

# Nepal's Political Crisis Since 2001 and the Indian Response

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Nepal's political landscape, marked by coalition collapses, monarchy crises, and constitutional disputes, has been significantly influenced by its turbulent history. India's role, characterized by a twin-pillar model and diplomatic initiatives, shapes its complex relationship with Nepal. India has always been in favor of a return to democracy, but over time, its complex strategy changed as a result of geopolitical concerns and worries about regional stability. This paper aims to explore India's changing approaches to Nepal's political challenges since 2001 and also analyze India's position as a political mediator, its support for constitutional changes in Nepal, subsequent conflicts, and diplomatic initiatives to restore bilateral ties. The complex interactions between India's regional interests and Nepal's internal political dynamics can be enhanced by taking note of these dynamics.

**Key Words:** Nepal, Political crisis, India, Response, Evolution

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India and Nepal have a long history together that has grown over the ages in terms of geopolitics, economy, and culture. A complicated interaction of regional dynamics, diplomatic relationships, and historical ties characterized these South Asian neighbor's bilateral relations. The two nations formally established diplomatic ties on June 17, 1947, to strengthen their longstanding relationship. The unshakable dedication to sovereign equality, peaceful cohabitation, and respect for one another's goals. These sensitivities have provided a solid base for further developing our bilateral relationships. The Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950 marked the beginning of the modern-day nations of India and Nepal's relationship (*Nepal-India Relations – Ministry of Foreign Affairs Nepal MOFA*, n.d.). The 1950–1951 Revolution in Nepal, also referred to as 'Sat Salko Kranti,' marks a turning point in Nepal's contemporary history. The liberal policies of the Jawaharlal Nehru-led Indian government stopped the democratic experiment that King Tribhuvan, the grandfather of the current King Birendra, had started in February 1951. This was due to the Rana's rule. The nation's prime minister then was Maharaja Mohan Shumsher (Mishra, 1995). The signing of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship in July 1950 established a cordial connection with the recently independent nation (Kochar, Jaiswal, 2016). Mohan Shumsher Jung Bahadur Rana [Prime Minister of Nepal] and Indian Delegate Chandreshwar Prasad Narain Singh signed the Treaty of Peace and Friendship. "Everlasting Peace and Friendship" between the two nations is promised in the treaty (Thapliyal, n.d.). Prime Minister Pt provided the Indian government's viewpoints. Nehru on 6<sup>th</sup> December, 1950. He stated, "The Himalayas have been the biggest security provider for India since ancient times." Despite this, India acknowledges

Nepal's independence and will not put up with any activities or projects that compromise Nepal or the Himalayan boundaries because doing so puts India's security at risk (Nehru, 1958). On April 25, 1954, an agreement was reached between India and Nepal to manage and use the water of the Kosi River.

### **Tensions and Diplomatic Efforts in the 1960s**

In September 1960, India and Nepal signed the redrafted Business and Immigration Treaty. India additionally gave Nepal's economy 18 crores in assistance. King Mahendra removed the Koirala Government on December 15, 1960, for no apparent cause. This was a major blow to relations between India and Nepal (Mahesh, 2022). The Union home minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, traveled to Nepal to reconcile the two nations' disputes. As a result of his mission's partial success in reducing tensions between the two nations, King Mahendra visited India in August 1963. The Indian government continued to exchange visits during the Nehru era, with Prime Ministers Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi leading the way. Every effort was taken to ensure that Kathmandu was happy and content. When Mrs. Indira Gandhi visited Nepal in 1966, she stated that each country has the right to determine its future and live according to its needs. Due to the people's brilliance and favorable circumstances, modern Nepal developed under King Mahendra's leadership (Jain, 1998). India and Nepal had good Ties during Mrs. Indira Gandhi's first term in office [1966–77]. Throughout her term, she received numerous administrative and diplomatic visits.

