprehensive convention against terrorism.

Never has been the issue of human mobility so prominent in the agenda of the United Nations. Nepal looks forward to the December Conference for the formal adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Ensuring human rights and wellbeing of all migrant workers has been our global priority. Nepal believes that the Compact will serve this purpose.

Nepal has hosted thousands of refugees for decades on a humanitarian ground. The international community must

Nepal recently marked the six decades of partnership for peace with the United Nations. Nepal has responded to every call, even at the shortest notice and without national caveats.

uphold the refugees' right to return to their homeland safely and with full dignity.

The complexities and intractability of global conflicts render the current thrust on conflict prevention even more important. Mediation, an under-utilised tool, can be applicable in all phases of the conflict continuum.

Nepal recently marked the six decades of partnership for peace with the United Nations. Nepal has responded to every call, even at the shortest notice and without national caveats.

Nepal welcomes the Secretary General's initiative of 'Action for Peacekeeping' and has endorsed the Declaration on Peacekeeping Operations. Troops and police contributing countries for peace must be given fair opportunities to serve at the leadership position both in the headquarters and the field missions.

A sustained partnership for capacity building of peacekeepers and guarantee of their safety and security can enhance performance of peace operations. Nepal condemns any kind of attacks on peacekeepers. Ending the indignity of sexual exploitation and abuse is a must.

Nonetheless, peace missions alone cannot substitute the home-grown preventive as well as conflict resolution measures. Our own experience tells us that peacekeeping cannot do what the politically negotiated settlements can.

Nonetheless, peace missions alone cannot substitute the home-grown preventive as well as conflict resolution measures. Our own experience tells us that peacekeeping cannot do what the politically negotiated settlement can.

Nepal's commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights is total and unflinching. We believe that development, democracy and respect for human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing to each other. As a member of the Human Rights Council, we will continue to play our constructive role to deliver on Council's mandates.

The ongoing transitional justice process in Nepal respects the comprehensive peace accord as well as the ground reality for sustaining peace and delivering justice to the conflict victims. We will not allow impunity in serious violations of human rights and humanitarian laws.

We are living in an uncertain world. Cold-war rivalries are re-surfacing. Trade tensions are building up. Multilateralism is being questioned. The Secretary General's opening statement largely captures the realities of contemporary world, and the sentiment of the Member States; be it in the field of peace and security or in the sectors of sustainable development, climate change, migration and technology.

The problems that we confront today at global scale can only be overcome through global collaboration and partnership in absolute trust and confidence.

We underscore the centrality of the United Nations as the most legitimate multilateral forum to deliberate on the challenges that we all confront globally today. It is the obligation of all Member States of the UN to preserve the sanctity of multilateralism and respect international laws. The problems that we confront today at global scale can only be overcome through global collaboration and partnership in absolute trust and confidence.

We are yet to make international system truly inclusive that promotes fairness, equality and justice for all states, bigger or smaller.

The onus to give direction to the world rests on us. Our collective wisdom and leadership should aim at the realization of the aspiration of peace and prosperity for all. Let us make a collective resolve that the history of 21st century will not be the history of confrontation and conflict, injustice and exploitation. It rather will be the history of cooperation and harmony; peace and prosperity, and justice and fairness.

Nepal has profound commitment to the principles and purposes as enshrined in the UN Charter. We remain as firm as we have been in the last 63 years since we joined the United Nations. ●

Asia
Society
sia

We are the example of homegrown peace

Asia Society, New York*

Amity with all, and enmity with none remains at the heart of Nepal's foreign policy. This is inspired by the principles of UN Charter, *Panchasheel*, non-alignment, international law, and norms of world peace.

Today, I stand before you to share my thoughts on peace, democracy and development. Nepali people have emerged through various struggles and transformations, at different junctures of history.

At one point of time, our forefathers fought against the imperialistic forces, and our sovereignty and independence was preserved, by their courage and patriotism.

The generation of my parents, who were ordinary peasants, had to fight to free themselves from the

* Speech delivered at the Asia Society Gathering held in New York, United States of America, 25 September 2018.

Now, the course of Nepal's political history has changed. We are a democratic republic. But our fight is continuing in a different form; as a fight against poverty, underdevelopment and backwardness.

clutches of feudalism and oppressive regime. Their struggle uprooted the despotic family rule of Ranas.

And, my generation had to fight against an autocratic monarchy. This was our final assault on an illiberal and undemocratic regime.

Now, the course of Nepal's political history has changed. We are a democratic republic. But our fight is continuing in a different form; as a fight against poverty, underdevelopment and backwardness.

In the course of history, our political gains have not come without heavy price. Several compatriots made ultimate sacrifice and got martyrdom. Many lived in political exile while others were brutalized and suppressed.

I feel a bit emotional when I recall those dark 14 years that I spent in jail, including four years in solitary confinement. My crime was that I fought against autocratic regime. But this never deterred me, instead, emboldened me to continue the struggle.

As a result of our sustained struggle, democracy was restored in 1990. However, our fight for full-fledged

The Constituent Assembly, was highly inclusive having representation from all gender, castes, ethnics, linguistic groups, faith communities, cultures, geographical length and breadth of the country.

democracy continued. We had never relented in our efforts. Nor was there any complacence towards our ultimate goal of a progressive democratic republic.

An armed conflict that began in 1996 was successfully resolved through a peace accord signed in November 2006.

Key to this process was the famous 12-point agreement forged in November 2005. I was among those who played an important role in forging consensus to advance this process and bring the rebellion force to a negotiating table.

This brought the seven-party political alliance and the rebellion force together to mount a combined people's movement against an absolute monarch who had snatched people's rights through unconstitutional means.

The ensuing result forced the monarch to capitulate. The armed conflict ended, and peace process began. The restored parliament clipped the wings of the ruling monarchy and suspended it until it was finally abolished two years later by a democratically elected Constituent Assembly.

The Constituent Assembly was highly inclusive having representation from all gender, castes, ethnics, linguistic

Implementation of the constitution is as much important as its promulgation. I had the privilege of serving the nation as the first Prime Minister under the new constitution.

groups, faith communities, cultures, geographical length and breadth of the country. After seven years of consultations and deliberations, arguments and debates, demands and pressures, peaceful agitation and campaigning, a highly progressive and democratic constitution was finally written, for the first time by people's representatives. As a leader of the second largest political party of that time I had an important responsibility to steer the process to a successful conclusion.

Finally, the constitution was promulgated on 20 September 2015. It has finally settled the political issues that the country confronted for a long period of time. This was a watershed moment in the political history of modern Nepal. I believe that the future generations may not have to go through the similar course of struggle for rights and freedoms anymore.

Through the constitution we consolidated democratic polity, republican order, periodic elections, universally recognized human rights, separation of power with checks and balances, rule of law, independent judiciary, and inclusive and proportional representation system.

Implementation of the constitution is as much important as its promulgation. I had the privilege of serving the nation

The government I head enjoys three-fourth support of the parliament. The 'Policies and Programmes' of my government were unanimously endorsed by the parliament, an exercise seen rarely in a competitive democracy.

as the first Prime Minister under the new constitution. It was thus incumbent upon my government to take decisive steps to implement the constitution as per the roadmap it has provided.

The Constitution came into full implementation after the free and fair democratic elections held last year for the federal, provincial and local levels. With a historic electoral turnout, the elections resulted in 41% of women's representation, and formation of stable and democratic governments at all three tiers of the federation.

The government I head enjoys three-fourth support of the parliament. The 'Policies and Programmes' of my government were unanimously endorsed by the parliament, an exercise seen rarely in a competitive democracy. This proves that the fellow Nepalis reposed trust in our leadership and our ability to deliver.

We steered a successful peace process through inclusive political dialogues and deliberations, and spirit of accommodation. Ours was a homegrown, nationally led and owned peace process.

To sustain the political gains and deliver on the development dividend to our people, my government has set a long-term goal of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'.

In the process:

- we managed to reconcile competing demands and aspirations of our diverse population;
- we ensured equal participation of all stakeholders and heard their voice;
- we recognized the important role of women in conflict resolution and peace process;
- we transformed state structures and institutions to mirror the mosaic of our society; and
- we brought the government closer to the people through restructuring of the state.

The major thrust of the peace process has been to promote reconciliation in society healing the wounds of conflict period. I have a clear vision for the development of the country. I am aware of our strengths, challenges and limitations.

To sustain the political gains and deliver on the development dividend to our people, my government has set a long-term goal of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'.

To realize this goal, we must:

- eradicate poverty,
- eliminate inequality and discrimination,

Nepal is a resource-rich country. But the level of development is well below our potentials. This mismatch must come to an end sooner than later. We have identified the drivers of economic growth.

- create employment opportunities,
- ensure social justice,
- promote good governance, and
- ensure effective service delivery,

Our aim is to attain a comprehensive democracy that empowers individuals in all spheres of national life- political, economic, social and cultural. I have a conviction that full realization of SDGs makes this possible.

Nepal is a resource-rich country. But the level of development is well below our potentials. This mismatch must come to an end sooner than later. We have identified the drivers of economic growth. These include no other vital sectors than agriculture, energy, industries, transport, infrastructure, information technology, tourism, and urban development.

For making economic progress sustainable, parallel attention will be given to the climate change mitigation, adaptation and preservation of bio-diversity. Nepal is safe for foreign investment. The government remains committed to further improving business and investment climate in the country.

Now, let me turn briefly to Nepal's foreign policy priorities.

We enjoy cordial and friendly relations with both our immediate neighbours, India and China. Economic growth and prosperity in neighbourhood offers us a promising prospect for the development of our country.

Nepal is the oldest independent state in our region, with her own distinguished and glorious history. Amity with all, and enmity with none remains at the heart of Nepal's foreign policy. This is inspired by the principles of UN Charter, *Panchasheel*, non-alignment, international law, and norms of world peace.

We enjoy cordial and friendly relations with both our immediate neighbours, India and China. Economic growth and prosperity in neighbourhood offers us a promising prospect for the development of our country.

Our relations with major powers and development partners have been all along cordial and friendly. We would like to further develop and expand our cooperative partnership with them. Extended neighbourhood and labour destination countries are also in our foreign policy priority.

Nepal has been playing an active role for the promotion of regional cooperation under SAARC and BIMSTEC.

On multilateral front, Nepal's efforts will be directed towards promoting a rule-based, just and equitable international order in which all states - small and big - fulfil their international obligations in good faith, and all

Nepal's commitment to democracy and fundamental freedoms is total and unflinching. The long journey of our political struggle is synonymous to the struggle for democracy.

countries enjoy equitable opportunities to fulfil aspirations for development and prosperity. Nepal's commitment to democracy and fundamental freedoms is total and unflinching. The long journey of our political struggle is synonymous to the struggle for democracy.

We will not allow any compromise on democratic norms, values and principles. We believe that democracy; development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. ●

Our vision for peace is guided by Asian philosophy

UN University for Peace, San Jose*

Education that cultivates culture of peace and tolerance while inspiring innovation and invention is the answer to the dilemmas that the world faces today. Such education is a building block of peace and prosperity.

It is my distinct pleasure and honour to be here at this University. I had heard a lot of good things about Costa Rica. I am pleased to be in this part of the world, and this beautiful land that hosts the prestigious University for Peace, an important institution that is working towards the realization of the UN charter's vision for peace and security.

* As part of his visit to the United Nations General Assembly in New York, Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli visited the UN University for Peace in Costa Rica where he was awarded with the Honorary Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. This speech was delivered on the occassion at the University on 1 October 2018.

No matter where the leaders came from; no matter which countries they represented, they were united in their call for a peaceful planet, shared progress and prosperity of humanity.

I thought that this was an appropriate forum to share my views on peace and democracy following my participation in the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly. Nothing could be a more relevant forum than this University.

I thank the Rector and the whole University family for your kind invitation. What touches me more is your decision to confer the honorary doctorate degree on me today. I am humbled to accept this great honour with a deep sense of gratitude. For me, this honour is an acknowledgement of my country's successful peace process and appreciation of peace-loving Nepali people.

With humility, I must submit that this recognition is bestowed on a citizen of the country that gave birth to Buddha, an apostle of peace.

I must commend the University for its immense contribution, as a center of learning and research, to promote the culture of understanding, tolerance and peace around the world. I am pleased to share on this occasion with the distinguished audience that Nepal has become a party to the agreement establishing the University. This is a reflection of our deep commitment to universal peace.

Education that inculcates tolerance and compassion, respects diversity, and accommodates differences while unleashing the infinite potential of human mind is the answer to the problems the humanity faces today.

Last week, I attended and addressed the General Debate of the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly. The world leaders gathered in the Assembly spoke of a myriad of challenges that we face today. Backlashes against multilateralism; growing incidences of terrorism and violent extremism; perpetuating poverty and increasing inequality; rising temperature and rising sea levels; continuing civil wars and sectarian strife; persistent food insecurity were among the issues that prominently figured during the Debate.

No matter where the leaders came from; no matter which countries they represented, they were united in their call for a peaceful planet, shared progress and prosperity of humanity.

In the march against many of these woes, the institutions like this University should be in the frontline. For, they have the answer to the many dilemmas we face today.

Education that inculcates tolerance and compassion, respects diversity, and accommodates differences while unleashing the infinite potential of human mind is the answer to the problems the humanity faces today.

After all, education is a lifelong process. As a student, one accumulates knowledge and sharpens skills, which later can be used to navigate the world.

Extremism that doesn't respect diversity and pluralistic nature of human society is showing its ugly head. We must note that diversity is inherent in nature; and no one can go against this.

Education is also about making oneself updated and relevant, for what we know and what we do not know today may change. Education that cultivates culture of peace and tolerance while inspiring innovation and invention is the answer to the dilemmas that the world faces today. Such education is a building block of peace and prosperity.

I, therefore, would like to commend the contributions that this University has made as a hub of knowledge for conflict prevention and peace.

Contemporary world is a confluence of achievements as well as setbacks, of progress as well as perils, of hope as well as despair. While the world has witnessed impressive economic growth and phenomenal technological progress, the benefit has not accrued to all equitably. Inhumane poverty still persists. Inequality within and among societies and nations is increasing.

Thousands of lives have been lost due to the civil wars and violent conflicts. The menace of terrorism has not abated, and its tentacles threaten the humanity in every part of the world.

Extremism that doesn't respect diversity and pluralistic nature of human society is showing its ugly head. We must

With the millions of people on the move, migration today is a mega trend. The response is needed to ensure that people migrate as a choice but not by compulsion.

note that diversity is inherent in nature; and no one can go against this.

The ecological balance has been upset. With the temperature rising, glaciers retreating, snow melting and sea level rising, the climate change has accelerated. And, our responses do not match the enormous challenges - the results of human recklessness.

