

《Sino-Nepal ties: Belt & Road delivers on pragmatic coope》

By Buddhi Sharma, General Secretary and Chief Researcher, Nepal-China Dialogue and Development Forum (NCDF), based in Kathmandu, Nepal

After a long dialogue between Nepal and China, the two sides signed a historic framework Agreement on Belt & Road cooperation on May 12.

The agreement was signed in Kathmandu before the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, which was held in Beijing on May 14-15 and a Nepali delegation was also in attendance.

Deputy Prime Minister Mahara said Nepal-China cooperation has entered new progressive and productive directions. Kathmandu will focus on cooperation with Beijing, based on mutual trust and win-win situations.

Nepali Foreign Minister Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat said Nepal-China relations have entered a new era. He said multiple doors of cooperation have opened up. Nepali ambassador to Beijing Leelamani Paudel told a Nepali's influential online news site that by signing agreements there are grand possibilities for more Chinese investment in the country.

Experts on Nepal-China affairs suggest there should be more serious efforts of cooperation from both sides.

Beijing has assured the world it has no intention to interfere with the internal affairs of other countries. At the BRF Beijing summit, Chinese President Xi Jinping said the B&R Initiative will establish a stable, prosperous and harmonious world society for a world community of common destiny.

Beijing announced a large-scale investment package in multiple sectors to demonstrate China is responsible for an aggravate level of cooperation. Since 2013, B&R project's super-fast execution and world concern show the B&R is uniting great human cooperation.

After signing the B&R agreement, there's one question: Are both parties serious about implementation? People are asking whether the Nepali government could seek more benefits from B&R connectivity.

Minister for Physical Infrastructure and Transport Ramesh Lekhak believes Nepal can attract more Chinese investments and connectivity. Zhang Shubin, director of Nepal Study Centre, Hebei University of Economics and Business, said Nepal must make a propitious environment for Chinese investments.

"Investors want guarantees and security. Implementation of the agreements will be a major factor for cooperation," he said. "Otherwise, only the agreements with good words could not do anything. So people are watching forthcoming actions."

Nepal should focus on implementing agreements with five major areas of cooperation: policy coordination, facility

connectivity, trade connectivity, financial integration and people-to-people bonds.

Nepal needs major investment to boost infrastructure development. China has capital, technology, knowledge and experiences. Nepal as a neighbor country should not delay after signing the B&R to clarify its necessities and embark on cooperation.

Through rail, road, transmission line and cultural connectivity, Nepal-China relations could reach a level of harmony based on mutual benefits if both parties are serious. Even though Nepal-China watchers opined that Nepal should do much to harness cooperation, based on win-win situation, it will lead Nepal towards greater prosperity.

