

## NEPAL, CHINA INK ROAD CONNECTIVITY DEAL

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

Chinese President Xi Jinping taking leave of Nepal Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli in Kathmandu on Sunday.APAP

China and Nepal on Sunday concluded agreements for all-weather connectivity between Kathmandu and the Tibet Autonomous Region.

The infrastructure-building agreements were part of the 20 documents that were signed after delegation-level talks held by visiting Chinese President Xi Jinping and Nepalese Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli.

An agreement for upgraded all-weather road connection that includes building of Himalayan tunnels was reached between the Ministry of Finance of Nepal and the China International Development Cooperation Agency.

Both sides resolved to begin feasibility studies for the construction of the tunnels along the road from Keyrung in Tibet to Kathmandu, said a joint statement issued at the end of the visit. The joint statement declared that both sides will intensify cooperation to realise “trans-Himalayan multidimensional connectivity network”.

The tunnel network will connect Tokha and Chhahare within Nepal that will ultimately reduce the road distance between Nepal and China.

The current road network is unsafe as it is prone to disruption due to landslips and poor maintenance.

Both sides also gave the green signal for a feasibility study of the trans-Himalayan rail connectivity aimed at connecting the Nepal capital with major commercial centres of the Tibetan Autonomous Region and beyond in China.

Nepal agreed to allow Chinese banks to open branches and other financial services in Nepal and increase imports from China.

President Xi began his visit to Kathmandu on Saturday afternoon, after his trip to Chennai for the informal summit with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He was accompanied by his full diplomatic team headed by Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

Nepal also signed a treaty with China on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters which will allow China to investigate cases of crime that might target Nepal.

Nepal reiterated its “firm commitment” to the One China policy.

Nepal also acknowledged that Taiwan was an “inalienable” part of China and promised not to allow any anti-China activities on Nepal territory.

The joint statement clarified that both sides were working towards an extradition treaty.

**Increased opportunity**

As per agreements, China will offer 100 training opportunities to the Nepalese law enforcement officers each year, increase exchange of visits of security personnel, joint exercises and training of personnel for disaster relief and prevention.

China has agreed to build the Madan Bhandari University for Science and Technology as a mark of respect for the late leader of the Communist Party of Nepal.

It also committed to build a railway line connecting Kathmandu and Pokhara with the birthplace of Lord Buddha at Lumbini.

Welcoming President Xi, Nepal President Bidhya Devi Bhandari said that Lumbini should be developed as a centre of global peace.

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