### **Zone of Peace Proposal and Cold Diplomacy (1971-1976)**

an arrangement for irrigation and hydropower plants. Due to this agreement, which was the best In 1971, the two nations inked an agreement to construct dams on the Kosi and Gandak rivers and most significant in the history of both countries, both countries became closer and supported each other's development. India exerted every effort to support Nepal's growth and development across all domains. The two countries had good and peaceful relations during India's emergency. Nepal proposed a "Peace Area" simultaneously, which caused tensions between the two nations. At the Conference of Non-Aligned Nations in Algeria in 1973, King Virendra made the initial informal proposal for Nepal to establish a "Zone of Peace." King clarified the suggestion: "Nepal should be declared a Zone of Peace for stable peace and cooperation in this area. Nepal is between India and China." Subsequently, on February 25, 1975, at the King's coronation, he stated that the "Peace Area" idea was necessary for the country's independence, security, and overall growth, and he went over several parts of it. Additionally, he stated that Nepal would not utilize one country for another due to the idea (Mahesh, 2022). When Tulasi Giri (Prime Minister of Nepal) visited India in April 1976, he said in a statement that India supported Nepal's efforts to grow and gave Nepal's problem considerable importance. Giri added that Nepal has never wished to undermine Indian interests. Additionally, Indira Gandhi said that Nepal need not worry about the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty. Nepal faced numerous constraints, including India's influence over the region and stability in Indian politics. As a result, she had to pursue cold diplomacy with India. Tulasi Giri also proposed a "Zone of Peace" from a Nepalese perspective during this tour. To maintain peace in the area, China, India, and other South Asian nations must be guaranteed that they will not attack Nepal. India categorically rejected this idea, claiming that China would always pose a threat to India because of its presence in Nepal. In this view, the idea

may not have any bearing on India because of its open border with Nepal, which is significant not just for political and strategic reasons but also for social and economic ones. Therefore, until this proposition does not apply to the entire subcontinent, India cannot safeguard Nepal.

### **Transition and Non-Interference Policy (1977-1980)**

When Atal Behari Vajpayee assumed office as External Minister in 1977, India adhered to Nepal's non-interference policy. Any declaration of non-aggression appeared to be meaningless. However, he added that India would try to establish a Zone of Peace that encompasses Nepal and South Asia (Jain, 1998). In 1980, Indira Gandhi emerged victorious in the general elections. Not only did the Indian political system undergo a significant change, but the Nepalese monarchy and its entrenched interests were also shaken to their core. The Nepalese King, Birendra, visited India shortly after Mrs. Gandhi came to power. Discussions on political, economic, and technological aspects were held during his stay (Alam, 2020).

### **Cooperation and Challenges in the Nineties**

However, strong support and cooperation defined the bilateral relations that existed between India and Nepal in the Nineties. India pragmatically approached Nepal. India was crucial to the democratic struggle in Nepal. When Indian Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar visited Nepal in February 1991, he pledged India's support for Nepal's transport system, efforts to prevent flooding, and other initiatives. As a response, G. P. Koirala [Nepali Prime Minister] visited India on a formal visit. During his visit, previous trade and transit agreements were reviewed, and a major effort was made to increase Nepal's economic interest. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao promised that India would support Nepal in developing the industry during his second visit to the country in October 1992. In May 1993, King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya of Nepal visited India, and relations between the two countries were further strengthened. Talking with Indian leaders during the King's visit improved their relationship and made it more friendly. After multiparty democracy was restored in Nepal, it was the first time that Their Majesties had visited any nation. In April 1995, Man Mohan Adhikari, the prime minister of Nepal, visited New Delhi. While in India, he thoroughly discussed matters of mutual interest with the President of India and Prime Minister, P. V. Narasimha Rao. In February 1996, the Maoist Communist Party of Nepal launched an uprising that started the "people's war." Despite their desire to build a parliamentary system of government, India denounced the Maoist uprising. There have been notable changes in the relations between India and Nepal after the leadership change in that country. With I. K. Gujral taking over as India's prime minister in 1997, an empathetic strategy known as the Gujral Doctrine was introduced.

### **Diplomatic Engagement in the Late Nineties**

During his visit in May 1998, Then Indian President K. R. Narayanan said, "Whatever technological achievements we have made, I am sure will be used for peaceful purpose," during an event held by then-Nepali Prime Minister G. P. Koirala. President K. R. Narayanan said in his speech that our nations are working towards economic reforms, liberalization, and global opening. We are committed to this process, which is a global occurrence. During his August 1999 visit to New Delhi, Dr.