Unfortunately, it is the countries with negligible emissions that are bearing the heavy price of climate change. This is unfair and thus unacceptable. We together have the responsibility to hand over a habitable planet to our future generations. We must fulfill our accountability towards them.

With the fourth industrial revolution, many ground-breaking achievements have been made. However, the benefit of technological progress has not been judiciously shared among all. The disruptive potential of such change in the world of work is yet to be assessed fully.

With the millions of people on the move, migration today is a mega trend. The response is needed to ensure that people migrate as a choice but not by compulsion. The world needs to come together to ensure the human rights of migrants, and to make migration safe, orderly and regular.

The attitude of violence sown in some human minds begets wars and human tragedy. The excess of greed breeding, in some, begets conflict and corruption.

Today, the problems are more interconnected than ever. They are not confined to the borders of countries and continents. They are not confined to particular race and nation. The tendencies undermining multilateralism and search for global solutions are gaining ground.

At the time when response should be joint and collective, rhetoric of isolationism is a regressive move.

At the time when international cooperation should be made more robust, protectionism and erosion of trust in the entire edifice of rule-based international order is a discouraging move. It is unfortunate.

I believe that the world needs, more than ever, to reassert its faith in multilateralism and collective solutions. And, it is equally important to resurrect and reinvent the rule-based international order, which is inclusive and accommodative of the voices of all countries, no matter how small or big, rich or poor, developed or developing.

A deeper reflection reveals that many maladies of modern times are rooted in human minds. The attitude of violence sown in some human minds begets wars and human tragedy. The excess of greed breeding, in some, begets conflict and corruption.

There are millions of people living in backwardness, who, if provided with proper education and opportunity, will be instrumental in rowing the raft of progress.

The veil of ignorance imbedded, in some, begets culture of intolerance. For this reason, foundation of peace should be built in the minds of people. This is also the essence of culture of peace.

The potential of human mind is not optimally realized. Human imagination, innovation and invention have brought tremendous break-throughs in the history.

And this potential of human mind is not yet fully realized. There are millions of people living in backwardness, who, if provided with proper education and opportunity, will be instrumental in rowing the raft of progress. We have to identify the willing minds and invest in them for their fuller development.

Not all people are equal in terms of their capacity. Not all share similar interest in the same subject. Therefore, the role of education is to identify and spur the hidden individual potential through appropriate tools including counseling.

Memory power, and creative ingenuity as well as imaginative power are the two aspects that make human minds superior to others.

Educating the minds of people will make them better individuals and open newer horizons. But more than that, it should also contribute to the development of societies and nations.

Prosperity and progress in isolated enclaves cannot sustain forever if a large chunk of humanity is lagging behind without being able to realize its full potential.

Education should enable human beings to harness the nature's enormous potentials while bridging the gaps between haves and have-nots and ending deprivation and backwardness. Doing so will contribute to defeat the cause of social tension, discord and conflict.

The utility of education lies on its ability to inculcate positive outlook in human beings. It should also foster moral values. This will enable individuals to judge what is right and what is wrong, where to proceed and where to restrain.

Educating the minds of people will make them better individuals and open newer horizons. But more than that, it should also contribute to the development of societies and nations.

Through education, individuals get enriched. Enriched individuals in turn enrich the families. Enriched families help develop society. Enriched societies contribute to enriching the nations. This, in sum, enriches the understanding among nations at the global level in the interest of humanity at large.

Peace is not a mere absence of war. Nor should it be understood as suppressed calmness, forced silence, and circumscribed tolerance.

Peace is not a mere absence of war. Nor should it be understood as suppressed calmness, forced silence, and circumscribed tolerance. It is a state of mind, way of living and has much broader dimensions – individual, political, economic, social, and cultural - which are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

At individual level, freedom with responsibility towards greater good of society is the foundation of peace.

At political level, meaningful participation in political process and logical power sharing contributes to sustaining peace. A perfect mix of rights and duties fosters an environment conducive to peace.

Likewise, in economic realm, for ensuring peace, the disparities between haves and have-nots and the condition of extractive economic exploitation should be abolished. Joblessness must be ended. Physical and biological human needs that are basic and justifiable must be met.

At socio-cultural level, tolerance and compassion in society and interfaith and civilizational harmony and unity in diversity are the catalyst for peace. This perspective calls for promoting the concept of comprehensive democracy that

At socio-cultural level, tolerance and compassion in society and interfaith and civilizational harmony and unity in diversity are the catalyst for peace.

embraces political, economic, social and cultural aspects to empower individuals.

In SDGs' underlying philosophy of 'leaving no one behind', I see an element of social justice. My vision of a comprehensive democracy is also anchored on social justice. So, there is a perfect match between SDGs' ultimate vision and the objective of this comprehensive democracy I am talking about.

I believe research programmes of this University can address the interrelationship between comprehensive democracy and SDGs for detailed analysis. In this regard, my Government is willing to contribute to research activities of the University by sending some students.

The UN Charter captures the aspirations of people for universal peace: 'to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war'. To promote and defend these aspirations, the structures to maintain the peace and culture to sustain the peace are needed.

The international institutions, rules, UN peace missions, and mediation are among the important tools as far as the structures are concerned.

For peace to prevail, the first step is to understand and address the root causes of conflict that are of different scope, scale and nature.

Sincere fulfillment of moral and legal obligations by all Member States and upholding the values of peace and harmony by every citizen are essential to maintain and sustain peace.

Here lies the important role of peace education.

In this sense, the United Nations has done justice to the core of its mandate by establishing this University.

For peace to prevail, the first step is to understand and address the root causes of conflict that are of different scope, scale and nature.

Poverty, inequality and backwardness often provide a breeding ground for conflicts. So do intolerance, intimidation and bigotry.

Self-centered parochialism and lack of far-sightedness further aggravate the situation. A myopic and selective approach does more harm than good.

Environmental distress, discrimination, societal discord, deficit of trust and denial of sovereign rights of nations over natural resources also contribute to fueling conflicts.

Environmental distress, discrimination, societal discord, deficit of trust and denial of sovereign rights of nations over natural resources also contribute to fueling conflicts.

More study and research of such causes of conflict can help broaden our understanding and anchor the peace universally.

Universities like this have an important role to generate, preserve and transfer knowledge about peace and conflict resolution.

Needless to say, the custodians of peace are the young people. Therefore, their contribution and stake in consolidating peace is paramount; so is their role in defending democracy and championing the human rights values.

When I say this, I recall my days as a young political activist fighting for democracy. In those days of autocratic rule in my country, arbitrary detention and torture were common. I myself was imprisoned for fourteen long years that also included a period of solitary confinement of four years.

In our pursuit of democracy, we never relented, never bowed to authority and never gave up our conscience. Our perseverance and indomitable courage shaped our struggles for political transformation.

Inspired by the universal acceptance of human values, we had numerous struggles and movements for people's rights

Born in Lumbini of Nepal, Buddha taught the path of peace and non-violence and his teachings are of eternal relevance to the world.

and democracy that culminated in the promulgation of a democratic constitution in 2015.

Gender perspective in peace is equally important. Women have an important role to play as agents of peace and harmony.

The primacy of peace is well established in the teachings of Buddha, who is an enlightened son of Nepal. Born in Lumbini of Nepal, Buddha taught the path of peace and non-violence and his teachings are of eternal relevance to the world.

The relevance and utility of certain things get diminished with the passage of time. But, Buddha's message is of timeless value. It is as pertinent today as it was in the time of its articulation.

The Charter of the United Nations embraces this eternal and universal message of peace of Buddha. We find in his teachings an illuminating philosophy for peace.

The essence of Asian philosophy is '*vasudaiva kutumbakam*', which means the world is one family. Likewise, '*sarve bhawantu sukhina*', which means all human beings should remain happy, is the core of our welfare vision, derived from long philosophical tradition. The relevance and appeal

The relevance and appeal of these maxims are universal. This philosophy doesn't discriminate humanity on any ground. Our vision for peace is guided by this philosophy.

of these maxims are universal. This philosophy doesn't discriminate humanity on any ground. Our vision for peace is guided by this philosophy.

Unfortunately, as witnessed in other parts of the world in different times and circumstances, Nepal too experienced a period of armed conflict that was the outcome of the prevailing circumstances and had much to do with dissatisfaction of the people fueled by the lack of opportunities for economic and social development.

However, the political parties of Nepal and the armed rebels managed to come together proactively to resolve the conflict through peaceful means and laid grounds for peace. As a result of a homegrown and nationally led and owned process, a peace accord was signed in 2006, formally ending the armed conflict. Management of arms and combatants was successfully handled to pave the way for political process.

In the last decade, Nepal has undergone political transformation of historic proportions. We moved from a unitary monarchial system of governance to a federal democratic republican polity, which has now been institutionalized by the new Constitution.

Our experience is a testimony of the fact that with requisite political will and sense of accommodation, negotiations and dialogue can resolve conflicts.

The constitution promulgated by the Constituent Assembly, is a forward-looking, progressive and human-rights based document which ensures inclusive and participatory democracy, decentralized federal structure, socio-economic justice and rule of law.

This has marked the conclusion of the uniquely successful peace process. Our conflict resolution experience and the peace process can provide an important case study for research works including in this University.

Our experience is a testimony of the fact that with requisite political will and sense of accommodation, negotiations and dialogue can resolve conflicts.

We must be aware of the elements that seek to drive a wedge between different groups by taking advantage of their differences and discords to perpetuate conflict to fulfill their vested interests. We must resolutely defeat them.

The historical elections held last year was successful to elect considerable number of women representatives to parliaments at all levels. Our experience is a testimony of the fact that strong political will and constitutional guarantee can be instrumental in empowering women to ensure their legitimate share as well as in making democracy inclusive.

Having settled the political issues, the history has bestowed on us the greater responsibilities to undertake socio-economic transformation to sustain the political gains we have achieved.

Having settled the political issues, the history has bestowed on us the greater responsibilities to undertake socio-economic transformation to sustain the political gains we have achieved.

With an overwhelming mandate of people, the government that I head is determined to building on this political transformation and accelerates its drive for prosperity and sustainable development to realise happiness for all Nepalese.

Our vision is guided by the long-term goal of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali.' To realize this goal, our priority is to ensure decent jobs and gainful employment for our working age population, modernize our agriculture, utilize our energy potential especially in hydropower, and promote development of infrastructure, connectivity, tourism and human resources.

In doing so, we will need investment in multiple sectors. And, we have put right policies in place to make foreign investments in Nepal safe and profitable.

Therefore, I would like to stress the need to promote enhanced collaboration and cooperation between the University for Peace and universities, think tanks and policy institutions

Having settled the political issues, the history has bestowed on us the greater responsibilities to undertake socio-economic transformation to sustain the political gains we have achieved.

in Nepal to advance the common cause of peace. When we talk about interrelationship between peace, democracy and development, we must not forget:

- that democracy and development are contingent upon peace.
- that the investment in development will crumble in the absence of peace.
- that aspirations for democracy will evaporate in the absence of peace. ●

We cannot be onlookers of our own peril anymore

Fourth BIMSTEC Summit, Kathmandu*

We want to achieve the goal of prosperity and happiness within a democratic framework institutionalised by our constitution. We believe in comprehensive democracy that empowers individuals not only politically but also economically, socially and culturally.

I feel honoured and privileged to welcome the distinguished Heads of States and Governments, and other delegates to the land of Sagarmatha and Buddha, and the Fourth BIMSTEC Summit in Kathmandu. I sincerely thank you all the fellow BIMSTEC leaders for the prompt consent to the organization of this Summit within such a short span of time, and for your gracious presence here today.

* Opening statement at the Inaugural Session of the Fourth BIMSTEC Summit held in Nepal, Kathmandu, 30 August 2018.

This unique platform of BIMSTEC does not only connect our countries but also links South Asia with South-East Asia. It connects mountains with oceans reinforcing ecological interdependence.

The world is watching our gathering and us with keen interest. Because, as a region with 1.6 billion people, home of 22% of world population, and combined GDP of USD 2.8 trillion, our vision, commitment and action will have an impact on global political and economic order. We are here today with a solemn commitment to make the Bay of Bengal Region peaceful, prosperous and sustainable.

Our countries, together, have a dynamic potential imbued with the creative ingenuity and diligence of our peoples; opulence and generosity of the nature; richness and depth of the civilizations; and magnificence of diverse cultures and heritages.

This unique platform of BIMSTEC does not only connect our countries but also links South Asia with South-East Asia. It connects mountains with oceans reinforcing ecological interdependence. It brings together a resolve of our leaderships - the resolve that is for progress and prosperity, and, for sustainable development.

BIMSTEC is not just a sum of its parts or a sum of the Member States. It is more than that.

Our group, together, has a promising potential with a plethora of opportunities, rich natural resources, and dynamic and vibrant populations. Moreover, we have been blessed by the wisdom, knowledge and innovation of our ancestors.

It is also an Idea - the idea if harnessed together can deepen integration among us and unleash the economic dynamism and address the development needs of countries and the peoples. An idea than can accelerate social progress and promote collaboration and partnership among us.

It is also an Identity - the identity that is rooted in rich civilizational heritage founded on shared values, and shaped by common understanding based on the unity in diversity.

It is also a Destiny - the destiny that is ordained by the organic linkage of ecosystem between high mountains and deep seas. The destiny that is shaped by contiguous geography as well as potential of robust people-to-people contacts.

Above all, it is our Commitment - the commitment that is for deeper integration of our economies, trade and commerce. It is a commitment espoused over two decades ago as a thoughtful response to seize the opportunities of globalization and shifting of economic locus to Asia.

And, I must say it has to evolve as a cohesive regional grouping, an association of connected countries that cuts across societies and peoples.

The dexterity of our hardworking people cannot pay off if we fail to lift millions of people from the suffocating ditch of poverty. The dream of prosperity falters i0f we fail to defeat the darkness of poverty.

Our group, together, has a promising potential with a plethora of opportunities, rich natural resources, and dynamic and vibrant populations. We have been blessed by the wisdom, knowledge and innovation of our ancestors.

In realizing our potentials, first and foremost, we must liberate our people from the clutches of poverty, - the brutal clutches that drag us in a vicious cycle of deprivation, which is inhumane, unjust and malign that drains our potential and ridicules our efforts and intentions.

The dexterity of our hardworking people cannot pay off if we fail to lift millions of people from the suffocating ditch of poverty. The dream of prosperity falters if we fail to defeat the darkness of poverty.

The BIMSTEC Poverty Plan of Action must be fully implemented. We must build on the progress made in the implementation of Millennium Development Goals, and integrate the transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We must ensure that no one would leave behind when we accelerate the economic development in our region.

We have been bearing the heavy brunt of nature's fury. Disproportionate consequences of climate change have adversely impacted us.

