



The India-China Competition in Nepal in Recent Years

Amit Ranjan* and Wini Fred Gurung†

Abstract

Although Nepal says that it maintains or tries to maintain a balance between India and China, it is a tough task for Kathmandu. Both India and China have interests in Nepal. This paper discusses the competition between India and China to retain and attain political influence in Nepal. It also examines the contemporary political developments in Nepal, and how India and China reacted to them.

Keywords: COVID-19, India, China, Nepal

1. Introduction

Looking at the geo-political location of Nepal, about three centuries ago, Nepali King Prithvi Narayan Shah (1723-1775) defined his country as “yam between two boulders” (Thapa, 2014). The two boulders are India and China (Thapa 2014 & Karki, 2013). Nepal shares its border with China in the north, and with India in the east and west. India and Nepal have historical ties, and after India’s independence in 1947, the two countries formalised their bilateral relationship by signing the Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950 (Gurung & Joshi, 2020). Like India, Nepal and China also formalised their relationships in 1955, and in 1960 the two countries signed the Peace and Friendship Treaty (Paudyal, 2020). Largely,

* Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), National University of Singapore; isasar@nus.edu.sg

† Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), National University of Singapore; wini@nus.edu.sg

for political and economic reasons, Nepal has tried to balance its relationship with India and China but could not do so satisfactorily. All governments in Kathmandu had faced accusations for favouring either India or China. In the last few years, China has emerged from “being an important neighbor” to one of Nepal’s primary trade partners and “close friends” (Sharma, 2018). In recent years, the relationship between the two countries has further strengthened after Nepal became a part of China’s ambitious Belt and Road Initiative in 2017.

Given Nepal’s location and political significance in South Asia, both India and China want to have a close bonding with Kathmandu. More than the two Asian powers, the Nepali political establishment is often accused of intensifying competition between India and China by trying to pit one against the other to reap benefits from both powerful neighbours (Raqif, 2020). This paper discusses Nepal’s relationships with India and China in recent times and examines the competition between the two Asian powers to retain and attain political influence in Kathmandu. It draws a lot from the authors’ earlier publication on the theme for Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore’s website (Ranjan, 2019; Ranjan, 2020 a; Ranjan, 2020 b; Gurung & Ranjan, 2020; Ranjan, 2021 a; Ranjan, 2021 b; Ranjan, 2021 c).

2. Nepal-India Relations in Recent Times

In recent years, the India-Nepal relationship has been nothing short of a roller-coaster ride.

India is the largest trading partner of landlocked Nepal. Total bilateral trade between the two countries in 2018-19 reached US \$ 8.27 billion (Embassy of India, 2020). Nepal’s exports to India stood at US \$ 508 million, India’s exports to Nepal were around US \$ 7.76 billion (Embassy of India, 2020). Besides, Indian firms account for more than 30% of the total approved foreign direct investments (Embassy of India, 2020).

Historically, people from India and Nepal have been much closer to each other than Nepal and China. Although the numbers are declining, cross-border marriages between Indian and Nepali citizens, especially those who live along the borders, is normal.

Indian and Nepali citizens move to each other's country freely. According to the 2011 census, about 3.9 million Nepali citizens resided in India and 4 million Indians in Nepal (Gurung & Joshi, 2020). New Delhi has also become an important hub of education for many Nepali students. The Indian government provides around 3000 scholarships/seats annually to Nepali citizens for doing various courses in India and Nepal (Embassy of India, 2020).

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, India has assisted Nepal. During the first wave of COVID-19, India provided a total of one million doses of vaccine. Apart from that, it also supplied diagnostic kits, masks, gloves and Remdesivir. India's COVID-19 outreach was halted when the country faced a serious situation at the beginning of 2021. At that time, Nepal received only half of the 2 million doses it ordered from India's Serum Institute (The Kathmandu Post, 2021). The Institute offered Nepal to refund the money, which it refused and demanded a shipment of goods (Gill, 2021). In June 2021, India re-started helping its neighbours. India handed over medical aid including ventilators, ambulances, Intensive Care Unit beds, Personal Protective Equipment and Polymerase Chain Reaction test kits to Nepal (Bhaumik, 2021). Also, under the COVAX facility, Nepal has received vaccines and other medicines. The COVAX initiative is co-led by Gavi, Vaccine Alliance, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations and World Health Organization, alongside key delivery partner, the United Nations Children's Fund (WHO, 2020). Under this facility, the USA had provided 1.5 million doses of the single-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine to Nepal in July 2021.