Ram Sharan Mahat, the Foreign Minister of Nepal at the time, also had meetings with the Prime Minister and President of India's External Affairs Ministry. With the SAARC relationship, the visit was especially consultative; however, there was also a chance for idea-sharing on current bilateral matters. At the invitation of Nepal's Foreign Minister, India's Minister of External Affairs, Jaswant Singh, they made a follow-up trip to Nepal. Discussing all aspects of India-Nepal bilateral relations during this visit was possible. A Joint Communiqué announcing various steps to deepen collaboration between the two nations was released following this visit (Alam, 2020).

### **Political crisis in Nepal Since 2001**

Nepal has been faced with several crises since 2001, each of which has shaped the country's political landscape while it navigates a challenging terrain of political unrest.

#### *Monarchical Crisis (2001-2008)*

The June 2001 massacre of the Royal Family changed Nepal's political landscape. Crown Prince Dipendra used a gun to shoot and kill King Birendra and numerous other members of the royal family. On June 4, 2001, Prince Gyanendra, King Birendra's younger brother, was named the next King of Nepal following the death of Prince Dipendra. The political landscape of Nepal changed with the accession of a new monarch. After coming to power, he distanced himself from constitutional monarchy-supporting political groups and pushed them towards the anti-monarchist Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M). On July 19, 2001, P.M. Girija Prasad Koirala resigned amid increasing political unrest, and Sher Bahadur Deuba was chosen as his successor by the Nepali Congress MPs. This resulted from the contentious attempt to use the Royal Army to combat the Maoists. Deuba's attempts to restart communication with Maoists were unsuccessful due to their stubbornness about the Constituent Assembly issue. Violence increased when the first round of peace negotiations between the Maoists and the government broke down in November 2001. In May 2002, after Deuba consented to a second extension of the state of emergency, King Gyanendra quickly dissolved the House of Representatives on his advice. He scheduled new elections amid a political conflict over the emergency status. The local bodies were dissolved in July 2002, and officials took their place. Because the midterm elections did not happen, King Gyanendra dismissed Sher Bahadur Deuba's government on October 4, 2002, considering him "incompetent" for failing to hold the election by the deadline. He then assumed executive power and sovereignty and named Lokendra Bahadur Chand the new prime minister. Lokendra Bahadur Chand resigned in May 2003 following many months of demonstrations by political parties calling for the reinstatement of parliament and the designation of "peoples' representatives." after that, the king announced Surya Bahadur Thapa as prime minister. Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa resigned in 2004 following weeks of demonstrations by opposition parties (Kumar et al., 2010). In November 2005, the first of the Twelve-Point Agreement's declarations, made during a meeting between Maoists and party officials in Delhi, stated that the "autocratic monarchy" was the primary obstacle to Nepal's democracy, peace, and development. The document continued by urging coordinated opposition against the monarchy. The Maoists also approved of a multiparty democratic system. Elections were scheduled to form the first Constituent Assembly of the country, which had been expected since 1951, and whose responsibility it would be to draft a

new Constitution. On April 6, 2006, the combined agitation started in earnest. Following a 19-day protest, King Gyanendra yielded and consented to the reinstatement of Parliament, quickly reducing the extent of royal authority. In addition to eliminating the King's role as supreme commander of the armed forces and removing the name "royal" from all significant governmental institutions, Parliament proclaimed itself to be sovereign and the King to be subservient to it. Furthermore, the bill superseded the 1990 constitution, formally referring to Nepal as a Hindu state and declaring Nepal a secular state. With the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in November 2006, the conflict was said to have formally ended, which also made it possible for the Maoists to become part of the government (SHNEIDERMAN et al., 2016), (Janjua, 2007).