We have been bearing the heavy brunt of nature's fury. Disproportionate consequences of climate change have adversely impacted us. Calamities such as landslides and floods have caused colossal loss. Ironically, we are being penalized for the mistakes we never made.

To face this challenge, what we need is collective preparedness to prevent the perils of such calamities. We also need to intensify collaboration to adapt to and mitigate the menace of climate change based on the Principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibility and Respective Capabilities.

We are in the lap of the same Himalayas. Our rivers originate from the Himalayas and merge in the Bay of Bengal. The clouds from the Bay of Bengal bump against the Himalayas and land in our country in the form of ice and rain. The typhoons in Bay of Bengal shake the Himalayas, and trigger avalanches and floods. Avalanches and floods in high mountains, in return, create troubles of various kinds in Bangladesh and other coastal areas. The nature has not just created the Himalayas and the Bay of Bengal, but also the bond of existence, one that requires us to constantly collaborate and cooperate.

Our youths and children are our future. We have to work together for youths and children and for the future generations. Investment in youths and children is investment for prosperous future.

With the wave of fourth industrial revolution, new avenues have opened up. The technological revolution is transformative. Old modes of production and consumption are being transformed exponentially.

This phenomenon has presented us a wide menu of challenges as well as opportunities. And, complacence is not in the menu. We cannot afford to be the mere bystander at our own peril. We need to invest more in information and communication technology. And, we need to invest smartly.

Most importantly, we need to invest in our youths to inculcate in them the entrepreneurial spirit to nourish their creativity, spur innovation to impart skills onto them so that they befit the rapid technological change. It will contribute to unleash their vigour and energy for creativity and production, thus barring the desperation and vulnerability. We should strive to the best utilization of the energy that our youths have.

Our youths and children are our future. We have to work together for youths and children and for the future generations. Investment in youths and children is investment for prosperous future.

An early conclusion of the agreements on trade in goods, trade in services, investment, mutual assistance in customs matters, dispute settlement and trade facilitation is the need of hour to enable BIMSTEC to effectively move forward.

Our region is not immune from dangers of terrorism, organized crimes, drugs trafficking, human trafficking, and money laundering, among others. We must remain united in defeating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We must combat all other transnational organized crimes through an enhanced level of cooperation and coordinated efforts. Peace and stability is essential for sustained economic growth and development. I believe that faster development with social justice and rapid growths with equitable distribution are key to ensuring peace and stability.

Trade is an engine for economic growth. It is unfortunate that we trade little within the region. An early conclusion of the agreements on trade in goods, trade in services, investment, mutual assistance in customs matters, dispute settlement and trade facilitation is the need of hour to enable BIMSTEC to effectively move forward. When the protectionist tendencies and increasing barriers are rife in the world, increased understanding among us is a *sine qua non* to realize our commitments for free and fair trade. Our success will depend on the honest and time-bound implementation of all instruments that we have signed. Our success will depend on lesser barriers and greater trade facilitations; on smooth and uninterrupted transit arrangements; on increased flow of goods and services; and on scaling up of investments.

Better physical connectivity, increased trade, and enhanced people-to-people contacts are some of them. We need to do this by focusing on our commonalities as well as comparative advantages. We need to do this by taking bold policy measures.

Our success will depend on integrated markets, integrated economies and an atmosphere of confidence for level playing field for all the Member States, including the landlocked and least developed countries amongst us.

My government has adopted the long-term goal of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'. When we speak of prosperity and happiness, we must be aware of that the nexus between opulence and happiness is not linear. Prosperity alone is not the soul and face of happiness. Happiness is multifaceted. It has multiple building blocks, and prosperity is one of them. In our efforts to realise this goal, we count on the goodwill and support of the international community.

We want to achieve the goal of prosperity and happiness within a democratic framework institutionalised by our constitution. We believe in comprehensive democracy that empowers individuals not only politically but also economically, socially and culturally.

Guided by the similar vision, we also aspire for a 'Prosperous Region, Happy Peoples'.

And, we must remember that the pockets of deprivation, be they small or large; the impulse of exclusion, and perennial

Connectivity in physical and digital sphere; connectivity of infrastructures and industries; connectivity of markets and minds can unleash multiplier effects igniting innovation, spurring growth and propelling progress.

attitude of pessimism and cynicism are obstacles in the march towards the vision of prosperous region and happy peoples.

We will be able to overcome these obstacles only through deeper economic integration. For this, we need to identify the drivers of economic integration. Better physical connectivity, increased trade, and enhanced people-to-people contacts are some of them. We need to do this by focusing on our commonalities as well as comparative advantages. We need to do this by taking bold policy measures.

Connectivity is a key enabler for robust regional cooperation. It is the very foundation in which the edifice of economic integration can stand upright.

Connectivity in physical and digital sphere; connectivity of infrastructures and industries; connectivity of markets and minds can unleash multiplier effects igniting innovation, spurring growth and propelling progress.

We need to intensify our investments in the cross-regional transport networks. Better connectivity of roads, railways, airways, waterways will unlock our full potential. It can

People are the drivers and beneficiaries of connectivity. Buddhism serves as a strong connecting thread in the region. All the Member States of BIMSTEC are connected to Buddhism in one way or the other.

promote meaningful cooperation in trade and investment, energy, tourism and technology transfer.

An early adoption of the draft BIMSTEC Master Plan on Transport Connectivity, and timely conclusion of transport related regional instruments will help advance our cooperation in this critical area.

People are the drivers and beneficiaries of connectivity. Buddhism serves as a strong connecting thread in the region. All the Member States of BIMSTEC are connected to Buddhism in one way or the other. It is in this spirit and in the capacity of the Prime Minister of the land of Buddha, I underline the importance of developing and operationalizing the Buddhist Circuit in the region to promote connectivity and tourism.

The success of BIMSTEC will be judged by outcomes it delivers. A strong political will coupled with right mix of policies, institutions and resources can ensure the success of BIMSTEC.

As our organization evolves, we should be prepared to adopt a Charter to provide it a solid legal foundation.

Scale, speed and substance of cooperation should match the potentials of the region. For this we must realise that time is of essence. Now is the time to act and to intensify our efforts.

Nepal stands for meaningful regional cooperation. We believe that SAARC and BIMSTEC do not substitute to each other but complement them. We are also committed to advancing the sub-regional cooperation under BBIN. Nepal reiterates its strong and unwavering commitment to the process of regional cooperation under BIMSTEC.

Scale, speed and substance of cooperation should match the potentials of the region. For this we must realise that time is of essence. Now is the time to act and to intensify our efforts. Now is the time not just to deliberate, but also to deliver. Now is the time to translate promises into performance. ●

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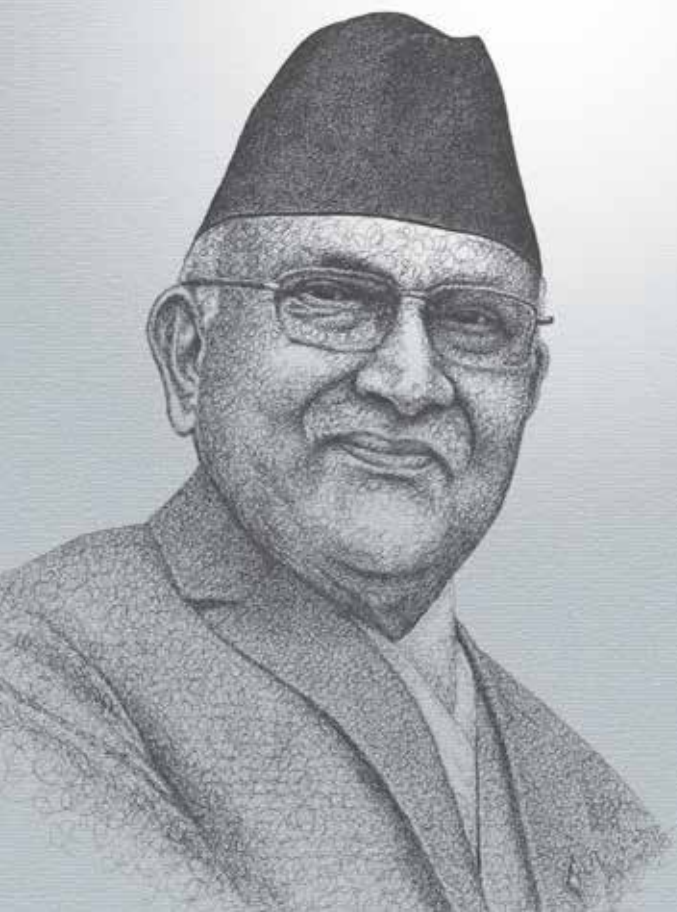
Constitution and Constitutionalism



Our constitution embraces the vision of our country

Kathmandu, Nepal*

Our constitution is the encapsulation of the collective will of Nepali people. It is summarised in its 35 Parts and 308 Articles. It includes all the novel, modern and progressive features of a democratic, inclusive and humanistic polity that we have aspired for during the several decades of our political struggles and revolutions.

Five weeks from today, we are going to celebrate the third anniversary of the promulgation of our Constitution.

As we are preparing for the Day, I am reminded of the severe trials and tribulations, unbearable pain and suffering that the Nepali people went through to write their constitution in their own which could embody their hopes and

* Statement delivered at the concluding ceremony of the Conference on the Constitution of Nepal 2015, Kathmandu, 13 August 2018.

सम्मेलन:
नेपालको संविधान

Nepali people cannot tolerate any excesses and excuses now. They cannot wait longer to feel the delivery of change. This popularly elected government does everything possible to make the people feel change in their life, and it does so as per the constitutional mandate.

aspirations, ideals and faiths for the well-being of them and their generations to come.

In the meantime, I am also aware of the monumental tasks ahead of us to translate the aspirations of Nepali people into a concrete action so that their hopes and faiths on us are not let down and the progressive and forward-looking provisions as guaranteed in the Constitution are fulfilled in their day to day life.

We will do no wrongs willfully while adhering to the Constitution. We will honestly work to deliver peace, good governance, development and prosperity to the people. Nepali people cannot tolerate any excesses and excuses now. They cannot wait longer to feel the delivery of change. This popularly elected government does everything possible to make the people feel change in their life, and it does so as per the constitutional mandate.

Our constitution is the encapsulation of the collective will of Nepali people. It is summarised in its 35 Parts and 308 Articles. It includes all the novel, modern and progressive features of a democratic, inclusive and humanistic polity that we have aspired for during the several decades of our political struggles and revolutions.

The Nepali people's quest for constitutionalism and democratic polity emerged from the legacy of all these streams coming into a single political movement for political freedoms, social change and transformation.

It recognizes the worth and dignity of every Nepali citizen, and treats every citizen equally, and guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms for everyone without any discrimination whatsoever.

We deserve to be proud of this apex law of the land, the promulgation of which was a crucial milestone in the modern history of Nepal.

Historical Overview

We have had to fight protracted struggles against various forms of authoritarian regimes to secure fundamental rights and political freedoms, as the modern political history of Nepal has basically been one of struggles and revolutions in various forms.

Indeed, the political struggles and movements of the Nepali people have a long and glorious tradition, emerging first as a patriotic movement for the country's unification, and later as a struggle against British aggression.

These battles took various forms of social reforms and humanist struggles against tyranny and repression and

For the last seven decades, the people of Nepal have tried to shape their destiny by forcing the past regimes to promulgate constitutions that could limit the power of the rulers. Past constitutions were not as democratic and progressive as the present Constitution.

later transformed into a democratic movement against the despotic Rana regime.

The Nepali people's quest for constitutionalism and democratic polity emerged from the legacy of all these streams coming into a single political movement for political freedoms, social change and transformation.

For the last seven decades, the people of Nepal have tried to shape their destiny by forcing the past regimes to promulgate constitutions that could limit the power of the rulers. Past constitutions were not as democratic and progressive as the present Constitution.

The History of Constitutions of Nepal

Nepal's constitutional history goes back to 70 years ago, with the promulgation of the landmark *Nepal Sarkar Bidhanik Kanoon of 1948* by Padma Sumsher (then Rana Prime Minister). While this first constitution in the annals of Nepal's constitutional history must be credited with initiating the process of democratization in the country, it fell short of meeting the basic requirements that define modern democratic systems of checks and balances.

It was against this flagrant violation of the people's rights that the people of Nepal waged continuous struggles and made supreme sacrifices for bringing back a democratic polity that would recognize the people as the repository of sovereignty and ultimate authority of the state.

Worse, it was never implemented.

The Interim Government of Nepal Act, 1951, which was enacted after the Revolution of 1951, created the Pradhan Nyayalaya (Supreme Court), and enlisted the fundamental rights of the citizens.

However, it was the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 1959, that enabled the first-ever general election in Nepal for introducing multi-party representative democracy for the first time in the country's history.

This democratic experiment, however, was short-lived as the king took over executive power by banning political parties, throttling free speech and instituting an autocratic Panchayat system under his direct control.

Thereafter, the Constitution of Nepal, 1962, constitutionalized the King's *coup d'etat* and placed him at the center-stage of Nepal's political authority.

This was a dark period in Nepal's modern history.

It was against this flagrant violation of the people's rights that the people of Nepal waged continuous struggles and

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As I think back to those days of utter darkness when political space was constricted, civil liberties curtailed and the people silenced with the might of violence, I vividly remember the matchless courage and fortitude of our comrades who fought against the autocratic regime without any concern for their personal safety or even for their lives. I have no hesitation to share with you that I was imprisoned for 14 long years, including four years in solitary confinement, for actively leading an anti-authoritarian campaign.

Many people sacrificed their lives at the altar of democracy and people's rights. Indeed, for us youths living in those days, it was a call of duty that we could not say no to.

It was a sacred duty for a noble cause.

And, these struggles of the people culminated into the People's Movement, 1990, that led to the downfall of the autocratic Panchayat System and heralded a new era in the democratization of Nepal's polity.

The Monarchy that ruled the country for almost two centuries and half was finally abolished in May 2008 at the very first meeting of the Constituent Assembly.

The promulgation of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 1990, should be seen against this background.

It might have been imperfect, as it proved to be in the face of a strong demand for political change and transformation impelled by the undemocratic behavior of the monarch. However, the Constitution should also be credited for reintroducing a democratic polity within a constitutional framework of civil liberties, fundamental rights, and the rule of law.

The King's misadventure in 2005 to take direct control of the administration ended the very foundation of the 1990 Constitution, which was based on constitutional monarchy and multiparty democracy. This undemocratic action of the King brought the Seven Party Alliance and the Maoists closer to stage a united front against the autocratic monarch. He was forced to accept the demand for the restoration of the dissolved parliament and give up the power that he had unconstitutionally usurped. The reinstated house issued a declaration, suspending the monarchy and making the people of Nepal truly sovereign for the first time in history. The Monarchy that ruled the country for almost two centuries and half was finally abolished in May 2008 at the very first meeting of the Constituent Assembly.