However, besides others, two major factors are responsible for the downward spiral of the bilateral relationship between India and Nepal.

First, on the question of a "fair" share and greater autonomy to the Madhes region, ethnic Madhesi protested against the promulgation of the new constitution in 2015 (Ghimire, 2015). In support of Madhesis, as many in Nepal believe, India carried out an unofficial blockade on the movement of goods from India into Nepal. The blockade severely affected Nepal's economy as it was still reeling from the devastating earthquake. Politically, the 2015-16 blockade convinced many in Nepal to develop close bonding with China. By

the end of 2016, China had invested in Nepal's security forces, particularly in its police and paramilitary forces (Baral, 2017). It even opened up an academy to train the Armed Police Force and the Nepali paramilitary force deployed to guard the Nepal-Tibet border from the possible infiltration of "Free Tibet" activists into Nepal (Baral, 2017). China and Nepal also conducted joint military exercises in Kathmandu in 2017 and Chengdu in 2018 (Rajagopalan, 2018). Commercially, instead of depending on India, China expressed a desire to provide alternative trade routes to Nepal. In 2017, Nepal signed an MoU on the Belt and Road Initiative. The press release of the signing of the MoU said that Nepal "seeks to strengthen cooperation in connectivity sectors including in transit transport, logistics systems, transport networks and related infrastructure development such as railways, roads, civil aviation, power grids, information and communication" (MoFA, Nepal, 2017).

Second, territorial disputes between India and Nepal had given rise to strong anti-India sentiments in Nepal. On 2 November 2019, India's Ministry of Home Affairs published an updated map of India depicting the physical and political status of the two recently created Union Territories - Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh (Ranjan, 2019). The map also shows Kalapani in Pithoragarh district of the Indian state of Uttarakhand, which upset Nepal. For Nepal, Kalapani is a part of its Darchula district in the Sudurpaschim province (Ranjan, 2019). In May 2020, India and Nepal, once again, was drawn into a diplomatic standoff over their border in the far Himalayas (Ranjan, 2020 a). Nepal's government decided to publish a new map of the country. On 18 May 2020, Nepal's cabinet endorsed the updated map. India termed the publication of the map as an "unjustified cartographic assertion" by Nepal (ANI, 2020).

However, developments since August 2020 suggest the possibility of a recalibration in the Indo-Nepal ties. On 15 August 2020, Nepal's then Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli made a congratulatory call to his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi on India's 74th Independence Day and expressed Nepal's willingness to resume "meaningful bilateral cooperation" (Gurung & Ranjan, 2020).

Following this telephonic conversation, there has been meetings and a series of diplomatic visits from India to Nepal and vice-versa.

On 17 August 2020, Kathmandu held the eighth meeting of the Nepal-India Oversight Mechanism via videoconferencing, which was attended by the Indian Ambassador to Nepal Vinay Mohan Kwatra and Nepal's Foreign Secretary Shankar Bairagi (MoFA, Nepal, 2020). This mechanism was established in 2016 to oversee the implementation of bilateral projects between the two countries. During the meeting, the two sides discussed the status of the ongoing bilateral projects, including the cross-border railways, petroleum products pipelines, including the Arun-III hydropower project and the Pancheshwar multipurpose project. They also discussed the construction of bridges over the Mahakali River - the river's origin remains a contested point as it marks the boundary between the two countries (MoFA, Nepal, 2020). The two sides expressed the need for speedy implementation of these projects and frequent talks to overcome the challenges that arise in the process.

In October 2020, Samant Goel, Chief of India's intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing, visited Kathmandu for a day-long trip (Basu, 2020). He met Oli and expressed India's willingness to resolve the outstanding bilateral issues through proper dialogue mechanisms, enhance bilateral engagement and keep the Indo-Nepal friendship intact. This visit took place a few weeks before the visit of Indian Army General Mukund Naravane to Kathmandu in November 2020 (Basu, 2020).