### *Emergence of Republic (2008-2009)*

The Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist (CPN-M) was one of the main political parties in Nepal when it constituted an interim parliament with 330 members on January 15, 2007, and they adopted an interim constitution. The interim Constitution provides for "the election of a Constituent Assembly; commits Nepal to become a federal republic ...; strips the king of all formal powers, and makes the prime minister both head of government and head of state". The interim Constitution of Nepal establishes the country as a secular state, in contrast to the previous Constitution. With the CPN-M as a member and Girija Prasad Koirala, the Nepali Congress (NC) leader, as prime minister, an interim government was established on April 1, 2007. However, the CPN-M left the interim government in September 2007 to pressure the monarchy to end. The CPN-M returned to the government when the Parliament voted in December 2007 to abolish the monarchy. Not only did the CPN-M and the government declare Nepal a republic, but they also decided to implement a proportional voting system. In the April 10, 2008 Constituent Assembly elections, the CPN-M emerged as the largest party but did not secure an outright majority. "Marred by irregularities and violence, most notably the killing of many Maoist activists" was how the election campaign was described. "Intimidation and coercion" were employed by the CPN-M in their electoral campaign. The Constituent Assembly is a "remarkably inclusive body, far more representative of Nepal's caste, ethnic, religious, and regional diversity than any past parliament," the elections, notwithstanding irregularities, seemed to reflect the people's desire. On May 28, 2008, at the inaugural session of the Constituent Assembly, Nepal was formally proclaimed a republic, and the monarchy was dissolved. Nepal's first president, Ram Baran Yadav of the NC party, was elected on July 21, 2008, after receiving 308 out of 590 votes in the Constituent Assembly. The President's role is primarily ceremonial. Paramanand Jha, a Madhesi Janadhikar Forum party member, was elected vice president on July 19, 2008. With 464 votes from the Constituent Assembly, CPN-M's Prachanda [Pushpa Kamal Dahal], the assembly's chairman, took the oath of office as prime minister on August 18, 2008. Prachanda was once the Maoists' "rebel leader" (Research et al. of Canada, Ottawa, 2009).

### *Constitutional Struggles (2010-2013)*

President Yadav and Prime Minister Prachanda resigned in May 2009, and Madhav Kumar Nepal was appointed the new PM. The Maoists entered the opposition and began a wave of demonstrations. Four individuals lost their lives in land grab



conflicts in western Nepal in December 2009, and the Maoist Party backed the demonstrations. The deadline was extended to May 2011 by the ruling coalition and the Maoist opposition since they could not draft a new constitution by May 2010. PM Madhav Kumar Nepal resigned in June 2010 due to pressure from the Maoists. However, he held the position for seven months as acting prime minister because the parties involved could not agree on a replacement. 2011 saw Jhala Nath Khanal elected as the next prime minister in February (PELDON, 2018). Adopting a new democratic constitution was outlined as the main responsibility of the future constitution assembly in the Interim Constitution of Nepal. It was scheduled for completion in two years. The most challenging question remained unaddressed during the protracted and contentious process of formulating the committee suggestions for the Constitution. Long before the term ended, it was clear that some extension was required. Since the deadline was missed, the Constituent Assembly prolonged its mandate at least four times, among other things, by amending the Constitution, until the Nepalese Supreme Court ultimately determined that the Interim Constitution's interpretation flexibility had been mandated at least four times, among other things, by amending the Constitution on May 27, 2012. The crisis of the Constitution had begun. After the Constituent Assembly was dissolved, there was no longer a parliamentary body to address the issue by passing laws. Nepal was left with a predicament where its Constitution was silent, ambiguous, and unworkable, with no clear path. At last, President Ram Baran Yadav decided to rely on the dreaded authority to remove obstacles provided in Article 158 of the Interim Constitution. On March 14, 2013, the President ordered the holding of elections for a new Constituent Assembly and the appointment of a new interim government to oversee the election process. The preparations for the election were carried out during the summer in an informal political dialogue between the leaders of the participating parties and the Interim government, known as the High-Level Political Committee ("HLPC"). This dialogue started as a de facto continuation of the dissolved Constituent Assembly. A political tug-of-war developed as the elections approached between the HLPC parties and the government's Electoral Commission, for example, over the number of assembly members needed to be elected and the boundaries of constituencies. Some of the Interim Constitution's election provisions felt broken or stuck in the newly altered conditions. This led to increased political debates over it as if the authority to solve issues had unlocked Pandora's box (Kari, 2015).