The accomplishment of the difficult task of the management of arms and Maoist combatants in accordance with the provisions of the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Accord paved the way for the conclusion of the peace process.

Following the end of the decade-long armed struggle in 2006, the political developments in Nepal took a sharp turn towards setting up a federal, republican and secular political order, which had been our ultimate political goals since. The accomplishment of the difficult task of the management of arms and Maoist combatants in accordance with the provisions of the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Accord paved the way for the conclusion of the peace process.

The role of the Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2007, was special: it was a stop-gap arrangement.

Nevertheless, it also pioneered many important landmarks in Nepal's constitutional history and set the stage ready for the promulgation of the Constitution of Nepal, by the CA.

The Constitution of Nepal is not only a historic achievement of the Nepali people but also a highly progressive law of the land that has set unprecedented parallels by global standards in guaranteeing the rights of the people, particularly for the disadvantaged sections of society including women, Dalits and the poor.

Through the Constitution, we have adopted a competitive multiparty system of governance with constitutional

Our Constitution has incorporated some of the social values, norms and practices handed down from generation to generation but not formally written in any previous documents.

supremacy, periodic elections, human rights, the rule of law, separation of powers as well as check and balance, and an independent judiciary.

The Constitution is also a document that embraces the vision we have for the country in the present and for the future.

We have set clear priorities for Nepal: enhancement of nationalism, institutional development of democracy, strengthening national unity on the basis of social harmony, achievement of social justice and equality by ending all forms of discrimination, inequality and suppression, and attainment of economic development and prosperity at the earliest possible.

I would like to share with you that our constitution has incorporated some of the social values, norms and practices handed down from generation to generation but not formally written in any previous documents.

At the same time, we focus on good governance encompassing such components as accountability, transparency, and eradication of corruption as key features for prosperity and rapid development.

The CA, which had 601 members, was an eloquent manifestation of our commitment to inclusive polity, reflective of our diversity. It was truly democratic in character and it followed a participatory approach to addressing constitutional issues.

The Road to the Promulgation of the Constitution of Nepal 2015: A Brief Review

Pursuant to the provisions of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement 2006, Nepal's first Constituent Assembly (CA) was duly elected in April 2008. As the first CA was unable to deliver a constitution within the stipulated time frame, elections were held again in November 2013 to the CA which, by building on the achievements made during the first CA, fulfilled its mandate to promulgate the Constitution in less than two years' time from the date of elections. The CA, which had 601 members, was an eloquent manifestation of our commitment to inclusive polity, reflective of our diversity. It was truly democratic in character and it followed a participatory approach to addressing constitutional issues.

There was an unprecedented unity among political parties who stood together under difficult circumstances to thwart all attempts to undermine the most democratic exercise of the Nepali people. My Party remained at the forefront of safeguarding people's right to frame a constitution and defending our country's sovereignty and independence in taking decisions on constitutional issues and other internal matters.

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The ultimate objectives of the Constitution were clear: vesting sovereignty in the hands of the people; ensuring equal rights and opportunities to the people; ensuring respect and dignity of every individual; and creating a just and prosperous society by eliminating discriminations in all its forms and manifestations. To achieve these objectives, we have restructured the state into a federal republican set-up and are pursuing a participatory democratic system of governance.

Our constitution envisages such a society, where every individual is a full and complete manifestation of his or her potentials, and he or she has every right to live a meaningful, joyful and healthy life, and enjoy full freedoms – political, economic and social – to realize his or her full potentials without any discrimination whatsoever, either on account of his or her class, race, ethnicity, caste, color, gender, religion, language or ideology.

Speaking of his vision for Nepal's political system, *Jananeta* (People's Leader) Madan Bhandari, the towering leader in Nepal's democratic movements, once said, and I quote:

> *'In my vision of Nepal's polity, I see the supremacy of the Constitution, multi-party open society, separation*

The Constitution expresses the determination to create an egalitarian society to ensure equitable economic opportunities, prosperity and social justice. It aims at building socialism by adopting democratic norms and values.

> *of powers, protection of human rights, multi-party competitive political system, periodic elections, government of the majority and a constitutional opposition, and the rule of law, as absolutely essential features.'*

It gives me a great satisfaction to observe that the Constitution of Nepal is one such document, unparalleled in its emphasis on guaranteeing the dignity of being a Nepali citizen.

The Constitution expresses the determination to create an egalitarian society to ensure equitable economic opportunities, prosperity and social justice. It aims at building socialism by adopting democratic norms and values.

The Constitution of Nepal also has special provisions for affirmative action for backward and disadvantaged communities. Further, the Constitution has restructured the country as a federal state with three layers of governance, at the federal, provincial and local levels.

The Constitution provides for an inclusive electoral system with a 60-40 mix of First Past the Post (FPTP) and Proportional Representation (PR) systems respectively. It also requires political parties to file candidacies for the PR

At the Local Level, women are guaranteed 40% representation. The recent elections confirmed 41% participation of women in representative bodies. This is not an insignificant achievement, and we remain committed to bridging the remaining gap of 9%.

system through closed lists of women, Dalits, indigenous people, *Khas Arya, Madhesi, Tharu*, Muslim, and backward regions.

In a significant initiative for ensuring the participation of women in state structures, women are guaranteed one-third of seats in the Federal Parliament, as well as the provincial assemblies. It also requires that the positions of either President or Vice-President of the country and Speaker or Deputy Speaker be filled by a woman. At the Local Level, women are guaranteed 40% representation. The recent elections confirmed 41% participation of women in representative bodies. This is not an insignificant achievement, and we remain committed to bridging the remaining gap of 9%.

Our Constitution has made many important departures. It has not only created a federal set-up, but has also made numerous provisions to make the state more inclusive and its polity more participative.

Accordingly, the State embraces a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural ethos and identity, and adopts policies based on diverse geographical specifics.

The Constitution ends discrimination based on class, caste, region, language, religion and gender, including all forms of untouchability, in order to protect and promote unity in diversity, social and cultural solidarity, tolerance, harmony and peace.

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There are also quite novel rights guaranteed to the people of Nepal by the Constitution. These rights include the right to social justice, the right to clean environment, the right against exploitation, and the rights to education, health, employment, food, and housing and many others. The Constitution contains many provisions of a welfare state to guarantee the rights of every segment of society from children to elder citizen.

Thus, the promulgation of the Constitution has been widely accepted and has gained the stamp of approval of the Nepali people because it has ensured their full rights, and charted a concrete map for creating a society wherein every Nepali citizen is happy and prosperous in line with the vision of *'Samriddha Nepal, Sukhi Nepali'* (Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali).

This is the most transformative achievement in Nepal's political and constitutional history.

The people of Nepal have given the Nepal Communist Party a solid mandate to govern the country for the first time in many years. Political stability and economic prosperity have been our twin goals and we remain steadfast in pursuing these objectives.

The successful holdings of local, provincial, and federal elections last year brought the constitution into full operation. The elections were held in a free, fair and impartial manner, with record turnout of people's participation. The people of Nepal have given the Nepal Communist Party a solid mandate to govern the country for the first time in many years. Political stability and economic prosperity have been our twin goals and we remain steadfast in pursuing these objectives.

As the elected Prime Minister, I am duty bound to ensure that the provisions of our Constitution are fully implemented true to the letter and spirit. I call upon all political leaders and fellow citizens to sincerely and faithfully support us in this most important national task.

As we continue implementing the Constitution, several issues need to be taken into account. To my mind, there are four major issues that need careful consideration and appropriate response.

First, we must ensure the full implementation of constitutional provisions relating to the enjoyment of rights as enshrined in the Constitution.

The government is committed to finalizing the bills relating to the full implementation of the Constitution at an early date and get them adopted by the Parliament within the constitutionally stipulated timeline.

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I request all to work together to fulfil this most important national task.

I believe that it is important to ensure that the constitutional provisions relating to the enjoyment of rights are implemented without any delay.

This will assure the people of the strength of constitutional provisions, and of their significance in fulfilling the aspirations of the people to live a life with dignity and honor.

Second, we must also manage Centre-province relations as per the spirit of the Constitution, enhance the capacity of all tiers of governments, and ensure the equitable distribution of natural and fiscal resources among the central, provincial and local levels of governance.

It requires great vision, strong leadership, dynamic adjustments, wideness and flexibility to achieve these objectives.

We will see to it that the equalization grant is based on parameters such as human development index, status of regional balance, requirement of resources, and the status of socio-economic development.

As the Nepali proverb says, 'ढुंगाको भर माटोलाई, माटोको भर ढुंगालाई' (the rock relies on the soil and the soil on the rock), interdependence and cooperation are of paramount importance.

The Constitution of Nepal provides that the three tiers of governments are embedded in a single system of governance, albeit with different jurisdictions and separate lists of responsibilities, but within a structure of governance that seeks the support and co-operation from each other for effective delivery of rule of law, governance and public service.

We will ensure that the revenues collected by the Government of Nepal are distributed equitably among the three tiers of government, and that the paucity of resources will not be a constraint in spearheading the development drive at the local levels.

We will see to it that the equalization grant is based on parameters such as human development index, status of regional balance, requirement of resources, and the status of socio-economic development.

It is equally important that the provincial and local governments also mobilize resources prudently at the local levels in order to accelerate socio-economic development in the local areas.

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I do hope that the newly formed governments at the province and the local levels will learn from their experiences, and provide clean and transparent governance.

I believe that since the local governments are close to the people, they are also more capable and responsible for solving local problems and foster local development more effectively.

At the same time, the local governments will gain maturity as they learn from their own experience, and deliver the fruits of economic development and social progress through innovative programmes that they come up with to address new challenges that they face.

Third, we need to strike a right balance between equity and growth, on the one hand, and federalist structures and economic efficiency, on the other.

The economic policies that we adopt should not only promote economic growth but also support equity and justice. We want to eradicate poverty from our soil and provide equal opportunities for our people to prosper.

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In fact, the combination of these three goals – growth, equity and social justice – is what the aspiration of people has always been.

To my mind, a well-crafted and managed federal structure not only ensures economic growth but also delivers equity and justice.

Finally, it is important to understand the circumstances under which the Constitution can be amended.

The Constitution of Nepal is a flexible document, in that it allows for amendments and adjustments as long as they don't infringe on the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Nepal, and the sovereignty and state authority vested in the people of Nepal.

Such flexibility is the constitution's important characteristic, a feature which will ensure that the changing aspirations of

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the people of Nepal will always find their full expression in the Constitution.

The representatives of the sovereign people of Nepal have toiled long and hard for countless years in its making. I only wish that the future generations will not need to wage such struggles - as we had to - to get their legitimate demands heard, and their genuine concerns addressed.

We believe that our Constitution will make Nepal a strong, prosperous and dignified nation, living in harmony and peace with our neighbours, maintaining cordial relations with all countries in the world, building partnerships for our development, and playing a proactive role in favour of a just, equitable and transparent world order. Our constitution has for the first time defined the elements of national interest. Our foreign policy will be guided to safeguard national interests within the overall framework established by the constitution.

I believe many of the issues that I could only touch upon have been discussed extensively during the past three days in this Conference. I do hope that the recommendations of

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this conclave will help devise effective strategies to fully implement the Constitution of Nepal.

The Government of Nepal is committed to implementing the Constitution of Nepal, and in this regard, your inputs and suggestions will be valuable for us. ●

Our commitment to prosperity and happiness is not a rhetoric

Nepal Army Pavilion, Kathmandu*

"Prosperity and happiness" is neither a name of someone nor it is a rhetoric. This is the result of years of our expectation. Our vision of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali' is a dream that we collectively envisioned, which is achievable and we must turn it into reality.

Today is the Constitution Day as well as our National Day. At the outset, on behalf of the Government of Nepal and on my own, I extend hearty congratulations and best wishes to you all on the occasion of this joyous day.

Addressing an international conference on the Constitution of Nepal five weeks ago, I had said – we are celebrating the third anniversary of the

* Address to the nation on the occasion of Constitution Day as well as National Day of Nepal, Kathmandu, 19 September 2018.

रेडियो नेपाल

The Constitution of Nepal has become not only the fundamental law of the land, but also a document of shared vision encompassing the collective aspirations of all Nepali people.

declaration of our constitution in a grand manner. While I was telling this in front of the galaxy of renowned international constitutional experts, I was recalling the incomparable pain and anxiety suffered by the Nepali society in the agonizing journey of constitution making and their perplexity and also the expectations from the constitution making process. I had made it clear then that our Constitution, made with seven-decade long waits and efforts through the historical Constituent Assembly, embodies not only the aspirations and hopes of the Nepali people, but also our norms and principles.

This constitution has incorporated the endogenous, modern and progressive aspects of humane and democratic politics that are inscribed in Parts, Articles and Schedules of the constitution. Hence, our constitution has become not only the fundamental law of the land, but also a document of shared vision encompassing the collective aspirations of all Nepali people.

Framed by collective endeavor of five dozen political parties, one thousand two hundred two Assembly Members, hundreds of experts, and hundreds of thousands of hearts from

We have not called our Constitution an 'incomparable' document, nor have we considered it essential to compare with any others. We Nepalis have with us a long saga of glorious movements.

all castes/tribes, linguistic groups, religions/communities/cultures, and all sections and genders living in Terai, hills and mountains coming together in one place, this is such a document that has recognized the importance and dignity of every Nepali. It is such a document that has guaranteed fundamental rights and freedoms for all citizens without discrimination. Therefore, we take pride in this fundamental law of the land.

Today, Ashoj 03 (19 September) - the day on which the Constitution was promulgated and this being a significant benchmark in the history of modern Nepal - is celebrated as the National Day throughout the country in a grand and festive atmosphere. On this occasion of the National Day, while paying heartfelt tributes to the martyers, I offer great respect to all the compatriots-the disappeared, the homeless as well as those who suffered with physical, mental and family loss in course of the Movement in making matchless contribution to bring the country into the fold of the rule of law.

We have not called our Constitution an 'incomparable' document, nor have we considered it essential to compare

To ensure fundamental rights and political freedom, we catapulted ourlseves in the struggles and revolutions of various forms waged against dictatorial regimes of different rubrics.

with any others. We Nepalis have with us a long saga of glorious movements. To ensure fundamental rights and political freedom, we catapulted ourlseves in the struggles and revolutions of various forms waged against dictatorial regimes of different rubrics.

Whether it is the war of patriotism fought against foreign aggression years ago or the various movements organized in favour of social reform and humanity against extreme repression and oppression, eventually all these were converted into a democratic movement against oppressive power.