General Naravane visited Nepal on 5 November 2020, complying with the age-old tradition of felicitating newly-appointed army generals. He was conferred the rank of General of the Nepali Army by the country's President Bidhya Devi Bhandari. During his conversation with Bhandari, they discussed ways to enhance bilateral cooperation. He also met his counterpart General Purna Chandra Thapa, with whom he discussed border management issues and the need to strengthen bilateral cooperation in defence and security areas (Peri & Bhattacharjee, 2020).

As a sign of goodwill, Naravane also presented Nepal with medical equipment and ventilators for its army's field hospitals to fight COVID-19 and assured the country that it would be a priority once the vaccine is rolled out in India. Before ending his tour, Naravane met Oli who assured him that India and Nepal would resolve the outstanding issues through formal dialogue mechanisms (Peri & Bhattacharjee, 2020).

Maintaining the continuity of official visits, Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla made the much-awaited visit to Kathmandu on 26-27 November 2020, a trip which was delayed due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. During his visit, Shringla met his Nepalese counterpart Bharat Raj Poudyal, Foreign Minister Pradeep Gyawali, Oli and Bhandari (Press Trust of India, 2020). With Poudyal, he held extensive talks reviewing various bilateral aspects like trade, connectivity, infrastructure and culture. They also discussed boundary-related issues such as completing the work in the remaining segments through proper mechanisms. Poudyal appreciated India's move of ensuring proper facilitation of cross-border trade during the pandemic (Gurung & Ranjan, 2020). With Bhandari, he discussed ways to bolster the bilateral relationship between the two countries. During his meeting with Gyawali, Shringla conveyed External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's invitation to him to come to India for the next Nepal-India Joint Commission Meeting (Gurung & Ranjan, 2020). He also handed over 2,000 vials of Remdesivir injection to Gyawali to fight the pandemic and further assured India's support to Nepal for COVID-related assistance (Gurung & Ranjan, 2020).

With Oli, Shringla discussed measures to intensify bilateral engagements through people-to-people linkages, strategic bilateral initiatives, and issues of mutual interest. Oli also reiterated his interest in resolving pending disputes through bilateral mechanisms. Besides Oli, he also met the Nepali Congress and Madhesh leaders to discuss ways to improve bilateral ties (Gurung & Ranjan, 2020).

From Nepal's side, former Foreign Affairs Minister Pradeep Gyawali along with Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal visited India at the beginning of 2021 and met Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The two leaders discussed areas of cooperation

between the two countries in terms of trade and connectivity. However, the talks on border issues were kept out of the discussion (Chaudhury, 2021).

Amidst signs of improvement in India-Nepal ties, Nepal witnessed a political change in power. After years of differences, finally, the Maoist Centre under the former prime minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias Prachanda withdrew support from Oli led government. The President dissolved the parliament on Oli's recommendation. This was challenged in the Supreme Court of Nepal which paved the way for the Sher Bahadur Deuba led coalition to come into power in July 2021.

In August 2021, the Deuba government introduced the Common Minimum Programme (CMP) which highlights that the border issue with India in areas of Limpiyadhura, Kalapani and Lipulekh region would be resolved through diplomatic means with India (Murarka, 2021). It also noted that Nepal would maintain good relations with India.

However, launching an attack on the CMP, former Nepal prime minister and Chairperson of the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist, Oli, questioned the resolve of Deuba's government to hold talks with India over Kalapani, Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh. He also asked the government about its plans regarding the report of the Eminent Persons' Group on Nepal-India relations (Ranjan, 2021 c).

Many in Nepal and outside see Deuba as a "pro-India" leader, though he is less likely to "ignore" China. The next section discusses the Nepal-China relationship.

3. Nepal-China Relations in Recent Times

In recent years, the relationship between Nepal and China has gained momentum after the 2015 earthquake in Nepal where the latter assisted Nepal with US \$663 million for the post-earthquake reconstruction process (Gurung & Joshi, 2020). As mentioned above, China-Nepal relationships also spiralled up after India's unofficial blockade in 2015-16.