### *Political Transition (2014-2018)*

Following legislative approval, Sushil Koirala, the leader of the Nepali Congress, was selected as the country's next prime minister in February 2014. Protests were organized following the September 2015 passing of a constitution by the Parliament, mostly by members of ethnic minorities and residents of Terai areas. They argued that the established parties, who were headed by high-caste elites, had rushed the new Constitution, which they felt discriminated against them. Furthermore, minority groups felt that the new Constitution discriminated against them since it decreased the proportional representation system in the Parliament to 48% from 58% under the previous temporary post-war Constitution. Human Rights Watch reports that a minimum of forty-five individuals lost their lives. The Parliament chose the Maoist Party's leader, Prachanda, to serve as prime minister for a second time in August 2016. Sher Bahadur Deuba succeeded Prachanda as PM in June 2017. Maoist

insurgents are said to have carried out dozens of strikes in November 2017, gravely wounding at least seventeen individuals (PELDON, 2018). In May 2018, The union of left-wing parties formed the Nepal Communist Party (NCP), establishing the nation's first democratically elected government through the new constitution of Nepal. Due to the party merger, the left-alliance government secured an almost two-thirds majority in Parliament.

### *Constitutional Challenges (2019-2021)*

However, conflicts inside the coalition resulted in the collapse of the legislature and widespread protests in 2020 and 2021. Following the advice of the former prime minister KP Sharma Oli, On December 20, 2020, President Bidya Devi Bhandari dissolved the House of Representatives. At least a year ahead of plan, general elections are set for April and May of 2021. Thousands of people demonstrated every day following the dissolution of Parliament to protest the action, calling it unconstitutional. Early in 2021, there were still protests. A segment of Oli's party led by previous prime ministers, NCP officials, opposition parties, and student organizations staged demonstrations. On February 23, 2021, the Supreme Court of Nepal heard dozens of petitions against the prime minister. The court declared the dissolution of Parliament to be illegal and reinstated Parliament. Additionally, the Supreme Court revoked the ruling NCP's party registration on March 7, 2021, due to another party using the same name that had previously been established with the Nepali Election Commission. Unified Marxist-Leninist and the Maoist Centre, the two parties that had united to create the NCP in 2018, were the new entities that constituted the ruling NCP due to this decision. K.P Oli (P.M of Nepal) sought and failed a vote of confidence in Parliament to stay in office following the re-establishment of Parliament and the breakup of the ruling party. The President dissolved Parliament on May 21, 2021, marking the second time in the previous five months, claiming a lack of support for either the opposition or the caretaker government in forming a new government. Political groups, arguing that the decision was unlawful, staged new, large-scale protests in response to the action, calling for Parliament to be re-established under the leadership of Sher Bahadur Deuba, the leading opposition candidate. Before the Supreme Court's decision in the case, the opposition and Oli's supporters held protests in favor of their requests. The Supreme Court reestablished the House of Representatives on July 12, 2021, and mandated the appointment of Sher Bahadur Deuba, the head of the opposition Nepali Congress, as P.M. Deuba established a coalition administration upon the return of Parliament, and the constitutional situation resulting from the divisions of Parliament was resolved (ASHIK et al. PRAKASH BHATTARAI, PAWAN ROY, RAJKUMAR BUDA, 2022).

### *Unravelling Coalitions (2022-2023)*

In 2022, Nepal experienced political upheaval that resulted in the unexpected transformation of adversaries into allies and the third term as prime minister for former guerrilla leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda. Meanwhile, Kathmandu endeavored to maintain a balance between its relations with China and India through high-profile visits.

To become prime minister, Prachanda, the 68-year-old head of the CPN-Maoist Centre, unexpectedly broke away from his pre-election coalition with the Nepali Congress and teamed up with the opposition CPN-UML, which is led by former prime

minister K.P. Sharma Oli, as well as five other minor parties. Elections for the lower house and seven provincial legislatures were held last month to stop the protracted political unrest that has afflicted the Himalayan nation. However, the elections produced a hung parliament, with the CPN-UML, Prachanda's CPN-Maoist, and the Nepali Congress emerging as the single largest party. In the 275-member House of Representatives, no party secured the 138 members necessary to establish a government.