In the past seven decades, we the Nepalis have experienced at least half a dozen constitutions to realize our destination and future. This Constitution of Nepal has not only embarced the three aspects such as patrotism, humanity and democracy that evolved through the centuries-long movements, but also has encompassed our values, norms and custom that have been in practice in our society for generations.Therefore, the Constitution is more progressive and rich than all those we experienced previously.

Our Constitution is that document which has addressed the discontent and rebellious voices of society erupted due to economic exploitation and social oppression.

This is the document that embodies our vision for the present and the future. This is the vision which bears a goal of establishing socialism with democratic values and norms.

Our constitution is that document which has addressed the discontent and rebellious voices of society erupted due to economic exploitation and social oppression. It has marked the conclusion of Nepal's unique and homegrown peace process following the management of combatants and arms of conflict-era. It was a complicated and arduous peace process but it has set a global standard.

Our constitution has transformed the country into a federal democratic republic. On this occasion of the 'Constitution Day', I as the Prime Minister of the country, express my commitment: I have taken it as my duty to implement this constitution in 'letter and spirit' for peace, good governance, development and prosperity. I want to make it clear that the present government has understood the fact that no pretext is acceptable to Nepali people as we strive to materialize the long-cherished aspirations of development and prosperity.

Prosperity and development is not a private business of a Prime Minister or government or any one political party or an individual alone; it is our national resolve. It is that resolve which we have reiterated at the front of every movement together with our fellow compatriots who sacrificed their lives or toiled to make is a success.

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On the issue of prosperity, I have also been listening to the grumbles that "too much in rhetoric but to no avail". We, now, have entered into the phase of action from words. I am clear on the point that from the stage of promises we have moved to the phase of realization of change.

The Government has already made necessary legal arrangements for implementing 31 fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution in order to ensure that our ongoing journey to prosperity reaches its destination.

The questions have been raised: why the expected results have not been produced? Where is the fault? Is it with the system we have chosen or the leadership we have elected? Or is it because of the inapt structure or incongruence of human resource with new structure? Why is there a confusion in making a new Nepal?

I consider that the existing dilemma is due to the incongruence between those who are slow-going with a mindset of 'let it be'; or those who are inert 'waiting others to do'; and those who are 'fast-going for speedy development' as per the people's expectation. I politely urge to all to realise that the expectation of 'everything will be in order' in six months time from the formation of the government can be an appeal but not a realistic one.

The government has already made necessary legal arrangements for implementing 31 fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution in order to ensure that our ongoing journey to prosperity reaches its destination. With the implementation of these provisions, the aspirations of Nepali people to live a respectful and dignified life will be fulfilled. More than fifty Bills necessary for implementation

The fact that all three tiers of government have clarity in the list of concurrent powers and are active in their respective areas indicate that the foundation of federalism is being well established.

of good governance have been submitted to the Federal Parliament. To have one Bill prepared in every five days, on an average, to establish the rule of law, I believe, is a notable work.

We have been hearing unfounded gossips like federalism has not been implemented or it is left like an unwanted child. The restructuring of the state institutions from the unitary system and the division of functional responsibilities of the local, provincial and federal level that were completed during this period have refuted such comments. Together with the federal, the provincial and local governments are in action. A total of 1,17,846 civil servants have been appropriately allotted to the provincial and local level.

The fact that all three tiers of government have clarity in the list of concurrent powers and are active in their respective areas indicate that the foundation of federalism is being well established.

We must be clear that federal system is a new experiment for us. It will achieve perfection through practice. The question of federalism whether right or wrong is no longer relevant

Be it federalism or constitution, if any lacuna is still there, if any aspect remains to be addressed, this will adjust itself and will be adjusted in due course of time.

in our context. Debates and arguments are natural only before we reach to a conclusion. But, when the state takes a decision, the leadership implements it firmly. In state affairs, there is only commitment; there is no room for confusion as this way or that way; there is no 'ifs' or 'buts'.

Be it federalism or constitution, if any lacuna is still there, if any aspect remains to be addressed, this will adjust itself and will be adjusted in due course of time. Matters that are found incongruous on the touchstone of practicality will be changed and amended.

I have been saying: our movement for democracy has culminated in success. Such a movement that demands discarding of irrelevant aspects and implementation of innovative ones. Therein, the aspect of citizens' rights has primacy. However, turning the country into guinea pig and playground of ill-motivated elements in the name of people's rights cannot be acceptable.

Experimentation phase in our political campaign of attaining citizens' rights is over. If anything is left for experiment, it

Peaceful or forceful, or armed violent movement- all these have to be subjects of 'history' following the implementation of the constitution. Coercion and clamor of any sort in the name of attaining rights or political system is not necessary.

is the model of 'quick and rapid' development. Arguments and deliberations should be focused on this.

Peaceful or forceful, or armed violent movement - all these have to be subjects of 'history' following the implementation of the Constitution. Coercion and clamor of any sort in the name of attaining rights or political system is not necessary.

Therefore, movement from now on is the movement in democracy. It is a great movement for development and prosperity. In such movement best traditions are preserved and achievements of the past movements are institutionalized. In such a movement, instilling a sense of responsibility in citizens should be a primary task.

I urge you to be clear that the 'federal-province relationship' in our federal structure will be managed as per the letter and spirit of the Constitution. It is often said, "the rock relies on the soil and the soil on the rock" and this collaborative spirit will guide our investment in capacity enhancement and the fair distribution of natural and financial resources. Our federal democracy shall achieve the desired outcomes

We must have patient that the local leadership, chosen after a gap of two decades in a different role, shall obtain maturity and provide services as per the expectations of the people.

only through leadership with great vision, which is firm in implementation and flexible in behaviour.

Our system has kept coordination and overall policy leadership at the federal, responsibilities of regional development in the provinces and the responsibilities of service delivery at the local level. We must have patient that the local leadership, chosen after a gap of two decades in a different role, shall obtain maturity and provide services as per the expectations of the people.

Economic growth, equity and social justice form the trinity of public aspirations and expectations. Our economic policies must therefore strengthen not only economic growth but also equity and social justice. We must have an appropriate balance between economic growth and equity, as well as between the federal structure and fiscal efficacy.

The entirety of our efforts shall be focused on good governance and economic development. For this, we shall direct our resources and capacities towards maintaining peace and order, preventing and eliminating corruption and moving forward in an accountable and result oriented

This government is clear that the state cannot be imprudent, and it cannot encroach upon the law. We should be clear that there should be resonance among all state agencies regarding the dream and aspirations of the nation.

manner. However, that might not be enough. Therefore, we have taken the policy of welcoming our neighbors, friendly nations, cooperative and friendly institutions and foreign investment to realize our aspirations for rapid development. While doing this, the public, private and cooperative sectors shall be made our development partners in carrying forward the campaign to establish a real democracy wherein a welfare state, a fair and equitable society and space for every citizen to lead a prosperous, safe and dignified life are an integral part.

This government is clear that the state cannot be imprudent, and it cannot encroach upon the law. We should be clear that there should be resonance among all state agencies regarding the dream and aspirations of the nation. The Executive, Legislature and Judiciary – three organs which are the pillars of our democracy - should be balance and conscientious while making decisions with regard to citizens. We must remove the existing inconsistencies, where some concerns are addressed without a single utterance of a word, whereas others go into deaf ear despite years of clamor.

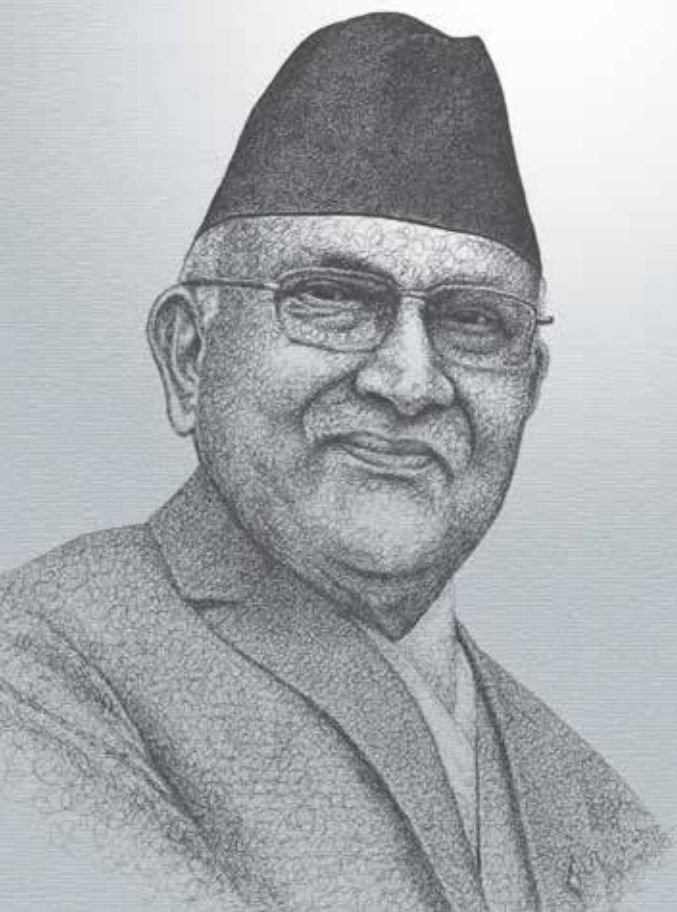
I have full confidence that our Constitution will transform Nepal into a strong, prosperous and dignified nation. It will protect our nationalism and strengthen our relations with the neighbors.

I have full confidence that our Constitution will transform Nepal into a strong, prosperous and dignified nation. It will protect our nationalism and strengthen our relations with the neighbors. The cordial relations with all nations of the world will be further enhanced. Nepal will play a positive and constructive role in partnership for development and international relations with all nations. ●

Civic Reception
in honour of
E. SHRI K.P. SHARI
Minister of Nepal
ew Delhi
Civic Reception
in honour of

2018中国一尼泊尔商务论
2018 Nepal-China Business Foru
Hosts: China Council for the Promotion of Interna
Embassy of Nepal, Beijing
Organizer: China Chamber of International Com

Foreign Relations



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Good neighbourliness demands harmonious coexistence

India Foundation, New Delhi*

Relations between neighbours differ from that of others. Neighbourhood realities are distinct in many respects and accordingly dictate the terms of overall engagements. Good neighbourliness demands harmonious co-existence forever. And, trust is the key cementing factor. It derives its strength from the observance of such fundamental principles as equality, justice, mutual respect and benefit as well as non-interference.

Two years back I was in this great city on my first State Visit to India as Nepal's Prime Minister. My country had then just accomplished the historic task of promulgating the Constitution through a democratic process of the elected Constituent Assembly.

* Speech at the Civic Reception organized by India Foundation in New Delhi, India, 7 April 2018.

The local, provincial and federal elections held in 2017 were historic in many ways. Following these, we were able to have elected representatives in all 753 local level bodies after a gap of nearly two decades. And, provincial elections are entirely new.

That was an important moment. We were living behind the long and costly period of political transition and uncertainties, anticipating a stable political course ahead. As the Prime Minister of the country, I had the huge responsibility to carry forth the tasks related to the implementation of the constitution that was just born. The task was demanding; challenges colossal.

Thanks to the wisdom and perseverance of fellow Nepali leadership and the 26 million Nepali people as well as support and solidarity of friends from neighbourhood and around the world, we have achieved all major milestones in constitution implementation in the past two years. And this time, I am visiting India as Nepal's Prime Minister elected through the first ever polls held under the constitution; as the leader of a country that looks to future with resounding optimism and abounding dreams.

The local, provincial and federal elections held in 2017 were historic in many ways. Following these, we were able to have elected representatives in all 753 local level bodies after a gap of nearly two decades. And, provincial elections are entirely new.

With this political process completed, we now have embarked on the path of political stability. All provincial governments command support of two third majority in their respective assemblies and my government at the centre has robust mandate and overwhelming support.

A major political transformation envisaged in the constitution was the restructuring of the state into federal set up. For the first time in our history, we now have seven provincial assemblies and provincial governments. 'Government at doorstep' is our constitutional spirit, which has now been structurally realized.

With this political process completed, we now have embarked on the path of political stability. All provincial governments command support of two third majority in their respective assemblies and my government at the federal level has robust mandate and overwhelming support.

I have deemed this as a mandate to work for the long-cherished socio-economic transformation of the country. Ours is the dream of a prosperous Nepal where people will have decent living and youths will have decent jobs; where our infrastructure will be better and our vast, untapped resources will be converted into economic benefits and wealth. It's a dream of overcoming the vicious circle of poverty, underdevelopment and social backwardness.

We are mindful, however, that we alone cannot undertake this journey to prosperity. We will continue to count on

Our relations are blessed by the wisdom of saints and sages. Our bonds are strengthened by both physical connectivity and people-to-people interactions in almost all spheres.

support, solidarity and goodwill from friends all over the world, particularly our neighbours.

I say neighbours, as they, by virtue of geographic proximity and long historic associations, are the ones who understand us well and are cognizant of our development needs. I say neighbours as, fortunately for us, they have been able to register marvellous achievements when it comes to development and hence, they are our inspirations, our lessons and key source of support.

Nepal and India are close neighbours. We are connected by geography as well as history, by our religions as well as culture.

Our relations are blessed by the wisdom of saints and sages. Our bonds are strengthened by both physical connectivity and people-to-people interactions in almost all spheres.

Our relations began even before the history began to be recorded; they began in the dawn of human civilization in this part of the world.

It is a neighbourhood reality that we often witness intermittent glitches in our relations. It is a fact that we have witnessed difficult times in our relations. We have gone through the cycles of ups and downs and highs lows in our relations.

Today, in this 21st century, our age-old relations have expanded to a more extensive, and multidimensional connection.

It is a neighbourhood reality that we often witness intermittent glitches in our relations. It is a fact that we have witnessed difficult times in our relations. We have gone through the cycles of ups and downs and highs lows in our relations. I am sharing this frankly because open discussions help improve the thrust and course of relationship.

We, leaders on both sides, are capable to review and introspect where things went wrong and how we could fare better in future.

And the history implores us to take our relations to newer vistas of opportunities, to newer heights of mutual benefits. In this mission, it is natural that we have certain expectations from India as a large neighbour and a country with rising global stature in many ways.

Relations between neighbours differ from that of others. Neighbourhood realities are distinct in many respects and accordingly dictate the terms of overall engagements. Good neighbourliness demands harmonious co-existence forever.

Nepal has not allowed its land to be used against the sovereign interests of India. We are firm in our resolve to maintain this position. And it is natural that we expect similar assurance from India.

And, trust is the key cementing factor. It derives its strength from the observance of such fundamental principles as equality, justice, mutual respect and benefit as well as non-interference.

As friendly neighbours, our two countries need to be aware of, and respect for, each other's concerns and sensitivities. Nepal has not allowed its land to be used against the sovereign interests of India. We are firm in our resolve to maintain this position. And it is natural that we expect similar assurance from India.