China's investments have been increasing over the years and it has become the largest source of Foreign Direct Investment in Nepal. It gave Nepal US \$288 million to build Pokhara International Airport and US \$102 million for the Trishuli 3 hydropower project in 2019 (Gurung & Joshi, 2020). China is also Nepal's second-largest trading partner. They have a total bilateral trade of US \$1.56 billion in FY 2017/2018 (Gurung & Joshi, 2020). It is also the second-largest source of tourists in Nepal, after India, with about two million Chinese visiting the country every year since 2017 (Gurung & Joshi, 2020). The BRI has also opened up various areas of bilateral cooperation, especially the Trans-Himalayan Railway Network which will extend to Nepal's border in Kerung, strengthening cross-border economic cooperation (Gurung & Joshi, 2020).

To fight against the COVID-19 health crisis, in April 2020, Xi'an Municipality in Shaanxi, China provided 30,000 medical masks, 1000 N95 masks, 500 personal protective equipment, 100 goggles, and 30 forehead thermometers (Bashyal & Ranjan, 2020). Then in March 2021, China donated 800,000 Sinopharm vaccine doses to Nepal (Hou Yanqi Twitter, 2021). This was followed by 10 ventilators and other equipment in May 2021 (Gill, 2021). Chinese donation of vaccines to Nepal is the second-largest in South Asia after Pakistan (Gill, 2021). Kathmandu also attended the virtual meetings held by Beijing with South Asian countries to plan a strategy to fight against the pandemic.

Nepal and China maintained a cordial relationship under Oli's regime, which became a worry to India. During Oli, China was also accused of interfering in Nepal's political affairs. For example, the Chinese Ambassador to Nepal, Hou Yanqi, held several meetings with both Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Oli, former co-chairs of the Nepal Communist Party, to settle their political differences (Gurung & Joshi, 2020).

Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Nepal in October 2019, becoming the first sitting Chinese leader to pay a state visit to the country after a hiatus of 23 years (Gurung & Joshi, 2020). Xi and Oli signed 20 agreements on sectors such as health, infrastructure and tourism (Gurung & Joshi, 2020). Additionally, Xi pledged to assist Nepal with US \$500 million for the next two years to boost the Nepalese economy (Gurung & Joshi, 2020). He also pledged to

assist Nepal to transform from a landlocked to a “land-linked country”, by announcing the start of a feasibility study for the landmark transboundary Himalayan railway connecting Nepal and China (Gurung & Joshi, 2020).

After the India-Nepal rapprochement, when official visits began in 2020, China was keeping close eyes on developments between the two countries. For example, the Chinese Defence Minister Wei Fenghe visited Nepal soon after Shringla’s visit. Fenghe is the senior-most Chinese official to visit Nepal after President Xi Jinping in October 2019 and the first Chinese Defence Minister to do so in 16 years (Gurung & Joshi, 2020). Fenghe met Oli and exchanged views on matters of mutual interest and promote “friendly relations” between the two countries. He also vowed to bolster military cooperation with Nepal and respect its territorial integrity, hinting at India (Gurung & Joshi, 2020). Besides Oli, Fenghe also met Chandra Thapa and discussed ways to resume military cooperation and training impacted by the pandemic. They also discussed resuming non-lethal military supplies to Nepal, student exchange programmes, and defence assistance (Gurung & Joshi, 2020).

Despite growing bilateral cooperation, Nepal and China have a history of border tensions. Historically, one of the earliest records of friction between Nepal and Tibet (now a part of China) occurred in 1789 (Ranjan, 2020 b). Peace was restored after the Betrawati Treaty was signed on 20 October 1792 under which the King of Nepal agreed to, without fail, send a mission and gift to Peking every five years. This mission system continued till 1906 (Ranjan, 2020 b).

In 1856, Nepal and Tibet had another clash in which Nepali forces under the command of Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana emerged victorious (Ranjan, 2020 b). On 24 March 1856, the two sides signed a treaty under which Tibet ceded the ryots of Kerong, Kuti, Junga, Tagla Khar, Chewur and Dhakling to Nepal (Ranjan, 2020 b).