Since Prachanda and Oli were partners until last year, when the former broke apart and supported Sher Bahadur Deuba, the head of the Nepali Congress, for prime minister, the wheel has completely turned. Not only did Oli succeed in weaning Prachanda away from the n Congress-led alliance by securing Prachanda's nomination as prime minister, but he now has his candidate for the Speaker of the House of Representatives, plum ministries, and most province chief ministers. The seven parties' new coalition appears to create governments in each of the seven provinces (PTI, KATHMANDU, 2022). Following the elections in November 2022, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, the prime minister of Nepal, was supported by the Nepali Communist Party (Unified Marxist–Leninist) (CPN-UML) in January 2023 and received 268 out of 270 votes in the Parliament. However, shortly after, rifts in the alliance became apparent, forcing Dahal to ask for another vote of confidence in March with the backing of the Nepali Congress. By the end of 2023, Dahal appeared determined to hold onto his post and struck agreements with all the essential parties. Only one item of legislation was enacted by the Parliament in 2023, while several other articles of legislation have been sitting in the legislature since July 2019, awaiting debate and approval. Dahal negotiated the political seas with coalition allies like Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba and fair-weather buddy Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli of the CPN-UML, even though his Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) only held 32 seats. Three septuagenarian leaders, Dahal, Deuba, and Oli, are in charge of a nation where half the population is under 25 and seventy percent is under 40 (Shakya, 2024).

### **India's Response to the Political Crisis in Nepal**

India's response is crucial in determining how events play out and how the region functions in light of Nepal's political crisis.

#### *The Twin-Pillar Model*

India's involvement at this chaotic time remained unclear. The "twin pillar" (also known as the "two-pillar") model, which focuses on the cohabitation of multiparty democracy with constitutional monarchy, has historically been New Delhi's chosen political solution for Nepal. Given the Maoist insurgency's potential for spillover effects into India and the backdrop of Nepal's civil war, New Delhi stuck to its conventional political course concerning Nepal. The twin-pillar strategy seemed to offer the most assurance for creating a "national response to the situation" of the Maoist uprising. In addition, to avoid upsetting the monarch, the Indian government only launched mild demonstrations in response to the progressive deterioration of Nepalese democracy between 2002 and 2005.

#### *India's Response to King Gyanendra's Coup*

At first, New Delhi's policies appeared to shift in response to King Gyanendra's



coup d'état on February 1, 2005, making it more blatantly pro-democracy. As did the rest of the world, India responded to the coup with demonstrations and criticism, characterizing the King's actions as "a severe setback to the cause of democracy" and "a cause of grave concern to India." New Delhi put King Gyanendra under duress by banning the supply of weapons to Nepal.

Nevertheless, this penalty was temporary since the embargo was removed as early as April 2005. Following the coup, the Indian government made several accommodative remarks stating India's desire for the twin-pillar system in an impartial manner and did not pressure the monarch. India did not implement measures that consistently represented this inclination, even while it publicly backed a return to democracy.

#### *Facilitation Role in 2004-2005*

India took on a facilitation role in 2004 and 2005, enabling the Maoist leaders and the Seven Party Alliance to begin a conversation against King Gyanendra. Madhav Nepal of the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) and leaders of the CPN-M are said to have met in secret in Lucknow, India, in February 2004. April 2006, during Jan Andolan II, By demanding the release of the professionals, students, and political figures who had been detained during the King's protests, the Indian government made a valiant effort to apply diplomatic pressure on Gyanendra. Nepal was in danger of becoming seriously unstable. India used soft and robust persuasive techniques, including neutral remarks, to achieve this goal.

#### *Neutral Approach towards Democracy*

When New Delhi expressed relief upon King Gyanendra's statement on April 21 that he would be handing over executive powers to a government to be formed by the democratic parties, it further highlighted India's neutral approach towards democracy in Nepal. Like a significant portion of the global population, who "hurried to support the royal proposal without waiting to hear Nepal's people and their representatives' response." India was pleased with King Gyanendra's choice since it suggested that multiparty democracy would return (Kantha, n.d.), (Destradi, 2010). India did not congratulate or warmly welcome Nepal and its people on the historic occasion of adopting the country's Constitution. The Indian government expressed displeasure in a press statement dated September 21, 2015, issued by the Ministry of External Affairs. "We have consistently argued that all sections of Nepal must come to a consensus on the political challenges facing them," the news release states. Nepal is confronted with political problems that cannot be handled by coercion. We hope Nepal's government takes steps to legitimately and successfully address the issues underlying the current state of conflict.