We are in the changed context both at home and abroad. Our domestic political realties dictate the values and course of our action both internally and externally. We have defined our goals, priorities, strategies and actions for nation-building. Likewise, we want to inject fresh perspectives into our relations with external world.

Our foreign policy priority begins at our borders. This is quite obvious that we attach great importance to our relations with neighbours. Talking about India, our foreign policy objective is to strengthen the foundation of our relations, but not to weaken it; objective is to expand and consolidate relations, but not to limit the scope and unravel it; and objective is to

Stability and predictability in relationship is very important for us. Because we are two countries of different size, populations, and level of economic development. And our ambition is different, so is our strength.

bring our relations to the next level, but not to slide back. Our objective is clear. Our intention is pure. Our determination is strong. And, our efforts will be robust.

Stability and predictability in relationship is very important for us. Because we are two countries of different size, populations, and level of economic development. And our ambition is different, so is our strength.

We will be working closely with the Government of India to uplift our relations to a new height of mutual satisfaction so that our peoples enjoy the fruits of our relationship. Our relationship should contribute to shared prosperity of our people. It should contribute to strengthen trust and understanding. It should contribute to instil confidence in our people and bring them even closer. I am envisioning an entirely different but mutually beneficial Nepal-India relations that excels any relations in existence between two sovereign nations.

We cherish India's progresses and prosperity. Its accomplishments in many spheres are notable. The illustrious journey of India as a major economic powerhouse is an inspiration for many people around the world and more so in our neighbourhood.

For Nepal, India remains the largest trading partner. However, the problem of bilateral trade deficit looms large. Our economy cannot sustain alarmingly high trade imbalance with India. Its continuance will pose a serious threat to our economy.

The splendid stride of India as a nation of innovators and its impressive march as the global hub of IT and digital economy is a stimulus for the young generation in our countries. We have seen highly positive development trajectory of India, which I believe, will further succeed.

For Nepal, India remains the largest trading partner. However, the problem of bilateral trade deficit looms large. Our economy cannot sustain alarmingly high trade imbalance with India. Its continuance will pose a serious threat to our economy. We cannot compete with India in any sector. We need a breathing space. I am sure many of you would agree when I say that making Nepal economically strong serves India's vital interest.

Therefore, we need to focus our attention to diversify our trade basket and scale up the volume of exports from Nepal to India. The provisions of the 1996 Trade Treaty were highly supportive for Nepal's trade. The Treaty's initial period was a golden period in our trade relationship. Measures such as removal of quantitative restrictions, tariff quota reduction and downward revision of value addition criteria, simplification and streamlining of procedures and easy access to quarantine and testing facilities could ease the difficult situation.

Nepal and India are endowed with resources, both natural and human. The 21st century should not be the mere century of potentials and resources – lying untapped and dormant.

To increase the flow of goods and augment trade, we need to invest in infrastructures and streamline the procedures as well.

India has extended generous assistance to finance development endeavours of Nepal. It has helped to diversify our economy, build up the infrastructure, and enhance our industrial base. However, there is much to do to scale up our economic cooperation and timely delivery of agreed projects.

To further intensify the economic cooperation, we must create the stories of success; we must translate our pledges into performance.

Nepal and India are endowed with resources, both natural and human. The 21st century should not be the mere century of potentials and resources – lying untapped and dormant.

Potential needs to be unleashed for prosperity. That unleashing of potential will propel the prosperity. And that transformation can excel only at the behest of closer partnership and stronger commitment. Commitment to prosper together.

To enhance the flow of people, for enterprise as well as tourism - we need to further expand air connectivity and road and rail linkages. Cross-border connectivity is very important to unleash development potentials and to spur growth.

Nepal's hydropower development is an important sector for bilateral partnership. It will benefit the people and industries of both of our countries. We need to generate a success story by sincerely implementing the projects agreed in the past such as Pancheshwor in its true spirit.

Nepal is an attractive destination for Indian tourists. Attracted by the natural heritage as well as religious sites, Indian tourists can further contribute to Nepal's economy.

To enhance the flow of people, for enterprise as well as tourism - we need to further expand air connectivity and road and rail linkages. Cross-border connectivity is very important to unleash development potentials and to spur growth.

The importance of connectivity cannot be overemphasized for a landlocked country like ours. India has been providing overland transit facilities to Nepal for international trade. When I talk about connectivity I recall what Prime Minister Modiji eloquently highlighted the idea of HIT (highways, information ways and transmission ways) while addressing the Legislature-Parliament of Nepal during his first visit to Nepal in August 2014. We need to realize this vision.

Recourse to obstacles in the movement of goods, services and people should not have any place in today's interconnected world and in interconnected neighbourhood.

As connectivity is important for all of us, we underline the need for developing regional and sub-regional connectivity arrangements. We need to ensure that bilateral as well as regional connectivity and transit arrangements run smoothly without any interruption at all times. Recourse to obstacles in the movement of goods, services and people should not have any place in today's interconnected world and in interconnected neighbourhood.

We are living in an interesting time in terms of the shifting power equation in the world and the transformed geopolitical orientation.

Asia's centrality in today's world stage has been affirmed by the fascinating combination of economics, demography and its value system. Having possessed a third of the Earth's landmass and almost two third of the world population, mostly young and energetic, Asia's renaissance has become irresistible and irreversible.

I call it renaissance because Asia's gain of supremacy is not a first time phenomenon. What we see today is rather the return of Asia to the glorious world podium of 200 years back. It's a return to the time when Asia homed the world's oldest and most affluent civilizations. Return to the time

Past 200 years were rather an aberration in Asia's prominence. Reasons may vary, but the reality is that in the past 200 years, poverty and backwardness became most of Asia's identity.

when it produced the world's best artists and architect; best physics and metaphysics; most sophisticated education system and most enlightening writings on governance and statecraft.

When majority of the world was reeling in the darkness of superstition, this region, centuries back, produced Vedanta, the world's most elaborate treatise of knowledge and wisdom as well as a most advanced philosophical system, and Buddhism, the most revered guiding principles on peace and nonviolence. Ancient Asia gave the world the advanced idea of town planning and sophisticated architecture. It also offered the idea of industry and techniques of trade.

Past 200 years were rather an aberration in Asia's prominence. Reasons may vary, but the reality is that in the past 200 years, poverty and backwardness became most of Asia's identity.

Today, Asia is already on the log march to success and prosperity. This journey may not be smooth and uninterrupted, but it is on.

Natural to its size, Asia is the most diverse region in the world. People are diverse and so are cultures; geography is diverse and so is the level of development. Amidst this,

Natural to its size, Asia is the most diverse region in the world. People are diverse and so are cultures; geography is diverse and so is the level of development.

how do we ensure that Asia gradually evolves into a closer, connected and a better-integrated society?

How do we ensure that those lagging behind in development are offered a helping hand and a level playing field to keep up with the required pace? How do we ensure that we all, big and small, grow together as fellow Asian nations? How do we ensure that we sort out our differences or at least not allow such differences undermine the larger good that we need to pursue together? These turn out to be critical questions as we embark on the noble journey towards realization of the Asian century.

As important as the tangible indicators of development are, we need to make sure that the core Asian values of universal fraternity, peaceful co-existence and sense of equality guide our ways as these are the values that stand as fortress to ensure world's peace and security and sustainability of its development.

Asian values have the potential not only to bring us, the Asians, closer but also contribute to the world's better future. These were born out of our collective, civilizational conviction on harmony, discipline and primacy of the larger public good and interest over petty individual self-

Asian values emphasize more on sharing, caring and co-existing than on individual race making. Collective thinking is the Asian way.

centredness. Asian values emphasize more on sharing, caring and co-existing than on individual race making. Collective thinking is the Asian way.

Asian values underscore, as the fundamental prerequisite to development, the need to build solid and well-functioning state institutions. While other actors are important components of modern day governance, state institutions must command due reverence and any ill-motivated attempt to undermine them must be discouraged.

Our collective journey towards realization of the Asian century can only be possible through due promotion and institutionalization of the Asian values.

Asia invented *panchsheel* that have not only become the core principles of the UN Charter but also provided the nations around the world the modus vivendi for living together peacefully despite differences and working together to serve mutual interest. Nepal's adherence to *panchsheel* is unwavering.

Nepal was among the few countries that remained independent throughout its history. In this very fact of history is rooted the abounding sense of national pride of

Nepal was among the few countries that remained independent throughout its history. In this very fact of history is rooted the abounding sense of national pride of today's 26 million Nepalis.

today's 26 million Nepalis. We, therefore, hold dearer than anything else the principles of sovereignty, independence and non-interference.

We pursue an independent foreign policy and our conduct of external relations is based on a balanced outlook.

No one compromises on nationalism. For us, nationalism is the protection of our sovereignty, territorial integrity, national independence, and fulfilment of our national interest. Our sense of nationalism does not harbour ill-will against anyone. Amity with all and enmity with none is our motto in foreign policy. We seek to foster relations with neighbours and all friendly countries around the world based on justice, sovereign equality, mutual respect and benefit.

When it comes to Nepal-India relations, the enablers for cordial friendship and rewarding relations partnership are already there. We must build on those enablers to boost our relations. We must seize the opportunities to make our relations fruitful to the lives of our peoples. As close neighbours, we share a common destiny which demands collective pursuit of prosperity.

When it comes to Nepal-India relations, the enablers for cordial friendship and rewarding relations partnership are already there. We must build on those enablers to boost our relations.

I have come to India this time with a mission to explore ways and means to enhance our relations to newer heights, commensurate with the realities of the 21st century. We want to erect a strong edifice of trust so that our relations always remain harmonious. We want to create a model relationship, which makes not only us but our posterity equally proud of our accomplishment. A relationship that is cherished forever. Everybody has a role to contribute towards realizing this goal.

With this spirit in mind we have tasked the Eminent Persons Group – Nepal India Relations (EPG-NIR) to come forward with concrete recommendations on making Nepal-India relations truly beneficial for both of our countries and peoples. Our intention is genuine and larger Indian intelligentsia have a duty to spread the message of the need for a positive transformation in our relationship. I hope this gathering could serve this useful purpose.

This afternoon, I had frank, open and comprehensive talks with Prime Minister Modiji. Our conversation was focused on the same direction.

We want to create a model relationship, which makes not only us but our posterity equally proud of our accomplishment. A relationship that is cherished forever.

I firmly believe, and hope you all would agree, a peaceful, stable, prosperous and democratic Nepal is in the interest of India as well as that of our larger neighbourhood. ●

We do not allow activities in our soil against China

Nepal-China Business Forum, Beijing*

Nepal is firmly committed to one China policy. We have a principled position that we do not allow our soil to be used against China. This is translated into day-to-day reality.

One would feel really proud of talking about Nepal-China relationship. Nepal and China are close neighbours linked by geography, culture and traditions. Our relationship dates back to antiquity. Formal relationship between these two countries was established in 1955. Both the countries share multidimensional relationship that encompasses political, economic, social and cultural aspects.

Our political relationships are based on the five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence. They have always remained cordial and friendly. We share a trouble-free and cooperative relationship with

* Speech at the Nepal-China Business Forum organized in Beijing, China, 20 June 2018.

Nepal and China are not only good friends but also reliable development partners. Nepal is a land of vast opportunities for development.

each other. Our relations have grown qualitatively and quantitatively over the period of years. High level of mutual trust and confidence underpin our ties.

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Our two countries have been in close and continuous engagement in the fields of economy, trade and commerce, and culture and people-to-people relations. These two countries have a long history of trade relations that began with the engagement of merchants from either side of the Himalayas since early days. The trade relationship has abundantly contributed to cement the foundation of our economic relationship.

Nepal and China are not only good friends but also reliable development partners. Nepal is a land of vast opportunities for development. But our rich resource-base has largely remained dormant due to financial and technological gap. We want to change this scenario and create success stories in the development front. We believe that China, with its huge financial and technological capability, can help us to transform our development landscape.

Being a close and next-door neighbour of China, it is natural for Nepal to aspire for a partnership with China for mutual benefits.

Many people believe that the success story of the 21st century will be dominated by the success story of China. Our great friend, China, has astonished the world by attaining unprecedented progress in many spheres. We share the joy of tremendous achievements of China in a truer sense. We also cherish China's positive and influential role in the global arena.

We note with great pleasure that Chinese government and the people have made China:

- the second largest economy in the world
- the largest industrial producer in the globe
- the largest holder of foreign currencies reserves
- the largest exporter of merchandise goods in the world
- the second largest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) provider
- a global leader in development finance, and
- a key driver of global growth and prosperity.

We are happy to see such unprecedented strides China has made in socio-economic and technological developments. Being a close and next-door neighbour of China, it is natural for Nepal to aspire for a partnership with China for mutual

Political stability ensures constancy and continuity in policy too. Consistent and coherent policy regime is a prerequisite for foreign investment. Now my government assures you that there will be policy stability and continuity in Nepal.

benefits. We can create a symbiotic relationship in business sector between our two countries building a situation of win-win collaboration.

While we greatly admire the success story of China, I do have a success story to share with you about momentous change that Nepal has undergone in its recent political history. Having witnessed a long period of conflict and instability, Nepal has achieved a success in the promulgation of a highly progressive and democratic constitution. The constitution has institutionalized political gains that we have achieved through over seven decades of incessant struggle and has made Nepali people truly sovereign citizens.

After the successful completion of the elections at three tiers of federal setup, governments have been formed with strong majority at all levels. We have now entered an era of political stability, peace and prosperity.

The unification of two communist parties, namely Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist and Leninist) and Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre), has made sure the much-needed political stability in the country. With this assurance of political stability, we have now undertaken

We count on Chinese investment in filling our financial technological gap, and we believe that our friend China is willing to invest in Nepal.

a decisive journey towards development and prosperity to realise our resolve of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali'.

Political stability ensures constancy and continuity in policy too. Consistent and coherent policy regime is a prerequisite for foreign investment. Now my government assures you that there will be policy stability and continuity in Nepal. My government has a clear vision, straightforward action plan and strategy, firm commitment, overwhelming mass support and ability to implement the development perspectives. It is committed to translating people's aspiration for peace, stability and prosperity into reality. It has a full persuasion that economic prosperity cannot be a long-deferred dream for Nepali people. Therefore, we aspire to become a middle-income country by 2030 and graduate from LDC status at an early date.

To realise our conviction of economic prosperity, we require massive investment in infrastructure development and induction of advanced and innovative technology to accelerate our development endeavour. We count on Chinese investment in filling our financial technological gap, and we believe that our friend China is willing to invest in Nepal.

Investors always look for market and it is not a problem in Nepal. As you all know, Nepal is located between two vibrant markets of the world, India and China, with a population of over 2.5 billion. Production is the only problem because our productive capacity is limited.