On 21 March 1960, Nepal and China signed a treaty that stipulated that the “traditional customary line” would serve as the basis for their boundary treaty (Ranjan, 2020 b). The Joint China-Nepal

Boundary Commission was set up to look at and demarcate their boundaries. After deliberation, the Joint Commission and the Joint Survey Teams produced a detailed report. The issue related to Mount Everest was left to the head of the two governments. Finally, on 5 October 1961, Nepal and China signed the Boundary treaty. The protocol to the treaty was signed on 23 January 1963 (Ranjan, 2020 b).

Despite the treaty, problems remain on Nepal's border with China. It has been reported that Beijing has "encroached" into about 36 hectares (some reports put it as 33 hectares) of Nepal's land (NDTV, 2020). This was revealed in a report by the survey department of Nepal's agriculture ministry. In the past, there were protests against such encroachment of Nepal's land by China. However, Nepal's government under Oli was accused of downplaying any such report. Appearing in a talk show on Nepalese television on 12 November 2019, Pradeep Gyawali, said that the country did not have any major border disputes with China. He reiterated the same on 26 June 2020 and rejected the point that China had encroached into Nepalese territory. On this issue, China earlier said that the "accusations are baseless and aim to confuse right and wrong and divert public attention" (Ranjan, 2020). Several leaders from the Nepali Congress, then largest opposition party in Kathmandu and now leading the government, alleged that the People Liberation Army troops had trespassed in the Humla district in northwest Nepal, where they had crossed the border into the Limi valley and Hilsa. There, they had moved the boundary pillars and constructed military bases (Ranjan, 2020 b). It was also reported that the Chinese had built nine to eleven houses inside the Nepali territory (Ranjan, 2020 b). The locals of Humla marched to the Chinese embassy in Kathmandu, organising protests and holding placards with anti-Chinese slogans. However, the government of Nepal has officially denied all such reports about China's invasion of Nepal's territory and claims (Ranjan, 2020 b).

Another factor that could affect Nepal-China relations is the growing involvement of the United States in Nepal. Four months after signing the BRI with China, Nepal signed the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact with the USA on 14

September 2017, but the Nepali parliament has not yet ratified it (Giri, 2021). The MCC is, as defined, an “innovative and independent US foreign assistance agency” to help to fight against global poverty (Millennium Challenge Corporation). Under MCC, the US government agreed to provide the US \$500 million in grants while Nepal would put in the US \$130 million for the project that prioritises energy and roadways (Nepal Compact Signing Ceremony, 2017 & Ghimire, 2020).

There is a deep political and ideological divide on MCC Nepal Compact in Nepal. Many of those who are opposed to the MCC see it as a part of Washington’s Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS) to countervail the Chinese expansion of influence in the region through BRI (Pradhan and Giri 2021). To seek clarifications, on 3 September 2021, a letter with questions regarding the MCC was sent by the Ministry of Finance, Government of Nepal to MCC headquarters in Washington DC. On “whether the MCC falls under the Indo-Pacific Strategy proposed by the US”, the MCC, in its response said :

“No, the MCC-Nepal Compact is not an agreement under the IPS. Any decision by Nepal regarding the IPS is separate and independent from the MCC Nepal Compact. The MCC Nepal Compact is not an agreement under the IPS, nor is it a part of any military strategy of the United States” (Responses by Millennium Challenge Corporation to Consolidated Clarification Questions from Government of Nepal regarding the Millennium Challenge Compact, 2021, 4).

4. Nepal: Between India and China

Based on the recent years' development, as discussed above, Nepal’s relationships with India and China can be largely explained in four points. First, in 2020, the Nepal government endorsed a new foreign policy calling for the need to maintain balance. Gyawali highlighted its objective stating that the new foreign policy would transform Nepal’s geographic position between India and China as an opportunity for economic development. He said, “The policy that we are drafting will reflect changes occurred in the country’s internal life and the external

world and its geopolitics” (Bhattarai & Rai, 2020). In practice, such balance is difficult to maintain.

