

## Nepal, China discuss railway connectivity project

Nepal on Thursday began talks about a railway connectivity project with China. Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal Krishna Bahadur Mahara, who visited Beijing, held talks with top Chinese decision-makers and said that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) opens up the railway connectivity project as a national priority of Nepal.

“(Krishna Bahadur) Mahara said that he had come up with a common consensus among major political leaders in the government and in the Opposition to carry forward railway connectivity as a national priority project. Both sides agreed to take necessary measures to carry out technical study of the project,” said a press release from Nepal’s embassy in Beijing.

“Government of Nepal has accorded high importance to the implementation of MoU on BRI signed between the two countries... Mahara expressed Nepal’s strong support to China’s Belt and Road Initiative.”

Apart from the talk on railways, both sides also sealed an agreement on energy cooperation. A third agreement signed on Thursday opened up Nepal’s tourism sector for greater Chinese investment.

The agreements came two days after China held the BRICS summit and indicate Nepal’s desire to reach out to Chinese and Eastern markets as an alternative to India.

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