

Press Statement to the Media by Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba
During his Visit to India
New Delhi, 02 April 2022

Your Excellency Shri Narendra Modi Ji
Officials from both side
Distinguished Media Persons

Thank you, Prime Minister Shri Modi Ji for your kind words. I am touched by the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to me and my delegation. I recall your landmark first visit to Nepal in 2014, and other subsequent visits which have helped nurture bonds of friendship and cooperation between our two countries. I truly admire your love and affection to Nepal and Nepali people. And, my visit today will further reinforce these innate sentiments.

This is my fifth visit to India as the Prime Minister of Nepal. This time I am particularly delighted to visit India in a special year while Azadika Amrit Mahotsav is being observed and we are also celebrating the 75th year of formalisation of Nepal-India diplomatic relations.

I admire the progress that India is making under the visionary leadership of Shri Modi-Ji. I We have seen India's effective management in battling the COVID-19. We received first vaccine assistance from India, as well as medicines, medical equipment and logistics to combat the COVID pandemic for which I thank Prime Minister Modi-Ji and Government of India.

As Prime Minister Modi-ji mentioned already, Modi-Ji and I had friendly talks and fruitful discussions on various aspects of Nepal-India relations and shared our perspectives on further strengthening our friendly ties in a forward-looking approach. Separately, we also had delegation-level talks, where we took a broad overview of our relations in all dimensions –political, economic, social and development matters.

Nepal and India share age-old, time-tested and multidimensional ties that cover all spheres of our interactions. We share democratic values, cultural ethos, civilizational linkages, and similar ambition for inclusive development. The relations between our countries have been widened and deepened with the passage of time. These relations have been enriched by close people-to-people contacts.

For Nepal, relations with India are highly important. We look up to the tremendous economic transformation that India has achieved. We are eager to benefit from India's progress through a mutually beneficial economic partnership.

Connectivity remained an important part of our discussions. I and Prime Minister Modi-Ji jointly flagged off the inaugural passenger service between Jayanagar – Kurtha rail link today, which was constructed under generous assistance of India. We also discussed about building of integrated checkpost and dry port in Chandani and Dodhara and agreed to early completion of the ongoing work of ICP Nepalgunj. I requested India for early commencement of construction of the ICP in Bhairahawa.

We also witnessed the exchange of MOU on Technical Cooperation in Railway Sector. We both are confident that other connectivity projects, roads and railways will gain further momentum.

Likewise, we had discussions on cooperation in civil aviation. We also discussed on Nepal's request for additional air entry routes to Nepal through Mahendranagar, Nepalgunj and Janakpur. I also requested for the

concurrence of near border flight operations to smoothly operationalize the Gautam Buddha International Airport in Bhairahawa.

Few weeks ago Nepal and India had signed two MOUs –one on Construction of Motorable Bridge from Darchula, Nepal to Dharchula, India over Mahakali River and another on Supply of Urea and DAP from India to Nepal on G-to-G basis. Our two sides are working on for early delivery of one hundred and fifty thousand Metric tons of chemical fertilizers before the planting season starts.

Bilateral trade between our countries is growing. We discussed the ways to address the huge trade deficit.

In view of Nepal's high potentials for hydroelectricity generation and export, it is important to have broad understanding in power export cooperation between our two countries. So cross-border power trade remained a priority agenda during our discussion. I am happy on the Nepal-India Joint Vision Statement on Power Sector Cooperation that we have agreed upon today for mutually beneficial cooperation on hydroelectricity generation, transmission and cross-border trade. I welcome Prime Minister Modi's offer of purchasing electricity from Nepal.

We agreed to conclude the revised Transit Treaty, which will facilitate the operationalization of rail, cargo, transshipment, private operators, inland waterways and access to additional ports.

We also launched today the operation of RuPay cards in Nepal that will help promote the flow of Indian tourists in Nepal.

Water resource remains an important area of cooperation between our two countries for mutual benefits. Prime Minister Modi-Ji and I discussed various aspects of cooperation in water resources, inundation and flood control, and power sector.

We jointly inaugurated today 90-KM long 132 KVDC Solu Corridor Transmission Line Project built under Indian Line of Credit. We discussed about early completion of DPR of Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project, which could be a milestone of Nepal-India cooperation in hydropower development.

India's cooperation has been vital in Nepal's health sector as well. I appreciated Prime Minister Modi-Ji for the assistance provided by India to address COVID-19 pandemic –including vaccines, medical supplies, and liquid oxygen.

Our discussion also covered upgrading of the GP Koirala National Center for Respiratory Diseases in Nepal into GP Koirala National Institute of Health Sciences.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Government of India for substantial support in our reconstruction efforts. We also witnessed the progress in construction of 132 health posts in 10 districts of Nepal, being constructed under Indian grant assistance.

We discussed the boundary matters and I urged him to resolve them through established mechanisms.

I admired Prime Minister Modi-ji for leading the multilateral initiatives such as International Solar Alliance and Coalition on Disaster Risk Resilient Infrastructure. I am happy to announce that Nepal joined the International Solar Alliance.

Both of us agreed that exchange of high-level visits should be regular. It helps promote mutual understanding, trust and confidence. I have invited Prime Minister Modi-Ji for a visit to Nepal. We eagerly look forward to welcoming Prime Minister Modi in Nepal.

Thank you!