Second, the growing rivalry between India and China in South Asia hardly gives Nepal any choice other than choosing one over the other. Till now Nepal has largely been able to manage its relationships with both India and China. However, with the escalation of rivalry between India and China, and the growing interest of the USA in Nepal, Kathmandu may be asked at one point to take sides. This is evident when the Chinese ambassador to Bangladesh, Li Jimming, “warned” Dhaka against joining the QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) camp that comprises the United States, India, Japan and Australia. China sees this group as a way of undermining and countering it (Mushfiqul, 2021). Hence, it could only be a matter of time when China may expect the same from Nepal.

Third, even though Deuba is largely seen as “pro-India” or “India friendly”, many in Nepal feel that his foreign policy will be largely guided by mutual friendship and cooperation with all, and Nepal’s ties with China will not see any “upheavals” (Giri, 2021). Earlier, Deuba has highlighted that his government will maintain a balanced relationship between India and China. Deuba has also added that he will work to build stronger ties with China (Purohit, 2021).

Fourth, India and China are accused of interfering in Nepal’s internal politics. India is accused at the time of ethnic disturbances, while the Chinese diplomat was proactive in saving Oli’s government. Growing interference from India and China in Nepal’s internal affairs seriously affect the country’s political dynamics. Through interference, both India and China try to create a strong social and political constituency in their favour.

5. Conclusion

Due to its location and need, it is hard for Nepal to take the side of either India or China. Although K. P. Oli was accused to be “pro-China” because of his policies, India was not entirely ignored. Especially, in his last months in power, a lot of important engagements took place between India and Nepal. Likewise, Deuba

is considered “pro-India” but he will not keep the Chinese away from Kathmandu. At a certain point of time, as mentioned above, due to escalating Sino-India rivalries, Nepal may be asked to take some “tough” policy-related decisions on bonding with one and not with the other. It will be worth observing how, at that time Nepali Political elites act, react and make move.

References

Ambassador Hou Yanqi’s Twitter post, 29 March 2021.

<https://twitter.com/PRCAmbNepal/status/1376414956589998083>

ANI. (2020, 19 May). Nepal cabinet approves new map incorporating Lipulekh, Kalapani, Limpiyadhura, claims its territories. Retrieved from <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/nepal-cabinet-approves-new-map-incorporating-lipulekh-kalapani-limpiyadhura-claims-its-territories20200519011222/> Accessed on 07 September 2021.

Baral, B. (2017, 01 February). After the “Blockade”: China’s Push into Nepal. *The Diplomat*. Retrieved from <https://thediplomat.com/2017/02/after-the-blockade-chinas-push-into-nepal/>. Accessed on 6 September 2021.

Bashyal, K. & Ranjan, A. (2020, 18 June). Impact of Covid-19 on Nepal’s Economy. *ISAS*. Retrieved from <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/impact-of-covid-19-on-nepals-economy/>. Accessed on 23 September 2021.

Basu, N. (2020, 21 October). R&AW chief on hurricane tour to Nepal, to meet PM Oli as trouble brews in ruling party. *The Print*. Retrieved from <https://theprint.in/diplomacy/raw-chief-on-hurricane-tour-to-nepal-to-meetpm-oli-as-trouble-brews-in-ruling-party/528403/> Accessed on 05 September 2021.

- Bhattarai, KD. & Rai, S. (2020, 08 October). Nepal's new foreign policy to transform country's geopolitical situation into opportunity: Minister. *Online Khabar*. Retrieved from <https://english.onlinekhabar.com/nepals-new-foreign-policy-to-transform-countrys-geopolitical-situation-into-opportunity-minister.html> Accessed on 07 September 2021.
- Bhaumik, A. (2021, 11 June). With Nepal, India restarts Covid-19 outreach to neighbours. *Deccan Herald*. Retrieved from <https://www.deccanherald.com/national/with-nepal-india-restarts-covid-19-outreach-to-neighbours-996475.html>. Accessed on 06 September 2021.
- Chaudhury, D. R. (2021, 14 January). Nepal Foreign Minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali embarks on three-day India visit. *The Economic Times*. Retrieved from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/nepal-foreign-minister-pradeep-kumar-gyawali-embarks-on-three-day-india-visit/articleshow/80268792.cms?from=mdr> Accessed on 26 August 2021.
- Embassy of India, Kathmandu. (2020, February). About India-Nepal Relations. Retrieved from <https://www.indembkathmandu.gov.in/page/about-india-nepal-relations/>. Accessed on 23 September 2021.
- Gurung, W., & Joshi, Y. (2020, 14 April). Indo-Nepal Dynamics vis-à-vis China. *ISAS*. Retrieved from <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/indo-nepal-dynamics-vis-a-vis-china/>. Accessed on 26 August 2021.
- Gurung, W., & Ranjan, A. (2020, 28 December). Resetting the Relationship: India's Recent Engagements with Nepal. *ISAS*. Retrieved from <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/resetting-the-relationship-indias-recent-engagements-with-nepal/>. Accessed on 26 August 2021.