I assure you that investing in Nepal is really a profitable business now. The government is determined to maintain an investment friendly environment. It is not just my lip-service. I put this commitment into action and you will realise it soon. With the strong government in office now and the political transition is coming to an end, the law and order situation has remarkably improved in Nepal. So is the situation in terms of industrial relations too. Therefore, I reiterate, Nepal is a virgin land for investment. It is the land with huge potentials for investment in hydropower, agriculture, tourism, service sectors and manufacturing industries, among others. Being China the largest source of FDI in Nepal and the second largest trading partner of Nepal, opportunities for economic engagement between our two countries have been growing rapidly. Our focus on trans-Himalayan connectivity will further add on to a conducive environment for bilateral trade and transportation of goods and services.

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We are committed to further improving business climate in the country. We are ready to do everything that enhances your confidence, facilitates your engagements and helps you make quick decision for investment.

We enjoy the benefit of Duty Free Quota Free (DFQF) access of more than 8,000 Nepali products to Chinese market. We have been requesting the Chinese government to grant 512 tradable Nepali products to access enhanced level of market in China. We also enjoy duty free access to European market and preferential market access to the USA for over 70 products as an LDC. I am here to listen to you and know your views.

We are committed to further improving business climate in the country. We are ready to do everything that enhances your confidence, facilitates your engagements and helps you make quick decision for investment. We have enacted the laws and policies on foreign investment, public private partnership, industrial enterprises, banking and intellectual property.

Almost every sector including manufacturing, hydropower, IT, services, tourism, mining, and agro-based industries are open for foreign investment. Our negative list is very small.

Let me highlight some potential areas for investment in Nepal.

Nepal is an attractive land for diversified agriculture. It has a vast geographical and biodiversity comprising the arable

Nepal is also a lucrative land for investment in hydro sector with more than 1,00,000 MW capacity. But this sector still remains untapped fir investment. Also, the country is rich in mines and minerals including iron, cement and precious stones.

land from 80 meters above the sea level to the top of the world. This provides an opportunity for all kinds of agro-products in the country.

Nepal is also a lucrative land for investment in hydro sector with more than 100,000 MW capacity. But this sector still remains untapped for investment. Also, the country is rich in mines and minerals including iron, cement and precious stones. This sector is largely virgin and need to be explored.

Nepal is widely known for many attractive tourist destinations with world-renowned heritage sites. It has the most favoured trekking routes, fascinating wild lives and amazing scenic beauty. Nepalese are hospitable and welcoming people. All these provide with attraction for investment.

We are also committed to maintain liberal economic policy with private sector as a key partner. We have no intention to reverse the trends. We want to assure you that we cannot go against the global trends.

Nepal Investment Board currently headed by the Prime Minister will be further strengthened by amending Investment Board Act. It will be developed as an institution

Foreign companies registered in Nepal can purchase, own and sell land. No discrimination is made between national and foreign investors. There is no policy of nationalization of private industry.

to permit investment through one-door system promoting the public private partnership.

There is a favourable fiscal environment in Nepal. We have low tax slabs. No income tax for certain period of time on earnings of industry exporting its products established in Special Economic Zones. We have provided exemption facility on tax and tax holidays for certain industries, and exemption of duty and fees on the key inputs used by an export Industry.

Our law permits full repatriation of income earned through investment and reinvestment. Foreign companies registered in Nepal can purchase, own and sell land. No discrimination is made between national and foreign investors. There is no policy of nationalization of private industry. The other factor that makes you competitive in Nepal is availability of cheaper labour force, improved labour law and industrial relations.

Infrastructure is key to economic development. Both the governments of Nepal and China are working on the establishment of Cross Border Economic Zones near Nepal-China border and further develop the existing border points between the two countries. Our two countries have been formally linked by optical fibre since the beginning of this

We are planning a cross-border connectivity through railways, transmission lines and new international airports. Partnership with Chinese investors to complete these priority projects will be very important.

year. We are planning a cross-border connectivity through railways, transmission lines and new international airports. Partnership with Chinese investors to complete these priority projects will be very important.

Our both countries have signed MoUs and agreements including Framework Agreement on Promotion of Investment and Economic Cooperation, MoU on Energy Cooperation and MoU on Investment and Cooperation on Production Capacity. It will facilitate and reinforce the collaboration between the investors of the two countries.

Nepal has joined the Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI), a visionary initiative launched by President Xi Jinping. We believe that this initiative offers immense opportunities for collaboration and partnership between our two countries. Growing attraction of the international community towards BRI has made it one of the biggest platforms for international cooperation.

China is an important source of international tourism market. The flow of Chinese tourist to Nepal has been significant in recent time. The beautiful nature and culture, Himalayas and heritages, wildlife and spiritual sites, and tourism sectors

In a bid to promote tourism, my government has announced to observe year 2020 as the 'Visit Nepal Year' where it has aimed to welcome two million tourists in the year.

have been the points of attraction for tourists. These sectors have been key to home economy.

The government is very committed to the safety and security of the tourists. Special provisions are being made for the security and emergency rescue of the mountaineers and trekkers. In a bid to promote tourism, my government has announced to observe year 2020 as the 'Visit Nepal Year' where it has aimed to welcome two million tourists to Nepal in the year. This is also the best opportunity for Chinese tourists and travel agencies to make the best use of Nepal's visa fee waiver facility and visit Nepal to enjoy from its natural beauty. I also encourage the Chinese investors to invest in tourism infrastructure in Nepal and benefit in return.

Private sectors of our two countries have developed good relations and agreed collaboration on a number of investment proposals. This gathering here today will give you yet another opportunity to forge partnership for meaningful business initiatives in Nepal. My government is committed to extending all possible support to facilitate the business venture. Excellent political engagement with an equally sound economic and business partnership further strengthens the fortress of our relationship where both the countries and its people can reap the benefits. ●

Amity with all, enmity with none

Diplomatic Community, Baluwatar, Kathmandu*

We want to be a good friend of everyone and we want to treat everyone as a good friend. We believe that this helps foster trust and understanding. We will pursue international relations based on justice, sovereign equality, mutual respect and benefit.

Allow me to briefly share with you my views on three topics. First, I will speak about Nepal's recent political developments. Second, I will highlight the major priorities of the present government, and, finally, I will dwell upon our foreign policy priorities.

Nepal has gone through momentous transformation in the last one decade. The impact of transformation has not been limited to political sphere, it has been felt across all sectors of national life. It has been an unprecedented

* Remarks at the luncheon hosted for Diplomatic Community in Nepal at Baluwatar, Kathmandu, Nepal, 27 March 2018.

BINDER

We have now begun a new era of political stability for which we have paid a heavy price. I appreciate the moral support we received from our friends and well-wishers in our struggle for democracy.

transformation in political and constitutional history of our country.

The most important phase of political transformation was begun in September 2015 when we promulgated a highly progressive and democratic constitution. You all have witnessed it, therefore, there is no further elaboration needed on it. We have completed 'unique and homegrown' peace process. The constitution has institutionalized federal democratic republican system of governance embodying the political gains we have achieved over the years through people's struggles and revolutions.

The next important milestone was achieved when we successfully concluded federal, provincial and local level elections. You all have personally seen it. The elections were free, fair and impartial and saw high turnout of the voters. We have accomplished this historic responsibility to implement the constitution..

With all elections completed, the federal system of governance has come to a full function. Governments have been formed at all three levels of federal structure. We have now begun a new era of political stability for which we have paid a heavy price. I appreciate the moral support we received from our

Every second of our time is precious and wastage of it is no longer an option. We cannot resort to any excuse if we fail to deliver. Therefore, there is no option for us but to succeed.

friends and well-wishers in our struggle for democracy. We believe that they also cherish this historic achievement of the people of this country whose only dream is peaceful, stable and prosperous Nepal.

At the federal level, we have a stable government for five years with more than three-fourth majority support of the House. All provincial governments enjoy above two-third majority support of the assemblies. We are now supporting the governments at sub-state levels to create necessary conditions for them to function smoothly.

We have the responsibility to augment these political achievements with socio-economic progress. There is a need and a historic opportunity before us to materialise the agenda of sustainable peace, good governance, development and prosperity.

We are aware that our efforts must therefore be on writing a new page in our history – the new page that is full of success stories of peace, stability and development with social justice. We know the cost of inaction will be huge. Every second of our time is precious and wastage of it is no longer an option. We cannot resort to any excuse if we fail to deliver. Therefore, there is no option for us but to succeed.

We, the Nepalis, are a proud people with our long and glorious history of independence and sovereignty. We are committed to safeguarding that space for the benefit of our national interest and for the good of our posterity.

The government that I am leading now is mindful of it. It is very much present to take on the generational challenge of making a socio-economic progress. We are fully committed to transforming this legitimate aspiration of our people into a reality.

Let me highlight some major policies and priorities of the government

We have the resolve of realising 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali.' For this, we have six pillars of policy and programmatic foundations.

First, nationalism. I understand nationalism as the protection of our sovereignty, territorial integrity, national independence, and fulfilment of our national interest. We, the Nepalis, are proud people with our long and glorious history of independence and sovereignty. We are committed to safeguarding that space for the benefit of our national interest and for the good of our posterity. This comes as a non-negotiable priority for us. We will serve this cause on the basis of our values, realities, and aspirations.

Second, democracy and freedom. Our commitment to democracy and fundamental freedoms is total and

Our constitution prohibits discrimination on any ground and the State is obliged to safeguard this fundamental right. Inclusive polity has been the true spirit of our constitution and we want to implement it honestly.

unflinching. The long journey of our political struggle is synonymous to the struggle for democracy. Our constitution has incorporated all the universally accepted norms and values, which are eloquently manifested in the bill of rights enshrined in it. We believe that democracy is irreversible and no one can take it away from us. No one would dare to dismantle the solid foundation of democracy we have so thoughtfully built. We hold this very dear to our heart and will not compromise on democratic norms, values and principles.

Third, social justice. We cannot imagine sustainable peace and prosperity without social justice based on equality. We stand firm on achieving it that ensures equitable opportunities and equal protection for all sections of society. Ours is a society full of diversity. Unity in diversity has been a Nepali characteristic and a primary source of our strength. Our constitution prohibits discrimination on any ground and the State is obliged to safeguard this fundamental right. Inclusive polity has been the true spirit of our constitution and we want to implement it honestly.

Fourth, stability, progress and development. This is one of the most important pillars of progress for us. We will continue to strive for progressive changes in our political,

Our commitment to good governance is strong. We want to make it a reality in our life. It will continue to guide the policies, programmes and activities of the government.

economic and socio-cultural set up. We have learnt lessons from our own experiences and we know very well what the price of instability will be. Any attempt to undermine peace and stability will not be tolerated. If such attempts are made by anyone, we will deal them with firmly and resolutely. There is no room for violence in our society.

Peaceful pursuit of political objectives remains at the core of our political discourse. However, we must remain cautious and vigilant to preserve our political gains. There might be some attempts from different quarters to disrupt our social harmony and cohesion under various pretexts. There might be some elements who believe in perpetuity of conflict and discord in our society. We do not want to see our people exploited under any ulterior agenda. We will stand united and pull our resources together to defeat the forces of divisions and instability, and work for the betterment of our people who deserve a decent life. Only the people of Nepal have the sovereign right to decide on constitutional, political and all other issues affecting them.

Fifth, good governance. Our commitment to good governance is strong. We want to make it a reality in our life. It will continue to guide the policies, programmes and activities of the government. Rule of law will be at the centre

We want to overcome the vicious circle of poverty and underdevelopment. Our resource-rich country can no longer afford to be poor. We must firmly and decisively attack on poverty, hunger and backwardness.

of governance and it will be pursued in an effective manner. We will also pursue the policy of zero-tolerance against corruption. Our aim is to ensure corruption-free governance. We will adopt efficient and smart mode of service delivery so that people can feel the change. Transparency and accountability will be effectively enforced. Beyond national efforts, I just want to emphasize that good governance must be pursued at all levels, from national to international. We all have to move from rhetoric to reality.

Sixth, sustainable development. With an end of the protracted political transition, the exclusive focus of the government now will be to fulfil people's aspirations for broad based, inclusive and sustainable development. We have a strong resolve to attain rapid economic growth to underpin political transformation. We want to overcome the vicious circle of poverty and underdevelopment. Our resource-rich country can no longer afford to be poor. We must firmly and decisively attack on poverty, hunger and backwardness.

Reared on these pillars, we will build greater convergence on national development agenda among the government, political parties, private sector, and civil society.

Adjustment to a rapidly changing world is a major challenge for everyone and more so for a country like ours. Stability in the global order is essential for peace, development and democracy around the world.

Our development challenges are manifold and daunting. We still are in the bottom rung of the development ladder. Overcoming these challenges would not be possible with the limited capacity and resources at the disposal of the government. We therefore invite the private sector, both domestic and foreign, to invest and contribute to production and employment generation in Nepal.

We are fully committed to strengthening business and investment environment. In order to improve and facilitate trade and investment, we have reduced tariffs, simplified tax regimes and focused on the development and operation of trade related infrastructure.

We are committed to graduating from the LDC category at the earliest. We need to achieve a double-digit growth to make it happen. Promotion of trade and investment is a natural priority of the government. All political parties are united to ensure investment-friendly environment in the country. Hydropower, tourism, agriculture, infrastructure development and Information Technology are some areas where we need a massive investment. These areas have the potential to transform our developmental landscape.

Nepal has huge demographic dividends. Job creation is our top priority. We want to retain our youths and engage them in economic activities.

Advanced, modern and efficient technology is the key to promote knowledge-based economy which is the foundation of sustainable development. Prosperity through the development of science and technology is our mission.

Nepal has huge demographic dividends. Job creation is our top priority. We want to retain our youths and engage them in economic activities.

Post- earthquakes reconstruction of the damaged structures, buildings and cultural and historical sites will receive our priority.

Allow me to highlight briefly the present government's foreign policy priorities now.

We live in a world that is full of contradictions and uncertainties. Forces of both stability and disruption are active. Adjustment to a rapidly changing world is a major challenge for everyone and more so for a country like ours. Stability in the global order is essential for peace, development and democracy around the world.

As the people of a country that was never under the control of any external power, we hold, more than anything else, the principles of sovereignty, independence and non-interference close to our heart.

Nepal's constitution has clearly defined the country's national interest and provided a framework for international relations.

We have two intrinsic diplomatic goals: first, to advance the cause of Nepal's socio-economic development and, second, to promote the image of the country as an inclusive democratic state at the international level. With these goals set firmly on future, we will continue to be guided by some fundamental premises as below.