#### *Indian Dissatisfaction and Proposed Constitutional Revisions*

As per S.D. Muni's (2015) analysis, the Indian leadership's dissatisfaction with the ruling parties in Nepal stems from their inability to produce a genuinely inclusive constitution, as promised by the peoples' movement of 2005-06 (Jan Andolan-II), which India actively backed.

Additionally, the current administration has made a concerted effort to improve ties between India and Nepal. Muni claims that some well-known Nepali leaders,

including Prachanda of the Maoists and Sher Bahadur Deuba of the NC, were called to India for talks and committed to include the Madhes and other groups. The Indian government discovered that the recently drafted Constitution did not align with its previous conversations and negotiations with the political leadership of Nepal. The Indian government formally sent the Nepali leadership a list of proposed constitutional revisions, according to the report in Indian Express on September 24, 2015. According to the report, the Indian government requested the following seven constitutional amendments.

1. Article 63 (3) of the Interim Constitution established electoral districts according to location, population, and unique qualities; in the case of Madhes, these factors were based on population proportion. With almost 50% of the population, Madhes received 50% of the seats in Parliament under this rule. The revised Constitution's Article 84 does not contain the latter clause. For Madhes to maintain electoral seats proportionate to their population, it must be reinserted.

2. According to the principles of proportionate participation, various groups would have the right to participate in governmental organizations, as stated in Article 21 of the interim constitution. India wants the term "proportional" to be reinserted in Article 42 of the new Constitution, which discards it.

3. Article 283 of the Constitution states that only citizens by descent are eligible to hold positions such as Chief Justice, President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, Speaker of Parliament, Chairperson of the National Assembly, Head of Province, Chief Minister, Speaker of the Provincial Assembly, and Chief of Security Bodies. This section is believed to discriminate against the many Madhesi who have become citizens through naturalization or birth. The Indian government argues that naturalization or citizenship by birth should be added to this.

4. The National Assembly will comprise three nominated members and eight members from each of the seven states, according to Article 86 of the new Constitution. Madhesi parties want the National Assembly's representation determined by the provinces' populations. India maintains that to resolve concerns, this should be done.

5. The five contested districts of Kailali, Sunsari, Jhapa, Morang, and Kanchanpur may be included, in whole or in part, in the surrounding Madhes Provinces based on the population's majority.

6. The Interim Constitution's Article 154 provides for the ten-year demarcation of election seats. The new Constitution's Article 281 has extended this to 20 years. Like the Madhesi parties, India wants this to be changed to ten years.

7. Under federal law, a foreign woman who marries a Nepali person may become a naturalized citizen of Nepal. The Madhesi parties demand naturalization to be granted automatically upon application. Delhi is likewise in support of this.

#### *Disregard of Indian Counsel by Nepal*

However, After the controversial Constitution was adopted in September 2015, the political establishment in Nepal disregarded India's counsel and expressed alarm, accusing it of promoting upheaval in the Terai region of the country. A spokesman for the Ministry of Home, Nepal's government, blamed India for the border commerce

embargo. Speaking in a television interview, the spokesperson, Mr. Laxmi Prasad Dakhal, stated that trucks had been entering Nepal without any significant issues for months prior to the enshrinement of the Constitution. Invoking security concerns, India halted the vehicles at the border just after the Constitution went into force. We maintain that this is retaliation from India because they disagree with the new Constitution of Nepal.

### *Trade Blockade Controversy*

Though it has not been formally declared, this is a trade blockade. However, all of these accusations by the Nepal Home Ministry have been categorically denied by the Indian administration. Subsequently, on November 16, Mr. K.P. Oli, Nepal's recently elected prime minister, also attributed the trade blockade to India. He concluded, "The rights of a landlocked country under international law as well as historic ties between the two nations had been undermined by India's undeclared blockade and the ensuing humanitarian crisis in the country."