- Gill, P. (2021, 14 May). Facing a Covid Crisis, Nepal Cries out for Help. *The Diplomat*. Retrieved from <https://thediplomat.com/2021/05/facing-a-covid-crisis-nepal-cries-out-for-help/>. Accessed on 6 September 2021.
- Ghimire, Y. (2015, 05 October). Who are Madhesis, why are they angry?. *The Indian Express*. Retrieved from <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/who-are-the-madhesis-why-are-they-angry/>. Accessed on 6 September 2021.
- Ghimire, B. (2021, 03 January). China says it welcomes any foreign economic support- even the MCC- to Nepal. *The Kathmandu Post*. Retrieved from <https://kathmandupost.com/2/2020/01/03/china-says-it-welcomes-any-foreign-economic-support-even-the-mcc-to-nepal> Accessed on 05 September 2021.
- Karki, R. (2013, July). Trilateral Security Cooperation: Nepal's New Foreign Policy. *IDS*. Retrieved from https://idsa.in/strategicanalysis/37_4/TrilateralSecurityCooperation. Accessed on 26 August 2021.
- Press Trust of India (2020, 26 November). Foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla arrives in Nepal for a 2-day visit. *NDTV*. Retrieved from <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/foreign-secretary-harsh-varadhan-shringla-arrives-in-nepal-for-2-day-visit-2330382> Accessed on 05 September 2021.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal. "Press Release on signing ceremony of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative". (2017, 17 May). Retrieved from <https://mofa.gov.np/press-release-signing-ceremony-memorandum-understanding-mou-cooperation-belt-road-initiative/>. Accessed on 23 August 2021.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kathmandu. "Press Release on the Eighth Meeting of Nepal-India Oversight Mechanism". (2020, 17 August). Retrieved from <https://mofa.gov.np/press-release-on-the-eighth-meeting-of-nepal-india-oversight-mechanism/> Accessed on 05 September 2021.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kathmandu. "Nepal-China Relations', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kathmandu". (2019, February). Retrieved from <https://mofa.gov.np/nepal-china-relations/> Accessed on 30 August 2021.

Murarka, S. (2021, 08 August). Nepal govt unveils 'common minimum programme. *WION*. Retrieved from <https://www.wionews.com/south-asia/nepal-govt-unveils-common-minimum-programme-404101> Accessed on 26 August 2021.

Mukit, M. (2021, 24 May). Why China is anxious about the Quad. *Bangkok Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/2120627/why-china-is-anxious-about-the-quad>. Accessed on 07 September 2021.

NDTV. (2020, 24 June). China Using Road Construction To Encroach On Land: Nepal Report. Retrieved from <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/china-using-road-construction-to-encroach-on-land-nepal-report-2251146> Accessed on 06 September 2021.

Nepal Compact Signing Ceremony, Millennium Challenge Corporation, United States of America. <https://www.mcc.gov/news-and-events/event/signing-091417-nepal>.

Paudyal, Leela Mani (2020). 65th anniversary of Sino-Nepali ties: Friendship for a shared future. *CGTN*. <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2020-08-01/65th->

anniversary-of-Sino-Nepali-ties-Friendship-for-a-shared-future-SzvF2rjyso/index.html. Accessed on 18 July 2021.