First and foremost, the promotion of Nepal's national interest while maintaining sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of the country. As the people of the country that was never under the control of any external power, we hold, more than anything else, the principles of sovereignty, independence and non-interference close to our heart. Independent foreign policy and balanced conduct of relations will be the hallmarks of our external engagements.

Second, our overall engagements will be directed, as always, by the principles of *Panchsheel*, non-alignment, UN Charter, international law, and norms of world peace. Our efforts will be towards the promotion of a just and equitable international order in which all states, small and big,

We believe that development and prosperity are universal goals and all nations have legitimate interest in achieving them. We must therefore recognize the development space for everyone. Development must not be seen through the geopolitical optics.

fulfil their international obligations in good faith, and all countries enjoy equitable opportunities to fulfil aspirations for development and prosperity of their country.

Third, our motto will be 'amity with all, enmity with none'. We want to be a good friend of everyone and we want to treat everyone as a good friend. We believe that this helps foster trust and understanding. We will pursue international relations based on justice, sovereign equality, mutual respect and benefit.

Fourth, development imperatives at home will be the guideposts for our diplomatic engagements abroad. Focused pursuit of economic development agenda at the international level will remain a key priority. We believe that development and prosperity are universal goals and all nations have legitimate interest in achieving them. We must therefore recognize the development space for everyone. Development must not be seen through the geopolitical optics.

Fifth, our culture, civilization and identity are our assets. Building Nepal's image as the land of diverse and bountiful resources will be our goal.

We fully acknowledge the support and cooperation received from our development partners. Given the level of our development, we still need an enhanced level of development cooperation from our partners mainly for economic development.

Our diplomatic machinery will be mobilized in line with these premises. Let me share with you some areas of our priorities:

We enjoy cordial and friendly relationship with both our immediate neighbours, India and China. Mutual trust will be the key ingredient of our relationship. We are thankful for all the goodwill and support of our neighbours towards our national aspirations. We look forward to further strengthening these relations at all levels of our cooperation. Serving our national interest and fulfilling our legitimate aspiration of economic development and prosperity will guide our engagements. In particular, we will remain engaged in the 'vibrant economic drive' of the neighbourhood with a view to benefitting from it. We respect the legitimate interests of our neighbours and will not allow anything against them in our soil.

We also wish to enhance our relations with all other friendly countries in our extended neighbourhood. Our engagements will be based on mutual respect and cooperation. We want to explore, open up and diversify our relationship especially in the areas of trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people exchanges.

We will closely work with labour-receiving countries for safety, security and wellbeing of our migrant workers. We would like to expand the scope of cooperation with these countries beyond labour issues to encompass trade, investment and tourism.

We will be working towards enriching the substance of cooperation in our bilateral engagements with major powers and development partners. We fully acknowledge the support and cooperation received from our development partners. Given the level of our development, we still need an enhanced level of development cooperation from our partners mainly for economic development. We urge the development partners to align assistance with our priorities, respecting our leadership and ownership in the process and channelizing such support through government mechanisms. We must create a success story of development cooperation. Fragmentation of precious resources and use of multiple channels will not yield desired results.

We will closely work with labour-receiving countries for safety, security and wellbeing of our migrant workers. We would like to expand the scope of cooperation with these countries beyond labour issues to encompass trade, investment and tourism.

Our multilateral engagements will be made more effective also in the UN. We know that we all, as a global community, share global challenges. These challenges can only be addressed by an inclusive and rule-based international system. We support the UN reform initiatives to provide

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equal emphasis on all three pillars: peace and security, development and human rights, and to make the world body more efficient, effective and responsive to the need of our time. On our part, Nepal will continue to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security through its effective participation in UN mandated peacekeeping operations.

We favour peaceful solution of international disputes. We support the national leadership and ownership of any solution to crisis situations and apolitical role of the agencies like the United Nations. Nepal will continue to lend support in favour of total and complete disarmament, especially of all weapons of mass destruction. Nepal will also lend support to global efforts to fight against terrorism. Nepal condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and believes that terrorist acts cannot be justified on any ground.

Nepal will remain constructively engaged to advance the cause of global peace, security and development. Solidarity and cooperation with Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) will continue to characterize our deliberations. We call for effective implementation of all relevant international instruments to

We consider that enabling environment can be created for all to enjoy the human rights by attaining economic development and providing means to implement human rights obligations.

address the specific development needs of these countries in special situation.

We have owned and integrated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into our national policies and programmes. We aspire to achieve them well before the deadline. We urge the international community to faithfully and effectively implement the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Special consideration must be given to address the vulnerabilities of the countries like ours while taking decision on climate change related funds and support measures.

Nepal has been elected as a member of the Human Rights Council for the term of 2018-20. We remain grateful to all those UN Member States that supported our candidature. As a member, we will provide a strong voice to all those around the globe who look up to the Council to make a positive difference in their lives. Nepal will always stand for apolitical and objective examination of human rights issues. We consider that enabling environment can be created for all to enjoy the human rights by attaining economic development and providing means to implement human rights obligations.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons are currently working in the country in order to address the issue of transitional justice.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons are currently working in the country in order to address the issue of transitional justice. I reiterate that there should be no blanket amnesty to serious violations of human rights and humanitarian laws. We are serious to ensure that the process is fair and free from pressure and influences within and outside the country.

Promoting regional economic cooperation remains a priority in our foreign policy. We will continue to work closely with fellow Member States of SAARC and BIMSTEC to accelerate these regional processes for achieving regional peace, progress and prosperity. We will play an active role in Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Pursuit of economic agenda is the spine of present diplomacy. Therefore, we will strive to promote our vital economic interests at the international level. This will be done through activities aimed at attracting more foreign investment to our national priority sectors, expanding our export trade and promoting tourism, among others.

We are aware that stability and progress cannot be achieved with the efforts of the government alone. It is a collective responsibility of the government, private sector, civil society and concerned stakeholders.

We will be more than happy to receive high level dignitaries from our neighbours and all other friendly countries. I am hopeful that our friends will give a serious thought to it. We would like to share our experiences and achievements of our unique peace process and political transformation with our friends through exchange of high-level visits.

We are aware that stability and progress cannot be achieved with the efforts of the government alone. It is a collective responsibility of the government, private sector, civil society and concerned stakeholders. Equally important is the enhanced support and cooperation of the international development partners. We are open to welcome your support to contribute to our mission. ●

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Together, we can achieve prosperity in SAARC region

Kathmandu, Nepal*

South Asia is a region of diversity. This diversity is also our strength. As enshrined in the SAARC Charter, ours should be a vision of a peaceful, stable and prosperous South Asia. This is the time to stand united and pull our resources together for the betterment of our peoples who deserve a decent life.

South Asia has all attributes and resources to be a vibrant growth pole in the world. Our region has achieved higher growth rate over the past several years. This economic dynamism needs to be maintained with equally increased investment and business activities within the region.

Our objective is to promote intra-regional trade and investment. This cannot be achieved

1 Speech at the opening ceremony of the Sixth SAARC Business Leaders Conclave held in Kathmandu, Nepal, 16 March 2018.

Our wisdom must dictate us that regional integration generates a win-win situation for all. We must ensure that there are no winners and losers. Every nation should get a space to grow and prosper.

without improvement in our trade infrastructure. This will also not be achieved without elimination of cumbersome logistics and regulatory obstacles. What is more important is an improvement in business facilitation and investment atmosphere.

We are countries of different levels of socio-economic development. Our wisdom must dictate us that regional integration generates a win-win situation for all. We must ensure that there are no winners and losers. Every nation should get a space to grow and prosper.

Connectivity remains at the core of any meaningful regional integration. It becomes important for a landlocked country like ours. Trade, tourism and investment cannot thrive without connectivity. Physical connectivity as well as connectivity of minds is important to drive economic development in today's globalized world. Innovation flourishes through private entrepreneurship. Technology is the key driver of change and transformation. Private sector is in the driving seat in both cases.

Our region is not free from challenges. It is full of opportunities too. We must be bold enough to set aside our differences in order to connect our markets and minds. Putting in place

We must ensure that no one is left behind and mired in the dehumanizing conditions of poverty and hunger in our region at a time when people elsewhere are making an incredible progress in development front.

the bilateral and regional arrangements for trade and transit facilitation will go a long way in spurring economic growth in our countries.

It is natural that the neighbours give first priority to trade with each other. However, our region lacks this natural bond. Despite many enabling factors, ours is the least integrated region in the world with less than 5.5% of intra-regional trade and insignificant amount of investment.

We must find ways and means to integrate our economies appropriate to the trends in the world today. We are aspiring to achieve a South Asian Economic Union. Full implementation of South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) and SAARC Agreement on Trade in Service (SATIS) will lead to this goal. Solid political commitment is a prerequisite to move ahead.

There are a number of areas including energy, science, technology and innovation to strike a meaningful cooperation among us. Cooperation in these areas can be a game changer in transforming South Asian development landscape. This will also help realize the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals. We must ensure that no one is left behind and mired in the dehumanizing conditions of poverty and hunger in

The cost of non-cooperation at the regional level will be colossal. There is no substitute to cooperation and collaboration. Regional understanding and cooperation is important to drive the process of regional integration.

our region at a time when people elsewhere are making an incredible progress in development front.

We continue to confront a multitude of challenges ranging from climate change, natural disaster, terrorism, and transnational crimes. Countries like ours have been bearing the disproportionate impact of climate change. Incidents of transnational crimes, terrorism and extremism have challenged our regional security and governance. A country, however powerful it might be, cannot overcome these and other evolving challenges on its own. There is no substitute to our collective efforts. There is no substitute to preparedness, resilience and collaboration.

Youths are our future. We have demographic dividends with young and active population in the region. Creating space for our youths to initiate start-ups, encourage entrepreneurship and innovation is very important. Productive utilization of remittances as well as knowledge, skills and know-how of migrant returnees should also receive our priority. As we all depend on agriculture, modernization and commercialization of agriculture sector will significantly contribute to reduce poverty through increased employment and earnings. We need exchange of knowledge and technology in this vital sector.

South Asia is a region of diversity. This diversity is also our strength. As enshrined in the SAARC Charter, ours should be a vision of a peaceful, stable and prosperous South Asia.

The cost of non-cooperation at the regional level will be colossal. There is no substitute to cooperation and collaboration. Regional understanding and cooperation is important to drive the process of regional integration.

South Asia is a region of diversity. This diversity is also our strength. As enshrined in the SAARC Charter, ours should be a vision of a peaceful, stable and prosperous South Asia. This is the time to stand united and pull our resources together for the betterment of our peoples who deserve a decent life. Our ultimate aim is to achieve common prosperity. And I believe, you, the business community, can play an important role to this end.

The SAARC Business Leaders' Conclave came into being following the 11th SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu. I am happy that it has always been active since then. It provides a unique platform for South Asian business leaders in sharing business ideas, forging partnership, cultivating relationship and exploring business opportunities.

I am delighted to learn that this meeting is set to deliberate on some of the most pertinent issues of our region. It is my expectation that the Conclave will be successful in furthering the objectives of SAARC and aspirations of South

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Asian people. I am also hopeful that it will be successful in engaging development actors to lead our collective efforts in line with the spirit of the 18th SAARC Summit that was aimed at 'Deeper Integration for Peace and Prosperity'. I thank the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies of Nepal, SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and other partner organizers for taking this timely initiative.

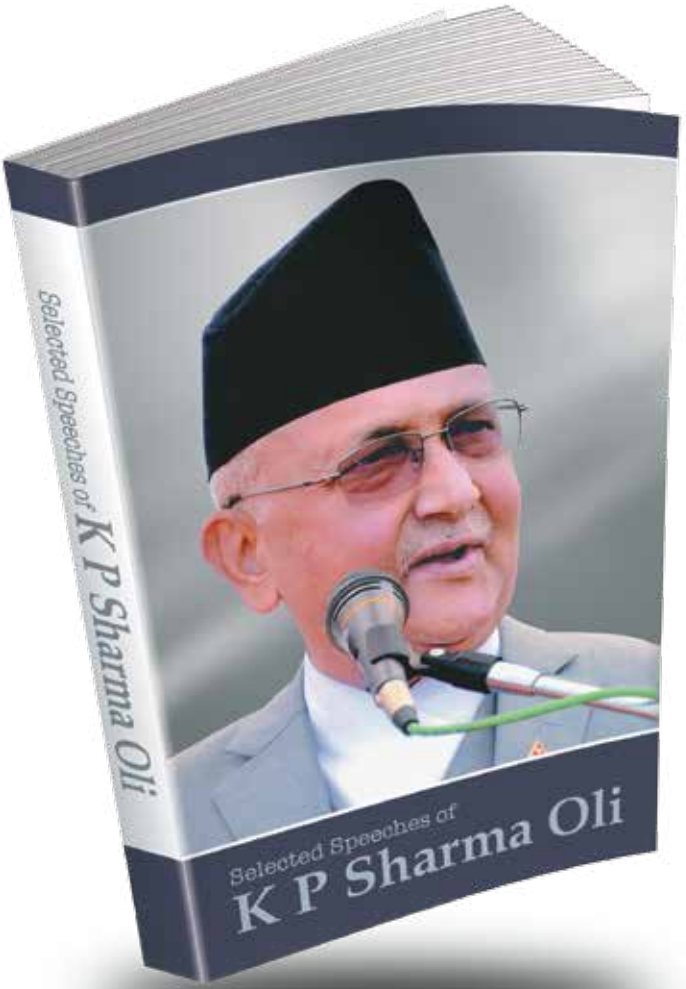
Nepal is making a good stride to the direction of political stability with the successful promulgation the constitution and conclusion of elections to the three-tire governments. With this, our constitution has come to a full operation. Nepal has a stable government now with the command of more than three-fourth overwhelming majority support of parliamentarians in the federal parliament; and above two-third majority support in the federal assemblies. This is a historical achievement in our political and constitutional history.

Protracted political transition has come to an end now. The country has ushered in a new era of political stability. Our national priority now onwards is to accelerate the pace of socio-economic transformation for achieving prosperity for our people.

Investment in any sector is highly profitable in Nepal. It is a virgin land in terms of investment. I invite all business people to come and invest in Nepal.

The government, under my leadership, is fully committed to strengthening business and investment environment and working closely with private sector. All political parties in Nepal stand united to send a strong message that Nepal is now ready to welcome investors from neighbours and from countries around the world. Investment in any sector is highly profitable in Nepal. It is a virgin land in terms of investment. I invite all business people to come and invest in Nepal.

Nepal in the capacity of the current Chair of SAARC reiterates that regional cooperation will continue to receive priority in our foreign policy. We are committed to closely working together with fellow Member States to accelerate SAARC process for achieving peace, progress and prosperity in the region. I appreciate all the Member States for lending their valuable support to discharging our role as the Chair of SAARC. ●


Selected Speeches of K P Sharma Oli
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