### *Protest in Nepal and Indian Assistance*

In order to voice their concerns, protesting organizations in Nepal have been looking to India for assistance. A group of Madhesi leaders recently met with various Indian political figures, including Sushma Swaraj, the minister of external affairs, on December 6, 2015. Media sources state that Ms. Swaraj supported "Inclusive Nepal." The Indian government also intends to deploy an all-party mission to Nepal (Singh, 2015), (Nayak, 2015).

### *Post-2015 Constitution Developments*

After the 2015 Constitution was approved in November 2016 and December 2017, Nepal saw many ups and downs. However, elections for state and federal administrations and all three levels of federal institutions were held smoothly in May 2017, June 28, and September 18, 2017. With the most seats in the assembly, the left-wing alliance appointed UML leader KP Oli as prime minister.

### *Diplomatic Visits and Relations*

From April 6 to 8, 2018, Prime Minister KP Oli officially visited India at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. At the request of KP Sharma Oli (Prime Minister of Nepal), and Narendra Modi (Prime Minister of India) visited Nepal on May 11 and 12, 2018, as part of his "Visit Diplomacy" tour. Henry Kissinger correctly stated, "In foreign relations, there are no permanent enemies or friends, only permanent interests," about the Libertarian Party of Ohio. The state must rethink its foreign policy to further Nepal's socio economic interests and political stability. Kissinger's hire-only KP Sharma Oli could have written to Prime Minister Modi expressing resentment about the two countries' relationship following the overwhelming win of his allies in the 2017 election. Prime Minister Modi exhibits a similar attitude in their bilateral ties with Nepal.

### ***Restoration of Nepal-India Relations***

Given that Sushma Swaraj's post-election tour prompted Oli's journey to India, it was highly beneficial. The direction of the development collaboration was chosen at

this important visit. In their meeting in Delhi, Prime Minister Oli and Prime Minister Modi of India deliberately proposed that Nepal pursue inland waterways to achieve high-speed connection. Therefore, Nepal-India relations were restored with the election, as India sought to ease the tensions between the two countries after the 2015 economic blockade ("India's Role: Political Crisis in Nepal," n.d.). These are some of India's reactions to the political unrest in Nepal.

### **Conclusion**

The paper "India's Evolving Approach: Analysing Responses to Nepal's Ongoing Political Crisis Since 2001" has explored the complex dynamics of diplomatic ties between Nepal and India in political upheaval. A thorough grasp of India's careful and comprehensive strategy, which considers several variables, including historical connections, cultural exchanges, geopolitical concerns, and regional stability, has been made possible by the research.

The analysis of India-Nepal ties before 2001 provided a fundamental framework, highlighting the historical background that significantly impacted the diplomatic reactions. The study provided an in-depth analysis of the political situation in Nepal from 2001, providing insight into the changing nature of the country's problems. Moreover, a thorough examination of India's replies revealed a diplomatically discerning approach that captured changes in India's perspective following the 2006 democratic movement and the ensuing political events.

The conclusions add to our knowledge of India's flexible strategy for addressing Nepal's political difficulties. Content analysis of government papers, media reports, and diplomatic statements reveals the subtleties of India's diplomatic maneuvers, which provide light on the intricate dynamics of the bilateral relationship.

### **Conclusion**

Even while this study has shed light on how India has responded to Nepal's political crises throughout time, questions still need to be answered. First, a more thorough understanding of the reasons behind diplomatic actions might be obtained by looking more closely at the economic interests affecting India's strategy.

Furthermore, a more comprehensive understanding of the regional ramifications of Nepal's political instability may result from comparing India's actions with those of other nearby nations or foreign entities. More studies might be conducted on how public opinion, media influence, and non-governmental actors shape diplomatic responses. Furthermore, given the changing dynamics of international relations, current events in the area could require this research to be reviewed regularly to record any changes in India's strategy and their effects on the relationship with Nepal. Future studies should concentrate on how flexible India's foreign policy is in reaction to shifting geopolitical conditions and how it affects regional stability as diplomatic environments change.

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