Peri, D. & Bhattacharjee, K. (2020, 06 November). Army Chief Naravane meets Nepal PM Oli, assures further defence cooperation. *The Hindu*. Retrieved from <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/army-chiefnaravane-meets-nepal-pm-oli-assures-further-defence-cooperation/article33041287>. Accessed on 05 September 2021.

Pradhan, Tika R & Giri, Anil “As MCC becomes a lightning rod for controversy, Deuba is in a tight spot” *The Kathmandu Post*. 5 September 2021. <https://kathmandupost.com/politics/2021/09/05/as-mcc-becomes-a-lightning-rod-for-controversy-deuba-is-in-a-tight-spot>. Accessed on 6 September 2021.

Purohit, K. (2021, 21 July). “Will Nepal’s new ‘pro-India’ prime minister hit reset on its China ties?”. *South China Morning Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3142000/will-nepals-new-pro-india-prime-minister-hit-reset-its-china> Accessed on 07 September 2021.

Raqif, A. (2020, 29 July). Nepal is walking a tightrope between India and China. *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2020/7/29/nepal-is-walking-a-tightrope-between-india-and-china>. Accessed on 06 September 2021.

Rajagopalan, R. (2018, August 20). Should Rising China-Nepal Military Ties Worry India?. *The Diplomat*. Retrieved from <https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/should-rising-china-nepal-military-ties-worry-india/>. Accessed on 21 July 2020.

Ranjan, A. (2019, 07 December). India-Nepal Row over the Updated Map of India. *ISAS*. Retrieved from

<https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Working-paper-India-Nepal-Border-Amit-Ranjan-061219-JV-HS.pdf>. Accessed on 26 August 2021.

Ranjan, A. a (2020, 05 June). India-Nepal Tensions: The Issue of Lipulekh. *ISAS*, Retrieved from <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/325-1.pdf>. Accessed on 26 August 2021.

Ranjan, A. b(2020, 01 July). Developments on Nepal-China Border: Concerns for India. *ISAS*. Retrieved from <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/developments-on-nepal-china-border-concerns-for-india/>. Accessed on 05 September 2021.

Ranjan, A. a(2021, 20 May). K P Oli loses Trust Vote: Nepal in a Political Crisis. *ISAS*. Retrieved from <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/k-p-oli-loses-trust-vote-nepal-in-a-political-crisis/>. Accessed on 06 September 2021.

Ranjan, A. b(2021, 02 August). Kathmandu's Closer Ties With Washington: Some Concerns for Beijing. *ISAS*. Retrieved from <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/kathmandus-closer-ties-with-washington-some-concerns-for-beijing/>. Accessed on 06 September 2021.

Ranjan, A. c(2021, 13 August). Nepal's Common Minimum Programme: Falling Short on Foreign Policy Expectations. *ISAS*. Retrieved from <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/nepals-common-minimum-programme-falling-short-on-foreign-policy-expectations/>. Accessed on 26 August 2021.

“Responses by Millennium Challenge Corporation to Consolidated Clarification Questions from Government of Nepal

Regarding the Millennium Challenge Compact” Millennium Challenge Corporation, United States of America, 8 September, 2021. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/156L1jGJgoKrFnRrVlXrz9-dz-9GSaYd3/view>. Accessed on 9 September 2021

Sharma, B. P. (2018). China-Nepal Relations: A Cooperative Partnership in Slow Motion. *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies* Vol. 4, No. 3 , World Scientific. 439-455. Retrieved from <https://www.worldscientific.com/doi/pdf/10.1142/S2377-740018500239>. Accessed on 29 September 2021.

Thapa, G. (2014, 4 November). Yam, buffer, bridge. *The Kathmandu Post* . <https://kathmandupost.com/opinion/2014/11/04/yam-buffer-bridge>. Accessed 18 June 2021.

The Kathmandu Post. (2021, 21 February). One million doses of Covishield arrive in Nepal. Retrieved from <https://kathmandupost.com/visual-stories/2021/02/21/one-million-doses-of-covishield-arrive-in-nepal> Accessed on 07 September 2021.

World Health Organization. Working for global equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/initiatives/act-accelerator/covax>. Accessed on 06 July 2021.